MA'AT CULTURAL CURRICULUM CONSULTANTS LLC

Day 1 African origins and geographic thinking

Name _____ Date _____ Section _____

Learning target

Use location and place to explain how resources supported early communities.

Do Now

If you could choose a campsite, what two geographic features would you look for? Why?

Vocabulary and word origins

Archaeology studies past people through material evidence. Artifact means an object people made or changed. Resource means something people can use. Homo sapiens is the scientific name for our species. Geography comes from Greek roots meaning earth and writing or description.

Source 1 Africa and the evidence of early societies

1. The earliest human societies developed long before written records. Scientists study fossils, stone tools, animal bones, and traces of settlements. Homo sapiens, our species, evolved in Africa about 300,000 years ago. Earlier human species lived before Homo sapiens. Africa is a continent with many landscapes, not one uniform environment. Modern country borders did not organize these ancient communities. [A]

2. Location asks where something is. Absolute location uses a fixed reference such as coordinates. Relative location describes a place in relation to another feature. A camp beside a river has a relative location that can help people reach water. Coordinates on a modern map help us locate archaeological sites; ancient people did not need today's coordinate system.

3. Place asks what an area is like. Physical characteristics include water, vegetation, temperature, and landforms. Human characteristics include shelters, tools, and ways people organize work. A campsite near water and useful stone could support drinking, food preparation, and toolmaking. These are geographic explanations of possible choices, not proof that every group chose the same site.

4. At Kanjera in present day Kenya, researchers found stone tools dating to about two million years ago. Some stone came from sources as far as 12 kilometers away. Matching the stone to its source helps researchers investigate movement and resource use. These toolmakers predated Homo sapiens. An artifact can support an interpretation, but one tool cannot reveal every belief or social rule. [B]

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Day 1 Evidence and written responses

1. What evidence helps researchers study societies without written records?

2. Distinguish the age of Homo sapiens from the much older Kanjera tools.

3. Explain a location and a place feature that could influence a campsite decision.

4. What can the transported Kanjera stone suggest, and what can it not establish?

Quick Write

Explain how location and place could affect an early community's access to resources. Use one detail from Source 1 and label your own example as a possible choice.

Exit ticket

Name one physical characteristic and one human characteristic of a place.

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