

Africa's Ethnic Groups

Directions: Complete the chart below after discussing the presentation.

	Location	Ancestry	Religion	Language
Arab				
Ashanti				
Bantu				
Swahili				



Ethnic Groups in Africa



ARABS

Location

- Most of Africa's Arab population is found in the countries of Northern Africa.
- While the majority of Arabs are in North Africa, the gold and salt trade spread the Arab culture beyond the Sahara into the Sahel region and beyond.





Ancestry

- Arab people began to spread into North Africa in the late 600s, when the first Muslim armies arrived in Egypt.
- Arab armies, traders, and scholars soon spread across northern Africa all the way to Morocco.
- Wherever the Arabs went, they took Islam and the Arabic language with them.



Ancestry

- Arabic was necessary to be able to read the Quran, Islam's holy book.
- The Arabic language, the religion of Islam, and many other aspects of Muslim culture became part of Africa.



Religion

- Most Arabs practice Islam, while small numbers of Arabs practice other religions.
 - Not all Arabs are Muslims, and not all Muslims are Arabs.
- Islam consists mostly of two different groups.
- The majority of Muslims practice Sunni Islam, and most others practice Shi'a Islam.
 - Sunnis and Shi'a disagree about who is in charge of the Muslim world.

The mosque in Djenne, Mali is the oldest mud brick building in the world.



Religion

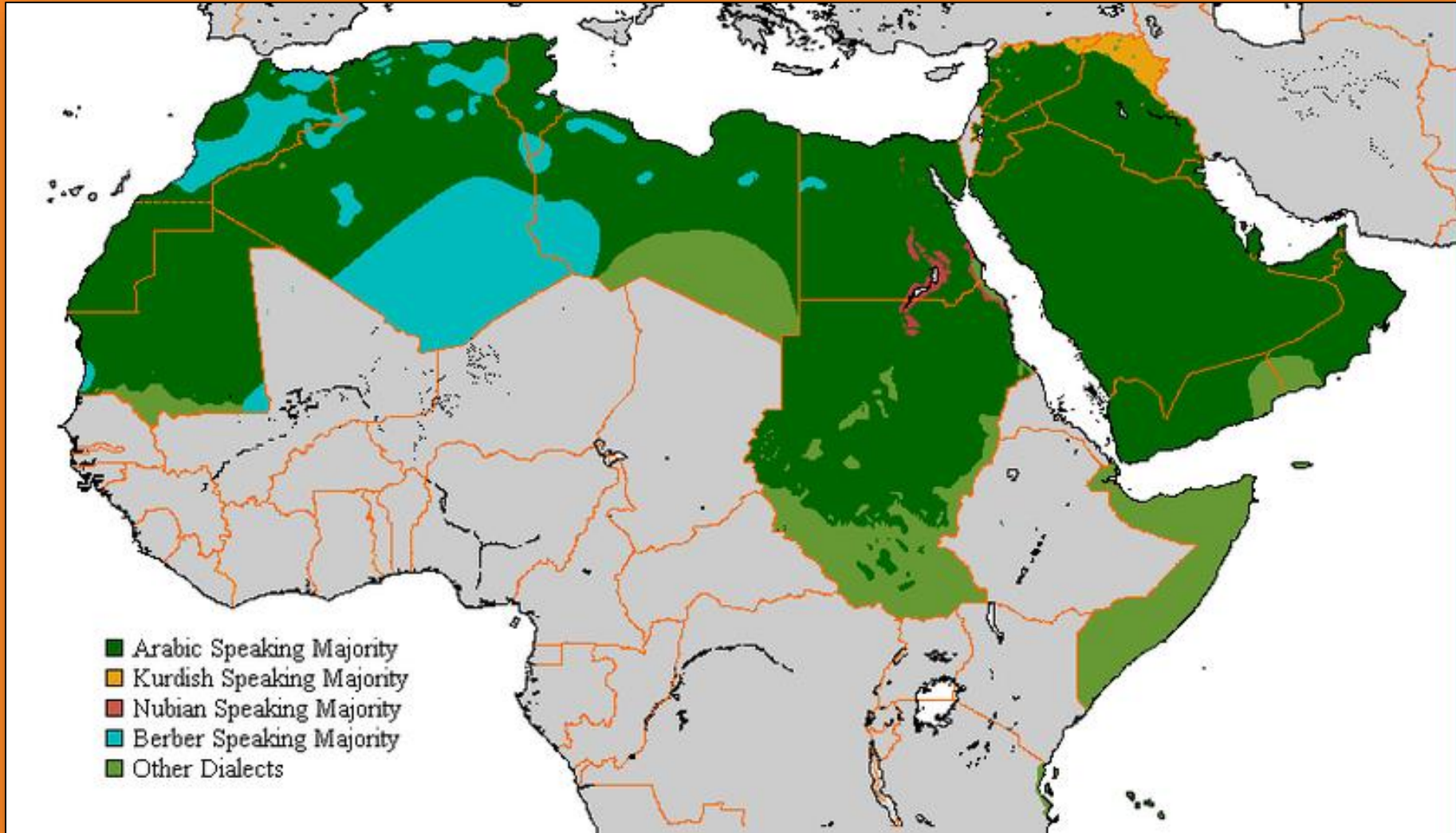
- Sunni Islam dominates in most Arab areas, especially in North Africa.
- Shi'a Islam is dominant among the Arab population in most of Southwest Asia.





