School District of Palm Beach County

MAY 2026 HAITIAN HERITAGE MONTH ESSAY CONTEST

Student's Name: Laurie Saint Val
Grade: 11th grade
School: Boynton Beach High School
Sponsoring Teacher: Ms. Sara JEAN BAPTISTE

TOPIC: Write a strategic plan narrative to suggest ways by which Haiti can be transformed in view of contemporary global perspectives.

Haiti: Challenges and a Vision for Sustainable Transformation

Haiti is often called the Pearl of the Caribbean or the Cradle of Freedom, a very beautiful and rich country located in the Caribbean, sharing a border with the Dominican Republic, the first independent Black nation and one of the richest countries in the world in natural resources. It is recognized for its beautiful culture, its delicious dishes, its beautiful beaches, its beautiful historical monuments, and its tropical climate, but despite this, it has been facing many problems for some time.

For several years, Haiti has been facing serious and persistent problems. Each day that passes, the country moves further away from change and from becoming the livable country it once was. These include economic and social instability, political unrest, and vulnerability to natural disasters. These problems reduce the country's level of development and lower people's life expectancy. Transforming the country is essential not only for its people, who deeply love it, but also for regional stability and for its progress on a global scale.

Economic instability

Haiti suffers from a very high unemployment rate, which is one of the main causes of poverty in the country. A large part of the population does not have access to a stable income, which makes living conditions very difficult on a daily basis and limits opportunities for improvement.

Infrastructure such as roads, buildings, electricity, and transportation is in a very degraded state, which slows economic development and complicates internal exchanges within the country. In addition, Haiti depends heavily on foreign aid to meet several essential needs, which limits its long-term economic independence and makes the economy vulnerable to external decisions. This overall situation slows down the country's growth and prevents job creation. Haiti's economy is in great difficulty and barely grows. The country depends heavily on the US dollar.

The gourde is losing value. Because of this, people and businesses mainly use the dollar to set prices and store their money. This makes the gourde less and less used and weaker in the economy. Prices are also increasing, which makes life more expensive.

The situation is also worsened by political instability, violence, and the fact that many families depend on money sent by people living abroad. The economy therefore remains fragile and can easily be affected by crises.

II. Political instability, which remains a major obstacle for the country

Corruption, the weakness of government institutions, and the lack of transparency among politicians have reduced the Haitian people's trust. In Haiti, political transition has become a permanent mode of governance, with successive transitional governments and fragile agreements for nearly five years.

For example, after the government of Haitian President Jovenel Moïse, who was unfortunately assassinated in his private residence on the night of July 6–7, 2021, the country went through three transitional governments without any consultation with the people, which has deepened both the political and economic crisis.

Social challenges

In Haiti, a large percentage of the population cannot read or write. The education system is in a deep crisis; more than 70% of schools have been closed or destroyed by gangs, along with a lack of financial and educational resources. This situation limits access to education, especially in rural areas.

The private sector dominates the country, making education paid and unaffordable for some families. Teachers are often underpaid and work in difficult conditions. Indeed, the lack of effective control and sufficient resources prevents schools from functioning properly. As a result, students do not receive a quality education, which slows the country's development. Leaders have not taken responsibility for supporting children on the streets, which increases unemployment and crime, because these same young people destroy the country in order to earn money. I believe that if these children had access to education, most of them would have thought about a better future.

Now let us consider health. The healthcare system in Haiti faces many major challenges. Insecurity and gang violence limit access to care and disrupt the functioning of a large number of hospitals in the country. Infrastructure is insufficient, with a very low number of beds and a shortage of essential supplies compared to international standards. The economic crisis worsens the situation because healthcare funding is limited and a large part of the population cannot afford medical care. In addition, problems such as cholera and malnutrition threaten the population, especially children. Finally, maternal and infant mortality rates remain very high due to the lack of access to adequate healthcare services.

Environmental vulnerability

Haiti is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to natural disasters and the effects of climate change, with a large part of its population exposed to major risks such as hurricanes, earthquakes, and droughts. This vulnerability is worsened by extreme deforestation and severe soil erosion, which increase the risk of floods and landslides. In addition, rapid and unplanned urbanization, especially in major cities, exposes the population even more to these dangers. Climate change also intensifies these phenomena, making disasters more frequent and more destructive. All these factors create a vicious cycle in which environmental degradation increases the impact of disasters, deepens poverty, and limits the country's ability to recover. These factors cause major agricultural losses, water shortages, and overall environmental degradation.

III. Vision for the future of Haiti

A transformed Haiti would be:

a stable and democratic nation, a growing and sustainable economy, a country where citizens enjoy a better standard of living, and an environmentally resilient and sustainable nation.

Strategic transformation plan

A: Reforms must aim to establish greater transparency and real accountability within the government. It is essential that the country be led by a patriotic president, democratically elected by the people and committed to serving the national interest.

B: A growing and sustainable economy is essential to transform Haiti. The country must invest in its local resources in order to reduce dependence on foreign aid and imports. By developing key sectors such as agriculture, industry, and tourism, the country can create jobs for the population. Developing local agriculture: The country must better support the production of cocoa, cotton, and Francique mangoes. This can be done by helping farmers with more resources, training, and equipment. Security must also be improved so that farmers can work safely. Finally, better organizing the sale and export of these products would generate more income and strengthen the rural economy. Support for small businesses will also strengthen the local economy. In addition, investments in infrastructure such as electricity and roads will promote trade and development. With such an economy, the country will achieve national prosperity and the living conditions of the population will be improved.

C: Improving the education system and healthcare in the country. Access to quality education is essential to ensure long-term development. Better education allows young people to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed and contribute to society. Vocational training programs play a very important role as they prepare individuals for work. At the same time, strengthening the healthcare system is essential to improve living conditions. With the support of international organizations, it is possible to increase access to care, better equip hospitals, and respond more effectively to health needs. Together, these efforts help create a stronger, fairer, and better-prepared society for the future.

D: Environmental sustainability and disaster resilience. Environmental sustainability and disaster resilience are closely linked, as they aim to reduce risks and protect natural resources. It is no longer just about repairing damage, but about anticipating and adapting to climate risks. This resilience also relies on the involvement of local communities and the sustainable management of ecosystems. Finally, investing in sustainable infrastructure and adopting strategies such as “build back better” helps better cope with disasters.

E: Technology and global integration. Expanding access to Internet and digital infrastructure is essential to connect Haiti to the global economy and promote its development. By improving access to technology, the country can stimulate innovation, facilitate communication, and create new economic opportunities. Promoting digital literacy will allow citizens, especially young people, to acquire useful skills to adapt to the modern world. Finally, partnerships with international organizations will strengthen the country’s capacity, attract investment, and support long-term sustainable development and innovation.

V. Implementation strategies

Transformation will require: strong government commitment and effective leadership, collaboration with international partners, active community involvement, long-term planning and regular monitoring of progress, and the use of data and global benchmarks to guide decisions.

The transformation will not be easy. Resistance to change can be overcome through education and public awareness to improve understanding of necessary reforms. The lack of funding can be addressed by attracting foreign investment and mobilizing international aid in an effective and transparent way. Finally, political instability must be reduced through institutional strengthening, the rule of law, and the promotion of good governance in order to ensure long-term stability.

Conclusion

Transforming Haiti is both necessary and possible. Despite major challenges, strategic planning and sustained efforts can lead to significant progress. By focusing on governance, economic growth, social development, environmental protection, and global integration, Haiti can build a more stable and prosperous future.

Haiti is not poor due to lack of values!! Haiti is not poor due to lack of history!! Haiti is rather paralyzed because it was made to pay for its freedom!!