

UNIT 3

Africa



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Chapter 8

The Geography and History of Africa

Chapter Preview

People

Nelson Mandela, Jimmy Carter, Tuareg tribe, Arabs, Bantu, Swahili, Omar al-Bashir, Robert Mugabe

Places

Red Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Nile River, Cairo, Indian Ocean, Congo River, Niger River, Atlantic Ocean, Sahara Desert, Sahel, savannas, tropical rain forests, Lake Victoria, Atlas Mountains, Mount Kilimanjaro, Kalahari Desert

Terms

water wars, fertilizer, industrial waste, deforestation, desertification, oasis, ecosystem, religious group, ethnic group, trans-Atlantic slave trade, imperialism, Scramble for Africa, colonies, indirect rule, assimilation, civil war, dictatorship, Pan-African movement, instability, HIV/AIDS, famine



Top: Young Africans have many opportunities for education and work that were not available to their parents and grandparents. High poverty, however, is still a problem to be solved.

Background: Built by the Ancient Egyptians more than 4,000 years ago, the pyramids at Giza, Egypt, were once covered with white marble and capped with gold.

Africa is an enormous continent. It is the second-largest continent in terms of both size and population behind Asia. The United States could fit three times inside Africa. Currently, there are fifty-four countries in Africa, and it has almost every type of climate and geography found in the world. There are many record-setting facts about Africa: largest hot desert (Sahara), tallest animal (giraffe), largest land animal (elephant), hottest continent, central location (crossed by prime meridian and Equator), oldest populated area, poorest and most underdeveloped continent, and deadliest war since World War II (over 5 million killed in Second Congo War).

Another record-setting fact is that Africa was home to one of the first great civilizations of mankind, that of Ancient Egypt, which began in Africa about 5,000 years ago. The Egyptians had an orderly society and government, trade routes to other parts of the world, and exquisite art and architecture. Most importantly, the Egyptians had a system of writing. This invention allowed the Egyptians to communicate in their country and operate a large government. It also has made it possible for us to know more about them than many other people of the time. Their stories were written down, so 5,000 years later, people can read them.

Over time, the African continent has undergone many changes, and its peoples have an extraordinary history. In this chapter, you will take a short journey into the vast continent to learn about the geography and history of Africa.

Bottom: The modern city of Johannesburg, South Africa, began as a gold-mining settlement. Today it is one of the world's leading financial centers.

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If there are dreams about a beautiful South Africa, there are also roads that lead to their goal. Two of these roads could be named Goodness and Forgiveness.

-Nelson Mandela



Top Right: The African slave trade, which began in the 1500s, changed the culture and history of Africa forever.

Middle Left: In 1935, African miners extracted gold in the world's richest mining region near Johannesburg, South Africa. **Bottom Right:**

Worldwide efforts brought clean water to millions of Africans in the early 21st century. **Background:** Ruins from Ancient Rome, such as these in Tunisia, are a reminder of Africa's connection to other cultures.

TIMELINE

OF AFRICA HISTORY



Figure 8.1



1800

1808 United States ended trans-Atlantic slave trade

1833 Slavery abolished in the British Empire

1884 European leaders met at the Berlin Conference to divide control of Africa among them

1889 First climbers reached the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro

1895 Kenya became an official British colony

1900

1931 South Africa gained independence from the United Kingdom

1956 Sudan became independent from the United Kingdom

1963 Kenya gained independence from the United Kingdom

1966 Botswana and Nigeria became independent from the United Kingdom

1973 Mount Kilimanjaro became a national park

1980 Zimbabwe gained independence from the United Kingdom

1983 Second Sudanese Civil War began

1986 Carter Center began focusing on Guinea worm eradication

1989 Omar al-Bashir seized control of Sudan

2000

2002 African Union created

2011 South Sudan seceded from Sudan

2013 Civil war broke out in South Sudan





Area: about 11,725,000 square miles

Population: 1,200,000,000 (est. 2016)

Population density:
about 102 people per square mile

Bounded by:
Atlantic Ocean
Mediterranean Sea
Red Sea
Indian Ocean

Highest point:
Mount Kilimanjaro (Tanzania) 19,340 feet above sea level

Lowest point:
Lake Assal (Djibouti) about 515 feet below sea level

Map 8.1

Africa

Map Skill: What is the largest country in Africa?

Section 1

The Geography of Africa


 Setting a Purpose

As you read, look for

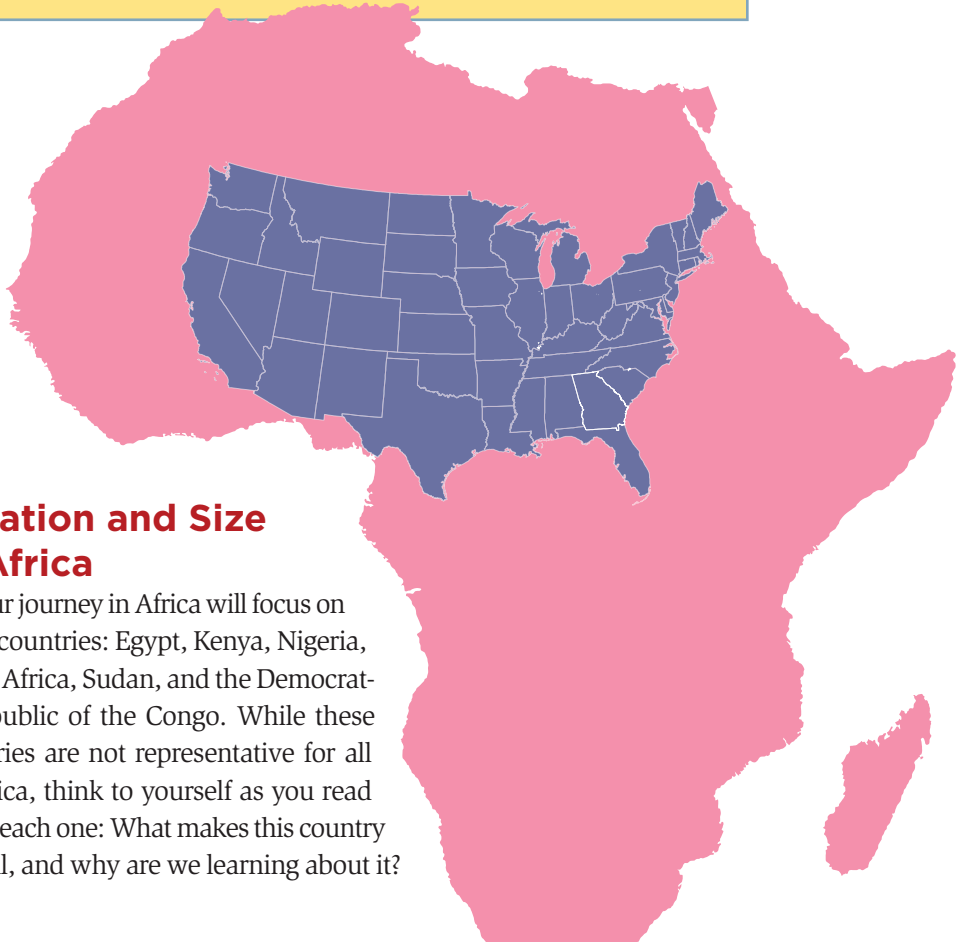
- ▶ the important rivers in Africa and their significance;
- ▶ the significance of the Sahel, the Sahara, and the savanna;
- ▶ the rain forests of Africa;
- ▶ the causes, effects, and possible solutions for environmental issues in Africa;
- ▶ countries: Egypt, Sudan, Kenya, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, South Africa;
- ▶ geography: Sahara Desert, Sahel, savanna, rain forests, Nile River, Lake Victoria, Congo River, Niger River, Atlas Mountains, Mount Kilimanjaro, Great Rift Valley;
- ▶ terms: **water wars, fertilizer, industrial waste, deforestation, desertification, oasis, ecosystem.**

DID YOU KNOW?

Deserts and drylands cover 60 percent of Africa's land surface area.

Location and Size of Africa

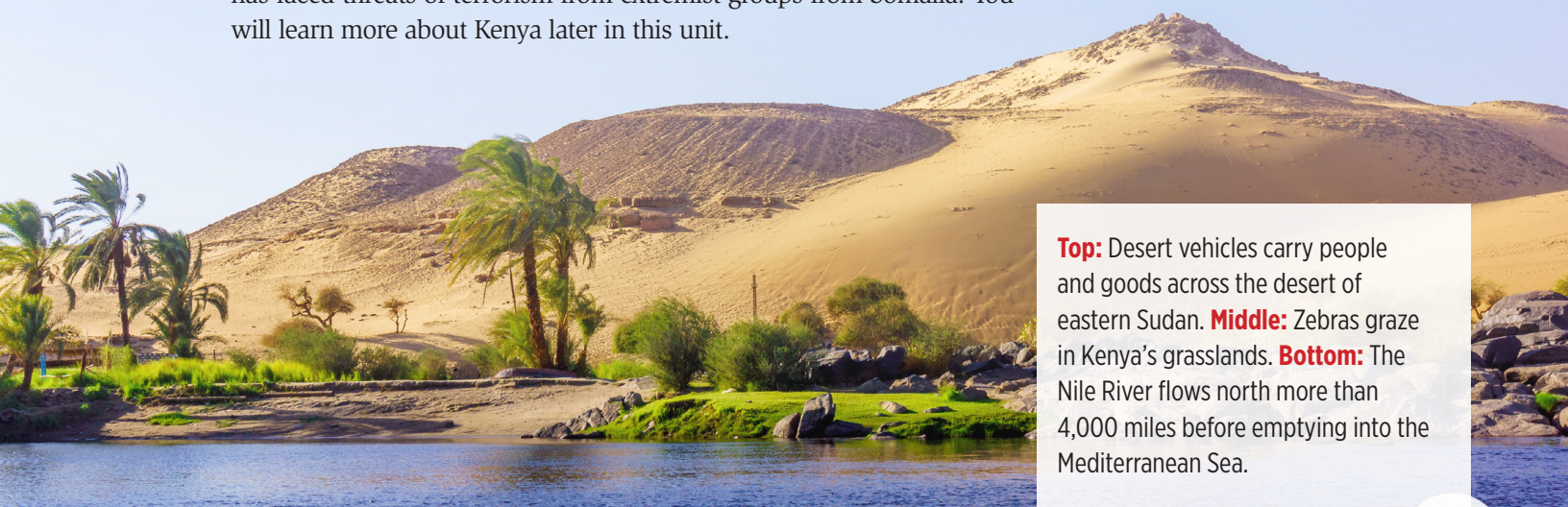
Your journey in Africa will focus on a few countries: Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. While these countries are not representative for all of Africa, think to yourself as you read about each one: What makes this country special, and why are we learning about it?