Language

- The term “Arab” refers to an ethnic group made up of people who speak the Arabic language.
- Most Arabs, whether they are Muslim or Christian, speak Arabic.



Arab Girls' School in Egypt



Let's Review

- The majority of Arab people are found in Southwest Asia and northern Africa.
- The language of the Arab people is Arabic.
- Most Arabs, but not all, practice Islam.



ASHANTI

Location

- Prior to European colonization, the Ashanti people developed a large and influential empire in West Africa.
- Today, they live predominately in Ghana and Ivory Coast.
- The total Ashanti population is over 7 million.



Ancestry

- In 1701, a meeting of all the clan chiefs in the region was held.
- In this meeting, it was said that a Golden Stool was produced from the heavens by a priest and landed on the lap of Osei Tutu, the first king.
- The Golden Stool was declared to be the symbol of the new Ashanti kingdom.



Golden Stool of the
Ashanti (Replica)

Ancestry

- The Golden Stool is sacred to the Ashanti, as it is believed that the kingdom will last as long as it remains in the hands of the Ashanti king.
- The Golden Stool is an Ashanti legend and has only been seen by the tribe's royalty.
- Only the king and trusted advisers know the hiding place of the stool.

Bells are attached to the side to warn the king
of impending danger.



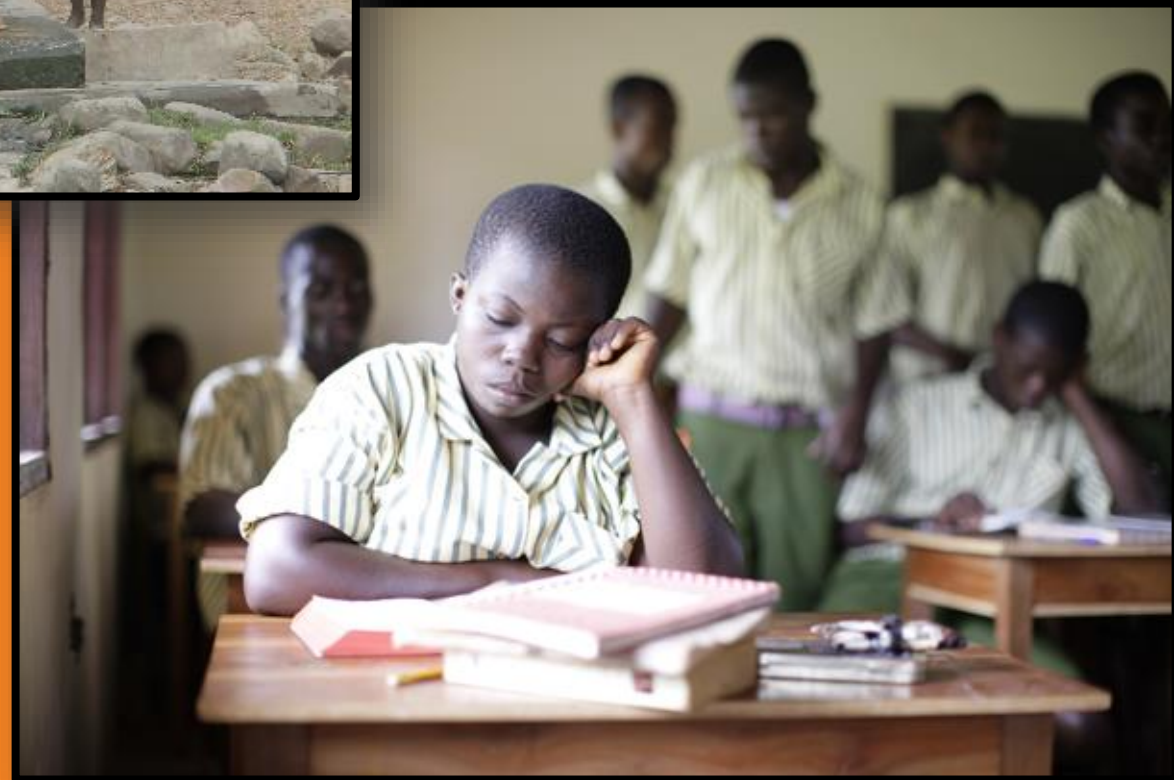
Religion

- Ashanti religion is a mixture of supernatural and animist powers.
- Animism is the belief that plants, animals, and trees have souls.
- Ashanti believe in a supreme god who takes on various names depending upon the region of worship.
- They believe lower gods, like spirits, are on earth to assist humans.



Language

- The major dialect of the Ashanti language is called 'Asante', or 'Twi'.
- It is spoken in and around Kumasi, the capital of the former Ashanti empire, and within the current sub-national Asante Kingdom in Ghana.



