

Return to Ghana through Historical Sites

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Keywords Ghana, Year of Return, Slave trade sites, Assin Manso, Elmina Castle

Overview In this series of lessons, students explore and apply the idea of “return” and “remembering” within the lens of historic sites in Ghana. Students will look for connections between the primary source images and justify their reasoning and ideas.

Essential Questions

- What does it mean to return?
- Why do people have the need to remember places or events?
- What can photographs tell us about a place or time period?

Intended Grade Level 4th & 5th

Intended Content Areas Social Studies

Standard Alignment with NC Standards

1.1.7 Construct claims in response to compelling and supporting questions.

1.1.8 Accurately use information from sources when making claims.

1.1.9 Make inferences from information in sources.

1.1.10 Construct responses to compelling questions with specific claims and information from teacher-provided sources.

4.G.1.3 Summarize the reasons for forced and voluntary migration to, from, and within North Carolina

5 G 1.4 Explain the reasons for forced and voluntary migration to, from, and within the United States.

Materials

- [Resource Slides for Classroom Use](#)
- [Photo Match up/Connection Chart](#)
- [“Back to Roots: Why African-Americans are Flocking to Ghana”](#)
- Arcgis storymap: [Hidden Histories of Ghana’s Slave Forts and Castles](#)
- Pencils, match up/connection chart, copies of slides 7-21 OR student computers with internet access

Suggested Length of Time 45 minutes

Prior Work to be Completed

This lesson is best done after “L6 Return to Ghana: Year of Return.” This lesson also assumes that students already have background knowledge of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and is best used as a catalyst for looking at this historical event from a slightly different, up-close perspective.

Procedures

- Review with students the Year of Return. Many of the official “Year of Return” activities celebrated Ghana’s arts and culture and encouraged people to invest financially in Ghana or even to move there. Another very important part of the “Year of Return” was to mark 400 years since the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in Jamestown, Virginia. It also celebrated the strength of the victims of the trans-Atlantic slave trade who migrated by force to places like North America, South America, and the Caribbean.
- Watch the video [The Atlantic Slave Trade in Two Minutes](#) and ask students to share observations about the video.
- Ask students how we commemorate or remember events (possible responses: holidays, books, museum exhibits, faces on money, stamps).
- People also often learn about events at historic sites and places. Ghana’s coastline is filled with old forts, many of which were dungeons for enslaved people who were being held there against their will before enduring the Middle Passage across the Atlantic. Every year, visitors go to these sites. Why would someone want to or need to return or “turn back” to these historic sites in Ghana?
- Guide/allow students to explore the infographic in the slides about Elmina Castle (please make the distinction that Elmina Castle is more like a fort or dungeon) and Assin Manso (Slave River) Site. The infographic has additional information about the sites embedded in it.
- Have students in pairs or small groups “match” or link up photos and fill out [this chart](#) to capture their thinking on the chart. Encourage students to dig deeper than superficial comparisons.
 - Students can independently explore the infographic via this link on their own chromebooks: bit.ly/elmina-info
 - You can also print out the images on resource slides 7-21 and allow students to use the hard copies for the activity.
- Give students time to share out and compare their charts with other groups.
- Be sure to have students explain how the images at these sites encourage/embody/display the concept of **return** or **remembering**.
- For some students, the following sentence stems may help them share out their thoughts:

- *This is _____ . It is an important site in Ghana because _____ .*
- *People should return there because _____ .*
- *People should remember it because _____ .*
- As an exit ticket or wrap up discussion, ask students to explain how Elmina Castle and Assin Manso fit into Ghana's Year of Return campaign. Think about Okeyame Kwame's song "Made in Ghana" or "Come Home" from the previous lesson.

Optional Extension Activities:

- Students can explore an additional slave fort or castle that is detailed on [Hidden Histories of Ghana's Slave Forts and Castles](#) and compare it to Elmina.