

**INTERNATIONAL
LITERACY
ASSOCIATION**

Activity Kit: Steps to Advance Literacy



International Literacy Day | 8 September 2016

Steps to Advance Literacy

ILA believes in the transformative power of literacy to create more successful societies, healthy communities, and prosperous economies. As champions of a vibrant literacy community for 60 years, we've learned that to create a literate world, we must be willing to go the distance, and even walk in someone else's shoes.

Our theme for ILD 2016—Steps to Advance Literacy—does just that. In our service project, we're focusing on the distance some students in countries with developing economies need to go each day simply to attend school and tracking our steps as individuals, classes, schools, and communities to experience the steps they take every day.

That is also why we've created literacy activities and ideas inspired by Jamaica, a country where students have to go to great distances—sometimes even miles—to learn. We're motivated by its students' dedication to literacy and learning, and enthralled by its diverse, yet unified country (the national motto is "Out of Many, One People") and rich culture that spans from music to food—and we know you and your students will be, too!





International Literacy Day is the perfect opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of providing literacy instruction to millions of today's learners.

Help us celebrate by using this kit with your students. Inside you'll find fun and interesting classroom activities created by your peers—educators from around the globe who are also advancing literacy where they live and work. These activities span every age level. They address what we've traditionally considered "literacy," as well as all of those other subject areas we know require literate learners.

We would like to thank the Jamaica Reading Association for helping us put these resources together.

And now, join us on this journey to a literate world!

Marcie Craig Post
Executive Director, ILA



This is an exciting time for the Jamaica Reading Association, and we are pleased to extend a warm welcome from the tropics.

We are heartened that Jamaica—a small island where big things happen—was chosen to be the country of focus for ILA's 2016 International Literacy Day Activity Kit. Our country boasts rich culture, history, and legacy, and is well known across the globe through music, sports, cuisine, and art. Jamaica is referred to as "The Land of Wood and Water," and we possess some of the world's finest beaches and tourist resorts. Our motto "Out of Many, One People" is indicative of the many races of our people who are predominantly from African descent, with a significant portion of our people from the European, Chinese, and Indian cultures, and mixed races.

As a people we are creative and innovative. As native educators we are thrilled to share our local literacy practices with the global world while defining who we are as Jamaicans and literacy practitioners. We hope you will find these ILD activities useful, valuable, and beneficial as you get a glimpse into our culture.

Finally, I would like to extend gratitude to the International Literacy Association for its support. I am proud to have worked with such a great team that cares so much about literacy development.

Dolsie R. Townsend
President, Jamaica Reading Association



Our goal of “Steps to Advance Literacy” is to inspire you to put your best foot forward for students everywhere!

Although most kids in the United States never have to worry about how—or if—they’re going to get to school, it’s a much bigger challenge for students in developing nations across the world. In many developing nations, the walk to school can be as long as 10 miles, and children often face danger along the way in the form of robberies and assaults.

Join our Steps to Advance Literacy initiative by tracking your steps as an individual, class, school, or community and comparing these distances to the miles students around the world must travel each day in order to learn. Download our service project kit with instructions on how to participate in this initiative and raise your awareness of the accessibility of education around the world.

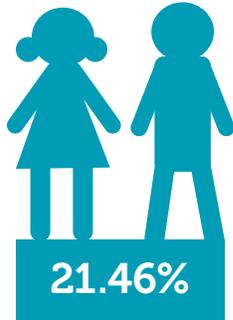


2,950,210

Population of Jamaica



0-14
years old



15-24
years old

49%

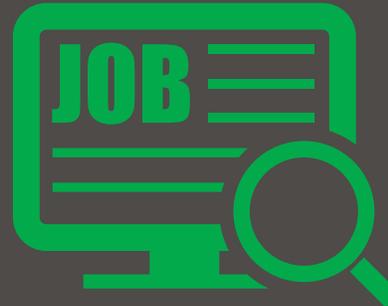
of the population is
under 25 years of age

Major Languages

2

English
(official)

English patois
(also known as
Jamaican patois)



34%

of youths ages 15-24
are unemployed



6.3%

 of GDP is spent
on education

CIA World Fact Book (accessed Nov. 29, 2015): cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jm.html
UN Data (accessed Nov. 29, 2015): data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=jamaica



