

## Yale 2017 PIER Summer Institute: Africa and the World

### Title of Lesson: African Independence Allegory Project

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School: Cary Academy (Cary, NC) <http://www.caryacademy.org/>

Subject Area(s): World History

Grade Level(s): 6 - 12

Time Allotment: In class: 5 days OR Homework Project: 1 day in class and 4 nights

**Lesson Description:** *Include- why is this important for students to know?*

**Students will read and analyze James Aggrey's, *The Eagle That Would Not Fly*.**

**It is important for students to view the independence of African countries from colonial rule as a part of a larger story. Too often African history is studied solely in the context of the colonial period. By looking at independence movements across the continent and how they vary, students will see different paths to independence.**

**Students will practice creative writing skills by writing an allegory in the style of Aggrey's, *The Eagle That Would Not Fly*.**

**Students will create original creative artwork to illustrate a scene in their allegory.**

**Learning Context:** *How does this lesson/unit fit within the context of the the larger unit or other units?*

*The larger unit is focused on independence movements across the African Continent, including: Algeria, Ghana, Kenya, and South Africa. This project serves as a capstone on a year of research about great African civilizations prior to arrival of Europeans and later study of the Atlantic Slave Trade, the Berlin Conference, and other aspects of colonial rule. The independence unit functions as the final third of the survey of African history with this parable as the final project. These materials are available for free from the author.*

**Compelling Question(s):** *What question(s) will guide student inquiry during the lesson/unit?*

*Anticipated questions:*

*What is an allegory?*

*How can allegory be used to share factual information about the past?*

*Context questions?*

*Why does knowing about African history from early independent civilizations to modern Independence movements help us to understand current political and cultural realities across the continent?*

*How best can aspects of African history be related in allegory form?*

**Content Standards:** *What standards are addressed through the teaching of this lesson/unit?*

*This project follows the C4 Framework for Social Studies. The following standards are addressed in this project.*

*Collect: students work to collect and organize data and information.*

*Create: Students create original creative writing products.*

*Communicate: Students will share their parables on class blogs and other students in the class will spend time reading them.*

**Lesson Objectives/Learning Intentions:**

*Students will reflect upon their year-long study of the African continent by creating characters and writing an allegory tracing three distinct historical periods: independent civilizations colonial subjugation, and independence movements. Students will post their original writing and artwork to their blog.*

**Lesson Vocabulary:**

| <b>Content Vocabulary</b>  | <b>Skill/Process Vocabulary</b>  |
|--|--|
| <b>Allegory</b><br><b>parable</b><br><b>Independent states</b><br><b>civilization</b><br><b>Kingdom</b><br><b>Colonization</b><br><b>Subjugation</b><br><b>Independence movement</b> | <b>Characteristic</b><br><b>Interpret</b><br><b>Analyze text</b><br>Critical thinking<br>Creative writing<br><b>Finding inspiration for visual art</b><br><b>Telling a story through artwork</b> |

**Supporting Questions:** *These questions are intended to contribute knowledge and insights to the inquiry behind the compelling question. These questions should provide students with the opportunity to explore content essential to advance the inquiry. Supporting questions should also serve to support development of formative assessment tasks (progress monitoring) and teacher or student selection of resources/teaching materials.*

| Supporting Question 1   | Supporting Question 2   | Supporting Question 3   |
|---|---|---|
| <i>How does Aggrey comment on Africa's colonial history in his <i>The Eagle that Would Not Fly</i> allegory?</i>                            | <i>What aspects of African history should be included in the parable?</i>   | <i>How can I incorporate historical information into fiction?</i>   |
| <b>Formative Assessment</b>   | <b>Formative Assessment</b>   | <b>Formative Assessment</b>   |
| <b>Allegory Reading Questions</b>   | <b>Allegory Project Brainstorming Questions</b>   | <b>Allegory Project Brainstorming Questions</b>   |
| <b>Materials/Resources</b>  | <b>Materials/Resources</b>  | <b>Materials/Resources</b>  |
| <b>Allegory Reading Questions Worksheet (Appendix A)</b><br><br><b>Aggrey, James E.K., <i>The Eagle That Would Not Fly</i> (Appendix D)</b> | <b>Allegory Reading Questions Worksheet (Appendix A)</b><br><br><b>Allegory Project Directions, Rubric, and Brainstorming Worksheet (Appendix B)</b><br><br><b>Aggrey, James E.K., <i>The Eagle That Would Not Fly</i> (Appendix D)</b> | <b>Allegory Reading Questions Worksheet (Appendix A)</b><br><br><b>Allegory Project Directions, Rubric, and Brainstorming Worksheet (Appendix B)</b><br><br><b>Aggrey, James E.K., <i>The Eagle That Would Not Fly</i> (Appendix D)</b> |

