

Emeka's Gift: An African Counting Story by Ifeoma Onyefulu (Cobblehill Books, New York, NY, 1995)

Literature Annotation: An African boy, Emeka, wanders around his Nigerian village looking for a gift to take to his grandmother. Along the way he counts what he sees: one boy, two friends, three women on their way to market, four new brooms, etc.

Grade Level: 3

Duration: 60 minutes

Economic Concepts: Production; Consumption

Maryland State Curriculum

Economics Standard: Students will identify the economic principles and processes that are helpful to producers and consumers when making good decisions. (PreK-3 Standard)

- 4.A.1.c Identify the opportunity cost of a choice or a decision (Grade 3)
- 4.A.2.a Explain how producers make choices because of limited natural, human, and capital resources (Grade 3)

Geography Standard: Students will use geographic concepts and processes to examine the role of culture, technology, and the environment in the location and distribution of human activities and spatial connections throughout time.

- 3.B.1.a Compare places and regions using geographic features (Grade 3)

Reading Standard: Students will use a variety of strategies to understand what they read (construct meaning).

- 1.D.1 Develop and apply vocabulary through exposure to a variety of texts (Grade 3)
- 1.E.4 Use strategies to demonstrate understanding of the text (after reading) (Grade 3)

Mathematics Standard – Knowledge of Measurement: Students will identify attributes, units, or systems of measurements or apply a variety of techniques, formulas, tools or technology for determining measurements.

- 3.A.1.a Measure length of objects and pictures of objects using a ruler, a tape measure, a yard stick, or a meter stick (Grade 3)

Mathematics Standard – Knowledge of Statistics: Students will collect, organize, display, analyze, or interpret data to make decisions or predictions.

- 4.A.1.d Organize and display data to make single bar graphs using a variety of categories and intervals (Grade 3)

Objectives: Students will be able to...

- describe the climate of Nigeria
- make a bar graph of average rainfall and average high temperatures of Nigeria and Baltimore, Maryland
- identify some of the natural resources used in the production of goods in Emeka's village
- compare the resources and goods available in the African village to resources and goods available in the student's community

Vocabulary

producer: an individual or group who combine economic resources to make goods and/or services.

production: the act of creating goods and services by combining economic resources

economic resources: the natural, human, and capital resources that are used to produce goods and services: also call factors of production

natural resources: the renewable, and nonrenewable gifts of nature that can be used to produce goods and services, including but not limited to land, water, animals, minerals, tress, climate, soil, fire, seeds, grain and fruits

Additional Vocabulary

chief official; plaited hair; mango trees; gourds; earthenware; mortars; pestles

Materials

- Book: *Emeka's Gift: An African Counting Story*
- Toy "jacks", 1 for every 2 students
- Cash register tape, 1 roll
- Teacher Resource 1: *Bar Graph Labels* (1 copy cut into strips)
- Teacher Resource 2: *How the Igala People Use Natural Resources* (transparency)
- Student Resource 1: *Traditions in an Igala Village* (1 copy for each pair of students)
- Student Resource 2: *Map of Africa* (1 copy for each student)

Teacher Background: Knowledge of village life in Nigeria would be helpful. Information is provided in the "Author's Note".

Motivation

Divide the students into pairs. Distribute one toy "jack" to each pair of students. Introduce the African game from Nigeria called Okosa. Have the pairs of students take turns spinning the jack. The person in each pair whose jack spins the longest is the winner.

Development

1. Locate Nigeria on a world map. Have a student trace the route that would be followed to travel from Maryland to Nigeria. Point out the location of Nigeria in relation to the equator. Distribute the outline map of Africa and have students color Nigeria and label the Atlantic Ocean, the Indian Ocean and the Equator. Tell the students that most of Nigeria has a tropical climate, with warm temperatures throughout the year but that the mount of rainfall varies greatly in northern and southern Nigeria.
2. Divide the students into six groups to prepare the bars for a bar graph of climate information which will be constructed on a bare section of wall in the classroom:
 - **Group 1** measures 130 inches of a roll of cash register tape, mark the endpoint, and cuts the tape. Have them paste on the label, "Southern Coast of Nigeria (130 inches of rain per year)" on the strip of paper they have cut to make a bar for the wall graph.
 - **Group 2** measures 26 inches of cash register tape, marks, and cuts the tape. Have them paste on the label, "Northern Border of Nigeria (25 inches of rain per year)."
 - **Group 3** measures a cash register tape to 48 inches, marks and cuts. Have them paste on the label, "Baltimore, Maryland (48 inches of rain per year.)"
 - **Group 4** measures a tape to 85 inches, marks, and cuts. Have them past on the label, "Average Temperature in Nigeria (85°F)."

