

Student Information Sheet:

Celebrations in Northeast Brazil

Grades 3-5

Carnival is an annual pre-Lenten celebration in every city, town and village in Brazil. It is known as Mardi Gras in New Orleans, Louisiana. The celebration is from the Friday to the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday in Brazil and in the U.S. It takes many months of preparation for neighborhood groups to organize and develop the floats, exhilarating percussive music, dance and the elaborate costumes. In Brazil, samba is carnival's music; in the U.S., jazz is the music of Mardi Gras.

Frevo is a popular dance and music in the state of Pernambuco. It is popular during street celebrations during carnival in Recife and Olinda. Acrobatic dancers use yellow, green and red umbrellas while performing. Instruments in a frevo band are saxophones, trumpets, trombones and percussion.

Black Consciousness Day is celebrated on November 20th in many states throughout Brazil. In Salvador the entire month is celebrated as Black November. This holiday commemorates the anniversary of the death of Zumbi, Brazil's most important African Brazilian leader. He was the last leader of Palmares, the largest free African settlement, and died resisting enslavement in 1697. Zumbi is a symbol of the fight against racism and discrimination. Participants acknowledge their African heritage in their speeches, clothing, singing, and dancing. Other activities include: marches, parades, music, and special programs on racism and racial equality.

Think about . . .?

- What holidays do you think are important to celebrate in the United States?
- Have you participated in a holiday of an ethnic group different than your own? What did you learn?