# RESOURCES FOR CELEBRATING HAITIAN HERITAGE/CULTURE MONTH

## May 1 – 31, 2009
## Haitian Heritage Month

**Miami-Dade County Public Schools**
**Division of Social Sciences and Life Skills**

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# RESOURCES FOR CELEBRATING AND RECOGNITION OF HAITIAN HERITAGE/ CULTURE MONTH

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# Frequently Asked Questions
# About Haiti

## 1. Who were Haiti's first inhabitants?
Haiti's first known inhabitants were the Taino/Arawak natives who migrated onto the island long before the arrival of Columbus in 1492.

## 2. Is Haitian Creole a language or a dialect?
It is a language. Along with French, Haitian Creole is the official language of the Republic of Haiti since 1987, although only a minority of Haitians can speak French fluently.

- A **dialect** is defined as a "regional variety of a language distinguished by pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary."

- A **language** is defined as "the use by human beings of voice sounds, and often written symbols representing these sounds, in combination and patterns to express and communicate thoughts and feelings. A system of words formed from such combinations and patterns, used by the people of a particular country or by a group of people with a shared history or set of traditions." -The American Heritage College Dictionary, Third Edition, 2000.

## 3. Do all Haitians speak and read Creole?
All Haitians who are born and raised in Haiti speak Haitian Creole; although, not all Haitians can read Haitian Creole.

## 4. Why do Haitians always drink pumpkin/squash soup on January 1st?
On January 1st, Haitians traditionally drink pumpkin/squash soup with family and friends to celebrate freedom and independence. During the French control of the island, only the masters were allowed to drink this delicious soup.

## 5. What is the origin of the country's name?
The name Haiti derives from the word AYTI or HAYTI, which in the Arawak language means "mountainous land".

## 6. Did the U.S. ever occupy or intervene in Haiti?
Yes, in 1915, as a result of U.S. concerns over its interests in the country because of renewed political chaos (4 presidents in 2 years, all killed while in office), the U.S. invaded Haiti and occupied the country for 19 years. The US intervened in Haiti again in 1994 to restore political stability and the return of the democratically elected president Jean Bertrand Aristide who was ousted in a coup d'etat seven months after he took power on February 7, 1991.

**7. Which U.S. presidents have visited Haiti during their terms in office?**
On July 5, 1934, Franklin D. Roosevelt was the first American president to visit Haiti.
On March 21, 1995, President Clinton became the second American President to visit Haiti.

**8. What is the capital of Haiti?** Port-Au-Prince is the capital of the Republic of Haiti.

**9. Is Haiti an island?** No, the republic of Haiti is not an island. It occupies one-third of the entire island of Hispaniola. The Dominican Republic makes up the rest of the island.

**10. Is there a democratic government in Haiti?** Yes, there is. The president elected is serving a term of five years. There are three branches in the government: The Executive, The Legislative, and the Judicial. See time line for specific leaders and their opposing groups.

**11. What are the major holidays in Haiti?** The major holidays in Haiti are:

- Independence Day (January 1st),
- Forefather's Day (January 2nd),
- Carnaval (2 days before Ash Wednesday, February or March),
- Good Friday (2 days before Easter),
- Easter Sunday ( usually in April),
- Toussaint Louverture's Death (April 7th),
- Pan American Day (April 14th),
- Labor Day (May 1st),
- Flag Day (May 18),
- Day of Assumption (August 15th),
- Dessalines' Death (October 17th),
- All Saints Day (November 1st),
- All Souls Day (November 2nd),
- Battle of Vertieres' Day (November 18th),
- Christmas Eve (December 24th),
- Christmas (December 25th),
- New Year's Eve (December 31st).

**12. What is the size of the Republic of Haiti?** The total area is 27,750 sq. km. (10,714 sq. mi.) about the size of Maryland.

**13. Why is there a Haitian/Haitian-American curriculum?** The Florida Statute 228.591 mandated that multicultural education be incorporated into the curriculum. The Multicultural Education Department main purpose of developing the Haitian/Haitian-American curriculum is to "help teachers incorporate diversity and different perspectives of history and

culture into the existing curriculum", and instill a sense of pride in the Haitian students who represent approximately 10% of the student population.

**14. What are the traditional meats served in the Haitian diet?**
Chicken, pork, beef, goat, and a variety of seafood are some of the most traditional meats served in Haiti.

**15. Do all Haitians speak French?** No, statistics report that about 10% of the population is fluent in the French Language.

**16. What is the employment rate in Haiti?** About 40% of the population is unemployed and more than 50% of the labor force does not have formals jobs.

**17. What is the population of Haiti?** The population of Haiti was estimated at 8 million in 2000. The population is about 95% black and 5% mulattos, which is traditionally the elite ruling class.

**18. Are there any other major cities beside Port-au-Prince?** Yes, there are. Cap Haitian (second largest city), Jacmel, Gonaives, Les Cayes, Port de Paix, and Jeremie.

**19. Why do many Haitian students keep their heads down when speaking to an adult?** Traditionally in Haiti, as a sign of respect, children are taught to keep their heads down when addressing an adult.

**20. Do Haitians celebrate Christmas?** Yes, Haitians celebrate Christmas on December 25th. It is one of the official holidays.

**21. Is Halloween a Holiday in Haiti?** No, Haitians do not celebrate Halloween in their home country.

**22. Do schools in Haiti have guidance counselors?** Although very rare, some of the private schools in Haiti have guidance counselors.

**23. Is it mandatory for students to wear uniforms in Haiti?** Most schools, public and private, require their students to wear uniforms. But there is not a strict mandate for all schools to require their students to wear uniforms.

Source: http://www.haitianheritagemonth.net/

# TIME LINE

Used with permission of
The Embassy of the Republic of Haiti, Washington D.C.
www.haiti.org
Ambassade d 'Haïti
**Washington D.C.**

## Key Dates in Haiti's History

**1492**
Christopher Columbus lands and claims the island of Hispaniola for Spain. The Spanish build the New World's first settlement at *La Navidad* on Haiti's north coast.

**1697**
Spanish control over the colony ends with the Treaty of Ryswick, which divided the island into French-controlled St. Domingue and Spanish Santo Domingo.
For over 100 years the colony of St. Domingue (known as the Pearl of the Antilles) was France's most important overseas territory, which supplied it with sugar, rum, coffee and cotton. At the height of slavery, near the end of the 18th century, some 500,000 people, mainly of western African origin, were enslaved by the French.

**1791-1803**
A slave rebellion is launched by the Jamaican-born Boukman leading to a protracted 13-year war of liberation against St. Domingue's colonists and later, Napoleon's army which was also assisted by Spanish and British forces. The slave armies were commanded by General Toussaint Louverture who was eventually betrayed by the French and subsequently exiled to France where he died.

**1803**
The Haitian blue and red flag is devised at Arcahie, by taking the French tricolor, turning it on its side and removing the white band. The Battle of Vertières in November marks the ultimate victory of the former slaves over the French.

**1804**
The hemispere's second Republic is declared on January 1, 1804 by General Jean-Jacques Dessalines. Haiti, or *Ayiti* in Creole, is the name given to the land by the former Taino-Arawak peoples, meaning "mountainous country."

**1806**
Emperor Jean-Jacques Dessalines is assassinated.

**1807-20**
Civil war racks the country, which divides into the northern kingdom of Henri Christophe and the southern republic governed by Alexandre Pétion. Faced with a rebellion by his

own army, Christophe commits suicide, paving the way for Jean-Pierre Boyer to reunify the country and become President of the entire republic in 1820.

**1821**
President Boyer invades Santo Domingo following its declaration of independence from Spain. The entire island is now controlled by Haiti until 1844.

**1838**
France recognizes Haitian independence in exchange for a financial indemnity of 150 million *francs*. Most nations including the United States shunned Haiti for almost forty years, fearful that its example could stir unrest in other slaveholding countries. Over the next few decades Haiti is forced to take out loans of 70 million *francs* to repay the indemnity and gain international recognition.

**1862**
The United States finally grants Haiti diplomatic recognition sending noted abolitionist Frederick Douglass as its Consular Minister.

**1915**
President Woodrow Wilson orders the U.S. Marines to occupy Haiti and establish control over customs-houses and port authorities. The Haitian National Guard is created by the occupying Americans. The Marines force peasants into *corvée* labor building roads. Peasant resistance to the occupiers grows under the leadership of Charlemagne Peralt, who is betrayed and assassinated by Marines in 1919.

**1934** The U.S. withdraws from Haiti leaving the Haitian Armed Forces in place throughout the country.

**1937**
Thousands of Haitians living near the border of the Dominican Republic are massacred by Dominican soldiers under the orders of President General Trujillo.

**1957**
After several attempts to move forward democratically ultimately fail, military-controlled elections lead to victory for Dr. François Duvalier, who in 1964 declares himself President-for-Life and forms the infamous paramilitary *Tonton Makout*. The corrupt Duvalier dictatorship marks one of the saddest chapters in Haitian history with tens of thousands killed or exiled.

**1971**
"Papa-Doc" Duvalier dies in office after naming his 19 year-old son Jean-Claude as his successor.

**1972**
The first Haitian "boat people" fleeing the country land in Florida.

**1976**
Widespread protests against repression of the nation's press take place.

**1970s-1980s**
"Baby-Doc" Duvalier exploits international assistance and seeks to attract investment leading to the establishment of textile-based assembly industries. Attempts by workers and political parties to organize are quickly and regularly crushed.

**1980**
Hundreds of human rights workers, journalists and lawyers are arrested and exiled from the country.

**1981**
International aid agencies declare Haitian pigs to be carriers of African Swine Fever and institute a program for their slaughter. Attempts to replace indigenous swine with imported breeds largely fail.

**1983**
Pope John Paul II visits Haiti and declares publicly that, "Things must change here."

**1984**
Over 200 peasants are massacred at Jean-Rabeau after demonstrating for access to land. The Haitian Bishops Conference launches a nation-wide (but short-lived) literacy program. Anti-government riots take place in all major towns.

**1985**
Massive anti-Government demonstrations continue to take place around the country. Four schoolchildren are shot dead by soldiers, an event which unifies popular protest against the régime.

**1986**
Widespread protests against "Baby Doc" lead the U.S. to arrange for Duvalier and his family to be exiled to France. Army leader General Henri Namphy heads a new National Governing Council.

**1987**
A new Constitution is overwhelmingly approved by the population in March. General elections in November are aborted hours after they begin with dozens of people shot by soldiers and the *Tonton Makout* in the capital and scores more around the country.

**1988**
Military controlled elections - widely abstained from - result in the installation of Leslie Manigat as President in January. Manigat is ousted by General Namphy four months later and in November General Prosper Avril unseats Namphy.

**1989**
President Avril, on a trade mission to Taiwan, returns empty-handed after grassroots-based democratic sectors inform Taiwanese authorities that the Haitian nation will not be responsible for any contracts agreed to by Avril. Avril orders massive repression against political parties, unions, students and democratic organizations.

**1990**
Avril declares a state of siege in January. Rising protests and urging from the American Ambassador convince Avril to resign. A Council of State forms out of negotiations among democratic sectors, charged with running a Provisional Government led by Supreme Court Justice Ertha Pascal-Trouillot.

U.S. Vice-President Dan Quayle visits Haiti and tells Army leaders, "No more coups." Assistance is sought from the Organization of American States (OAS) and the United Nations (UN) to help organize general elections in December.

In a campaign marred by occasional violence and death, democratic elections finally take place on December 16, 1990. Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a parish priest, well known throughout the country for his support of the poor, is elected President with 67.5% of the popular vote. The "U.S. favorite" Marc Bazin finishes a distant second with 14.2%

**1991**
Duvalierist holdover and *Tonton Makout* Dr. Roger Lafontant attempts a coup d'état to prevent Father Aristide's ascension to power. The Armed Forces quickly remove him from the National Palace following massive popular protest.

