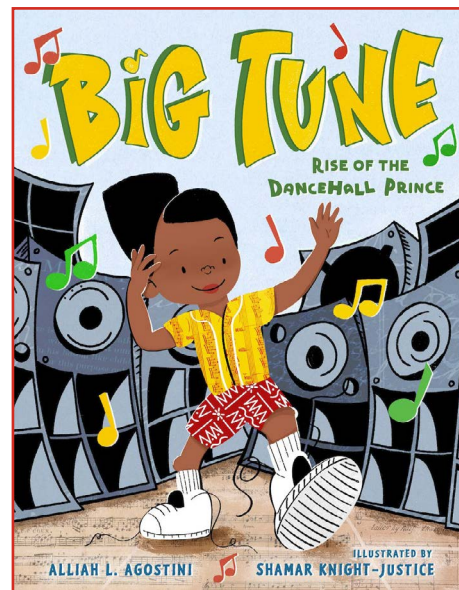


BIG TUNE

RISE OF THE DANCEHALL PRINCE

HOST YOUR OWN DANCEHALL PARTY

This guide will give you everything you need to host a Caribbean Dancehall party in your school, store, or library!



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ABOUT THE BOOK

An exuberant picture book written by Alliah L. Agostini and illustrated by Shamar Knight-Justice is about a Black boy with big dancing dreams who learns the meaning of courage and community.

*It's the weekend, first in June; speaker's blasting out big tune!
Cousins, aunties, uncles, friends pack the house, and fun begins.*

*Shane is shy but loves to dance—and all year long, he's picked up cans
to earn some money toward his goal: high-tops with a pump-up sole.*

*But then the speaker blows—it's done! Will this stop his family's fun?
Can Shane come through to save the day and bring back Big Tune Saturday?*


Set within a vibrant Caribbean American neighborhood and told to a rhythmic beat, *Big Tune* is a story of Black boy joy that touches on determination, confidence to express who you are, selflessness, and community gratitude.



WHAT IS A DANCEHALL PARTY?



Dancehall music originated in Jamaica, but it has grown in popularity throughout the Caribbean and many other countries around the world, especially the United States, the United Kingdom, and Japan. Of West African origin, it is very similar to hip-hop, with heavy bass and a mixture of talking and singing over riddims (rhythms) or tracks. It's no coincidence DJ Kool Herc, known as the father of hip-hop, is a Jamaican-born DJ from the Bronx.




Dancehall gets its name from where it first became popular, in the dancehalls of Kingston, Jamaica, where people would dress up in their best clothes and dance to live music from sound systems—groups of selectors (who played the music) and deejays who would “toast” or talk and sing over tracks (riddims).

While kids don't go to dancehalls, family house parties and barbecues are a little different. Parties where a lot of dancehall music is played are also called bashments.



WHAT TYPES OF MUSIC WOULD BE FOUND AT A JAMAICAN DANCEHALL PARTY? EXPLAIN THE IMPORTANCE OF MUSIC AT A PARTY.

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- Music provides the soul of a party, and big tune, the most popular songs, are the ones that everyone can't help but dance to and maybe also sing along with! Dancehall is typically played, but some reggae, dub, soca, and hip-hop might be mixed in, along with music by the Canadian crooner Celine Dion, who is *highly* revered in Jamaica.

DANCEHALL STAPLES

- Music
 - “Ting-A-Ling” by Shabba Ranks
 - “Bam Bam” by Sister Nancy
 - “Who Am I” by Beenie Man
 - “Love Me Browning” by Buju Banton
 - “Like Glue” by Sean Paul
 - “Pon de River, Pon de Bank” by Elephant Man
 - “Clarks” by Vybz Kartel, Popcaan, and Gaza Slim
 - “Summertime” by Vybz Kartel
 - “Queen of the Pack” by Patra
 - “Party Shot” by Popcaan
- Airhorns are used by a lot of DJs across many genres now, but it started with dancehall.



WHAT TYPE OF FOOD AND DRINKS WOULD BE FOUND AT A JAMAICAN DANCEHALL PARTY?

- **Jerk Barbecue:** Chicken and pork are most common. Jerk is a culinary style that originated in the combined traditions of the Maroon people (African people taken to Jamaica to be enslaved, but who escaped and built their own communities) and the Indigenous Arawak people. It is the barbecue art of slow-cooking meat with flavorful seasoning blends that include the spicy scotch bonnet pepper, scallions, ginger, thyme, garlic, pimento, and more.
- **Hard Dough Bread:** This dense bread is the perfect accompaniment to counter the spice of jerk barbecue.
- **Jamaican Patties:** These are hand pies typically made with a flaky, yellow-colored crust and filled with a spicy or curry-based meat or vegetable filling. Beef or chicken are most popular, but they come in a number of different filling varieties and sizes. In the New York area, they are so popular, you can even buy them at a lot of pizzerias.
- Kid-friendly Drinks:
 - Ting, a grapefruit-flavored soda
 - Pineapple soda
 - Kola Champagne, nonalcoholic, like cream soda
 - Ginger Beer, nonalcoholic, like ginger ale but with a stronger flavor



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Alliah L. Agostini grew up an avid reader in a cross-cultural African-American and Guyanese household in Buffalo, NY. After pursuing a career marketing everything from beauty and personal care to home decor, motherhood helped her return to her first love: children's literature.

Now an author and speaker, Alliah has spoken at schools, libraries, corporations, and on several podcasts. She is also the author of the acclaimed *The Juneteenth Story: Celebrating the End of Slavery in the United States*. Alliah and her work have been highlighted on Essence.com, the TODAY Show, CNN, WashingtonPost.com, *Good Housekeeping*, and more.

Alliah writes to spread joy, truth, and to help more children see themselves reflected on the page. She and her family live in the suburbs of New York City, where she enjoys impromptu dance parties, museum hopping, and summer festival season. *Big Tune* is her debut fiction picture book.



ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



Shamar Knight-Justice is an illustrator based in Atlanta, Georgia. He grew up with a crayon in his hand and a love for patterns. He currently serves as the principal of an elementary school in Southwest Atlanta, where his scholars' stories and personalities inspire him to create illustrations that honor their identities. When not drawing, Shamar loves to spend time hoarding collage materials, going on long walks with his family, and devouring the nearest pancake.