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**ABSTRACT**

The document presents a seventh grade social studies unit on Africa. The unit is one of a number of products developed by a summer workshop for teachers on African curriculum development. The objective is to help students understand the concept of culture, how cultures develop, and how and why cultures change. The document is divided into two parts. Part One focuses on students' knowledge and misinformation about Africa, as well as the environment of the continent, a prediction of problems caused by the environment, and an attempt to formulate hypotheses for student inquiry into African culture. Sixteen learning activities include two pretests, class discussion, and mapwork, as well as exercises in knowledge identification, classification, data gathering, speculation, and generalization. All activities emphasize problem prediction and hypotheses formulation about the development of African cultures. Concluding sections list student and teacher resources and offer student handouts. Part II offers activities focusing on African art, music, and oral literature as integrated expressions of the culture. These are intended to supplement the activities of Part I and should be coordinated with them. Stories and proverbs from several tribes are told and discussed, including dilemma tales, singing tales, and tales of gods and heroes. Activities include identifying values, playing games, creative writing, problem solving, reading novels, film viewing, having a story telling contest, and dramatizing. They all emphasize African cultural aspects and values. Teaching strategies and student and teacher resources are suggested throughout. A bibliography concludes the document. (CK)

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### "INTRODUCING AFRICA IN THE CLASSROOM"

An Instructional Unit for Seventh Grade Social Studies

Part I

by

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This teaching unit on Africa was developed as part of an inter-disciplinary workshop project in African curriculum development held on the University of Illinois' Urbana-Champaign campus in the summer of 1979. The workshop project, which was funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, was carried out from 1977-80 and was integrated into an on-going program of outreach services offered to teachers nationwide. For further information on teaching aids available through outreach services, contact:

Outreach Director  
African Studies Program  
1208 West California, #101  
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54012691



**AFRICA**

Sleepy giant  
You've been resting awhile  
Now I see thunder  
And lightning in your smile.  
Now I see  
The storm clouds  
In your waking eyes:  
The thunder  
The wonder  
And the new  
Surprise  
Your every step reveals  
The new stride  
In your thighs.

Langston Hughes


You are not a country,  
Africa,  
You are a concept,

I'm great  
I'm African

Is Africa a sleepy giant, or are we just awakening to the reality of Africa after having seen her with our near-sighted vision? Has Africa been resting, or are we putting to rest the idea that Africa exists for the rest of the world?

## INTRODUCTION

When I lived and taught in Turkey, I developed a formula to help my American students understand culture, how cultures develop, and how and why cultures change. I found that my American students, who were living in an American enclave in a different culture, were not experiencing this culture, could not or would not understand this culture, and believed any culture other than their own to be inferior. The formula resulted from inquiry into why people live the way they do. We discovered that environment and man's interaction with or adaptation to this environment could, to a large extent, explain culture and why cultures vary throughout the world. The formula is simple but can be used in social studies, science, or language arts. The formula reads: Environment (man-made or natural) causes problems, and when people react to these problems (adapting to their environment or trying to alter their environment), they create a culture. Environment  $\rightarrow$  Problems = Culture =



$E \quad \rightarrow \quad P \quad = \quad C = 0$

It must be stressed that cultures have histories, either written or unwritten, and are dynamic. Many things can influence the creation of culture. Thus, the formula must be shown as ongoing, almost cyclical, because cultures aren't static, and the development of culture will have an effect on the environment which in turn affects problems and once again the culture. This formula is used merely as one approach to helping students understand culture and cultural change, and it has proven to be an effective device to introduce students to this difficult concept. A controlling idea of this formula is man's adaptation to environment.

Included in an understanding of culture, must be the idea of culture being the product of man's and woman's work which includes man-made things as well as dreams and ideas. Dr. Uchendu's metaphor of society being an incubator of culture with the reminder that not all incubators hatch eggs is an intriguing notion to add to the formula. The environment could be seen as the incubator and some environments are more conducive to rapid development of culture. A final idea to be stressed is that cultures might be receptive to cultural forces or they might be resistant to cultural forces. The ideas of continuity and change will be central to a study of any culture. Cultural change or resistance to change can be shown by using the formula. Any time something or someone alters the environment or creates problems, there will be cultural resistance or cultural change. The arrival of the Europeans in Africa fits very nicely into this formula, and students can predict cultural resistance or cultural change as a result of this intrusion.

Part of the problem with our TABA Social Science Units: People in Change is that there is no structured introduction to the units. Rather than building a foundation for study, the students are plunged into a culture. The books are collections of narratives with many gaps and a lack of sequence which often causes problems when trying to fill in the gaps. The first part of this curriculum unit is an attempt to introduce our students to the continent of Africa by assessing their knowledge and misinformation and to acknowledge the existence of myths and stereotypes. In addition, through this introduction the formula  $E \rightarrow P = O =$  will be used to look at the environment of the continent, predict problems, and formulate hypotheses for student inquiry into African cultures. In this way, diversity will be established before plunging into a particular cultural group in West Africa.

ACTIVITY I  
PRE-TEST A

Complete these sentences as rapidly as possible, using the first idea or phrase that comes to you.

1. Africa is
2. African people are
3. When I hear the word Africa I think of
4. Africans probably think America is
5. Africans probably think Americans are
6. Some things I know about Africa are
7. I would like to go to Africa because
8. I would not like to go to Africa because



ACTIVITY II  
Pretest B.

This is a word association game. When I say a word, I want you to write down the first word that comes to you. I will say the words quickly, and I will not repeat any of the words. Number your papers from one to twenty.

1. animal
2. land
3. people
4. clothing
5. transportation
6. communication
7. weather
8. house
9. work
10. resources
11. leader
12. game
13. color
14. country
15. recreation.
16. education
17. stories
18. music
19. family
20. food

Using a rectangle or the actual shape, draw to scale Africa and the United States so that you show how they compare in size.

Collect the pretests for use with Activity 4. The pretests should be tabulated and the results placed on butcher paper, overlay for overhead projector, or on a ditto.

## ACTIVITY 2

Use the ideas of SPECK of knowledge and SPECULATION to begin to generalize and hypothesize. This activity will begin an on-going gathering of information, verifying specks of knowledge, and refining, altering, or disregarding speculations about Africa in general, and Nigeria, Kenya, and Tanzania in particular.

Tape large sheets of butcher paper to the blackboard. If possible, use large rolls of different colors so that specks are on one color and speculations are on another color.

Tell the students that we are going to list all of our specks of knowledge about Africa. Each contributor will write his or her speck of knowledge on the speck paper in felt tip pen. No comments will be made about any speck of knowledge. There are no right or wrong contributions, and the contributions can be fact or fiction.

When the specks of knowledge have been listed, students will then try to write speculations related to these specks of knowledge. These lists will be posted for the duration of the unit and will serve as a focus of inquiry instruction.

Ask students if they think all of their specks of knowledge are facts.

Where did they obtain their specks of knowledge?

Are the specks accurate, verified, reliable information?

If some of the specks are not facts but misinformation, what does that say about our speculations?

Where do people get inaccurate or partial specks of knowledge?

What might happen if we have just a speck of knowledge?

How might people use inaccurate specks of knowledge?

What are some consequences of using inaccurate specks of knowledge?

How should we find out whether or not our specks of knowledge are accurate?

How can we know if our sources of information are reliable? What questions should we ask about sources of information?

We might ask WHO(African, reporter, historian, traveler, etc.), WHEN(copyright), and WHY(purpose).

### ACTIVITY 3

Students will classify specks of knowledge and speculations.

Ask students what categories are missing if we want to really understand Africa and its people. Add categories so the list is fairly complete. These categories can be later used to formulate Environment —> Problems=Culture=.

This list of specks and speculations will be the focal point of inquiry instruction. As we learn about Africa and its people, specks will be modified or crossed off the list if found to be untrue. Tentative words will be added to speculations, and they too will be altered or crossed off until, at the end of our unit, we have only accurate information and generalizations. Each time a speck has been verified as fact, it will be written on an index card, categorized, and placed in a data bank for student use. Students will also be keeping a notebook in which verified information will be kept. This notebook will be used for many tests which encourages students to keep a well-organized notebook.

#### ACTIVITY 4

Use information from pretests from Activity 1. Students should have already learned about stereotypes during our group guidance activities and short story unit. Review if necessary.

Ask students if they can identify any stereotypes from the tabulated lists. Can they add any stereotypes that people often have when thinking or talking about Africa?

Where do these stereotypes come from?

(A collection of cartoons, phantom comic strips, or Tarzan movies can be used to examine stereotypes and sources).

What should we do about stereotypes?

**ACTIVITY 5:** Give students copies of poems by two Harlem Renaissance poets. Read poems aloud.

What is Africa to me:  
Copper sun or scarlet sea,  
Jungle star or jungle track,  
Strong bronzed men, or regal black  
Women from whose loins I sprang  
when the birds of Eden sang?

Countee Cullen

I've known rivers:  
I've known rivers ancient as the world and older than the  
flow of human blood in human veins.

My soul has grown deep like rivers.

I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young.  
I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.  
I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyramids above it.  
I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln  
went down to New Orleans, and I've seen its muddy  
bosom turn all golden in the sunset.

I've known rivers:  
Ancient, dusky rivers.

My soul has grown deep like rivers.

Langston Hughes

Who are these poets?

How do they see Africa?

Why do you think they have the feelings they do?

Do you think their perceptions are accurate?

What mental maps do they have in their minds?

Depending upon the students, a discussion of the Harlem Renaissance writers might be in order.

**ACTIVITY:** Students will write a poem Africa or Africa is.

**ACTIVITY 5:** Show a montage of slides (cities, villages, houses, people, markets, festivals, etc.) with tape of African traditional and modern music. The montage should indicate diversity, rural and urban, traditional and modern, North, East, West, and South Africa.

Ask students to write down as many things as they can remember after viewing montage.

Why do they seem to remember certain things?

Ask students if they want to alter any of their speaks or speculations that are posted in the room. Make appropriate changes or additions.

Discuss why changes were or were not made.

Students should define the following words:

- diversity
- rural
- urban
- traditional
- modern

### ACTIVITY 7

Establish the size of the continent of Africa: Compare students' pretests comparing size of Africa and the U.S. with overhead projection which places U.S. and China inside the continent.

Why are we often uncertain about the size of places outside of the U.S.?

Give each student an outline map of Africa, a clear acetate sheet or a piece of saranwrap, and markers.

Locate equator and draw on outline map.

Locate oceans and label on outline map.

Locate major rivers and label on outline map.

Based on the above information, students will predict climate regions and draw and label on their acetate overlay or on the saranwrap.

Give students a second overlay sheet. Students will predict vegetation areas and label on overlay. These predictions will be based on the climate predictions. Establish the notion that climate influences vegetation.

Discuss reasons for student predictions.

### ACTIVITY 8

Using source books, students will place major landforms on their original outline maps.

Discuss how landforms affect climate and vegetation.

Ask students what else might affect climate and vegetation.  
(winds, altitude, rainfall, soil)

Establish that climate, weather, soil, vegetation, and landforms form the natural environment. How does environment affect people? What problems might the environment cause?

### ACTIVITY 9

Using sourcebooks students will compare their predictions with actual maps of vegetation and climate regions.

Students will make a map of climate regions and a map of vegetation regions for their notebooks.

Large maps that were made in previous years will be posted in classroom.



## ACTIVITY 10

Students will look at a map of average rainfall and charts showing rainfall distribution. Students will compare rainfall in Africa to rainfall in Illinois. Through discussion and reading students will realize that climate is more likely determined by amount of rainfall rather than temperature. Length of growing season is not as relevant as wet and dry season.

Wind systems should be studied. This could be done through the science class. Emphasis should be placed on the effect of wind on environment.

Inquiry into tropical soils and their effect on agriculture and people. Again, this could be done through the science class.

Using climate and vegetation maps, information on rainfall and tropical soils, students will predict population distribution (using terms sparse and dense) and possible occupations of people in different areas of Africa.

Make additions and corrections to specks and speculations.

Begin working with formula  $E \rightarrow P=O=$  to list factors under environment, problems caused by environment, and possible solutions(culture).

ACTIVITY 11: Ecology slides. These same slides will be used as a post-test at the end of the unit.

For each slide, students will describe what they see (environment).

Students will predict problems that might be caused by the environment.

Students will predict whether or not the area would be sparsely or densely populated.

Students will predict what the people do who live in the region, the types of houses in which they might live, the social organization that they might have developed (family and community organization, things or ideas that might be important to the people (values), and any other aspects of culture that students think might be reasonable.

Students could work in small groups to compare and discuss their predictions.

The slides could be shown as a method of teaching the students about certain areas and how different cultures developed in a given region.



### ACTIVITY 12

Students will use sourcebooks to describe and locate deserts, rainforests, and savanna regions of Africa. These descriptions will be written in student notebooks.

Students should discover that savanna regions, not rain forests, make up the majority of Africa.

Inquiry question: African rain forests used to attract big game hunters. Students should find information to support or refute this statement.

### ACTIVITY 13

Using an opaque projector, show a map of Africa 1000 years ago, a map of Africa in 1880, a map of Africa in 1914, and a map of Africa today.

Students will write generalizations based on maps. Possible generalizations: English, French, and Portuguese might be spoken in Africa. Today there are more than 50 countries. Boundaries have changed. Africa was colonized at one time.

Using an opaque projector, show a map of language families and a map of ethnic groups. Students will write generalizations that they think can be supported by the maps. (Modern boundaries do not appear to correspond with ethnic boundaries. Africa is a diverse continent. Many languages are spoken in Africa. There are many different groups in Africa.)

Students will write a hypothesis to explain why they think that the modern boundaries exist and why these boundaries seem to be different from boundaries 1000 years ago. Students will be asked to consider cause and effect of these boundaries. The cause will be represented by their hypotheses and the effect will be written in the form of a speculation.

Students will write speculations concerning language groups and ethnic groups. Add speculations to wall chart.

### ACTIVITY 14

Since we have discovered that Africa is a large and diverse continent, how might we divide Africa into regions of study? Discuss why students would divide the continent in these ways?

Tell students we will be studying Africa south of the Sahara, or sub-Saharan Africa. Why? (the Sahara Desert is a natural barrier.) What do they think might have been the relationship between Sub-Saharan Africa and Africa north of the Sahara?

### ACTIVITY 15

Pass out copies of TRAVCOA travel guides to Africa and North Africa.

Four areas of Africa are described as: "the west with its exciting tribal life; the east with its teeming herds of wild animals; the south with its sophisticated cities; and the historically rich Sahara regions of the north."

Why do you think Africa was divided into these four regions?

Who do you think wrote the generalizations to describe these regions?

Do you think Africans would describe the regions in the same way?

As we begin our study of Africa, keep these descriptions in mind. Your job is to alter these descriptions so that they are more accurate and to try to decide how an African might describe his or her country and region.

Discuss the words tribe and tribal life as pejorative or downgrading terms. pp. 171-172 in THE WAYS OF MAN should be used. "An African Chief Speaks" is a good treatment of the use of the word tribe and makes the point that we do not use the word when describing groups in Western culture.

### ACTIVITY 16

"These new African states are dedicated to modern development, and old traditions will not long remain. Therefore, now is the time to visit these people before the vestiges of a primitive culture are eradicated forever." from TRAVCOA TRAVEL GUIDE TO AFRICA AND NORTH AFRICA.

What speculations is this writer making about African cultures?

What specks of knowledge is he or she using to make these speculations?

Do you think this statement is accurate?

Discuss the word primitive. What other word might we use instead of the pejorative word primitive?

What are your reactions to visiting these people before "their primitive culture is eradicated forever?"

What might cause a change in traditional cultures?

Who do you think might change more quickly or be more receptive to change?

What kinds of changes do you think you can predict for Africa?

**SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITY**

South Africa: a discussion based on Last Grave at Dimbaza.

"Tell Freedom" and "Let Me See Your Pass, Kaffir" can be read in preparation for the film Last Grave at Dimbaza.

See Suggestions for Use of Supplementary Student Resources for resource material on South Africa. "Tell Freedom" and "Let Me See Your Pass, Kaffir" are found in Through African Eyes, by Leon E. Clark (editor): Volume II, From Tribe to Town: Problems of Adjustment.

Resource people from the African Studies Program should be utilized during the discussion of this film. This is such a powerful film. A follow-up activity would be to collect supplies for displaced children in Southern Africa.

Letter writing activities might also be used as a follow-up.

Students might assess their own feelings and look more closely at racial equality in the U. S.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY  
PART I

STUDENT REFERENCE

Africa: People in Change. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975.

The Ways of Man: An Introduction to Many Cultures. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1974.

Afro-Asian Culture Series. New York: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1974.

Africa: Today's World in Focus. Boston, Mass.: Ginn and Company, 1965.

Africa: South of the Sahara. New York: Macmillan Company, 1968.

TEACHER REFERENCE

African Studies Handbook for Elementary and Secondary School Teachers. University of Massachusetts, 1971.

This is available from the African Studies Program  
Extremely useful for pretest ideas and "The Body  
Ritual of Nacirema" for teaching "other" cultures.  
"Body Ritual Among the Nacirema" (student study sheet)  
is available from the African Studies Program.  
Includes detailed lesson plans.

Bascom, William. African Art in Cultural Perspective. New York: 1973.

Also used in Part II. Chapter 7 has been xeroxed:  
Southern Nigeria. There are some errors in the text  
(i.e. discussion of twins in Yoruba culture)  
Good photographs.

Bohannon, Paul and Phillip Curtain. Africa and Africans.  
New York: 1971.

Clark, Leon E. (Ed.). Through African Eyes: Culture in Change.  
New York: Praeger, 1971.

Series of six sequential paperbacks. Volumes I and II  
include articles, poetry, and excerpts from novels.  
This series is intended for use in high school, but  
some of the selections can be used in middle school.  
Book III includes an excellent treatment of the slave  
trade which could be used in eighth grade.

Hall, Susan J. Africa in U.S. Educational Materials: Thirty  
Problems and Responses. New York: The African-American  
Institute, School Services Division, 1976.

Includes myths about Africa and ways to evaluate African  
curriculum materials. This book has been purchased and  
included as part of the unit which will be shared by

other teams and used as part of a planned inservice for teachers using this unit.

Murphy, E. Jefferson and Harry Stein. Teaching Africa Today: A Handbook for Teachers and Curriculum Planners. New York: 1973.

Excellent chapter on geography. Step by step plans and suggestions. Also includes chapters on history, nation building, Africa and the World; Africa and the U.S., and southern Africa. Excellent guide.

Price, Christine. Made in West Africa. New York: 1975.

Excellent book. Can be used as student reference. Survey of African crafts, written for children.

Schmidt, Nancy J. Resources for Teaching Children About Africa. Educational Resources Information Center/Early Childhood Education. December, 1976.

The Peoples of Africa. National Geographic Ethnolinguistic Map. Supplement to National Geographic, December 1971. "Africa: Its Peoples and Its Past."

Choices in Development: The Experience of Tanzania & Kenya. Part I and II. (From African Studies Program)

Set of pictures and text. Written by an English woman and published in England for English school children. Part I--excellent suggestions for using photographs and excellent writing activities. Good for generalizing and hypothesizing. Can be used for reading photographs, interpretation, and imagining feelings. Part II--Urban Development. Good information on ujamaa villages in Tanzania. Development is discussed in African terms for Africa but through British eyes. It seems to be fairly balanced and Africa first is stressed. This can also be used as student reference.

Yoruba Blue: Symbols on Cloth. Education Development Center, Inc., Cambridge, Mass: 1972.

Can be used as student reference. Written as a narrative. Importance of Yoruba cloth and how it is made. Good descriptions and focuses on Yoruba woman who makes the cloth. Available from African Studies Program.

Madubuike, Ihechukwu. A Handbook of African Names. Washington D.C.: Three Continents Press: 1976.

Author was born in Eastern Nigeria. Includes history, structure and meaning of names. Also includes naming ceremonies and stresses importance of names. Source for Igbo, Yoruba, Kenya, and Tanzania names.

Money, D.O.. East Africa in Colour. Nairobi: Evans Brothers Limited: 1972.



East Africa in Colour. Written for British students. Interesting for its point of view. Can be used as resource for Masai settlement. Available from African Studies Program.

Reuben, Joel and Howard Orstens. Tanzania in Pictures. New York: Sterling Publishing Co., Visual Geography Series: 1972.

Pictures are good for specks and speculations. Can be used to formulate hypotheses. Use for exercises in picture reading, writing captions, and writing descriptions.

Recommend subscription to Africa News. Weekly newsletter for student and teacher use.

### RESOURCES TO BE PREVIEWED

Buchi, Emecheta. Second Class Citizen. New York: 1975.

The Slave Girl. New York: 1977.

Bride Price.

Emecheta Buchi is a Nigerian novelist who also writes children's books.

Crane, Louise. Ms. Africa: Profiles of Modern African women. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1973.

Accomplishments of 13 women from Ghana, South Africa, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Zambia, and Malagasy, who are national leaders in their countries.

Kennerley, Karen. The Slave Who Bought His Freedom, Equiano's Story. New York: Dutton, 1971.

A simplified version of the eighteenth century autobiography written by a Nigerian about his capture and life in the West Indies, U.S., and England.

Ojigbo, A.O. Young and Black in Africa. New York: Random House, 1971.

Autobiographies of seven men and one woman who grew up in Africa from the 18th century to the present.

Pfieffer, Melissa. Changing Africa Through Its Children's Eyes. Thompson, Conn: Inter Culture Associates, 1971

Liberian school children (fourth graders) wrote essays describing Liberian village life. One essay describes how to build a house.

White, Jo Ann (comp.) African Views of the West. New York: 1972. Anthology of writings by Africans on colonial experience, independence, apartheid, and the future.

PERIODICALS

Special Issue on Africa. Social Education. Vol. 35, No. 2,  
February 1971.

FILMSTRIPS: Available from African Studies Program.

Everyday Life in Nigeria. Filmstrip includes script. This could be used for student writing activities since no cassette is included. Overview of frames: compound, yams, burning bush, sorghum, rice, oil palms, cocoa, market scenes, mortar, guinea corn porridge, yam flour, village well, blacksmith, wood carver, builder, basket and mat making, dyeing cloth (adire cloth), Oshun shrine, muslims at prayer, tropical problems with agriculture, rural economy, developing economy, subsistence and export crops, water problems, crafts, marketing and trade, industrial and port development. Good for hypothesizing, generalizing, and understanding link between climate and vegetation and economic crops. Also good for showing cultural diversity. Also shows new yam festival.

Nigeria: A Short Introduction. Slide set includes script. Overview of frames: Houses of Parliament, museum, forest region, palm wine tapper, grassland, camels in Kano, cattle, farm plots, terracing, yams, children on farm plots, fish nets, peanut mounds, markets, lorry park, compound, Ifik burial shrines, Christmas dance, Igbo social criticism dance, masked dancers, Sallah Festival (Muslim). This filmstrip could be shown first and students could formulate hypotheses. Everyday Life in Nigeria could be shown to test these hypotheses or as a test. Filmstrips without cassettes are good for evaluation purposes and for writing activities.

FILMS: AVAILABLE FROM AFRICAN STUDIES PROGRAM.

Benin Kingship Ritual (also slide set and study guides).  
Used to show interrelatedness of art, music, and literature.

Gelede. Masquerade, weaving, divining with palm nuts. A bit staged, but a good film of preparation and demonstration of masquerade to emphasize that the masks we see are just part of a masquerade and art, music, and literature must be viewed in its social or religious context.  
(available on special-loan only)

SELECTED HANDOUTS FROM AFRICAN STUDIES PROGRAM

"Body Ritual Among the Nacirema" (student study sheet) Satire on American culture. The bathroom as an American shrine. Excellent for teaching about "other" cultures.

The Aola Nut in Traditional Igbo Society of Nigeria.  
Land and Contemporary Politics among the Pastoral Massai  
Palm Tree in West African Society  
Oil Palm in West African Society

A resource packet of handouts will be assembled and included as part of this unit and will be used during teacher inservice before the unit is taught.

SUGGESTIONS FROM STUDENT SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES:

The Ways of Man. This is a much better text than the TABA manual. It includes excellent maps and charts and graphs, and it also makes use of excerpts from literature by Africans and poems by African poets.

- Page 149--Basic comparisons, map and bar graphs.  
150-155--Excellent maps and graphs for climate and vegetation and rainfall.  
158-159--Descriptions of East African highlands in Kenya and rainforest.  
156-157--Pictures and places game.  
160-- Draught on the Savanna, from Things Fall Apart.  
161-- "Rain-making Litany"  
162-- Description of Kalahari Desert  
164-168--Rich Land? Poor Land? Map of tsetse fly area.  
166-- map of mineral resources  
167-169--people  
170-- languages  
171-- "An African Chief Speaks (about tribes)  
173-- farming people  
183-- read pictures  
186  
187-- Afikpo Ibo  
193-- Yoruba  
197-- Pastoral people  
199-- "Lopore, a Boy of Dodoth (cattle people in Uganda)  
211-- Family and Kinship  
213-- Land and ancestors  
215-- "Forefathers" poem  
216-217--Marriage from Things Fall Apart  
218-- age groups, age-village system  
221-- education within family  
234-- using evidence to draw conclusions. Deductive reasoning.  
247-251--"School for Peter" from Tell Freedom by Peter Abrahams.  
258 from A Wreath for Udomo, by Peter Abrahams.  
reaction to be educated by Europeans.

TODAY'S WORLD IN FOCUS--This book is for better readers.  
Can be used for introducing myths and stereotypes.

- p. 11 Map and sketches of vegetation regions.  
p. 10 Mention of flag in Nigeria. Green background with white mosquito in center, a symbol for the climate keeping white Europeans from settling in W. Africa.  
p. 29 Southern Africa. Some problems with treatment. i.e., even under apartheid, Africans are better off economically than the people. This does not make up for lack of freedom. It is questionable whether they are better off economically.  
p. 92 Agricultural and mineral resources  
p. 113 comparison of African sculpture and Italian, Modigliani



Africa: South of the Sahara. For better reader. Prologue is good for dispelling myths.

- p. 13--good maps (rainfall and physical features
- p. 27--map of population density and language families
- p. 43--slave trade
- p. 54--Africa in 1880
- p. 56--Nkrumah, right to decide own destiny.
- p. 59--Africa in 1914
- 57-61--Colonial approaches
- 69-70--South African racial policy
- 71 "Life Between Two worlds," Masai student.
- 72 Meaning of tribe
- 75 Two African Communities
- 76-77 Yoruba Way, diagram of compound
- 78-79--Achoi, diagram of homestead
- 79 functions of descent groups
- 82 traditional marriage
- 83 polygyny and children.
- 85 urban Africa
- 86 West African cities
- 87 white Man's city
- 89 migrants
- 91 cost of opportunity
- 94 religion and arts
- 102-103 African arts
- 106-107 Problems of nation building. Exampis of Nigeria.
- 116 Nigerian Children's Song (going to class with clean hands and faces!)
- 145-147 Africa--"Sleeping Giant" by Langston Hughes

Afro-Asian Culture Studies. Includes plateau topography and explanation, includes maps, rivers, mountains, deserts, lakes. This book is good for data gathering.

- p. 145- Descriptions of Rift valley, rainforest, savanna, and deserts.
- 146- climate and rainfall
- 147- good map of climate zones
- 149- languages
- 151-marriage and family
- 152-"tribalism" discussion
- 154-religious beliefs
- 155- "if able to understand why people believe . . . beliefs make more sense."
- 157 art
- 158 characteristics of African sculpture
- 159 types of masks
- 159-64--history and kingdoms

- 167 spread of Islam
- 158 arrival of Europeans
- 159 slave trade
- 171 opened to Western world
- 174 European imperialism
- 175 how imperialism changed Africa
- 180 Today--Problems of Independence
- 181 Apartheid
- 182 Bantu Authorities Act, Education Act, general laws of apartheid.
- 185 Economy, agriculture
- 186 problems
- 187 resources
- 189. use of resources, desire for independent development, why industry has not developed
- 191 development of trade
- 192 summary of key ideas
- 196 Pitogram Exercise--Kikuyu homestead--agree or disagree with given statements

## SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITY ON MARKETS

Show slides of markets from Turkey, Greece, Mexico, and old outdoor market in Boston before renovation, and African markets. Show the slides rapidly so that students can't identify people.

Where would we find outdoor markets?

What functions do markets serve?

What similarities in markets did you note from seeing slides?

Are markets and supermarkets incompatible? Do supermarkets take over the functions of markets?

Where would we find the most resistance to a change in the market system?

Article "Farmers Market Comes to Urbana," News Gazette, July 2, 1979.

How is Urbana's farmers market similar to markets in Africa?  
How are they different?

Why would these markets be gaining in popularity?

What functions do these markets serve?

Do you think these markets are just fads?

**"INTRODUCING AFRICA IN THE CLASSROOM"**

**An Instructional Unit for Seventh Grade Social Studies**

**Part II**

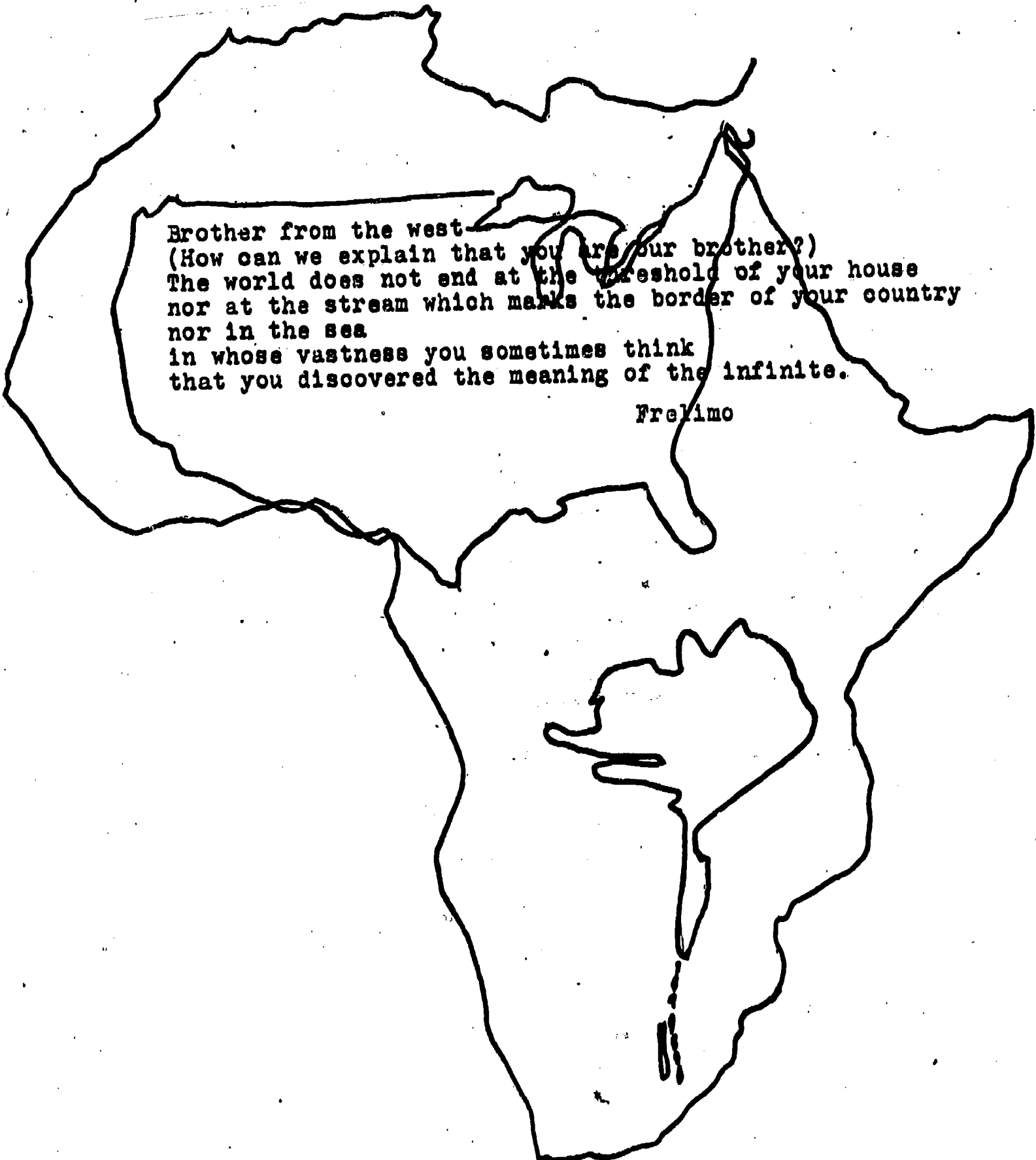
**by**

**Karen S. McKenzie**  
**Jefferson Middle School**  
**Champaign, Illinois**

This teaching unit on Africa was developed as part of an inter-disciplinary workshop project in African curriculum development held on the University of Illinois' Urbana-Champaign campus in the summer of 1979. The workshop project, which was funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, was carried out from 1977-80 and was integrated into an on-going program of outreach services offered to teachers nationwide. For further information on teaching aids available through outreach services, contact:

**Outreach Director**  
**African Studies Program**  
**1208 West California, #101**  
**Urbana, Illinois 61801**

A STORY, A STORY  
Let it Go  
Let it Come



Brother from the west  
(How can we explain that you are our brother?)  
The world does not end at the threshold of your house  
nor at the stream which marks the border of your country  
nor in the sea  
in whose vastness you sometimes think  
that you discovered the meaning of the infinite.

Frelimo

Part I is a general overview which initiates some data gathering, classifying, generalizing, and hypothesizing. These activities have been arranged in a sequential way because the activities tend to build upon previous activities. These activities, however, may be used out of order, may be used to supplement a text, or may be supplemented by other activities. Since this unit is intended to be taught by an interdisciplinary team, many of the activities could be done by a team of two, three, or four of the teachers during blocks of time rather than during arbitrary class periods. Some of the activities could be done by the language arts teacher while the social studies teacher was doing other activities just as long as students had the necessary introductory activities first. Blocks of time seem more appropriate so that the introduction can be completed in a reasonable amount of time. Of course, the team structure, time allotment, and individual teachers will determine how these activities are used.

Part II is intended to supplement those activities taking place in the social studies classroom. They should be coordinated, if possible, so that the students are not reading Burning Grass, for example, while studying the Kikuyu. The activities for proverbs and dilemma tales should be used first to give the social studies teachers time to provide some background before having the students read literature about a certain ethnic group. Team teaching allows this coordination to work more smoothly than if the activities are taught in isolation.

The art unit prepared by Kay Orentzberg will be used along with this literature unit and integrated with the literature where appropriate. The weakest part of our unit is music. More specific activities need to be developed before our unit is taught during the 1980-81 school year. For the purpose of this project, music will be used in terms of its function in the performance of oral narratives. Art, music, and oral literature will be presented as integrated expressions of culture, none of which appear in isolation in African culture. Thus, all three will be integrated when possible and will be brought together in the culminating activities.

I have tried to include several examples for each type of literature used. The utilization of the literature will be determined by the amount of time allotted by the team. Therefore, I have arranged the material not in terms of days, but in terms of activities which can be used in various ways. For example, not all of the dilemma tales need to be used. Also, I will be adding stories, poems, and novels as I review the additional sources listed in the bibliography. This unit is simply a beginning and intended to show how African literature can be used.

The major problem with the African oral literature included in most anthologies is that we are getting only the plot skeleton devoid of the elements which make the stories so culturally rich. These stories can be used, but one must be aware that the stories have often been altered by those who collected them, certain biases of the collector may be present, and the stories are not

representative of the African oral tradition of literature. If used alone, they present a false picture to students. One must be cautious when trying to generalize or compare African literature to literature of other countries. Some of the stories which seem to parallel stories from other cultures, may in fact be stories told to the people by missionaries. When Westerners go to Africa to collect stories, Africans may indeed tell some of the stories told to them by missionaries as part of their oral tradition. Caution and further study are the only safeguards when trying to teach this unit. One must try to present literature by Africans rather than just stories collected by Westerners. By searching for additional literature, I hope to eventually replace the dependency on the use of anthologies with more authentic African literature.



PART II

ACTIVITY 1

Brother from the west--  
(How can we explain that you are our brother?)  
The world does not end at the threshold of your house  
nor at the stream which marks the border of your country  
nor in the sea  
in whose vastness you sometimes think  
that you discovered the meaning of the infinite.

Frelimo

from If You Want to Know Me

The African

by Michael Dei Anang

They thought I didn't count  
and pushed me round and round  
From place to place:  
They looked at my face,  
and my kinky hair, and wouldn't share  
Mankind's good fare  
With me;  
I' African.

And yet I held my ground,  
Although in chains I was bound;  
I strove against odds,  
And prayed to my gods;  
I rose above shame and grief;  
Their scorn was brief:  
I'm great  
I'm African

from Resources for Teaching Children About  
Africa

We look across a vast continent  
And blindly call it ours.  
You are not a country, Africa,  
You are a concept,  
Fashioned in our minds, each to each,  
To hide our separate fears,  
To dream our separate dreams.

from The Ways of Man  
An Introduction to Many Cultures

If we want to know Africa from the inside and through African eyes, what might these three poets want us to keep in mind?

To whom does they refer in the second poem?

How can we avoid being they while reading and studying African literature?

**"Body Ritual Among the Nacirema"**

This lesson is included in the African Studies Handbook for Elementary and Secondary School Teachers, University of Massachusetts/Worcester Teacher Corps.

It is also available from the Bobbs-Merrill Reprint Series #S185 for \$.25.

Student copies of "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema" or copy of African Studies Handbook. Student Study Sheet for "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema."

**FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES:**

1. Make a list of those things which you believe represent American culture. Number from 1-10 the 10 most descriptive characteristics of American culture.

What words and/or descriptions make "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema" seem like a foreign culture?

What often keeps people from understanding other people's culture?

2. Write a description of American culture for an African student who has never visited the U.S.

What are some problems with describing American culture?

3. In your opinion, what makes an American different from an African?

4. What should we keep in mind when studying "other" cultures?

Who are you and who would you be in Africa?

In preparation for activities dealing with names and naming ceremonies, students should do the following as homework:

Student will try to give the meaning of his/her name  
Write a brief description of his/her family

List ancestors

Describe what is considered proper behavior

List values (what is important to you and your family)

Are your values and beliefs the same as your family's,  
your neighbors', as people in your town, in state,  
in the U.S.?

"The Case of the Akan of Ghana" will be used to introduce students to the importance of names in West Africa.

Several good sources could be used in addition to the Akan of Ghana. See bibliography for source books for names. "The Naming Ceremony of the Koranko People of Northern Sierra Leone" (handout from the African Studies Center) and "The Case of the Igbo of Nigeria" also from the African Studies Program are good sources. The Case of the Igbo would be best used when studying the Igbo. In addition, I have sent for a Yoruba naming ceremony.

If all teachers on the team did the activity on names and naming ceremonies, one period rather than one entire day could be used. Chapter one from Roots could be used as a follow-up for the student homework assignment. Using "The Case of the Akan of Ghana," students will be given a new name to be used until we study the Yoruba. Students can make name tags and use their African name and their last name on all papers to be handed in. An important question to ask students is, "Do you think that everyone in West Africa follows the same rules for naming their children?" Also, the students should speculate as to whether they think that naming ceremonies are a part of everyday life in Africa today.

Ask students for examples of traditional American stories.  
(examples: tall tales, fairy tales, fables, myths, legends)

From where did we get these stories?  
When did you first read or hear these stories?  
Why were you told stories?

What kinds of literature do you think we would find in Africa? Why?  
What might be the purpose of African literature?

Tell students that we are going to begin our study of African literature through the oral tradition of literature. Discuss the reasons for an oral tradition and the function of oral literature--to socialize children, to pass on cultural traditions, to teach a lesson.

Students should take notes for their notebooks.

Ask students to write down as many proverbs as they can.

Who uses proverbs? Why do people use proverbs?  
Discuss literal meaning and symbolic meaning. Translate some of the proverbs. Proverbs are good sources for studying figurative language.

How might proverbs be used in Africa?  
What might we learn about Africa by studying proverbs?

#### PROVERBS ON PROVERBS

Proverbs are the daughters of experience. (Sierra Leone)  
A proverb is the horse of conversation: if the conversation lags, a proverb will revive it. (Yoruba)  
A wise man who knows proverbs, reconciles difficulties. (Yoruba)  
A counsellor who understands proverbs soon sets matters right. (Yoruba)  
Proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten. (Ibo)

Discuss what these proverbs on proverbs tell us about the importance of proverbs in African culture.

Why are the two Yoruba proverbs above (a wise man . . . and a counsellor . . . ) so similar? Through discussion, students should be made aware of the fact that these proverbs have been translated and some of the cultural details may be missing or unclear because of the translation. This point must be reiterated throughout the unit on the oral tradition of African literature.

## A Selection of African Proverbs:

### Fulani

He who waits will see what is in the grass.

He who asks questions seldom goes astray.

On the day of death there is no doctor.

There is no tiredness while there is life.

Even a rich and well-dressed man of servile origin will still only be a slave.

### Nigeria

He who wishes to barter, does not like his own property.

Seeing is better than hearing.

Evil knows where evil sleeps.

He who is sick will not refuse medicine.

A wealthy man will always have followers.

The dying man is not saved by medicine.

Some birds avoid the water; ducks seek it.

The day on which one starts out is not the time to start one's preparations.

The house roof fights the rain, but he who is sheltered ignores it.

Since he has no eyes, he says that eyes smell bad.

He who is being carried does not realize how far the town is.

He who runs from the white ant may stumble upon the stinging ant.

The stone in the water does not know how hot the hill is, parched by the sun.

The one-eyed man thanks God only when he sees a man who is totally blind.

Someone else's legs do you no good in traveling.

Fine words do not produce food.

If the bull would throw you, lie down.

The bird flies high, but always returns to earth.

If you rise too early, the dew will wet you.

When the mouse laughs at the cat, there is a hole nearby.

Children of the same mother do not always agree.

What the child says, he has heard at home.

If you fill your mouth with a razor, you will spit blood.

Not to know is bad; not to wish to know is worse.

Before shooting, one must aim.

He who has goods can sell them.

When one is in trouble, one remembers God.

Meat does not eat meat.

Before healing others, heal thyself.

A shepherd does not strike his sheep.

A bird can drink much, but an elephant drinks more.

Horns do not grow before the head.

If the stomach-ache were in the foot, one would go lame.

Time destroys all things.

Earth is the queen of beds.

Little is better than nothing.

One does not throw a stick after the snake is gone.

One who cannot pick up an ant and wants to pick up an elephant  
will someday see his folly.

#### TANZANIA

Ability is wealth.

He who does not listen to an elder's advice comes to grief.

Where there are old people, nothing goes wrong.

Where there are many people there is God.

He who is expelled from his home has nowhere to go.

The good that befalls you is yours and your friends;  
the evil that befalls you is just your own.

A bad brother is far better than no brother.



To stumble is not to fall down but to go forward.

Where elephants fight, the reeds get hurt.

A brother is as useful as a cooking pot, and a neighbor is as useful as a cooking-pot lid.

The tongue harms more than the teeth.

Do not mend your neighbor's fence before looking to your own.

A sheep cannot bleat in two different places at the same time.

Even the night has ears.

Everything has an end.

We start as fools and become wise through experience.

Even flies have ears.

#### KENYA

Thunder is not yet rain.

Soon found soon lost.

Home affairs are not talked about on the public square.

Good millet is known at the harvest.

A white dog does not bite another white dog.

Try this bracelet: if it fits you wear it; but if it hurts you, throw it away no matter how shiny.

When you take a knife away from a child, give him a piece of wood instead.

He who is unable to dance says that the yard is stoney.

One finger alone cannot kill even a louse.

After a foolish deed comes remorse.

A man who has once been tossed by a buffalo, when he sees a black ox, thinks it's another buffalo.

He who receives a gift does not measure.

He who does not know one thing knows another.

Do not say the first thing that comes to your mind.

Virtue is better than wealth.

There is no phrase without a double meaning.



Hearts do not meet one another like roads.

One does not slaughter a calf before its mother's eyes.

There is no cure that does not cost.

Seeing is different from being told.

It is the duty of children to wait on elders, and not the  
elders on children.

Because a man has injured your goat, do not go out and  
kill his bull.

A man who continually laments is not heeded.

Talking with one another is boring one another.

Absence makes the heart forget.

If a dead tree falls, it carries with it a live one.

(Kikuyu) Two wives are two pots full of poison.

Knowing too much is like being ignorant.

When new clothes are sewn, where do the old ones go?

(Yoruba) When the face is washed you finish at the chin.

(Akan) When a fool is told a proverb, the meaning has to be  
explained to him.

All sunshine makes a desert.

An old person is necessary in a village.

Love your wife, but do not trust her.

A king is not a relative.

When it is not your mother who is in danger of being eaten by  
the wild animal, the matter can wait until tomorrow.

If one does not live in heaven he must live on earth among  
ordinary men.

Even though you may be taller than your father, you still are  
not his equal.

Five things to make a man cautious: a horse, a woman, night,  
a river, the forest.

Wood may remain 10 years in the water, but it will never become  
a crocodile.

Lack of knowledge is darker than the night.

There are three friends in life: courage, sense, and insight.

The man who is carried on another man's back does not appreciate how far off the town is.

The cat always eats the mouse it plays with.

Faults are like a hill: you stand on your own and talk about those of other people.

Bowing to a dwarf will not prevent you from standing erect again.

I will do it later on is a brother to I didn't do it.

Alive he is insufficient, dead he is missed.

When one is at sea one does not quarrel with the boatman.

Death is like a wild animal.

The stick that is at your friend's house will not drive away the leopard.

One who has not suffered does not know how to pity.

If someone calls out "witch, witch," and you are not a witch you will not turn around.

The man who cannot dance will say the drum is bad.

He who hunts two rats catches none.

If you play with a cat, you must not mind her scratch.

It is because of man that the blacksmith makes weapons.

Even the Niger River must flow around an island.

Even the Niger has an island.

When the drumbeat changes, the dance changes.

A dark night brings fear, but man still more.

If a child can wash his hands, he may eat with kings.

## ACTIVITIES FOR PROVERBS:

Proverbs can be studied on their own as a way to learn about values and culture. They can be used again with dilemma tales, and they will be found in oral narratives and novels. They can be recalled when studying particular cultures and when looking at traditional societies and the effect of change on these societies. But, it must be remembered and stressed as Ruth Finnegan points out in ORAL LITERATURE IN AFRICA that proverbs have a

situational aspect. Proverbs are used on particular occasions, by individuals in a particular context, and their wit, their attractiveness, their insights, even their meaning must be seen as arising from that context.

Select a proverb for each student in the class. These may be typed on notecards or typed on a ditto and cut into strips. A circle discussion can be held with each student trying to explain his or her proverb. The student should attempt to explain the proverb in an African context rather than through American eyes.

Students may be given a proverb and asked to draw a picture which translates its meaning for the rest of the class. Students should be reminded of the differences between literal meaning and figurative meaning. For example, the proverb: Wood may remain 10 years in the water, but it will never become a crocodile should not be drawn as a piece of wood in the water. Students should then share their pictures and explain their proverbs. For students who have trouble drawing, magazine pictures make a good substitute.

Students could also be asked to write a narrative to illustrate their proverbs. This narrative could be first written with an American setting and later altered by adding an African setting. The narrative assignment could be assigned at a later date as a test of the student's ability to create an African setting, plot, characters, and theme.

Students could be asked to write a dialogue in which proverbs would be used in conversation. Proverbs are usually used by adults, so children would not speak in proverbs to an adult.

Certain proverbs might be chosen for the proverb of the week. Students might try to model their behavior after the proverb. Students could send each other messages through proverbs, or teachers and students could exchange proverb messages.

Students could create games using the proverbs.

Students could be asked to write a paragraph using a proverb as a topic sentence or as a clincher sentence.

## A STORY, A STORY

Let it Go

Let it Come

Hausa stories begin with the narrator chanting "A Story, A Story" and the listeners respond "Let it go, let it come." (Let it go from you, let it come to us.) Ashanti storytellers begin their tales with "We don't really mean to say so; we don't really mean to say so." This avoids giving personal offense and reminds the audience that the person telling the story is just a narrator, and if a listener happens to see himself or herself in one of the characters, one should not take out his or her anger on the storyteller. Hausa storytellers will often end a tale by saying "Off with the rat's head" to remind anyone in the audience who feels libelled to direct any anger at a rat since no offense was intended. Akan tales might end with "This my tale, which I have told, if it be sweet; if it is not sweet, take some elsewhere, and let some return to me."

### DILEMMA TALES

Ask the students what a dilemma is. Through group discussion arrive at a definition for dilemma. Add definition to student notebook.

Under what conditions do people find themselves in dilemmas?

Tell students that they are going to listen to and read some dilemma tales.

Ask: Why do you think that dilemma tales are important to African cultures?

Through discussion or handout, it should be brought out that:

1. dilemmas are part of oral tradition of literature
2. in societies where there was no written law, problems might be settled by the eldest member of the group, chief, or group of elders serving as a council. Recall the Yoruba proverb.
3. dilemmas can be used to test children's memories and sharpen debating skills.
4. dilemmas can be devices for teaching ethics or attitudes in personal relationships.
5. dilemma tales must be debated within African cultural context, not through American eyes.
6. There is no right answer!

Students will listen to two versions of the same Hausa story, "Three Sons of a Chief" and "A Test of Skill." Project the slide of a Baobab tree from the ecology series of slides from the African Studies Program while reading the stories. Begin by announcing, "A Story, A Story." Students should respond, "Let it Go, Let it Come."

"Three Sons of a Chief"

"A Test of Skill"

Ask students why these two versions are different.

If these stories are examples of oral literature, who wrote them down?

What happens to the stories when "outsiders" write down the stories for Western readers?

What do we need to know in order to understand African stories?

After listening to the stories, students will debate the dilemma. The debate should be evaluated in terms of the students' abilities to debate in African terms rather than through their American eyes.

Having debated the story, students should make a list of anything learned from the story pertaining to the environment and any cultural details learned from the story.

Students should write a paragraph explaining their solution to the dilemma and reasons for making their choice. Remind them that there are no right answers to a dilemma. They will be evaluated in terms of specific aspects of Hausa culture mentioned in their paragraphs, the use of tentative words when making generalizations, and their attempt to look at the problem through African eyes.



Show the film "The Magic Tree" from the African Studies Program as an opener for discussion and inquiry into family life in Africa and an example of a dilemma tale.

In social studies classes the students should already have discussed and learned some things about the African family. The major concepts to be reviewed are: extended family, lineage (patrilineal and matrilineal), polygamy, age groups, male and female roles in traditional societies, socialization, education, importance of names, traditional vs. modern societies, rural vs. urban societies. It is important to review the idea that in patrilineal societies, the sons remain with their families of birth whereas daughters marry into families but may return to their families in time of trouble. It is important to note the importance of the woman's family to her children.

The literature will be correlated to the social studies as closely as possible, but exact correlation will probably be impossible. Therefore, through questions and discussion, student knowledge will be assessed and necessary background reading will be assigned. Throughout the literature sequence, the importance of the socialization of oral literature will be stressed even though Finnegan in Oral Literature in Africa cautions against the tendency to overstress the functional importance of the African oral tradition of literature. The literature, however, will be used as another vehicle for learning the concepts related to the African family, values, roles, and socialization. The formula  $E \rightarrow P = C$  established in the introduction will be utilized as one method of understanding why the African family functions as it does and why the family is so important to African society. This formula may also be used to help students understand pressures on the family and how the extended family may change as a result of these pressures.

Before viewing "The Magic Tree"

Ask students if they have trouble with their brothers and sisters. Does one child in the family seem to get more attention than another? How do different individuals react and cope with the problem or existence of several children in a family? Are all children treated equally?

Ask students to draw a diagram of their families. (This activity may be done earlier in the unit and used at this time). How do you think your family compares to other families in your neighborhood, state, in the U.S.?

What might you do if you felt unhappy with your family or any members of your family?

Do you think that it's important for the family to stay together no matter what the cost? Why? How do you think an African might answer this question?

We are going to see a film called "The Magic Tree" about a family in Zaire. Locate Zaire on your map.

Do you think families of Zaire are similar to families in Nigeria?

What might make them similar?  
What might make them different?

Through discussion, students should bring out the formula  $E = P=C$  in terms of a different environment might mean different problems which would perhaps result in a different culture. Customs and traditions of different ethnic groups should also be discussed. The importance of the African family, however, should be the center of discussion. No matter what structure or customs, the family is of central importance.

View film. 11 minutes. Students should be asked to write down specific specks of knowledge from the film: Environment, values, beliefs, problems, life in the new village.

Homework: Write a paragraph answering questions from the film: "Why did Mavungu forget those who cared for him? Why did he honor those who do not love him? Students should discuss the cost of being reunited with his family in a second paragraph. Students will be making speculations, but these should be evaluated in terms of African culture and through African eyes. They should consider whether or not Mavungu was prepared for this reunion. Their clincher sentences could be a proverb or a statement of the theme of the film. Additional questions to think about: why did Mavungu lose his wealth? Did he have happiness while living with the princess in his magic village?



Collect paragraphs written the previous day.

Discuss the specks written down during the film.

Why would Luemba be loved more than Mavungu? Why might strength and beauty be valued?

Speculate as to what African societies might consider beautiful and strong. What might be responsible for these values? Would all groups in Africa agree as to what is beautiful and of value? Why?

Discuss students' ideas of the theme of the film.

Write and refine until acceptable, a group generalization concerning the importance of the family in Africa. Write the generalization on the speculation chart and in notebooks.

Students will read another dilemma, "The Leftover Eye," in their Projection book. As students read the story, some or all of the students may listen to the Interaction tape of the story.

**Before story:** Discuss symbolic use of the eye. What might the eye represent? Otherwise, students tend to get caught up with the idea that nobody could find eyes and give them away. Discuss the use of fiction to make a point. The eye is so important that it might have been chosen to represent anything of value.

**After story:** Ask, "What makes this a dilemma?"

List student alternatives for the solving the problem of the leftover eye. Next to alternatives, list consequences. Students should choose what they consider the best alternative in African terms. Using what they know about patrilineal societies and the woman's place in her husband's family, they should debate the solutions to this dilemma.

"A Hunter and his Son" Folktales 2, Interaction, Level 2

Discuss the importance of the first and last sentences before reading the story.

Why begin with "a certain hunter and his son?"  
From the last sentence, we know what group of people would tell this story. How do we know? Which group are we talking about? (Hausa)

Worksheet attached. Students will individually answer questions 1,2,3,4,5, and 7. Collect worksheets before the debate.

**Debate:** This will be evaluated in terms of reasons pertaining to the African family and values and generalizations made from the previous story and film "The Magic Tree."

What similarities exist between the problem in "The Magic Tree" and "The Hunter and his Son?" Who might the people from Zaire be? (this could be answered for extra credit) Compare and contrast what you know about the Hausa of Nigeria and the people from Zaire.

Students will discuss questions 6,8,9, and 10 from the worksheet in groups. Student recorder will list group ideas to be handed in.

WORKSHEET FOR "THE HUNTER AND HIS SON"

1. Why did the son leave his father?
2. What Hausa values can you list from reading this story?
3. Why was it so important for the chief to have a son?  
Why didn't the chief just adopt the boy as his son?  
Why pretend that the boy was the chief's lost son?
4. Describe the tests the village used to decide if the boy was the king's returned son. Why had the boy passed the tests?
5. "If the naked man can dance, much more can the man with the cloak." Translate.

How did this help the boy convince the councilors that he was the chief's returned son?

6. "Only the son of a chief would display such magnificent disregard of valuable property and life."

Why do you think that a chief and his son might have this "disregard" for valuable property and life?

How would other people of the village regard property and life? How might they have learned this?

Do you think that disregard was the word used by African storytellers when telling this story?

With limited specks of knowledge, our own values, and a translation of this story, what speculations might an American make about this group of people after reading this story? Do you think these speculations would be accurate?

7. Write an ending to the story. Try not to include your values, but write it from an African point of view.
8. Under what circumstances might this story be told?
9. What might this story be intended to teach?
10. Write two generalizations which might explain Hausa ideas about family.

Write at least two questions you would want to ask an African friend about this story.

"Ingratitude" and crocodile story from ROOTS.

1. Read story from Roots, pp. 7-8. Discuss Mandinka storytelling.
2. Discuss whether or not gratitude is often repaid with ingratitude or good is repaid with bad in African cultures, in American cultures. Where would this more likely to be true--in rural or urban settings, in traditional or modern settings?
3. A student or the teacher will read the story "Ingratitude" to the class. (The stories should be read aloud as often as possible since we are dealing with oral literature. Having students reading stories silently to themselves is an artificial setting for these stories.)
4. Have students make a list in notebooks of any specks of knowledge gained from the story.  
  
Extra credit: Find a proverb or make up a proverb that might be appropriate for this story.
5. How do we know that this is a Hausa story? If it is a Hausa story, how should we have begun the story?
6. Debate which of the three--the snake, the man, or the heron were the most ungrateful. "All three alike brought final death to the woman. All three repaid good with evil." Were all three equally to blame?
7. Create a situation in an African setting where someone would find either of these stories appropriate to teach a lesson.

"The King of Wrestlers, the King of Bowmen, and the King of Prayer"

1. A student or the teacher will read the story to the class.
2. Students will debate the question of which man had crossed the river in a way which excelled the others.
3. HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: Write a paragraph in which the student explains his or her choice of which man excelled and why his method would be praised by others.  
  
The students should write a second paragraph in which they demonstrate how the method of crossing the river could be applied to a different problem. This problem must have an African setting and characters, and the problem must be a logical African problem.
4. EXTRA CREDIT: Find a proverb that might be applicable to this problem.
5. Students should make a list of specks of knowledge about the Hausa gained from this story. These will be checked and reused as more reading about the Hausa is done.

## SINGING TALES

The Foreward to Yes and No, the Intimate Folklore of Africa will be presented to the students. The important ideas from this foreward are the importance of the storyteller, the role of the audience, beginnings and endings, types of stories, importance of mime, and the use of the voice. The controlling idea is that so-called primitive oral literature is in fact a rich tradition of literature presented by storytellers (mostly non-professionals) and by people who have listened to stories.

The Introduction to Singing Tales of Africa will be presented to the students. The important ideas from this introduction are: the listener has an active part in storytelling and may join in singing, may make rhythmic sounds, may join in by clapping or rhythmically moving his or her body. The controlling idea is that the storyteller is extremely important and that African stories are action stories that are usually told in song and with motion.

Remind the students of the two Hausa versions of the dilemma tale. What were these two versions missing?

The forms of most narratives are simply shadows of the original performances. We are getting only a brief plot summary without the richness of the music, song, and use of body movements. African oral literature is a dynamic oral and performing art.

Students will outline the characteristics of African oral literature based on the foreward to Yes and No and the introduction to Singing Tales. Students will also outline the types of oral literature and will use this outline to classify stories throughout the unit. There will be bulletin board displays of book jackets and charts and posters. Students will add story illustrations, charts, and posters of their own to the bulletin board.

Students will be divided into three groups. Each group will read and practice one of the singing tales which will be presented to the class. The three tales will be:

"The Lion on the Path," from The Lion on the Path and Other African Stories.

"Kidden's Second Adventure with the Lion," from The Disappointed Lion.

"Why There is Death in the World," from Singing Tales of Africa

Some liberty will be taken with the art of storytelling. Students will be made aware that usually a single, non-professional storyteller would tell the story. In order to increase the number of student participants, we will utilize group performances.

Each group must prepare information for audience participation.



Students should make a bulletin board display or present a panel discussion after their presentation. They must include the title of the story, country or group origin, and specks of knowledge and speculations from the story including environment (setting), plot (problem), cultural details, type and function of story, and theme.

At least three days will be used for preparation of the stories. Each group will meet with the music teacher to practice the songs from their story. The music can be taped on a cassette so that the students can sing along with the tape. If it is not possible for the students to work with the music teacher during the school day, the teacher and music teacher could work out some tapes for the students to use.

One period will be spent working on mime and body movements using techniques learned from Child's Play, a children's theatre group that did workshops and performances at Jefferson last year.

If possible, music and musical instruments should be presented prior to the practice sessions. This may be done by the music teacher with the aid of someone from the African Studies Center. The handouts from the summer workshop will be utilized as well as recordings, films, and filmstrips. The music section will be worked out in more detail before this unit is taught during the 1980-81 school year.

#### GUIDE SHEETS (SAMPLE) FOR GROUP PERFORMANCES

##### I. Presentation (5 points each)

- \_\_\_ A. Accuracy of the presentation
- \_\_\_ B. Use of mime
- \_\_\_ C. Incorporation of songs and chants
- \_\_\_ D. Audience participation
- \_\_\_ E. Character portrayal

##### II. Discussion of Story (5 points each)

- \_\_\_ A. Setting (environment)
- \_\_\_ B. Problems (Plot)
- \_\_\_ C. Cultural details from story
- \_\_\_ D. Type of story and function of story
- \_\_\_ E. Possible lessons, values, or proper ways of behaving (theme)

40-50 points = A  
30-39 points = B  
20-29 points = C  
10-19 points = D

NOTES FROM "KIDDEN'S SECOND ADVENTURE WITH THE LION" Bari of Central Africa

Possible characters:

Narrator

Logilisuk-Kidden's younger brother

Kidden

Lion

Konyi--Kidden's husband

tortoise

Chorus to sing the sounds of the bell

Plot: Konyi already had two wives when he married Kidden. The other two wives hated Kidden, and they would sabotage everything that Kidden did in order to make her look like a bad wife. Kidden decided to run away to live by herself and called her brother to drive her cattle for her. While Kidden and her brother were camped, a lion came to Kidden's door and sang for her to open the door. Before Kidden could open the door, Logilisuk sang out a warning. This continued until the lion put a magic bone in the cooking pot. This bone stuck in Logilisuk's throat so that it became more difficult and then impossible for him to sing out the warnings against the lion. The lion gained access to Kidden's house and ordered her to wait hand and foot on him. But while he left to hunt, Kidden, who knew something about magic, removed the bone from Logilisuk's throat and they ran away to Kidden's family. When they reached a river, the river promised to part if they promised not to trample on the river's children. Kidden and Logilisuk crossed safely. When the lion reached the river, he made the same promise but trampled the fish and creatures of the river. The river closed and washed the lion ashore. When Kidden reached her family's village everyone rejoiced. Konyi, in the next village, heard the bell of his old bull. Konyi had been grieving for Kidden and realized what his other two wives had been doing. So, he sent his other wives back to their fathers, returned the bride price, and he and Kidden lived happily ever after.

Cultural aspects of the story should be discussed. Audience should challenge or add specks of knowledge and speculations made by the group.



NOTES FOR "WHY THERE IS DEATH IN THE WORLD." IBO TALE

Possible characters:

Narrator  
Tortoise  
Dog  
Chorus

God chose tortoise and dog to send message that no death or sickness would be sent to the people. The tortoise started repeating the message but walked very slowly. The tortoise was ahead, but the dog caught up and passed tortoise. Dog decided to nose about for bone in a rubbish heap and began to crunch on the bone (chorus chants the sound of the crunching). The dog once again passed tortoise, so he lay down in bush to rest. Tortoise's voice grew so faint that all he could say was "Death-sickness-from God to man. The dog was too late, and not even God could change the message. The people were very angry, and that is why the dog is always found nosing around the roadside looking for food and crunching old, dry bones.

This story not only explains death and sickness. What values are passed along through this story? What lesson could this story tell?

NOTES FOR "THE LION ON THE PATH" Karanga of Rhodesia

A man's wife wanted to go to see her mother. Her husband warned her not to take the big path down in the valley because of lions. She had not been gone long when the husband threw down his hoe, picked up his mbira (a musical instrument), and ran down the path where he saw his wife's footprints. He saw his wife and the lion and began to play his mbira. The lion began to dance to the storyteller's song, but everytime the man took a step back, the lion couldn't hear the music so he stepped forward. The man got tired, and he heard the voice of a rabbit. He gave the instrument to the rabbit, and while the rabbit played his version of the storyteller's song, the man and his wife ran down the path. The rabbit looked for a place to escape, and the lion turned around just in time to see the rabbit disappear down a hole. He had thought that a man had been playing the music.

What might be the function of this story? Might there be a lesson involved?

How are women portrayed?

L  
STORIES FROM YORUBALAND

Whereas the dilemma stories were used as a vehicle for the study of the African family, the Yoruba tales of Gods and Heroes will be used as a vehicle for the study of religion, art, and the inter-relationship of art, music, and literature. Three tales will be used in this unit, but more Yoruba tales must be incorporated. This section on Yoruba literature will be used in conjunction with Kay Creutzburg's art unit. The slides and film of the Benin Kingship Ritual and the Gelede film will be used. The literature will be used to stress the importance of the people knowing the stories in order to understand the rituals and festivals. It will also be stressed that art, music, and literature are inter-related and do not appear isolated from their cultural context. The stories included in this unit were chosen because of the mention of the descent from the sky of the Yoruba gods in our TABA unit on the Yoruba. They will help the students to understand the purpose of African religious beliefs and help them to understand that because people practice different religious beliefs, they are not strange.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Map of Yorubaland

Introduction: The Yorubas  
The Gods, Heroes and Other Protagonists

ACTIVITY ONE

Song "Earth and Sky" explaining why Orun (Sky) and Ile (Earth) are far apart. Earth and Sky had been equals. When a bush rat was caught, Earth and Sky fought over who was the elder. Sky withheld rain which brought drought and famine to Earth. Earth sent a vulture carrying a bush rat to Sky and rain fell again. This song sets the stage for the importance of elders and the necessity of appealing to the gods in order to maintain harmony and thus avoid such problems as drought and famine.

The formula  $E \rightarrow P=O$  can be used to inquire about the Yorubas.

<u>Environment</u>		<u>Problems</u>	=	<u>Culture</u>
lack of rain		famine		gods to bring rain and establish harmony.

Background reading, lectures, handouts, and discussion on religion must be part of this unit. A hierarchy of gods must be established and the idea that lesser gods are used to intercede and bring harmony.

Literature, religion, and ceremony are all ways to achieve harmony in an uncertain environment. If there is no rain and draught results in famine, it is reasonable and logical to seek reasons for the problem and to try to solve the problem. Therefore, it is not strange or peculiar for the Yorubas to practice divination, tell stories about gods and heroes, or to have masquerades and festivals in order to maintain harmony and cope with their environment.

"Descent from the Sky"

From this story we learn the importance of yams and maize, the importance of elders, and the importance of gods to bring harmony. This story explains the origin of earth and people and the idea of a supreme god, Olorun.

NOTES FROM "DESCENT FROM THE SKY"

Orunmila (Ifa) eldest son. Read future, understood secret of existence and divine processes of fate.

Obatala--King of white cloth

Eshu--neither good or bad: chance and accident. Unpredictable. understood speech and language. Trickster, messenger.

Agemo--chameleon

Olokun--female--ruled over vast expanses of water and marshes--no living thing.

The existence of man in the sky and woman in the water below--separate and apart.

divining--palm nuts

descent of orisha on chain of gold made by goldsmith.

snail shell of sand, white hen to disperse sand, black cat for companion, and palm nut. Because sand was scattered unevenly, the land created was not entirely flat. People were created from clay. Because Obatala drank too much palm wine, some people



were misshapen. Ife was created.

Tools--wooden hoe and copper bush knife to grow millet and yams.

Obatala -Oba- ruler. Joined by other orishas who were told to never forget their duties to humans.

Olokun was angry and humiliated, so she sent great waves and floods.

Orunmila consulted palm nuts. Went to Ife. Because of his knowledge of medicine, the people asked him to stay. Other orishas were taught divination, and thus, the art of divining has been passed on from generation to generation.

Order was needed as well as an understanding of the relationship between people and physical world and between people and orishas.

The problem between Olokun and Olorun was still not settled. A contest was called to decide who had the greatest knowledge of cloth making. Olokun sent Agemo to tell Olorun that if her cloth was as magnificent as she claimed, then Olokun would enter the contest. Olorun was vain and showed Agemo her beautiful cloth. Agemo turned the exact color of all of her cloth. She thought that if Agemo was only a messenger and can duplicate the color of her cloth, what could Olorun do? She realized the futility of competing, so Olorun remained supreme.

As a group evaluation, students will sit in a circle and retell the story, each student adding a detail.

Ask the students what might change these traditional values and beliefs. Who would more easily change? What would most likely continue as part of Yoruba beliefs today?

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Might the fact that the wooden hoe was sent by gods explain the importance of traditional ways of doing things?
2. What was the purpose of the art of divination? What might be the purpose of using palm nuts for divining?
3. Why do the people believe that they need the various orishas?
4. Might the conflict between Olokun and Olorun help to explain the dominance of man and power and reinforce the feeling of inferiority in the minds of women?

#### SOME GUIDELINES FOR FILMS:

Look for divination with palm nuts.

Why do people understand the ceremonies and masquerades.

Observe the cloth and weaving.

Look for interrelatedness of art, music, and literature.

Think about the ideas of the superiority of men but the recognition of power of women.

What is the purpose of ritual?

What is the purpose of the masquerade?

How are art, music, and literature part of everyday life?

Speculate about the continuity of these customs and beliefs in terms of changes taking place in Africa.



## "THE ORISHAS ACQUIRE THEIR POWERS"

### NOTES FROM STORY:

Even orishas appealed to Olorun or Orunmila. With powers, they would not always have to appeal to Olorun. The orishas needed powers to distinguish them from humans. The people's demands were heavy. The question became how to divide the powers evenly. It was important to treat the orishas equally so that there would be harmony rather than dissension.

Agemo suggested that this distribution be left to chance. So the powers were thrown to earth. Eshu was the strongest and pushed others aside which meant that he accumulated more powers. People try to avoid his displeasure. Shango received the power of the lightning bolt. Orisha Oko could make crops flourish. Sonponno controlled smallpox and was to be avoided. Osanyin had the powers of curing and divining. He became the orisha of the bush country and forest.

Stress the importance of these stories as methods of passing on customs, beliefs, and traditions.

Photos of Yoruba and Benin art could be used for various writing activities. Since photos are out of their cultural context, students could be asked to add cultural details. Students could be asked to write about the photos from various perspectives in terms of the creator of the art, people using the art, "outsiders" viewing the art.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think that the gods were distinguished from humans?
2. Why do you think that the people felt it necessary to have gods to take their needs to Olorun?
3. What might explain why the people's demands were heavy? What problems do you think they had? What caused these problems? How did the people attempt to solve these problems?
4. How did Agemo's solution to distributing powers avoid disharmony?
5. Do you think it is possible for all people to be equal?

Students could be asked to write a story with an African setting in which at least one of the Yoruba gods is a character.

