

Welcome to South Africa

Lesson Objective & Summary

Objective: Students will learn about the basic history, geography, and cultural heritage of South Africa. Students will use a map to locate South Africa and its capitals, as well as identify some of the unique aspects of this nation's geography and history.

Summary: Students will identify South Africa's location on a world map, and will explain some of the major geographic features of South Africa. Students will read [Sawubona! Welcome to South Africa](#) and watch the [South Africa Series Sneak Peek](#), [Townships](#), [Zulu Dance](#), and [Table Mountain](#) episodes, and spend time previewing some of the other blogs and videos in ProjectExplorer.org's South Africa section. Students will share their observations and questions about South Africa.

Grade Level:
Upper Elementary

DURATION:
1 - 2 Lessons

SUBJECTS:
English Language Arts,
Social Studies, Geography

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Standards & Benchmarks

From the Common Core Standards for Language Arts in History / Social Studies

- Students will quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. (*Key Ideas and Details, Grade 5*)
- Students will draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently. (*Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Grade 5*)

From the New York State Social Studies Standards, Standard 3: Geography

- Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the geography of the interdependent world in which we live - local, national, and global - including the distribution of people, places, and environments over the Earth's surface.

Background Information for Educators

South Africa boasts some of the oldest artifacts of human existence in the world. For nearly a millennium, the two dominant tribes of South Africa, the Xhosa and Zulu, were descendants of Bantu-speaking peoples who had migrated to the southern part of the African continent.

It was not until the 15th century that South Africa was exposed to European interests. In 1488, Portuguese explorer Bartolomeu Dias was the first known European explorer to pass the southern tip of Africa, which was later dubbed the Cape of Good Hope. Dias's journey opened the door to other European exploration into the East Indies. In 1652, the Dutch East Indies Company established a "refreshment station" in what later became known as Cape Town. This settlement was later taken over by the British in 1806, as the British Empire tried to expand their interests north into the rest of the African continent.

For much of the 19th century, South Africa was plagued by ongoing wars between the British, Dutch Boer, and Zulu tribes. These conflicts laid the foundation for what would later become a system of segregation known as "apartheid."

In 1913, the Natives' Land Act forced non-whites into "homelands" or "bantustans," segregating South Africa's whites from its native blacks. In 1948, with the National Party's rise to power, the system of apartheid was legally established, formally segregating South Africans on the basis of skin color and ethnicity. For more than forty years, the black African population of South Africa was brutally oppressed. Efforts to peacefully protest unfair treatments often escalated into bloody uprisings.

In 1990, then-President F.W. de Klerk began dismantling the system of apartheid. One of the most significant events that transpired was the release of political prisoner Nelson Mandela, who had been imprisoned for 27 years on Robben Island after protesting against South Africa's apartheid system. Mandela was later elected as President in South Africa's first universal elections in which black South Africans were given the right to vote. Mandela's rise to power ushered in a new era in which South Africa's black majority was treated with dignity and respect.

In the 21st century, South Africa has made many steps towards embracing its "rainbow culture," or multi-cultural, multi-ethnic heritage. Today, South Africa recognizes 11 different official languages, including isiZulu, isiXhosa, Afrikaans, and English. South Africa has three different capital cities, each of which serve a specific function in government: Pretoria (administrative capital), Cape Town (legislative capital), and Bloemfontein (judicial capital).

Guiding Questions	Key Vocabulary
<p>Where is South Africa located? (map coordinates? Continent?)</p> <p>What are the capital of South Africa? Why does South Africa have three different capital cities?</p> <p>What are the national languages of South Africa?</p> <p>What are some of South Africa's unique geographic features?</p>	<p>Apartheid</p> <p>Homeland</p> <p>Boer</p> <p>Afrikaans</p> <p>Zulu</p> <p>Xhosa</p> <p>Settlers</p> <p>Township</p> <p>Colonialism</p>

Lesson Plan

1. Using a world map, ask students to locate South Africa. Ask students to locate South Africa's capital cities (Cape Town, Pretoria, and Bloemfontein). Why does South Africa have three capital cities? What makes each capital city different from the others?
2. Have students look at some of the geographic features of South Africa (coastline; grassland; rivers). Have students locate and identify some of the countries nearby. Ask students to think about how the geography of South Africa might influence how the South African people live, or what their occupations may have traditionally looked like (i.e.: fishing, hunting, farming, etc).
3. Distribute the Country Profile Worksheet (included below) to students. Ask students to complete the information they have already discovered about South Africa.
4. Read [Sawubona! Welcome to South Africa](#) and watch the [South Africa Series Sneak Peek](#) video. Ask students to write what observations they made from the video (i.e.: animals; drumming; dancing). Encourage them to consider aspects of culture that they observe: food, clothing, daily life, agriculture, etc. If needed, have students watch the South Africa Series Sneak Peek video several times to note any other observations.
5. Briefly explain the history of South Africa. Ask students to consider what makes South Africa different from some of its neighboring countries. Have students make comparisons between South Africa and their home country.
6. Show students the [Townships](#), [Zulu Dance](#), and [Table Mountain](#) episodes in ProjectExplorer.org's South Africa pages. Have students add thoughts and observations to their Country Profile Worksheet, particularly focusing on the geographical features.
7. Inform students that for more than 40 years, South Africa was under a system called "apartheid," which was the legal segregation of people based on their skin color and ethnic background. White people were given rights that blacks were not. These laws changed in the 1990s, when apartheid was dismantled and black South Africans were given the right to vote. Nelson Mandela is one of the most famous black South Africans who was imprisoned for 27 years because of his anti-apartheid beliefs. He later became president of South Africa in South Africa's first universal elections.
8. In small groups, ask students to preview some of the other chapters, blogs, and videos on ProjectExplorer.org's South Africa pages. Have students complete the ProjectExplorer.org Country Profile Worksheet with their learning and questions about South Africa. Invite students to share their observations and questions on a class chart.
9. Have students reflect on what they have learned about South Africa so far. Write down additional questions students may have and encourage them to think about how South Africa compares with their home country. Have students think about what they would like to see and do if they were to visit South Africa.