16.5%

of people live below the poverty line

Ethnic Groups

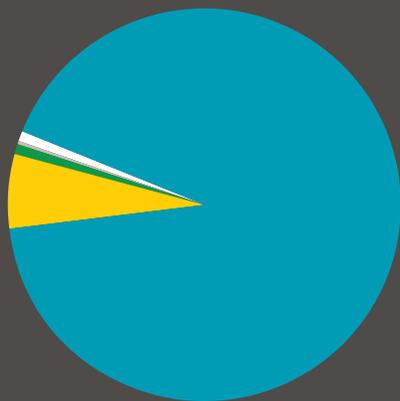
Black 92.1%

Mixed 6.1%

East Indian 0.8%

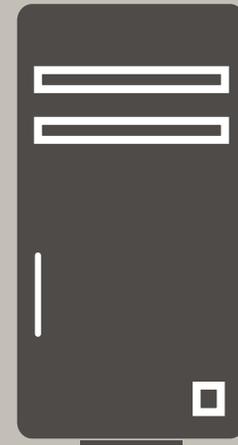
Other 0.4%

Unspecified 0.7%



49.8%

of the population uses the Internet



School Attendance Rates by Gender



88.7%

of people ages 15 and older have ever attended school in some form

School Life Expectancy

12 years for males



13 years for females



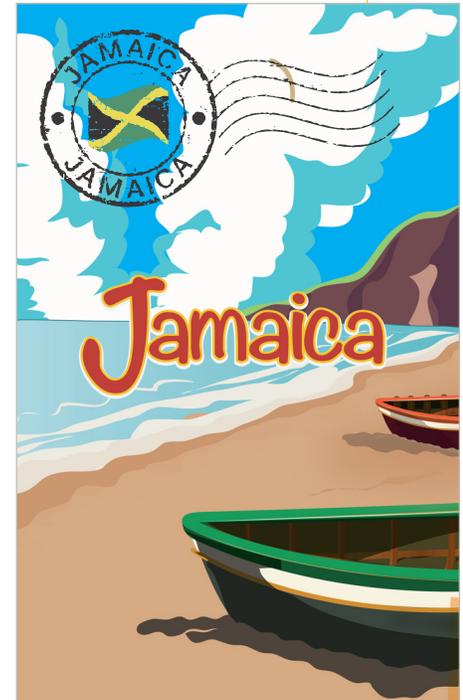
Activities for All Ages

“OUT OF MANY, ONE PEOPLE.” The national motto of Jamaica, “Out of many, one people,” represents both the diversity and unity of the country. Though of many different races, backgrounds, and cultures, the people of Jamaica seek to come together as one united voice and to celebrate their distinct history and heritage. To explore this concept, invite students to use [Canva](#) or other online graphic design tools to create digital posters demonstrating visually what this message means to them. —JW

POSTCARDS TELL A THOUSAND WORDS. Examine [historic postcards from Jamaica](#) to learn more about the country and its past. Ask students primary source questions using the “I See, I Think, I Wonder” strategy to help them unpack information from the pictures.

- **See:** What do you see? Is this a photograph or drawing? What did you notice first? What people or objects are in the image? Where was the photo taken? Are there any clues in the image or words to tell you the location? What other details do you see?
- **Think:** What do you think? Why do you think this image was used on a postcard? What is happening in the image? Who is the audience for this postcard image? What tools were used to make the image? If someone was making a postcard today, what would be different?
- **Wonder:** What do you wonder? What other questions do you have about this postcard? —DK

