

# REGIONALLY CONNECTED: A GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF AFRICA BY REGIONS

Regina Gilyard Thomas

The continent of Africa is vast. It consists of 54 countries engulfing the southernmost and the northernmost part of the continent. It would probably take a year to complete an in-depth study of Africa. These activities will focus on each geographic region.

Suggested time: 6 - 9 week period  
Grade Level: Intermediate grades (4 - 6)

**Goals:** The students will be able to:

1. Locate Africa on a map/globe.
2. Locate and label each of the five regions.
3. Name at least five major countries in each region.



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- a. natural resource (major)
- b. crafts
- c. food
- d. flag
- e. traditional ceremonies
- f. rivers
- g. language
- h. climate/physical features
- i. population

**Vocabulary:**

physical features  
griots  
cultures

**Languages:**

Hausa, Ngoni,  
Zulu, Yoruba

**Regions:**

North Africa

West Africa

Central Africa

Southern Africa

East Africa

**Products:**

cocoa, coffee, tea,  
gold, diamonds, oil etc.

**Activities**

Students will work in cooperative groups to research and compile a formative report and project related to one of the five regions of Africa. Students will present an oral and visual presentation.

**Introduction:**

Teacher introduces students to Africa.

- a. KWL (What do you know about Africa, what you want to know, and what have you learned. First reactions to "Africa.")

b. Comparison (size)

Students will be given copies of maps (drawn to equal ratio) of China, the USA, Europe, Argentina, New Zealand and Africa (larger).

c. Map.

Use map and overhead projector to show how the maps of other regions compare in size to the size of Africa. (Each map should be a different color.)

d. Literature/video

Show students video, "Journey to Africa" Part 1 and discuss the video.

e. Writing: Journal

Students will imagine that they are going on an African journey. Each day they will write about some experience (something they have learned).

f. Cooperative Groups

Students will be divided into groups for regional study. They will create a logo for their region.

g. Speakers:

Speakers will be invited to class to share knowledge and experiences with students.

h. Research

Groups will work in the media center to

answer specific questions related to their region (listed under goals).

i. Presentation/Projects

Each group will present an oral as well as visual report.

j. African Culture Day

As a culminating activity class will invite speakers, parents, etc. to a festival (food, clothing).

k. Timeline

Students will make a timeline identifying facts found relevant to a country in a specific region.

l. Graphic Map/Collage

Students will collect materials from newspapers and journals using a map outline and make a collage placing articles in areas relevant to the article. Use different items (provided by teacher) such as rice, colored grits, beans, chocolates, pictures of materials including gold, copper, etc. to outline each region.

m. Crafts/Flags

Students will, through the art teacher, construct masks and make flags with explanation of their meanings.



Master Kora Player, Djimo Kouyate, introducing students at the YMCA to African music

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# TEACHING TOLERANCE AND ACCEPTANCE

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by Amy Callahan

This unit is designed for primary aged children in an elementary school setting, the lessons are very basic, but may be expanded to use with more advanced students. A basic theme that runs through all the lessons is that while we are all very much alike, the human experience is one shared by people all over the world. The emphasis is also that we should celebrate each other's differences because they are what make the world an interesting and diverse place to live. Acceptance is a key concept for small children to learn, and will help them in all aspects of their lives. The following lessons will teach students about Africa, but also reinforce the idea of acceptance and tolerance of others.

## Lesson 1: Getting Familiar with Africa

On the first day of teaching about Africa start a "K-W-L" chart. Together with the class, complete the "what we know" and "what we want to learn" sections on chart paper. Leave the "what we learned" space empty to complete at the end of the unit. Write all responses, even if they are inaccurate. The students will have a chance at the end of the unit to correct inaccurate information and discuss stereotypes.

Show the children a map of Africa and also where it is on the globe or world map. Point out where Africa is in relation to where we live, and how we would get there if we were to travel there. On the map of Africa, discuss the general features of the land (the deserts, rain forest, rivers, oceans, etc.). Discuss the diversity of the landscape, and how different people would adapt to live differently in each region. Discuss why more people would live near tropical areas instead of the desert regions. Have students ponder the question of whether all African people are alike. Use pictures to show the different African peoples.

## Lesson 2: Life in the Desert

Read *The Day of Ahmed's Secret* by Florence Heide and Judith Gilliard to the class. The following are suggested discussion topics.

Explore why Ahmed may or may not look like the stereotypical "African." Discuss how so many different kinds of people live on the same continent, but in different countries, and are each unique.

Compare how life in Cairo would be different or similar to an American big city (New York, Miami, Los Angeles). Contrast the traditional and modern elements of city life that are shown in the book.

-Ahmed works to help his family. Have the students draw a picture or write about what they do to help their families at home.

-Ahmed eats beans and rice for lunch. Prepare a beans and rice dish and eat it together.

-Find Cairo on the map. Point out the desert on one side and the Nile River on the other. Discuss why it would be beneficial to live by a river.

-Bring in books about the pyramids and other Egyptian landmarks.

Ahmed learned to write his name. Have students draw or write about an accomplishment that they were very proud of.

## Lesson 3: West African Names

The Akan people of West Africa name their children according to the day of the week on which the child is born. They believe that people born on the same day of the week have the same kind of soul.

Have the children ask their parents on what day of the week they were born. Also have them find out how they got their names. Translate their names into Akan names. Label their new "names" on their desks. Graph how many

students there are with each name. Teach students the days of the week in the language the Akan speak.

