

UNIT: WEST AFRICA IN FOCUS

Tanisha Dudley-Williams
Crump Elementary School
2nd-4th grade

Unit Summary:

This unit will introduce students to various cultural communities in West Africa. They will closely examine the following expressions of culture: style of dress for different people and occasions, language and expressions, celebrations and traditions, art and design, and cuisine. Although these expressions of culture are often said to be elements of surface culture, students are invited to reflect on two countries' traditions (Senegal & Nigeria) as examples of the great diversity of cultures in Africa and students are enriched by the experiences. At the end of each activity, students will reflect on their learning by answering one of the essential questions. They will record their reflections as journal notebook entries.

UNIT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Examine the similarities and differences among different aspects of cultural expressions (traditions, language, art, music, and cuisine) within various texts.
- Research a monument or tangible cultural heritage and present it in a cohesive manner.
- Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively with a group for the purpose of completing and presenting an appropriate and engaging presentation.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

Lesson 1

- What do you know about Africa?
- Where is the continent of Africa located?
- Why is it important to learn about Africa?

- How are we connected to Africa?
- What are some of the misconceptions we have about Africa?

Lesson 2

- Where is Senegal?
- What is the weather like in Senegal?
- What are the major cities in Senegal?
- What kinds of food do people eat in Senegal?
- What languages do people speak in Senegal?
- What is teranga?
- Why is tea important in Senegalese culture?
- What important monuments can be found in Senegal?

Lesson 3

- Where is Nigeria?
- What languages do people speak in Nigeria?
- What are the main cultural/groups (Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba) in Nigeria and in what part of the country do they live?
- What is the weather like in Nigeria?
- What are the major cities in Nigeria?
- What kinds of foods do people eat in Nigeria?
- What important monuments can be found in Nigeria?

STANDARDS

Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.3

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.5

Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

UNIT STORYLINE

This overview for the Unit provides a snapshot of objectives and themes.

LESSON	GUIDING QUESTION(S) & LEARNING OBJECTIVES	SUMMARY
1. Where in the World is Africa?	What do you know about Africa? Where is the continent of Africa located? Why is it important to learn about Africa? How are we connected to Africa? What are some of the misconceptions we have about Africa? How many countries are in Africa?	Students will receive an overview of the continent, including its diverse history and culture. We also explore the different geographical regions of Africa.
2. Senegal: A look at Tea and Teranga	Where is Senegal? What is the weather like in Senegal? What are the major cities in Senegal? What kinds of food do people eat in Senegal? What languages do people speak in Senegal? What is teranga? Why is tea important in Senegalese culture? How are cultural norms in Senegal similar to those in the United States? How are they different?	We will discuss the history and traditions of Senegal including Senegalese tea culture. Students will also learn common Wolof greetings.
3. Nigeria: The Lion of Africa	Where is Nigeria? What languages do people speak in Nigeria? What is the weather like in Nigeria? What are the major cities in Nigeria? What kinds of food do people eat in Nigeria?	Students will discuss the richness of the Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba people in Nigeria and their contributions to west African civilization.

	What are the main cultural/groups in Nigeria and in what part of the country do they live? How are cultural traditions expressed among the three ethnic groups we have discussed?	
--	---	--

VOCABULARY

Continent
 Country
 Culture
 Tradition
 Region
 Stereotype
 Senegal: Tea and Teranga
 Teranga
 Wolof
 Sahel
 Dakar
 African Renaissance Monument
 Goree
 Saint Louis
 Boabab tree
 Nigeria: The Lion of Africa
 Igbo
 Yoruba
 Abuja
 Lagos

LESSON 1:

Guiding Questions:

- What do you know about Africa?
- Where is the continent of Africa located?
- Why is it important to learn about Africa?
- How are we connected to Africa?
- What are some of the misconceptions we have about Africa?
- How many countries are in Africa?

Learning objectives

- Examine the similarities and differences among different aspects of cultural expressions in the text *Africa is Not a Country* by Margy Burns Knight

Time Period:

1 class period (75 minutes)

Instructional Procedures:

-Students will work in groups to complete the K and L categories of KWL charts about what they know about Africa. Groups will have an opportunity to share out loud.

