



Lesson Plans Digital Booklet

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Introduction

Exploring Africa is a comprehensive curriculum designed to educate about Africa in a true, objective way. Each unit is designed with a theme in mind: *Why Study Africa?*, *Studying Africa through the Social Studies*, *Studying Africa through the Humanities*, *Regional Perspectives*, and *Country Case Studies*. Using these themes allows Exploring Africa to provide a well-rounded, interdisciplinary, and holistic approach to learning about Africa. Within each unit, there are modules constructed in a more specific thematic organization, which creates an even more accessible format for learning in a systematic way. Finally, within each module there are activities designed to help students comprehend the lessons they just learned. Each of these activities is aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). It is here in this Exploring Africa Lesson Plan Digital Booklet that we offer lesson plans designed for the physical classroom space, to be used and implemented in your own classroom, and adjusted in any way you see fit to meet your individual classroom's needs. It is highly recommended that these lesson plans for activities are supplemental to the lessons in the modules in Exploring Africa. These lesson plans are for the activities only, and not the lessons for which they are designed.

Unit Three

Studying Africa through the Humanities

Module Fourteen: Religion in Africa

Module Fourteen: Religion in Africa will introduce students to the rich and diverse tradition of religious belief and practice in Africa. This will be accomplished through the use of narrative, maps, and photographs.

Given the commitment of the United States to the separation of church and state, students are not used to studying religious traditions and the role organized religions play in societies. However, given the central role that religion plays in the lives of most Africans and in African societies and cultures, an exploration of Africa would be incomplete without careful study of religion in Africa.

The module will focus on three religious traditions that are important in Africa: indigenous African religions, Islam, and Christianity. In exploring these religious traditions in the African context, the learning activities will focus on the following:

- The basic tenants of each faith tradition
- The development of these traditions within given African historical contexts
- The dynamic character of each tradition within changing historical contexts
- The impact of African religious and cultural beliefs and practices on Islam and Christianity-imported religions -and vise-versa.
- Similarities among religious traditions in Africa.

Module Fourteen

Creation Stories

Indigenous African Religions

Islam in Africa

Christianity in Africa

Creation Stories

Time Needed	Approximately 42 minutes
Prior Knowledge	None needed
Lesson Assessment	Formative: class discussion and written work
Standards	<p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.2 <i>Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation</i></p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.2 <i>Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.</i></p>
Materials Needed	Creation Stories handout ¹ , paper, pencil, access to Exploring Africa website

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Gain a clear understanding of the rich diversity of religious traditions and practices in Africa
- Interpret the importance or value of a creation story in relation to its religion
- Infer insights and beliefs of a religion from its creation story
- Compare different religions based on their creation stories

Time	Learning Task	Methods or Procedures
5 min	Students discuss ground rules for the entire module. Teacher may want to write these rules and keep them at the front of the room during the unit.	Class discussion. Since religion can be a sensitive subject, teacher should remind students of any ground rules that will apply to discussions for the entire unit on religion. (No one will have to share personal information or beliefs, and discussion should explore each faith without positive or negative judgment, etc.). Students may suggest additional rules.
5 min	Journal: students write down everything they know or can think of about religions in Africa. What religions do they think are practiced there, what do they believe in, etc.?	Individual student activity; teacher monitors and encourages students to keep writing the full time. *Students should be instructed to place this paragraph somewhere they won't lose it, as they will be returning to it at the end of the unit on religion.

¹ Handouts and Worksheets, pg. 12

2 min	Students listen to instructions and receive handout.	Teacher instructs students to answer the first question of the worksheet, and then follow the instructions on the worksheet to get on the Exploring Africa website.
30 min	Students read text on website and fill out the worksheet.	Individual student work; teacher monitors and assists as needed.

Indigenous African Religions

Time Needed	Approximately 42 minutes
Prior Knowledge	Completion of previous activities in this module
Lesson Assessment	Formative: worksheet, written work
Standards	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.2 <i>Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation</i> D2.His.1.6-8 <i>Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts</i>
Materials Needed	Access to Exploring Africa website, Indigenous African Religions ² Worksheet, pencil

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Identify the diversity within indigenous African religions
- Gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of indigenous African religions

Time	Learning Task	Methods or Procedures
5 min	Writing: <i>What do you think of when you hear 'Indigenous African Religions'? Write down the first five words that come to mind.</i>	Individual student work; teacher gives prompt and monitors student work.
2 min	Students receive worksheets, listen to instructions, and get on Exploring Africa website.	Teacher hands out Indigenous African Religions worksheets, and instructs students to get on Exploring Africa, Module Fourteen, Activity Two.
30 min	Students read through the text on the website and then fill out their worksheets based on what they have read.	Individual student work; teacher monitors and assists as needed.
2 min	Students return to the original prompt: <i>What do you think of when you hear 'Indigenous African Religions' now that you've read about them? Write down the first five words that come to mind.</i>	Individual student work; teacher gives the revised prompt and monitors student work.

