Kenya facts
Fast facts about Kenya and its people

Official name: Republic of Kenya
Capital: Nairobi
Population: Approximately 38.6 million
Area: 580,367 km²
Official languages: Kiswahili and English
Currencies: Kenyan Shillings (KES)
GDP per capita: USD $850
People living on less than USD $2 a day: 58%

Location
Kenya is a country in East Africa that lies on the equator. With the Indian Ocean to its south-east, it is bordered by Tanzania to the south, Uganda to the west, South Sudan to the north-west, Ethiopia to the north and Somalia to the north-east.

Climate
Kenya’s climate varies from tropical along the coast, to temperate inland, to arid in the north and northeast parts of the country. Kenya receives a great deal of sunshine all the year round, and summer clothes are worn throughout the year. The ‘long rains’ season occurs from March-June. The ‘short rains’ season occurs from October-December. The temperature remains high throughout these months of tropical rain. On the high mountains (Mount Kenya and Mount Elgon) the weather can become bitterly cold for most of the year with some snowfall.

Land
Kenya is the world’s forty-seventh largest country with a land area of 580,000 km². Mount Kenya is the highest peak in Kenya at 5,199m (17,057 ft) and Kenya is named after the mountain. From the coast on the Indian Ocean, the low plains rise to central highlands. The highlands are bisected by the Great Rift Valley and comprise one of the most successful agricultural production regions in Africa. Kenya has considerable land area devoted to wildlife habitats, such as Masai Mara and Tsavo national parks.

Religion
The vast majority of Kenyans are Christians (83%), with 47.7% regarding themselves as Protestant and 23.5% as Roman Catholic. Others include Muslims, Hindus, Baha’is and indigenous traditional believers.

Government and Economy
Kenya was a British colony until 1963 when it became an independent Republic. It is ruled by a President who is both the head of state and head of government. Executive power is exercised by the government. Legislative power is vested in both the government and the National Assembly. The Judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature.

Kenya is the biggest and most advanced economy in east and central Africa. Agriculture is an important sector, employing 75% of the workforce. Kenya’s economy has posted tremendous growth in the service sector, boosted by rapid expansion in telecommunication and financial activity over the last decade, and now contributes 62% of GDP. Tourism is the country’s principal source of foreign exchange and tourists are attracted mainly to the coastal beaches and the game reserves. Foreign aid accounts for 15% of the development budget and a significant portion of the population is dependent on food aid.

Production
Tea, coffee, sisal, corn, wheat, coconuts, cashew nuts, pyrethrum, cotton, sugarcane, pineapples and horticultural produce.

Food
Ugali with vegetables, sour milk, meat, fish or other stew is generally eaten by most of the population. Other common foods include Mukimo, Githeri,
Chapati and Pilau. Ethnic variations exist and each ethnic group has their own preferred food.

**Music**

Kenya has a diverse assortment of popular music forms, in addition to multiple types of folk music based on the various ethnic languages. Lyrics are most often in Swahili, English and indigenous languages. Common music includes gospel, hip-hop, reggae, soul and taarab.

**Sport**

Kenya is active in several sports, among them cricket, rallying, football, rugby and boxing. However, the country is known for its dominance in middle-distance and long-distance athletics. Kenya has consistently produced Olympic and Commonwealth Games champions in various distance events, especially in 800m, 1,500m, 3,000m steeplechase, 5,000m, 10,000m and the marathon.

**Brief Political History**

1885 - Establishment of a German protectorate over the Sultan of Zanzibar’s coastal possessions
1888 - Arrival of the Imperial British East Africa Company
1890 - Germany handed its coastal holdings to Britain
1895-1905 - Building of the Kenya–Uganda railway that allowed British settlers quick access to the fertile highlands of the region.
1952 - 1959 - State of emergency arising from the Mau Mau rebellion against British rule
1956 - Field Marshal Dedan Kimathi, the Mau Mau leader was captured and killed by the British. This marked the ultimate defeat of the Mau Mau.
1957 - The first direct elections for Africans to the Legislative Council
1963 - Kenya became an independent republic. Kisoi Munyao hoisted the new flag of an independent Kenya on the highest peak of Mount Kenya
1964 - The Republic of Kenya was proclaimed and Jomo Kenyatta became Kenya’s first president
1978 - Jomo Kenyatta died and Daniel Arap Moi became president
1982 - An abortive military coup attempt intended to overthrow President Moi
1978-2002 - Daniel Arap Moi retained the Presidency, under the single party of Kenya African National Union (KANU)
2002 - Mwai Kibaki was elected President under the party of National Rainbow Coalition (NARC). This was an important turning point in Kenya's democratic evolution in that power was transferred peacefully from KANU, which had ruled the country since independence to NARC
2007 - Latest general elections in which President Kibaki under the Party of National Unity (PNU) ran for re-election against the main opposition party, the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) of Raila Odinga. Elections were flawed leading to protests which escalated into ethnic violence and destruction of property. Almost 1,000 people were killed and nearly 600,000 displaced
2008 - Kibaki and Odinga signed an agreement on the formation of a coalition government in which the former would be President and the latter Prime Minister.

