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i Think: Geography

AFRICA



**by Sharon Coletti
and Kendra Corr**

** It is the goal of InspirEd Educators to create instructional materials that are interesting, engaging, and challenging. Our student-centered approach incorporates both content and skills, placing particular emphasis on reading, writing, vocabulary development, and critical and creative thinking in the content areas.

Edited by Sharon Coletti

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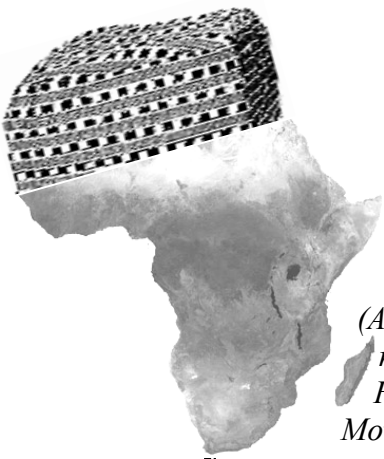
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Meet Africa

Springboard:

Students should complete “Our House.”

(Answers will of course vary but could include: Location - 15 Elm Street, next to the library, etc; Place - brick with elm trees in the backyard, etc.; Human-Environment Interaction - air conditioning, heater, etc; Movement – cars, Internet etc.; Region - in the Midwest, South, North, West.

Objective: The student will be able to describe the absolute and relative location of Africa and make several generalizations about the continent.

Materials:

- Our House (Springboard handout)
- Taking Africa’s Measurements (handout)
- Map of Africa (handout)
- Generally Speaking (handout)
- highlighters
- African Geography (handout - see note below)

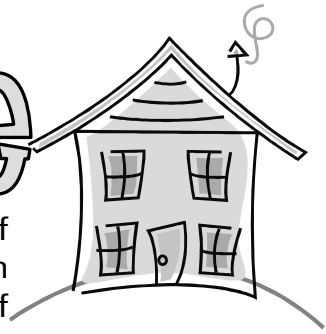
Terms to know:

- latitude** - lines on maps and globes that measure distance north and south of the equator (0° latitude)
- longitude** - lines on maps and globes that measure distance east and west of the prime meridian (0° longitude)

Procedure:

- After reviewing the Springboard, explain that in this lesson, the student(s) will focus on the first theme of geography; location.
- Distribute “Taking Africa’s Measurements” and the “Map of Africa.” The student(s) should work independently or in pairs to read and complete the handout and mark their maps as instructed. Make sure they understand that when they see a blank line, they should write “absolute” or “relative” location based on the text description preceding it.
- Then, distribute “Generally Speaking” and have them work alone or with a partner to study the map and what they have learned so far to come up with descriptions and three generalizations about Africa. *(Answers will vary, but could include: Africa is huge, surrounded by water, has many countries, may be hot (near the Equator), has many landforms, etc. Information about absolute and relative locations of land, water, mountains, etc. should be used to identify countries and physical features.)*
- Have the student(s) share their maps and discuss. They should keep their map of Africa for future reference.
- **NOTE:** This lesson and the next four provide an introduction to each of the five themes of geography. Thereafter, each lesson will deepen student understanding of the geographic themes. Distribute “African Geography” for use as a unit organizer to record examples after each lesson that fit the five themes. This should be used as a review resource in addition to the objectives sheet at the front of the unit.

Our House



DIRECTIONS: Read the definitions of the five themes of geography and describe where you live using each geographic theme. Make sure you include all parts of each definition in your descriptions!

1. **Location:** Location answers the question of “Where are we?” It can be absolute (latitude and longitude, or street address) or relative (described in terms of nearby landmarks). _____

2. **Place:** Place refers to what the location looks like, feels like, smells like, etc. Characteristics that are both physical (natural) and human (man-made) describe place. _____

3. **Human-Environmental Interaction:** This theme describes the way humans and the environment affect each other. It can refer to how we change the environment or the way the environment forces us to act or change. _____

4. **Movement:** This theme refers to the movement of people, ideas and goods. People, goods and ideas can move by transportation or communication. _____

5. **Region:** This is the way the world is organized into manageable units for study. Regions can be formal (with political boundaries) or functional (grouped together by a common characteristic) or vernacular (which everyone knows but are not official, such as the West, Midwest, etc). _____



Taking Africa's Measurements

DIRECTIONS: Africa is the second largest continent on earth; only Asia is bigger. The African continent covers 11.7 million square miles and has a coastline of 22,921 miles. To travel completely around its coastline following every bend would take a ship sailing 200 miles a day almost four months!

Use your Map of Africa to complete each “mapquest” below to learn more about the continent’s location. Follow the directions, answer the questions, and fill in each blank telling whether the statement describes **absolute** or **relative** location.

