Preserving Our Culture

Cover artwork: www.miamismith.com
Artists, artistes and cultural groups communicate information about our past and present and ideas and values of our community and society through the visual and performing arts (VAPA).

- **Visual arts**: drawings, paintings, photographs, sculpture, architecture
- **Performing arts**: storytelling, music, song, drama, and dance
- **Oral traditions** are cultural practices and ideas that are passed on through oral communication
  - Some are not available in written form
  - Some require the use of body language and voice modulation to convey the meaning and may not be as effectively communicated in written form
Why must government help?

• Government has an important role to play in the transfer and preservation of our cultural heritage because many local artists, artistes and cultural groups lack the resources to do so on their own.
Role of institutions

- **National Trusts:** [https://nationaltrust.tt/](https://nationaltrust.tt/)
  - preserve pictures and furniture of historic or artistic value
  - Buildings of national, historical, architectural or artistic value
    (the public can tour these buildings)
- **Museums** store important historical and cultural objects/artefacts and display them for public viewing
- **Archives** store large numbers of historical documents and make them available to the public
- **Art galleries** acquire, store and display important pieces of local art for viewing

These institutions also sponsor lectures and exhibitions to transmit information to us about our cultural heritage.
Role of the mass media

• The Caribbean’s cultural heritage is threatened by foreign cultures which are promoted on both foreign (e.g. cable tv stations) and locally owned mass media.

• Caribbean media can assist in transferring the region’s cultural heritage by:

  – exchanging local programmes with other regional media
  – Financing the production of local TV shows
  – Devoting more airtime to locally produced cultural programmes
  – Establishing an archives department for storing/preserving locally produced works
  – Linking up with other stations in the region so that audiences can share their views on Caribbean culture
  – Presenting information on the way of life of the people of different Caribbean countries to highlight their similarities
What is protected by copyright law

- Literary works (novels, short stories, lectures, addresses, manuals etc)
- Musical works
- Choreographic works (dances and pantomimes)
- Dramatic works (plays for radio, tv, theatre)
- Artistic works (drawings, paintings, photos, sculptures)
- Maps and technical drawings
- Audiovisual works (films, tv shows, documentaries)
- Computer programmes and databases
- Sound recordings and broadcasts
Other forms of legal protection

• **Patent**: a legal protection given to inventors to protect them against unauthorized use of their inventions for a specified period of time

• **Trademark**: a legally registered word or symbol which is associated with your good or service and may not be used on any other good or service

• **Pirate**: person who copies and sells other persons’ work without their permission
PRESERVING OUR ARTFORMS

• Preserving our artforms:
  – Song lyrics
  – Instruments (steelpan created in the Caribbean)
  – Dances (limbo created in the Caribbean)
  – Cuisine (style, method and ingredients used in our cooking represent another of our art forms)

• Why preserve our artforms?
  – They are a living testimony of our historical past
  – They attract international interest, attention and research
  – The Tourism industry (and the Caribbean economy) is dependent on it
HOW CAN OUR CULTURAL ARTFORMS BE PRESERVED?

1. Establishment of National Cultural Centres
2. Establishment of government ministries to promote and preserve culture
3. Granting of financial support to events such as CARIFESTA and Best Village Competitions
4. Introducing the artforms/drama etc into the school curriculum
5. Organising competitions in schools
6. Advertising our festivals on the internet and in leading magazines
7. Encouraging and facilitating the patenting of Caribbean inventions
8. Declaring holidays for special events
9. Providing the Caribbean Media Corporation with relevant information for broadcasting
10. Providing funds to ensure artefacts are preserved and exhibited in museums
11. Awards to our cultural icons
12. Teaching cultural artforms in the community centres
13. Refurbishing and maintaining our historical sites and buildings
14. Enacting copyright laws to protect creative and artistic work
15. Establishing Academies for the Performing Arts e.g NAPA and SAPA
1. What is the best definition of culture?
   A. Customs, ceremonies, religions, and festivals
   B. The beliefs and behaviours of an ethnic group
   C. The way of life of a group of people
   D. The things we inherit from our ancestors

2. Which of the following is NOT a correct description of Caribbean society?
   A. Multicultural
   B. Ethnically diverse
   C. Cultural diversity
   D. Monocultural

3. A soca band playing in a hotel is an example of:
   A. Cultural penetration
   B. Cultural commercialization
   C. Cultural integration
   D. Cultural retention

4. Another word for an established cultural tradition or pattern of behaviour is:
   A. a more
   B. a norm
   C. a folkway
   D. a hierarchy

