



Interdisciplinary Challenge

Discover the Source of the Nile

You are proud to be part of a daring expedition to the heart of Africa. The trip, which begins in 1856, is sponsored by the Royal Geographical Society. Its leaders are two of Britain's best-known explorers—John Hanning Speke and Richard Burton. They are chasing a legend—that there is a great lake in the heart of Africa that is the source of the Nile—and you are the newest member of their team.

COOPERATIVE LEARNING On these pages are challenges your expedition will face as you search for the source of the Nile. Working with a small group of other explorers, decide which one of these challenges you will solve. Divide the work among group members. Look for helpful information in the Data File. Keep in mind that you will present your solution to the class.

SCIENCE CHALLENGE

“The African rain forest is full of hazards, from warring tribes to malaria to deadly snakes.”

Exploring Africa is dangerous, especially in the mid-1800s. The African rain forest is full of hazards, from warring tribes to malaria to deadly snakes. While your expedition is deep in the jungle, you and your companions must be your own doctors. How can you keep yourself and others in the expedition healthy? Choose one of these options. Use the Data File for help.

ACTIVITIES

1. Research dangers and diseases you may encounter in the rain forest. Make a list of the safety equipment and medicines you will pack for the expedition.
2. Write a short manual on tropical diseases common in East Africa.



GEOGRAPHY CHALLENGE

“ . . . others are likely to challenge you.”

Recently, Speke left the main expedition, and he now believes that he has found the Nile's source at Lake Ukerewe. He has renamed this huge lake Victoria, after the British queen. With him went a small group of people, and you are one of them. You are sure of your discoveries, but others are likely to challenge you. You need to demonstrate exactly how you found the source of the Nile. Choose one of these options. Use the Data File for help.

ACTIVITIES

1. Draw or trace a large map of East Africa that you can display on an easel. Make notes for a lecture-demonstration in which you will trace your route to show where the Nile begins.
2. Make a tabletop clay model of the lakes region of East Africa, including Lakes Victoria and Albert.



DATA FILE

DISCOVERY TIME LINE

- February 1858: **Speke** and **Burton** are the first Europeans to reach Lake Tanganyika.
- July 1858: Speke breaks off from Burton, travels north, and finds and names **Lake Victoria**.
- 1860–1862: Speke and **James Grant** map Lake Victoria. Speke finds and names **Ripon Falls**, where the Nile flows out of the lake. The explorers start to follow the Nile but are stopped by local warfare.
- 1863: Speke passes on stories of another great lake to **Samuel W. Baker** and **Florence von Sass**, who find and name **Lake Albert**. It feeds into the White Nile.

AFRICA'S GREAT LAKES

- **Lake Victoria**, Uganda-Tanzania: area, 26,828 sq. mi.; length, 250 mi.; maximum depth, 270 ft.
- **Lake Tanganyika**, Tanzania-Congo: area, 12,700 sq. mi.; length, 420 mi.; maximum depth, 4,823 ft.
- **Lake Albert (Mobuto)**, Congo-Uganda: area, 2,075 sq. mi.; length, 100 mi.; maximum depth, 168 ft.
- **Lake Turkana (Rudolf)**, Kenya: area, 2,473 sq. mi.; length, 154 mi.; maximum depth, 240 ft.

EXPLORERS SEEKING THE SOURCE OF THE NILE

- **John Hanning Speke** (1827–1864): British soldier, discoverer of Lake Victoria.
- **Sir Richard Burton** (1821–1890): discoverer of Lake Tanganyika, looked for source of White Nile, also explored India and Arabia.

To learn more about Nile exploration, go to



Activity Wrap-Up

As a group, review your solution to the challenge you selected. Then present your solution to the class.