African Imperialism: Scramble for Africa

Students learn European motives for and methods of colonizing Africa.

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Grade Level: High School
Class Period(s): 1-2

National Geography Standards
ESSENTIAL ELEMENT: HUMAN SYSTEMS
12. The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement.
13. How the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of the Earth’s surface.

Arizona Geography Strand
GEOGRAPHY: STRAND 4 Concept 2 Places and Regions
PO 5. Examine how the geographic characteristics of a place affect the economics and culture (e.g., changing regional economy of the sunbelt, location with respect of natural hazards, location of Panama Canal, Air Force Bases in Arizona).
PO 6. Analyze how a region changes over time (e.g., U.S./Mexico border, Europe from World War I to the development of European Union, change from pre-to post-colonialism in Africa, Hong Kong).

Concept 4 Human Systems
PO 4. Analyze issues of globalization (e.g., widespread use of English, the role of the global media, resistance to “cultural imperialism”, trade, and outsourcing).

Concept 6 Geographic Applications
PO 3. Analyze how geography influences historical events and movements (e.g., Trail of Tears, Cuban missile crisis, location of terrorist camps, pursuit of Pancho Villa, Mao’s long march, Hannibal crossing the Alps, Silk Road).

Other Arizona Standards
Strand 2 World History
Concept 7: Age of Imperialism
PO 1. Explain the rationale (e.g., need for raw materials, domination of markets, advent of national competition, spread of European culture/religion) for imperialism.
PO 3. Describe the division of the world into empires and spheres of influence during the 18th and 19th centuries (e.g., British, French, Dutch, Spanish, American, Belgian).
PO 4. Analyze the effects of European and American colonialism on their colonies (e.g., artificially drawn boundaries, one-crop economies, creation of economic dependence, population relocation, cultural suppression).

ELA College and Career Ready Standards
Reading
Key Ideas and Details
9-10.RH.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

Writing
Production and Distribution of Writing
9-10.WHST.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.
Overview

The 19th and 20th centuries saw European countries continuing to expand their influence around the world, especially on the continent of Africa. The most powerful Imperialist nations included England, France, Portugal, Spain and Holland. These European nations scrambled to claim territory and dominated the African governments, trade, and cultures. European countries actually viewed colonization of Africa as their right and responsibility, as they believed that they were culturally superior to the native populations. The African slave trade and treatment of the native peoples in the Congo by King Leopold further demonstrates that view. Imperialist nations also profited economically from taking natural resources such as diamonds.

Purpose

Knowing the motivations for Imperialism in Africa is essential to develop an understanding of cultural diffusion and forces of conflict in that part of the world. In this lesson, students will uncover the consequences, both positive and negative, that resulted from this historical event.

Materials

- Sticky notes
- Colored pencils/markers
- Scramble for Africa PowerPoint Presentation
- Create Your Own Country worksheet
- Political Cartoon Analysis Tool with a Geographic Lens
- Imperialism in Africa Cornell Notes worksheet
- Maps:
  - Africa Regions Map (labeled)- http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/map_s/AFREGNM_0.pdf
  - Africa’s Resources Map http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/map_s/Africa%20Resources_10_20_15.pdf
- Websites for additional information:
  - Michigan State University’s Exploring Africa Natural resources in Africa http://exploringafrica.matrix.msu.edu/students/courriculum/m6/activity4.php
  - Movement of people http://exploringafrica.matrix.msu.edu/students/courriculum/m6/activity5.php
  - Geography of Africa in regions http://exploringafrica.matrix.msu.edu/students/courriculum/m6/activity3.php

Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. explain the motivations for and the process by which Europeans colonized Africa during the 19th and 20th centuries.
2. analyze the effects of colonization on colonies.

