

Is Africa a new Chinese colony?

Less than one hundred years ago Africa was still being colonised by the western imperial powers. Large parts had still yet to be discovered. The British Empire was nearing its peak with red covering many countries on the new map of the African continent. France, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Belgium all had colonies there. Yet today where are they all? Having kicked out their imperial western masters and gained their independence today's African leaders have turned their backs on the west. Instead they have set their eyes firmly towards the east. China has emerged as the new Asian tiger – or should that be dragon. Hungry for raw materials, land and energy China has for a number of years now been quietly doing massive amounts of new business all over the African continent. Thousands and thousands of Chinese have been relocated to Africa to organise and deliver many precious raw materials. China desperately needs them due to its own shortage of raw materials. Over the last decade a staggering 750,000 Chinese have resettled in Africa. Many more are coming. Africa is rapidly becoming a new Chinese colony or satellite state.

So why China? The answer is simple – money, which is being used by many African leaders to prop themselves up without fear of retribution from western countries interfering in their business. This buys them arms, which fuel wars which keeps them in power. The Chinese are not actually 'taking over' the countries like the former western imperialists did. Instead they are simply exploiting its mineral wealth in return for cash, giving assistance with new developments like dams. More importantly they are rebuilding the infrastructure. Thousands of miles of new roads and railways are being built. **Whilst the colonial powers like Britain built the original network chronic under investment and deterioration over the last 50 years or so** has meant new ones were desperately needed in order to carry the tons of illegally logged timber, gold and diamonds to ports.

There are few health and safety rules in Africa. China also doesn't care about human rights in Africa. African leaders desperate for money in order to shore up their regimes turn to China. The money is used to buy weapons. According to Human Rights First, a leading human rights advocacy

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Level: Intermediate / Upper intermediate

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organisation, many types of weapon have ended up in Darfur, Sudan. There may be some limits however, as in 2008, a container shipment of arms from China was due to be delivered to the government in Zimbabwe via either Mozambique or South Africa. There was an international outcry about it, so after being refused docking the ship returned home with all the arms still on board.

In Equatorial Guinea Chinese money is building a new capital, not to mention a few Chinese restaurants. In Angola Chinese firms have won large tenders. Money has been lent to governments in Nigeria and Congo. China meanwhile shrugs off criticism by others saying simply 'business is business'. It doesn't care what the money is used for. As for Africa's impoverished people - little is seen by them of this newly found wealth. The money goes into the back pockets of their leaders. China doesn't ask questions about where the cash goes unlike western loans that need transparency.

China is desperate to sell its cheap shoddy goods and Africa is the perfect place for them. Huge ships deliver containers including toys and clothes into African ports replacing them with much needed African oil and minerals that return to China. Chinese goods today litter African markets - resulting in 200 local textile factories closing in Kenya alone. Beijing has launched its so called 'One China in Africa policy' due to its spiralling population. Housing a fifth of the world's population it needs raw materials to fuel its economic boom. New air routes have been opened between China and Africa to ferry Chinese in.

Chinese presence is felt in places like Nigeria in the west, Sudan in the east, Equatorial Guinea, Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Gabon in the southwest. Also Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Zambia in the south, and Chad, Burundi and Rwanda in the centre. China today has seized a vice-like grip on the African continent which Chinese officials know is crucial to the superpowers' survival. The Chinese are in Africa for long-term plunder. Much like the colonial powers once were. China will be there to stay until the last drop of oil and minerals have been extracted. Does Africa deserve better?

EXERCISES

1. **AFRICA:** What do you know about Africa? What do you know about the Chinese in Africa? Go round the room swapping details.

2. **Geography: Africa:** Where is Africa? What seas surround it? Draw a map on the board then **look on Google maps** to help you.

3. **Dictation:** The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

4. **Reading:** The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

5. **Vocabulary:** Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

6. **The article:** Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?

7. **Let's think! Africa:** With your partner think of three countries in each part of Africa. Write them below. Draw a map on the board to locate them, and then look on Google maps to help you. What is the biggest country? What is the smallest country? How many countries are there in Africa? (See page 8)

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Three northern African countries | Three southern African countries |
| 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 2 |
| 3 | 3 |
| Three Western African countries | Three Eastern African countries |
| 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 2 |
| 3 | 3 |
| Three Central African countries | Three islands off Africa |
| 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 2 |
| 3 | 3 |

What three things do you know about each country?

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

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8. Let's debate: Students A think Africa can develop economically. Explain why. Students B think it will never fully develop. Explain why.

