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***TAKING AFRICA TO THE CLASSROOM***

A Publication of The Center for African Studies  
University of Florida

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*Dolly Rathebe, a  
South Africa artist,  
performing at the  
University of  
Florida's Reitz Union  
in the Fall 1999.*

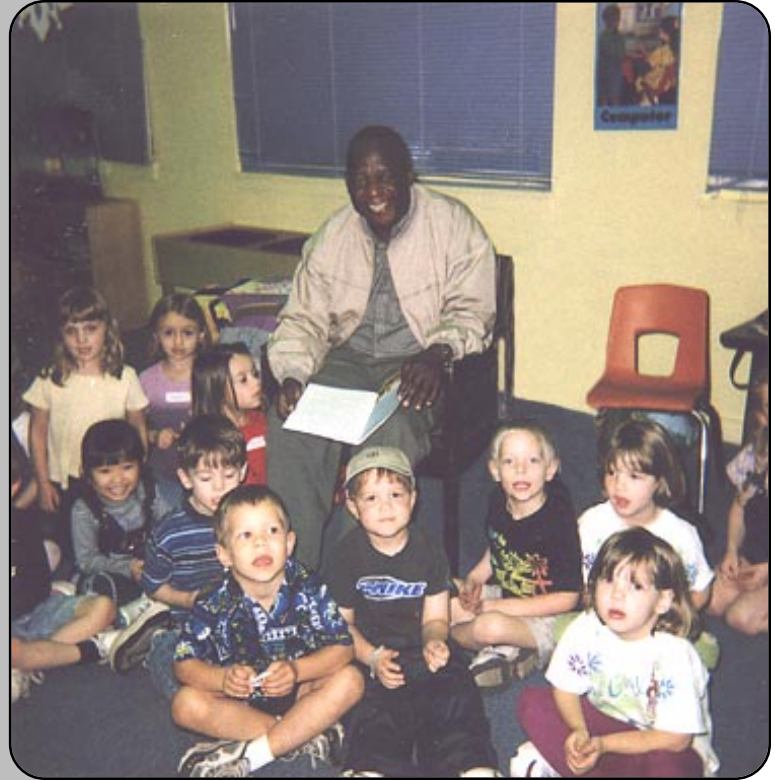


# Center for African Studies

## *Outreach Program at the University of Florida*

The Center is in part federally funded under Title VI of the higher education act as a National Resource Center on Africa. One of nine Resource Centers, Florida's is the only Center located in the Southeastern United States. The Center directs, develops, and coordinates interdisciplinary instruction, research, and outreach on Africa.

The Outreach Program includes a variety of activities whose objective is to improve the teaching of Africa in schools from K-12, colleges, universities and the community. Below are some of the regular activities which fall under the Outreach Program.



**Teachers' Workshops.** The Center offers in-service workshops for K-12 teachers on the teaching of Africa.

**Summer Institutes.** Each summer, the Center holds teaching institutes for K- 12 teachers.

**Publications.** The Center publishes teaching resources including the *Irohin*, which is distributed to teachers. In addition, the Center has also published a monograph entitled *Lesson Plans on African History and Geography: A Teaching Resource*.

**Library.** Teachers may borrow video tapes and books from the Outreach office.

▲ *Writer and poet Charles Mungoshi from Zimbabwe was a writer-in-residence at the University of Florida in Spring 2000. He visited several schools including Baby Gator where he read stories from his books.*

**Community and School Presentations.** Faculty and graduate students make presentations on Africa to the community and schools.

**Research Affiliate Program.** The program enables African specialists at institutions which do not have adequate resources for African-related research, to increase their expertise on Africa through contact with other Africanists as well as access to African-related resources of the University of Florida libraries. Two one-month appointments are provided each summer.

## Editor's Note

*E*

Each summer, the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida hosts a K-12 teachers' institute. The objective of the institute is to help teachers increase their knowledge about Africa and develop lesson plans to use in their classrooms. The creative lesson plans in this issue of *Irohin* were written by participants in the 1999 institute. Please feel free to use these materials in your teaching and share them with other teachers. Write or call the Center for additional copies.

Sincerely,



Agnes Ngoma Leslie,  
Editor/Outreach Director

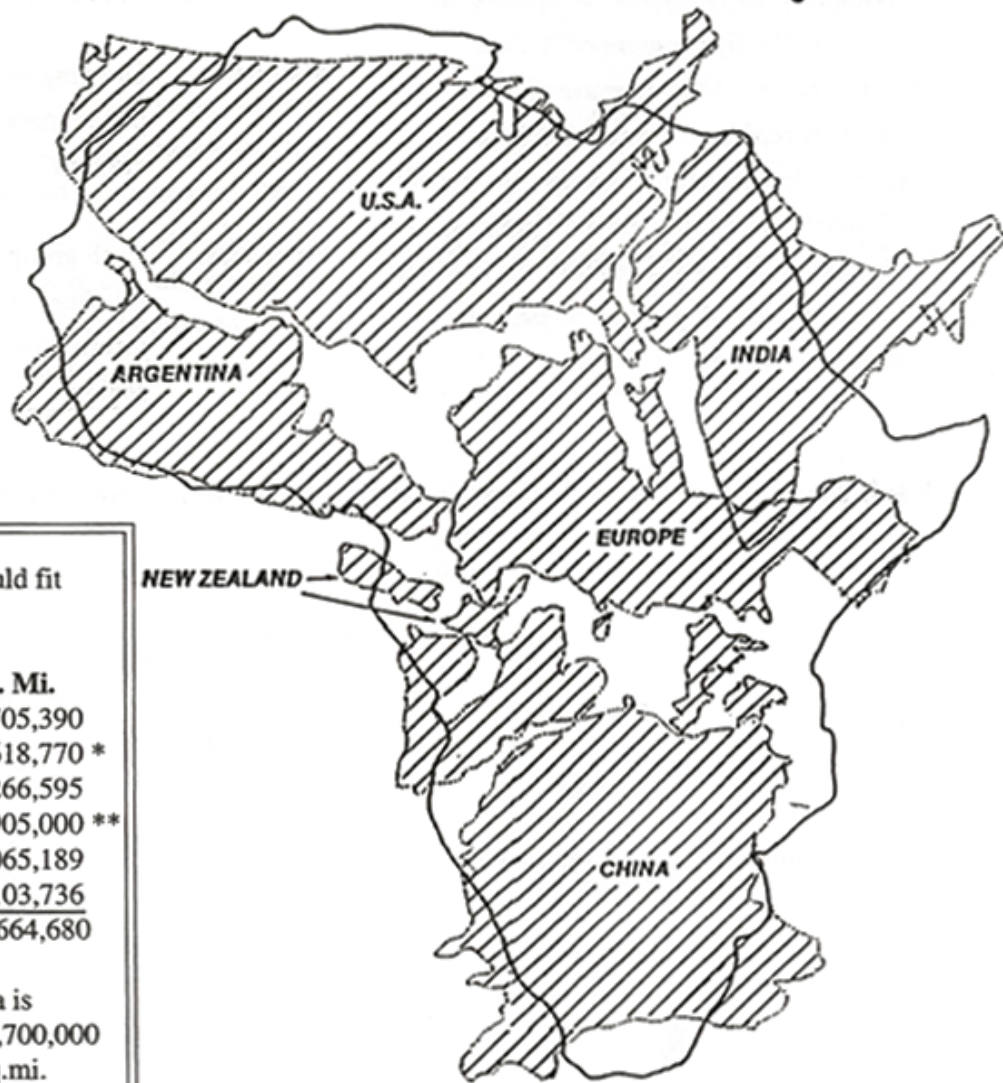
*Picture shows participants in the Summer Institute. Back row: Marie Paul, Agnes Ngoma Lesllie (Institute Director), Michael Swartz, Shelton Davis, Tim Ajani, and Rose Wershaw. Middle row: Dawn Forman, Chelsie Jefferson, Lisa Cooper, Annie Johnson, Michael Manetz, and Deatra Spratling. Kneeling: Dr. Michael Chege (Director, Center for African Studies) and Charlotte Durrance.*



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Agnes Ngoma Leslie, **Editor/Outreach Director**, **Layout & Design** Pei Li Li

# WOULD YOU BELIEVE?



The following could fit within Africa:

Country	Sq. Mi.
China	3,705,390
U.S.A	3,618,770 *
India	1,266,595
Europe	1,905,000 **
Argentina	1,065,189
New Zealand	103,736
	<u>11,664,680</u>

The area of Africa is  
11,700,000  
sq.mi.

Source of data: The 1990 World Almanac and Book of Facts.

\* Total, land & water, 50 states  
\*\* 1989 Information Please Almanac, Includes Iceland. Excludes the Soviet Union and Turkey

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# Teaching About Africa Using French Language

by  
Marie R Paul

## POINT OF DEPARTURE

Africa, the second largest continent after Asia and the third largest in population, offers to the world natural resources including gold, diamonds, cobalt, uranium, oil, and the fruits of human endeavor in religion, philosophy, literature, and science.

Africa provides us more than another world market to be exploited for commercial gain. It has a cultural history dating back to the beginning of man and is home to many modes of thought, some ancient and some new, which still have not been fully explored. African political power on the world scene is on the increase.

As a result of the African Diaspora in the United States, some American institutions and attitudes can be better understood by acknowledging their origins in Africa.

In an ever shrinking world one cannot ignore the varieties of African experience. We live together in closer proximity each day. Some experiences tend to separate us, but many more must unite us for humanity to benefit. To do this people must communicate and so we start with language.

## IN PREPARATION

Volunteers are called upon to do a Bulletin Board presentation- a large map of Africa on which Francophone countries are prominently displayed and on which care is taken to give the most current names (e.g. Zaire to DRC) for the areas.

## GOALS:

1. To provide an important key to the treasure trove that is Africa.

According to various sources 700 languages are spoken on the continent. However, as a result of French and Belgian colonial history, French is the official language of most of North Africa and of many countries in Western and Central Africa. Beyond these boundaries, it is very widely used and studied.

As a motivational tool, good poetry requires an intimate understanding of language. The production of a body of work in French which can take its place proudly in the best of world literature and produced by individuals coming from vastly different cultural and linguistic structures in which French is not their first mode of expression will demonstrate to all students the possibility of success in the discipline.

2. To demonstrate proud and sometimes unstressed cultural roots.

## TARGETED GROUP

The chosen material is suitable for third and fourth year French Students.

