



Year 6 Africa Reading Booklet

Lesson Series:

1. The Continent of Africa
2. Past civilisations and empires – Mansa Musa
3. The Sahara Desert and Desertification
4. Food Security
5. Kenya
6. Assessment

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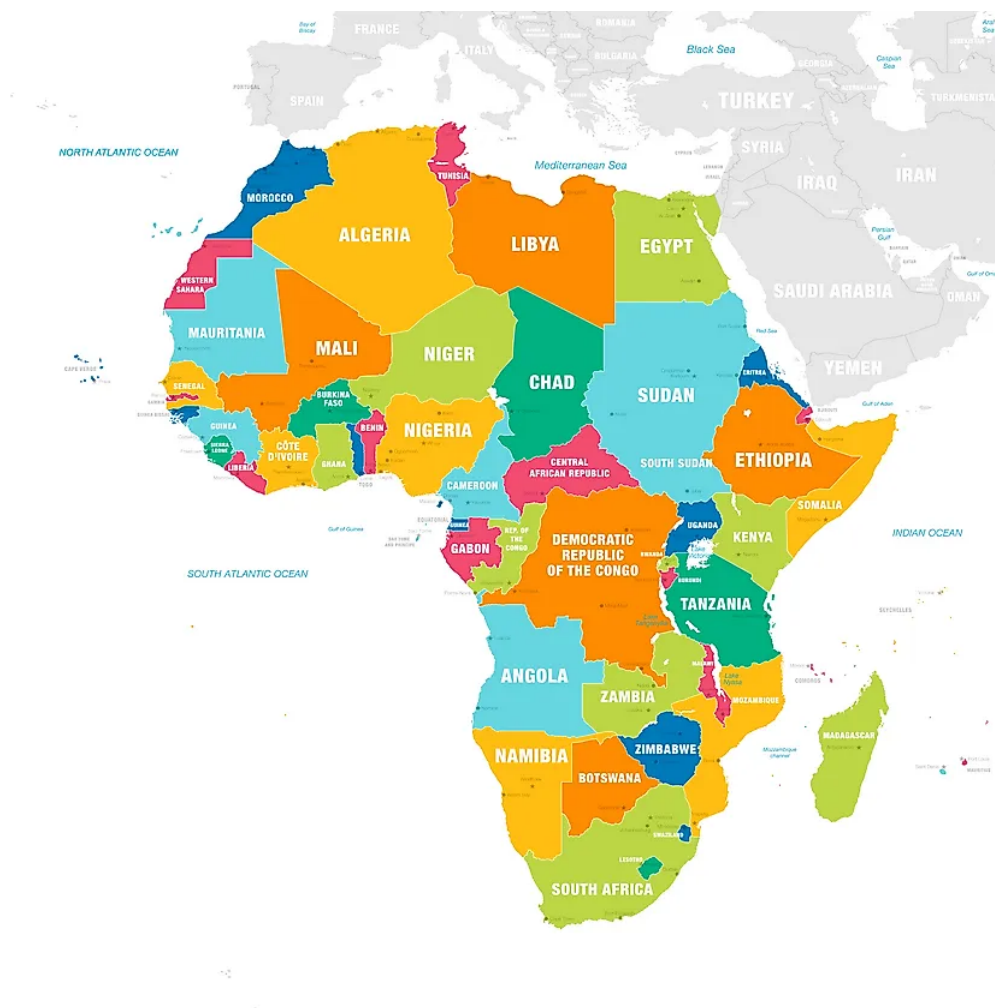
Class: _____

Lesson 1

An introduction to the continent of Africa

Read this

Scientists and geographers believe that Africa is the oldest inhabited continent on Earth. Scientists believe humans have been living in Africa for approximately 5 million years. Africa, the second-largest continent, is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the Atlantic Ocean. The equator divides Africa almost exactly in half. Africa has a number of islands located off its coastline, including Madagascar. The Romans referred to the land as Africa, possibly coming from the Latin, 'aprica' meaning 'sunny'. Africa is rich in resources; fossil fuels, minerals, metals, and precious stones such as diamonds. Africa has desert, highlands, rainforest, savannah, great lakes and each of these regions has unique plant and animal ecosystems. 1.1 billion people live in Africa, 15% of the world's population, but due to its size, Africa is in fact underpopulated. The world's longest river is located in Africa, the Nile.

