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# Safari to Kenya

## *The Land and the People*

**by Margit E. McGuire, Ph.D.**

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## Content Consultants

I am grateful to Joseph Otieno, a Kenyan and a geography educator, for reviewing the information about the Maasai Mara habitat and the Maasai people.

## Class Test Sites

I am grateful to the following teachers who piloted *Safari to Kenya* in their classrooms. My thanks to them for their ideas and suggestions in the development of the unit.

Cathy Dugovich and Lucy Kalotay  
Mercer Island School District  
Mercer Island, Washington

–Margit E. McGuire

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Storypath advisors reviewed each unit prior to publication. We sincerely thank the following advisors for their comments and recommendations regarding *Safari to Kenya*:

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**Program Design:** Herman Adler Design

## STP450

978-1-56004-598-4

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Published by Storypath  
10200 Jefferson Boulevard  
P.O. Box 802  
Culver City, California 90232-0802  
1-800-359-0961  
www.teachstorypath.com

# ABOUT STORYPATH

## THE STORYPATH STRATEGY

Storypath offers both a structure for organizing the social studies curriculum and an instructional strategy for teaching. The structure is a familiar one: the story. The strategy is grounded in a belief that students learn best when they are active participants in their own learning, and places students' own efforts to understand at the center of the educational enterprise. Together, the structure and the teaching strategy ensure that students feel strongly motivated and have meaningful and memorable learning experiences.

Originally developed in Scotland during the 1960s, Storypath draws support from decades of experience with teachers and students. The approach has its roots in these beliefs about students and learning:

- The world is complex and presents many layers of information. Students know a good deal about how the world works and have a reservoir of knowledge that is often untapped in the classroom.
- When students build on that knowledge through activities such as questioning and researching, new understandings are acquired. Because students construct their own knowledge and understanding of their world, their learning is more meaningful and memorable.
- Problem solving is a natural and powerful human endeavor. When students are engaged in problem-solving, they take ownership for their learning.
- The story form integrates content and skills from many disciplines and provides a context for students to gain a deeper, more complex understanding of major concepts.

## AN INQUIRY APPROACH

Questioning, by both teacher and students, is a key component of Storypath. Through the story structure and the discourse it creates, the teacher guides students in their search for meaning and understanding as they acquire new knowledge and skills. Your questions, and the discussions they engender, cause students to:

- ask their own questions and think critically about what they know;
- use their prior knowledge to make sense of new information;
- connect personally to important social studies concepts.

The story structure and inquiry guided by unit goals provide the framework for students to integrate skills and complex content through problems they encounter. As they do so, their understanding of important concepts is extended and key connections are made.

## THE STORY STRUCTURE

For thousands of years, stories have helped us create order and make connections between events. Storypath’s narrative structure helps students understand concepts that they often find difficult to comprehend in the traditional social studies curriculum.

Each Storypath unit centers on a unique and engaging story that provides a concrete context for understanding the social science content. This story may be based on actual historical events, as developed in *Struggle for Independence*. Or the story might instead be based on typical community or business structures, as developed in *Families in Their Neighborhoods* or in *Understanding the Marketplace*. From all of these structures, students develop a meaningful context for developing understanding of the topic.

### Typical structure of a Storypath unit

#### CREATING THE SETTING

Students create the setting by completing a frieze or mural of the place.

#### CREATING THE CHARACTERS

Students create characters for the story whose roles they will play during subsequent episodes.

#### BUILDING CONTEXT

Students are involved in activities such as reading and writing to stimulate them to think more deeply about the people and the place they have created.

#### CRITICAL INCIDENTS

Characters confront problems typical of those faced by people of that time and place.

#### CONCLUDING EVENT

Students plan and participate in an activity that brings closure to the story.

# PLANNING THE UNIT

## SAFARI TO KENYA

### MAKE KEY DECISIONS

**Plan the Space for the Storypath.** You will need ample wall space for displaying the photographers and the frieze of the game reserve. It is recommended that the Maasai village be three-dimensional and placed on a counter or tabletop in front of the Maasai Mara frieze. Additionally, you will need space to display various lists, artifacts, student writing, and other materials that students create.