President Aristide is inaugurated on February 7th, five years after Duvalier's fall from power. A Government is formed by Prime Minister René Préval promising to uproot the corruption of the past. Over $500 million is promised in aid by the international community.

In September President Aristide addresses the UN General Assembly. Three days after his return military personnel with financial backing from neo-Duvalierist sectors and their international allies unleash a coup d'état, ousting President Aristide. Over 1,000 people are killed in the first days of the coup.

The OAS calls for a hemisphere-wide embargo against the coup régime in support of the deposed constitutional authorities.

**1992**
Negotiations between the Washington, D.C. based exiled Government, Haiti's Parliament and representatives of the coup régime headed by General Raoul Cédras lead to the Washington Protocol, which is ultimately scuttled by the coup régime.

U.S. President George Bush exempts U.S. factories from the embargo and orders U.S. Coast Guard to interdict all Haitians leaving the island in boats and to return them to Haiti.

The OAS embargo fails as goods continue to be smuggled through neighboring Dominican Republic. Haiti's legitimate authorities ask the United Nations to support a larger embargo in order to press the coup leaders to step down. The UN pledges to support efforts by the OAS to find a solution to the political crisis.

**1993**
President Aristide asks the Secretaries-General of the OAS and the UN for the deployment by the United Nations and OAS of an international civilian mission to monitor respect for human rights and the elimination of all forms of violence.
In June Haiti requests an oil and arms embargo from the UN Security Council in order to pressure the coup régime to give up power.

In July of 1993, President Aristide and General Raoul Cédras sign the Governors Island Accord, which *inter alia* called for the early retirement of Gen. Cédras, the formation and training of a new civilian police force, and the return of the President on October 30, 1993. Representatives of political parties and Parliament sign the New York Pact pledging support for President Aristide's return and the rebuilding of the nation.

A contingent of U.S. and Canadian trainers aboard the U.S.S. Harlan County arrives in Haitian waters in October and is recalled because of right-wing demonstrations, setting back the Governors Island agreement. General Cédras refuses to step down as promised.
President Aristide's Justice Minister Guy Malary, responsible for the formation of a civilian police force is shot dead in Port-au-Prince weeks after local businessman and Aristide supporter Antoine Izmery is executed outside of a local church.

The UN calls for "strict implementation" of the embargo against the de facto authorities. The Civilian Mission's human rights observers are allowed to return in small numbers.

**1994**
In May additional sanctions were levied against the régime through a naval blockade supported by Argentine, Canadian, French, Dutch and U.S. warships.
Tensions increase as human rights violations continue. The Civilian Mission is told by the de facto authorities to leave the country.

The UN Security Council passes Resolution 940 authorizing the Member States to form a 6,000 multinational force and "to use all necessary means" to facilitate the departure of the military régime.

On September 15th, U.S. President Clinton declares that all diplomatic initiatives were exhausted and that the US with 20 other countries would form a multinational force. On September 19th these troops land in Haiti after the coup leaders agree to step down and leave the country.

On October 15th, President Aristide and his Government-in-exile return to Haiti.

**1995**
In June Haiti hosts the annual OAS General Assembly at MontrouiLegislative elections take place that month and in December the presidential contest is won by former Prime Minister René Préval. (President Aristide is precluded by the Constitution from succeeding himself). In November Prime Minister Smarck Michel steps down and Foreign Minister Claudette Werleigh becomes President Aristide's fourth Prime Minister.

**1996**
President Préval is inaugurated in February. A Government is formed under Prime Minister Rosny Smarth. Agricultural production, administrative reform, and economic modernization are announced as the Government’s priorities.

# Geography

Haiti, in the West Indies, occupies the western third of the island of Hispaniola, which it shares with the Dominican Republic. About the size of Maryland, Haiti is two-thirds mountainous, with the rest of the country marked by great valleys, extensive plateaus, and small plains.

# Government

Republic with an elected government.

# History

Explored by Columbus on Dec. 6, 1492, Haiti's native Arawaks fell victim to Spanish rule. In 1697, Haiti became the French colony of Saint-Dominique, which became a leading sugarcane producer dependent on slaves. In 1791, an insurrection erupted among the slave population of 480,000, resulting in a declaration of independence by Pierre-Dominique Toussaint l'Ouverture in 1801. Napoléon Bonaparte suppressed the independence movement, but it eventually triumphed in 1804 under Jean-Jacques Dessalines, who gave the new nation the Arawak name *Haiti*. It was the world's first independent black republic.

The revolution wrecked Haiti's economy. Years of strife between the light-skinned mulattos who dominated the economy and the majority black population, plus disputes with neighboring Santo Domingo, continued to hurt the nation's development. After a succession of dictatorships, a bankrupt Haiti accepted a U.S. customs receivership from 1905 to 1941. Occupation by U.S. Marines from 1915 to 1934 brought stability. Haiti's high population growth made it the most densely populated nation in the Western Hemisphere.

In 1949, after four years of democratic rule by President Dumarsais Estimé, dictatorship returned under Gen. Paul Magloire, who was succeeded by François Duvalier, nicknamed “Papa Doc,” in 1957. Duvalier's secret police, the “Tontons Macoutes,” ensured political stability with brutal efficiency. Upon Duvalier's death in 1971, his son, Jean-Claude, or “Baby Doc,” succeeded as ruler of the poorest nation in the hemisphere. In the early 1980s, Haiti became one of the first countries to face an AIDS epidemic. Fear of the disease caused tourists to stay away, and the tourist industry collapsed, causing rising unemployment. Unrest generated by the economic crisis forced Baby Doc to flee the country in 1986.

Throughout the 1990s the international community tried to establish democracy in Haiti. The country's first elected chief executive, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a leftist Roman Catholic priest who seemed to promise a new era in Haiti, took office in Feb. 1991. The military, however, took control in a coup nine months later. A UN peacekeeping force, led by the U.S.—Operation Uphold Democracy—arrived in 1994. Aristide was restored to office and René Preval became his successor in 1996 elections. U.S. soldiers and UN peacekeepers left in 2000. Haiti's government, however, remained ineffectual and its economy was in ruins. Haiti has the highest rates of AIDS, malnutrition, and infant mortality in the region.

In 2000, former president Aristide was reelected president in elections boycotted by the opposition and questioned by many foreign observers. The U.S. and other countries threatened Haiti with sanctions unless democratic procedures were strengthened. Aristide, once a charismatic champion of democracy, grew more authoritarian and seemed incapable of improving the lot of his people. Violent protests rocked the country in Jan. 2004, the month of Haiti's bicentennial, with protesters demanding that Aristide resign. By February, a full-blown armed revolt was under way, and Aristide's hold on power continued to slip. The protests, groups of armed rebels, and French and American pressure led to the ousting of Aristide on Feb. 29. Thereafter a U.S.-led

international force of 2,300 entered the chaos-engulfed country to attempt to restore order, and an interim government took over. In September, Hurricane Jeanne ravaged Haiti, killing more than 2,400 people. Lawlessness and gang violence were widespread, and the interim government had no control over parts of the country, which were run by armed former soldiers.

After numerous delays, Haiti held elections on Feb. 7, 2006. The elections, backed by 9,000 United Nations troops, were seen as a crucial step in returning Haiti to some semblance of stability. Former prime minister and Aristide protegé René Préval, very popular among the poor, was seen as the favorite. But when the election count indicated that Préval's lead over the other candidate was dropping and that he would not win an outright majority, Préval contested the election and charged that “massive fraud and gross errors had stained the process.” On Feb. 14, the interim government halted the election count, and the following day, after the votes were retabulated, Préval was declared the winner.

In April 2008, Prime Minister Jacques-Édouard Alexis was removed from office by the senate, which held him responsible for the poor economy. On April 12, after violent street riots, President René Préval announced that he would cut the cost of rice by nearly 16%.

Source: http://www.infoplease.com/atlas/country/haiti.html

## Haiti Country Profile Sheet

**http://news.bbc.co.uk**

1. Haiti is the world's first black-led republic and the first Caribbean state to achieve independence, Haiti's pride has been dented by decades of poverty, environmental degradation, violence, instability and dictatorship which have left it as the poorest nation in the Americas.

2. Haiti achieved notoriety during the brutal dictatorships of the voodoo physician, Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier, and his son, Jean-Claude, or "Baby Doc". Hopes that the election in 1990 of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a former priest, would herald a brighter future were dashed when he was overthrown by the military a short time later.

3. Although economic sanctions and US-led military intervention forced a return to constitutional government in 1994, Haiti's fortunes did not pick up, with allegations of electoral irregularities, ongoing extra-judicial killings, torture and brutality.

4. A bloody rebellion, and pressure from the US and France, forced Mr. Aristide out of the country in 2004. Since then, an elected leadership has taken over from an interim government and a UN stabilization force has been deployed. But Haiti is still plagued by violent confrontations between rival gangs and political groups and the UN has described the human rights situation as "catastrophic".

5. **Politics:** Democratic rule was restored in 2006, two years after a violent revolt ousted former leader Jean-Bertrand Aristide; bitter political divisions persist.

6. **Economy:** Haiti's economy is in ruins and there is chronic unemployment.

7. **International:** The UN has deployed peacekeepers; international aid is seen as key to recovery.

Country profile source: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/country_profiles/1202772.stm

### Additional Articles on Haiti:

Donors Pledge $750 million aid to Haiti. July 2006
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/5215490.stm

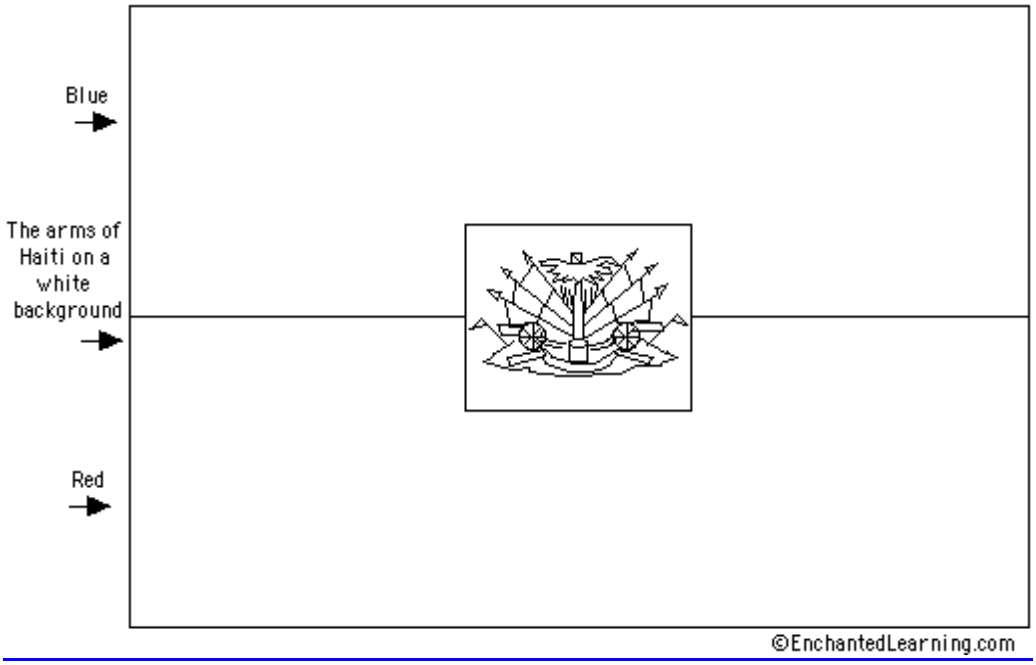
Challenges Ahead for Haiti's Preval. February 2006
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4721510.stm

Glimmers of Hope in Cite Soleil. February 2006:
http://blog.washingtonpost.com/haitisstruggle/2006/02/glimmers_of_hope_in_cite_solei_1.html

UN Envoy Urges Continuing Aid for Haiti. May 2006:
http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/20/world/americas/20haiti.html?ex=1160280000&en=3c762a89fbe52485&ei=5070

The Council on Foreign Relations. http://www.cfr.org/region/223/haiti.html

# Haitian Flag Quiz/Printout




The flag of the Republic of Haiti was adopted on May 18, 1803. Haiti had been a colony of France since 1697, but the people rebelled in 1803 and Haiti achieved independence on January 1, 1804.

