

# Africa, A Look Through the Eyes of A Child

## Summary

Students will explore literature about Africa and exhibit an interest in learning more about it. This unit will introduce them to the seven continents of the world.

## Main Core Tie

English Language Arts Grade 2

[Reading: Literature Standard 1](#)

## Additional Core Ties

English Language Arts Grade 2

[Reading: Literature Standard 2](#)

English Language Arts Grade 2

[Reading: Informational Text Standard 1](#)

## Time Frame

4 class periods of 15 minutes each

## Group Size

Large Groups

## Materials

### Lesson 1:

- One book about Africa for each student in the class. (See suggested books in the Bibliography)
- A large basket to hold the books
- Timer with bell
- A map showing the continents
- K-W-L chart
- A marker

### Lesson 2:

- Map of Africa and Mali shaded
- Map of USA with Utah shaded
- Crayons
- Paper
- Large world physical map
- Interactive bulletin board labeled "Facts About Mali, Africa" to record facts.
- A "little fact book" for each child.

### Lesson 3:

- Pictures of physical characteristics of Utah and Mali including deserts, rivers, etc.
- Pictures of animals native to both places (obtained from the Web site [Mali, Africa to Utah, USA](#))
- Fact books

### Lesson 4:

#### For Griot Staff

- Cardboard tube (from wrapping paper)
- Gold foil
- Raffia
- Plastic or Styrofoam apple

Low temperature glue gun  
Glue sticks  
Writing materials  
Fact books

### Background for Teachers

#### Music Integration:

The following site contains sheet music and a sound file for the unofficial African Anthem "God Bless Africa".

### Instructional Procedures

#### Lesson 1:

##### Anticipatory Set:

Give each child a book and have them study the cover without opening it. Ask several of the children to share what is interesting about their book cover and to predict what it might be about. Write these predictions down to refer to later.

##### Instruction and Activities:

Have the students pass their book to their neighbor. Ask them to open the books and find a key detail to share when the timer goes off. Give them a couple of minutes. Ring the bell and ask questions such as: who, what, where, when, why and how.

Pass the books again and repeat the process a few times.

Check predictions from the first activity. See if they can be confirmed or how they might be changed.

Show the students the continents on a map and teach them the names. Tell them that North America married South America and they are holding hands (connected). They went to Europe on a honeymoon. They had four children and all their names begin with "A" Africa, Antarctica, Asia, and Australia.

Ask them which continent they think the books are about.

##### Closure:

Do a K-W-L chart as a group on the board filling in "What I think I know about Africa", "What I want to know", and leaving "What I learned" blank. Tell the students we will learn many things about Africa during the next few weeks.

#### Lesson 2:

##### Anticipatory Set:

Give each student a map of Africa and of North America.

Utah is located in the western part of North America. Can you find it? Put your finger on Utah.

Mali is located in the western part of Africa. Can you find it? Put your finger on Mali.

Hang up a large sketch of Africa drawn on a poster board. Tell them we are going to learn about a place called Mali in Africa. When we learn new facts we will write them on our Mali poster. We want it to be completely covered with facts.

##### Instruction and Activities:

Have students work in partners. Have them count the number of countries around Mali. Tell your study partner how many there are.

Discuss the shape of the country of Mali with your partner. What does it look like?

Use crayons to illustrate the shape of Mali into what you think it looks like.

Count the number of states around Utah. Tell your partner how many there are.

Discuss the shape of Utah with your partner. What does it look like?

Use crayons to illustrate the shape of Utah on the other side of your paper.

Find Mali on a world physical map and show where it is located.

Find Utah on a world physical map and show where it is located.

Find the ocean that is between Africa and North America. Which ocean is it?

Which ocean is closest to Utah?

What direction would you go to travel from Utah to Mali?

Closure:

Have a grand conversation about the distance between Mali and Utah. Ask open ended questions to determine their preconceived notions about Mali and to stimulate thinking for future lessons. Have each child write a fact they learned about Mali on the bulletin board, and also in their own fact book.

Lesson 3:

Anticipatory Set:

Present a large bowl of fresh ripe cherries. Tell them that cherries are Utah's state fruit. Ask them if they think cherries grow in Mali.

