

Learning About Africa Through African Literature

By

Lynn Marsico

Pittsburgh Middle Gifted Center

Literature has always provided a means for young people to broaden their awareness of other cultures and lifestyles. Literature has also provided a means for readers to make human connections with individuals and groups with whom the reader might otherwise never come in contact.

This curriculum, "Learning About Africa Through African Literature," seeks to broaden the scope of literature presented to middle school students. Although the literature anthologies currently used in most middle schools include a representation of dominant cultural groups in the United States, including Asian American, African American, and Hispanic, there is almost no literature from other continents. Few middle school students are introduced to the voices of African writers, living or dead. The stories and novels chosen for this unit are appropriate for middle school children in regard to language and content. They have been especially chosen to present a reality that sixth, seventh and eighth graders can relate to. The themes cover family, adolescence, friendship, women's roles, and customs. In addition, the chosen literature represents a variety of African cultures, including the West African nations of Nigeria, Guinea, Congo, and Senegal, and the Eastern African nation of Kenya.

Often students, European American as well as African American, are aware of and proud of African American History in the United States, especially the civil rights movement. Generally, however, they are totally unaware of, and somewhat disrespectful of, an actual African heritage. This may be because of a lack of awareness and understanding of Africa, its people, cultures, geography, histories, and political states. In the minds of many students, Africa is often a jumble of confused and disparate images from television news. Students can make sense of these images by reading literature from a wide variety of African voices and by viewing these voices in their geographical and historical contexts.

To provide a sense of the historical and geographical context of each piece of literature, each student will be given a general current map of Africa as well as maps of each country that we study. In addition, timelines will be created that incorporate important events in American History, African History, and the time periods covered by each literary work studied. The curriculum will include brief biographical background on each author and a thumbnail sketch of each country.

The goals of this unit are:

1. to broaden the scope of literature presented to middle school students
2. to encourage students to find a common humanity with Africans from several countries

3. to create a respect for non-western cultures through reading the literature of individual Africans

The Method of Presenting Literary Works To Students

Literature selected for the course will be presented to the students in a structured reader response method pioneered by Louise Rosenblatt. Students will keep a reading journal and answer open-ended questions about each literary work as they read. The questions will challenge students to make personal and intellectual connections with the texts they read. These journal entries will then form the basis of class discussion.

A version of the double-entry reading journal will be used with all stories presented in this unit. This method involves students taking notes as they read, in response to questions and prompts. These responses are used in a class discussion. After the discussion, students revisit their original responses and make a second set of journal entries based on insights and understandings gained through the discussion.

PART 1:

As they read each selection the first time, students will jot down first impressions, observations, reactions, feelings, thoughts, ideas, questions, associations as they answer the following questions.

1. What sentence, phrases, paragraphs, sections, stand out?
2. What did you like about the story?
3. What don't you like?
4. How do you feel about the characters?
5. What was surprising or unexpected about the story?
6. What was puzzling about the story?
7. How did the story make you feel?
8. What did the story make you think of?
9. What assumptions have you made
 - about the author's tone?
 - about the author's purpose?
 - about the way the story begins?
 - about the way the story ends?
 - about the audience?
10. What questions did the story make you ask about the culture, history, government, or people of the country where this story takes place?
11. What comparisons did you make between the lives of the people in this story and your own life?
12. What is different about the lives of the people in this story and your own life?

PART 2:

After class discussion, students will answer the following questions, revealing their second thoughts, interpretations, conclusions, and connections.

1. Why did sections, sentences, paragraphs stand out?
2. Why did you like or dislike certain parts of the story? Be specific.
3. Was the action easy or difficult to follow? Why?
4. Why did you react as you did to the characters?
5. How did the characters seem to feel about each other?
6. What similarities or distinct differences did you find among the characters?
7. Were the characters real to you? Why or why not?
8. Why were certain elements puzzling or surprising?
9. Why did certain elements stand out?
10. What made you feel or think as you did about the story? (Something in the story; something from your experience, knowledge?)
11. What generalizations can you make about the story?
12. What generalizations can you make about your response to the story?
13. What would you change about the story? Why?
14. What is the meaning of the story for you?
15. Why did you react to the story as you did?