## CLASSROOM PROCEDURE

### Day One

#### Test Your French!

Jusqu'au milieu du XX<sup>e</sup>me siècle, la France était une grande puissance coloniale. Les colonies et les protectorats français occupaient une superficie d'environ 4.600.000 "square miles", c'est à dire, approximativement vingt fois l'étendue de la France. Les anciennes colonies françaises, les territoires et les Départements d'Outre-Mer actuels avaient une population de plus de cinquante-cinq millions d'habitants.

En Afrique, beaucoup de pays ont réclamé leur indépendance. Depuis 1956, les territoires, l'un après l'autre, ont acquis cette indépendance. Cependant, parce que beaucoup de ces pays avaient été formés par la France, l'influence française y est encore très forte. (1)

Start the class with a review of vocabulary dealing with geographical features, political divisions etc. Refer to bulletin board display.

Elicit from students residual knowledge previously taught allowing them to express themselves in the target language. Provide a handout of vocabulary and idiomatic expressions dealing with the subject and for which they will be held responsible.

Allow the students to test their knowledge of West and Central African countries by providing a printout of these countries on which they will attempt to match the country name with the correct area. Correct immediately and refer to the bulletin board to note if any name changes have been effected e.g. Zaire to DRC etc. Assign some students to research when these changes have come about and why. Encourage them to use the internet if school library sources do not provide the answers.

(1) La Géographie de la France, Gessler Publishing, NewYork, N.Y.

### Day Two

Start with an oral review of vocabulary stressed the previous day.

Have the class repeat names of countries under French influence as shown on bulletin board.

Point out Senegal on display. Indicate location of Dakar. Show the picture and note that it is a large city resembling many such cities in Europe and North America.

Give a Cloze test (dictée) dealing with general facts about Senegal.

Exchange papers and correct.

Discuss verb and adjective agreement and French sounds and spellings e.g. in the word République note how the accent aigue changes "e" sound and in the pronunciation of "ique" the "i" is long and that spelling "que" gives us the "k" sound in English etc.

**Les Devoirs:** Assign a "redaction" on the subject of Dakar. It is to be written in French using at least 10 sentences. This can be as simple as "Dakar est une grande ville. C'est la capitale du Senegal. On y parle français etc." The level of language depending on the talent of the student. Stress is to be put both on accurate language structure and general information about the city.



### Day Three

Introduce *Léopold Sédhar Senghor* to the class.

A world renowned literary figure familiar with the long history of oral verse evident in many of Africa's diverse cultures and the first African invited into the Académie Française, Senghor felt that the invention of Francophone African poetry provided an opportunity not only to reach a larger audience but also for these writers to actually influence and change the French language to suit a broader purpose.

Senghor deeply believed in and promulgated the idea of "négritude". For him it was "L'ensemble des valeurs de civilisation du monde noir". Some writers have held that "négritude" is the basis for modern African Afrocentrism. They also attribute to it the recognition of the African woman as not only the economic force for much of the continent but the unifying symbol of beauty, virtue, faith, and strength.

With this in mind we start our study of *Femme Noir* by Senghor:

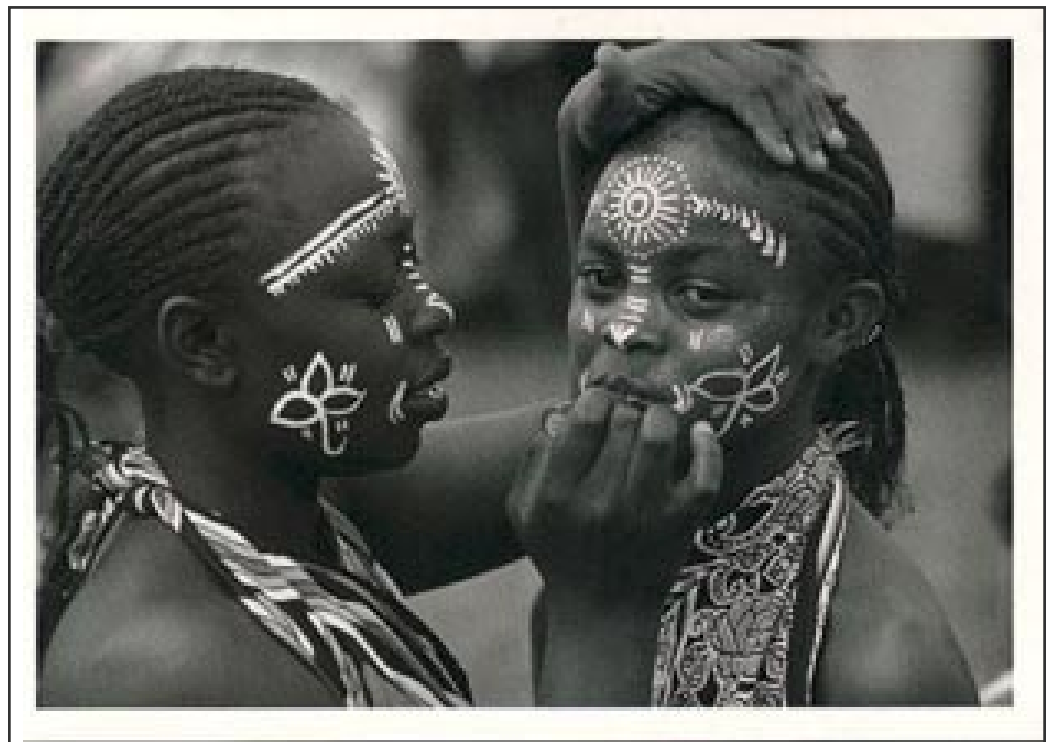
Students hear the poem read for the first time. They repeat it slowly three times with the teacher prompting.

Students are given a vocabulary list: words unfamiliar to students at this level are listed in columns and by type - nouns, adjectives, verbs etc.

They are to use dictionaries to find the English translation and if possible to provide a definition using a sentence in French. Verbs must include the designation regular or irregular. If irregular, the student must provide for the verb the present tense, the past participle and the future stem.

Work is checked. Verbs are discussed. Questions on the vocabulary are taken and problems of syntax are explained.

Students again repeat poem with teacher prompting.



- *Celebrating African womanhood. These girls have fun decorating their faces. (Picture by Betty Press)*

## Femme noire

by Leopold Senghor

Femme nue, femme noire  
Vêtue de ta couleur qui est vie, de ta forme qui est beauté!  
J'ai grandi à ton ombre; la douceur de tes mains bandait mes yeux.  
Et voilà qu'au cœur de l'Été et de Midi, je te découvre, Terre promise, du haut d'un haut col calciné  
Et ta beauté me foudroie en plein cœur, comme l'éclair d'un aigle.

Femme nue, femme obscure  
Fruit mur à la chair ferme, sombres extases du vin noir, bouche qui fais lyrique ma bouche  
Savane aux horizons purs, savane qui frémit aux caresses ferventes du Vent d'Est  
Tam-tam sculpté, tam-tam tendu qui gronde sous les doigts du vainqueur  
Ta voix grave de contralto est le chant spirituel de l' Aimée.

Femme nue, femme obscure  
Huile que ne ride nul souffle, huile calme aux flancs de l'athlète, aux flancs des princes du Mali  
Gazelle aux attaches célestes, les perles sont étoiles sur la nuit de ta peau  
Délices des jeux de l'esprit, les reflets de l'or rouge sur ta peau qui se moire  
A l'ombre de ta chevelure, s'éclaire mon angoisse aux soleils prochains de tes yeux.

Femme nue, femme noire  
Je chante ta beauté qui passe, forme que je fixe dans l'Éternel.  
Avant que le Destin jaloux ne te réduise en cendres pour nourrir les racines de la vie.

## Black Woman (translation)



Nude woman, black woman,  
Clothed in your color which is life, in your form which is beauty!  
I have grown in your shadow while the sweetness of your hand cradled my eyes.  
And high on the fiery pass, I find you, Earth's promise, in the heart of summer and the noon,  
And your beauty blasts me full-heart like the flash of an eagle in the sun.

Nude mother, black mother,  
Ripe fruit of firm flesh, deep rapture of dark wine, lips whose song is my song,  
Savanna of pure horizons, savanna trembling at the East Wind's eager kisses,  
Carved tom-tom, tight tom-tom, groaning under the hands of the conqueror,  
Your heavy contralto is the spirit-song of the loved.

Nude mother, black mother,  
Oil of no ripple or flow, calm oil on the flanks of the athlete, on the flanks of the princes of Mali,  
Gazelle of heavenly binding, pearls are stars on the night of your skin;  
Delights of the playful mind, the red sun's glint on your glistening skin  
Under the shadow of your hair—my cares are brightened by the neighbouring sun of your eyes.

Nude woman, black woman,  
I sing your passing beauty, your form I fix in the Ageless Night  
Before old jealous Destiny brings you down in the fire and gathers your ashes for the suckling life.

### Day Four

Students repeat entire poem three times with teacher prompting.

Students are told they will memorize the selection. Before they hit the floor in a dead faint, it will be explained that only two stanzas a week will be recited for a grade. However, on the third week the entire poem is to be presented and will be graded on pronunciation and phrasing.

The Poem is translated orally by students using their vocabulary list from the previous day. A literal translation is at first encouraged in order to have students understand the language structure.

The meaning of the piece is discussed by means of questions asked in French and to which the students respond in French.

Devoirs: The students must answer in French 10 questions on the content of the poem.

### Day Five

Students repeat entire poem three times with teacher prompting. Class drills on vocabulary - at first words - then phrases - then sentences. French to English and English to French

The class starts to work on the first two stanzas of the poem.

Students repeat poem line by line after teacher modeling. Individual students are called upon to repeat after the teacher. Each student is called upon several times.

