



COUNTRIES OF AFRICA

Africa

Africa, the second largest continent in the world, makes up about one-fifth of the globe's land area. The continent is divided into 54 independent nations and one territory (Western Sahara), whose status remains unresolved. Six of the 54 nations are islands, two off the west coast and four off the east coast. The nations of Africa are often grouped into regions because of cultural and geographic factors. North Africa includes the countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. Racially and culturally, North Africa is more similar to the Middle East than the mostly black African nations to the south. West Africa is made up of the nations south of the Sahara Desert in the western bulge of the continent above the Gulf of Guinea. The land is mostly flat, ranging from rainforests near the coast stepping through savanna and steppe to the edge of the Sahara Desert. Central Africa extends from the west coast below the western bulge inland and north to the desert. It contains the most extensive rainforests on the continent. East Africa contains the nations bordering the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. East Africa has productive highlands, deserts, and savannas. Southern Africa includes those nations south of Central and East Africa to the Cape of Good Hope. It has deserts, rich farmland, mountains, savanna, and the largest white population south of the Sahara.

MAP: Question 1

Name five landlocked nations in Africa.

Question 2

Into what five regions are the nations of Africa commonly grouped?

Question 3

What are the historical and cultural factors that determined the boundaries of countries in Africa?