² Handouts and Worksheets, pg.13

Islam in Africa

Time Needed	Approximately 42 minutes
Prior Knowledge	Completion of previous activities in this module
Lesson Assessment	Formative: worksheet, written work
Standards	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.2 <i>Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation</i> D2.His.1.6-8 <i>Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts</i>
Materials Needed	Access to Exploring Africa Website, Five Pillars of Islam Graphic Organizer ³ , paper, pencil

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Understand the role that Islam has and continues to play in African countries and societies

Time	Learning Task	Methods or Procedures
2 min	Students receive handout, listen to instructions, and get on Exploring Africa.	Teacher passes out handout and instructs students to get on the Exploring Africa website, module Fourteen, Activity 3.
15 min	Students read through the text on the activity.	Individual student work; teacher monitors and assists as needed
10 min	Once students reach the first question under “Your Turn” they fill out their graphic organizers based on the instructions given in 1.	Individual student work; teacher monitors and assists as needed
15 min	Students complete the writing assignment that is given on 2. of Your Turn.	Individual student work; teacher monitors and assists as needed

³ Handouts and Worksheets, pg. 14

Christianity in Africa

Time Needed	Approximately 42 minutes
Prior Knowledge	Completion of previous activities in this module
Lesson Assessment	Formative: worksheet Summative: student's revised journal on religion in Africa
Standards	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.2 <i>Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation</i> D2.His.1.6-8 <i>Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts</i>
Materials Needed	Christianity in Africa Worksheet ⁴ , pencil, paper, access to Exploring Africa website, journal entry from first activity

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Explain the history and development of Christianity in Africa
- Reflect upon their own learning experience, and track their growth from the beginning to end of a unit.

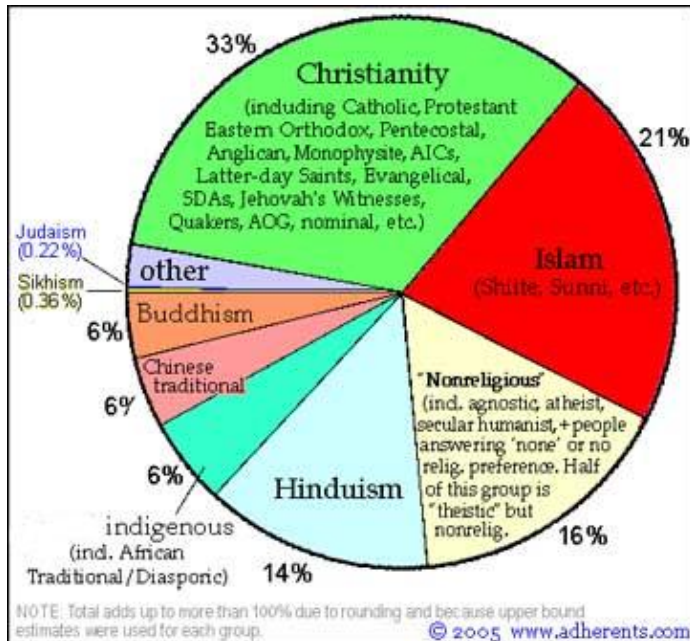
Time	Learning Task	Methods or Procedures
2 min	Students listen to instructions, receive worksheet, and get on Exploring Africa.	Teacher passes out worksheet and instructs students to get on Module Fourteen, activity 4 of Exploring Africa
15 min	Students read through the text on the website.	Individual student work; teacher monitors and assists as needed
15 min	Students fill out answers to the worksheet, using what they just read.	Individual student work; teacher monitors and assists as needed.
10 min	Wrap up the unit: Students revisit the journals they wrote on the first day of the religion unit (write down everything they know or can think of about religions in Africa). After rereading their entry, students should decide whether they want to revise or expand their definitions, now that they have learned more about religion in Africa.	Individual student work; teacher monitors, and encourages students to really think about everything they learned in this module, and show that in their writing. Teacher collects work to assess student growth from the lesson.