## "SCATTERING FROM IFE"

NOTES: All were equal and all had everything they wanted. People began to question why everyone looked the same and spoke the same. They believed that sameness was monotonous. They began to believe that to be equal meant to be deprived, so they asked to be made different. Olorun believed that the humans were ungrateful and unreasonable and that there was harmony in quality. The people began to quarrel and looked on others with suspicion. Olorun gave them different languages (Ibo, Hausa, Fon, or Arabic) and the people began to separate into different groups and nations.

The world has never been the same.

Ask the students to describe modern Nigeria in terms of the story "The Scattering from Ife."

This unit could be used with the Eighth Grade unit on Greek Mythology.

### PRAISE POEMS

Each Yoruba orisha has a series of praises sung by the priest. This is a praise poem about Ogun, the god of iron. He is extremely powerful and is "worshipped" by warriors, hunters, and blacksmiths. Do you think the word worshipped is a proper term to use?

What do you learn about the Yoruba from this praise poem?  
What makes Ogun so powerful?  
Why might hunters and blacksmiths praise Ogun?

Write a praise poem for someone you admire.

Read the story about Ogun in Tales of Yoruba Gods and Heroes.

USING NOVELS TO SUPPLEMENT THE SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

Burning Grass. Novels can be used in various ways. Parts of the novel can be used for a specific purpose, chapters can be used to illustrate a point or develop a concept, or the entire novel can be read by students. The teacher may wish to read a novel to a group or tape the novel for use by individual students. Burning Grass will be used to show how a novel can be used to supplement the social studies curriculum. Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart could be used in a similar way. Both novels are rich in cultural details, and both incorporate the oral tradition of literature into the novels. Both novels are excellent sources of proverbs.

Begin by reading the following: "It is time too for the Harmattan to blow dust into eyes and teeth, to wrinkle the skin: the harmattan that leaves . . . a shroud of fog that veils the walls and trees like muslin on a skeikh."

"The trees were skeletons bleached in the sun--barren, with peeling skins bruised by decades of thirst and hunger."

"The somnolence in the air crackled. Gusts of heat rose from the earth and shimmered upwards to an intense blue sky that hurt the eyes."

"He and his son lifted their eyes and took in the undulating hills, rivulets, and rocks. And it was lonely."

1. From these descriptions, where in Africa might this be? Describe the environment.
2. What problems might be caused by this environment?
3. What do you think the people who live in this environment do for a living? How do you think they have adapted to this environment?
4. Use the formula E = P = C to predict the culture of the people who live in the environment described.

We are going to be learning about (or learning more about) the Fulani, one group of people living in Africa.

The Fulani have a proverb: Six things cannot be trusted: a prince, a river, a knife, a woman, string, and darkness. Translate this proverb in terms of Fulani culture.

We are going to read a novel Burning Grass. Is this going to be a true account of the Fulani? Do you think the author Cyprian Ekwensi will be describing the Fulani through African eyes?

What do you think the title Burning Grass can tell us about the area where the Fulani live?



## CHAPTER ONE

1. Find out where the Fulani live.
2. Find out what they do for a living.
3. Find out why burning grass is important and how it affects the Fulani.
4. Which river is mentioned in this chapter?
5. Write down any aspect of Fulani culture that you learn.
6. List the characters you meet and write a brief character sketch of each.

## CHAPTER TWO

What did Fatemeh need to learn? Since she had to learn these things, what type of life do you think she had lived before? Why wasn't she part of a herding family?

1. Describe the status of a slave girl.
2. What was the purpose of folk stories?
3. What was the significance of Fatemeh and Hodio's running away?
4. Why was Rikku's love for Fatemeh referred to as calf-love? Can you think of an American expression for this type of love?
5. Complete: "Broken is the family; gone is \_\_\_\_\_."

## CHAPTER THREE

1. What is a talisman?  
What was the white paper tied to the bird?
2. What is Sokugo?
3. "Shaitu's life . . . was ruled by beliefs for which she could find no logical explanation. She accepted happenings but associated them with inanimate objects and peculiar circumstances." Can you explain this through the eyes of the Fulani?
4. What do you learn about the importance of magic?

## CHAPTER FOUR

1. What problem do you learn about in this chapter?
2. What was Dr. McMinter's solution?
3. How did this solution affect the Fulanis?
4. How did the Fulanis cope with the problem?
5. How did the tax on cattle affect the Fulani?

## CHAPTER FIVE

1. Were all people in this area herders?
2. What did others do? Why?
3. What was the relationship between the Fulanis and others?

## CHAPTER SIX

1. Describe the "war" mentioned by Baba.
2. What was the cause of this war in Baba's opinion.
3. How did Baba measure distance?
4. Why did Baba not like the new village?
5. What is the translation of the proverb given to you before beginning this novel? Compare this translation to your translation.
6. What else do you learn about the Fulani?

At this point, the students may be required to finish the novel or certain groups may be required to complete the novel. Certain chapters may be used. Chapter notes will be completed and added to this unit along with a list of possible activities.

Chapter activities will be written for Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart. Excerpts from this novel appear in the textbook, The Ways of Man. This novel is more appropriate for high school students, but some chapters could be used for sixth-seventh graders. The use of proverbs is an excellent teaching device. The chapter describing the failure of the rains to come (Chapter 3) is excellent. Chapter 5, the festival of the new yam, would also be good to use. The entire book is rich in cultural details.

Camara Laye's, The Dark Child could also be used in part.

Iyabo of Nigeria, a children's novel, has some interesting cultural details, but the tone of the book is disturbing. I often felt that the author was writing for British school children rather than for African children. Often the tone is condescending and critical, and western dress and values seem to be considered better than or at least more sophisticated than African dress and values. Although this is not apparent in every chapter, the book must be used carefully, and the students must be made aware of the tone of the book. This would make for good discussion, but there are problems with using the book without qualification. The reading level of this book is more appropriate for sixth-seventh graders. A more thorough review of children's books needs to be made before teaching this unit.

RESOURCES AND IDEAS  
for  
STORYTELLING CONTEST

FILM: ANANSI THE SPIDER

Film and film guide available from  
the African Studies Program

Before film: Tell students that they are going to see a film ANANSI THE SPIDER which is a dilemma story. Kwaku Ananse has six sons, each of whom has a special quality. Kwaku Ananse will be faced with a dilemma and you will be asked to try to help him make a decision.

Ask students who Anansi is and why this character is important to African oral literature. The discussion may reveal that students are aware that Anansi is from Ghana, and they may already know the character and perhaps have read some Anansi stories. If the students have no knowledge of Anansi stories, they could read Understanding African Folklore (handout from African Studies Program) and a short lecture on the importance of Anansi and the purpose and function of Anansi stories could be given.

View film, stopping the film after the question, "which son deserves the prize" is posed. Students will debate the question and make their predictions about the ending in writing.

Complete the film. Even though this film is recommended for the primary levels, it can be used successfully in middle school.

After the film: Ask the students to describe the environment where Anansi lives. Why is a spider used as a character? Would a spider be found in all African tales? Why do we find various animals in African narratives? (The environment and culture are responsible).

A good evaluation exercise is to read a narrative or ditto a narrative and ask students to predict the environment based on the characters and plot or give certain elements from a story (animal, problem, some cultural details) and have students create the setting and characters. Any combination of details can be used according to skills to be evaluated.

A storytelling contest might be used to evaluate the students' knowledge of oral literature as an oral and performing art, categories of oral narratives, function of oral narratives, and their ability to analyze narratives. If time allows, each student will be assigned a story to read and prepare for telling. Stories vary in length and difficulty, so they will be assigned to students with varying reading skills. The same guide sheet used for the singing tales will be used for the evaluation. The champion storytellers will tell their stories at our festival at the end of the unit.

#### ALTERNATIVES FOR ORGANIZING STORYTELLING

1. Each student reads and tells a story. Stories could be told by type of story: origin, explanatory, trick, contest, didactic. Stories should be discussed or questions should be prepared for each story.
2. Students can tell stories in any order. Using notes, students can be asked to classify stories, describe setting, summarize plot, describe characters, and state theme.
3. Students can be grouped according to type of story. Students tell stories within group and choose the best story to be told to the entire group. Students discuss stories within groups and present chart of specks representing all stories within group but tell only the best story to be analyzed by entire group.
4. Group students so that all types of stories are represented. One person tells an origin story, one an explanatory, etc. This might reveal the most popular type of story since the groups would have to choose the best story to tell the entire class.
5. Stories could be told at the beginning of class period. The rest of the period could be used for reading stories and doing station activities.
6. The stories could be used for a contract assignment based on points. Each story would be worth a certain number of points, and students would be asked to write reporting sheets for each story read. They would classify the story, list specks of knowledge gained from the story, describe the environment and culture of the people who would tell the story, state the theme of the story, and state circumstances under which the story might be told. Students should write a recommendation for each story. Students working for an A or B would be required to tell a story during a storytelling contest. Some of the stories are more of a plot

skeleton than others, so students could be expected to add details, songs, audience responses, chants, beginnings and endings.

Whatever the organization, some of the stories should be told. Since time will be a factor, a list of the stories is attached with an asterisk indicating the best stories for telling. Some of the stories have been xeroxed whereas others come from a paperback, The Calabash of Wisdom and Other Igbo Stories. The Calabash of Wisdom is arranged in such a way that each story can be removed from the book and laminated. The xeroxed stories will also be laminated. The remainder of the stories are from handouts from the African Studies Program, Projection (6/7 literature anthology), and from the Interaction series Level 2. Stories will be added to this collection since the search for appropriate stories and for more authentic stories will continue. A card file has been made for the stories, and this will be typed at a later date so that copies can be made.



NARRATIVES FOR STORYTELLING CONTEST

CONTEST STORIES

- "Proving the Heron's Age" (Nigerian Folktales handout)  
Contest to determine the eldest.
- \* "The Hornbill and the Chameleon" (The Calabash of Wisdom)  
Same story as "Proving the Heron's Age" but includes better details concerning the status and privileges of being the eldest.
  - \* "The Blind Man and the Lame Man" (The Calabash of Wisdom)  
Each have a part in killing an antelope for which the king will give a reward. Only one man can be rewarded, so each tries to prove the greater responsibility. Answer is given but on a separate page.
  - \* "The Liar's Contest" (Folktales I, Interaction, Level 2)  
Excellent story. Moth, mosquito, and fly try to tell a lie which will cause the spider to say he does not believe the story and submit to being eaten by them. Spider sets up a story which gives the moth, mosquito, and fly no choice because if they believe the spider, he gets to eat them, but if they don't believe the story, by the rules of the contest, the spider will also get to eat them.
  - \* "Tug of War" (Projection) dilemma story. Tortoise sets up a tug of war with the elephant and the hippo on the condition if Tortoise can hold his own with each of them, he will be considered an equal. In fact, he gives each an end of a rope, jerks the rope in the middle to signal the beginning of the tug of war, and the hippo and elephant tugged themselves into exhaustion. Question: Were the elephant, hippo, and tortoise really equal?
- "The Two Greatest Liars" (Folktales from Sierra Leone handout)  
Contest held by King of Ata to decide which of two men was the greatest liar. Each showed up late for the contest which gave them their purpose for lying. King could not decide and declared them equally great. People began lying and lying spread.
- \* "Clever One Foolish One" (from Yes and No, the Intimate Folklore of Africa). Excellent dilemma. One brother considered smart and praised, one considered a fool and ridiculed, thus their names, Clever One and Foolish One. The two brothers supplied family with game and fish. Foolish One was always the first to kill fish, but Clever One always took credit. While eating one evening, fishbone became lodged in father's throat. Foolish One was told to fetch a doctor, but he sang instead. (song included). The father died, and the town joined in mourning. Foolish One still sang, "I sang while he suffered, for I suffered hunger while providing him with plenty." Two groups took sides, one group blamed Foolish One saying, "A man lives only because his parents made him," and the other group saying, "He who eats fish with much oil, must suffer from belly-ache."

