

Ethnic Conflict in Africa: A Historical Investigation

OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES

In this lesson students will contrast historical maps of African tribes, kingdoms, and ethnicities with the colonial and contemporary political boundaries in Africa. Students will investigate the source of these discrepancies, as well as the current impact on ethnic conflicts throughout Africa. Finally, students will discuss what they learned about making boundaries and the significance of human rights in establishing ethnic diversity.

Students will be able to...

- Describe how Africa's colonial boundaries were established.
- Identify specific countries where political boundaries do not correspond with cultural, ethnic, and linguistic boundaries.
- Summarize the impact of imperialism and colonial boundaries on current African conflicts.
- Analyze the role of protected human rights in establishing an ethnically diverse society.

GRADES

8th Global Studies and 10th Geography and World History

TIME

2 Days

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- ✓ Computer Internet access for students
- ✓ Handout: "Ethnic Conflict in Africa: A Historical Investigation"
- ✓ Headphones (for viewing the YouTube video and interactive map)

MINNESOTA SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS & BENCHMARKS

(8th GRADE)

Standard 1. People use geographic representations and geospatial technologies to acquire, process and report information within a spatial context.

8.3.1.1.1 Obtain and analyze geographic information from a variety of print and electronic sources to investigate places or answer specific geographic questions; provide rationale for its use.

For example: Sources—Geographic Information Systems (GIS), online atlases and databases, Google Earth or similar programs, maps, aerial photos and other images. Geographic questions—Where are we? What is this location like? What are the characteristics of this location? How has this place been affected by the movement of people, goods and ideas? How do people modify the environment to fit their needs? How do people organize locations into regions? How is this place similar to or different from other places? Questions might also relate to urban development, environmental concerns, transportation issues, flood control.

Standard 7. The characteristics, distribution and complexity of the earth's cultures influence human systems (social, economic and political systems).

8.3.3.7.1 Describe independence and nationalist movements in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, including India's independence movement.

For example: Creation of South Sudan, attempted Biafran independence movement, separation of Singapore from Malaysia, separation of Bangladesh from Pakistan.

History

Standard 13. Post- World War II political reorganization produced the Cold War balance of power and new alliances that were based on competing economic and political doctrines. (The World After World War

II: 1950-1989)

8.4.3.13.3 Describe political challenges and struggles of newly independent countries during the Cold War era. (The World After World War II: 1950-1989)

For example: Ghana (1957), Uganda (1962), Algeria (1962), Belize (1945), Mozambique (1975), Cambodia (1953), Indonesia (1949), Philippines (1946).

(9th GRADE)

Standard 1. People use geographic representations and geospatial technologies to acquire, process and report information within a spatial context.

9.3.1.1.2 Apply geographic information from a variety of print and electronic sources to interpret the past and present and plan for the future; provide rationale for using specific technologies for each application.

For example: Technologies—aerial photographs, satellite-produced imagery, and geographic information systems (GIS). Applications—determine obstacles that needed to be overcome in building the Suez and Panama Canals; gauge the extent of water pollution in a harbor complex in South Africa.

Standard 8. Processes of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of the earth's surface.

9.3.3.8.2 Describe the effects of nationalism and supranationalism on the establishment of political boundaries and economic activities.

Standard 8. Processes of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of the earth's surface.

9.3.3.8.3 Analyze the impact of colonialism on the emergence of independent states and the tensions that arise when the boundaries of political units do not correspond to the nationalities or ethnicities of the people living within them.

World History

Standard 11. Industrialization ushered in wide-spread population growth and migration, new colonial empires and revolutionary ideas about government and political power. (The Age of Revolutions: 1750-1922)

9.4.3.11.7 Describe European imperialism; explain its effects on interactions with colonized peoples in Africa and Asia. (The Age of Revolutions: 1750-1922)

For example: Berlin Conference, Treaty of Nanking, Sepoy Rebellion (India's First War of Independence).

Standard 13. Post- World War II geopolitical reorganization produced the Cold War balance of power and new alliances that were based on competing economic and political doctrines. (The World After World War II: 1950-1989)

For example: The Congo, Nicaragua, Afghanistan.