The flag of Kenya

The Kenyan flag consists of three equal-sized horizontal stripes of black, red and green, each holding a symbolic significance for the country. The stripes are separated by two thinner white stripes and a large warrior’s shield covered with crossed spears which are superimposed over the flag’s centre.

The flag was officially adopted on 12 December 1963 when Kenya became an independent republic. It was based on the flag of KANU, the political party that led Kenya to independence. The original flag had three equal stripes of black, red, and green. These colors symbolize:

- **Black** - The indigenous Kenyan people.
- **Red** - The blood that was shed in the fight for independence.
- **Green** - Kenya’s rich agricultural land and natural resources.

The white stripes, the traditional Maasai shield, and the two crossed spears were added to the Kenyan flag after Kenya attained independence. The color white symbolizes peace while the shield and spears signify that all Kenyans are always ready to defend the independence they fought so hard for.

**Learning Experiences - Kenya Flag**

- Students could research your own country’s flag. What do the colours and designs symbolise?
- Discuss why we have national flags. What are they for and why are they important?
- Students could design a flag for their school or their town or local area, or could create an alternative flag for their country. Then write an explanation of the colours and symbols they have used and why. Children could present their flag to the class and explain their choices.
- **Design and create a flag for Purple Cake Day!** You could use your own ideas or follow the directions on the resource sheet.

* Free printable worksheets are available from our website to support this and other learning experiences.

www.purplecakeday.org
Languages in Kenya
How do we say "Hello"?

There are 42 ethnic groups in Kenya that typically speak their mother tongues within their own communities. Some of the major ethnic languages include: Kikuyu, Kiluhya, Kiluo Kikalenjin, Kikamba, Kimeru, Kikisii, Kigirima and Luo.

The two official languages, English and Kiswahili (Swahili), are used in varying degrees of fluency for communication. English is widely spoken in school, commerce and government. Most educated Kenyans are able to communicate fluently in Swahili, since it is a compulsory subject in primary and secondary schools, and a distinct academic discipline in many of the public and private universities. People who live out of the cities are less multilingual, with many in rural areas speaking only their native languages.

Other countries that are fast adapting Swahili as their main language include Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Congo DRC, Congo Brazzavile and Comoros. Therefore Swahili has become a business language within East and Central Africa. It is spoken by around 120 million people within the East African Region alone.

Count to Ten in Swahili

1 moja 6 sita
2 mbili 7 saba
3 tatu 8 nane
4 nne 9 tisa
5 tano 10 kumi

Animals

Zebra - Punda Milia (stripy donkey!)
Giraffe - Twiga Lion - Simba
Dog - Mbwa Cat - Paka
Bird - Ndege Fish - Samaki
Chicken - Kuku Pig - Nguruwe
Goat - Mbuizi Cow - Ngombe

Learn to Speak Some Swahili!

- Jambo! - Hello!
- Habari yako? - How are you?
- Jina lako nani? - What is your name?
- Jina langu ni... - My name is...
- Hakuna matata - No problem
- Asante sana - Thanks very much
- Napenda.. / Tunapenda - I like / we like
- Tutaonana - See you later
- Kwa heri - Goodbye
- Watoto - Children
- Mvulana - Boy
- Mchichana - Girl
- Mama - Mother
- Baba - Father
- Dada - Sister
- Ndugu - Brother
- Mtoto - Baby
- Nyanya - Grandmother
- Babu - Grandfather
- Rafiki - Friend
- Mwalimu - Teacher
- Chakula - Food
- Nyumba - House
- Shule - School
A child's story

Irene's Day - Same or Different?

Download the powerpoint presentation of this story with more photos, online at purplecakeday.org/faqs

‘Jambo! Habari Gani?’ Hello! How are you?

I am Irene and I am ten years old. I go to Kibagare Primary School with my friends Mary, Peninah, Tabitha, Ancieterh, Mercy, Naomi and Esther … Oh we are too MANY to write ALL our names! We all came here from different places to live with Mum and Dad Chege. We are SO lucky they care for us now, because our own families cannot. This story is about our school day. Will it be the same as yours?

