

Africa – Geography & Economics Study Guide

1. How is Africa's landscape like a "mirror image"? **From the equator, Africa's landscapes and climates "mirror" each other. The rain forest is in the center, and then the savannas, the Sahel regions, the deserts, and the Mediterranean climates extend from there.**
2. What is the Great Rift Valley and why do so many people live there? **The Great Rift Valley is a valley that extends along the eastern side of the African continent. Many of Africa's lakes are located in this valley so many people populate this area to have access to these sources of fresh water. Lake Victoria, the source of the Nile River, is also located in the Great Rift Valley.**
3. What is deforestation? **Deforestation refers to removing trees from an area.**
 - a. Why does deforestation occur in the Sahel & rainforest? **People cut down trees so the land dries out and eventually becomes infertile. In the Sahel, people cut the trees for fuel (charcoal) and subsistence farming, and they cut down trees in the rain forest to clear land for the logging industry, farming, or grazing animals.**
 - b. Why is deforestation harmful? **The soil loses nutrients so people will not be able to farm the land as effectively, there are no trees to stop erosion, overuse of the land makes it infertile, loss of plant species (possible medicine), displacement of people & animals that depend on the forests, transpiration cycle is interrupted creating less rain and increasing drought conditions, atmosphere is impacted due to carbon dioxide from burning wood – People have had to adapt to subsistence farming and herding animals.**
4. How does deforestation lead to desertification? **Removing trees dries out the soil and removes nutrients from it allowing the soil to become more desert-like. The nearby desert areas begin to "creep" into the Sahel.**
5. How has Pastoralism increased the effects of desertification? **Pastoralism leads to overuse of the land because animals graze and important nutrients are removed from the soil. Over time, there is less grass so there is less evaporation and rain, and the sun scorches the land drying out the soil.**
6. In which region is desertification having the most damaging effects? Why? **The Sahel is affected the most because this region borders the desert so closely. As more and more land becomes overused and infertile, the borders of the deserts seem to increase annually.**
7. Why is deforestation occurring in Africa's rainforests? **The logging industry removes trees and people clear land for farming and raising animals.**
8. What are governments doing to try to stop deforestation and desertification? **Governments in the Sahel are trying to require charcoal dealers to get licenses to control deforestation. They are also educating people about cooking alternatives. Governments in communities near rain forests are trying to educate people about the consequences of deforestation and they are trying to increase efforts to replant cleared lands.**
9. Where is the Niger River delta and why is it important? **The Niger River delta is the fertile land around the mouth of the Niger River where it runs into the Atlantic Ocean. This area is important because it is rich in oil deposits and it is very fertile land that supports a large population.**
10. Why do some African countries have trouble becoming economically successful? **Corrupt governments, loss of infrastructure, lack of transportation systems, criminal activity, fighting constant famine, and trying to combat diseases are some of the reasons African countries have trouble becoming economically successful.**
11. Why is pollution produced by companies sometimes allowed by governments in Africa? **The governments want the companies to be profitable, so they don't worry about them having to pay for ways to prevent or clean up pollution.**
12. Why is famine caused in Africa today? **There is an unequal distribution of resources and most people are farming at subsistence levels. Also, political corruption and war prevent people from having access to food.**
13. What types of conflict impact the people of Africa? What are the consequences of these conflicts? **Political conflicts which result in corrupt governments, religious and ethnic conflicts which lead to war and suffering**
14. What are some reasons many people in Africa don't have adequate healthcare? **They do not have enough money to pay for treatments, there are no doctors near where they live, they may not have access to medication, & people continue to rely on traditional healers because they are cheaper and culturally preferred.**

- a. How does HIV/AIDS impact countries in Africa? **Many people are sick and unable to work, a lot of money is spent on treating the disease so countries can't invest in new technology and development, many children become orphans because their parents die from the disease**
 - b. Why do traditional healers still play a role in healthcare today? **Many people still trust traditional healers because to do so is a part of their culture. Also, they are cheaper than other treatments.**
 - c. How do foreign countries positively impact healthcare in Africa? **Many countries donate money and medical resources to help people in Africa. They may also trade resources for medicine and supplies.**
15. If you had to choose to go to an African school, would you rather go to a city school or a rural, village school? Why? **City schools provide the opportunity to learn about more job choices, students in city schools can learn the national language of the country and have more opportunities, and city schools may have more resources and better educated teachers.**
16. How does the idea of land ownership differ between some ethnic groups in Africa and people in the United States? **Some ethnic groups believe that no one owns the land rather it belongs to the community to use as needed, whereas Americans believe that individuals own land and can buy and sell it at their will.**
17. What conclusions can usually be drawn by looking at a country's literacy rate? **The literacy rate may tell us how much a country values education and what percentage of the population is capable of successfully contributing to the country's economy.**
- a. How does this rate impact human capital & the economy in the country? **People must be educated to have higher level jobs and contribute to the economy.**
 - b. How could this rate relate to the standard of living in the country? **A more educated population leads to better technology, inventions, and new ideas which lead to a higher standard of living.**
18. What are some cash crops that Africa exports to maintain economically interdependent relationships with other countries? **Cotton, peanuts, cocoa, sugar cane, other food products**
19. How would a traditional economy differ from market and command economies? **Traditional economies base products on cultural needs and availability of resources. Individuals may also participate in a barter/trade system.**
20. How could a country use a tariff on foreign products to increase domestic trade? **They may put a tariff on a foreign product and pass that cost on to the consumer. This would encourage the consumer to buy local products which do not have the added tariff.**
21. How can specialization help a country's economy? **A country may become an expert in producing a quality product.**
22. How could specialization negatively impact a country's economy? **If demand for the country's only product goes down or if the country loses the resources for that product, the country will lose money.**
23. How could a government's focus on one resource negatively impact the people who live there? **The government would not care about or use resources to help other areas of need. Many issues would not get proper attention and people would suffer.**
24. How does the location of natural resources affect a country's economy? **If a country has valuable resources like gold, diamonds, or oil, they can trade them with other countries to earn money. Some poor countries have very little natural resources.**
25. Why would a country's government want to encourage entrepreneurship? **People who create businesses also create jobs. The unemployment rate decreases and people spend money which helps the economy.**
26. How can micro-lending help a country's economy? **Giving small loans to people help them start new businesses or buy new equipment and supplies like seeds to help them make profits and be successful.**
27. Why does living in a city not ensure economic success? **Cities may be overcrowded so there might be very few jobs available, and jobs that are available may pay very little money. Also, many workers may not have enough training to get available jobs.**