



**Abina**  
Teaching materials  
Introduction and Episode/Chapter 1  
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**Introduction to *Abina***

*Abina* is a digital experience designed specifically for the high school world history classroom. The story at its heart is based on the graphic history *Abina and the Important Men*, which won both the American Historical Association's *Harvey James Robinson Award* for teaching material and the *Africana Children's Book Award for Older Readers*. Its interactive tools and activities were developed in consultation with high school teachers and are specifically aimed at 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade history students.

*Abina* is organized into six episodes/chapters that follow the story of an enslaved young woman Abina Mansah, in West Africa, as she takes her accused enslavers to court. Students may encounter this story in one of two forms:

- A full **digital application** includes six animated videos that follow her story. In addition, each episode has reading material that helps to contextualize events in the application and to lead the students into deeper explorations of the events of the past and the way that historians interpret them. These are organized into four pathways: Biography, Slavery, Individual & Society, and Colonialism. Each package of video and text is called an **episode** in the digital app.
- A hard-copy **book** with containing six graphic history sections, each paired with additional text organized into four pathways. In the book, each package of graphic history and text enrichment is called a **chapter**. There is an additional section in the book that provides the full text of the courtroom testimony in the original case on which the story is based.

In these teaching resources, we will tend to use the word **episode**, but if you are using the hard cover book, remember that each episode of the digital application maps exactly onto an analogous **chapter**.

The technology behind *Abina* allows you and your students to download each of the six episodes and the original source as digital applications on just about any device including Windows or Apple desktop and laptop computers as well as smartphones and tablets running iOS and Android operating systems. These can be purchased by individuals or as a block by the teacher or district, for a single year or longer. Contact us at [www.ebuukuu.com](http://www.ebuukuu.com) or [tgetz@sfsu.edu](mailto:tgetz@sfsu.edu) if you need assistance or more information.

*Abina* can be used in your classroom in a variety of ways. The lesson plans and assignments we provide assume that your class will be able to devote only 6-7 days to *Abina* overall, although we encourage you to take more time, and we have provided resources to help you do so. If you choose to move through in a brief period, students can view each of the six videos in about 10 minutes and read the accompanying material for homework in a single afternoon. You may wish every student to read and participate in all four pathways, or you may wish to divide students into groups focusing on the four pathways and then have them report to each other in the following class. We have also suggested a number of final questions and a major collaborative project for this student experience.

The *Abina* project is designed around six student learning outcomes that align with AP world history and other curricular models, as well as best practices for introducing students to historical work at higher levels.

### ***Abina* overall learning outcomes**

- Students will develop historical thinking and competencies such as comparing and cross-analyzing primary and secondary sources, supporting vocabulary in context, integrating text and visual learning, and critical analysis. [Common Core RH 9-10.1, 9-10.2, 9-10.8, 9-10.4, 11-12.6, 11-12.7, 11-12.8];
- Students will analyze historical experiences identified as key concepts including the Atlantic slave trade and slavery [AP Key Concept 4.2] and colonialism [AP key concept 5.2];
- The material will foster consideration of social justice and ethics in the construction and interpretation of the past.
- Students will learn to connect the experiences of one young woman in West Africa to ideas of the Enlightenment, the growth of capitalism, and other global trends of this era.

## Introduction to Episode/Chapter 1

In the introductory episode of *Abina*, students meet Abina as she flees the house where she has been enslaved. They then follow her story until she manages to bring her former master, Quamina Eddoo, to court. Students also begin to learn about the historical context of the society and time in which Abina lived and about her personal attributes and experiences. By the time they complete episode 1, students should be able to:

### Episode 1 learning outcomes

- Write about their impressions of Abina Mansah as the protagonist of this story, using both the video depiction for the episode and biographical information taken from the text  
Propose a preliminary definition of a 'slave' and evaluate whether institutions of servitude on the Gold Coast should be labeled 'slavery' and also evaluate the impact of the Atlantic slave trade on the region
- Describe social and political institutions on the Gold Coast, especially the extended family, and assess the importance Abina' lack of family on which her story;
- Contrast a variety of explanations for the British establishment of the Gold Coast Colony and Protectorate in 1874 and situate it within the broader late nineteenth century trend of European expansion and imperialism.