**Lesson 4: Making Ethiopian Flat Bread**

You will be making a flat and airy round bread called injera. Find Ethiopia on the map. Let the students help measure the ingredients. It would be helpful to have volunteers during the activity.

**Ingredients**

- 4 cups self-rising flour
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder

small holes appear on the surface of the batter, remove injera. It should be cooked on one side and browned. If your first try is too pasty and undercooked, you may need to cook it a little longer or to make the next one thinner. Be careful not to cook it too long; it should be soft enough to fold.

4. Stack the injera one on top of the other as you cook, covering them with a clean cloth to prevent their drying out. To serve, lay them on a platter overlapping. Serves six to eight. May be served with meats, fish or vegetables. (Recipe from *African Crafts*, by Judith Corwin.)

## Names in the Akan Language

<u>Days of the Week</u>	<u>Girl's Names</u>	<u>Boy's Names</u>
Dwoda (Monday)	Adwoa	Kwadwo
Benada (Tuesday)	Abena	Kwabena
Wukuda (Wednesday)	Akua	Kwaku
Yawda (Thursday)	Yaa	Yaw
Fida (Friday)	Afua	Kofi
Memeneda (Saturday)	Ama	Kwame
Kwasida (Sunday)	Akosua	Kwasi

- 2 cups club soda
- water
- vegetable oil to grease frying pan

**Utensils**

- measuring cups and spoons
- large mixing bowl and spoon, spatula
- clean cloth
- large platter
- 10-inch nonstick frying pan

**Directions:**

1. Combine flours and baking powder in a bowl. Add club soda and 4 cups water. Mix into a smooth, fairly thin batter.
2. Heat the frying pan. When a drop of water bounces on the pan's surface, dip enough batter from the bowl to cover the bottom of the pan. Pour it in quickly, at once. Swirl the pan so that the entire bottom is evenly coated then set it back on heat.
3. When the moisture has evaporated and

**Lesson 5: Swahili Math**

<u>Number</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Swahili</u>
1	one	moja
2	two	mbili
3	three	tatu
4	four	nne
5	five	tano
6	six	sita
7	seven	saba
8	eight	nane
9	nine	tisa
10	ten	kumi

Directions: Read the problem that is written with Swahili number words. Translate the Swahili number words into English number words by looking at the chart. Last, translate the

number sentence into symbols. Note:

kutoa = minus

ongeza = plus

ni = equals

1. Saba kutoa nne ni \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ kutoa \_\_\_\_\_ ni \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Tatu ongeza sita ni \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ongeza \_\_\_\_\_ ni \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ ni \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Moja kutoa tano ni \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ kutoa \_\_\_\_\_ ni \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Tisa ongeza mbili ni \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ongeza \_\_\_\_\_ ni \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ ni \_\_\_\_\_.

5. Sita ongeza tatu ni \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ongeza \_\_\_\_\_ ni \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ ni \_\_\_\_\_.

6. Saba kutoa tatu ni \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ kutoa \_\_\_\_\_ ni \_\_\_\_\_.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ni \_\_\_\_\_.

Make up more problems of your own.

### Lesson 7: The Diversity of People

Read the book *Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions* by Margaret Musgrove. The book describes 26 different groups of African people (one for each letter of the alphabet) You may want to read this book more than one day because there is a lot of content that can be discussed. Tell the children that this book represents only a small number of African people, and that there are many other ethnic groups in Africa. Compare this concept to the people of the United States. Many activities can be done in conjunction with reading this book. If you have limited time, pick and choose activities that work best with your classroom. The following is a list of suggested activities.

A (Ashanti) Discuss the way names might be chosen for the kente and the significance of each name. Design your own kente (on paper) and name it.

B (Baule) Discuss the legend, and why the crocodile is a sacred animal to the Baule people. Make up a legend of your own with a special animal in it.

C (Chagga) Compare and contrast the way Chagga children and American children grow up. What American groups have names that sound brave and proud (sports teams, schools, etc.)? Brainstorm possibilities for a class name. Vote and graph the votes. Make a banner announcing the new name, mascot and color.

D (Dogon) Compare how the Dogon people farm to the way Americans farm (mountains vs. fields). Discuss how they adapt to their environment to meet their needs.

E (Ewe) Discuss drums, and their significance to the Ewe people. If possible, get a guest speaker to bring in an authentic drum and demonstrate. If not, check-out a tape of African drumming and let the children dance to the beat. Borrow a bongo drum from the music department, and demonstrate how different sounds are made. Discuss how the drums were used for sending news far away and how the telephone has replaced them.

F (Fanti) Bring in a gourd to show how a calabash looks. Discuss the concept of ancestors and how it is very important to honor them. Talk about grandparents and about how they are respected. Write letters to the students' grandparents, telling them why they respect them.

G (Ga) Bring in some yams, cook and eat them. Contrast the way the Ga eat fufu to the way Americans typically eat (table manners).

H (Hausa) Briefly discuss terms used when talking about religion, such as "Islam" and

“mosque.” Compare terminology to other names of churches, temples, etc.

I (Ikoma) Bring in honey for the kids to taste, perhaps on graham crackers with peanut butter. Talk about how bees make the honey and birds like to eat it (as well as people). Point out the way they honor the bird and the way they give thanks for their blessings.

J (Jie) Discuss farmers and the roles they play in the community. Have the children name their pets (real or imaginary) for their colors and markings - keeping in mind that they will have to adopt these same names! Put tags on their desks with their new names.

