



The Road to Independence

TERMS & NAMES

racism
diversity
apartheid

MAIN IDEA

During the 20th century, African nations gained independence from their colonial rulers.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Many independent nations in Africa are now struggling to form democratic governments.

DATELINE

NAIROBI, KENYA, DECEMBER 12, 1963—

Thousands of Kenyans watched today as the British flag was lowered for the last time over the former colony. The new national flag of independent Kenya was raised in its place.

The new flag's stripes of black, red, and green stand for the country's people, their struggle for independence, and the country's rich resources. The center symbol is a Masai shield and spears.

To mark the change from British rule, Prince Philip of England attended the ceremony. All over Kenya, people cheered their new country, shouting "Uhuru!" the Swahili word for "freedom."



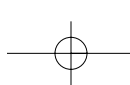
Place • Prince Philip and Kenya's Prime Minister Jomo Kenyatta attend the ceremony marking Kenya's independence. ▲



Culture • This flag is a symbol of Kenya's independence. ▲

Moving Toward Independence

Colonial rule in Africa disrupted social systems and governments, and robbed Africa of resources. Many Africans objected, but they did not have enough power to act. During the 1920s and 1930s, colonial rulers sent a few Africans to attend universities in Europe and the United States. These educated young people started to dream of independence. Nationalism grew strong.



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting a Map

- 1. Region** • How many countries have a multiparty democracy?
- 2. Place** • Describe the political system in Cameroon.

Journey to Freedom

European nations wanted to keep their colonies for their valuable resources although they were expensive to maintain. Many Europeans believed that Africans were unable to govern themselves. This attitude is an example of **racism**, the unfounded belief that one race is inferior to another race.

Pan-African Congresses Educated Africans believed they could govern themselves. African men had fought for the European Allies during World War I, and thousands had died. Ex-soldiers wanted self-rule. Pan-Africanism, an idea that people of African descent around the world should work together for their freedom, attracted more sup-

porters. In 1919, the first Pan-African Congress was organized. Africans again fought in World War II. After this war, many felt that they now deserved independence.

A VOICE FROM AFRICA

...We are determined to be free. We want education. We want the right to earn a decent living; the right to express our thoughts and emotions, to adopt and create forms of beauty. We demand for Black Africa autonomy and independence....

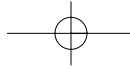
The Pan-African Congress, 1945

Reading Social Studies

A. Analyzing

Causes How did the two world wars and the Pan-African congresses affect the struggle for African independence?

At the fifth Pan-African Congress in 1945, there were 90 delegates; 26 were from all over Africa. Several were men who would become the political leaders of their countries, including Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya.



New African Countries

Between 1951 and 1980, most of the colonies in Africa south of the Sahara gained independence. For some countries, the path to nationhood was smooth. For others, it was not. Nigeria and South Africa had different experiences in achieving independence.

Nigeria: Diversity Brings Division

Before Nigeria gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1960, it had experienced a well-organized government, rich resources, and a strong economy under British rule. It was hoped that Nigeria's **diversity**—its many different cultures and viewpoints—would be a source of strength. Many Nigerians are Muslim, while others are Christian or follow traditional African religions. Nigerians speak more than 400 languages. However, instead of being a source of strength, this diversity caused problems.

Reading

Social Studies

B. Finding

Causes What led to the 1966 rioting in Nigeria?

Riots and War The slave trade and colonial rule had created hostility between the ethnic groups in Nigeria. Many Nigerian politicians focused on their ethnic group and not the whole country. Some leaders stole money and gave or took bribes.



Yam Festivals People celebrate what is precious to them. In Ghana, Nigeria, and Côte d'Ivoire, the yam is traditionally the most important crop. Among the Ibo people of Nigeria, a man's first prayer to God is for children. His second is for many yams.

Every year, people in these countries celebrate the harvest of the new yams with special dances and ceremonies. Côte d'Ivoire's King Kofti is shown at right accepting offerings at the Yam Festival. Yam paste is prepared in a large bowl.

Among the Aburi people of Ghana, a priest begins the festival by slicing and dropping three pieces from a yam. If the pieces fall skin-side down, the village will have good luck. If the slices fall cut-side down, trouble is ahead.



THINKING CRITICALLY



- Comparing** How is the American holiday Thanksgiving similar to the Yam Festival?
- Making Inferences** Why do you think a priest is involved with the Yam Festival in Ghana?



Place • Signs such as these were common in South Africa during apartheid. Everything from businesses to bathrooms was segregated. ▲

In 1966, deadly riots broke out, and many people were killed. The next year, people in the eastern part of Nigeria announced the formation of a separate country, Biafra. After three years of civil war between Biafran Nigerians and the Nigerian army, Biafra was defeated and rejoined Nigeria. Since then, military leaders have primarily ruled Nigeria.

Independence of South Africa

The United Kingdom gave South Africa independence in 1910. This action did not bring freedom to most South Africans. Only white South Africans could vote, and many laws were passed to restrict nonwhites.

In 1948, an official policy of racial segregation known as **apartheid** (uh•PAHRT•HYT) was adopted. Apartheid strictly separated people by color. Many people resisted apartheid. Protesters held marches, went on strike, and sometimes became violent. Although many protesters were jailed or killed, they did make progress. In 1991, apartheid ended. In 1994, for the first time, all South African adults could vote.

BACKGROUND

The word *apartheid* is from the Afrikaans language. It means "apartness."

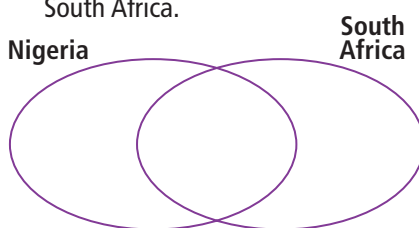
SECTION 4 ASSESSMENT

Terms & Names

1. Identify: (a) racism (b) diversity (c) apartheid

Taking Notes

2. Use a Venn diagram like this one to list the similarities and differences between the processes of independence for Nigeria and for South Africa.



Main Ideas

3. (a) What factors strengthened the movement among Africans for independence?
 (b) How did Nigeria's diversity create problems after the country gained independence?
 (c) How did opportunities for South African citizens to participate in and influence the political process change in the 1990s?

Critical Thinking

4. Hypothesizing

Do you think possessing African colonies helped or hurt the economies of European countries?

Think About

- ♦ the cost of running a colony
- ♦ Africa's resources

ACTIVITY -OPTION-

Design a **logo** or write a **motto** for a modern-day Pan-African Congress. Remember to represent African peoples around the world.