## Episode 1 Lesson plan and activities

The main purpose of this first episode is to help students become familiar with Abina, the global context of the period, and the society of the Gold Coast region in which she lived. Their understanding of Abina herself is mainly supported through the Biography pathway. In the Slavery pathway students learn about the history of slavery in the Gold Coast, including the impact of the Atlantic slave trade. In the Society & Individual pathway, they discover important information about pre-colonial Gold Coast society and how it worked. In the Colonialism pathway, they bring their history of the Gold Coast up to the period they explore the origins of British colonialism and beginning to study its impact on this region and its inhabitants.

### Potential lesson plans

The first lesson plan for teaching *Abina* could include a discussion of the five background questions that introduce Abina, the society in which she lived, and its

connections to the wider world in the nineteenth century. This lesson plan could be delivered either before or after the students watch the Episode 1 video, but prior to their reading of the accompanying materials for the episode in the digital application.

### **What is this story?**

*Abina* is a work on non-fiction. That may surprise many students, but it's an important point to share with them because it will help them to think deeply about "what history is" and "what the historians job is." One way to help them to think about the role of the historian is to begin by asking them what a historian does. They may come up with answers like:

- The historian recreates the past
- The historian is like a detective, putting together evidence about the past
- Historians tell us what happened

None of these answers is entirely incorrect, but it is important for this project that students understand that historians *interpret* the past. We take the evidence we have and try to assemble it into a story that is *meaningful*, as well as *accurate*. Most of our interpretations are text interpretations in books and articles, but historians also work on memorials, movies, and other kinds of interpretations. *Abina* is an animated movie interpretation of the past and was previously a graphic history/comic interpretation. Like other historians who present their interpretations in text alone, however, the author (Trevor Getz), artist (Liz Clarke), and director (Soumyaa Kapil Behrens) strove to give the most accurate and meaningful interpretation they could of the court case on which this narrative is built.

The major source for *Abina*, which is available to you and to students as part of this digital application, was a court case: Regina v Quamina Eddoo, 10 November 1876, Cape Coast Court. In preparing students to look at the court case, or even perform it live (if you have the time), you may want to discuss with them the fact that the transcript was written during the proceedings of the case. There are numerous grammatical errors and many different spellings of names in the transcript. This is not a surprise, both because of the rapid speed with which notes had to be taken and also because, in this era, the British did not recognize standardized spellings of local names.

In discussing this source with students, you might want to begin by taking apart the title "Regina v Quamina Eddoo":

- Regina (the Queen, just as the State is the plaintiff in many crimes in the US)
- Quamina Eddoo (the man charged with enslaving Abina Mansah)
- 10 November 1876 (putting this in the colonial period, in which Britain ruled the Gold Coast of West Africa)
- Cape Coast (the city and court in which the case took place)

Where is Abina in this title? She isn't there. As students will discover, young women like Abina – especially young, poor, possibly enslaved African women – were not generally considered important enough to be plaintiffs in a big case. Equally, however, since this was a formal crime, Abina was only a 'witness' for the prosecution, because the state (in this case the Queen of Great Britain) was the plaintiff.

### **Who was Abina Mansah?**

It doesn't make a lot of sense to try to reach conclusions about Abina Mansah's biography or character at the beginning of the story, as students will uncover more and more about her experiences, motives, and personality through each of the six episodes. However, you can help students prepare for this experience in a variety of ways.

First, it may be useful to identify Abina as the *protagonist* of the story and to remind students what a protagonist is: the leading character whose actions and interactions with others make the story advance. You can help them to see that Abina is the protagonist in this story for two reasons: because she was picked by the historian who developed this story, and because she made herself the likely protagonist by being the resourceful person who brought the crime of her alleged enslavement to the attention of the authorities.

One way to help students to get to know Abina is to task them with completing an identity wheel (see below) for her as they watch the first episode video and read the Episode 1 text. You may want to do this in class or as an assignment for some or all of the students.

