

Lesson Plan

# Sub-Saharan Africa

## Length

Two 45-minute periods

## Grade Level

High School

## Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to describe the political, societal, economic, and geopolitical systems that characterize sub-Saharan Africa.
- Students will understand how global powers wield influence on countries in the region.

## Worksheets



## Homework

- Students will read the section entitled *Modern History* from Sub-Saharan Africa and complete the worksheet below.

## Class One

1. **(5 minutes) Debrief Homework:** Have students share their homework responses in small groups.
2. **(10 minutes) Warm Up:** Give students the attached blank map of sub-Saharan Africa. Have students work in small groups to label as many countries, cities, geographical landmarks, etc., as possible. When students have finished, show this [map](#) labeled with sub-Saharan African country names and ask students the following questions to activate prior knowledge.
  - *Referencing the map, what comes to mind when you think of sub-Saharan Africa? What do you associate with the region in terms of language, food, religion, climate, government, etc.?*
  - *What major historical events have taken place in the region?*
  - *What major current events are currently taking place in the region?*
  - *What questions do you have about sub-Saharan Africa?*
3. **(20 minutes) Group Work:** Have students use their assigned section from *Regions of the World: Sub-Saharan Africa* to complete the corresponding section of the attached worksheet. When finished, students will share and write down other students' takeaways to complete their worksheets. Assign students to the following groups:
  - People and Society
  - Politics
  - Economics
  - Geopolitics
4. **(10 minutes) Discussion:** Lead a discussion that highlights positive trends in the region as well as some of the challenges that the region faces. Use the following questions as guidance.
  - *What are some positive trends seen in sub-Saharan African countries?*
  - *How are the countries of sub-Saharan Africa working to improve the quality of life of their citizens?*
  - *What are the greatest challenges faced by sub-Saharan Africa?*
  - *How are governments responding to these challenges?*

- Transition the class to tomorrow’s topic by asking students to consider how high levels of emigration affect sub-Saharan Africa.

## Homework

- Have students briefly respond to the following: *What challenges do high levels of emigration (people leaving their country to live in another) bring to countries in sub-Saharan Africa? Why do high levels of migration cause instability?*

## Class Two

1. **(10 minutes) Debrief Homework:** Have students share their reflections from last night’s homework in small groups. Emphasize the fact that emigration can contribute to political instability. Have groups brainstorm ways that governments in sub-Saharan Africa can address the following underlying causes of emigration:
  - Violent Conflict
  - Lack of Economic Opportunities
  - Climate Change
2. **(15 minutes) Worksheet:** Have groups complete the attached worksheet using their page of *Sub-Saharan Africa: U.S. Foreign Policy*. Assign students to the following groups:
  - U.S. Leaders Establish African Colony
  - Cold War Rivalries
  - United States Finds Flawed Ally
  - United States Questions Involvement
  - Terrorism Draws U.S. into Region
  - Bush Administration Increases Health Aid
3. **(10 minutes) Debrief:** Have each group share their example of U.S. foreign policy with the class. Ask each group to explain whether or not the U.S. was effective at pursuing its foreign policy goals in their example. As students share, the rest of the class will use their worksheets to write down other groups’ examples.
4. **(10 minutes) Discussion:** End class by discussing what makes a foreign policy effective. Use the following questions as guidance.
  - *Why has the U.S. engaged in foreign policy in sub-Saharan Africa?*
  - *Considering the foreign policy examples discussed in class, who benefits as a result of effective foreign policy?*
  - *On the whole, how successful has the U.S. been at pursuing its foreign policy goals in sub-Saharan Africa?*
  - *Given the United States’ position as a global leader, does the United States have a responsibility to be more engaged in foreign policy in sub-Saharan Africa? Why or why not? What values should guide U.S. engagement in the region?*

## Homework

- Have students complete a reflection about United States involvement in sub-Saharan Africa using the worksheet below.