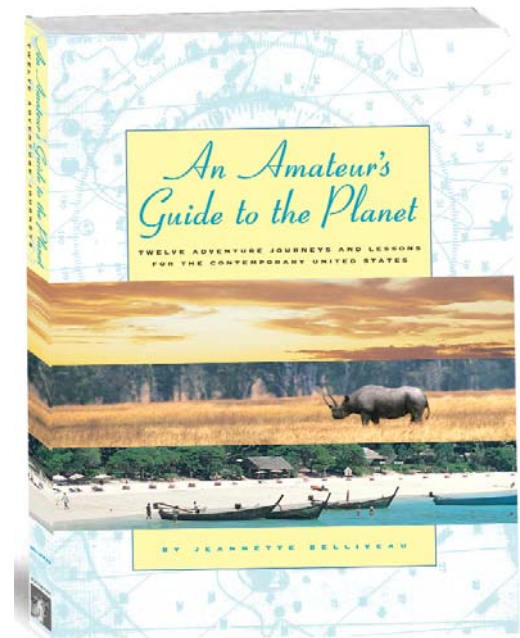


World geography study guide

An Amateur's Guide to the Planet



REGIONAL ORGANIZATION

31 units

Each with 3 to 7 discussion questions

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THEMES

The central concern of this study guide is the interconnectedness of geography, the environment, world cultures and communication. Our investigation of culture and communication will be far ranging. We begin with a smorgasbord of adventure travel experiences. Travel experiences are fun, informative and motivational. They also provide a basis for crosscultural understanding.

From these brief, intense forays across the globe we will begin to sense the connections between culture and history, climate, diet, religion, social and economic systems, child rearing and many other things.

Communication in foreign cultures is likewise affected by the options a culture provides to meet universal human needs, and by many, many other factors.

GEOGRAPHY LESSON IDEAS

(1) MADAGASCAR

Based on the first chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, "Eden Under Siege: Madagascar and Lessons on the Earth's Fragility," pp. 5-28.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize that Madagascar is one of about 20 or so remote islands with extremely rare wildlife.**
- **To learn that Madagascar's environmental problems are much more severe than other islands' problems and the reasons for this.**
- **To understand that many concerned agencies are seeking hope for Madagascar's people and animals, and that getting involved makes a difference.**

Directions:

Have students begin this reading adventure with a visit to Nosy Komba to meet the friendly black lemurs (p. 12, col. 1, through p. 13, col. 1, and box, p. 14).

Learn why lemurs are significant to human development ("Combining cuteness and clues to our past," box, p. 14).

Next visit Perinet park to watch the extraordinary indri lemur, which sings like a whale (p. 21, col. 1, through p. 24, col. 2).

Learn about the groups trying to help Madagascar ("The World Wildlife Fund," box, p. 18, "The Madagascar Fauna Group," box, p. 21, "The Duke University Primate Center, p. 24, and additional organizations, p. 28, col. 2.)

Finally, read "Madagascar and the big les-

son: the Earth's fragility," pp. 25-28.

Discussion points:

- The black lemurs have forward-looking, binocular vision and opposable fingers and thumbs. Our ability to read a computer monitor and hit a space bar traces from this branch of evolution. What other human traits may be traceable to the lemur? (Our adaptability to many different climates and habitats and our complex sociality.)
- The rare, giant indri lemurs live in a forest that is being cleared (see "Trying to help Madagascar: The Duke University Primate Center," box, p. 24). Population growth and soil problems in Madagascar make the farmers cut down the lemurs' forest. Do you think cutting down the forest provides long-term solutions for Madagascar's people? What groups are trying to help Madagascar? (Duke University Primate Center, the Madagascar Fauna Group, the World Wildlife Fund, National Geographic, the National Science Foundation, and others.)
- What is island biogeography? (The study of isolated areas and their plants and animals.) What tends to happen to animals and plants in isolated areas? (They risk extinction.)
- How has the fear of extinctions, which have occurred often on islands such as Madagascar, lead to the creation of giant national parks in the United States and Canada? (Because extinctions may threaten animals even on big continents when their habitat is chopped into island-sized pieces).

- Look at the map on p. 27. What do Madagascar, New Zealand, Mauritius and Hawaii have in common? (These are isolated islands discovered after the birth of Christ, with rare wildlife.) How is Madagascar very different from Iceland, for example? (Much poorer, far more people, much more rare wildlife, severe soil problems.)

Additional information on video: National Geographic's *The Wilds of Madagascar* (reviewed at our Web site, www.beaumonde.net).

Additional sounds on CD: You can play the whalelike sound of the indri lemur. It has been recorded on "Lemur Rap," on the recording *A World Out of Time*, Vol. 2, by Henry Kaiser and David Lindley, and on

Island of Ghosts by Rossy, a track called "Hiakan' Ny Babakoto."

Field trips: A visit to the Duke University Primate Center in Durham, N.C., will provide an unforgettable experience watching the winsome lemurs of Madagascar. Ring-tailed lemurs can also be seen at the Tampa Zoo, Philadelphia Zoo, Santa Ana Zoo, St. Louis Zoo and many others—call or check zoo's Web pages to find out. The ruffed lemur can be seen at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C.

A portion of the proceeds from *An Amateur's Guide to the Planet* supports the annual care of Polydorus, a black lemur in the Adopt-a-Lemur Program at the Duke University Primate Center.



(2) CHINA

Based on the second chapter of *An Amateur's Guide to the Planet*, "Spitting, Staring and a Square Called Tiananmen: China and Lessons on Emigration," pp. 29-54.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize that many of China's 1.1 billion people are jammed in the eastern third of the nation and that crowding and political persecution have historically spurred emigration.**
- **To learn that Beijing's political control of China is weakest along its coast between Shanghai and Viet Nam.**
- **To understand that China in some ways resembles other giant continental nations, yet in other ways it resembles tiny Ireland.**
- **To begin to look at worldwide patterns of geography and culture.**

Directions:

Have students begin this reading adventure with a hellish train ride through the Chinese night (p. 36, col. 1, through p. 41, col. 1).

Next visit Beijing to learn about the two Chinas, one tightly controlled by Communists, the other more free (p. 47, col. 2, through p. 49, col. 1).

Finally, read "China and the big lesson:

Emigration," pp. 52-54.

Discussion points:

- A third-class train ride in China may not be fun, but it provides insight into how the people live. Why do you think the author was so upset with the conditions on the train, while the Chinese people were coping quite well? (Western notions of comfort are not frequently available on the Third World transportation, and little in the U.S. and Canadian education or media coverage prepares the traveler for this reality.) Would you be able to ride on this train for 32 hours? Would you try it as a learning experience?
- Look at the map on page 39. The Chinese train ride illustrated the crowding in eastern China. Can you see why China feels more crowded than the United States? Do you think this is a factor in the emigration of 55 million Chinese people overseas?
- What are some of the reasons Chinese people living on the seacoast enjoy more political freedom? (Proximity to Hong Kong and Taiwan and their TV news programs, many relatives living in the United States and overseas who visit, bringing money and presents and up-to-date news.) • Look map on page 37. Do you think China's rivers are a factor as well? (China's river networks are a natural feature that bought it civilization, p. 42, col. 2, but which also isolate its

southern arc, p. 53-54.)

- What does China teach us about emigration? (That crowding and political persecution spur people to leave.) In what ways does China resemble Russia, the United States, India, Brazil and Nigeria? (Geographically massive nations with high populations.) In what way are Chinese households quite different to U.S. families? (Far less spending on food, housing and clothing.) Could this be a spur to emigration?
- In what ways do the Chinese people resemble the Irish? (Famine victims, victim of political extremism, resiliency, cleverness in working around oppression, and an intimate relationship to their history.)