### Summative Assessment/Performance Task:

**African Independence Allegory Project**

### Lesson Activities:

#### **Activity 1: *The Eagle That Would Not Fly* - Reading and Questions**

1. Define the word *allegory*.
2. Using the *Allegory Reading Questions Worksheet (Appendix A)*, complete the brainstorming questions at the top of the page. Describe the characteristics of a chicken and an eagle. How are they different? Are there any similarities?
3. Read James Aggrey's "*The Eagle That Would Not Fly*." (*Appendix A* or *Appendix D*)
4. Complete the class discussion questions at the end of the *Allegory Reading Questions Worksheet (Appendix A)*.

#### **Activity 2: African Independence Allegory Project**

1. *Allegory Project Directions, Rubric, and Brainstorming Worksheet (Appendix B)*
2. Complete the brainstorming questions section of the worksheet.
3. Submit brainstorming questions for teacher feedback and assessment.

4. *Write rough draft*
5. *Have peer review rough draft.*
6. *Make changes to rough draft per feedback and review rubric.*
7. *Write final draft.*
8. *Create original artwork to accompany allegory.*
9. *Post final draft and original artwork to personal blog.*
10. *Read at least 3 other students blog posts and write feedback.*
11. *Read student feedback on personal blog.*

#### Credits:

I would like to thank members of the Social Studies Department at Cary Academy, Meredith Stewart and Lucy Dawson, for help in developing these lessons and materials over the past four years.

#### About the Author:

Alicia Morris teaches social studies at Cary Academy in Cary, North Carolina. She received her Master's in Teaching from the University of Virginia and has been teaching World History since 2008. Working at Cary Academy, Mrs. Morris has been a Middle School World History teacher since 2012 where she has created multiple opportunities for students to study African history throughout the year, through student directed projects and traditional lessons. Mrs. Morris has received two Fulbright-Hays GPA fellowships to study language and culture, one in Tanzania 2011 and one in Morocco in 2014.

#### Appendix A: Allegory Reading Questions Worksheet

##### **Allegory Reading Questions**

**Some seemingly random questions that will make sense soon....**

1. What is an allegory? Use an online dictionary to help you, if you need to.
2. What are some characteristics of a chicken?
3. What are some characteristics of an eagle?

**DIRECTIONS: Listen closely to the story as it is read aloud. After the reading we will discuss the questions at the bottom as a class.**

**The Eagle that Would not Fly**  
**James Emman Kewgyir Aggrey,**

“A certain man went through a forest seeking any bird of interest he may find. He caught a young eagle, brought it home and put it among his fowls and ducks and turkeys, and gave it chickens’ food to eat even though it was an eagle, the king of birds.”

“Five years later a naturalist came to see him and, after passing through his garden, said: ‘This bird is an eagle, not a chicken.’”

“‘Yes,’ said its owner, ‘but I have trained it to be a chicken. It is no longer an eagle, it is a chicken, even though it measures fifteen feet from tip to tip of its wings.’”

“‘No,’ said the naturalist, ‘it is an eagle still: it has the heart of an eagle, and I will make it soar high up to the heavens.’”

“‘No,’ said the owner, ‘it is a chicken, and it will never fly.’”

“They agreed to test it. The naturalist picked up the eagle, held it up, and said with great intensity, ‘Eagle, thou art an eagle; thou dost belong to the sky and not to this earth; stretch forth thy wings and fly.’”

“The eagle turned this way and that, and then, looking down, saw the chickens eating their food, and down he jumped.”

“The owner said: ‘I told you it was a chicken.’”

“‘No,’ said the naturalist, ‘it is an eagle. Give it another chance tomorrow.’”

“So the next day he took it to the top of the house and said: ‘Eagle, thou art an eagle; stretch forth thy wings and fly.’ But again the eagle, seeing the chickens feeding, jumped down and fed with them.”

