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The Legacy of Francophonie in Post-Colonial Africa

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INTRODUCTION

This unit is written for high school French 3 and 4, and it focuses on interpreting historical events while building up background knowledge. It creates an overall awareness about the French-speaking world rather than memorizing grammar structures and rules often emphasized in language learning. Our curriculum is designed to give the teachers leniency to expand and use history, art, culture, and cross-disciplinary topics. Students in French 3 and 4 can explore various themes independently – under the overarching themes of contemporary and standardized French language teaching. As students move from levels 1 and 2 to 3 and 4, the task difficulty increases as students go through stages of second language acquisition. Precisely, in levels 1 and 2, our curriculum, although thematic, focuses more on vocabulary, which is often contextualized. Hence, in French 3 and 4, the tasks become more cognitively demanding. The context becomes less evident as we go from conversational scenes to interpreting facts, giving opinions, and expressing thoughts in speaking and writing.

Although the themes are selected to prepare our students to become fluent in French, we need our students to become thinkers. Thus, there is more to teaching French than improvising conversational utterances, teaching strict grammar rules, training students how to self-correct mistakes, and convert the lesson into a grammar monitoring process. In the last twenty years, the paradigm of teaching a second language has shifted from accuracy to fluency by optimizing the comprehensible input and focusing more on interactive activities. However, what I think is missing from our instruction has little to do with our teaching but instead with what we are teaching. Yet, by focusing precisely on the content, we realize that – our curriculum embodies the same ideology that we perceive as the cradle of French culture and civilization. In other words, the “Francophonie.”

The reason why many students choose to take French nowadays stems from the widely believed idea that French pertains only to France, its culture, traditions, and history. Yet a language, in general - has many parts that make up its structure: Grammar, phonetics, lexicology, text analysis, syntactic morphology, etc. Thus, the overarching curriculum offers and requires that - phonetics, lexicology at least be based on modern, standardized French at the high school level and the higher education. When students study French, their main focus is to communicate and learn the "Parisian" version of the language.¹ Phonetic practice does precisely that. The videos, audios we play are mainly narrated in that version. Teachers hardly encourage

other French accents and dialects, especially those in Africa and the Caribbean, as they deem them non-standard.

Teachers usually create non-racist or neutral lessons where race is not discussed at all. This practice also goes for language and foreign language teachers. However, teaching a non-racist curriculum is not the same as teaching an anti-racist curriculum. ² On a more personal level and as a teacher, I believe that neutrality in any curriculum deepens the problem. Neutrality impedes creativity and uniqueness. Practicing neutrality in our lessons to avoid the race discourse perpetuates the problem and ensures continuity of the status quo. It means we cannot see beyond the glass wall and colorblindness.

Inherently French teachers are language teachers, and their focus is more on the linguistic aspect and reassuring that students acquire fluency in French. Teaching for social justice and using culturally responsive pedagogy is not one of the focuses of language teachers. Social justice - is founded on three pillars - equity, activism, and social literacy.³ It is not easy to adopt a foreign language curriculum and teach for social justice. Yet, as challenging as it might look, it is quite possible, as long as we understand that we must challenge the narrative and decolonize the curriculum to teach more culturally responsive content. With this assumption, I mean, we must teach students various French-speaking cultures, history, art, colonization, decolonization, and the quest for independence. Forming a solid background will allow students to become aware of more linguistic components such as French Creole expressions, or French African dialects.

Objective

My objective is to add more diversity to the high school French curriculum by including the French-speaking countries in Africa and the Caribbean that often lack in our teaching. As stated above, it gives our teaching a partial view of the French-speaking world or le monde francophone. In the last two decades or more, France has made progress in representing minorities in the country's cultural life. However, the teaching of French not only by individuals on their private YouTube channels but also in standardized methods excludes diversity.

My aim in this project is to focus on colonial history, art, and literature. I will look for particularities in the French colonial system, symbolism, shared values, and traditions that made the colonial culture unique and a vital part of Francophonie.

I will raise awareness among French teachers to look at the curriculum more rationally and be open to the idea of teaching French for social justice and outside of the current framework. The unit's premise is to argue that Francophonie, as part of linguistic and cultural policy, alienates the former French colonies, their contribution to diversity, cultural tradition, and heritage. And finally, we must look at the Francophonie as a new way of including various cultures, dialects and traditions.

