

A woman with her hair in braids is shown in profile, looking down at a newborn baby she is holding. The baby is wrapped in a patterned blanket. The background shows a hospital room with blue and white linens and a colorful patterned blanket on a bed. The overall scene is a maternity ward.

Babies Can't Wait

In the Shadow of War, Life Begins Anew in a Congolese Maternity Ward

<https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/shadow-war-life-begins-anew-congolese>

Kinshasa

Population: 17 million





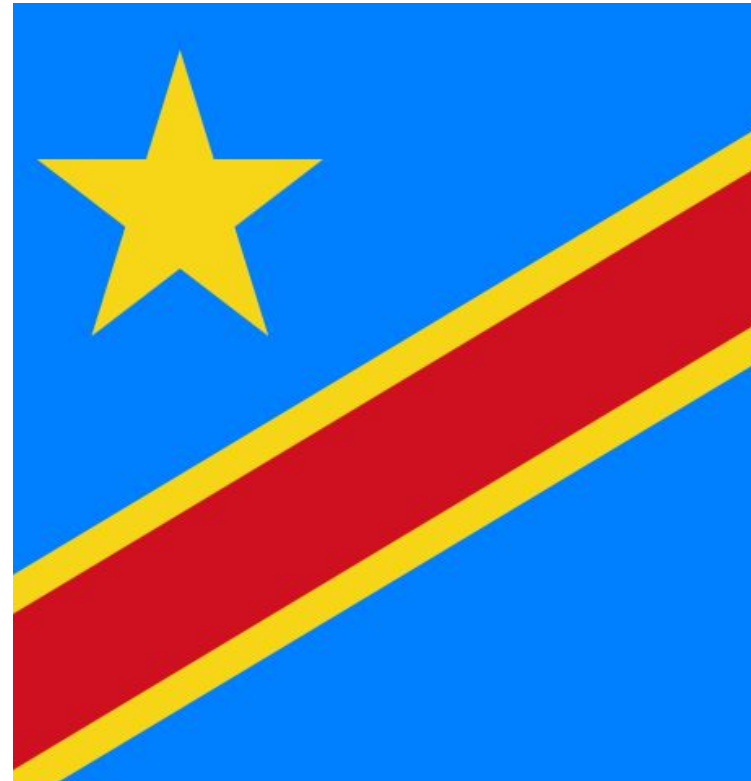
Where in the World

Where is the Democratic Republic of the Congo?

- Located in Central Africa and is the 2nd largest country in Africa
- 11th largest country in the world
- Population around 110 million
- The most populous Francophone (French-speaking) country in the world
- Kinshasa is the national capital and largest

Who Has The Power

- Kingdom of Kongo first controlled the territory of what is now modern-day Angola, DRC, and Republic of the Congo from the 14th to the 19th century
- Later, King Leopold of Belgium colonized the country in 1884 until 1960
- DRC gained independence from Belgium in 1960 and has continued to suffer political and social unrest
- Today the DRC is a republic, with a parliament, prime minister, and president





Geography

- The DRC is located in central sub-Saharan Africa, bordered by 9 countries
- The Congo Rainforest is the 2nd largest rainforest in the world
- The Congo River has the 2nd largest flow and watershed river in the world