Additional information on video: National Geographic's *China: Beyond the Clouds* (reviewed at our Web site, www.beau-monde.net).

If any students' mothers are from China, can they cook a meal for the class and talk about feast and famine in Chinese history, and why their family emigrated?

Additional activities: Ask class to bring in clippings about geographical and cultural events in China from newspapers or news-magazines. Look for articles on Western trends in southern China, bureaucratic controls in Beijing, conflicts in Tibet and Turkestan/Xinjiang province with the Beijing government, and the gigantic dam project on the Yangtze rivers.

(3) BORNEO

Based on the third chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, "Hiking with children in the rain forest: Borneo and lessons on modern missionaries," pp. 55-72.

Students will be able:

- **To learn that geographical features such as highlands and rapids can isolate people in places such as Borneo, Zaire and Papua New Guinea.**
- **To recognize that even the culture of Borneo's isolated Dayaks has been greatly altered by contact with the outside world.**
- **To understand how children in isolated areas often are given great responsibility and display confidence in navigating poorly mapped areas.**

Directions:

Have students begin with a flight to the interior of Borneo to observe how its Dayak people live (p. 56, col. 2, through p. 63, col. 2).

Read "Dayak culture faces assaults from many fronts" (box, p. 61).

Finally take a hike through the rain forest with a 12-year-old Dayak named Ampung (p. 66, col. 1, through p. 69, col. 1).

Discussion points:

- The pilot, Emile Borne, provides the only

fast transportation for Dayaks in Borneo's Apau Kayan region to the big cities on Borneo's coast. What are the advantages of the service Borne provides? (Access to education, health care, commodities such as salt and kerosene.) What are the disadvantages to his flying service? (Contact with greater numbers of missionaries, anthropologists and hikers brought in by airplane alters Dayak culture.)

- What natural features isolate the Apau Kayan? (Rapids on the Kayan River.) What other parts of the world are isolated by rapids? (The Congo.) By mountains? (Papua New Guinea.) By dense jungle and mountains? (The north Amazon between Brazil and Venezuela.)
- What influences have changed the culture of Borneo's Dayaks? (Indonesian government policies, U.S. popular culture, Japanese demand for Borneo's resources.)
- A 12-year-old guide named Ampung leads tourists safely through an area of Borneo's highlands that is poorly mapped. What do his skills tell us about the culture of the Dayak people in his area? (That children are given considerable responsibility, that they are strong and skilled at finding their way in the rainforest.)

(4) KENYA AND TANZANIA

Based on the fourth chapter of *An Amateur's Guide to the Planet*, "Giraffes by the Roadside: Kenya and Tanzania and lessons on our love-hate relationship to Africa," pp. 73-98.

Students will be able:

- **To learn that Africa is a massive continent. Its size and varied landscape make it home to many cultures.**
- **To understand that even within Kenya, there are great differences between the people of the Swahili coast, the agricultural tribes of the central area, and the Masai herders of the west.**
- **To recognize that Kenya's proximity to Somalia creates problems for Kenyans, Western tourists and wildlife.**

Directions:

Have students begin with information on planning a trip to Africa (p. 73) and proceed to a visit to the Masai people (pp. 80-81).

Read about Joel, a guide who belongs to the Kikuyu tribe (pp. 81-83).

Read "A good book in Africa: I" (box, p. 85).

Visit the Swahili coast (pp. 86-90).

Finally, read "Kenya's summer of growing discontent" (box, p. 77).

Discussion points:

- How does Africa compare in size to North America? (Africa is 25 percent larger.) Would you expect East and West Africa, or North and Southern Africa, to be identical? (No, for the same reason Mexico is quite different from Canada: regional differences are a given with such vast distances.)
- What do the photos on page 80 tell us about the lives of Masai women compared to Masai men? (Women raise children and food, men struggle to find a role in a world with no need for warriors.)
- Joel, a member of the Kikuyu tribe, tells about his life. How does it compare to the life of someone in the United States or Canada? (Education is also important in Kenya. Marriages are arranged. Some Africans love their wildlife as much as the tourists do.)
- Kenya's Swahili coast was historically linked to what other areas? (African coastal cities from Zimbabwe to Somalia, as well as Araby and India.)
- How did instability in Somalia affect Kenya? (Poachers crossed the border to kill elephants and eventually tourists. These problems foreshadowed the U.N. invasion of Somalia in 1992.)

(5) JAPAN

Based on the fifth chapter of *An Amateur's Guide to the Planet*, "Civilities, Sheepdogs and Bomb Survivors: Japan and lessons on formal societies," pp. 99-116.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize that island nations may enjoy advantages as trading crossroads.**
- **To learn that many Asian nations can be compared to European counterparts and to recognize global geographical patterns.**
- **To understand how geography may play a role in such cultural phenomena as etiquette.**

Directions:

Have students begin by reading about

preparing for travel to Japan and how British and American journalists cope there (pp. 99-102).

Next read about everyday life in Japan including bathing, eating and sleeping (pp. 106-108) and how the United States and Canada are adopting some facets of this once mysterious culture.

Finally, read "England and Japan: Shared interests and facets of life" (box, p. 100) and "Japan and the big lesson: Formal Societies" (pp. 115-116).

Discussion points:

- In what ways does Japan mimic the United States, Germany and Britain? (The United States: economic might; Germany: history of military aggressiveness; Britain: a culture based on formal etiquette.)

- What other resemblances exist between Asian and European nations? (China and the United States are more direct in terms of communication. Korea and Ireland produce hard-headed, tough workers. Mexico and Indonesia are colorful, religious and relaxed nations.)
- How does geography play a role in the formation of culture in Japan and England? (Both are outlying islands that borrowed cultures that had matured on nearby continents. Both lack the geographic security of continental nations and thus rely more on indirect phraseology and discreteness.)

- How does geography play a role in Japan and Britain both having powerful navies and reliance on overseas trade? (The economic ascendancy of the Americas thrust both nations from being outlying, remote places to well-situated trading crossroads.)

- What are some shared features of Japanese and English culture? (Thirty-one are shown in the box on p. 100.)

Additional information on video: National Geographic's *Living Treasures of Japan* (reviewed at our Web site, www.beau-monde.net).

(6) POLYNESIA

Based on the sixth chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, "Waterworlds of the Great Navigators," pp. 117-34.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize that the Pacific is the world's largest geological feature.**
- **To learn that Polynesians are the most dispersed people in the world.**
- **To understand how remote areas may be altered by nuclear testing.**

Directions:

Have students begin by reading about visiting Tahiti and its outlying island of Bora Bora (pp. 117-21) and a visit to the Hawaiian island chain (pp. 127-31).

Next read "Polynesia and the big lesson: Why culture survives" (pp. 131-34).

Finally, read "Bombs away on Mururoa" (box, p. 123).

Discussion points:

- What is so remarkable about the Polynesians' voyages of discovery? (Without modern equipment, they used chants, the stars and observations of birds and floating plant material to find islands in the vast

Pacific that Magellan had no idea existed.)

- What geographical aspects of Hawaii created awe in the Tahitian voyagers who arrived there? (Hawaii's vast size compared to Tahiti's smaller islands, the live volcano on the Big Island.)

- What geographical features of Hawaii have created problems for Polynesians there trying to preserve their culture? (Its agricultural lands attracted outsiders who grabbed title to the Hawaiian lands, its proximity to Japan and the United States bring many tourists, and its mid-Pacific location and snug Pearl Harbor bring many soldiers and sailors to U.S. military installations.)

