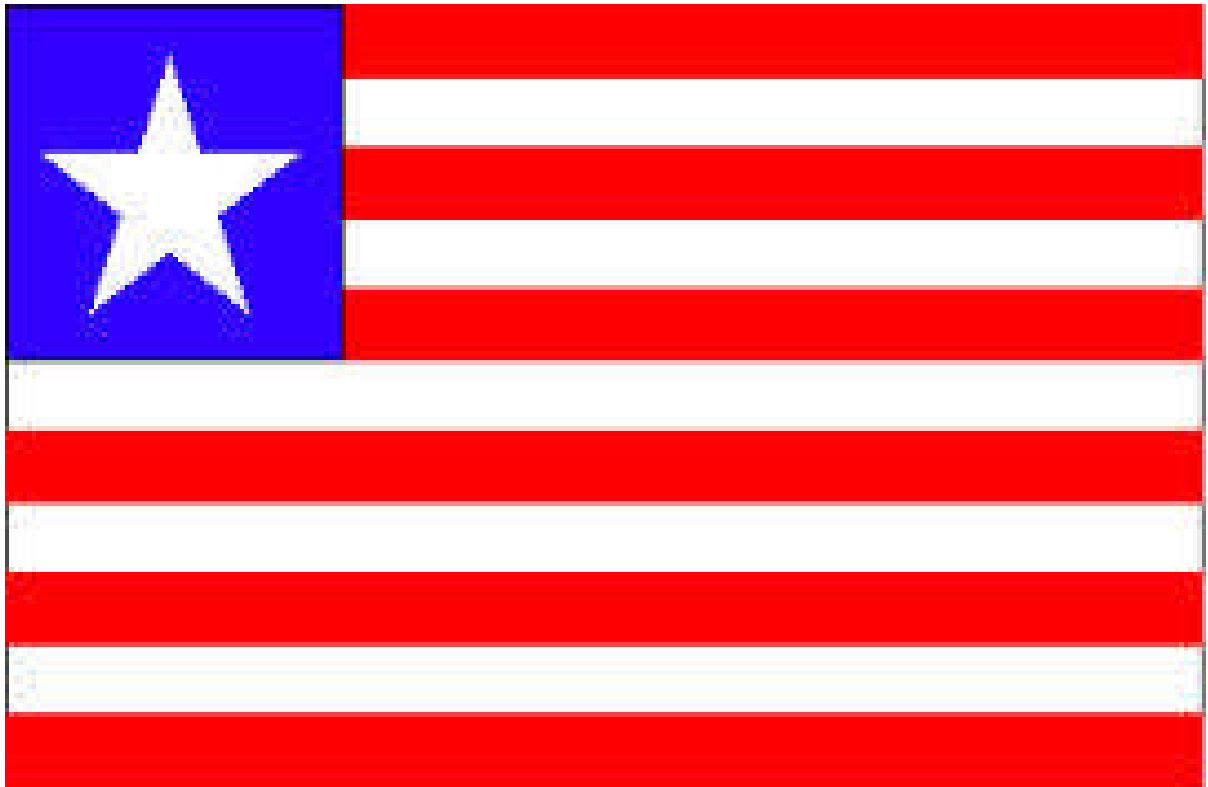


LIBERIA

Lessons for Mission Minded Kids

Lesson 1

Beginnings



Liberia

Lesson 1: Beginnings

Goals for Lesson 1:

- The students will understand why Liberia was founded and how it was settled.
- Students will begin to build foundation knowledge of the country and people we will be studying this year.
- Students will begin to learn the verse for this year's lessons, and understand the hope it holds for Liberia.

Verse for Liberia:

"Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long." Psalm 25:4-5

Before Class:

- Read through lesson and decide what you will use according to your age group and time allotted.
- Obtain a real Liberian Flag if possible, or prepare the picture on the lesson cover as a power point slide or print it and back it with cardstock for stability. Prepare the picture of Monrovia in the same way.
- Write the verse as directed on a large poster board that can be used for all of the Liberia Lessons. Practice singing the verse as directed as a song to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me".
- If you are going to make the Liberian Flag craft, prepare the following materials:
 1. One white craft foam rectangle (4" x 5 ½") **and** one white foam star for each student.
 2. Blue craft foam square (2x2 in.) for each student
 3. Three red craft foam stripes (5 ½ in. long x 3/8 in. high) **and** three red foam stripes (3 ½ in. long x 3/8 in. high) for each student.
 4. Two adhesive backed magnet strips for each student.
 5. Make a baggie kit for each child by putting all materials for one flag into a Ziploc baggie. Make one sample to show children finished craft.
 6. Have Elmer's or tacky glue on hand or use adhesive backed foam.
- Make copies of the blank and labeled African maps for each student (not back to back). Gather colored pencils, crayons or markers to use in class.
- Make a copy of the flag coloring page for each student.