“Watoto, watoto, wake up!” That’s Aunty Mary calling us. We call her Mama Anthony because her first born child is named Anthony. Is your mother called after the eldest child in your family?

Waah! It’s baridi sana (very cold). It is still dark as we leave our cosy bunk beds and rush to queue at the outside tap to wash. We like to chatter and laugh while we shiver and wash. We hurry to dress in our uniforms and make our beds and help the younger ones prepare too. O where is my bag? And my homework? Is this the same for you?

Over in the boys’ rooms (out by the donkey and sheep pens) Uncle Simon is helping the small boys prepare for their day.

The older boys are all busy looking after themselves. Here are our rooms. Can you guess which room is the girls and which is the boys? Do you like our Maasai blankets?

We stand together in the hall waiting for our mugs of uji (porridge). One of us begins to sing and we all join in. We love to sing. Do you? The sun is rising and the older teens have already left for their schools.

Haraka! (Hurry) Our teachers like us to be in our classrooms studying by 7am and our school is far, up a barabara fupi (short cut) on a track high on the escarpment. We love the beautiful views down to the Great Rift Valley. We creep carefully around any punda (donkeys) tethered to graze on the track and call greetings to jirani (neighbours) “Habari ya asabuhi?” (How are you this morning?) They are already working hard in their shambas.

Our school is big enough for all the children here (maybe 600 or so). The classrooms are built of stone with glass windows and strong doors. We have 4 new toilets (called choo - say ‘choh’, it rhymes with oh) far across the playing field. Families helped fundraise and built them with toilet holes in the concrete floor. In the middle of the classroom block is the staffroom and principal’s office. You don’t want to get called to the principals office by Mwalimu Njoroge.

The teachers are all busy shaking hands and greeting each other, marking our work, whilst drinking chai.

At 8am we all gather in front of the school for assembly - we sing songs and listen to notices. We like to sing and dance and stamp our feet. Do you? Sometimes our uniforms, hands & hankies are checked. Beware Mr Njoroge if we have no hanky!

Our school has a water tank but no gutters to carry the rain water from the roof to the tank. So when it rains it pours off the roof onto the ground and it gets VERY muddy. It is hard to keep our hands & uniforms clean. Every week we have duties & use branches to sweep the classrooms and ground outside.

Is this the same, or different for you?
We walk smartly back to our rooms to listen and learn and copy the work Mwalimu writes on the blackboard. We recite our learning over and over. Teacher say ‘Again. AGAIN. AGAIN!’ Teacher asks a question and we all want to be picked to give the correct answer. ‘Teecha. Teecha. Teeee-cha!’ we cry with our hands stretched up high.

The little ones are working with their maths equipment.

Is this the same for you, or different?

We all try to work hard. We all want to get good results and be top of the class. We want Mum and Dad Chege to be proud of us. We have to pass our exams in order to go up to the next Class. We have an exercise book for each subject. We learn Mathematics, Reading, English, Kiswahili, Religious Studies, Science, History, Geography and Physical Education. Phew- so many subjects to learn! We like it even more when our teacher takes us outside for games. Is this the same for you, or different? We say ‘My pencil is my friend. I care for him each day. I keep him sharp. He helps me learn so I can reach my goals.’

When I grow up I want to be a Doctor. Or a lawyer. Or a pilot. What about you?

At lunchtime some of the village children go home to eat. We wait for Gabriel to bring ours... sometimes we wait and wait. He pushes his bike carrying two buckets of hot githeri, enough for 40 children. It’s 1pm and we are hungry. After school we help carry the empty buckets home. The little ones go home at 2pm but most of us work until 4pm.

What is the very first thing you do when you get home? We have to remove our uniforms, hang them neatly for tomorrow and change into old clothes. We have to do duties next. Uncle Simon makes us pick up leaves from the ground, or sweep the paths. The Aunts want us to pick sukuma wiki or cabbages from the shamba and help prepare the vegetables for dinner. We want to play so we hurry to get our duties finished!

Is this the same for you, or different? My favourite time of the day is when the sun is dropping over the horizon, lighting the valley below, and even us, with a golden glow. We come together to watch, then sing songs of thanks whilst we wait for dinner to be ready. It’s been a long day and we still have homework to complete. But that’s OK. We are happy. We are the lucky ones. Kwaheri! Asante for reading my story.

Look at me now! I’m nearly 12 years old. Here I am with my friend Tabitha.

Did I tell you before I’m the top of my class? Well I AM! We hope you have learned how we try to do well at school.