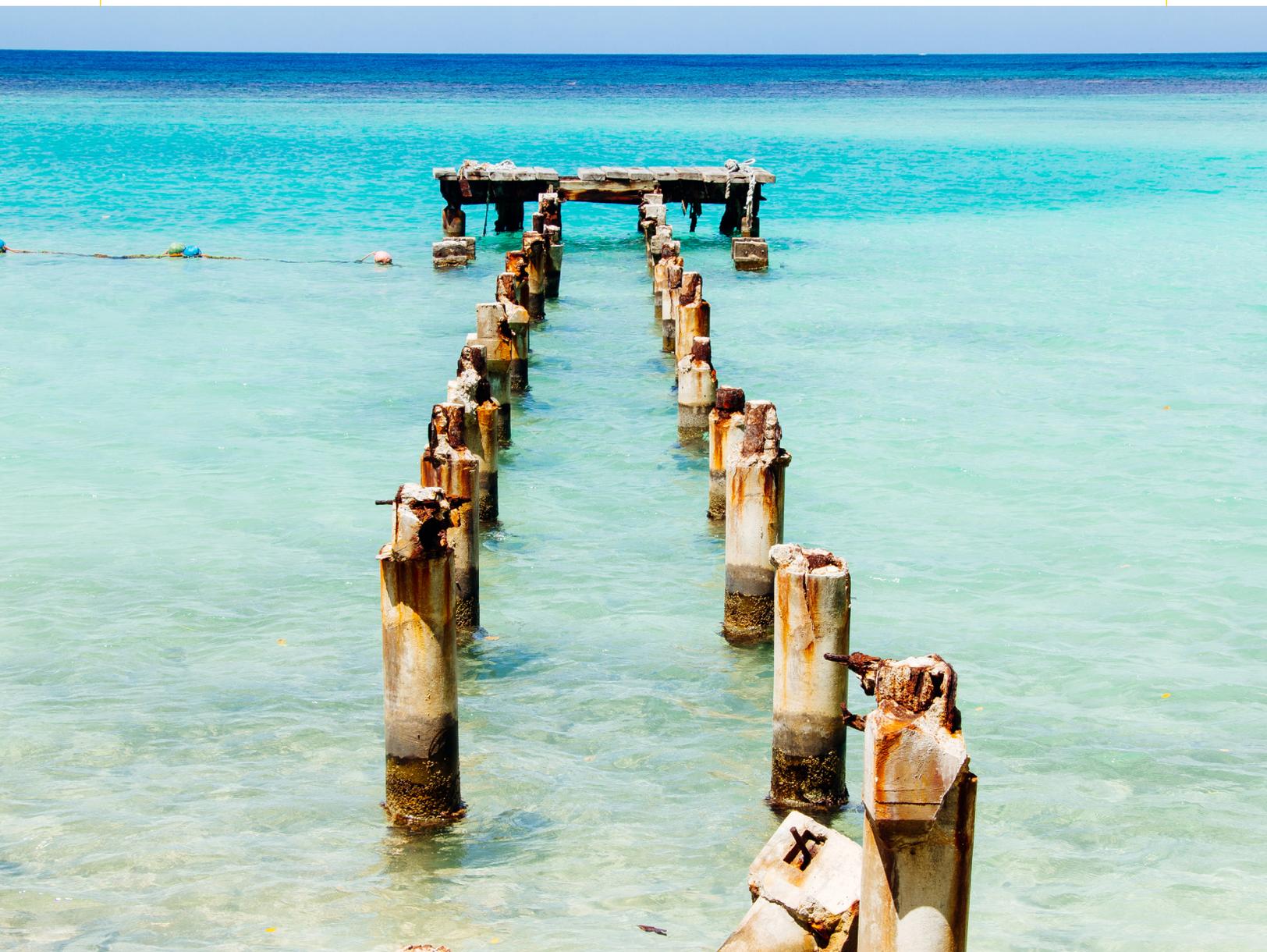
FOOD FOR THOUGHT. Today’s Jamaican cuisine reflects foods that inhabitants and occupiers introduced to the island at different times in the past. The Spaniards, for instance, introduced many trees and fruits, including the coconut plant, which is used extensively in Jamaican cooking. Split students into groups and have each group research what foods a particular group (e.g., the Spanish, English, Africans, Chinese, East Indians, and Rastafarians) contributed to modern Jamaican cuisine. As time and resources permit, prepare a Jamaican food that reflects what students learned from their research. For example, [grater cake](#) is a very popular candy made from coconut. —AE



Activities for All Ages (continued)

PERSUASIVE ABOUT PLACES. Have students create billboards about popular sightseeing attractions in Jamaica with the purpose of persuading people to visit those places. These attractions might include Seven Mile Beach in Negril, Dunn’s River Falls in Ocho Rios, and Blue Mountain National Park on the eastern part of the island. Students should research their location and consider what about their landmark makes it a must-see. How can students convey this idea using just a few words and pictures? To give them some ideas, show examples of tourist billboards from around the world, such as one that shows crystal blue waters and says, “It’s Better in the Bahamas.” Display student poster board billboards and discuss the persuasive elements of each billboard. —AH

ASK AND ANSWER. Create and send an “Ask a Question” [Padlet](#) to another class—either in your school or on another continent! Ask students to post any questions they have about Jamaica. Divide the questions among partners in your class and have them research the answers. Share the results on a “Jamaican Questions Answered” Padlet. —LTS



Activities for All Ages (continued)



IN THE NEWS. Use student-friendly news websites like [Newsela](#) to find articles about Jamaica. Newsela allows you to set up a free account and to choose from several versions of the same article at different Lexile levels. Have younger students identify features of the article, such as the headline, byline, photo and accompanying caption, and lede (or opening). Discuss what each of these features contributes to the article. For older students, assign research into a current topic or news event in Jamaica and then have them write a short article that include these features. —AH

MAKE CONNECTIONS. For last year's International Literacy Day, I posted a request on my Facebook page asking for help in finding a speaker from the Philippines to visit our class. Thanks to connections I made, we welcomed a guest speaker who shared information with us about his culture. If you'd like to welcome a Jamaican visitor to your class (in person or virtually), get on Skype, Facebook, or Google+ and ask your networks for recommendations. Hop on Yelp to search for local Jamaican restaurants and ask the owners if they are willing to share their experiences (and maybe

some food!) with your students. On Twitter, use #ILD16 to share connections and ideas with other teachers. —AH