Show the children a mango. Tell them mangos grow in Mali. Allow them to taste it. Ask, "Could we grow mango in Utah? Why? Do you think Mali is different than Utah or the same?"

Instruction and Activities:

Show pictures of animals native to Utah and have the students name them. Discuss the climate in Utah and what these animals need to survive.

Show pictures of animals native to Mali and the children name them. Ask what they think these animals eat and what kind of climate and conditions might be necessary for them to survive.

Take students to the computer lab and let them explore the pictures of how Mali and Utah are alike and how they are different. (Use Internet site listed above)

Give each child a Mali fact book. Have them write three facts they learned today about Mali and choose one to write on the fact poster.

Closure:

Have the students talk about differences and similarities between Mali and Utah. Add facts to the fact poster. Tell them our fact poster is showing they have learned lots of important facts about Mali. Add a fact or draw a picture in the fact book. Share the information in the anticipatory set from lesson 4 with the students.

Lesson 4:

Anticipatory Set:

The following may be read or paraphrased:

"As in much of Africa, Mali's history was preserved by a rich oral tradition. Until Middle Eastern traders brought written language to the area, all of Mali's history was memorized and shared in a storytelling performance by professional historians called GRIOTS (Gree-ohs). Griot is an old French term that used to mean "keeper of memories". Griots were employed by villages, kings, or clans and had to commit to memory tremendous amounts of information."

Read aloud an African folktale from the bibliography below. Discuss what message or moral the folktale was teaching.

Instruction and Activity:

Talk to your family members and ask about a story that they can relate about your family. Share it with the class.

Closure:

All families have stories that they pass down from generation to generation. Share a story from your background that they can relate to.

### Strategies for Diverse Learners

Partner the children for extra support. Make a contact with the home and see if there is any help you can provide before activities are carried out.

Encourage the gifted children to learn more about Mali and share it with the class. Also, they may

complete additional activities on the other topics not covered by the whole group.

## Assessment Plan

### Lesson 1:

Did the children enthusiastically participate in the exploration of the books? Were they eager to share interesting facts and characters they found?

Did they volunteer information for the K-W-L chart?

Can they name all seven continents of the world?

### Lesson 2:

Are students able to locate Mali and Utah on the world physical map?

Can they name the two continents where we find Utah and Mali?

Did the fact they wrote on the poster reflect new information learned?

### Lesson 3:

Did the students' writing reflect comprehension about the similarities and difference between Mali and Utah?

### Lesson 4:

The interview will be the assessment. If the student understands that storytelling helps with the history of a family, it will be portrayed in the story that the student shares.

## Bibliography

- Anansi and the Talking Melon  
, by Eric A. Kimmel. ISBN: 0823411044
- South Africa  
, by Zo E Dawson ISBN: 0817240152
- The Land and Wildlife of Africa  
, by Archie Fairly Carr. Library of Congress #64-23586
- Asante of West Africa  
, by Jamie Hetfield. ISBN: 0823923290
- Sundiata: Lion King of Mali  
, by David Wisniewski. ISBN: 0395764815
- Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears: A West African Tale  
, by Verna Aardema. ISBN: 0329065548
- Why the Sun and the Moon Live in the Sky  
, by Elphinstone Dayrell. ISBN: 0395296099
- A Visit to Egypt  
, by Peter Roop. ISBN: 1575721228
- Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions  
, by Margaret Musgrove. ISBN: 0329052705
- The Leopard's Drum: An Asante Tale from West Africa  
, by Jessica Souhami. ISBN: 0316804665.
- Too Much Talk: A West African Folktale  
, by Angela Shelf Medearis. ISBN: 0329044753
- The Village of Round and Square Houses  
, by Ann Grifalconi. ISBN: 0329044753
- A Is for Africa  
, by Ifeoma Onyefulu. ISBN: 0329059610
- Emeka's Gift: An African Counting Story  
, by Ifeoma Onyefulu. ISBN: 0329091077

- Anansi and the Moss-Covered Rock  
, by Eric A. Kimmel. ISBN: 08230689X  
[www.africamasterweb.com/GBASingerMusicF.html](http://www.africamasterweb.com/GBASingerMusicF.html) (accompaniment with real African drums on this site.)

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