The Haitian flag is a red and blue bicolor; for state occasions, the Arms of Haiti are added to the center of the flag on a white background. The colors red and blue were chosen from the French flag. The Haitian arms depict a royal palm in the center topped with a red and blue cap of liberty. There are also six blue and red flags, two smaller red banners on the sides, many weapons (rifles with bayonets, two yellow cannons and many cannonballs), a drum, an anchor, green grass, and a white banner reading "L'UNION FAIT LA FORCE," meaning "Union is Strength."

Haiti is located in the Caribbean Sea. Christopher Columbus sailed to Hispaniola in 1492. Haiti and the Dominican Republic constitute the island of Hispaniola, located east of Cuba. Haiti occupies the western third of the island. Haiti's capital city is Port-au-Prince.

1. What are the two major colors in this flag?

_____

2. When was this flag adopted?

_____

3. When did Haiti become independent from France?

_____

4. In which sea is Haiti located?

_____

## Information on Haiti, Its Geography & History

| | |
|---|---|
| Official Name | Repiblik Dayti (Haitian Creole); Republique d'Haiti (French) (Republic of Haiti) |
| Capital | Port-au-Prince |
| Population | 8,707,497 (2007) |
| Area | Land area: 10,641 sq mi (27,560 sq km); total area: 10,714 sq mi (27,750 sq km) |
| Currency | Gourde ($1=23.75) |
| Religion | Christianity and Voodoo |
| Literacy | 53% |
| Languages | Haitian Creole, French (official) |
| Major Cities | Carrefour, Demas, Cap-Haitien, Petion-Ville |
| Climate | Tropical in nature |
| President | René Préval (2006) |
| Prime Minister | Jacques-Édouard Alexis (2006) |

## INTRODUCTION

Haiti is part of the West Indies archipelago. The country gained independence when, in the late 18th century, Haiti's nearly half million enslaved Africans revolted, and it became the first Black republic in 1804.

### Location

Haiti is bounded on the north by the Atlantic Ocean, on the east by the Dominican Republic, on the south by the Caribbean Sea, and on the west by the Windward Passage, a channel that separates the country from Cuba.

### Physical Map of Haiti

Haiti is mountainous in most parts, with five mountain ranges crossing the country. The Chaîe du Haut Piton, runs along the northern peninsula, the Massif de la Selle, begins just southeast of Port-au-Prince and has Haiti's highest point of 8,793 feet at Pic la Selle. The Massif de la Hotte further runs along the western end of the southern peninsula. The other chains include the Massif des Montagnes Noires and Chaîne des Cahos, and the solitary peak of Montagne Terrible. The Gonâve Gulf contains the largest of Haiti's offshore islands, the island of Govâve. As is characteristic of mountainous regions, Haiti's shoreline is irregular, and there are many natural harbors. The numerous rivers dotting Haiti are short, swift, and un-navigable. The only navigable river is the Artibonite.

### Climate of Haiti

Haiti has a tropical climate with significant variations. Rainfall varies from a height of 3,600 mm on the western tip of the southern peninsula to 600 mm on the southwest coast of the northern peninsula. The south west receives most of the rains in early and late summer. Port-au-Prince, located at sea level, has a yearly average temperature of 27°C. In Kenscoff, located just south of Port-au-Prince at an elevation of 4,700 feet, the temperature average is usually recorded at 16°C. Haiti is also vulnerable to hurricanes and is occasionally hit by destructive storms.

### Arts, Culture and Music of Haiti

Haitian culture fuses African, French, and West Indian elements. Formerly a social divider, the Creole language is now being used in attempts to define a national culture. The language is used in literature, drama, music, dance, and some governmental functions and the country has to its credit several outstanding libraries. Haitian works of art are enjoying increasing worldwide recognition.

(http:www.mapsofworld.com/country-profile/haiti.html)

# Haitian Communities in the U.S.

Little Haiti serves up some of the best Afro-Caribbean culture this side of the Gulf Stream, the warm-water current south of Florida. The Miami community of some 33,000 people is alive with the sights, sounds, smells, and tastes of Haiti. Place names echo with Haitian pride. Avenue Felix Moisseau Leroy, which slices through the heart of Little Haiti, bears the name of a famous Haitian writer and poet. It leads directly to Toussaint L'Ouverture Elementary School, which is named after the hero of Haitian independence.

Activity

Brooklyn's Haitian Community

According to the 2000 census, some 200,000 Haitians live in Brooklyn—home to the largest Haitian community in New York City. This is a sharp rise from the 52,600 who lived there in 1980.

Most of Brooklyn's Haitians live along Flatbush Avenue. Here announcements written in French or Creole decorate the walls, windows, and bulletin boards of stores, churches, and government agencies such as police and fire stations. Newspaper stands carry publications like the *Haiti Progres*, a newspaper written primarily in French, and the *Haitian Times*, a newspaper written in English. Both papers offer stories about Haitian-related events not normally covered in other sources.

The mix of languages can be heard in the halls of Brooklyn's Walt Whitman Middle School. Here about 75% of students are of Haitian descent. Teachers challenge them with bilingual instruction, both in English and Creole, so that students can continue in regular all-English classes in high school.

But learning English doesn't mean leaving Haitian culture behind. New York's Haitian radio station, *Radio Soleil D'Haiti*, *(http://www.radiosoleil.com)* broadcasts programs in 3 languages, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Some 600,000 Haitians and Haitian Americans in the New York metropolitan area tune in regularly.

There's other live entertainment, too. The dance-and-drum group *La Troupe Makandal*, *(http://www.makandal.org/home.html)* for example, regularly sells out tickets to its shows. The group, which takes its name from an enslaved African leader, often reenacts important events in Haitian history. In one performance, an ancestor calls out: "Have we truly tasted freedom?"

The Haitian community of Brooklyn is seeking to answer, "Yes!" They're finding a new political voice in the 2000s. The Flatbush community recently succeeded, with the help of local politicians, in renaming a street Toussaint L'Ouverture Boulevard. It's the city's first Haitian street name. Jean Vernet II, who grew up in Haiti and Brooklyn, has created a computer database to unify Haitian-American voters in the United States. He tried it out in the 2004 election and plans to continue building a Haitian voting bloc. "We're no

longer an exiled community who will return to Haiti shortly," he says. "It's O.K. to be an American."

## LANGUAGE

### Haitian Creole

Haiti has two official languages—French and Haitian Creole. Yet only about 10% of Haitians can speak both languages fluently. Most speak only Haitian Creole, the nation's "mother language."

The use of Haitian Creole began aboard slave ships and the French plantations of Hispaniola. It blends the languages of West Africa with many French words. Over time, words from Spanish, English, and other languages have crept in as well.

Turning Haitian Creole into a written language didn't happen until well after independence. It took the constitution of 1987 to recognize it as the nation's second official language. (French was the first.)

Today many Haitian and Haitian American writers preserve their heritage by recording the Haitian Creole stories, songs, and proverbs handed down through the generations by word of mouth. Some popular proverbs include the following:

- Ti chen gen fos devan kay met li.
- "A little dog is really brave in front of his master's house."

- Bouch manje tout manje, men li pa pale tout pawol.
- "The mouth may eat any food, but should not speak on any subject."

- Fon sl dwet pa manje kalalou.
- "You cannot eat okra with one finger."

- Tanbou prete pa janm fe bon dans.
- "A borrowed drum never makes good dancing."

- Sak vid pad kanp.
- "An empty sack can't stand up."

- Kreyol pale, kreyol comprann.
- "Creole spoke, Creole understood."

**Activity**

What do these proverbs mean to you? Pick one of them, and illustrate your interpretation in the form of a poster.

## AUTHORS

### Haitian Authors

The world became aware of Haiti's great writers during its Golden Age of the 1930s and 1940s. African American poet Langston Hughes traveled there hoping to meet Jacques Romaine, a Haitian poet whom he admired. Hughes later described the meeting.

*For an hour, in French--mine halting, and in English--his bad, we talked about poetry and people. Jacques showed me his excellent library in many languages with the cloth and board bindings of America and England mingling with the bright paper covers of France and Germany. . . . And he made me a present of his poems.*

Romaine, still famous among Haitians, is but one of the many writers who have enriched the literature of Haiti and the world. They've included poet and playwright Felix Morriseau-Leroy, journalist Yvonne Hakim Rimpel, author Jean-Price Mars, and many more.
Haitian writers wrote in French at first and later in Creole. Massillon Coicou, for example, pioneered Haitian Creole literature with his *Emperor Dessalines*. George Sylvain did the same with a collection of short stories.

The Haitian literary tradition has grown stronger in recent times, but with a twist. More Haitian and Haitian American women are writing than ever before. Some of them have formed the Women Writers of Haitian Descent (WWOHD), a group that promotes the work of talented Haitian women writers. "I write therefore I am," declares one of the group's slogans.

Perhaps one of the most widely known and successful of these young women writers is Edwidge Danticat. She started her writing career at age 9.

**Activity**

Find out more about Danticat, and prepare a speech that might be given to introduce her to a conference on Haitian writers in the 20th century.

Like other artists, Haitian and Haitian American artists work with all kinds of materials, including the tin from oil drums. This "tin art" often takes the form of animals found in Haiti--lizards called geckos, big-eyed tree frogs, or tropical birds like flamingos.

## Activity

Research pictures of one of these animals. Then make try your hand at "tooling," or engraving, a piece of foil art by following these directions.

**Materials:** heavy weight tin foil, scissors, poster board, tracing paper, ballpoint pen, enamel paints, brush, newspapers

**Procedure**

Use a pencil to copy the picture of a Haitian animal on to tracing paper. This will be your "pattern."

- Place the pattern over the poster board. Go over the outline of the pattern with the tip of a ballpoint pen. Press hard enough so that an imprint is left on the poster board.
- Cut out the "tooled" figure.
- Now put the pattern over a piece of tin foil. Again, use the pen to tool the outline into the tin foil.
- Remove the pattern. Then draw a one-quarter inch edge around the figure outlined on the tinfoil. Cut out the figure following this edge.
- Wrap the tin foil around the poster board figure, securing the edges on the back with tape.
- Use the ballpoint pen to tool details on to your "tin art." You can trace the pattern or draw freehand, as Haitian artists do.
- Cover a desk or table with newspaper. Then paint your figure. Use bright colors, similar to those found in many works of Haitian art. (*Tip*: You can find examples of Haitian tin art in galleries on the Internet.)

Source: Not available (Beyond the Textbook- Haitian Cultural Heritage – http://www.glencoe.com/sec/socialstudies/btt/Haitian_heritage/)

# Haitian Cultural Literacy Using the Internet

**Lesson Plan:** Haitian Cultural Literacy Using the Internet

**Subject:** Social Studies

**Grade level:** Elementary

**CBC Connection:** II. Historical Awareness, V. Cultural Awareness: Fostering understanding for the contributions of Haitians/Haitian Americans.

**Description/ Abstract of Lesson:** After teaching students how to conduct research on the Internet the students will demonstrate comprehension by answering a "Haitian Cultural Literacy Quiz" using Internet sources.

**Objective(s):** The students will

- Demonstrate efficient Internet researching.
- Use media resources to develop multicultural awareness.