K (Kung) Show the students where the deserts in Africa are, as well as the deserts in the United States. Discuss ways that people who live in the desert have to adapt to the environment. Have kids estimate the size of an ostrich shell.

L (Lozi) Find the Zambezi River on the map. Discuss how people who live on the river are different from the people who live in the desert. Talk about how there is such a diversity in United States also.

M (Masai) Compare the roles of the Masai men and women with gender roles in America.

N (Ndaka) Compare a wedding ceremony of the Ndaka people to wedding customs of Americans.

O (Ouadi) Discuss the differences and similarities between shopping in a Ouadi market and shopping in the United States.

P (Pondo) Brainstorm games that the children like to play. Discuss whether the kids would like to play a game like this. Why or why not? Discuss how games have rules and what you get when you win.

Q (Quimbande) Compare and contrast family life for a Quimbande child to an Ameri-

can child. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of living differently?

R (Rendille) Discuss the concept of nomadic people and how life would be different for them if they stayed in one place. Also discuss what might make them move from one place to another.

S (Sotho) Again compare wedding customs, also discussing Ndaka ceremonies. Brainstorm why the bride would hold a doll and name it after her first child.

T (Tuareg) Compare the way the Tuareg people socialize to the way the children's families celebrate together. Have children draw and write about how their families spend time together.

U (Uge) Discuss how kola nuts are used as a sign of friendship and welcome. Discuss how Americans show the same to newcomers. Role play ways that the students could make a new student feel comfortable in the classroom.

V (Vai) Compare how the Vai people and Americans carry things from place to place. Let the children try walking across the room with an object or basket on their heads.

W (Wagenia) Point out where the Congo River is on the map. Compare how Wagenia people fish and how Americans fish. Measure how long some of their traps are (10 ft. X 15 ft.) Estimate other objects that would weigh about 200 pounds.

X (Xhosa) Show the kids where South Africa is on the map. Discuss how they use red soil to dye their blankets. Contrast how they dress to the way the children dress.

Y (Yoruba) If possible, show pictures of some statues that the Yoruba people have carved. Discuss how statues represent important people or spirits. Brainstorm any statues that the children have seen and their significance to our culture.

Z (Zulu) Discuss the importance of dance in different cultures. Explore how different dances would be appropriate for different occasions.

Point out where each of these ethnic groups reside in Africa. There is a map in the back of the book. The main point of this book is to demonstrate that there are many different African cultures and traditions.

**Conclusion: Evaluation**

Finish your "K-W-L" chart together in class. Fill in "what we learned" column, allowing every child to contribute at least one idea. Go back and read the "what we know" column, pointing out any stereotypes or misinformation. Also read the "what we want to learn" column to find out if the children's questions were satisfactorily answered.

Allow each child to write a book "Five Things I Know About Africa." The children must think of five legitimate things they learned, write them on a sheet of paper, and edit with the teacher. They can then transfer their corrected sentences onto blank paper (one fact

per page). They should also add colorful illustrations to their books. The books should include a title page, dedication and cover. Bind the books with a machine or staple the pages together. This is a good assessment to determine whether the students really learned anything about Africa, and a great language arts activity. This book takes a while to construct, so allow a week. Put the books in the school library or reading center to share with other children.

As a conclusion, discuss the idea that although we have many differences, we are all very much alike as people. We all share the same experiences, such as birth, death, the need to eat, and sleep. We also share emotions such as fear, happiness, sadness and have the need for togetherness with other people.

References

Corwin, Judith Hoffman. 1990. *African Crafts*. New York: Franklin Watts.

Heide, Forence Parry & Gilliland, Jugith Heide. 1990. *The Day of Ahmed's Secret*. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

Musgrave, Margaret. 1976. *Ashanti to Zulu:*

## EXPLORING COUNTRIES IN AFRICA: A COOPERATIVE LEARNING APPROACH

by *Eva M. Bradshaw*

**Objectives:** Students will

- develop an awareness of the diversity of ethnic groups in Africa;
- become acquainted with physical and political features of Africa;
- develop a sense of pride and unity in working cooperatively with each other.

**Goals:** The student will be able to

- interpret maps, globes and atlases;
- compare and contrast relationships between geographical locations and the life of the different ethnic groups in Africa;
- incorporate the elements of writing through art, music, literature, and poetry.

### **Key Words**

- |               |                      |
|---------------|----------------------|
| 1. hemisphere | 7. natural resources |
| 2. latitude   | 8. regions           |
| 3. longitude  | 9. savanna grassland |
| 4. continent  | 10. rainforest       |
| 5. country    | 11. desert           |
| 6. equator    |                      |

### **Preplanning**

- Take pictures or collect a photo from each student to put on a passport.
- Xerox and laminate a map of Africa and tape one to each student's passport.
- Checkout globes or desk maps from the library.
- Put key words on a chart to post in the classroom.
- Inform the resource teachers about the unit on Africa.
- Set up an African Museum in the classroom.
- Contact guest speakers.

### **Materials Needed**

- markers
- copies of a seek and find crossword puzzle with names of the African countries
- butcher paper
- a large map of Africa with the names of the different countries on it.
- books about Africa
- globes
- materials for passport

### **Procedure**

1. Begin by letting the students know about the unit that will be explored
2. Generate a class discussion:
  - What is the difference between a country and a continent?
  - How many continents are there?
  - Locate the continents on the globe.
  - Which continent is the largest?
  - Africa is bounded by two oceans. (name them and their location)
  - Share briefly about how Africa is divided into two regions.
  - Let students work in cooperative groups to find the African countries on the word search puzzle.
  - Talk briefly about the number of countries found in Africa.
  - Give each team a region in Africa and let them decide which country they would like to do research on.
  - Pass out project outline.