Find the political map of Africa at the beginning of this chapter. We will begin in the northern part of Africa. Find the country of Egypt in the northeast corner of Africa and put your finger on it. It is a large country in North Africa that is located along the banks of the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. The Nile River flows the length of Egypt before emptying into the Mediterranean Sea near the city of Alexandria. Egypt's capital, Cairo, is also located on the Nile River. Most of Egypt is a desert, which means that most people live along the Nile River so they can have access to fresh water. Culturally speaking, the culture of Egypt is actually more similar to Southwest Asia than sub-Saharan Africa. Culturally, it is a part of the "Middle East," but geographically, it is African.

Now move your finger directly south of Egypt and cross into the country of Sudan. It is a larger country than Egypt and was once the largest country in Africa before Sudan was divided after its civil war. The Nile River also flows through Sudan on its way to the Mediterranean Sea. Political and ethnic problems in recent years have made Sudan one of the most unstable countries in Africa. Many Sudanese have become refugees because of the fighting in their country. In 2011, the southern part of Sudan seceded and became the country of South Sudan. Many people hoped that, once South Sudan became independent, the conflict within Sudan would end. Unfortunately, conflict continues between South Sudan and Sudan, as well as within each country. At this point, South Sudan faces an uncertain future.

If you move your finger to the southeast corner of Sudan and cross through South Sudan, you will find Kenya. The country of Kenya is located along the eastern coast of Africa bordering the Indian Ocean. Close your eyes and imagine giraffes, lions, and zebras running through grasslands. What you just pictured in your head is very similar to much of Kenya's geography. Kenya is a beautiful country known around the world for its amazing animal parks and rich savanna grasslands. Kenya was colonized by the British in the 1800s but gained its independence in the 1960s. Since then, it has had a relatively stable government. In recent years, Kenya has faced threats of terrorism from extremist groups from Somalia. You will learn more about Kenya later in this unit.



Top: Desert vehicles carry people and goods across the desert of eastern Sudan. **Middle:** Zebras graze in Kenya's grasslands. **Bottom:** The Nile River flows north more than 4,000 miles before emptying into the Mediterranean Sea.

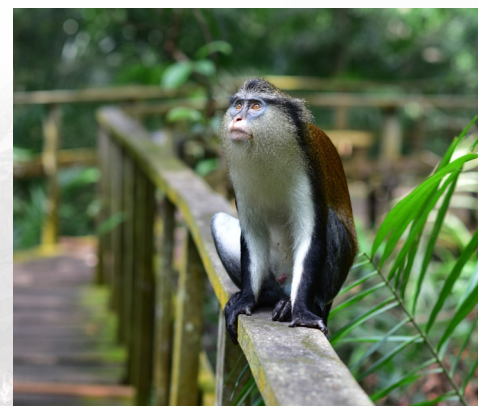


Look again at the map of Africa. From Kenya, move your finger to the west. Cross through Uganda, and you will be in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is the second-largest country in Africa. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is located in central Africa and has a very small coastline on the Atlantic Ocean. It is rich in natural resources like copper, cobalt, and diamonds. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is home to the Congo River, which is surrounded by the Congo Rain Forest. The Congo River is very important for commerce and transportation; however, boats cannot travel the entire length of the Congo because of rapids and waterfalls that are not navigable. The Democratic Republic of the Congo has had a very troubled history, both with European colonization and with later civil war. The political situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains unstable today, which means that economic

growth is very difficult to achieve.

From the Democratic Republic of the Congo, move your finger to the northwest, pass through the Congo and Cameroon, and you will arrive in Nigeria. This large nation on the coast of West Africa has nearly every kind of habitat found in Africa. The northern part of the country is close to the Sahara and is rocky and sparsely covered with short, brush-like vegetation. This dry land gradually changes to grasslands before changing into tropical rain forests. The Niger River flows through Nigeria, bringing much-needed fresh water to people, as well as providing a transportation route. The Nigerian coast is very rich in oil; however, oil has not brought wealth to average Nigerians. It has brought government corruption, which means that the Nigerian people do not get to enjoy most benefits that oil wealth normally brings. In fact, even though Nigeria has a lot of arable land, it has to import food to satisfy the needs of its people.

The final country you are going to learn about is South Africa. Move your finger from Nigeria all the way to the southernmost point of the continent of Africa. This is where the country of South Africa is located with coasts on both the Atlantic Ocean and Indian Ocean. Most of the country is a broad plateau with large stretches of grasslands in the interior. These grasslands are home to many of the animals that are commonly associated with Africa, like lions, elephants, giraffes, and leopards. Like most countries in Africa, South Africa was colonized by Europeans. After independence from the British, the South African government established a racist policy called apartheid that segregated blacks and whites. You will learn more about apartheid and Nelson Mandela's fight against it later in this unit.



DID YOU KNOW ?

Mountain gorillas are considered to be critically endangered. There are only several hundred of the species remaining on Earth—about half of which live on volcanic slopes in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Uganda.



Top: Mountain gorillas can be found in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. **Right:** Mangrove swamps in Nigeria are home to many animals such as this curious monkey. **Bottom:** The Zongo Waterfalls of the Congo River in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are an impressive sight.

Physical Features of Africa

Africa has snow-capped mountains, expansive grasslands, fierce deserts, lush rain forests, placid lakes, and wild rivers. These physical features can be found by examining the map of Africa and noting the countries where they are found. Look at the map of Africa at the beginning of the chapter. Find the Sahara Desert in the northern part of Africa, and put your finger on it. It is the largest nonpolar desert in the world and stretches across North Africa.

The Sahara is covered with sand dunes that may reach a height of nearly 600 feet. The Sahara also has rolling rocky hills and wide stretches of gravel that extend for miles. Because of its harsh climate, very few people live in the Sahara. However, traders have crossed the desert for thousands of years. At first, traders used camel caravans to cross the barren miles. Today, traders may use trucks and other vehicles to cross the desert, but some people still use the traditional camel caravan.

Move your finger south of the Sahara, and you will cross into a region called the Sahel, which is a dry and semiarid region that acts as a transition zone between the desert sands of the Sahara and the lush savannas. However, the Sahel is slowly turning into a desert. There is little rain in this region and droughts occur frequently. Generations of people have tried to live in the Sahel, raising livestock and farming. Unfortunately, these activities have led to livestock overgrazing, and many of the trees have been cut down. As the plants disappear, the soil becomes drier—so dry that it can be blown away by winds. Without fertile topsoil, it is very difficult to grow anything.

Continue to move your finger south and you will come to the savannas, which are grasslands and tropical habitats. This region runs along the Equator throughout Africa. In the savanna region, many of the animals iconic for Africa—such as elephants, lions, giraffes, and many others—live. Farming is easier here than in the Sahel, especially when the rains come. However, when there are droughts—periods of little to no rainfall—farming can be very difficult or impossible.



Top: Flat-roofed mud dwellings form a village in the West African Sahel region. **Left:** Caravans of camels cross the Sahara following ancient routes through the desert.

Move your finger south once more, and you will find the tropical rain forests (woodlands with high annual rainfall and very tall evergreen trees). These rain forests are located in the center of Africa, along the Atlantic coast. The climate here is hot and humid. The trees within the rain forests can reach hundreds of feet in height. Many animals and birds live in the African rain forests. The biggest threat to this ecosystem is the rapid population growth in most African countries in this area. The demand to use wood for fuel is driving people to cut down the trees faster than they can be replaced. You will learn more about deforestation and its effects later in this chapter.

Rivers and Lakes

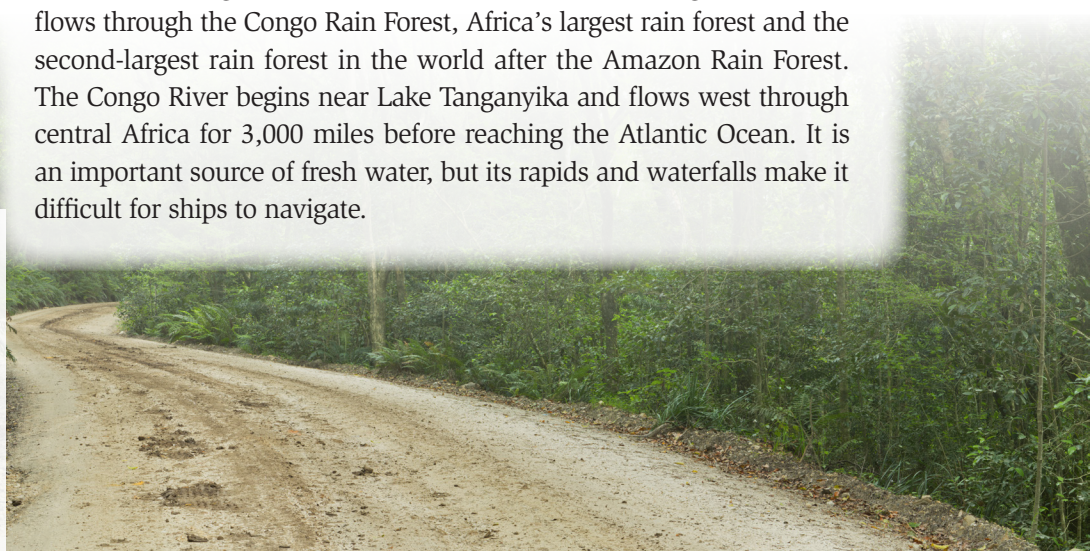
Africa has spectacular rivers. The longest river in the world is the Nile. Find the Nile River in northeastern Africa and place your finger on it. The Nile begins in the central mountains of Africa as the White Nile and the Blue Nile. Find these tributaries of the Nile in Sudan. Now run your finger north along the 4,000 miles that the Nile River flows on its way to the Mediterranean Sea. It may seem unusual to have a river flowing north. Like all rivers, the Nile flows in the direction of elevation; it begins at a high elevation and flows downhill until it reaches sea level at the Mediterranean Sea.

