Africa's Colonies Gain Independence

After World War II, European colonial powers were forced to withdraw from former colonies such as India and Vietnam. During the decade after the war, Africans, too, increasingly demanded independence.

A Geographically Diverse Continent

Africa is the world's second-largest continent, more than three times the size of the United States. Tropical rain forests cover central Africa's Congo Basin and coastal West Africa. Visit savannas, or grasslands with scattered trees, make up interior West Africa, East Africa, and much of central and southern Africa. Africa has the world's largest desert—the Sahara—in the north and the smaller Kalahari Desert in the south, as well as fertile coastal strips in North and South Africa.

Africa's people are concentrated in the most fertile areas, such as the savannas and forest regions of Nigeria and the moist highlands of East Africa. These regions produce enough food to support large populations. Africa's people, however, have been moving from the countryside to the constantly growing cities.

African Nations Gain Independence

In Nairobi, in villages throughout Kenya, and in other new African nations, bands played new national anthems, and crowds cheered the good news. However, as Africans celebrated their newfound freedom, they also faced many challenges.

Set a Purpose

Focus Question
What challenges did new African nations face?

Prepare to Read

Section Standards and the list of Terms, People, and Places.

Prepare to Read

Build Background Knowledge
Ask students to recall challenges that nations such as Indonesia faced after independence (internal conflict and a struggle for democracy). Then ask students to predict challenges that African nations would face at independence.

Set a Purpose

Focus Question
What mood do the words of Ngugi wa Thiong'o convey? (excitement and pride that his nation has achieved independence)

Focus Point out the Section Focus Question and write it on the board. Tell students to refer to this question as they read. (Answer appears with Section 3 Assessment answers.)

Preview Have students preview the Section Standards and the list of Terms, People, and Places.

Note Taking Have students read this section using the Paragraph Shrinking strategy (TE, p. T20). As they read, have students fill in the concept web summarizing causes and effects of independence in Africa.

Reading and Note Taking Study Guide, p. 146

High-Use Word Definition and Sample Sentence

Ensure, p. 564

To ensure that students would be prepared for the assessment, the teacher gave weekly practice tests.

Vocabulary Builder

Use the information below and the following resources to teach the high-use word from this section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High-Use Word</th>
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Africans Build New Nations

Some new African nations enjoyed peace and democracy. Others were plunged into crisis by civil war, military rule, or corrupt dictators. In recent years, however, there has been a hopeful trend toward greater democracy in many African nations.

Confronting Ethnic Divisions

European colonial powers had drawn boundaries between their colonies without regard for the territories of the continent’s hundreds of ethnic groups. Most African nations gained independence as a patchwork of peoples with diverse languages and religions. Once freedom was won, many Africans felt their first loyalty was to their own ethnic group, not to a faceless national government. As a result, ethnic and regional conflict plagued many nations.

Dictators Seize Power

Many early leaders established one-party political systems. Multiparty systems, those leaders declared, encouraged disorder. Many one-party states became dictatorships. Dictators often used their positions to enrich themselves and a privileged few.

When bad government policies led to unrest, the military often seized power. More than half of all African nations suffered military coups (kooz). A coup, or overthrow of a government. Some military rulers were brutal tyrants. Others sought to improve conditions. Military leaders usually promised to restore civilian rule once they had cleaned up the government. In many cases, however, they gave up power only when they were toppled by other military coups.

Moving Toward Democracy

More and more Africans demanded an end to strong-man rule and a move to greater democracy. Meanwhile, Western governments and the World Bank required democratic reforms as a condition for loans. In many cases, however, they gave up power only when they were toppled by other military coups.

Africans’ Efforts Toward Democracy

In the first years of independence, African leaders often struggled to establish democratic institutions. In many cases, however, they gave up power only when they were toppled by other military coups. One artist, Kofi Antubam, created a golden seat of government, incorporating traditional symbols, to be used at presidential inaugurations.