### EXPLORING NIGERIA

#### **Materials Needed**

1. newsprint
2. assorted construction paper
3. markers or crayons
4. straws
5. pieces of cloth about 4 ft. X 1 ft.



6. scissors
7. rulers
8. fabric paints and vegetables in a print center
9. strips of tagboard of about 20 in. X 4 in.
10. balloons
11. paper mache' mixture
12. thread or yarn
13. beads
14. dyed macaroni (optional)
15. egg cartons
16. stones, dried beans, etc.
17. pictures depicting the different ethnic groups in Nigeria

#### **Procedure**

- Introduce the students to Nigeria.
- Review what they have learned about Africa.
- Have students locate Nigeria on their map.
- Students should color in Nigeria on their map.
- Read a folktale from Nigeria titled, The Right Way to Ride a Donkey, by Besty Franco

#### **Folktale Follow-up**

Ethnic Groups in Nigeria  
Yoruba  
Igbo  
Hausa

#### **Art Activities**

- Making African masks
- Headwraps for girls
- Hats for boys
- Vegetable printing with fabric paint
- Beaded jewelry
- Calabashes
- Weaving a map of Africa
- Drums

#### **-Celebrating the New Yam Festival**

The New Yam Festival is celebrated all over Nigeria when the yams are ready to be harvested.

#### **Foods Needed**

- baked yams or sweet potatoes
- peanut oil, palm oil or butter (to go on the yam)
- fruit juice

#### **Games**

Ayo (EYE-yoh)

#### **Materials Needed:**

- an egg carton
- a small container for either side of the egg carton
- 36 to 48 small stones, dried beans, etc.

#### **Rules for the game:**

The game begins with four beans in each cup. To start the game, one player picks up the beans in any one of her home cups and moves counter-clockwise placing the beans in each cup until she uses up her beans. Next, her opponent picks up beans in any of her cups and repeats the process. Beans are captured when a player drops her last bean into an opponent's cup that already contains one or two beans. The player who captures the majority of the beans is the winner.

#### **Culminating Activities**

- Make post cards
- Each cooperative team could set up an area with their arts and crafts
- Let the different teams in the classroom bargain against each other using Nigerian money
- Cut and paste pictures to make a pop-up book- Write poetry — Cinquain, Haiku, or Acrostic
- Invite a guest speaker to come and talk to the students about African art
- Each student could make a Nigerian flag.

# KENYA : THROUGH THE EYES OF THE YOUNG CHILD

by Martha Brown

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## Introduction

The goals of this unit are to increase and enhance awareness and appreciation of the Kenyan people and their culture and to make multicultural connection between our lifestyles and customs to those of people living in Kenya.

## Background Information

Official Name: Republic of Kenya

Land and climate: Kenya is located on the eastern side of the continent of Africa. Kenya consists of four geographical regions: the coast, savannas, highlands and the Rift Valley.

Population: 26.7 million.

Language: Swahili is the national language and English is the official language.

Government: Kenya is a republic headed by a president.

National Motto: Harambee ("Let's Pull Together").

Religion: Kenya has religious freedom.

Capital: Nairobi.

## Themes

1. Kenya is a land of great diversity.
2. Some Kenyans live in large cities, however most people live in the countryside.
3. Many interesting animals live in Kenya.
4. Kenya celebrates its heritage through expressive art forms.
5. People in Kenya have special celebrations that honor their culture.

## Introduction

Develop a KWL Chart:

What we know about Kenya;

What we want to learn about Kenya;  
What we learned about Kenya.

The following is a simple one-week plan to teach young children:

1. Today is \_\_\_\_\_. We are going to take an imaginary trip to Kenya.
2. Today is \_\_\_\_\_. We are going to learn where people live in Kenya.
3. Today is \_\_\_\_\_. We are going to learn about Kenyan art forms.
4. Today is \_\_\_\_\_. We are going to celebrate the Kenyan holiday of Kenyatta Day.

## Journal Writing (Daily)

1. Write about your imaginary trip to Kenya.
2. Brainstorm a list of things that were sold at the market.
3. Draw a picture of your favorite Kenyan animal.
4. Write a letter to Rabbit telling her how to get the long one out of her house.
5. Tell why Kenyans celebrate Jomo Kenyatta's birthday.

## Literature

1. *It Takes a Village* - Jane Cowen-Fletcher.
2. *Who's in Rabbit's House?* - Verna Aardema.
3. *Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain* - Verna Aardema.
4. *Take a Trip to Kenya* - Keith Lye.
5. *A New True Book Kenya* - Karen Jacobsen.
6. *Kenya In Pictures* - Ifeoma Onyefulu.
7. *Afro-Bets First Book about Africa* -

- Veronica Ellis.  
8. *Count Your Way Through Africa* - Jim Haskins.