The White Nile, which begins in Lake Victoria, is the longest tributary of the Nile. Find Lake Victoria on the map and put your finger on it. It is the largest lake in Africa. It is the second-largest lake in the world in surface area after Lake Superior in the United States. Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya all border the lake. Lake Victoria was named for Great Britain's Queen Victoria during the period of exploration and colonization of Africa. The lake is important to all three countries that border it for fishing and as a source of fresh water. The shores of the lake are very densely populated, which has led to pollution in the lake.

Another important waterway in Africa is the Congo River, the second-longest river in Africa. Find its mouth on the western coast of Africa near the Equator and trace it back through the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This river flows through the Congo Rain Forest, Africa's largest rain forest and the second-largest rain forest in the world after the Amazon Rain Forest. The Congo River begins near Lake Tanganyika and flows west through central Africa for 3,000 miles before reaching the Atlantic Ocean. It is an important source of fresh water, but its rapids and waterfalls make it difficult for ships to navigate.



Top: The Victoria Nile (White Nile) River has beautiful, and dangerous, rapids in eastern Africa. **Middle:** Lake Victoria, Africa's largest lake, supplies fish to supplement the diet of local people. **Bottom:** The Garden Route National Park in South Africa is set amid the African rain forest.



To the northwest of the Congo River is the Niger River, the third-largest river in Africa. Find its mouth in Nigeria and then trace the path of the Niger River. It flows for almost 2,600 miles from Guinea through Mali, Niger, and Benin before ending in Nigeria. At the mouth of the river is a huge delta that is sometimes known as the “oil delta” because so much oil is located there. Aside from oil, the river is important as a source of fresh water and as a way to transport people and goods.

Mountains and Valleys

There are spectacular mountains in Africa. Look at the northwest corner of Africa and find the Atlas Mountains. This group of mountains stretches through the countries of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, separating the coastal regions along the Mediterranean Sea from the Sahara Desert. The coastal regions receive plentiful rainfall and have a mild climate as a result of the Mediterranean Sea. However, the Atlas Mountains act as a barrier that keeps the moisture from reaching the interior of Africa.

The tallest mountain in Africa is Mount Kilimanjaro. Find this peak in the country of Tanzania in East Africa and put your finger on it. Mount Kilimanjaro is not just an ordinary mountain. It is a combination of three volcanoes, two of which are extinct. When a volcano becomes extinct, it leaves behind a cone. The tallest of the three cones that make up Mount Kilimanjaro, called Kibo, is 19,340 feet tall. Kibo is the one volcano that is not extinct, just dormant, which means it could erupt again. It is so tall that the cone is covered in snow year around even though it is located fairly close to the Equator. In the 1970s, the area around and including the mountain was made into a national park to protect it for generations to come. Today, it is one of the major peaks to climb in the world.

The final physical feature you are going to learn about is the Great Rift Valley. Find this valley located in East Africa. The Great Rift Valley formed thousands of years ago as a result of plate tectonics. Most of the continent of Africa is located on one plate (a separate area of Earth’s crust). However, there is a smaller plate called the Somalian Plate in East Africa. The Great Rift Valley occurred when these two plates moved away from each other, creating a valley. The valley actually runs about 4,000 miles from Syria in Southwest Asia south through Africa and ending in Mozambique. Within Africa, it is divided into two valleys, the Eastern Rift and the Western Rift. The Western Rift has many of the deepest lakes in Africa, including Lake Victoria.



DID YOU KNOW ?

The last volcanic activity on Kibo was about 200 years ago.

DID YOU KNOW ?

Astronauts can see the Great Rift Valley from space!



Top: The Atlas Mountains rise in the distance behind Ouarzazate, Morocco, in Northwest Africa. **Left:** The Great Rift Valley as seen in eastern Africa.

special Feature

Mount Kilimanjaro

Mount Kilimanjaro is the highest mountain in Africa. Some people refer to it as the “roof of Africa.” Kilimanjaro is remarkable for having a snow-covered peak that lies near the hottest latitude, the Equator. There are many stories and myths about Mount Kilimanjaro.

While Mount Kilimanjaro is well known, the meaning of its name remains a mystery. The local people are called the Chagga. They have two words for the peaks: Kipoo and Kimawense. Some people even believe the Chagga word Kilemeiroiya, which means “not easy to climb,” is where the name Kilimanjaro comes from. The Wakawba people in Kenya call the mountain Kilima Jeu. When the Germans arrived during the colonial period, they called the mountain Kilimandscharos, but the reason is a mystery. The Swahili call the mountain Kilima Njaro, which means “mountains of caravans.” They use the mountain as a compass to help guide them on their travels. Which name do you think is the most similar to the current name of Mount Kilimanjaro?



Above Right: Hikers who successfully reach the summit of Kilimanjaro are greeted by this sign. **Background:** Mount Kilimanjaro can be seen in the distance from Amboseli National Park in Kenya.



DID YOU KNOW ?

The Chattahoochee River in Georgia has been the subject of a legal water war. Alabama and Florida sued Georgia for using too much water in Atlanta, causing less water to flow to the other states.

DID YOU KNOW ?

On average, 115 people per hour die in Africa from drinking contaminated water.



Environmental Issues in Africa

The people of Africa face many different types of environmental problems. Many of these problems are not common in the United States or other developed countries. However, these environmental issues are causing a lot of damage in Africa, such as destroying farmland and reducing the amount of clean water that is available for people. Some of the issues are lack of water, poor soil quality, and expanding deserts. Parts of Africa are arid, others are semiarid, some have rolling grassland, and still others are humid and subtropical. Countries with large river systems have enough water for farming and for people in villages, towns, and cities. However, all countries have the problem of increasing pollution from factories and from animal and human waste. Some countries have poor harvests, little grazing land for farm animals, and even little clean water for drinking and washing. Each year deserts claim more land. It is very important for the governments of African countries to work together to solve these issues.

Water Pollution and Unequal Access to Water

One of the most important environmental issues in Africa is water pollution and unequal access to water. Many countries in Africa struggle to have enough water for people to survive. Water is limited in Africa. As the population across the continent continues to grow, the supply of available water will not be enough to meet the people's demands. While some countries have access to enough water from their lakes or rivers, many countries have little to no access to fresh water.

Many people believe that Africa could find itself dealing with **water wars** (conflicts fought over water) in the future. For example, the Nile River runs through Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Egypt. All of these countries have growing populations and growing water needs. Another example is the Niger River. It supplies the dry Sahel region with water before flowing into Nigeria. As more water is used for irrigation in countries upstream, less water is available to countries further downstream.

Not only is access to water a problem in Africa, but the limited amount of fresh water is also becoming polluted. Many African countries do not have enough clean water even though they have large rivers. The United Nations estimates that 40 percent of the people living in sub-Saharan Africa do not have access to clean fresh water.

Top: A West African gathers water from a lake to irrigate crops. This chore is traditionally done by women.

Clean water is needed for basic health and sanitation. People who do not have access to clean water are at risk for many diseases. Lack of clean water to wash also increases the frequency of skin and eye infections.

One place where this is a problem is Egypt. The areas along the banks of the Nile River are very densely populated. The river is used both for transportation and as a source of water for irrigation and drinking. In recent years, however, overpopulation and poor sanitation regulations have made life along the Nile River more difficult. The water is becoming contaminated with human waste.

Another factor contributing to water pollution in Africa is **fertilizers** (chemical or natural substances added to soil to increase its fertility). When the Egyptians built the Aswan High Dam to control the Nile's seasonal floods and generate hydroelectricity, a problem developed. Although farmers have access to water for irrigation all year, there are no longer floods that can deposit fertile silt. As a result, farmers have to use chemical fertilizers for their crops. When these fertilizers wash into the river, they contaminate the water supply and leave large amounts of salt in the water.

Industrial wastes (unwanted or residual material from industrial operations) are also polluting the rivers. Some African countries have tried to improve their economies by starting factories. However, the governments are often more focused on profits than on environmental problems. As a result, many factories dump their wastes directly into rivers and streams because it is cheaper and easier than disposing of them properly. Sometimes the factory workers themselves get sick from drinking water that is polluted by waste from the factory where they work.

Parasites that live in water are another threat to health. People can get many diseases—including typhoid, dysentery, cholera, and hepatitis A—from drinking water with parasites. The United Nations, the World Bank, and the United Children's Fund have programs in Africa that focus on ensuring that people have safe and clean water to drink. The African Union has had several meetings to try and solve the water crisis in many countries. The most recent meeting was in 2016. While these problems are very large, African countries are working hard with world organizations to try and solve them.



Top: A water pump provides clean well water for a community in Africa. This pump was provided by US citizens through USAID. **Above:** African children playing near an open sewer in Kenya are vulnerable to a number of diseases. **Left:** This slum area in Lagos, Nigeria, is built over water that is heavily polluted by human waste.

Poor Soil and Deforestation

The Sahel is a transition zone between the Sahara Desert and the savanna grasslands. It has an arid to semiarid climate. Most historians believe that the Sahel once had rich farmland. However, centuries of farming and grazing along with less rainfall have gradually damaged land in the Sahel. Today, these poor farming practices have led to an expanding desert. Animals have been allowed to graze too heavily in the region and have stripped all the vegetation from the soil. When there is no vegetation on the land, the fertile topsoil can blow away, leaving behind poor soil. Millions of people struggle to farm in the poor soil.