Lesson 1 - Introduction

Before reading any literature, students and the teacher will assess their knowledge of Africa. A map of Africa without countries named will be presented to the students. Students will attempt to label countries. They will then be asked to make two lists: one of everything they know about Africa and its people, and one of questions they have about Africa and its people. At the end of the unit, these lists and map will be examined again to help students assess what they have learned.

Also during this first lesson, students will be given a blank timeline and encouraged to place on it events in the history of the United States and the world that they are familiar with. As dates in African history are learned, they will also be placed on the timeline.

Major issues such as colonialism, the spread of Islam and Christianity, Negritude, and the tribal history of Africa will be addressed during this introductory lesson

Lesson 2

The Dark Child (L'Enfant noir) by Camara Laye
French Guinea, 1954
Written in French

Author Biography:

Camara Laye (b. 1928, Kouroussa, French Guinea), wrote about a beautiful and peaceful Africa and angered many of his contemporaries because of his lack of commitment to Negritude and the cause of African nationalism.

He was the eldest of seven children of a goldsmith. He received an elementary and Koranic, or Islam, education in Kouroussa, went on to study engineering at the College George Poiret (subsequently College Technique) in Conakry, and won a scholarship to study motor mechanics in Paris. His first two novels, *L'Enfant noir*, translated as *The Dark Child* and *Le Regard du Roi*, translated as *The Radiance of the King*, were both written while Laye lived in France.

Although he worked for a time in France, he later went back to Guinea and after the country's declaration of independence in 1958, he joined the government of Sekou Toure as director of the Ministry of Information's Study and Research Center.

Laye had disagreements with the government and left Guinea in 1964 for Senegal, where he wrote his third book, *Dramouss*, translated as *A Dream of Africa*.

Country Thumbnail Sketch - Republic of Guinea

Religion: 85% Islam, 8% Christian, 7% Native religions

Language: Official Language is French. Dominant ethnic languages include Malinke, Susu, and Fulani.

In its early history, Guinea was once a part of the Mali Empire. The descendants of the Mali rulers are known as Malinke. Later, Fulani immigrants arrived, bringing the teachings of Islam with them, and by the 18th century, Muslims had consolidated their power, forming the Kingdom of Fouta Djallon. They engaged in the slave trade with Arabs in the north and with Europeans on the coast. The French arrived in Guinea in 1849 and, taking advantage of fractional strife, gained control and administered the area until independence in 1958.

While other former French colonies maintained strong ties with France, Guinea - led by Sekou Toure - struck out on its own. "We prefer poverty in freedom to riches in slavery," Toure declared. Toure seemed to equate independence with detachment and the nation became increasingly isolated. Following his death in 1948, the military regime that took over made slow but steady progress in rebuilding the nation, and the country held multiparty elections in June 1995. Guinea is now one of the few African nations where the standard of living is on the rise.

Most of the country is lush and green. Swamps on the coast give way to an area of muggy jungle, while the forested uplands, laced by rivers and gushing waterfalls, lead to a cool mountainous interior. To the east are savannas.

Lesson 3

"Marriage Is a Private Affair," by Chinua Achebe
Nigeria, 1972
Written in English

Author Biography

Chinua Achebe from Nigeria is one of the most well known African authors of his generation. He was born in 1930 into the Ibo tribe in eastern Nigeria to parents who later converted to Christianity. Enrolled in the first class of the University College at Ibadan in 1948, he initially intended to study medicine, but switched to literature. Since 1976, he has taught English at the University of Nigeria in Nsukka.

His most famous novels include *Things Fall Apart* ((1958), *A Man Of the People* (1966), and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987). Much of Achebe's work is political. His novels are not "art for its own sake." He believes that the African people must know and value their heritage, understand their history, and possess a strong ethical code that condemns injustice and corruption wherever they occur. Thus, in a literary style that is direct and clear, his stories depict the changing nature of Nigerian society, with the inevitable conflicts between African tradition and modern European society. In addition to his famous novels, he has written numerous essays, as well as several children's stories.

