

Life and Work on the Plantation

Women - What can we learn about the experiences of different enslaved people on plantations in Jamaica.

Lesson 2





What can we learn about the experiences of different enslaved people on plantations in Jamaica.



Starter Task

Connect



What did you already know about life on plantation?

Extend



What questions do you have about plantation life?

Challenge!



What new things did you learn about men living on plantations last lesson?

Learning Intentions

To **study** the role of women on plantation in Jamaica.

To **consider** their experience on plantation and compare this to men.

To **analyse** the different experiences of women throughout their lives.

Success Criteria

We can **analyse** two different primary sources detailing enslaved people on Jamaican plantations.

We can **describe** the role of women on plantations.

We can **understand** how women's experience was **different** from men's and **changed** throughout their life.

We can **evaluate** the usefulness of a primary source.



Enquiry Question

What can we learn about the experiences of different enslaved people on plantations in Jamaica.

To answer this question, we will be looking at source evidence from **two different** plantations on British controlled Jamaica.

What skills will I be using?

- Enquiry
- Investigation
- Reading
- Collating
- Summarising
- Interpreting
- Evaluating
- Commenting

Life on Plantations

Life on plantation for enslaved people was varied depending on their sex, ability, age and *disposition*.

Synonyms for *disposition*:
tendency, disposal, inclination, nature, temperament, propensity, temper, character, arrangement, predisposition

We are going to look at 2 different groups of plantation records from Jamaica.

- **Rose Hall Plantation, Jamaica**
- **Rozell Estate, Jamaica**

In doing this, we will study the experience of women on plantation throughout their lives.

James Robertson's 1804 Map of Jamaica
(courtesy National Library of Scotland)



**Rose Hall Plantation,
Montego Bay**

Rozell Plantation

Image of Rose Hall plantation in Jamaica.
(University College London, Special Collections)



This website was made to **remember** those enslaved at Rose Hall and to **honour** their memory.

The glossary will define words you might not know.



Here are the names of the enslaved people on record.



Scan Me

Each circle shows a year where a record was taken.

Task

Whilst **researching** the life experiences of women at Rose Hall, complete the **3-2-1 Pyramid**:



One new word or term you have learned with definition.

Two interesting facts about their life or something that surprised you.

Three women you have learned about.
You should include:

Their name

What their role/ job was (if stated)

Any information about their 'disposition'

How many records do they appear in?

Task

You are now going to look at a list of enslaved people from Rozelle. **You should collect the following information:**

- 1) What different jobs did women have?
- 2) What other information is noted about the women?
- 3) How many women lived on the Rozell plantation in 1770?
- 4) Did anything surprise you about this list?

An Account of the Negroes & Stock, upon Rozell Plantation in St Thomas in the East 1st January 1770			
1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28
29	30	31	32
33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44
45	46	47	48
49	50	51	52
53	54	55	56
57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64
65	66	67	68
69	70	71	72
73	74	75	76
77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84
85	86	87	88
89	90	91	92
93	94	95	96
97	98	99	100

'An Account of the Negroes & Stock, upon Rozell Plantation in St Thomas in the East 1st January 1770'

* National Register of the Archives of Scotland 3572, private papers of the Fergusson Family of Kilkerran, Ayrshire.

Task

Based on your knowledge of male and female experience on plantation, complete the following:

National 4

1) Describe the experience of enslaved people on plantations.

You should describe at least 2 experiences of enslaved people whilst living and working on plantations.

2) Consider source A (handout) and detail the following:

- Author
- Time
- What does it say about the jobs women would have?
- What jobs doesn't it mention?

National 5

1) Describe the experience of enslaved people working and living on plantations. **(4)**

2) Evaluate the usefulness of source A as evidence of the work and working conditions women would suffer on plantations. **(5)**

(You may want to comment on who wrote it, when they wrote it, why they wrote it, what they say or what has been missed out.)