**Materials:**

- Computer with Internet Access
- Attached "Haitian Cultural Literacy Quiz"

**Duration:** 1 class period

**Lesson Lead In/ Opening:** Discuss with the students about the usefulness of the Internet when you are trying to find out different forms of information quickly: (Examples)

- Phone Numbers
- Addresses and Location
- Information about People, Things and Places
- Historical Facts

**Activity:**

1. Schedule an appointment to the media center/computer lab for a computer-based lesson.

2. Teach the students efficient ways of how to conduct research on the Internet using a search engine (preferably either Google or Yahoo). Be sure to teach students the importance of key word usage (as opposed to typing whole sentences).

3. Have the students put what they learned into practice by researching the answers to the "Haitian Cultural Quiz" on a search engine.

4. Have the students write down the answers on the attached worksheet, as well as list down websites where they found the answers.

5. Review the answers as a class.

**Extended Lesson:**

- Have students locate their neighborhoods and different locations around the world (including Haiti) using Google Earth.

- Contact a Haitian non-profit organization such as Yele' Haiti about developing a “pen-pal” project between students in your class and students in Haiti.

**Assessment:**

- Evaluate quiz answers using the answer key provided.
- Consider grammar and neatness as part of the overall grade.
- Closely monitor students to make sure they are following instructions while conducting searches.
- Consider cooperation grade in cases of students working together.

**Internet Resources:**

www.google.com
www.earth.google.com
www.maps.google.com/
www.yahoo.com
www.wikipedia.org
http://allsearchengines.com/

# Haitian Cultural Literacy Quiz

1. On what island is Haiti located? _____

2. Name the Maroon African who led a rebellion against the French in 1751. _____

3. The Spanish settled in the _____ part of the island looking for gold.

4. He led a Black army against the French, and in 1801 became governor general of the entire island.

   _____

5. The French general who wanted to restore slavery in Saint Dominigue.

   _____

6. One of the three generals who defeated the French army in 1803.

   _____

7. The colors of the Haitian flag are _____.

8. The National Flower of Haiti. _____

9. He founded the first permanent settlement which became the city of Chicago. _____

10. In 1964, he declared himself "President for Life" during which time Haiti became a police state. _____

11. Eight hundred Haitians fought against the British in this American War for Independence battle. _____

12. Haiti became the first independent Black republic in what year? _____

13. He helped overthrow the French and later named himself "King of Haiti." _____

14. He was greeted by the Taino/Arawak when he arrived on the island of Haiti on December 6, 1492. _____

15. The capital of Haiti is _____

16. A religion which is a mixture of West African and Catholic beliefs and practices. _____

# Answers to Haitian Cultural Literacy Quiz

1. Hispaniola
2. Francois Makandal
3. Eastern
4. Toussaint L'Ouverture
5. Napoleon Bonaparte
6. Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Alexandre Pétion or Henri Christophe
7. Blue and Red
8. Hibiscus
9. Jean Baptiste Point DuSable
10. Francois Duvalier
11. Battle of Savannah
12. 1804
13. Henri Christophe
14. Christopher Columbus
15. Port au Prince
16. Voudou

# THE HAITIAN POLITICAL CRISIS: WHAT ROLE SHOULD THE U.S. PLAY IN FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS?

**Subjects:** Social Studies, Government, World Cultures

**Estimated Time:** Three 50-minute class periods plus additional time for extension activities

**Lesson Objectives:**

Students will:

1. Formulate opinions based on reasons, facts, examples and individual ideas.
2. Share and debate opinions during class discussions.
3. Evaluate cause and effect relationships while learning about the history of Haiti, the political turmoil endured by the Haitian people over the past 50 years, and the recent removal of Jean-Bertrand Aristide from power.
4. Analyze U.S. involvement in and foreign relations with countries such as Haiti, Iraq, Afghanistan and others.
5. Conduct relevant research and use it to support their opinions and arguments in writing and class discussions.

**Background:**
Since it declared independence from France in 1804, Haiti has experienced a series of ruthless leaders, military coups and political turmoil. Most recently, rebels forced the resignation of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide because of alleged corruption, broken promises, and economic and social problems. Now the United States and France, among others, have deployed troops and are taking on the task of restoring and maintaining law and order and assisting with the reorganization of the Haitian government. Meanwhile, Aristide claims he has not resigned but was removed from power, and placed in exile against his will by the United States. Ironically, it was the United States who helped Aristide regain his position as president in 1994 after a military coup removed him from power in 1991.

**Materials Needed:**
1. Game sheets with questions from Step 1 below for each group of four students.

2. Optional: small prize to give to member of each winning team when students play the game in Steps 1-2.

3. Access to photocopies or online versions of the NewsHour articles listed below:

- "Civil Unrest Spreads Through Island Nation of Haiti"
  http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/jan-june04/haiti_2-09.html
- "U.S. Mulls Sending Marines to Haiti"
  http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/Haiti_02-27-04.html
- "President of Haiti Resigns, U.S. Troops Enter Caribbean Nation"
  http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/jan_june04/Haiti_3-01.html

4. Access to photocopies or online versions of the PBS program "Journey to the Planet Earth." Country Profiles found at:
http://www.pbs.org/journeytoplanetearth/profiles/haiti.html

5. Current newspaper, news magazines, Internet news resources and other library research materials that students can use in the game in Steps 1-2 as well as for completing the

assignment explained in Step 9 and the extension activities.

6. Mailing and e-mail addresses for government officials such as Secretary of State Colin Powell, President Bush, presidential candidate Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., and congressional representatives.

**Procedures:**
1. Create interest and focus attention by telling students they are going to play a game based on a current world event. Break students into random teams of four. Give each team a specific work area in the classroom. In the center of the work area, place a pen or pencil and a paper that contains the questions listed below. Be sure the questions are face down so students cannot see them.

- Who is Jean-Bertrand Aristide?
- What country is he from?
- What is the major event that happened in this country in February 2004?
- What caused this event to take place?
- What role/involvement does the U.S. have in this event?

Once all students arrive in their groups, explain the rules of the game:

- All groups should work quietly to prevent other teams from learning their answers.
- Groups should use their knowledge of current world events to answer the questions.
- Groups should write the answers to their questions on the papers provided.
- Groups will get a total of 5 minutes to answer the questions.
- Outside resources available within the classroom (newspapers, magazines, Internet, etc.) can be used on a first-come, first-served basis.
- When answers are completed, teams must submit their papers to the teacher.
- The team with the most correct answers wins.

2. Facilitate the game using the guidelines above. When all teams are finished/time has been called, collect all papers. Have a short class discussion using the questions from the game. Read each question aloud and ask for volunteers to answer it. Have students provide as much information as they can for each question. Following the discussion, ask each team to discuss how many questions they believe they had
correct. While students discuss, quickly review each team's answers and determine the game's winner. Announce the winning team and number correct. Present a reward at this time if you choose.

3. Explain that throughout the next few days students will be learning more about the conflict in Haiti and the role of the United States in this situation. In addition, they will be examining the political issues surrounding U.S. involvement in Haiti and other countries throughout the world. Finally, they will be discussing the role of the United States as a world "watchdog" of sorts and whether or not they support this type of U.S. involvement in other countries.

4. Introduce students to Haiti by giving them a brief overview of the country. The Web site for the program "Journey to the Planet Earth" includes Country Profiles and describes Haiti. This can be found by going to
http://www.pbs.org/journeytoplanetearth/profiles/haiti.html. Pay specific attention to the Background, Location, Population, Religions, Literacy, Government type, Economy overview, Population below poverty line, Labor force, and Unemployment rate. This will give students some basic information about the country as well as some indication about why people might be dissatisfied with the government. Discuss each section briefly.

5. Introduce students to the more direct and specific causes for Aristide's removal from office by sharing the NewsHour Extra story entitled "Civil Unrest Spreads Through Island Nation of Haiti." Access the story at http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/jan-june04/Haiti_2-09.html. Take time to discuss the third paragraph of the article as well as the section titled "Aristide" specifically. This will supply students with the background necessary to understand the causes of the unrest and ultimate removal of Aristide from power. Pay specific attention to the accusations of corruption and violence in the Aristide regime, the loss of international aid after the 2000 elections, and the economic poverty that the majority of Haitians endure.

6. Now introduce students to the role of the United States in the Haitian political turmoil. The article "U.S. Mulls Sending Marines to Haiti" available at http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/Haiti_02-27-04.html describes some of the reasons for U.S. involvement in the situation with quotes from Secretary of State Colin Powell as well as President Bush. This article also brings up the point that the United States is already involved in several similar situations, specifically, but not limited to, Iraq and Afghanistan. Next, share the article "President of Haiti Resigns; U.S. Troops Enter Caribbean Nation" available at http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/Jan_june04/Haiti_3-01.html to illustrate U.S. reaction to the Aristide resignation and outline the planned scope of U.S. involvement in the reorganization of the Haitian government.

7. Use the articles as a springboard for discussion about the role of the United States as a world "watchdog." Many students pose questions such as "Why is the United States always involved in solving the problems of other countries?" or "We have enough problems in our own country, why do we have to be involved in what is happening with the leadership and lives of people living outside of the United States?" when talking about this issue. Lead a classroom discussion about the role of the United States in world politics using questions like:

- In what way is U.S. involvement in the creation and maintenance of other countries' governments a good thing? Conversely, how is it bad?
- If the United States can only afford to intervene in only a few crises, how should the president decide which countries to help?
- What could happen if the United States adopted a "stay at home" attitude (nationalism) and refrained from involvement in world political struggles?
- As a world Super Power, what obligation does the United States have to help other countries develop and prosper?
- Should the United States encourage other countries to adopt governments or leaders that support U.S. world policy? How?
- Why does the United States use its economic resources to assist other countries when there are plenty or U.S. citizens who could benefit from assistance here instead?

8. As you facilitate the discussion, many students will have diverse opinions about the role of the United States as a world "watchdog" and "protector." Encourage students to give specific examples to support their opinions throughout this discussion. The more specific information that is generated, the more students will be prepared to complete the research steps needed to present their final ideas. Encourage students to debate their points of view with one another throughout the discussion. Be sure to mediate the discussion, correct inaccuracies, and pose additional questions as the discussion warrants.

9. Once the class discussion is complete, each student will need to choose a point of view that he/she supports and write a one page essay about the role of the United States in the development, reorganization, and maintenance of foreign governments. Students will need to use reasons, facts, and examples to illustrate their point of view.

# *U.S. MULLS SENDING MARINES TO HAITI*

Three warships with 2,000 Marines are ready to sail to Haiti, where armed rebels are seeking President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's ouster, as the Pentagon considers its options for dealing with the crisis.

Defense officials said Friday that no deployment orders have been issued, but if the call is made, the Amphibious Ready Group led by the helicopter carrier USS Saipan, can travel from Norfolk, Va. to the impoverished Caribbean nation in two days.

A Navy official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the U.S. military also could send the three ships without large numbers of Marines for maritime interdiction or to support U.S. Coast Guard ships trying to prevent a mass exodus of Haitians to the United States, Reuters reported.

About 50 Marines were sent to Haiti Feb. 23 to guard the U.S. Embassy in the capital Port-au-Prince.

For days, heavily armed rebel groups have threatened to attack Port-au-Prince if Aristide does not step down. Aristide supporters and other residents have erected flaming barricades on streets leading into the capital.

Aristide has faced increasing political opposition since his Lavalas Party gained seats in what many considered to be flawed legislative elections in 2000. The demonstrations turned violent Feb. 5, when rebels began taking over towns in the North, clashing with militant Aristide supporters. About 70 people have died in recent weeks.

Aristide has vowed to stay in office until his term expires in February 2006.

France has voiced support for Aristide's early departure, and U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell on Thursday questioned the embattled president's ability to govern effectively during his remaining two years in office.

