



# African Regions and their Folk Tales

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**Grade Level** 7  
**Duration** 2-4 class period

**ELL Adaptation by** Diane Godfrey

## National Standards

### GEOGRAPHY

#### Element 1: The World in Spatial Terms

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information

#### Element 2: Places and Regions

4. The physical and human characteristics of places

5. People create regions to interpret Earth's complexity

#### Element 3: Physical Systems

7. The physical processes that shape the patterns of Earth's surface

8. The characteristics and distribution of ecosystems and biomes on Earth's surface

#### Element 5: Environment and Society

14. How human actions modify the physical environment

## AZ Standards

### ELA

#### Reading

#### Literature

#### Key Ideas and Details

7.RL.3 Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

#### Writing

#### Text Types and Purposes

7.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.

a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories as appropriate to achieving purpose; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.  
 b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone.

f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

#### Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7.W.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

## Arizona Social Science Standards

### GEOGRAPHY

**The use of geographic representations and tools helps individuals understand their world.**

7.G1.1 Use and construct maps and other geographic representations to explain the spatial patterns of cultural and environmental characteristics. **Human-environment interactions are essential aspects of human life in all societies.**

7.G2.1 Explain how cultural demographic patterns, economic decisions, and human adaptations shape the identity of nearby and distant places.

7.G2.2 Analyze cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar and different.

**Global interconnections and spatial patterns are a necessary part of geographic reasoning.**

7.G4.1 Analyze cultural and environmental characteristics among various places and regions of the world.

## SIOP Elements

## African Regions and Their Folk Tales

<b>Preparation</b> Adapting content <b>Linking to background</b> Linking to past learning Strategies used	<b>Scaffolding</b> <b>Modeling</b> <b>Guided practice</b> Independent practice <b>Comprehensible input</b>	<b>Grouping Option</b> Whole class <b>Small groups</b> <b>Partners</b> Independent
<b>Integrating Processes</b> Reading Writing <b>Speaking</b> <b>Listening</b>	<b>Application</b> Hands on Meaningful <b>Linked to objectives</b> Promotes engagement	<b>Assessment</b> <b>Individual</b> Group <b>Written</b> Oral

### Arizona ELP Standards

#### Stage IV

#### Basic

#### Comprehension of Oral Communications

**Standard 1: The student will listen actively to the ideas of others in order to acquire new knowledge. The student will demonstrate understanding of oral communications by:**

B-3: responding to read-alouds (nonfiction and fiction) by identifying main ideas and details in complete sentences.

#### Reading

**Standard 1: The student will demonstrate understanding of print concepts of the English language. The student will demonstrate knowledge of print concepts by:**

B-3: locating specific information using the organizational features of a book, a dictionary and a newspaper.

#### Writing

**Standard 1: The student will express his or her thinking and ideas in a variety of writing genres. The student will express his or her thinking and ideas by using a variety of writing genres, as demonstrated by:**

B-3: taking notes using a teacher selected and student created graphic organizer or cloze notes.

B-9: writing a summary that identifies the main idea, characters, and setting of varied texts.

## Overview

The geographical concept of regions and how and why they change is one that middle school students often find difficult to understand. The second largest continent, Africa, has several regions, each with distinct natural and human characteristics.

## Purpose

In this lesson, students will use research skills to compare the characteristics of three major natural regions of Africa: the desert, the rain forest, and the savanna. Students will also establish how the people who live there have affected these regions. Then students will listen to African folk tales from the three regions and describe the setting of each story.

