

TTP After Abolition  
**How proud can Britain be of the Royal Navy's efforts to end the Atlantic Slave Trade in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century?**

**Resource Sheet 1 [Version A] - Facts and Opinions about the West Africa Squadron**

Facts	Facts
<p>1807 – A small number of Royal Navy vessels were assigned to the task of patrolling the Atlantic ocean for illegal slaving ships</p> <p>1819 – The West African Squadron was formed</p> <p>1822 – a vessel could be seized where proof of slave trading intent was found</p> <p>1829 - the worst year for the squadron, 204 men died out of the total strength of 792, the majority in an outbreak of yellow fever on board HMS Eden.</p> <p>1830 – W.A. Squadron consisted of 9 RN ships; cost of maintenance £106,111; crew =1129; Sybille was biggest ship with 48 guns and 300 crew</p> <p>1832 – HMS Black Joke burned because of rotten hull; a Royal Navy surgeon wrote: 'it has done more towards putting an end to the vile traffic in slaves than all the ships of the station put together'.</p> <p>1833 – treaty with French for very complete search-and-seizure treaty for vessels flying the French colours and carrying slaves or slave trading equipment</p> <p>1840 – BWAS helped British forces destroy Gallinas slave barracoons = new British policy of direct intervention on the African coast, leading to numerous treaties signed with local chiefdoms</p> <p>1847 = WAS consisted of 32 ships: 6 were steam driven, and was actively engaged in intervention at sea and now on land as well</p> <p>1850s - By the 1850s, around 25 vessels and 2,000 officers and men were on the station,</p>	<p>experienced fishermen recruited as sailors from what is now the coast of modern Liberia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Between 1807 and 1847, roughly one in four slavers were captured</li> <li>The trade was virtually stamped out in the 'northern division, but the south, at the mouth of the Congo and in Angola, it still flourished.</li> <li>Sometimes slave ships being chased by the Royal Navy jettisoned their slave cargo overboard.</li> <li>The cost in the lives of the Squadron crew members was high due to diseases on the West coast of Africa; the introduction of quinine reduced Malaria deaths</li> <li>The numbers allocated to this task varied from 2 to 7 until 1841, when the fleet increased to 13; it reached 30 in 1847. Between 1842 and 1861, when much of the Squadron was relocated to blockade duties off the North American coast, it had captured 595 ships and freed 45,612. The total cost of suppression between 1816 and 1865 was a about £12.4 million</li> <li>Captured slave ships were often sold and bought by other slave traders</li> </ul>

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supported by nearly 1,000 'Kroomen',	
	<b>Opinions</b>
	<b>Marika Sherwood</b> , 'After Abolition': 'almost always its vessels were old and the most inefficient the Navy possessed.'
	<b>Quaker Abolitionist, Joseph Sturge</b> , who founded the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society in 1839, thought the Squadron should be withdrawn as a failure.
	<b>Palmerston</b> , British Prime Minister in 1862, complained that 'no First Lord and no Board of Admiralty have ever felt any interest in the suppression of the slave trade...If there was a particularly old, slow-going tub in the navy, she was sure to be sent to the coast of Africa to try and catch the fast-sailing American clippers.'
	<b>Historian, James Walvin</b> (A Short History of Slavery: 'the abolitionist sentiment first launched in Britain in 1787 became part of British cultural imperialism in the following century. In the process, the British quickly forgot their own central role in promoting slavery on both sides of the Atlantic for more than two centuries. The slaving poacher of the 18 <sup>th</sup> century became the world's abolitionist gamekeeper of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century.'