In this curriculum unit, students will:

1. Examine through mapping, pictures, and paintings the enterprise of French colonization of Africa; its ideology, history, and its impact in general, but mainly in the region otherwise known as *Afrique Noire*.
2. Define "*assimilation*" as a term and the ruling ideology in French Africa, especially in the "Four

Communes" region of Senegal.

3. Define through art the ideology of the oppressed.
4. Explore why many French intellectuals of African and Caribbean background writers, and artists diverted from the idea of the overarching culture and civilization to form a culture that is indigenous to Africa yet modern and contemporary.

Communalities in the teaching of French as a Second Language

Teaching French implies disseminating culture, history, and philosophy that stemmed from the idea of France as a cultural nation and one of the most democratic and social nations in modern history. Tenets such as the French Revolution, the end of the Monarchy, la Commune de Paris, the "Declaration of human rights" - are long revered and admired worldwide by many democratic societies. As an educator, I find the contribution to equality, fairness, brotherhood, and liberty - engrained in the French enlightenment - genuinely inspiring. However, there is another side to France being a colonial power that is not revealed or part of our discourse. France was one of the most ambitious powers during the 19th century. Hence the topic of colonialism is often avoided in our French curriculum. Historically, France was the second greatest colonizer after Great Britain. It had numerous settlements and colonies in Africa, Asia, North America, the Caribbean, and South America. France left a legacy in these countries even after their wars for independence: The French language and culture. Yet, when we think of French as a language, we think of France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and not Algeria, Chad, Congo, Senegal, Ivory Coast, etc. This discrepancy makes us question the inclusiveness of all French-speaking countries as part of the linguistic and cultural legacy. Still, it reveals double standards in determining what constitutes the French language, art, and culture.⁴

Almost 80 years after WWII and the Algerian Independence Revolution, France has contributed to promoting democracies in the former colonies. Scholars of colonialism and post-colonialism studies argue that France's presence and politics in the former colonies is none other than neo-colonialism.⁵ At home, a cursory evaluation of French politics shows little involvement of minority groups within the politics of the modern French nation. Nowadays, France remains a key factor in world politics and International Relations; and its spheres of influence.⁶ France has a tremendous economic and military influence in Africa, which has raised concerns among African intellectuals.⁷ More so, France remains a cradle of cultural and linguistic hegemony in the African continent, despite its social fabric changes in the last two hundred years.⁸ France 24, a public news channel, gives a daily view of France's international interests. More than fifty percent of the news comes from Africa and mainly former French colonies struggling with political turmoil, and ethnic conflicts within their countries. It often shows a French military presence - perhaps through international missions, or UN appointees.

France 24 includes some diversity within the country in its news reporting, depicting African artists and performers. Yet, the French culture remains the dominant culture, with little to offer in diversity. For years now, France has diffused and promulgated through Francophonie the dominant linguistic themes, culture, literature, and other topics centered mainly on French civilization. Colonial France is inexistent in this diffusion of new and old ideas. The overarching curriculum for middle and high school features thematic units depicting life, customs, and lifestyle in the metropolis. The former colonies, once the periphery, do not exist or are seldom reflected in themes and lessons. Inherently, the former colonies are only introduced as French-

speaking countries, but the various dialects and rich traditions, art, and cultures are lacking in our curriculum.⁹ My students understand the impact that bias curriculum has on learning. French is not taught as a language only. After all, teachers of foreign languages promote culture, art, tradition, history, food and even promulgate globalist ideas in their teaching of language. Teachers usually have to research these countries on their own. Not only that, but the textbooks overlook these countries by giving more room to other European French-speaking countries such as Belgium, Luxemburg, Switzerland, and also Canada. The French-speaking African countries and their respective cultures have always been left in the shadows.¹⁰ In addition, if black students and characters were featured in French books, they were displaced and transplanted into the metropolis rather than being in their countries of origin. There are a few underlying assumptions in the narrative that teachers take for granted. Such rhetoric has to do with the history of colonialism. The narrative and the counter narrative exist just as in other subjects, and if looked at it from the lenses of social justice it is clear that the curriculum must go through the process of decolonization:

Narrative:

France played a role in civilizing the African countries by spreading ideas of human rights and democracy.

The assimilation turned the African people into dignified black Frenchmen and women.

Some races are superior and others inferior, and it is the duty of the superior race to act as a change agent and civilize the most inferior ones.

On the other hand, the counter-narrative is quite lacking from our discourse in French teaching:

Counter narrative:

France colonized Africa as an imperialist power seeking a cheap labor market, human and natural resources.

