Grade 6 Social Studies

Terms 1, 2 and 3 - notes for 22 topics

IN EVERY TOPIC

- What you will learn and the key words.
- Short, clear notes with worked examples.
- Questions to try and a topic test, with the answers at the back.

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Strand 1.0 Natural and the Built Environments | Term 1

1.1 Position and Size of Countries in Eastern Africa

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

By the end of this topic you should be able to:

- identify the countries of Eastern Africa on a map
- describe the position and size of countries in Eastern Africa
- use latitudes and longitudes to locate places on a map

KEY WORDS

Eastern Africa, neighbour, landlocked, latitude, longitude, Equator, Prime Meridian, area.

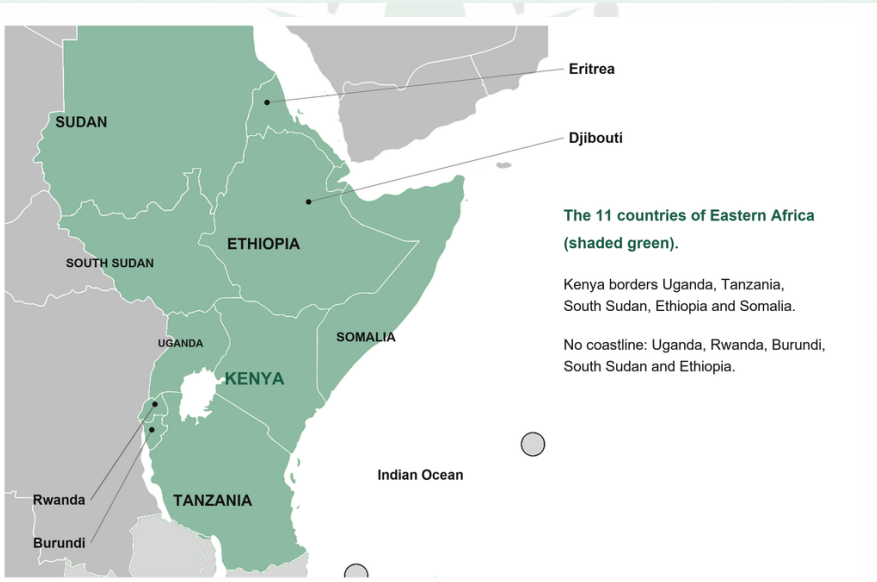
1. The countries of Eastern Africa

The countries of Eastern Africa

Eastern Africa is usually taken to include eleven countries: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti and Somalia.

Kenya shares a border with five of them: Uganda (west), Tanzania (south), South Sudan (north-west), Ethiopia (north) and Somalia (east). The Indian Ocean lies to the south-east.

Five countries have no coastline (they are landlocked): Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan and Ethiopia. They depend on ports such as Mombasa, Dar es Salaam and Djibouti for imports and exports.



The countries of Eastern Africa

2. Position and size of the countries

Describing position and size

We describe a country's position by its neighbours (Kenya lies between Uganda to the west and Somalia to the east) and by lines of latitude and longitude (Kenya lies roughly between 5° North and 5° South, and 34° East and 42° East). The Equator passes through Kenya, Uganda and Somalia.

Size is the area a country covers. Sudan is the largest country in Eastern Africa, followed by Ethiopia and then Tanzania. Kenya covers about 580,000 square kilometres. The smallest are Djibouti, Rwanda and Burundi.

A big country is not always richer or more populated: Rwanda is small but has many people per square kilometre.

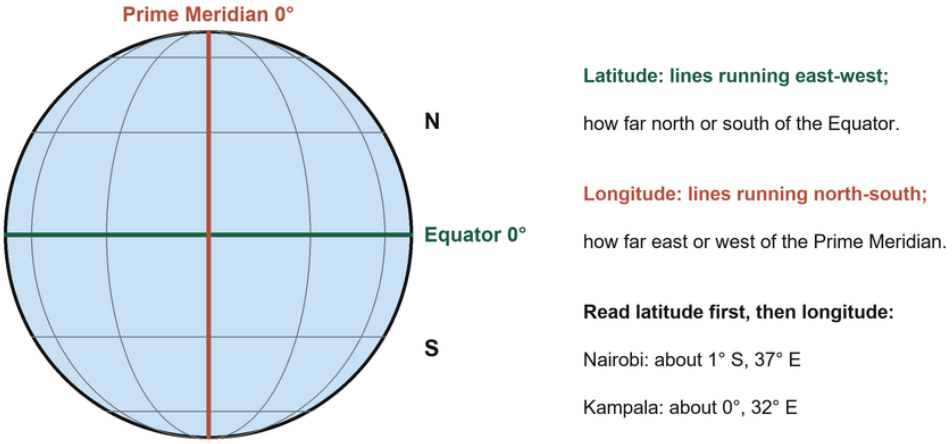
3. Latitude, longitude and the unity of Eastern Africa

Latitude and longitude

Lines of latitude run from east to west and measure how far north or south of the Equator (0°) a place is. Lines of longitude run from north to south and measure how far east or west of the Prime Meridian (0°) a place is.