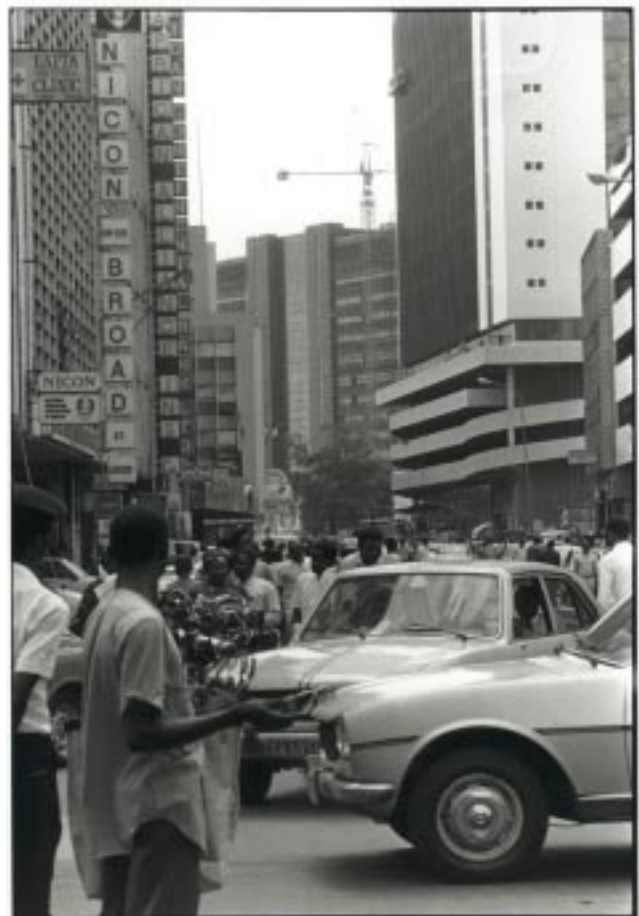
Students now repeat first two stanzas

### Follow up

In the following weeks the students begin and end the class with repetition of the poem and short vocabulary drill. Additional class work is sandwiched in between these exercises.

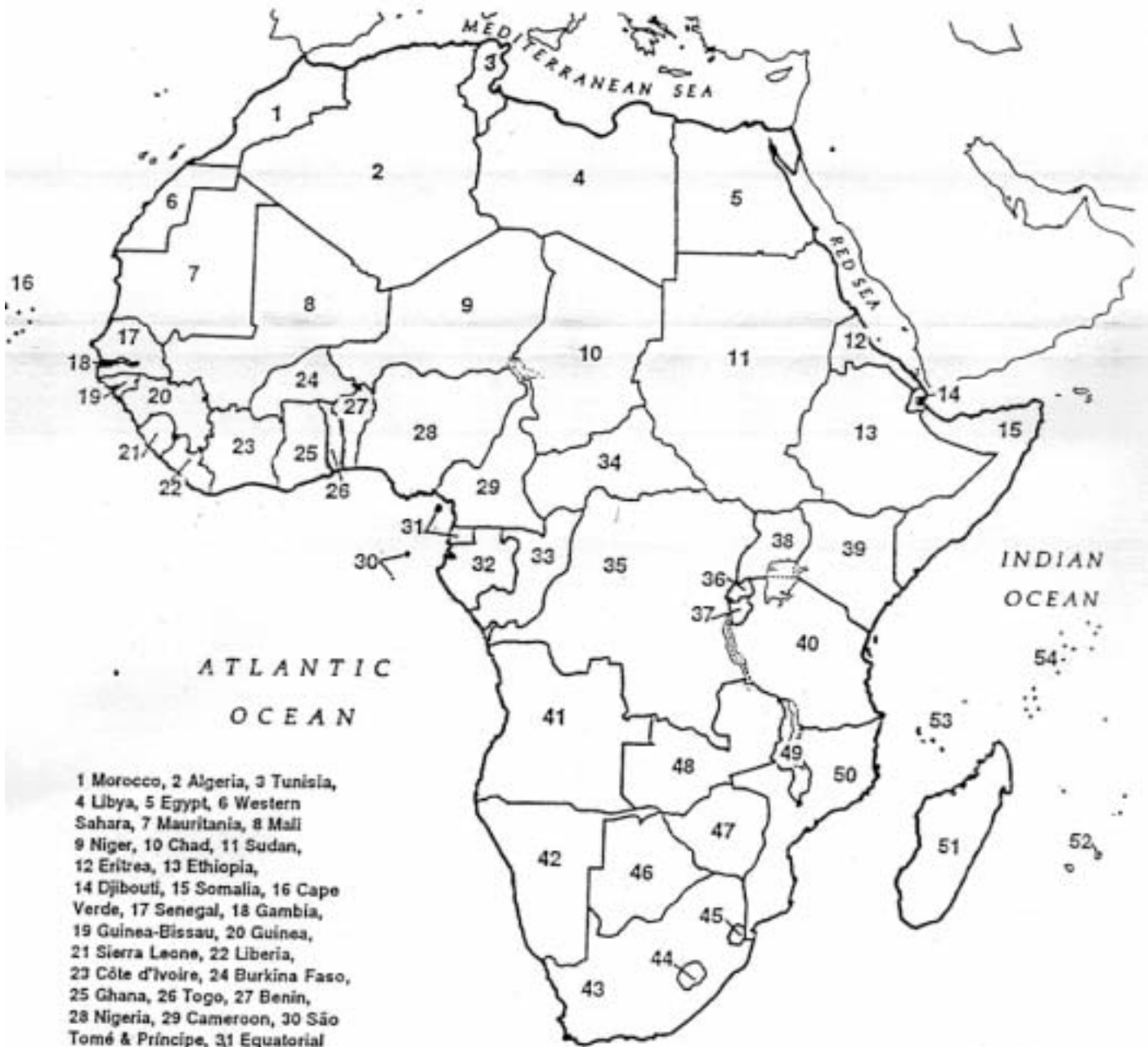
Poems are tested on Wednesday. Tuesday is reserved for intense pronunciation exercises on the lines to be recited.

When the entire poem has been learned, a general written test is given on the background material. The students are also responsible for all vocabulary and grammatical structures mentioned and used.



• *Contemporary street scene in Nigeria (Picture by Betty Press).*

NAME THEM!



- 1 Morocco, 2 Algeria, 3 Tunisia,
- 4 Libya, 5 Egypt, 6 Western Sahara, 7 Mauritania, 8 Mali
- 9 Niger, 10 Chad, 11 Sudan,
- 12 Eritrea, 13 Ethiopia,
- 14 Djibouti, 15 Somalia, 16 Cape Verde, 17 Senegal, 18 Gambia,
- 19 Guinea-Bissau, 20 Guinea,
- 21 Sierra Leone, 22 Liberia,
- 23 Côte d'Ivoire, 24 Burkina Faso,
- 25 Ghana, 26 Togo, 27 Benin,
- 28 Nigeria, 29 Cameroon, 30 São Tomé & Príncipe, 31 Equatorial Guinea, 32 Gabon, 33 Congo Republic, 34 Central African Republic, 35 Zaire, 36 Rwanda, 37 Burundi, 38 Uganda, 39 Kenya, 40 Tanzania, 41 Angola, 42 Namibia, 43 South Africa, 44 Lesotho, 45 Swaziland, 46 Botswana, 47 Zimbabwe, 48 Zambia, 49 Malawi, 50 Mozambique, 51 Madagascar, 52 Mauritius, 53 Comoros, 54 Seychelles.

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# Exploring Malawi Through Children's Literature

by  
*Chelsie Jefferson*

**G**oal: To gain a general understanding of the lives of Malawian children, and to gain knowledge of Malawi and surrounding East African nations.

## Suggested Teaching Strategies:

Information about Malawi can be delivered to students by class discussions, visual, map work, group activities, and by using books with pictures to illustrate concepts. *Galimoto* can be read individually or as a group, depending on the reading ability of students. This compilation of information targets reading, math, and life skills and can be used in the instruction of county pupil progression skills, or Individualized Educational Plan goals and objectives.

## **Galimoto by: Karen Lynn Williams**

Kondi is a seven year old boy living in a village of Malawi. He wishes to make a galimoto (a toy car), but he does not have enough wire. Kondi goes through his village, buying wire and collecting wire that is thrown away. He finds enough wire and constructs a truck.

## **Malawi:**

Malawi is located in East Africa, bordered by Zambia and Tanzania in the north, and Mozambique in the southern part of the nation. The country is a long narrow valley that holds the third largest lake in Africa, Lake Malawi. The majority of the country is forest, including a small portion that is rain forest. Half of the nation's population resides in the south. Ethnic groups of the people include Chewa, Ngoni, Natal, and Yao (from Mozambique). Chichewa is the national language. English is the official language. Only 12.8% of the population lives in towns (as of 1993), leaving the majority of the nation living in rural areas. Life expectancy is 45 years for men, 46 years for women. The death rate is 50 per 1000. Agriculture supports local economies.

## Activity:

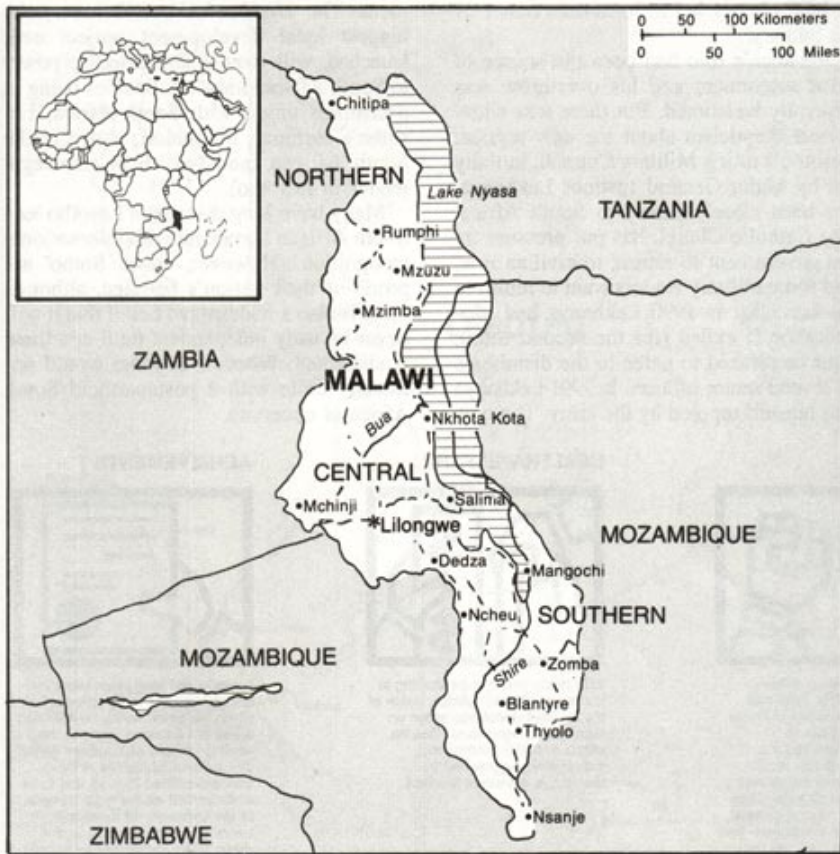
### How to make a *galimoto*

You will need coat hangers that have been straightened, a spool of wire smaller in diameter than the coat hangers, strips of latex (an old swim cap cut into strips works nicely). Divide students into small groups. Shape the coat hanger into a bike. Wrap the smaller wire around the larger frame. Wrap the latex around the wheels, and there you have your own galimoto!

