



Ayiti, The Pearl of the Antilles with Inez Barlatier & Family

MTC study guide



Inez Barlatier, raised in Miami, learned to play musical instruments from her father, Jan Sebon, a member of the band Kazak International and an African drum instructor at DASH (Design and Architecture Senior High), right here in

Miami. His distinctive sound profoundly influenced her and became a lasting source of inspiration. Starting at the age of 12, Inez would join her father and younger sister on Friday nights in Miami Beach, where their family band performed for tourists at Tap Tap, a vibrant Haitian restaurant on Fifth Street. The restaurant's walls were adorned with murals by Haitian artists, including one behind the stage painted by her father. Inez grew up immersed in the lively sounds of jazz and Haitian roots music that filled her home.

"All my new material, as a beginning songwriter, was first performed at Tap Tap. It's where we learned my lyrics had a positive effect on people." –Inez Barlatier.

Post-Performance Reflection Questions:

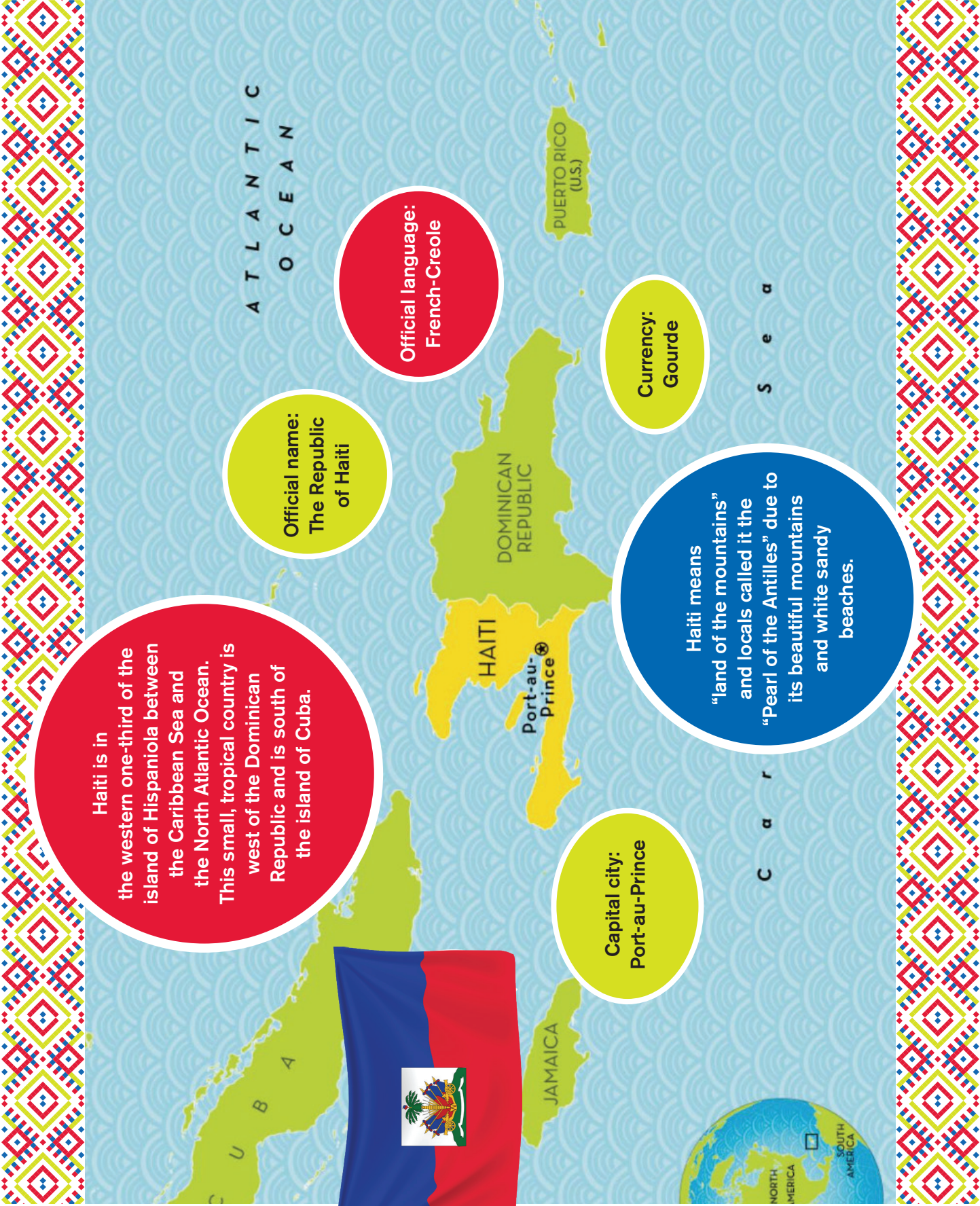
What was your favorite song from the concert?

