Jomo Kenyatta Biography and Research Simulation Task

Grades 6 through 12 | Five Day Inquiry | Ma’at Cultural Curriculum Consultants

First Name _____ Last Name _____
Date _____ Class _____

Essential Question

To what extent did Jomo Kenyatta’s leadership fulfill the promise of Kenyan independence?

Objective

Analyze a biography and four informational readings to explain colonialism, independence, land policy, and political rights.

Demonstration of Learning

Answer 15 multiple choice questions and write a RACE argument using evidence from at least three readings.

Standards and Literacy Connections

NJSLS Social Studies 6.2.12.HistoryCC.5.a and 6.2.12.HistoryCC.5.d: independence movements and colonial legacies. High school content targets are scaffolded for Grades 6 through 8; this packet supplies one case for later comparison.

NJSLS ELA RI.CR.6.1, RI.CI.6.2, W.AW.6.1: evidence, central ideas, and arguments. Extend the complexity of source analysis and writing for Grades 9 through 12.

CCSS/CCLS Literacy RH.6 through 8.1, RH.9 through 10.1, RH.11 through 12.1; WHST.6 through 8.1, WHST.9 through 10.1, WHST.11 through 12.1: cite evidence and write historical arguments.

Read and Think

Read the biography, then complete Days 1 through 4. On Day 5, complete the assessment and extended response. All readings are original educational syntheses, not quotations or reproductions of primary documents. Source identifiers appear in brackets.

Vocabulary: colonialism, dispossession, sovereignty, nationalism, republic, opposition, distribution, de facto.

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Biography of Jomo Kenyatta

Jomo Kenyatta was born in the Kikuyu community near Gatundu in the central highlands of present day Kenya. His birth year is uncertain; Kenya's Presidential Library gives around 1895. Known earlier as Kamau, he attended a mission school and worked before becoming a political organizer. His experiences connected questions of land, education, and cultural authority. [S1]

Kenyatta became an advocate for African rights under British colonial rule. He traveled to Britain to present grievances, participated in international anticolonial networks, and published Facing Mount Kenya in 1938. The book presented Kikuyu society to readers abroad. He returned to Kenya in 1946 and became president of the Kenya African Union in 1947. [S1]

Colonial authorities arrested him in 1952 and imprisoned him after a contested trial alleging involvement in Mau Mau. He later remained under restriction until 1961. Kenyatta became prime minister in 1963 and president when Kenya became a republic in 1964. He died on August 22, 1978. His career raises questions about liberation, leadership, and accountability. [S1 through S2]

Biographical Timeline

Around 1895 Born in central Kenya
1929 Travels to Britain to present political grievances
1938 Publishes Facing Mount Kenya
1946 Returns to Kenya
1947 Leads the Kenya African Union
1952 Arrested during the emergency
1961 Restrictions lifted
1963 Becomes prime minister; Kenya gains independence
1964 Becomes president of the republic
1978 Dies in Mombasa

Biography Check: Choose two events and explain how they connect Kenyatta's personal life to Kenya's political history.

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