

Teaching Notes for Haitian Slave Rebellion

- I. Starter: Use *Slave Rebellion in St.-Domingue: 1792* (image included on Slide 1 in the PowerPoint)
 - a. What do you see in this picture? (*fighting, violence, fire in the background, massive unrest*)
 - b. Who do you think the people in the picture are? (*farmers, slaves, white men*)
 - c. Where do you think this is happening? (*some where along the coast, ships in the background*)
 - d. Why do you think this is occurring? (*anger and violence shown among both groups of people*)
 - e. What questions do you have about the image?
- II. Model Source: Use *Napoleon's explanation of the selling of Louisiana*
**Give each student a copy of the source in its entirety. Explain that the PowerPoint slides (2-3) only have excerpts from the document.*
 - a. Ask students the following questions while they are viewing the source: (Use the questions from the *Primary Source Note-taking* sheet.)
 - i. Who is the author of this document and from what country are they? (*Napoleon Bonaparte, France*)
 - ii. Who is the intended audience and from what country are they? (*Explanation to world for why he sold Louisiana*)
 - iii. What are the key points of the document? (*Importance of Louisiana-port of New Orleans & Mississippi River; explanation for not selling to Britain and why he would sell to the United States*)
 - iv. What questions do you have?
 - b. From which perspective (American, French, or Haitian) does this come? (*French perspective, Napoleon Bonaparte's explanation for selling Louisiana*)
- III. PowerPoint: *What happened during the Haitian Slave rebellion?*
 - a. Slide 4: Title Slide: *Haitian Slave Rebellion 1791-1804*
 - i. The Haitian Slave rebellion began in 1791. It was the first successful slave uprising in the world.
 - ii. This rebellion frightened slave owners around the world because they thought their slaves would begin rebelling.
 - iii. After many years and several attempts by the French, British, and Spanish to regain control over the rebellion, the Haitians declared independence in 1804.
 - iv. Haiti became the first African led nation in the world.
 - b. Slide 5: *Where is Saint Domingue?*
 - i. Saint Domingue (present day Haiti) is located off the southeastern coast of the United States.
 - ii. During the time of the rebellion, it was one of the wealthiest colonies of France. They were producers of sugar, coffee, cotton, and indigo.
 - iii. They were about 25,000 white plantation owners and 500,000 slaves.
 - c. Slide 6: *What happened in Saint Domingue?*
 - i. Use information provided on the slide.
 - ii. The following hierarchy or caste system was used in Saint Domingue:
 1. grandblancs: whites who owned plantations
 2. Petitblancs: small merchants also white
 3. Gensdecolour (affranchis): free blacks
 4. Slaves
 - d. Slide 7: *Who was involved?*

- i. Toussaint L'Ouverture was the slave who organized a small army of slaves to rebel against the French government in Saint Domingue.
 - ii. Napoleon Bonaparte was the leader of France and the wealthy colony of Saint Domingue. He sent several groups of troops to Saint Domingue to attempt to gain control of the rebellion. Each time the L'Ouverture and his forces defeated the French.
- e. Slide 8: *Effects on Saint Domingue and France*
 - i. Saint Domingue gained independence in 1804. The Haitians fell into extreme poverty as they began ruling themselves and towards the end of the rebellion as many countries set up embargos (including the United States during Thomas Jefferson's presidency).
 - ii. France lost control of one of its wealthiest colonies. Napoleon did not see any reason to maintain control of all of Louisiana and thus sold the port of New Orleans and the Louisiana Territory to Thomas Jefferson.
- f. Slide 9: *Why is Saint Domingue important?*
 - i. The rebellion began in 1791 and ended in 1804 with Haiti becoming an independent nation.
 - ii. Effects on the world
 - 1. Slave owners in other countries were frightened that their own slaves would begin rebelling.
 - a. 1793—large influx into the United States of refugees from Saint Domingue
 - i. Slave owners in the US were extremely worried about slave rebellions
 - 1. United States was one of the largest slave holding countries during this time.
 - 2. There was serious fear of a slave revolt occurring in the United States.
 - ii. Slave owners maintained stronger, harsher hold on slaves.
 - 2. France, Spain, and England all made unsuccessful attempts to intervene and put the rebellion in Saint-Domingue down.
 - 3. Many countries passed harsher slave laws.
- g. Slide 10: *How did this affect the United States?*
 - i. President Thomas Jefferson allowed refugees to enter the United States during the revolution.
 - ii. Slave rebellions began to occur in the South.
 - 1. In 1802, Gabrielle Prosser, a slave in Virginia organized an invasion of Richmond, Virginia and its armory. Prosser gained support from 1,000 slaves. On the day of the rebellion, the bridges leading to Richmond were washed out due to a large storm. Prosser and 35 other slaves were hanged for their involvement in the rebellion.
 - iii. Thomas Jefferson wanted the port of New Orleans. After the rebellion, Napoleon realized that there was no point in keeping the port or the Louisiana territory. He sold both to Jefferson, thus his colony of New France.