\*Depending on the ability level of your students, you may wish to demonstrate and guide students through this activity. Older students may only need an example to go by, and written directions.

**Skills:** reading, listening comprehension, fine motor, social skills, following directions.

## Facts About Malawi



Map of Malawi



The Flag of Malawi

### Capital city:

Lilongwe

### Principal Exports:

Tea  
Tobacco  
Sugar  
Coffee

### Climate:

Malawi has three seasons:

- cool, dry season from April to August
- warm, dry season from September to November
- rainy season from December to April ( 90 % of rainfall occurs during this season)

### Energy:

Wood is the main source of energy. Only 3% of households had access to electricity as of 1999, mostly generated from hydroelectric power.

### Religion:

Traditional religions (50%)  
Christian  
(Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian)  
Hindu  
Muslim

### Unit of currency:

Malawi *kwacha* (MK)

**Wildlife:**

Leopards, hyenas, jackals, hyraxes, porcupines, bushbucks, reedbucks, klipspringers, baboons, mongooses, velvet monkeys, servals, civets, genets, tree frogs, and over 600 species of birds.

**Food to mention:**

*Mnkhuani relish* (pumpkin leaves cooked with tomatoes and peanuts)  
*Nsima* (cornmeal porridge)  
*Guava okazinga* (fried guavas)  
 sugarcane  
 fish  
 peanuts  
 rice

**Children:**

Students learn English in school and speak local languages only at home. 70% of Malawian boys, and 49% of Malawian girls attend school. Less than 10% of children attend secondary school, and even fewer attend higher education offered at the University of Malawi. Soccer (called football) is an organized sport in schools. Children also enjoy boxing, baseball, and basketball. *Fuwa* is a popular game in which one attempts to win the opponents game pieces much like chess or checkers.

## Activities

### Making a soccer ball:

You will need old rags, and a meter of twine for each ball. Scrunch rags, wrap them in a larger rag. Bunch up the end of the larger rag. One student holds the bunch of rags, while the other wraps the twine around the ball. You may need to assist some students in the beginning to see that the twine is wrapped tightly. Allow students to take their soccer ball outside and kick it around. If time allows, have a soccer game!



\*Directions for this activity can be written in small booklets for groups to read and do independently.

**Skills:** reading, fine motor, gross motor, following directions, vocabulary, and social skills.

## Cooking in Malawi

Malawians enjoy the following dishes, one made of sweet potatoes and other made of groundnuts (we know these as peanuts!).

### *Mtedza* (peanut puffs)

3/4 cup finely chopped peanuts  
1/2 cup margarine  
2 tbs. sugar  
1/2 tsp. vanilla  
1 cup flour  
powdered sugar  
pinch of salt

Cream margarine and sugar, add peanuts, vanilla, and flour. Roll into small balls, put on a greased cookie sheet and bake 35 minutes. While hot, roll in powdered sugar, repeat when cooled.

\*Note: Recipes can be written on cards or made into booklets for any grade level. Pictures can be used to assist those with learning disabilities.

Skills: fine motor, social skills, following directions, reading comprehension, decoding, and measurement.

### *Mbatata* (Sweet Potato Biscuits)

3/4 cup mashed sweet potato  
1/4 cup milk  
4 tbs. melted margarine  
1 1/4 cup sifted flour  
2 tsp. baking powder  
1/2 tsp. salt

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Mix and beat potatoes, milk, and margarine. Sift and stir in remaining ingredients. Turn onto a floured board and knead lightly. Roll out 1/2 inch thick and cut with a cookie cutter or biscuit cutter. Put on a greased cookie sheet and bake for 15 minutes.

## Making *Fufu*

Maize (corn) or cassava (a root also called yuca) are main staples in Malawi. Either product is ground and used in many dishes. Cassava can be found in the freezer section of most grocery stores. Thaw the cassava, then grind the pieces into a fine powder. Explain to students that this is an important ingredient of many foods, such as *Fufu*. *Fufu* is a dumpling served with soups. If you choose to make *Fufu*, use the recipe below, which substitutes Bisquick for the ground cassava.

### Ingredients

2 1/2 cups Bisquick  
2 1/2 instant potato flakes

Bring 6 cups of water to a rapid boil. Combine ingredients in a bowl and add to the water. Stir constantly 10 to 12 minutes. Mixture will be thick and difficult to stir. Have one person hold the pot, while another stirs. Dump a cup of the mixture into a wet bowl and shake until it forms itself into a smooth ball.



## Useful Books:

O'Toole, T. (1988). *Malawi In Pictures*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications Company.

Carpenter, A. & DeLany, M. (1977). *Enchantment of Africa: Malawi*. Chicago, IL: Children's Press.

Williams, K. (1990). *Galimoto*. New York, NY: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books.

Angelou, M. (1996). *Kofi and His Magic*. New York, NY: Clarkson Potter Publishers.

Cobb, V. (1998). *This Place is Wild: East Africa*. New York, NY: Walker and Company.

Sayre, A. (1995). *If You Should Hear A Honey Guide*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Farris, P. (1996). *Young Mouse and Elephant*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Sammon, R. & Sammon, S. (1994). *Wild Safari In 3-D*. Berkley, CA: The Nature Company.

# MOROCCO

## Chicken with Olives

by Deatra Spratling

2 small chickens cut in pieces  
5 tbsp. of oil  
3 onions sliced  
Salt & black pepper to taste  
2 tbsp. of oil

3 tsp. Paprika  
1 onion chopped  
3 - 8 oz. jars of olives  
juice of 2 lemons  
1 tsp. of cumin

Heat oil in large saucepan. Add onions slices. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, cumin and paprika. Add chicken, which has been washed, on top of onions. Cook over low heat, covered for 1 hour. Turn chicken frequently. Add a little salt if necessary and add the finely chopped onions. Cook for another 20 minutes.

Stone olives and put them in a pan of cold water. Bring water to a boil and leave for 1 minute. Drain off water and repeat the process to remove all salt from the olives. Add olives to chicken and cook for a few more minutes. Just before serving, squeeze a little lemon juice over the dish. You could serve with pickled lemon slices

# The Gullah: A Living Connection Between the Sea Islands and West Africa

by Rose Wershow

When I was a child, I used to listen to my father talking with Willy Giles. Willy Giles was the African American who grew crops and raised livestock on our land. He and my father spent many hours leaning on the fence, engaged in animated conversation, obviously enjoying each other's company immensely. What they talked about, I could only guess. Even though I understood a word here and there, I never could catch an entire sentence. I knew it had to be English. Willy Giles was from Georgia and even though I have never excelled at geography even at that young age I knew Georgia was part of the United States and people from Georgia spoke English.

When I finally asked my father what language they were speaking, he replied they were speaking "Geechee". I knew my father liked to tease me and to me "Geechee" sounded exactly like a word my father would make up to torment me. So I just laughed, to show I was not taken in so easily and left it at that. And thereby I missed what I now know was a priceless opportunity to learn first hand about a rich and unique community of people that

- *Baskets made in Sierra Leone are identical to those made by Sea Island Gullahs.*

exists only on the Sea Islands of South Carolina and Georgia. Although commonly called Gullah today, Geechee is the Georgia name for the group of African Americans that have the strongest living cultural links with Africa in America today.

The Gullah language and customs still have such pure evidence of their African roots that American Gullah- speakers and Krio-speaking Africans from Sierra Leone can understand each other with no difficulty at all. Baskets made by the Sea Island Gullahs and used by their ancestors on the rice plantations of South Carolina and Georgia are identical to the baskets made and used in Sierra Leone during the rice harvest today. The baskets are called by the same name in both countries.

This vibrant and living history can be used in the classroom to communicate much about Africa and its links with America, both historically and in our lives today.

Gullahs are descended from slaves that came from a fairly small geographical region, the

West Coast of Africa from Senegal to Sierra Leone, the Rice Coast. The colonists of South Carolina and Georgia discovered that the humid, semitropical climate of their coastal plantations was suited to the production of rice. Unfortunately the colonists knew very little about how to grow rice and their early attempts to do so were failures. Their solution to the problem was to import the knowledge they needed by buying slaves who came from a rice growing area and had the experience necessary to make the rice plantations profitable.

The colonists of South Carolina and Georgia generally showed far greater interest in the geographical origins of African slaves than did planters in other North American colonies. Planters were willing to pay higher prices for slave from the Rice Coast. Slaves traders who came from a rice growing area and had the experience necessary to make the rice plantations profitable.

The planters of South Carolina and Georgia came to rely heavily on the technical knowledge of their African slaves. The systems of sluices, banks and ditches used on the plantations are similar to the ones used by the Temme of Sierra Leone as early as the 1700s. The labor patterns, the large wooden mortars and pestles used to pound the rice at harvest time and the large round winnowing baskets used to separate the grain and chaff by “fanning” are all identical to those used in West Africa. The slaves of Georgia and South Carolina continued with many of the methods of rice farming which form special link between the Gullah and the people of Sierra Leone.

Rice is an important part of the Gullah diet and reflects the West African cuisine of their ancestors. Rice and greens and rice and okra are similar to Sierra Leone’s plasas and rice and okra soups. Red rice when served with a *gumbo* containing okra, fish, tomatoes and hot peppers, greatly resembles West African *jollof* rice. A South Carolina writer who has visited West Africa, refers to jollof rice as a “typical South Carolina Meal”! In very remote areas the Gullahs have also tradition-

**GOTTUH TEK DUH CHILLUN OUTUH PHARAOH HAN'**

*Spiritedly*      *Leader*      *Congregation*      *Pianopolis*

1. Oh Lawd, trou-ble een duh lan', Yuh got - tuh tek duh  
 chil-lun out-uh Phar-aoh han', Oh Lawd, trou-ble een duh  
 lan', Yuh got-tuh tek duh chil-lun out-uh Pha-raoh han'. Yuh  
 got - tuh tek duh chil - lun out - uh Pha - raoh han', Yuh  
 got - tuh tek duh chil - lun out - uh Pha-raoh han', Yuh  
 got - tuh tek duh chil - lun out - uh Pha - raoh han', Yuh  
 got - tuh tek duh chil - lun out - uh Pha-raoh han'.

Verse 2  
 Neb-buh been to Heb-ben but uh has been tol', Yuh Etc.