I. Measure Africa’s width.

1. The widest part of the continent is between 10 N and 20 N. Circle these coordinates on your map. _____
2. Between 10 N and 20 N find Cape Verde in the west and Cape Guardafui in the east. Highlight each location. _____
3. Using the map scale to roughly measure, which measurement is closest to the width of Africa, in miles? Circle your answer:
A. 470 B. 4,700 C. 47,000 D. 470,000

II. Measure Africa’s length.

1. Between 0 and 20 E you will find the northernmost (Tunis) and southernmost (Cape Town) African cities. _____
2. Highlight these two locations on the map.
3. Using the map scale to roughly measure, which measurement comes closest to the length of Africa, in miles? Circle your answer:
A. 490 B. 4,900 C. 49,000 D. 490,000

III. Divide Africa in half.

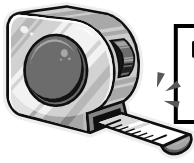
1. Africa is roughly divided in half by the Equator which is located at 0 degrees latitude. _____
2. Highlight the Equator on your map. Which of these countries does the Equator **NOT** pass through? Circle your answer:
A. Tanzania B. Gabon C. Kenya D. Somalia
3. The country furthest away from the Equator to the north is Tunisia. _____ and furthest away from the Equator to the south is South Africa _____

IV. Examine the islands around Africa.

1. The largest island that is part of Africa is located at 20 S and 47 E _____ . Highlight the name of this island on the map.
2. There are several other islands near Africa, especially in the Atlantic Ocean between 14 N and 40 N. _____
3. Most of these islands are controlled by non-African countries, such as France, and Portugal, located at 39 N and 8 W. _____
4. Which of the following is not one of the groups of islands located in the North Atlantic? _____ Circle your answer:
A. Azores B. Canary C. Glorioso D. Madeira

Map of Africa





Taking Africa's Measurements - Answers & Explanations

DIRECTIONS: Africa is the second largest continent on earth; only Asia is bigger. The African continent covers 11.7 million square miles and has a coastline of 22,921 miles. To travel completely around its coastline following every bend would take a ship sailing 200 miles a day almost four months!

Use your Map of Africa to complete each “mapquest” below to learn more about the continent’s location. Follow the directions, answer the questions, and fill in each blank telling whether the statement describes **absolute** or **relative** location.

I. Measure Africa’s width.

1. The widest part of the continent is between 10 N and 20 N. Circle these coordinates on your map. Relative: text refers to the point “between.”
2. Between 10 N and 20 N find Cape Verde in the west and Cape Guardafui in the east. Highlight each location. Absolute: these are specific locations.
3. Using the map scale to roughly measure, which measurement is closest to the width of Africa, in miles? Circle your answer:
A. 470 **B. 4,700 *** C. 47,000 D. 470,000

II. Measure Africa’s length.

1. Between 0 and 20 E you will find the northernmost (Tunis) and southernmost (Cape Town) African cities. Absolute; they are directed to a specific, measured location (between 0 and 20 E) but are supposed to locate the ABSOLUTE locations of Tunis and Cape Town.
2. Highlight these two locations on the map.
3. Using the map scale to roughly measure, which measurement comes closest to the length of Africa, in miles? Circle your answer:
A. 490 **B. 4,900 *** C. 49,000 D. 490,000