“Then the owner said: ‘I told you it was a chicken.’”

“‘No,’ asserted the naturalist, ‘it is an eagle, and it still has the heart of an eagle; only give it one more chance, and I will make it fly tomorrow.’”

“The next morning he rose early and took the eagle outside the city, away from the houses, to the foot of a high mountain. The sun was just rising, gilding the top of the mountain with gold and every crag was glistening in the joy of that beautiful morning.”

“He picked up the eagle and said to it: “Eagle, thou art an eagle; thou dost belong to the sky and not to this earth; stretch forth thy wings and fly!”

“The eagle looked around and trembled as if new life were coming to it; but it did not fly. The naturalist then made it look straight at the sun. Suddenly it stretched out its wings and, with a screech of an eagle, it mounted higher and higher and never returned. It was an eagle, though it had been kept and tamed as a chicken!”

“Musing and Amusing.” “*The Parable of the Eagle*” by James Aggrey. N.p., 25 Apr. 2009. Web 29 Oct. 2012. <<http://gouldacademy.org/ninthgrade/2012/the-eagle-parable-question-1/>>

### QUESTIONS

1. In this allegory, the eagle is representative of both a people and place. Which people and place do you think the eagle represents? Why?
2. How is the treatment of the eagle in the parable similar to the treatment of Africa(ns) by Europeans under colonialism? Please describe.
3. How did the treatment of the eagle in the parable affect what the eagle thought it was capable of?
4. How did the treatment of Africa(ns) under colonialism affect their ability to govern themselves?
5. At the end of the parable, the eagle recognizes its freedom and flies away. How is this similar to Africans during their independence movements?

### Appendix B: Allegory Project Directions, Rubric, and Brainstorming Worksheet

#### Allegory Project Directions, Rubric, & Brainstorming

**Project description:**

You will write an allegory and create accompanying artwork to represent the changes the people on the continent of Africa have experienced throughout history. Your parable will cover independent civilizations, colonial/imperial subjugation, and independence movements.

**Rubric:**

| <b>Allegory Rubric</b>  | <b>Points Possible</b> | <b>Points Earned</b> |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Allegory should reference African history during all <u>3</u> of the following periods: independent civilizations/kingdoms, colonial subjugation, and independence movements</b> | <b>30</b>              |                      |
| <b>Allegory is clearly organized and uses correct grammar and mechanics.</b>  | <b>5</b>               |                      |
| <b>Artwork depicts a scene from allegory in a creative way</b>  | <b>5</b>               |                      |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>40</b>              |                      |

Use the space below for brainstorming.....

**1. In your allegory, what character(s) will represent the people of the continent of Africa? Why did you chose this character(s) to represent Africa? What are the primary traits of the character? How do these traits accurately reflect the group of people they are representing?**

**2. In your parable, what will represent the people of Europe or a European country? Why did you chose this character to represent Europe or a European country?**

**3. You need to create a drawing to represent your allegory artistically. This can be a scene or an image of the main action or characters, etc. What is the topic of your picture and how will you create your artwork (ex. paper and pencil, stylus and tablet, Storyboard That?)**

**4. Fill in the chart below to describe how your parable will show each part of African history. Make sure to think about what events or descriptions you can include in your allegory to clearly show the different periods in African history.**

| Time period in African history     | How my allegory will show this time period |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Independent Kingdoms/Civilizations |  |
| Colonial Subjugation               |  |
| Independence Movement              |  |

### Appendix C: Student Allegory Example

#### **Allegory Student Example**

##### **The Legendary Parable of the Wind and the Rain**

A Parable of Kenyan Independence by Allie Chandler, Cary Academy Class of 2022

Once there was a time before the wind took over. The world was a sphere of brilliant colors and the sky was the palest blue. The sun perpetually shone brightly, glinting off the rain like gold. The animals' coats all gleamed and none had humps or grips on their toes- in that day there was no need for them, for there was no force to sweep them off their feet. The trees grew to the height of mountains and there was life thriving in every nook and cranny. The rocks were sparse and few, littering the ground like gems and gleaming under the sunlight's golden hue. The canopies were lush, healthy, and vibrant reflections on the water. This was when the rain reigned free.