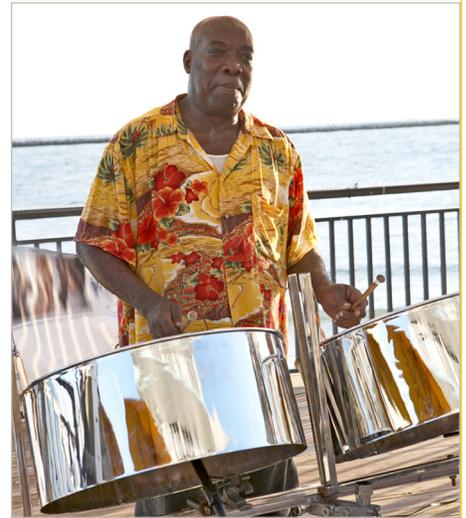
EXPLORE THE ISLAND. Use [Google Tour Builder](#) to create a virtual trip around Jamaica. As a class, decide which notable places you'd like to visit. Make sure to choose locations with different travel purposes (e.g., adventure, art, history, and music) to satisfy all of the travelers' interests in your class. You can research these locations on formal tourism sites like [Visit Jamaica](#), media outlets like the [Travel Channel](#), and travel reviews websites such as [TripAdvisor](#). You might also send home a survey to ask students' families if they have travel experiences to share about the island. After you've decided on your travel plans, start to pin the locations on your tour builder, adding photos and details about each place as you go. Arrange your pins so your trip follows a logical sequence. To take it to the next level, look for a class in Jamaica and plan a Skype visit so that the other students can act as tour guides and tell you what they know about the locations you'll visit virtually. —AH, LH, & SL



Activities for Ages 4–8

DR. SEUSS: JAMAICAN PATOIS STYLE. Although the official language of Jamaica is Standard English, many Jamaican people speak in patois, a creole language that is a combination of English, Spanish, Portuguese, and African phrases. Learn more about patois by listening to this [beautiful read-aloud](#) of Dr. Seuss’s *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish*. As students listen, follow along in your own copy of the book. Compare and contrast some words and phrases from the recording with the Standard English version. Later on, students can practice saying basic patois phrases with the help of the [Kids’ Guide to Speaking Jamaican](#). —JW

STEAM CHALLENGE. Invite your music teacher to join the fun by playing reggae music. Together, have students research instruments used in reggae and challenge them to identify the instruments’ individual sounds in the music. Afterward, have students make their own instruments using foil pie plates, tin cans, boxes, strings, and other household items. You can later incorporate a lesson about sound into your science class to explore concepts like vibration and pitch. —AH



GAMES FOR A PICKNEY. Children in Jamaica often spend time creating and playing games with friends. Celebrate play by inviting each *pickney* (the patois word for *child*) in your class to explore common Jamaican games. Students can play marbles, create paper airplanes, and learn the game of dominoes. Or, as a class, go outside to play a round of [Dandy Shandy](#), a popular game among Jamaican children similar to dodgeball. Afterward, gather together for shared writing to create a list of rules that govern one or more of the games that students played. —JW

ANIMALS OF JAMAICA. Introduce students to some of Jamaica’s wild animals. Then, put students in small groups and allow each group to select an animal to research. Using an app like [Book Creator](#) or another story publishing program, invite each group to create a page about its creature. The pages should detail important information about the reptiles, birds, or mammals, including its habitat, size, life span, predators, and prey. Assemble the pages together to make a class book. To create an authentic audience, consider publishing your book in the iBooks store or connecting with another class online (try a hashtag like #Comments4Kids on Twitter) that would like to read and comment on your students’ work. —SL

WHAT’S IN A NAME? Talk with your students about how names identify us and tell about our culture and family history. Jamaican last names originate from around the world, including Africa (e.g., Nzerogwu and Yeboah), Spain (e.g., Rodriquez and Sanchez), Germany (e.g., Bayer and Denzel), Scotland (e.g., Bailey and Bain), and England (e.g., Gabriel and Jack). In Jamaica, some children also have pet names, or nicknames, like Birdie or Shortie. Assign students to talk with their families and find out how they got their first name and the origins of their last name. Invite students to discuss with a partner what they learned, taking turns to ask and answer questions, then make a name wall in your classroom that features a photograph of each student, as well as students’ findings about what’s “in their name.” —DT



Activities for Ages 4–8 (continued)