How many languages did you hear in the concert?

What country did the musicians sing/talk about?

What can you tell us about that country?

Did any of the musicians tell stories? If so, which ones?



Haiti is in the western one-third of the island of Hispaniola between the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean. This small, tropical country is west of the Dominican Republic and is south of the island of Cuba.

Official name:
The Republic
of Haiti

Official language:
French-Creole

Currency:
Gourde

Haiti means "land of the mountains" and locals called it the "Pearl of the Antilles" due to its beautiful mountains and white sandy beaches.

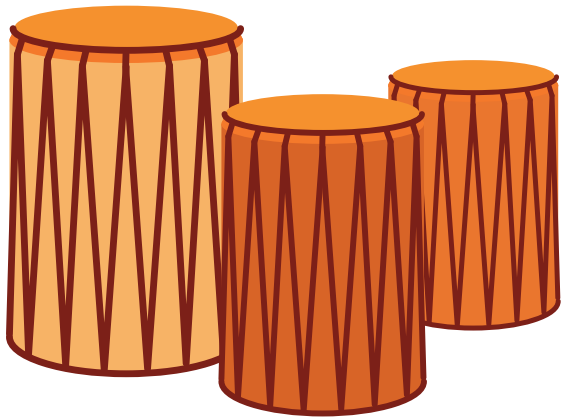
Capital city:
Port-au-Prince



The Drumming Circle

During the show, Inez introduces her musicians and the instruments they play. She pays particular attention to the drums and explains that even though they originate from different parts of the world, they can be played together to create beautiful rhythms such as Taino, Senti, Kongo and Yanvalou.

Here are some of the drums you may have seen on stage:

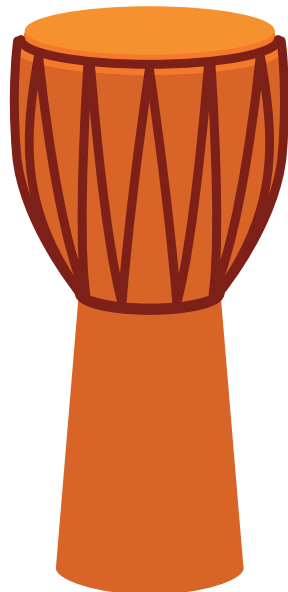


DUNUN

Inez plays a dunun drum, originally from West Africa. A dunun is a rope-tuned cylindrical drum with a rawhide skin at both ends. Most commonly using cow or goat, the dunun drum is played with a stick and makes a high sound and a low sound.

DJEMBE

Inez's father, Sebon, was playing the djembe or jembe. Originally from West Africa, this is a rope-tuned skin-covered goblet drum played with bare hands. It is played in many countries around the world, and according to the Bambara people in Mali, the name of the djembe comes from the saying, "Anke djé, anke bé" which translates to "everyone gather together in peace" and defines the drum's purpose.



TANBOU

Inez's good friend, Gerald, was playing the tanbou drum. This is the national musical instrument of Haiti and a type of barrel drum. The drum is used in many Haitian music genres and has been influential in the rest of the Caribbean and Latin American world.

CONGA

Finally, Inez's other close friend, Ralph, was playing the conga drum. This is also known as tumbadora, is a tall, narrow, single-headed drum originally from Cuba.

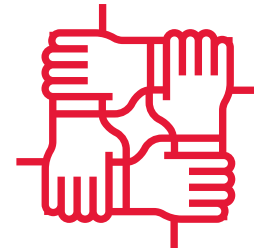


"If you listen, a drum can talk and say its own name." Jan Sebon, musician, Inez's father.