Deforestation is a problem affecting the soil in the Sahel and in other regions of Africa. **Deforestation** is the destruction of trees and other vegetation. People who need fuel or new farmland cut down trees that hold the topsoil in place. While these new farms are productive at first, soon the topsoil erodes away, and farmers are left with poor soil once again.

Another place where deforestation is taking place is in Africa's tropical rain forests. Many of the rain forests that once ran from Guinea to Cameroon are already gone. Nigeria is losing rain forest at the fastest rate in West Africa. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations estimates that Nigeria has lost at least 55 percent of its original rain forests to logging, clearing land for farming, and cutting down trees for fuel.

As a result of the poor soil, many people in these areas often face starvation and poverty. Some people move to urban areas in the hope of finding better jobs, but they often only find more poverty. In recent years, the United Nations and the World Food Bank have started to help the people in the Sahel. Not only are they providing food for people who need it, they also are trying to help people develop better farming habits.

Desertification

Another significant problem in Africa, especially in the Sahel, is desertification. **Desertification** is when a desert expands into areas that had been farmland previously. As the farmland is overused, the soil becomes poor and powdery. Then the winds from the Sahara gradually blow the dry topsoil away, leaving barren, rocky land behind. To make the issue worse, there have been long periods of drought in the area too. As the desert expands, people are less able to grow enough food to feed themselves. People living in areas that are experiencing desertification face hunger and hardship as a result.

Above: All trees have been cut for firewood in this area on the African island of Madagascar. Deforestation results when too many trees are cut in an area. **Bottom:** This once useful land in Ethiopia is now desert. Such desertification is due to poor land management by the people in the region.

In the Sahel, the majority of desertification is the result of people, not climate. Land is being cleared for farming, and trees are being cut down for firewood. The people need farmland and firewood to survive, but they are destroying major parts of their environment in the process.

East Africa is also experiencing desertification. In Ethiopia, people have lived for generations by farming and raising animals that graze, like sheep and goats. People are finding that they have less available grazing land. To make matters worse, there have been long periods of drought in recent years. As cities grow, they have expanded into areas that were once used for farming. As a result, farmers must reuse the same land, which makes it less fertile. Animals overgraze their fields and eat more grass than can be grown before the next season. As the soil wears out, the desert creeps in.

The Kalahari Desert in the southern part of Africa is also growing because of desertification. The people around this desert are facing the same problems that people near the Sahara are seeing. Pressure from increasing population, the need for fuels like firewood and brush, and the constant grazing of animals have worn away the soil, and the land is becoming a desert.

The constant movement of the Sahara Desert can be seen in many countries that border it. Some people say there is a “Green Line,” which is the place where agriculture ends and desert begins. People are trying to fight the spreading desert. They are replanting trees, building windbreaks to keep out the sand, and pushing the desert back whenever they can. However, in many parts of Africa, people are fighting a losing battle as the desert continues to expand and claim more land each year.

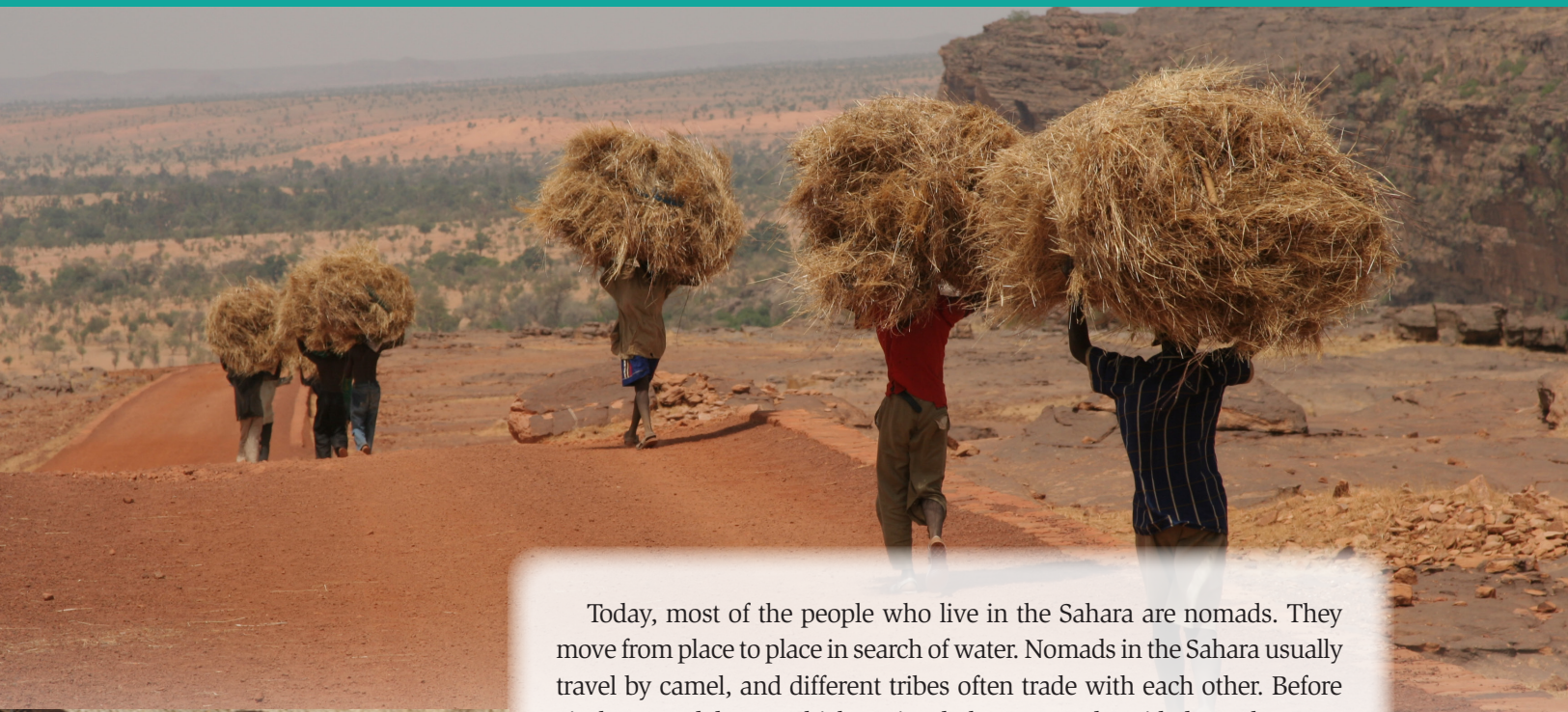


Living in the Sahara Desert

The Sahara is the largest nonpolar desert on Earth. It covers over 3.5 million square miles and is still growing. Very few people are able to live in the Sahara. It is considered to be one of the harshest environments in the world. In the Sahara, there are a few places where water is available. One of these places is an **oasis**, where a spring of fresh water comes from the ground. Trees are able to grow there and people can live there and graze animals and even sometimes farm. Oases are rare, however.



Above: At the edge of the Kalahari Desert, bushmen gather straw to repair the roof of their house. **Left:** This oasis in the Sahara Desert provides a water source in an otherwise dry zone.



Today, most of the people who live in the Sahara are nomads. They move from place to place in search of water. Nomads in the Sahara usually travel by camel, and different tribes often trade with each other. Before airplanes and desert vehicles existed, these nomads guided people across the Sahara. Hundreds of years ago, gold and salt came across the Sahara from central Africa on the backs of camels as they made their way to the Mediterranean coasts. Even today, there are parts of the Sahara that are impossible to travel across without a camel.

The Tuareg tribe is one of the nomadic people who live in the Sahara. Their name can be translated as “free men,” because their nomadic lifestyle means they are not tied down to one area. They can travel where they wish to go. However, today, many of these tribes are having a hard time earning a living in traditional ways. Many nomads are actually settling down to live in small villages and towns so they can find steady work.



Top: Young men carry straw to feed their livestock in the Sahel region of Africa. **Above:** A type of flour is made in western Africa from millet grown by local farmers.

Living in the Sahel

The hot and arid climate of the Sahel has a large impact on the people who live there. While there is more rain in the Sahel than the Sahara, the amount of rainfall can range anywhere from six to twenty inches a year. Even when rainfall is plentiful, farming is still difficult. Vegetation is sparse in the Sahel, and the grasses and shrubs are unevenly distributed. However, some areas have enough grass to support grazing animals. Desertification is a problem in the Sahel as the land becomes drier and overused.

Most of the people who live in the Sahel follow the traditional way of making a living, herding animals. These people are said to be seminomadic because they live in one area until the water and grass run out, then they move somewhere else. Other people in the Sahel are subsistence farmers, which means they grow just enough food for their families. The main crops are peanuts and millet, which are both sold at marketplaces. Undependable rainfall makes farming difficult. Most of the countries in the Sahel have rapidly growing populations. This will make living in the Sahel even more challenging because food and water are already scarce.

Living in the Savanna

Africa has the largest savanna (grassland region) in the world. During the summer, heavy rains allow the grass to grow thick and green. During the winter dry season, the grass turns brown. While these areas are covered with grass, there is usually not enough rainfall to support trees and shrubs. People who live in the savannas usually farm. The main crops they grow include wheat, oats, and sorghum.

These grasslands are also important as an **ecosystem** (a biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment). Many different species of animals live there. Lions, elephants, buffaloes, giraffes, zebras, leopards, cheetahs, hyenas, and rhinoceroses are among the animals that inhabit the savanna. Animals like the giraffes and zebras eat the plants and grasses, while other animals, like lions and leopards, eat other animals.

The biggest threat to the African savanna is the increasing number of people who live there. People are moving to the savanna areas so they will be able to grow food for their families. Every year, more savanna is fenced in and plowed for crops. The growth of towns and cities in the region also means that roads are being built across the savanna. The expansion of farms means there is less land for animals. However, some countries, like Kenya and Tanzania, are creating national parks and game preserves to provide a protected area for these animals to live.

Living in the Tropical Rain Forests

There are several different ecosystems in the tropical rain forest. The floor of the rain forest is where thousands of varieties of insects live, including many types of butterflies. The butterflies are very important because they pollinate the flowers, allowing the plants to reproduce. The rivers and streams are home to fish, alligators, and crocodiles. Higher up in the trees, canopy layers are home to birds, frogs, toads, and snakes, as well as monkeys and chimpanzees. Rain forest canopies grow in multiple layers, with taller trees shading those at lower levels. This allows a wide variety of plants and animals to live and grow.



