

Document-Based Question: The Haitian Revolution as a Global Phenomenon

Directions: The following question is based on the accompanying Documents 1-8. The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise. Write an essay to respond to the following essay prompt.

This question is designed to test your ability to work with and understand historical documents.

Write **ONE** DBQ paragraph that:

- Has a relevant sub-claim and supports that claim with evidence from the documents.
- Uses at least 3 of the documents.
- Takes into account both the sources of the documents and the authors' point of view.
- Recommends an additional document that would help your argument

You should also try to refer to historical information not mentioned in the documents.

Prompt:

1. Using the documents, **explain how the Haitian revolution was a global event in terms of its origin, its process, and its legacy.**

Document 1

Source: French Code Noir (Black Code) King Louis XIV in 1685 –remained in force until 1848. French legal code for the regulation of slavery in the West Indies, including sugar plantations in Saint Domingue

- “2. All slaves in our islands shall be baptized and instructed in the Catholic religion.
22. Masters shall be obliged to provide each week to their slaves of eighteen years or older for food 2 1/2 measures of cassava flour, or three cassavas weighing 2 1/2 pounds each at least, or some equivalent provisions, with 2 pounds of saltbeef or three pounds of fish...
23. It is prohibited to give slaves brandy or fermented cane juice to take the place of rations mentioned in the previous article.
59. We grant to those who have been emancipated the same rights, privileges, and immunities enjoyed by people born free; wishing that the benefits of acquired liberty may produce in them, as much for their persons as for their goods, the same effects that the good fortune of natural liberty offers to our other subjects.”

Document 2

Source: Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen , 1789 Marquis de Lafayette (and Thomas Jefferson)

- ✧ “ Men are born and remain free and equal in rights; social distinctions may be based only upon general usefulness.”
- ✧ “The aim of every political association is the preservation of the natural and inalienable rights of man; these rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.”
- ✧ “The source of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation; no group, no individual may exercise authority not emanating expressly therefrom.”
- ✧ “ Since property is a sacred and inviolate right, no one may be deprived thereof unless a legally established public necessity obviously requires it, and upon condition of a just and previous indemnity.”

Document 3

Jean-Marie d'Augy, white president of the colonial Assembly in Saint-Domingue 1790 at the occasion of the torture and execution of the mulatto leader, Vincent Oge following his attempts to bring the new rights of man from France to Haiti.

“We have not brought half a million slaves from the coasts of Africa to make them into French citizens.”

Document 4

Source: Mark Almond, 20th century historian *Revolution 500 Years of struggle for Change* p. 85

“ In May 1802, Napoleon’s forces tried to re-establish slavery. To make matters worse, the French Commander kidnapped Toussaint and deported him back to France. The effect was to enrage the black majority and provoke an even greater rebellion. By now black soldiers had gained experience in organizing an army. The French were at a disadvantage” they were more susceptible to disease (particularly yellow fever) than their opponents, and reinforcements were difficult to obtain from France. The French troops were also demoralized by fighting against enemies who sang the Marsellaise and invoked revolutionary ideals. One officer, Lacroix, asked, “Have our barbarous enemies justice on their side? Are we no longer the soldiers of Republican France? And have we become crude instruments of policy?”

Document 5

Source: “Revenge Taken by the Black Army” 1805 Sketch by Marcus Rainsford in “An Historical Account of the Black Empire of Hayti” showing actions taken against the French in Saint Domingue’s war for independence from France and slavery.



Document 6

Source: PROCLAMATION OF HAITI'S INDEPENDENCE BY THE GENERAL IN CHIEF, Jean Jacques Dessalines to the Haitian people in Gonaives, on January 1st 1804, year first of Haiti's independence

Dear Citizens,

It is not enough to have expelled from your country the barbarians who have bloodied it for two centuries; it is not enough to have put a brake to these ever reviving factions which take turns to play-act this liberty, like ghost that France had exposed before your eyes; it is necessary, by a last act of national authority, assure forever an empire of liberty in this country our birth place; we must take away from this inhumane government, which held for so long our spirits in the most humiliating torpor, all hope to resubjugate us; we must at last live independent or die.

Let us be on guard however so that the spirit of proselytism does not destroy our work; let our neighbors breath in peace, may they live in peace under the empire of the laws that they have legislated themselves, and let us not go, like spark fire revolutionaries, erecting ourselves as legislators of the Caribbean, to make good of our glory by troubling the peace of neighboring islands: they have never, like the one that we live in, been soaked of the innocent blood of their inhabitants; they have no vengeance to exercise against the authority that protects them.

Let us swear to the entire universe, to posterity, to ourselves, to renounce forever to France, and to die rather than to live under its domination.

To fight until the last crotchet rest for the independence of our country!

Document 7

Source: Douglas Egerton, Professor of History Le Moyne College, on the impact of the Haitian Revolution on Americans in a PBS interview in the 1990's

“Jefferson was terrified of what was happening in Saint Domingue. He referred to Toussaint’s army as cannibals. His fear was that black American would be inspired by what they saw taking place just off the shore of America. And he spent his entire career trying to shut down any contact, and therefore any movement of information, between the American mainland and the Caribbean island. He called upon Congress to abolish trade between the United States and what after 1804 was the independent country of Haiti. He argued that France believed it still owned the island. In short, he denied that Haitian revolutionaries had the same right to independence and autonomy that he claimed for American patriots. And consequently, in 1805 and finally in 1806, trade was formally shut down between the United States and Haiti, which decimated the already very weak Haitian economy. And of course, Jefferson then argued that this was an example of what happens when Africans are allowed to govern themselves: economic devastation caused in large part by his own economic policies.”

Document 8

Source: David Geggus, historian “The Haitian Revolution” in The Modern Caribbean, 1989

“From 1792 onward laws were passed all around the Caribbean and in North America restricting immigration from strife-torn Saint Domingue. Even when the likelihood of direct interference was not considered strong. Slave owners feared the revolution’s inflammatory example. Within a month of the August 1791 revolt, slaves in Jamaica were singing songs about the uprising, and before long whites in the West Indies and North America were complaining uneasily of a new “insolence” on the part of their slaves. Several plots and insurrections were partly inspired by events in Saint Domingue and the Emancipation Decree of 1794. Most notable of these were the conspiracies organized by free colored in Bahia (1798), Havana (1812) and Charleston (1822). However, many factors were at work in the slave rebellions of the period, and to suppose that mere inspiration from abroad was critical in provoking resistance would be to underestimate the difficulties confronting dissidents in this age of strong colonial garrisons.”