

Teachers Notes

Queen Nzinga

Links to the National Curriculum for Key Stage 3 History

Students will gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between national and international history; between cultural, economic, military and political history.

This lesson would easily fit into schemes of learning on the following topics:

- Political power, industry and empire.
- The impact of European trade and colonialism in Africa
- The Transatlantic Slave Trade: its effects
- The History of protest and/or civil rights and resistance movements.
- The lesson is also relevant to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural SMSC development

The lesson gives students the ability to be reflective about their own non-religious beliefs and perspective on life, their knowledge of, and respect for, different people's feelings and values.

It will build their understanding of the history of Europe and of Africa from the earliest times to the present day: Especially how the actions and views of people in Africa have shaped Europe, and vice versa.

It offers the opportunity to develop reasoned views about moral and ethical issues. Giving students a chance to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on historical issues.

Lesson Structure

This lesson follows the enquiry question:

“What was the historical impact of Queen Nzinga Mbande’s life?”

And explores the story of Queen Nzinga and the successful resistance she led against the colonisation of Ndongo (now Angola) by the Portuguese in the 1700s. The lesson encourages students to think about how African societies were structured, and how politics, diplomacy and military skill have influenced history. It also asks questions about what made Nzinga a successful leader and explores how Nzinga is remembered today.

This is a multimedia lesson plan, in which students have a chance to use an artist's interpretation of Queen Nzinga to make some predictions and watch a poetry performance. There is extended reading to learn about the wider context.

On the next page you can find the text of the poem “Queen Nzinga” that is performed as part of the lesson plan.

AFRICAN QUEEN

History is a recorded story constructed from questionable facts
Which have been used to create myths masking horrendous acts
African Queens have ruled admirably throughout the ages
Against invading colonisers who are illuminated on pages
Queen Nzinga is one such Queen, inspiring, resilient and regal
Who stood tall, proud and defiant knowing she was their equal
Respected, loved and feared always fighting for her people
The spirit of Africa embodied in one it's time for her prequel
In 1583 Nzinga Mbande incredible life journey began
A future African Queen who overcame the evils of man
Growing up in the ruling family of Ndongo now known as Angola
Nzinga became much more than an African revolutionary soldier
Nzinga represented her father's Kingdom becoming a shrewd ambassador
Who outwitted the Portuguese and others who always underestimated her
The French, English and Portuguese were fighting for control
Searching for Africa's riches while trying to destroy her soul
Installing vassal Kingdoms that did just as they were told
Gave Europeans a monopoly over Africans being sold
Nzinga Mbande became Queen of the Mbundu in 1626
A new African Queen too cunning to fall for European tricks
Queen Nzinga united former rival African states to fight for their lands
Against invading European Terrorists who chopped off African hands
Subjugation was no longer going to be tolerated and resistance grew
Led by Queen Nzinga's army the Portuguese and others they overthrew
For over 30 years Queen Nzinga kept invading Europeans at bay
Creating a legacy that is unrivalled and inspiring to all Africans today
Living to be 80 years old and seeing out her days peacefully
Is a beautiful life journey's end for one who fought so fiercely

Lawrence Hoo