Link to Art

Ghanaian Art After Independence

Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana’s first president, turned to the arts to help establish an identity for Ghana and unify its many cultures. During colonial rule, African art had been discouraged. Ghana’s new government commissioned public murals, mosaics, sculptures, and national symbols and funded drama and dance. Regional diversity was encouraged. One artist, Kofi Antubam, created a golden seat of government, incorporating traditional symbols, to be used at presidential inaugurations. In the 1980s, Ghana’s leader, Jerry Rawlings, restablished the arts. Today Ghana’s art is thriving. Ghanaian artists incorporate both Western influences and traditional forms such as the geometric motifs of kente cloth.
Africans Build New Nations H-SS 10.10.3

Instruct

■ Introduce: Key Terms Ask students to locate the key term coup d’état (in blue) in the text and explain its meaning. Point out that more than half of Africa’s new nations suffered military coups. Ask students to predict why there were so many changes of power and struggles for control in the emerging nations of Africa. Have students read to confirm or adjust their ideas.

■ Teach Discuss how colonial rule contributed to the post-independence power struggles in many African nations. Highlight the different factions that competed for influence, including former colonial powers, and trace the trend toward democracy. Use the Numbered Heads strategy (TR, p. T23) and ask Why did many Africans lack loyalty to their new national governments? (National boundaries had been drawn by European colonial powers without regard to ethnic composition. Africans had greater loyalty to their ethnic group than to their nation.) What role did former colonial powers play in African power struggles? (Many former colonial powers retained strong business interests and economic influence.) How have African nations moved toward democracy? (Many have legalized opposition parties and lifted censorship. Some nations have held multiparty elections for the first time.)

■ Quick Activity Web Code map-3131 will take students to an interactive map. Have students complete the interactivity and then answer the questions in the text.

Answers

1. More and more Africans have demanded democracy. In addition, Western governments and the World Bank have put economic pressure to require democratic reforms.

2. Sample: They could provide financial support and influence those who visit their nation.

Materials

Advanced Readers Gifted and Talented

Copy onto the board the following quotation from the British historian Thomas B. Macaulay: “Many politicians are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story who resolved not to go into the water till he had learned to swim.” Have students research the history of an African nation during and after its struggle for independence. Have them use the Macaulay quotation to write an essay about the selected nation’s experience with democracy. Then conduct a discussion of the causes of Africa’s overall successes and failures with democracy.

562 New Nations Emerge

In nations such as Tanzania, Nigeria, and Benin, multiparty elections were held, removing long-ruling leaders from office.

Foreigners Jostle for Influence Although African nations gained political independence, colonial powers often retained control of businesses in their former colonies. Many new nations thus remained dependent economically on their former colonizers.

During the Cold War, the Soviet Union and the United States competed for military and strategic advantage through alliances with several African countries. For example, the United States supported Mobutu Sese Seko, the dictator of Zaire (now known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo), in counter Soviet support for the government of neighboring Angola. Likewise, during the 1970s, the United States had an alliance with the government of Somalia, while the Soviet Union supported neighboring Ethiopia. These countries attracted superpower interest because they controlled access to the Red Sea, a vital shipping route connecting Asia, Europe, and Africa. Each superpower wanted to make sure that the other did not gain an advantage.

Standards Check Why have African countries moved toward democracy in recent years? H-SS 10.10.3

The Stories of Five African Nations

While the new nations of Africa faced many of the same challenges, each nation had a unique history. To gain a better understanding of the process of nation-building in Africa, we will examine the recent histories of five important nations.

Ghana The first African nation south of the Sahara to win freedom was the British colony of Gold Coast. During the 1940s, Kwame Nkrumah organized a movement for independence from Britain. In 1957, Gold Coast finally won independence. The nation took the name Ghana, after the ancient West African kingdom. The name linked the new nation with an African past.

As president, Nkrumah advocated socialized expropriation and nationalized, or placed under government ownership, many businesses. His government built a massive dam for electric power that created Lake Volta, the world’s largest artificial lake, but left Ghana with massive debts. Gradually, his government became more dictatorial and corrupt. In 1966, he was overthrown by the first of several military coups in Ghana.

Ghana’s last coup, in 1981, was led by a young military officer named Jerry Rawlings. Rawlings took steps to strengthen Ghana’s economy, which is based largely on overseas sales of cocoa and gold.
Independent Practice

Have students fill in the Outline Map Independence in Africa.

