BLACK HISTORY MONTH

African Games

Africa Awareness Week

Teachers' Notes

Core contents:

In this lesson, we will:

1) Explore the different aspects of the game and its relationship with social rules.

2) Learn about the history of African societies through the game.

3) Promote Awelé /Marcala and its mathematical, sociological, anthropological and philosophical dimensions.

4) Presenting the rules of the game and their relationship with social organisations.

5) Strengthen educational values, especially respect for diversity, solidarity, co-operation and broadening citizenship

What is Black History Month?

Black History Month, observed every October in the UK, is a time to honor and celebrate the accomplishments of individuals with African or Caribbean heritage.

It's an opportunity to acknowledge their profound influence on shaping the nation into a diverse and multicultural society.

During this month, we proudly commemorate the remarkable contributions made by Black individuals across various fields, including literature, music, art, and science.

The school has a vital role in strengthening anti-racist education, as it is a space that allows dialogue, the search for solutions that modify prejudiced views and attitudes, and the appreciation of African culture. Together, we have the power to build a society that is more just and equitable

While Black History Month is essential for highlighting issues of racial equality annually, true integration of Black history into education means making it a fundamental part of the curriculum year-round.

Let's delve into a proposal for a math-focused, multi-disciplinary approach that ensures Black history is woven into the entire educational program.

Part 1:- Presenting the Mancala Awelé

Start the lesson by inviting the students to share their previous knowledge about African games.

Show the picture of Mancala Awele and ask the students to make predictions:

What do you think this game is about?

Write a list of predictions made by students and explain that they will revisit them after knowing more about the game.

Part 1:- Presenting the Mancala Awelé

From Egypt to Congo, Ethiopia to Ghana, a game unites Africa.

It's made with materials that are easy to find and create.
- First, a good number of seeds. Then, a board with two larger pits, the oases, and 12 or more smaller pits (originally, players sat and dug in the ground to sow and harvest).

- The aim is to distribute the seeds one by one until the winner ends up with the most seeds in the oasis (see the rules below).
- From there, each people created variations and a large family of games called mancala emerged.

- In the version of the rules presented in this lesson with three seeds in each of the 12 holes, there are no less than 1 septillion (1024, or rather a number 1 followed by 24 zeros) options for moves.

How to play mancala

There are at least 200 variations of the game.

Number of players 2

Part 1:- Presenting the Mancala Awelé

Materials

- 36 seeds and a board with 12 small pits and two oases (larger pits that serve as reservoirs).

Objective

- Place as many seeds as possible in the oasis itself. Understand the dynamics
- The players sit opposite each other and have the oasis on their right. Each player then distributes 18 seeds into their six pits (three in each). At the start, the oasis is empty.
- Whoever starts chooses one of the holes in their field, takes all the seeds from it and distributes them, one by one, in the following holes, walking anti-clockwise.
- If they pass the oasis itself, they leave one seed in it and continue to place the others in the opponent's field, but never in the oasis there. If the last seed lands in the oasis itself, he can make another move. If it lands in an empty pit, they can add all the seeds from the next pit to their oasis.
- When the seeds have dwindled to the point where it is no longer possible to sow the opposing field, the players collect their leftovers, add them to their oasis and count them up. Whoever has the most wins.

Among the countless games recorded, Awelé occupies a special place. Known by different names in Africa and elsewhere in the world [Oware (Ghana), Ayò (Nigeria), Wari (Mali), Ouril or Uril (Cape Verde), Warri (Caribbean), Wori (Senegal)]15, archaeologists, anthropologists and mathematicians attest to its African origin.

