

# CITADELLE LA FERRIÈRE BY REBECCA HINSON

(HISTORY/NONFICTION)

## Questions for *Citadelle La Ferrière* by Rebecca Hinson

### LEVEL 1: What does it say?

#### General Understanding

- Citing specific details from the text, name the historical, biographical, and architectural themes in *Citadelle La Ferrière*.

#### Key Details

- Which three countries fought to control Saint-Domingue? Why did Louverture switch sides?
- What were the relationships between Louverture, Dessalines, Christophe, and Pétion?
- Why was Christophe well-suited to orchestrate the building of the Citadelle?

### LEVEL 2: How does it work?

#### Vocabulary

- What is an *apprentice to a mason*?
- What is an *impregnable fortress*?
- What is *foreign domination*?
- What does it mean to *stand your ground*?
- What is an *iron-clad will*?
- What is a *ship's prow*?

#### Structure

Compare and contrast the chronologies of *Citadelle La Ferrière* and *Independence*.

#### Author's Craft

*Citadelle La Ferrière* and *Emancipation* both address the end of slavery in two different countries. How is the author's view of emancipation the same and different in these two texts?

### LEVEL 3: What does it mean?

#### Author's Purpose

- Why did the author integrate history and biography into a book about a building?

### Intertextual Connections

- The *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*, drafted by the Marquis de Lafayette, and was adopted by the French National Assembly in 1789. The declaration was not applied to free people of color or slaves in the French colonies, causing great discontent in St. Domingue. Here are two of the seventeen articles.

**Article 1** - All people shall have equal rights upon birth and ever after. General utility is the only permissible basis for social distinctions.

**Article 2** - The aim of all political associations shall be to preserve man's natural and imprescriptible rights. These are the right to freedom, property, safety and the right to resist oppression.

What event in the book was a reaction to this declaration? How do you think witnessing this event impacted the Louverture, Dessalines, and Christophe?

- In 1804 Governor General Dessalines and his generals signed the Act of Independence of Haiti (Ayiti.) It established the first free black state of former slaves who overthrew their colonial masters in battle and seized their own liberty. According to *Emancipation*, how many years passed before all the slaves in the United States (only 650 miles away) gained their freedom?
- A World Heritage Site is a landmark that is listed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as of special cultural or physical significance. Sites are selected on the basis of having cultural, historical, scientific or some other form of significance, and they are legally protected by international treaties. Cite reasons and evidence that the Citadelle La Ferrière deserves its designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

## LEVEL 4: What does it inspire you to do?

### Opinion with Evidence or Argument

- Israelmore Ayivor says, "Every big castle was once started with a single block; despise no small beginnings. A little step taken every day builds up the hope of greater accomplishments. Do something every day!" Christophe lived as a slave, a free black, a general, a commander, a governor, and a king. Integrate information from several texts to plan how you can rise from what you are to what you want to be.
- Ishaan Tharoor of the Washington Post states, "Meanwhile, France, the spurned former colonial ruler, fumed at its losses. In 1825, with a French flotilla threatening invasion, Haiti was compelled to pay a king's ransom of 150 million gold francs — estimated to be [ten times the country's annual revenues](#) — in indemnities to compensate French settlers and slave owners for their lost plantations. The sum would be later reduced to 90 million gold francs, but that was little consolation: Haiti, in effect, was forced to pay reparations for its freedom." Make a case for whether these reparations were justified or unjustified.

## Sources

Marquis de Lafayette, *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*

Rebecca Hinson, *Emancipation*

Rebecca Hinson, *Independence*

Ishaan Tharoor, "Is it time for France to pay its real debt to Haiti?" Washington Post