Verse 3. 4  
 Tal - les' tree een Par - a - dise, Yuh Etc.

- *This song is typical of an early spiritual sung by Gullah people (Faces: People, Places, and Cultures, Cobblestone Publication, 1998)*

ally made a boiled corn paste served in leaves similar to Sierra Leonean *agidi* and a heavy porridge of wheat flour which they call *fufu*.

The slaves on the plantations were more isolated from the influence of the colonists than slaves in other areas because the climate of the Low Country was not only conducive to the growing of rice, but also to tropical diseases, such as yellow fever. This kept plantation owners away from their holdings for certain seasons and left the slaves with more autonomy than was usual. Of course Gullah customs borrowed from their white masters, as well as being a mixture of elements from many different ethnic groups in Africa, but much of the culture does point to West Africa and their language points to Sierra Leone in particular. For instance, the Gullah practiced Christianity but their style of worship reflected their African heritage.

During slavery they developed a ceremony called “ring shout”. Participants danced in a ritual fashion in a circle while sticks were pounded rhythmically and eventually participants experienced possession by the Holy Spirit while shouting praise and thanksgiving. Although ring shout seems to have died out other customs are still practiced. Sea Island Gullahs may still paint their doors and windows blue to ward off witches and evil spirits. Gullahs may believe in evil spirits that can enslave a person by controlling his or her will. Sometimes the

walls of houses are papered with newsprint or sometimes a bit of folded newspaper is put inside a shoe in the belief that the spirit must first read every word before taking action. This custom seems to be derived from the common West African practice of wearing a protective amulet, *sebeh* or *grigri*, containing written passages from the Koran.

*Gullah* story telling is widely known to most Americans through the Brer Rabbit tales collected by Joel Chandler Harris a hundred years ago and published as the Tales of Uncle Remus. Brer Rabbit is the “trickster” found in animal tales throughout Africa. In *Krio* (Sierra Leone) stories he is known as Koni Rabbit. The Gullah have a rich collection of animal fables. The plots of these stories always involve competition among the animals, which have distinctly human personalities, and the situations and predicaments are virtually identical to those in stories told in Africa.

South Carolina and Georgia museums contain a wide assortment of artifacts made during slavery times, some bearing close connection with crafts:

wooden mortars and pestles, rice “fanners”, clay pots, calabash containers, baskets, palm leaf brooms, drums and hand-woven cotton blankets dyed with indigo.

The Gullah language is an English based Creole language. Creoles develop when people of diverse backgrounds come together and must forge a common means of communication.



- *Brer Rabbit is the “trickster” found in animal tales throughout Africa.*

Gullah is not “broken English” but a full and complete language with its own systematic grammatical structure. Many linguists argue that an early West African Creole English developed in the 18th century and that the slaves from the Rice Coast brought the rudiments of the Gullah language directly from Africa.

Another startling link with West Africa was discovered by the late Dr. Lorenzo Turner while studying the Gullah in the 1940s. Dr. Turner met Gullah men and women who could recall simple texts in various African languages, texts passed from generation to generation and still intelligible. He identified *Mende* from *Vai Sierra Leone* phrases embedded in Gullah songs; *Mende* passages in Gullah stories and an entire *Mende* song, apparently a funeral dirge. Dr. Turner also found Gullah people who could count from 1 to 19 in the Guinea/Sierra Leone language of *Fula*.

Dr. Turner found at the time (in the 1940s) that all Gullah had African basket names in addition to their English names which were used for official purposes. The basket name is given soon after birth, when the baby is still in the arms or in a cradle (or “basket”). The basket name is known and used only in the family circle and the home community. It is not the same as a nickname which may be acquired during adolescence or later because of some physical or personality characteristic or an incident in the person’s life. Dr. Turner un-

equivocally states that the Sea Island basket name is nearly always a word of African origin. The Gullah use such masculine names as *Soire*, *Tamba*, *Sanie*, *Vandi*, and *Ndapi* and such feminine names as *Kadiatu*, *Fatimata*, *Hawa* and *Isata*, all common names in Sierra Leone. Naming in African societies was and is an important choice. Names are not just identification tags, they record family and community history, reflect present status and are a promise of future success. They may be influenced by the day or time of day a child is born, whether the child has younger or older siblings, what cosmic events such as flood or famine or war were going on at the time of the child’s birth. The *Yoruba* of Nigeria say “We consider the state of our affairs before we name a child.” (THE *CRUCIBLE OF CAROLING*, pd.25).

What enabled the Gullah to preserve so much more of their African heritage than other African-American groups? It was only in South Carolina and Georgia that Sierra Leonean slaves came together in large enough numbers and over a long enough period of time to leave a significant imprint on the language and customs of their descendants. The insistence of the plantation owner on slaves from the Rice Coast and the isolation of the slaves and their descendants, both during slavery and since, have given Gullah culture the elements needed to preserve the rich heritage of Sierra Leone and West Africa in an American setting.



**Famous Proverb:**

**If you don’t know where you are going,  
you should know where you come from!**

*If una noh usai una dey go una foh no usai una kohmoht!*

*Krio (Sierra Leone) proverb*

*Ef oona ent kno weh oona da gwine, oona should kno weh oona come from!*

*Gullah proverb*

**LITERATURE: Making A Connection Between  
West Africa and the Sea Islands**

1) Share folk tales from West Africa and from the Sea Islands with your class. Have them discuss similarities and differences. Ask them to suggest what new circumstances might have caused the changes. Keep a list of the ideas students bring up.

2) Spend some time with Brer Rabbit. Older students can learn and tell a short Brer Rabbit tale or read it out loud. Younger students can hear the cassettes and books featuring Brer Rabbit. Hear the teacher tell or read a story each day. A listening station can be set up with audio appealing for the small, weak rabbit to continually come out on top using only his quick wits. Why would human characteristics be applied to the animals? Would this make it safe for storytellers to comment on powerful people without directly mentioning them? Ask students to write a short Brer Rabbit tale themselves or with younger students, make it a group activity and the teacher can record the story on the board.

3) A good novel for 3rd grade and up is *THE TERRIBLE, WONDERFUL TELLIN' AT HOG HAMMOCK* by Kim Siegleson. This chapter book fits well with the Brer Rabbit/story telling theme. It centers on a young boy growing up on Sapelo Island and shows the changes the Gullah culture is undergoing, as well as the strength of community that has preserved the culture and will continue to do so. A very positive, upbeat book, good for reading aloud.

4) The storyteller played an important part in African history and culture. Help students understand the role of oral tradition in societies that do not have a written tradition. Older students can research the topic on their own. Younger students can simply be introduced to the idea of history and culture that is preserved orally and not in books. How was this important to people who were forced to leave their homes and ethnic groups and transported to totally unfamiliar and hostile environments?

5) Sponsor a story telling event with guest or student storytellers. End with food tasting featuring West African and Gullah recipes.

# Activities:

## **GEOGRAPHY AND MAPS**

- 1) Locate the Rice Coast on a world map (Senegal to Sierra Leone)
- 2) Locate South Carolina and Georgia on the world map
- 3) Research the route taken by slave traders from Sierra Leone to South Carolina (FACES, February, 1999 has a very simple map of this route)
- 4) Using a topographical map, figure out why the coastal areas of South Carolina and Georgia are called "Low Country"
- 5) Using a topographical map, list similarities and differences between Sierra Leone and South Carolina/Georgia
- 6) Research the climates of Sierra Leone and South Carolina/Georgia and list similarities and differences

## **ART**

There are several contemporary Gullah artists that have information readily available in books or on the Web: Ernest Butts, Jr. ([www.gacoast.com/navigator/ebjr.htm](http://www.gacoast.com/navigator/ebjr.htm)), Joseph A. Pinckney ([www.gulla-art.com](http://www.gulla-art.com)) and Jonathan Green ([www.gallerychuma.com/index.htm](http://www.gallerychuma.com/index.htm)).

## **NATIVE AMERICAN AND/OR FLORIDA STUDIES**

There is a group of Gullah that escaped to Florida and lived with the Seminoles in Florida. They fought with the Seminoles during the First and Second Seminole Wars. These Black Seminoles were forcibly removed along with their Indian comrades to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). Look for information under Black Seminoles, Black Indians (Andros Island in the Bahamas), Seminole Freedment (Seminole County, Oklahoma), Mascogos (Nacimientto, Mexico) and Scouts (Brackettville, Texas).



## Recommended Books On Africa



🍏 **AFRICA NEWS COOKBOOK:** Features recipes from all over the continent of Africa. Good information of area recipes come from adaptations for American kitchens.

🍏 **BITTLE EN' T'ING GULLAH COOKING WITH MAUM CHRISH'** by Virginia Mixson Geraty. A contemporary cookbook in Gullah and English.

🍏 **BO RABBIT SMART FOR TRUE:** FOLKTALES FROM THE GULLAH retold by Priscilla Jaquith and illustrated by Ed Young.

🍏 **THE BRIDGES OF SUMMER** by Brenda Seabrook. Sent to spend the summer on a South Carolina island, fourteen year old Zarah finds herself in what she considers a lonely, primitive place, surrounded by terrifying wildlife and an old woman who clings to the past. As "sophisticated" Zarah rebels against a culture she does not understand, she discovers the startling truths about her Gullah grandmother and comes to a better understanding of culture and change.

🍏 **BRIDGES TO CHANGE: HOW KIDS LIVE ON A SOUTH CAROLINA SEA ISLAND** by Kathleen Krull. A photo documentary about children living within a culture brought from Africa generations ago, and the lives they lead where Gullah background is not made clear, but simply referred to as African American.

🍏 **FROM MAP TO MUSEUM** by Joan Anderson. The uninhabited island of St. Catherines, off the coast of Georgia, hold many secrets. Join archeologist David Thomas as he explores this Sea Island while looking for a lost Spanish Mission.

🍏 **A GOOD SOUP ATTRACTS: A FIRST AFRICAN COOKBOOK FOR AMERICAN CHILDREN** by Fran Osseo-Asare. The author is American, married to a Ghanaian and has spent time living in Ghana. The recipes in the book are mostly Ghanaian or West African. The author

makes a point of emphasizing the connection between West African cooking and the recipes of the American South and the historical reasons for this.