Country Thumbnail Sketch - Federal Republic of Nigeria

Religion: 50% Islam, 40% Christian, 10% Native Religions

Language: The official language is English. The dominant ethnic languages (of which there are over 200) are Hausa, Yoruba, and Ibo.

What is now called Nigeria, the largest country in Africa, was originally several separate tribal kingdoms, and some of its older cultures can be traced back 2,000 years. Archeological evidence, oral traditions, and written documentation establish the existence of dynamic societies and well-developed political systems. Today there are hundreds of ethnic groups, but the dominant ones are the Yoruba in the West, the Ibo in the East and the Hausa-Fulina in the North.

There are several dominant themes in Nigerian history. First, the spread of Islam, predominantly in the north but later in southwestern Nigeria as well, began a thousand years ago. The creation of the Sokoto Caliphate in the jihad (holy war) of 1804-08 brought most of the northern region and adjacent parts of Niger and Cameroon under a single Islamic government. This history helps account for the division between north and south and for the divisions within the north that were so strong during the colonial and post-colonial eras.

Second, the slave trade, both across the Sahara Desert and the Atlantic Ocean, had a profound influence on virtually all parts of Nigeria. The transatlantic trade in particular

accounted for the forced migration of perhaps 3.5 million people between the 1650's and the 1860's, while a steady stream of slaves flowed north across the Sahara for a thousand years, ending at the beginning of the twentieth century. Within Nigeria, slavery was widespread, with social implications that are still evident today. In 1860 the Sokoto Caliphate had more slaves than any other modern country except the United States. Many ethnic distinctions, especially in the central part of the country, were reinforced because of slave raiding and defensive measures that were adopted for protection against enslavement.

Third, the colonial era was relatively brief. It lasted only about six decades, varying to some degree in various parts of Nigeria. The changes brought about during this time were rapid and caused much disruption.

Since the independence of Nigeria in 1960, Nigeria has experienced a number of successful and attempted military coups d'état and a brutal civil war, which let corrupt civilian governments siphon off the profits from the oil boom of the 1970s, and faced economic collapse in the 1980s.

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, and one of the ten most populous countries in the world. Geographically, it is divided into four regions, forming bands running east to west: the hot, humid, swampy coastal belt; tropical rain forest; relatively dry woodland and savanna (which make up most of the country); and semi-desert (in the extreme North). The only mountainous region is in the east along Nigeria's border with Cameroon.

Despite the country's substantial oil and mineral deposits, prosperity is far out of the reach of most of its people.

Lesson 4

Tribaliks: Contemporary Congolese Stories, by Henri Lopes
Congo, 1971.

Written in French

Author Biography

Henri Lopes has roots in both the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire and formerly the Belgian Congo), where he was born, and in the People's Republic of the Congo, where he served in the government as Minister of Education, Foreign Affairs and Finance. He also served as Prime Minister in 1973-74.

Lopes was born in Kinsasha in 1937 but received his secondary and university education in France. In France he was a leader of the extreme leftist group, the Federation of Black African Students (FEANF).

His stories address the problems of post-colonial Africa and deal with three main categories of problems. They are tribalism and political power, the situation of modern African women, and the attitude of Africans towards education. He is very outspoken concerning corrupt officials, political opportunism, ties with foreign financial institutions within the government, mediocrity in public service, and political cronyism.

Country Thumbnail Sketch - Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire)

Religion: 50% Roman Catholic, 20% Protestant, 10% Kimbanguist, 10% Islam, 10 % Native Religions

Language: The official language is French. The other predominant languages are English and Bantu dialects including Swahili, Lingala, and Kinkongo.