- Remote areas may attract interest as nuclear testing sites. Can you name some of these sites? (Mururoa in French Polynesia, Algeria in North Africa, Xinjiang desert in China, Nevada and Bikini Atoll for the United States.) Why did the use of Mururoa in the South Pacific create controversy? (Possible effects of radioactivity on people and fish, morality of conducting such tests without consulting local people, social and economic effects of bringing many civilian and military personnel into a remote territory.)

(7) THAILAND

Based on the seventh chapter of *An Amateur's Guide to the Planet*, "Perfect Seas: Thailand and lessons on ultimate sailing," pp. 135-46.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize the geological forces that create scenic beauty in Thailand, China and Vietnam.**
- **To learn of areas of the world where sailors enjoy fine sailing.**

Directions:

Have students begin by exploring Thailand's Phangnga Bay (pp. 135-37).

Next learn about the geological history of this area of beautiful limestone peaks: "Sailing through geological history" (box, p. 136).

Finally, read "Finding perfect seas" (box, p. 145).

Discussion points:

- What geological forces created the limestone peaks celebrated by Chinese classical painters and modern-day sailors in Thailand? (Flat layers of limestone composed mostly of shells and coral were thrust vertically. Because of their unusual purity, the peaks resisted weathering more than the surrounding granite.)
- What effect do these karst mountains have on storms in Phangnga Bay? (They keep the waves low during storms, even during typhoons.)
- What area of the world produced master navigator Captain Joshua Slocum? (Nova Scotia.) What areas of the world have been described as sites for perfect sailing by great writers? (The Indian Ocean, the Chesapeake Bay, the Atlantic between South Africa and Brazil, and others of course.)

(8) GREECE

Based on the eighth chapter of *An Amateur's Guide to the Planet*, "The Odyssey of Sandstorm: Greece and lessons on national greatness and decline," pp. 147-66.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize that seafaring nations share certain characteristics and that sailors hold a different mental map of the world than landlubbers.**
- **To learn that poor soils and long coastlines may force a nation into an economic focus on maritime commerce.**
- **To understand that island nations often become tourist magnets, with mixed results for national pride.**

Directions:

Have students begin this reading adventure with a tale of a rough sail through an early autumn gale in Greece (pp. 150-58).

Next read "Poor in land, rich in sea lanes" (box, p. 157).

Finally, read "Mass tourism: The fate of Once-Great Powers and islands alike," box, p. 163.

Discussion points:

- What insights does the author describe based on her terrible sailing experience in Greece? (That ports such as Mikonos attract sailors from all over the world. That these sailors, including the ones on the Polish ship *Zyawa*, are familiar with the names of port cities best, rather than just large and famous cities found inland. That Homer's description of Greek waters in *The Odyssey* is quite accurate in describing the three-day cycle of storms and clear skies.)
- What characteristics do Greece and Norway share? (Long coastlines, small populations, poor soils.) What global economic activity attracts both Greeks and Norwegians? (Shipping.)
- What sort of economic activity do sunny islands attract? (Mass tourism.) What are some of the pitfalls of mass tourism? (Mass tourism may indicate reduced national prestige as well as more important drawbacks, such as a lack of manufacturing, agriculture and fishing. Profits may head back to First World investors. Local people may be treated badly by wealthy tourists.)

(9) THE YUCATAN

Based on the ninth chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, "Pyramids in the Americas: The Yucatan and lessons on parallel evolution," pp. 167-82.

Students will be able:

- **To learn that tourism development programs can radically change the look of a region.**
- **To recognize that there are "nations within nations" in many places, including Mexico.**
- **To understand how unusual in world history it has been for a riverless region such as the Yucatan to produce a culture as accomplished as the Maya.**

Directions:

Have students begin with a flight into Cancun and a visit to the ruins at Tulum (pp. 167-170).

Read "Whatever country this is, it is not Mexico" (box, p. 170).

Finally read "The Yucatan and the big lesson: parallel evolution" (pp. 179-82).

Discussion points:

- What was the Yucatan like before the cre-

ation of the tourist resort of Cancun in the 1970s? (Roadless scrubland that could hide rebels.) How did Cancun change the relationship of Mexico to the United States? (Easy air access from Miami and the rest of the East Coast bought in millions of tourists who might not have been as interested in entering Mexico either overland via Texas or by air to Mexico City.)

- What are some reasons that the eastern area of the Yucatan peninsula, known as Quintana Roo, does not feel like a part of Mexico? (Differences between the dominant Maya culture and that of western Mexico, especially male attitudes to women and a distinctive regional cuisine.)
- The Maya civilization arose in an area different from those of China, Egypt and Mesopotamia in what way? (Lack of rivers.) What tools did the Maya civilization lack? (Ploughs, metal implements, the wheel and draft animals.) In what areas did certain creative Maya excel? (Agriculture, as well as stone carving, astronomy, warfare and architecture.)

(10) BURMA

Based on the 10th chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, "Shimmering heat and radiant Buddhists: Burma and lessons on the nature of poverty," pp. 183-202.

Students will be able:

- **To learn that border areas are often unstable.**
- **To understand what "hill stations" are and their relationship to the colonial and modern economies of Asian and African states.**
- **To recognize the profound and differing influences of India and China on their regional neighbors in Southeast Asia.**

Directions:

Have students begin with visiting Rangoon, Pagan, Mandalay and Maymyo (pp. 183-90).

Read about "The nature of borders" (box, p. 189).

Next read "Hill stations: keeping cool in colonial times" (box, p. 190).

Finally, read "Yin and yang: Burma and Thailand" (box, p. 192).

Discussion points:

- Travelers to Burma can only visit cities and towns in its central plain drained by the Irrawaddy River. Why can't visitors go into the mountains? (Smugglers, warring tribes, and government campaigns against minorities are found there.) What other nations have problems with minority groups on their borders? (China, the former Soviet Union, Iraq, Brazil, India and Nigeria.)
- What is a hill station? (A town between 1,200 and 10,000 feet above sea level where colonial administrators in Asia and Africa would visit to escape the heat of lower elevations.) What crop was grown in many of these areas? (Tea.) What modern economic activity has become important to hill sta-

tions? (Tourism and golf.)

- Thailand and Burma are adjacent nations with quite different cultures. How did China influence Thailand? (Many Chinese emigrated to Thailand, bringing economic talents.) How does India influence Burma? (It had an influence on Burma's religion, Buddhism, as

well as its law codes, medicine, royal traditions and education system.) How do Thailand and Burma compare economically? (Burma is the world's poorest non-African nation, Thailand had the world's fastest-growing economy from 1985 to 1994.)

(11) JAVA AND BALI

Based on the 11th chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, "Earthly Paradises: Java and Bali and how we view Heaven," pp. 203-18.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize the effects of tourism on the economy and culture of a beautiful area.**
- **To learn how fertile soil and a climate conducive to crop growing freed the Balinese to pursue the arts.**
- **To understand how our cultural maps of Heaven match those of tropical places, according to theological writers for the past 600 years.**

Directions:

Have students begin by reading about Indonesia, a little-understood world giant, and Java and its classical arts and temples (pp. 203-07).

Next read about the arts and beaches in Bali (pp. 208-13) and "An island paradise copes with crushing popularity" (box, p. 209).

Finally, read "Java and Bali and the big lesson: how we view Heaven" (pp. 215-18).