⁴ Handouts and Worksheets, pg. 15-16

Handouts and Worksheets

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Creation Stories



1. Look carefully at this pie chart of the amount of practitioners of different world religions. Write down a few sentences about your reaction to the chart. Was there anything surprising?

Get on the Exploring Africa website. Go to Module Fourteen, Activity One, and read through the text. Click on the links to the creation stories, and read those as well. After, answer the following questions.

2. Which of the African creation stories do you like best? Why?
3. What do the stories tell us about how god is perceived in the various religions?
4. What is the relationship between god and human beings in these stories? Is this relationship similar or different between stories?
5. What are some of the similarities between the African creation stories and the Genesis account?

Indigenous African Religions Worksheet

1. In your own words, describe the importance of ancestors to African religions and societies.
2. According to most African religions, what are the two main causes of disease and misfortune?
3. How can people promote security and well-being of themselves, their families, and their communities?
4. Choose one individual example of African religious expression in the Americas to explore on your own, such as Santeria, Voodoo, or one of your own choosing. Do research on this religion, and record five things you find that you find most interesting or significant about the religion.

I chose the religion: _____

1)

2)

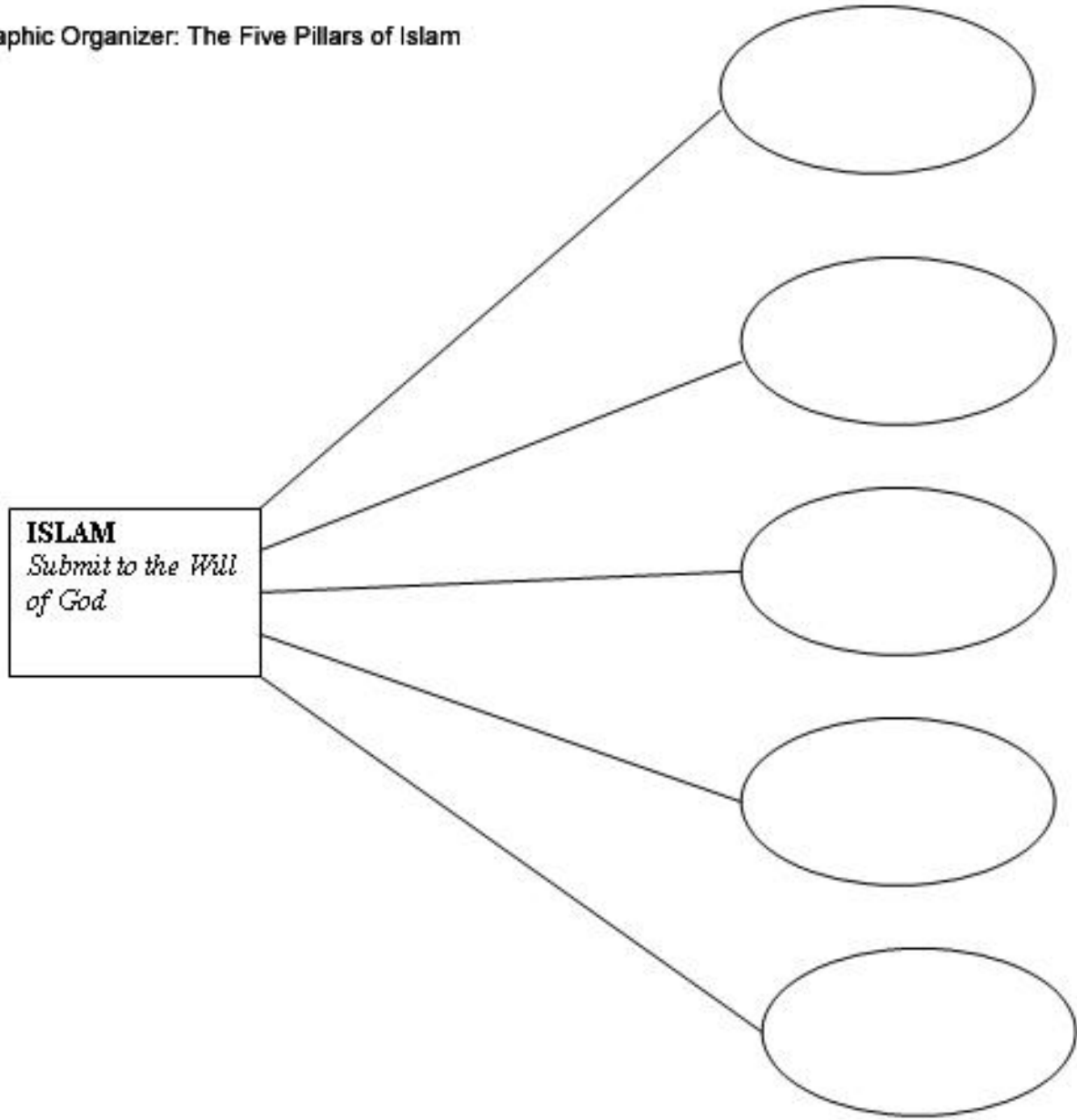
3)

