

# What did resistance to slavery look like?

Lesson 2: What did it mean to 'self-emancipate'?



## Learning Intentions

## Success Criteria

I can **describe** the methods of resistance used by self-emancipating Africans

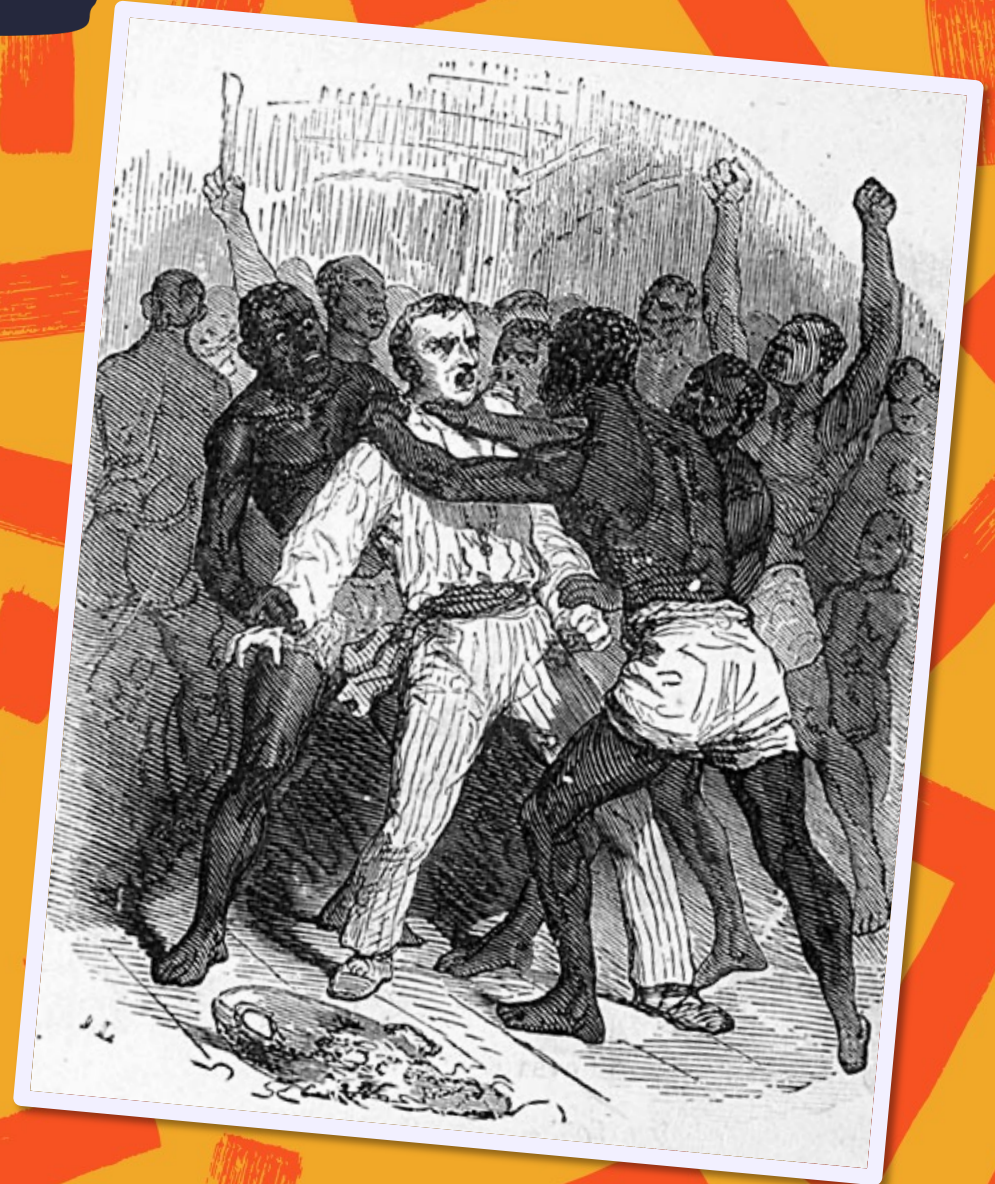
I can **evaluate** the success of the attempts at resistance by self-emancipating Africans

I can **use my knowledge** of self-emancipating communities to **answer an Evaluate the Usefulness question** using the appropriate structure



Discuss

What did resistance  
to slavery look like:  
**What have we  
learned so far?**





**Emancipation**

# emancipation

**'e'**

Prefix: 'out'  
or 'away'

**'mancip'**

From Latin '*mancipium*':  
'taking by hand'; 'taking  
possession of through sale'

**'ation'**

Suffix: turns a verb  
into a noun

The **process of getting out/away** from being **owned**; and which we now use to mean: "the fact or process of being set free from legal, social, or political restrictions; liberation – such as from enslavement"

So what would **self-emancipation** mean?

