Notes Outline on “The Haitian Revolution”

1) What were the promise and the tragedy of the Haitian Revolution?

2) Where is Haiti located? Which two countries share the island of Hispaniola?

3) Who were the original inhabitants of Hispaniola? What was the name that they gave their island, which became the source of the name, Haiti. What did that word mean in their language?

4) When and by whom was the island of Hispaniola first discovered by Europeans? What is the significance of the settlement established there?

5) When and by whom were slaves first imported to Hispaniola? When did the French settle on part of the island? What did they call their part of the island? Why did it become important to France?

6) How did France develop the sugar cane production on the island? Who benefited the most from this? Who benefited the least?

7) Describe the several social classes on the island.

8) When and how did the Haitian Revolution begin? Who led a revolt of mulattoes? How did the French react to the revolt?
9) Who was Toussaint Louverture? Why was he so important to the Haitian Revolution?

10) Faced with war with Britain and Spain, what action did Commissioner Sonthonax take? How did this affect Toussaint Louverture who had previously defected to the Spanish side?

11) What was Napoleon’s response to Toussaint’s declaration of a Constitution in 1801 and announcement of Sainte-Domingue’s autonomy?

12) What happened to Toussaint Louverture after Charles Leclerc arrived on Haiti?

13) Who was Jean-Jacques Dessalines? How were the French finally defeated? When did the last French soldiers leave the island?

14) When did Dessalines declare the establishment of “The Republic of Haiti”? What was its significance within the Western Hemisphere?

15) What was the impact of the Haitian independence on the future of the United States? Why did Thomas Jefferson place a trade embargo on Haiti? What irony was there in that action?

16) What are the reasons that Haiti has not prospered since independence and now ranks as the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere?