JAMAICA



Welcome to Jamaica!

Before we dive in, meet Archie and his friends, the Intrepid Explorers. They are five adventurous Aussie kids who travel the world on missions to recover stolen artefacts or protect endangered species. This time, they are headed to Jamaica.

Before landing, they have decided to read up on the country's geography, history, and wildlife, and we hope you have fun learning with them!

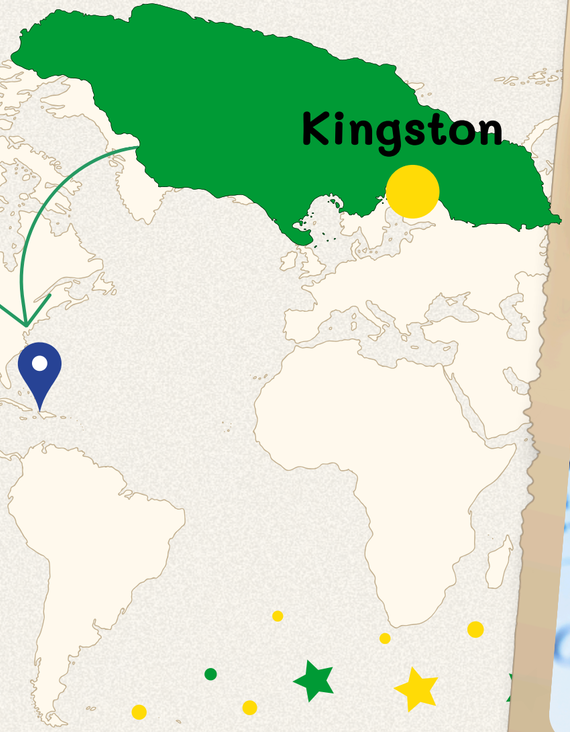
And if you love this kind of adventure, jump on our website, www.thelittlexplorersjournal.com. Under the resources page, we've shared plenty of other country mini lessons and activities to keep the kids learning and having fun every step of the way.



Where is Jamaica?



Jamaica is an island nation in the Caribbean Sea, located south of Cuba and west of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. It covers about 11,000 square kilometres, making it the third-largest island in the Caribbean.









Jamaica

By The Little Explorers' Journal

Where is Jamaica?

Jamaica is an island country in the Caribbean Sea, so it doesn't share land borders with any other countries. However, it has plenty of nearby neighbours across the water, including Cuba to the north, Haiti to the east on the island of Hispaniola, and the Cayman Islands to the northwest.





1. Cuba
2. Haiti
3. Dominican Republic
4. Venezuela
5. Colombia
6. Belize
7. Mexico
8. The US



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Jamaica Country Profile



Capital City: Kingston
Population: 2,812,090
Currency: Jamaican dollar
Official Language(s): English





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Geography of Jamaica

Although Jamaica is a small island, it has an amazing variety of landscapes. The island is covered with lush green mountains, tropical forests, limestone hills, rivers, waterfalls, caves, and beautiful beaches. The centre of Jamaica is dominated by the Blue Mountains, which rise to nearly 2,300 metres above sea level and are the highest mountains in the Caribbean. These misty mountains are covered with forests and are famous for growing some of the world's most prized coffee.

Much of Jamaica's landscape was shaped by limestone, a type of rock that has created fascinating natural features such as caves, underground rivers, and dramatic cliffs. The island is also home to many rivers that flow from the mountains to the sea, including the Rio Grande and the Martha Brae River. Around the coast, Jamaica is famous for its white sandy beaches, coral reefs, and clear turquoise waters, which provide a home for colourful fish, sea turtles, and other marine life.