"Whether or not [Aristide] is able to effectively continue as president is something he will have to examine carefully, in the interests of the Haitian people," Powell said.

If Aristide resigns, the constitutional successor would be Supreme Court Chief Justice Boniface Alexandre. In the period before elections are held, a broad-based government would be formed consistent with a peace proposal set forth a month ago by the Caribbean Community, a U.S. official told the Associated Press.

President Bush declined to comment Friday on whether he would support an Aristide resignation. "We're interested in achieving a political settlement," he said.

Defense Department officials have not been enthusiastic about launching a military mission to Haiti. The U.S. military is stretched thin by operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, although officials have said that would not prevent them from being able to mount a robust Haiti operation if necessary, Reuters reported.

During the Clinton administration, the United States sent 20,000 troops to Haiti in 1994 to restore Aristide to power after a coup during his first term.

Since then, Powell said, "corruption came into play, inefficiency came into play, cronyism came into play and the whole political tapestry of the country came apart."

The United States and its other regional allies had sent a delegation to the island nation to negotiate a government-sharing agreement with Aristide and nonviolent opposition groups. Aristide agreed to the new arrangement, but opposition leaders refused to accept a deal that did not require the president to resign.

Some U.S. lawmakers have criticized the administration's handling of Haiti. Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., said Friday, "One way or another, the United States is going to have to get involved to resolve this mess.

"We can do it sooner -- and minimize the loss of life and property destruction -- or we can do it later when we will be sending body bags to dispose of the dead and Coast Guard cutters to pick up Haitians at sea," he said, according to the AP.

The United States has intercepted boats with about 531 Haitians in the Windward Pass, a stretch of ocean northwest of Haiti. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said they were taken back to Haiti to be repatriated.

-- Compiled from wire reports and other media sources
President of Haiti resigns; U.S. troops Enter Caribbean Nation Posted: 03.1.04
After increasing diplomatic pressure from the United States and other allies, President Jean-Bertrand Aristide of Haiti fled into exile Sunday, leaving the Caribbean nation in a state of turmoil.

Following Aristide's resignation, President Bush authorized the deployment of about 200 Marines as part of an "interim international force" to restore order. The U.S. troops join soldiers from countries such as Canada and France that are trying to stop the looting and revenge killings that have destabilized Haiti in the past several weeks.

The situation in Haiti, which shares an island with the Dominican Republic around 600 miles off the coast of Florida, has sparked political debate over when and how the United States should intervene in emergency situations around the world. And pressure to resolve the crisis continues, especially from the large number of Haitians living in New York and Florida.

Exile

Reading and Discussion Questions
Following weeks of violent protests, a U.S. military aircraft carried the displaced Aristide and his American wife, Mildred Trouillot Aristide, to the Central African Republic, where they are expected to stay "for a short time," according to state radio.

The couple had earlier in the week sent their two daughters to Mildred's mother's home in New York City.

In a letter explaining his resignation, the former president said that he left to prevent further bloodshed and to ensure that the new government would conform to Haiti's Constitution.

"[The Constitution] should not be drowned in the Haitian people's blood. This is why tonight, if it is my resignation that will prevent a bloodbath, I agree to go with the hope that there will be life and not death."

Haiti's chief justice of the Supreme Court, Boniface Alexandre, was sworn in as the leader of a transitional government until elections can be held in 2005, as defined under the Haitian Constitution.

## Violent uprising

In the 200 years since it gained independence from France, Haiti has been plagued by violent uprisings and brutal military dictatorships.

Many Haitians hoped that Aristide, a former priest, would end the painful cycle when he became Haiti's first democratically elected president in 1990. However, he was only in the presidential palace for several months before a military coup forced him into exile. U.S. troops reinstated him in 1994 and he finished the end of his five-year term.

He returned to power in 2000, but many of his critics believe that the elections were marred by corruption. A coalition of political parties, civil societies, trade unions and business associations boycotted the Congress, and refused to cooperate in any government initiatives until he resigned.

At the same time, armed rebel groups -- not linked to the political opposition groups -- began violent clashes with government supporters especially in the North.

In recent days law and order has broken down and ordinary citizens have been caught up in the looting of stores, government buildings and hospitals. Dozens have been killed.

## U.S. troops

The initial 200 U.S. Marines who arrived in the Haitian capital Port-au-Prince late Sunday night could be joined by hundreds more, according to Secretary of State Colin Powell.

"I don't think there will be a great deal of fighting, but they have to be prepared for that. They need to bring a sense of security back to society, as we have done in times past. Unfortunately, that security didn't stick because of the flawed politics of Haiti," Powell said.

According to a deal reached by the United Nations, the troops will remain no longer than three months, at which time they will be replaced by U.N. peacekeepers.

The U.S. Coast Guard has also been on duty in the area. Three ships stationed just offshore have been picking up Haitians who are trying to flee the violent nation and returning them home.

## Foreign policy criticism

"This is the beginning of a new chapter in the country's history," President Bush said Sunday. "I would urge the people of Haiti to reject violence to give this break from the past a chance to work. The United States is prepared to help."

The Democratic presidential candidates and the Congressional Black Caucus, a group of black Congress members who advocate for black and minority citizens, have criticized the Bush administration's handling of the Haiti crisis, saying that lack of attention allowed the situation to spiral out of control.

Rep. Charles Rangel, a Democrat from New York and a member of the Congressional Black Caucus who was deeply involved in restoring Aristide to power in 1994, said the United States must shoulder much of the blame for Aristide's fall and the chaos that brought it on.

"We are just as much a part of this coup d'etat as the rebels, looters or anyone else," he said.

But Powell said Aristide had a large role in creating the political crisis. After the United States reinstated the leader in 1994, Powell said, "corruption came into play, inefficiency came into play, cronyism came into play and the whole political tapestry of the country came apart."

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Printer-friendly versions: HTML / PDF

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The couple had earlier in the week sent their two daughters to Mildred's mother's home in New York City.

The U.S. military airlifted President Aristide out of Haiti on February 29.

In a letter explaining his resignation, the former president said that he left to prevent further bloodshed and to ensure that the new government would conform to Haiti's Constitution.

"[The Constitution] should not be drowned in the Haitian people's blood. This is why tonight, if it is my resignation that will prevent a bloodbath, I agree to go with the hope that there will be life and not death."

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Rebels in Port-au-Prince celebrated the resignation of Pres. Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

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Sec. of State Powell has said the U.S. will send less than one thousand troops to Haiti.

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# Civil Unrest Spreads through Island Nation of Haiti

Pressure to oust Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide escalated over the weekend as growing opposition turned to mass uprisings in the small, Caribbean nation of 8 million.

The unrest began Thursday, when armed anti-government protestors and some residents took over several cities, setting police stations and government buildings on fire and driving out police and elected officials with guns and machetes.

A student chants anti-government slogans during a protest in Port-au-Prince.

The protestors, led by rebel groups, have been angry with Aristide since he was reelected in 2000 in an election contested by his opponents. They say Aristide, who once was expected to help Haiti move forward with its quest for democracy after decades of dictatorial rule, rigged the elections and has become corrupt and brutal himself.

"We're just waiting for Aristide to go," said one rebel leader. "Step by step, town by town. When we have all the departments [districts], we'll go down to Port-au-Prince [the capital]."

## A nation in conflict

Haiti is located to the south of the Island nation Cuba.

The nation of Haiti, which shares an island landmass with the Dominican Republic, has seen decades of violence and poverty since its independence from France in 1804, most notably during the reign of the infamous Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier.

Tensions between blacks and mulattos -- mixed race Haitians -- divided the nation starting in the early 1800s.

Then, between 1915 and 1934 the United States invaded Haiti and maintained control of the island until 1956. Following a coup in 1956 and a year of political turmoil, Duvalier, a physician and a practitioner of Voodoo -- a religion that is a mix of Roman Catholic ritual, animism and magic recently made one of Haiti's official religions -- was elected to office and declared himself "president for life." He used personal bodyguards called Macoutes or bogeymen, as protection.

Reading and Discussion Questions

When Duvalier died in 1971, his son Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier took over as president for life. Both Duvaliers were infamous for their brutality and between 1957 and 1986 when Baby Doc fled the country amidst protests thousands of Duvalier opponents mysteriously disappeared or were murdered.

## Aristide

During the Duvalier rule, a young priest named Jean-Bertrand Aristide became a leading voice in the opposition.

When the country finally held elections in 1990, Aristide dubbed his campaign "Lavalas" or a cleansing flood, and won 67 percent of the vote.

Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier declared himself "president for life" in 1956.

Although many Haitians hoped his election would usher in peace and prosperity to the young democracy, Aristide was ousted a year later in a military coup. The coup, led by Brig. Gen. Raoul Cedras, led to economic sanctions against the country by both the United States and the United Nations.

In 1994 U.S. forces arrived in Haiti to oversee a peaceful transition from military rule to civilian rule. Aristide returned to power for a short time, but it wasn't until 2000 that he was again elected president.

Today, the country of 8 million people is considered the poorest in North, South and Latin America and has one of the highest rates of AIDS in the world.

Since contested legislative elections in 2000, Aristide's opponents have refused to recognize his party's leadership and have held mass demonstrations in the country's capital, Port-au-Prince.

Some protesters in the capital marched peacefully to call for the president's resignation.

In the last few months, the violence has escalated and 69 people have died in clashes with the police since September.

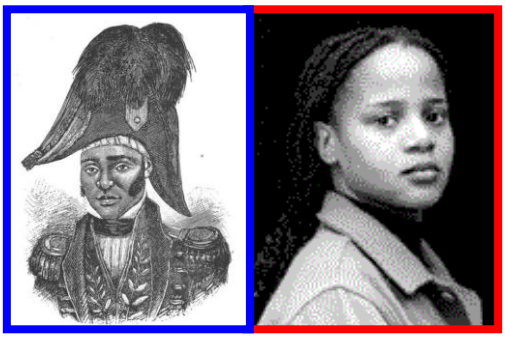
**-- Kristina Nwazota, Online NewsHour**

Source: http://www.nytimes.com/learning/index.html

# Commemoration Gallery for Haitian Heritage Month

**Lesson Plan:** Commemoration Gallery for Haitian Heritage Month

**Subject:** World History
American History



**Grade level:** **Secondary**

**CBC Connection:** II. Historical Awareness,
III. Civic Participation
V. Cultural Awareness

**Description/ Abstract of Lesson:** After conducting researching, writing reports and gathering materials on the contributions of Haitians in the Americas, the students will organize a "Commemoration Gallery" to be exhibited in Haitian Heritage Month in May.

**Objective(s):** The students will

- Demonstrate appreciation for multicultural perspectives of history.
- Foster awareness for inter-cultural historical events and contributions.

**Materials:**

- Internet Resources
- Attached Documents
- Science Poster Boards
- Markers, Colored Pencils, Crayons, etc.
- Glue

**Duration:** 5 class periods

**Lesson Lead In/ Opening:** 1. Explain to the students that historians are constantly digging deep and uncovering parts of our inter-cultural heritage that we have either forgotten or have been completely unaware took place.

2. Have the students read and discuss the attached article "U.S. Monument for Haitian Soldiers Who Fought in the U.S. War for Independence"

3. Prompt discussion by asking higher order thinking questions: (examples)

- Besides the information covered in this article, what else do you know about the contributions of the Haitian people?
- Why is it important to learn about the contributions of other cultures?

- Why is it important to commemorate our heroes of different cultural backgrounds with monuments such as the one you just read about?
- If you had the opportunity to create a monument commemorating a heroic historical achievement, who and what would you do it on?

**Activity:** 1. Have the students research and write brief reports (2 to 3 pages) on the great contributions and relationships that Haitians have established historically in the Americas.

**Suggested Topics:**

- Approximately 750 Haitian freemen assisting in the U.S. War for Independence – The Siege of Savannah on October 9, 1779.