Discussion points:

- Indonesia is more populous than Brazil, Russia, Japan and Nigeria. Is it as prominent

in world news as we would expect for its size? Why not? (Indonesia is a diverse island nation primarily engaged in agriculture, fishing and the arts, and seems to attract less notice than other, more industrialized or oil-producing nations.)

- How has a 10-fold increase in tourism affected the Balinese? (The Balinese experience water shortages, lower agricultural output and reef destruction. Traditional religious practices seem to be little affected. Tourism seems to have had a mixed effect on the arts, perhaps encouraging production of many low-quality batik paintings yet also supporting other more original artists.)

- What have been the geographical features of Heaven as portrayed for centuries by theological and literary writers and artists? (A beautiful place of richness and fertility, gardenlike, peaceful, with a springtime climate.) What real places have been described as earthly paradises? (Ceylon, Madagascar, Egypt.) What peoples consider their homes to be much like Heaven? (Balinese, Polynesians and many Americans.)

Additional information on video: National Geographic's *Bali: Masterpiece of the Gods* (reviewed at our Web site, www.beau-monde.net).

(12) BRAZIL

Based on the 12th and final chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, "A Crescent Called New Africa," pp. 219-46.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize the location of a New Africa in the Americas.**
- **To understand how distance from Africa and other geographi-**

cal factors affected cultural survival among slaves bought to the New World.

- **To learn how Brazil compares with other world giants.**

Directions:

Have students begin by reading about arriving in Brazil (pp. 219-220) and studying the map

on p. 220, and continue with “Exploring America’s Africa” (pp. 235-38).

Next read “Slavery and cultural survival” (box, p. 244).

Finally, visit the Amazon region by reading “Waking up to bird song” (pp. 228-30).

Discussion points:

- What do the southeastern United States, Brazil and the Caribbean islands and coast have in common? (All have been demographically affected by the importation of slaves, whose descendents now live in the Crescent of New Africa.)
- Why do many blacks in Brazil speak African languages, while few African-Americans speak anything but English? (Because a greater proportion of Brazilians are descended from Africans, and numbers usually determine cultural survival.)
- What are other reasons for the greater

survival of African culture in Brazil?

- (a) Islamic slaves bought to Brazil were more resistant to the dominant culture;
- (b) slaves maintained greater contact with one another in Brazilian cities than in the rural United States;
- (c) slaves continued to arrive in Brazil for nearly a half-century after importation was halted in the United States;
- (d) and Brazil enjoyed greater continuing contact with Africa than did the United States.)
- How does Brazil compare to the other five world giants in land area? (Great economic potential contrasts with an inland area much like a frontier.) What other empty areas of the world can we compare the Amazon to? (Australia, Tibet, the Yukon, Siberia, Nevada.)

WORLD CULTURE LESSON IDEAS

DIASPORAS

(1) MAPPING NEW AFRICA, NEW CHINA, GREATER IRELAND, GREATER GREECE AND GREATER INDONESIA.

Based on four chapters of An Amateur’s Guide to the Planet: Brazil, pp. 219-46; China, pp. 29-54; Borneo, pp. 55-72, and Greece, pp. 147-66.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize how ethnic groups that originated in a single area now inhabit vast arcs of the globe and transport their culture across space and time.**

Directions:

Study the map on p. 220, “A Crescent Called New Africa,” and read the text on pp. 219-20, continue with “Exploring America’s Africa,” pp. 235-40, and the box “Slavery and cultural survival,” pp. 244-25.

Read “China and the big lesson: emigration,” on pp. 52-54.

Read the introductory two pages of “The Odyssey of Sandstorm: Greece and lessons on national greatness and decline,” pp. 147-148.

To read about Greater Indonesia, read the next exercise (on page 10) on Borneo’s links to Madagascar and Polynesia and Sumatra’s links to the Maya.

Discussion points:

- Where do the descendents of Africans live in the Americas? (In a vast arc covering the southeastern United States, Caribbean and northeastern South America.)
- Where do the descendents of emigrant Chinese principally live in the world? (In an arc including Southeast Asia, Australia and the South Pacific, Hawaii, the western United States and Canada.)
- Where do people with Irish ancestry principally live today? (The eastern United States and Canada, principally Boston, Chicago and New York.)
- Where have Greeks emigrated? (The United States, Germany and Australia.)
- What factors spurred the giant population movements of these nationalities and ethnic groups? (Africans became dispersed via slavery, Irish via the Great Famine, Chinese via famine, overcrowding and political persecution, and Greeks due to their navigational talents, economic opportunities abroad and political setbacks at home.)

DIASPORAS

(2) GREATER INDONESIA: BORNEO'S CULTURAL PARENTAGE OF MADAGASCAR AND POLYNESIA AND SUMATRA'S LINKS TO THE MAYA.

Based on four passages of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, from chapters on Madagascar, Borneo, Polynesia and the Yucatan.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize how Borneo's seafaring people settled a giant swath of the globe from Madagascar to Easter Island.**
- **To see how another island in modern-day Indonesia, Sumatra, may have links to the Maya of the Yucatan.**
- **To understand that cultural connections may occur in widely separated areas of the globe.**

Directions:

In the Madagascar chapter, read the first three paragraphs of "Stonewashed jackets in the middle of nowhere," p. 7, paying special attention to the small map, and the first paragraph on p. 22.

In the Polynesia chapter, read the introductory four paragraphs, p. 117, and then p. 130, col. 2, especially looking at the photograph of the village dog in Borneo that resembles the Polynesian dog.

Read the Borneo chapter, pp. 55-72, and perhaps also the Java and Bali chapter, pp. 203-18, to gain an idea of the richness of Indonesian and Borneo [Dayak] cultures.

Read the box entitled "Maya parallels to Asia," p. 181.

Discussion points:

- What aspects of life in Madagascar resemble life in Borneo? (Language similarities, rice-growing practices and elaborate wooden grave markers.) How can we explain these similarities? (Seafarers from Borneo are believed to have hopped along the coasts of India, Arabia and Africa before finally settling in Madagascar.)
- What aspects of life in Polynesia resemble life in Borneo? (The ubiquity of the village dog and its appearance.) How can we explain this similarity? (Borneo seafarers sailed east and eventually evolved into Polynesians, much as they later sailed west and landed in Madagascar.)
- What aspect of Maya culture resembles that of the Batak people of Sumatra? (The use of screen-fold books of bark paper.) What other parallels exist between the Maya people and Asians? (Matching names in their calendars and the same methods of predicting lunar and solar eclipses.)
- We hear a lot about Egypt, Greece, the Roman and Chinese empires as being major influences of world culture. Had you heard before about the vast influence of people from Borneo and Indonesia on Indian Ocean, Pacific and possibly Central American peoples? Do you think Indonesia's history and cultural influence are neglected topics?

CULTURAL SURVIVAL

(3) WHY POLYNESIAN CULTURE SURVIVES MORE ON TAHITI THAN IN HAWAII, AND AFRICAN CULTURE MORE IN BRAZIL THAN THE UNITED STATES.

Based on three chapters of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet: Polynesia, pp. 117-34, Brazil, pp. 219-46, and part of the Greece chapter, box on pop. 164-65, and well as the conclusion, "Overall Lessons," p. 247.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize factors important to cultural survival.**
- **To debate whether cultural survival is invariably a good thing.**

Directions:

Read "Polynesia and the big lesson: why culture survives," pp. 131-34.

Read "Brazil and the big lesson: racial democracy," pp. 241-46, including the box on pp. 244-45, "Slavery and cultural survival."