Lesson Plan:

- Open your time together with a welcome, announcements and a brief prayer. (5 min.)
- Give each student a blank Africa map, a labeled map and some colored pencils or crayons. Play a game with the maps, giving directions like: “Find Egypt and color it green.” Children will find Egypt on the labeled map, find the corresponding shape on the blank map, and color the blank shape green. Older children can be paired with younger children. Make any number of directions, telling them to “draw a tree in Zaire”, or “circle the island country”, ending with “find Liberia and put a star on it.” (10-15 min.)
- Tell the students that they will be learning about the country of Liberia, and the star they put on the country represents “Hope”—the hope that God is bringing to a troubled country. **Read the verse out loud** and talk about the hope that God’s truth and God’s ways can bring to a person’s heart and to a desperate country. Tell students that the song “Jesus Loves Me” is a simple children’s song that reminds us that our hope is in Christ because of His great love for us. We will put our Liberia verse to the tune of “Jesus Loves Me” to help us remember the verse and remember that the Love of Jesus is the Hope of Liberia. **Sing the verse** together at least once to help them begin to learn it. (5-8 min.)
- Read or tell the story part of the lesson, adapting, discussing and explaining as needed for your group of children. (15-20 min.)
- Make the flag craft, as described. Tell the children to stick the magnet on their refrigerator or another metal surface at home to remind them to pray for the people whose country this flag represents. (10-15 min.)
- End with prayer for the country of Liberia. Use the flag coloring page as an ending activity, or send it home to finish later. (5 min.)

Lesson 1 Story: Beginnings

Do you know how America got its start? A long time ago, a group of people left the country of England so that they could have freedom to worship God how they wanted and to live their lives the way they chose. The country that we are going to be talking about is called Liberia, and it got started in a very similar way.

The name Liberia actually means “land of the free,” which tells us that it too was a place that people went so they could enjoy freedom. A long time ago, a group of 86 American people got on a ship and moved to a piece of land on the coast of the continent of Africa about the size of our state of Tennessee. The people who moved there were African-Americans who were slaves in America but had been freed by their masters. They were going to Africa to start a new country that they would call, Liberia. This was to be a brand new country where no one would be a slave. Later, this group of people would become known as Americo-Liberians. It was this group of people that established Monrovia, the capitol of Liberia. Monrovia is named after one of our Presidents, James Monroe.

Here in the United States we have a Declaration of Independence that tells us about the freedoms that we can enjoy. Well, the new country of Liberia wanted to do the same thing. On July 26, 1847 they declared themselves the Republic of Liberia. They even created a flag very similar to the one we have here in the United States. Do you know how many stars our American flag has? How many stripes? Here on the Liberian flag, there is one star instead of fifty. **(Show picture of Liberian Flag)** There are also 11 stripes on the Liberian flag unlike the American flag which has thirteen. The star on the Liberian flag represents the shining light of a new country on a dark continent, which is why there is a dark blue square on the flag. The eleven stripes represent the eleven people who signed the Liberian Declaration of Independence. The official language would be English, even though there were still many tribal languages being spoken as well.

Liberia started off as a series of colonies, just like America did. The former slaves from different states wanted to settle close to each other. For example, former slaves from Virginia settled with other former slaves from Virginia and so on. The American government offered to pay the way for former slaves who wanted to settle in Liberia. Even though there were about one and a half million African-Americans in the United States at that time, only twenty thousand decided to leave the country and settle in

Liberia. Since there were many tribal groups that were already living on the piece of land that became Liberia, the 20,000 Americo-Liberians who began setting up a new government and a new capital city, only made up 5% of the total population of the new country.

While it was exciting that Liberia was its own free nation, the government was being led by people who had no prior experience running a government. Also, the members of African tribes who already lived on that land had completely different traditions than the Americo-Liberians. Sadly, the Americo-Liberians didn't always understand the customs and traditions of the tribal people. The result was that the Americo-Liberians forced the tribal people to become more civilized. Even though the tribal people were the majority in Liberia, they were not allowed to vote in any government elections until the 1940's.

As a result of the tribal people being treated unfairly, there were many inter-tribal wars and tribal raids on the settlers. Many years of civil war among the tribes led to great devastation of the land, the economy, the buildings and the families who lived in Liberia.

Along with the inter-tribal wars, Liberia suffered some financial problems as well. One President, Edwin Roye, had sent three men to London to get a government loan for \$500,000. The bank charged them for \$500,000, but only gave them \$350,000, which is what they expected because of the exchange rates. The problem was that President Roye was selfish and spent \$250,000 on himself and his friends. That means that the country had a big debt, but only \$100,000 was spent on improving the country.

