

Should Nigeria Divide to Survive?



People inspected the site of a bomb explosion on Nov. 29 in Kano, Nigeria. Muhammed Giginyu/Associated Press
From Ashkenas, Jeremy, Derek Watkins, and Archie Tse. "Boko Haram: The Other Islamic State." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 10 Dec. 2014. Web. 10 Dec. 2015.

Supporting Questions

1. How does northern Nigeria differ from the south?
2. How has violence challenged the balance between north and south?
3. What safeguards have been put in place to prevent negative divisions?
4. What are the costs and benefits of a divided Nigeria?

12th Grade Nigeria Inquiry

Should Nigeria Divide to Survive?

Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies	HS3.CM.2 Participation and Deliberation: <i>Applying Civic Virtues and Democratic Principles:</i> Analyze how human rights and global responsibility influence individual perspectives and societies when addressing governmental and societal issues.
Staging the Compelling Question	Using previous course content (e.g. state-building in Yugoslavia), hold a classroom discussion about the concepts of arbitrary borders, ethnic divisions and violence, governmental solutions, and consequences on state stability.

Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3	Supporting Question 4
How does northern Nigeria differ from the south?	How has violence challenged the balance between the north and south?	What safeguards have been put in place to prevent negative divisions?	What are the costs and benefits of a divided Nigeria?
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
Create a T-chart of differences between the north and the south of Nigeria.	Construct an annotated timeline on the development of Boko Haram and their attacks.	List the safeguards found in the Nigerian government and political culture.	Develop a claim supported by evidence about whether Nigeria should divide into two separate countries.
Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources
<p>Source A: Excerpt of Article: "A Nation Divided"</p> <p>Source B: Excerpt of maps and charts from Article: "Nigeria's Election: A Powder Keg"</p>	<p>Source A: Excerpt of Article: "Who are Nigeria's Boko Haram Islamists?"</p> <p>Source B: Excerpt of Article: "Boko Haram: The Other Islamic State"</p>	<p>Source A: Excerpt of the Constitution of Nigeria</p> <p>Source B: Excerpt of Article: "Political Appointments in Nigeria: Between Zoning and Competence"</p>	<p>Source A: Commentary: "Breaking up Nigeria is Not the Answer to its Civil Unrest"</p> <p>Source B: Article: "Should the World Help Break Up Nigeria in Order to Save It?"</p>

Summative Performance Task	ARGUMENT <i>Should Nigeria divide to survive?</i> Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, or essay) that addresses the compelling question, using specific claims and relevant evidence from sources while acknowledging competing views.
	EXTENSION Using the structure of Model UN, students will use evidence to write speeches and propose resolutions to present to the class.
Taking Informed Action	<p>UNDERSTAND Identify coinciding cleavages within your school system, local community, or state that need addressing.</p> <p>ASSESS Create possible resolutions/bills that would help alleviate divisions within the school, community, or state.</p> <p>ACT Present this resolution before the local school board, city council, or state legislature.</p>

Overview

Inquiry Description

This inquiry asks students to consider the challenges and benefits of the process of state-building and subsequent stability, using Nigeria as a case study. Students investigate the economic incentives for a country to have a diverse culture, the impact on governmental structure heterogeneous societies pose, and violence that can be brought about by ethnic divisions. Students will ultimately assess whether Nigeria should split into two separate countries, or remain a single, federal country. Researching this material, together with the skills of presenting an argument will help students apply this inquiry to take informed action by addressing other areas of division within their schools, communities, and states.

NOTE: This inquiry is expected to take four to six 50-minute class periods. The inquiry time frame could expand if teachers think that their students need additional instructional experiences (i.e., supporting questions, formative tasks, and sources). Teachers are encouraged to adapt the inquiries in order to meet the needs and interests of their particular students. Resources can also be modified as necessary to meet individualized education plans (IEPs) for students receiving special education services.

Structure of the Inquiry

In addressing the compelling question, “*Should Nigeria Divide to Survive?*” students work through a series of supporting questions, performance tasks, and sources in order to construct an argument with evidence and counterevidence from a variety of sources.

