

## KS3 Geography. Africa.

### 5. Resources: opportunities and challenges.

[INTRODUCTION]	These containers could be on their way to factories in China, or Europe, or America. They contain valuable resources - vital ingredients for the global economy. Those raw materials are extracted from African countries, like here - in South Africa - but the people who live here won't receive much of their benefit.
[RAW MATERIALS]	Africa's lands are rich - particularly when it comes to underground deposits of minerals like diamonds, or uranium, or metals like cobalt.
[COBALT]	<p>And as the world's population increases, the demand for resources keeps rising. Cobalt, for example, is needed all around the world, to make batteries for electronic devices and electric cars. And 50% of the planet's cobalt reserves are located in just one country: the Democratic Republic of the Congo!</p> <p>Of course, African nations have been a part of the global economy for a long time. Here, at this museum in Cape Town, you can learn how in the 12th century, powerful African kingdoms traded gold with Europe, via Arabian merchants.</p>
[COLONISATION]	<p>And how from the 1500s everything changed, in a catastrophic way, as European countries began to colonise Africa. The transatlantic slave trade was a brutal and inhuman system, which devastated many African kingdoms, and led to the forced trafficking of at least 12 million people to the Americas.</p> <p>In the later phases of colonisation - beginning in the 1800s - those same European rulers claimed power over the African continent, and prospectors began mapping out its hidden treasures.</p> <p>Gold... diamonds... platinum... rubber... ivory... The colonial rulers realised that extracting resource wealth could make them just as rich as the slave trade had done.</p> <p>Mining and logging became big business and changed the way people lived. Johannesburg was founded when gold was discovered in these hills. Even today, there are disused gold mines beneath some of the buildings of the city.</p>

[EXPLOITATION]

But the companies who operated those mines weren't African companies. They were founded and run by European settlers. And the African workers who toiled and often died to extract the precious resources were given generally little or no payment at all.

[APARTHEID IN SA]

And here in South Africa, racism became established by law, with the 'apartheid' system, that forced people from different racial groups to live separately. And it made it very difficult for many Black people to access education, or have any share of the nation's great wealth.

It took a lot of resistance - and a long time - for African nations to start gaining independence. But our economies are still deeply affected by the past...

['MULTINATIONALS']

Many leading multinational companies were founded in colonial times. As African countries gained independence, those companies used their power to negotiate long-term, binding agreements - which kept mines open, but made sure the workers would continue to receive very low pay.

And many new African leaders used their power for private gain, making it difficult for African economies to move forward and improve the standard of living of ordinary people.

[THE FUTURE]

But things are changing! It used to be that Western nations saw Africa as a place for economic exploitation, in need of foreign aid and humanitarian assistance.

But African countries are predicted to now dominate the world's top ten fastest growing economies! And as our economies grow, our universities turn out a generation of doctors, lawyers, engineers, managers, entrepreneurs. We have the world's youngest workforces! We're building new infrastructure, and we're starting new businesses.

And that's a good thing - because it means that in future we may see the benefit of this continent's abundant resources being shared more equally.