Source A

“In a fortnight (after giving birth), this woman is at work with her Pickaninny (child) at her back, as merry a soul as any is there. If the Overseer be discreet, she is suffer'd to rest herself a little more than ordinary; but if not, she is compelled to do as others do. Times they have of suckling their Children in the fields, and refreshing themselves; and good reason, for they carry burthens on their backs; and yet work too. Some women, whose Pickaninnies are three years old, will, as they work at weeding, which is stooping work, suffer the hee Pickaninny, to set a stride upon their backs like *St George* a Horse-back; and there Spur his mother with his heels, and sings and crows on her back, clapping his hands, as if he is meant to flye: which the mother is so pleas'd with, as she continues her painful stooping posture, longer than she would do, rather than discompose her Jovial Pickaninny of his pleasure, so glad she is to see him merry.”

Source A is from '*A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*' by Richard Ligon written in 1657

- 1) Evaluate the usefulness of Source A as evidence of the work and working conditions women would suffer on plantation?

(You may want to comment on who wrote it, why they wrote it, what they say or what has been missed out.)



Plenary exercise

What can we learn about the experiences of different enslaved people on plantations in Jamaica.

What have we learned about women's experience at Rose Hall and Rozell Plantations?

Can you state **3 facts** about what life was like for women living on plantations?

Can you identify the different roles women would have on plantations at the different stages of their life?

Can you state a **role** a woman would have as a **child, adult and elderly person**?

Success Criteria



With your partner, write down at least **two differences** you have noticed about the experience of **men and women on plantation.**

We can **analyse** two different primary sources detailing enslaved people on Jamaican plantations.

We can **describe** the role of women on plantation.

We can **understand** how their experience was **different** from men and **changed** throughout their life.

We **evaluate** the usefulness of a primary source.

Life and Work on the Plantation

The Rozell and Rose Hall Registers:

What can we learn about those who produced them and how did this impact the lives of the enslaved?

