



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1985 Volume IV: History as Fiction in Central and South America

Revolts Against Colonial Rule in Latin America in the Early Nineteenth Century

Guide for Curriculum Unit 85.04.06
by Peter N. Herndon

This unit of study is intended to be a ten-to-fifteen day inquiry in to the underlying and immediate causes of various slave revolts in Caribbean America, culminating in the study of the Haitian Revolution of 1791-1804. It is geared for ninth-grade students in World History, but can be adapted to other grades. The unit is designed to stimulate interest in a past that in many ways is part of our present. The Hispanic and Black students should particularly find it easy to identify cultural and geographic roots as we examine the heroic efforts of colonists and slaves to throw off the colonial yoke of oppression.

The unit contains a substantial list of “core concepts” and behavioral objectives, as well as three detailed lesson plans. The unit begins with map work to familiarize students with Caribbean geography at the turn of the 18th century. Students will examine attitudes of members of all strata of Spanish, French and English colonial society in an attempt to discover how slaves were viewed by the dominant classes. Next, we examine the various law codes and attempt to discover how fairly or unfairly they were applied. Underlying causes of slave discontent will be looked at in the context of plantation life and Maroon societies of runaway slaves.

The slave conditions in Haiti combined with the French Revolution and the remarkable career of the slave leader Toussaint L’Ouverture provide an in-depth look at a successful slave rebellion-turned-revolution. Three detailed lesson plans provide the instructor with information for setting up a successful role-play and a debate on the advisability of a slave revolt in Haiti.

(Recommended for World History classes, grade 9)

Key Words

World Latin America Slave Revolts Colonial History Slavery

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

©2019 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University

For terms of use visit <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/terms>