Kwaheri rafiki!
Goodbye friend!
A child's story

A day in the life of Naserian

My name is Naserian and I am a ten year old Maasai girl. I live in Narok County with my mother and elderly father and twelve siblings.

In my family there are four girls and eight boys. I am the eighth born in my family and the youngest girl child. My elder three sisters have all been married off. My father keeps a lot of cattle which he treasures as it is considered a sign of wealth.

I go to a school called Ilturot Orook Primary School. The school is located many miles from my home and I have to walk several kilometers to get to school. My father allowed me to go to school because it is free.

In my culture, girls do not go to school but instead stay at home and help with household chores, and once they attain the age of 14-15 years they are then married off in exchange for cattle and money.

My day starts very early in the morning at 5am so that I can do my homework and chores, and make it to school in good time. My first task is to prepare breakfast for my family and after which I tidy up the homestead before leaving for school. I love going to school because it gives me the opportunity to spend some time with my friends.

After school I have to pass by the well to fetch water that is required back at home. It takes about an hour to get to the well from my school and another one and a half hours to get home.

In the evening I help my mother to prepare dinner and go to bed at around 9. I am usually too tired to study in the evenings and so make some time to do so in the early morning.

We live a nomadic life and occasionally have to move to different areas in search of food and water for our cattle. During these times I do not get to go to school but instead stay home and help my mother with chores such as building our new housing, feeding the animals, fetching water and firewood for cooking. It is the duty of women to build houses. Our house is built of mud, grass, sticks and cow dung.

One of my sister’s friends is being married off in a few days and the village is alive with activities. The women are busy crafting beautiful beaded jewellery that will be worn on the wedding day, and practicing songs that will be sang that day. On her wedding day, a Maasai girl wears so much beaded jewellery that it makes it even difficult to walk.

Many girls are usually very sad on their wedding day.

Take action for children like Naserian
day because they are getting married to persons that they do not know, having been booked by them at birth.

I do not want to be married off. I would very much like to go to secondary school as well as university, so that I can be an important person someday, and be able to make decisions like who to marry and when to marry.

I would like to join Ole Tipis Girls Secondary School where my cousin studies. She says it is a very good school. My dream is to be a doctor so that I can be able to treat people in my village who have little access to medical care.

My dream is to be able to be a doctor so that I can treat people in my village who have little access to medical care - Nasarien

Learning Experience - A Child's Story

Ways you could use these children’s stories in the classroom include:

• Create reading comprehension activities based on one or more of the stories as a literacy focus.

• Have students read a Child’s Story in small groups and present the information in it to the rest of the class.

• Students could choose one of the children and write a diary entry for a typical day in that child’s life. They can then write a diary for a typical day in their own life and compare the two.

• Students could choose one of the children as an imaginary pen friend. Write a letter explaining how their own experiences of school are different from the Kenyan child’s.

• Ask students to imagine that they have to switch places with one of the Kenyan children for a week. What would they miss from their own life? What might they learn from switching places and ‘walking in another’s shoes’ for a few days?

• Ask students to do some inquiry learning to find out more about the Maasai way of life. How would Naserian’s life be different if she was a boy?

* Free printable worksheets are available from our website to support this and other learning experiences.
My name is Ouma and I am an 11 year old boy. I live in a village called Kager with my elderly grandmother. We live near Lake Victoria which is the largest lake in Africa.

My mother and father died when I was very young. I am an only child but live with two of my cousins who are also raised by my grandmother. My grandmother runs a small vegetable kiosk in the nearby town.

My grandmother works very hard to provide for me and my cousins and we love her very much. She would like for us to have a bright future and ensures that we wake up very early every day to go to school. My grandmother says that if we work hard we can become very important people in the society just like President Obama of the United States whose grandmother lives in a nearby district.

I go to a school called Koyoo Primary School. There are very many children in my school. I am in class six and there are 40 children in my class. My favorite subject is science.

I cannot wait for the school holiday. My grandmother has promised to take us to visit our aunt who lives in the Mfangano Islands. The trip is about two hours by boat. I have never ridden in a boat before, and I am so excited.

In the evenings, I help my grandmother to raise money by selling groundnuts. Sometimes I get lucky and I am able to sell all the packets of groundnuts. My grandmother then uses the money to buy us food. My favorite meal is ugali (cornmeal mush) and omena (fish) stew.

My best friend's father is a fisherman. The fishermen in our village leave before sunset to go fishing and come back in the morning with their nets full of omena.