To locate a place, read its latitude first, then its longitude. Nairobi is close to 1° South, 37° East. Kampala is close to 0°, 32° East, almost on the Equator.

Eastern African countries share borders, lakes, rivers, ports and many languages such as Kiswahili. Working together through trade, shared roads and peace keeps the whole region stronger.



Lines of latitude and longitude

TRY THESE

1. Name Kenya's neighbour to the west.
2. Name Kenya's neighbour to the south.
3. Which is the largest country in Eastern Africa?
4. Which is the smallest country in Eastern Africa?
5. What is the latitude of the Equator?
6. Which way do lines of latitude run?

TOPIC TEST

T1. Why would a landlocked country like Uganda want good relations with Kenya?

T2. Arrange Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Ethiopia from largest to smallest.

T3. Using an atlas, find the country that lies at about 2° South, 30° East.

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1.2 Main physical features in Eastern Africa

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

By the end of this topic you should be able to:

- identify the main physical features in Eastern Africa on a map
- describe the formation of the main physical features of Eastern Africa
- draw a map of Eastern Africa and label the main physical features

KEY WORDS

physical feature, mountain, rift valley, plateau, lake, river, volcano, faulting, downwarping.

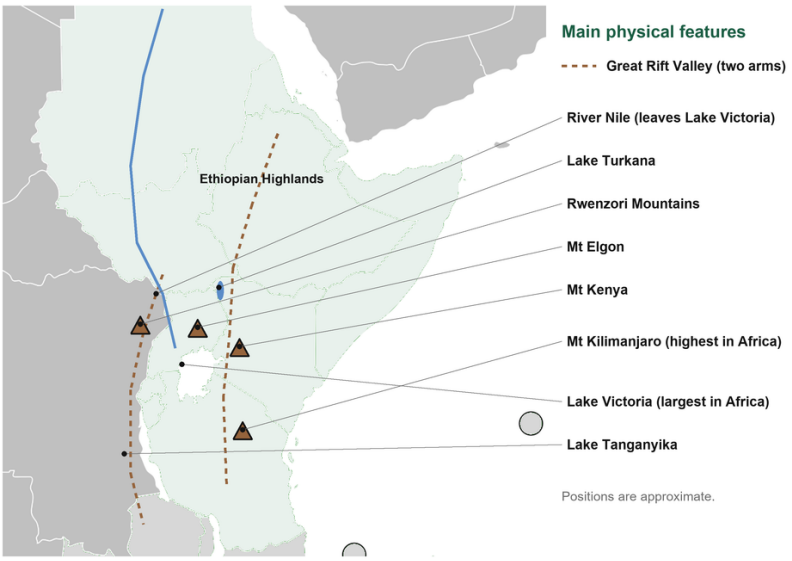
1. The main physical features

Main physical features of Eastern Africa

Mountains: Mt Kilimanjaro in Tanzania (the highest in Africa, about 5,895 m), Mt Kenya (about 5,199 m), Mt Elgon on the Kenya-Uganda border, and the Rwenzori Mountains between Uganda and the DR Congo. The Ethiopian Highlands are a large high area.

The Great Rift Valley runs through Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania (the eastern arm) and along the western side of Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi (the western arm).

Lakes: Lake Victoria (the largest in Africa, shared by Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania), Lake Tanganyika, Lake Turkana, Lake Albert. Rivers: the Nile (leaves Lake Victoria at Jinja), the Tana, the Rufiji.



Main physical features of Eastern Africa

2. How the features were formed

Three ways features form

Volcanic activity: hot melted rock (magma) from deep inside the earth pushed out through cracks and cooled in layers, building up mountains such as Kilimanjaro, Mt Kenya and Mt Elgon.

Faulting: forces inside the earth cracked the crust (faults). Where a strip of land sank between two faults, a rift valley formed; where a block was pushed up, block mountains formed, such as the Rwenzori.

