

Africa Today: Teacher's Guide

Grade Level: 6-8

Curriculum Focus: Geography

Lesson Duration: Three class periods

Program Description

How have recent tumultuous events affected Africa's families, economies, and environments? This program describes different ways of life in Africa and puts a human face on events and places in the news. Segments create a compelling portrait of life in modern Africa. This program includes two feature segments and four short segments.

Onscreen Questions

- How does war affect the lives of young people?
 - How can young people make a difference in their families?
 - How is deforestation hurting the country of Ghana?
 - How is oil drilling affecting the people of Nigeria's Niger Delta?
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Lesson Plan

Student Objectives

- Discuss how children in Africa are affected by AIDS, based on information in the program.
- Read an article or Web site on this topic to analyze and summarize.
- Create a small poster inspired by the article, including images, excerpts, data, and quotes.

Materials

- *Africa Today* video and VCR, or DVD and DVD player
- Computer with Internet access
- Materials to create poster presentation (markers, colored pencils, glue, scissors, poster board)

Procedures

1. After watching the segment called "Medical Crisis in Africa," have students discuss what they learned. Were they surprised by the facts presented? What people or stories made the biggest impact on them? What are some reasons that AIDS has had such a devastating and far-reaching effect in Africa? What are some challenges that health-care workers face in treating all those affected by AIDS? Why does the disease continue to spread?
2. Talk about the ways that AIDS is affecting children in Africa. (Many are born with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Many lose parents, aunts, uncles, and other family members to AIDS.)
3. Tell the class that they are going to learn more about children in Africa who are affected by AIDS. Working with a partner, students will read an article on this topic, summarize what they learned, and then create a poster with images, excerpts, quotes, and data. Since this is such a timely topic, students can find a wealth of articles in recent newspapers, magazines, or Web sites. You may also choose to use some of the articles listed below, or use the Web sites as a starting point.
 - The Virus Creates a Generation of Orphans
<http://www.villagevoice.com/issues/9944/schoofs.php>
 - Africa's Lost Generation
<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2000/aids/stories/women.children/>
 - The Orphaned Continent: Breaking the Silence
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/static/in_depth/africa/2000/aids_in_africa/overview.stm
 - AIDS Orphan's Preventable Death Challenges Those Left Behind
<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,128736,00.html>
 - Zambia's Generation of Orphans
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/821874.stm>
 - AIDS Orphans Millions in Africa
<http://www.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/africa/05/13/aids.africa/index.html>
 - AIDS Orphans in Africa (read first part through "Country Responses")
<http://www.avert.org/aidsorphans.htm>
 - UNICEF: HIV/AIDS: Real Lives (choose story from Africa)
http://www.unicef.org/aids/index_reallives.html
 - AIDS in Africa
<http://www.aidsafrica.com/>
 - AllAfrica.com: Children Headlines (choose article on HIV/AIDS)
<http://allafrica.com/children/>



4. Although all students should be assigned the same article, have the pairs read the article and address the issues below on their own.
 - What was the main theme of this article?
 - Write a brief outline showing the main points and supporting details of the article.
 - Summarize the article in one paragraph.
 - Find an excerpt from the article that was particularly powerful or meaningful. (Students may choose a sentence or phrase, or just a few words.)
 - Find one quote from this article that you found compelling, persuasive, or poignant.
 - Find one piece of data or a statistic that supported the main theme of the article.
 - Describe one image that was included with this article. How did this image support or enhance the article?
 - Describe any charts or graphs included in the article. What surprising fact did you learn from this data?
5. When students have answered the questions above, have them share their answers with their partners. Then have the pairs create a small poster inspired by the article. Their poster should include an excerpt, one fact or piece of data, a quote, and an image (sketched, copied, or printed from the article). If they would like additional statistics for their poster, share the following website:

Worldwide HIV & AIDS Orphans Statistics
<http://www.avert.org/aidsorphans2.htm>
6. Have students present and hang their posters. You may also want to encourage kids to take action by raising awareness in their school or raising money to donate to causes devoted to children affected by AIDS in Africa. For a list of organizations devoted to the fight against AIDS in Africa, go to: <http://www.aidsandafrika.com/you.html>.

Assessment

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

- **3 points:** Students were highly engaged in class discussions, showed strong reading comprehension, and created a detailed poster including all of the requested information.
- **2 points:** Students participated in class discussions, showed satisfactory reading comprehension, and created an adequate poster including most of the requested information.
- **1 point:** Students participated minimally in class discussions, showed weak reading comprehension, and created an incomplete poster with little or none of the requested information.