# Who were the maroons?

Formerly enslaved Africans who achieved **self-emancipation** by escaping to the densely overgrown tropical mountains near the plantations.

Maroon comes from the Spanish '**cimarron**' and referred to domestic animals which escaped settlers and ran to the mountains. The French then shortened it to '**marron**' ('marron' in French also means 'brown' – so it was a link to their skin colour also), while the English used '**maroon**'.

Unsurprisingly, Africans did not call themselves this. They instead used liberatory, powerful names to reclaim their identity.

Jamaicans usually used '**Koromanti**', '**Kromanti**' or '**Yenkunkun**' which linked to their culture and history.



# Task

## Story, Source, Scholarship

Story	
<p><b>The Jamaican Maroons – Self-emancipating Africans</b></p> <p>After the colonisation of Jamaica by the Spanish in 1509, slavery was established on the island. When the British invaded in 1655, many of the 558 enslaved Africans living there – both men and women - fled to the mountains, making it more difficult for them to be pursued while also offering them the resources needed for survival. They eventually established two separate factions: the Leeward and the Windward Maroons. The Maroon population reached 1,288 by 1796. While different to each other in many ways, both suffered persecution at the hands of the British.</p>	<p>Title</p> <p>Summary</p>
<p>By the early 1700s, the Maroons controlled much of the eastern part of the island. The British were displeased with this and so launched the First Maroon War in 1728. The Maroon forces comprised both men and women, and were led by a man named Cudjoe and a woman named Nanny – who was reputed to be a powerful obeah woman. They were highly adaptable fighters and took advantage of local environments to launch guerrilla attacks on the British – which they were fully unprepared for. After just over a decade of bloody combat, the British recognised Maroon autonomy by signing a treaty with them in 1739. They would be left alone – as long as they supported the British in preventing further runaways from joining them.</p>	<p>Title</p> <p>Summary</p>
<p>The peace lasted several decades – until 1795 when a new Governor of Jamaica arrested several Maroon leaders over minor breaches of the peace. This angered the Maroons, and it led to a 5 month battle – The Second Maroon War under leadership of Leonard Parkinson. 300 Maroons resisted 4500 British troops. The British eventually offered another peace treaty. When it was signed, they instead arrested the Maroons and shipped them to Nova Scotia and then on to Sierra Leone. Despite this, several Maroon societies still thrive in Jamaica today.</p>	<p>Title</p> <p>Summary</p>

### 1. Read the story

For each paragraph, give it a title and in your own words create a summary, 2 facts from that paragraph on the right

# Task

## Story, Source, Scholarship

**Source A**

A map of Jamaica showing its 14 parishes: Westmoreland, Hanover, St. James, Trelawny, St. Andrew, St. Mary, St. Ann, St. Catherine, St. Elizabeth, St. Thomas, St. George, St. Michael, St. Peter, and St. Paul. The map also indicates the locations of Maroon towns, with solid dots for presently existing towns and plus signs for former towns. A legend at the bottom left explains the symbols. A scale of miles (0 to 20) and a north arrow are also present.

Map showing former and present-day Maroon settlements.  
Bilby, 1992

**Source B**

A black and white illustration showing a group of Maroons in a forested area, using guerrilla tactics against British soldiers. A copyright notice for Getty Images is overlaid on the image.

Jamaican Maroons using guerrilla tactics against the British soldiers in one of the Maroon wars. Image created in 1834 for a history book, Historical Cabinet.

**Source C**

“We are not in a condition to defend ourselves, the terror of them spreads itself everywhere and the ravages and barbarities they commit, have determined several planters to abandoned their settlements, the evil is daily increasing and their success has had such influence on our slaves that they are continually deserting to them in great numbers and the insolent behaviour of others gives but too much cause to fear a general defection...”

Source C: Governor of Jamaica outlining the impact of maroons in an address to the King, 1734

## 2. Examine the sources

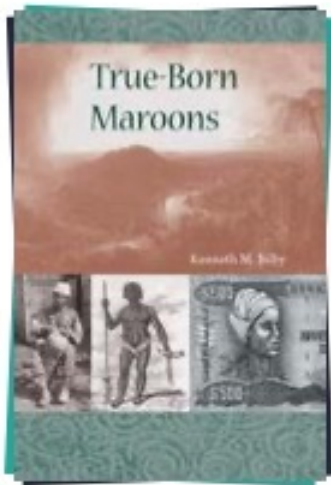
In your jotters, for each source explain what you can learn from it about self-emancipating Africans - successes & failures - and provide proof from the source that shows this.



## Task

# Story, Source, Scholarship

### Scholarship



“

The British colonial government in Jamaica ... began a deportation campaign to eradicate the Maroons in 1795... Remarkably, this and later efforts to destroy the group failed, and today the Maroon settlements on Jamaica still consider themselves an independent nation...”