Top: A lion slows traffic as it crosses a road on the savanna of Tanzania.

Left: Crocodiles are at home in many of Africa's waterways, especially in the rain forest.



Throughout most of Africa's history, the tropical rain forests have been home to small groups of people who survived by gathering wood from the forest or living on small subsistence farms. Their simple lives had very little impact on their environment. That changed in the 1800s when Europeans arrived and discovered the riches in the rain forests. Land was cleared for large plantations, including those that harvested rubber for use in Europe's Industrial Revolution. Thousands of the people who had lived in the rain forests were forced to work on these plantations, and their traditional ways of life began to disappear.

The rain forests are still being destroyed today. The reason for deforestation now is commercial logging. Timber-cutting businesses also need roads and

heavy equipment to get the trees they cut to cities. These roads destroy more of the natural environment. Deforestation is causing the extinction of both plants and animals. Destruction of the forests also causes soil erosion and desertification.

Reviewing the Section

1. What are three of the most important rivers in Africa? Why are they so important to the people of Africa?
2. What is the Sahel?
3. How does the Sahara affect trade?
4. Where are the rain forests located in Africa? How do they affect trade?
5. What is the savanna? How does the savanna affect trade?
6. Copy the chart below and complete it with information from the passage.

Environmental Issue	Causes	Effects	Possible Solutions
Water Pollution			
Deforestation			
Desertification			

7. Putting It All Together: How does the geography of Africa affect where people live and how they trade? Where do most people live? Why? Which physical features make trade easier?

Top: To meet the demand for wood, people in Africa often clear large areas of forest.

Section 2

The People of Africa

As you read, look for

- ▶ the difference between religious and ethnic groups;
- ▶ the largest religious groups in Africa and how they came to Africa;
- ▶ the location of the major ethnic groups in Africa;
- ▶ ways in which the cultures of North Africa and Southwest Asia are similar;
- ▶ terms: **religious group**, **ethnic group**.



Religious and Ethnic Groups

There are many different ways to divide people. Two of the most common ways people are divided are based upon their religion and their ethnicity. A **religious group** shares a belief system in a god or gods, with a specific set of rituals and literature. The two largest religions in Africa are Islam and Christianity. Arabs brought Islam with them when they arrived hundreds of years ago. Today, North Africa and parts of East Africa are mainly Muslim. The other large religion found throughout Africa is Christianity. Europeans brought Christianity with them when they explored and colonized Africa during the 1800s.

An **ethnic group** is a group of people who share the same cultural ideas and beliefs that have been part of their community for generations. Some of the shared characteristics include language, religion, history, types of food, and a set of traditional stories, beliefs, or celebrations. People from different ethnic groups may share the same religion, even though they are from very different cultures. In Africa, there are thousands of different ethnic groups. Three examples are the Arabs, Bantu, and Swahili.



Above: The Agadir Mosque in Morocco is used as an Islamic worship center.

Left: This church in Cairo, Egypt, is used for worship by Coptic Christians.



Arabs

The Arabs arrived in North Africa in the 5th century when the first Muslim armies reached Egypt. After that, Arab armies, traders, and scholars began to spread across North Africa all the way to Morocco. Wherever the Arabs went, they brought Islam and the Arabic language with them. The Quran is written in Arabic, so it was necessary for people to learn Arabic if they wanted to read the Quran. Eventually, Arab traders began to lead caravans south across the Sahara as part of the gold and salt trade. This also brought Islam to the Sahel and regions further to the south. Meanwhile, Arabs were traveling by sea and across land down the eastern coast of Africa to the present-day countries of Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zanzibar.

These Arab traders married local women, and the process of blending cultures and religions began. The Arabic language, the religion of Islam, and many other aspects of Arab culture became part of Africa's culture. Today, Arabs can be found throughout Africa. They make up a majority of the people who live along the Mediterranean Sea in North Africa, and they are also found in some of the countries along the Indian Ocean in East Africa.

Bantu

The Bantu-speaking people of Africa have had a large impact on many different ethnic groups across central and southern Africa. Beginning over 2,000 years ago, they migrated in different waves from the Sahel, just south of the Sahara, to the central and southern parts of Africa.

From the earliest days, the Bantu were farmers and herds-men. They learned how to make tools from iron. As they migrated south and east across Africa, they followed rivers and streams, and they met many different groups of people. As a result of these interactions, the Bantu learned new skills, and they also shared their skills. Eventually, the Bantu began to marry into these other ethnic groups, which led to a blending of culture and traditions.

The Bantu migration was one of the largest movements of people in Africa's history. Many Bantu settled in areas where Islam was the main religion, so they converted to Islam. Other Bantu settled in areas where Christianity was the main religion. Still other groups settled where people had animist beliefs, which means they believe there are spirits in nature. They may feel a spiritual presence in rocks, trees, a waterfall, or a particularly beautiful place in the forest. Today, over 60 million people in central and southern Africa speak a Bantu-based language and share some of the Bantu culture. For this reason, many people think that the Bantu are more of a language group than an ethnic group.



**DID YOU
KNOW**



Hundreds of languages in central and southern Africa can be traced back to the Bantu migrations.

Top: A young Egyptian girl of Arab descent. **Middle Right:** This Bantu woman is weaving a traditional hat called a mokorotlo.

Swahili

The Swahili ethnic group is found along the coast of East Africa. Their culture began as a result of contact between Arab and Persian traders and marriage with the local Bantu population. As a result, people from Africa, Arabia, and areas across the Indian Ocean influenced the Swahili culture. Many people in Kenya, Tanzania, and Mozambique share the Swahili culture, language, history, and traditions. The blending of a Bantu language and Arabic is clearly seen in Swahili. While Swahili is considered a Bantu language, there are many Arabic words and phrases as well. The word Swahili comes from an Arabic word that means “one who lives on the coast.” Today, most Swahili live in cities instead of traditional farms, although many Swahili still fish and trade just as their ancestors did.

As a result of contact with Arab traders, most of the Swahili today are Muslims. Islam is among the factors that have created a common identity for such a diverse group of people. It is not unusual for Swahili men to wear charms around their necks containing verses of the Quran to protect them from harm. In addition, many Swahili also follow traditional beliefs that were part of the culture of East Africa before Arab traders arrived a thousand years ago. These local beliefs are called mila. One belief that is part of the mila is that there are spirits that can possess a person. Many Swahili also see a close link between their religious beliefs and the practice of medicine and healing. In fact, herbal medicines are often given along with prescribed prayers and rituals that are all thought to be part of the cure.



Reviewing the Section

1. What is the difference between religious and ethnic groups?
2. What are the two largest religious groups in Africa? How did each religion come to Africa?
3. Copy the chart below and fill it in with information from the reading.

Ethnic Group	Where Do They Live?	What Are the Main Religions Practiced?
Arab		
Bantu		
Swahili		

4. Why are the cultures of North Africa and Southwest Asia similar?
5. Why do many people think the Bantu should be considered a language group instead of an ethnic group?
6. Make a Prediction: Africa is home to hundreds of ethnic groups. Do you think this could lead to conflict or problems? Why or why not?

Top: The Swahili phrase “Hakuna matata” written on this motorboat roughly translates as “No worries.”

Section 3

An Overview of African History


 Setting a Purpose

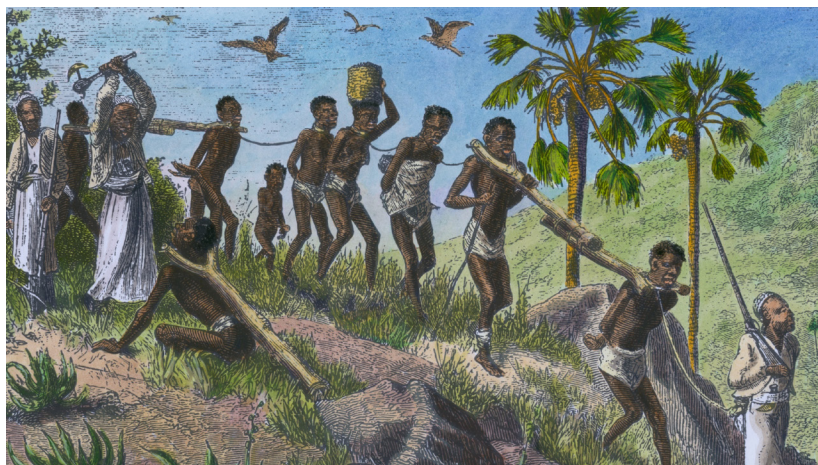
As you read, look for

- ▶ reasons for Europeans' interest in Africa;
- ▶ the Scramble for Africa;
- ▶ different ways the British and French controlled their colonies;
- ▶ when and why many African colonies gained their independence;
- ▶ the cause of political instability in Africa since independence;
- ▶ the goals and impact of the Pan-African movement;
- ▶ terms: **trans-Atlantic slave trade, imperialism, Scramble for Africa, colonies, indirect rule, assimilation, civil war, dictatorship, Pan-African movement.**



The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade

One of the most important events in African history was the arrival of Europeans. The first Europeans who landed on Africa's shores were explorers trying to find a route around Africa to India and the rest of Asia. Eventually, the Europeans became more interested in Africa as a source of enslaved laborers who could be sent to their colonies in the Americas. This led to the creation of the **trans-Atlantic slave trade**, which lasted from the 1500s until the middle of the 1800s. During this time, between 12 and 15 million Africans were captured by Europeans and sent on overcrowded ships across the Atlantic where they would be bought and sold, never seeing their homes or families again. The effects of the trans-Atlantic slave trade were devastating.



Top: A memorial to victims of the slave trade stands near the site of a slave market in Stone Town, Tanzania, in East Africa. **Right:** The trade that sent Africans into slavery across the Atlantic Ocean lasted over 300 years.

