EXPLORING AFRICA

Exploring Africa introduces students to the geography, history, and culture of the continent of Africa. The Close-Up reading selections provide students with facts and information. The Knowledge Checks assess student understanding of the reading using selected response and constructed response questioning strategies. Map Follow-Ups provide opportunities for students to report information from a spatial perspective and develop their map skills. Explore sections allow students to expand learning by participating in high interest, hands-on activities. Vocabulary words are boldfaced in the text and defined in a glossary at the back of the book. Topics covered include climate, resources, industries, people, animals, culture, and profiles of selected nations from throughout the continent. An alternative version of the reading selections at a lower reading level is available for download at www.carsondellosa.com. For correlations to national, state, and provincial standards, also visit www.carsondellosa.com.
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Introduction to the Teacher

*Exploring Africa* is one of the seven books in Mark Twain Media’s *Continents of the World Geography Series*. This series can be used to supplement the middle-school geography and social studies curriculum. The books support the goal of the National Geography Standards to prepare students for life in a global community by strengthening geographical literacy.

The intent of the *Continents of the World Geography Series* is to help students better understand the world around them through the study of geography. Each book focuses on one continent. Information and facts are presented in an easy-to-read and easy-to-understand format that does not overwhelm the learner. The text presents only the most important information in small organized bites to make it easier for students to comprehend. Vocabulary words are boldfaced in the text. For quick reference, these words are listed in a glossary at the back of the book.

The series is specifically designed to facilitate planning for the diverse learning styles and skill levels of middle-school students. Each book is divided into several units. Each unit provides the teacher with alternative methods of instruction.

**Unit Features**

- **Close-Up** introduces facts and information as a reading exercise.
- **Knowledge Check** assesses student understanding of the reading exercise using selected response and constructed response questioning strategies.
- **Map Follow-Up** provides opportunities for students to report information from a spatial perspective.
- **Explore** allows students to expand learning by participating in high-interest, hands-on activities.
- **Glossary** lists the boldfaced words with definitions.

**Online Resources**

- **Reluctant Reader Text**: A modified version of the reading exercise pages can be downloaded from the website at www.carsondellosa.com. In the Search box, enter the product code CD-404170. When you reach the *Exploring Africa* product page, click the icon for the Reluctant Reader Text download.
- The readability level of the text has been modified to facilitate struggling readers. The Flesch-Kincaid Readability formula, which is built into Microsoft® Word™, was used to determine the readability level. The formula calculates the number of words, sentences, and paragraphs in each selection to produce a reading level.

**Additional Resources**

*Classroom Decoratives: The Seven Continents of the World and World Landmarks and Locales Topper* bulletin board sets are available through Mark Twain Media/Carson-Dellosa Publishing LLC. These classroom decoratives visually reinforce geography lessons found in the *Continents of the World Geography Series* in an interesting and attention-grabbing way.
The Continents: Close-Up

A continent is a large landmass completely or mostly surrounded by water. The continents make up just over 29 percent of the earth's surface. They occupy about 57,100,000 square miles (148,000,000 sq. km). More than 65 percent of the land area is in the Northern Hemisphere.

Landmasses
- Continents: Geographers list North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, and Antarctica as continents.
- Subcontinents: Greenland and the India-Pakistan area are sometimes referred to as “subcontinents.”
- Microcontinents: Madagascar and the Seychelles Islands are often called “microcontinents.”
- Oceania: The island groups in the Pacific Ocean are called Oceania, but they are not considered a continent.

How Were the Continents Formed?
For many years, Europeans believed the continents were formed by a catastrophe or series of catastrophes, such as floods, earthquakes, and volcanoes. In 1596, a Dutch mapmaker, Abraham Ortelius, noted that the Americas’ eastern coasts and the western coasts of Europe and Africa looked as if they fit together. He proposed that once they had been joined but later were torn apart.

Many years later, a German named Alfred Lothar Wegener published a book in which he explained his theory of the “Continental Drift.” Wegener, like Ortelius, believed that the earth originally had one supercontinent. He named it Pangaea from the Greek word meaning “all lands.” He believed that the large landmass was a lighter rock that floated on a heavier rock, like ice floats on water.

Wegener’s theory stated that the landmasses were still moving at a rate of about one yard each century. Wegener believed that Pangaea existed in the Permian Age. Then
Pangaea slowly divided into two continents, the upper part, **Laurasia**, and the lower, **Gondwanaland**, during the Triassic Age.