Each subsequent episode will also include a focus on other individuals (real people who actually lived and were part of this case!) in the story. Students will have an opportunity to get to know them in later episodes. However, you may wish to spend some time introducing some of the figures at least briefly:

- Abina Mansah – the protagonist, a young women who claimed to have been enslaved
- Quamina Eddoo – an important local palm oil grower, who was accused of having bought Abina as a slave
- Ecchoah [Coom] – his sister, for whom Abina was allegedly forced to work
- Yaw [Awoah] – her husband, but also potentially the man who sold her to Quamina Eddoo
- Adjuah Nyamiwah – a young woman who was allegedly also purchased and lived in Quamina Eddoo's house
- Tando – a man who worked for Quamina Eddoo, possibly a former slave himself

- James Davis – the court interpreter, a Euro-African (mixed heritage) man who helped Abina take her claim to court
- William Melton – the British judge who heard the case
- James Hutton Brew – a powerful Euro-African man and trained lawyer who was hired to defend Quamina Eddoo

### **What was Gold Coast society like in this period?**

Many students may start this project with the idea of all Africans living in timeless, tribal societies. The world in which Abina lived does not fit this description, and one possible benefit of this project may be to help students question their preconception of African societies (and perhaps to think critically about preconceptions in general).

As students will begin to learn in this first episode, Gold Coast society is based on thousands of years of human occupation of the region that is the modern-day state of Ghana. This society is also based on a series of migrations of peoples into the region, mostly from the savanna to the north where Africans independently developed agriculture in the years prior to 1000 CE. As a result, the region had a patchwork of language groups, and students will encounter four of them: the Akan, Guan, Ga-Adangme, and Ewe. In the next episode, we will look at Akan and Ewe society more closely, because of a debate about from which society Abina was originally enslaved. But it's more important right now that you help students to not think of these as 'tribes' but rather as linguistic communities living in, around, and next to each other. Most people living in this region at the time probably spoke more than one language, and many would have had parents from more than one community. Moreover, these identities were fluid. In fact, in this era many Guan speakers (descendants of the original inhabitants of this region) were becoming culturally and linguistically Akan. The very city in which this court case was heard, Cape Coast, had once been culturally Guan, but was in 1876 culturally Akan.

Even more important, you can help students to move past the idea of 'tribes' by pointing to the chiefdom or kingdom as the traditional primary political unit of the area. The Gold Coast was made up of many of these states, each ruled by hereditary chiefs or kings. The largest of these was Asante, a state to the north with which the British continually clashed. It was conflict with Asante that was the genesis of the Gold Coast Colony and Protectorate in 1874. Importantly, these states were often multi-ethnic! The society Cape Coast, for example, included some people who still thought of themselves as Guan and others who clearly thought of themselves as Akan.

Perhaps the most important institution in the lives of the inhabitants of the Gold Coast was membership in an extended family. For the Akan --whose culture dominated Asante (where Abina was originally enslaved), the town Saltpond (where Abina was allegedly enslaved to Quamina Eddoo), and the colonial capital Cape Coast (where the case was heard) --families was traced mainly through matrilineal

lines. In other word, membership in these extended families passed to a person through the mother. But students may not need this level of detail. What they need to know is that the extended family provided support, finances, and concerned relatives for its members, effectively making sure that they were happy, healthy, and not impoverished. Later Akan intellectuals would describe this as a kind of ‘social safety net.’ Why is this important to our story? Specifically because slaves (especially people brought from far away like Abina Mansah) *were not members in a local extended family and did not have these kinds of supports!* As we will see in later episodes, this had a big impact on their lives.

Some additional useful (and accurate) information about Akan society can be found at <http://www.saylor.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Akan-People.pdf>.

### **Why were there slaves in Gold Coast society in this period?**

Slavery is one of the core concepts of this story, and this initial episode offers an opportunity for students to begin to come to grips with critical questions surrounding slavery and how people experienced enslavement. Abina’s claim to have been illegally enslaved forms the basis for this engagement, and one potential final question for students is “Was Abina a slave?” You can help students begin this journey to understanding and answering this question by discussing the meaning and history of slavery as an experience and in this region especially. Begin by asking students to think about and discuss the definition of a ‘slave.’

Students may come up with some of the following ideas:

- A slave is owned (chattel) or a possession
- Slaves are not ‘free.’ It is worth discussing what this means: that they cannot leave or cannot move around, or cannot decide what they want to do
- Slaves are a particular race or group different from their owners
- Slaves are mistreated
- A slave works without pay
- Slaves have low social status or are considered to be without honor or social standing

At this point, it’s probably not important to have students settle on a single definition of a slave. In fact, students should be encouraged to think about the word ‘slave’ as being a useful one but often applied to different kinds of institutions. In this episode, for example, they will encounter the ‘odonko’ and ‘amerflefle’ of the Gold Coast. We usually translate these local words to mean ‘slave,’ but as they will read, both odonko and amerflefle (unlike slaves in the United States) were protected from physical violence and could often be fully assimilated into their masters’ families over time. Yet they could not move around freely and were not considered full members of society. Students reading this section could be asked to consider whether this kind of living situation is slavery or not.

Moreover, as students will read, the institutions and social situations of Ogoni and Amefele changed with the coming of the Atlantic slave trade. Students should hopefully already have encountered just how transformative the Atlantic slave trade was for African societies. The Gold Coast is a good example of the kinds of changes it brought. We can begin by looking at the number of enslaved humans taken from the Gold Coast to the Americas, numbers that are reflected in the chart below. This chart can be supported by the maps at [www.slavevoyages.org](http://www.slavevoyages.org), including <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/intro-maps/07.jsp>, and is a good opportunity to build students' skills at reading charts like this one. The chart below shows that the Gold Coast was not a major region of slaving until the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This is partly because the region was mostly exporting gold, and locals were unwilling to part with their mine laborers but also because large-scale slaving was not familiar to the inhabitants of the Gold Coast. However, in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century the prices offered by Atlantic slavers increased, and the guns they provided to those who were willing to trade with them provided a significant military advantage to locals who were their partners. As a result, wars, kidnapping, and enslavements all increased in the region. By the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, therefore, slave trading from the region was at its height.

**Regions from which enslaved Africans were embarked in the Atlantic slaving system**

	Sene- gambia	Sierra Leone	Windwar d Coast	Gold Coast	Bight of Benin	Bight of Biafra	West Central Africa	South- east Africa	Totals
1501-									
1525	12,726	0	0	0	0	0	637	0	13,363
1526-									
1550	44,458	0	0	0	0	2,080	4,225	0	50,763
1551-									
1575	48,319	1,168	0	0	0	3,383	8,137	0	61,007
1576-									
1600	41,778	237	2,482	0	0	2,996	104,879	0	152,373
1601-									
1625	23,862	0	0	68	3,528	2,921	322,119	345	352,843
1626-									
1650	30,360	1,372	0	2,429	6,080	33,540	241,269	0	315,050
1651-									
1675	27,741	906	351	30,806	52,768	80,780	278,079	16,633	488,064
1676-									
1700	54,141	4,565	999	75,377	207,436	69,080	293,340	14,737	719,674
1701-									
1725	55,944	6,585	8,878	229,239	378,101	66,833	331,183	12,146	1,088,909
1726-									
1750	87,028	16,637	37,672	231,418	356,760	182,066	556,981	3,162	1,471,725
1751-									
1775	135,294	84,069	169,094	268,228	288,587	319,709	654,984	5,348	1,925,314
1776-									
1800	84,920	94,694	73,938	285,643	261,137	336,008	822,056	50,274	2,008,670
1801-									
1825	91,225	89,326	37,322	80,895	201,054	264,834	929,999	182,338	1,876,992
1826-									
1850	17,717	84,416	6,131	5,219	209,742	230,328	989,908	227,518	1,770,979
1851-	0	4,795	0	0	33,867	2	156,779	30,167	225,609



1866									
Total	755,513	388,771	336,868	1,209,321	1,999,060	1,594,560	5,694,574	542,668	12,521,336

As students will read, this increasing involvement in the slave trade had a big impact on Gold Coast society. One outcome was that the number of people enslaved in the region increased every decade. The second result was that slavery -- even for *odonko* and *amerflefle* -- became harsher and more permanent. This was the kind of slavery Abina experienced.