Let's Review

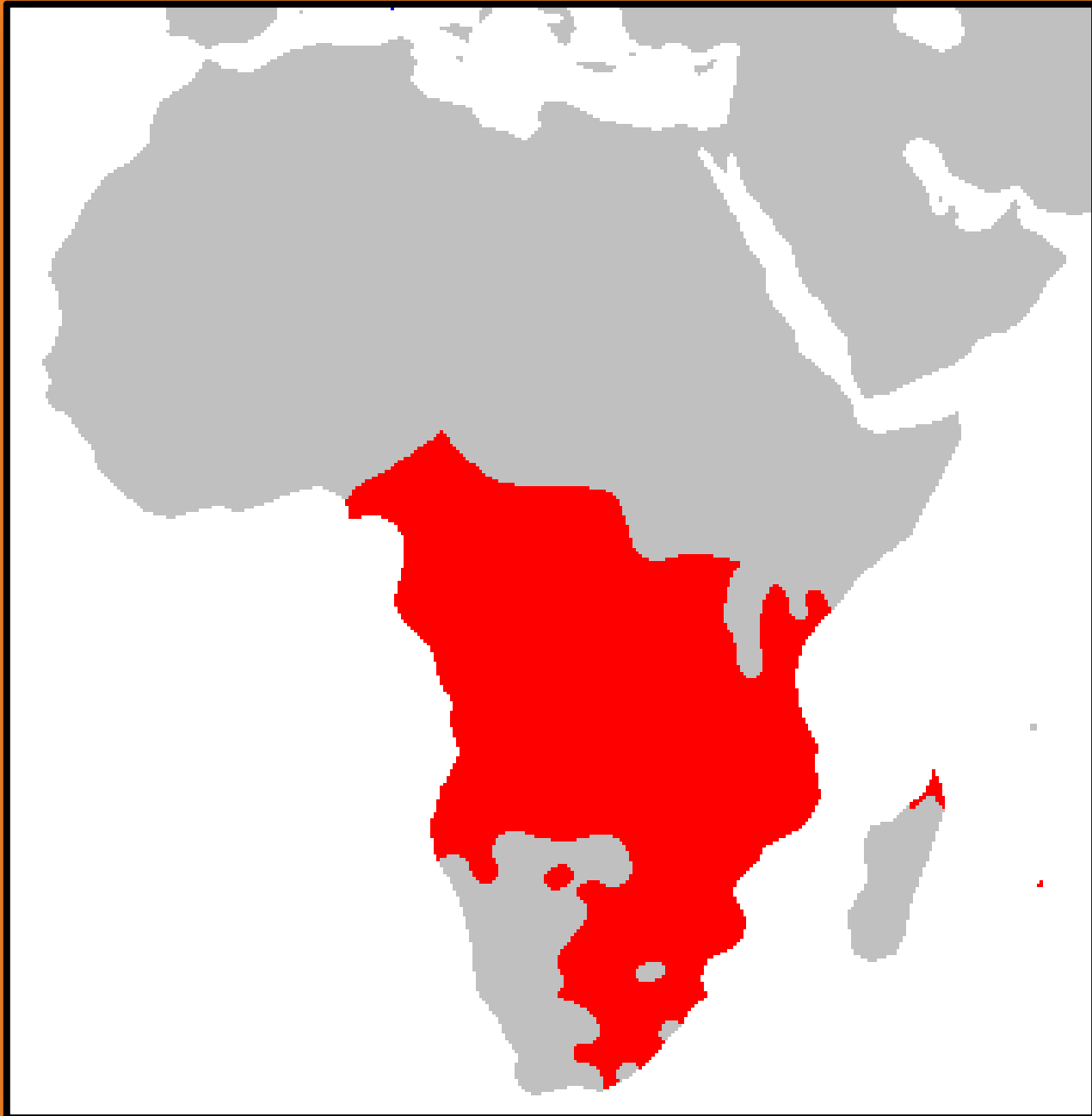
- They live predominately in Ghana and Ivory Coast.
- Most speak Twi (or Asante).
- The Ashanti religion is a mixture of spiritual and supernatural powers.
 - They believe that plants, animals, and trees have souls (animism).
- The Golden Stool legend is very important to Ashanti culture.



BANTU

Location

- Bantu generally refers to nearly 600 ethnic groups in Africa who speak Bantu languages.
- The Bantu people are distributed throughout central and southern parts of the continent.
- Bantu make up about two-thirds of Africa's population and cover the southern half of the continent.
- The word "bantu" means "the people".



Ancestry

- In Angola, archeologists have uncovered scratches on rock, massive stone pillars, and tools that place the Bantu people there about 50,000 BCE.
- From there, they evolved and spread eastward and southward.
- As they spread across the continent, they met many new people, learned new skills, and shared their customs and beliefs.



Ancestry

- They intermarried with the people, accepting new traditions and blending them with Bantu culture.
- Bantu-speaking people settled as far south as the southern tip of Africa.
- The Bantu migration was one of the largest movements of people in Africa's history.



Religion

- Many Bantu people settled in areas where there was a strong Arab presence and are now Muslim.
- Other Bantu people were influenced by missionary efforts in Africa and are now Christian.
- Whether Muslim or Christian, many Bantu retain their beliefs that precede both those religions.
 - They believe in the power of curses and magic.





