

SWAHILI

Mark It on the Map

Have students locate Africa on the maps on pages 4–5 and on a world map. Ask them to estimate what percentage of the African population speaks the Swahili language. Have them locate the original Swahili cultural area on the map on page 5. Using the two maps as references, have them name the countries across which this area extended.

Introduction

Read the “Editor’s Message” on page 2 aloud. Are there any clues to help you identify the photo’s location or the section of the world in which it was taken?

Questions for Discussion

- Can you guess what the mystery photo on the inside front cover shows?
- What does the word “Swahili” mean? What do the people who speak Swahili call their language? What three elements unify the Swahili people?
- What did Swahili traders export? What did they import?
- What makes the price of cloves so high, even with today’s advances in technology?
- What is a kanga and for what is it used? Where did the kanga get its name?
- What are the differences between the Swahili on the coast and their neighbors in the interior? Make a list.
- What is meant by “lingua franca”? Give examples of such languages.
- What is special about the doors in Zanzibar? What do they tell you about the people within?
- What is the significance of the colors—red, green, and black—in Kwanzaa celebrations?
- What does “Kwanzaa” mean? What are the seven symbols of Kwanzaa?

Writing Workout

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Have students study the images on pages 6–10 and the maps on pages 4–5. Then have them write a list of words that describe the Swahili area, people, and culture. Next to each word, have them write a reason why they chose the word.
- Explain what the following saying heard in Zanzibar means: “The clove tree will not grow unless it sees the mountains and smells the sea.” Be very specific with your explanation.
- Use the text and illustrations on pages 14–17 to write a descriptive essay detailing the construction and use of a dhow that can then be presented to the class.
- Choose one of the proverbs listed in Swahili and in English on page 23. Write a brief essay explaining what it means. (Or, divide the class into groups and assign each group a proverb.) Present the explanations.
- Write an essay explaining the saying “Brains are money” on pages 28–29. Use specific examples (related to yourself and/or someone you know) to support your explanation.
- Write an essay listing the words you might use to describe Paka the house cat and his personality traits. Give a reason for each word.
- Read the article about Zanzibar on pages 34–39. Then use what you have learned to explain the saying “When the flute is played in Zanzibar, people dance on the mainland.”

Vocabulary

dhow	adz
Muslim	keel
mosque	bow
sultan	stern
monsoon	shahamu
aromatic	kanga
draught	c.
jahazi	linguist

Think About It

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Read the saying at the bottom of pages 10–11 (also on the back cover). What do you think it means? Be specific.
- Muslim traders settled in Swahili communities. How did this affect the communities? Also, how did this move affect trade in the area?
- Cloves were so valuable at one point in history that they were used as money. If we were to return to using a trade item as money, what item do you think would be best? Why?
- Are there any boats used for trading in the United States that are comparable to dhows? (The shape does not have to be similar, but the size and use do.)
- Read the text on pages 26–27. Then answer the question found on page 27: “Are you therefore speaking French, Hindi, or Arabic?” Be very specific with your answers. Follow-up: Have students suggest other foreign words that are used in English. (Examples: hacienda, ciao, gung-ho, kindergarten.) Draw columns on the board—one for each language represented by the words the students suggest. Write the words in the proper column. Then have a class discussion about English and why it has a “foreign” vocabulary.

Compare and Contrast

Students may complete one or both of the following activities:

- Bring to class a picture of a U.S. city on the coast and a picture of a U.S. city in the center of the country. Ask the students to look closely at the images and then at the illustration on pages 26–27. Let them compare and contrast living by the ocean and living away from the coast. Have students suggest reasons for the differences.
- Have students find illustrations in the issues in this unit that show people in traditional dress. Let them make copies of each. On a large piece of paper or poster board have the students draw an outline of Africa and place each person in his or her appropriate country/area. Label the countries/areas.

Speaking Swahili

Make a list of all the Swahili words and phrases in the issue. Then use the pronunciation guide on page 30 to pronounce the words. Use these words in the classroom and with friends.

Get Into Art

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Divide the class into two groups and have each group create a collage on a large piece of poster board — one titled “Clove Production” and the other titled “Uses for Cloves.” Students may use the information found on pages 12–13. They may draw an illustration of each phase (or product), or clip a suitable illustration from a magazine or catalog. Then ask them to write a brief explanation of each illustration, noting especially if the use shown is still a use today.
- Make copies of the illustrations on pages 15–17. After reading the text on these pages, have students locate all the boat sections that are mentioned (rope-operated hand drill, bow, rudder, blue and white carved board in bow, etc.).
- Bring plain-colored bed sheets to class. Have students decorate their kangas with proverbs—their own or a favorite saying. Have the students don their kangas by following the directions on page 21.
- Make a poster that shows from what language Swahili is derived, to which family of languages it belongs, and a few of the differences between English and Swahili that a speaker of Swahili would have to know in order to speak English correctly. (Example: In English, the adjective precedes the noun, whereas in Swahili, it follows the noun. Suggestion: As an extra project, have students research Bantu languages and where each is spoken.)

➔ Divide a large piece of paper into seven columns. Use *Ngzuzo saba* as the title. Then list one of the seven principles of Kwanzaa in Kiswahili (page 43) at the top of each column. Below, write the English translation and include an illustration and explanation of some way in which you might carry out this principle.

Map It Out

Students may complete one or both of the following activities:

➔ Have students find the capital city of each country where Swahili is spoken.
➔ Use a large piece of paper, poster board, or several sheets of plain white paper taped together on the reverse side. Draw an outline of the world on the paper, marking the continents and countries mentioned on pages 24–25. Divide the class into four groups, assign each one of the time periods found on pages 24–25, and assign each a color to use that represents the particular time period. Have each group make little cards (and color the cards with “its” color) that note a date and event. (Students may also accompany this information with a visual depiction of the event.) Then have them attach the cards to their proper locations on the map. Hang the map on the wall. Let students discuss what the time periods and events tell them about East Africa.

Research Projects

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

➔ Assign students to research where clove trees are grown, and if the methods for harvesting them are the same as those used by the Zanzibaris. Let the students present their findings to the class.
➔ Have students research monsoon seasons, what monsoons are, where they exist in the world, and how they help and hinder the people in those areas. Let the students present their findings to the class.
➔ Have students research the history of the Portuguese exploration around Africa—following the advance from the northwestern coast, around the Cape of Good Hope, and then up the east coast. Let the students present their findings to the class.
➔ Assign students to research making rope from coconuts. Have them present their findings to the class.

Just for Fun

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

➔ Follow the directions on page 13, and make a pomander ball.
➔ Find two pieces of long, wide cloth. Follow the directions on page 21, and try tying your own kanga.
➔ Try the game played by Swahili poets on pages 22–23. Divide the class into two groups and let each write proverbs whose first letters follow the alphabet in order.
➔ Try the “Proverbial Activity” on page 23.
➔ Complete the crossword puzzle on page 31.
➔ Plan to celebrate Kwanzaa, following the details found on pages 40–43.

Follow These Footsteps

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