You may wish to point out to students that the number of slaves exported from the Gold Coast (and indeed most of Africa) dropped dramatically in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Why was this the case? Answering this question is an important opportunity to introduce abolitionism, and especially the abolition of the slave trade by Britain---once the world’s largest slave-trading state -- beginning in 1807. You could then discuss with them a debate about why abolition happened, as an example of the way that historians debate causation in the past:

### The Abolition Debate

The story of modern historians’ study of British abolitionism should probably begin with Eric Williams. In his powerful book, *Capitalism and Slavery* (New York, 1944) he argues that economic forces were behind the rise of abolitionism and the demise of the slave trade. Williams argues that while profits from slave-trading and slave plantations had risen steadily in early centuries, by the 1780s they were in fast decline. This also meant that the political power of plantation owners, the biggest pro-slavery force, was dwindling. Meanwhile, the industrial revolution had begun, and factory owners were becoming politically powerful. Not only was the slave trade not in their economic interest, but these industrialists also saw the slave-owning class as adversaries and abolition as a chance to do damage to their political rivals. Some scholars who have followed Williams have argued, moreover, that many Europeans wanted to invest in new trades in Africa – like the profitable palm oil trade – and that the slave trade got in their way by causing chaos and warfare that interfered with other kinds of trade.

Seymour Drescher has been one of Eric Williams’ biggest critics. Similarly focusing on economics, Drescher has argued that the profitability of the slave trade remained high in the late nineteenth century. In his book *Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition* (Pittsburgh: The University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977), he concludes that “[e]conomic interests cannot account for either the timing, the occurrence, or the maintenance of the abolition of the slave trade between 1787 and 1820.” So if abolitionism wasn’t driven by a changing economy, what did drive it?

Roger Antsey and Adam Hirsch have both tried to explain the origins and motives of the abolitionist movement and their supporters. Antsey argues that the

abolitionists were led by a group of religious reformers whose opponents were greedy businessmen whose only motivation was profit. To his mind, the central, driving idea behind abolitionism was the Christian ideal of benevolence. In a 1980?? article entitled “The pattern of British Abolitionism in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries (*Anti-slavery, Religion, and Reform*, edited by Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher, Folkestone: Dawson, 1980), Antsey wrote that “It was mainly religious conviction, insight and zeal which made it possible for anti-slavery feeling to be subsumed into a crusade against the slave trade and slavery”[20]. In particular, he focused on religious sects rising in the late eighteenth century in Britain, such as the Quakers, Baptists, and Methodists.

Hochschild also takes the anti-slavery movement’s success as evidence that a small group of radical reformers can make momentous change in the world, although his account focuses more on activism than religious belief. In his book *Bury the Chains* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), he follows British reformers like Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce, who organized a movement to change laws in the British Parliament that would culminate in the outlawing of slavery. Hochschild follows inspirational figures like Olaudah Equiano, a formerly enslaved African whose account of his experiences influenced many readers, and Granville Sharp, the abolitionist who rescued enslaved Africans. He argues that these figures fighting for justice formed the first modern human rights activist movement. Their speeches, pamphlets, and organized campaigns turned many working-class Britons against the slave trade and slavery. This campaign culminated in a boycott of slave-grown sugar by hundreds of thousands of everyday Britons, who exerted pressure on their legislators to end the trade. By 1807, “[t]he abolitionists” he wrote “now had more members of parliament with them than they had previously dared dream of. As it became apparent which way the wind was blowing, many pro-slave [Members of Parliament], preferring to appear enlightened, jumped to the winning side. There were attempts at delays and amendments, but the momentum was unstoppable. In early 1807, a bill abolishing the entire British slave trade passed both houses of Parliament, the climax of twenty years of effort.” [307]

Of course, the abolitionist debate was eventually much wider than the British public alone. Abolitionist struggles emerged in the United States, France, the Netherlands, and other parts of Europe during the struggle to end slavery in the British Empire. Africans also played important roles, especially former slaves whose stories were published and read by the European public. But abolitionism came first to Britain, and the debate as to why continues.

Finally, you might add that British abolition of the Atlantic slave trade (which was followed, Only slowly, by other major slave trading states) was followed by abolition of slavery throughout the British Empire in 1834. This became important for the Gold Coast in 1874, because at that date, the Gold Coast became a British colony, and hence the criminalization of slavery across the British Empire came to apply to this region, making Abina’s prosecution of Quamina Eddoo possible!

## Why did the Gold Coast become a British colony in 1874?

It is at this point that Abina's story intersects with one of the most important global stories of the late nineteenth century – modern imperialism.