9.4.3.13.3 Explain how the Cold War shaped the global geopolitical climate, including proxy wars and the Non-Aligned Movement. (The World After World War II: 1950-1989)

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

Day 1

Opening

Share the following quote with the students: "We have been engaged in drawing lines upon maps where no white man's foot ever trod; we have been giving away mountains and rivers and lakes to each other, only hindered by the small impediment that we never knew exactly where the mountains and rivers and lakes were." (Lord Salisbury)

Development

The teacher will review the directions for the handout, “Ethnic Conflict in Africa: A Historical Investigation”, and explain how to use the Library of Congress website.

The teacher will divide students into pairs and have them examine the maps from the Library of Congress and answer the guiding questions on the front of the handout.

Students continue on the back of the handout by progressing through the interactive maps and answering the additional guiding questions.

Closing

Students share their responses for the culminating question from each activity.

- What effects might the differences between ethnic and political boundaries have upon the people living in these countries?
- Given what you know about African boundaries, why do you think there have been so many civil wars in Africa since they’ve gained their independence?

Day 2

Opening

The teacher will quickly review the maps students investigated yesterday.

Development

Students then view the YouTube video, discuss what they saw, and write a two-paragraph summary on the lasting impact of colonialism on modern Africa.

Students will move their desks into a circle to facilitate the class discussion. Explain the procedure and rules for conducting the discussion. Use the following discussion questions to guide and redirect the discussion:

1. Who bears responsibility for the civil wars and genocides in Liberia, Rwanda, Sudan, etc. in the last 30 years?
2. What factors should be taken into account when creating political boundaries?
3. Would it really be better to make hundreds of countries according to each of the ethnic groups?
4. The U.S. is one of the most ethnically diverse countries. What allows diversity to work here and prevents civil wars?
5. Imagine this class represents the United Nations. What actions could we take to help the current problems and prevent further damage from occurring?

Students will return desks to their original position and be given the position paper assignment. The teacher will explain directions for the reflective one-page paper answering the following question: Imagine this class represents the United Nations. What actions could we take to help the current problems and prevent further damage from occurring?

Closing

Review the requirements for the worksheet and position paper. Invite students with questions, or who would like to do an extended activity, to come forward with the time remaining.

Assessment

- “Ethnic Conflict in Africa: A Historical Investigation” Handout
- Two-Paragraph Summary
- Class Discussion
- Position Paper

Answer Key: "Ethnic Conflict in Africa: A Historical Investigation" Handout

Map 1 – Africa 1725

1. 1725
2. 13/14
3. 5°N - 20°N, 20°E - 35°E
4. 4

Map 2 – Africa 1883 Languages

1. 1883
2. 6
3. 4
4. scattered throughout

Map 3 – Africa 1970 Ethnolinguistics

1. 1996
2. An ethnic group is a group of people whose members identify with each other through a common heritage, consisting of a common culture, including a shared language or dialect.
3. 15
4. Liberia, Ivory Coast, Mali, Upper Volta, Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Tanzania, South-West Africa

Map 4 – Africa 1972 Tribes, People, and Nations

1. 1972
2. 3,000 tribes and 700 languages
3. They don't match up at all, several tribes are split into different countries by political boundaries, some countries have many ethnicities within them
4. Could lead to loss of ethnic identity within tribes, could cause conflict between rival tribes within the same country

Introduction – Interactive Map

1. ports along the coast
2. Berlin Conference
3. They are largely the same

Africa before the Berlin Conference – Interactive Map

1. Indigenous Polities
2. North and East
3. the value of African resources became better known

Africa after the Berlin Conference – Interactive Map

1. drew borders recognizing their respective dominion
2. 1885-1914
3. WWI

From Colonialism to Independence – Interactive Map

1. 1950s
2. 1960s
3. competing ethnicities trying to gain control over the land and its resources

Website Resources

“Colonialism in 10 Minutes: The Scramble for Africa” (9:48) excerpted from “Uganda Rising” at YouTube. This video provides information about colonialism and its direct connections to ethnic conflicts in the late 20th and early 21st centuries (WARNING: some images may be too graphic for younger viewers).

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTP8ZIXnoMM&feature=related>

“A Brief History of European Colonization in Africa” (4:00) excerpted from “Uganda Rising” at YouTube. This video is the first 4 minutes of “Colonialism in 10 Minutes: The Scramble for Africa”.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pis5f085P3M>

“The Colonial Legacy in Africa” (2:10) at YouTube. This video provides a brief summary of the colonial legacy. A transcript of Africans’ responsibility is also included.