By the Jurassic Age, the landmasses had moved into what we could recognize as the seven continents, although they were still located near each other. Eventually, the continents “drifted” to their present locations.

Most scientists had been in agreement on the continental drift theory until researchers in the 1960s discovered several major mountain ranges on the ocean floor. These mountains suggested that the earth’s crust consists of about 20 slabs or **plates**.

These discoveries led to a new theory, “**Plate Tectonics**,” which has become more popular. This theory suggests that these plates move a few inches each year. In some places the plates are moving apart, while in others, the plates are colliding or scraping against each other.

Scientists also discovered that most volcanoes and earthquakes occur along the boundaries of the various plates. Scientists hope that further study will help them increase their understanding of Earth’s story.
Knowledge Check

Matching

1. Plate Tectonics
2. Laurasia
3. continent
4. Gondwanaland
5. Pangaea

a. lower part of Pangaea
b. Greek word meaning “all lands”
c. theory suggesting that plates move a few inches each year
d. upper part of Pangaea
e. a large landmass completely or mostly surrounded by water

Multiple Choice

6. He explained his theory of the Continental Drift.
   a. Abraham Ortelius
   b. Alfred Lothar Wegener
   c. Pangaea
   d. Laurasia

7. The earth’s crust consists of ____ plates.
   a. about 20
   b. about 10
   c. about 5
   d. about 50

Did You Know?

Earth is thought to be the only planet in our solar system that has plate tectonics.

Constructed Response

Explain how the movement of the earth’s plates formed the seven continents. Use two details from the selection to support your answer.

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Map Follow-Up

**Directions:** There are seven continents and four oceans. Match the numbers on the map with the names of the continents and oceans.

- _____ Pacific Ocean
- _____ Arctic Ocean
- _____ Atlantic Ocean
- _____ Indian Ocean
- _____ Africa
- _____ Antarctica
- _____ Asia
- _____ Australia
- _____ Europe
- _____ North America
- _____ South America

Continents and Oceans
Explore: Pangaea Puzzle

At one time, many people believed the earth originally consisted of one large continent. It was named Pangaea, meaning “all lands.” Create a jigsaw puzzle to represent the supercontinent Pangaea.

**Materials**
- scissors
- glue
- construction paper
- copy of Pangaea Cutouts

**Directions**

Step 1: Label and color each continent and the country of India on the Pangaea Cutouts page.

Step 2: Cut out the continents and India.

Step 3: Piece the continents together into one landmass like a jigsaw puzzle to represent how Pangaea might have looked 190 million years ago.

Step 4: Once you have the continents in place, glue them onto a piece of construction paper.

Step 5: Title the page “Pangaea.”
Explore: Pangaea Cutouts

Africa
Antarctica
Australia
Eurasia
Greenland
India
North America
South America
The Continent of Africa: Close-Up

Africa is the second-largest continent; only Asia is larger. Africa’s land mass covers over 11,677,000 square miles (30,243,000 sq. km) and includes several islands. The largest island is Madagascar, located off the southeast coast. Africa contains 23 percent of the world’s total land area and is three times as large as the United States.

The equator divides Africa in half. Africa’s northernmost point is 35° North, and its southernmost point is 36° South. Africa is almost completely surrounded by water. The northern coast is on the Mediterranean Sea. The western coast is on the Atlantic Ocean, and the eastern coast is bordered by the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea, and the Indian Ocean. A small land border joins Egypt and Israel.

The Land
- The continent is mainly plateau land. It does have narrow coastal plains and a few mountain ranges. The highest point in Africa is Mount Kilimanjaro. It is 19,341 feet (5,895 m) above sea level. The lowest point is Lake Assai, which is 502 feet (153 m) below sea level.
- The Sahara is the world’s largest desert. It covers over 3,500,000 square miles (9,065,000 sq. km). The Sahara covers one-fourth of the continent. It cuts through the northern part of Africa, dividing the continent into northern and southern regions. The northern regions are much more highly developed.
- Southern Africa also has desert terrain. The Namib Desert and the Kalahari Desert are located in Namibia and Botswana.

