Focus on an Economic Activity: 
Tourism in the Caribbean

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Lesson Overview: Students explore various aspects of tourism in the Caribbean region. Students compare the economy and the political structures of the two countries of Hispaniola; Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Essential Questions:
- How is Caribbean tourism a major type of economic activity?
- What types of factors affect tourism?
- What are some negative and positive aspects for a country?

Objectives: Students will be able to:
- Locate the two countries of Hispaniola; Haiti and the Dominican Republic.
- Compare the economy and political structures of two countries of Hispaniola.
- Select one of the two nations of Hispaniola for a vacation and justify their choice in writing.

Subject/Target Grade: World Geography, Economics; grades 6-8

Duration: one class period

Student Materials: Maps and atlases; worksheets: Top Five Reasons, Economy in the Caribbean; internet access (optional)

Tourism in the Caribbean PPT

Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations
- 6-G2.1.1 Describe landform features and the climate of the region under study.
- 6 – G2.2.3 Analyze how culture and experience influence people’s perception of places and regions (e.g., the Caribbean Region that presently displays enduring impacts of different immigrant groups – Africans, South Asians, Europeans – and the differing contemporary points of view about the region displayed by islanders and tourists).
- 6 - E3.1.1 Use charts and graphs to compare imports and exports of different countries in the Western Hemisphere and propose generalizations about patterns of economic interdependence.

National Geography Standards and/or C3 connections
- Standard 4: The physical and human characteristics of places
- Standard 6: How culture and experience influence people’s perceptions of places and regions
- Standard 11: The patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth’s surface

Common Core Literacy Standards
- 8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- 2. Write informative/explanatory texts
Procedure

1. **Opening Activity:** Ask students to write down all the reasons that they can think of that people travel. Have volunteers share their reasons and record them on an overhead or white board. *(Slide 3)*

Travel can be broken down into several categories: Relaxation, Belonging, Knowledge, Status, Security, Aesthetics. Use these categories or others. Within these categories are many reasons for travel. Examples are:

- **Relaxation:** escape, sand and sun, chilling out, tension reduction, dropping out, exercise
- **Belonging:** visit family and friends, search for roots, companionship, reunion, convention
- **Knowledge:** culture, wanderlust, education programs, museums, historical sites
- **Status:** social recognition, be like the neighbors or friends, ego enhancement, feel better
- **Security:** health, business/work advancement, active recreation
- **Aesthetics:** scenery, environment, museums, historical sites

Now have the students consider the notion of a vacation. Discuss with the students how these two items, travel and a vacation, are different. Also discuss how they are similar. The main difference is that travel can encompass many reasons beyond the sheer break in the routine that a vacation can provide.

2. **Map Activity:** *(Slide 4)* On a map of the Caribbean region locate and identify the following:

- Hispaniola, the second largest island in the Caribbean
- Cuba, the largest island in the Caribbean, is to the northwest of Hispaniola.
- Puerto Rico, a commonwealth and territorial possession of the United States to the east of Hispaniola
- Jamaica, to the west.

Ask the student to consider reasons people would want to visit Hispaniola, Puerto Rico or Jamaica. Remind students that places with unique physical features that are often selected by tourists. One example would be many tourists who go to South America visit the Amazon River and its surrounding environs.

3. **Travel Teams:** After students have considered appropriate reasons to visit Hispaniola, Puerto Rico or Jamaica, break the class into five ‘Travel Team’ groups and give each group a copy of the **Top Five Reasons** worksheet. *(Slide 5)* Each group then selects a leader and a recorder and all names are listed on the worksheet. Group members share their reasons and the recorder creates a rank-ordered list of their top five reasons to visit the Caribbean locations. When all groups have finished this step, the leaders from each group address the class, share their top five, and post the sheet for all to see. After all groups have shared their lists, look for commonalities and exceptions. Discuss that people have many different reasons for selecting a location for a vacation. All of these factors are a part of the economic package of tourism.
4. **Hispaniola: (Slide 6)** Narrow the focus down to the island of Hispaniola by examining a map of the island. A good map to use is the “Hispaniola map and information page” found at [http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/namerica/caribb/hispnola.htm](http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/namerica/caribb/hispnola.htm). The island of Hispaniola is made up of two countries: Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Haiti occupies about 1/3 of the island, while the Dominican Republic controls the balance of land. Columbus claimed Hispaniola in 1492, declaring it *(Isla Espanola,)* “the most beautiful island in the world.” In the 17th Century, with the Spanish in control, the French established a colony on the island. The Spanish later ceded the western third of Hispaniola in 1697, which in 1804 became known as Haiti. The remainder of the island, then known as Santo Domingo, declared its independence in 1821; however, it was immediately occupied by Haiti. It finally gained total independence in 1844, and became the Dominican Republic. Today Haiti remains a French speaking nation, while Spanish is the official language of the Dominican Republic.

