

The Sound of Jamaica Teacher's Notes B1

In this B1 article your students will learn about Jamaica, its history and its music as a new exhibition opens at the *Philharmonie* in Paris: Jamaica! Jamaica! Most of them will have heard of Reggae and Bob Marley, and they may have studied the Triangle Trade in History. In any case, this is a good opportunity to work on a real information gap.

This lesson can be taught for itself or as part of an *EPI* about Jamaican music (*culture et création artistiques*) or slavery (*Information, communication, citoyenneté*). A parallel can be drawn with French history in Saint-Domingue (Haiti), Guadeloupe and Martinique, other Caribbean islands in which French traders were heavily involved in the slave trade.

Vocabulary and structures.

- Music related vocabulary.
- Slavery related vocabulary.
- Passive voice.
- Relative pronouns.

Speaking, reading, writing

- We suggest starting the lesson by listening to the song "Get Up, Stand Up!" by Bob Marley and the Wailers (1973). For example, the video of the stage performance in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on 23 September 1980. Do not provide any information. Write on the board everything your students say. This might include: *It's Bob Marley; it's Reggae; it's dance music; I like / don't like it ...; I don't know this song / do you know it, X ?/ What is it?...*
- Don't answer any questions yourself, even if your students can't find anything to say. Now is a good time to videoproject a photo of Bob Marley.
- **Activity A**, ask the class to work in groups for 5 minutes and write their questions about him. When / where was he born? *When /where/ how did he die? What was his*

nationality? Did he sing in a group? ... Have a co-teacher (or teacher's assistant) pool the questions, find out if anyone knows any of the answers and write question and / or answer on the board.

- In **Activities B** and **C**, the information will have to be checked or the answer found in the article. Any remaining questions will be kept for further personal work (www.bobmarley.com).
- **Activities D, E** and **F** are all based on the article and are meant to provide enough information and language for the final presentation. When discussing the different musical styles, it might be helpful to play some snippets. There's an example of each style on www.worldmusic.net/guide/music-of-jamaica.
- The last question in **Activity F** takes the class back to the starting point of the lesson, by having the students listen to "Get Up, Stand Up!" again, but this time to link the words in the song to what has been learnt in the article (just focusing on the chorus – the full lyrics require language skills and cultural knowledge that are beyond this level).

■ In **Activity G** a lot of work (with the teacher moving from group to group to provide personal help) should be devoted to oral practice, with particular attention to rhythm. After all, this is a lesson on Jamaican music!

Going Further

■ This article was inspired by the exhibition *Jamaica! Jamaica!* at the Philharmonie in Paris till 13 August 2017.

There is quite a lot of information on the exhibition site, and a webradio for musical accompaniment – including a playlist by sprinter Usain Bolt.

www.philharmoniedeparis.fr/en/jamaica-jamaica-exhibition

Solutions

For the **Activities A-C**, there are no standard answers. The following are only examples.

What we think we know	What we want to know	What we found
<p>Bob Marley is dead. RIGHT</p> <p>He died in 2000. WRONG</p> <p>He was a Reggae singer. RIGHT</p> <p>He was from Jamaica. RIGHT</p>	<p>When was he born?</p> <p>Where did he die?</p> <p>How did he die?</p> <p>Did he sing in a group?</p>	<p>He died in 1981.</p> <p>He died of cancer.</p> <p>He sang with The Wailers.</p> <p>He became world-famous.</p> <p>He became Rastafarian.</p> <p>He sang about injustice, revolution and peace.</p>



Jamaica is an island in the Caribbean. It's south of Cuba. The climate in Jamaica is tropical, but it's temperate in the mountains. The capital is Kingston.

2. It is a developing country. The main industries are tourism and mining. Jamaica produces coffee, sugar, rum and spices.

3. Jamaica was discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1494. He was working for Spain, which is why Jamaica became a Spanish colony.

Later, Jamaica was conquered by the British, so it became a British colony in 1655 and it remained British until 1962, when it became independent.

4.a. Slaves are people who belong to a master. Africans were transported to Jamaica, where they had to work for white plantation owners whose sugar cane fields needed a big labour force. Even after 1838 black workers were very poor, which is the reason why they still worked on plantations.

b. Slavery became illegal in 1838 / slavery was abolished in 1838.

E. Mento (c), Ska (a), Reggae (b).

F.1. frustration.

2. Examples: Black people in Jamaica are too poor. This is not fair. Slavery is illegal, we shouldn't have to work for white plantation owners for so little money. We can't hear the music we like on colonial British radio. We want to sing and dance on our music...

3. Stand up for your rights!