Vocabulary

AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome)

Definition: The final, life-threatening stage of infection with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)

Context: Of the 40 million people worldwide who have AIDS, about 75 percent live in Africa.

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus)

Definition: A virus that causes AIDS; this virus severely damages the immune system by infecting and destroying certain white blood cells

Context: A person who tests positive for HIV does not necessarily have AIDS.

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:

- 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
 - People, Places, and Environments
 - Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
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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 six 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. Testing Times (3 min.)

Journey to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where students are taking their first high school final exams following years of civil war and political unrest.

II. One Girl's Life (2 min.)

Meet Asbeth, a young girl from Ethiopia's Rift Valley, and learn about how girls like her contribute to the success and well-being of their families.

III. School for Girls: A Dream Comes True (16 min.)

Most young girls in the villages of Tanzania do not have many options beyond marriage. Tour Murigha, a boarding school that teaches girls how to achieve economic success.

IV. Medical Crisis in Africa (20 min.)

Nearly three-quarters of all those suffering from HIV and AIDS live in Africa. Take an intimate look at several African families whose lives have been changed by this epidemic.



V. Living on the Forest's Edge (3 min.)

The overexploitation of natural resources is a serious problem in many parts of Africa. Learn about deforestation in Ghana and the harmful effects it is having on the country's environment.

VI. Oil vs. Soil (3 min.)

Drilling for oil has affected Nigeria's natural environment, but some residents are working to protect their once-fertile farmland from further pollution and destruction.

Curriculum Units**1. Educating the Youth**

Pre-viewing question

Q: What effects might a country's civil war have on its education system?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Do you think your family would send you to school if you lived in the Congo?

A: Answers will vary.

2. Women's Work

Pre-viewing question

Q: Are young men and women given different responsibilities and duties in your society?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What are some differences in the responsibilities of young women in Ethiopia and those of your country?

A: Answers will vary.

3. A Marrying Age

Pre-viewing question

Q: What are some reasons why women in your society get married?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Why do some Tanzanian women marry at young ages?

A: Women may marry young because their families pressure them. Sometimes the addition of a cow, goat, or money from the groom's family makes a substantial contribution to her family's finances.

4. Course of Study

Pre-viewing question

Q: What do you think is the most useful subject you have been taught at school?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question



Q: How is the Murigha school different from your own?

A: Answers will vary.

5. Supporting a School

Pre-viewing question

Q: How is your school funded?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: How does Murigha support its needs?

A: Even though families pay tuition, the students raise chickens and grow corn and other products for their own food. They sell extra goods and products in a student-run store and in town, using the money to buy supplies they can't grow or make themselves

6. Serving the Community

Pre-viewing question

Q: Why would some poor farming families not want to send their girls to school?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What are some of the ways the Murigha school serves its community?

A: The school operates the only store in the village and allows residents to take water from its well instead of having to walk 25 kilometers to the next nearest well.

7. Living with AIDS

Pre-viewing question

Q: Why do you think AIDS is so prevalent in Africa?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Why do you think there is a larger HIV-infection rate in rural areas?

A: Answers will vary.

8. AIDS in Dar es Salaam

Pre-viewing question

Q: About how many people are living with AIDS in Dar es Salaam?

A: In a city of roughly three million people, about 300,000 to 500,000 are living with AIDS.

Post-viewing question

Q: What can be done for the numerous impoverished African families affected by AIDS?

A: Answers will vary.

9. Informal Schools

Pre-viewing question

Q: How does education help prevent the spread of AIDS?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What is the importance of informal schools?

A: Answers will vary.

10. AIDS Orphans

Pre-viewing question

Q: What should other countries do about the AIDS problem in Africa?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: How has the AIDS epidemic changed the family structure in African nations?

A: The epidemic has created a large population of orphans in Africa. Many older people have to care for their grandchildren instead of being cared for by their own children.

11. Deforestation in Ghana

Pre-viewing question

Q: What is "slash and burn"?

A: Slash and burn is a farming technique in which people cut down and burn trees to create farmland. While it quickly clears land, it can destroy some plant species.

Post-viewing question

Q: What do you think would happen if the forests in Ghana were destroyed?

A: Answers will vary.

12. Liquid Gold in Nigeria

Pre-viewing question

Q: How does drilling for oil impact the environment?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What should be done to protect Nigeria from further pollution from oil drilling?

A: Answers will vary.