Step-by-step procedures:

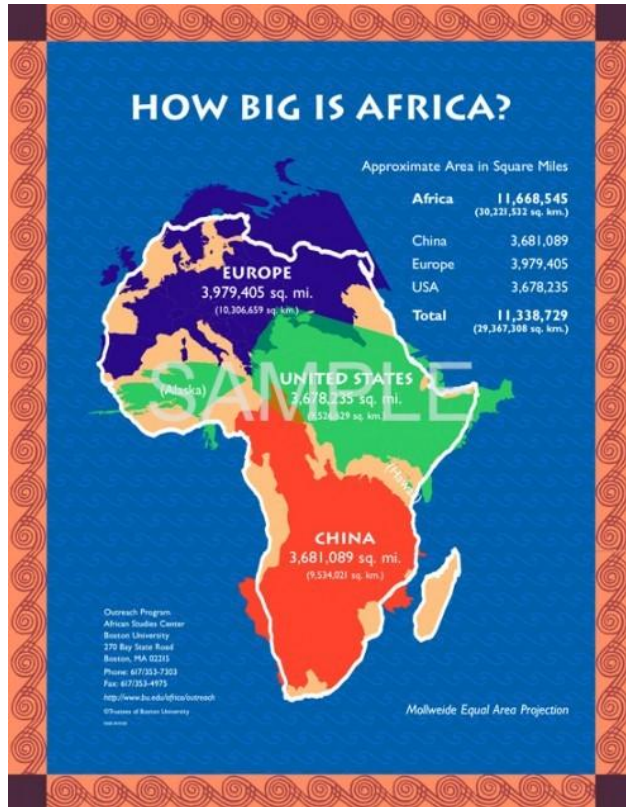
Along with the teacher, students will explore the map titled, "How Big is Africa?" Students will discuss the size of Africa.

Students will listen to a read aloud of *Africa is not a Country* by Margy Burns Knight.

Students will engage in a [powerpoint presentation](#) about Africa. They will discuss stereotypes about the continent, its size and regions.

-Students will complete *How Big is Africa* map activity

<https://www.bu.edu/africa/outreach/teachingresources/geography/curriculum-guide>



Lesson closing & Formative Assessment:

Students will complete a Ticket-Out-The-Door task by answering the following question:
What new information did you learn about Africa today? Be prepared to share it at home and at our next class.

Materials needed:

- Boston University's How Big is Africa activity map (from the *Exploring Africa* curriculum)
- Powerpoint Presentation
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Copy of maps
- Glue
- Scissors
- Crayons

LESSON 2:

Guiding Questions:

- Where is Senegal?
- What is the weather like in Senegal?
- What are the major cities in Senegal?
- What kinds of food do people eat in Senegal?
- What languages do people speak in Senegal?
- What is teranga?
- Why is tea important in Senegalese culture?
- How are cultural norms in Senegal similar to those in the United States? How are they different?

Learning objectives:

- Demonstrate awareness and an appreciation of Senegalese culture, the Wolof language, and perspectives by engaging in cross-cultural activity with a cohort of students in Senegal.
- Apply critical thinking skills(analyzing and evaluating information) to gain an understanding of diverse cultures
- Identify various perspectives to solve problems.
- Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively with a group to complete and present an appropriate and engaging presentation.
- Examine the similarities and differences among different aspects of cultural expressions.

Time Period:

1 hour and 15 minutes

Number of days: 2-3

Instructional Procedures:

Lesson opening/activator:

- Students will work in groups to complete the K and L categories of KWL charts about Senegal. Groups will have an opportunity to share out loud.

Step-by-step procedures:

Part 1

-Along with the teacher, students will discuss the facts presented in a [powerpoint presentation](#) about Senegal. Each slide has a question about Senegal. The answer to the question is on the slide.



-Culture Box: Students are introduced to a teacher-curated cultural box with artifacts (books, flag, clothing, currency, etc.) representative of Senegal.

Basic Wolof: Students will learn common Wolof greetings. They will practice greeting in Wolof.

Part 2

-In order to center African voices, it is a great enhancement to student learning to invite guest speakers from the continent. A number of National Resource Centers may be able to facilitate such visits to your classroom. The purpose of the talk with the virtual guest speaker is to allow students to engage with a Senegalese cultural expert. The speaker will give a more detailed presentation about Senegalese culture and the Wolof language. Another extension of the guest speaker experience is to engage in Cross Cultural Exchange: Using *Zoom*, students would ideally participate in a cross-cultural “getting to know you” activity with students from *Najee Classroom*, an online multisensory program for students with special needs in Dakar, Senegal

(<https://www.najeeclassroom.org/>).

-Senegalese Tea Demonstration (see demonstration presented by Howard University Center for African Studies: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FC3GoyFSAdc>)

Lesson closing:

- Students will work in groups to complete the L component of the KWL chart.
- Students will write a journal entry about what they learned about Senegal.

Formative Assessment:

- Teacher observation

-Journal entry

Materials needed:

Cultural Box

-A flag

-Tea set for demonstration

-Power point presentation

-Student journals

-Chart paper

LESSON 3:

Guiding Questions:

- Where is Nigeria?
- What languages do people speak in Nigeria?
- What is the weather like in Nigeria?
- What are the major cities in Nigeria?
- What kinds of food do people eat in Nigeria?
- What are the main cultural/groups in Nigeria and in what part of the country do they live?
- How are cultural traditions expressed among the three ethnic groups we have discussed?
- Why do you think these traditions are important to the people of Nigeria?