## Materials

- African Regions map (labeled)  
<https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/AFREGNM.pdf>
- African Regions map (unlabeled)  
<https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/AFREG.pdf>
- Projection device
- Vocabulary Cards
- Vocabulary Definition Worksheet
- Note-taking Worksheets (Desert, Savanna, Rain Forest)
- Various resources for research (i.e., almanacs, encyclopedia, nonfiction books about Africa's regions, internet)

## African Regions and Their Folk Tales

- *Talk Talk: An Ashanti Legend* by Deborah Chocolate
- *Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain* by Verna Aardema
- *The Storytellers* by Ted Lewin
- Written Assessment
- Comparison Chart (extension activity)

### Key Vocabulary

**region** - an area on the earth's surface that is defined by certain unifying characteristics

**native plant** – a plant that naturally grows there

**habitat** – where plants or animals naturally grow

**savanna** – a large flat area of Africa with grass and few trees

**rainforest** – a tropical forest that gets lots of rain and has very tall trees

**desert** – a dry region that gets less than 10 inches of rain a year

### Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Explain the concept of region.
- Identify the three major regions of Africa and relate their human and physical characteristics.
- Choose and cite appropriate sources for research.
- Take notes that summarize and paraphrase.
- Incorporate notes into a paragraph.

### Procedures

#### SESSION ONE

1. Begin the lesson by having students discuss with a partner what they already know about Africa. As a whole class, have students share their responses.

**(Preparation: Linking to background, Grouping**

**Option: Partners, Integrating Processes: Speaking)**

2. Distribute the unlabeled African Regions map and project the labeled version. Guide students in locating, coloring, and labeling the desert, savanna, and rainforest. **(Scaffolding: Guided practice)**

3. Explain the term “region” as an area with common characteristics. Provide examples of some regions. **(Application: Linked to objectives).**

4. Introduce the Vocabulary Cards by projecting them and discussing the definitions and images. Distribute the Vocabulary Definition Worksheet and explain how to fill in the graphic organizer. Model by doing the first word. **(Scaffolding: Comprehensible Input, Modeling).**

5. Working in groups of three, have students complete the graphic organizer. **(Application: Linked to objectives)** Have students add the new words to their personal vocabulary journals or add to word wall.

#### SESSION TWO

1. Assign students to one of the three regions:

desert, savanna, or rain forest. Allow groups to work together in threes. **(Grouping: Small groups)**

2. Distribute and explain the Note-taking Worksheets for the assigned regions.

3. Provide resources (books, internet, etc.) for students to research reminding students to cite their sources and why that source was used. **(Grouping: Small group).**

#### SESSION THREE

1. Read aloud the three African tales: *Talk Talk: An Ashanti Legend*, of *Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain*, and *The Storytellers*. Based on clues in each tale, students will determine in which region the story is set. Lead the class in a discussion of the setting of each story and how it relates to the story.

**(Integrated Processes: Speaking and Listening)**

#### SESSION FOUR

1. Distribute and explain the Written Assessment including how it will be scored using the 6 Traits Writing Rubric. **(Assessment: Individual, Written)**

### Assessment

#### ELA and Geography

The Written Assessment will be scored using the Six Trait Writing Rubric with a focus on Ideas and Content and Organization. Mastery will be considered a score of 4 or higher.

The Vocabulary Definition Worksheet can be graded for completeness and accuracy. Mastery will be considered a score of 80% or higher.

The Note-taking Worksheets can be graded for completeness and accuracy. Mastery will be considered a score of 80% or higher.

### Extensions

A comparison chart can be created as a class project with each column being filled in by the groups that researched that biome.

## African Regions and Their Folk Tales

Students can write their own versions of African tales, distinctive to the region they researched.

### Sources

*The Storytellers* by Ted Lewin, Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 1998. ISBN 0688151795 (out of print)

*Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain* by Verna Aardema, Puffin Books, 1981. ISBN 0140546162

*Talk Talk: An Ashanti Legend* retold by Deborah M. Newton Chocolate, Troll Associates, 1993. ISBN 0816728186

For further reading of African folk tales:

*Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears* by Verna Aardema; Puffin Books, 1975.

*The King's Drum and Other African Stories* by Harold Courlander, Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962.

*Folk Tales and Fables of the Middle East and Africa* by Robert Ingpen & Barbara Hayes, Chelsea House, 1994.

*The Cow-Tail Switch and Other African Stories* by Harold Courlander and George Herzog, Henry Holt and Company, 1974.

*Arab Folktalks* translated and edited by Inea Bushnaq, Pantheon Books, 1986.