Language and Culture

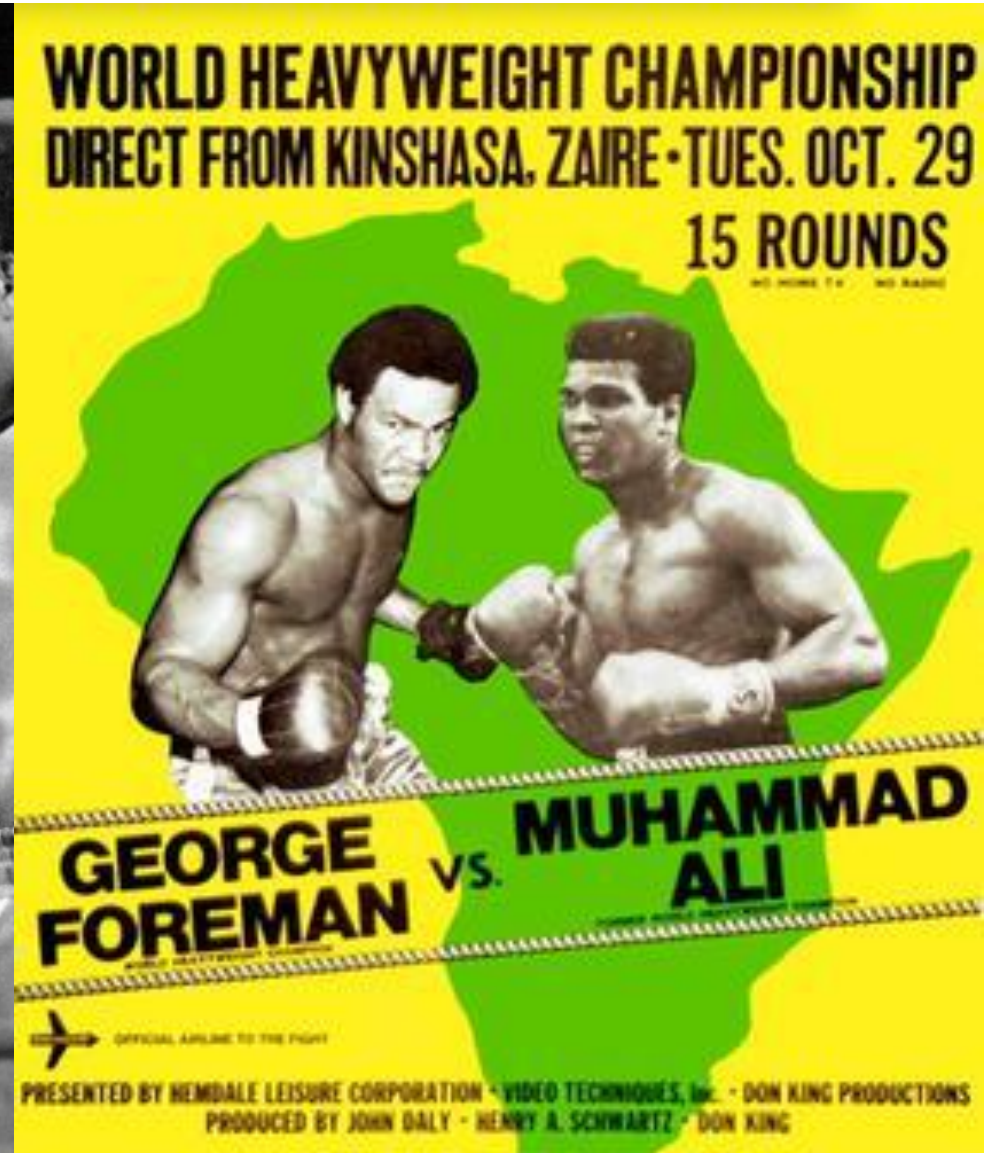
- Languages: French, Kituba, Lingala, Swahili, and Tshiluba
- Religion: Christian (largest); Traditional spiritual practices; Islam
- Ali vs. Foreman - *Rumble in the Jungle*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PgRTMfYB57k>

Rumble in the Jungle

Muhammad Ali vs. George Foreman

1974







Natural Resources

Natural Resources: Tin, copper, gold, cobalt, crude oil

Many of these natural resources have been labeled “conflict minerals” because armed groups use the profits from sales to fund their violent activities





Where To Go?

- More than seven million people have been displaced due to the constant threat of violence, extreme poverty and mining expansion
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEOmI5bc3HU>



Key Vocabulary

- Infrastructure
 - Health disparities
 - Conflict Zone
 - Maternity Ward
 - Resilience
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In the Shadow of War, Life Begins Anew in a Congolese Maternity Ward

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- In groups of 3 read the article
- Underline/circle any words that are unfamiliar
- Select 2 individuals mentioned in the article and complete the chart for the individuals selected

Role of Interviewee	Key Quote	Theme (Resilience, Community, Healthcare Challenges, etc.)
Nurse	“Push. Breathe,” she tells them. “It will be all right.”	Resilience – telling the mother that it will be alright; hope during hard times and suffering

Reflection Poem

Inspired by "In the Shadow of War, Life Begins Anew in a Congolese Maternity Ward"

Directions: Write a thoughtful and creative poem that reflects the themes, emotions, and imagery from the article. Use your own words to explore hope, struggle, and new beginnings

Step 1: Choose a poem structure:

1. **Free Verse:** no rules about rhyming or line length
2. **Rhyming Poem:** use words that rhyme at the end of lines
3. **Acrostic Poem:** write the word *HOPE* or *LIFE* vertically, and begin each line with a letter from the word.

Step 2: Writing :

4. **Start with an image or feeling**
5. **Use descriptive language:** use your senses! What might you **see**, **hear**, or **feel**?
6. **Include themes:** write about the struggle (the war) and conflict zones, resilience, and hope (new life)
7. **End on a high note:** leave the reader with a feeling of hope or peace



Babies Can't Wait

The babies can't wait

What's the due date?

Now! It's time; it's time

Everyone gather around

A new life has made it town

We've been waiting for you

You're bringing joy to ease our pain

Your cooing and cries are sweet as drops of rain

Be strong, young Black prince

Mama is tired and Daddy must go fight

For justice, for peace and freedom

We can, we will, we must - WIN!!

References and Resources

- <https://news.bahai.org/story/1233/>
- <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/east-africa-the-horn-and-great-lakes/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/report-democratic-republic-of-the-congo/>
- <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violence-democratic-republic-congo>
- <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13283212>