The rain was plentiful, scattered all over the world. They ruled over everything and urged the world on to greater and greater heights, overseeing all with a bird's-eye view. They had few enemies or opposition- in some centuries the thunder or lightning would rumble and strike, fighting for control, but this was minor. The rain always had the upper hand, as it should, for there was far more rain than thunder or lightning. But then the wind took over.

It was not known where it came from, though clearly it knew about the rain and sought to destroy its reign. It came from the North and swept through the land unannounced. It knocked the animals off their feet and overturned the tallest trees. It blotted the sun out with darkness and the land, once lush and green, was dark, grey, and filled only with rubble and ash. The rocks were all dull, muted hues. The rain could not fight this single, unified foe that covered the world like a dark and deadly blanket. They were many but they could not fight back for they were divided.

"Where did you come from? Why seek you to destroy our land?" called the rain, but the wind shook them down and tossed them into the gutters, ignoring their pleas. The wind was strong and had weapons and force never yet known to this world.

"We are the wind," they said. "You are our inferiors and you must obey our every command." The rain could not resist this overwhelming force, and the world fell into a period of darkness. The rain was seen from time to time, and the trees and animals would call out to them, begging them to take back what once was theirs. Some did try to strike back, but their voices were lost and swept away by the wind.



Over time, as new rain came and the old ones fell away, all that was left of the previous land was memories. These memories faded and when the rain looked out on the world, over time, they could no longer see it as it once was. The wind's reign seemed perpetual and everlasting, never to be overcome. Young rain would come and they never knew of how the world once was. They were taught they were inferior to the wind and that the wind had a might they could never possess.

Many centuries passed and even the stories of the past seemed weak and unfeasible. How had there ever been a time without the wind? One day, though, a leader among the rain- a single chunk of hail rose to the sky. He would eventually become a legendary figure- he was the young Jomonop Kenyettaplop.

There were other pieces of hail, too- they were scattered all over the land, fragments of what they once were. They told the stories of the past to young rain, eager for change. Through the centuries, a spark of hope had remained, born from the ice. The wind had tried to wipe out the hail, but they missed many of them that were disguising as rain. They lived, and eventually more and more hail was born. As the wind became more brutal and committed more atrocities, the rain became more rebellious.

The dissenters among the rain grew the chunk of hail rose to power to rally the rain. Jomonop Kenyettaplop was there and his mission was to bring the rain and hail together and fight against the wind.

"Brothers and sisters," he began in his famous speech, the Bring Back the Reign of Rain Speech. "Indigenous rain of this nation. The wind's reign must come to an end. We have been taught we are inferior to them. That we are, in some way, less. They say that to keep us in line. But we can take back our freedom. We are many and they are few. We must not let the wind sweep us off our feet again!" Kenyettaplop was a powerful speaker and he brought hope to many.

"We are the wind. Do not cross us. We have power you don't. You are inferior to us," the wind said once again. However, it did not seem as powerful as before.

"We are the rain," Jomonop Kenyettaplop called back. "You have crossed us. We have the power in numbers you don't. We are equal to you and this is our land. Leave or we will storm you until you do!" This brought many cheers and a lot of enthusiasm from the precipitation.

The wind was a hard and strong foe that had never yet been defeated. It was stubborn and unified and strong. For some reason, it seemed to like the rain's world far better than its own. It soon became apparent the wind would not leave easily and it would take the unified might of all to bring back the precipitations' freedoms.

"Join us, brothers and sisters, to fight the wind and take back what is ours!" Jomonop Kenyettaplop called again. This time, with the assistance of others, he managed to bring most of the rain to his side. The Precipitation Land and Freedom Fighters, as they called themselves, drew into the last scrap of land that was theirs- the forest. Then the attacks began.

They started small, with only single clouds raining down on the wind's territory. These single, pointed raids struck fear into the hearts of the wind. But the wind would not give up easily. It tossed and knocked the rain around, shoving it with a force only the wind possessed. The rain would not give up either. At first it seemed the

two were evenly matched. The rain had the power in numbers, but the wind had the force necessary to blow that away. But later it came apparent that was not the case.

The wind fought for their stolen territory, but the rain fought for the freedom they had been denied. And that made all the difference.

“For we will NEVER back down!” Shouted Kenyettaplop in one of his campaigns. And it was later discovered this was more frightening to the wind than any of his other speeches- because both sides knew this was the truth. “Leave our country!!”

