

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Score: \_\_\_\_\_

## IMPERIALISM IN AFRICA

Europeans first took an interest in Africa during the 1400's. They found that slaves could be bought along the African coast from tribal rulers who had taken prisoners of war. The African rulers would sell their prisoners in return for cloth, guns, and iron. Between 1450 and 1865, European traders transported some 10 million slaves to North America and South America where they were sold to owners of sugar and cotton plantations. Companies from France, England, Portugal, Holland, and Denmark were earning tens of thousands of dollars on each voyage to America.



But attitudes toward slavery began to change during the 1800's as more and more people learned about the inhumane conditions forced upon captive Africans. Pressure for legal action resulted in Great Britain abolishing the slave trade and declaring slavery against the laws in all of its possessions. Other European countries also began taking a dim view of the marketing of human beings. Missionaries urged African rulers to stop selling their prisoners of war.

This humanitarian reform movement influenced European businessmen to look for other products in which to trade. Soon, peanuts, palm oil, and other commodities needed by European industrialists were flowing out of the Dark Continent. Crops grown in the African interior were sent to the coast where local tribesmen, acting as middlemen, sold them to trading companies. European countries at this time had not yet established any real colonies in Africa. Explorers, missionaries, consuls (government representatives), and a few scattered pockets of settlers were the only foreigners on the continent. Countries had little desire to start new colonies. Past experiences had shown that the establishment and administration of distant possessions was expensive and often troublesome.

But in the early 1880's, a dramatic change occurred in Europe's colonial policies. Suddenly half a dozen countries were involved in a spirited land rush that saw nearly all of Africa fall into European hands. Only Ethiopia and Liberia maintained their independence. The conquest of territory known as "imperialism" was carried out by Britain, France, Germany, Portugal, Italy, and Belgium. The Industrial Revolution had generated a need for raw materials and had created a class of wealthy businessmen who were interested in making foreign investments. Nations that were rivals in Europe became rivals in Africa. When one country claimed a piece of land, other did likewise, No one wanted to be outdone in terms of markets, prestige, and power.

During the race for colonies, imperialist nations often found themselves with conflicting claims. Conferences were held to define boundary lines and ease international tensions. In a short time, Africa was divided up on paper. Nations then set out to establish firm control over their new territories. Although they hoped to gain control peacefully, many countries were willing to use force if necessary. Some African rulers recognized Europe's technological and military superiority, and surrendered to the imperialists without incident. Other Africans fought skirmishes and all out wars of resistance. But by the 1920's, most of the continent was in the tight grasp of the European powers.

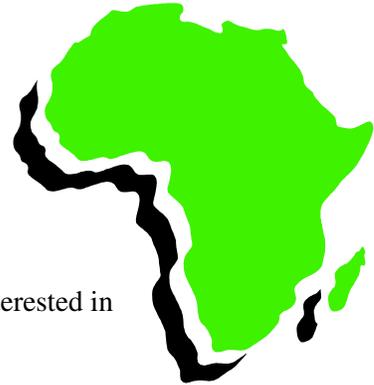
Colonial rule lasted for several decades until the post World War II period when independence movements became widespread. European countries were forced to choose between fighting expensive wars or giving up their colonies. Most chose to grant independence peacefully.

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### Multiple-Choice

- \_\_\_\_\_ Europeans went to Africa during the 1400's in order to:
  - divide the continent into colonies
  - trade for slaves
  - covert the natives to Christianity
- \_\_\_\_\_ African rulers hoped to get from the Europeans:
  - wheat and other grains
  - cloth, guns, and iron
  - farm equipment
- \_\_\_\_\_ Beginning in the 1800's, businessmen from Europe became interested in trading for such African products as:
  - oil and timber
  - peanuts and palm oil
  - corn and wheat
- \_\_\_\_\_ Countries began establishing colonies in Africa during the:
  - 1400's
  - 1500's
  - 1800's
- \_\_\_\_\_ The first foreigners to go to the Dark Continent were:
  - explorers, missionaries, and consuls
  - gold miners
  - tourists



### Matching

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| 6. _____ Great Britain       | A. Transported millions of slaves to North America and South America.                 |
| 7. _____ Missionaries        | B. Competed against each other for colonies in Africa.                                |
| 8. _____ imperialist nations | C. Abolished the slave trade and declared slavery against the law in its possessions. |
| 9. _____ tribal rulers       | D. Traded prisoners of war to the Europeans.  |
| 10. _____ European traders   | E. Urged Africans to stop giving slaves to the Europeans.                             |

### Completion

- \_\_\_\_\_ were needed to do the work on sugar and cotton plantations in the Americas.
- By 1914, almost all of \_\_\_\_\_ had been divided into colonies.
- The term for the conquest of territory is “\_\_\_\_\_.”
- Only \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ maintained their independence.

### True-False

- \_\_\_\_\_ China, India, and Japan carried on a busy trade with most parts of Africa.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Crops grown in the African interior were sent to the coast where local tribesmen sold them to trading companies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Great Britain, France, Germany, Portugal, Italy, and Belgium established colonial empires in Africa.
- \_\_\_\_\_ African countries were militarily and technologically superior to outside nations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Colonial rule lasted for several decades until the post- World War I period when independence movements became widespread.