JAMAICAN ABCS. Create an alphabet book with a Jamaican theme using the [Alphabet Organizer app](#) or [Alphabet Organizer interactive](#). You might use [J Is for Jamaica](#) by Benjamin Zephaniah as a mentor text, but any ABC book on a different topic will help students understand the format. As a class, brainstorm a word for each letter of the alphabet that tells more about Jamaica. For instance, *A* is for *art*, *C* is for *clothing*, *F* is for *family*, and *R* is for *religion*. (You may choose to skip some difficult letters like *X* and *Z*.) Assign each student a word and have him or her use

books and kid-friendly websites to learn about it. Each student can add a picture and sentence or two to complete your class's Jamaica ABC book. —DK

CLOSE LOOKING. Climate is the general weather conditions in an area over a long period of time—different from the weather on a particular day. Introduce students to three climate zones from [Weatherforkids.org](#): arctic, tropical, and temperate. Explain the characteristics of each zone and identify which climate you live in. Show students photos from Jamaica. Prompt them to “zoom in” on small details (such as what people are wearing) and “zoom out” on the bigger picture to explain what’s happening in the picture. Ask students to conclude which climate zone Jamaica falls in. Find Jamaica on the above-mentioned website’s world map to confirm students’ conclusions. —AL

GET CRAFTY. With African and Caribbean influences, the people of Jamaica are well known for their distinct forms of textile art. Tie-dye is particularly popular. Engage students in an “Irie Day of Tie-Dyeing.” Students can outline steps to the tie-dyeing process, gather supplies, and work in teams to create tie-dyed shirts or hats. Students can choose to use the symbolic colors of Jamaica (yellow, black, and green) in their designs, or they can create their own color schemes and patterns. —JW



Activities for Ages 9–11

WORDS TO LIVE BY. Proverbs such as “the early bird gets the worm” exist in many cultures. Explain to students that proverbs are short sayings used to give advice or a truth. Many Jamaican proverbs originated in Africa, especially from the Ashanti tribe, but others reflect European influences. Have students examine [Jamaican proverbs](#) from the National Library of Jamaica. Students can read the proverb in patois, the translation in Standard English, and then an explanation of its meaning. Invite students to try to pronounce these proverbs as they think a Jamaican would. Then, allow each student to choose one proverb and write a short story that teaches the lesson of that saying. The story should end with the proverb itself. —*AE & DK*

HURRICANE! Hurricanes are a real danger in Jamaica. Hurricane Gilbert, which hit the island in 1988, is etched in the memories of many Jamaicans. As a class, research what causes a hurricane like Gilbert to form. Later, set students off to learn the devastating effects that Hurricane Gilbert had on Jamaica and its people. To extend the lesson, students can compare what they learned about Hurricane Gilbert with natural disasters that are prone to happen where they live, such as tornadoes, tsunamis, earthquakes, or typhoons. —*AE*

NAME THAT PLACE. With names like Milk River and Half-Way-Tree, some places in Jamaica have very interesting origins! Consider Putogether Corner near the town of Mandeville. How did it get its name? It was a spot where women stopped to put together their goods before heading into town. Search the [National Library of Jamaica](#) for more unique place names. Put students in pairs and have them conduct research on the origins of a place’s name. Following a paragraph structure, students should write a succinct description summarizing their findings on a notecard. Hang a large map of Jamaica in the classroom and invite each pair to locate their place and pin their explanation on the map. If you’d prefer to use technology, create a [Google Lit Trip](#) and have your students enter their name origins on Google Earth. —*DK*



LET THE GAMES BEGIN. Activities like cricket, athletics (track and field), football (soccer), and netball (a game similar to basketball) are an important part of life in Jamaica. Enlist your physical education teacher to choose one of these sports to teach your students. In the classroom, you can support students’ understanding of the sport by introducing key vocabulary terms (such as *wicket*, the gate in cricket), teaching about the sport’s history, and showing videos of the sport in action. After students have an understanding of how the game is played, they can craft “how-to” pieces of writing that include a list of necessary equipment, procedures to play a game, and labeled diagrams that show players’ positions or the layout of a field. —*AH, SL, & LTS*



Activities for Ages 9–11 (continued)

ANANCY STORIES. Anancy (or Anansi) is a West African spider god. Stories about Anancy originated in West Africa and were brought to Jamaica and other parts of the New World by Ashanti slaves. The stories were handed down orally through generations. Anancy exists as a spider, man, or combination of the two. He is no goody two-shoes hero—he is a greedy, lazy, inventive trickster and is cunning and smart to the extreme. Anancy loves a joke, and when he is not sleeping, he is up to something. Share some Anancy stories with your class. (A listing of print and video stories is available on the [Kid World Citizen blog](#).) In addition to providing many hours of fun and laughter, the stories are quite short and lend themselves to dramatization. After reading a story, assign students to act out the plot in small groups to check for comprehension. End the lesson by asking students what they learned from Anancy’s antics; hopefully, it will include valuable lessons about carefulness, wisdom, and decision making. —AE

