

What did resistance to slavery look like?

Lesson 1: Overt Resistance





Starter Task

**What did
resistance
mean?**

In *Rituals of Resistance*, Jason Young defines resistance to slavery as, “any tactic that slaves undertook to disrupt [the] forced extraction [of labour].”

Put this sentence in to your own words.



GLOSSARY

Resistance

obstruction of enslavement

Overt

open confrontation

Covert

disguised non-compliance

Emancipation

legally free from previous bound or chattel servitude



Two Main Types of Resistance

Overt

Overt

Open confrontation to resist slavery as an individual and/or overthrow the entire institution for all.

Overt forms often include

- face to face,
- aggressive or combative tactics and
- violence.
- These acts were not performed daily.

Two Main Types of Resistance

Covert

Covert

subtle or passive tactics performed for a variety of reasons but without the intent to end enslavement.

Covert resistance could be

1. Daily acts done by an individual or in groups, often in opposition of colonial/European worldviews that tried to force one to believe their way of living and working was the only acceptable way.
2. Any action that made life a bit easier for the enslaved that may or may not bend or break the rules.
3. Any action that allowed one to remember they are human with joy, fun, and community bonding when slavery was meant to dehumanise and keep the enslaved working in fear and terror.



Starter Task

**What did
resistance
look like?**

In pairs, try to come up with **3 ways** in which enslaved people might have **resisted**?

Note these down in your jotter in the form of a **mind map**.

On the next slide you will see some historians' quotes that may help you...



Quotes

“The general ambition of the enslaved was to avoid being subjected to the cruelty, inhumanity and dehumanization of slavery.” – Dawn Miles

“the most prevalent forms of resistance were not necessarily the most effective nor the most important.” – Bernard Moitt

“...most enslaved people recognized that escaping slavery was unlikely and were therefore preoccupied with the challenge of survival” – Randy M Browne

“Slave resistance of one kind or another was a constant feature of slavery. Only the forms varied across time and place, according to circumstances and opportunities” – Michael Craton

**“If slave resistance was endemic, it was only overt in special circumstances.”
– Michael Craton**



Overt Resistance

Learning Intentions

To understand how enslaved people fought for their freedom

Today's Tasks: define key terms, create a timeline & complete a describe question

Success Criteria

I can **define** the **different types of resistance**

I can **describe** an example of **overt resistance**

With the person beside you try to think of a definition for these three terms:

The refusal to
Resistance
accept or submit to
something

Concealed, hidden,
Covert
or disguised

Done or shown
publicly or in an
Overt
obvious way and
not in secret

Resistance

Enslaved people did not accept their loss of freedom, **they fought hard to retain their families, cultures, customs and dignity.**

This included more direct forms of resistance such as **rebellions.**

But it is important to note that **resistance took many forms:** from keeping aspects of their identity and traditions alive to running away.

Resistance

Large-scale organised uprisings were a common reaction to the cruelties of the slave system.

Potential and actual armed resistance also contributed to the ending of the slave trade and eventually slavery itself.

On the next slide you will see some of the most significant and planned revolts that happened in the Caribbean

“the many slave revolts and plots... between 1638 and 1838 could be conceived of as the ‘200 Years’ War’— one prolonged struggle launched by Africans against slave owners.”