Lesson 3

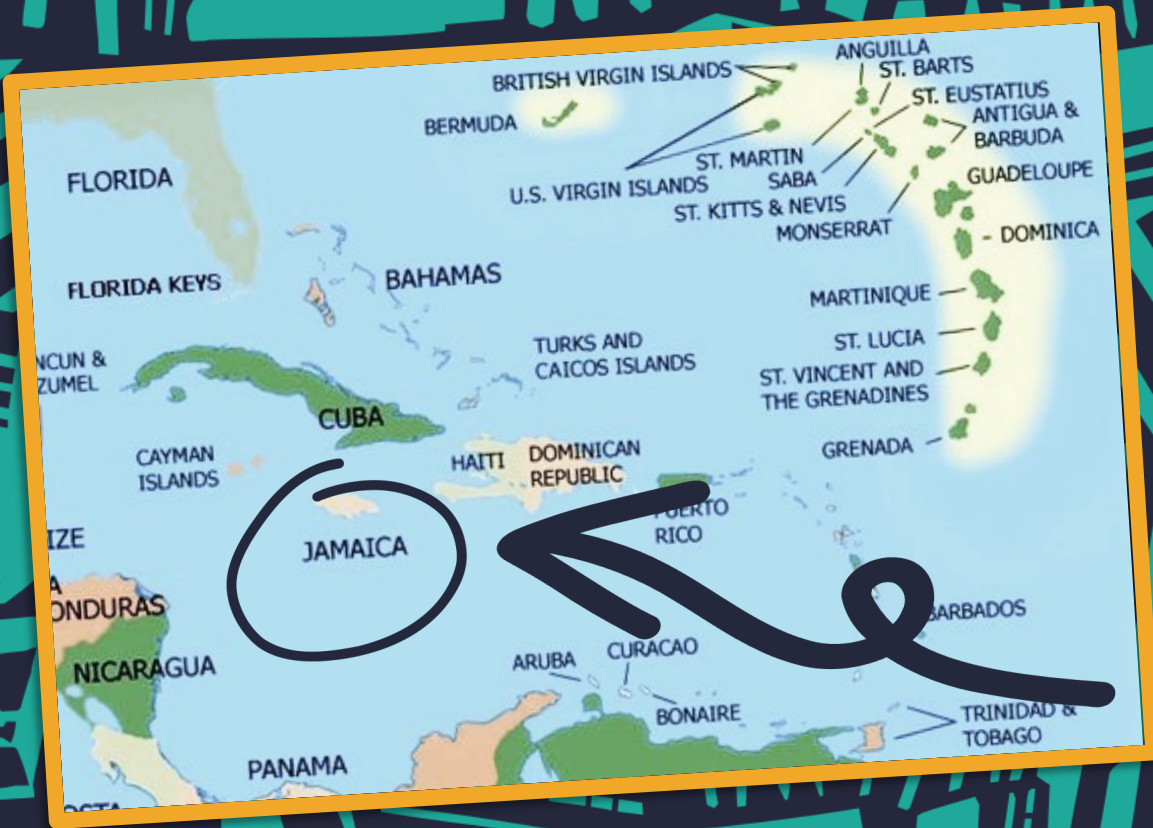


Learning Intentions

I will think about **who** produced the historical records of Rozell and Rose Hall from Jamaica, and **why**, to learn more about the different experiences of enslaved Africans.

Success Criteria

I can explain how the production of the registers from Rozell and Rose Hall plantations would have **impacted** the **lives of enslaved** people.



What have we learnt about the lives of enslaved women and children in Jamaica so far?

By looking at who produced these records and why, we can find out more about the lives of the enslaved.

Task

In groups, you will look at the **2 sources of Rozell and Rose Hall again.**

This time we will begin to think **critically** about how and why they were made.

By 'reading against the grain' and looking at what the source **does not** tell us, it can often explain what the producer/creator of the source is thinking.

Silence/omission can also tell us something important



In groups: look through the records of data and write down an answer to each question.

These records show what enslaved people were reduced to.

(An Account of the Negroes & Stock, upon Rosell Plantation in St Thomas in the East 1st January 1770)

1 - Fero	Washmen	50	Aminta	1.
2 - Rosell		51	Colia	2.
3 - Hazard		52	Clarinda	3.
4 - Francis	Cattlemen & Boy	53	Charu	4.
5 - Hugh		54	Dolly	5.
6 - Hector		55	Diana	6.
7 - Quamino		56	Dauphny	7.
8 - Tom a groom		57	Tanny	8.
9 - Hamblet waits on the overseer		58	Hagar	9.
10 - Casar a black doctor		59	Suba	10.
11 - Tom		60	June	11.
12 - Duk	Coopers	61	Kettle	12.
13 - Will	Masons	62	Madam	13.
14 - Ned		63	Mimba	14.
15 - Johnnie Hog keeper		64	Mamott	15.
16 - Old Tower Hill	Journals	65	Mary - Ann	16.
17 - Young Towerhill		66	Nancy	17.
18 - Othello		67	Rose	18.
19 - Belly		68	Tonus	19.
20 - Davy		69	Elizabeth	20.
21 - Tobby		70	Belinda	21.
22 - Roxell		71	Christian	22.
23 - Cyrus		72	Dido	
24 - Dublin		73	Joe	
25 - Frank		74	Eastor	
26 - Fero		75	Hamott	
27 - Quarky		76	Scanny	
28 - Tom		77	Old Tommy Ann away 2 y ^{rs}	

Particulars of the Negroes & Stock, upon Rosell Plantation in St Thomas in the East 1st January 1770

Name	Sex	Age	Species	Remarks
Aminta	Female	30	African	
Colia	Female	28	African	
Clarinda	Female	25	African	
Charu	Female	20	African	
Dolly	Female	18	African	
Diana	Female	15	African	
Dauphny	Female	12	African	
Tanny	Female	10	African	
Hagar	Female	8	African	
Suba	Female	6	African	
June	Female	4	African	
Kettle	Female	3	African	
Madam	Female	2	African	
Mimba	Female	1	African	
Mamott	Female	1	African	
Mary - Ann	Female	1	African	
Nancy	Female	1	African	
Rose	Female	1	African	
Tonus	Female	1	African	
Elizabeth	Female	1	African	
Belinda	Female	1	African	
Christian	Female	1	African	
Dido	Female	1	African	
Joe	Female	1	African	
Eastor	Female	1	African	
Hamott	Female	1	African	
Scanny	Female	1	African	