Even though many people had good intentions about starting a country where former slaves could be free and govern themselves, you can see that there were a lot of problems that no one thought about ahead of time. The people who made up the population of this new little country in Africa did not know how to get along with each other, or to make good laws that would help everyone who lived there.

The people of Liberia needed help, and they needed the Love of Jesus to truly make them free. Today, Liberia's president is a lady named Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. She is trying to lead her country well. **(Show the picture of Monrovia)** Monrovia is a large, active city, and many people are hearing about Jesus' love for them. Hope is coming back to Liberia. Let's remember to pray for the Liberian people as we learn more about them.

HOPE FOR LIBERIA

Our verse for Liberia represents the Hope of Christ and the change He can bring to a broken country. Together, we will learn to sing this verse to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me". The Love of Jesus has the power to change even the most impossible situations and bring Light and Hope to desperate and hopeless people. Putting a Bible verse to music increases retention, and using the tune of "Jesus Loves Me", reminds us that our hope is in Christ because of His great Love for us.

Before Class: Get a piece of colored or white poster board and write the verse on it with black sharpie in this format:

HOPE FOR LIBERIA

Show me your ways, O Lord,
teach me your paths; guide me
in your truth and teach me,
for you are God my Savior,
my hope is in you
all day long.
Psalm 25:4-5

Practice singing the verse to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me" so that you can lead your class to learn it in this way.

HOPE FOR LIBERIA

Show-ow me your ways, O Lord, (7 syllables—Je-sus loves me, this I know)
teach me your paths; gui-ide me (7 syllables—for the Bi-ble tells me so)
in your truth and tea-each me, (7 syllables—lit-tle ones to Him be-long)
for you are God my Sav-ior, (7 syllables—they are weak but He is strong)
my hope is in you (5 syllables—yes, Je-sus loves me)
my hope is in you (5 syllables—yes, Je-sus loves me)
my hope is in you (5 syllables—yes, Je-sus loves me)
all-ll day-ay long." (5 syllables—Bi-ble tells me so)