Rivers
- The major rivers of Africa are the Nile and the Congo (also called the Zaire). The Nile is the world’s longest river. It has a length of 4,160 miles (6,695 km). The Congo River, 2,718 miles long (4,374 km), drains much of central Africa. The Niger River, 2,600 miles long (4,184 km), empties into part of the Atlantic Ocean known as the Gulf of Guinea.

Lakes
- Lake Victoria is Africa’s largest lake. It is the third-largest lake in the world. Lake Victoria covers over 26,800 square miles (69,400 sq. km). One branch of the Nile River begins at Lake Victoria.

Waterfalls
- Africa contains one of the world’s most spectacular waterfalls. They were named the Victoria Falls by the Scottish explorer David Livingstone in honor of Queen Victoria of England. Victoria Falls are on the Zambezi River in Zimbabwe near the border with Zambia.
Outline Map of Africa
Knowledge Check

Matching

1. Nile  a. world's largest desert
2. equator  b. Africa's largest lake
3. Sahara  c. highest point in Africa
4. Mount Kilimanjaro  d. divides Africa in half
5. Lake Victoria  e. world's longest river

Multiple Choice

6. What fraction of Africa is covered with desert?
   a. one-half
   b. one-fourth
   c. three-fourths
   d. two-thirds

7. How long is the Nile River?
   a. 2,460 miles
   b. 2,718 miles
   c. 4,160 miles
   d. 5,800 miles

Did You Know?
The Sahara is the world's largest and hottest desert. It stretches 3,000 miles (4,828 km) from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea. It is larger than the entire continent of Australia!

Constructed Response
In your opinion, what impact does the Sahara desert have on the continent of Africa? Use at least two details from the selection to support your answer.

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
Map Follow-Up

Directions: Match the names listed below with the numbers on the map.

- Indian Ocean
- Atlantic Ocean
- Mediterranean Sea
- Africa
- Madagascar
- Mozambique Channel
- Red Sea
- Gulf of Aden

The Continent of Africa
Map Follow-Up

Directions: The major rivers and lakes of Africa are numbered on the map below. Match the numbers on the map with the names listed below.

- Nile River
- Congo River
- Niger River
- Orange River
- Senegal River
- Benue River
- Volta River
- Zambezi River
- Limpopo River
- Lake Nyasa
- Lake Albert
- Lake Tanganyika
- Lake Victoria

Major Rivers and Lakes of Africa
The Continents
Knowledge Check (p. 4)
Matching
1. c 2. d 3. e 4. a 5. b
Multiple Choice
6. b 7. a
Constructed Response
The earth’s crust consists of 20 plates. Plate tectonics suggest that these plates move a few inches each year. Over time, the plates have moved to their present positions.

Map Follow-Up (p. 5)

The Continent of Africa
Knowledge Check (p. 10)
Matching
1. e 2. d 3. a 4. c 5. b
Multiple Choice
6. b 7. c
Constructed Response
The Sahara cuts through the northern part of Africa, dividing the continent into northern and southern regions. It covers one-fourth of the continent, covering 3,500,000 square miles. Opinions will vary.

Map Follow-Up (p. 11)

Map Follow-Up (p. 12)

Africa’s Climate
Knowledge Check (p. 15)
Matching
1. e 2. c 3. a 4. d 5. b
Multiple Choice
6. d 7. b

Africa’s Resources
Knowledge Check (p. 18)
Matching
1. d 2. e 3. a 4. b 5. c
Multiple Choice
6. a 7. c
Constructed Response
Africa contains many of the world’s largest mineral reserves. It has large reserves of titanium, uranium, and radium. It also has about one-half of the world’s gold, and well over one-half of the world’s supply of diamonds. It supplies 50 percent of the world’s chromite.

Africa’s Industries
Knowledge Check (p. 21)
Matching
1. d 2. e 3. a 4. b 5. c
Multiple Choice
6. c 7. d
Constructed Response
Agriculture is Africa’s largest industry. Most of the production goes to feeding the continent’s population.

Africa’s Animal Life
Knowledge Check (p. 24)
Matching
1. e 2. c 3. b 4. a 5. d
Multiple Choice
6. b 7. b
Constructed Response
The national parks have been established to help protect species from extinction. The development of the national preserves has aided scientists in their study of animal behavior.

The People of Africa
Knowledge Check (p. 27)
Matching
1. c 2. d 3. a 4. e 5. b
Multiple Choice
6. d 7. c