Language

- There are over 650 different Bantu languages and dialects.
- Today, close to 70 million people across the southern half of Africa speak Bantu-based languages and share some part of Bantu culture.



High School Classroom

Let's Review

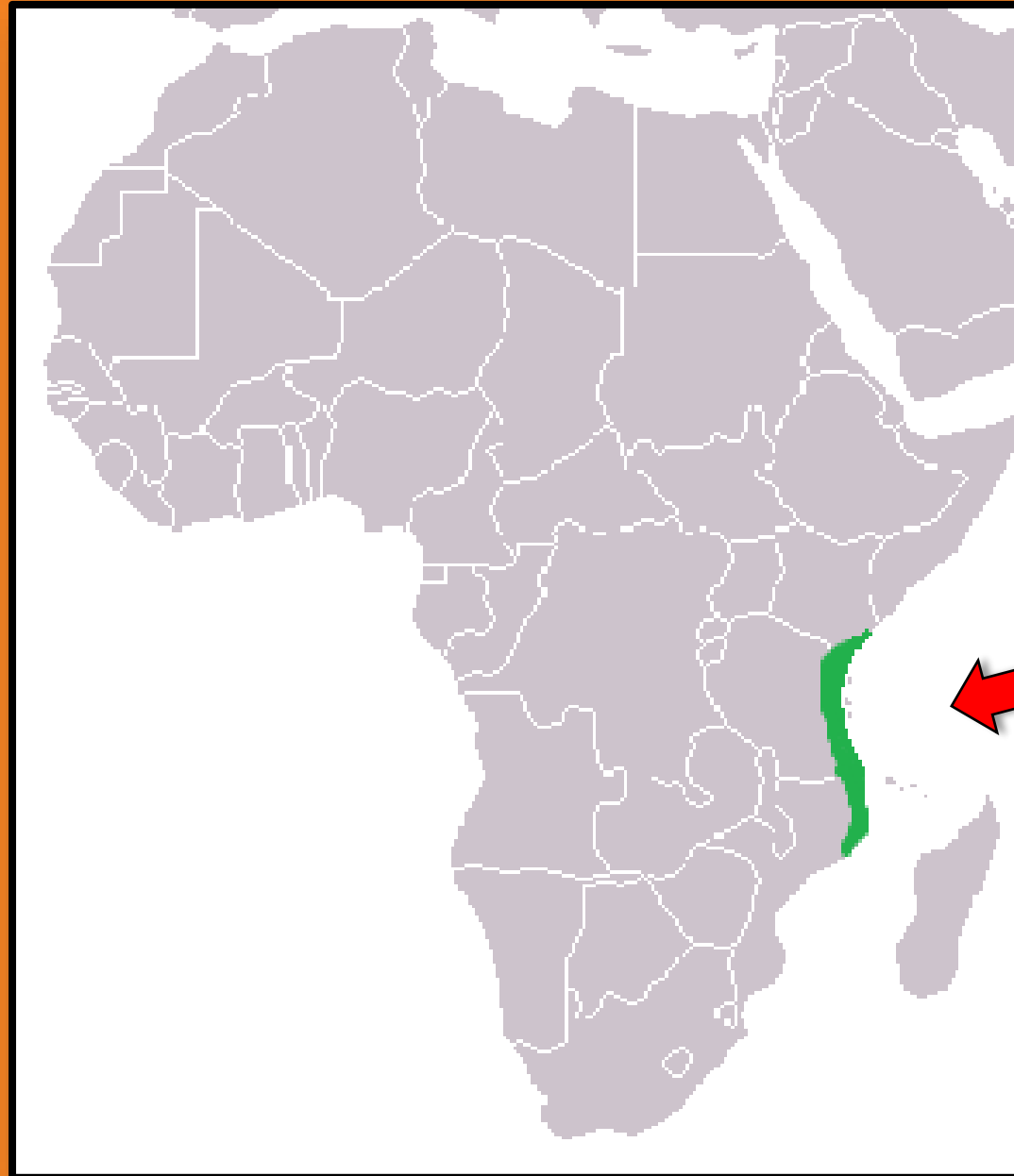
- The Bantu people are found throughout Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Bantu is a mixture of nearly 600 different ethnic groups combined.
- There are over 650 different Bantu languages and dialects.
- Bantu practice Islam, Christianity, & traditional African religions.



