Once home to great empires and rich in raw materials, Africa’s people and resources have been exploited by centuries of slave trade and colonialism.
Africa South of the Sahara: Geography and History

SECTION 1: The Geography of Africa South of the Sahara
SECTION 2: African Cultures and Empires
SECTION 3: The Impact of Colonialism on African Life
SECTION 4: The Road to Independence
Section 1

The Geography of Africa South of the Sahara

Africa south of the Sahara is a region with dramatically different landforms and climates. This provides for a variety of natural resources.
The African Continent

Once the Center of the Earth
• Africa is about three times larger than the U.S.
• 225 million years ago, it was the center of sole continent, Pangaea
  - Pangaea broke into pieces that drifted apart
  - the Africa piece remained in its current place
Lowlands and Highlands

- Lowlands in north, west; highlands in south, east
- Highest peak is Tanzania’s Mount Kilimanjaro—“shining mountain”

Plateaus

- **Plateau**—raised area of level land; African plateau spans continent

Rifts

- Slow tectonic plate separation creates rifts—wide, steep valleys
- **Great Rift Valley** runs from Red Sea to Mozambique; always widening
  - East Africa could break away, become island like Madagascar
Lakes
- Huge lakes like Tanganyika, Victoria form in Great Rift Valley
  - Victoria is on borders of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania
- Waterfalls and rapids make lake travel difficult

Rivers
- Nile is world’s longest river, flowing north from central mountains
- Okavango River crosses southern nations, empties north of Kalahari
- Zambezi River includes huge waterfalls such as Victoria Falls
Many Climates

Desert and Semiarid Regions
• Deserts include Sahara (north), Namib, Kalahari (south)
  - semiarid regions border deserts, get more rain than deserts
• Semiarid Sahel south of Sahara has desertification—desert spreading
  - caused by drought—lack of rain, which leads to erosion
  - other causes include overgrazing, overfarming
  - lack of farmland causes hunger in many African countries

Continued . . .
Tropical and Equatorial Regions

• Tropical climate has six-month rainy season, dry rest of year
• **Savannas**—vast, flat grasslands with scattered trees, shrubs
  - home to lions, elephants, giraffes, zebras
• Equatorial region has two rainy and two dry seasons
  - high temperatures, heavy rainfall create rain forests
  - home to chimpanzees, gorillas, hippos, parrots
Resources of Africa South of the Sahara

Nonrenewable and Renewable

- Africa is rich in mineral resources like gold, diamonds
  - also: copper, tin, chrome, nickel, iron ore
- **Nonrenewable resources** take millions of years to create, replace
- **Renewable resources**—used, replaced quickly
  - cocoa, vanilla and coffee beans, nuts, bananas, rubber, sugar, tea
- Wildlife and historic sites draw tourists from around world
Section 2

African Cultures and Empires

Africa south of the Sahara has a rich and significant history.
The First Humans

Three-Million-Year-Old Footprints

- Paleontologists—scientists who study fossils
- Evidence of first humans found in Kenya, South Africa, other areas
- 3.6-million-year-old human fossil footprints found in Tanzania
- African humans were first to develop language, tools, culture
  - migrated to other continents over tens of thousands of years
Early African Farmers

Hunter-Gatherers
• First humans live in small groups; collect berries, nuts, plants
  - hunt wild animals, move when they became scarce
• 5,000 years ago, Cameroon’s Bantu had become farmers
  - grow grain; herd cattle, sheep; make iron tools, weapons

On the Move
• **Bantu migration**—moved across continent around 1000 B.C.
  - spread culture, influenced many languages such as Swahili, Zulu
The Salt Trade
- Trade routes develop between Bantu villages
- Precious salt needed to survive and preserve food is mined in Sahara
  - trade with southern people for gold, slaves, ivory, cola nuts

Camels and Caravans
- In A.D. 600s, Arabian camels carry goods across deserts to north
  - trade expands to Europe, Asia; brings in glass, cotton, spices
- Traders travel in caravans for protection against robbers
An Empire Built by Trade

Ghana’s Gold

• Kingdom of Ghana rises in Niger River Valley in A.D. 300s
  - controls trade between north, south Africa; collects taxes on trade
• Plentiful gold from taxes and mining makes Ghana the Land of Gold
• Merchants trade salt for gold
  - trade gold and slaves for tools, cloth, jewelry, copper, weapons
The Mali Empire