Staging the Compelling Question

The compelling question could be staged by reading *United States: Office of Historian’s* briefing on the “Breakup of Yugoslavia: 1989-1992,” the history of Yugoslavia being material already addressed in the course. After a class discussion of the primary events, students could create a chart of the formation, steps taken to unify, the ethnic cleavages, and, finally, the breakup of Yugoslavia. Concepts of arbitrary borders, ethnic division, political violence, and governmental solutions will resonate with the inquiry into present day Nigeria.

Teachers are encouraged to use this example, but may also refer to other attempts at state-building that have been fraught with difficulties, successful or not.

Supporting Question 1

The opening supporting question, “How does northern Nigeria differ from the south?” will help the student understand the ethnic and economic divides of Nigeria. The formative task asks students to chart these differences. With this visual of the geographic distinction between the north and the south, both ethnically and religiously, students will see the challenges facing Africa’s most populous country. This stark division of the country is only further complicated by the diversity of economies and the disparity between the oil-rich regions and the non-oil north. The two sources present many of the differences between the economies, religions, populations, ethnicities, and legal systems. The first source plainly presents the differences, while the second source utilizes charts and maps to help students understand using geographic and economic reasoning.

Supporting Question 2

Supporting Question 2, “How has violence challenged the balance between the north and south?” offers a more sobering look at the ethnic and religious divisions within Nigeria. With a set of articles focusing on the terror group, Boko Haram, students will create an annotated timeline, large enough for a wall, that charts the growth of this organization. Charting the violence and seeming inability to curb the deaths and growth of the organization itself will reveal the very real struggle of the Nigerian government to keep its country together and safe. The featured sources provide information of the growth of the terror group, addressing Nigeria’s role specifically.

Supporting Question 3

The third supporting question, “What safeguards have been put in place to prevent negative divisions?” points the student back towards the compelling question and the larger issues to consider. Students will use both the Constitution of Nigeria and the supporting article to address how Nigeria has faced the challenges of ethnic and religious cleavages within their border in the recent past. Student will list the legal safeguards and the potential issues or problems they are meant to alleviate or prevent. In particular, this performance task will help students consider the lengths taken to help ensure neither the north, nor the south will dominate the Federal government.

Supporting Question 4

Finally, students will be asked to answer the question, “What are the costs and benefits to a divided Nigeria?” By reading both commentaries, students will understand the variance of perspectives related to Nigeria dividing into two nations. Through the refining nature of debate, students will use the conversations and arguments of a Socratic Circle to create a pro- and con- list for division. Afterwards, they will write 2-3 paragraphs explaining both sides of the arguments. This performance task will lead the student directly to crafting an argument for answering the compelling question.

Summative Performance Task

At this point in the inquiry, students have examined the demographics of Nigeria, with its various ethnic cleavages, diverse economy, and governmental responses. Through this analysis, students will have charted the growth in ethnic violence and the effectiveness of governmental policy. These tasks will culminate in a debate over the pros and cons of a country split.

Students should be able to demonstrate the breadth of their understandings and their abilities to use evidence from multiple sources to construct an evidence-based argument responding to the prompt, “Should Nigeria divide to survive?”

Student arguments will likely vary but could include any of the following:

- Nigeria should divide into two separate countries to lessen ethnic tensions between the north and the south, which will help further destabilize Boko Haram, and lessen governmental corruption left over from post-colonial instability.
- Nigeria should be allowed to divide as two nations, as it could better serve the north and south regions’ interests, thereby promoting stability at the national and continental level.
- Division of Nigeria will not alleviate tensions between the north and south, but rather undermine cooperative efforts, visible in the latest election’s democratic transfer of power.
- Despite the lessening it would have of ethnic tensions, it would worsen economic disparities and possibly hurt democratization efforts in the two nations as it would encourage partisanship, rather than cooperation.