Universalism and colonialism is an oxymoron. One cannot colonize people to instill human rights and values. Colonization defeats that purpose.

Assimilation brings to the extinction of cultures, ideas, and entire civilizations. It deprives people of self-expression in art, culture, language, politics, and depletes creativity.

France as an imperialist power

When analyzing France's influence in Africa and its role as a colonizer, it is paramount to look at the timeline in which its policies became prevalent. There are two phases or periods that mark France's legacy in Africa as a hegemon and world power. The first colonial empire lasted until 1814. The conquest of Algiers in the 1830s marked the second empire, and it ended with the wars of Indochina and the Algerian Revolutionary War of 1955. After the 1960s, France changed its "posture" to a more peaceful transition while granting independence to sub-Saharan regions.¹¹

France was the second colonial power on the verge of WWI after Great Britain. Nevertheless, there was an ongoing struggle for new markets and establishing a balance of power in international relations. Deep Africa,

especially the sub-Saharan region, became a zone of interest for France, Great Britain, and Belgium.¹² France spread its influence in almost all the three major continents; Asia, Africa, and the Americas. A cursory evaluation of the French colonization practices shows another account from previous colonial systems. It was not quite a mercantilist system such as Spain and Britain. French colonialism was a mere political adventure that the third Republic under Napoleon the III undertook to expand beyond France's territories. The enterprise was an ideological trope, and it became evident that the expeditions to Africa were a calculated political move. The occupation of Laos, Vietnam, the protectorate of Morocco, was none other than enslavement and dehumanization of the indigenous people under the guise of civilization and the promulgation of human rights. From a historical perspective, French colonization and expansionism as a process comprised two phases: During the first phase, France embarked on one of the essential missions of modern History: The conquest of the New World. Thus, the first phase took place right during the Renaissance.¹³ The first settlements in the Western Hemisphere were Bay du Saint Laurent, Acadie, and Quebec. Later on, the French founded the Louisiana, Saint Domingue, Martinique, and Guadalupe. After claiming their territories in North and South America, the French expeditions sailed south of the Atlantic Ocean, down the coast of Africa, and claimed two other parts for the crown. Ile de France and Ile Bourbon.

The colonization was always a debate that had fueled the political circles. The clergy also sought colonization as a way to convert people into Catholics and expand their influence. The first phase of French colonization was more or less a competitive race between two other world powers in this historical adventure: Great Britain and Spain.

With the Manifest Destiny platform, the United States started to aggressively expand the territory by pushing the indigenous population either West or placing them in reservations. France was struggling to keep the settlements in North America. Thus, Napoleon Bonaparte sold Louisiana to the US in 1803. Quebec and others colonies were lost to Canada, and Haiti declared independence in 1804. In 1830, France sent troops to conquer Alger, marking the beginning of the second phase of the French colonial experiment. However, due to clashes with local resistance, the fall of Algeria under French rule did not happen until 1847.¹⁴

As the elected President of the III Republic, Napoleon the III solidified his intentions as one of the most expansionist presidents in France's modern history. His presidency marked a prosperous period due to the annexation of new territories, such as New Caledonia, and the occupation of Cochinchina (Vietnam). The Third Republic finalized the new colonization phase with the signing of Morocco's protectorate status, the occupation of Congo, Sudan, Niger, Ivory Coast, and Mauritania. Meanwhile, the competition between France and Great Britain to conquer more territories in Africa became fierce. As a result, France funded two major territorial federations, AEF Afrique Equatoriale Française and AOF Afrique Occidentale Française made of eight states. In the Far East, Annam became a protectorate, and Laos remained occupied.

Jules Ferry¹⁵ was the most prominent figure of this Republican Imperialism. Ideologically, the left-wing at the time (the mid-1800s) promoted imperialism under the idea of Universalism or Universal Humanism. According to this belief, the values held by the French Republic- must be expanded outside France's territory. Jules Ferry believed that matters such as universal humanism, secularism, and the modernism of the Western world are necessary to civilize cultures he deemed inferior. The right-wing was against the expansion of the Republic and promulgated the use of power and resources against Germany - especially after the loss of Alsace Lorraine (Prussia) in 1871.¹⁶

