

Essential Questions:

1. Why do people look beyond their borders?
2. In what ways is Africa diverse (made up of many cultures and people)?
3. How have geographic features—including climate—influenced Africa's past and present?
4. How have global issues influenced Africa's past and present?
5. What are the current issues impacting modern Africa today?

Identifying, Representing and Describing the Problem

Africa has played an important role in the history and geography of the world. It has been said that the movement of butterfly wings over the ocean near Africa are the start of hurricanes that later come ashore in the Caribbean, the United States, and Mexico.

Teams will focus on different areas of Africa's geographic and historical influence. By combining the work of the different teams, we will come away with a better understanding of Africa and its influence in the world.

The power of a team is revealed in the presence of *synergy*, a word that means that what has been produced by the team as a whole (collectively) is better than what would have been produced by combining the best efforts of each person on the team individually. Synergy requires trust, respect, acceptance, and a willingness to work with each other's ideas and not to insist on only one point of view. For modern teams to function effectively, they must also learn to bring synergy present as they work and to have it be revealed in their work products.

Sub-questions:

1. What countries make up Africa (for the time period[s] covered by each team)?

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2. What major land forms are in Africa?
3. How have immigration, imperialism, and the slave trade impacted Africa?
4. What environmental issues have impacted Africa?
5. What are the similarities and differences between Northern Africa and Sub Saharan Africa?
6. How do the seven elements of culture apply to Africa?

Goals and Curriculum Fit

Social Sciences—History

16A3B. I can work with historical models, maps and other historical sources to make inferences about historical events and eras where Africa played a part.

16C3c(W). I can explain the impact of technology on different Africa.

16D3. I can identify origins and show cause and effect of events that have shaped African social history including famines, migrations, plagues, and slave trading.

Social Sciences--Geography

17. I can explain the basic concepts of geography and how geography affects society in Africa.

17C3a. I can explain how human activity in Africa is affected by geographic factors.

17C3c. I can show how human processes in Africa affect settlement factors such as migration and population growth.

17D3a. I can explain how and why spatial patterns of settlement in Africa change over time.

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17D3b. I can explain how geographic factors have shaped present conditions in Africa.

English Language Arts—Reading

1.C.3a Use information to form, explain and support questions and predictions.

English-Language Arts--Research

5.A.3a Identify appropriate resources to solve problems or answer questions through research.

5.B.3a Choose and analyze information sources for individual, academic and functional purposes.

5.C.3a Plan, compose, edit and revise documents that synthesize new meaning gleaned from multiple sources.

5.C.3b Prepare and orally present original work (e.g., poems, monologues, reports, plays, stories) supported by research.

5.C.3c Take notes, conduct interviews, organize and report information in oral, visual and electronic formats.

English Language Proficiency (ELP) Reading—Level Three--Developing

Sequence pictures, events, and processes.

Identify main ideas.

Use context clues to determine meaning of words.

English Language Proficiency (ELP) Writing—Level Three—Developing

Produce bare bones expository or narrative text.

Compare and contrast information.

Describe events, people, processes and procedures.

English Language Proficiency (ELP) Speaking—Level Three—Developing

Formulate, hypotheses, make predictions.

Describe processes, procedures.

Retell stories or events.

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Social Emotional Learning

2C.3b. Demonstrate cooperation and teamwork to promote group effectiveness.

Products

Some students will prepare Microsoft PowerPoint and Microsoft PhotoStory3 presentations. Other students may choose to create a mural or other artistic piece to reflect what they are learning. Others may write stories, poems, or draw sketches to illustrate key learning from the project. Students could also write and enact a play or other dramatic performance of the results of their research.

Technologies

Computers and the Internet will be used extensively in the research and documentation of this project. Students will also access “streaming video” from the Discovery School ([UnitedStreaming](#)) and will work with resources made available from the [National Geographic](#).

Public libraries (in school and in neighboring communities) will be used for some of the reading needed to complete the assignment.

Part of the learning activities of this unit will be the way in which students engage with the technology and learn to work with it to conduct research, to store and organize their data, and to prepare their final results.

This unit has a reflective component in that students will continually observe and reflect on their own process to look for evidence of synergy.

Student Roles

One phase of the project will be to explore different elements that make up modern Africa and its history in the world.

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Students will also be investigators, authors, team members, directors, authors, and have specific duties in support of the cooperative learning processes of the teams to which they are assigned.

Key Vocabulary

Debt	Developed nation
Developing nation	Disease
Genocide	HIV-AIDS
Malaria	Poverty
Racism	Refugees

Team Assignments

Human Migration and Ancient Africa Team

How did climate and technology influence human migration “out of Africa”?

Where did people go when they migrated out of Africa?

What legacies does modern Africa have from the ancient Egyptian, Mali, and Zulu civilizations?

Slavery and Human Rights in Africa Team(s)

Africa has experienced traditions of slavery since the time of the ancient Egyptians. When slavery became a business for Europeans and American colonists, the practice had been well established for centuries. Human rights and slavery are still issues in Africa. How has the experience of African life changed

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into modern times? What is “genocide” and how does that practice impact African life today?

Diseases and Africa Team

Many diseases trace their origins to Africa. Others are still very active in Africa today. What is being done to control diseases in Africa and the spread of disease “out of Africa”?

Modern Africa Team

How do geographic land forms (desert, mountains, ocean beds) and climate influence the make-up of modern Africa?

What cultural traditions have led to the nations that currently make-up Africa? How is Africa dealing with newer ideas of independence and cultural infusion?