**Learning Centers**

1. Art- Kenya flag, Kenya masks, Kenyan thatched-roof house
2. Construction - Kenyan city or village
3. Dramatic play - Kenyan market, a trip to Kenya and the Kenyan Village from Home
4. Media - Kenyan Cultural Center
5. Manipulatives - Basket weaving, playdough and animal carvings

**Math**

1. Tell about objects from Kenya
2. Counting beads
3. Animals great and small
4. Counting drum beats
5. Favorite Kenyan fruit
6. African design patterns

**Science**

1. Some fruits float and some sink
2. Animal tracks

3. Kenyan rainforest
4. Spices
5. Run, run as fast as you can

**Music/Movement**

1. Basket balancing
2. Musical paint
3. Skafu (scarf) dancing
4. Mwanvuli (umbrella) dance
5. Zamani says (like Simon says)

**Cooking**

1. Fried Bananas (Ndizi Kaanga)  
Dip slices into lemon juice.  
Fry with margarine.  
Sprinkle with sugar and nutmeg.
2. French Fried Sweet Potatoes  
Fry with vegetable oil.  
Sprinkle with salt, sugar or cinnamon.
3. Mango Snow  
Steam sliced mangoes until soft.  
Puree cooled mangoes in a blender with sugar.  
Chill or serve immediately.



# A FIRST LOOK AT AFRICA: 4TH GRADE

by Carol  
Hinkson

## Goals

The student will learn the following:

1. Africa's position as it relates to the other continents;
2. The position of the equator;
3. Africa is surrounded by two oceans, the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean;
4. The size of Africa compared to the United States;
5. That there are more than 50 countries, not states, in Africa;
6. The location of some African countries according to their region ;
7. Some African themes in literature;
8. Five different African games - a game from one country in each of the regions;
9. Students will be tested over information presented.

## Teaching Materials:

Large world map  
Overhead of worksheet - United States and Africa  
Overhead - regions of Africa  
Poster to help in learning continent names.

## Example:

Asia	An
Africa	African
Antarctica	Antelope
N. America	Needs Air
S. America	Sunshine And
Australia	An
Europe	Elephant

(An African Antelope Needs Air, Sunshine And An Elephant).

## Student Materials:

Students will accumulate materials for a folder containing:

1. Title of unit
2. Name of continents worksheet
3. United States and Africa worksheet
4. Introduction: regions of Africa worksheet
5. Facts about Africa worksheet
6. Five worksheets - one for each region of Africa - containing names of countries of that region and directions for playing a game from that region
7. Puzzle maze to find names of individual African countries
8. Unit test

## TEACHER PLAN

### Day 1

Use large map of the world.

Today we are going to begin our study of Africa by figuring out just where Africa is in relation to other continents of the world.

The biggest continent of the world is Asia. Who thinks they can find Asia on the big map?

Now, who can find the topic of our study on the big map - Africa? Africa is the second largest continent in the world. Notice that on a big map Africa appears to be right in the center of the map.

Let us locate the other continents. Can you name any of them? (Locate Antarctica, South America, North America, Australia and Europe.)

Pass out worksheet, "Name the Continents," and have children write down the names of the continents as listed on the worksheet. Call attention to the special memory tool and play a memory game by having students line up in front of the room to see if they can remember the names of the seven continents if someone reads the words from the fun memory sentence- - An African Antelope Needs Air, Sunshine, And An

Elephant.

Discuss the fact that the equator runs through the center of Africa and how this affects the countries in that part of Africa.

Call attention to the Atlantic and Indian oceans surrounding the continent of Africa.

Day 2

Pass out worksheets "United States of America and Africa" and "Facts About Africa."

Review what was learned yesterday. Check to see who memorized the names of the seven continents.

Discuss "United States and Africa" map. Present the fact that Africa contains more than 50 countries.

Day 3

Pass out two handouts - "Regions of Africa" and "North Africa." As you can see on the map of Africa there are five different regions.

Today, we will learn a little bit about the countries that are in North Africa. Would someone read the names of the countries that are found on your sheet? Do not memorize them; just be familiar with them. Write the names of the countries that you listed down on your paper.

There are two other things that I would like to do as we take a look at these countries from North Africa. First, I want you to understand that we have many fictional books in our library that come from all parts of Africa. Today, I am going to read one that has its background in Egypt. It is called "The Egyptian Polar Bear" by JoAn Adinolf. (Teacher reads the book and discusses it with children.)

The other important thing I want us to remember is that just as boys and girls in the U.S.A. like to play games and have fun, so do children in Africa. So, let us read the "Sheep and Hyena" game, and then see if we can learn to play the game.\*

Day 4

Teacher passes out East Africa Worksheet. Teacher reviews the names of the North African countries learned on the previous day.

The teacher then asks a student to read the names of the countries found in East Africa. Have the students copy the East African country names on to their worksheets. Teacher reads a story depicting life in some part of Eastern Africa.

Day 5

Teacher passes out Central Africa worksheet. Teacher reviews the names of North and East African countries. Students read the names of the Central African countries and copy them onto their worksheets.

The teacher reads "Africa - Brothers and Sisters" by Virginia Kroll and discusses the book. Students read and discuss playing the game "Bokwek" from the Congo, and take part in the game.

BOKWEK:

Ages: Teen

Players: 20 or more; Two groups

Supplies: beans, corn, or stones

Activity: hunting, chasing, running

Appeal: Competition, problem solving

Players are divided into two or more teams. Each team draws a large circle in which it places colored beans, stones, grains of corn, or any other objects different from those used by another team. The players run from their opponents and avoid being caught. The team that steals all the beans, stones, or corn wins the game.

Day 6

Teacher passes out West Africa worksheet. Teacher reviews the names of North African East, and Central African countries. A student is asked to read the names of the West African countries and all students copy them onto their worksheets. Teacher reads and discusses "The Black Snowman" by Phil Mendez. Students read and discuss playing the game "Catch Your Tail" from West Africa, and take part in playing the game.