Read "Rome's approach to minorities: sharing power and insisting on cultural assimilation," box, pp. 164-65.

Read "Overall Lessons: Classroom Earth teaches us history, economics, language, politics

and culture,” p. 247.

Discussion points:

- Why does Polynesian culture survive to a greater extent on Tahiti and its islands than in Hawaii? (Tahiti has a higher number of Polynesians, is farther from the overwhelming cultural influences of the United States and Japan and has fewer tourists.)
- What drawbacks are associated with the greater Polynesian cultural survival among Tahitians? (Tahitians have achieved less political representation, while Hawaiians have made good strides, capturing the U.S. Senate and governor’s seat in Hawaii, and now seem to be catching up in cultural awareness as well to Tahitians.)
- Why does African culture survive to a greater extent in Brazil than in the United States? (As with Tahiti having greater numbers of Polynesians, a higher proportion of Brazilians have some African ancestors than do U.S. citizens.)
- What factors related to the type of slavery in Brazil led to greater survival of African customs? (Many Brazilian slaves shared the

bond of Islam, lived in cities rather than rural areas and been transported more recently from Africa than American slaves.)

- What drawbacks are associated with the greater African cultural survival among Afro-Brazilians? (The historic headstart of acculturation among African Americans has been linked to their greater success in education, politics and health in the United States compared to Brazil. Afro-Brazilians have an illiteracy rate of about 30 percent and typically have the equivalent of a second-grade education.)
- What is an important facet of how both the United States and Rome attempt to acculturate minorities? (By appointing them to civil jobs.) What are the ramifications of this policy? (Greater internal security and maintenance of territorial integrity.)
- How did the Roman Empire deal with cultural diversity? (Administrators insisted on common language and laws; it tolerated but did not encourage diversity.) Do you think this would be a good policy for the United States?

CULTURAL SURVIVAL

(4) LANGUAGE AS THE CARDINAL INDICATOR OF CULTURE: CASE STUDIES IN BORNEO, POLYNESIA AND BRAZIL.

Based on three chapters of An Amateur’s Guide to the Planet, on Borneo, Polynesia and Brazil.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize language as a measure of cultural survival in many areas around the world.**

Directions:

Read p. 72 of “Borneo and the big lesson: the role of modern missionaries.”

Read the introductory passage of “Polynesia,” pp. 117-18, and the first 3 paragraphs of “Polynesia and the big lesson: Why culture survives,” p. 131.

Read “A candomble feast day,” pp. 236-37, including the box on pp. 244-45, “Slavery and cultural survival.”

Discussion points:

- What is significant about the fact that Tahitians still conduct the Mass in Tahitian and that candomble participants worship in Yoruba? (It demonstrates the survival of aspects of Polynesian and African culture,

respectively.) In what cases do language and culture survive? (When there are sufficient numbers of people to preserve customs. For instance, there are greater concentrations of African descendents in Brazil than in the United States, and thus greater cultural survival.)

- In what part of the United States do some people speak an African-influenced language? (On the Sea Islands off Georgia and South Carolina, where Gullah is spoken.) Why have African-influenced languages survived in these areas? (For the same reason they survive in Brazil: a high concentration of African-descended people.)
- Missionaries have translated the Bible into 1,200 languages. Observers debate whether this shows respect for local cultures. Author Jeannette Belliveau says this does show respect, while many anthropologists feel that the Bible tears down the foundation of local cultures. What do you think?

CULTURAL SURVIVAL

(5) GENEROSITY AND KINSHIP: KEYSTONES OF AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURE.

Based on the East Africa chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize aspects of African culture that have survived among blacks in the United States.**
- **To understand that African Americans are also profoundly different in many ways from Africans.**
- **To assess what expectations Americans of any background should hold on "Roots" trips.**

Directions:

Read pp. 76-81 of "Giraffes by the Roadside," describing a visit to a little Kenyan nightclub and to a Masai village, and pp. 95-98, "Kenya, Tanzania and the big lesson: our love-hate relationship with Africa."

Discussion points:

- What aspects of African culture survive among the descendants of Africans in the United States? (Obligations to share material advancement, fatalism, forgiveness and a belief in redemption, improvisational thinking talent, abilities to compose polyrhythmic music and choreograph complex dance routine.)
- What fundamental differences in attitude and behavior divide Africans and African Americans? (Corruption and incompetence in sectors of African public life may erode solidarity.)
- What should American visitors of any ethnic background expect on visits to their ancestral homelands? (Subtle echoes of their ancestral culture, rather than perfect kinship.)

RELIGION

(6) VIEWS OF HEAVEN: FROM BALI TO THE UNITED STATES.

Based on the 11th chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, "Earthly paradises: Java and Bali and how we view Heaven."

Students will be able:

- **To recognize how scholars have traditionally depicted Heaven and how this image jibes with many tropical vacation destinations.**
- **To understand that many people—including Americans—look at Heaven as being like their homes.**

Directions:

Read "Viewing the mirrorlike paddies," p. 212.

Read "Java and Bali and the big lesson: How we view Heaven," pp. 215-18, including "Heaven as a place to resolve premature passings," box, p. 218.

Discussion points:

- What themes have been central to images of paradise or Heaven? (The garden or oasis.) How did early writers envision the earthly paradise? (A peaceful, well-watered place with a springtime climate, perfumed breezes, fruit trees and long-lived inhabitants with no need to work.)
- Where do modern travelers go to satisfy ancient human longings for an earthly paradise? (To Bali, the South Pacific islands, and the Caribbean, Mexico, Florida and Hawaii.)
- What peoples regard their homes as Heaven? (The Balinese, Polynesians, and to an extent even Americans.)
- What aspect of unfinished business on Earth preoccupies many people about an afterlife in Heaven? (The prospect of reunion with family members.)

RELIGION

(7) TWO KINDS OF BUDDHISM: BURMA VS. THAILAND.

Based on the 7th and 10th chapters of *An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, on Thailand and Burma*.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize how two neighboring countries nominally of the same religion can have vastly different cultures and influences.**

Directions:

Read "Yin and yang, Burma and Thailand," box, p. 192, and "Flash forward: the political deterioration since 1988," box, p. 194). If time permits, read the full chapters on Thailand, pp. 135-46, and Burma, pp. 183-202.

Discussion points:

- How are Thailand and Burma similar? (They are adjoining nations, both nominally Buddhist, sharing the Indochinese and Malay

peninsulas.)

- How are they different? (Thailand is far more affluent, Burma is still more unmateri-
alistically spiritual. More precisely, Thailand
was the world's fastest-growing economy
from 1985-94, while Burma is the world's
poorest non-African nation.)
- What are some explanations for the pro-
found differences in these two adjoining
countries? (Brutal repression in Burma,
India's cultural influence on Burma, and
China's cultural influence on Thailand.) Are
there other places where the influences of
India and China compete? (Yes, in Malaysia
and Indonesia one sees the influence of
Chinese art and trading and Indian epic tales
such as the *Ramayana*.)

RELIGION

(8) THE ROLE OF MODERN MISSIONARIES.

Based on the third chapter of *An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, on Borneo*.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize how the role of missionaries has evolved considerably in the 20th century.**
- **To debate the effects of effects of missionaries on isolated societies compared to the interactions with backpackers, anthropologists and Peace Corps volunteers.**

Directions:

Read pp. 56-60, on pilot Emile Borne, a mis-
sionary in Borneo, and "Borneo and the big les-
son: the role of modern missionaries," pp. 69-
72.