Learning objectives:

- Identify various perspectives to solve problems.
- Examine the similarities and differences among different aspects of cultural expressions within various texts.
- Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively with a group to complete and present an appropriate and engaging presentation.

Time Period:

Two Class periods (75 minutes each period)

Instructional Procedures:

Part 1

-Along with the teacher, students will discuss the facts presented in a [powerpoint presentation about Nigeria](#). Emphasis will be placed on the different cultures of the country: Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa. Each slide has a question about Nigeria. The answer to the question is on the slide.



-Culture Box: Students are introduced to a cultural box with artifacts representative of the different cultures in Nigeria. Students will work together to come up with a list of questions they have about each group.

Part 2

-Virtual guest speaker: Students will engage in a presentation with a virtual guest speaker. The speaker will engage students in a more detailed discussion about the three main cultures in Nigeria.

Lesson opening/activator:

Students will watch a short [video clip](#) about Nigeria. Students will complete an I See, I Think, I Wonder chart in groups. Students will share out. Then they will be told that what they watched was a short clip about Lagos, the capital of Nigeria.

Video clip link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QidB96ZrPR0>

Lesson closing & Formative Assessment:

1 Tale and 2 Truths Ticket-Out-The-Door task

Materials needed:

- Video clips (YouTube)
- Chart Paper
- Markers
- Cultural Box with materials representing each ethnic group

ASSESSMENT (LESSON 4)

Research Task:

- -We will discuss the mission of the [UNESCO World Heritage Convention](#) and its significance in the [preservation of African culture and heritage](#). Teachers will review with students some select UNESCO World Heritage sites in Africa, and in particular in Senegal and Nigeria.
 - See the list of sites [here](#).
- We will discuss what it means to research a topic
 - Students will watch the following video on research:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84nDQvBfg60>
- Students will research a UNESCO World Heritage site in Senegal or Nigeria. They will note the significance of their chosen site.
 - Students will use the following website: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/africa/>
- Students may choose to research one of the following UNESCO sites:
 - *Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove (Nigeria)
 - *Sukur Cultural Landscape (Nigeria)
 - *Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary (Senegal)
 - *Island of Saint-Louis (Senegal)
 - *Saloum Delta (Senegal)
- Students will record information on the following document:
<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/36282021/research-project-proposal-template-format>
- Students will complete a powerpoint presentation to share with the class. Presentations will include a general overview of their sites. Students must include 5 historical or cultural facts about the site.
- Students will be graded according to the criteria of the attached rubric:
[powerpoint-rubric.pdf](#)

DIFFERENTIATION FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

The following accommodations will be implemented to meet the needs of diverse learners:

- Implementation of graphic organizers, pictures, and vocabulary cards
- Read aloud
- Extended time for task completion
- The vocabulary list will be presented at the start of the lesson to ensure students are aware of the concepts of the lesson.

MATERIALS

-How Big is Africa activity map (from the *Exploring Africa* curriculum)

 [How Big is Africa \(4\).pptx](#)

-PowerPoint Presentation for Senegal  [Senegal PPT_West Africa in Focus.pdf](#)

-Chart paper

-Markers

-Copy of maps

-Glue

-Scissors

-Crayons

-Cultural Box for Senegal

-A Senegalese flag

-Tea set for demonstration

-PowerPoint presentation for Nigeria  [Nigeria\(4\).pptx](#)

-Student journals

-Chart paper

-Video clips (YouTube)

-Chart Paper

-Markers

- Cultural Box for Nigeria (with materials representing each ethnic group)

REFERENCES

-  12 Incredible Facts About Nigeria video
- *Africa is Not a Country* by Margy Burns Knight
- Choices Curriculum- Brown University
- *Exploring Africa Curriculum*-Michigan State University
- *How Big is Africa* map activity
<https://www.bu.edu/africa/outreach/teachingresources/geography/curriculum-guide>
- <https://www.najeeclassroom.org/>
- PowerPoint Presentation for Senegal  Senegal PPT_West Africa in Focus.pdf
- PowerPoint presentation for Nigeria  Nigeria(4).pptx
-  Research for Kids: How to Research a Topic in Elementary
- Senegalese Tea Demonstration (see demonstration presented by Howard University Center for African Studies: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FC3GoyFSAdc>)
- <https://whc.unesco.org/en/africa/>
- <https://whc.unesco.org/en/convention/>
- https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/CID=31&SEARCH=&SEARCH_BY_COUNTRY=®ION=5&ORDER=&TYPE=&&order=year