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TOPIC: **What Can Trinidad and Tobago Teach the World?**

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Age: 13

St. Joseph's Convent, St. Joseph

Topic:- What could Trinidad and Tobago Teach the World?

My country, the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is a twin island state. It is a really small country located off the north-east coast of Venezuela, at the bottom of the archipelago known as the Caribbean. Many people may look at Trinidad and Tobago and assume that there isn't much that a tiny country as ours can teach the world. I choose to disagree. Yes, we are a small country, but we possess colossal hearts overflowing with joy and love.

Trinidad and Tobago is what many refer to as a multi-cultural, multi-racial and cosmopolitan country. Many of our ancestors came to Trinidad as slaves, indentured labourers or slave masters. Hence, we have so many people of different races and cultural backgrounds living here. Some of these races are: East Indian, Chinese, African, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Syrian Lebanese and many mixed races. This is the reason why some of us refer to Trinidad as a 'pot of calaloo', a local way of saying multi-racial, using the local dish calaloo, with many ingredients as a simile or metaphor.

Though there is so much diversity, we

still come together and try to live as one and in harmony. We recognize the tolerance and acceptance of our people when it comes to religious festivals or celebrations. For example, at Diwali, the Hindu festival of light, many Hindus invite family and friends over to their homes to celebrate. These family and friends may not necessarily be Hindu, but because we love, tolerate and accept each others' cultures, we celebrate and show support together. Also, at Christmas, Christians are not the only ones who celebrate it, the same goes for Eid.

Although Trinbagonians love, to party, and as much as we love celebrations, we are also supportive outside of the festivals. I notice the display of support for each other alot in my school. Even though it is a Roman Catholic school and Catholicism is the religion practised, there are many students, who belong to different faiths, who attend the school. I am extremely pleased and impressed by the respect we show each other. Whenever we pray, those who belong to different religious followings, remain reverent and whenever there are religious festivals, our school is always excited to experience and learn about the various cultures and the religions

As I mentioned before, Trinbagonians absolutely love to party. I believe that one of our greatest unifying forces as a nation is partying or 'liming' as we prefer to describe it. Whenever there is a celebration, we Trinis forget our worries and stresses and focus on having fun and enjoying oneself. We can fully see this exhibition of jubilation and mirth at events such as Carnival and various sporting events.

Carnival is a joyous time, whether it is that you're a masquerader, a DJ, a performer such as steelpan players or calypsonians and soca artistes, a spectator on the streets or at home, most Trinbagonians enjoy carnival. At Carnival it doesn't matter what ethnicity you are or what cultural background you came from, everyone 'wines' and dances with one another. Forgetting for those two days, all their burdens and bothers and losing themselves to the rhythm of the infectious music and moving their bodies to suit. This also displays our supportive spirit when it comes to choosing our favourite local to be the Road March contenders and winner, by requesting his or her song to be played.

At sporting events, we also demonstrate our patriotism and supportive spirit. When our local athletes attend world renowned events such as the Olympics or the World Cup.

there is usually a sea of red in the stands cheering for 'T & T'. In comparison to the other countries who come down really hard and harsh on their athletes, we simply encourage them to do better. It is also quite hard to crash or bring down a Trini's spirit. No matter how many times we've lost, we still have high hopes of winning the next time around. Ofcourse we love winning, but whether we win, lose or draw, Trinis always celebrate, like I said a few times before, 'Trinis love to party!'

Ofcourse our country isn't perfect because there are always the few bad minded people who prefer to mutilate our countries' name rather than uplift it and help the ~~pp~~ people. Yet, still, I think the main thing Trinidad and Tobago can teach the world is unity in the face of adversity and diversity. We can teach the world how to try to keep a positive perspective even when there are trials. They world can also grasp from us our strong endeavours to ensure and maintain, in this twin island state known as Trinidad and Tobago, that every creed and race will indeed find an equal place and may God truly bless our nation!