By the early 1800s, the major European countries had ended their slave trade. The United States ended its trans-Atlantic slave trade in 1808, although the ownership of slaves within the United States was legal until the 1860s.

During the years of the slave trade, Europeans stayed close to the coasts. However, the Dutch and British controlled parts of southern Africa. Eventually, competition for power among the Europeans forced them to move further into the interior of Africa in the 1800s as they looked for raw materials and began to create colonies. The small country of Belgium took control of the Congo. Britain, France, and Germany fought over control of Sudan and Egypt. The ethnic groups in Africa tried to fight against the Europeans. The Zulu nation fought against the British in South Africa. The Fulani tried to resist French control in what is now Nigeria. The Ashanti tried to maintain control of what is now Ghana. However, the Europeans had more advanced technology and weapons, so they were able to defeat the Africans.

The Age of Imperialism

During the 1800s, Europeans saw the number of colonies they had as a measure of national power, which was a key part of imperialism. **Imperialism** is the process through which a country controls another country. In the eyes of European rulers, a strong country was supposed to have colonies that would provide raw materials and markets to increase its wealth and importance in the world. Some countries wanted to control parts of Africa so they could protect their trade routes. For example, Great Britain wanted to control areas of Africa to protect transportation routes to British territories in India and Asia. Some countries were mainly interested in Africa's valuable natural resources. Gold, platinum, and diamonds were discovered in South Africa. Iron ore, coal, and uranium were found in other areas. The tropical rain forests in the Congo produced rubber, which was in high demand during the Industrial Revolution in Europe. European missionaries also came to Africa during this time, working to convert as many Africans as they could to Christianity.



Top: David Livingstone was a Scottish medical missionary and explorer of Africa in the 19th century. **Left:** Some buildings in parts of Africa show the influence of the Dutch people in their design.



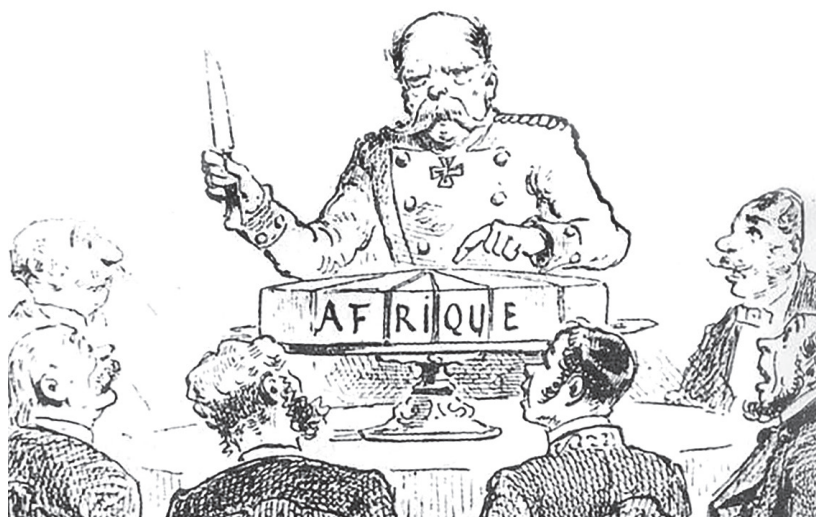
The competition between European countries to gain territory and colonies in Africa is called the **Scramble for Africa**. This competition almost led to war between the European countries. In 1884, the leaders of the major European countries met in Berlin to decide how to divide the land in Africa. The major outcome of the Berlin Conference was agreement on which European country controlled which parts of Africa. Unfortunately, no African leaders were invited to this conference. They were given no control over what was about to happen in their own lands. Nearly all Europeans who were involved in the colonization of Africa believed that the local people needed Europe's civilizing influence. Most Europeans knew nothing of the great cultures that were a part of Africa's history.

The Colonial Period

The colonial period in Africa began in the 1800s and lasted until the mid-1900s. The European countries tried different ways of ruling the African colonies. Some Europeans allowed large companies into the areas of Africa that they controlled to organize the African people in whatever ways would guarantee the most efficient workforce. No thought was given to culture or existing conflicts between ethnic groups. Other countries set up colonial governments. They forced the Africans to work, and they used their natural resources. African **colonies** (areas under control of another country) were divided into districts and put under the power of European officials who were expected to keep the peace, make a profit, and help "civilize" the African people.

Another way the Europeans ruled African colonies was a method called **indirect rule**. The British used this method. They would appoint local chiefs to be their enforcers—to collect taxes, run the British businesses, and put down any trouble that began to emerge. Africans were lured into these jobs with the promise of wealth, power, and influence, which did not last. The French tried a different approach, which was **assimilation**. In areas the French controlled, the Africans were forced to give up their own culture and customs and adopt the French language and ways of life.

Top: This political cartoon depicts English businessman Cecil Rhodes with his vision of British rule over all of Africa. **Right:** The Berlin Conference members are shown in this political cartoon carving the continent of Africa to share among themselves.



Though they worked to keep order in their African colonies, most European powers did not do anything to improve the lives of the Africans themselves, unless doing so would increase profits. Raw materials were mined and collected by the Africans, then sent to European factories. These factories would produce final goods that would then be shipped back to Africa and sold to the same people who had harvested the raw materials. European neglect of the African people remained until after World War II.

Independence in Africa

In the 1950s, change was in the air in Africa. Many Africans were openly opposed to the continuation of European rule. World Wars I and II had opened Africa to the rest of the world. Africans had fought on the side of Europeans who were fighting for their freedom. Now the Africans began to demand freedom for themselves. They realized colonialism was not equality for all. The Europeans in power had more rights and lived more comfortable lives than their African subjects. They were taking advantage of African land and labor, and they saw the African people as second-class citizens.

After World War II, European countries were focused on rebuilding their own countries and were no longer focused on their African colonies. As a result, the Europeans began to slowly give independence to their African colonies. By 1960, there were 27 independent countries. By 1975, over 47 countries were independent.

This independence, however, came at a high cost. When the Europeans were creating their colonies and establishing borders, they paid little attention to traditional loyalties and ethnic groups of the people living in Africa. Boundaries were drawn based on colonial practice, agreements, and resources, rather than the people who lived there. As a result, ethnic groups were divided among colonies, while rival ethnic groups were sometimes put into the same colonies. When colonies began to gain their independence, the new borders followed the colonial borders. This led to conflict in many of the newly created African countries. The European countries withdrew from their colonies without helping them create new and stable governments. As a result, **civil wars** (wars between citizens of the same country) and **dictatorships** (harsh rule by persons who rule with total authority) became common throughout many parts of Africa. The legacy of European colonialism still significantly affects many African countries today.



Top: One of the most notorious and brutal African dictators was Idi Amin of Uganda. An estimated 300,000 people were killed during his dictatorship, which earned him the name “Butcher of Uganda.” **Left:** Troops from Belgium, like these young men, fought in many African conflicts in the 20th century. This conflict, known as the Congo Crisis, cost an estimated 100,000 lives.

The Pan-African Movement

During the push for independence, a movement developed that called for unity among African people. The **Pan-African movement** began as a reaction to the terrible experiences of colonial rule. Its goal was for people of African descent around the world to think of Africa as a homeland. Pan-Africanism first gained support from Africans who were living in other parts of the world. They felt that all Africans, no matter where they lived, shared a bond with each other. They also wanted Africans all over the continent to think of themselves as one group of people, instead of separate ethnic groups, and to work together for the benefit of everyone. Another goal of the Pan-African movement was to end European control of Africa and to make Africa a homeland for all people of African descent. Supporters hoped this would help African countries work together to improve each other's economies.

Even though the peaceful unification of Africa has never happened, the Pan-African movement can take a lot of credit for sparking the independence movements that led to almost all African nations being free from European control by the 1980s. The Pan-African movement has also led to the creation of the African Union in 2002 that works to help the people across Africa.



Reviewing the Section

1. Why were Europeans first interested in Africa?
2. What was the Scramble for Africa?
3. What were the different ways the British and French controlled their colonies?
4. When did many African colonies gain their independence? Why?
5. Why did war and conflict happen in many different parts of Africa after independence?
6. What was the goal of the Pan-African movement? What did it lead to?

Top: Flag of the African Union. The organization's goal is to encourage economic development and cooperation among African nations. **Right:** The African Union's headquarters building is in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.



special Feature

South Sudan

When you located Sudan on the political map of Africa, did you notice the country to the south that is called South Sudan? Until 2011, South Sudan was actually part of Sudan. It is the youngest country in the world. Its path to independence, however, was not easy.

During the colonial period in African history, Sudan was a British colony. After Sudan gained independence in 1956, conflict between the north and south soon began. In fact, there have only been eleven years of peace in Sudan since independence! The people who live in northern Sudan are mainly Arab and practice Islam. The people who live in southern Sudan are from sixty different ethnic groups and practice traditional religions and Christianity. After a brief period of peace, the Second Sudanese Civil War began in 1983. The cause of the civil war was that the government of Sudan, located in the north, wanted to impose Sharia Law, or Islamic law, throughout Sudan. The people in the south revolted!

The president of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir, did not want to let southern Sudan break away. Al-Bashir had been the head of Sudan since 1989 after seizing power in a military coup. Southern Sudan has most of Sudan's oil deposits, about 5 to 7 billion barrels of oil. During the civil war, the area of Darfur in southern Sudan experienced the worst of the fighting. In fact, genocide (the deliberate killing of people who belong to a particular racial, political, or cultural group) occurred during the civil war in Darfur. Between 50,000 and 80,000 people were killed and between 1.2 million and 2 million people lost their homes and fled the war. Even now, this area is at risk of famine because of a shortage of food and water.

On July 9, 2011, South Sudan became an independent country, ending the civil war between Sudan and South Sudan. In the end, the civil war killed over 2 million people. Over 4 million people lost their homes and became displaced. While the people of South Sudan were happy to be free of Sudan's government, the peace and happiness did not last. The presence of over sixty different ethnic groups in South Sudan has led to conflict. Another civil war broke out in South Sudan in 2013 and lasted until 2015. Currently, there is an uneasy peace in South Sudan. It is one of the most undeveloped countries in the world. Less than 15 percent of the population owns a cell phone, and there are very few paved roads. Do you think South Sudan will ever have a lasting peace? Why or why not?