Part 2:- Make your own Mancala and invite your students to play.
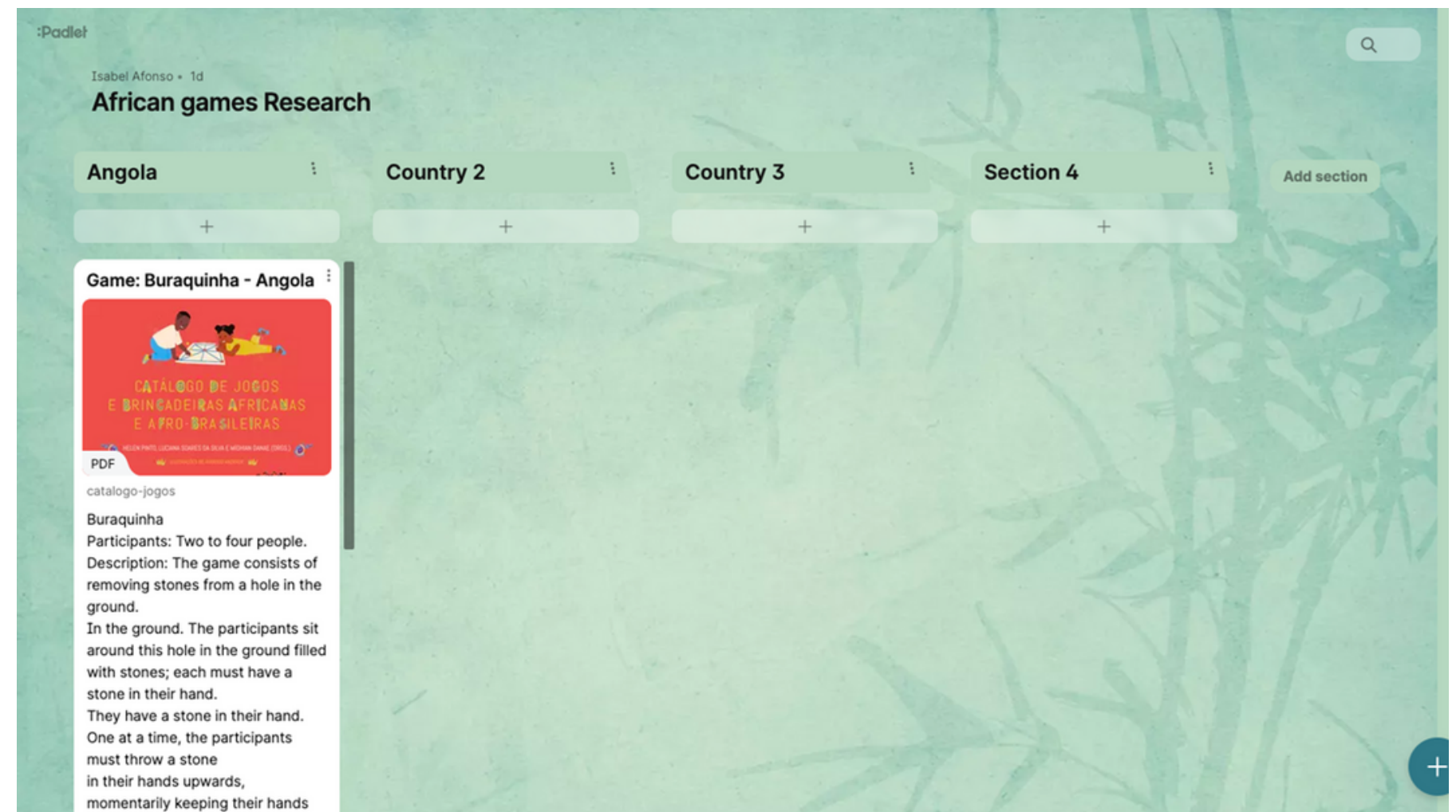
Click link below to get instructions

Mancala Instructions

Part 3:- What about researching and creating a virtual mural with different African games?

Click link below to get instructions

Padlet Example

EXTRA Lesson - Learning more about Mathematics in Africa

- **Start the lesson by inviting the students to read the article.**
- **Mathematics in Africa has been written out of history books – it's time we reminded the world of its rich past.**

Ask the students to make predictions:
- **What do you think the article is about?**
- **Write a list of predictions made by students and explain that they will revisit them after reading the article**

Mathematics in Africa has been written out of history books – it's time we reminded the world of its rich past

It is impossible to quantify how much the slave trade impacted the reputation of African mathematics, but we are slowly regaining a better perspective

Michael Brooks • Sunday 24 October 2021 10:29 • 13 Comments

Click Here

LESSONS LEARNED

List 3 things you found out in this lesson