Downwarping: the land between the two arms of the Rift Valley sagged downwards into a wide basin, and water collected in it to form Lake Victoria. Lake Tanganyika, by contrast, fills part of the rift valley floor, so it is long, narrow and very deep.

3. Drawing a map of the main physical features

Practical: drawing a physical map

Materials: outline maps, pencils, coloured pencils, atlas; individual work.

On an outline map of Eastern Africa, mark and label: Mt Kilimanjaro, Mt Kenya, Mt Elgon, the Rwenzori, the Ethiopian Highlands, both arms of the Rift Valley, Lakes Victoria, Tanganyika and Turkana, and Rivers Nile and Tana.

Use symbols: a small triangle for a mountain, blue shading for lakes, a blue line for rivers, two dashed lines for the Rift Valley. Add a title, a frame, a key and a north arrow.

4. Importance and conservation of physical features in our locality

Why features matter and how to care for them

Importance: mountains and highlands receive more rain and are the sources of rivers; lakes and rivers give water, fish and transport; the Rift Valley has geothermal power (Olkaria) and attracts tourists; mountains attract climbers and tourists.

Conservation: plant trees on hill slopes to stop soil erosion, do not cultivate right up to river banks, do not dump rubbish in rivers and lakes, protect springs, and report illegal sand harvesting or quarrying.

TRY THESE

1. Name the highest mountain in Africa.
2. Which three countries share Lake Victoria?
3. How was Mt Kilimanjaro formed?
4. What is a fault?
5. What symbol will you use for a mountain?
6. What colour is used for water features?
7. Give one importance of mountains.
8. Give one importance of lakes.

TOPIC TEST

T1. Why do you think the longest river in Kenya flows into the Indian Ocean and not into Lake Victoria?

T2. Name one block mountain in Eastern Africa and explain how it formed.

T3. Add Lake Albert and the Danakil Depression to your map.

T4. Write a short message for the school notice board asking people to protect a feature near your school.

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1.3 Climatic regions in Eastern Africa

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

By the end of this topic you should be able to:

- identify the main climatic regions in Eastern Africa on a map
- describe characteristics of the main climatic regions in Eastern Africa
- explain ways in which climate influences human activities in Eastern Africa
- acknowledge the main climatic regions in Eastern Africa

KEY WORDS

weather, climate, climatic region, equatorial, tropical, semi-desert, highland, rainfall, temperature.

1. Weather, climate and the main climatic regions

Climatic regions of Eastern Africa

Weather is the condition of the air at a place for a short time (today, this week). Climate is the usual weather of a place over a long time, about 30 years.

The main climatic regions are: equatorial (around Lake Victoria), tropical or savanna (much of Tanzania, southern Kenya and Uganda), semi-desert and desert (northern and north-eastern Kenya, Somalia, Djibouti, parts of Ethiopia and Eritrea), highland or mountain (the Kenya highlands, Ethiopian Highlands, slopes of high mountains) and coastal (a hot, humid strip along the Indian Ocean).

2. Characteristics of equatorial and tropical (savanna) climate

Equatorial and tropical climate

Equatorial climate: high temperatures all year, high rainfall spread through the year (often heavy afternoon showers with thunder), high humidity, and very little difference between the warmest and coolest months.

Tropical (savanna) climate: hot most of the year, with a wet season and a long dry season. Rainfall is moderate and less reliable than in equatorial areas. Grass and scattered trees grow here.

3. Characteristics of semi-desert, highland and coastal climate

Three more climates

Semi-desert and desert: very hot days, cooler nights, very low and unreliable rainfall, strong winds, frequent droughts.

Highland (mountain): cool to cold temperatures because temperature falls as height increases, high rainfall, frost or even snow on the highest peaks (Kilimanjaro and Mt Kenya).

Coastal: hot and humid all year, with sea breezes, and rain mainly in two seasons (the long and short rains).

4. How climate influences human activities

Climate and human activities

Farming: high, reliable rainfall in the highlands supports tea, coffee and dairy farming; equatorial areas grow sugarcane and bananas.

Herding: in semi-desert areas people keep camels, goats and cattle and move with them (pastoralism) to find water and pasture.

Settlement: more people live where rainfall is reliable. Tourism: the warm, sunny coast attracts beach tourists.

Dressing and housing: people wear light clothes in hot areas and warm clothes in cool highlands.

Climate also brings disasters: droughts in dry areas and floods during very heavy rains, so communities plan ahead (storing food and water, early warning, not building on flood plains).