4)

5)

Five Pillars of Islam Graphic Organizer

Graphic Organizer: The Five Pillars of Islam



Answer Keys and Examples

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Creation Stories

Look carefully at this pie chart of the amount of practitioners of different world religions. Write down a few sentences about your reaction to the chart. Was there anything surprising?

Answers will vary.

Which of the African Creation stories do you like best? Why?

Answers will vary.

What do the stories tell us about how god is perceived in the various religions?

Answers will vary.

What is the relationship between god and human beings in these stories? Is this relationship similar or different between stories?

Answers will vary.

What are some of the similarities between the African creation stories and the Genesis account?

Answers will vary. Students may remark on how most stories said god made all things, including human beings. They may also say the stories explain both life and death.

Indigenous African Religions

In your own words, describe the importance of ancestors to African religions and societies.

Answers will vary. Students may talk about how they help their families and communities remain prosperous and secure, are a connection between god and the living, and that they condemn bad behavior by withdrawing protection.

According to most African religions, what are the two main causes of disease and misfortune?

Answer: inappropriate behavior on the part of individuals and communities OR the intervention of bad or disruptive spirits.

How can people promote security and well-being of themselves, their families, and their communities?

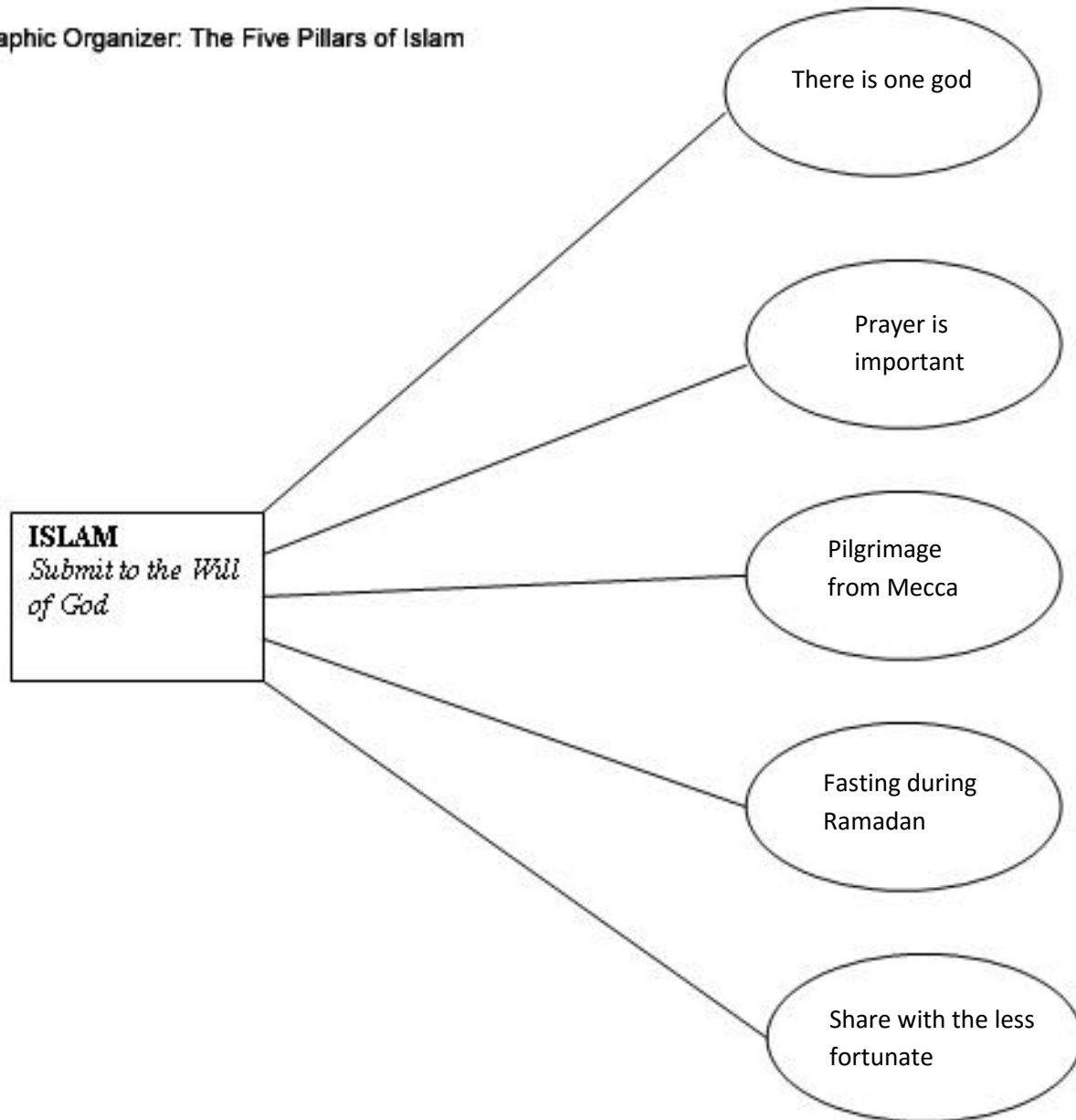
Answer: giving libations for ancestors, participating in moral/good behavior