**Manage Class Time.** Plan five to six weeks for the unit depending on how you integrate the activities with other aspects of your curriculum and how much time is allowed for various episodes. You will want to spend a significant amount of time each week on the Storypath so that students stay connected to the storyline, the photographers they are role-playing, and the events that occur. Thus, the ideal approach is to integrate other subjects—especially reading, writing, and science—with the Storypath. There are opportunities to develop word banks, to record the events of the Storypath, and to develop research skills while writing reports about the reserve’s wildlife.

**Build Your Knowledge Base.** If you are unfamiliar with this part of the world, begin reading or viewing the suggested resources. This will allow you to knowledgeably guide the discussions as students raise questions or offer perspectives. There will be times, however, when you won’t know particular information, so use that as a teachable moment for you and the students.

**Develop Group Skills.** There are many opportunities for students to work in groups throughout the Storypath. Suggestions for ways to facilitate this process are integrated throughout. Teaching Master 11, “Self-Assessment: Social Skills,” TH page 57, provides suggestions and a checklist for assessing social skills. At times you will want to stop the story to discuss groups skills and to reflect on how students are working together. Involve students in the process by letting them set goals for group work and by encouraging them to evaluate their ability to work with others throughout this Storypath.

**Arrange for Role Plays.** In Episode 5, arrange for an adult to play the role of the village elder—or you can play this role. The Background Information on page 64 provides a brief overview of Maasai culture that can be used to prepare for the role play.

### CUSTOMIZE THE UNIT

**Adapt the Unit.** There may be times when you will want to modify this unit to suit your own needs and follow the logical progression of the story. Alternative activities or special arrangements are suggested at various points during the unit to assist you in adapting the unit to meet your unique needs. Frequently, students will provide an unanticipated twist to the Storypath, or important learning opportunities will arise. The Storypath allows for the accommodation of those special circumstances.

**Connect to Other Storypaths.** This unit naturally lends itself to the study of habitats as students learn about and create the reserve and its wildlife. It also provides an ideal framework for studying other cultures. You can extend and deepen students' understanding of these subject areas by connecting to other Storypath units. *Protecting an Ecosystem: The Great Barrier Reef* unit contains information and activities related to the study of ocean habitats. *The Wampanoags and the First Thanksgiving* provides opportunities to explore and understand another culture in a historical context.

## INVOLVE OTHERS

**Use Adults or Older Students.** Depending on the reading and writing skills of your students, you may want adults or older students to assist with some of the writing activities.

**Involve Experts.** In Episode 3, when students are creating the frieze of the reserve, you may want to invite an expert, such as a zoologist, to speak to the class and answer students' questions about the wildlife and their habitat. An expert is best used toward the end of the Storypath, when students have developed a knowledge base and are ready to learn more about the topic. In the concluding episode, you may want to invite a guest speaker who has special knowledge about the Maasai Mara region and the Maasai people.

**Involve Families.** Parents and other family members can serve as excellent resources for you and your students. Students may have family members who have visited Kenya or immigrated from Kenya and would be interested in sharing their knowledge with the class. Be sure that information and artifacts introduced to enrich the learning pertain to the Maasai Mara region. If students bring in objects or photos that pertain to another part of Kenya, use this as an opportunity to compare the different regions. In Episode 6, students plan a farewell party. This is an ideal time to invite families. Students can write invitations to the party, and families can participate in the event.

**Involve the Community.** A visit to a zoo can enrich the Storypath and provide students with a deeper understanding of how the animals live in their environments. This activity should be carefully timed, however, and should happen only when students are truly interested in learning more about the wildlife. Usually, the best time for a field trip is at the end of the unit when students can knowledgeably compare and contrast their learning to the new information they encounter on the field trip.

**Create a Learning Community.** An open and supportive atmosphere is essential for students to engage in the discourse that is basic to the learning process of the Storypath approach. Students should understand the value of reflective discussions and the importance of collaborative work to deepen their understanding of complex ideas. Consequently, students should be expected to listen carefully and respond thoughtfully and respectfully to one another's ideas.

# 1

# EPISODE

## CREATING THE CHARACTERS THE PHOTOGRAPHERS

### INTRODUCING THE PHOTOGRAPHERS

page 15

Students learn about an opportunity to travel to Kenya and photograph wild animals.

**Materials** Portfolio 1, *An Invitation*, p. 4  
Portfolio 2, *Word Bank: The Safari*, p. 5  
Content Slide Sets 1 and 2  
For the class word bank: index cards, markers  
World maps or globes

**Grouping** Whole class

**Schedule** Approximately 15 minutes

### CREATING THE SAFARI PHOTOGRAPHERS

page 16

Students imagine themselves as photographers and create passports for the safari to Kenya.

**Materials** Teaching Master 1, *Outline of a Figure*, TH p. 47  
Teaching Master 2, *Passport*, TH p. 48  
For the figure:

- various colors of construction and tissue paper
- yarn, wallpaper and fabric scraps, paper doilies, ribbon, lace, buttons
- colored markers, crayons, chalk, glue, scissors, masking tape
- various craft materials
- optional: camera (for taking passport photos)

**Grouping** Individuals

**Schedule** Approximately 2 hours

### CONCLUDING EPISODE 1

page 17

Students introduce themselves as photographers to the class.

**Materials** Pocket folders or sturdy paper to make folders for the portfolio (one per student)

**Grouping** Whole class

**Schedule** 1–2 hours spread over several days

#### EPISODE OBJECTIVES

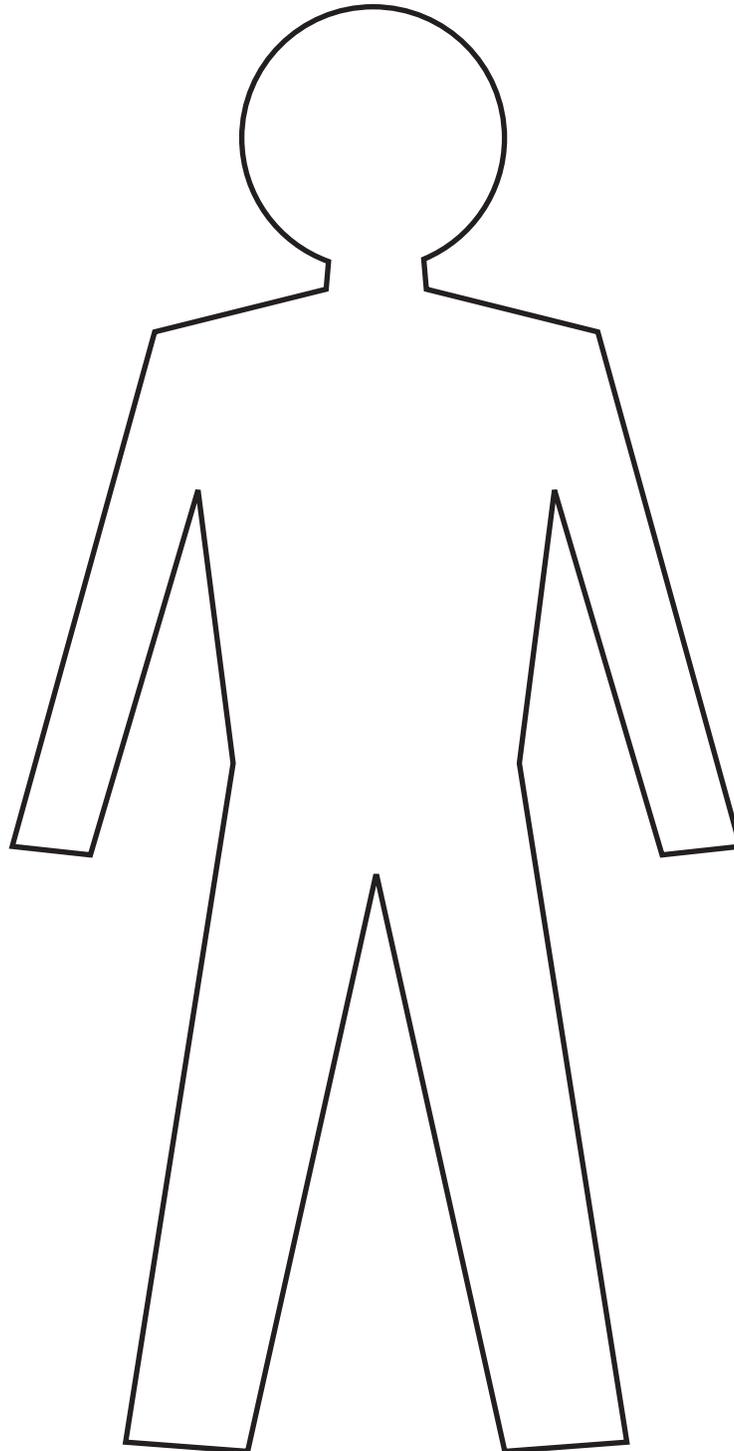


- **Global Studies** *Recognize the importance of getting passports for international travel.*
- **Social Skills** *Organize, plan, and make decisions while creating photographers.*
- **Critical Thinking** *Organize ideas from class discussion in new ways to create photographers.*
- **Civic Competence** *Identify examples of citizens' rights and responsibilities through the creation of passports.*
- **Literacy** *As a group read and discuss an invitation.*
- **Literacy** *Create a word bank related to going on a safari.*
- **Literacy** *Present an introduction in the role of a photographer.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## OUTLINE OF A FIGURE

Use the outline below to create your figure. Cut out the figure. How would you dress for a safari? Be sure to draw details such as hair, facial features, and clothing.