Blue Mountains (2,256 meters)



Blue Lagoon



Dunn's River Falls

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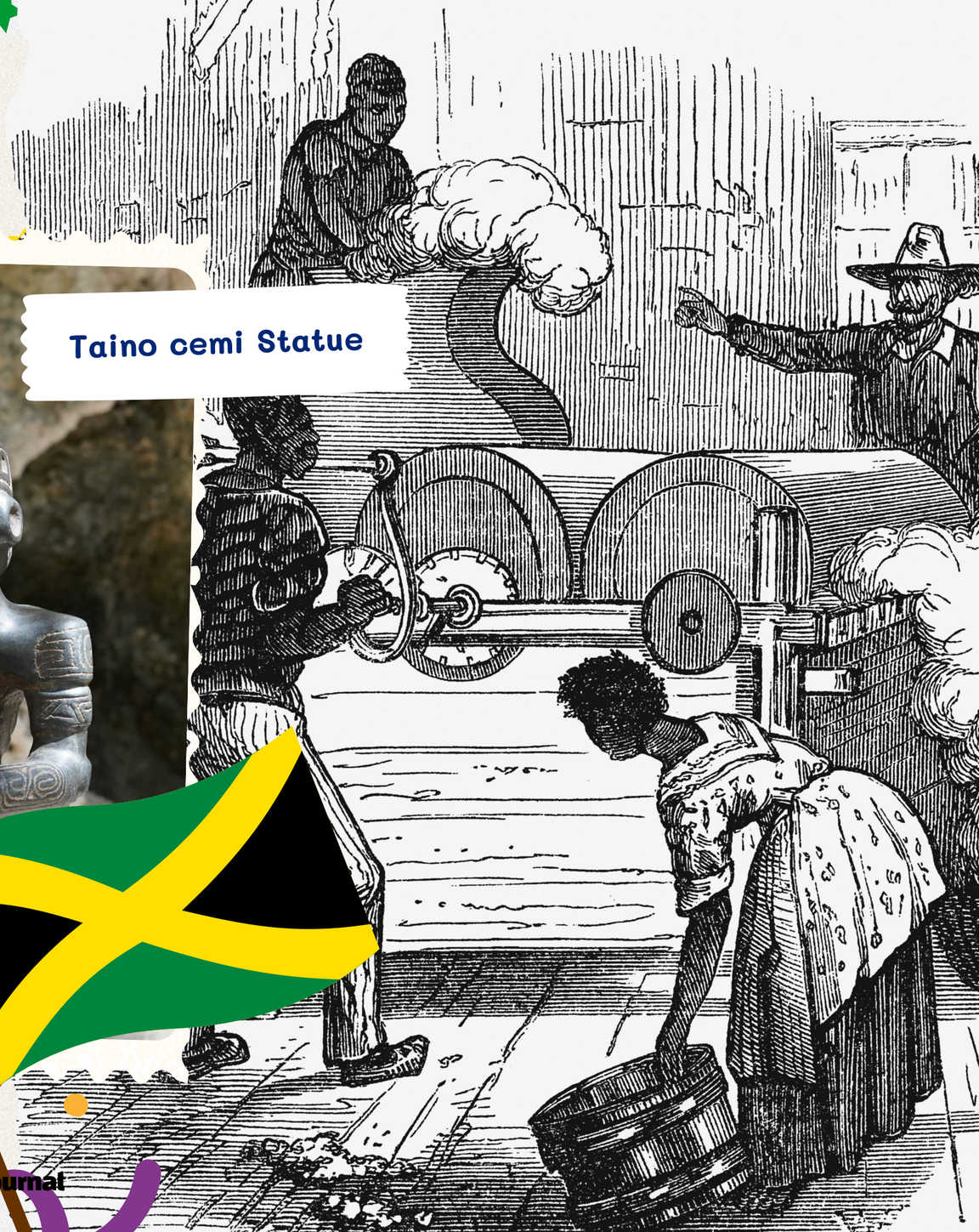
History of Jamaica

People have lived in Jamaica for thousands of years. The island's first inhabitants were Indigenous peoples, including the Taíno, who called the island Xaymaca, meaning "land of wood and water." They lived in villages, fished, grew crops, and created their own tools and artwork.
In 1494, Christopher Columbus arrived in Jamaica, and the island was later colonised by Spain. Many Taíno people suffered from harsh treatment and diseases brought by Europeans.
In 1655, the English took control of Jamaica and turned it into a major sugar-producing colony. Thousands of enslaved people were brought from West Africa to work on plantations, shaping much of Jamaica's culture and history. Some escaped and formed free communities in the mountains called the Maroons. Slavery was abolished in Jamaica in 1838, and after years of change, the island gained independence from Britain on 6 August 1962. Today, Jamaica is known around the world for its music, food, sports, and rich culture, which reflects the many peoples who have shaped the island's history.