Assessment / Evidence of Understanding

- Student will identify the location of South Africa and its capital cities, Cape Town, Pretoria, and Bloemfontein, using a world map.
- Student will identify the geographic features of South Africa and make inferences about how the South African people live and what natural resources they have.
- Student will identify some of the major features and facts about South Africa.

Assessment Rubric	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
Geography Skills	<p>With assistance, student can locate country and capital city on a map.</p> <p>Student may be able to identify some geographic features, but may require guidance to make inferences about people's daily life due to the geography.</p>	<p>Student can locate country and capital city on a map. With assistance, student can identify the longitude/latitude coordinates of the country. Student can identify some of the specific geographic features (i.e.: lake, mountains, bordering nations) independently. Student can make basic inferences about how people's daily life is shaped by their geography.</p>	<p>Student can locate country and capital city on a map. Student independently identifies the longitude/latitude coordinates of the country, and can identify numerous specific geographic features (i.e.: lake, mountains, bordering nations) independently. Student makes clear observations and inferences linking the geographical landscape with the way local people live their lives. Student may also be able to share other observations about how bordering nations may influence the local people, culture, and way of life.</p>
South Africa Worksheet	<p>With assistance, student is able to complete the South Africa Worksheet, completing all required sections.</p> <p>With assistance, student can identify several interesting facts about the country.</p>	<p>Student is able to complete the worksheet independently, using available resources in the classroom & online (i.e.: Atlas, CIA Fact Book, ProjectExplorer.org).</p> <p>Student uses observations and resources to identify interesting facts about country. Student makes connections and asks questions that are grade-level appropriate.</p>	<p>Student completes the worksheet independently, using available resources in the classroom & online (i.e.: Atlas, CIA Fact Book, ProjectExplorer.org), but student may make connections with other countries or with prior knowledge. Student uses observations and resources to identify interesting facts about the country while also making insightful inferences that reflect higher-level connections and thinking. Student makes connections and asks questions that exceed grade-level expectations.</p>

Additional Resources

CIA World Fact Book, South Africa

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sf.html>

South African History Online

<http://www.sahistory.org.za/>

South Africa History Timeline

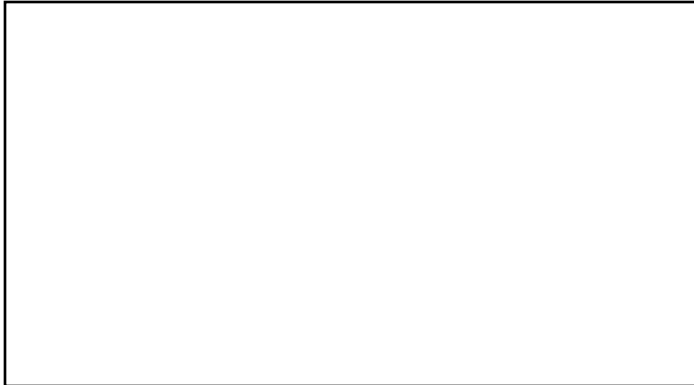
<http://www.timeforkids.com/destination/south-africa/history-timeline>

South Africa Facts

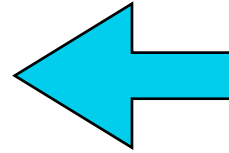
<http://www.factmonster.com/country/south-africa.html>

***** South Africa Worksheet follows on next page *****

South Africa Worksheet



Draw the flag of South Africa



CAPITAL CITY:	
CONTINENT:	
MAP COORDINATES:	
LANGUAGE(S):	
GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES:	
BORDERING COUNTRIES:	
NATURAL RESOURCES:	
TYPE OF GOVERNMENT:	
INTERESTING FACTS:	

What do I think I know about South Africa?

What would I like to know about South Africa?

What do I think I will learn about South Africa from the ProjectExplorer.org team?

What other questions do I have South Africa that I may need to research further?

If I visited South Africa, I would like to see...