SWAHILI

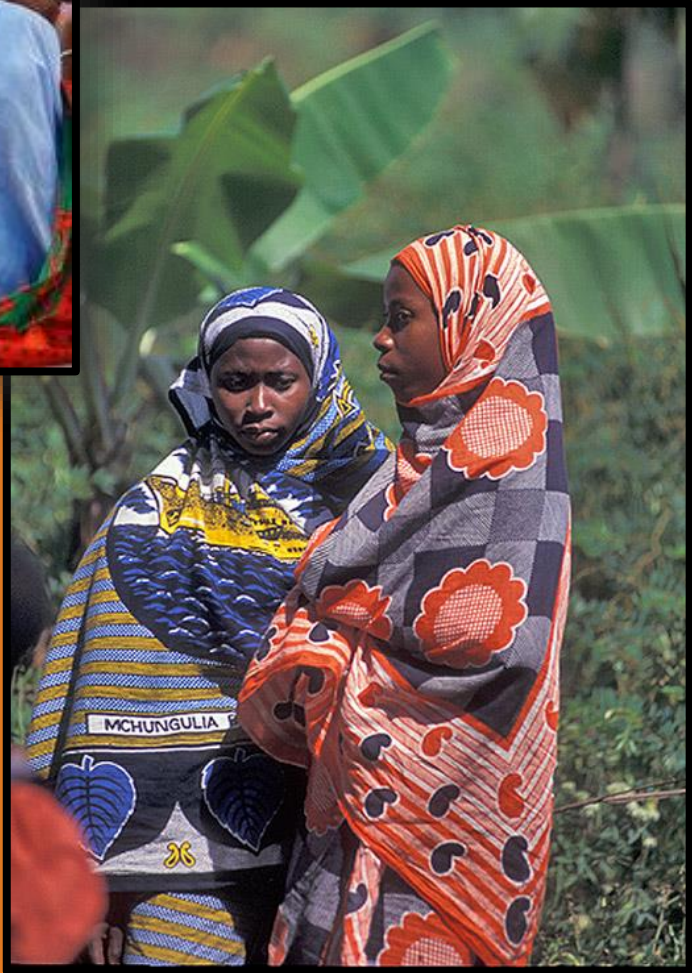
Location

- The Swahili people mostly inhabit a narrow strip of land along the southern coast of East Africa (in Kenya, Tanzania, & Mozambique).
- Members also live on several nearby islands in the Indian Ocean, including Zanzibar.
- The total population is 1,328,000.



Ancestry

- The Swahili community developed along the coast of East Africa when Arab traders began to settle there and intermarry with the local Bantu-speaking population.
- The group's name comes from the Arabic word "Swahili," which means "one who lives on the coast".



Religion

- Islam established its presence in the region during the 9th century, when Arab traders made contact with the Bantu people.
- The Swahili are all Muslims and Islam has been one of the factors that helped create a common identity for such a diverse group of people.
- Since Islam is a way of life, and religious holidays are very important, the Arab culture is a vital part of Swahili culture.



Language

- The Swahili speak the Swahili language as their native tongue.
- While the Swahili language is considered a Bantu language, there are many Arabic words and phrases included as a result of interactions with early Arab traders.
- Many also speak English.



Swahili Islamic School

Let's Review

- The Swahili people are found in eastern Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, & Mozambique).
- The language they speak is Swahili, which reflects Bantu and Arab roots.
- The majority practice Islam.