🍏 **THE GULLAH** by Joseph A. Opala a 36 page pamphlet published in 1987 by an American anthropologist lecturing at the University of Sierra Leone. This is an excellent resource. Available at the University of Florida. E 185.93.S7 0621 1987

🍏 **JUMP! THE ADVENTURES OF BRER RABBIT** adapted by Van Dyke Parks and Malcolm Jones, illustrated by Barry Moser

🍏 **LITTLE MUDDY WATERS: A GULLAH FOLK TALE** by Ronald Daise

🍏 **A NET TO CATCH TIME** by Sara Harell Banks. Musical Gullah words describe each time of day as a young boy goes about his island business of fishing and selling Gran's deviled crabs.

🍏 **THE TALES OF UNCLE REMUS** as told by Julius Lester, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney.

🍏 **THE TERRIBLE, WONDERFUL TELLIN' AT HOG HAMMOCK** by Kin Siegelson and illustrated by Eric Velasquez. Short chapter book centering on Jonas who wants to keep the memory of his beloved Gullah grandfather alive by representing his family at the traditional storytelling contest, even though Jonas feels he is too young to do a "man's job". Try using web site [www.gacoast.com/navigator/iamsapelo.html](http://www.gacoast.com/navigator/iamsapelo.html) with this book.

🍏 **THE WATER BROUGHT US: THE STORY OF THE GULLAH-SPEAKING PEOPLE** by Murial Miller Branch. A broad perspective of the history, culture, religion, folklore, arts and language of Gullah speaking people. This book presents a wonderful mix of factual information with the personal perspectives and experiences of the author. There is also a detailed bibliography for those who want to do additional reading and research.



🍏 **WHEN ROOTS DIE: THE ENDANGERED TRADITIONS OF THE SEA ISLANDS** by Patricia Jones-Jackson. This book was developed after years of research of the Sea Islands and the coast of West Africa. The author makes connections between the Gullah language and traditions and those found in West Africa. The author also explores the forces that are threatening these traditions.

## More References

### Videos

**BRER RABBIT AND THE WONDERFUL TAR BABY:** Rabbit Ears Productions, 30 minutes, all ages.

**DAUGHTERS OF THE DUST:** A beautiful low budget commercial film by Julie Dash, 1991, Geechee Girls Production. Focus on a Gullah family as they prepare to move North at the beginning of the 1900s. Sundance award winner for cinematography. Adult.

**FAMILY ACROSS THE SEA:** Traces the footsteps of African people to the Sea Islands and uncovers the connections between the two. A historical and linguistic detective story, interspersed with the “homecoming” of a delegation of Gullah to their West African home land of Sierra Leone. (High school to adult) California Newsreel, 149 Ninth Street/420, San Francisco, CA 94103 415-621-6196

**UNDERSTANDING EACH OTHER:** An excellent video to help children relate to different cultures and ethnic groups. Narrated by a young African actress who provides a brief introduction to Africa. Good for all ages. 1-800-323-5448 for ordering information.

### On-Line

**Gullah:** Excellent site by the Beaufort

County Public Library. Provides history, recipes, web links. [www.co.beaufort.sc.us/library/Beaufort/gullah.htm](http://www.co.beaufort.sc.us/library/Beaufort/gullah.htm)

**Gullah Art:** Ernest Butts, Jr. ([www.gacoast.com/navigator/ebjr.htm](http://www.gacoast.com/navigator/ebjr.htm), Joseph A. Pinckney ([www.gullah-art.com](http://www.gullah-art.com)) and Jonathan Green ([www.gallerychuma.com/index.htm](http://www.gallerychuma.com/index.htm)).

**Penn School:** Excellent 1995 paper by a Ph.D. in Organizational Communications for the Gullah and Penn School. [www.journalism.wisc.edu/cpn/sections/topics/community/stories-studies/pew\\_diverse\\_com.html](http://www.journalism.wisc.edu/cpn/sections/topics/community/stories-studies/pew_diverse_com.html)

**Sapelo Island:** Focus on a Gullah storyteller from Sapelo Island. Use with THE TERRIBLE, WONDERFUL TELLIN’ AT HOG HAMMOCK, which is set on Sapelo Island. [www.gacoast.com/navigator/iamsapelo.html](http://www.gacoast.com/navigator/iamsapelo.html)

**Sweetgrass Baskets:** Brief history of sweetgrass baskets. Good pictures of many different types of contemporary sweetgrass baskets. Rice “fanner” is basket makers and you can order baskets from this site. [www.charlestonartists.com/sweetgrass/history.html](http://www.charlestonartists.com/sweetgrass/history.html)

### Periodicals

**FACES** has an entire issue devoted to the Gullah. (February, 1999: GULLAH; PEOPLE OF THE SEA ISLANDS) Included in the issue are maps, articles, photographs, a rice puddn’ recipe, tie and dye craft activity, a story in Gullah and English and a crossword puzzle! If your Library/Media Center does not carry FACES, back issues can be ordered from 1-800-821-0115 or visit their home page at <http://www.cobblestonepub.com>

**AMERICAN VISIONS**, the April/May 1997 issue, includes an article on the Sea Islands and their place in African American history. Also gives information on the annual Gullah Festival that is held each May.

# Climate and Agriculture of West Africa

by Michael A. Manetz

**Introduction:** In teaching seventh grade geography, this unit on Africa is divided into five sub-sections based on the geographical regions of the continent. The following lesson would be incorporated with the sub-section on West-Africa, and covers the physical nature of the region, the climate and vegetation zones, and the effect of climate on agriculture.

## Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- ⇒ identify, locate, and describe the major climate zones of west Africa
- ⇒ differentiate between a cash crop and a subsistence crop
- ⇒ identify several agricultural crops found in West Africa
- ⇒ analyze a list of West African crops to determine a) if it is a cash crop or a subsistence crop, and b) in which climate zone the crop would most likely be found

## Materials:

- ⇒ wall map of Africa
- ⇒ textbook showing climate/vegetation zones of West Africa
- ⇒ handout: “Biographies of famous (and not so famous) West African agricultural products”
- ⇒ a few examples of West African food crops. Millet, cassava (aka yucca), and corn (maize) should be readily available. Pictures or photocopies of some of these products would be helpful.



## Procedure

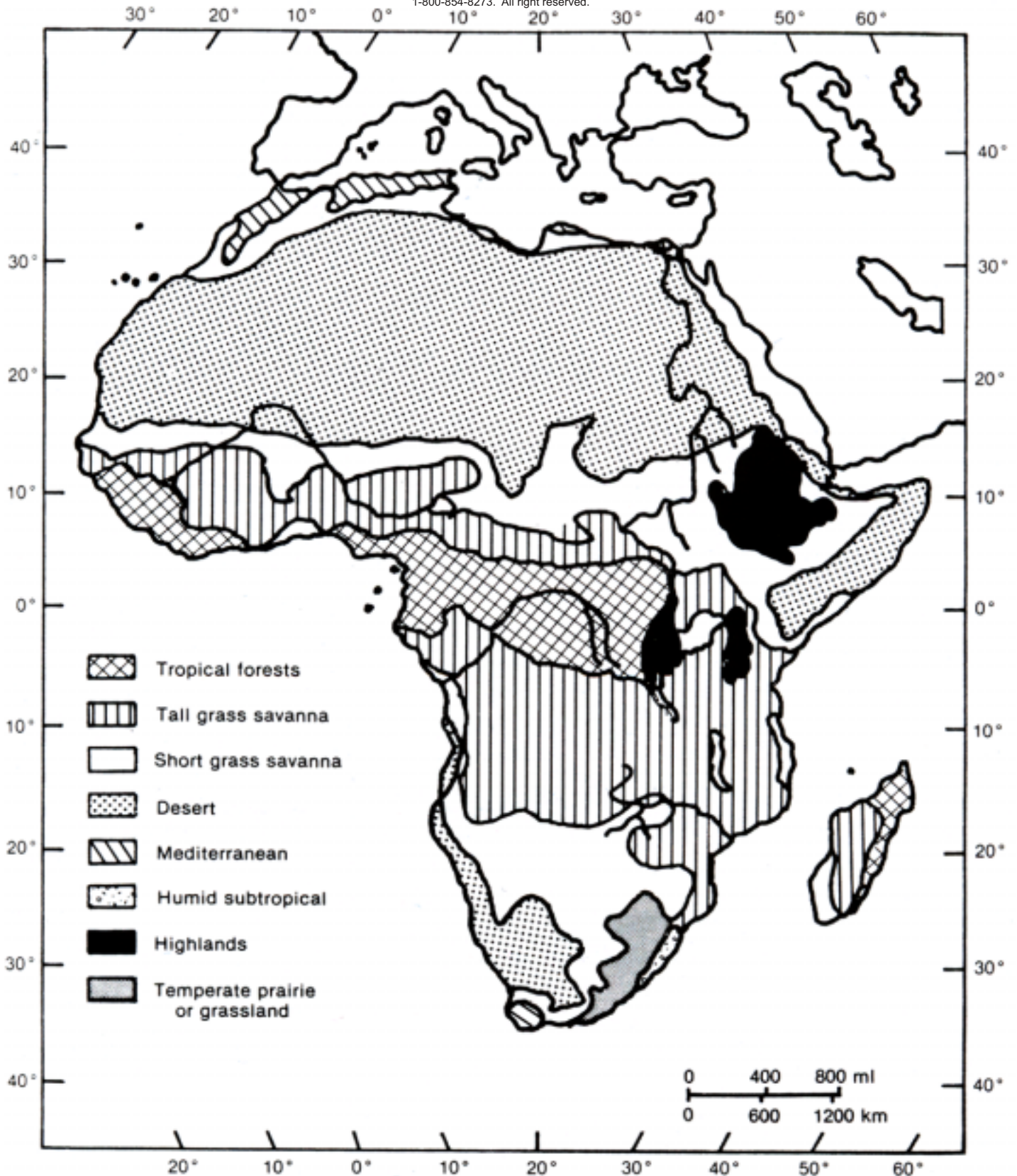
1. Introduce the lesson by giving a pre-test on several West African agricultural products one by one, asking students what they think the product is, or for what the product is used.
2. Introduce and discuss the concepts of “cash crops” and “subsistence crops”.
3. Using a wall map of Africa and referring students to a climate map in a textbook, explain and describe the climate zones of West Africa. Include at least:
  - a. tropical coast
  - b. Savanna
  - c. Sahel
  - d. Sahara
4. Students working in pairs analyze crops described in the handout “Biographies of Famous (and not so famous) West African Agricultural Products” trying to decide for each product, is it a cash crop or a subsistence crop? and in which zone would it most likely be grown?

