The Haitian Revolution
1791-1803
Objectives:
Was the Haitian Revolution a success or a failure?

Compare the Haitian Revolution with the American Revolution.

Compare the Haitian Revolution with the French Revolution.
1697 - Treaty formally ceded the western third of Hispaniola from Spain to France, which renamed it Saint-Domingue.
The colony of Saint-Domingue was the richest colony in the West Indies and probably the richest colony in the history of the world.

Driven by slave labor and enabled by fertile soil and ideal climate, Saint-Domingue produced sugar, coffee, cocoa, indigo, tobacco, cotton, sisal as well as some fruits and vegetables for the motherland, France.
How did the social structure of Haitian Society contribute to the Haitian Revolution?

- The whites
- The free people of color
- The black slaves
- The maroons (Escaped Slaves)
Whites = 20,000 – Mostly French

**Planters**
- Wealthy plantation owners
- Discontented with France
- No representation
- United in favor of slavery

**Petit Blancs**
- Artisans, shop keepers, merchants, teachers
- Less independence-minded and more loyal to France
- Also approved of slavery
The Free People of Color = 30,000

- ½ Mulattoes
  - Children of white Frenchmen and black slave women
  - Tense relationship w/slaves

- ½ freed slaves
The Free People of Color Cont.

- Very wealthy
- Owned plantations and slaves
- Denied their African roots
- Dressed exceptionally well

- Catholic rather than Voodoo
- Well educated
- French rather than Creole
The Black Slaves = 500,000

Slaves outnumbered free people by 10-1

- 100,000 – Domestics
  - More Loyal to Masters
- 400,000 – Field Hand
  - Treated very cruelly
The Maroons

- Large group of run-away slaves who retreated deep into the mountains of Saint-Domingue.
From Rebellion to Revolution

- Growing independence movement by planters
- French enforced “Exclusif”
  - Molasses $\rightarrow$ Dried Fish
Slave Rebellions

- Why did slave owners treat their slaves especially harsh?

- Mackandal Rebellion of 1759
  - Plot to poison slave owners

- Remember the ratio!
Other influences which contributed to the Revolution

- 1791 – Slaves revolt

- Why would they revolt after more than 200 years of slavery?
Meanwhile back in France……… The mother country

France was having its own Revolution.
The Declaration of the Rights of Man (August 27, 1789)

How would the Declaration of the Rights of Man influence a revolt in Haiti?

“Article 1. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may only be founded upon the general good.”

“The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptibly rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security and resistance to oppression.”
Toussaint L’Ouverture

- Led slave revolts
- Considered brilliant
- Self – educated
- Former slave
- Fought against French, British and Spanish troops
- Arduous battle
- Many lives lost
Haitian Independence!

- 1802 – Napoleon sent a large army to reconquer Haiti
- Something other than Toussaint’s forces attacked the French armies…
  - Yellow Fever destroyed much of Napoleon’s troops
- 1802 – French agreed to a truce
Haitian Independence Continued

- 1804 - Toussaint captured and dies in prison
- 1804 – Haitians declare independence
The Republic of Haiti

- Poorest and least developed countries in the world
- Problems ranging from near-constant political upheaval, health crises, severe environmental degradation and an annual barrage of hurricanes.

Was the Haitian Revolution truly successful even though Haiti is mired in poverty today?
On Jan. 12, 2010, a devastating earthquake struck Haiti, reducing much of its capital to rubble. It was the worst earthquake in the region in more than 200 years.
- Total cost of the disaster was between $7.2 billion to $13.2 billion,
- Death Toll = 250,000 - 300,000.
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