My friend would like to be a fisherman like his father, but my dream is to be a pilot. I have always wanted to fly above the lake and to make lots of money so I can build a house for my grandmother in the city and buy her many nice clothes. - Ouma

Ouma hopes, one day, to become an HBEF beneficiary like Patrick.
The Kenyan Constitution recognizes education as a basic human right. Primary school which starts at the age of 6 years is free in public schools and lasts for 8 years. At the end of primary school, pupils sit the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE), which determines those who proceed to secondary school or vocational training. Those who proceed sit a national examination at the end of Form Four (approx age 14) – the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE), which determines those who will go to university, other professional training or employment.

In addition to public schools, there are many private schools in the country, mainly in urban areas. There are also a number of international schools catering for various overseas educational systems.

Despite the success in increasing primary school enrolment in Kenya, there is a significant drop-off in the transition to secondary school due to high cost of school fees. Though the government of Kenya subsidised secondary education in 2008, secondary school still has fees which are beyond the reach of many parents.

**Learning Experience – Education System in Kenya**

- Discuss with students the reasons that education is important. How would their lives be different if they were to finish at the end of primary school?
- What are the issues around the KCPE exam? Discuss the impact that the result of this one exam can have on the rest of a person’s life.
- Set up an inquiry based research project. Older students could use internet research and the library to find out more about the Kenyan education system. Which subjects are studied? What are the literacy rates? You could focus on finding out about one school; what do the school buildings look like? How many children are in a class? What kind of learning resources do the children use?
- Visit the Hilde Back Education Fund website at hildebackeducationfund.com and find out more about what they do.

* Free printable worksheets are available from our website to support this and other learning experiences.*
Street children
Chokora - "to pick or to poke"

Street children are children who cannot rely on their families to provide them what's necessary to live and grow up peacefully. Even though some still maintain a bond with their parents, particularly with their mothers, street children live by their wits in the back streets of huge cities, begging, collecting garbage to be recycled, committing thefts or prostituting themselves.

In order to relieve the pangs of hunger, they often sniff glue, a cheap drug which is particularly harmful, and which in the long term causes permanent damage to the brain and to the respiratory system. The "glue bottle" in the public mind negatively symbolizes what is taken to be, in Kenya and often elsewhere, the defining characteristic of street children, that is, people who are troublemakers and a threat to society.

Kenya is estimated to host more than 300,000 children and youth on the streets who engage in survival tactics that endanger their well being and that of the society. Most of them are abused, neglected, exposed to criminal and gang activities, suffer poor health due to their lifestyles and exposure to harsh environment, drug and substance abuse, and exposure to HIV/AIDS infection.

The street children mostly survive by scavenging for food in waste bins and rubbish dumps. Food scavenging is a behavior street children in Kenya share with other street children around the world. Street children commonly face a constant struggle to get food, a task that is often problematic in an urban environment. Street children do not participate in customary patterns of familial food exchange typical of most Kenyans.

In Kenya, street children are known as chokora, roughly translated from Kiswahili as pokers at dustbins or garbage heaps in search of food and other valuables. Earlier generations of street boys were known as "parking boys," named for their assistance in guarding and parking cars. Chokora as a verb in Kiswahili means "to pick" or "to poke." Accordingly, Kenyans describe street boys as ones who "grab inside" or "pull down," as if from a dustbin or garbage can. Chokora as a noun refers to a "kitchen boy," one who does odd jobs. In either usage, an association with food is suggested.

Despite the new law, designed to enhance child welfare and protect young people from neglect and abuse, a combination of economic and social factors is forcing more and more children to continue pouring into the streets throughout the country. According to the Nairobi-based African Network for the Protection and Prevention against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN), up to 3.5 million Kenyan children of school-going age are out of school, and a "good number" of those are on the streets. These children will continue to go onto into the streets as long as they don't have a place to sleep and someone to provide their food.
Festivals
Major Celebrations in Kenya

1st June - Madaraka Day
This commemorates the day that Kenya attained internal self-rule in 1963, preceding full independence from the United Kingdom on 12 December, 1963. The day is celebrated with much vigour every year amongst Kenyans all across the globe. The President addresses the nation and this is then traditionally followed by an entertaining show. All of the uniformed services are a part of this celebration which includes various singers and dancers. Madaraka Day is also an occasion where certain national issues are addressed by the government leaders.

20th October - Mashujaa Day or Heroes Day
Before 2010, the 20th of October was called Kenyatta Day to honour Kenya’s first President - Jomo Kenyatta. Following the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya on August 2010, Kenyatta Day was renamed Mashujaa Day (Heroes Day) to collectively honour all those who contributed toward the struggle for Kenya’s independence. The celebrations are attended by thousands of Kenyans as well as leaders. During this day, the President and other dignitaries address the nation. The celebrations during all the public holidays are marked by performances from various groups such as the Kenya armed forces, scouts, comedians, poets, traditional dancers and school children.