Located on the Equator, the Congo has a long and rich history. The first known occupants of the area were Pygmies, who were joined in the seventh and eighth centuries by Bantu and Nilotic settlers from the north. When the first Portuguese explorers arrived in the late fifteenth century, they encountered an advanced Congo kingdom. An American, Henry M. Stanley, navigated the Congo River in 1877 and opened the interior to exploration. The Belgian King Leopold II commissioned Stanley to make treaties with native chiefs that enabled Belgium to obtain personal title to the territory in 1885.

Independence for this African nation, which came in 1960, has not been easy. Conflict has plagued this country for the last 39 years. When freedom was granted in 1960, two provinces, Katanga Province and South Kasai, seceded from the new republic. Belgium sent paratroopers to quell the civil war, as did the United Nations. Dag Hammarskjold, U.N. secretary-general, died in a plane crash en route to a peace conference there in 1961. In 1965 General J-D Mobutu, Army Chief of Staff, took control and renamed the country Zaire. Although nurtured by the U.S. CIA, Mobutu drove his country to economic collapse while he siphoned off millions of dollars for himself.

Laurent Kabila launched a 7 month guerrilla movement that ousted Mobutu in 1996. Mobutu fled to Morocco where he eventually died of cancer. Kabila renamed the country the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but his autocratic style has done little to reconstruct the country. There have been alleged massacres of Hutu refugees. In August, 1998, Congolese rebel forces led attacks and gained control of a large portion of the country. Angolan, Namibian, and Zimbabwean troops aided Kabila. In July, 1999, a cease-fire agreement was signed by all countries involved, but the rebel forces refused.

Lesson 5

Weep Not, Child, by Ngugi wa Thiong'o

Kenya, 1964

Written in English

Author Biography

Born in 1938 in Kenya, Ngugi wa Thiong'o grew up in a family involved in the Mau Mau resistance to the colonists, and this experience is reflected in many of his writings. His education was a mix of tradition and Christianity. He renounced his original Christian name, James, to show his dissatisfaction with Christianity's ties to colonialism.

In 1963, Ngugi completed the Honors English program at Makerere University College in Kampala, Uganda. Hoping to promote interest in African writers, he became a professor at Nairobi University. By 1977, he declared his intention of writing novels in Gikuyu (or Kikuyu), his native language, rather than in English as he had been doing. In 1980, he published the first modern novel written in Gikuyu, *Caitani muhara-Ini (Devil on the Cross)*.

He was jailed in 1976 by the Kenyan government because of a play, *Ngaahika Ndeenda*, which involved the local workers in the village of Kamiruthu in telling the story of a community. It drew on the history of the struggle for land and freedom. After Ngugi's release in 1978, he again began working in the community. After the second play was stopped and the theater was razed, he left Kenya in 1982. He first went to London, and then became a professor of Comparative Literature at New York University.

Country Thumbnail Sketch - Republic of Kenya

Religion: 40% Protestant, 36% Roman Catholic, 16% Islam, 6% Traditional
Language: The national language is Kiswahili and English is the official language of communication.

Although there are more than 40 ethnic groups in Kenya, linguists have linked modern-day Kenyans to three branches of ancient peoples. Around 3,000 years ago, Africans from other parts of the continent began to migrate to what would become Kenya and pushed out the groups that were already there. About half of all Kenyans can trace their roots to West African tribes who spoke Bantu languages.

A second group came from the Nilotic peoples from the area near the Nile River, which is present day Sudan. Nilotic groups settled in the Great Rift Valley and near Lake Victoria.

The third group is comprises the nomadic Cushitic peoples, whose descendants live mostly in the dry grasslands of northern and northeastern Kenya. This group brought languages from the areas that are now Ethiopia and Somalia.

The Kenyans gained their independence from Great Britain in 1963. Kenya is an independent republic which lies on the Indian Ocean coast and forms part of the East African Region. The capital city is Nairobi. Other major towns are Nakuru and Kisumu and the port of Mombasa.