Increase 13

Decrease 20

Number of Slaves on the 28th day of June 1823 - One hundred thirty five. Males 71. Females 64 - 135
Births since last return Thirteen
Deaths since last return Twenty

I, John Rose Palmer do swear, that the above list and return is a true, perfect, and complete list and return, to the best of my knowledge and belief, in every particular therein mentioned, of all and every slave and slaves possessed by me as Owner & receiver of Rose Hall Estate, considered as most permanently settled, worked, or employed in the parish of St. James on the 28th day of June, in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred twenty three, without fraud, deceit, or evasion. - So help me God.

Sworn before me, this 4 day
of September - 1823 }

Wm. [unclear]

John Rose Palmer

An extract from the Rose Hall register signed by John Rose Palmer (the enslaver who owned the plantation) where we see him swear a legal oath and a link to God.

Task

Think about...

- The people in the painting?
- The people who produced the painting?
- What can it tell us about the relationship between these two groups of people?



“Jamaica Negroes Cutting Cane in their Working Dresses. Men and women in first gang cutting cane; supervised by a black driver with his staff.”

In groups: **look through the records and write down an answer to each question.**



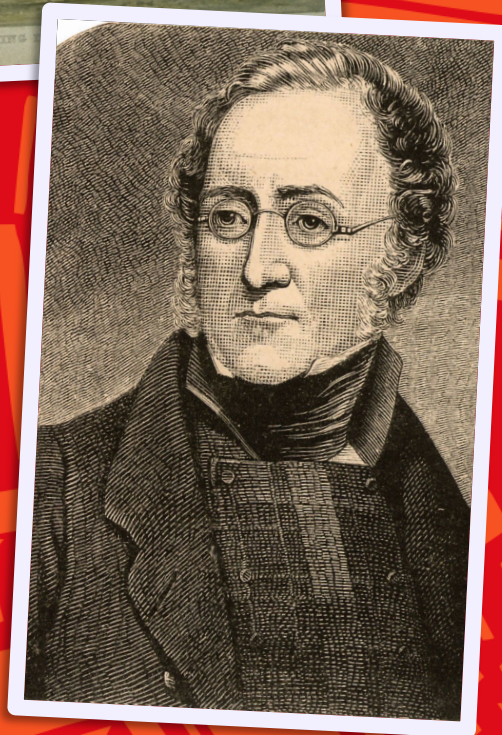
- 1) What do you see in this painting?
- 2) Who do you think would have painted it?
- 3) Why was this painted? Was there a particular message to get across, and who is the intended audience?
- 4) Based on what you already know, does this represent life on plantations accurately?
- 5) What is missing?
- 6) Do you think consent or permission was granted by the people being represented? Should it be?
- 7) Whose narrative is being represented? The oppressed or oppressor?



Who created this?

Sir Henry Thomas De La Beche,
(born 1796 - April 13, 1855, London),
was a geologist, pictured.

He investigated the geology of the
Pembrokeshire coast, the coasts of
France, and the island of Jamaica.



Sir Henry Thomas De La Beche, is commemorated in Swansea street names in Wales (where he lived a large part of his life).

He inherited his father's plantation in Jamaica in 1801, and this plantation is featured in the painting.

Why do we have a close up portrait and lots of information about De La Beche's life, but not the subjects of his painting?

Medals given to enslaved people on De La Beche's plantation as rewards.

Why do you think he gave these out?
What does this tell us about how De La Beche felt towards the people he enslaved?



Jamaica was a British colony from 1655 until it became independent in 1962

An estimated 600,000 African captives were taken to the island

- Although it is clear there was unimaginable suffering, there is such a vast difference of what people will have experienced because 600,000 different human beings will all have different stories, personalities, relationships.....
- How can we ever truly know and understand people's emotional experiences?
- Are the voices of the enslaved and oppressed being heard and represented?
- We must make sure we do not **reduce individual experiences to 'one story'** as there were 600,000 people.