Using the evidence gathered from the performance tasks, students can utilize the structure and tools of Model UN to write speeches, create resolutions, and present both to their classmates. Students could use these to debate the compelling question and develop a diplomatic approach to considering societal divisions and cleavages’ consequences.

Students will have an opportunity to *take informed action* by applying skills exercised in the performance tasks, arguments crafted in the assessments, their understanding of the impact of divisions and cleavages in society, and the diplomatic approach in the extension activity to approach divisive issues in their schools, communities, and states. They will tackle issues dividing these areas and create resolutions or propose bills to present at a school board meeting, city council meeting, or state legislature. They will apply the skills gained in the inquiry to exercise positive change, even as a high school student.

Staging the Compelling Question

Featured Source

Source A: *United States Office of the Historian* description of the dissolution of Yugoslavia "Milestones: 1989–1992 - Office of the Historian." U.S. Department of State, n.d. Web. 09 Sept. 2016.

Accessed from: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1989-1992/breakup-yugoslavia>

Supporting Question 1

Featured Source

Source A: An excerpt from, "A Nation Divided." *The Economist*, 25 Oct. 2014. Web. 09 Sept. 2016

See section: "The poor and angry north"

Accessed from: <http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21627646-africas-lodestar-nation-has-weathered-ebola-extremist-takeover-has-exposed>

Supporting Question 1

Featured Source

Source B: An excerpt of maps and graphs from, "A Powder Keg." *The Economist*, 01 Apr. 2015. Web. 09 Sept. 2016.

See chart: "Nigeria's growth", maps: "Presidential Election," "Muslim Population," "Boko Haram conflict related deaths," "GDP," "Population estimate"

Accessed from: <http://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2015/04/nigerias-election>

Supporting Question 2

Featured Source

Source A: Excerpt from: Chothia, Farouk. "Who Are Nigeria's Boko Haram Islamists?" *BBC News*. 24 November 2016. Web. 09 Sept. 2016.

See sections "Boko Haram," "Resisting British Rule," "Boko Haram at a glance," "Recruiting ground," "Facial marks," "Foreign links"

Accessed from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13809501>

Supporting Question 2

Featured Source	Source B: Excerpts from, Ashkenas, Jeremy, Derek Watkins, and Archie Tse. "Boko Haram: The Other Islamic State." <i>The New York Times</i> , 10 Dec. 2014. Web. 09 Sept. 2016.
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Full article accessed from: http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/12/11/world/africa/boko-haram-nigeria-maps.html?_r=0

Supporting Question 3

Featured Source	Source A: Excerpts from the "Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria." Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999. Web. 09 Sept. 2016.
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See sections: 10, 14.1-4, 15.1-5, 55, 133, 147.1, 147.3, 222, 223.1-2

Accessed from: <http://www.nigeria-law.org/ConstitutionOfTheFederalRepublicOfNigeria.htm>

Supporting Question 3

Featured Source	Source B: Excerpt from: Ojonugwa, Ugboja Felix. "Political Appointments in Nigeria: Between Zoning and Competence" <i>Nigeria's Leadership News</i> . 25 May 2015. Web. 09 Sept. 2016.
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See section: "Political Appointments in Nigeria"

Accessed from: <http://leadership.ng/news/435702/political-appointments-in-nigeria-between-zoning-and-competence#respond>

Supporting Question 4

Featured Source	Source A: Editorial, Adekoya, Remi. "Breaking up Nigeria Is Not the Answer to Its Civil Unrest Remi Adekoya." <i>The Guardian</i> , 03 Mar. 2012. Web. 09 Sept. 2016.
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Accessed from: <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/mar/03/breaking-up-nigeria-not-answer-unrest>

Supporting Question 4

Featured Source	Source B: Editorial, Zachary, G. Pascal. "Should the World Help Break Up Nigeria In Order to Save It?" <i>The Atlantic</i> , 24 Jan. 2012. Web. 09 Sept. 2016.
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Accessed from: <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/01/should-the-world-help-break-up-nigeria-in-order-to-save-it/251784/>