

SECTION
2

Reading for Understanding

▶ Key Ideas

BEFORE, YOU LEARNED

Africa is home to thousands of plant and animal species, and has a wealth of natural resources.

NOW YOU WILL LEARN

Human life first emerged on this warm continent.

▶ Vocabulary

TERMS & NAMES

hominid a human primate; an early human

bipedal walking on two feet

Stone Age the earliest period of human culture, in which people used stone tools

animism the belief that spirits exist in animals, plants, natural forces, and ancestors

griot (gree•OH) a West African storyteller

stateless societies groups that have no single authority, but make decisions based on compromise

lineage descent from an ancestor

REVIEW

fossil remains of early life preserved in the ground

culture the shared attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors of a group

BACKGROUND VOCABULARY

ancestor an early relative

domesticate to adapt or train plants or animals for human use

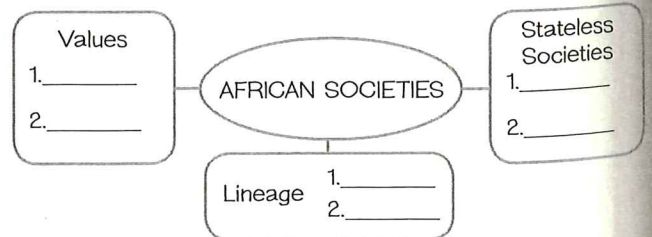
patrilineal descent from father to father

▶ Reading Strategy

Re-create the web diagram shown at right. As you read and respond to the **KEY QUESTIONS**, use the diagram to record the main ideas about African societies.

 Skillbuilder Handbook, page R4

FIND MAIN IDEAS



Human Beginnings in Africa

Connecting to Your World

Have you ever made an exciting discovery? Perhaps you found a treasure on the street or learned something that made you decide to become a drummer, dancer, hockey player, or scientist.

If you're really lucky, you may make a find that changes the way people think. Anthropologist Donald Johanson had that kind of luck in Ethiopia in 1974 when he and his assistants took a new route back to their vehicle. They stumbled on the bones of a **fossil**, which they named Lucy after a popular song. Lucy was an early human, called a **hominid**. She lived about 3.2 million years ago.

Human Ancestors

KEY QUESTION What were some of the important hominid finds in Africa?

Lucy, an adult female, probably stood about three and a half feet tall and weighed a little over 60 pounds. She and other hominids were **bipedal**, meaning they walked on two feet. If early hominids used tools, the tools have since disappeared. The first tools that scientists have found—stones to cut meat—date back a mere 2.5 million years.



Lucy This early human is the most-studied fossil to date.

Animated GEOGRAPHY

Archaeological Dig in East Africa

Scientists continue to look to Africa for clues about early human development.

[Click here](#) to see fossils found in East Africa @ClassZone.com





Chad Skull A reconstruction of the 6.5-million-year-old skull found in Chad in 2001

Important Discoveries Older hominids have been found since Lucy's discovery. Scientists unearthed a six- to seven-million-year-old skull in Chad in 2001. It resembles both a human skull and an ape skull. Scientists wonder whether this and other finds could be early human **ancestors**. Other important discoveries include:

Australopithecines (aw•STRAY•loh•PIHTH•uh•seenz) Like Lucy, these hominids first walked upright in eastern, southern, and central Africa about 4 million years ago.

Homo habilis (HOH•moh-HAB•uh•luhs) Tool-using hominids appeared between 1.5 and 2 million years ago in Africa. In 1960, Mary and Louis Leakey found the skull of a creature they named *Homo habilis*, or "handy man," near chipped pebble tools.

Homo erectus (HOH•moh-ih•REHK•tus) In 1984, scientists found the skeleton of "Turkana Boy" in Kenya. This pre-teen lived about 1.6 million years ago. *Homo erectus* fossils have also been discovered in Asia. They were the first hominids to leave Africa.

Homo sapiens (HOH•moh-SAY•pee•EHNZ) People identical to modern humans first appeared about 150,000 years ago.

Stone Age The **Stone Age**, during which hominids first began using stone tools, began 2.5 million years ago. During this important period, people also learned how to control fire and use language.



ONLINE PRIMARY SOURCE

To read accounts of important discoveries, go to the Research & Writing Center @ClassZone.com



SUMMARIZE Describe the key hominid finds in Africa.