Kenya sits right on the equator, which means that year-round the sun shines for 12 hours each day. At Malindi, a busy city in Kenya's coastal lowlands, sandy beaches and palm trees meet the waves. Further inland, there is a savanna, a grassland that rises in a series of level plateaus, where many tourists visit on safaris. In these highlands, three out of four people live. The Great Rift Valley causes a steep drop that divides the highlands of the Aberdare Mountains into eastern and western parts. Lake Victoria is located in the bottom western corner of Kenya. Much of northern Kenya is dry and hot, especially the Chalbi Desert.

Lesson 6

Tribal Scars and other Stories, by Ousmane Sembene
Senegal, 1987
Written in French

Author Biography

In addition to being a prominent writer, Sembene is a leading filmmaker and often considered to be the father of African cinema. He was born in 1923 in Senegal to a Moslem fisherman. Sembene had little formal education and was essentially self-taught. He worked as a bricklayer, plumber, and apprentice mechanic before joining the Free French Forces during World War II.

After the war, Sembene went to France where he worked as a docker and union organizer in Marseilles and where he also joined the French Communist Party. He published his first novel in 1956 and then *God's Bits of Wood*, possibly his most famous work, in 1960.

Most Africans in France at this time were inspired by the Negritude movement, but Sembene was more interested in the popular resistance movement that led to independence in Senegal than in theories about Blackness or in Parisian intellectual life. After Senegalese independence in 1960, Sembene went to the Soviet Union to study at the Moscow Film School. When he returned to Senegal in 1963, he began directing short films, and then made his first full-length film in 1966, *La Noire de.../ Black Girl*. It was the first feature film from sub-Saharan Africa. Because he felt that film gave him a way to communicate his ideas more widely to the people, he became primarily a filmmaker.

Country Thumbnail Sketch - Republic of Senegal

Religion: 92% Islam, 2% Christian, 5 % Traditional Religion

Language: The official language is French. The main ethnic languages are Wolof and Serer.

In the 14th century, the area that is now Senegal was part of the Jolof empire, dominated by the local Wolof people. Portuguese explorers arrived a century later,

establishing Senegal's western region as an important slave center. An island in Dakar's harbor was the departure port to the new world for millions of slaves. The French gained control of the region in the 1600s and maintained control until 1960, when Senegal became independent.

Senegal has been politically stable since independence, with one party in power, although a number of opposition parties are represented in the legislature and participate in periodic elections. A movement in the southern part of the country, the Democratic Forces of Casamance, seeks independence. Military attacks occur frequently in that part of the country.

Most of the country consists of low-lying plains where peanuts are grown. A varied geography encompasses both tropical forests and the outer boundaries of the semiarid Sahel, a region plagued by recurrent drought and overgrazing. Although 70% of the people farm, both fishing and tourism are important sources of employment and revenue.

Ethnically, the country is divided into three major groups: the Wolof, the Fulani and the Serere.

Lesson 7

So Long A Letter, Une Si Longue Lettre, by Mariama Ba
Senegal, 1979
Written in French

Author Biography

Mariama Ba (b. 1929) was a brilliant student, although her maternal grandparents who raised her in a traditional Muslim environment, were against the idea of educating women. Her father was the first Senegalese Minister of Health. When she graduated from the Ecole Normal in 1943 she had the highest exam score in all of colonial French West Africa. She married and divorced Obeye Diop, a member of parliament. During her marriage she had nine children and did not publish her first book until the age of 51.

Abiola Irele, in her book, *West Africa*, called *So Long A Letter*, “the most deeply felt presentation of the female condition in African fiction.” *So Long A Letter* won the first Noma Award in 1980. Ba’s writing deals with women’s issues such as education, polygamy, child custody and women’s legal rights in marriage.

Her second novel, *Scarlet Song*, was published after her death in 1981.

Lesson 8

Mista Courifer, by Adelaide Casely-Hayford
Ghana, 1950
Written in English

Author Biography

One of the earliest female African writers and one of the first Africans to write in the English language, Adelaide Casely-Hayford was born into an educated family in Ghana. She was educated in England and in Germany. In her own life she was able to combine European customs with traditional African customs and this is revealed in many of her literary works.

