

Africa: Shaped by the Past: Teacher's Guide

Grade Level: 6-8

Curriculum Focus: Geography

Lesson Duration: Three class periods

Program Description

Africa's long history dates back to the dawn of man, and the past strongly influences the lives of Africans today. Segments present the stories of several different regions. This program includes one feature segment and four short segments.

Onscreen Questions

- How have the lives of Egypt's fellaheen changed in modern Africa?
 - How can clothing be a sign of belonging?
 - How were the Europeans able to purchase enslaved Africans?
 - What were some of the reasons that black South Africans fought against the apartheid government?
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Lesson Plan

Student Objectives

- Review facts about Cleopatra and other rulers of ancient Egypt.
- Research basic facts about one Egyptian ruler, and create a "Rulers of Egypt" trading card.

Materials

- *Africa: Shaped by the Past* video and VCR, or DVD and DVD player
- Computer with Internet access
- Print resources about Egyptian rulers, from pharaohs to Ptolemy
- Index cards
- Materials to create trading cards (markers, colored pencils, glue, scissors)

Procedures

1. Review the program's "Sunken City" segment, then identify Egypt and Alexandria on a classroom map. Ask students to name the Egyptian ruler whose palace was excavated in the program (Cleopatra). Explain that Cleopatra ruled Egypt from 51 to 30 B.C. She was the last of the pharaohs, or rulers of ancient Egypt. The first pharaoh ruled Egypt in 3000 B.C., so it's not surprising that hundreds of pharaohs ruled during the height of ancient Egypt. However, some were more powerful and influential, and some are more famous today.
2. Tell students that they are going to research different rulers and create their own trading card with basic facts and at least one image. Assign students one of the following Egyptian rulers. (These are just suggestions; print and online resources will provide many others.)
 - Thutmose III
 - Hatshepsut
 - Tutankhamun
 - Ramses I
 - Seti I
 - Ramses II
 - Akhenaten and Nefertiti
 - Alexander the Great
 - Ptolemy
 - Cleopatra
3. Tell students that they should research their ruler and gather the information below. In addition, encourage students to print out or sketch pictures of their ruler and any monument or artifact related to that person.
 - Name
 - Years of reign
 - Important accomplishments
 - Cool fact
4. Have students use print and online resources in their research. The following Web sites may be helpful:
 - Discovery: Valley of the Kings
<http://dsc.discovery.com/convergence/greatpyramid/valley/valley.html>
 - Pharaohs of the Sun (Akhenaten)
<http://www.mfa.org/egypt/amarna/index.html>
 - Akhenaten and Tutankhamun
<http://www.akhet.co.uk/mainpage.htm>
 - Tutankhamun
<http://www.civilization.ca/civil/egypt/egtut01e.html>



- Hatshepsut
<http://www.civilization.ca/civil/egypt/eghats1e.html>
 - Cleopatra of Egypt
<http://www.fmnh.org/cleopatra/cleopatra.html>
 - Cleopatra: The Last Pharaoh
<http://ce.eng.usf.edu/pharos/alexandria/History/cleo.html>
 - Pharaohs Timeline (see links)
<http://www.clevelandart.org/archive/pharaoh/time.html>
 - History for Kids: Ancient Egypt
<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/egypt/index.htm>
5. Once students have completed their initial research, give them one full class period to create their trading card on an index card. Have them write important data on one side of their card, and place an image on the other. The image can be a picture of the ruler or a monument or artifact associated with the ruler's reign.
 6. Create a timeline on a bulletin board and have students pin their cards along the timeline.

Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- **3 points:** Students thoroughly researched their ruler and created a complete card, one that included all of the requested information.
- **2 points:** Students satisfactorily researched their ruler and created an adequate card, one that included most, but not all, of the requested information.
- **1 point:** Students minimally researched their ruler and created an incomplete card, one that had little or none of the requested information.

Vocabulary

ancient

Definition: Of or relating to times long past, especially those before the fall of the Western Roman Empire (A.D. 476)

Context: Alexandria was the capital of the ancient world.

archaeologist

Definition: A scientist who studies the life and culture of ancient peoples by studying their material remains (such as ruins and artifacts)

Context: Archaeologists are still uncovering artifacts and discovering new facts about ancient Egypt.



artifact

Definition: An object made by humans, such as a primitive tool; an object remaining from a particular period

Context: Artifacts left behind by ancient civilizations provide clues about how people lived in those times.

pharaoh

Definition: A ruler in ancient Egypt; sometimes called a king

Context: In ancient Egypt, the pharaoh was considered a god.

Academic Standards

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit <http://www.mcrel.org/>.

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- Geography – Human Systems: Understands the forces of cooperation and conflict that shape the divisions of Earth's surface
- Language Arts – Viewing: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media; Reading: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of informational texts

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)

NCSS has developed national guidelines for teaching social studies. To become a member of NCSS, or to view the standards online, go to <http://www.socialstudies.org>

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- Culture
 - Time, Continuity, and Change
 - People, Places, and Environment
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Support Materials

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the [Discoveryschool.com](http://www.discoveryschool.com) Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>
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DVD Content

This program is available in an interactive DVD format. The following information and activities are specific to the DVD version.

How To Use the DVD

The DVD starting screen has the following options:

Play Video – This plays the video from start to finish. There are no programmed stops, except by using a remote control. With a computer, depending on the particular software player, a pause button is included with the other video controls.

