

AN AMERICAN EPIC The epic mini-series *Roots* is a historical portrait of one family's journey from slavery to freedom and their struggle to pass on their cultural identity from one generation to the next. Featuring a stellar cast including Laurence Fishburne, Jonathan Rhys Meyers, Anna Paquin, Anika Noni Rose, Forest Whitaker, and Malachi Kirby as Kunta Kinte, *Roots* airs on HISTORY® over four consecutive nights beginning May 30 at 9pm ET.

DISCOVERY

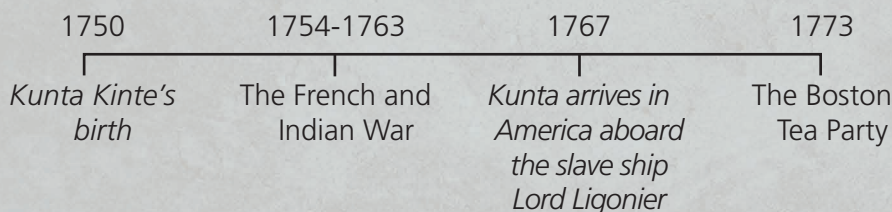
The Mandinka: The story of *Roots* begins with Kunta Kinte, a young Mandinka warrior from The Gambia in West Africa, who is sold to European slave traders by a rival family in his own town of Juffure (also spelled Juffreh). Learn about the Mandinka at mandinkapeople.org. Then complete this short quiz.

1. Many Mandinka were well-educated. (T) (F)
2. West Africa was a primitive part of the world in 1750. (T) (F)
3. The majority of Mandinka people were Muslim. (T) (F)
4. The Mandinka had no knowledge of Europe until the 18th century. (T) (F)
5. Warrior culture was extremely important to the Mandinka people. (T) (F)

The Slave Trade: Use these resources to learn more about the time period in which *Roots* takes place.

- Learn more about the Atlantic Slave Trade at abcnews.go.com/US/story?id=96659&page=1
- See how the Atlantic Slave Trade evolved at www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/slav/hd_slav.htm
- Hear firsthand accounts of former slaves at memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snhome.html
- Read a brief excerpt from chapter 1 of Alex Haley's *Roots* at www.rootsthebook.com/excerpt.html

Historical Context: As you watch *Roots* over the next four nights, use the back of this sheet to create a timeline that places events in this family history in the context of major events in American history. Here is a timeline of the opening events of the story to get you started:



DISCUSSION

Use your research and what you learn from watching *Roots* to explore these questions:

- Why was there an increased demand for slaves in the Americas in the mid- and late-18th century?
- What were the conditions on the slave ships? How did the slave traders attempt to control slaves on ships? How did enslaved people resist?
- How did the slave trade affect the colonies in both the short and long term?
- Visit www.notforsalecampaign.org to learn about the persistence of slavery today. Compare and contrast the type of slavery depicted in *Roots* with what is happening in parts of our world. In what ways is slavery the same as it was in the colonial era and how is it different?
- www.notforsalecampaign.org says, "Modern-day slavery is the acquisition of people using force, deception or coercion with the intent to exploit. Slavery is wrapped up in almost every industry's supply chain, tainting the food we eat, the clothes we buy and the electronics we use. After the international drug trade, trafficking of humans is tied with arms dealing as the second-largest criminal industry in the world." What can be done to stop it? What are some organizations doing to end this kind of slavery?



ROOTS

MAY 30 THROUGH JUNE 2 AT 9PM ET ON HISTORY®