

Begin by opening the Ghanaian Fantasy Coffins StoryMap located here: <http://arcg.is/29UQhGN>

On the left side of the StoryMap you will see the navigation bar:



You begin on the “Home” page symbolized by the house. Scroll down the page or click on each dot under the house icon to progress through the StoryMap. Map layers will change as you scroll.

The Fantasy Coffins of Ghana - Slate

Read the article from Slate. Take time to study the pictures as well.

1. Click on the word *harmattan*. What is the harmattan?

- When does it occur?
- What effects does it have?

2. What do the coffin workshops of the Ghana area have in common?

3. Which two types of coffins are made and how do they differ?

4. Eric Adjetey Anang originally thought of himself as a carpenter. How has the way he views himself changed over time?

5. Why is the original workshop under threat?

6. According to legend, how did this type of coffin making begin?
(The picture to the right is a “litter”.)



7. What type of coffin did Kane Kwei make for his grandmother?

8. Why are Ghanaian funerals so expensive?

9. "Inside the workshop, a group of young apprentices saw grooves into a block of wood that will become a coffin in the shape of a cocoa pod." Besides cocoa, name another Ghanaian industry or product that is a popular theme for coffins.
10. What is the only type of fantasy coffin allowed in Ghanaian churches?
11. Provides two specific examples of how some of Anang's designs have made the transition from utility to art with a social message.
 - a.
 - b.
12. Demand for Anang's coffins is growing. What is he doing to address the demand?

Eric Anang Featured In Coca Cola Aquarius Commercial
Watch the video.

1. Have you heard of Aquarius? What flavor is it? In what way is it an "official drink"?
2. Watch the video. Which of the featured coffins is your favorite? Why?
3. Why does Eric believe his coffins are an appropriate topic for an Aquarius commercial?

Ghanaian Fantasy Coffins Workshops Map
Zoom and click the icons on the map to learn more about five fantasy coffin workshops and their artists.

1. All five artists featured can trace their training back to one person. Who was that person?
2. In what sense has their work become globalized?

The Long Goodbye: Why Funerals Are Big Deals In Ghana
Read the article.

1. "Ghanaians may spend as much money on funerals as on weddings, sometimes even more." List the major funeral expenses that are described.
2. Why have some political and religious leaders criticized these expenses?
3. What types of things happen at a typical Ghanaian funeral?

Dancing Pallbearers

Watch the video.

1. In addition to the dancing pallbearers, name another cultural trait that you noticed in this video.

Population Density Of Ghana

Use the GhanaWeb link and the map to answer the following questions.

1. What is the difference between population and population density? (Google if necessary.)
2. What is the population of Ghana?
3. What is the population density of the Accra area?
4. Besides the Greater Accra region, which other regions of Ghana are very densely populated? (*Hint: click on the map and a pop-up will appear with the name of the region.*)
5. Based on this map, why does it make sense that the coffin workshops are located where they are?

Religion In Ghana

Use the Wikipedia link and the map to answer the following questions.

1. According to the 2010 Census, what percentage of Ghanaians identify as Christian (any denomination)?

What percentage identify as Muslim?

2. How did Christianity diffuse to Ghana?
3. How did Islam diffuse to Ghana?
4. What role does traditional religion still play in Ghanaian life?
5. In which region of Ghana is Christianity more predominant?

In which region of Ghana is Islam more predominant?

6. Zoom out on the map. In which regions of Africa is Christianity more predominant?

In which regions of Africa is Islam more predominant?

Ghanaian Cocoa Production

Use the map and link to the Ghana Cocoa Board to answer the following questions.

1. The Slate article mentions a coffin shaped like a cocoa bean. In which regions of Ghana does most cocoa production take place?
2. Approximately how many Ghanaian farm families are employed in the cocoa industry?
3. How much revenue does cocoa generate for the Ghanaian economy?

Ghana: Fishing In Oil's Ocean

Read the article.

1. The Slate article also mentioned coffins shaped like fish. How has the development of oil and gas resources impacted Ghanaian fishermen?
2. "One of the biggest conflicts surrounding the intersection of these two industries is the physical confrontation that can occur on the water." Explain.
3. In what sense is the impact of the Ghanaian oil and gas industry uneven?
4. Why does Chief Nana Nketsia V believe that the oil and gas industry is just another example of modern day colonialism?

Diffusion Of Ghanaian Funeral Traditions

Read the article.

1. If you were to attend one of the Ghanaian funerals in New York described in the article, what would it be like?
2. "... the funerals all serve the same ends ..." What are the two ends?
3. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, about how many Ghanaians live in New York City?
4. In what sense are Ghanaian funerals "competitive"?
5. "The funerals are the hub of a buzzing economy." Explain.
6. What is Twi?
7. What are the traditional colors worn to a Ghanaian funeral?

8. What is highlife?

9. "Francis Insaideo, a biochemist who recently moved to New York, said funerals reminded him that he belongs to a community." Why is this significant?

Ghanaian Coffin At The Minneapolis Institute of Art

Take a look and plan a visit!

Preparation For Class Discussion

You are now finished with the StoryMap portion of this activity. Next will be a class discussion. To prepare, think about the following discussion questions:

- Which coffins did you find most intriguing? Why?
- Which Ghanaian funeral traditions did you find 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 Sentence Summary

In addition to learning about the Ghanaian Fantasy Coffins themselves, describe five things that you learned about the human geography of Ghana from this activity. Use complete sentences.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.