

# GHANA WEST AFRICA



*Cultural Research  
Based on Themes*






<b>Research Worksheet Culture:</b>	<i>Notes</i>
Question: What resources are found in the environment and how are or were they used by people for survival?	Ghana has a wide range of natural resources– extensive fishing, arable land, forests, sizeable mineral deposits as well as crude oil reserves and natural gas. The people who live here feed off the fish and land.
<i>Theme 1: People and the Environment</i>	
Land and climate	The climate in Ghana is Tropical. There are two main seasons, the wet and the dry seasons. Ghana can be divided into four different geographical regions; the coastline is mostly a low, sandy shore backed by plains and scrub and intersected by several rivers and streams while the northern part of Ghana features high plains.
Animals	Elephants, monkeys, birds, hippos, crocodiles, baboons, antelope, buffalo, warthogs, bats, hippos.
Clothing	People in Ghana continue to dress in the traditional styles of their ancestors despite an abundance of Western influence. Most of their clothes are hand-dyed, hand-woven and hand-sewn by professional seamstresses. As a result, many people wear clothing that is custom-made to fit their unique shape. Ghanaian clothing is usually made of sturdy fabrics that are rich in color and detail. Many outfits include expert embroidery and beading.
Food/crops	The main food crops are corn, yams, cassava, and other root crops. Cocoa is Ghana's principal agricultural export.
Architecture	Ghana originally consisted of many different tribes and ethnic groups. Their traditional architecture was influenced by factors as available materials and technological limitations, economic, social relationship within the community and religious beliefs. That makes all the tribes different in many ways, above all in architectural style.

Tools/Transportation	Transport in Ghana is accomplished by road, rail, air and water. Ghana's transportation and communications networks are centered in the southern regions, especially the areas in which gold, cocoa, and timber are produced. The northern and central areas are connected through a major road system.
Question: What are or were the various roles the individual plays in the social and political structure and contributions?	<p>The roles in Ghana are similar to the roles we are familiar with today. Ghana is one of the most developed countries in Africa. They have factory workers, teachers, military, and police.</p> <p>Unlike America polygyny is encouraged among the men, but decreases as education level increases. There are three levels of education, much like America. However, after junior high Ghanaian students are required to take a test and the results of the test either send them to prepare for college or send them to vocational school.</p> <p>The Ghana Armed Forces that consists of headquarters, support services, and 6 battalions of infantry.</p>
<i>Theme 2: People in Society</i>	
People, Origins and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population: 27 million</li> <li>• 98% Black Africans</li> <li>• Largest Ashanti people</li> <li>• 11 languages</li> <li>• 90% live in urban areas</li> <li>• 100 different ethnic groups</li> <li>• Most non-native groups belong to Asians (Indians, Chinese, Middle Easterners, Lebanese, Syrians)</li> </ul>
Political and Social Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unitary Presidential Constitutional Democracy</li> <li>• Universal health care system</li> <li>• Education divided into 3 parts</li> <li>• Ghana Armed Forced (GAF)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Polygyny encouraged (rates decrease as education increases)</li> <li>• Political Parties: Military, liberal, social democrat, socialist</li> </ul>
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of Africa's most developed countries</li> <li>• Highest per capita income in the sub region of West Africa</li> <li>• Middle income country</li> <li>• Produce and export digital technology, automobiles, ships</li> <li>• Rig Communications: tablets, smart phones, consumer electronics</li> <li>• One of the world's leaders in petroleum, natural gas, gold, diamonds, and cocoa</li> </ul>
Games and Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 Olympic medals in 13 appearances</li> <li>• Soccer – most spectated</li> <li>• Most popular: boxing, tennis, basketball, hockey, cricket, rugby, golf</li> </ul>
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> largest producer of cocoa (predicted to become 1<sup>st</sup>)</li> <li>• 4 Olympic medals</li> <li>• Ghana Vision 2020 - plan to become first developed Nation in Africa by 2020-2029</li> <li>• One of five countries in Africa with free press</li> <li>• Most successful universal healthcare system in Africa</li> <li>• One of the highest education enrollment rates in Africa</li> <li>• Highest per capita income in West Africa</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> African nation to declare independence from European colonization</li> </ul>
Historical Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• British established Gold Coast in 1857</li> <li>• 1957 – declared independence from United Kingdom</li> </ul>

	<p>Kingdom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1960 – declared a republic</li> <li>• 1966 – over throw of 1<sup>st</sup> republic</li> <li>• 1969 – 2<sup>nd</sup> republic</li> <li>• 1972 – overthrow of 2<sup>nd</sup> republic</li> <li>• President (Supreme Commander in Chief) John Dramani Mahama elected in 2012</li> </ul>
<p>Question: What are or were the belief systems; and how are or were they manifested in other areas?</p>	<p>Ghana’s belief system is mostly comprised up of Christians and Muslims. Christians account for 71% of the population, while Muslims make up 17.5% of the population. Less than 6% of Ghanaians have a different belief.</p> <p> The Portuguese in the country brought Christianity in the 15th century. However, the Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries who came in the country in the 19th century did introduce the Christian church and its foundations. This is the reason why most Christians in Ghana are part of Presbyterian and Methodist churches.</p> <p> The spread of Islam throughout Ghana was not simultaneous or uniform. Islam had already spread into northern Africa by the mid-seventh century. Between the eighth and ninth centuries, Arab traders and travelers, then African clerics began</p>

	to spread the religion along the eastern coast of Africa and to western and central Ghana and Sudan.
<i>Theme 3: People and Their Beliefs</i>	
Beliefs	Taboos, Ghosts, The Ancestors, Belief in the Gods, Punishments and Rewards, Hajj, Salat, Pastor, afterlife, village mother, priest.
Myths/Literature 	One of the most popular tales to come from Ghana is “Anansi the Spider” tales  Ashanti creation myth. Inkalimeva and the Hare  The tortoise and the baboon  Marwe in the Underworld  No King as God  The Spirit in the Tree  The Tree Story
Rituals/Ceremonies 	Very elaborate funerals, puberty rites, child naming ceremonies, traditional blessing, and welcoming ceremonies.  .
Art/Materials	Ghanaians carve figures from wood, shape terracotta, Kente cloth, brass castings, stamped Adinkra cloth and royal arts, crushed charcoal and plants for paint.
Dance/Regalia 	There are three types of dances done in Ghana; high life, traditional, and ceremonial. Here are a few of the major dances: Gota, Jira, Bamaya, and Gahu