ANALYZING Primary Sources



Oldest human footprints Mary Leakey and the footprints she discovered in 1978

Mary Leakey (1913–1996), as a young girl, was determined to study the Stone Age. Her most famous discovery was a set of hominid footprints, preserved in dried lava in Tanzania. In a 1978 letter, she wrote:

We have found magnificent hominid footprints this year, in a dual trail 23 metres [75 feet] long! (confidential) It is a most important find and demonstrates that 3½ m.y. [million years] ago the fully bipedal, striding gait had been completely developed.

Mary Leakey, letter to paleontologist Dick Hooijer

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION:

Why were these footprints so important?



CONNECT to History

The Stone Age in Africa is divided into two periods. The Paleolithic period lasted from 2.5 million years ago to 8000 B.C. During this period, hominids hunted and gathered food. Early humans also chopped meat with sharpened stone tools. Later, they tamed fire, used harpoons and needles, and developed language. The Neolithic period lasted from 8000 B.C. to 3500 B.C. People living at this time polished stone tools and made pottery. They began to grow crops, **domesticate** animals, and live in villages. Around 3500 B.C. they developed writing.



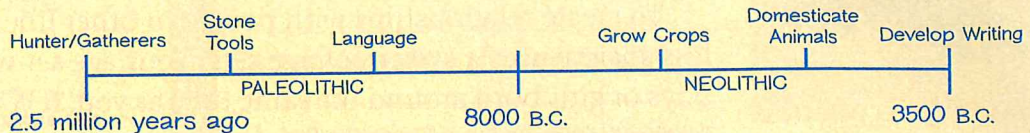
Hand axes These stone tools from the Paleolithic period were found in Tanzania.

Activity

Create a Time Line

Materials

- paper
- pencil
- ruler



1. Reread this chapter and add the dates for the sequence of hominid discoveries in Africa.

2. Look for specific dates in the text. Make sure to match the correct events and dates.

Characteristics of African Societies

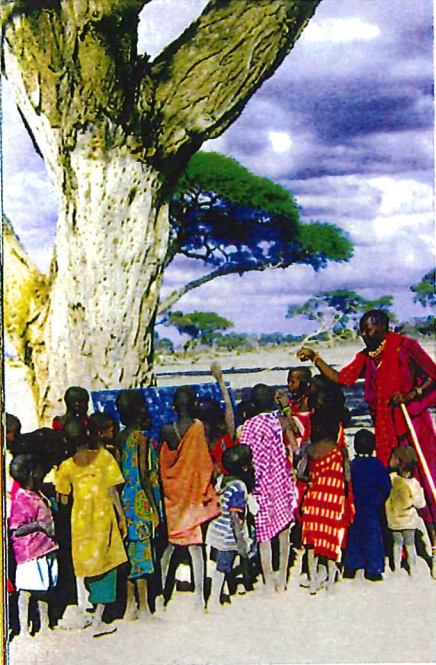
KEY QUESTION What is the nature of an extended family in African society?

In the previous section, you learned that hundreds of separate languages may be spoken in a single African country. Still, many African **cultures** share certain traits.

Beliefs and Values A typical African family probably wouldn't fit around your dinner table. The extended family of Africa consists of as many as five generations of relatives and spouses who all obey a single leader. This large family works together, protects its members from outsiders, and cares for its weakest members.

Today many Africans are Muslims or Christians. But Africans may also practice traditional religions. Traditional African religions maintain that an all-powerful God created everything. They also believe that spirits exist in animals, plants, natural forces, and ancestors, an idea called **animism**.

One generation of Africans passes information to the next by telling stories. West Africans call their storytellers **griots** (gree•OHZ). You need a good memory to be a griot because some of the best stories about ancestors and other heroes go on for hours or even days. Griots usually accompany their stories with music. Today many popular griots perform on television and record their stories on CDs.



Elders in African Societies
Elders often fill teaching roles, like this Masai elder in Kenya.

Stateless Societies Traditional African cultures didn't organize themselves into states, with one person at the top. Instead they formed stateless societies. In a **stateless society**, two or more equal groups would cooperate.

The extended families that made up these groups were based on lineage. **Lineage** means descent from one parent back several generations to a single ancestor. For example, your own **patrilineal** descent goes back from your father, to his father, and so on.