## Going Beyond:

- students could create and label a map of West Africa, with symbols for each product showing where the products would be grown
- students could view video “Koi and the Kola Nuts” as a transition between this lesson and further lesson(s) on the culture of West Africa

# ECOLOGICAL AREAS OF AFRICA

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## *Biographies of Famous (and not so famous) West African Agricultural Products*

**millet:** Millet is a grain that is heat and drought resistant. In fact, millet actually lies dormant during drought conditions, and then continues growing when rains come. The harvested grain can be prepared as a gruel (like grits or cream of wheat), or ground into flour to make bread.

**maize:** Maize is common both in Africa and in the United States, where it is known as corn. The plant is native to Mexico and Central America, and was introduced to Africa by the Europeans. As in the United States, maize grows best with moderate (not too much, not too little) rainfall. Africans grow maize mostly to feed their families, and it is enjoyed roasted on the cob or ground and boiled to make a thick porridge. In the nation of Ghana maize is fermented to make a dish called “kenkey”.

**kola nuts:** Kola nuts grow, not surprisingly, on Kola nut trees, which are native to forests of coastal West Africa. The nut is rather bitter tasting, but when processed contains the extract from which the flavor for our cola soft-drinks is derived. Kola nuts make the “real thing” possible! This is used by West Africans for ceremonial purposes and as a source of caffeine, the nuts are now grown on small plantations from which they are sold abroad for the soft-drink trade.

**yams:** Yams are tubers (starchy, potato-like root crops) that are native to the wet coastal regions of West Africa. Yams are often confused with sweet potatoes, which are native to the American tropics. In fact, yams that are sold in the U.S. are not yams at all, but are actually a variety of sweet potato.

**sorghum:** Sorghum is another heat and drought resistant grain crop that is popular in dry regions. When harvested, the kernels are used for porridge and to make bread.

**ground nuts:** Ground nuts, commonly known as “peanuts” here in the United States, form underground as part of the root system of the peanut plant. Ground nuts prefer a warm climate with moderate (not too much, not too little), rainfall for optimal growth. Although originally native to the Americas, ground nuts have become very important to the economy of West Africa, and several nations from Senegal to Nigeria list them as a major export.

**cassava:** Cassava is another tuber that is native to tropical America (where it is known as “manioc”) and has transplanted well in similar climate areas in West Africa. Some species of cassava contains cyanide, and have to be thoroughly soaked in water before it can be eaten. This versatile root, can be grated and dried into flour, and from there made into bread.

**cacao:** Cacao is a small tree that was originally native to tropical regions of South America and was brought to Africa by the Spanish and Portuguese for cultivation. Large pods that grow on the tree contain beans that, when ground, produce what we call cocoa, the main ingredient for chocolate. Two West African nations, Ivory Coast and Ghana, are among the top three cacao exporting nations in the world. Consider that the next time you bite into a Hershey bar!

# A Tour of African Countries Through Music

## The Lesson Plan

By Annie Johnson

Recording of songs from: Kenya, Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, Morocco, and Zimbabwe

### Procedure: (Applicable to each song)

1. Listen to music examples of each country.
2. Compare the instruments heard in the song, name the instruments. What are they?
3. Locate the country on the map, using directions (N,S,E,W)
4. Have children sing along with the song and create movements to accompany each phrase. Make up routines for dance.
5. Sing the song in the language recorded as well as English translation.
6. After each song, have students identify the flag of the country.
7. Perform song as a class or group.
8. Each child can record the country in the passport as each country is musically covered. This will be a tour of each country through music.

**Materials:** Trunk consisting of map, flag of the country, travel brochures, clothing, currency, music, children's literature/books, musical instruments and art examples. Passports for each child.

• *Part of the Gambian national dance troupe playing a variety of musical instruments.*



## Music Vocabulary

unison	a cappella	rhythm	shekere	mbira
djembe	beat	gourd	kalimba	call and response
dance	rattles	drums	chant	tambourine
juju	balafon	bells	anthem	lullaby

These songs are a small representation of the African music collection. Please check with your music teacher at your school for more information, the library (public), and local music stores, Public Broadcasting (NPR) station, WUFT channel 5, Gainesville, AFROPOP, Sunday 7:00-8:00 PM.

### The following countries are used as examples for the singing project:

From each African country, I have selected song(s) that illustrate an ideal musical representation of that country. These songs come with movement activities for children and can be used in the classroom. These musical representations can be found in the music series called The Music Connection, Silver Burdett Ginn, 1995 edition.

Zimbabwe  
Nigeria  
Morocco  
South Africa  
Kenya  
Liberia  
Ghana

### Song: Sorida

Grade 1

**Objective: Play a singing game with a new way of greeting each other**

#### Country: Zimbabwe



*Sorida* is an example of songs enjoyed by children at musical play, delightedly busy with singing and playing games. Shona is the language from which *Sorida* comes: It is the name of a Bantu speaking people who live in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Zambia. These countries are located in southeastern Africa.

Shona speaking children welcome family and guests into their homes with the greeting soon after they begin to speak. A lively game with movement to do with a partner accompanies the game.

**Country: South Africa****Go Well and Safely****Grade 2**

One of the largest indigenous African groups in South Africa is the Zulu. “*Hambani hahle*” (Go well and safely) appears to have been adapted from a popular Christian hymn in churches of African Americans in the United States. The Zulu fondness for vocal and choral music brought about the acceptance and modification of this song.

**Country: Nigeria****Ise Oluwa****Grade 2**

Translation: The Creator’s work will never be destroyed. The Yoruba people are some of several groups of people that live in Nigeria in West Africa. Yoruba music has a great deal of singing in unison, octaves, and thirds, call and response, and the creation of complicated rhythm patterns. Its popular music is called juju. *Ise Oluwa* comprises the music of worship

**Country: Morocco****Song: A Ram Sam Sam****Grade 3**

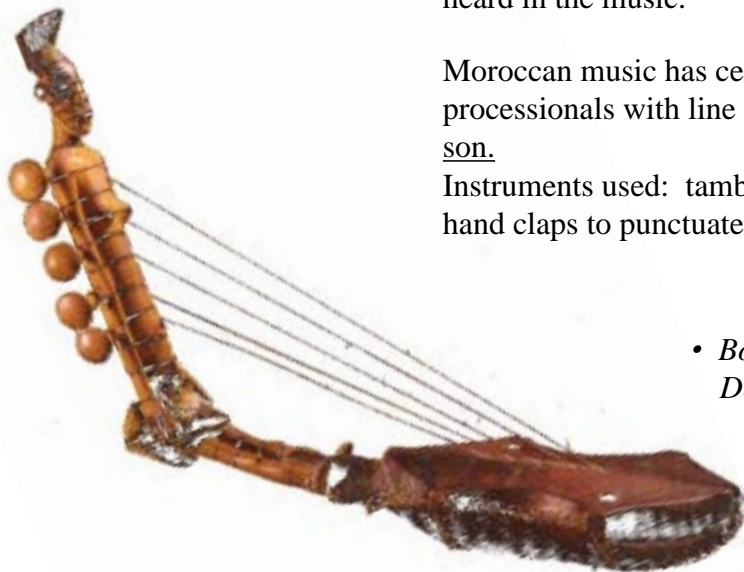
Morocco forms a cultural triangle with Egypt and the countries of western Africa. Free traveling groups across these points resulted in bringing not only goods, but cultural conditions. The mixture can be heard in the music.

**Words:****A Ram Sam Sam****A Ram Sam Sam****Guli Guli Guli Guli****Guli Ram Sam Sam****A rafi, A rafi****Guli Guli Guli Guli Guli****Ram Sam Sam**

Moroccan music has ceremonial functions and is used for group processions with line dancing. Songs are usually sung in unison.

Instruments used: tambourines, hand drum, castanets, bells, or hand claps to punctuate melodic rhythm or reinforce the pulse.

- *Bowed harp with five strings from the Democratic Republic of Congo.*



**Song: Kum Ba Yah****Grade 4**

Translation: “Come by You,  
Come by me, Come by Here”  
Attributed to Liberia, West  
Africa, seat of exportations of  
many slaves to the Americas.  
Liberia is the principal country  
to which English speaking  
Africans repatriated following  
their emancipation.

**Words:**  
**Kum ba Yah, my Lord,**  
**Kum ba Yah**  
**Kum ba Yah, my Lord**  
**Kum ba Yah**  
**Kum ba Yah, my Lord**  
**Kum ba Yah**  
**O, Lord, Kum ba Yah**

**Country: Liberia****Song: Banuwa**

Translation: “Don’t cry, pretty  
little girl, don’t cry”  
It has been said that the  
rhythm and roll of the drums  
impresses the newcomer in  
Africa more than  
any other African sound.

Types of drums: Dancing,  
singing and talking. Messages  
were sent from village to  
village by drums.  
Additional listening:  
Manyanga Drum Rhythms  
Recorded at Mwanza, Tanza-  
nia.

**Song: Onchimbo****Grade 4**

Translation: The onchimbo bird is a symbol of a group of people  
in Kenya.

In this song, the singers are asking for a favor from the bird.  
Although the role of music varies from one cultural group to  
another in Kenya, there are features that most groups share. The  
*song* is the essential musical form.

Types of songs: Lullabies, children’s singing games,  
songs with historical and military themes, songs used in rites and  
initiations, songs of praise for individuals and their possessions,  
and songs sung by healers of the sick.

There are songs for everyday occupations: Work songs for  
grinding flour, herding, plowing, fishing, and hunting. Kenyans  
often sing in unison. The song suggests that Kenya is a land  
teeming with wildlife. Additional listening: Malenka ethnic  
group: Drum Duet and Ewe Dance

**Country: Kenya**



**Country: Ghana****Song: Everybody Loves a Saturday Night Grade 5**

Ghanaian music types were performed exclusively in the royal court for chiefs, their families, guests, and public. Public music can be recreational or entertainment performed in the evenings at any social occasion that allows spontaneous expression. Public music is communal in which the members participate as singers, dancers, or instrumentalists.

Instruments used: rattles, bells, drums, xylophones with wooden keys and frames.

**Objective: Play game/ sing song**

Obwisana is played in Africa as a stone-passing game.

Translation: "Oh, Gramma, I just hurt my finger on a rock."

Like their friends around the world, the children of Ghana enjoy singing games. Many of these games are played in circles so that children can see and hear each other in the happy group of playmates they have formed. Rock and stick games are special favorites of children throughout Sub-Saharan Africa.

Children in Ghana learn that each of them is important in keeping the object going, as the passing movement is performed rhythmically and by working together with the rest of the group. So by playing this game, your children can grow in musical awareness-- and become a little more skilled at working and playing with their classmates.