Day 7

Teacher passes out Southern Africa worksheet. Teacher reviews the countries of

Central and West Africa and today's Southern African country names. Students are asked to copy Southern African country names onto their worksheets. Teacher reads "Muhla, The Fair One" by Linda Ghan, and "Mufaro's Daughters" by Joseph Steptoe. Students read about the "Melon Dance" from South Africa and take part in playing the game.

#### MELON DANCE:

This game can be played by 10 to 20 students outdoor or in a gymnasium. The players encircle a center player who holds a small melon. The center player runs about the circle, waving her arms while throwing and catching the melon. The other players imitate her movements. Suddenly, she stops, leaps into the air and throws the melon between her feet toward the player behind her. The second player must catch the melon without moving from her place. If she fails, the center player remains the leader; otherwise the second player becomes the leader. The leader may try to catch the others off guard and even pretend to throw the melon several times before actually doing it. A ball may be used instead of a melon.

#### SAMPLE TEST

1. Write a complete sentence listing the names of the seven continents.
2. In one complete sentence, write the names of the two oceans that surround Africa.
3. In one sentence, tell what the important map line is that runs through the middle of Africa.
4. Describe one of the games from Africa that you enjoyed playing.
5. Write one sentence about one of the storybooks we read as we studied the different regions of Africa.

# A WHOLESOME WAY OF TEACHING HIGH SCHOOL GEOGRAPHY

by Sue Reed

In teaching geography, I take a thorough approach, incorporating the five themes of geography, which are: location, place, human environment interaction, movement and regions.

It is important to orient the students to the area first through the use of maps and activities designed to study the physical geography, climate, vegetation, and resources of each continent or region of the world.

Next, we study the historical context of inhabitants, including outside influences. Then we proceed to study the present day life of the people, and how it is shaped by the land itself, the history of the people, and in turn, how the people change the environment to suit their needs. This would include cultural aspects of the many peoples of the region.

Finally, we try to look at possible futures - what ifs? to facilitate problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

In my previous teachings of the continent of Africa, especially the area south of the Sahara, I have: (a) ignored the area entirely for lack of time; (b) used the occasion and my lack of knowledge as an excuse to do student generated reports through individual or group reports; (c) only covered certain countries, i.e. South Africa; or (d) covered the area quickly and moved on. None of these proved to be satisfactory in themselves, but each approach contained qualities worth repeating.

The Summer Institute on African Studies offered through the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida has provided me with both new content, and time to rethink my approach and methods for teaching about the continent.

**Context:** The class is a seventh grade geography class that meets for 55 minutes a day, five times a week. The course lasts two semesters.

**Approach:** Using the five themes of geography, the students will study the regions of Africa:

1. North Africa
2. West Africa
3. Central Africa
4. East Africa
5. Southern Africa

The students will study:

- A. Introduction to Africa
  1. preconceived notions and bias
- B. physical geography
- C. climate, vegetation, and resources
- D. historical context
  1. influence of Arabs, Europeans and Americans
  2. religious influence
- E. culture
  1. literature - proverbs and stories
  2. religion
  3. homes/architecture
  4. music
  5. clothing

There will be at least one activity for each section (A - E) allowing for both teacher's choice and students' preference in the activities to be completed. Teaching strategies will include class discussion, mini-lectures, audio-visual presentations, map work, cooperative learning groups, writing assignments, group presentations, teacher read alouds, small group discussions and art activities.

The student text is "Prentice Hall World Geography," 1993 edition. Chapters 24 - 27 will be used.

**STUDENT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

The student will:

1. Employ a geographic perspective to identify, analyze, and predict solutions to geographic issues or concerns.
2. Explain how geographic factors affect the cultural, economic, and political activities of specific African nations.
3. Define geography as a spatial study; one that is concerned with the arrangement and interaction of people and places over space.
4. Use systematic approaches to study and analyze the people of Africa and their environments.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the interdependence of Africa's cultures, population patterns, and physical features.
6. Use maps, globes, charts, graphs, and other tools of geography to gather and interpret data and to draw conclusions about physical and human patterns on the African continent.
7. Interpret and read information on maps.
8. Gather and interpret data from various types of maps to draw valid conclusions.
9. Use maps, globes, and other models to interpret spatial relationships.
10. Apply the concepts of location, place, human environment interactions, movement and region.
11. Determine both the absolute and relative location of Africa's nations.
12. Describe the human and physical characteristics of Africa's nations.
13. Recognize the relationships within the continent of Africa.
14. Identify the changes and diffusion of population, ideas and other phenomena on the continent of Africa.
15. Understand concepts of transition and change.
16. Compare the uneven distribution of nations that are going through a form of transition.

17. Identify characteristics of African nations that are going through a form of transition.

18. Describe geography as a dynamic study that analyzes change.

**PROCEDURE**

**A. Introduction to Africa**

**Week 1**

Introduce the unit of study by assessing students' background knowledge of Africa. Ask them what they think they already know. Use a webbing diagram to organize their ideas and have the students copy down what is created on the board. Using this as a springboard, introduce the following list of words, one at a time and discuss the appropriateness/inappropriateness of bias. Discuss also the more appropriate words.

Biased word

1. native
2. pygmy
3. witch doctor
4. tribe
5. hut
6. jungle

Unbiased word

- African, people  
Mbuti  
Healer, herbalist, minister, religious leader  
ethnic group  
dwelling, home, residence  
tropical rain forest

Discuss the slang terms that are relevant to students today that are also biased.

