

Pre-intermediate Video script Unit 11

Unit 11 White gold

VO = voice over **P** = Presenter

VO: Mmm, sugar. Did you know that sweet is the only taste we like when we are born? Perhaps that's why we love it so much.

P: As a nation, we in Britain consume more than two million tons of sugar a year. That's almost four hundred weight for every man, woman and child.

VO: That was back in the 1970s, when we consumed much more sugar than we do today. People first grew sugar cane in Papua New Guinea more than eight thousand years ago. From there, it travelled across the world to India, the Middle East, and finally it came to the Mediterranean. And when people got the taste for sugar, they paid a high price for it.

Five hundred years ago, sugar was so expensive people called it white gold. In today's money, a teaspoon of sugar cost nearly fifty pounds. But to become an everyday ingredient, sugar had to become a lot cheaper.

So sugar crossed the Atlantic to British colonies in the Caribbean. The perfect place to grow sugar cane. But this part of the story of sugar is not so sweet. Sugar plantations needed workers. Thousands of slaves had to work to give us our sugar. Cheap sugar crossed the Atlantic in massive quantities as Europeans came to love everything sweet. But the use of slaves had to end. Slavery ended in British colonies in the early nineteenth century. We had to find other ways to get sugar. The price remained low because of new production methods and a new source, sugar beet.