5. **Economic Comparison:** Two countries, both on the same island in the Caribbean, offer stark contrast when examined. On the surface, both Haiti and the Dominican Republic have miles of shoreline on the Caribbean Sea and a climate which offers warmth all year round. Tourist decisions need to be based on more than sand and sun. The Dominican Republic has a tourist industry built on their assets while Haiti is struggling to revive tourism. Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Direct students to the CIA - the World Factbook found at [https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world_factbook/index.html](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world_factbook/index.html) *(Slide 7)* These economic indicators give part of the picture of the economic diversity of these two countries on the same island.

Read the ‘Economy – overview’ for Haiti and the Dominican Republic: *(Slides 8-9)*

*Haiti is a free market economy that enjoys the advantages of low labor costs and tariff-free access to the US for many of its exports. Poverty, corruption, vulnerability to natural disasters, and low levels of education for much of the population are among Haiti's most serious impediments to economic growth.*

*The Dominican Republic has long been viewed primarily as an exporter of sugar, coffee, and tobacco, but in recent years the service sector has overtaken agriculture as the economy's largest employer, due to growth in telecommunications, tourism, and free trade zones.*

If students have access to computers, use the website to look at some of the economic data to complete the **Economy in the Caribbean** chart and follow the directions on the worksheet. If there is no computer access, use the **Economy of the Caribbean (For students without access to the internet)** worksheet. *(Slides 10-12)*

**Travel:** Another, more defining, piece of the diversity picture can be seen in travel warnings issued by the U.S. Department of State website found at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_5850.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_5850.html) *(Slides 12-16)*

If not using the PowerPoint, print the warning from slides 14-16 and project using a document camera or an overhead and read aloud with the class. Discuss the information found in this warning and answer questions that arise.
6. **Writing Activity:** Have the students compose a paragraph in which they select which country of Hispaniola they would recommend for their next family vacation. They must include and explain at least three reasons why they chose the country they did and two reasons why they did not select the other country. The class ends with a discussion of which site most students selected for their next family vacation. *(Slide 17)*

**Assessment Options**

- Group participation; participation in class discussion
- Answers on the Economy in the Caribbean worksheet
- Written Paragraphs (assessed using the CCSS rubric):
  
  **Standard 2:** Write informative/explanatory texts in which they:
  
  a. Introduce and establish a topic that provides a sense of what is to follow and organize information appropriate to the purpose, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect.
  
  b. Develop the topic with relevant and accurate facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
  
  c. Use appropriate links and varied sentence structures to create cohesion and clarify ideas.
  
  d. Use precise language and sustain an objective style appropriate for a reader seeking information.
  
  e. Provide a conclusion that follows logically from the information or explanation presented.

**References**

*CIA - the World Factbook.* 7 May 2013  

*Haiti bounces back.* Global Travel Industry News. 23 November 2009  


*U.S. Department of State – Travel Information.* 28 December 2012  
Top Five Reasons to Visit Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, or Jamaica
Rankings from the Travel Team

Travel Team Leader___________________________________________

Travel Team Recorder_________________________________________

Travel Team Members_________________________________________

Reason #1:

Reason #2:

Reason #3:

Reason #4:

Reason #5:
Economy of the Caribbean
(For students without access to the internet)

The World Fact Book includes the following economic data for Haiti and the Dominican Republic. These economic indicators give part of the picture of the economic diversity of these two countries on the same island. Study the chart and follow the directions below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Indicators</th>
<th>Haiti</th>
<th>Dominican Republic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita</td>
<td>$1300</td>
<td>$9600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP Composition by sector:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>61.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor force by occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
<td>63.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population below the poverty line</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Answer the following on the back of this page:

1. Write two statements showing an economic comparison between the two countries and one possible impact or consequence of the difference.

Example: *The Dominican Republic has more industry than Haiti; it probably produces more goods for both domestic and foreign trade.*

2. Go back to the World Fact book and look up the economic overview for the United States. Choose one economic indicator and compare the data between our country and one of the countries on the island of Hispaniola.

Example: *The unemployment rate in Haiti (40.6%) is 5 times higher than in the United States (8.2%).*
Economy of the Caribbean

Log on to the World Fact Book at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>. Read the ‘Economy – overview’ for Haiti and the Dominican Republic and look at some of the economic data. These economic indicators give part of the picture of the economic diversity of these two countries on the same island. Fill in the chart and follow the directions below.

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<td><strong>Population below the poverty line</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other interesting data</strong> (your choice of data)</td>
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