Monitor Progress

Circulate to make sure students are accurately labeling the nations in Africa on their Outline Maps. Check answers to map skills questions.

Answers

Map Skills

1. Review locations with students.
2. Angola
3. after 1975
The Stories of Five African Nations

Instruct

- Introduce: Have a volunteer read this subtitle and the paragraph beneath it, on page 562. Discuss why each nation’s experience in facing the challenges of independence might vary. Invite students to suggest reasons, such as geography, ethnic makeup, or external influences, and then have them read to confirm or revise their ideas.

- Teach: Write the names of the five nations on the board: Ghana, Kenya, Algeria, Congo, and Nigeria. Have students list features of each nation’s history, including its former colonial ruler, key leaders, types of government, and current form of government. Write their answers on the board.

- Quick Activity: Direct students’ attention to the Biography of Jomo Kenyatta and other information about Kenyatta on this page. Ask them whether Jomo Kenyatta can be called a democratic leader. Then discuss the Biography question, inviting students’ thoughts on the importance of dynamic political leaders in inspiring change.

Vocabulary Builder

**BIOGRAPHY**

**BIOGRAPHY** Sample: They inspire people to support their nation and make the ideals of the nation appealing to people of different backgrounds.

Answer

**BIOGRAPHY** Jomo Kenyatta

Jomo Kenyatta (c. 1894–1978) was born in a small Kikuyu village and educated at a Christian mission. Moving to Nairobi, he was quickly drawn to the first stirrings of the nationalist cause. He quickly became a prominent anticolonial organizer and was eventually elected president of the Kenya Africa Union. The British arrested Kenyatta in 1952 and convicted him in 1953 on charges of inciting the Mau Mau uprising against the British. Released in 1961, he resumed leadership of the movement for independence, which was finally granted in December 1963. When Kenya became a republic in 1964, Kenyatta was elected its first president. Under his 15-year rule, Kenya enjoyed political stability and economic advances. Each year, October 20, the date of his arrest, is celebrated as Kenyatta Day. What role do you think national heroes play in helping to form a nation’s identity?

History Background

**A History of Repression** Colonialism in Algeria left a bitter legacy. Under French rule, Muslims faced discrimination. French settlers owned and operated large farms, businesses, and industries while Algerian Muslims labored on tiny farms or in menial jobs. Muslims were prevented from taking an active role in government. In the 1950s, resentment erupted into guerrilla war. The French moved two million Algerians to internment camps in the desert, where thousands perished. Algerians responded with terrorist attacks. Nearly a million Algerians and 10,000 French soldiers died overall. Since independence, Algeria has experienced cycles of repression and violence. In the 1990s, attacks by government and opposition forces killed up to 150,000 civilians.

Rawlings also restored democracy to Ghana, bringing political stability to the country. He won a free election in 1992, and then peacefully handed over power in 2001 after losing an election to an opponent.

Kenya

In Kenya, freedom came only after armed struggle. White settlers had taken over land in the fertile highlands, where they displaced African farmers. Most of these farmers were Kikuyu (kee koo yoo), Kenya’s largest ethnic group. While settlers saw Kenya as their homeland and had passed laws to ensure their own domination, “The land is ours,” declared Jomo Kenyatta, a leading spokesman for the Kikuyu. “When Europeans came, they kept us back and took our land.” Kenyatta supported nonviolent methods to end the oppressive laws.

In the 1950s, more radical leaders turned to guerrilla warfare. They burned farms and attacked settlers and Africans who worked with the colonial rulers. The British called the guerrillas the Mau Mau. To stop the violence, the British arrested Kenyatta and killed thousands of Kikuyu. The rebels were crushed, but the movement lived on. In 1963, Kenyatta, whose imprisonment had made him a national hero, became the first leader of an independent Kenya.

As president, Kenyatta jailed opponents and outlawed opposition parties. Kenya’s ruling party resisted free elections until violent demonstrations and foreign lenders forced it to move toward democracy during the 1990s. Finally, in 2002, Kenya’s first fair election removed the ruling party from office.

