



# Western and Central Africa

**SECTION 1** History and Political Change

**SECTION 2** Economies and Cultures

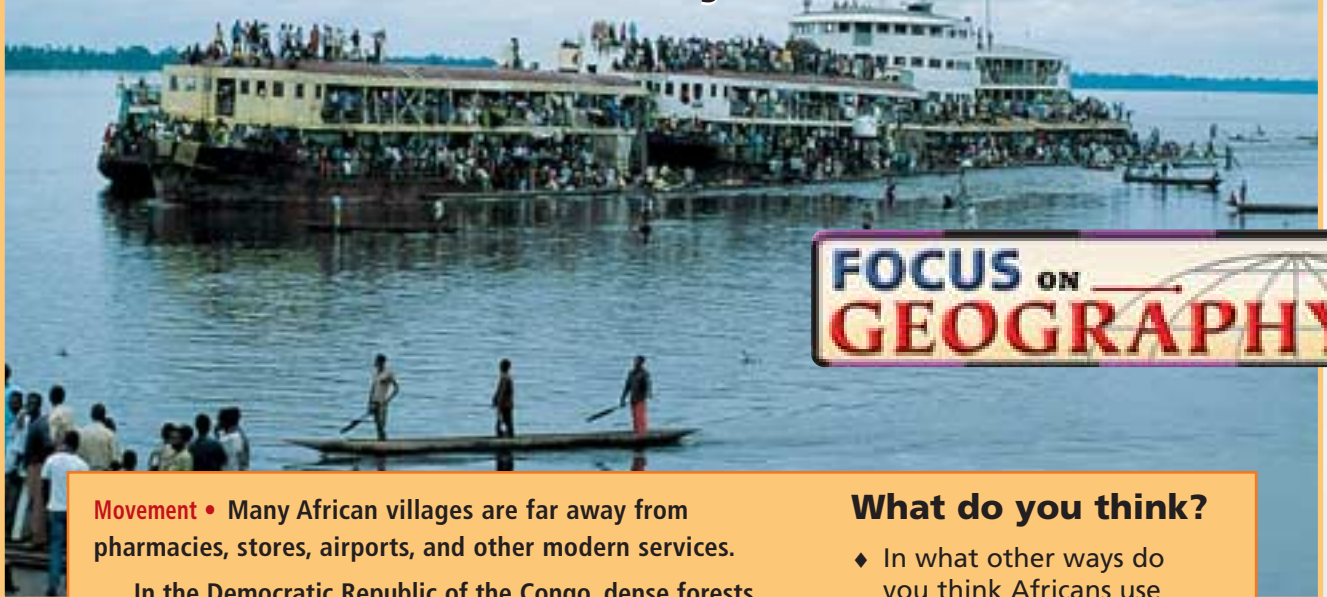
**SECTION 3** Nigeria Today







# How can an entire town move across a country?



## FOCUS ON GEOGRAPHY

**Movement** • Many African villages are far away from pharmacies, stores, airports, and other modern services.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, dense forests separate many villages from cities and towns.

Instead of building roads, the Congolese use their rivers as highways. Great barges run up and down the Congo River, carrying thousands of people on each trip. These barges are moving towns, with clinics, churches, markets, restaurants, and more.

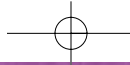
### What do you think?

- ♦ In what other ways do you think Africans use their waterways?
- ♦ What benefits do you think the barge offers over airplane travel in the Democratic Republic of the Congo?



**Place** Most African towns and villages host daily or weekly outdoor markets. Many of the vendors live in the countryside and travel into town to sell their goods.





## READING SOCIAL STUDIES

### BEFORE YOU READ

#### ►► What Do You Know?

Western and Central African countries export many products to the United States, including gold and the cacao beans used to make chocolate. What else do you know about this region? Did you know that Liberia was founded by Americans? How did European colonialism affect the region? Reflect on what you have learned in other classes, what you read in Chapter 10, and what you have seen in the news about recent events in this area.

#### ►► What Do You Want to Know?

Decide what else you want to know about Western and Central Africa. In your notebook, record what you hope to learn from this chapter.

**Culture** • Cameroon's soccer team celebrated after winning the gold medal at the Olympic Games in 2000. ▼



### READ AND TAKE NOTES

**Reading Strategy: Making Inferences** Making inferences is an important skill in reading social studies. Making inferences involves thinking beyond the text and interpreting the information you read. To make inferences, read carefully and use common sense and previous knowledge to make connections between ideas. Use the chart below to record inferences you can build on as you read.

- Copy the chart into your notebook.
- Read each statement. Use what you know to make inferences. Record your interpretations, connections, and ideas.
- As you read, record key evidence that confirms, changes, or builds on your inferences.



**Culture** • At one time only royalty in Ghana could wear this colorful Kente cloth. Today, it is popular among all Ghanaians. ▲

| Statements   | My Inferences | Key Evidence |
|--|---------------|--------------|
| European colonial powers divided Africa. Territories created by colonial powers became separate countries.   |               |              |
| In most African countries, governments are either too strong or too weak.  |               |              |
| Most countries of Western and Central Africa have a mix of different types of economies.   |               |              |
| Africa is culturally diverse. Before colonial rule, Africa had many different types of societies. There are some things that most of the peoples of Western and Central Africa have in common. |               |              |
| Nigeria has more than 250 ethnic groups. Conflicts among these groups have sometimes led to civil war. This diversity has also led to a rich artistic and literary heritage.                   |               |              |