Video Index – Here the video is divided into five parts (see below), indicated by video thumbnail icons. Watching all parts in sequence is similar to watching the video from start to finish. Brief descriptions and total running times are noted for each part. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the remote for TV playback; on a computer, click once to highlight a thumbnail and read the accompanying text description and click again to start the video.

Curriculum Units – These are specially edited video segments pulled from different sections of the video (see below). These nonlinear segments align with key ideas in the unit of instruction. They include onscreen pre- and post-viewing questions, reproduced below in this Teacher's Guide. Total running times for these segments are noted. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the TV remote or click once on the Curriculum Unit title on a computer.

Standards Link – Selecting this option displays a single screen that lists the national academic standards the video addresses.

Teacher Resources – This screen gives the technical support number and Web site address.

Video Index

I. Life on the River (2 min.)

Egyptian fellaheen have farmed in the fertile Nile River valley for centuries. Learn about the fellaheen and the modern threats to their ancient traditions and culture.

II. The Fabric of Society (2 min.)

Clothing plays an important role in most African cultures. View examples of traditional African garb while exploring some of the more modern, Western-style clothing worn in many African countries today.

III. Sunken City (35 min.)

Follow scientists as they attempt to uncover what led to the destruction of ancient Alexandria and what it means for its modern-day namesake, now standing upon the same Mediterranean shore.

IV. Africa's Slave Trade (3 min.)

Journey back in time to a dark period in African history and experience what life was like for African slaves taken away from their homes and sold to European traders.



V. Apartheid's Legacy (3 min.)

For many years, the laws governing South Africa kept blacks and whites apart. Learn about apartheid and witness the changes that have taken place in South Africa since apartheid's demise.

Curriculum Units

1. Farming the Nile

Pre-viewing question

Q: What traditions have been passed down in your family?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Who are the fellaheen, and what do they produce?

A: Egyptian farmers are known as fellaheen. They make up about 29 percent of Egypt's workforce. They produce wheat, rice, cotton, dates, beans, and citrus fruits.

2. Dressing the Part

Pre-viewing question

Q: What does your clothing say about you?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What fabrics and clothing are typically associated with your religion or culture?

A: Answers will vary.

3. A Mysterious Disappearance

Pre-viewing question

Q: What do you think is the most dangerous kind of natural disaster?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What do you think destroyed the city of Alexandria?

A: Answers will vary.

4. Sifting Through the Remains

Pre-viewing question

Q: What do you think the divers will find when looking for Alexandria's remains?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Why did the divers find remains from several cultural periods?

A: Answers will vary.



5. New Theories

Pre-viewing question

Q: Are earthquakes prevalent in the Mediterranean?

A: Yes. Italy, Greece, and Turkey are all considered to be part of an earthquake danger zone.

Post-viewing question

Q: Why did scientists originally dismiss an earthquake as the cause of Alexandria's destruction?

A: They thought Alexandria was outside the earthquake danger zone. However, the underwater ruins proved there was a lot of possible earthquake damage to the sunken city.

6. A High-Tech Hunt

Pre-viewing question

Q: How does modern science help us figure out the past?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Why must every archaeological find be categorized and inventoried?

A: Everything found at a site can offer clues about the past. In old Alexandria, coins might indicate when the city was destroyed; lots of gold might indicate residents fled in a hurry.

7. Preparing for Modern Catastrophe

Pre-viewing question

Q: How can clues to our past help us make decisions about the future?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Why is the fate of ancient Alexandria a concern in the 21st century?

A: About 4 million people live in modern Alexandria. Knowing what happened could help prevent a similar tragedy and benefit other cities facing a similar threat.

8. An Ancient Flood?

Pre-viewing question

Q: Do you think Alexandria was destroyed by an earthquake or a massive flood?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What is the evidence of a flood in ancient Alexandria?

A: According to text from 8th century Egypt, the flood levels of the Nile during that time were the highest ever recorded. The collapsed buildings and pillars could indicate a flood or an earthquake.

9. Rebuilding: A Recipe for Disaster

Pre-viewing question

Q: Why do we continue to build cities in areas prone to large natural disasters?

A: Answers will vary.



Post-viewing question

Q: What did the crack in the seafloor indicate to the scientists?

A: The deep chasm near the ruins of Alexandria indicated that the city had been destroyed, or partially destroyed, at an earlier date and rebuilt.

10. Piecing Together the Puzzle

Pre-viewing question

Q: Would you rebuild your house if it were destroyed by a natural disaster?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: If an earthquake struck ancient Alexandria, what might it imply for the modern-day city?

A: It could indicate that a fault remains a threat to the modern city.

11. Stealing Lives

Pre-viewing question

Q: Why did the African slave trade increase in the 15th century?

A: The Portuguese, Dutch, British, and French needed workers for their plantations. As demand increased, African rulers began invading other kingdoms solely to capture slaves that could be traded to the Europeans in return for goods.

Post-viewing question

Q: Do you think life on a slave ship or on a plantation would be harder for a slave?

A: Answers will vary.

12. A Divided People

Pre-viewing question

Q: What is apartheid?

A: Apartheid is a social, political, and economic system that separated whites and non-whites in South Africa.

Post-viewing question

Q: What was life like in South Africa's non-white reserves?

A: Poor soil quality and little government support made farming difficult and left the people living in poverty.