In traditional African stateless societies, lineages with equal power would share authority. If members clashed, elders from the warring lineage groups would meet to make peace.

To create relationships with people in other lineages, a stateless society uses a system of age sets. Your age set would be the boys or girls born around the same time as you. If you were a boy in the Nandi tribe of Kenya, for example, you would go through military training with your age set. The warrior set, responsible for fighting and governing the tribe, would stay in power for about 15 years. Then it would become a set of elders, and the next younger age set would move up.

FIND MAIN IDEAS Describe the structure of an African extended family.

ONLINE QUIZ
For test practice, go to
Interactive Review
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Section 2 Assessment

TERMS & NAMES

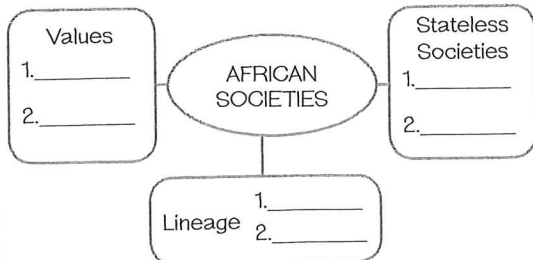
1. Explain the importance of

- hominid
- animism
- stateless societies
- lineage

USE YOUR READING NOTES

2. Find Main Ideas Use your completed diagram to answer the following question:

What are the roles of elders in traditional African societies?



KEY IDEAS

3. Who is Lucy, and how old is she?
4. Which was the first human to leave Africa?
5. How would warring lineage groups make peace?

CRITICAL THINKING

6. **Summarize** What major human advances took place during the Stone Age?
7. **Compare and Contrast** What similarities do African cultures share?
8. **CONNECT to Today** What systems of age sets exist in the United States?
9. **MATH Draw a Scale Time Line** Find a way to demonstrate how long ago Lucy lived. You might start by making a scale with 100 years equal to 1 inch. How many inches, feet, or yards would it take to show 1,000 or 1 million years? How about 3.5 million years?

CHAPTER SUMMARY



Key Idea 1

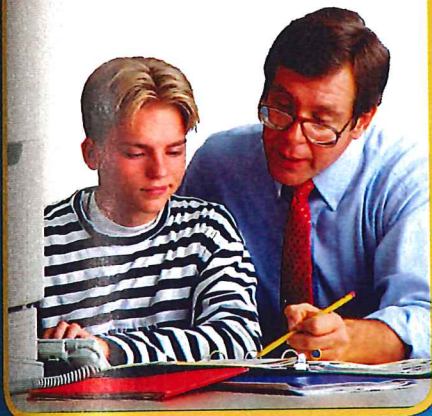
Africa, the world's second largest continent, lies almost entirely in the tropics.



Key Idea 2


Human life first emerged on this warm continent.

 For Review and Study Notes, go to Interactive Review @ ClassZone.com



NAME GAME

Use the Terms & Names list to complete each sentence on paper or online.

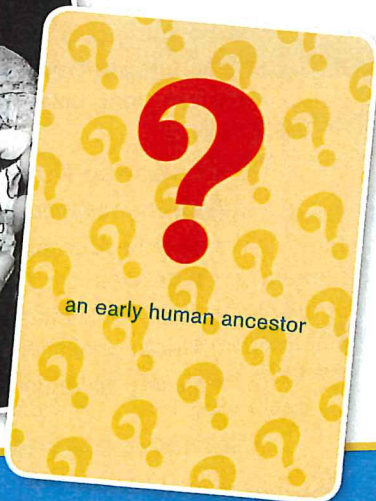
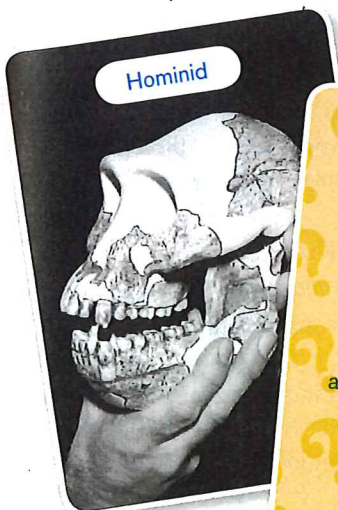
- I am the longest river in the world. _____
Nile River 
- I am a process that changes grasslands and semi-arid regions into deserts. _____
- I am a landform some Africans call Mosi-oa-Tunya, "the smoke that thunders." _____
- I am the top layer of the rain forest. _____
- I am Africa's grasslands, where antelopes, giraffes, and elephants graze. _____
- We are the slowly shifting blocks that make up the Earth's surface layer. _____
- I can tell stories that last for many hours or even days. _____
- I am the belief that trees, animals, and ancestors have living spirits. _____
- We do not have a single leader, but resolve problems by having our elders meet and talk until they agree. _____
- I am the earliest period of human history. _____

