In 1884 at the request of Portugal, German chancellor Otto von Bismark called together the major western powers of the world to negotiate questions and end confusion over the control of Africa. Bismark appreciated the opportunity to expand Germany’s sphere of influence over Africa and desired to force Germany’s rivals to struggle with one another for territory.

At the time of the conference, 80% of Africa remained under traditional and local control. What ultimately resulted was a hodgepodge of geometric boundaries that divided Africa into fifty irregular countries. This new map of the continent was superimposed over the one thousand indigenous cultures and regions of Africa. The new countries lacked rhyme or reason and divided coherent groups of people and merged together disparate groups who really did not get along.

Fourteen countries were represented by a plethora of ambassadors when the conference opened in Berlin on November 15, 1884. The countries represented at the time included Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden-Norway (unified from 1814-1905), Turkey and the United States. Of these fourteen nations, France, Germany, Great Britain, and Portugal were the major players in the conference, controlling most of colonial Africa at the time.

The initial task of the conference was to agree that the Congo River and Niger River mouths and basins would be considered neutral and open to trade. Despite its neutrality, part of the Congo Basin became a personal kingdom for Belgium’s King Leopold II and under his rule, over half of the region’s population died.

At the time of the conference, only the coastal areas of Africa were colonized by the European powers. At the Berlin Conference the European colonial powers scrambled to gain control over the interior of the continent. The conference lasted until February 26, 1885 - a three month period where colonial powers haggled over geometric boundaries in the interior of the continent, disregarding the cultural and linguistic boundaries already established by the indigenous African population.

Following the conference, the give and take continued. By 1914, the conference participants had fully divided Africa among themselves into fifty countries.

Major colonial holdings included: Use map on page 404 to determine answers but write COUNTRY’s name not language or people.

_________________________ desired a Cape-to-Cairo group of colonies and almost succeeded though their control of Egypt, Sudan (Anglo-Egyptian Sudan), Uganda, Kenya (British East Africa), South Africa, and Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Botswana (Rhodesia). The British also controlled Nigeria and Ghana (Gold Coast).

_________________________ took much of western Africa, from Mauritania to Chad (French West Africa) and Gabon and the Republic of Congo (French Equatorial Africa).

_________________________ King Leopold II controlled the Democratic Republic of Congo (Belgian Congo).

_________________________ Mozambique in the east and Angola in the west.

_________________________ took Somalia (Italian Somaliland) and a portion of Ethiopia.

_________________________ took Namibia (German Southwest Africa) and Tanzania (German East Africa).

_________________________ claimed the smallest territory - Equatorial Guinea (Rio Muni).
1. The first humans came from Africa.  a. True  b. False

2. An early humanoid skeleton found in Africa is named:  a. Mary  b. Anna  c. Lucy


4. Which of these words/ideas are NOT associated with ancient Egypt?  a. pyramids  b. dynasty  c. pharaoh  d. maasai  e. mummies

5. The last Egyptian ruler was a  a. man  b. woman

6. What animal is referred to as the “ship of the Sahara?”

7. Nubia is a  a. river  b. ancient building  c. culture

8. Which of these is NOT a rich kingdom of West Africa in Sub-Saharan Africa?  a. Mali  b. Ghana  c. Great Zimbabwe  d. Songhai

9. Many Africans were sold into slavery.  a. True  b. False

10. When did Europeans began pushing into Africa?  a. 1800’s  b. 1700’s  c. 1900’s

11. Many of Africa's problems today are a result of  a. too many people.  b. colonial rule.  c. weather.

12. The main religions practiced in Africa are:  a. Islam  b. Christianity  c. Traditional (ethnic)  d. All of the above

13. Approximately 50% of Africa is Christian.  a. True  b. False

14. The world's fastest growing cities are in Africa.  a. True  b. False

15. Africa has never had dictators.  a. True  b. False

16. There is little tourism in Africa because of all the violence and Civil Wars.  a. True  b. False

17. The Suez Canal connects the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean.  a. True  b. False
Why is Africa so poor? Why, when other regions of the world have made significant strides since the global wave of decolonization after World War II, has Africa been trapped in a state of underdevelopment?