The conquest of the African continent marked a rivalry between world powers in exploiting vast land, territories, human and natural resources. Great Britain and France were among the pioneers of claiming land

under the "course au clocher" (steeple race), the race against the time in the mission of acquiring territories.¹⁷ However, as we saw, France had a long experience with colonialism before the scramble for Africa. It had already built and then lost parts of a great empire to Canada and United States. Moreover, France - long before the revolution- had emerged as a civic nation. In 1539, François le Premier (Francis I) declared French the official language.¹⁸ His intentions, apart from consolidating the state, were also expansionist ideas.¹⁹

The French experiment in Senegal and the four communes

During the second colonial phase around 1830, France took a different approach. Rather than conquering by force as it did with Algeria, it changed posture and introduced the "assimilation theory"²⁰ in which France would train, educate African men (les évolués) to carry out the mission of diffusing ideas of civilization. In the second half of the 19th century, France created the four communes of Senegal - Dakar, Saint Louis, Gorée, and Rufisque where people were granted the same rights as French citizens.

Africans from the four communes who were able to pursue higher education and were willing to renounce their legal protection could 'rise' to be termed Evolué (evolved) and were nominally granted full citizenship including the right to vote. Nevertheless, despite this legal framework, évolués still faced substantial discrimination in Africa as well as in the metropolis.²¹

Thus during the first half of the 1800s, the economic importance of these settlements as key trading points led to the creation of general councils. By 1880, the four communes were able to send their elected representatives to the French General Assembly. Though, their representatives were often colonists, European or métis.²² The policy of assimilation became prevalent in the four communes. Africans could be evolved into "Black Frenchmen." In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a hallmark of the French colonial project was called civilizing mission (mission civilisatrice) or known as a policy of cultural assimilation. For example, during the nineteenth century, black Africans in four communes in Senegal were granted French citizenship along with the right to elect deputies to the Chamber of Deputies. The conditions that a native had to meet to be granted French citizenship included earning a decent living, was to display good moral standards, speak and write French.²³

The population in these regions became known as "Les originaires" meaning they were the first to have a French citizen status - not yet promoted in other settlements. Les originaires ought to be fluent in French to advance in social life, politics, or work in administrative institutions. However, prejudice was very common when it came to career ambition and advancement. It was not until 1907 that the first originaires of African background Galandou Diouf was elected as a legislator in the General Council in the commune of Rufisque. In 1914, the first African man Blaise Diagne won a seat in the French National Assembly representing the communes of Senegal. He was then succeeded by Diouf.²⁴

The Ruling Ideology of the Imperial Enterprise

When the French expanded in Africa in the nineteenth century, they *based* their imperial policy on nationalism, in which the critical element was people. By including all under a nation-state, the idea of native cultures, traditions, and indigenous language groups would no longer be significant. The overarching culture, constitution, and language would be under French culture, language, and civilization. ²⁵

After the French Revolution, the idea of humanism, equality, liberty and brotherhood, became prevalent and was the binding element in the newly emerged French civic nation. However, the competition between world powers for finding new markets, resources, cheap labor forced France and Great Britain to expand their empires in Africa and Asia. An excellent impasse for the French was the status that would grant to the newly acquired colonies and justify universalism and egalitarianism. Africa – especially Afrique Noir- was nonetheless a challenging task for France.²⁶ As French nationals – would Africans have the same rights as French nationals or become French nationals? France needed to boost its military and build the infrastructure in the countries under its rule, such as Congo, Senegal, and others. The colonization process was founded on the principle that inequality between the human races exists regardless, and a powerful country must spread ideas of civilization and prosperity to inferior cultures. In 1885, Jules Ferry talked about "superior races" and "inferior races." His discourse and rhetoric did not go unnoticed. Essayist and Diplomat Arthur De Gobineau in his acclaimed research at the time "L'essai sur l'inegalité des races humaines" (1855) argues that - based on anthropological studies- a black person's brain is primitive. In addition, another argument embraced by French expansionism was the theory of evolution, which argued that "Africans" were in the first stages of civilization.²⁷ These arguments served as means to justify the Republican colonization using the ideals of "Universal Humanism."

In other words, the theory of evolution, according to French ideologues of the 19th Century - legitimized the colonization of Africa. However, there is a fine line in using human rights to protect civil liberties – and deforming the same ideals to deprive or violate others' rights - in the name of universalism. In this context, the idea of universal rights prompted the colonization of Black Africa in the second half of the 19th Century – which marks the beginning of explorations deep into the African continent. It is worth mentioning that the indigenous African men partook in the conquest of Africa to conquer more territories in the name of the French Republic. In contrast with Spain's early settlements, mainly a private enterprise – partly financed by the Crown, France's colonialism was state-sponsored, state-controlled, and state institutionalized with a strong ideology. In the process, Republican expansionism ruled out the independence of these countries until the revolutionary wars.