12th December - Jamhuri Day
Also called Independence Day, this marks Kenya’s establishment as a republic on 12 December, 1964. It formally marks the date of the country’s admission in 1964 into the Commonwealth as a republic and takes its name from the Swahili word Jamhuri ("republic"). There are celebrations include feasts, political speeches, parades and dancing.
'The Big 5'

Kenya is a world attraction for its rich abundance of wildlife, most of which can be found in its national parks and reserves. The most famous Kenyan animals, the lion, leopard, elephant, buffalo and rhinoceros, are known as 'The Big 5'.

**Lion**

As the largest of Africa's big cats, the lion is highly regarded by humans. Its massive size, majestic walk, power and hunting prowess make it very fascinating to watch. It's no wonder that the lion draws so many people to Kenya. Lions are ferocious hunters, but are not normally dangerous to humans unless they are wounded or cornered. Unlike the other big cats, lions are social animals, living in prides of 20 - 30 members. Each pride may have one to three males. You are guaranteed to see Kenyan lions on a Kenya safari tour to the Maasai Mara National Reserve.

**Leopard**

Dubbed the "Silent Hunter", the leopard is a very elusive animal with a gorgeous fur. It is nocturnal, hunting at night and spending its day resting in trees. The leopard lives a solitary life and only pairs up during the mating season. Leopards hunt on the ground but take their "kill" up into the trees, out of the reach of scavengers such as hyenas. Most people fail to draw the distinction between leopards and cheetahs, but they are two very different animals.

- A leopard is stouter while a cheetah is slender
- The leopard has a shorter body length while the cheetah has a longer body length
- The cheetah has black tear marks running down its eyes while a leopard does not
- Although both have golden yellow fur, a leopard has black rings while a cheetah has black spots on its fur.
ANIMALS

Elephant

The African Elephant is the world’s largest land mammal. Due to its gigantic stature, the elephant has no predators apart from humans who hunt it for its tusks. However, elephant hunting and ivory trade are prohibited in Kenya.

Elephants have a sharp sense of smell and are highly intelligent. They are reputed to be the only animals that recognize one another, even after death. Amboseli National Park is home to most elephants and is the best place to see them. The elephants in Tsavo National Park have a distinct reddish-brown color that they obtain from the red volcanic soil in Tsavo. Elephants in other parks are grayish in color.

Buffalo

Famed for its boiling temper, the buffalo is one of the most feared animals. It is not only feared by humans but also by some of the most daring predators in the wild. The mighty lion rarely ever hunts a buffalo. Most lions that try end up dead or badly injured. Lions and hyenas are only known to hunt solitary aging buffalos that are either too weak to fight or greatly outnumbered. The buffalo resembles the typical cow but has a distinct grayish black color. It also has up-curving horns with bases that meet across the forehead. This gives it a very dangerous look. The male horns are usually thicker and more profound than the female horns.

Buffalo live in herds of several hundred led by one dominant bull. Old, buffalo bulls are the most dangerous. They either live alone or with other bulls. They often lie in wait to ambush people.

Rhinoceros

There are two species of rhinoceros found in Kenya: white and black rhinos. Both are endangered species. The white rhino derives its name from the Dutch word Weid meaning broad. White rhinos have a broad, wide mouth adapted for grazing. They often live in large groups. The biggest white rhino population in Kenya is found in Lake Nakuru National Park. The black rhino has a pointed upper lip adapted for browsing. It eats dry bush and thorny scrub, especially acacia.

Black rhinos have a sharp sense of smell and hearing but very poor eyesight. They lead a solitary life and are the more dangerous of the two species. Maasai Mara National Reserve has the largest population of black rhinos, along with many other Kenya animals.
Environment

Kenya's environmental challenges

Kenya faces some major environmental challenges. These include:

1. Deterioration of water quality and quantity
2. Deforestation
3. Pollution and inadequate waste management
4. Impacts of Climate change and Global Warming;
5. Widespread poverty, which leads people to desperation and sacrifice of the environment in order to sustain their livelihoods
6. Conflicts on use of natural resources
7. Cultural practices which are unfriendly to the environment
8. Poor governance
9. Inadequate data and research funding
10. Limited national accounting for natural resources

Here is a more indepth look at two key issues - as you can see several of the problems overlap.

Water

The Kenya water crisis is the current struggle that Kenya faces to supply clean water to its population. The human population depends heavily on water resources, not only for drinking but also for crops, agriculture, livestock and fishing. For example, wetland grasses are used to feed and keep livestock.

