

Art and Culture

Caribbean and African Cultures are very prominent in Canada. Many festivals happen every year where Caribbean and African cultures are shared within Canada. Music, dance, poetry, parades are ways in which African and Caribbean culture is celebrated, and everyone is able to immerse themselves, if for a day or a weekend in all things African and/or Caribbean. These festivals include: Afrikadey, Afrofest and Caribana.

Here is a list of activities you will work on:

- KWL Chart
- Reading
- Listening / Video

KWL chart

Look at the KWL Chart below. What do you already know about African/Caribbean Festivals? Write what you know in the column 'K'. What do you want to know about? Write it down in the "W" column.

| K | W | L |
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| What I know about African/Caribbean Festivals. | What I want to know about African/Caribbean Festivals. | What I learned about African/Caribbean Festivals. |
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READING



Afrofest is considered the largest free African festival in North America. It was started in "1989 by Music Africa, a not-for-profit, community-based organization that promotes African music in Toronto. Afrofest showcases and celebrates the best in African music, art, crafts, culture and food," and also hosts activities for youth and children. The creative village is an area where children can engage in arts and crafts and face painting. Notably, the celebration features traditional and contemporary styles of music by top international touring acts and dozens of African performing groups from across Canada. " Afrofest 2016 hosted 35

artists, from all over Africa and Toronto and expected over 100,000 people to attend the 2 day festival.

The city of Regina in Saskatchewan also hosts its own Afrofest, known as Regina Afrofest. It is hosted at Victoria Park, and is an all-day event that features music, art, and food.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2011 Afrofest was slated to not receive a permit to use its usual location at Queen's park (a site it has used for 23 years); the city "refused to grant permit for 2011 stating that the festival was too big and had violated terms of its permits in the past." The festival was moved to Woodbine Park to accommodate its large festival. Again, in 2016, the City wanted to reduce the 2 day event to 1 day because of alleged noise violations. Because of social media outrage, the City agreed to maintain the 2 day festival.

VIDEO

Information from the videos and audios will also be included in the quiz.

This is a video of Afrofest 2015 in Toronto. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9Xc2dJEFY>

READING ACTIVITY

Afrikadey is an African festival that takes place in Calgary, Alberta in the month of August. It is presented by the Afrikadey! Arts and Culture Society and it has been hosted for the past 25 years. It was founded by artistic director Tunde Dawodu, to share the rich creative works of African cultures from the continent and the diaspora.

Afrikadey is a "word that comes from the broken English spoken in West Africa, meaning Africa is alive, Africa is well, Africa is there!" This festival celebrates African musical styles, dance, art and literature. It is a week long event that takes place on Prince's Island Park. Its inception has carried forth the message of socio-political consciousness. Its belief is that "the performing arts are a powerful force when it comes to promoting cultural unity amongst Calgarians." It is also a way for audiences and artists to parlay advocacy into meaningful action, as well as gives festival goers of all ages the opportunity to have an international experience in the heart of their own city. What is great about this festival is that, although it isn't as big as other festivals hosted in the city (Stampede), it is an opportunity for artists from Canada and the world to be showcased and highlighted. The festival is not just for those who are artists; it offers various activities, from art gallery classes for children, to sold-out drumming workshops. Afrikadey is not only a festival for the goers to enjoy but it is also a way to educate people on the ongoing contributions of Canadians of African descent. It shows innovative Canadian music generated from a uniquely Afro-Canadian perspective.

Afrikadey has hosted some renowned artists from around Africa, from Oliver Mtukudzi from Zimbabwe to Guinean guitarist, Alpha Yaya Diallo. This festival continues to function as an important bridge between local and international

communities. Not only that, it continues to attract new talent and fans with each successful event.

VIDEO

Below is a video of a day at Afrikadey. Information from the videos and audios will also be included in the quiz.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHud3b6xtGE>



READING ACTIVITY

Caribana is one of, if not the most recognized North American festival. Inspired primarily by Trinidad's annual pre-Lenten Carnival, this three week festival of the arts reflects the diverse expressive traditions of the Caribbean, bringing together a wide range of indigenous songs, instrumental music, dances, masquerade and oral traditions. Since the 1980s, participation by groups from Central and South America, Africa, Bahamas, Haiti and elsewhere in Canada has added a dimension of

multiculturalism to the festival that is uniquely Canadian. It was created in 1967 as a community heritage project for Canada's Centennial year. The musical, dance, food and costume contributions are from Jamaica, Guyana, the Bahamas, and other Black cultures represented.

Canada was celebrating its 100th birthday as a country in 1967. In Toronto, Black immigrants (mostly Caribbeans) wanted to join in the celebration and express their sense of sister/brotherhood in their newfound home. This led to the formation of the Caribbean Cultural Committee, the organizing body for Caribana that still exists today. In August of 1967, this group of visionaries brought the spirit of Caribana to life, with the purpose of showing appreciation for Canada's warmth and hospitality and sharing the Caribbean culture with fellow Canadians. The carnival was a tremendous success and lasted an entire week (July 30 to Aug. 6, 1967). And so began an annual tradition.

The Caribbean culture has spread out throughout Canada. The following festivals have brought Caribbean culture across Canada: "Caribbean Days in Vancouver, Carifete in Montreal, Cariwest In Edmonton, Carifest in Calgary, and Toronto's Caribana." It has proliferated the Caribbean culture and traditions, cuisine and music and each year the festivals get to share soca, calypso, reggae and the sweet sounds of steel pans on the streets.

VIDEO

This link is a video of what Caribana festivals looks like. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfINWBq7dxI>

REFERENCES

This is for additional information only. You do not have to study the references for the quiz.

1. <http://blackhistorycanada.ca/topic.php?id=194&themeid=9>
2. <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/caribana-emc/>
3. http://www.yorku.ca/aonline/c_caribana.html
4. <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/caribbean-people/>
5. <http://exploreedmonton.com/festivals-and-events/Cariwest-Caribbean-Arts-Festival>

REFERENCES

<http://www.insidetoronto.com/news-story/6759198-african-music-and-culture-can-be-celebrated-during-afrofest-at-woodbine-park/>

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<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/the-vibes-are-good-crowds-converge-on-woodbine-park-for-28th-annual-afrofest-1.3672773>

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