Discussion points:

- How has the role of modern missionaries changed? (Missionaries are more likely to be tending the sick, educating children and providing air transportation than to be attempting direct conversions to Christianity. Also, now many missionaries are Third World nationals.)
- Do you think it is important for mission-
aries to respect the local cultures they work

with? How have Roman Catholic missionar-
ies attempted to do this? (By incorporating
local customs into religious ceremonies.)
Why does the Roman Catholic Church take
this approach? (Because it values the institu-
tion of the family, and the family transmits
cultural values, so these are considered wor-
thy of respect.)

- What admirable qualities does University
of Amsterdam professor Sjaak van der Geest
see in many missionaries? (They acquire vast
knowledge through their long time commit-
ments to an area; they are open to transcen-
dent religious experience in a way often
shared by the local population; they believe
that the fate of the souls of the local people
are important.)
- Do you agree with van der Geest that, if
one accepts change as a normal part of life,
"it will be agreed that the prevention of
change in indeed 'change' in another more
complex sense of the term." His implicat
that the change wrought by traders, logging
personnel, missionaries, anthropologists,
Peace Corps volunteers and tourists to isolat-
ed societies is inevitable.

POVERTY

(9) BURMA'S HIDDEN RICHES CHALLENGE THE WEST AND REVEAL THREE DIFFERENT DEFINITIONS OF POVERTY.

Based on the 10th chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, on Burma.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize how poverty has come to be defined historically.**
- **To understand three different definitions of poverty found in the world today.**
- **To debate the true nature of Western poverty.**

Directions:

Form an impression of the people of Burma, such as Pottos, Maung Nyo and the smiling peasant seen from a train window by reading pp. 190-193.

Read "Burma and the big lesson: the nature of poverty," pp. 196-202.

Discussion points:

- Who came up with the concept of the "poverty line"? (British social thinker Charles Booth, in 1886.)
- How do European nations define poverty? (Many say the poor are those whose earnings falls in the bottom quarter of the national range.) How does the United States define poverty? (The poverty line is three times the dollar amount needed to buy a nutritious but low-cost diet.)

- What is the United Nations' definition of absolute poverty? (When a person does not have the means to purchase sufficient food to ensure 2,250 calories per day.)
- What material things do the U.S. poor typically possess? (VCRs, washing machines, telephones, color televisions and refrigerators.) What material things do the U.S. poor typically lack? (personal computers, dishwashers.) How do the U.S. poor compare to the overall populations of many European nations in terms of appliances owned? (Sixty percent of the U.S. poor have VCRs, compared to lower proportions of Dutch people, Belgians, Germans, Swiss, French and Italians.)
- How can we define the true nature of U.S. poverty? (Not fully participating the economy, which typically happens to a family headed by a woman only.)
- What three types of poverty exist in the world? (Grinding poverty, as evidenced by disease, hunger and slow starvation, such as in found in parts of India and Bangladesh. Genteel shabbiness, as found in Burma. An inability to fully participate in the middle-class lifestyle, as is found in the United States.)

NATIONAL GREATNESS AND DECLINE

(10) WHAT THE UNITED STATES CAN LEARN FROM GREECE, ROME AND BRITAIN, AND WHAT JAPAN AND CHINA CAN EXPECT IN THE NEXT CYCLE OF GREATNESS AND DECLINE.

Based on the eighth chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, on Greece.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize how historians view cycles of greatness and decline.**
- **To understand how the United States fits in with past and future world powers.**
- **To debate future of the United States and the relationship of U.S. greatness to being an inclusive society.**

Directions:

Experience some of the thoughts that occur to Americans traveling in Greece by reading pp. 147-48.

Read "Greece and the big lesson: on national greatness and decline," pp. 162-66, including the box on pp. 164-65, "Rome's approach to minorities: sharing power and insisting on cultural assimilation."

Discussion points:

- What has happened to Greece since the heyday of Athens, circa 500 B.C.? (It now lags Spain economically and is one of Europe's poorer nations.)
- What is unusual about the United States

as a world power? (Its extraordinary domination of world production, at 50 percent in 1950, believed to be the highest achieved by a Great Power.)

- Why do Great Nations eventually decline? (Because as Spengler points out, they enjoy a life-cycle similar to that of a living thing, and as Kennedy, Sowell and others point out, their rates of growth and technological advance may be uneven and subject to being surpassed by others.)
- Do you think a decline similar to that of Greece, Rome and Britain is inevitable for the United States? (Yes, if you look at typical patterns of ascent and decline for Great

Powers.)

- What unusual strengths does the United States possess that may forestall decline? (Its Asian immigrants, who provide built-in ties to the future Great Powers, and the strength of its “fundamental idea” as a land of liberty.)
- What nations are likely to be the next Great Powers if/when the United States declines? (Japan and China.) Why? (Japan has a well-educated and homogenous population and technological abilities, and China’s giant population may be able to catch up once its work habits and mercantile abilities are free to flourish in an open society.)

GEOGRAPHY OF ETIQUETTE

(11) HOW JAPAN AND BRITAIN FILL THEIR ROLE AS “FORMAL SOCIETIES,” AND HOW THEY COMPARE TO CONTINENTAL NATIONS’ CUSTOMS.

Based on the fifth chapter of An Amateur’s Guide to the Planet, on Japan.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize how American travelers must be sensitive to the cultural mores of other nations.**
- **To understand how geography can play a role even in the realm of etiquette.**
- **To know how cultural patterns may arise in widely scattered areas.**

Directions:

Catch the flavor of how Americans adjust to travel in Japan by reading the beginning of “Civilities, Sheepdogs and Bomb Survivors,” pp. 99-102, including “England and Japan: Shared interests and facets of life,” box, p. 100.

Take a trip to a Japanese public bath, “Our definition of ‘clean’ goes up, up, up,” pp. 106-08, and note the closing paragraph’s look at aspects of Japanese life that have crept into American life.

Read “Japan and the big lesson: formal societies,” pp. 115-16.

Discussion points:

- What little things must the American traveler to Japan be aware of? (To address people by their last names, to exchange business cards ceremoniously, to avoid the word “no,” to speak softly and to refrain from asking personal questions.)

- What other nation shares much of Japan’s approach to great politeness? (Britain.) What are some of these similarities? (Thirty-one are shown in the box on page 100). What are some of the geographical and historical reasons for both nations’ emphases on discretion and subtlety? (Fear of invasion, having an older culture.)

- What aspects of life in Japan tend to confound visitors the most? (Communal sleeping rooms, raw fish, attitudes toward personal cleanliness.) But which of these same cultural aspects are now appearing in American life? (California hot tubs and Jacuzzis, futons, sushi bars and the emphasis on lightness in nouvelle French and American cuisines.)

- Are there any lessons on how to behave in Japan that also apply to the developing world? (Yes—most of the world’s cultures employ some varieties of indirectness in their communication, as linguist Deborah Tannen points out. So speaking softly and in a formal way may work in rustic or isolated societies as well as in Japan and Britain.)

- What geographic and historical factors make continental nations, such as the United States, China, Canada, Brazil and Australia, more direct and less formal? (These nations (except China) are younger, more democratic, less homogeneous and more frontier-like in spirit.)

PARALLEL EVOLUTION

(12) HOW THE MAYA SERVE AS EXTRAORDINARY EXAMPLES OF THE “PARALLEL EVOLUTION” OF CULTURE.

Based on the ninth chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, on the Yucatan.