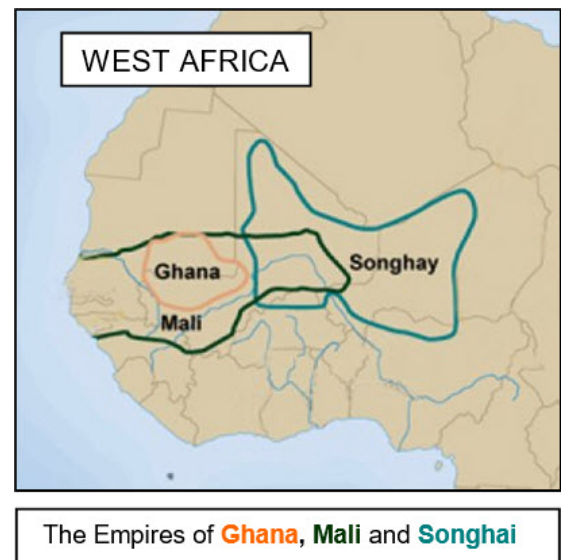


Lesson 2

Ancient African Empires

During Ancient times, whilst England was in the dark ages, a very different world could be found in Africa. The Sahara Desert kept West Africa mostly cut off from the rest of the world, apart from a few trans-Saharan (meaning across the Sahara) trade routes. The spread of Islam had encouraged more trade and West Africa was rich in gold. The Empire of Mali was a powerful merchant empire in West Africa. Kankan Musa, or Mansa Musa (Mansa meaning emperor) was one of the leaders of the great Empire of Mali. He wanted to strengthen his army, expand the empire and increase its wealth, he also wanted his people to follow Islam. Twelve years into his role as emperor, Mansa Musa decided to embark on a pilgrimage to Mecca, one of the five pillars of Islam. The trip was over 9,000 miles. The emperor took sixty thousand people with him, including armies and servants, and camels and horses to carry all the food, water, tents, cooking utensils etc. Some of the camels carried gold, Mansa Musa's bank account for his journey. As the journey progressed, Mansa Musa's caravan of people and animals actually caused economies to crash due to their generosity, spending and giving away gold. The price of gold crashed in Cairo for over 12 years. It is thought Mansa Musa was the richest man to have ever lived.

Read this



Lesson 3

The Sahara Desert and Desertification

The Sahara Desert is the largest hot desert in the world. Its area is comparable to that of the United States of America. The desert, in some capacity, covers almost all of North Africa. The Sahara Desert is sparsely populated, many areas are completely uninhabitable. However where there is a little vegetation for grazing animals, or a reliable water source, there are small populations who have inhabited this harsh environment. In recent times, people have discovered oil, coal and natural gas reserves under the Sahara. Mining and extracting these commodities brought technology and wealth to small areas of the Sahara, however these remain limited.



Lesson 4

Food Security

Being food secure means having reliable access to enough affordable, nutritious food. The Global Hunger Index identifies countries who have 'food insecurity'. Many African countries feature on this list including, Zimbabwe, Chad, Liberia, Zambia and Madagascar. Climate plays a large role in food insecurity. Madagascar is often hit by cyclones that bring extreme flooding, the country also experiences long periods of drought. In 2019, the UN estimated that 188,500 children were suffering from malnutrition. It is



extremely challenging for some African countries to produce enough food for many reasons including poverty, conflict, environmental factors (desertification, deforestation, drought, extreme weather, flooding), governmental factors and population growth. Africa has had a tough history, including slavery, and this, along with the difficult climate, is part of the reason there is still so much poverty.

Lesson 5

Kenya (research lesson)

Kenya is a country in eastern Africa with a coastline on the Indian Ocean. Kenya is a diverse country, its varied environments include savannah, mountain forests, desert and mangroves. It has a tropical climate. Kenya's capital is Nairobi and its population is more concentrated around the south eastern part of the country. Kenya is known for its national parks, many people travel to Kenya for tourism, to see wildlife such as elephants, lions, cheetahs, giraffes, zebras and hippos. The Maasai Mara Reserve is known for its annual wildebeest migration where two million wildebeest migrate from Tanzania to Kenya, crossing the Mara River where they will be hunted by



crocodiles as they journey across.



Africa



Mansa Musa

Ruler of the Ancient Kingdom of Mali, thought to be the richest man the world has ever known.

Food security



KEY VOCABULARY

Homo Sapiens

Commodity

Agriculture

Desert

Desertification

Biodiversity

Food Insecurity

Colonialism

Our **species of modern human**. From the Latin meaning, wise man. The term was introduced by the scientist Carl Linnaeus.

A **raw material** or product of farming that **can be bought and sold**, e.g. salt or gold. Commodities are traded around the world.

The **practice of farming**, both crops and animals.

From the Latin word meaning, 'an abandoned place', deserts are regions of **land that receive very little precipitation** (e.g. rain). It is hard for plants, animals and people to live in desert areas.

A process where **fertile land becomes desert**. This can be as a result of drought, deforestation or over farming. Farmers cannot grow crops or graze animals on desert land.

The **variety of plants and animals** within a habitat.

A situation where people within a country, or region, are **unable to access, or afford, enough nutritious food**.

The practice of **taking control of another country**, then holding political and economic power over that country.

DESERTIFICATION:

