

Contemporary Africa: Insights into the Continent's Impoverished Condition

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INTRODUCTION

In responding to the eternal social studies student question, "Why is this subject important?", teachers often revert to using formal platitudes like, "This class is transmitting our culture's knowledge from one generation to another." End of discussion. In taking this casual and matter-of-fact approach to a profoundly important question, the teacher fails to incite the natural curiosity needed to construct a link of understanding that empowers the student to begin to make sense of his or her own life outside the constructs of poverty.

The student composition at my high school reflects the unique experiences reflected in the forty different languages spoken in our hallways. Ninety-two percent of our students are on free or reduced lunch and struggle with the impersonal public educational system demands that make few allowances for their disadvantaged status. Since many of our students are undocumented teenagers and work to support their family's rent and food payments, they are fearful of being "discovered" and have little security from the evils of greed and adult exploitation (asked to work for less than minimum wage). This demographic background and the mobility of many of our students contribute to the fact that our school has a 37% four-year graduation rate.

In any given school year, I teach World Geography, Pre-AP Human Geography, World History, Economics and/or US Government. One of the greatest challenges I face is to make each subject relevant to the life experience of my students. This HTI study of Africa has greatly increased my awareness of the circumstances impacting the political and economic development of the world's second largest continent. Many of the political and economic experiences of the African people could be shared by my students (some have come from Nigeria, Ethiopia, Liberia and Senegal). The culture of poverty has a constricting nature that destroys the human ability to think and act progressively. It creates resignation to hopelessness of opportunity and causes the life paradigm of living for the moment. Perhaps the content and activities of my curriculum unit will increase each student's awareness that poverty can be overcome, but only if we master knowledge acquisition and create avenues of unity rather than division.

My curriculum unit presents an effort to increase my students' understanding of the nature of Africa's underdevelopment and how this once exceptional place was pillaged by others resulting in its current state of impoverishment. In evaluating the causes of Africa's demise, my students will gain understanding of basic economic and social forces that have created the world we live in. Having understood the development of the modern world, my students can make decisions based upon observed human patterns and become motivated to achieve success in the face of pressure to fail.

OBJECTIVES

The following TAKS objectives will be addressed in my curriculum unit's modules:

- (8:10) Student will use geographic tools to analyze and interpret data.
- (WH23) Students will understand how the development of technological innovations has affected societies throughout history.

- (WG5) Student understands the distribution and characteristics of economic systems throughout the world.
- (WG18) Student understands the ways which cultures change and maintain continuity.
- (8.22) Student understands the importance of being able to express dissent in a democratic society.
- (WG5) (B) Student analyzes political, economic, social and demographic data to determine the level of a country's development.
- (8.30) Student identifies points of view from the historical context surrounding an event and the frame of reference which influenced the participants

RATIONALE

The purpose of this curriculum unit is to address the historical and economic issues related to Africa's underdevelopment and expose the biases and myths that surround the Western culture's idea that "primitive" black Africa was not capable of developing its own civilizations (Diamond 292). In writing this unit, it would be my intent to have my students explore the economic, political, and social ramifications of the effects of European slave trade, Europe's African colonialization policies, European imperial policies of arbitrarily creating state boundaries without regard to language, religious or indigenous culture groups, and finally, *Developed* countries' neo-colonial policies of indirect control of African economies.

The key concepts of my unit will include:

- The evidence of abundant rich and thriving African cultures prior to the sixteenth century.
- The nature and social role that African slavery held prior to European slave trade.
- The accesses and destructive effect that European African slave trade had on Africa's social structures.
- The totality of European colonialism in destroying African peoples view of themselves and the "African way" of life.
- The legacy of colonialism that continues to sustain Africa's underdevelopment while enabling the colonial masters to achieve an ever higher standard of living.
- The nature of "Core" and "Periphery" nations and how they compete in a global economy.
- The analysis of post-colonial rule and the stages of political development a country must experience before democracy can be extended to all people.

Some of the key questions that can be addressed in this unit would include:

- What is the historical background to Africa's pre-European slave trade era?
- How does capitalism work in order that wealth can be gained?
- Compare and contrast policies of special interest groups with goals of colonialism.
- How do countries justify their dehumanization of people and what are some of their strategies to accomplish this objective?
- Can democratic African regional alliances assist African countries in securing a stable and fair government for all the peoples of a country?

As a trained social studies educator, I am aware of my own lack of extended knowledge regarding the nature of Africa's underdevelopment and the causes for social and economic problems. This HTI seminar has created a substantial opportunity for me to do research on the topic I am addressing in my curriculum unit. I am afraid that it is too convenient to accept traditional "myths" and half-truths about African underdevelopment and treat it as an unfortunate

reality, but one of their own making. It is somewhat appalling that educators do not take the time to review Africa's historical record and discover the causes of its current political and economic poverty. I realize that the historical record does not paralyze the continent from taking remedial action to correct at least the region's political instability, but like our own experience as a developing nation, democracy for everyone is a slow and often hurtful experience for certain groups of people (13th, 14th, 15th and 19th Amendments, *Brown v. Board of Education, Topeka*, Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the King assassination, *et. al.*)

An additional objective for creating this unit would be to link the experiences of living in poverty with the circumstances facing the African people. How do you overcome the economic circumstances of the immediate past? What are some strategies you can employ to overcome your economic hardships? What must happen in order for you to achieve a better standard of living that you currently experience? I am hoping the analysis of honest insights can be extended to include understanding some of the issues facing Africa today.

A tertiary objective of this lesson is to supplement the current curricular offering in CLEAR. CLEAR is Houston Independent School District's "planned" series of curricular lessons that strategically addresses the district's/state's learning objective for each class of each course taught within the district. As currently structured, the CLEAR six lessons on Africa do not provide essential primary and secondary resource information on the causes for Africa's underdevelopment. It would be my intent to have students analyze these resources in order to gain an understanding of Africa's contributions to the world's practice of agriculture, architecture, literature, social constructs and artistic expression. These significant achievements often go unnoticed or are only lightly touched upon in our CLEAR curriculum and course textbook.

Finally, as citizens of the twenty-first century, my students need to investigate the rich African history that existed prior to the sixteenth century and compare and contrast that heritage with similar cultures of that era, including the Europeans. Contrasting the rich period of African history with contemporary Africa, students will evaluate the effect that the forced migration of nearly 12 million captives had on the economic and social development of the continent. Not only did slave trade effectively destroy any opportunity that Africans may have had at becoming an equal partner on the world stage, it also changed the fundamental characteristics of cultural roles in Africa, a development that had catastrophic impact on the underlying political and economic themes that were fundamental institutions of African politics.

UNIT BACKGROUND

My students do ask the question, "Why is the study of Africa important to me?" To answer that question in a compelling manner, I would like to appeal to my students' personal awareness of their own reality and how they may have arrived at their social and economic condition. By leading a candid discussion on Africa's impoverished condition, I would suggest that they visualize the effects of poverty and the debilitating social and economic constraints it places on one's future participation in a growingly affluent world. Do those living in poverty today have a role in choosing to live in that condition or is their impoverished condition related to social and economic events that occurred prior to their birth?

The attempt to assign blame for current economic and social deficiencies on past events does not promote empowerment or address the social and economic deficiencies of the culture of poverty. At best, historical fact and scholarly interpretative narrative can create an understanding of a nation's development level in the modern world, but does not articulate a unifying plan to remedy the continents current underdevelopment. For students and countries alike, I would suggest that the beginning of empowerment starts with a forum where each stakeholder is granted the right to speak and be listened to and participate in the establishment of collaboratively constructed goals to guide future development.

Like my students trapped in poverty, the nations of Africa should receive the economic and political support (to nations practicing democratic principles) from the brotherhood of nations and be authentically empowered to resolve their own problems. Knowing that their underdevelopment is linked to “outsiders” exploitive foreign policies (Alexander), the African people should receive resources, both political and financial aid to assist them in creating a plan that would restore the continent as equals in the world community. This starting point would lead to the creation of additional dialogues on remedies to rehabilitate the African continent from its current economic and social deficiencies. This is first step in a long term commitment to address the creation of opportunities that would lead to increased living standards for the African people.

An objective of this curriculum unit is to make students aware of the importance of knowing how past events shape current reality. During the acquisition of this awareness, the students will acquire an understanding that the African continent was a very different place prior to the European slave trade and colonialization. Serving as an historical model of how one group of people can affect the social and economic outcomes of other peoples for future generations, this unit should encourage my students to consider opportunities they are given in our culture to overcome the imperfection of their past legacy.

Given the dynamic nature of globalization forces, one can be hopeful that African nations will overcome the economic and social legacy of European colonialism. In pondering the extent of Africa’s plundered continent one can make the case that European nations caused Africa a wrong through its Atlantic Slave trade and unlawfully gained wealth as a result of Europe’s imperialistic practices on the African continent. I would like my students to explore the possibility of invoking a restitution policy based on precedent by certain victim groups who have been awarded money damages from the countries that perpetuated the crimes on their continent. This remedy (which can be managed through “loan forgiveness”) will be explored by my students as we discuss possible responses to the real needs of the African nations.

Africa before the Atlantic Trade Era

Africa has not always been a continent filled with poverty and despair. Before the onset of Atlantic Slave Trade era, the Africa people experienced a vibrant and unique social and economic life. Africa, the name given the continent by the Romans as it conquered Carthage in the second-century B.C., (Shillington 64) had prosperous trading relationships with numerous Asian and southern European countries (46, 131) and featured geographic pockets of prosperity and innovations.

In his 14th century traveling journal, Ibn Battutta recounts social and economic measures indicating the extensive reaches of African influence in the global Islamic community (Davis 3). African societies were stable social and economic entities that engaged in global trading on their own terms (Davis 3). In fact, the first African contacts with the Europeans were on the basis of equals or near equals (Northrup 100). In fact, in early sixteenth century, Africa had a higher average income than Europe (Zakaria 55).

The African continent was organized in empires, kingdoms, chiefdoms and city-states which featured traditional forms of governance that were evident in other parts of the world. The larger empires and kingdoms engaged in trading commodities such as salt, gold, ivory and slaves with nations throughout the known world. African merchants were also known to trade their war captives or kidnapped rival tribe members with other merchants for sought-after goods. This slave trade was local at first then grew increasing outward into every part of Africa and south Asia (Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery* 12).

As Islamic influence grew in sub-Saharan Africa and their trading network reached from the Baltic to Mozambique, China to Indonesia, and west of the Niger to Senegal rivers, the spread of slavery accompanied the trading activities of Muslim merchants. African slaves under Muslim custom were accorded the dignity and rights to humanity. Slavery was employed as an economic means to increase one's capital, and a slave was considered an instrument of labor and coercion could be applied with force in particular situations (Lovejoy, *Transformations* 5). However, during this era of African slavery, the institution of slavery only assumed a minor role in society and was incidental to the society's economic functioning (Lovejoy, *Transformations* 9).

In the 15th century the Portuguese envisioned using trade with Africa as a means of financing their attempt to bypass Muslim control of the Indian trade routes by sailing around the tip of southern Africa on its way to India. In pursuit of this goal the Portuguese became enamored with visions of obtaining vast riches in trading with the west African kingdoms for the gold they mined in their region. This incidental trade soon developed into a substantial economic enterprise, causing the Portuguese to undertake the creation of trading/military posts along Africa's west coast. From these geographic positions in west Africa, unscrupulous Portuguese could impose their will upon the kingdoms of that region, initially in their quest for gold, then later in their demands for human slaves to work their sugar plantations (Shillington 175).

The European Atlantic slave trade was actually three eras of differing characteristics. The first phase from 1500-1600 was the foundational stage as the Portuguese became familiar with African tribal politics and customs. Through this contact, the Portuguese established trading relationships with African kings and chiefs who proved to be sophisticated negotiators demanding European manufactured goods like textiles, brass pans, and beads in exchange for their gold. During this stage, Portugal diverted their trading objectives to establish sugar plantations on the African islands of Sao Tome and Principe. Sugar had been a rare spice at this time and was only enjoyed by the European rich; thus, Portugal's trading focus switched from gold to slaves. Working the sugar plantations, slaves provided the Portuguese with the necessary labor to insure the profitability (Klieman).

When the Dutch arrived (1593), they challenged Portugal's trading monopoly with the West African kingdoms. The Dutch readily exchanged guns for gold and ivory and sold goods to the Africans more cheaply than the Portuguese (Ramerini 5). Because the Dutch had no plantations to manage at the time, they were not interested in trading for African slaves. This outlook would change over time as the Dutch began capturing Portuguese colonies and their sugar plantations both in the New World (1630) and in Africa (1641) (Ramerini 2).

The second era of European Atlantic Slave trade was 1660-1830. This period featured the height of slave trade and the beginning of the disintegration of Kongo kingdom and the destabilization local African power structures. As the forward edge of the slave trading zone moved from the coast forward into the African interior, political and economic turbulence materialized all along its frontier edge. Using social chaos to gain military advantage, armed slave traders nourishing the European insatiable appetite for slave labor were able to bring order to the newly captured zones and established well-defined routes and rules of orderly trade to expand their commercial objectives (Klieman).

The violence and social instability instigated by European trading companies destroyed Africa's old social order. In the wake of the violence entire communities and ethnic groups were relocated and forced to accept new identities, thereby creating a general "hardening" of what had been more fluid ethnic lines (Klieman).

The final chapter of the European Slave trade (1830 to 1884) was a transition time when the European nations began featuring increased inefficiency and profits based upon machine technology rather than human labor. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, slave labor was

not as efficient a means of farm production as was some of the labor provided by new farm machinery being introduced in Great Britain and Western Europe. This fact caught the eye of European investors who began shifting their capital to the new industrialists (Shillington 233).

The new machinery was reducing the costs of sugar production and the French, armed with the latest in farming machine technology, began to undercut their European rivals, especially Great Britain (Shillington 233). Compounding the growing costs of slave labor was the fact that the West African rulers and merchants were also demanding more for the sale of their captives, further driving up the cost of slave-produced sugar.

In addition to the introduction of labor saving machinery was the fact that rising European sentiment considered slavery a non humanitarian enterprise and in direct conflict with the principles of human freedom and equality. This point was especially poignant when made by ex-slaves who became educated and anglicized (Shillington 234). Olaudah Equiano and Ottobah Cugoano were two of these ex-slaves who spoke and wrote compassionately from their own experiences. They recounted how Africans from the beginning of European trans-Atlantic slave trade attempted to resist and became so desperate that they entertained (and sometimes committed) suicidal actions as a means to escape this horrific fate. Their voices were joined by others with similar experiences and created a substantial abolitionist movement in England (Shillington 234).

As significant as was the role assumed by the abolitionists in persuading Great Britain to make the slave trade illegal in 1807, perhaps the main reason the slave trade was outlawed was the fact the new manufacturers and their bankers took note that if the Africans were left in Africa, they could provide Europeans with significant raw materials that could be sold for profit in growing markets. They also noted that while supplying the Europeans with raw materials, Africans could be empowered to buy the finished goods made at the new European factories (Shillington 233).

Consequences of the European Atlantic Slave Trade

Because of the size of the African continent (Africa is the second largest continent), its population density is low, rendering the individual worker's labor an important factor in a region's agricultural production. With the increase in European slave trade, the loss of population had devastating direct and indirect impact on the African economy (Rodney 93). Numerous African peoples were conscious that the size of their population was directly tied to their community's productivity and therefore resisted participation in the slave trade, but were later drawn into this European economic boon through contrived wars, kidnappings and social deceptions.

When African rulers refused to supply the Europeans with slaves, the Europeans reverted to the practice of enslaving the rulers, kidnapping young people or making war against certain communities with the intent of capturing citizens to make them slaves to serve on the sugar or tobacco plantations of the New World. In Brazil, even though slaves were more valuable than gold, they were literally worked to death (Rodney 82).

What began as the European purchase of African captives on the coasts of Africa to work in European markets, soon escalated into an insatiable appetite for human exports (Rodney 92). Prior to European slave trade involvement, slavery in Africa was characterized by the slave's humane treatment which offered social status that accompanied the opportunity of freedom for the "slave" (Hunwick 29). However, the nature of the European slave trade (public inspection of the flesh of black human beings as if they were less than human and the dividing of families) and the cruelty of the "Middle Passage" soon changed the meaning of African slavery. It reduced the "captive" to mere "chattel property" (Dred Scott decision, 1856) to be bought, sold and even eliminated without a trace of human feeling or rights. The European slave trade significantly changed the African culture and radically altered the role and status of the term "slave."

Like other innovative enterprises that made capitalists richer, the financial success of the sugar plantations was short lived as new technology in the forms of machines and huge, new plantations caused the decline in sugar plantation profitability. During the late eighteenth century the introduction of the Industrial Revolution's manufacturing techniques and labor saving machines changed the demand and necessity of slavery. Slavery was becoming a net loss exchange which was viewed by investors as time to liquidate old investments and invest their capital in the new financial industries of the era (Shillington 233).

Impact of European Colonial Practices

As the Industrial Revolution spread along the rich coal fields of Great Britain and Western Europe in the later part of the eighteenth century, the "scramble" for African colonies and their natural resources began in earnest among the European states. To avoid counterproductive wars and continued raiding of each other's proclaimed African territory, Chancellor Otto von Bismarck of Germany convened a meeting on November 15, 1884, of fourteen countries to discuss the political partitioning of Africa. By 1914 the Europeans had divided Africa into fifty colonial "countries" whose boundaries still serve as a source of conflict. The Europeans' influence over the African peoples was regressive, destroying old ways but leaving little to replace them (Zakaria 68).

According to Rodney, colonial Africa's economic health was destroyed by the European system to repatriate the profits of African trade to the "mother country" and bypass the African merchant who stood a chance of making a living. This imperialistic policy allowed Europe to exploit the surplus grown on African farms to enhance their own wealth and deprive the African economy from participating in the international capitalist economy. European nations' colonial practices contributed to keeping the African standard of living inferior to other countries that had open access to free market competition (114).

Another characteristic of the European imperialistic practices was the differentiation of wages for whites, light skinned and dark Africans (Rodney 219). This biased practice in applying wage differentials was strictly racist and used extensively to increase the profits to the European trading companies. European imperialism and its accompanying racist policies had a pervasive influence in Africa's social as well as in all economic realms including shipping and banking services.

In addition the European trading companies did not purchase the land they used, did not pay taxes to African municipalities, and did not allow the Africans to trade with other nations in the world. These imposed artificial economic barriers caused the Africans to live in continued state of abject poverty while their European overseers lived in luxury. This colonial arrangement lasted long after the Europeans left the continent and has only recently been addressed as Africans place their own people in government positions of authority. Furthermore, Rodney notes that colonialism meant the intensification of exploitation of Africa resources at much greater level than under communalism or feudal-type African societies practiced prior to colonialism (159).

The encounters with the Europeans changed or destroyed the existing political, social, and economic arrangements in African societies. When they left the continent, the Europeans did not leave enough capital resources or infrastructure to provide economic impetus for a new country to begin its ascent into the realm of developed nations. Becoming a modern society, a state must have access to capital resources to promote industrialization and urbanization while raising the levels of literacy, education, and wealth (Zakaria 74).

Where will African nations obtain these resources and from whom will they look for justice from past wrongs? The answer to this question appears to be China. As an emerging nation China is seen by Africans as an economic model that could raise the standard of living on their

continent. The Chinese are serious about cementing economic ties with the African nations as they have diplomatic relations with 48 out of the 53 countries and sponsored the largest ever African summit held outside of Africa (Sino-African Summit, November, 2006) (Zakaria 116). These actions are reminders that a nation's international influence is directly tied to their legitimacy in the eyes of the world and that unipolarity and unilateral policies destroy a nation's international political capital (Zakaria 223).

Destroying Africa's Social Organizational Systems

Added to the twin devastation of removing human and economic capital from the continent was the European development of administrative boundaries which facilitated the trading companies' total subjugation of the African kingdoms. The Berlin Conference's arbitrary boundaries which serve as current demarcation for each African sovereign state were imposed upon the African people without their consent nor any regard for language, religious, cultural, or social groupings of the indigenous people. When the European invaders finally granted Africa its independence in the twentieth century, the colonial administrative boundaries became sovereign states permanently uniting peoples who were not culturally related and often viewed as competitors for the land's resources. Into the power vacuum created by the Europeans departure, local African leaders, regardless of ideological belief, sought to centralize state power, build institutions of public administration and create state security military apparatuses that would sustain them in power over the people. In their determination to consolidate power they often treated opposing groups with a ruthless vengeance and unyielding persecution causing ongoing civil wars and social unrest (Rodney 144).

This rush for power reflects the learned behavior gained from years of European oppression and its greedy, no-quarter-given authoritarian practices in crushing the opposition. This practice is in direct conflict with the traditional African belief in the element of conviviality and hospitality as a means of exercising power and transmitting the community's wisdom and databank.

Legacy of Colonialism

History recounts other cultures in other regions of the world that have suffered total devastation to their homeland, yet have recovered sufficiently to provide a modern standard of living for its citizens (South Korea, Taiwan). Now that the African nations are "citizens of the world" (Davidson 176), they are confronted with political and economic realities that are challenging, but not impossible to master. Because the colonial economic and political practices robbed the African nation of both their economic and political resources, the African continent faces a long and arduous road to normalcy. This road to recovery, like most of the literal African roads, is marred by holes and wash-outs that make advancement a slow and difficult task.

Pre-colonial Africa had its own political, social, and economic systems that worked as regional zones of cooperation (Davidson 98). A return to regional unity seems to be a logical step in Africa's return to normalcy. However, this proposal is unrealistic when the government leadership of an African nation fails to appreciate the role that popular participation plays in the recovery and development process. Colonialism has left Africa with a legacy of political and economic division by pitting the self-interests of colonial tribalism against the unity of modern nationalism (Davidson 187). The early governments of independent African states suffered from the same human malady that their colonial masters did; namely, they never secured their people's respect or support. These early governments depended upon the outside for formal sovereignty and resources that enabled them to arbitrarily extend and enforce their authority (Cooper 156).

Another significant legacy of colonialism can be seen in Africa's economic position in the world. Forced by the need to acquire modern technology and capital, African nations are forced to accommodate the financial arrangements of multi-national corporations that continue the

policy of exporting African's wealth to other parts of the world (Davidson 98). For example, 90% of Liberia's market value in goods and services is controlled by external forces (Davidson 180). Multi-national corporations and state-owned business entities (China and Russia) continue to exploit Africa for their own gain.

For Africa to regain its past glory and equal access to the world's marketplace, it appears that the continent's leadership must focus upon three goals: 1) Strengthen their internal stability, 2) Provide equal economic and political access to all African citizens in establishing a higher standard of living for the people, and 3) Unify their actions to overcome the economic and political deficits caused by colonialism. Africa's rehabilitation will be fostered by the exercise of internal popular support for African interests and not the western capitalists who have long taken advantage of Africa's diversity and rich natural resources. The fact that Africa's trade is growing by 50% a year with its trading partner China demonstrates the economic power of African nations (Zakaria 116)

In this era of transitioning paradigms, it is interesting to note how the United Nations Security Council's effort to exert its will (sanctions, military threats) upon the current political crisis in Zimbabwe was received by other African states. Regarding the threat of UN intervention, neighboring South Africa's ruling party, the African National Council, informed the world that "arbitrary, capricious power" exerted by Africa's former colonial masters would be not be welcomed and would be counterproductive. In fact, any initiative by European nations even though well-meaning would "merely deepen the crisis" (Cowell).

The twenty-first century global economics and the "rise of the rest" (Zakaria 218) have empowered Africans to assume responsibility for the well-being of their own continent. China and others have led them to realize that the only ones who can manage the needs of the African people are the African people. On the road to democracy and free-market benefits, African states will experience numerous failures, but their resolve "to get it right" will serve as a testimony to the world that Africa has arrived as an equal partner in the world of nations. As the *Houston Chronicle* article stated, "It has always been and continues to be the view of our movement that the challenges facing Zimbabwe can only be solved by the Zimbabweans themselves" stated a spokesperson for the ANC." (Cowell).

This self-assuring proclamation is initial evidence that Africa can overcome its past and increase the standard of living throughout the continent. It is unfortunate that a totalitarian regime (China) has demonstrated more respect for the African identity than countless democratic governments who share in the causes of Africa's blighted history of slavery and colonialism.

LESSON PLANS

Lesson Plan 1: World Geography – Understanding Africa's Underdevelopment

In World Geography, the learning focus will be an analysis of the economic impact of European colonialization and evaluation of the neo-colonial economic and political practices still prevalent on the African continent today. I will use the creation of wall charts, and "pyor" graphics to demonstrate the issues and data related to Europe's slave trade and imperialism effect on African development. I will use current event articles and passages from various books to engage the learner in mastery the lesson's objectives.

Objective: The students will analyze the demographic basis for organizing countries into developed and developing and evaluate how twentieth century imperialism contributed to the creation of these categories.

TEKS: 8:10. Students will use geographic tools to analyze and interpret data.

TEKS: WG5: Students will analyze political, economic, social and demographic data to determine the level of a country's development.

TEKS: WH23. Students will understand how the development of technological innovations has affected societies throughout history.

Materials: computer (or LCD projector), excerpts from archived newspaper clippings, large sheets of poster board and colored pencils.

Procedures: Teacher will illustrate the disparity in global economics using websites (www.census.gov/statab/www, <http://infochimp.org/flip>, and <http://bea.gov/national/nipaweb/SelectTable.asp?Select>) that generate per capita income data for each nation of the world. Using a listing of world demographic data detailing a country's literacy level, life expectancy, doctors per thousand people and number of televisions per household, students will create a written (listing) profile of the attributes of a developed country and developing country. Working in pairs, students will create wall charts depicting the growth of European and African nations over the last four centuries. With his/her partner, each group will also create a decoupage of events that assist them in explaining the significance of their wall chart findings. Each group will make an oral presentation of their work to the class.

Assessment: A rubric will be developed and will record where the students received their points for the project. Their oral presentation will also be guided by a rubric that will be combined with their chart grade for an average grade for the lesson.

Lesson Plan 2: World History--Imperialism's Impact on Africa's Development

Students will conduct research using primary and secondary sources in an effort to create pro and con arguments for the practice of imperialism. Students will conduct debates on whether European imperialism had any benefit for the peoples of the African continent.

Objectives:

TEKS: 8.30: Students will identify points of view from the historical context surrounding an event and the frame of reference which influenced the participants.

TEKS: WG5: Students will understand the distribution and characteristics of economic systems throughout the world.

Materials: Text materials, computer websites, newspaper and magazine articles and books.

Procedures:

Using teacher-created materials (Debate and persuasive writing), I will review the basic terms used in formal debate. In this presentation, I will cover the issue of giving evidence, special focus on primary and secondary sources, for debate arguments (points) and the need to use data to support statements. I will model a summary and rebuttal statements as well strategies to employ in convincing the audience of your position's correctness. I will encourage each team of students to be able to defend either position of the topic "The benefits of European imperialism to the African people."

Students will do research in primary and secondary resources that provide them with data that can be used in supporting their oral arguments. I will lead them into discovering evidence using certain websites that offer charts and data addressing topics such as economic indicators (earthtrends.org), integration of economic and political systems worldwide (Globalization101.com), demographic data (census.gov) and other contemporary sites that could assist students in preparing for their debates. I will also make available text materials including

diary entries made by former slaves. Each student will write out his/her team's position and argue their evidence in a formal debate setting.

Assessment: The student audience and I will have a scorecard representing points for each part of the debate (presentation, reasoning, evidence, and rebuttal). Grades will be awarded on an average of scores and/or dropping the lowest and highest grades. The objective of this assessment is to make the student aware of presentation or preparation issues that need to be address prior to another class debate.

Lesson Plan 3:

Economics - The current economic conditions of African nations and how they are related to its recent colonial history.

Students will analyze the general economic state of Africa and evaluate possible causes via spreadsheet presentations and cause and effect discussions. I will instruct the students in how capital is formed and review the European colonial practices of extracting raw materials, fixing prices for the import and export of both raw and finished materials, using forced labor to extract raw materials and build roads, and how interest rates are calculated on loans advanced to client governments by industrialized nations.

Objective:

TEKS: WG5. B: Students analyzes political, economic, social, and demographic data to determine the level of a country's development.

TEKS: WG5: Students will understand the distribution and characteristics of economic systems throughout the world.

Materials: Computers, Excel spreadsheets, Word processing software

Procedures:

The teacher will use the school's computer lab to teach this particular lesson. Using the United Nations Statistics Division – Social Statistics website, the teacher will explain the concept of per capita income (GDP) and demonstrate how one can use these statistics to make evaluations of a countries level of development. After creating a spreadsheet to list economic (monetary aggregate and level of economic activity data) statistics for European and African countries, the teacher will explain that the boundaries for the world economy change over time and are usually dictated by the winner in the struggle between those who defend the old order and those who practice a vision for something new (market economy, monetary sophistication). The students will do a longitudinal study of the economic growth of Europe while Africa was in decline after the 15th century.

Assessment:

Students will submit their economic spreadsheets and a Word document in support of their argument. Can they align their data to make a case for the position that Africa's current underdevelopment was in part caused by European imperialist policies or is the data inconclusive? The learning objective infers that students will understand how the characteristics of economic systems (capitalism, socialism, fascism, and communism) are sustained, refined or rejected in the real world. An outcome of this analysis should be the documentation of a nation's economic growth and the economic factors that fuel that growth.

Lesson Plan 4:

Human Geography - Contrasting and comparing LDCs (Less Developed Countries) and MDCs (More Developed Countries) using Africa and Europe longitudinal economic data sets as a means of explaining contemporary patterns of national development

Students will do research in primary and secondary sources to evaluate the development of economic injustice in the “world economic order.” They will do research on various remedies for this disparity and offer defensible solutions (or note political and/or social dilemmas) in either a visual or written format.

Objectives:

TEKS: WG18: Students understand the ways which cultures change and maintain continuity.

TEKS: 8.12: Students will understand the importance of being able to express dissent in a democratic society.

Materials: Computer, relevant archived articles, and related books.

Procedures: Students will be given an overview and listing of resource materials including websites, library-archived articles, and book titles that discuss current world demographics and the preponderance of poverty in the twenty-first century. They will note economic progress being made in certain African states and economic regression being experienced in other African nations. Using Africa’s recent history with Europe, students will look for the causes of Africa’s underdevelopment and attempt to explain this reality in political and economic terms.

Assessment: Students will submit their written work on this topic and be graded according to a rubric that will guide their critique. In lieu of a fully developed written critique, each student will be allowed to make a visual presentation (PowerPoint Charts) to the class in support of their findings.

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