I. WHY ARE AFRICAN IMMIGRANTS LEAVING THEIR HOME COUNTRIES?

1A. Lesson Plan

**Objectives:** Students will learn:
1) Background information on Africa’s size, geography, history, and people
2) Reasons why some Africans are leaving their home countries
3) Methods by which African immigrants are coming to the United States.

**Key Geography/Location Terms:** North, South, East, West, Africa, Antarctica, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, South America, United States, Pennsylvania, Philadelphia *(Grades K-12)*

**Key Terms:** asylum, colonize, continent, country, culture, dialect, enslave, ethnic group, family reunification, immigrant, Immigration Act of 1965, political asylum, refugee, Refugee Act of 1980, refugee resettlement, sojourner, U.S. Diversity Lottery, visa *(Grades 4-12)* — See appendix for glossary of terms

**Map(s):** Map of contemporary Africa connected to Philadelphia — See appendix for map

**Note:** Visit www.africa.upenn.edu for country-specific maps and a contemporary map of Africa

**Background Readings:**


“How Big is Africa” article, provide each student with a copy of the country cutout page (page 280). — See appendix for article.

Distribute a page to each student and have students color each country a different color. Ask students how many times they can fit the country of United States inside the continent of Africa? Option: You may also have students cut out other countries and see how many can fit into Africa. Note: The continent of Africa is larger than the U.S., Europe, and China combined. Suggestion: When doing map exercises use a map based on the Peterson Projection World Map. For more information see www.teachingforchange.org. Items needed for activity: Paper, scissors, a map of Africa, and a map of the United States. For more ideas see the “How Big is Africa” lesson plan at www.bu.edu/afr/outreach/index.html
Grades 4-8

Why do people move?
A) Ask students to think of reasons why people move. What are some reasons why people leave their homes, communities, states, or countries? Students can consider their own or a friend’s experience of moving. (Some reasons are natural disaster, war, to get a better job, to get a better education, to get a larger home for family, to take care of an elderly family member, to get a nicer home/move into a nicer neighborhood)

B) Ask students: What are some reasons why African immigrants are moving from their homes to come to the United States? How would you feel if you had to move from your home, neighborhood, state, or country? What would you tell African immigrants to help them feel better about coming to the United States? How would you encourage African immigrants coming to the United States?

Encourage and/or help students write an individual or class letter to or draw pictures for African immigrants and send them to local agencies and organizations that connect with African immigrants—

Items needed for this activity: paper, pencils, map of Africa, Lists of organizations in “Directory of African Community Resources,” in Extended Lives: The African Immigrant Experience in Philadelphia: A Balch Institute Community Profile — Available with educational materials — See appendix for map (Some portions of this activity are for K-3, others 4-12)

Grades 9-12

The Diversity Lottery
A) Discuss with students the idea of a lottery. Ask students to imagine that they live in Africa and really need to leave their home country for their survival. Using the list of predominant countries from which Philadelphia’s African immigrants come, allow students to choose a country in which they live. Have students list their full name, date and place of birth (could be in African country other than the one in which they live), list of family members, a drawing or physical description of themselves and their signature on one sheet of paper. Ask students to fold their sheets so that the written information is not visible.

B) Take all the sheets of paper and place them inside a bag. Make sure no one can see through or into the bag.

C) Review with students the actual process and requirements for the diversity lottery — See www.travel.state.gov/dv2002.html

D) Choose a pre-selected amount of sheets of paper. Reveal the names of those students and have them come to the front of the room.

♦ Ask the chosen students how they feel?
♦ Ask the students not chosen how they feel?
♦ Ask the entire class the following questions: How might African immigrants who are actually trying leave their countries through this process feel if they were/were not chosen?
♦ Is the diversity lottery fair? Why or why not?
♦ How would you feel if your and your family needed to leave this country for survival and the only way to do so was through a diversity lottery?


For statistics and articles on the history of immigration to the United States, see www.ins.gov/graphics/aboutins/statistics/index.htm and www.ins.gov/graphics/aboutins/history/teacher/Resources.htm
E) Share with students that in reality only half the names drawn come to the United States. The other half is eliminated for various reasons including failure to meet educational requirements or pass medical examinations.

F) Option: Use this activity as a journal exercise and have students write and share their answers. **Items needed for this activity: paper, pencils, map of Africa, and Diversity Immigrant Visa Program information. — See appendix for map — See www.travel.state.gov/dv2002.html for diversity immigrant visa program information.

G) An additional assignment for the Diversity Lottery is to have students research the country in which they chose to originate from. Ask them to answer the following questions: Why did you choose this country? Are there any current or previous conflicts that would cause someone to flee this country? Are there other reasons why someone would want to leave this country? What other places might a person have gone before leaving this country, the continent, and coming to Philadelphia? **Option:** Students may also use the Internet to research current happenings in African countries—See appendix for web sites.

Assessment:
1. Using a blank map of Africa, fill in the names of countries—See appendix for map
2. List three new things that you learned about Africa
3. Give two main reasons why African immigrants are leaving their home countries.
4. Give three methods by which African immigrants are coming into the United States
5. Choose an African country and describe past and/or present conflicts or hardships. Are people coming to the United States from this country? Are people coming to Philadelphia from this country?
6. What is a refugee? What are three differences and three similarities between an immigrant and a refugee?

1B. Supplementary activities for students

General

**Grades 4-12**

**Immigrant Interview**

Class or individual project — ask students to find out if someone in their school or neighborhood is an African immigrant. If so, schedule a time to talk and ask the person the following questions:

♦ How did you come?
♦ With whom did you come?
♦ What did you go through to get here?
♦ What did you bring with you?
♦ When did you come?
♦ Why did you come?
♦ Whom did you leave?
♦ What did you like about your home country?
♦ What language(s) does your family speak at home?

**Option:** Students may also choose an African immigrant in the media and search for answers to the above questions. Some people include:

♦ Dikembe Mutombo, Congo, Basketball player
♦ Manute Bol, Sudan, Former Basketball player
♦ Iman, Somalia, Model
♦ Miriam Makeba, South Africa, Singer/Musician
♦ Hugh Masekela, South Africa, Singer/Musician
♦ Buchi Emecheta, Nigeria, Novelist
♦ Flora Nwapa, Nigeria, Novelist
♦ Wole Soyinka, Nigeria?, Nobel Peace Prize winner
♦ Kofi Annan, U.S. Ambassador to Africa (recent recipient of Liberty Medal here in Philadelphia)
♦ Desagana Diop, Senegal, high school NBA draft pick
♦ Chinua Achebe, Nigeria, writer

Cultural Exchange
Befriend an African immigrant in your school and/or neighborhood. Simply ask her/his name and her/his home country. Many African immigrants know 3 to 5 languages. Ask him/her to teach you how to say hello and goodbye in her/his ethnic or national language. Practice saying hello and goodbye in her/his language each time you see that person. Note: Teachers and students should not assume that African students grew up speaking a language other than English. Most African immigrants speak English. Some African immigrants come from Anglophone, or English speaking, countries, including Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. In addition to English, these African immigrants also speak an ethnic language.

Quiz Show
Create a quiz show contest with questions and answers, using the “Fast Facts About Africa and African Immigrants in Philadelphia” or “Test Your Knowledge of Africa” Handouts — See appendix

Contemporary Africa

Grades K-3
Explorers
Students may use maps to explore further Africa’s physical features, political states, or natural vegetation.

Learn Swahili
Over 1,000 languages are spoken in Africa. The most widely spoken language is Swahili with over 30 million speakers. Teach students the alphabet or numbers using the following books: Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book or Moja Means One: Swahili Counting Book, both by Muriel Feelings

Grades 4-12
Current Events
Ask students to review past and recent newspapers for news on Africans, especially Philadelphia’s African immigrants’ home countries. Ask students to research present conflicts that are taking place in one or more of the African countries from which Philadelphia’s African immigrants originate. Students may use sources such as the Internet (for example, visit allafrica.com) or New York Times to gather information. Have students share their findings with the class.

News You Can Use?
Ask students to watch television and examine newspapers for a pre-determined time to note how Africa and Africans are portrayed in the media. Students should record their findings in their “reporter’s notebook,” using the following questions as a guide:
♦ How does the media portray Africa and Africans in words and images? (i.e. poor, rural, warring, tribal, malnourished)
♦ Are any of these images stereotypical? (i.e. All of Africa is a jungle, All Africans live in villages or around wild animals) How can you spot a stereotype?
♦ Is there other information about Africa that doesn’t fit into these stereotypes? (Only a small part of Africa is jungle, Many Africans live in large cities including many African immigrants who have moved to Philadelphia)
♦ How do the “Extended Lives: The African Immigrant Experience in Philadelphia,” educational guide, community profile, or exhibit portray Africa and Africans?

Have students write a news story on how Africans are portrayed in the media and share their stories in a class-wide “broadcast.” Discuss how and why these images should or could change.

Media Assumptions
This exercise helps students see how the media shapes assumptions we make about other societies. Ask students to imagine going to another country where no one has ever heard of the United States. Students can reflect on how people in foreign countries form assumptions about life in America by asking these critical questions: How might have people found out your country? (News, Internet, Television) What are the most popular shows on television? What would someone learn about on these shows? What assumptions might they make about your country, based on these television shows? What would be true? What would be untrue? What assumptions might someone make about country based on the news or Internet? How would you feel about these assumptions? How would you feel about people judging you based upon what they saw on television, news, or the Internet. How would you feel about people judging you based upon their assumptions about your country and its people? What do you know about countries in Africa? Based on what sources? What do you assume about Africans or African immigrants based on this knowledge? How do you think they feel about being seen this way?

Bingo! The African Connection
Play a game that teaches information about Africa. For one model see www.bu.edu/afr/outreach/index.html

Geography

Grades K-8
Jigsaw Puzzle
Provide an 8’ x 10’ size map of the seven continents with a star showing Philadelphia’s location. Do a cut out activity with students. Ask students to trace the continents onto another sheet of paper, color them in (optional), look at them, and find them on a large world map in the classroom. Ask students to place them on another sheet of paper that has continent outlines drawn on it; using a pre-test, assess students’ knowledge of directions, location, and size of Africa in relationship the six other continents. Review the directions of North, South, East, and West. Hint: West sounds like left and can be useful in this review. Help students identify Africa’s location and size in relationship to the other six continents.

Help students identify the continents and the United States on a world map. Provide each student with a copy of the blank “Map of Africa.” See appendix for “Map of Africa.” Using the article “How Big is Africa,” guide students through the activities 1) “Africa is Not a Country” 2) “How Big is Africa?: Using Country Cutouts.” See appendix for article. Note: The continent of Africa is larger than the U.S., Europe, and China combined. Suggestion: When doing map exercises use a map based on the Peters Projection World Map. For more information see www.teachingforchange.org. For more ideas see the “How Big is Africa” lesson at www.bu.edu/afr/outreach/index.html.

Africa’s Natural Resources

Grades K-3
Have and/or help students list some of Africa’s natural resources (i.e. cocoa, gold, petroleum, diamonds, copper, silver, uranium, and titanium). Ask students to draw the resources of countries from which Philadelphia’s African immigrants come. Ask students to draw items that we make from these resources (i.e. chocolate, jewelry)
**Grades 4-12**

A) Have and/or help students list some of Africa’s natural resources (i.e. cocoa, gold, petroleum, diamonds, copper, silver, uranium, and titanium). Ask students to identify the resources of countries, from which Philadelphia’s African immigrants come and describe the importance of these resources. Ask students what items we make from these resources (i.e. chocolate, jewelry)

B) Have students read the following articles:


Discuss the controversies and conflicts surrounding the extraction of cocoa? Diamonds? At what costs do we enjoy such items as chocolate?

**Option for Grades 9-12:** Have students use the Internet, books, newspapers, and film to conduct in depth research such controversies around cocoa, diamonds etc. Ask students the following: Since Africa is so rich in natural resources, why are people immigrating for economic reasons? (Non-African countries control most manufacturing companies). Ask students to research this topic further. Ask students to share their findings with the class.

**Journal exercises**

**Grades K-12**

Ask students to address these questions in writing: Have you ever moved to a new neighborhood, city, or state? If so, name five special items you took with you. What special memories did you take with you? How would it feel to be in a new place?

**Grades 4-12**

Ask students to address these questions in writing:

- If you had to leave your home/country forever, what five items would you bring with you?
- If you had to leave suddenly and could not take these things with you, where would you keep them? (Memory)
- What are some special memories you would take with you, across the country, across the world?
- What people/animals would you leave? (family, friends, pets)
- Are you from another country? If so, what did you bring with you? What special memories, objects, family mementos, or air looms did you bring with you?
- Do you know someone who is from another country? Ask him/her what they brought with them? Ask your friend what special memories he/she brought with them? What is life like in the United States compared to his/her home country?
- If you were/are an immigrant, what would you write to your family and friends back home? How would you describe your experience here in the United States? Students may write this in a journal or write a letter.

**Option:** Students may share their written responses with a classmate or friend.
1C. Reference Materials

Books


**This issue is entitled “Black Immigration to the United States” and contains several useful articles, student activities, and resources. It is also available at your public library.

Web sites

www.balchinstitute.org

www.bu.edu/afri/outreach/index.html — How Big is Africa? –Various free resources are available at this site; Also a “How Big is Africa” poster is available for purchase and is highly recommended for students


www.africaonline.com

www.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/K-12
www.upenn.africa.upenn.edu

www.mnh.si.edu/africanvoices — This site offers an African history timeline that concludes with Africa today

www.ins.gov

www.teachingforchange.org

allafrica.com – current news reports from and about African countries

www.pbs.org/wnet/africa/index.html — the companion site to the PBS series, “Africa”

Other