Of course, there were great transcontinental empires prior to the late nineteenth century, and indeed many of them visited this region. First the Portuguese (15<sup>th</sup> century) and then rival European states made deals with the rulers of coastal states and were allowed to build forts and even to rule small towns along the coast. A list of such settlements, 'factories,' and trading forts can be found at: [http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/tourism/castles\\_overview.php](http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/tourism/castles_overview.php). In general, these were very small settlements. For the most part, Africa was too large, densely populated and politically and militarily strong for Europeans to establish sizable colonies, except at the very northern and southern tips, until the late nineteenth century. European susceptibility to local diseases also helped to keep colonialism at bay.

Several changes in the nineteenth century, however, reversed this trend, leading to the partition of Africa into a number of colonies ruled by European states. The Gold Coast was colonized by Britain and became the Gold Coast Colony and Protectorate. Why did this happen? Perhaps your students have already encountered this debate in class, but we can set out here some larger arguments and their specific, local histories.

### Factors in the new imperialism

Factor	Explanation	Local manifestation
Technology	Medicines, new weapons, steamships and trains, communications systems like telegraph all make conquest and rule easier	Quinine reduces the danger of malaria, improved rifles make it possible for British to defeat Asante in 1873-1874 Anglo-Asante War
Economics & industry	The demand for raw materials and markets for growing European industry drives desire to conquer colonies	This region was a major supplier of palm oil, which was an important industrial lubricant, lamp fuel, and ingredient for soap. Indeed, the Anglo-Asante war was partly to see who would control important palm oil fields.
Competition among great powers	Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, and the	The British were increasingly concerned by

	United States all competed for prestige and perceived national interests on a global stage	French expansion to the West (later the Ivory Coast colony) and German expansion to the East (later German Togoland)
The “civilizing mission”	Europeans claimed (and many felt) a duty and right to rule over Africans in order to ‘civilize’ them	British proponents of the war with Asante and the new colony falsely argued that antagonistic local kings were despots and practiced human sacrifice. Missionaries thought a new colony would allow them to spread Christianity more easily. Abolitionists hoped establishing a colony would help them to eradicate slavery.

It may be important to help students to understand that in 1874 the British established the Gold Coast Colony and Protectorate. Technically, the castles and forts of the coast (theirs and those that once belonged to other European states) became the “Colony,” while the chiefdoms and kingdoms around them that accepted British rule were the “Protectorate.” While legally quite different, however, the experience in each was roughly the same. Over time, the British came to rule the whole area as a single colony and enforced rules – like the abolition of slavery – throughout.

One question that students may ask is whether British colonialism was a good or bad thing for the region and its people. This is a difficult question to answer, especially early in this project. In the long term, unequivocally, colonialism had an overall detrimental impact for the people of the Gold Coast. They suffered the loss of political independence, of control over their economic destiny, and of their social system that protected most of the poor through the extended family. However, students may rightly point out that the British outlawed slavery, which could not have been a bad thing. They will also encounter men – like James Davis – who clearly believed that British culture was a valuable addition to Gold Coast society. We will explore the impact of the British abolition of slavery later in the digital application, but at this stage this project doesn’t directly address the question of the overall positive or negative impact of colonialism, although it could contribute to such a discussion.

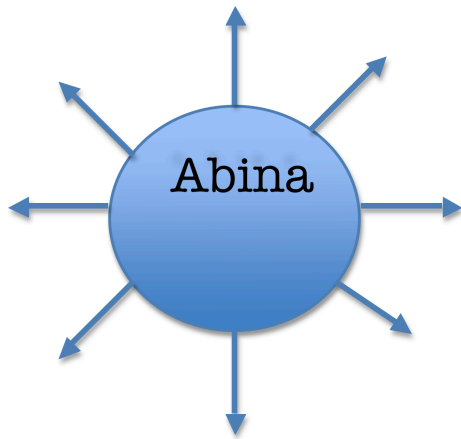
## Homework assignments or classroom activities

### Biography Pathway activity

Probably the best way to get students actively involved in this pathway is to ask them to create an identity wheel for Abina as they watch the video for the first episode. They may also add words as they read the biography section for this episode. You may wish to discuss their identity wheels in the following class.