HELP WANTED. Jamaica’s tourism industry is a major contributor to its economy. As a result, the island has many hotels, particularly resorts, in its northern parishes. Ask students to share what they know about the goods and services that hotels offer. Make a list of the people who work in the hospitality industry, such as housekeepers, lifeguards, chefs, and tour guides. Ask students to use adjectives to describe the ideal candidates for these jobs, as well as skills that would be helpful for these workers to have (a lifeguard, for instance, should be attentive and trained in CPR). Show students examples of job advertisements before assigning them to write their own help wanted ads to recruit candidates to work at a hotel in Jamaica. —KR

NATIONAL CELEBRATIONS. Jamaica celebrates holidays like New Year’s Day, Valentine’s Day, Easter, and Christmas, but they also have special holidays for events in their history. These celebrations include Independence Day, Emancipation Day, Labour Day, and National Heroes Day. Have students conduct research to find out why these days are important in Jamaica. Then, collect the information on a chart. Label the first column *holiday*, a second column *date*, and the third column *why it’s celebrated*. After your class has completed the chart, compare and contrast these holidays with those of your country. —DT

JAMAICA ON THE MAP. Display a world map and challenge students to identify Jamaica’s location in the Caribbean Sea. Prompt students to use map features, such as the compass and distance key, to explain Jamaica’s *relative location* to other countries. Next, have students use lines of latitude and longitude to determine the *absolute location* of Jamaica’s capital, Kingston. Afterward, switch things up and give students a measure of latitude and longitude, prompting them to point to that Jamaican location on the map. To wrap up the activity, have students come up with their geographic riddles—giving either relative or absolute locations—and challenge their peers to state which city or other landmark is found at that location. —GN



Yevgen Belich / Shutterstock.com

Activities for Ages 12–14

INFORMATION IN ACTION. Get to know Jamaica through current statistics about its people. Introduce students to infographics—visual representations of information or data. Show students examples of infographics about Jamaica—including the one at the beginning of this kit—and online samples like this one about [Jamaica's Olympic champions](#). Using a site like [The World Factbook](#), students should focus on one area of life in Jamaica and gather relevant information. They should then use tools such as [Piktochart](#) to create an infographic to represent their findings. Students can share their finished products with one another to deepen their understanding of both this vibrant country and the value of graphically representing information. —LH

MEET MS. LOU. Mrs. Louise Bennett-Coverley, affectionately called Ms. Lou in her time, passed away some years ago, but she left behind a rich cultural heritage for Jamaicans. Using the country's own language, her poetry resonated with Jamaicans because it told the honest truth about their society. One poem, called "[Noh Lickle Twang](#)" ("[Not Even a Little Accent](#)"), complains about a young man who returned from traveling abroad without an accent, which was an unusual and unforgivable occurrence. Read the poem as a class or listen to the recording and work to [translate](#) the lines. Then, talk about the poem using the following questions to guide your discussion: Where did the Jamaican son travel? What was the reception upon his return? Why was his mother disappointed? Do you think he received a fair treatment? Why or why not? —BH

NOTABLE NAMES IN HISTORY. Jamaica's past and present is full of heroes and other notable personalities. Have students craft a short biography of such a figure in the form of a trading card. Talk about important aspects to a biography, including date of birth (and death, if applicable), where the person lived, his or her job, and major events in the person's life. Biographies also typically highlight a problem that the person encountered and how he or she overcame it. Other features might include accomplishments and famous quotes. Allow students to consult the digital collections of the National Library of Jamaica to learn about a [national hero](#) or [other personality](#). When they're done, students can create [trading cards](#) about their subjects. Students can print their cards to share with classmates—aiming to collect an entire set of notable Jamaican figures. —DK

MINI MARINE BIOLOGISTS. Known for its beautiful beaches and oceans, the island of Jamaica also has roughly 479 miles of surrounding coral reefs, some of which are severely endangered. Invite students to work in teams to analyze the current threats to Jamaica's coral reefs. Teams can digitally collect data, photos, and other information and share them on [Padlet](#) boards. Following their research, teams can work to propose potential solutions that address the threats by creating and sharing interactive presentations. —JW



Activities for Ages 12–14 (continued)

