Oklahoma Alliance for Geographic Education

"Karibu Afrika"...*Welcome to Africa!*

Exploring with Map Skills

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Lesson Title: "Karibu Afrika"…Welcome to Africa: Exploring with Map Skills

Grade Level: 7th

Purpose/Overview:
Students will use the Giant Map of Africa to familiarize themselves with the continent using observation and mapping skills. This lesson will provide hands-on practice for students to use coordinates, scales, and plotting to learn about the continent of Africa and its countries. *(Note: The lesson title shows the Swahili translation for "Welcome to Africa" kah-REE-boo Ahf-ree-kah)*

National Geography Standards from *Geography for Life*
Geographic Elements & Standards:
Places and Regions Standard 5: The geographically informed person knows and understands that people create regions to interpret Earth's complexity.

The World in Spatial Terms Standard 1: The geographically informed person knows and understands how to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information.

Oklahoma Academic Standards for the 7th Grade Social Studies [Eastern Hemisphere]:

7.1 The student will analyze data from a geographic perspective using the skills and tools of geography.

7.1.2 Apply the concepts of scale, distance, direction, relative location, absolute location, and latitude and longitude.

7.3 The student will identify the characteristics, distribution and demographic patterns of human populations and systems of the Eastern Hemisphere.

7.3.1 Identify on a political map the major countries and population centers of each region.

Geographic Themes:
Location (absolute and relative); Place

Objectives:

1. Students will participate in a review of mapping skills in a cooperative learning activity using the Giant Map of Africa.
2. Students will use the Giant Map of Africa to practice and reinforce geography skills of observation, estimation, distance, plotting coordinates, directions, and measurement using a scale of miles.
3. Students will be able to use the information gained from the Giant Map of Africa to complete other assignments within the study of Africa based on Oklahoma State Standards of Social Studies.

Materials: "Welcome to Africa" activity sheets and answer keys (included), 1-2 tape measures per group (included), 1-2 student atlases per group (included), "The True Size of Africa" graphic (included), laminated country cards (optional – included), additional scales of miles (included), 1-2 calculators per group (NOT included).

Time Frame: 1-2 class days

Procedures:

One day before using the Giant Map of Africa [or at the beginning of the Africa unit of study] introduce the map by asking students, *"What comes to your mind when someone says the word 'Africa'?"* Give thinking time and ask students to answer the question on paper. Use the following questions as a common formative assessment [CFA] for the Giant Map of Africa activities:

1. What do you already about Africa?
2. Approximately how many countries are located in Africa?
3. How big is Africa compared to other continents?
4. What is a question about Africa that the Giant Map might answer for you?

The teacher will retain these papers until the Giant Map activities are concluded. *(NOTE: #1-2 below may be done before visiting the Giant Map of Africa to maximize time.)*

1. The teacher will guide the students to the Giant Map and explain the procedures and expectations for its use, i.e., socks only, no shoes or bare feet; pencils and papers are kept off of the map; wait for instructions for walking on the map, etc.

2. Divide students into four groups and sit at the four corners by the colored dots. *If needed, sub-divide the class into smaller groups at the corners.*

3. Allow students 2-3 minutes to observe the map and make comments.

4. Using estimation skills: Refer to question #2 on the CFA. Tell students, "You are going to work with your group to make an estimation. Be ready to share your estimate AND how you arrived at your answer. Work quickly and whisper so that no other group can hear your discussion."

   Ask students to estimate how many countries are in Africa. Give about 60 seconds to arrive at an answer. *(Do not give time for students to count.) Solicit answers including <u>how</u> they made their estimations. Then provide time for students to count.*

   The continent is widely considered to have a total of **54 countries**, nine territories and two independent states with limited or no recognition. However, given Africa's complex political situation and the legacy of its colonial history, the exact makeup of the continent and number of officially recognized countries is still a contentious issue. Africa's population is the youngest of all the continents, with a median age of 19.7 (in comparison to the global median age of 30.4).[1]

5. Using thinking skills: Point out the compass rose and map key. Locate important features as they are used on the map.
   a. Note colors used. Ask students what the colors indicate.
   b. Ask students why they think SW Asia and parts of Europe have been included. Ask students how they could use these additional map features to gain more information about Africa. *Accept any reasonable answers.*
   c. Students may inquire about the very small countries. *Most boundaries were drawn by European Colonizers at the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885.*

6. Using estimation and mapping skills: Ask each group to estimate how many miles Africa is from north to south and east to west. Record estimations. *(North-South = approx. 5,000 mi; East-West = approx. 4,600 mi)*[2] Use the tape measures (included) and the map key to allow students to measure the distance. *While some students are working on the Giant Map, other students may work together to measure the distance in the atlas. Use additional scales of miles (included) to allow more students to compute the distance. Compare answers.*

7. Using observation skills: What appears to be the largest country? *(Algeria, slightly smaller than 3.5 times the size of Texas. Students may argue that Sudan is larger. They are approximately the same size with Algeria being slightly larger).*[3]

What appears to be the smallest country? *(Allow time for divergent thinking here. On the continent, The Gambia, slightly less than twice the size of Delaware; for the entire continent, The Seychelles, 2.5 times the size of Washington D.C.)*[4]

8. Using estimation skills: How big do you think Africa is compared to the other continents? *(Africa ranks 2nd behind Asia).* Which countries would fit inside of Africa? *(US -about 3 times; at 6.6 million sq. mi, Russia is the world's largest country… [Africa] is almost twice the size of Russia)*[5] Show the graphic "THE TRUE SIZE OF AFRICA" (included).