Activity:

Think about your impressions of Abina Mansah from the reading and from Episode 1 of the film and enter them in the identity wheel below. Write a noun or an adjective that describes Abina in each place on the wheel:



Now write a paragraph describing Abina using those nouns and adjectives.

### Slavery Pathway activity

Below is a variety of questions that students should be able to answer as they read the Slavery Pathway in Episode 1. You may wish to discuss these in class or assign them as homework.

1. What is a slave? Write your initial thoughts before reading this section.
2. Would you describe the “odonko,” “amerflefle” and “pawns” of the Gold Coast as slaves prior to the Atlantic slave trade? Why or why not?
3. Describe the pattern of slave exports from the Gold Coast in terms of change over time.
4. What was the impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on the Gold Coast?
5. What are some of the explanations put forward for Britain’s switch from a major slave trading power to an abolitionist society?
6. Explain the difference between the anti-slavery laws enacted by the British government in 1807 and 1834. Also, why did these laws only apply to the Gold Coast Colony and Protectorate after 1874?

### **Individual and Society Pathway activity**

The questions below pertain to the Individual and Society Pathway of Episode 1. You may wish to discuss these in class or assign them as homework

1. How would you describe the political system of the independent states of the Gold Coast?
2. Most people living in the Gold Coast were members of large extended families. These families provided safety and support for their members. Abina Mansah had been taken from her family, who lived far away, as a child. How do you think this might have influenced her decision to run to the big city of Cape Coast when she needed help?

### **Colonialism Pathway activity**

The question below will be most easily answered by students who have read the Colonialism Pathway for Episode 1. It can be supported in class by the lesson plan idea “factors in the new imperialism” described above.

1. Explain why the British chose to go to war with Asante and conquer the Gold Coast and also what factors made it possible for them to do so. Include such factors as economics, politics, technology, and culture.

## Episode 1 Glossary

May be appropriate for discussion or for a vocabulary test.

- Akan - The Akan people are the majority ethnic group of modern-day Ghana. They speak several related dialects that are collectively known as the Twi language. Their language and oral histories suggest that they originated to the north, on the border of the grassy West African Sahel and the forests of central Ghana. They migrated southward as individuals and small groups over a period of several centuries, probably assimilating members of many other groups in the process. They probably developed their social organization system of extended families to bring together labor to clear forests for growing crops. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Akan ended up building states that were often confederations – centralized alliances of many smaller states – including Asante and the Fante Confederation. The last of these states was annexed to the British Empire in 1900-1902.
- assimilation – the process by which an individual moves from being an outsider of a group to being recognized as a member. Usually it means the individual adopts many of the cultural practices of the group as well.
- emancipation – In terms of slavery, emancipation refers to the legal act of declaring slaves to be free and usually ended “slavery” as a recognized status.
- Ewe - The Ewe-speaking peoples of West Africa occupy a number of communities straddling the border of Ghana and neighboring Togo. Their language suggests that some of their ancestors originated even further east, as it is related to that of the Yoruba (in modern Nigeria). Prior to colonialism, they tended to have a rather decentralized political structure, perhaps partly because they lived in valleys, on high hills, and around coastal lagoons.
- Ga-adangme – This is a compound name given to two related languages and their speakers who currently live in the area around the capital city of Ghana, Accra. Also written Ga-Dangme or sometimes Ga-Dangbe.
- Guan – Also known as Etsi, this is a label given to a group of people speaking related languages who lived in the Gold Coast region probably before any of the other modern ethnic groups. They may have been largely hunters, gatherers, and fishers. Many Guan-speakers probably started to speak the Akan (Twi) language and were assimilated into the larger Akan societies from the sixteenth century onward.

- magistrate – A judge. In the late nineteenth century Gold Coast Colony and Protectorat, these magistrates were British officials but most had little or no legal training.
- matrilineal – The tracing of one’s ancestry or belonging in a group through the mother and maternal ancestors.
- palm kernels/palm oil – palm kernels are the fruit of a particular palm tree which when pressed release large amounts of palm oil. Today palm oil is often used in food, but in the nineteenth century it was an important ingredient for soap, could be used to lubricate machines, and could be burned to provide light. Thus it was a vital commodity for industrializing societies like Britain, and it was only found in a few parts of the world, such as the Gold Coast.