

Activity 5: Haitian Revolution Inquiry Worksheet

Part I: Understanding the Social Hierarchy

1. Create a visual representation of the social pyramid in Saint-Domingue before the revolution. List the different social groups and their relative positions.

Hint for Question 1: Creating a Social Pyramid

Think of the social pyramid like a layered cake

- *Top layer (most privileged): White plantation owners*
- *Middle layer: Free people of color*
- *Bottom layer (least privileged): Enslaved Africans*

Part II: Conditions of Enslavement

2. Calculate the life expectancy of enslaved people in Saint-Domingue:

- *Forcibly transported from Africa: _____ years*
- *Born in the colony: _____ years*

Hint for Life Expectancy Calculation

Important Context:

- *Enslaved people faced extreme hardship*
- *Life expectancy was shockingly short*
- *Factors like harsh labor, poor nutrition, and brutal treatment contributed*

3. Analyze the quote: "The colonists seem to believe that it was cheaper to just replenish... than to actually create better conditions that would sustain human life."

- *What does this reveal about the economic and moral mindset of the colonizers?*
- *How does this perspective dehumanize enslaved people?*

Part III: Revolution and Communication

4. Identify three ways enslaved people shared information and political ideas:

- a.
- b.
- c.

Hint for Communication Methods

Creative Thinking:

- *How might people share secret information?*
- *Consider:*
 - *Storytelling*
 - *Songs*
 - *Religious gatherings*
 - *Hidden signals*

5. Explain the significance of the Bois Caiman ceremony:

- *Who were the key leaders?*
- *What was the primary goal of the initial revolt?*

Part IV: Critical Thinking and Legacy

6. Compare and contrast the Haitian Revolution with other independence movements of the time:

- What made this revolution unique?
- Why did it "stun the world"?

Hint for Comparing Revolutions

Comparative Analysis Tips:

- *Look for:*
 - *Who was fighting?*
 - *What were they fighting against?*
 - *What made this revolution unique?*

7. Examine the economic punishment imposed by France:

- How much did Haiti have to pay?
- When did they finish paying?
- How might this have impacted Haiti's development?

Reflection Questions

8. How did the Haitian Revolution challenge the global system of slavery?

9. In the words of Jean-Jacques Dessalines, what does "daring to be free" mean in the context of this revolution?