9. Preview the activity and review cooperative learning strategies. The group must allow every member to measure, calculate, and record information. Give a few moments for the group to discuss the roles and make decisions. Do not use student atlases for this activity.

   Give each group a copy of the page "WELCOME TO AFRICA MAP SKILLS" which has their group's color at the top right. Countries have been selected to keep students fairly within a quadrant of the continent and not be overlapping other groups too much. Review the directions. Provide measuring tapes (included) and 1-2 calculators (not included) to each group. Allow students time to work as a group to complete the assignment.

   The teacher may choose to use the laminated country cards for students to place as they locate countries.

Assessment Options:

The teacher may take a grade on the Map Skills activity. (key included)
NOTE: Miles are approximate. Allow for differences in student estimations.

Students independently or as a group may write a short essay or make a list concerning the cooperative learning strategies, they used for completing the activity.

The teacher may use additional questions about Africa's countries to measure the student's observation skills using an atlas or the Giant Map of Africa such as:

How many African countries are landlocked? *(16)*
Which countries border Lake Malawi? *(Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique)*
Which country claims Western Sahara? *(Morocco)*
What country is completely surrounded by another country? *(Lesotho)*

In what country is the highest point of Africa? *(Tanzania)*
Which country has three capitals? *(South Africa)*
Which countries share the Atlas Mountains *(Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia)*

The teacher may use the CFA 1-4 above for a summative assessment of the lesson. *(Note the wording changes and probing questions below which may be used to provide additional data. The teacher may use the CFA as stated or modify the questions to fit his/her needs.)*

1. What do you already know about Africa?
   In what ways did your knowledge about the continent of Africa change?
   What were some reasons why your knowledge changed?

2. How many countries are in Africa?
   What is something you learned about the countries in Africa?
   Create a summary statement about the continent and the African countries now that you have used the Giant Map of Africa.
   How has your knowledge of Africa's countries changed from before we used the Giant Map and why?

3. How big is Africa compared to other continents?
   How has your thinking changed about Africa's size, and also about the countries of the world that could fit inside of Africa?
   In what ways do you think it might be important to learn about the countries of Africa?

4. Was the question you wrote on the formative assessment #4 answered through the use of the Giant Map? If so, how was it answered? If not, why not?
   What is another question about Africa that the Giant Map answered for you?
   What further research could you do to find out more about your questions?

The teacher may use the **Anticipatory Set/Lesson Hook** question above as an assessment by asking students to compose a short essay about what they have learned about Africa's size or its countries or by making a before/after T-chart of what they have learned. Students should be able to analyze why their thinking has changed.

The teacher may provide a blank political map of Africa *(not included)* for students to use to locate and label the countries they can recall. Students may use an atlas or the Giant Map of Africa at the teacher's discretion.

Resources:

[1] **World Population Review**
http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/countries-in-africa/
[2] **New World Encyclopedia**
https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/africa
[3] **Country Economy**
https://countryeconomy.com/countries/compare/algeria/sudan
[4] **World Atlas**
https://www.worldatlas.com
[5] **Big Think**
https://bigthink.com/strange-maps/compare-true-size-of-countries
True Size of Africa map
https://www.tripsavvy.com/maps-of-africa-4123312
Latitude and Longitude Tables
http://www.csgnetwork.com/llinfotable.html
Geology.com
https://geology.com/world
Air Miles calculator
https://www.prokerala.com/travel/distance/

Extension and Enrichment/Simplification:
The study of Africa is part of Oklahoma grade 7 curriculum and State Standards, and as such is primarily intended for this grade level. In a middle school setting, grade 6 classes could use the map as a review of mapping skills.

The teacher may assign gifted students one or more of the countries of Africa for further investigation. Topics could include cultural characteristics, issues of health, education, access to clean water/sanitation, availability of natural resources, push-pull factors, current political situation, or by focusing on any of the Five Themes of Geography and could be used to enhance later topics in the unit of study. These topics may also be used with individual students or with small groups in the regular classroom as the class moves through the unit study of Africa.

Special needs students may help with the mapping skills or parts of the research assessment activities.

For a one-day lesson, use only the continent measurements (#6) and the map skills activity sheets. The teacher may begin with the cooperative activity sheets and as time allows, use the continent measurements and other activities in the lesson.