

CHAPTER

8

Section 2

GEOGRAPHY APPLICATION: REGION

Desertification and Migration in Africa

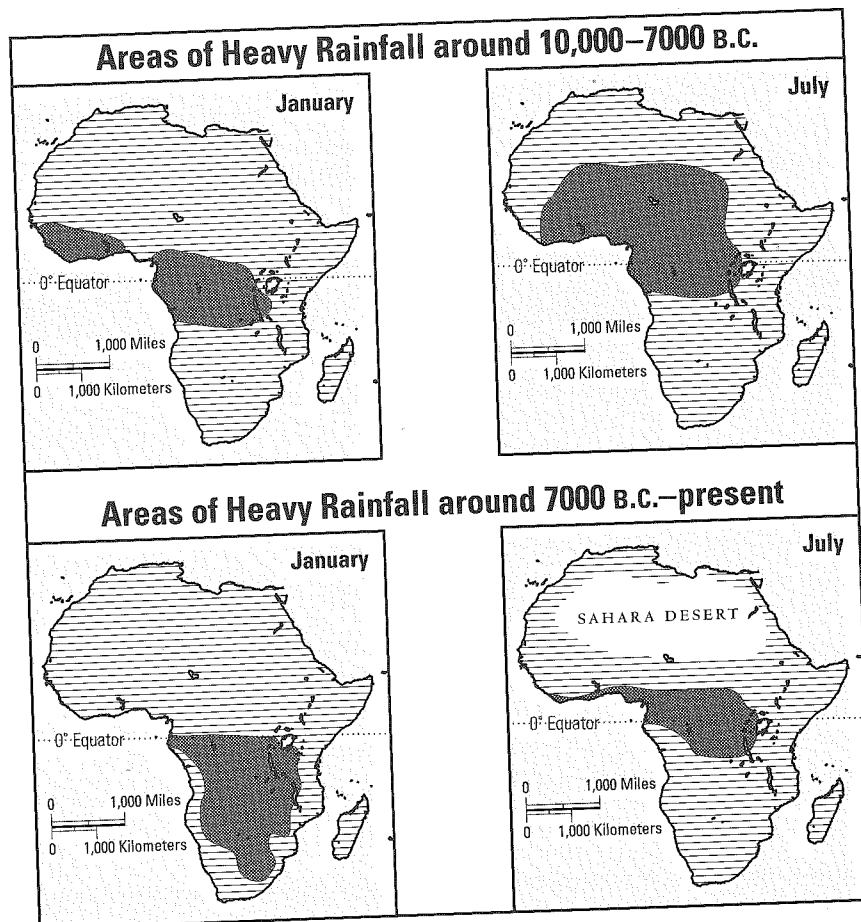
Directions: Read the paragraphs below and study the maps carefully. Then answer the questions that follow.

Human migration usually takes thousands of years and can be caused by a variety of factors. One of those factors is environmental change, and it occurred on a large scale on the African continent. The change centered on the northern section of Africa, where the present-day Sahara Desert is located. Before 10,000 B.C., the Sahara region received abundant rainfall, from ten to fifty times as much as it does today. As a result, many groups of people once inhabited this lush and fertile section of Africa.

Then, between 10,000 and 7000 B.C., temperatures rose and rainfall became less frequent, leading to desertification, a drying of the soil. Around 3000 B.C., much of northern Africa became the Sahara Desert.

As the desert slowly expanded, groups of people began to move south toward grassy savannas and north to the Mediterranean fringe, regions that could support human and animal life. This movement sparked a whole set of changes. As people moved, so did their ideas and technology. Iron-making capability, agricultural techniques, and other new ideas rapidly spread across the continent. This climatic change was also a major factor in the Bantu migrations.

The same environmental conditions that began this process are still occurring today. The Sahara desert continues to expand southward, causing many problems in central Africa.



Name _____

Interpreting Text and Visuals

1. Where was the African rainfall centered around 10,000–7000 B.C. in the month of July?

2. Where is the rainfall centered since 7000 B.C. in the month of January? _____

3. On which two rainfall maps are the areas of rainfall nearly equal? _____

4. How many miles farther south does rainfall extend in January, 7000 B.C.–present as compared to January, 10,000–7000 B.C.? _____
5. In which month did more rain fall during 10,000–7000 B.C.? 7000 B.C.–present? _____

6. Why did people migrate toward the areas of rainfall? _____

7. How does migrating affect the development of technology and ideas in the world? _____