Procedures

SESSION ONE

1. Project the Scramble for Africa PowerPoint that contains the day’s objectives, bell work, a definition of imperialism, and a prediction exercise (slides 1-5). Record the students’ predictions on the whiteboard so that they can be referred to at the end of the lesson.
2. Assign students into groups of 4-5 and distribute the Create Your Own Country worksheet. Advise students that all steps must be completed in order. Groups are not to go on to the next step until the teacher has reviewed their work and given permission to move on to the next step (slide 6).
3. Have students work through the set of directions: create a flag, a constitution, and Bill of Rights for their mock country. After gaining approval of their work, students can begin to claim land by placing sticky notes on items around the classroom. You can have some areas of the classroom “off limits” if you prefer. These areas can represent areas in Africa that were not colonized such as Ethiopia and Liberia. The purpose of this demonstration is to show the students that the most organized (established, powerful, and industrialized) nations in Europe were the ones that colonized the most areas in Africa. Therefore, once one group begins colonizing the classroom, the other groups rush to complete the rest of the steps so that they too can begin colonizing. What results is a mad rush for territory, just like the Scramble for Africa.
4. Have students answer the questions (slide 7) in the PowerPoint. Discuss their answers.
5. Distribute Cornell Notes on Imperialism in Africa. Have students take notes on the European Movites for African Imperialism (slide 8).
6. Closure- Discuss the African trade maps (slides 9 and 10). Go back to predictions students made and decide as a class if their predictions were correct.
SESSION TWO

1. Resume the Scramble for Africa PowerPoint that contains the day’s objective and bell work (slides 11-13). Distribute the Political Cartoon Analysis Tool with a Geographic Lens to use with “The Sleeping Sickness” political cartoon. Have students work in pairs to write answers. Elicit responses from the whole class. The message in the cartoon should be that African people were held against their will as Europeans took advantage of the land.

2. Group students in to 4-5 students per group. Assign each group an African region (slide 14). Distribute both African Regions map and Africa’s Resources map. Have students draw symbols and shade the Africa Regions to match the Africa’s Resources map.(slides 15-16)

3. Go further by having students Use MSU’s Exploring Africa matrix to help them discover what natural resources exist in their assigned region and what motivated people to move to and from their region over time. Students record their findings on their blank Africa Regions map. Have students report their regional findings to the class. Have students record 2-3 key ideas based on each group’s regional presentations on their map.

4. Closure: Have students hand in map work.

SESSION THREE

1. Have students return to their Cornell notes from yesterday. Ask students what motivation is connected to the political cartoon, “The Sleeping Sickness.” Answers may vary.

2. Resume the Scramble for Africa PowerPoint taking notes on the 19th and 20th Centuries Mysteries and Adventures and continue with The Belgian Congo: “King Leopold’s Ghost” and finish with “The Struggle for Africa.” (slides 18-63)

3. Have students summarize what they know about the motives for European Imperialism. What do they believe were the positive and negative effects of imperialism on the colonizer and the colony?

Assessment

Students’ Cornell notes on African Imperialism can be graded for completeness and correctness. A score of 80% or higher will be considered mastery.

Students’ maps of the African Regions can be graded for completeness and correctness. A score of 80% or higher will be considered mastery.

Students will receive a 4 or higher on the 6 Traits Writing Rubric in the area of Ideas and Organization on their summaries explaining the motives for Imperialism and analyzing its effects.

Extensions

As an extension, have students close read various accounts of the Zulu Wars to gain differing perspectives on the effects on native people.

Students can compare King Leopold’s campaign in the Congo to the Holocaust during World War Two. Have students research both events and discuss reasons that this historic tragedy is not as well known as the Holocaust.

Sources

PowerPoint is modified from an original PowerPoint entitled “European Colonialism in Africa” by Susan M. Pojer of Chappaqua, NY

Africa Regions Map (labeled)-
http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/AFREGNM_0.pdf

Africa’s Resources Map
http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/Africa%20Resources_10_20_15.pdf

Websites for additional information:
Michigan State University’s Exploring Africa
Natural resources in Africa
http://exploringafrica.matrix.msu.edu/students/curriculum/m6/activity4.php

Movement of people
http://exploringafrica.matrix.msu.edu/students/curriculum/m6/activity5.php

Geography of Africa in regions
http://exploringafrica.matrix.msu.edu/students/curriculum/m6/activity3.php

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