Taino cemi Statue



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Wildlife in Jamaica





Jamaica's forests, mountains, rivers, and coastal waters are home to a fascinating variety of wildlife, including many species found nowhere else on Earth. In the island's lush forests, the Jamaican boa moves through the trees hunting for small animals, while the colourful Jamaican tody, a tiny bird with bright green feathers and a red throat, searches for insects among the branches. The forests are also home to the Jamaican hutia, a rare furry mammal found only on the island.

Around Jamaica's coast, coral reefs provide a home for sea turtles, dolphins, colourful fish, and even the occasional West Indian manatee. The island is also famous for the Jamaican iguana, one of the world's rarest lizards, which was once thought to be extinct before being rediscovered.

Jamaican yellow Boa. Source: Pinterest

By The Little Explorers' Journal

Culture and traditions in Jamaica

Jamaica's culture is a vibrant mix of African, European, Indigenous, and Asian influences, shaped by the many people who have called the island home. One of the most famous celebrations is Jamaica Carnival, where people wear colourful costumes, dance to lively music, and celebrate with parades and street parties. Music is a huge part of Jamaican life, with genres like reggae, ska, and dancehall becoming famous around the world.

Jamaicans also celebrate Jamaica Independence Day on 6 August with music, food, dancing, and events across the island. Food is an important part of the culture too, with dishes like jerk chicken, rice and peas, and ackee and saltfish bringing families and communities together. Sports are also loved, especially cricket, football, and athletics, with Jamaican sprinters becoming famous worldwide.



Carnival.
Source Carribeansphere



Reggae

By The Little Explorers' Journal

JAMAICA QUIZ

How many can you get right?

1 Which country is Jamaica's closest neighbour?

2 What does the Taíno name Xaymaca mean?

3 Which mountain range contains Jamaica's highest peak?

4 True or False: The Jamaican tody is a colourful bird that can only be found in Jamaica.

5 Which animal is one of Jamaica's rarest lizards?

6 Which music style from Jamaica became famous around the world?

7 What food is a famous Jamaican dish?



Challenge

Can you become a map expert and place all of the countries on this page correctly? Use the clues to label the countries and islands on the map and draw each country's flag next to them.

🇯🇲 **Jamaica – the island you are exploring!**

🇨🇺 **Cuba – Jamaica's closest neighbour, located to the north**

🇭🇹 **Haiti – found on the island of Hispaniola, east of Cuba and Jamaica**

🇲🇽 **Mexico – a large country south of the United States, connecting North America to Central America**

🇩🇴 **Dominican Republic – shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti**



Jamaican Reggae

Colouring Sheet



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In the Egypt digital country magazine , join Archie, Violet, Ruby, Alex and Max on an exciting adventure in Egypt, as they uncover an ancient mystery in the Great Pyramid of Giza!



AUSTRALIA!

JAPAN!

Discover Japan with the Intrepid Explorers!

In the Japan digital country unit , join Violet, Archie, and Ruby on an exciting adventure in Japan, as they land in Kyoto and solve a mysterious puzzle! !

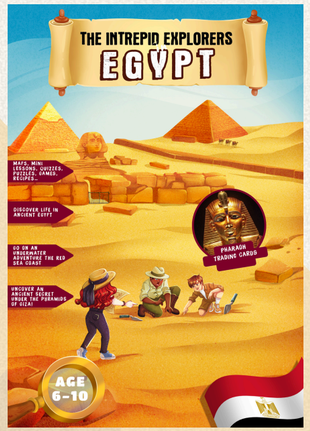
FINLAND!

MEXICO!

SCAN FOR MORE İNFORMATİON













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Thank You

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