Choose one individual example of African religious expression in the Americas to explore on your own.

Answers will vary

Five Pillars of Islam Graphic Organizer

Graphic Organizer: The Five Pillars of Islam



Christianity in Africa

Based on what you have learned, what reasons can you give for why most Christians in Europe and North America don't know more about the rich tradition of Christianity in Egypt, Aksum, and Nubia?

Answers will vary. Students may talk about the lack of knowledge of Africa overall, or refer to specific things they learned in the religion module.

Why has Christianity been able to survive and thrive for nearly 2,000 years in Aksum when Christianity disappeared in neighboring Nubia?

Answer: Christianity was well established in Aksum, after the rulers converted in the fourth century C.E. Nubia did not convert to Christianity until the seventh century C.E. So when Muslim Arab traders arrived in Nubia and Aksum in the eighth century, Aksum remained Christian because Christianity had been so firmly embedded in the structure of the state, society, and culture for centuries, while Nubia converted to Islam gradually, because they had not been practicing Christianity for nearly as long.

Why do you think that Beatrice Kimpa Vita formed the independent Antonine Christian movement in the Kongo? What was the reaction of the Portuguese missionaries to this movement? Why do you think that they had this reaction?

Answer: Beatrice wanted to form a movement that would restore the Kongo Kingdom, after it became a puppet state of the Portuguese. The Portuguese viewed her as a huge threat, and captured her and burned her at the stake. This was because her movement was a threat to the Catholic Church, Portuguese control over the Kongo, and the development of European missionary churches in Africa.

The greatest expansion of Christianity in Africa began with the larger scale arrival of missionaries in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Some scholars who study Christianity in Africa suggest that this rapid expansion of Christianity in Africa was facilitated by a symbiotic relationship between Christian missionaries and colonial governments. List the ways in which (i) Christian missionaries and their activities may have helped colonial governments, and (ii) colonial governments may have assisted Christian missionaries in their attempts at converting Africans.

Answer: (i) colonial governments saw Christian missionaries as allies, who would provide support for colonial rule. They believed if Africans were converted to Christianity they would see the value of colonial rule and be less likely to resist. (ii) Colonial rule provided a politically peaceful and supportive government for the work of Christian missionaries.

What were the two main reasons why some African Christians broke away from missionary churches to form African Independent Churches?

Answer: racism and rejection of African culture and religious beliefs/practices

In which ways do African Independent Churches, particularly the Zionist churches, incorporate aspects of indigenous African religions into their beliefs and practices?

Answer: Zionist independent churches incorporate spiritual and physical healing through the intervention of the Holy Spirit. They also incorporate tradition singing, dancing, and African instruments.

African Independent Churches are the fastest growing churches in Africa. In your opinion, why is this so?

Answers will vary.