Human populations throughout Kenya have been affected by a lack of clean drinking water, due in large part to the overuse of land and increases in community settlements.

A specific example of this is in the Mau Forest, in the highlands of Kenya, that is a major watershed for the country. In the Mau Complex individuals have used land for their personal gain, creating homes and farms at the expense of the natural biodiversity. The destruction of trees throughout the forest has caused massive soil erosion, which pollutes the water.

This phenomenon exists all over the country and with the addition of animal and human waste into already polluted water it has made it difficult to find clean water.

The current water conditions have caused a number of issues including many diseases, and tribal conflicts over the remaining water resources. Additionally, as clean water becomes harder to find, people are forced to walk for many miles each day to find the water needed for their families.

Another huge problem with clean water in Kenya has been an influx of individuals moving to large cities such as Nairobi, which creates large slum areas that have some of the worst living conditions and most polluted water in the whole country.

This interaction between humans and water is currently at a crucial point in Kenya as the nation faces a major shortage in the ability for citizens to receive the water they desperately need. Only significant improvements in land management and environmental policies can help make sure this country has the water it needs to support becoming a developed country.
Deforestation

Over-exploitation over the past three decades has reduced the country’s timber resources by one-half. At present only 2% of the land remains forested, and an estimated 50 square kilometres of forest are lost each year. This loss of forest aggravates erosion, the silting of dams and flooding, and the loss of biodiversity. Among the endangered forests are Kakamega Forest, Mau Forest and Karura Forest.

In response to ecological disruption, activists have pressed with some success for policies that encourage sustainable resource use. The 2004 Nobel Peace Prize went to the Kenyan environmentalist, Wangari Maathai.

Wangari Maathai organised a grassroots movement in which thousands of people were mobilised, over the years, to plant 30 million trees in Kenya and elsewhere, and to protest forest clearance for luxury development. Maathai linked deforestation with the plight of rural women, who are forced to spend untold hours in search of scarce firewood and water.

Learning Experience - Environment

• Set up a persuasive writing activity based on the environmental issues in Kenya. Students could write a letter to a Kenyan newspaper urging action on the water crisis.

• Design a leaflet to persuade people to take action against deforestation.

• Conduct further research on the environmental issues listed at the beginning of this article. This could be done in small groups. Can you think of any possible solutions to the problems?

* Free printable worksheets are available from our website to support this and other learning experiences.
Cook a Kenyan feast

Kenyans generally have three meals a day - breakfast in the morning (kiamsha kinywa), lunch after noon (chakula cha mchana) and supper in the evening (chakula cha jioni).

Ugali

Ugali is a staple starch component of many tribes in Kenya. It is generally made from maize flour (or ground maize) and water, and looks like a dough-like substance. Ugali is usually served as an accompaniment to meat or vegetable stews, greens or soured milk. To eat Ugali, pull off a small ball of mush with your fingers.

Ingredients (4 to 6 servings)

4 cups water
2 cups white cornmeal, finely ground

Method:

1. Boil the water in a heavy cooking pot. Stir in the cornmeal slowly.
2. Reduce heat to medium-low and continue stirring regularly, smashing any lumps that may form with a cooking stick.
3. As Ugali continues to cook, it gets very thick. You can continue adding flour until it is thicker than mashed potatoes.
4. Leave it cooking for about 10 minutes, but make sure you keep turning it so that it does not get burned.
5. Using the cooking stick, mash it into a dome shape. Tip out your Ugali onto a serving bowl.

Chapati

Chapati is an unleavened (no yeast or baking powder) flat bread. Chapati is normally served with vegetables such as cabbage and stew.

Ingredients (4 servings)

2 cups white flour
½ teaspoon salt
oil
water

Method:

1. Mix dry ingredients well. Add one tablespoon of oil to the flour mixture and mix in with your hands until flour feels a little bit like sand. Add enough water to form an elastic dough.
2. Divide the dough into four equal parts. Roll out one ball into a circle and spread ½ teaspoon oil over it. Roll the circle up, like a jelly roll, and then roll it up again. It should resemble a snail shell.
3. Do the same for the other three balls.
4. Let the dough sit 20 minutes to 8 hours, depending on when you make them.
5. Roll out into circles 10 to 12 inches in diameter.
6. Melt a bit of butter in a frying pan and wait until it is hot to cook the Chapati.
7. Cook rapidly and watch them bubble up.
**Njahi Stew**