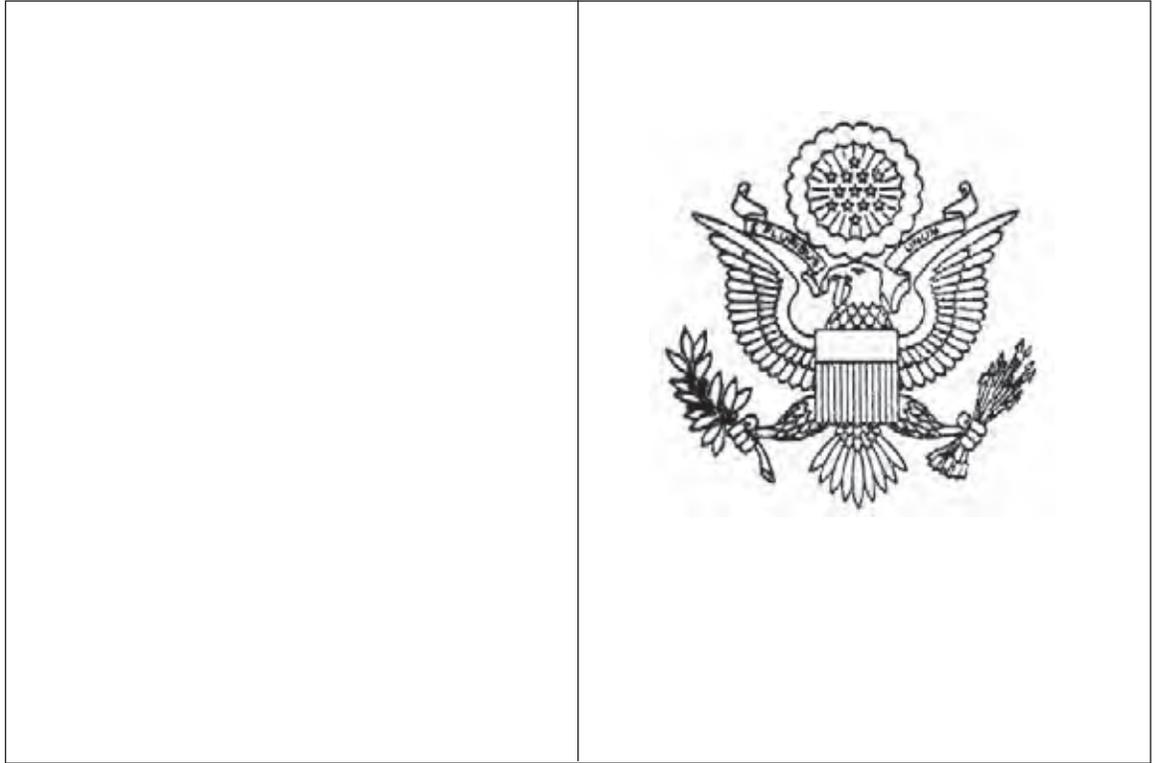


Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# PASSPORT

**Directions:**

1. Cut out passport pages.
2. Insert pages inside passport cover and staple in center.
3. Fill in the information.
4. Create a passport photo.
5. Add your signature below the photo.



<p>_____</p> <p>Last name</p> <p>_____</p> <p>First name</p> <p>_____ Male _____ Female _____</p> <p>Age</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Place of birth</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Occupation</p>	<p>[place photo here]</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Signature</p>