Understanding the context when learning from historical records:

All of the historical records in Jamaica are from a time when slavery was a **legal system** being upheld by another system: **white supremacy**.

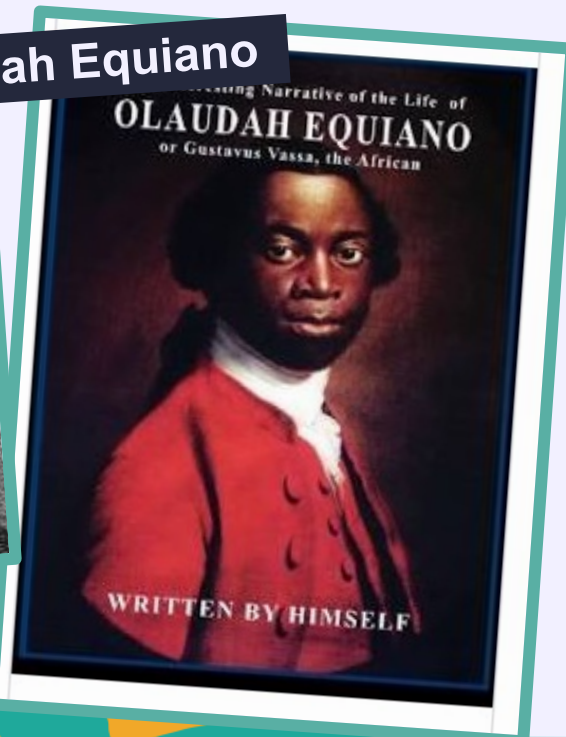
Racism was expanded during this era to **reduce enslaved Africans to chattel** (personal possessions). Language was one aspect this. The law was another.

Jamaica introduced a '**Slave Code**' in **1664** that legally **stopped any human and civil rights for enslaved Black people**. This also legalised abhorrent physical torture on enslaved people such as branding and chopping off body parts as punishments.

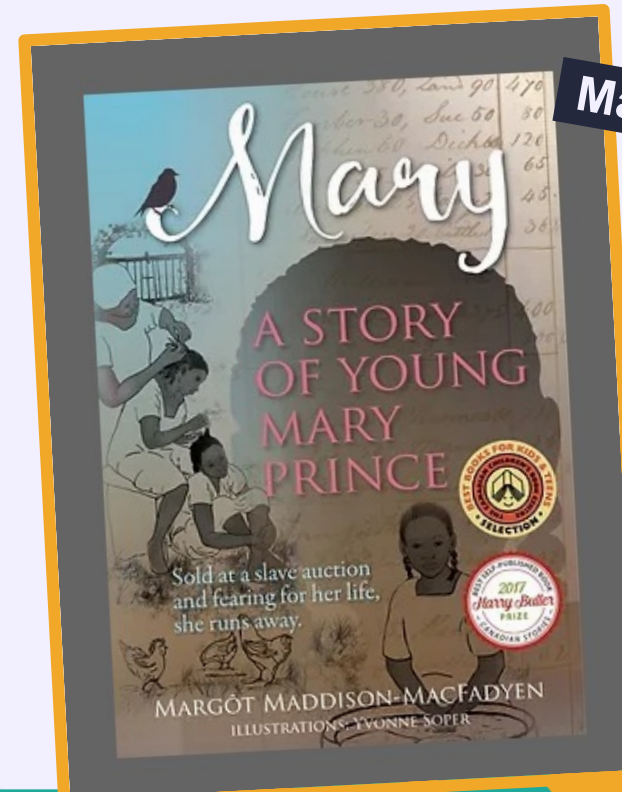
The historical documents created by enslavers are useful, though they are limited in what can learn from them about what life was really like as an enslaved person in the West Indies on a human level.

Today, we also have voices such as those of **Olaudah Equiano** and **Mary Prince**, who against the odds told their own individual accounts of their journeys of survival and their fight for freedom.

Olaudah Equiano



Mary Prince



 **Task**

Think about what you have learnt from these sources. Copy each N5 question and write down facts you could use in your answers.

- Describe life on plantations. (4)
- Explain how difficult resistance was on plantations. (6)



Developed by

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