



European traders used to go to India to buy the best cloth in the world; muslin, velvets, cotton of all kinds.



But the Industrial Revolution in Britain enabled the Lancashire textile factories to make a great deal of cotton cloth by machines.



The British government, now ruling India, taxed Indian cloth heavily. It was cheaper for Indians to send raw cotton to Lancashire to be woven; the cloth was sent back to India.



India now bought Lancashire cotton. In this way the Lancashire men and women got jobs, British cotton merchants and shippers got the profits, and the Indians went out of business, Britain got richer, India got poorer.

The cotton industry in Britain grew bigger. More raw cotton was needed.

Britain got more and more of its cotton from the colonies in the Caribbean and from North America. Here enslaved Africans were made to work on cotton plantations. Lots of cheap cotton was produced for Britain's factories and Britain became rich. However, people worked in terrible conditions on the cotton plantations and in the textile mills here.

But they fought back to change things. In India, the people opposed the cruelty of British colonial rule. Led by Gandhi, they eventually won their independence. Enslaved people in the West Indies, such as the fighting Maroons in Jamaica, helped end slavery there in 1838. The use of child labour and the terrible working conditions in Manchester's cotton mills were changed by workers protests.

Today, young people in countries that were once colonised, such as Egypt and Bangladesh, help to make the clothing we buy in our shops. They grow and harvest cotton and work in factories to make clothing. They work long hours for little reward – are they justly treated? Is this a legacy of colonialism?

- 1 Where did people come from to buy India's textiles?
- 2 How was cotton cloth made in Lancashire?
- 3 Where did the raw cotton used in Lancashire factories come from?
- 4 Who helped India to get independence?
- 5 When was slavery in the Caribbean ended?
- 6 Why did the Indian cotton industry die out?
- 7 What has slavery got to do with Lancashire cotton mills?
- 8 What cruel conditions did people fight to change around the world?
- 9 What is the legacy of colonialism today?

TEACHERS: SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON PAGE 5 OF TEACHERS' NOTES.
PUPILS' PAGES ARE PHOTOCOPIABLE FOR CLASSROOM USE.



In 1853, there were widespread strikes by mill workers across towns in Lancashire. Their pay had been cut and they wanted this back. In Preston, the cotton mill owners locked out the workers because they wanted to form a trade union.

'There's two things I've got a right to and these are death and liberty. . . . No-one will take me back alive! I shall fight for my liberty!'

Harriet Tubman, born a slave in the United States, she rescued many from slavery

'One day, when we had a smooth sea... two of my wearied countrymen who were chained together, preferring death to such a life of misery, somehow made through the nettings and jumped into the sea.'

Olaudah Equiano, who was captured in West Africa and taken on a slave ship to the West Indies

The Maroons were escaped slaves living in the mountains of Jamaica. They based their lives on African traditions. They fought against the cotton plantation owners.

'We have something more important than guns. We have truth and justice ... and time ... on our side.'

Gandhi, who led the struggle for Indian independence from Britain

'My job is to take the worms off the cotton leaves. But it is hard. The worms that eat the cotton are difficult to spot. I feel sick in the heat, but I must work. My family needs bread.'

7 year old Abdul Rachman, an Egyptian boy, *Observer*, June 2008

Workers making clothes for Primark, Tesco and Asda are being forced to work up to 80 hours a week for as little as 7p an hour.

War on Want report, December 2008 on factory workers in Dhaka, Bangladesh

A Some of them work long hours in dangerous conditions for little pay.

Q Where was the world centre for textile production before the Lancashire cotton factory boom?

STARTER CARD

A India

Q How did Britain stop textile production in India?

A High taxes and violence, such as cutting off weavers' thumbs.

Q Why did Britain stop textile production in India?

A So that India would have to buy cotton cloth from Britain. Britain got richer.

Q What happened in 1857?

A India's First War of Independence.

Q Which parts of the world had cotton slave plantations?

A The Caribbean and North America.

Q Where were enslaved people brought from?

A West Africa

Q How did enslaved Africans, working on cotton plantations, help Britain?

A They produced cheap cotton for Lancashire's mills, making Britain richer.

Q What are Toussaint L'Ouverture and Harriet Tubman famous for?

A They were enslaved people who fought for freedom.

Q Where in the world were the British colonies that were forced to help its cotton industry?

A India, West Africa, West Indies.

Q What were people in the colonies forced to do?

A They had to grow raw materials, such as cotton, for British industry.

Q How were people in India, the Caribbean and West Africa affected by colonialism?

A They grew less food and became poorer. It made them struggle for independence.

Q What were conditions like in Lancashire's cotton mills?

A People worked long hours in dangerous conditions for little pay.

Q Why did Gandhi want India to stop importing cotton from Britain?

A To help India get independence from Britain.

Q Who controls the cotton industry today?

A Big retail chains and brands such as Nike.

Q What is the problem today for some people who work to make our clothes?