



## Big Facts about

# Africa

Use with Lessons 1–4  
on back of poster

Share these facts about Africa with your students as you use the lessons and activities in this program. Examine a map with students so they can see the impressive size of the African continent and its distance from the United States. Help them to see that Africa is not one big malarial swamp or jungle filled with wild animals: It also has cities with skyscrapers, schoolrooms where children work on computers, music on the radio, and many other elements familiar to American students.

### Geography

- ❖ Africa, the world's second largest continent (after Asia), is made up of 54 countries.
- ❖ Africa's diverse and beautiful landscape includes the world's longest river (the Nile), lush rain forests, snowcapped mountains, the world's largest desert (the Sahara), and the world's second highest waterfall (Tugela Falls, 2,800 feet).
- ❖ Africa covers nearly 12 million square miles, more than one-fifth of all the land surface on Earth. The United States, Canada, Europe, India, and Japan could all fit inside Africa!

### Climate

- ❖ It often rains as much as 200 inches a year in the African rain forests. By contrast, Los Angeles receives only 14.8 inches a year.
- ❖ The Sahara Desert is the hottest desert anywhere on Earth. Temperatures there reach 122 degrees Fahrenheit.

### People

- ❖ Africa has the fastest growing population in the world. As of 2006, the population of Africa was 911 million—about three times that of the United States.
- ❖ The people are diverse, ranging from desert nomads to tribesmen to CEOs and scientists.

The majority of Africans, however, are farmers.

- ❖ Many national governments in Africa are working with organizations like the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to reduce poverty and improve peace, security, health, education, and other issues.

### Economics

- ❖ Despite having more land and people than the United States, Africa's economy is only one-eighth the size of the U.S. economy. In 2005, 40 percent of Africans lived on less than \$1 a day.
- ❖ Africa's trade with the U.S. has tripled over the past seven years, from \$20 billion to more than \$60 billion.
- ❖ Africa's top exports to the U.S. in 2005 were oil, precious stones and metals, ores, iron and steel, and cocoa.

### Animals

- ❖ The largest land animal on Earth, the African elephant, as well as the tallest, the giraffe, both live in Africa.
- ❖ African carnivores (meat-eating animals) include the lion, tiger, cheetah, and leopard.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT AFRICA, VISIT:

<http://pbskids.org/africa>  
[www.nhm.org/africa/science](http://www.nhm.org/africa/science)  
[www.mnh.si.edu/africanvoices](http://www.mnh.si.edu/africanvoices)  
[www.awf.org/content/wildlife](http://www.awf.org/content/wildlife)  
[www.afro.com/children/index.html](http://www.afro.com/children/index.html)