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## What is Kenya?

Kenya is a country in Africa. It is made up of many different groups of people and many different kinds of land. In Kenya's highlands, there is plenty of rain and the soil is good for farming. The flat plains are home to many wild animals. Warm waters from the Indian Ocean reach the sandy white beaches of Kenya's coast.



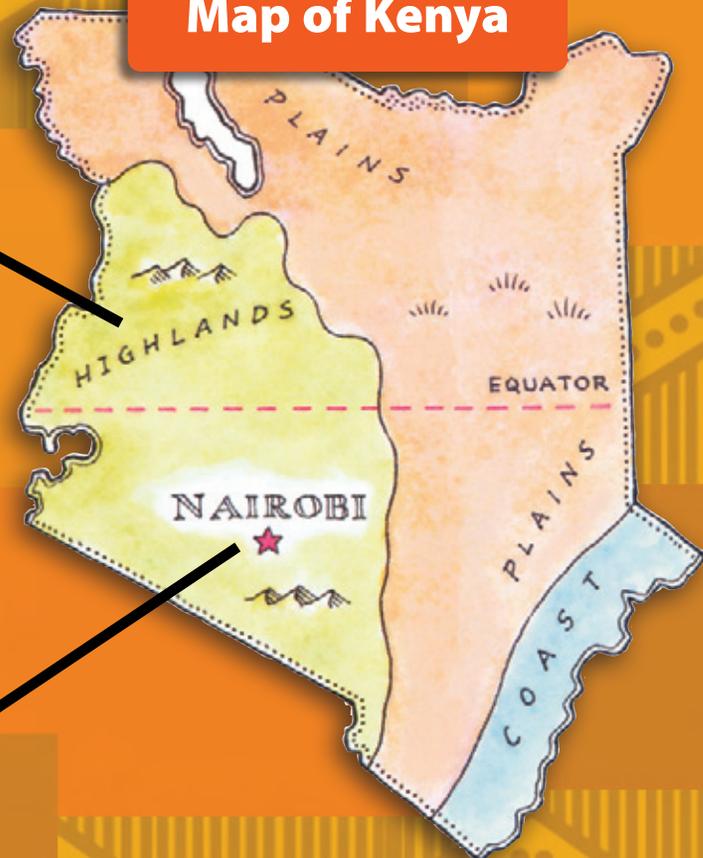


▲ Farmers grow tea in the rich soil of the highlands.