'True-born Maroons' Kenneth Bilby

“

Maroons did whatever it took to maintain their existence - which includes liberating, kidnapping, punishing, and assimilating Africans, as well as working with the British to capture runaways and stop rebellions”

'The Jamaican Maroons of the 17th and 18th Centuries: Survivalists of the New World' Lance J. Parker Jnr

## 3. Read the opinions from the **scholarship**

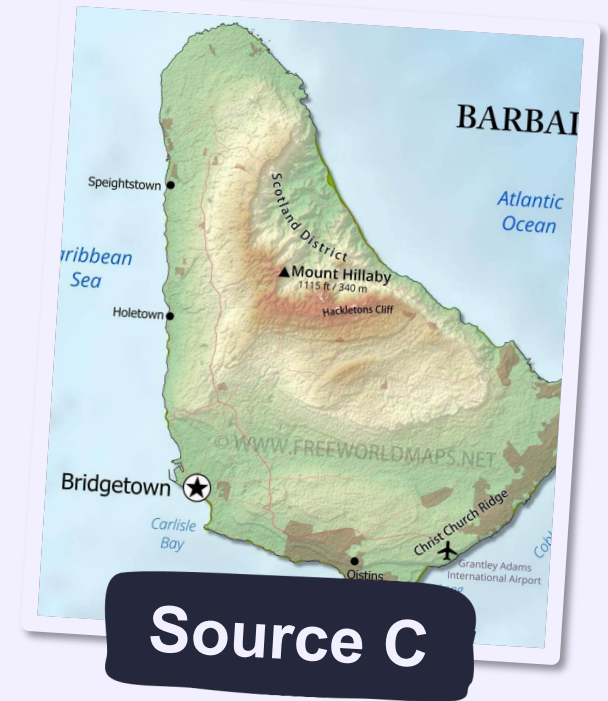
Highlight the key opinion in each quote

Then in jotters: how do these quotes conflict? Do they show the self-emancipated Africans were successful? Why/why not? Which do you mostly agree with? Why?

# Compare

What do you notice about the two topographic maps? (Source B & C)

What about the photo of the Rio Grande Valley where Jamaican Maroons still live? (Source A)



What does this suggest about why enslaved people in Jamaica were more likely to attempt self-emancipation than those in Barbados or other British colonised islands?



## Evidence

That self-emancipation was a *powerful* method of resisting enslavement

A large, empty rectangular box with a teal border, intended for providing evidence for the claim that self-emancipation was a powerful method of resisting enslavement.

That self-emancipation was *limited* as a method of resisting enslavement

A large, empty rectangular box with a teal border, intended for providing evidence for the claim that self-emancipation was limited as a method of resisting enslavement.



# Plenary Exercise

## Checking Out My History by John Agard

Dem tell me  
Dem tell me  
Wha dem want to tell me

Bandage up me eye with me own history  
Blind me to me own identity

Dem tell me bout 1066 and all dat  
dem tell me bout Dick Whittington and he cat  
But Toussaint L'Ouverture  
no dem never tell me bout dat

*Toussaint  
a slave  
with vision  
lick back  
Napoleon  
battalion  
and first Black  
Republic born  
Toussaint de thom  
to de French  
Toussaint de beacon  
of de Haitian Revolution*



Dem tell me bout de man who discover de balloon  
and de cow who jump over de moon  
Dem tell me bout de dish ran away with de spoon  
but dem never tell me bout Nanny de maroon

*Nanny  
see-far woman  
of mountain dream  
fire-woman struggle  
hopeful stream  
to freedom river*



How do you feel about Agard's song/poem?

What is the key message?

How does this connect with what we have learned about resistance by enslaved people?



## Extension



# Maroon Map

What do you notice on the map at this link?

What surprises you?



Scan Me



# Homework

## Source A

The Maroons were escaped slaves. They fled to the mountainous areas of Jamaica, where it was difficult for their owners to follow and catch them, and formed independent communities as free men and women. As the Maroon population grew, the Jamaican government decided to defeat the Maroons once and for all. The First Maroon War began in 1728. The campaign against them made the Maroons more determined than ever. Under their leader called Cudjoe, the Maroons fought back. Maroons were known for their skilful tactics in combat, whereby they relied on their knowledge of the surrounding environment to outwit the attackers. In 1739, the British and the Maroons made peace. The Maroons were to govern themselves. In return they would support the British government in Jamaica to help capture rebel slaves and runaways from the plantations and return them to their owners.

Source A: is from the website, Discovering Bristol, created by Bristol Museum & Art Gallery and the University of the West of England in 1999

## Practice Questions:

Evaluate the usefulness of Source A as evidence of the resistance of Jamaican maroons (5)

*7.5 minutes if practicing timed*



**Developed by**

Caitlin McIntosh (Golspie High School) and Fionnuala Glover (Holy Rood RC High School)

as part of the Teaching Slavery in Scotland project at Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling Universities.



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