Students will be able:

- **To appreciate the wondrous achievement of the pyramids in the isolated Americas.**
- **To understand why most prosperous cultures appear to invariably begin to construct monumental architecture and develop a system of writing.**
- **To recognize that the principle of parallel evolution lives on in modern science.**
- **To debate whether the Maya pyramids demonstrate an extraordinary psychic unity among humankind and a fixed pattern to human development.**

Directions:

Take an adventure to the astounding Maya pyramids and temples at Uxmal, “A ruin of Athenian impact,” pp. 176-78.

Read “The Yucatan and the big lesson: parallel evolution,” pp. 179-82, including “The inevitability of inventions,” box, p. 180.

Discussion points:

- What is so unusual about the House of the Governor at the Maya site of Uxmal in the Yucatan? (The structure has a grace and formality possible equal to the Parthenon at Athens and demonstrates that the Maya could construct both rectangular and pyramid-shaped monuments.)
- What profound questions do the Maya pyramids raise? (Whether, absent Maya contact with European, Asian or African civiliza-

tions, humankind inevitably feels an urge at a certain stage of development to construct pyramids and study the stars.)

- What early talent of the Maya led to the progress in building cities? (Agricultural talent at raising maize and other vegetables.) What happens once a civilization produces surplus food? (Social evolution leads to laws, knowledge, pyramids and writing to record trading and the exploits of leaders.)
- What makes the Maya feat of parallel evolution so remarkable? (They replicated the cities of the Egyptians, the roads of the Romans, the sea trading of the Phoenicians, the pyramid form of the Babylonians, the monument form of the Greeks without contact, and it is much easier to borrow culture than to create it.)
- What are some other examples of parallel evolution? (Writing, farming, knights, castles and coins arose independently in scattered parts of the globe.)
- How does parallel evolution live on in the sphere of science? (Hundreds of inventions have been stumbled on by independent discoverers.)
- What does cultural observer Leslie White say is more important to cultural advancement and inventions: smart people or a certain level of civilizational attainment? (The latter: He says creative people are born at a steady rate in large populations, but calculus and the steam engine are not going to be invented in an isolated, pre-industrial society because the required conditions and factors are not present.)

GEOGRAPHY OF TOURISM

(13) THE IMPACT OF MASS TOURISM AND ITS INVERSE RELATIONSHIP TO NATIONAL GREATNESS; TRAVEL STYLES (PROFESSIONAL AND AMATEUR) AND PATTERNS; AND LEARNING FROM TRAVEL.

Based on passages in *An Amateur's Guide to the Planet* in the chapters on East Africa, Polynesia, Greece, and Java and Bali.

Students will be able:

- To appreciate the impact of mass tourism on Bali, Greece, Hawaii, and Britain.
- To understand how many Americans go overseas each year, and how travel may thus serve as a corrective to U.S. insularity.
- To recognize how black and white Americans travel differently in Africa.
- To debate whether the Maya pyramids demonstrate an extraordinary psychic unity among humankind and a fixed pattern of human development.

Directions:

Read "The Age of Adventure Travel," pp. 1-2, "Reasons to roam the world," box, p. 6, and "Overall lessons: Classroom Earth teaches us history, economics, language, politics and culture."

Read "Mass tourism: The fate of the Once-Great Powers and islands alike," box, p. 163.

Read the first page of the East Africa chapter, p. 73, and "Kenya, Tanzania and the big lesson: our love-hate relationship with Africa," pp. 95-98.

Read "An island paradise copes with crushing popularity," box, p. 209, to learn about Bali, and p. 128 and p. 132, which refer to tourism on Hawaii.

Read "Frustration at the history education gap," p. 129, and "Understanding clues in foreign languages," p. 240.

Discussion points:

- How many Americans travel overseas each year? (20 million, with half going to non-European destinations.)
- How do these travelers counterbalance the insularity of the U.S. media and education system? (They learn a ferocious amount of foreign cultures, and can learn even more if they continue reading upon their return after their trip.) Do most U.S. high school graduates have a firm grasp of history and language before they travel? (No, according to history achievement statistics and figures on the numbers of Americans studying foreign languages in school.)
- Who does author Jeannette Belliveau describe as professional travelers? (Soldiers, diplomats, explorers, tradesmen, scholars.)
- What does the phrase "amateur traveler" refer to? (Someone who travels for the love of it.) How does one's style of travel affect impressions of a continent like Africa? (Professional travelers often find themselves confronted with brutal or disheartening conditions, amateur travelers are freer to discover Africa's beautiful and generous side.)
- How do tourism jobs correlate with national power? (A small proportion of the population works in tourism in the United States and Japan, two of the world's most powerful nations. Conversely, Mediterranean and Caribbean islands have a large proportion of jobs serving tourists.)
- How do white and black Americans travel differently to Africa? (Black Americans tend to visit West Africa, their cultural homeland, while white Americans may prefer East Africa, to see its tribal people and game parks.)
- What problems has tourism brought to Bali? (Water shortages, pollution, a decline in craft standards, and mining of reef coral for hotel construction.) How about Hawaii? (Erotic dances such as the hula have been repackaged for tourism consumption.)

ENVIRONMENT LESSON IDEAS

(1) BIODIVERSITY

A visit to the lemurs of Madagascar offers a perfect case study on the importance of biodiversity.

Based on the first chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, "Eden Under Siege: Madagascar and Lessons on the Earth's fragility," pp. 5-28.

Students will be able:

- **To recognize how biodiversity not only plays a role in economic growth but is also crucial to human survival.**

Directions:

Visit Perinet park to watch the extraordinary indri lemur, which sings like a whale (p. 21, col. 1, through p. 24, col. 2).

Learn why lemurs are significant to human development ("Combining cuteness and clues to our past," box, p. 14).

Finally, read "Madagascar and the big lesson: the Earth's fragility," pp. 25-28.

Discussion points:

- Why does life on planet Earth need a vast gene pool to survive? (To provide oxygen, medicine, food and good soil and water.)
- What are some practical advances in sci-

ence and medicine attributable to biodiversity? (Strep throat diagnosis, cleansing of bodies of water such as the Chesapeake Bay, blood pressure medicines.)

- Do you think humans can manage land and animals for human benefit alone?
- Do you see examples of loss of biodiversity in your own area or state? Can you name any?

Additional information on the Internet:

Read the full text of Smithsonian official Thomas J. Lovejoy's fantastic speech at <http://www.deh.gov.au/biodiversity/publications/articles/lovejoy.html>, "Biodiversity: The Most Fundamental Issue," originally delivered to the Australian Academy of Science on March 1, 1994.

Are there any endangered species in your area or state? Check resources such as the Environmental Organization WebDirectory (http://www.webdirectory.com/Wildlife/General_Endangered_Species) to find out. Maybe black bears, panthers, wolves and condors once roamed in your area.

(2) HABITAT LOSS

Elephants in East Africa, hornbills in Borneo, other birds in Hawaii and lemurs in Madagascar struggle with a tough problem: a human population that robs them of a place to live.

Based on the fourth chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, "Giraffes by the Roadside: Kenya and Tanzania and our love-hate relationship to Africa," pp. 73-98, and additional passages in the chapters on Borneo, Polynesia and Madagascar.

Students will be able:

- **To understand how habitat loss is a problem for plants and wildlife around the world, perhaps even in their own backyard.**

Directions:

Visit Amboseli National Park in Kenya to visit its unique herd of elephants (p. 75, column 2, and "Profile: The elephants of Kenya," box, p. 78).

Fly to upcountry Borneo to see the hornbill,

whose habitat in trees is threatened by logging ("Seeing the sights of the Apau Kayan," box, p. 58).