Top: Flag of South Sudan. **Above:** A damaged tank blocks a road in South Sudan, a reminder of the civil war there. **Bottom:** A remote mountain village in South Sudan. **Background:** A South Sudanese soldier is armed in case of attack during the civil war.

Section 4

Government Instability in Africa

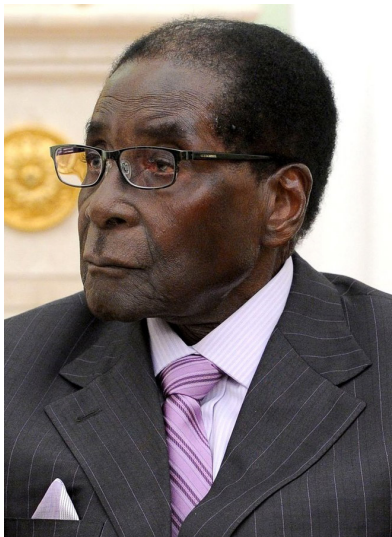

 Setting a Purpose

DID YOU KNOW?

Robert Mugabe became prime minister of Zimbabwe in 1980 and served as president from 1987 until he resigned in 2017 after impeachment proceedings were initiated against him.

As you read, look for

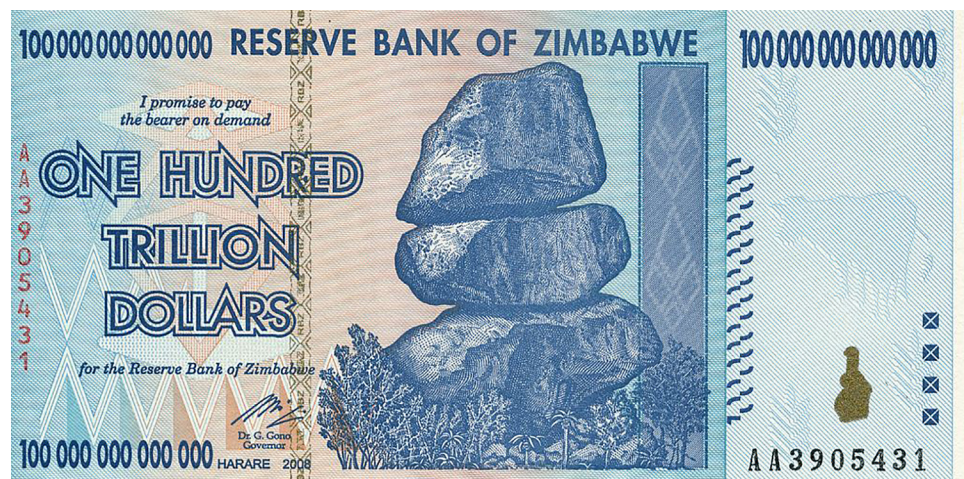
- ▶ reasons that led to unstable governments in Africa after independence;
- ▶ how unstable governments affect education;
- ▶ the gender gap in literacy between boys and girls in many parts of Africa;
- ▶ how the inability of unstable governments to fight disease affected health;
- ▶ the causes of famine;
- ▶ terms: **instability, HIV/AIDS, famine.**



Above: Robert Mugabe ruled Zimbabwe as prime minister, then president from 1980 until he resigned in 2017. **Right:** Zimbabwe's economic crisis in 2009 led leaders to print money with extraordinarily high denominations. This banknote perhaps would have bought a loaf of bread.

The Legacy of Colonialism

One of the most significant legacies of the European colonial period in Africa is the presence of unstable governments throughout Africa. As the Europeans withdrew from their African colonies, they did not help the people set up stable governments. To many African people, the reality of self-government was new, and they were not prepared to develop a new government. The borders for the new countries followed the colonial boundaries. These borders were drawn with no thought to the politics and relationships between the different groups of people in Africa. As a result, civil wars broke out in several countries, like Nigeria. In other countries, like Zimbabwe, dictators who were supported by the military seized power.



Government **instability** (a tendency toward unpredictable or erratic behavior) has led to many problems within African countries. Some of these problems include poor opportunities for education, lack of medicine and food, and the inability to combat disease and famine.

Access to Education in Africa

Government stability has a significant effect on education for children. In countries that have been relatively peaceful since independence, educational opportunities are better. In Kenya, for example, the government has made the improvement of schools a priority. Government investments into the education system have resulted in higher literacy rates for its people. Citizens who are better educated contribute more to the economy. The average Kenyan attends school for eleven years, and the government is working to increase this time. Kenya also has a number of private and public universities, although few Kenyans are able to continue studying for that long.

The people in other countries, however, have not been as fortunate. In some countries, civil war has caused a neglect of education. In Sudan and South Sudan, for example, during the long civil war between the two countries, children did not go to school because it was unsafe. As a result, the literacy rate in parts of Sudan and South Sudan is very low. In South Sudan, only 27 percent of the population over fifteen years old can read and write. The civil war left many schools in ruins, and the schools that remain have a difficult time in accessing school materials, like textbooks.

Another issue that affects access to education in Africa is gender. Boys are much more likely to attend school than girls. This is especially common in rural areas, where the traditional role of girls was to stay home and learn how to cook and clean so they would be ready for marriage. While girls in some rural areas are able to attend school, they often do not attend as long as boys do. There are government programs that are working to close the gap in education between boys and girls.



DID YOU KNOW ?

About 40 percent of African adults are illiterate. Of those, about two-thirds are women.



Top: American entertainer Oprah Winfrey pledged money to build a school to promote education and leadership for girls in South Africa. The school opened in 2002. **Left:** A group of children attend school in a Kenyan orphanage.

special Feature

Jimmy Carter and the End of the Guinea Worm

Chances are you have never heard of the Guinea worm. Americans are lucky enough to live in a part of the world where the Guinea worm has never been a problem. Up until the 1980s, the Guinea worm was found in twenty-one countries throughout Africa and Asia and infected over three million people. Today, however, it is only found in four countries: Ethiopia, South Sudan, Mali, and Chad. If it is completely destroyed, it will only be the second disease in the world, behind smallpox, to be eradicated.

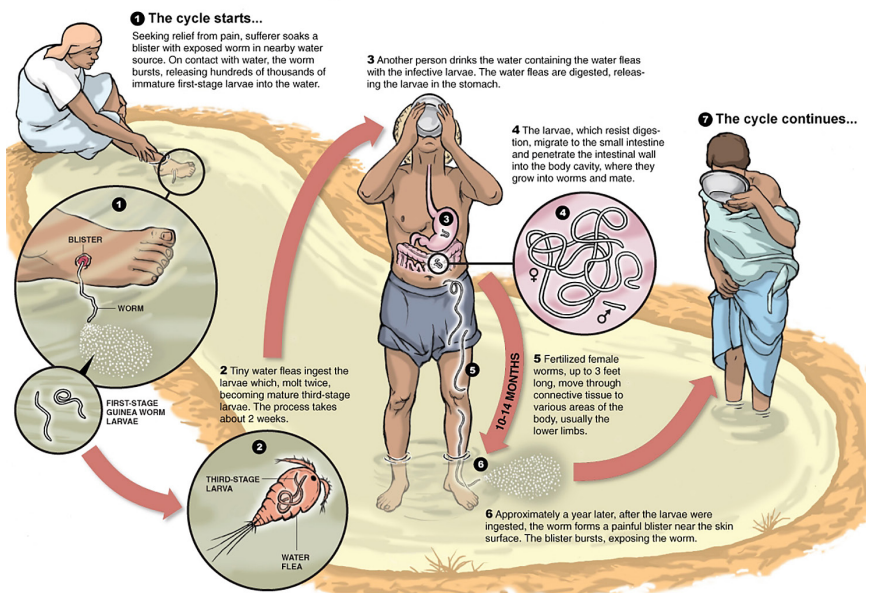
The official name of the Guinea worm is *Dracunculus medinensis*. It is a parasite that lives in water. People swallow the Guinea worm larvae when they drink water that is untreated. Female worms begin to grow in the stomach, but infected people have no symptoms for almost a year. When fully developed, the worms try to exit the body, usually in the leg or foot. This creates a burning sensation that people try to soothe by putting their foot in water. This causes the worm to release larvae into the water, starting the cycle over again. Attempts to remove the worm from the foot or leg are painful and can sometimes cause permanent damage to joints.

The good news about Guinea worm is that it is only found in four countries today thanks to former US President Jimmy Carter and the Carter Center. The Carter Center has focused on eradicating Guinea worm from the earth since 1986. While there is no cure for Guinea worm, it can be avoided. For example, drinking filtered water is one way to avoid Guinea worm. Another way is to prevent infected people from putting their infected legs and feet into the water. The work of Jimmy Carter and the Carter Center is remarkable. In 2015, there were only 22 cases reported worldwide. What do you think can be done to prevent the spread of waterborne diseases, like the Guinea worm, in Africa?



Top: The Guinea worm can grow up to 3 feet inside a person's body. **Above:** In 2007, US President Jimmy Carter visited Savelugu Hospital in Ghana. President Carter and the Carter Center played a huge role in Ghana's fight to eradicate Guinea worm disease. **Below:** The life cycle of Guinea worm disease.

The Life Cycle of Guinea Worm Disease



The Carter Center / Graphic by Al Granberg

Combating HIV/AIDS in Africa

Another area where government instability has caused problems is in the control and treatment of diseases. Sub-Saharan Africa has one of the highest **HIV/AIDS** (Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) infections in the world. It is estimated that there are about 26 million people living in Africa with AIDS. Two-thirds of new HIV/AIDS cases are in sub-Saharan Africa. Many of the victims are young and middle-age adults, which means that their deaths have left millions of orphans. Poor health care systems, poverty, and lack of government organization are all contributing to the rising number of cases. Additionally, many people in Africa still are not educated about the disease and how to prevent it. Unstable governments are not able to organize programs to help people learn about prevention. While there are now drugs that can slow down the progress of the disease, they are very expensive, which means that many of the people who need them cannot afford them.