<http://bigthink.com/videos/the-colonial-legacy-in-africa>

“African Independence” trailer (1:20) at YouTube. You might want to view or purchase the entire feature film length documentary.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwiWXJXnufs>

Student Website Resources

“Africa: Corrected from the observations of the Royal Society at London and Paris” (1725) at Library of Congress. This map shows the major kingdoms of Africa in 1725 by John Senex of the Royal Society at London and Paris.

<http://www.loc.gov/item/2005625330>

“A language map of Africa” (1883) at Library of Congress. This map shows the major language groups of Africa in 1883 by Ernest George Ravenstein of Stanford’s Geology.

<http://www.loc.gov/item/2005625334>

“Africa, ethnolinguistic groups” (1996) at Library of Congress. This map shows the major ethnolinguistic groups of Africa in 1996 by the Central Intelligence Agency.

<http://www.loc.gov/item/96680239>

“The Times map of the tribes, peoples, & nations of modern Africa” (1972) at Library of Congress. This map shows the major tribes, peoples, and nations of Africa in 1972 by Roy Lewis of the London Times.

<http://www.loc.gov/item/73691651>

“Africa” (2010) at Library of Congress. This map shows the countries of Africa in 2010 by the Central Intelligence Agency.

<http://www.loc.gov/item/2010587939>

“African History” at Mapping History (Interactive Map) University of Oregon. This website provides information and interactive maps on Africa before, during, and after European colonization.

<http://pages.uoregon.edu/maphist/english/AF/AF01-00.html>

Ethnic Conflict in Africa: A Historical Investigation

Map 1 – Africa 1725 at <http://www.loc.gov/item/2005625330>

1. When was this map created? _____
2. How many kingdoms (represented by color coded regions) are identified on just the continent of Africa? _____
3. Using your modern reference map of Africa, what are the approximate coordinate ranges for latitude and longitude for the country of Sudan? _____
4. Now find how many kingdoms (shaded regions) existed in what is modern day Sudan? _____

Map 2 – Africa 1883 Languages at <http://www.loc.gov/item/2005625334>

1. When was this map created? _____
2. How many language families are identified on the continent of Africa? _____
3. Using your coordinate ranges for modern Sudan, how many language families are identified in this region? _____
4. According to the map, are the language families scattered throughout the continent or in unified zones or regions? _____

Map 3 – Africa 1970 Ethnolinguistics at <http://www.loc.gov/item/96680239>

1. When was this map created? _____
2. Use a dictionary or online encyclopedia to define an ethnic group. _____

3. How many different ethnic groups does this map identify in Africa at this time? _____
4. Name 8 countries that have 3 or more different ethnic groups within their borders.

Map 4 – Africa 1972 Tribes, People, and Nations at <http://www.loc.gov/item/73691651>

1. When was this map created? _____
2. According to the key, how many identifiable tribes and languages are there in Africa at this time? _____
3. Compare the tribal boundaries to the political boundaries of each country. What observations can be made in comparison of the two? _____

4. What effects might these similarities or differences have upon the people living in these countries? _____

Introduction at <http://pages.uoregon.edu/maphist/english/AF/AF01-00.html>

1. From 1480 to 1870 where were European outposts located in Africa? _____

2. What was the name given to the meeting in which European leaders established ground rules for claiming territory in Africa? _____
3. How do those boundaries established by European colonization compare to Africa's boundaries today? _____

Africa before the Berlin Conference at <http://pages.uoregon.edu/maphist/english/AF/AF01-01.html>

1. Who had a greater portion of control of the African continent through the mid 1880's?

2. What regions of the continent did Muslim groups control? _____
3. Why did Europeans increase their holdings in Africa during the 19th century? _____

Africa after the Berlin Conference at <http://pages.uoregon.edu/maphist/english/AF/AF01-02.html>

1. What did the Europeans do at the Berlin Conference? _____
2. Between what years did the Europeans finally explore the regions they had claimed?

3. The outbreak of which event marked the establishment of European colonization? _____

From Colonialism to Independence at <http://pages.uoregon.edu/maphist/english/AF/AF01-04.html>

1. In what decade did Sudan gain its independence? _____
2. In what decade did the majority of African nations gain their independence? _____
3. Given what you know about African boundaries, why do you think there have been so many civil wars in Africa since they've gained their independence? _____