5. The Garifuna language is a mixture of:
   A. African and French
   B. African and Taino
   C. African and English
   D. Creole and Taino
1. What is the best definition of culture?
   A. Customs, ceremonies, religions, and festivals
   B. The beliefs and behaviours of an ethnic group
   C. The way of life of a group of people
   D. The things we inherit from our ancestors

2. Which of the following in NOT a correct description of Caribbean society?
   1. Multicultural
   2. Ethnically diverse
   3. Cultural diversity
   4. Monocultural

3. A soca band playing in a hotel is an example of:
   A. Cultural penetration
   B. Cultural commercialization
   C. Cultural integration
   D. Cultural retention

4. Another word for an established cultural tradition or pattern of behaviour is:
   A. A more
   B. A norm
   C. A folkway
   D. A hierarchy

5. The Garifuna language is a mixture of:
   A. African and French
   B. African and Taino
   C. African and English
   D. Creole and Taino
6. Caribbean societies are often referred to as multicultural.

a) Identify FOUR ethnic groups that have migrated to the Caribbean.

b) Outline 2 ways in which cultural integration is occurring.

c) Give 2 reasons for cultural change in the Caribbean today.

d) Suggest 3 ways in which young people can conserve and develop Caribbean culture.

e) Identify 2 traditional Caribbean customs and identify the ethnic group or groups from which it originates.

f) Give 2 reasons why some traditional Caribbean customs are changing.

g) Suggest to community leaders 3 strategies that they can use to promote the culture of ONE ethnic group in your country.

h) Explain why the strategies you have suggested will be successful.
• The Garifuna people are a mixed African and indigenous people originally from the Caribbean island of Saint Vincent who speak Garifuna, an Arawakan language. The Garifuna, previously known as Black Caribs, are the descendants of indigenous Arawak and Island Carib or Karipono and Afro-Caribbean people.

• **Folkways** are the customs and social norms of everyday life. Consider it the “right way” to do things in society. They are so customary and habitual that we do not even realize we are doing them. Some examples are eating using the proper utensils, saying please and thank you, holding the door open for someone behind you, and not wearing inappropriate clothing to church.
Caribbean societies are often referred to as multicultural.

1) Identify FOUR ethnic groups that have migrated to the Caribbean.
   - Amerindians, Arawaks, Tainos, Caribs, Kalinagoes, Africans, Europeans, East Indians, Chinese, Middle Eastern people.

2) Outline 2 ways in which cultural integration is occurring.
   - people of all ethnic groups celebrate each others’ festivals
   - carnival is a mixture of customs and traditions from different groups
   - new types of music are emerging e.g. chutney-soca, parang-soca
   - Spices and flavourings from different cultural groups are used in cooking
3. Give 2 reasons for cultural change in the Caribbean today.
   - the influence of TV, radio and other media;
   - Globalization/ influences from foreign cultures such as the US;
   - the intermixing of ethnic groups;
   - development of a world youth culture;
   - commercialization of our cultural activities to make them more attractive to tourists
   - Continued migration of people from other parts of the world into the region

4. Suggest 3 ways in which young people can conserve and develop Caribbean culture
   - by researching traditional culture,
   - by practising Caribbean culture,
   - by spending money on Caribbean cultural items, such as local CDs or downloads.
5) Identify 2 traditional Caribbean customs and identify the ethnic group or groups from which it originates.
   - Divali (East Indians/Hindus);
   - Eid (East Indians/Muslims);
   - jumping the broom (African).

6) Give 2 reasons why some traditional Caribbean customs are changing.
   - They are becoming irrelevant to modern people;
   - the influence of TV, radio and other media, especially the internet;
   - influences from foreign cultures such as the US;
   - globalization;
   - the intermixing of ethnic groups;
   - people prefer new ways and consider some customs to be backward.
7) Suggest to community leaders 3 strategies that they can use to promote the culture of ONE ethnic group in your country.

- East Indian culture can be promoted by:
  - classes for young people,
  - shows for the whole community,
  - being all-inclusive and inviting other groups to take part in cultural festivities,
  - setting up cultural organisations or groups,
  - taking activities into schools,
  - setting up a website or social media page, etc.

8) Explain why the strategies you have suggested will be successful.
1. Explain why cultural groups in the Caribbean should be encouraged to communicate their cultural traditions.

2. What are some advantages of using the performing arts to communicate the cultural heritage of the Caribbean?

3. Suggest some measures that your government can use to encourage the development of the cultural art forms in your country.

4. Explain to a group of school children three reasons why they should visit the national museum.

5. How can local television station managers assist in transferring the region’s cultural heritage?

6. What are some of the ways in which creative work may be pirated?

7. Suggest some reasons why pirating of creative work might take place in your country.
Image source