Grade 7- Social Studies

Topic: Jamaica's Cultural Heritage

Students should be able to define the following terms:

1. Melting pot
2. Culture
3. Preservation
4. Cultural heritage
5. Tangible culture
6. Intangible culture

Characteristics of Culture

Characteristics of a culture consist of the details which distinguishes a group of people from another. In general, the characteristic of aw culture refers to the groups’ music, language, religion, dress, traditions, practices, beliefs and folk among others.

Characteristics of Jamaica’s Culture

Music Dancehall, reggae, soca,

Language Creole (patois). English, Spanish

Religion Christianity, Revivalism, Rastafari

Traditions Setups, nine night, cooking rice and peas on Sunday’s

Sports Track and field, netball, football

Dance Kumina, Maypole, Jonkunnu, Dinki-Mini, Quadrille.

Food Ackee and salt, friend dumpling, pudding, calloo and salt fish

* Ethnic Groups in Jamaica and their Contributions of the Country

Ethnic groups can be defined as a community or population made up of people who share a common cultural background or descent. There are over ten different ethnic groups in Jamaica and each ethnic group contributes something of significant to the culture of Jamaica.

The ethnic groups in Jamaica are the Africans, Indians, Europeans, Tainos, Chinese, Syrians, Lebanese among others.

The Africans contributed to Jamaica aspects of our religion such as our belief in ancestry Gods. They contributed to the mixture in Jamaica’s Creole, dances and parental practices. The Indians contributed to Jamaica’s food for example the famous curry and in addition they innovated farming practices such as the cultivation of rice.

Important Events in Jamaican History

The coming of the European (British and Spaniards)

On May 5, 1494 Christopher Columbus, the European explorer, who sailed west to get to the East Indies and came upon the region now called the West Indies, landed in Jamaica.

The coming of the Africans (slavery)

Enslaved Africans filled the large labour force required for the industry. The colonists were impressed with the performance and endurance of the Africans, as well as the fact that African labour was cheaper and more promising.

The coming of the Indians and Chinese

The Chinese started to arrive in Jamaica 1854. Chinese immigrants were mainly farmers but only a few appear to stay into farming.

Emancipation of slavery

August 1, 1834, marked the emancipation of all slaves in British colonies but it was a case of freedom.

ACTIVITY: Students should write at least two paragraphs stating which ethnic group they believe made the most valuable contribution to Jamaica's culture, response should be justified.