Algeria

In the 1800s, France had conquered Algeria after a brutal struggle. A million French people settled there over time. They were determined to keep the Algerian people from winning independence. Algerian nationalists set up the National Liberation Front in 1954, which turned to guerrilla warfare to win freedom. France, which had just lost its Asian colony of Vietnam, sent half a million troops to maintain its possession of Algeria. France was especially reluctant to lose Algeria after oil and natural gas were discovered there in the 1950s.
A long and costly war raged in Algeria. Hundreds of thousands of Algerians were killed. Eventually, public opinion in France turned against the war. Finally, in 1962, Algeria celebrated its freedom.

A coup in 1965 began a long period of military rule. During the late 1960s and 1970s, Algeria nationalized foreign firms and created a command economy based on oil and gas exports. Since the 1980s, the country has returned to a market economy. When the government allowed free elections in 1992, an Islamist party won the most votes. Islamists are people who want government policies to be based on the teachings of Islam. The military rejected the election results. Seven years of civil war between the Islamists and the military left 100,000 Algerians dead. Since 1999, the government has largely stopped the fighting, but the country remains tense. Critics have accused the government of rigging elections.

Democratic Republic of the Congo The Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly a Belgian colony, covers a vast region of central Africa, a million square miles of rain forest and savanna centered in the Congo River basin. The huge country contains valuable natural resources, including diamonds and the copper of Katanga province. Belgium sought to maintain control of these resources. In 1960, therefore, it rushed to declare the colony independent, though the Congolese were not prepared for self-government. This enabled Belgian mining companies, working with politicians in Katanga, to retain effective control of the province and its valuable minerals.

The Belgian-backed province rebelled against the Congo shortly after independence. The country’s first prime minister, Patrice Lumumba, appealed for Soviet help to fight the rebels. Seeing the appeal to the Soviets as a Cold War challenge, the United States supported Lumumba’s rival, Colonel Joseph Mobutu, later known as Mobutu Sese Seko. Mobutu captured Lumumba, and Lumumba was executed shortly thereafter.

An Election Celebration Citizens of Mauritania, in West Africa, celebrate the reelection of the country’s president in 2003. What signs of democracy do you see in this photograph?

Independent Practice

- Display Color Transparency 101: African States Achieve Independence. Have students review the chart and then list causes and effects of independence for each of the five nations discussed.
- Color Transparencies, 101
- Have students suppose they are national historians for one of the five nations. Ask them to briefly recount their nation’s recent history in one to two paragraphs. Encourage students to reflect pride in their nation’s achievements and/or concern for its struggles.

Monitor Progress

- As students list causes and effects of independence in Africa, circulate to make sure that they understand which causes and effects listed on the Transparency apply to each of the five nations.
- Check Reading and Note Taking Study Guide entries for student understanding.

Link to Literature

Wole Soyinka In 1986 Nigerian writer Wole Soyinka became the first black African to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature. Soyinka has written plays, poetry, and novels that combine Western influences with his native Yoruba folklore, song, and dance. Soyinka writes in English, and his works criticize both excessive nationalism and of Africa’s modern governments. “I have one abiding religion—human liberty,” Soyinka says. In the 1960s, Soyinka was arrested by Nigeria’s repressive government and kept mainly in solitary confinement for more than two years. His notes, written on toilet paper and paper scraps using self-made ink, were later published as a prison diary. Forced into exile in 1994, Soyinka returned to Nigeria in 1998.

Answer

Caption People are waving signs and voicing their support for the candidate, which is a sign of a democratic election campaign.
Nigeria's Oil Industry
Nigeria's economy relies heavily on revenues from its oil industry. This oil-rich nation is operating a oil well in southeastern Nigeria.

The United Nations ended the Katanga rebellion in 1963. In 1965, Mobutu overthrew Congo's government and ruled as a military dictator. Mobutu's harsh and corrupt rule led Congo's poverty and instability to increase. He was finally driven into exile in 1997 by a rebellion based in the south. A second coup later that year by northern Muslim officers led to a rebellion in the oil-rich southeast by the Bia people, who declared independence as the Republic of Biafra. A three-year war ensued that left hundreds of thousands dead. In the end, Nigeria's military defeated the Biafran rebels and ended Biafra's independence.