**Children's Literature**

*Ashanti to Zulu*

*Moja means One*

*Bringing the Rain on the Kapiti*

*Plain*

*Tales Alive*

*African Creation Myth: Origin of Life on Earth*

Have children sit in a circle on the floor, with an object in front of each of them. (You can use crumpled paper, shoes, yarn, balls, bean bags, or any object that they can easily pick up and put down.) Encourage children to sing as they play.

**Words**

**Ob wi sa na sa na**

**Ob wi sa na sa**

**Ob wi sa na sa na**

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**CD references (South African Music)**

Laydysmith Black Mambazo, *Gift of the Tortoise*

Laydysmith Black Mambazo, *Journey of Dreams*

Sweet Honey in the Rock, *I Got Shoes*

Sweet Honey in the Rock, *All for Freedom*

Games/Songs

Cassette/book--Shake it to the One that You Love the Best

**Reference**

Encarta Encyclopedia, 1998 edition

Circling the Globe

World Wide Web locations

# A Personal Memoir Invoked by an African Text: *The Dark Child*

by Shelton Davis

The *Dark Child* by Camara Laye of Guinea provides a positive portrayal of an African boy's childhood years. Camara's autobiography depicts his life in the village Kouroussa, French Guinea during the early 1900s until he departs to study in France. The original translation copyright was in 1954; the book was in its sixth printing in 1999.

## ✦ Curriculum Areas: Literature and History

Reading interest among high-school students can be enhanced through *The Dark Child* because of its personal, clear and beautiful prose. The writer gives the reader a sentimental feeling about his life in Africa that is promised to create identification and comparisons about one's personal development from boyhood to manhood. This assignment may be particularly stimulating for African-American adolescent males. There is magic, frustration, independence, dependence, love, hate, fear, and sacred traditions that will intrigue the adolescent reader and awaken ideas for an exciting opportunity to write about oneself.

## ✦ Guinea Today

Guinea is one of the smaller countries with 7.1 million people. Guinea has much potential for economic development because of its abundant natural resources. It has one-third of the world's reserve of bauxite, a mineral used to make aluminum. Guinea was a colony of France from the late 1800s until 1958, when it became an independent nation.



## ✦ Background Information about the Author

Camara Laye was born in 1928 to a family of goldsmiths in Kouroussa, Guinea, West Africa. He was the oldest of 12 children and won a scholarship to study in France. Camara had a special relationship with his mother and grew up in a huge family with his father. The Guinean culture and family ways are different from those in North America. Camara's father was the head of an innumerable family. The story of Camara's life was first published in 1953 in French, as *L'Enfant noir*. The Novel won the Charles Veillon International Prize.



## ☀ The Lesson

\*Extra Credit

\*Enrichment

\*No Grades Please!

Use *The Dark Child* as a personal reading and writing lesson offered to individual students for the purpose of self-study and reflection about the continent of Africa. No doubt this experience will strengthen the student's life of literature and bring more purpose to studying. The lesson is designed to provide personal meaning and intrinsic reward for the student. Students may choose the person or audience in which they would like to share this work.

## ☀ Themes and Experiences

### • Guinean family traditions in Kouroussa

Working seasons and traditions consume the family and villagers with customs well rehearsed. Story telling, song and dance celebrations are the mainstays that build and set apart the many relationships.

### • Schooling from Kouroussa to Paris

Camara was in school for a long time. And he regarded schooling as a serious matter. Traditional schooling included farming and life skills as well as reading and writing. Camara tells about the magnification of the blackboard, and how the smallest detail was of utmost importance.

At age fifteen, Camara left home for Conakry (the Capital city of Guinea) to study at the technical college. This was after winning a scholarship examination for serving as an interpreter. Later, Camara would hear from the director of the school that he was offered a unique opportunity to study in France.

### • Transition to adulthood

Passing through successive stages from infancy to grandparent comes with different privileges and levels of respect. Reaching old age and the position of elder in African societies is an honor. Strictness and responsibilities accompany each level of the domestic sphere.

### • Initiation to a brave manhood

In African societies, boys and girls undergo ceremonies that mark their transition and acceptance of roles from childhood to adulthood. In *The Dark Child*, attention is given to Camara's clothing and his separate place to live in the village representing his move to adulthood. But, before that, Camara had great anxiety. "I knew perfectly well that I was going to be hurt, but I wanted to be a man, and it seemed to me that nothing could be too painful if, by enduring it, I was to come to man's estate."

## ☀ Instructions to the Student

**STEP 1-** Read *The Dark Child* by Camara Laye

Read for sheer enjoyment and develop closeness with the writer.

**STEP 2-** Record the broad themes and experiences that you thought of while reading the novel.

After reading the novel, write a chronicle of exciting, fearful, and positive moments of your life as you remember them. You can dream.

**STEP 3 -** Review your geographical and social history.

Begin this review by reading about your birth continent. Recall and record your early physical world.

**STEP 4 -** Set your story inside geographical and social boundaries.

This may be a great place to begin writing your book.

**STEP 5 -** From the images you now see and feel you can write about yourself, the history surrounding you, your dreams and aspirations.

Spence (1997) suggests the following: In setting the scene, you decide the range for the years you consider your adolescence. Again, tell your reader about the world around you by describing the kinds of clothes young people liked to wear; the entertainment - movies, games, sports, music, etc. - popular with your peers; your transportation; the favored food and drink. If you had \$5 to spend on whatever you wanted, what would you buy? How about \$20? Update your readers on the historical, political, and cultural events taking place during your adolescence, telling how you were affected by them (p33).

## ☀ References

1. Laye, Camara, *The Dark Child*, Tran. James Kirkup and Ernest Jones, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999. Trans. of *L'Enfant noir*. Paris: Plon, 1954.
2. Martin, Phyllis and Meara, Patrick, *Africa* (3ed), Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1995
3. Moffat, Mary Jane, *Times of Our Lives: A Guide to Writing Autobiography and Memoir*, 1996.
4. Spence, Linda, *Legacy: A Step-By-Step Guide to Writing Personal History*, Swallow Press, Ohio University Press, Athens, 1997.

# Learning More About Africa Through Cuisine

by  
Michael Swartz

**Main Objective:** Students will gain a closer understanding of Africa through lessons based on food and cooking. They will also explore the culture, climate, geography, and history of one African country in detail. At the same time, they will learn about other African countries, through observation of other students' work.



All students will have been exposed to some basic facts about Africa including the geography of the continent and the culture. The teacher will also spend time discussing the myths about Africa to rid the students of stereotypes of Africa.

This project will begin with previous knowledge given to the students. The students will then build upon this knowledge to develop a portfolio on an African nation. The project evolves around research skills, culminating in a day set aside for the students to present their recipes to the rest of the class.

The expected length of this project will be 2-3 weeks. Of course, you will need to assess your own class to decide how much time you need.

All students will be given an outline of this project. This will give information on student expectations as well as detailed information for each part of the project. The portfolio for each student will be kept in the classroom. In addition, each student will receive a set of maps. Each set will differ slightly due to the origin of individual recipes.



The climate of the continent will be discussed. Students will have a map of Africa showing the various climatic zones. They will use this in their project to show the climate of the country they will be researching.

In studying culture, students will note the following:

1. Africans practice different religions including Islam, Christianity, or traditional religions.
2. Africa has over 700 languages.
3. Education plays a major role in Africa.
4. Honesty is highly valued in Africa.
5. Family life includes the extended family.



## PROJECTS



This project consists of many parts within it and may be varied according to an individual teacher. The teacher will provide each student with an outline of the project. He/she will read over and discuss student expectations and clarify any questions from the students.

### Part One

1. Each student will choose a recipe from an African Cookbook. The recipe will be the foundation for the rest of the project.
2. After the student has chosen a recipe, the student will tell the teacher two things. First, what country the recipe is from. Second, what the recipe is and what source they got it from.
3. Each student will keep a copy of the recipe in his/her portfolio.

### Part Two

This part will involve researching the culture, climate, and history of the country where the recipe is derived. The research will be conducted in the classroom as well as the library. The teacher will provide resources from the library, as well as encyclopedias. Students will also obtain information from the internet.

#### History

1. The first research each student is expected to do is the history of their chosen country.
2. This section will consist of various components including: pre-colonial history, colonization, independence, and other important events.

3. When complete, the student will receive a grade for this section. The work will become part of the portfolio.

#### Culture

1. This section will include:
  - religion
  - social life
  - traditions
2. Different aspects will be written about culture by each student. When completed, it will be graded and included in the portfolio.

#### Climate

This section is unique. It need not be written at all. The student may present information in a variety of ways.

1. The student may also use a map showing the different climate zones. Then the student can describe them, and tell how the climate affects the recipe.
2. Each student will provide a map showing the climate zones of their chosen country. On the map, they should provide a description of each climate.

## **Part Three**

### **Map Section**

1. The teacher will provide various maps to the students including the geographical feature of Africa and the climate zone.

#### **2. Political Map**

Each student is expected to name each country and its capital. A blank map and an answer sheet will be provided.

#### **3. Regional Map**

Each student will label different geographical regions of Africa. Each student will use the back of the map to write at least two facts about each country shown.

## **Part Four**

Time will be set aside to review recipes. On this day students will be able to ask questions about their recipes. The teacher will give any help possible. Students may ask where a product may be found. If so, suggest possible substitutions, or refer to stores like Wards, and Mother Earth.

Some helpful hints-

1. Substitute food items like Yucca for Cassava and apple juice for wine.
2. Omit very small quantities of a seasoning-it rarely affects the recipe. If the recipe says to follow it completely, do so.
3. Be careful of following a recipe too closely. Some recipes make enough food for a small army. Reduce recipe by half if it seems like too much.



- *A coiled basket with lid made by the Zulu ethnic group of South Africa.*

## **Part Five**

1. Each student will organize their portfolio. This may take as much as a half day. For those that are already organized, they may decorate the front of their portfolio with an African theme.

2. Each student will present their research to the rest of the class. It may take two or three days for all the students to make their presentations. Students will be encouraged to take notes about the other countries presented.

3. Students will also talk about their recipe. They are not to go into detail.

## **Part Six**

1. The project will culminate in the presentation of the food prepared by the students.

2. Teacher will provide a microwave for reheating. If you do not have a microwave, you may want to ask your home economics teacher.

### **Resources for recipes**

1. Internet-<http://www.fellesraadet.africainfo.no/africaindex/subjects/cooking.htm>
2. *The Africa News Cookbook*
3. The African Cookbook-Bea Sandler. Citadel Press.