

Afro-Latin American Topics of Conversation

Race and Racism in Latin America

- What are the representations of race in the various dolls and souvenir art included in the suitcase?
- How is Afro-Cuban identity commoditized in the “Statue of Man” suitcase item?
- How is the depiction of race different or the same between the dolls from Haiti, Cuba, and Puerto Rico?

Race and Culture in Latin America

- How are African heritage and Latin American identity present in various cultural activities (i.e. music, dance, etc.)?
- How have different governments regulated Afro-Latino practices? (certain music was outlawed in Latin American societies, investigate).
- How did that Garifuna fight to maintain their homeland and resist slavery? (Watch video included in suitcase “The Garifuna Journey”).

Selected Suitcase Items Descriptions

Samba Instruments

Learn about the various instruments used in Samba dance and music.

For more information, visit: <http://www.brazilcarnival.com.br/culture/drum-samba-instruments-from-brazil>

Apito

A Samba whistle. This model with three different notes helps maintaining the overall tempo, not only by whistling the beat but also through improvised phrasing, warning the percussionists about a coming break or stop.

There are a number of different Samba whistles that have various pitches and sounds.

To listen to the differences, visit this website: <http://larkinam.com/MOBWhistleBrazil.html>

Cuíca

Brazilian samba drum. One of the most notable characteristics of the drum is the wooden stick found on the inside of the drum that is attached to the center of the drum head. The drum can have various pitches depending on the tension on the drum head and the different pressures applied to the stick and drum head.

To observe and listen to the uniqueness of the drum, click here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mmlK94QvwiA>

For a more detailed lesson in Portuguese: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCm18Ra0JA8>

Additional Resources

Videos:

Black in Latin America by Henry Louis Gates

4 episodes available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLYrhy-utYPcctQjul2KpUZYqWFDQ__PA

Literature:

Andrews, G. R. (2004). *Afro-Latin America, 1800-2000*. New York: Oxford University Press.

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