Civilizing efforts included the development of colonial infrastructure, especially in railway transportation and healthcare provision. However, the cornerstone of Mission Civilisatrice was attempted social engineering through efforts at improving the natives' quality of life, politics and education, but often in the promotion of French interests and ideological and governmental traditions; a recurring trend.²⁸

France implemented a colonial system based partially on mercantilism and partly on culture and language. Hence the culture and its expression in the metropolis was the standard. This teaching method discourages the heritage culture and language of more than twenty-one African countries – especially in the West African region – Françafrique and the French-speaking countries of the Caribbean islands. The policy of diffusing the

French language and culture has long been an objective of France reclaiming its place globally and perhaps through softer means more so than the traditional colonialism. The mentality of France being a hegemon in Africa has not faded, but it continues –as we see in the current state of France politics.

Seemingly, French colonialism based its ideology on the tenets of human rights. Yet, the French demanded that their colonial subjects learn the French language and culture as a prerequisite to becoming French- or precisely French black men. Of course, France sought in Africa more than diffusing human rights and egalitarianism on a global scale. The cheap labor, the rich land, the vast territories, and the future markets became profiting industries for the French economy in the metropolis. More importantly, France sought in African men, the future soldiers of the French Army, to fight in the upcoming conflicts or potential revolution uprising inside colonies. The newly French-African citizens were later enlisted in the military and fought in the French Army.²⁹

An example of such inclusion were the famous 'Four Communes' in Senegal where inhabitants were granted the same rights as French Citizens.³⁰ The French assimilation of the African colonies came as a result of dominating the indigenous culture. During the 19th and 20th centuries, the imperial policy consisted of subtracting or eliminating various African cultures and replacing them with French – as a culture and as vernacular. The French policy of expanding the nations beyond the French border and creating an extension of the French nation meant going in the same trajectory as building a modern nation. Therefore, France needed to create a civic framework to turn these colonies into sub-nations. By erasing their culture, tradition, history, and language – implementing a political and legal system – based on the metropolis, France had a "perfect" model to create an empire based on civic or institutional nationalism.

Unlike the early settlements of Imperial Spain that resulted in the physical extinction of the natives in the Caribbean Islands, France was cautious about the imperial policies in Africa. Hence, France went after the cultural identity construct, rather than physical extinction through force – yet it often practiced harsh physical labor. The colonized were also subject to an overarching political system. Thus, upon implementing imperial policies, natives in these colonies were considered French citizens as long as the French culture and customs were adopted. This also meant the indigenous would have the rights and duties of the French citizens. The purpose of the assimilation theory was to turn African natives into "French" men by educating them in the language and French culture to become French citizens or equals.

The imperial endeavor in the mid-1800s – adopted the ideology of the liberal left and precisely the politics of Jules Ferry. In contrast, conservatives, Catholics, and monarchist traditionalists in France were opposed to the idea of expanding French citizenship beyond France's borders. Such was the opposition of having representatives from Africa in Parliament.³¹

La Negritude: The Ideology of the Oppressed

The Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s had a significant impact on the African and Caribbean intellectuals, authors, and artists living in France. The Negritude, a literary movement of French intellectuals - not only in Africa but also in the Caribbean and South America, marked one of the essential aspects in Colonial literature and art. It was a rupture between the French culture and civilization and a newly introduced, refined, sophisticated, post-colonial movement that had roots in pre-colonial Africa. La Negritude as a movement

began in Paris in between two wars (WWI and WWII). During this period, the ruling ideology of the colonist – was otherwise known as tabula rasa. The French argued that it brought values to African, which before were non-existent. The founders or the pioneers of the Negritude were three black intellectuals, Leopold Senghor – Senegal, Leon Gontran – French Guyana, and Aimé Césaire – Martinique. The movement was influenced by influential authors such as Langston Hughes and Claude Mc Kay of Harlem Renaissance.³²