JAMAICAN FAREWELL. Listen to Harry Belafonte’s version of the song “[Jamaica Farewell](#).” Belafonte, whose mother was Jamaican, is an American performer and activist known for his Caribbean music style. Though the song was popular in the West Indies many years earlier, it was Belafonte who popularized the song outside the Caribbean Islands. Hand out [the song’s lyrics](#) for students to analyze. Ask students to identify the rhyme scheme and prompt them to think about the meaning of the song and what they can learn from it about Jamaica. As time permits, challenge students to research another song made popular by Harry Belafonte—“Day-O (The Banana Boat Song)” —to learn about its Jamaican roots as well. —CH

BROWN’S TOWN BALLADS. Thomas MacDermot was a Jamaican writer who was named Jamaica’s first Poet Laureate (he lived 1870–1933 and was awarded the title posthumously). Interestingly, he published some works under the pseudonym Tom Redcam. Ask students why he may have chosen this pseudonym—did you notice the palindrome? Browse the historic poems written by MacDermot in [Brown’s Town Ballads and Other Poems](#). Choose some poems to read aloud and discuss what the poems tell about the Jamaican places they describe. —DK

RASTAFARIAN RESEARCH. Although the majority of Jamaicans are Christian (about 65%, according to the CIA World Factbook), 1% practice Rastafarianism, a religion that was developed in Jamaica in the 1930s. Assign students to research the religion to answer two questions: How did Rastafarianism begin? What do Rastafarians believe? Use this opportunity to teach students how to determine if a website is credible. The following questions can help guide that process: When was the article published? Does it include the author’s name? What website hosts the article? Are there ads? Does it contain quotes or footnotes that cite sources? Are there any typos or other errors? Is there a bias? As students research and answer the questions, they can complete the [Is This a Hoax? worksheet](#) to evaluate their sources. —ILA



GOVERNING THE PEOPLE. Jamaica is divided into 14 parishes. Show a [political map of Jamaica](#) and ask students what they notice about the parishes. Introduce students to some historic places in the parishes. For instance, in the parish of Portland, one town is called Breastworks, which means a temporary fortification. It was so named because in 1730, the English set up a fort there in the war against the Maroons. Explain that each parish elects a council, though these councils have limited power compared with the central government. Have students read about the [country’s legislature](#). To showcase their new knowledge, assign students to create a flowchart showing the relationship among the Queen, Governor-General, Senate, House of Representatives, Speaker, and Leader of the House. Students can use pencil and paper or online tools such as [draw.io](#) or [Creately](#). —BH

Activities for Ages 15+

CLIMATE CHANGE IN JAMAICA. According to the [United Nations' Caribbean Environment Programme](#), Jamaica faces direct threats from climate change because of its geographic location. The island nation has seen the impact of climate change in more frequent and severe weather events (stronger tropical storms, increased flooding, and longer droughts), as well as in beach erosion and warmer temperatures. Some people fear that the effect on the fishing industry will be devastating, with marine life moving to cooler waters as temperatures rise. Use the jigsaw strategy to help students learn more about these threats and what Jamaicans are doing to combat it. Put students in "home groups" of four. Within each home group, assign one student to become an expert on weather events, a second on beach erosion, a third on warmer temperatures, and a fourth on marine life. Next, send students to "expert groups" where all of the students tasked with learning about weather events meet together and so on. Allow expert groups to use print and digital resources to learn about their topic. Afterward, students should return to their home groups to report what they learned about their topic. —AE

FAST AS LIGHTNING. Track and field star Usain Bolt made worldwide headlines in 2008 when he won both the 100-meter and 200-meter races in record times at the Beijing Olympic Games. What makes Bolt lightning fast? Have students conduct a close reading of news articles from [CNN](#), [Rutgers University](#), and the [BBC](#) to gather evidence about the factors that contribute to Bolt's speed. Later, students should use ReadWriteThink.org's [essay map](#) to plan an essay to answer the question drawing on text evidence from their sources. —DK

WHAT FOLK TALES TELL US. The stories that a culture passes down from generation to generation tell a lot about that culture's values and beliefs. As a class, brainstorm folk tales from your country. Put students in small groups to find Jamaican folk tales, such as those from [this collection of stories](#). Notice that many of the stories are adapted from West Africa and Europe, two major influences in Jamaican culture. (Daring? Send students off to find stories about Rolling Calves, River Mumma, or other supernatural tales.) Students should each select a story and compare and contrast it to a folk tale from their own culture. Students can then create a thesis about how the cultures are similar and different on the basis of details from these stories. —TV

MAKING INFERENCES WITH ART AND MUSIC. What do works of art tell you about artists' experiences in Jamaica? Use the [Media Triangle](#) framework to deconstruct various pieces of music and art. The triangle calls for students to answer questions about the work, its production, and its audience. Students can choose a piece of art from the following sources and then answer the framework's questions:

- [About Face: Revisiting Jamaica's First Exhibition in Europe](#) (art and popular culture works)
- [Institute of Jamaica Virtual Museum](#) (Jamaica music museum) —DK



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Activities for Ages 15+ (continued)

MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY. William Bligh lived in Jamaica between 1784 and 1787 and worked on his uncle’s ships, which transported rum and sugar from Jamaica to England. In 1793, he sailed to the South Pacific to bring [breadfruit](#) and other plants back to Jamaica. Unfortunately, this voyage turned out to be disastrous. There was a mutiny on the ship, the HMS *Bounty*, and Bligh and 18 crewmembers were put in a small boat. Although he lost his plant species and his ship, he managed to pilot the boat to Timor. (After he returned to England, Bligh became a captain, set off to Tahiti, and finally returned to Jamaica where he planted the breadfruit tree.) Have students read [The Bounty Mutiny](#) or other firsthand accounts of Bligh’s experience. As you’ll see in these sources, the captain of a ship would record the day’s events in a diary. To assess students’ understanding of the texts, tell them to imagine that Captain Bligh lived today and used Instagram as his diary. Task them with creating three Instagram posts (complete with photos, text, hashtags, and a handle for Bligh) that—like a diary—encapsulate Bligh’s ordeal. As time permits, watch the movie *Mutiny on the Bounty* starring Clark Gable and Charles Laughton. Compare and contrast the fictional film version with what students learned from the primary sources. What’s the same? What’s different? —AE

RHYTHMIC ROOTS. From ska and reggae to dancehall and mento, Jamaica is known around the globe for its influential music. Students should first take time in class to listen to selections of Jamaican music to become familiar with its rhythms. They can also study the lyrics to understand common themes in songs. Later, ask students to research an element of Jamaican music, particularly focusing on its role in the development of other forms of music, such as punk rock or rap, and other artists, like Heavy D and the Notorious B.I.G. —LH

Credit: Ozphotoguy



Activities for Ages 15+ (continued)

EMANCIPATION AND FREE VILLAGES. From as early as the 16th century, the triangular slave trade brought Africans to Jamaica where they were forced to work on the island’s sugar plantations. When the British took control of Jamaica from the Spanish in 1655, several enslaved people escaped to the island’s mountains, far away from their owners’ estates, and set up their own communities. These people—and their descendants—are known as Maroons. Have students use the resources below and ones they find on their own to read about the history of slavery in Jamaica. As a finished product, they can construct a [timeline](#) that leads to full freedom for enslaved people in 1838.

- [“Jamaican History”](#)
- [“The Triangular Slave Trade”](#)
- [“The Maroons of Jamaica”](#)
- [“William Knibb – The Friend of Slaves”](#) —*ILA*

EDUCATION DEBATE. In Jamaica, children are required to attend primary school through grade 6. This schooling is free. However, after grade 6, students must pass an exam to be admitted to a high school and then pay tuition to attend. Instruct students to gather information about the Jamaican education system (some good sources include [UNICEF](#) and the [Caribbean Education Foundation](#)) and then debate its merits. Is it an effective or an ineffective system? Students can collect their information on a [persuasion map](#). From there, they can pair up and debate the topic or write a persuasive essay to argue their point by drawing on reasons and evidence. —*AH*



About ILA

The International Literacy Association (ILA) is a global advocacy and membership organization dedicated to advancing literacy for all through its network of more than 300,000 literacy educators, researchers, and experts across 75 countries. ILA believes in the transformative power of literacy to create more successful societies, healthy communities, and prosperous economies. We also believe that literacy is the primary foundation for all learning and have worked to advance literacy through research, advocacy efforts, volunteerism, and professional development activities for the last 60 years. As the champion of a vibrant literacy community, we recognize the importance of working together to drive sustainable change.

To learn more about ILA, visit literacyworldwide.org.

About International Literacy Day

In 1965, UNESCO declared September 8 International Literacy Day (ILD) in an effort to focus attention on worldwide literacy needs. These needs are still prevalent today: nearly 800 million people (about two-thirds of whom are women), including 126 million of the world's youth, do not know how to read or write. This year, ILA's theme—Steps to Advance Literacy—inspires students to put themselves in the shoes of students in developing nations, who may have to walk great distances simply to get to school every day. Starting on September 8, 2016, help students learn about a new culture, broaden their worldview, and go the distance to raise awareness and advance literacy with ILD activities and projects. We encourage educators to celebrate ILD and to take steps to advance literacy with us.

Contributors

The activities in this kit came from educators in the field. We are pleased to recognize them and their contribution.

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