

Explore *Africa* Today

One continent, *different* worlds.



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Dear Educator:

Too often young people are inundated with images and stories that lead to negative or inaccurate stereotypes of cultures different from our own. Africa, in particular, is often perceived as a continent in peril, suffering from the devastating effects of AIDS, genocide, poverty and droughts, and depicted in images of barren landscapes and destitute villages. The Africa of today, however, is much more dynamic and diverse; Africans are faced with sprawling technology, increasing energy needs and their impact on the environment, and the growing influence and reach of the media.

In actuality – the similarities between the U.S. and Africa are striking.

To help educate Americans about Africa and to facilitate global understanding and connectedness, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), The Africa Society of the National Summit on Africa, and the Discovery Channel Global Education Partnership produced *Africa Today*. This new educational documentary series brings together American and Ugandan teachers and students to explore the similarities and differences of their respective countries. Through topical discussions, participants break stereotypes and confront preconceived notions about each others' cultures. Discovery Education has joined forces with the producers to share *Africa Today* with you and your students.

We invite you to visit www.ExploreAfricaToday.com, a comprehensive site featuring access to *Africa Today*, additional related videos, and free companion lesson plans to help experience the real Africa in your classroom. Topics include education, the environment, arts and culture, health, media, politics and science and technology.

Hear directly from Ugandan students and teachers as they discuss facets of 21st century life with their American counterparts. Learn how Ugandan teachers handle cell phones in the classroom, what familiar slang terms Ugandan students share with their American peers, and hear Ugandan and American students discuss their favorite types of music and the connections to their respective cultures.

Enclosed please find posters for *Africa Today* to display in your classroom and share with colleagues.

As technology continues to bridge the divide of distance between the U.S. and other nations, we hope you will take a moment to review the materials at www.ExploreAfricaToday.com to help empower students with greater and more accurate knowledge about the world around them.



www.ExploreAfricaToday.com