*La négritude se présente sous deux aspects : objectif et subjectif [...]. C'est objectivement l'ensemble des valeurs de civilisation du monde noir, dont le sens de la communion, le don de l'image analogique, le don du rythme fait de parallélismes asymétriques. D'un mot c'est une certaine dialectique, mieux une symbiose entre l'intelligence et l'âme, l'esprit et la matière, l'homme et la femme, etc. La négritude est aussi une certaine volonté et une certaine manière de vivre les valeurs que voilà. C'est surtout ce dernier sens que lui donne Aimé Césaire. [...]*³³

(Adaptation) Negritude presents itself in two aspects: objective and subjective [...]. It is objectively the set of values of civilization in the black world, including the sense of communion, the gift of analogical image, the gift of rhythm made of asymmetric parallelisms. In a word, it is a certain dialectic, better a symbiosis between intelligence and soul, spirit and matter, man and woman, etc. Negritude is also a certain will and a certain way of living these values. It is especially this last meaning that Aimé Césaire gives it.

L'école de Dakar

The Negritude was a form of self-expression and liberation of African and Caribbean authors and artists – one of the most prominent was Aimé Césaire with his poetry. Ecole de Dakar, more so than a school, was a movement – of self-affirmation. The school was dedicated to art and the promotion of Senegalese artists, self-expression, creativity, and authenticity.

Léopold Sédar Senghor, the first Senegalese President, became one of the promoters of the school by advocating native art, culture, national museums, and various events and festivals. The art featured in these exhibitions was a form of liberation from the influences of colonialism. It marked a new period of creativity and development known as the Africanité. As the Senegalese President – Senghor – established better conditions for art by funding art schools. During this time, one of the prominent artists was the modern painter Papa Ibra Tall (1935-2015).

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: An example of a daily activity that can be accomplished as group work.

Objectives:

Examine maps, pictures, and paintings and draw conclusions about the French colonization of Africa. Determine the ideology France used to dominate Africa and write the history of Afrique Noire. (Black Africa)

Description:

In this activity, students will explore various historic maps of Africa and precisely French-speaking countries. First, students will determine characteristics of different maps – what they represent and from whose point of view they are written. Then, students will interpret the maps and explain how they relate to the colonization of Africa.

Academic language: Students should know (In French and English) the keywords that evolve around the unit, such as colonizing, imperialism, assimilation, rule, republic, etc

Procedure:

The teacher introduces the importance of the activity and explains why the activity is meaningful to student learning. The focus should always remain on historical rather than a territorial mapping of Africa. From the maps that students will examine – they will focus on features that depict the natural wealth and abundance of Africa and its people and ask why the maps are labeled "Colonies Françaises" - meaning under the French rule. The teacher will connect this activity to previous lessons and built on knowledge.

After introducing the activity, the teacher divides the class into groups of four and passes out two or three maps per group with questions about the maps.³⁴

Questions:

What do you observe in map #1 #2 and #3?

How is this _____ map different from other maps?

Describe in your own words particularities of the French colonization of Africa and show evidence from the maps.

Closing argument:

Students present and share with other groups their findings.

Activity 2: An example of a performance task or a summative assessment**Objective:**

1. Define the term *assimilation* – as France's ruling ideology carried out in the newly colonized regions such as the four communes of Senegal.
2. Develop a conceptual understanding of stages of colonization and various level of assimilation.

The teacher must have a clear rubric and instruction for this research activity. Students will examine various sources to create an idea of what are some of the ways to assimilate into a different language of culture:

Ideas to be explored before students start the research.

The teacher must use resources such as videos, power points, songs, and documentaries.

1. Assimilation through the language or the vernacular – How were French Africans assimilated

linguistically. Examine various documents and documentaries that support the narrative above. "Les originaires" in the four communes had to learn French to advance.

2. Assimilation through culture – Examine various documents that show whether French Speaking African people adapted their own culture to make it more a francophone culture. (Example – listen to various French- African songs)
3. Institutional assimilation – France implemented institutions modeled after their form of government or governance and employed African intellectuals. Examine through documentaries and documents the institutional assimilation of African countries under French rule. Use as an example of the four communes being represented in the General Assembly in France instead of having a government in their land.

Assessment ideas: Create a poster, write an expository essay, create a PowerPoint presentation, or an infographic.

After spending a few lessons exploring the colonial rule in Africa, students should have enough background knowledge to go ahead and explore on their own about the topic.

Activity 3: An example of an art lesson

Objective:

Define through art the ideology of the oppressed.

1. Explore the motives French African intellectuals, writers, and artists diverted from the idea of the overarching culture and civilization to form a culture that is indigenous to Africa, yet modern and contemporary.