1) The Legacy of Colonialism - the colonial period in Africa was relatively brief, but it is difficult to overstate its impact. The colonial powers haphazardly divided Africa as it suited their interests, in many cases joining previously distinct ethnic groups in a single state while bisecting others with artificial boundaries. Creating states without regard to nations has contributed to ethnic violence.

2) Lots of Land, Few People - Many African states contain vast, sparsely populated regions where it is difficult to collect taxes and prohibitively expensive to build infrastructure. The geography of these regions provides an ideal location from which the rebel groups that routinely menace African states can launch attacks and hide from government forces.
3) **Infectious Diseases** - HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Tuberculosis have wreaked havoc on African societies. Malaria kills an African child every 30 seconds and Tuberculosis infection rates have tripled in the last decade. However, it is AIDS that extracts the greatest toll.

4) **Civil War** - Since decolonization began in earnest in the 1960s, millions upon millions of lives in Africa have been lost to civil war - the disastrous consequence of weak, poorly institutionalized and illegitimate states.

5) **Scarcity of Human Capital or** supply of labor and its productivity - has decreased by decades of war, disease, and by the pervasive lack of access to education. Literacy rates in Sub-Saharan Africa range from 19-85% with huge disparities between countries. The most highly skilled professionals leave Africa for more developed countries.

6) **Corruption** - Government corruption, from the well-connected official who funnels millions in foreign aid or oil revenues into a foreign bank account to the civil servant who has not been paid in months and demands a bribe, reduces confidence and deprives governments of much needed revenue to fix roads, build schools, and provide basic services to its people.

7) **Natural Resources** - The abundance of natural resources in poor countries can lead to rampant corruption, low levels of industrialization, decreased incentives to diversify the economy or invest in education, and civil war. The economies of resource-rich countries grow more slowly than those of wealthy countries, and the struggle between rival, often ethnically-based, political groups for control of oil and diamond resources has fueled armed conflicts.

8) **Personal Rule** - Post-colonial Africa has been plagued by governments founded not on strong institutions, but on the personal charisma of a single leader. Whether led by brutal dictators or enlightened despots, these leaders often treat the state as their personal property, stifling the development of opposition political parties, regular elections, a free press, and other mechanisms of accountability associated with developed democracies.

9) **Foreign Aid** - International assistance may hurt poor African countries as much as it helps. Aid often comes with "strings attached"; governments must enact policies that in some cases may not represent the interests of the people.

10) **An Unjust International System** - Europe and the U.S., large potential markets for African produce, continue to impose high tariffs on foreign agricultural products while at the same time placing pressure on African governments to open their economies to foreign trade. The international lending locks African countries into cycles of indebtedness where they must take out more loans in order to make interest payments on old ones.

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Africa’s Diseases - Reported by World Health Organization (WHO) in 1999

1. HIV and AIDS - 23.3 million Africans south of the Sahara (10% of world’s population but have 70% of AIDS cases). 55% of infected are women - 10 million children lost at least one parent due to AIDS

2. Malaria - 90% of the world’s malaria cases are in Africa which makes it the second most deadly disease on the continent. Spread by mosquitoes - Majority of deaths are children under five

3. River blindness - caused by a parasitic worm transmitted from one person to another by the black fly. Of the 120 million people at risk worldwide, 96% are in Africa

4. Sleeping sickness - caused by parasites, which are transmitted to human beings and animals when they are bitten by an infected tsetse fly.

5. Schistosomiasis - waterborne disease, people are infected when they come in contact with larvae carried by snails in infested water. Often found in rice paddies - rarely causes death

6. Guinea worm - transmitted by drinking contaminated water and only exists in Africa. Once ingested, the larvae mature and grow up to 3 feet long - it can take weeks or months to pull the worm out of person.

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**Nelson Mandela** is a former President of South Africa, the first to be elected in a fully representative democratic election, who held office from 1994–99. He was the first black president of South Africa. Before his presidency, Mandela was an anti-apartheid activist, and the leader of the African National Congress. The South African courts convicted him on charges of sabotage, as well as other crimes committed while he led the movement against apartheid. In accordance with his conviction, Mandela served 27 years in prison. Following his release from prison on February 11, 1990, Mandela supported reconciliation and negotiation, and helped lead the transition towards multi-racial democracy in South Africa. Nelson Mandela died in 2013.