**Ingredients**
1 cup of black beans (njahi)
2 tomatoes - sliced
1 large onion chopped
2 garlic cloves crushed
1 capsicum diced
2 large carrots diced
1 bunch of coriander chopped
salt to taste
10ml cooking oil

**Method:**
1. Select the black beans in order to remove unwanted particles and then wash them. 2. Boil them till they are well done and remove from heat. 3. In a different cooking pan fry chopped onions in oil until golden brown. 4. Add in the chopped garlic and stir. 5. Add the diced capsicum and chopped coriander, stir and allow to cook for 3 minutes. 6. Then bring in the sliced tomatoes and allow them to cook for 5 minutes. 7. Finally add the diced carrots, stir well add half a cup of water and allow the food to simmer for 5 minutes while covered. 8. When cooked add in the boiled black beans, plus another cup of water, season with salt and allow the food to simmer for 10 minutes. 9. Garnish with finely chopped coriander. 11. Serve hot with either steamed rice or chapati.

**Note:** Beef can be added to njahi stew. Njahi can be boiled then mashed with potatoes and greens to make Mukimo. Other types of bean such as pinto beans, kidney beans, and pigeon peas can also be used.

**Pilau**

Pilau is a specialty for the Swahili people at the Kenyan coast.

**Ingredients**
1kg white rice, long-grained aromatic is best
½ kg meat diced - beef, mutton, chicken or goat
freshly ground garlic
freshly ground ginger
1 large onion - sliced
2 large tomatoes - sliced (or use tomato paste)
cooking oil
pure ground Pilau masala
½ cup coconut milk - optional
whole potatoes - optional
dash of pepper and salt - optional
Other spices - optional

**Method:**
1. Boil the meat until tender. Sprinkle some salt to taste. Once cooked, drain the remaining broth into a container and put aside. 2. Add the onions. Cook for a couple of minutes. 3. Add freshly ground ginger and garlic then stir. Boil the meat until tender. Sprinkle some salt to taste. Once cooked, drain the remaining broth into a container and put aside.
4. Add the tomatoes or tomato paste. If you like, add the potatoes. Stir. 6. Let it cook for five to 10 minutes. Add two level teaspoons of pure ground Pilau Masala and the dash of pepper. If you are using other spices, add them at this point. Stir. 7. Let the spicy mixture simmer for about three minutes. Then add four to five cups of the meat broth. Top up with hot water or coconut milk if necessary. 8. Wash the rice. After the water or broth has boiled, add the rice. Cook under low heat until all water has dried up or until ready.

**Note:** Pilau must always be served dry, not wet. Pilau goes well with kachumbari (onions + coriander + tomatoes, sprinkled with lemon). Ripe bananas are great for garnishing.
Children's reading list

Some of these books may be available in your local library. If you can't find them then look online. Lesson plans and resources for teachers based on this Resource Kit are available online at: purplecakeday.org/faqs

For You Are A Kenyan Child
Cunnane, KellyAnne Schwartz. 2006
(Age 3+)

Mama Panya's Pancakes
Chamberlin, Mary and Rich
Barefoot Books 2006 - Depicts village life and values especially sharing. (Age 4+)

Masai And I
Kroll, Virginia. Alladin 1997 - An apartment dwelling Western child pictures herself living a Masai lifestyle. Vividly evokes similarities and differences. (Age 4+)

Mama I'll Give You The World
Themes of giving, thinking of others. (Ages 4+)

I Can Make A Difference

Planting The Trees of Kenya
Nivola, Claire A. Frances. Foster Books 2008. Important book about Wangari Maathai (Nobel Laureate) who believes change comes about one seed at a time. (Age 5+)

Mbobo Tree
Millard, Glenda. Scholastic Press 2009. Generates discussion about kindness to strangers, sharing and caring for our precious resources. (Age 5+)

Wangari's Tree Of Peace

Kenya ABC's
Heiman, Sarah, Avila and Arturo. Explore the people, wildlife and culture of Kenya. (ages 7+)

Tinga Tinga Tales
Puffin 2010. Based on African Folk Tales. Tinga Tinga is the name of a Tanzanian artist whose style has become popular throughout East Africa. (Ages 3-7 yrs)

One Hen: how one small loan made a big difference
Milway, Katie. Kids Can Press 2008 Micro finance we can understand. (Ages 8+)

Beatrice's Dream

Lala Salama- a Tanzanian Lullaby
Mclachlan, Patricia. Candlewick Press 2011. A vision of African life that is serene and safe. (For under 9s and sharing with pre schoolers.)

A Life Like Mine
Kindersley, Dorling. UNICEF 2002 Children’s rights (Ages 9+)