Together We Are Strong

In the show, Inez shares meaningful insights about her culture and the values she cherishes. One of the key lessons comes from the motto on the Haitian flag: “L’Union Fait La Force,” which means “unity is strength” or “together we are strong.” The next two activities invite your students to explore this powerful theme by working together in teams to solve a challenge.



ACTIVITY 1:

THE FARMER CROSSING THE SEA

Inspired by the song featuring the farmer, the mermaid, and the whale, your students will collaborate to solve a fun challenge. You’ll need four blankets or beach towels for this activity.

- 1. Divide the Class:** Split the class into groups of 4 to 8 students each.
- 2. Set the Stage:** Clear a large space in the classroom or use a larger area like the school dining hall. Use masking tape to mark a starting line and a finish line on opposite sides of the space.



3. Introduce the Challenge:

Have one group stand behind the starting line. Hand them a towel or blanket, explaining that it represents their “fishing boat” or “raft.” Their goal is to travel from the starting line to the finish line as quickly as possible while keeping everyone’s feet on the towel at all times. If anyone’s feet touch the floor, the team must return to the starting line and start over while the timer keeps running. Encourage them to work together and create a strategy before starting.

- 4. Rules & Creativity:** Teams can use any technique they come up with to complete the challenge, as long as everyone’s feet remain on the towel.

- 5. Time & Points:** Use a stopwatch to time each team. The team that finishes in the shortest time wins. Additionally, award bonus points to the team that demonstrates the best teamwork and supports one another’s ideas.

ACTIVITY 2:

HUMAN KNOT

Building on the previous activity, this challenge encourages students to collaborate while sharpening their observation and communication skills.

- 1. Form a Circle:** Have students stand in a close circle.
- 2. Create the Knot:** Ask everyone to reach out and grab two hands. The rules are:
 - They cannot grab the hands of the person standing directly next to them.
 - They cannot grab both hands from the same person.
- 3. Untangle the Knot:** Students must work together to “untie” the human knot without letting go of anyone’s hands.
- 4. Finish the Challenge:** Once a group has successfully untangled their knot, the entire group sits down to signal they’re finished.
- 5. Encourage Teamwork:** Remind students to move carefully and thoughtfully, keeping in mind how their actions affect others in the knot. Some knots will be easier to solve, while others may require more communication, patience, and problem-solving.
- 6. Increase the Challenge:** To make the activity more complex, try these variations:
 - Complete the task in silence.
 - Form larger groups to create bigger knots.
 - Attempt to untangle an entire class-sized knot!



Reflection Questions

- What is a motto?
- What does “together we are strong” mean?
- Did you notice the musicians collaborating during the show?
- How did you and your team work together during these activities?
- In what ways can we be stronger when we work together?
- Can you think of a time in your life when this has been true?

These activities foster collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving skills in a lively and engaging way!



TEACHER RESOURCES

Haitian Music and Dance Resources

YouTube Channels:

Haitian Dance Workshop – Videos showcasing traditional Haitian dance styles such as Rara, Kompa, and Yanvalou.

Books:

Haiti A to Z: A Bilingual ABC Book about the Pearl of the Antilles by M.J. Fievre (Author), Anastasia Khmelevska (Illustrator)

Learn Haitian Creole For Kids: Bilingual Creole & English Language Learning Book For Babies, Toddlers, and Children by Tiny Talks Publishing (Author)

Freedom Soup by Tami Charles (Author), Jacqueline Alcántara (Illustrator)

Haitian Flag Day Fleurina's Way by Jinica Dauphin (Author), Camilla Frescura (Illustrator)



The Miami-Dade Arts Education Collective

The Miami-Dade Arts Education Collective, formed in 2020 by the Miami Theater Center, The Adrienne Arsht Center, the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs' Culture Shock Miami program, and the Dennis C. Moss Cultural Arts Center, came together to provide diverse and high-quality virtual arts experiences to students during school closures. Since its founding, the Collective has impacted over 100,000 students in Miami-Dade County. As the 2024/25 season marks five years of collaboration, the Collective has transitioned to in-person programming, reflecting the transformative journey of the arts industry, which was reshaped by the pandemic. We are proud to co-produce and co-present *Inez Barlatier: Songs and Stories from Ayiti*.