- **Group 5** measures a tape to 86 inches, marks, and cuts. Have them past on the label, “Average High Summer Temperature in Baltimore (86°F).”
 - **Group 6** measures a tape to 46 inches, marks, and cuts. Have them past on the label, “Average High Winter Temperature in Baltimore (46°F).”
3. Make a wall bar graph comparing the average rainfall of northern Nigeria, southern Nigeria, and Baltimore by taping the strips with rainfall information on the wall, starting from the floor. (Some of the tapes may be too tall for the wall. Allow the top to fold up onto the ceiling, if necessary.) Tape the sign with the title “Average Yearly Rainfall” above the bars.
 4. Make a wall bar graph comparing the average high temperatures of Nigeria and Baltimore by taping the cash register tapes with temperature information on the wall, starting from the floor. Tape the sign with the title, “Average High Temperature”, above the temperature bars.
 5. Discuss with the students the information displayed on the bar graphs. Ask the following questions:
 - Why are there two bars for recording temperature information about Baltimore, but only one bar for recording the temperature information about Nigeria? (*Baltimore has seasonal changes, with winter being much colder and summer much warmer. Nigeria is tropical which means the temperature is warm all year.*)
 - How does the average rainfall in the northern part of Nigeria compare to the rainfall in the southern part? (*It rains a lot in southern Nigeria, up to 130 inches each year, while it rains about 26 inches in the border area of northern Nigeria.*)
 - How does the rainfall in Baltimore compare to the two areas of Nigeria? (*Baltimore gets more rain in a year than northern Nigeria does, but less than the southern coastal area of Nigeria.*)
 6. Introduce the students to the term rainforest and explain that the southern coast of Nigeria gets so much rain, especially in the months of May through September, that it is called a rainforest. The area in the northern part of the country is practically a desert. Ask: “What effect would the amount of rainfall have on the lifestyles of the people in Nigeria?” (*The people in the dry regions wait for the rains that fall in May and June to help them raise enough yams and grain to survive the dry seasons. Some of the areas in the south are too swampy to raise crops.*)
 7. Show the cover of the book *Emeka’s Gift*, to the students. Tell them that Emeka, the boy in the story, lives in a village call Ibaji, in southern Nigeria and comes from a tribe called Igala. The Igala people, who speak the Kwa language, are traders, farmers, fishermen and healers. Ask the students to watch and listen for more information about what life is like in Emeka’s village and other parts of Nigeria.
 8. Conduct a Read-Aloud of *Emeka’s Gift*.
 9. Remind students that, as Emeka walked to his grandmother’s house, he passed many handmade goods. Project the transparency of Teacher Resource 2: *How the Igala People Use Natural Resources*. Re-visit the book, page by page, to list the objects Emeka saw on his walk, and to identify the natural resources from which the goods were made.

Goods

Okosa game piece
colorful clothing
brooms
hats
necklaces
musical instruments (ishaka)
water pots
mortars and pestles

Natural Resources Used

small shells
cotton (?)
straw
straw
dried akodegbe seeds, rubber, plants for dye
gourds, dried seeds, rubber, plants for dye
earth
tree trunks

10. Have the students work in pairs to find traditions of the Igala people that were mentioned in the story. Distribute a copy of Student Resource 1: *Traditions in an Igala Village* to each pair of students. Have them write 3 traditions they learned from the story. Share the student's responses. Post the worksheets near the bar graphs.

Conclusion/Closure

Have the students write a few sentences telling which good they think Emeka should get for his grandmother and why.

Thoughtful Application of Knowledge

Remind the students that Emeka wanted to choose a good to give as a gift to his grandmother. Many of the goods he liked were hand-made from natural resources. Say: "Suppose you want to give a gift to your grandmother or another older person. Make a list of 5 possible gifts. The items should be gifts you could make with natural resources found near your home. Next to each item, tell the purpose of the item and the natural resources you used to make it." *Note: By third grade, the students also should be able to identify some of the human resources (skills) and capital resources (tools) needed to make each of the gifts.*

Bar Graph Labels

Southern Coast of Nigeria (130 inches of rain per year)

Northern Border of Nigeria (26 inches of rain per year)

Baltimore (48 inches of rain per year)

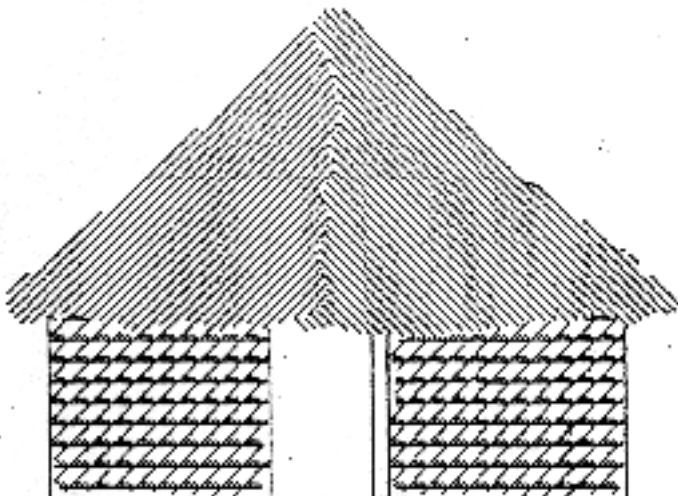
Average Temperature in Nigeria (85°F)

Average High Summer Temperature in Baltimore (86°F)

Average High Winter Temperature in Baltimore (46°F)

Average High Temperatures	Average Yearly Rainfall
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Traditions in an Igala Village



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

How the Igala People Use Natural Resources

Object	Purpose	Natural Resources Used

Map of Africa