III. Divide Africa in half.

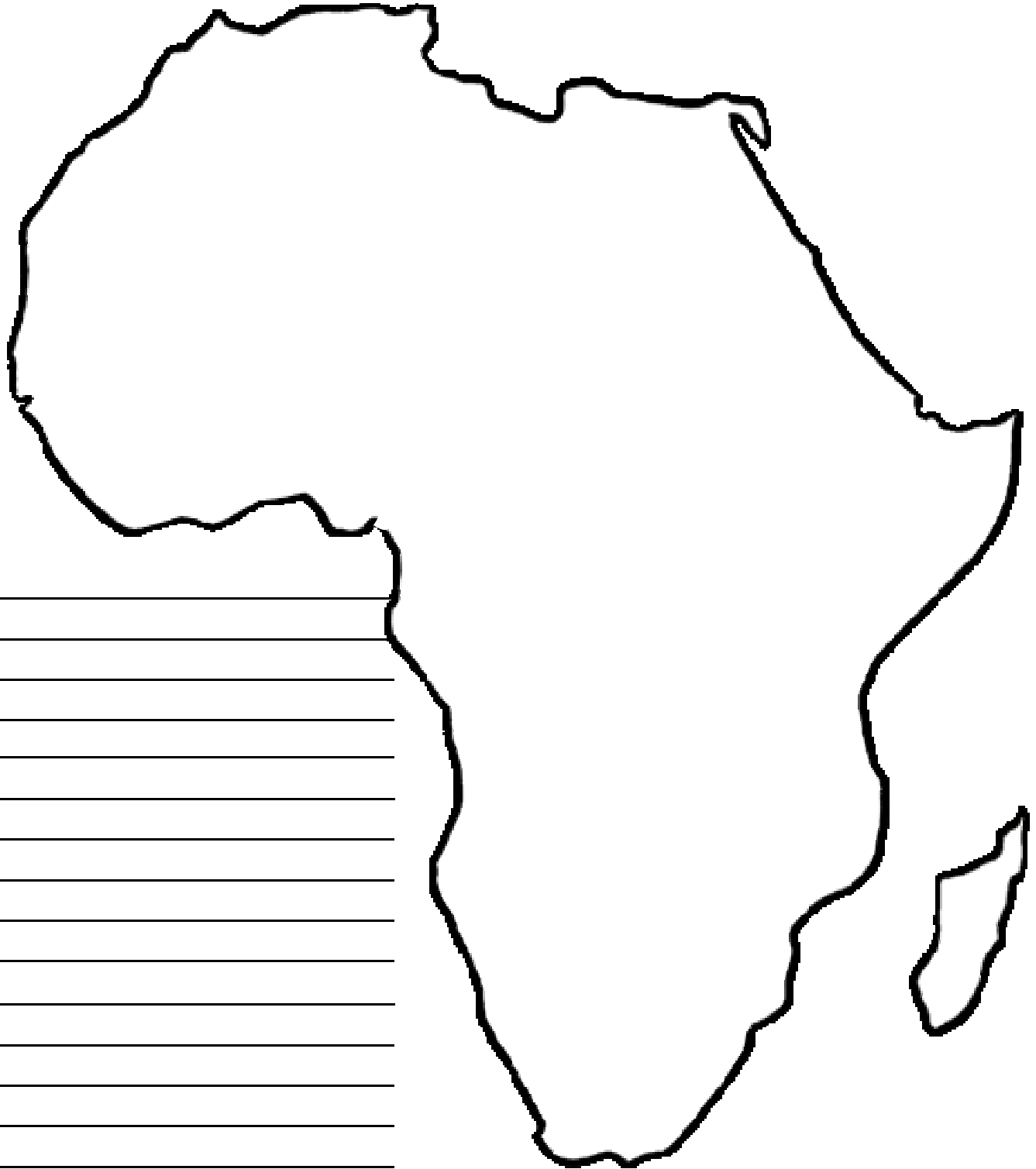
1. Africa is roughly divided in half by the Equator which is located at 0 degrees latitude. Absolute; the exact coordinate of the Equator is given.
2. Highlight the Equator on your map. Which of these countries does the Equator **NOT** pass through? Circle your answer:
A. Tanzania * B. Gabon C. Kenya D. Somalia
3. The country furthest away from the Equator to the north is Tunisia. Relative and furthest away from the Equator to the south is South Africa. Relative; both describe places in terms of their relationship to another place.

IV. Examine the islands around Africa.

1. The largest island that is part of Africa is located at 20 S and 47 E Absolute. Highlight the name of this island on the map. (*Madagascar*)
2. There are several other islands near Africa, especially in the Atlantic Ocean between 14 N and 40 N. Both; coordinates and a description of its location (in the Atlantic) are given.
3. Most of these islands are controlled by non-African countries, such as France, and Portugal, located at 39 N and 8 W. Absolute location of Portugal is given.
4. Which of the following is not one of the groups of islands located in the North Atlantic? Relative; in the North Atlantic. Circle your answer:
A. Azores B. Canary **C. Glorioso *** D. Madeira

GENERALLY SPEAKING

DIRECTIONS: Fill the map below with as many describing words and phrases as you can think of. Make sure you consider absolute and relative locations in your descriptions! Then write three generalizations about the continent's location in the blanks.



AFRICAN GEOGRAPHY

DIRECTIONS: Record examples of each geographic theme as you progress through the unit.

Location:

Place:

Human-Environmental Interaction:

Movement:

Region:

A Closer Look



Springboard:

Students should free write about “Images of Africa.” for 2-3 minutes.

(Answer will of course, vary, but will likely reflect a somewhat stereotyped image of Africa: jungles, wild animals, etc.)

Objective: The student will be able to describe some of the physical and human characteristics of Africa, or it’s “place.”

Materials:

Images of Africa (Springboard handout)
Map of Africa (from the previous lesson)
Special Features (handout)

Terms to know:

rift - a large “cut” in the earth’s surface

basin - large area of land that drains into a river or a lake

plain - large area of flat land with a few trees

Procedure:

- During discussion of the Springboard, explain that after examining Africa in terms of the second theme of geography, place, the student(s) should have a more accurate view of what Africa “looks like.” Go on to explain that in this lesson the student(s) will consider some of the physical characteristics of the continent and “predict” the human ones.
- Distribute copies of the “Special Features” handout. Student(s) should use their Africa map from the previous lesson along with the Internet to locate and describe each of the physical features on the handout. They should then use what they learn to predict what human features might be present at each.
- Have students share and compare answers. Discuss how their images of Africa have changed after completing this lesson. *(Answers will vary, but hopefully students have a better understanding of the physical diversity of the continent!)*
- For lesson closure or homework, have the student(s) add examples from this lesson to their “African Geography” organizer.