- Toussaint L'Ouverture organizing the first large scale battle against the Spanish, British and the French and developing a lucrative sugar trade with the United States. He was eventually captured in an ambush and died imprisoned in France. He is credited for being one of the Fathers of the Haitian Revolution.

- Alexandre Petion offering aid in the form of arms to Simon Bolivar in exchange for abolishing slavery and including the colors of the Haitian flag (Red and Blue) on all of the colonies he liberated in South America.

- On May 16 – 18, 1803 – Traditional rivals Jean Jacques Dessalines, leader of the Blacks and Alexandre Petion, leader of the mulattos, met in the city of Archahaie and agreed to fight as a united front against Napoleon Bonaparte's colonial army. This pact sealed the fate of French rule in Haiti and led to the creation of the first Black Republic in the Western Hemisphere.

- Jean Baptiste Du Sable founds the city of Chicago in the 1770s. He finally becomes recognized for this accomplishment in 1968. Du Sable was the first Haitian to be placed on a Black Heritage Stamp.

- Frederick Douglass served as U.S. Minister to Haiti between 1889 and 1891.

- Under the tag name SAMO, Jean Michel Basquiat became one of the most noted graffiti artists in New York City throughout the 1980s. His paintings were displayed in major art museums throughout the world and featured at shows with the works of such artists as Keith Haring and Andy Warhol.

- 1990s - Edwidge Danticat becomes one of America's most celebrated new writers, publishing story books such as Breath, Eyes, Memory and Krik? Krak!

- October 17, 2001 Governor Jeb Bush names assistant public defender Fred Seraphin the first Haitian-American judge in Miami-Dade County

- In January of 2005 Grammy-award winning musician Wyclef Jean founds Yele Haiti, a non-profit organization dedicated to rebuilding schools and providing food and clean water to the poor in Haiti.

- In 2006, community activist Max Rameau initiates Umoja Village, a project dedicated to housing the poor in Miami-Dade County.

**Suggested Websites for Research:**

**Toussaint L'Ouverture**

http://www.historywiz.com/toussaint.htm

http://www.hyperhistory.net/apwh/bios/b4louverturetoussaint.htm

http://www.bartelby.com/65/to/TousStLO.html

**Jean Jacques Dessalines**

http://www.webster.edu/~corbetre/haiti/leaders/dessalines.htm

http://dolphin.upenn.edu/~dhsa/dessa_bio.html

**Alexandre Petion**

http://web.upmf-grenoble.fr/Haiti/Petion.htm

**Frederick Douglass**

http://www.history.rochester.edu/class/douglass/home.html

http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/jb/progress/douglass_1

http://www.caribvoice.org/A&E/basquait.html

**Jean Michel Basquiat**

http://www.english.emory.edu/Bahri/Basquiat.html

http://www.lucidcafe.com/library/95dec/basquiat.html

**Fred Seraphin**

http://southflorida.bizjournals.com/southflorida/stories/2001/10/15/daily31.html

**Edwidge Danticat**

http://reach.ucf.edu/~aml3930/danticat/

**Wyclef Jean**

http://www.yele.org/

**Max Rameau**

http://takebacktheland.blogspot.com/

http://www.earthfirstjournal.org/article.php?id=3

**Various**

http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/43a/398.html

http://haitisupport.gn.apc.org/10_fam_main2.html

2. After proofing the reports, have the students type them professionally on Microsoft Word.

3. Have the students research pictures in magazines, newspapers and the Internet representing their individual projects. (The students may also draw images).

4. Have the students post their reports and pictures on a science poster board. Encourage the students to be creative with their designs.

5. Upon completion, have the school media center display the projects for Haitian Heritage Month in the form of a gallery.

**Extended Lesson:**

- Designate one whole day to having students give presentations in the media center about their projects. Invite other classes and the community to the presentations.

- Invite guest speakers from the community to speak about their unique experiences as a Haitian living in South Florida in the media center.

**Assessment:**

- Evaluate reports according to historical accuracy, grammar and neatness.
- Consider creativity grades in projects.
- Consider cooperation grade in cases of students working together on certain projects.

**Suggested Books In Lesson:**

James, C.L.R. (1989) The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution, Vintage

Dayan, J. (1998) Haiti, History, and the Gods, University of California Press

McCarthy Brown, K. (2001) Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn, University of California Press

Danticat, E. (1996) Krik? Krak!, Vintage

Wilentz, A. (1990) The Rainy Season: Haiti Since Duvalier, Simon & Schuster

# Global Kids' *Ayiti: The Cost of Life* Game

**Objectives**:
Students will be able to:

- Explore the core challenges faced by children in Haiti.
- Examine the impact poverty has on access to education, nutrition, basic healthcare and child mortality.
- Identify some of the social, political and economic variables that affect Haitian children.
- Become familiar with the UNICEF Child Alert: Haiti Summary Paper.

**Time:** 50 Minutes

**Materials:**

- Newsprint
- Markers
- Copy of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child for each student: http://www.unicef.org/crc/
- Copies of the UNICEF Child Alert Summary on children in Haiti: http://www.unicef.org/childalert/haiti

**Note:**
This workshop can be conducted either before playing the *Ayiti: The Cost of Life* game, as a way to introduce students to the game's issues, or after playing the game, as a way to help them better understand the links between poverty and access to education.

The United Nations defines a child as anyone under the age of 18. Every young person has rights and responsibilities protected by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The Convention has been ratified by Haiti and every other country in the world except for the United States and Somalia.
http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm

The Convention on the Rights of the Child makes nation states accountable for their actions towards children and calls on nations to create the conditions in which children may take an active and creative part in the social and political life of their countries. The CRC explicitly codifies the child's right to education in articles 28 and 29.

## Main Activity: (35 Minutes)
## Children of Haiti Summit

**Rationale**: This part of the workshop will explore the challenges faced by children in Haiti, using the UNICEF *Child Alert: Haiti* report as a primary reference. During this activity, students will assume the roles of community advocates/stakeholders who are concerned about the areas of: security, health, education, poverty and unemployment. The simulation exercise will help students understand the social political and economic dynamics that constitute the realities faced by children in Haiti.

This will be achieved by putting students in groups, each assigned with the task of alerting a team of representatives from the United Nations to the status of one of the following issues in Haiti: education; health; security; and unemployment and poverty. One group will be the United Nations Special Representatives who will interview the groups then report their findings to a panel of experts (teacher/s) at the "Children of Haiti Summit."

**Procedure:**

1. Distribute copies of the UNICEF *Child Alert: Haiti* report. Provided in packet
2. Divide students into five groups: Provided in packet
    - Group 1: UN Special Representatives
    - Group 2: Education Advocates
    - Group 3: Health Advocates
    - Group 4: Poverty and Unemployment Experts
    - Group 5: Security Experts
3. Provide each group with newsprint and marker.
4. Explain that each group except group Group1 will read the *Child Alert: Haiti* Report. As advocates or experts on a specific issue (e.g., education or health, etc.), each group must summarize the challenges children face in relation to that issue, and list their findings and recommendations. Each group has a set of guiding questions to help them generate the information they need (see below). Give groups 15 minutes to do this.
5. The UN Special Representatives' Group, (Group 1), is a team traveling to Haiti on a fact-finding mission. In the interest of time, the group should divide up and send members of the team to groups 2, 3, 4, and 5 to conduct simultaneous interviews. Their assignment is to collect information on the issues so they can prepare a presentation at the "UN Children of Haiti" Summit. Give the group 5 minutes to gather the information.

6. Once the UN Special Representatives have gathered their information, suggest that they take themselves aside for five minutes to prepare their presentation.
7. While the Special Representatives are working, re-arrange the room and explain that they all will now participate in the 'Children of Haiti Summit' at the United Nations.
8. Call all participants to order and tell them they are about to listen to a presentation from a team of international experts on the status of children in Haiti. Direct the Special Representatives to present their report.
9. Tell them that you (teacher/facilitator) will act as the chair of the summit and facilitate a brief conversation after the presentations about the information presented (or left out).
10. After the group has made the presentation, lead the class in a discussion about the activity and what they learned using the following questions:

**Processing of the Main activity (10 Minutes):**

1. What did you think of this activity?
2. What are some of the major challenges faced by children in Haiti?
3. What information in the UNICEF *Child Alert: Haiti* report surprised you?
4. What do you consider to be the biggest obstacle to accessing education in Haiti? Why?
5. What do you think is the most urgent need for a child in Haiti today?
6. What role can the Haitian government play in meeting the needs of Haitian children?
7. What role can the international community play to support Haitian children?
8. What role should the United States government play to support Haitian children?
9. What role can youth play to make a difference here and in Haiti?

## Background Information for Educators

**Rationale:** This section will provide you with general background information about the international norms and regulations outlining the rights and entitlements of all children around the world, with particular emphasis on the right to education. It will also give you a snapshot into the prevailing social, political and economic realities in Haiti.

**Overview:**

The right to education is a fundamental human right. Every individual, irrespective of race, gender, nationality, ethnic or social origin, religion or political preference, age or disability, is entitled to a free elementary education.

**The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR):**

The right to education is explicitly stated in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted in 1948[7]:

"Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be

> free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. …" (Article 26)

Ensuring *access to education* is a precondition for full realization of the right to education. Without access, it is not possible to guarantee the right to education.[8]

**The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC):**
The United Nations defines a child as anyone under the age of 18. Every young person has rights and responsibilities protected by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The Convention has been ratified by Haiti and every other country in the world except for the United States and Somalia. (http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm)

The CRC makes nation states accountable for their actions towards children and calls on nations to create the conditions in which children may take an active and creative part in the social and political life of their countries. The CRC explicitly codifies the child's right to education in articles 28 and 29.

**Access to Education in Haiti:**
In Haiti only fifty-five percent of school age children receive an education; only two percent finish the U.S. equivalent of high school; and roughly one-third of youths between 15 and 24 are illiterate.

There are many factors that prevent children from attaining their right to basic education. Poverty is one of the biggest obstacles. In Haiti poverty is more widespread in rural areas than in the cities. Seventy-seven percent of Haiti's extremely poor live in rural areas. The level of education of the main provider in a Haitian household has a clear impact on the risk of being poor.[9] Of those living in households where the main provider has higher education, only seven percent are extremely poor compared to seventy percent of those living in households where the main provider has no education.[10]

**Economic Inequality:**
In Haiti, often described as the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, 80% of the population lives in abject poverty. Haiti's most serious underlying social problem, the huge wealth gap between the impoverished Creole-speaking black majority and the French-speaking mulattos, 1% of whom own nearly half the country's wealth, remains unaddressed. Two-thirds of all Haitians depend on the agriculture sector, mainly small-

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[8] http://www.hrea.org/learn/guides/right-to-education.html
[9] Poverty in Haiti, Pål Sletten and Willy Egset, Fafo Foundation, Norway (2004) http://www.fafo.no/pub/rapp/755/755.pdf
[10] Poverty in Haiti, Pål Sletten and Willy Egset, Fafo Foundation, Norway (2004) http://www.fafo.no/pub/rapp/755/755.pdf

scale subsistence farming, and remain vulnerable to damage from frequent natural disasters, exacerbated by the country's widespread deforestation. Persons with education in Haiti tend to live in the metropolitan areas and are salaried rather than self employed.

**Political Instability:**
After gaining independence in 1804, Haiti has experienced significant political upheavals. Years of misrule by dictators and a series of armed rebellions have led to the collapse of the Haitian economy, degeneration of infrastructure, and exacerbated the government's inability to provide desperately needed social services such as healthcare, clean water and education.[11] With a new democratically elected president, Rene Preval, (February, 2006), the government faces huge challenges - such as improving social and economic conditions. President Rene Preval said Haiti was on the path to recovering its sovereignty, but said it needed the help of the international community. A UN peacekeeping force is deployed in Haiti[12], which remains deeply divided between rival political factions.