animism
canopy
desertification
griot
hominid
Mount Kilimanjaro
Nile River
Sahel
savanna
stateless societies
Stone Age
tectonic plates
Victoria Falls

Activities

Flip Cards

Use the online flip cards to quiz yourself on the terms and names introduced in this chapter.

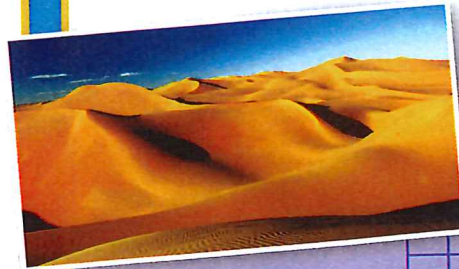


Crossword Puzzle

Complete an online crossword puzzle to test your knowledge of Africa's geography and early history.

ACROSS

- the world's largest desert



VOCABULARY

Explain the significance of each of the following.

1. Mount Kilimanjaro
2. Nile River
3. savanna
4. Sahel
5. desertification
6. hominid
7. bipedal
8. animism
9. stateless societies
10. lineage



Explain how the terms and names in each group are related.

11. Sahel, desertification, savanna
12. stateless societies, culture, lineage

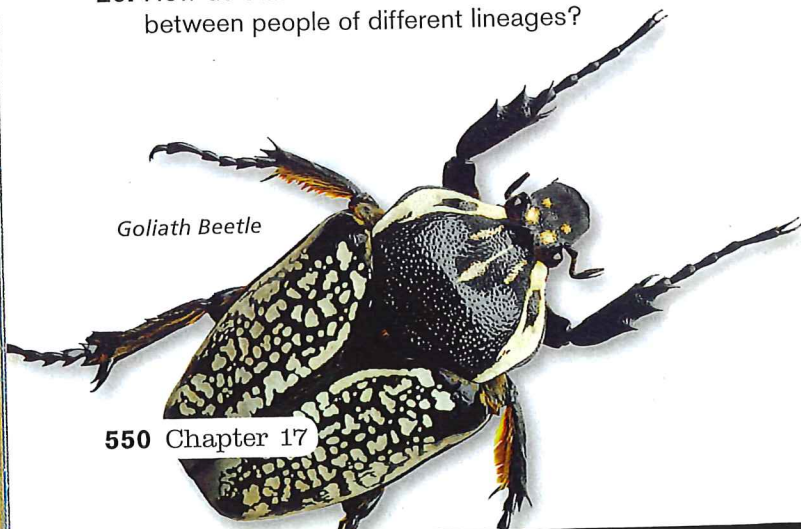
KEY IDEAS

1 Africa's Geographic Extremes

13. What geographic process formed Africa's Great Rift Valley?
14. What makes many African rivers hard to navigate?
15. How do many Africans communicate with people who don't speak their language?
16. What minerals make South Africa a wealthy country?

2 Human Beginnings in Africa

17. Why was Lucy such an important discovery?
18. What does a griot do?
19. How are African extended families structured?
20. How do stateless societies create relationships between people of different lineages?



Goliath Beetle

CRITICAL THINKING

21. **Analyze Causes and Effects** Create a table to show some of the effects of human settlement on rain forests and grasslands.

CAUSES	EFFECTS
cut down rain forests for farmland	
cut trees for firewood and use grass for grazing	

22. **Summarize** What events led to the formation of game parks in Africa?
23. **Compare and Contrast** How are traditional African religions similar to and different from Christianity and Islam?
24. **Five Themes: Movement** How might family members moving to a city affect a traditional extended family structure?
25. **Connect Geography & Science** Why can't scientists say for sure whether *Australopithecines* like Lucy used tools?

