I. The Physical Characteristics of Africa

A. Second-largest continent (after Asia).
B. Has the world’s largest desert (Sahara).
C. Today, has the most countries (55).
D. Varied geography and climates.
E. Touches the Atlantic ocean, The Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea.
Africa is much larger than you think.
II. The Climates of Africa

A. Five distinct climate zones.

B. This helps to explain the variety of societies in Africa.

C. Due to environmental factors (overuse of land, global warming, population), the amount of desert is increasing = DESERTIFICATION
III. The Savanna

A. About 40% of Africa’s land is composed of **SAVANNA** – broad grasslands with small trees and shrubs.

B. Enough rainfall to support (limited) farming and herding of animals.
IV. The Deserts of Africa (40% of landmass)

A. Underneath a small slice of the Fertile Crescent is the **SAHARA DESERT**, stretching east to west.

B. Mostly inhabited by nomadic herding tribes (Bedouins).

C. A key trading and transit link to Europe and Asia.

D. In the southwest, there is the **KALAHARI DESERT**.

Camels are the most reliable means of transportation in the Sahara

A village in the Kalahari Desert
V. Eastern Africa and Development of Humans

A. In East Africa, the GREAT RIFT VALLEY is the birthplace of numerous precursors (something that comes before) Homo Sapiens.

B. “Lucy,” a partial skeleton, is about 3 million years old and was found there.