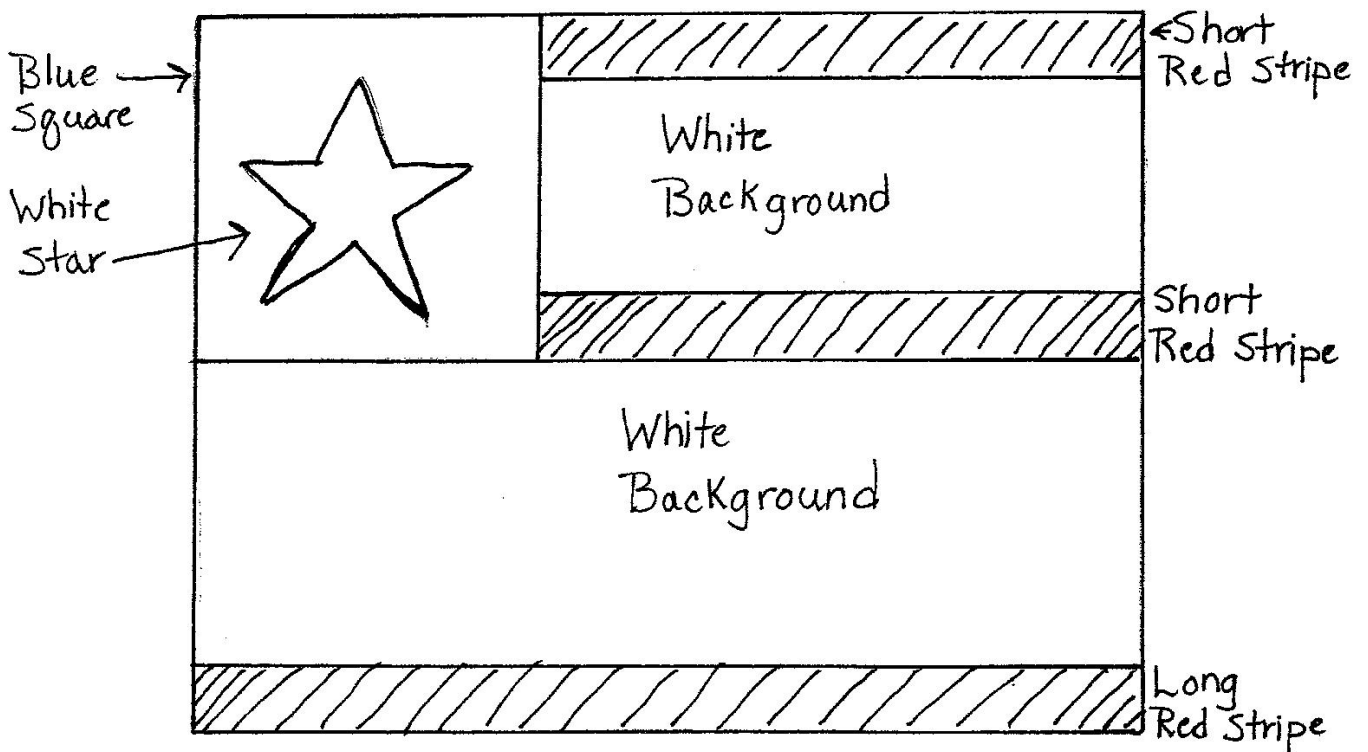
Africa



Blank Map Of Africa



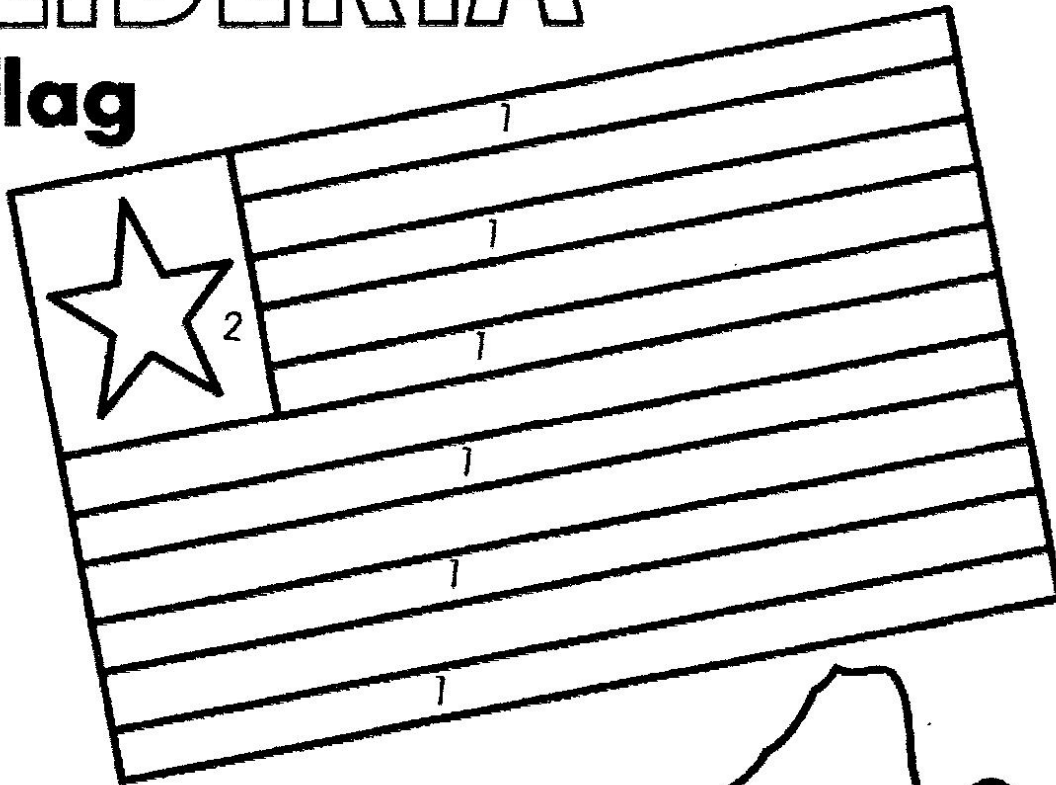
Assembling The Flag Magnet



1. Glue the blue square in the upper left-hand corner of the white rectangle. Glue the star in the center of the blue square.
2. Glue one of the long (5 ½ inch) stripes at the bottom and one of the short (3 ½ inch) stripes at the top of the white rectangle.
3. Glue a second short stripe in place, making sure the bottom of the red stripe and the bottom of the blue square form a continuous line. (see diagram above).
4. Place the other three stripes on the white background. Glue the stripes down once they have been centered.
5. Apply the magnet strips on the back.
6. Use as a prayer reminder for Liberia.

LIBERIA

flag



To color the flag of Liberia, use Crayola® crayons, markers, or colored pencils. Color the shape numbered 1 red. Color the shape numbered 2 blue. Leave the rest of the flag white.

Did you know? Liberia became a republic on July 26, 1847. The country was established by societies in the U.S. for reparation of former slaves in Africa. Located on Africa's west coast, Liberia is home to many rubber plantations. Its capital is Monrovia.

(Write your name here)