**Activity 1**

Have the students, in groups, come up with their own list of slang terms and an equal list of more appropriate words to use. Compare lists as a class.

Have students name or describe other stereotypical images of Africa or Africans.

**B. Physical Aspects**

**Activity 2**

Tell the students that they will be using five regions to classify and define the vast continent of Africa.



Each group will identify the five regions, pick one country from each region to research and compile a notebook of research materials and crafts to present to the class at the end of the unit.

1. Distribute the African countries outline map. Referring to atlases, wall maps, etc., have students color code each region of the map. These will be used for future reference throughout the unit.

2. Distribute the African political map, and have the student groups pick one country from each region to research. This will include almanac information and flags, as well as cultural information on ethnic groups, and current events newspaper and magazine articles. Each student will color code the countries of his or her group's choice in each region. Each country's name and capital will also be put on the map.

3. Distribute the physical map of Africa. Referring to their books, have the students label the physical features including the Sahara, Great Rift Valley, Kalahari, Nile, Congo River, Zaire River, Niger River, Mt. Kilimanjaro. Also label oceans and seas that surround Africa.

Remind students to be on the look out for newspaper and magazine articles relating to the five countries they are to research. Each article should be mounted on a piece of colored paper and put into the group folder.

Week 3

### C. Climate, Vegetation and Resources

Display a map of the world and discuss latitude zones (i.e. low, middle, high latitudes) and remind students that countries in the same zone have similar climates. Tell the students that elevation and proximity to water affect climate greatly. Higher elevation creates a colder climate and proximity to a large body of water creates a milder climate. The discussion can be as detailed as the teacher desires.

### Activity 3

Distribute physical maps, and have each student, in their groups, read and label climate regions vegetation regions, and natural re-

sources of the five countries the group has chosen to research.

All activities will be kept in a section of the student's folder, to be turned in as a presentation at the end of the unit.

### Activity 4

The groups will begin to work on the flags of the five nations they have chosen to research. Colored paper, tag board and scissors should be provided for construction of the flags.

### D. Historical Context

In this section the teacher will discuss the history of the continent noting ancient kingdoms of the Pharaohs, Nok, Mali, Ghana and Niger. Muslim and Christian influences should be discussed. European influences, including the slave trade and the division of Africa by the Europeans in 1884, should be emphasized. The consequences of European conquest should be discussed, and in particular, apartheid in South Africa. The teachers should also discuss the struggles for independence by using a case study of one African country.

### Activity 5

After studying King Mansa Musa and his kingdom of Mali, the students will discuss his famous journey to Mecca. Discussion also should mention the *Hajj* — pilgrimage to Mecca— and reiterate previous material on Islam and its importance in North Africa both religiously and economically. A discussion of barter as a means of trade should be discussed. Most trading within the African continent was conducted using a barter system. The students, in their groups, will be given a site of a caravan, and their task will be to :

1. plot the route on a map.
2. discuss the route and what provisions will be needed for the king and his court and their animals.
3. research the kingdom or country and list the resources of that area using the resource map created in Activity 2.
4. create an item to take on the trip which can be bought or traded for something else.

You can have a trade day in which

students can practice what they have learned about bartering. An entire class period can easily be used for this activity, but time can be shortened by the teacher becoming the “go-between” for faster bartering.

Week 3

### E. Cultural Aspects of Africa

This unit is designed to give students an opportunity to research the countries they have chosen to discover, ethnic groups, and use this as a springboard to discuss aspects of culture. Discussion, lectures, readings and research should focus on both differences and similarities.

#### Activity 6

Students will study and interpret African proverbs using similar sayings and proverbs. You may use the following proverbs from *African Proverbs by Charlotte and Wolfe Leslau*:

1. Two flavors confuse the palate.
2. A single stick may smoke, but it will not burn.
3. The fool is thirsty in the midst of water.
4. When one is in love, a cliff becomes a meadow.
5. A pretty basket does not prevent worries.
6. To try and to fail, is not laziness.

Distribute a sheet with five of six African proverbs on it. Have students brainstorm meaning and interpretations as a group and as a class, writing down the interpretations.

As a group, students will take five African proverbs and match them with five similar American proverbs, noting the differences. They will then take three African proverbs and create three American proverbs from them.

#### Activity 7

Students will listen to an African story and list the character’s names and meanings and use this as a discussion activity. *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe will be used.

Students will be asked questions concern-

ing the characters and their names. A proverb could be invented to provide the moral of the story.

### 1. Literature

Tell students that proverbs are sayings that contain some element of wisdom or embody a commonly accepted belief. Proverbs often influence decisions and in some African communities people habitually recite proverbs in decision making. Proverbs are a part of most cultures.

Give examples of common American proverbs and ask students to interpret their meanings:

“A stitch in time saves nine.”

“Don’t cry over spilled milk.”

“He who laughs last, laughs best.”

“A penny saved is a penny earned.”

### 2. Religion

African religions are a mosaic of many self-contained and locally rooted traditions. This makes it difficult to generalize about them or describe them as any one certain form of worship. Most traditional African religions are based on the belief in one god and some lesser deities who play a large part in the daily lives of people.

The discussion will center around traditional African religious ideas. Several creation stories can be introduced to show a common theme contained in many religions. *The Dark Child* by Camara Laye will be used to discuss the role of supernatural, and totems among some African ethnic groups. Local museum exhibits and personalities, as well as books on the subject will be used to give the students the “flavor” of different regions of Africa. The teacher will discuss differences of imported religions including Christianity, Islam and Judaism and their impact on African societies.