The fighting persisted for many storms, but it became clear the rain had the upper hand. They raged and gave everything they had for the hope of freedom- for a glimpse into what they once had been. And for all their might, the wind wasn't so willing to die for this endeavor. While the rain pushed on harder and harder, the wind got weaker and weaker.

At first it was just a few pieces of the wind that started fleeing, but then they became many. The rain was relentless and the wind knew it. Through all the darkness and terror, the rain saw hope in what it was becoming.

It took more struggling and fighting for the rain to completely regain its control, but for the first time in centuries there was progress. For the first time in centuries there was hope. The wind left behind traces of their cruelty; the rocks and rubble and ash lingered beneath the newly budding seeds. Still, the sprouts, the tiny inklings of green showed proof of moving forward and moving on.

The rain was never again to be defeated. There were many that tried, and many struggles and fighting in this nation's future. However, the rain had regained their spirit. It was that hope, that faith, and their experiences that drew them together as a whole, not just individuals.

For they were many and others were few. They had hope for the future and memories of the past. They were the rain and they would never again back down.



#### Appendix D: The Eagle that Would Not Fly: Text Only

*Ghanaian James Emman Kwegyir Aggrey was born in 1875 in the Gold Coast, a British colony in West Africa. In 1898 he left Africa to study in the United States. He studied at Livingstone College in North Carolina where he received his Bachelor's and Master's Degrees. He also earned a Doctor of Divinity degree from Hood Theological Seminary. He returned to Africa in the 1920's to conduct educational research in numerous countries while studying at Columbia University. Eventually he returned to Ghana to serve as Vice-Principal of Achimota College. He died after returning to the United States and earning his Doctor of Philosophy from Columbia.*

#### **The Eagle that Would Not Fly** **James Aggrey**

**“A certain man went through a forest seeking any bird of interest he may find. He caught a young eagle, brought it home and put it among his fowls and ducks and turkeys, and gave it chickens' food to eat even though it was an eagle, the king of birds.”**

**“Five years later a naturalist came to see him and, after passing through his garden, said: ‘The bird is an eagle, not a chicken.’”**

**“‘Yes,’ said its owner, ‘but I have trained it to be a chicken. It is no longer an eagle, it is a chicken, even though it measures fifteen feet from tip to tip of its wings.’”**

**“‘No,’ said the naturalist, ‘it is an eagle still: it has the heart of an eagle, and I will make it soar high up to the heavens.’”**

**“No,’ said the owner, ‘it is a chicken, and it will never fly.’”**

**“They agreed to test it. The naturalist picked up the eagle, held it up, and said with great intensity, ‘Eagle, thou art an eagle; thou dost belong to the sky and not to this earth; stretch forth thy wings and fly.’”**

**“The eagle turned this way and that, and then, looking down, saw the chickens eating their food, and down he jumped.”**

**“The owner said: ‘I told you it was a chicken.’”**

**“No,’ said the naturalist, ‘it is an eagle. Give it another chance tomorrow.’”**

**“So the next day he took it to the top of the house and said: ‘Eagle, thou art an eagle; stretch forth thy wings and fly.’ But again the eagle, seeing the chickens feeding, jumped down and fed with them.”**

**“Then the owner said: ‘I told you it was a chicken.’”**

**“No,’ asserted the naturalist, ‘it is an eagle, and it still has the heart of an eagle; only give it one more chance, and I will make it fly tomorrow.’”**

**“The next morning he rose early and took the eagle outside the city, away from the houses, to the foot of a high mountain. The sun was just rising, gilding the top of the mountain with gold and every crag was glistening in the joy of that beautiful morning.”**

**“He picked up the eagle and said to it: “Eagle, thou art an eagle; thou dost belong to the sky and not to this earth; stretch forth thy wings and fly!””**

**“The eagle looked around and trembled as if new life were coming to it; but it did not fly. The naturalist then made it look straight at the sun. Suddenly it stretched out its wings and, with the screech of an eagle, it mounted higher and higher and never returned. It was an eagle, though it had been kept and tamed as a chicken!”**

**"My people of Africa, we were created in the image of God, but men have made us think that we are chickens, and we still think we are; but we are eagles. Stretch forth your wings and fly! Don't be content with the food of chickens!"**