Zimbabwe has one of the highest rates of HIV/AIDS in the world. Government corruption, civil unrest, and suspicion of offers of help from other countries have made Zimbabwe's problems even worse. Its struggling economy means that it is impossible for most people to afford medicine. Political unrest and a harsh government have created many refugees in Zimbabwe, making the health crisis even worse.

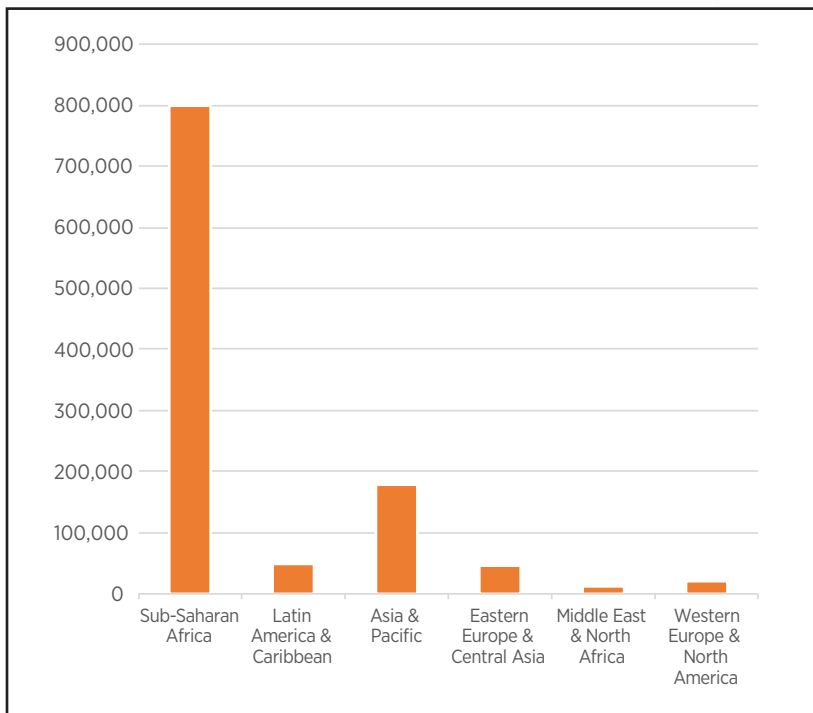


Figure 8.2
AIDS-Related Deaths by Region (2015)

Top: Doctors in Africa have been working to decrease the spread of HIV/AIDS cases on the continent.



Nigeria has a lower rate of HIV/AIDS infection than many other African nations. Its rate is 3.1 percent, which means that about 3 million people in Nigeria are currently infected. The Nigerian government has struggled with dictatorships and civil war in the past and was not able to make fighting HIV/AIDS a priority until the 1990s. Since then, however, Nigeria has made HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care a main concern. While the rate of infection is still a problem, the government is working hard to educate its people and make treatment available.

Botswana is a country where the government has been stable. In fact, Botswana has enjoyed five decades of peace since gaining independence in 1966. The country's economy is stable because of its large supply of diamonds. While many of the people in Botswana are poor, the country's stable government has been very responsive to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The government has provided education and prevention training for its citizens and medical care for those who are already infected.

Combating Famine in Africa

Government instability can also lead to famine. **Famine** is when there is a shortage of food and people are unable to get enough food to eat. People can starve to death as a result of famine. Famines in Africa today are caused by climate change, political conflict—which can disrupt farming—low prices for African goods on the world market, and poorly organized or corrupt governments.

One country where government policies have led to famine and starvation is Zimbabwe. The government began a land reform program that gave land to native Zimbabweans. The old landowners who were often associated with the colonial period were run off their land. Chaos followed and many farms were not productive. The new owners were unable to produce as much food as the old owners, which caused a food shortage that led to famine.



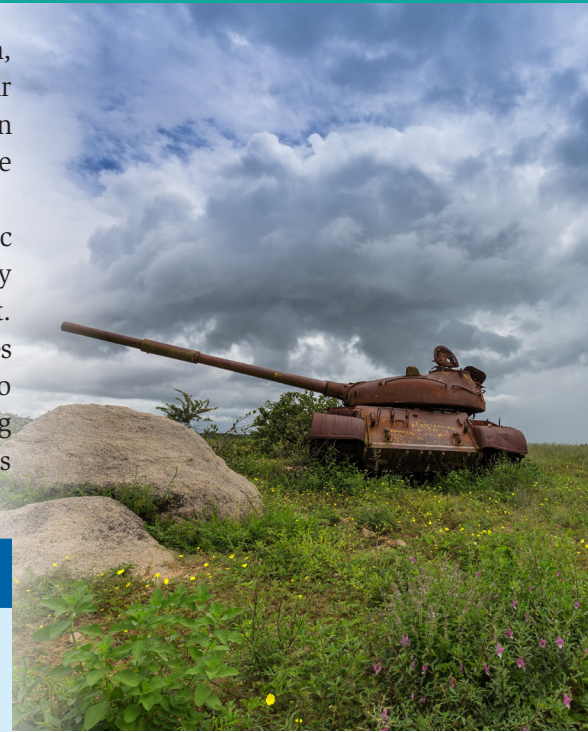
Top: Ongoing research is helping to find treatments for many diseases in Africa. **Right:** Food aid from around the world helped Ethiopians avoid starvation in 2014.

Civil wars can also lead to famine. After a long civil war in Angola, hundreds of thousands of people who had left the country during war returned, which led to food shortages. During the long Sudan-South Sudan civil war, famine was a common occurrence. Millions of South Sudanese now depend on international aid to avoid starvation.

Uganda has had to deal with fighting among many different ethnic groups. Conflicts have occurred between armed gangs, as well as military factions. Some rebel forces have even tried to overthrow the government. These conflicts disrupt agriculture and trade, which makes food shortages common. When international aid arrives, the government is supposed to be the group that distributes food. However, if the government is dealing with armed rebel forces, it will be unable to send the food where it needs to go.

Reviewing the Section

1. What are two conditions that led to unstable governments in Africa after independence?
2. How do unstable governments make it more difficult for children to attend school?
3. Why does access to education in Kenya and Sudan differ?
4. Why is there an education gap between boys and girls in many parts of Africa?
5. How do unstable governments make fighting diseases, like HIV/AIDS, difficult?
6. What is famine and how is it caused?
7. Putting It All Together: How do unstable governments negatively affect the people of Africa?



Top: An abandoned Soviet tank is a reminder of the war in Angola and the loss of thousands of lives. **Bottom:** In 2008, these Ugandan soldiers prepared for training by the US Army. The US government believed such training would help strengthen and stabilize Uganda.

Chapter Review

Chapter Summary

Section 1: The Geography of Africa

- Africa is the second-largest continent in the world and contains many different climates, countries, and cultures.
- The continent has many impressive physical features including the Sahara Desert, Nile River, and Mt. Kilimanjaro.
- Due to population growth and pollution, there is little access to clean water in many countries. This may prompt conflicts in the future.
- Desertification and deforestation are leading to a loss of agricultural land and changing lifestyles.

Section 2: The People of Africa

- There are thousands of ethnic groups in Africa, including Arabs, Bantu, and Swahili, which predate the current countries.
- The two major religions in Africa are Islam, introduced by Middle Eastern traders, and Christianity, brought by European colonizers.

Section 3: An Overview of African History

- Modern Africa has been heavily shaped by Europeans who appeared in the 16th century.
- Europeans built coastal forts and set up the Atlantic slave trade to send enslaved Africans to European colonies for about 300 years.
- Once slavery ended in the 19th century, Europeans moved further into the continent, dominating Africans and taking natural resources.
- During the 1950s, many Africans gained independence from Europe and accepted the idea of pan-Africanism.

Section 4: Government Instability in Africa

- The legacy of colonization left many African countries with few positive examples of self-government and with political lines that joined many different ethnic groups.
- Countries with stable governments have more access to education and better health care to fight epidemics like HIV/AIDS.

Activities for Learning

Reviewing People, Places, and Things



Create a crossword puzzle with the following words. Create clues for each of the words.

imperialism	savanna
ethnic group	water wars
Bantu	Islam
Taureg	Great Rift Valley

Understanding the Facts



1. What are the four major geographic regions of Africa?
2. The “oil delta” is at the mouth of which river?
3. What are some human activities that lead to deforestation?
4. What religion(s) do the Bantu-speaking people practice?
5. The Swahili culture can be found in large numbers in what countries?
6. What is indirect rule?
7. What is the Pan-African movement?
8. What are three causes of famine in Africa?
9. How does Kenya’s education system compare to other African countries?
10. How do unstable governments affect the spread of HIV/AIDS?

Developing Critical Thinking



1. Desertification is a pressing issue for African countries that border deserts. Based on your knowledge of desertification, what steps do you think people could take to slow or even reverse this process?
2. This chapter mentions how government instability in Africa is influenced by colonialism. Do you think different forms of colonial governments created specific difficulties after independence? Use at least one system for specific examples.

Writing across the Curriculum



1. Write a short report on how ethnic and religious groups differ using at least one ethnic group discussed in this chapter as an example.
2. Access to clean water is becoming a growing issue in Africa. Write a short report describing why water can be hard to find and unsafe to drink. Discuss possible future consequences if these problems are not solved.

Applying Your Skills



1. Make a chart to compare government stability in four African countries. Include the name of the country, if it is stable or unstable, and the main positive or negative impact this has on citizens.
2. Create a timeline of African countries’ growing independence and the growth of the Pan-African movement. Include at least five points and draw two conclusions about societal values that influenced this history.

Exploring Technology



1. Using the Internet, find a list of the many ethnic groups in Africa. Choose one that is the most interesting to you and, using credible sources, provide the following information: (a) name of ethnic group, (b) location, (c) language, (d) religion, (e) distinct cultural features, and (f) population. List your source(s).
2. Use satellite images in Google Maps to locate the following: (a) Sahara Desert, (b) “Green Line,” (c) Nile River, (d) Great Rift Valley, and (e) Lake Victoria.