After gaining a European education, she returned to Africa, committed to the education of young women. Although she faced opposition from colonial authorities and even from some of the elite Africans, she founded a school for girls in Sierra Leone. Here she tried to combine the best of European and African life.

Country Thumbnail Sketch - Ghana

Religion: 38% Traditional religions, 30% Islam, 24% Christian
Language: The official language is English. Native language include Brong Ahafo, Twi, Fanti, Ga, Ewe, and Dagbani.

An African tribe known as the Akan peoples established a major civilization in the area that is now Ghana beginning the 13th century and ruling until the Ashanti empire gained control in the 18th and 19th centuries. During most of this time, Europeans were extremely active in this part of Africa because of the rich mineral resources such as gold, diamonds, manganese, bauxite, iron ore and various clay and salt deposits.

The Portuguese discovered gold in 1471 and named the area the Gold Coast. They were followed by the English (1553), the Dutch (1595), and the Swedes (1640). Evidence of this heavy European interest in Ghana can be found today. Of the 32 European colonial forts and castles along the coast of west Africa, 29 are in Ghana. British rule over the Gold Coast began in 1820, but it was not until after quelling the severe resistance of the Ashanti in 1901 that it was firmly established.

Ghana gained its independence in 1957. Although it started out as a republic, a series of military coups controlled the government for many years. In 1992 Jerry John Rawlings won a majority of the votes and became president.

STUDENT LITERATURE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Achebe, Chinua. "Marriage is a Private Affair," from *World Literature*, ed. Donna Rosenberg, Lincolnwood, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1994.
Written by a Nigerian author, this story illustrates the problems a young man encounters with his father when he wants to marry a young woman from a different tribe.

Ba, Marima. *So Long a Letter, Una Si Longe Lettre*, tr. Modupe Bode-Thomas. 1980. Heinemann, 1991. ISBN: 0435905554.
Ramatoulaye, while observing a Muslim 40 day mourning period upon the death of her husband, takes time to think about her own life and the lives of other African women. She focuses on problems such as polygamy, castes, and female exploitation. Through the experiences of Ramatoulaye; her friend Aissatou, who left her husband after he took a second wife; and Ramatoulaye's daughter, Daba, who has a more modern marriage, the reader sees the wide variety of experiences of Western African women.

Caselly-Hayford, Adelaide. "Mista Courifer," from *World Literature*, ed. Donna Rosenberg, Lincolnwood, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1994.
This story, written in English by a woman from Ghana, takes place in Sierra Leone. Tomas, the son of Mista Courifer, rebels against his father's obsession with everything that is English. He refuses to wear the clothes his father has shipped from England and instead wears the native dress of the Wolof. Instead of building a western style home like his father has, he decides to build a mud home for himself and his future wife.

Laye, Camara. *The Dark Child. (L'Enfant Noir)*, tr. J. Kirkup and E. Jones. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Girous, 1954.
This autobiography of a young African boy growing up in French Guinea details the rich family and tribal life of the narrator. Although the rituals that fill his life will be foreign and somewhat exotic to adolescent American readers, the love he feels towards his extended family members will be easy to identify with. If limited to only a few chapters, I would suggest chapter 3, where Laye visits his grandmother in Tindican, and chapter 12, when he leaves his home to study in France.

Lopes, Henri. *Tribaliks: Contemporary Congolese Stories*. Heinemann, 1988. ISBN 0435907638.
Especially appropriate might be the story, "Exodus of the Skilled Workers," which tells of a young African who finds a life he prefers in France and leaves a girlfriend behind. The female character, Mba, has a strong sense of herself as a student and as a supporter of her family and nation. The stories, "The Advance," about a mother who must care for a child while her own son dies; and "Whiskey," which explores corruption in a post revolutionary government, are also appropriate for middle school students.

Ngugi, Wa Thiong'o. *Weep Not, Child*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1964.
The effects of the Mau Mau war on the lives of ordinary men and women are explored in this book.