Because of poverty, children are often faced with many challenging conditions and responsibilities, including:

- Having to work in their homes to keep the household running.
- Caring for their younger siblings instead of going to school.
- Lacking money needed to pay for school fees, transportations, uniforms and supplies, and food.
- Lacking medical resources needed to stay healthy and attend school.

**Resources:**

- **UNICEF Child Alert Haiti** http://www.unicef.org/childalert/haiti/

- **USAID** (United States Agency for International Development) programs in Haiti: http://www.usaid.gov/ht/education.htm

- **World Bank** www.worldbank.org

- **United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti** (MINUSTAH) http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/minustah/index.html

- **Global Campaign for Education** http://www.campaignforeducation.org/

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[11] For further reading on the Haitian politics go to: http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/haiti-politics.htm

[12] United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/minustah/

## Action Assignment

**Rationale:** This section will suggest possible actions your students can undertake to make a difference.

**What You Can Do:**

Inform students that there are many ways to take action:

1. Write a letter to your Congressional or Senate Representatives to find out what they are doing to improve access to education for children in Haiti. http://www.vote-smart.org/index.htm

2. Create a petition, collect signatures, and send them to any of the following U.S. government offices or agencies calling for programs that increase access to education for Haitian children:

- The Embassy of the United States in Haiti
  U.S. Ambassador to Haiti
  Ms. Janet A. Sanderson
  Boulevard Harry Truman no. 5
  Bicentenaire–Port-au-Prince, Haiti
  http://haiti.usembassy.gov/

- USAID/Port-Au-Prince
  Department of State
  Washington, DC 20521-3400
  Tel: 509-223-3805Fax: 509-223-9603
  URL: www.usaid.gov/ht

Write a letter of inquiry to the Haitian Ambassador to the United States or United Nations to find out about the current status on access to education in Haiti:

- His Excellency Ambassador Raymond Joseph
  2311 Massachusetts Avenue,
  NW, Washington DC 20008
  Telephone: (202) 332-4090Fax: (202) 745-7215
  E-mail: embassy@haiti.org
  URL: www.haiti.org/

- His Excellency Ambassador Leo Merores
  Permanent Representative of the Republic of Haiti to the UN
  801 Second Avenue, Suite 600
  New York, NY 10017
  Tel: 212-370-4840 Fax: 212-661-8698
  Email: Haiti@un.int
  URL: www.un.int/haiti

3. Introduce your peers to the game and educate them about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, (http://www.unicef.org/crc/).

4. Raise funds to support a local organization in Haiti such as the Maison Fortuné Orphanage in Hinche which is working to provide food, shelter, clothing and education to orphaned Haitian children. http://www.maisonfortune.org/

5. Write a few paragraphs about what you learned playing the game and send it to Global Kids to post on its website. Email to: info@globalkids.org with the 'Ayiti Action' in the subject line.

6. Educate your peers and members of your community by writing an article on poverty as an obstacle to education in Haiti in your school or community newspaper.

**Organizations Working in Haiti**:

1. **Haitian Coalition for the Defense of Children's Rights**
   Ms. Colette Larose Lamothe
   10, Babiole, Turgeau,
   Port-au-Prince, Haiti
   Tel / Fax : 245-4357

2. **UNESCO Office Port au Prince**
   Mr. Paul-Antoine Bien-Aimé
   Education Expert
   United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
   19, Delmas 60, Musseau par Bourdon, Petion Ville,
   Port-au-Prince, Haiti
   Email: unescohaiti@hainet.net

3. **Centre for Specialized Education**
   73, rue Enterrement, Port-au-Prince
   Phone: 509-222 21 54  257

E-mail: magloirenicole@hotmail.com

4. **Association Women Sun of Haiti (AFASDA)**
   Cap Haitian, rue 21, J-K, # 145
   Haiti
   Phone 509-431 40 89
   E-mail: afasdacap@yahoo.fr

5. **Fanm Yo La** Strengthening leadership/capacity building
   9, rue Cheriez, Canapé Vert, Port-au-Prince
   Phone: 509-244 54 28 or 403 92 29
   E-mail: fanmyola@yahoo.fr

6. **Yele Haiti Foundation**
   P.O. Box 2345
   New York, NY 10108
   Tel: 212-352-0552 (voicemail only)
   www.yele.org

## Haiti Country Profile Sheet

**http://news.bbc.co.uk**

1. Haiti is the world's first black-led republic and the first Caribbean state to achieve independence, Haiti's pride has been dented by decades of poverty, environmental degradation, violence, instability and dictatorship which have left it as the poorest nation in the Americas.

2. Haiti achieved notoriety during the brutal dictatorships of the voodoo physician, Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier, and his son, Jean-Claude, or "Baby Doc". Hopes that the election in 1990 of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a former priest, would herald a brighter future were dashed when he was overthrown by the military a short time later.

3. Although economic sanctions and US-led military intervention forced a return to constitutional government in 1994, Haiti's fortunes did not pick up, with allegations of electoral irregularities, ongoing extra-judicial killings, torture and brutality.

4. A bloody rebellion, and pressure from the US and France, forced Mr. Aristide out of the country in 2004. Since then, an elected leadership has taken over from an interim government and a UN stabilization force has been deployed. But Haiti is still plagued by violent confrontations between rival gangs and political groups and the UN has described the human rights situation as "catastrophic".

5. **Politics:** Democratic rule was restored in 2006, two years after a violent revolt ousted former leader Jean-Bertrand Aristide; bitter political divisions persist.

6. **Economy:** Haiti's economy is in ruins and there is chronic unemployment.

7. **International:** The UN has deployed peacekeepers; international aid is seen as key to recovery.

Country profile source: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/country_profiles/1202772.stm

### Additional Articles on Haiti:

Donors Pledge $750 million aid to Haiti. July 2006
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/5215490.stm

Challenges Ahead for Haiti's Preval. February 2006
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4721510.stm

Glimmers of Hope in Cite Soleil. February 2006:
http://blog.washingtonpost.com/haitisstruggle/2006/02/glimmers_of_hope_in_cite_solei_1.html

UN Envoy Urges Continuing Aid for Haiti. May 2006:
http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/20/world/americas/20haiti.html?ex=1160280000&en=3c762a89fbe52485&ei=5070

The Council on Foreign Relations. http://www.cfr.org/region/223/haiti.html

**Group Assignment Handouts**

## Group 1: UN Special Representatives

Your group is on a fact-finding mission. You must visit each of the other groups and gather information about the challenges they face in the areas of Security, Education, Poverty/Unemployment and Health.

At least one member of this group must get the following information from each of the other groups:

1. What is the group's issue, or primary area of concern?
2. Who is involved and what are the challenges? Collect at least three facts and/or statistics.
3. How are Haitian children affected?
4. What are your recommendations?

## Group 2: Education Advocates

There are several factors that limit Haitian children's access to basic education. Your group must identify and outline the factors that prevent Haitian children from going to school. (For example, poverty forces many children to work at the home. See page 2).

**As a group you must answer the following questions:**

1. What is the group's issue, or primary area of concern?
2. Who is involved and what are the challenges? What are the facts and statistics, if any?
3. How are Haitian children affected?
4. What recommendations/demands do you have for the Haitian government and international community?

## Group 3: Health Advocates

Many Haitian children have no access to basic health services. Your group must identify and outline the health related facts and challenges affecting Haitian children as outlined in the Child Alert: Haiti Report. (An example would be inadequate immunization services for infants. See page 1).

**As a group you must answer the following questions:**

1. What is the group's issue, or primary area of concern?
2. Who is involved and what are the challenges? What are the facts and statistics, if any?
3. How are Haitian children affected?
4. What recommendations/demands do you have for the Haitian government and international community?

## Group 4: Poverty and Unemployment

Poverty is a major obstacle education access in Haiti. Your group must identify and outline the ways in which poverty makes it difficult for the children in Haiti to go to school. (An example would be that families often send their children away from home to do domestic-work, and this exposes them to exploitation and abuse. See page 3).

**As a group you must answer the following questions:**

1. What is the group's issue, or primary area of concern?
2. Who is involved and what are the challenges? What are the facts and statistics, if any?
3. How are Haitian children affected?
4. What recommendations/demands do you have for the Haitian government and international community?

## Group 5: Security

In Port-au-Prince alone an estimated 2,000 street children are living and working on its roads and squares. Many of these children are unprotected from abuse and violence on the streets. Your group must identify and outline the challenges faced by children living on the streets.

**As a group you must answer the following questions:**

1. What is the group's issue, or primary area of concern?
2. Who is involved and what are the challenges? What are the facts and statistics, if any?
3. How are Haitian children affected?
4. What recommendations/demands do you have for the Haitian government and international community?

# Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Children have rights as human beings and also need special care and protection.

UNICEF's mission is to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. UNICEF is guided in doing this by the provisions and principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Built on varied legal systems and cultural traditions, the Convention is a universally agreed set of non-negotiable standards and obligations. These basic standards—also called human rights—set minimum entitlements and freedoms that should be respected by governments. They are founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each individual, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth status or ability and therefore apply to every human being everywhere. With these rights comes the obligation on both governments and individuals not to infringe on the parallel rights of others. These standards are both interdependent and indivisible; we cannot ensure some rights without—or at the expense of—other rights.

## A legally binding instrument

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate the full range of human rights—civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. In 1989, world leaders decided that children needed a special convention just for them because people under 18 years old often need special care and protection that adults do not. The leaders also wanted to make sure that the world recognized that children have human rights too.

The Convention sets out these rights in 54 articles and two Optional Protocols. It spells out the basic human rights that children everywhere have: the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life. The four core principles of the Convention are non-discrimination; devotion to the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child. Every right spelled out in the Convention is inherent to the human dignity and harmonious development of every child. The Convention protects children's rights by setting standards in health care; education; and legal, civil and social services.

By agreeing to undertake the obligations of the Convention (by ratifying or acceding to it), national governments have committed themselves to protecting and ensuring children's rights and they have agreed to hold themselves accountable for this commitment before the international community. States parties to the Convention are obliged to develop and undertake all actions and policies in the light of the best interests of the child.

# CHILD ALERT Haiti

For every child
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY

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# Child Alert: Haiti

*Child Alert* is a briefing series that presents the core challenges for children in a given crisis location at a given time. Haiti has far and away the Western Hemisphere's highest death rate of under-5-year-olds. What can the new, democratically elected government do, with the support of the international community, to change this situation?

## Survival is the greatest challenge for Haiti's children

In Haiti, it is a major accomplishment for a child to survive long enough to mark his or her first birthday. In fact, 1 of every 14 infants in Haiti never reaches that milestone. Making it through the first year of life, however, does not ensure survival. In no other country in Latin America and the Caribbean - and in only a few in the developing world outside of sub-Saharan Africa – is a child more likely to die between the ages of 1 and 4 than in Haiti. In 2004, of the 58,000 deaths in the region among children in this age group, 11,000 – 19 per cent, or roughly 1 in every 5 – were Haitian. Another 11,000 were Mexican. Yet Mexico also has 19 per cent of the region's births, while Haiti has just 2 per cent.

The disproportionate ratio of child deaths to births in Haiti says much about why this Child Alert has been issued. This disparity should not, and cannot, be allowed to continue. With the election of a new government, there is fresh hope that the plight of Haiti's long-neglected children can begin to change – but only if concerted action is taken now and sustained in the coming years.

Haiti recently elected a new president, René Preval. Along with all the other presidential candidates, Mr. Preval endorsed the *Political Agenda for Children*, a policy paper on social reform for children. The *Agenda* is, in effect, a road map for child development and protection. Beginning with a comprehensive analysis of the situation of Haiti's children, it sets out priorities for improving child and maternal health and educational attainment, reducing HIV/AIDS and protecting children against abuse, exploitation and violence. In addition to outlining the responsibilities of the government and Congress, the plan calls for the active involvement of civil society and the private sector, especially local leaders and parents.