Historian Sir Hilary Beckles



**Tacky's Revolt
1760**

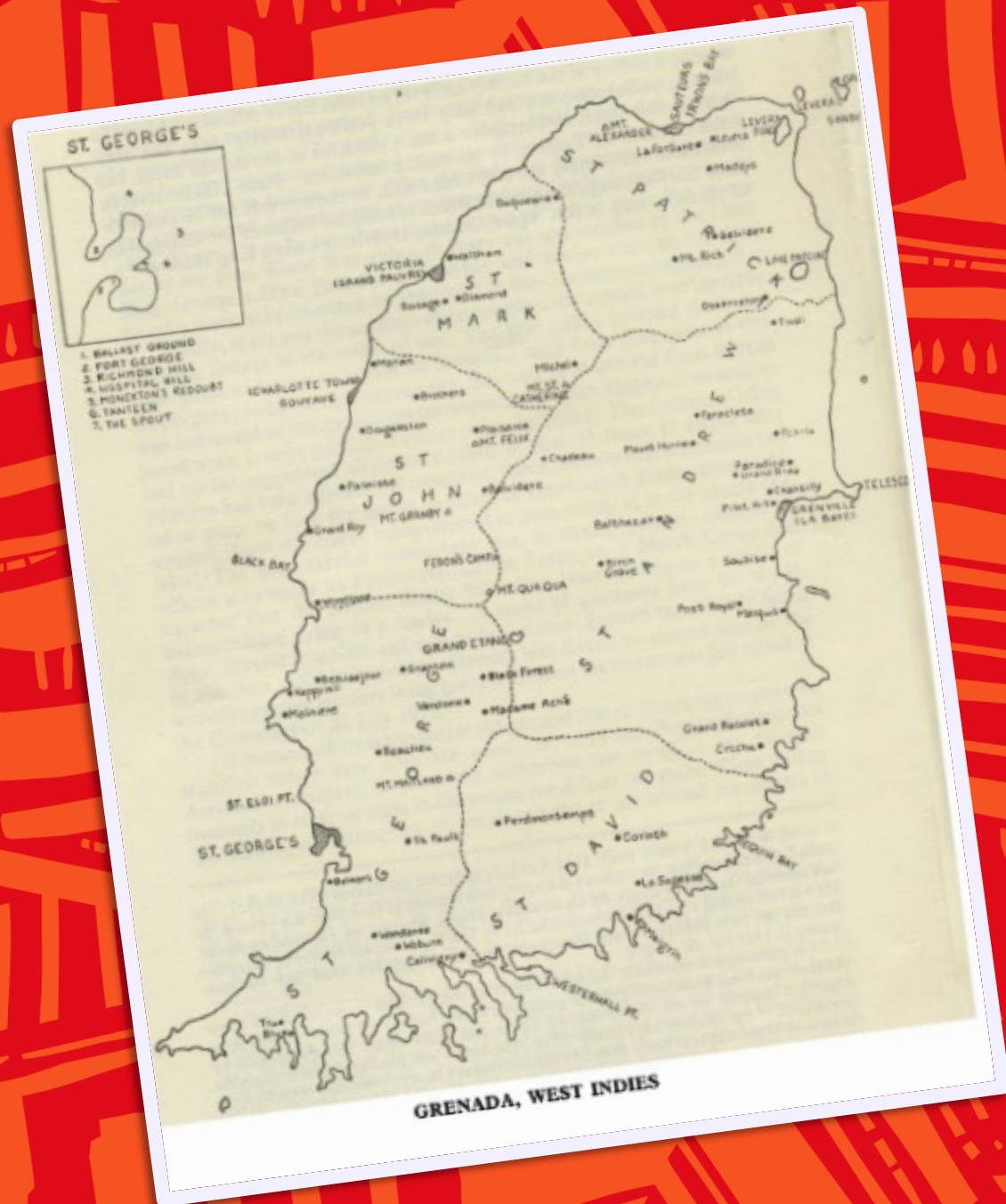
**Saint Domingue
1791**

Antigua 1736

Barbados 1816

Grenada 1796

**Demerara
Rebellion 1823**



Grenada

Grenada is a Caribbean country comprising a main island, also called Grenada, and smaller surrounding islands.

Grenada is also known as the "Island of Spice" due to its production of nutmeg and mace crops.

Originally colonised by France in 1672, it was formally given up to Britain by the Treaty of Paris in 1763.

It was here an anti-slavery rebellion took place in 1795.

Task

Fédon's rebellion

1. **Read** the information sheet on Fédon's rebellion
2. Turn your jotter **on its side** and **draw a line down the middle** of the page
3. Using the information sheet you should **fill in your timeline** with **detailed notes** of what happened during this rebellion. The first and last one has been done for you.

19 June 1796
British reinforcements arrived ending the rebellion

1789
The French Revolution



Task

Exam Practice

Using your timeline answer the following question:

Describe the events of Fédon's Rebellion (4)

You have 6 minutes.

One event during Fédon's rebellion was _____.

A second event was _____.

A third event was _____.

A fourth event was _____.



Plenary exercise

“Slaves ‘naturally’ resisted their enslavement because slavery was fundamentally unnatural.”

Historian Franklin Knight

What does resistance look like?

Overt e.g. Fédon's rebellion

Add this example to your mind-map

Over the next two lessons you will be able to expand your understanding of how enslaved people resisted.



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