DIDACTIC STORIES

- \* "The Monkey and the Snail" (Folktales from Sierra Leone handout) Snail positioned friends at every station of a race. Monkey frantically leaped from tree to tree only to think that he had lost the race. Snail confessed saying, "Sometimes a race is won with the head, not the feet."
- "The Tortoise and the Hare" (Folktales from Sierra Leone handout) Never disrespect elderly. It is the duty as a young person to humble yourself before the elderly. The hare fears people will laugh at him, so he is always on the run.
- \* "One Cannot Help an Unlucky Man" (taken from Oral Literature in Africa.) A pauper and a man with many wives, slaves, and children had farms close together. An even richer man dressed in ragged clothes, came by. When he spoke to the rich man, the man was offended to be spoken to by someone so poor. When he spoke to the poor man, the man gave him something to drink. The richer man decided to reward the poor man. He sent his daughter with a calabash filled with money. The poor man did not open because he thought it contained food. He sent the calabash to Malam Abba with instructions to take as much flour as he wanted and to return the rest. Malam Abba took the money and replaced it with flour. The poor man thanked god for the flour. Very rich man enraged, "If I put unlucky man into a jar of oil, he would emerge quite dry. I wanted him to have some luck, but God has made him thus."
- \* "Working for the Tiger" (Calabash of Wisdom) Tiger invited all animals except Tortoise to work for him on farm. Tortoise sought revenge by playing harp which caused everyone to stop working to dance. Song and chorus included. Tortoise explained that he did not have enough strength to work with hoe, but he did have enough strength to distract workers. From now on, don't spurn any fellow animals. "Goodby his workers, goodby my dancers."
- "The Calabash of Wisdom" (The Calabash of Wisdom). Tortoise decided to acquire all wisdom. He stored all he gathered in calabash which he hung around his neck. He decided to store calabash in tallest tree, but could not climb with calabash around neck. Hare suggested to hang over back. "If the stupid hare has as much wisdom as exhibited, no one can gain control of all wisdom."
- "A Promise is a Promise" (Nigerian Folktales) Woman promised daughter to deity Iroko if he would favor her in trade. When time came, she did not want to give up daughter.



### TRICK STORIES

- "The Giraffe Hunter" Masai (from The King's Drum)  
Original ending left off. Kume and his friend hunted a prize giraffe and were going to kill it together. Lumbwa began to laugh and couldn't shoot, so Kume killed it himself. Kume would not share meat, so Lumbwa tricked Kume by sending away Kume's wife and taking the meat as Kume handed it into the house, thinking that he was handing it to his wife.
- \* "The He-goat and the Dibia" (The Calabash of Wisdom)  
With the help of Tortoise, He-goat played clever tricks on Dibia (traditional doctor).
- \* "How Abunawas was Exiled" (Interaction, Level 2, Folktales I.)  
Clever story of Abunawas taking everything Negus said literally. Story ends with Abunawas triumphant in being more clever than Negus. Possible writing assignment to create a response for Negus that would leave him the most clever.

### ORIGIN STORIES

- "The Origin of Death" (Projection) Hare gave people wrong message which accounts for the split in his nose, but men believed what hare told them.
- "Man Chooses Death" (Projection). Choice of kind of death, that of banana or the moon. The banana dies but shoots take its place whereas the moon itself comes back to life. Chose to have children knowing consequences.
- "The Origin of the Tortoise's Shell" (The Calabash of Wisdom)
- "The Origin of Turtle's Rough Shell" (Nigerian Folktales handout) moral included
- "The Origin of Death" (The Calabash of Wisdom) Dog and tortoise carried messages of opposing groups. Dog stopped to rest, so Tortoise arrived first: death takes men one after another.

### EXPLANATORY STORIES

- "How animals Got Color" (Projection). Just a plot skeleton.
- "How animals Got Their Tails" (Projection) Just a plot skeleton.  
"If you want a thing well done, do it yourself."
- "Why the Sun Lives in the Sky" (The Calabash of Wisdom)  
same story as in Projection. This story stresses meaning of friendship. Was Sea a good friend?
- "Why the Sun and the Moon Live in the Sky" (Projection)  
Sun often visited water, but water never returned visit. Sun built large compound and asked water to visit. Water came with fish and water animals and forced sun and moon into the sky.

"Why There are Cracks in the Tortoise's Shell" (Projection)  
Tortoise's wife tied him in a parcel with a lump of tobacco and asked Vulture to buy grain for them. As flying, heard Tortoise ask to be untied. Surprised, he let go of bundle, and Tortoise crashed to earth.

"Why the Tortoise has Checkered Shell I" (Calabash of Wisdom)  
Tortoise took money collected by animals for a palace for king. Tortoise fell from wren's tree while stealing money.

"Why Fowls Scratch the Earth" (Calabash of Wisdom)  
Animals collected money to build parliament. Fowl treasurer. Tortoise placed ashes in Fowl's bag which left a trail to Ircko tree where money hidden. When asked to bring money to meeting, Fowl couldn't find money, and Tortoise, who had stolen it, abused Fowl. Still scratching trying to find money.

"Why the Spider is Lean" (Folktales from Sierra Leone handout)  
Arranged to eat with all daughters at once. Tied rope and daughters were to pull when it was time for him to eat with them. But he had told to pull all at the same time.

"The Vulture and the Hen" (Kikuyu. from Oral Literature in Africa)  
Borrowed razor from vulture. Forgot to return. That is why hen is always scratching and vulture is swooping on chickens.

"Why the Tortoise Lives in River Swamps" (Calabash of Wisdom)  
Tortoise and beetle argued over pieces of antelope because beetle refused to accept tortoise as bigger partner. Tortoise knocked beetle into stew and thought dead. Beetle disguised voice and spoke of the tragedy of the beetle. "Killer does not outlive victim." Prize for anyone who catches tortoise.

"How Dog Outwitted Leopard" (Folktales from Sierra Leone handout)  
Dog deceived leopard. When leopard discovered treachery, he chased dog who ran into house of man and wagged his tail. Man and Dog are friends, and leopard and dog are enemies.

"How the Lame Boy Brought Fire from Heaven" (Projection)  
Had to steal fire--consequence, boy became lame.  
Should the boy be considered a hero?  
Why did the fire have to be stolen?

A PLAY, A PLAY  
Let it Go  
Let it Come

This last section of "A Story, A Story" will involve dramatic productions of at least six adaptations of African oral narratives. The plays are taken from Plays from Folktales of Africa and Asia. "African Trio" is also found in Short Plays, Interaction, Level 2. Furthermore, the narrative, "Two Strangers," is found in Projection and differs from the play adaptation. "The Maiden Nsia," Folktales 2, Interaction, Level 2, is similar to "The Honey Hunter." "Ijapa the Tortoise," an adaptation of a Nigerian narrative, is similar to "Anansi Plays Dead," Folktales 1, Interaction, Level 2. The third play from "African Trio" is similar to "The Two Sisters," an Igbo story found in The Calabash of Wisdom and other Igbo Stories.

The stories which are similar or simply different versions can be used in different ways. Using one approach, they may be read by the entire class and compared to the dramatic production in keeping with the idea that people are aware of the stories that they see performed and can therefore participate during the production. This use will also reinforce the idea that our written versions of oral narratives are simply plot skeletons. A second approach would be for students to adapt the similar story for production which would test the students' abilities of using what they've learned about the oral tradition of literature and the incorporation of mime, songs, chants, and audience participation. Once again, time will be a determining factor for the use of the play adaptations and narratives.

This final activity may very well be the most important activity in the unit. Most sixth and seventh graders thoroughly enjoy dramatic productions, and the productions can be used to teach or reinforce many skills. These productions will also be a vehicle for the incorporation of art and music activities to further emphasize the fact that art, music, and literature are interrelated and a part of everyday life. Finally, these productions will be presented as a part of our culminating festival where students will eat African food, hear African music, and wear some of the fabric they have tie-dyed.

Plays from Folktales of Africa and Asia includes production notes which suggest the use of slides as backdrops. Slides from the ecology series and "Houses in Western and Southern Africa" will be used. These notes also include suggestions for making costumes.

The entire team of teachers as well as the music, art, and home economics teachers may have to be asked to help prepare for the productions. At least flexible scheduling will be necessary in order to allow enough time for the preparation needed. Other sections of this unit may need to be shortened in order to find time for this activity. One suggestion is rather than telling the stories from the storytelling section, use these for students to adapt for this production activity. Plays can be used as a guide for the adaptation of oral narratives.

Resource people such as Séverine Arlabosse and Child's Play, a Champaign drama troupe, should be utilized if possible. Child's Play is rather expensive, but it would be worthwhile to have their workshops and production before the students work

out their own. One interesting thing that Child's Play does is to perform stories written by students. Since we do not teach our African unit during the 1979-80 school year, it might be possible to begin our preparation for the dramatic productions one year early by having the Child's Play workshops and for students who studied Africa during the 1978-79 school year and did some work with African oral literature to adapt one of the narratives to be performed by Child's Play. My students did participate in Child's Play workshops and saw their performance last year. We adapted some African narratives which were performed for our team, and the students seemed to benefit from seeing Child's Play first.

#### PLAYS AND NARRATIVES TO BE READ AND PERFORMED

1. "Two Strangers" This is a dilemma tale in which two strangers spend the night in a village in which snoring is prohibited and punished with death. During the night one of the two begins to snore which causes the other to compose a song to cover up the snoring. The villagers dance to the music and the chief gives the two men a bag of money for providing entertainment. The question is: who should get the larger share of the money? The play version includes the chants and songs. It also states a reason for the ban on snoring: the ancestors' spirits require silence at night. The ancestors joined the singing and dancing, and since they enjoyed themselves, silence is no longer required and anyone may snore.
2. "The Maiden Nsia" and "The Honey Hunter" both involve three people who possess magic powers. When these powers are needed, the question becomes: which of the powers is the greatest?
3. "Ijapa the Tortoise" and "Anansi Plays Dead" both involve stealing yams and using a gummed object to catch the thief.
4. "African Trio" includes a Masai story in which the caterpillar fools Hare, Leopard, Rhinoceros, and Elephant only to be fooled by a little frog. This play shows the use of repetition in oral narratives.

The second narrative takes place in southern Africa in the flat grasslands. This play is about Hare, the hero trickster and the struggle against nature for survival.

The third play is from the rainforest in Liberia. The moral of the play is if you do not have inner beauty, outward beauty will become ugly. This play involves a role reversal of a king's daughter and a slave. Once a servant, the king's beautiful daughter becomes cruel.

"The Two Sisters" is somewhat different because two sisters are separated when very young. One of the sisters marries a wealthy man who buys the other sister at market to care for the couple's new baby. The wealthy sister beats her servant until one day the servant sings a lullaby which is an account of the two sisters' separation. The girls are reconciled and the one swears never to mistreat a servant again. This story is richer in cultural details than the play adaptation.



Unfortunately, this unit represents only a scratching of the surface of the use of African literature. The emphasis has been placed on the use of only some of the oral tradition and has virtually ignored modern African literature and poetry. This omission and neglect makes another curriculum writing project a necessity. Revisions are necessary for this existing unit, but the incorporation of modern literature and more emphasis on eastern and southern Africa seems necessary.

Through African Eyes, Books I and II, can be incorporated into this unit or through the social studies. "Song of Lawino: A Lament" may be used from Book I. "Pardon Me," "Trying to Beat the Odds," "Marriage is a Different Matter," "Men of Two Worlds," "Tell Freedom" and "Let Me See Your Pass, Kaffir" can be used from Book II. This incorporation, however, seems too much like an afterthought and must be worked out in greater detail. Perhaps the oral tradition should be stressed at the middle school level and modern African literature and poetry should be used at the high school level. This organization would make it possible for the middle school student to gain a foundation in the oral tradition until which time he or she has the necessary maturity to deal with modern literature and poetry. Every effort will be made to fill in the gaps of this unit and coordinate the use of African literature in the middle school and high school.

Whereas we tried during the summer workshop to concentrate on seeing Africa through African eyes, it seems that after completing this curriculum unit I've provided my students with only one traditional eye that has limited vision. This one eye

seems to see things only in terms of the male perspective.  
Our work is indeed cut out for us before we test this unit  
in 1930-81.

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