Mali Absorbs Ghana

• From 1000s to 1200s, Ghana trade weakens by long war with Muslims
• People ruled by Ghana begin to break away
• Muslim leader Sundiata unites tribes, other states into Mali Empire
  - takes over remains of Ghana Empire in 1240
• Mali Empire controls trade across Sahara, along Niger River
  - spreads Islam through region

Continued . . .
Mali’s Golden Age

- **Mansu Musa** rules expanding, flourishing Mali from 1312 to 1332
- Makes religious pilgrimage to Arabia’s Mecca in 1324
  - brings Muslim scholars, artisans back to Mali
- Major Mali city of Timbuktu becomes cultural center
  - architects build mosques
  - scholars found Islamic universities in several West African cities
The Songhai Empire

A New Empire Controls Trade

• Mali’s power declines after Musa’s death in 1337
• Conquered by nearby Songhai, which then controls Saharan trade
  - by 1500s, Songhai Empire is larger than Mali was
  - Timbuktu is Muslim cultural center again
• A Moroccan army defeats the Songhai Empire in early 1590s
Section 3

The Impact of Colonialism on African Life

The slave trade and colonialism destroyed traditional cultures and social systems in Africa south of the Sahara.
SECTION

The Impact of Colonialism on African Life

Africa Before the Europeans

Varied Ways of Life

• Africans have different types of governments
  - some kings rule empires
  - some states have aspects of democracy
  - some groups have no central government
• Some Africans live in cities, others in small villages
• Some are nomadic hunters, some are artists
The Slave Trade

Slavery Within Africa
• Mali, Songhai use slaves; villages raid one another for slaves

From Africa to the Americas
• In early 1400s, Europeans begin to capture Africans, sell as slaves
  - 10–12 million enslaved, sent to Americas between 1520–1860
• By 1808, it is illegal to ship African slaves to U.S., U.K., Denmark

Impact on Africa
• Two-thirds of slaves taken are men 18–30 years old
  - too few workers left in cities, towns; family structures destroyed
SECTION 3

European Colonialism

Explorers and Missionaries
• Explorers seek raw materials, markets for Industrial Revolution
• A missionary goes to another country to do religious, social work
  - convert Africans to Christianity; bring education, health care
  - teach European ways that conflict with, destroy African traditions

Competition for Africa
• In 1884 Berlin, European nations divide Africa to avoid wars
• Major nations acquire colonies; only Ethiopia, Liberia remain free
Impact of Colonial Rule

Ethnic Conflicts

- Colonizers care about resources, not political or social systems
- Try to make Africans more like Europeans
- End up worsening ethnic conflicts, as Belgium did in Rwanda-Burundi
  - divide people into Hutu ethnic majority and ruling Tutsi minority
  - Tutsi get better jobs, education, spurring conflict between groups
  - civil war erupts in 1994; Tutsi win, take over Rwanda
Section 4

The Road to Independence

During the 20th century, African nations gained independence from their colonial rulers.
Seeds of Independence

- Colonization of Africa disrupts social systems, governments
  - robs region of resources
- In early 1900s, some Africans attend universities in Europe, U.S.
  - educated Africans begin to seek independence
  - African nationalism grows
Journey to Freedom

Colonial Racism
• Many colonial Europeans feel Africans cannot govern themselves
  - racism—unfounded belief that one race is inferior to another

Pan-African Congresses
• Africans get education, serve in Allied armies in WWI, WWII
• Pan-Africanism—African people around world work together for freedom
  - first Congress 1919
  - After WWII, fifth Congress calls for independence
• Pan-African Congresses produce political leaders
SECTION 4

New African Countries

The Late 20th Century

• From 1951 to 1980, most colonies gain independence
  - independence process is smooth for some, not for others
Nigeria: Diversity Brings Division

Independence
• As British colony has solid government, resources, strong economy
• Hopes strength will come from diversity—many cultures, viewpoints
• Many Nigerians are Muslim; 400 languages are spoken in country

Riots and War
• Diversity, corrupt leaders cause problems between ethnic groups
• 1966 riots kill many; eastern Nigeria breaks off into Biafra
• Biafra is defeated in civil war; military leaders rule all Nigeria
Independence of South Africa

Apartheid

- South Africa becomes free from United Kingdom in 1910
- Only white South Africans can vote
  - nonwhites restricted by laws
- **Apartheid**—1948 official policy segregates people by color
- Protesters march, strike, fight against apartheid
- Apartheid ends in 1991; first all-inclusive elections held in 1994