Ousmane, Sembene. *Tribal Scars and Other Stories*, tr. Len Ortzen. African Writers' Series, no 142. Heinemann, 1987. ISBN 0435902504.

The story, "Her Three Days" is the most appropriate story in this collection for middle school children. Reading about the plight of Noumbe, the third of four wives of Mustapha, gives the reader a clear picture of the negative aspects of polygamy. The story is written from the point of view of the forgotten wife and encourages the reader to sympathize with her. It also sheds light on the intricacies of how this cultural phenomenon is organized in some parts of Africa.

STUDENT SUPPLEMENTAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ogot, Grace A. "The Rain Came," from *World Literature*, ed. Donna Rosenberg, Lincolnwood, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1994. Kenya

Soyinka, Wole. "The Trials of Brother Jero," from *World Literature*, ed. Donna Rosenberg, Lincolnwood, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1994. Nigeria

STUDENT RESOURCE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Koslow, Philip. *Centuries of Greatness: The West African Kingdoms: 750-1900*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1995.

Dedicated to illuminating high levels of civilization that existed in Africa before the Europeans came, this book for middle school children presents the research of archaeologists who explored the sites of former African cities.

McCollum, Sean. *Kenya, Globetrotters Club*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, Inc. 1999.

This is a well illustrated resource book about the people, culture, and history of Kenya. Also in the Globetrotters Club series is a book on Nigeria.

TEACHER'S BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cesaire, Aime. *Discourse on Colonialism, (Discourse sur le colonialisme)*, tr. J. Pinkham. 1955. LCCN 72-178714

Larson, Charles R., ed. *Under African Skies, Modern African Stories*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1997.

Rosenblatt, Louise M. *Literature as Exploration*. 3rd ed. New York: Noble, 1968.

_____, 1978. *The Reader, the Text, the Poem: The Transactional Theory of the Literary Work*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP.

WEB SITES

Agatucci, Cora. African Timelines, History , Orature, Literature, & Film, Part V: Post-Independence African & Contemporary Trends. [Online] Available

<http://www.cocc.edu/cagatucci/classes/hum211/timelines/>. 1997

This timeline in five parts seeks to relate African literary landmarks to historical events on the continent.

Caruso, Joseph. African Literature on the Internet. [Online] Available:

<http://www.cc.columbia.edu/cu/libraries/indiv/area/Africa/aflit.html> 4/3/99

Edited and updated by the African Studies librarian at Columbia University, this website is current and has links to many other universities and literature associations around the world. There are numerous links to sites offering biographical information about individual writers.

Global Mapping International, <http://www.sil.org/ethnologue/maps/africa.html>

This is a good source for current maps of the continent and of individual countries.

Information Please Almanac, <http://www.infoplease.com/countries.html>

This source provides the most current information I can find on all African nations. Analyses of current government conflicts and elections seem to be added weekly. In addition to listings of statistical information, detailed historical narratives are included on each country.

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o. The Global Education Project. [Online] Available:

<http://ultrix.ramapo.edu/global/thiongo.html>

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o speaks about his life, beliefs, and writings in this autobiographical essay.

University of Florida. African Writers: Voices of Change. [Online] Available:

<http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/hss/africana/voices.html>#soyinka, 1997

In addition to having links to other sites, there are concise biographical sketches on sixteen twentieth century African writers here.

Reed Travel Groups,

<http://city.net/countries/guinea>

<http://city.net/countries/senegal>

<http://city.net/countries/congo>

Although these are sites with information for tourists, there is geographical and historic information as well.

Washington Post, African Lives. [Online] Available:

<http://www.washingtonost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/africanlives/front.htm>

If students are interested in reading about the joys and struggles in the everyday lives of African peoples in 1999, this is the perfect site. Some of the articles include Young Urban Kenyans, Fishermen of Senegal, Families of Abidjan, Child Brides in Ivory Coast, the Dinka in Sudan, and AIDS in Kenya.