During the 1970s and 1980s, a series of military rulers violently suppressed opposition and diverted much of the country's oil earnings for their personal enrichment. Opposition to military rule increased during the 1990s. A second coup in 1993 returned power to civilian rule, but a return to democracy, however, Nigeria's people faced an increase in crime. Meanwhile, ethnic and religious divisions gave rise to renewed violence.

The Cold War superpowers sought alliances with African nations. They both wanted military and strategic advantage in Africa, so they could advance their global dominance. However, these alliances caused problems for African nations. The Cold War superpowers often sided with African nations, but they also supported dictators to maintain power. This made it difficult for African nations to maintain their independence. In the end, the Cold War superpowers withdrew their support, and African nations were left to face their challenges on their own.

Weaknesses: The Cold War superpowers sought alliances with African nations to advance their global dominance. They supported dictators to maintain power, but African nations were left to face their challenges on their own.

1. What were the weaknesses of African nations? The Cold War superpowers sought alliances with African nations to advance their global dominance. They supported dictators to maintain power, but African nations were left to face their challenges on their own.

2. How did Biafra and Katanga reflect the challenges to unity faced by the two countries? They both wanted military and strategic advantage in Africa, so they could advance their global dominance. However, these alliances caused problems for African nations. The Cold War superpowers often sided with African nations, but they also supported dictators to maintain power. This made it difficult for African nations to maintain their independence. In the end, the Cold War superpowers withdrew their support, and African nations were left to face their challenges on their own.

3. How did Mobutu and Nkrumah respond to the Cold War? They both wanted military and strategic advantage in Africa, so they could advance their global dominance. However, these alliances caused problems for African nations. The Cold War superpowers often sided with African nations, but they also supported dictators to maintain power. This made it difficult for African nations to maintain their independence. In the end, the Cold War superpowers withdrew their support, and African nations were left to face their challenges on their own.

4. How did Cold War superpowers influence the history of Algeria? The Cold War superpowers sought alliances with African nations to advance their global dominance. They supported dictators to maintain power, but African nations were left to face their challenges on their own.

5. How did Cold War superpowers influence the history of Nkrumah? They both wanted military and strategic advantage in Africa, so they could advance their global dominance. However, these alliances caused problems for African nations. The Cold War superpowers often sided with African nations, but they also supported dictators to maintain power. This made it difficult for African nations to maintain their independence. In the end, the Cold War superpowers withdrew their support, and African nations were left to face their challenges on their own.

6. How did Cold War superpowers influence the history of Mobutu? They both wanted military and strategic advantage in Africa, so they could advance their global dominance. However, these alliances caused problems for African nations. The Cold War superpowers often sided with African nations, but they also supported dictators to maintain power. This made it difficult for African nations to maintain their independence. In the end, the Cold War superpowers withdrew their support, and African nations were left to face their challenges on their own.

Writing About History
Quick Write: Prewriting Elaboration

To write a compare-and-contrast essay, you need to prewrite examples that support the main point of the essay. Suppose that the main point of your essay is to compare and contrast challenges faced by Algeria and Nigeria since independence. Draft two sentences for an essay in each sentence, give examples that compare or contrast a challenge faced by these countries.

For additional assessment, have students access Standards Monitoring Online at Web Code mza-3131.
Kwame Nkrumah: Autobiography

Kwame Nkrumah led the people of Gold Coast in their quest for independence from Britain. After succeeding in 1957, Nkrumah became the first prime minister and renamed the country Ghana. In this excerpt from his Autobiography, Nkrumah speaks of the need to establish economic independence as a means of maintaining political independence.

...independence for the Gold Coast was my aim. It was a colony, and I have always regarded colonialism as the policy by which a foreign power binds territories to itself by political ties, with the primary object of promoting her own economic advantage. No one need be surprised if this system has led to disturbances and political tension in many territories. There are few people who would not rid themselves of such domination if they could... I saw that the whole solution to our problem lay in political freedom for our people, for it is only when a people are politically free that other races can give them the respect that is due them. It is impossible to talk of political freedom for our people, for it is only when a people are politically free that other races can give them the respect that is due them. It is impossible to talk of political freedom for our people, for it is only when a people are politically free that other races can give them the respect that is due them. It is impossible to talk of...