9. Raw materials: Think of 10 raw materials you can find in Africa. List them below. Decide which is the most valuable (10 = most valuable and expensive: 1= cheapest). In which country might you find these minerals? (You might like to use the internet for this)

| | |
|---|----|
| 1 | 6 |
| 2 | 7 |
| 3 | 8 |
| 4 | 9 |
| 5 | 10 |

10. Let's do 'The Article Quiz' + African countries: Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) Name the South Western African countries.
- 2) How have Africa's peoples benefited from the Chinese in Africa?
- 3) How long is China in Africa for?
- 4) Does Africa deserve better? Explain.
- 5) Name the Central African countries.

Student B

- 1) Name the East and West African countries.
- 2) How many Chinese have resettled in Africa over the last decade?
- 3) Who is the new dragon?
- 4) What sort of goods does China deliver to Africa?
- 5) Name the South African countries.

11. China in Africa: Think of two economic advantages and disadvantages of China in Africa. Discuss them with your partner.

12. Presentation: In pairs, groups or individually: Prepare in class or at home a 2-minute presentation on: **The Chinese in Africa**. Stand at the front of the class to give your presentation. The class can vote on the best presentation. Class – After the presentations go through the strong and weak points on each presentation.

13. Let's write an e-mail: Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: **The Chinese in Africa**. Your e-mail can be read out in class.

14. Sentence starters: Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) Africa _____
- b) China _____
- c) The Chinese _____

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DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Is China the new colonial power in Africa?
- 3) Why aren't western countries clamouring to re-establish their presence in Africa?
- 4) Shouldn't western countries be really worried about what China is doing in Africa?
- 5) If you choose to live in Africa which country would you live in? Why this one?
- 6) Is it right the Chinese are taking over Africa?
- 7) Would you like to live in China? Why? Why not?
- 8) Should illegal logging be stopped?
- 9) What can be done to stop illegal logging?
- 10) Do you think it is right that China simply shrugs its shoulders at the criticism by others of its policy in Africa by simply saying 'business is business'?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS

- 1) What do you think about what you read?
- 2) Are Chinese goods shoddy?
- 3) Have you ever bought any Chinese goods? What? When? What quality were the goods you bought?
- 4) What can the people of Africa do to get their share of this new found wealth their leaders mostly keep for themselves?
- 5) Should loans to African countries be transparent or is asking no questions in today's world okay?
- 6) Do you think the Chinese will ever be kicked out of Africa like the imperial powers were?
- 7) Why are arms so important to some African countries?
- 8) Would you work in Africa if your company offered you a position there?
- 9) Why have some African countries prospered and many others failed?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

SPEAKING

Let's debate! Africa

Allow 10-15 minutes - Small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

Choose three African countries. Write them on the board then draw a map on the board to show where they are located. What do you know about them? What business opportunities are there? What raw materials might the Chinese be able to extract from these countries? What else do you know about these countries? (You might like to use the internet to help you e.g. Google maps) Discuss together.

The teacher can moderate the session.

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GAP FILL: READING

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Less than one hundred years ago (1)_____ was still being colonised by the western imperial powers. Large parts had still yet to be discovered. The British Empire was nearing its peak with red covering many countries on the new map of the African continent. France, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Belgium all had colonies there. Yet today where are they all? Having kicked out their (2)_____ western masters and gained their independence today's African leaders have turned their backs on the west. Instead they have set their eyes firmly towards the east. China has emerged as the new Asian tiger – or should that be (3)_____. Hungry for raw materials, land and energy (4)_____ has for a number of years now been quietly doing massive amounts of new business all over the African (5)_____. Thousands and thousands of Chinese have been relocated to Africa to organise and deliver many (6)_____ raw materials. China desperately needs them due to its own shortage of raw materials. Over the last decade a (7)_____ 750,000 Chinese have resettled in Africa. Many more are coming. Africa is rapidly becoming a new Chinese (8)_____ or satellite state.

dragon

imperial

continent

China

colony

precious

staggering

Africa

So why China? The answer is simple – money, which is being used by many African leaders to prop themselves up without fear of (1)_____ from western countries interfering in their business. This buys them (2)_____, which fuel wars which keeps them in power. The Chinese are not actually 'taking over' the countries like the (3)_____ western imperialists did. Instead they are simply exploiting its mineral wealth in return for cash, giving assistance with new developments like dams. More importantly they are rebuilding the (4)_____. Thousands of miles of new roads and railways are being built. Whilst the colonial powers like Britain built the original network (5)_____ under investment and (6)_____ over the last 50 years or so has meant new ones were desperately needed in order to carry the tons of (7)_____ logged timber, gold and (8)_____ to ports.