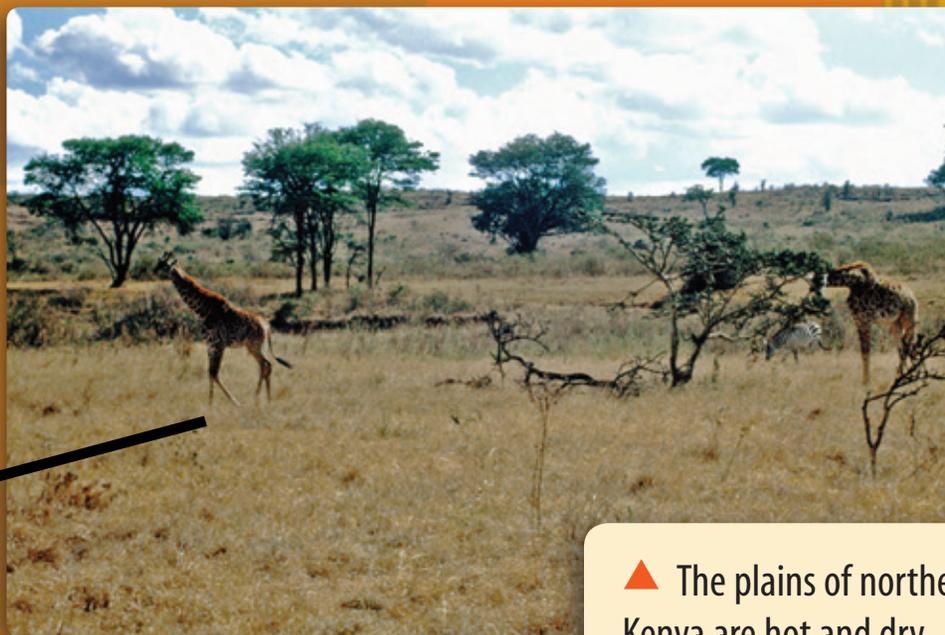
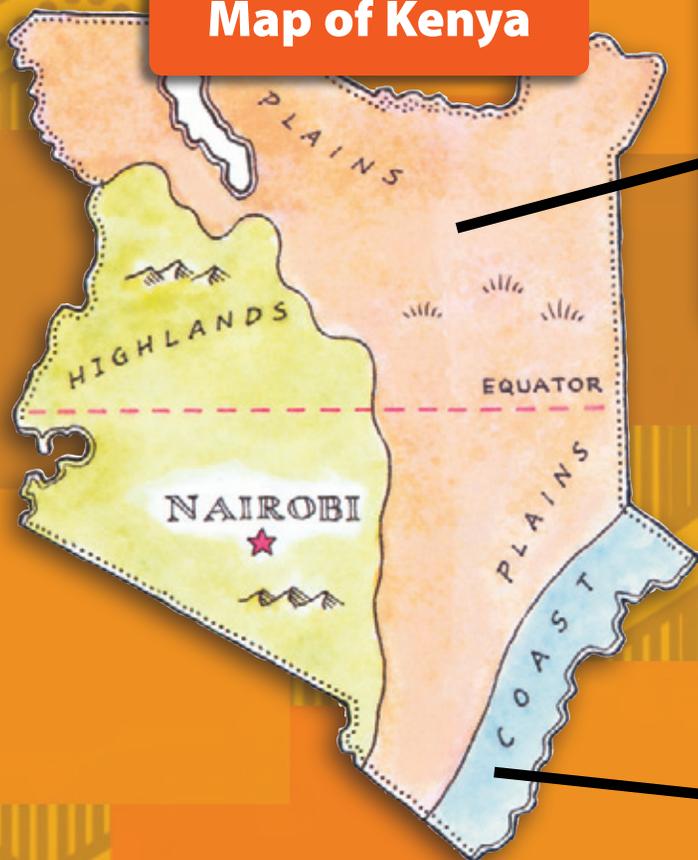
▲ Many people live and work in Nairobi, Kenya's busy capital.

### Map of Kenya





## Map of Kenya



▲ The plains of northern Kenya are hot and dry.