### 3. Homes/Architecture

#### Activity 8

Using books and texts as reference, the students will seek to dispel stereotypes about what “Africans” use as homes and buildings. Pre-colonial traditions, as well as Arabic and

western influences, will be looked at and discussed. Climate and available materials will also be discussed as factors that influence architecture.

**Activity 9**

Student groups will prepare a collage showing how climate, building materials available and economics determine choice of housing. Comparisons with other cultures will also be incorporated.

**4. Music**

Students will listen to a mini lecture on traditional African music and how it has influenced contemporary popular music including jazz, rock and gospel. Students can make musical instruments/create their own musical compositions.

**5. Clothing**

This discussion and activity will focus on similarities and differences. Most Africans today wear shirts and pants, or skirts and dresses as well as traditional cloths and styles of dress.

Focus will be on cloth used to make traditional style dress; particularly, the popular Kente cloth of the Ashanti people and the Adinkra cloth.

Week 4

Review can be conducted as a teacher directed activity. One method of review is as follows:

**Review using Bloom's Taxonomy:**

Bloom's Taxonomy is a well-known strategy for teaching critical thinking skills in any subject area. It consists of six different thinking levels arranged in a hierarchy of difficulty. The six levels are: knowledge (learn the information), comprehension (understand the information), application (use the information), analysis (break the information down into component parts), synthesis (put the information together in new and different ways) and evaluation (judge the information).

Activity 10 - See Bloom's Taxonomy sheet on Africa.

**Evaluation:**

Each activity will be put into a folder for the group to present. Points could be assigned to each activity for creative and cognitive content.

**Extensions**

The book *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe can be read and studied. The book and movie, *Cry, The Beloved Country* by Alan Paton can be viewed, read and discussed.



Students can have fun studying African cloth such as these varieties of styles from Nigeria

# WEST AFRICA : SLAVE TRADE , COLONIALISM , AND INDEPENDENCE

by Garnet Messer

## Slave Trade and Colonialism

The voyage from Europe to Africa below the Sahara was extremely difficult. The seas were stormy, there were few safe harbors, and the land was unmapped. However, in the early 1400s, it finally became possible to reach Africa by the Atlantic. The first people to reach the western coast were the Portuguese. By the 1470s, Portuguese ships had found their way to the gold fields of West Africa and had built prosperous trading posts there.

Gold was the primary attraction for Europeans at first. But in time, they found a more profitable commodity along the West African Coast — slaves. Labor was needed for the large Spanish and Portuguese plantations just beginning in the West Indies and Brazil, and later in North America.

During the nearly four centuries of the slave trade, an estimated 30 to 60 million Africans were transported to the Americas to be sold in slave markets. Many died before they arrived.

The results of the slave trade were tragic not only for those sold, but for the societies that they left behind.

Britain led the way in putting an end to slavery by passing a law against it at home in 1772 and abolishing it in its colonies in 1834. France followed the lead in 1848 and ended slavery in its colonies in 1860. The United States made slave importation illegal in 1808 but did not emancipate slaves in the country until 1865.

The slave trade began to diminish toward the end of the 18th century, but European interests in Africa began to grow for other reasons. The African people were not given a chance to recover from the harsh reality of the slave trade because the Europeans were now looking to conquer the continent itself because

of its wealth in mineral resources and fertile land — all of which were scarce in Europe.

The scramble for territory in Africa among European powers was so fierce that a conference was called in Berlin in 1884 to decide upon rules for colonizing African lands. Africa was carved up with no regard for traditional ethnic land divisions. In many cases, the ethnic lands were split in two — one half being controlled by the British the other by the French.

Despite great resistance, by 1914 all of West Africa except Liberia was under European rule. Colonization greatly affected West Africa, setting the modern political boundaries and creating the region's economic dependence on export of raw materials.

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate their understanding of:

- 1.) the impact of the slave trade on African societies
- 2.) colonization in West Africa through small group discussions and simulation.

**Resources:** drinking straws, masking tape, scissors.

**Suggested Time:** Each activity - one class period.

## Activities

A. Students will simulate a community working together to design a structure.

## Procedure:

1. After reading the lesson text with the class, divide the class into three groups.
2. Explain that the task for each community is to build the most creative and tallest free-standing structure by the end of the class period. Emphasize the importance of working as a team.

3. Once the students get into the task, begin to gradually remove members of one group and place them in the other two groups. By the end of the period, one group should only have 2 to 3 members.

Note: There will be a lot of frustration among the students. It is important, however, that the teacher not intervene. The teacher will be allowed to help students debrief and work through their frustrations at the end of the simulation.

4. Declare a winner by testing to see which structure is free-standing and creative.

5. Debrief: Allow students to discuss which parts of the activity were most frustrating. Compare the experience with the slave trade: people being uprooted out of their communities, placed in unfamiliar environments, overcrowding and the loss of skilled labor.

B. Students will engage in small group discussions about colonialism in West Africa.

1. On index cards, write the following questions and have students discuss them in their groups. After groups have had adequate time to discuss questions, bring the whole class back together and ask each group to share something interesting that came out of their discussion.

A. Are there any positive things that could have resulted from colonization?

B. How did colonization affect the West African Kingdoms?

C. Consider the current problems/issues occurring in West African countries today. Can any of them be traced to colonization?