Reaching the targets of the *Agenda* would help spur progress toward the UN Millennium Development Goals – which governments agreed to six years ago and which have been largely beyond Haiti's reach, especially in the areas of child survival, immunization and universal primary education. Based on his previous term in office in the late 1990s, Mr. Preval is committed to the MDGs. He recently stated his intention to take children off the streets, and to replace the weapons in their hands with pens and books. But the task he faces is daunting. In addition to its staggering infant and child mortality rates, almost every other major indicator related to child health and development in Haiti is far worse than the regional averages (see Figures).

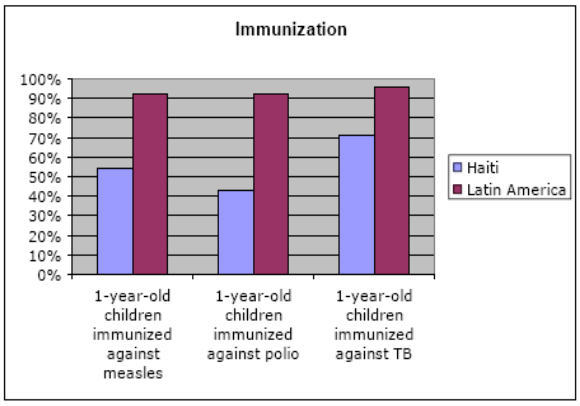
Many Haitian children have no access to basic health services at all. In rural and urban areas alike, cost and distance are barriers to healthcare. Those facilities that exist tend to be poorly situated, understaffed and inadequately supplied. Substandard private health facilities fill the gap between government capacity and public demand.

A major factor in the low survival rate of newborns and infants in Haiti is the lack of widespread immunization. Haitians compensate by having large families, in the expectation – common before the introduction of antibiotics – that a certain number of their children are fated to die of diseases that simply cannot be prevented. In Haiti only 54 per cent of children under the age of one receive vaccinations for measles, compared to over 90 per cent for the rest of Latin America, and 66 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa.

Rates of chronic malnutrition among Haitian children are also high, especially in rural areas. It is estimated that across the country, almost one quarter of all children under the age of five suffers from moderate to severe malnutrition, a

developmental inheritance that can leave children with an intellectual and physical deficit for the rest of their lives. In the Artibonite Valley, the Haitian 'breadbasket,' the only hospital in a 60km radius is inundated with cases of malnutrition.

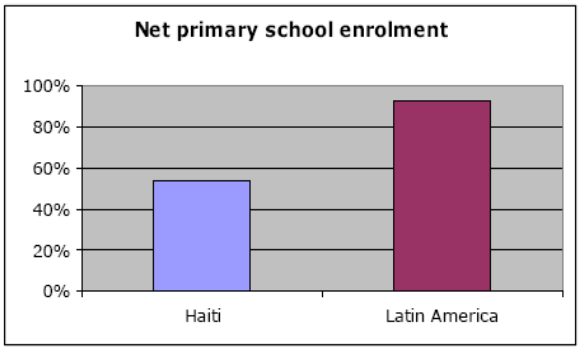
With 2 out of every 3 Haitians living below the national poverty line at the time of the country's last survey, just obtaining the basic necessities of life, such as clean water to drink and fuel for cooking, is a struggle. Only 71 per cent of the population uses an improved water source, and just 34 per cent have access to adequate sanitation facilities.




Many children spend hours fetching water from the nearest source, often at the expense of their schooling. Once carried home, the water is not safe until it is boiled and treated with wood or charcoal – scarce resources since centuries of exploitation have left Haiti with just a 3 per cent covering of forest. It is of little surprise, then, that diarrhoea is prevalent, and is a leading cause of mortality and morbidity among children under the age of five. Only 41 percent of children under five who are stricken with diarrhoea receive oral rehydration therapy and continued feeding.

In Cité Saint Martin, one of the poorest neighbourhoods in the capital of Port-au-Prince, 60,000 people reside in a square kilometre without waste disposal or toilet facilities. The health risks from contaminated water and the open sewers around them are extremely high. "In Haiti, if a child is thirsty and you give him water to drink, he could easily die from that water," laments Margarette Albert, an aid worker in the capital's Bel Air slum.

For parents, education offers the single hope of a life for their children beyond these brutal conditions. Enormous sacrifices are made by many poor families to send their children to school, since the majority of schools charge a fee for each student. Yet the education system, beset by years of underinvestment, strangles even these hopes. Schools in Haiti are largely overcrowded, run-down and barely maintained. Training and resources for teachers are inadequate, and payment of their salaries is irregular at best.

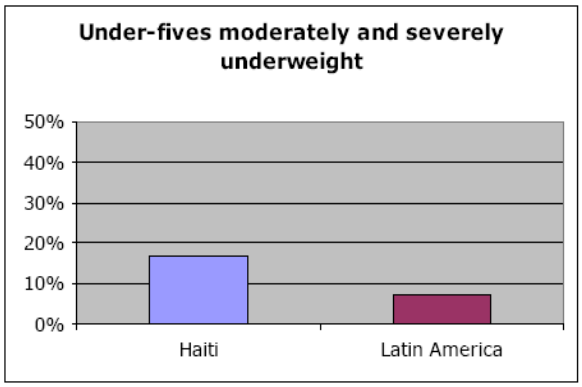



There are other factors that help deny children the right to a basic education. Poverty forces many children to work in the home, or to care for younger children instead of going to school. In rural areas, distance from school and lack of transportation are also constraints. In the cities, the high numbers of orphans, street children and violence are a barrier to school attendance. It is hardly surprising, then, that only 55 per cent of primary-school-age children receive an education; that only 2 per cent finish secondary school, and that the latest estimates show that roughly one-third of youths between 15 and 24 are illiterate.

If there is one common plaudit for the school system, it is that it keeps many children off the streets. The latest estimates suggest that in Port-au-Prince alone there are 2,000 street children living and working on its roads and public squares. Some street children are orphans, others are escapees from violent homes or places of work; and still others have left their impoverished rural communities in search of a better life in the cities. Once there, they survive by begging or doing menial work. Many are sexually exploited. Others do not

survive: Reports place the murder rate of street children in Port-au-Prince at one a week.

Children whose basic needs are unmet and who are unprotected against abuse are easily and forcibly recruited into gangs. Some are coerced into membership; others see gang life as a way to gain food, shelter, protection and prestige. In Haiti's largest cities, armed gangs recruit children to be messengers, to commit crimes, and to fight rival gangs. Refusal to carry out orders means risking punishment. For girls, gangs bring the threat of forced prostitution, or rape. "Young girls are often raped by the men of the opposing gang as a way of reprisal," says Danise, a 22-year old former resident of Cité Soleil, one of the capital's largest slums.

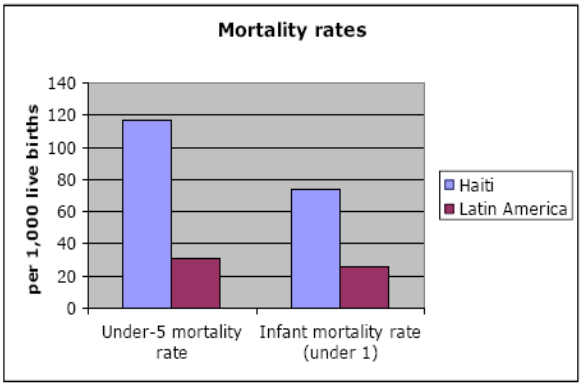



Poverty, destitution and violence foster the conditions that allow children to become excluded and invisible - exploited, neglected, trafficked and abused. It is estimated that more than half the children lack birth registration, without which they are more vulnerable to exclusion from essential services such as healthcare and education, protection from early marriage and labour, and, when they grow up, access to credit and the right to vote. Compared with other countries in the region, Haiti has the highest rate of orphans (children who have lost one or both parents), who account for 16 per cent of the under-18 population.

The problems of child labour, trafficking, and HIV/AIDS, to name but three, are serious. Around 1 in 10 children is engaged in domestic work away from their families. Girls account for three-quarters of these 300,000-plus workers, who have been dubbed *restaveks* (meaning in the Creole dialect "to stay with"). Many poor parents, who cannot feed or educate their children, allow them to become *restaveks* out of desperation. Families are typically visited by prospective employers or intermediaries who promise that their children will be fed, educated and cared for. But all too often, the reality is that the child is exploited and abused, working long hours on meagre food rations and with limited possibilities of receiving an education.

Celine, 13, and Naki, 12, are two children who were harmed by their employers. Celine was sexually abused and severely burned by the two men who "owned" her. Naki, a small boy with scars on his forehead and chest, was beaten with a rock by the man he worked for. He is now at Foyer L'Escale, a shelter in northern Port-au-Prince for young *restaveks* who have managed to escape abusive employers.

The exploitation of Haiti's children is not confined to the country's borders. Haitian children are kidnapped or trafficked into the neighbouring Dominican Republic. Many parents, despairing of the bleak prospects for their children and believing that migration may offer the only avenue for employment and a better future for them, are tricked into paying for their passage to the Dominican Republic. Again, the reality is often very different from the promise, particularly for girls. Most of them become domestic servants, and some end up in prostitution.




As for HIV/AIDS, a glimmer of hope has emerged for Haiti's children. Though the country's HIV-prevalence rate is by far the highest in the region, and more than 200,000 children have lost one or both parents to the AIDS, recent developments give cause for

cautious optimism. HIV infection among pregnant women fell by half from 1992 to 2003-04 (from 6.2 per cent to 3.1 per cent). The fall was particularly marked in urban areas and among young women aged 15-24, and may be related to behavioural change (the evidence is indicative rather than conclusive). The fact remains, however, that more than 3 per cent of the adult population is infected by HIV, and 5,000 babies are born each year with the infection (of whom just 300 receive appropriate care). Increased prevention initiatives and treatment will be vital to ensure that the corner indeed has been turned.

## A future for Haiti's children

Despite their plight, the hopes of children are resilient. Romario, who is 15 and voluntarily attends an open, safe centre for street children where he receives education and has access to leisure says, "If I were President, I would bring all the children on the streets to places where they can go to school and grow."

Whether Mr. Preval and his new government can fulfil these hopes, or even come close, will depend on sound political leadership, continued commitment to children, and increased and sustained support of international donors.

UNICEF believes that the *Political Agenda for Children* represents an essential common platform from which reform can begin — by placing children at the centre of social change. But if Haiti's long neglected children are to have the bright future that is their right, swift and decisive action is needed.

Our thanks to our partners, government counterparts, non-governmental organizations, UN colleagues and Haitian advisors, who assisted in the creation of this report. A particular note of thanks to the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University.

**For further information on this Child Alert, e-mail childalert@unicef.org**

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964** - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

**Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964,** as amended - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.

**Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972** - prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender.

**Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA),** as amended - prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40.

**The Equal Pay Act of 1963,** as amended - prohibits sex discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment.

**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** - prohibits discrimination against the disabled.

**Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)** - prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations and telecommunications.

**The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA)** - requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons.

**The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978** - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

**Florida Educational Equity Act (FEEA)** - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, marital status, or handicap against a student or employee.

**Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992** - secures for all individuals within the state freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status.

**School Board Rules 6Gx13- 4A-1.01, 6Gx13- 4A-1.32, and 6Gx13- 5D-1.10** - prohibit harassment and/or discrimination against a student or employee on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs, marital status, age, sexual orientation, social and family background, linguistic preference, pregnancy, or disability.

*Veterans are provided re-employment rights in accordance with P.L. 93-508 (Federal Law) and Section 295.07 (Florida Statutes), which stipulate categorical preferences for employment.*