

Title: Ghanaian Fantasy Coffins

Overview: In this lesson, students utilize an ESRI StoryMap to better understand Ghanaian Fantasy Coffins and Ghanaian funeral traditions as a slice of the human geography of Ghana.

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

1. Navigate an ESRI StoryMap.
2. Glean geographic information from news articles, pictures, videos and thematic maps.
3. Identify examples of folk culture, cultural diffusion, globalization and human environment interaction through class discussion.
4. Summarize key learning about Ghanaian human geography.

Grade Level: 9

Time: 2-3 class periods

Required Materials:

- Internet Access
- Student headphones or ear buds
- Copies of ghanafantasycoffins_studenthandout.pdf

Minnesota Social Studies Standards - 9-12 Geography

Substrand 1: Geospatial Skills

Standard: 1. People use geographic representations and geospatial technologies to acquire, process and report information within a spatial context.

Benchmark 9.3.1.1.2: Apply geographic information from a variety of print and electronic sources to interpret the past and present and plan for the future; provide rationale for using specific technologies for each application.

Substrand 2: Places and Regions

Standard 3: Places have physical characteristics (such as climate, topography and vegetation) and human characteristics (such as culture, population, political and economic systems).

Benchmark 9.3.2.3.1: Make inferences and draw conclusions about the physical and human characteristics of places based on a comparison of maps and other geographic representations and geospatial technologies.

Substrand 3: Human Systems

Standard 7: The characteristics, distribution and complexity of the earth's cultures influence human systems (social, economic and political systems).

Benchmark 9.3.3.7.1: Explain the spread of culture using the concept of diffusion and diffusion models.

Benchmark 9.3.3.7.3: Explain how social, political and economic processes influence the characteristics of places and regions.

Substrand 4: Human Environment Interaction

Standard 9: The environment influences human actions; and human both adapt to and change the environment

Benchmark 9.3.4.9.1: Analyze the interconnectedness of the environment and human activities (Including the use of technology), and the impact of one upon the other.

Suggested Procedure:

1. Prior to teaching the lesson, review ESRI StoryMap and all Student Materials found on Weebly: <http://africaintheclassroom2016.weebly.com/ghanaian-fantasy-coffins.html>
2. Distribute the Student Handout and review instructions.
3. Circulate and provide assistance as students navigate the StoryMap and answer the questions.
4. Discuss student responses and findings as a class.
 - Which coffins are most intriguing? Why?
 - Which Ghanaian funeral traditions are most interesting? Why?
 - Compare and contrast Ghanaian funeral traditions with American funeral traditions. How are they similar? How are they different?
 - Would you rather attend a Ghanaian funeral or an American funeral? Why?
 - Why do folk cultural traditions such as coffin carving and funeral practices persist? How?
 - How have folk cultural traditions such as coffin carving and funeral practices diffused?
 - What evidence of globalization did you detect?
 - What threats to Ghanaian folk cultural traditions were mentioned? Were the threats primarily social, political or economic?
5. Direct students to write their 5 Sentence Summaries.
6. Collect and assess student materials.

Extensions: Further research on Ghanaian human geography topics, fantasy coffins and funeral traditions around the world. Design a fantasy coffin (see lesson plan link below.)

(Note: I was not able to locate ArcGIS layers for ethnic groups or languages of Ghana to add to the map. Looking at these topics through separate static maps would add to the discussion of human geography topics. Many of these traditions are affiliated with Ghana's Ga people.)

Additional Resources:

Fantasy Coffin - Wikipedia
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fantasy_coffin

Death Is Not The End: Fascinating Burial Traditions From Around The Globe - TED
<http://ideas.ted.com/11-fascinating-funeral-traditions-from-around-the-globe/>

Create A Fantasy Coffin Lesson Plan
<http://minimatisse.blogspot.com/2015/06/sub-plan-create-fantasy-coffin.html>

Assessment: Ghanaian Fantasy Coffins Student Handout, class discussion.

Resources: <http://africaintheclassroom2016.weebly.com/ghanaian-fantasy-coffins.html>

Credits:

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