Learn about the waves of bird extinctions wherever Polynesians settled ("What drove islanders to explore—and stop?," box, p. 134, particularly the last two paragraphs.)

Finally, read about the habitat problems of the extremely rare indri lemur, "Trying to help Madagascar: The Duke University Primate Center," box p. 24, and "Madagascar and the big lesson: the Earth's fragility," pp. 25-28.

Discussion points:

- Would you say the problem of habitat loss is an isolated one, or widely found? (Widely found, on all the world's continents.)
- How does Madagascar serve as an example of habitat loss? (Indri lemurs need forest to live, and it is being chopped down by farmers.) How is the habitat loss in Borneo,

which affects the hornbill, different? (Habitat is being destroyed by logging.)

- What do the loss of birds on Hawaii and other islands teach us about habitat loss? (Quote from Peter Ward, p. 26: "People arrived, and species died. It shows that many species on the Earth cannot tolerate the least

human disturbance, so delicately are they balanced on the precarious tightrope of nature.")

- Do you see examples of habitat loss in your own area or state? Are more houses being built in woodland or on marshes? Do you think this will impact plants and animals?

(3) GENETIC ISLANDS

Cheetahs and lions in East Africa find themselves in small "gene ponds" created by shrinking habitat.

Based on the fourth chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, "Giraffes by the Roadside: Kenya and Tanzania and our love-hate relationship to Africa," pp. 73-98.

Students will be able:

- **To understand how inbreeding threatens the future of many of Africa's wild animals.**

Directions:

Visit the Ngorongoro Crater in Tanzania and its fierce hunting lionesses (pp. 92-95, including "Gene pools become gene ponds," box, p. 92).

Read the first page of "Madagascar and the big lesson: the Earth's fragility" (p. 25).

Read as well the April 1992 *National Geographic* article (pp. 122-36): "Captives in the Wild: They seem the picture of health, these lionesses hunting in an extinct volcano. But cut off within its walls, they are threatened by an unseen foe—inbreeding."

Discussion points:

- What is the problem with game parks? (They isolate animals, who may inbreed.)
- How can we set up parks to avoid this problem? (Connect them via land bridges.)
- What animals especially seem to need more roaming space? (Large mammals.)

(4) POACHING

A look at how elephants, which have rebounded since the 1989 ban on ivory, and hyacinth macaws in Brazil.

Based on the fourth chapter of An Amateur's Guide to the Planet, "Giraffes by the Roadside: Kenya and Tanzania and our love-hate relationship to Africa," pp. 73-98, and additional passages in the chapter on Brazil.

Students will be able:

- **To understand how poaching decimated the elephant population of Africa and similarly threatens other species.**

Directions:

Visit Amboseli National Park in Kenya to visit its unique herd of elephants (p. 75, column 2, and "Profile: The elephants of Kenya," box, p. 78).

Trace the onslaught of heavy poaching in "Kenya's summer of growing discontent" (box, p. 77).

Stroll in Brazil's Pantanal region to trees bearing hyacinth macaws ("In the realm of the world's largest parrots," pp. 222-23).

Discussion points:

- How did Somalia play a role in elephant poaching? (Its president authorized dealings in tusks in 1987.)
 - What did Kenya do to combat poaching? (Rangers were allowed to shoot poachers on sight.) What did the world do to combat poaching? (Banned the ivory trade in 1989.)
 - How did the ivory trade ban affect the numbers of elephants? (They rebounded from 550,000 to about 600,000 in Africa.)
- Additional information on video: *National Geographic's Wildlife Warriors: Defending Africa's Animals* (reviewed at our Web site, www.beaumonde.net).

(5) HUMAN ENCROACHMENT

Case study: *Why shark attacks on humans have skyrocketed in recent years.*

Based on the sixth chapter of *An Amateur's Guide to the Planet*, "Waterworlds of the Great Navigators: Polynesia and why culture survives," pp. 117-34.

Students will be able:

- **To understand where sharks live.**
- **To know why shark attacks have escalated in recent years.**
- **To recognize the signs of an impending shark attack.**

Directions:

"Go fishing" on the idyllic Tahitian outisland of Bora Bora, where an unexpected visitor shows up (p. 121, col. 2 through p. 122, col. 1).

Explore one of the world's best islands for swimming with sharks, Rangiroa (pp. 125-27).

Read "Playing it safe with sharks" (p. 126).

Discussion points:

- Where do sharks live? (In salt water everywhere from the Arctic to the tropics.) Is there really such a thing as "shark-infested waters." (Sharks inhabit waters, they do not infest, and are drawn naturally to boat sinkings and similar disasters.)
- How many shark attacks have been

recorded in the 1990s? (287.) How many people are killed by sharks annually? (Usually around 10.) What areas of the United States have seen increased numbers of shark attacks? (Florida, California, Hawaii.)

- Why are shark attacks increasing? (Population growth and increased recreation use of waters.) What are the signs of impending shark attack? (It swims over to investigate, bumps you, and then swims in a violently humpbacked manner.) How can someone interested in sharks swim with them safely? (Stay in protected lagoon waters, swim gently, get out of the water if you are bleeding or have harpooned fish.)

- What other creatures are languishing due to human encroachment on their territories? (Many, many creatures, to name just a few: the Florida panther, the mountain lion in California and Chile, the mountain gorilla in Rwanda, the golden tamarin in Brazil, the panda in China.)

Additional information on video: National Geographic's *Shark Encounters* and *The Sharks*. For looks at other examples of human encroachment, try *Puma: Lion of the Andes* and *Secrets of the Wild Panda* (reviewed at our Web site at www.beaumonde.net).

(6) CLIMATE CHANGE

Wildfires in Borneo—a problem for nearly two decades—finally win worldwide attention.

Based on the third chapter of *An Amateur's Guide to the Planet*, "Hiking with children in the rainforest: Borneo and lessons on modern missionaries," pp. 55-72.

Students will be able:

- **To understand how forest fires are changing the climate of Indonesia and Malaysia.**
- **To know how this affects living things in Borneo, including people, rare birds and even leeches.**

Directions:

Board a missionary's Cessna airplane to go to the interior of Borneo (p. 58).

Trek through the rain forest with a young guide, Ampung (pp. 66-69), and find out what it's like to be bitten by a leech.

Read "Health problems in the rain forest" (box, p. 63).

Discussion points:

- What event in 1983 began to change Borneo's climate? (The largest forest fire in the 20th century consumed 13,500 square miles of forest, greater than the size of the state of Maryland.)
- Early explorers in Borneo often found their legs covered with leeches. What does it tell us that Jeannette Belliveau found only one leech on her leg after her hike? (The island has become much drier over time due to a vicious cycle of deforestation, dryness, forest fires and additional treelessness.)
- What other animals in Borneo are affected by diminishing forest habitat? (Orangutans, hornbills.)
- What 1983 crisis repeated itself in

September 1997 in Borneo? (Giant fires broke out again on Borneo and Sumatra, to the west.) What you read about this disaster in your newspaper? (That people in Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines had to wear masks outdoors because of haze from forest fires burning in deforested Borneo and Sumatra.) How have the health problems in the rain forest mentioned in the box on page 63 become worse? (The respiratory problems cited by Professor Rousseau affecting the

Dayak people have been exacerbated.)

Additional information on the Internet: Read a collection of articles about Southeast Asia's smog on the Yahoo web site.

Additional information on video: National Geographic's *Borneo: Creatures of the Mangrove* (reviewed at our Web site, www.beaumonde.net).deals with the proboscis monkeys, crabs, birds and other creatures of Borneo's coast, but not the forest fires per se.

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