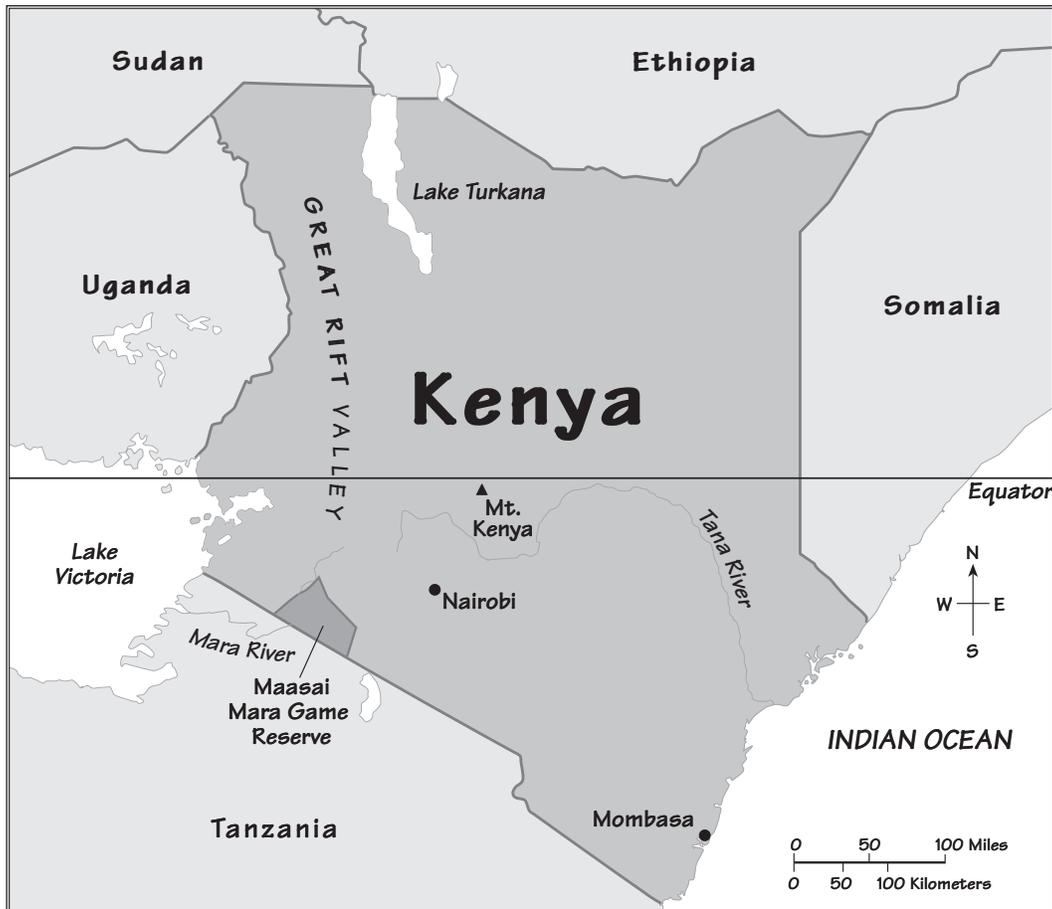


▲ Many people vacation on the beaches of Kenya's coast.



## AN INVITATION

### ATTENTION: ALL PHOTOGRAPHERS



**You are invited to go on a safari in Kenya, Africa.**

This is a wonderful opportunity to photograph wild animals in their natural habitat. While in Kenya, you will

- stay on the beautiful Maasai Mara Game Reserve.
- visit a Maasai village.



### Temperatures in the Maasai Mara Region

Month	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
<b>Daytime Temperature Fahrenheit</b>	69	68	66	69	69	69	68	66	71	69	68	69
<b>Daytime Temperature Celsius</b>	20.5	20	19	20.5	20.5	20.5	20	19	21.5	20.5	20	20.5

### Rainfall in the Maasai Mara Region

Month	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
<b>Rainfall in Inches</b>	2.5	3	4	5.5	3.5	1	.5	1	1	1	2.5	3
<b>Rainfall in Centimeters</b>	6.4	7.6	10.2	14	1.4	.4	.2	.4	.4	.4	6.4	7.6

1. Circle the month that you think would be a good time of year to visit.
  2. I think this is a good time of year to visit because ...
- 

**Assessment:** The month circled is logical to the reason given for the choice. Sentence is completed and makes sense.