Answer the ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do humans interact with the extreme African environment?

Written Response Write a two- or three-paragraph response to the Essential Question. Be sure to consider the key ideas of each section. Use the rubric below to guide your thinking.

Response Rubric

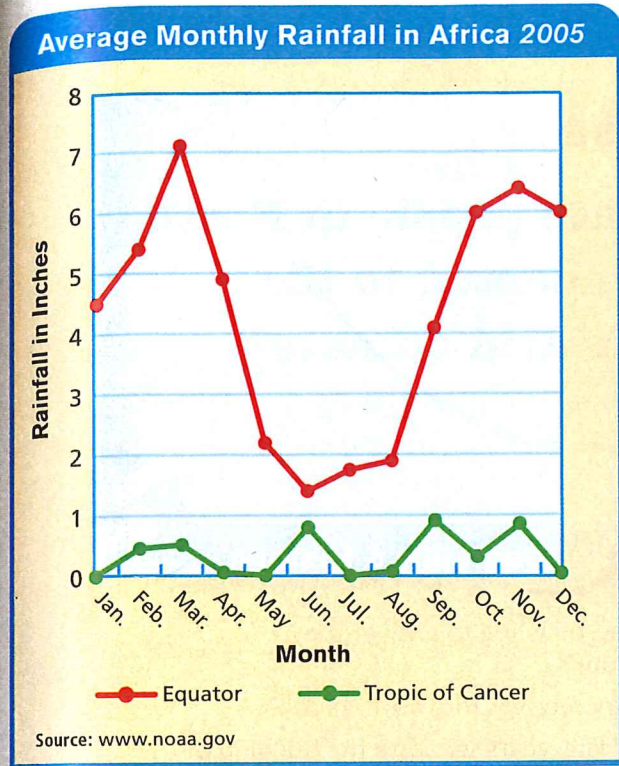
A strong response will:

- describe Africa's landforms, climate, and vegetation
- explain how climate and terrain have influenced African population density
- identify the resources available in Africa

- Online Test Practice @ClassZone.com
- Test-Taking Strategies and Practice at the front of this book

LINE GRAPH

Use the line graph and your knowledge of Africa to answer questions 1 and 2.

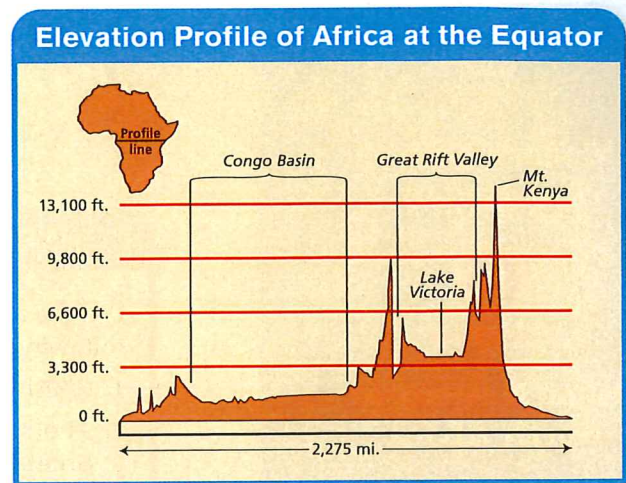


1. When is the “dry season” along the Equator?
- September through December
 - January through March
 - March through May
 - June through August

2. In what month did the most rain fall along the Tropic of Cancer?
- March
 - June
 - September
 - November

ELEVATION PROFILE

Use the elevation profile at the Equator to answer questions 3 and 4 on your own paper.



3. At what elevation is Mount Kenya?
4. Based on this elevation profile, why might Africa be called the “plateau continent”?

GeoActivity

1. INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITY-SCIENCE

With a small group, choose one of Africa’s native animals to research. Find out where the animal lives, what it eats, whether it has predators, and if its habitat has been threatened by hunting or farming. Present your findings to the class.

2. WRITING FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

Reread the description of griots in Section 2. Write a story, poem, or rap about one of your ancestors or an American folk hero. Memorize your story and present it to your class without using notes.

3. MENTAL MAPPING

Create an outline map of Africa and label the following:

- Lake Victoria
- Lake Chad
- Nile River
- Great Rift
- Great Escarpment
- Sahara Desert
- Sahel