The focus of this lesson is the Senegalese artist Papa Ibra Tall, but it can be an artist, author, writer or poet.

Procedure:

The teacher introduces the topic and reassures that students are aware that today's activity will be about art. Then, through PowerPoint presentations, slide shows, or videos, teachers must build background knowledge about Papa Ibra Tall. Among others, the teacher must introduce his life, work, and activities. Then the teacher explains how Papa Ibra Tall is part of a greater movement – and that of L'Ecole de Dakar. The teacher also must explain the importance of the Dakar School of Art in encouraging authenticity in African Art.

The teacher will print in color a few paintings of Papa Ibra Tall and display them in class. I chose to frame and post it will create a tradition of diversity in the French class.

The teacher invites students to the board and looks at the prints. Then, students divide in groups of three or four and pick a painting to work on.

The teacher should have straightforward questions and expectations such as:

- What genre is most likely the work of Papa Ibra Tall? (e.g., impressionism, classicism, modernism, etc.) Explain your answer.

- What is the overall mood of this painting? How does that make you feel? Explain why.

- Colors, figures, and shapes. What are the dominant colors of the painting? What are the dominant shapes of the painting? How can we relate them to today's African culture, folk art, tradition?

- What can you make of Papa Ibra Tall's painting? Describe your thoughts.

APPENDIX ON IMPLEMENTING DISTRICT STANDARDS

Standards: ACTFL

Culture

Interact with cultural competence and understanding.

Relating Cultural Practices to Perspectives: Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the cultures studied.

Relating Cultural Products to Perspectives: Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied.

Some of the topics that I plan to discuss in the curriculum are:

The historical perspective of French colonial history. The ruling ideology of France as a hegemon in Africa and the themes it used to dominate the narrative. The ideology of the oppressed and the birth of "The Negritude": The schism between French culture and black culture within the Empire: The "Negritude" as a literary movement created by French authors - of African descents, artists and writers to form their uniqueness rooted in the authentic, indigenous cultures. The overlooking of Haitian and African artists, poets and writers in the current curriculum.

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Barbour, Stephen, and Cathie Carmichael. *Language and Nationalism in Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. The book chapter emphasizes that the linguistic history of France includes both institutionalizing French and pushing away regional languages, which in reality is also the premise of this research. Francophonie insisted on erasing native language and cultures.

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⁴ Parlez vous français? Decifering the meaning of Francophonie today. Retrieved from Africa today

⁵ Globalising The French Language: Neo-Colonialism Or Development? Chidozie, Felix Chidozie Department of Political Science and International Relations, College of Development Studies, School of Social Sciences, Covenant University

⁶ The Ongoing Relationship Between France and its Former African Colonies. IJ Benneyworth

⁷ Macron's French language crusade bolsters imperialism - Congo novelist

This article is more than 3 years old

Club of French-speaking countries needs total overhaul, says novelist Alain Mabanckou

⁸ Through political, security, economic and cultural connections, France has attempted to maintain a hegemonic foothold in Francophone Africa, both to serve its interests and maintain a last bastion of prestige associated with a legacy of past mastery.

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²¹ (Note 1, on African Series sample documents Volume IX: June 1921.W.E.B. Du Bois to Charles Evans Hughes, June 23 1921.

²² Mixed race

²³ Wesley Johnson, Jr. 'The Emergence of Black politics in Senegal: The Struggle for Power in the Four communes', 1900-1920 (1972

²⁴ Toure, M.-K. (2020, February 6). *Four Communes of Senegal (1887-1960)* • • .

²⁵ The French Model of Assimilation and Direct Rule - Faidherbe and Senegal -

²⁶ Sesan, Johnson M. "Major Features of the Policy of Assimilation as Practiced in the Four Communes of Senegal." Academia.edu. Accessed June 8, 2021.

²⁷ The Legacy of French colonial psychiatry. Africa as Country

²⁸ The ongoing relationship between France and its former African colonies

²⁹Colonisation, décolonisation : Le cas français Doc

³⁰ The Four Communes of Senegal in French West Africa, Gorée, Dakar, Rufisque, and Saint-Louis, were the only places during the African Colonial period, where African inhabitants were granted the same rights as French Citizens.

³¹Colonisation, décolonisation : Le cas français Doc

³²La Négritude, UNE LITTÉRATURE DE COMBAT

³³La Négritude, UNE LITTÉRATURE DE COMBAT

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