

Carnival as a Voice for the Powerless

Read the passage and answer the questions. (CEFR B1–B2)

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

1 Carnival has always been more than a party; for a few days, it turns the normal social order upside down. Masks hide who you are, ordinary people are crowned as kings, and jokes about the powerful are allowed. This is why communities with little power have often used Carnival to express themselves.



2 In Trinidad, enslaved Africans were not welcome at the elegant balls of the planters. After slavery ended in 1834, freed people brought their own drumming, songs, and stick-fighting into the streets. When the colonial government banned drumming in 1881, musicians beat bamboo sticks instead. By 1937, bands were playing frying pans, trash can lids, and oil drums, and this eventually led to the steelpan, now the national instrument.

3 A similar story can be found in New Orleans. In 1909, Black residents who were shut out of the city's elite krewes formed the Zulu club and openly parodied the royal parade of Rex. Its riders still hand out painted coconuts, which have become one of the most wanted treasures of the whole season. Today, Zulu is one of the most popular parades, which shows how a celebration born from exclusion can become a symbol of a whole city.

Comprehension

1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- (A) Carnival is mainly a festival for rich people.
- (B) Carnival has given people with little power a way to express themselves.
- (C) The steelpan was invented in New Orleans.
- (D) Masks were banned in Trinidad in 1881.

2. What did musicians in Trinidad do after drumming was banned in 1881?

- (A) They stopped playing music in the streets.
- (B) They moved to New Orleans.
- (C) They joined the planters' balls.
- (D) They beat bamboo sticks instead.

3. Who formed the Zulu club in 1909?

- (A) Black residents who were shut out of the city's elite krewes.
- (B) The members of the Rex parade.
- (C) Musicians from Trinidad.
- (D) The city government of New Orleans.

4. What can we infer from the fact that bands played frying pans, trash can lids, and oil drums?

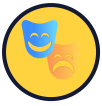
- (A) The bands were paid by the colonial government.
- (B) Oil drums were the most expensive instruments at the time.
- (C) People created music from everyday objects when they could not use their own drums.
- (D) The bands wanted to make fun of the planters' cooking.

5. In paragraph 3, the word "parodied" in "openly parodied the royal parade of Rex" is closest in meaning to

- (A) paid for
- (B) protected
- (C) followed quietly
- (D) copied in a funny way to make fun of

6. What does the writer want to show with the example of Zulu today?

- (A) That painted coconuts are too expensive.
- (B) That the Rex parade is no longer held.
- (C) That a celebration born from exclusion can become a symbol of a whole city.
- (D) That most visitors to New Orleans come only for Zulu.



Vocabulary, Paraphrase & Summary

Match the words with the definitions. Then rewrite and summarize.

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| 1. ordinary | a. beautiful in a rich, stylish, and formal way |
| 2. express | b. connected with a time when one country ruled another country |
| 3. elegant | c. to say officially that people must not do or use something |
| 4. colonial | d. in the end, after a long time or many changes |
| 5. ban | e. to copy someone or something in a funny way to make fun of them |
| 6. eventually | f. the act of not letting someone join a group or take part in something |
| 7. parody | g. normal and usual, not special or important |
| 8. exclusion | h. to show your feelings or ideas by words, actions, music, or art |

Paraphrase — say it in your own words

1. “Carnival has always been more than a party; for a few days, it turns the normal social order upside down.”

Hint: Start with "Carnival is not only" and change "turns the normal social order upside down" to "the usual rules of society are reversed".

2. “In Trinidad, enslaved Africans were not welcome at the elegant balls of the planters.”

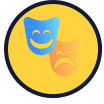
Hint: Start with "The rich farm owners in Trinidad" and use "did not allow".

3. “Today, Zulu is one of the most popular parades, which shows how a celebration born from exclusion can become a symbol of a whole city.”

Hint: Split it into two sentences and use "started because".

Summary

Summarize the passage in about 50 words.



Debate & Opinion Essay

Prepare for a debate. Then write your opinion (100–150 words).

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Motion: A festival can change a society.

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- In Trinidad, music born from street Carnival became the steelpan, now the national instrument, so a festival changed the nation's culture.
- The Zulu club began because Black residents were shut out, and now it is one of the most popular parades in New Orleans.
- Festivals let people say things they cannot say on normal days, and those voices can slowly change public opinion.

Add your own reason:

AGAINST 反対

- Carnival only turns the social order upside down for a few days. After that, the old order returns.
- Laws, elections, and economics change societies. Festivals only show changes that are already happening.
- Powerful groups can also use festivals to make people forget their problems for a while instead of fixing them.

Add your own reason:

Opinion	<i>I believe / I think that ...</i>
Reason 1	<i>First, ... For example, ...</i>
Reason 2	<i>Second, ... In fact, ...</i>
Counter	<i>Some people say ... However, ...</i>
Conclusion	<i>In conclusion, ...</i>