infrastructure

retribution

chronic

arms

deterioration

illegally

diamonds

former

GRAMMAR

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Less (1)___ one hundred years ago Africa was still being colonised by the western imperial powers. Large parts had (2)___ yet to be discovered. The British Empire was nearing its peak with red covering many countries on the new map of the African continent. France, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Belgium all had colonies (3)___ . Yet today (4)___ are they all? Having kicked out their imperial western masters and gained (5)___ independence today's African leaders have turned their backs on the west. Instead they have set their eyes firmly towards the east. China has emerged as the new Asian tiger – or should that be dragon. Hungry for raw materials, land and energy China has for a number of years now been quietly doing massive amounts of new business all over the African continent. Thousands and thousands of Chinese have been relocated to Africa to organise and deliver (6)___ precious raw materials. China desperately needs (7)___ due to its own shortage of raw materials. Over the last decade a staggering 750,000 Chinese have resettled in Africa. Many (8)___ are coming. Africa is rapidly becoming a new Chinese colony or satellite state.

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So (1)___ China? The answer is simple – money, which is being used by many African leaders to prop themselves up without fear of retribution from western countries interfering in their business. This buys them arms, which fuel wars which keeps them in power. The Chinese are not actually 'taking over' (2)___ countries like the former western imperialists did. Instead they are simply exploiting (3)___ mineral wealth (4)___ return for cash, giving assistance with new developments like dams. More importantly they are rebuilding (5)___ infrastructure. Thousands of miles of new roads and railways are being built. Whilst the colonial powers like Britain built the original network chronic under investment and deterioration over the last 50 years (6)___ (7)___ so has meant new ones were desperately needed in order to carry the tons of illegally logged timber, gold (8)___ diamonds to ports.

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SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings: **Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20**

| | | | |
|----|--------------|----|----------------|
| 1 | spiralling | 11 | infrastructure |
| 2 | transparency | 12 | interfering |
| 3 | precious | 13 | regimes |
| 4 | imperialists | 14 | criticism |
| 5 | outcry | 15 | survival |
| 6 | impoverished | 16 | deterioration |
| 7 | advocacy | 17 | shoddy |
| 8 | investment | 18 | desperately |
| 9 | meanwhile | 19 | retribution |
| 10 | illegally | 20 | independence |

MAP LINKS

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/cia-maps-publications/maps/803377.jpg>
http://www.africa.upenn.edu/CIA_Maps/Africa_19850.gif
<http://www.ilike2learn.com/ilike2learn/africa.html>
<http://www.zonu.com/detail-en/2009-11-06-10903/Africa-map-1913.html>

LINKS

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/article-1036105/How-Chinas-taking-Africa-West-VERY-worried.html> <http://allafrica.com/stories/201007300850.html>
<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65916/deborah-brautigam/africa%E2%80%99s-eastern-promise> <http://www.cbc.ca/world/story/2010/03/29/f-china-in-africa.html>
<http://allafrica.com/stories/201001200091.html>
<http://www.wsws.org/articles/2009/nov2009/afch-n16.shtml>

NOTE: There are 54 countries in Africa.

ANSWERS

GAP FILL: Is Africa a new Chinese colony? Less than one hundred years ago **Africa** was still being colonised by the western imperial powers. Large parts had still yet to be discovered. The British Empire was nearing its peak with red covering many countries on the new map of the African continent. France, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Belgium all had colonies there. Yet today where are they all? Having kicked out their **imperial** western masters and gained their independence today's African leaders have turned their backs on the west. Instead they have set their eyes firmly towards the east. China has emerged as the new Asian tiger – or should that be dragon. Hungry for raw materials, land and energy **China** has for a number of years now been quietly doing massive amounts of new business all over the African **continent**. Thousands and thousands of Chinese have been relocated to Africa to organise and deliver many **precious** raw materials. China desperately needs them due to its own shortage of raw materials. Over the last decade a **staggering** 750,000 Chinese have resettled in Africa. Many more are coming. Africa is rapidly becoming a new Chinese **colony** or satellite state. So why China? The answer is simple – money, which is being used by many African leaders to prop themselves up without fear of **retribution** from western countries interfering in their business. This buys them **arms**, which fuel wars which keeps them in power. The Chinese are not actually 'taking over' the countries like the **former** western imperialists did. Instead they are simply exploiting its mineral wealth in return for cash, giving assistance with new developments like dams. More importantly they are rebuilding the **infrastructure**. Thousands of miles of new roads and railways are being built. Whilst the colonial powers like Britain built the original network **chronic** under investment and **deterioration** over the last 50 years or so has meant new ones were desperately needed in order to carry the tons of **illegally** logged timber, gold and **diamonds** to ports. **(Note: This is a remodelled lesson from 2008)** **(V2)**



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