

My country Ghana



Let us learn about ...

- 1 Name three (3) ethnic groups who live in Ghana.
- 2 Name the ethnic groups from these regions:
 - a the Volta Region
 - b the Greater Accra Region
 - c the Bono East Region.

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The people of Ghana

In Basic 2, you learnt about the people of Ghana. You also learnt about the regions they live in and found out about the capital cities of these regions.

The origins of the major ethnic groups in Ghana

The people of Ghana come from different regions and speak different languages. In this lesson, you will learn more about where the main ethnic groups of Ghana came from and where they live today.

The major ethnic groups of Ghana

An **ethnic group** is a group of people who share a similar language, origin, history, culture and **tradition**.

The main ethnic groups of Ghana are the Guan, Mole-Dagbani, Akan, Ga-Adangbe, Gonja and the Ewe.

Which region do you come from?

**KEYWORDS**

ethnic group
tradition

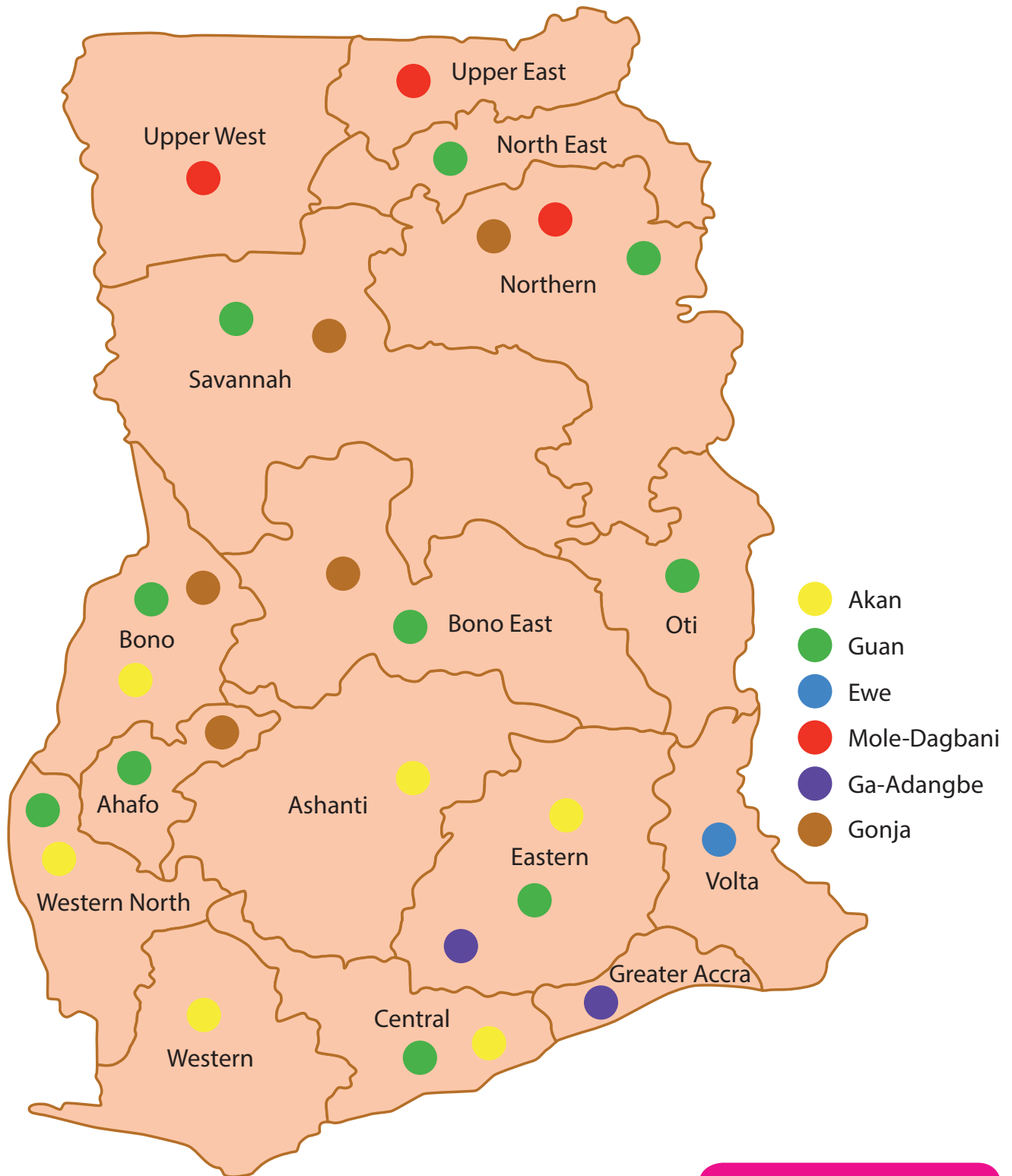
Activity 1**Groups**

In your groups, answer the following questions.

- 1 Explain what an ethnic group is.
- 2 What ethnic group do you belong to?
- 3 Do you know where your group came from originally?
- 4 Look at the map on page 3 and state where your ethnic group lives today.

Exercise 1

- 1 Draw, sketch or trace the map from page 3 and show the regions where your ethnic group lives.
- 2 Write three (3) to five (5) sentences about your map.

**HOMEWORK**

- 1 When you go home, ask your parents to tell you about their ethnic groups.
- 2 Ask them to tell you about the history of their ethnic groups or about the culture or traditions of their ethnic groups. Make short notes.
- 3 Share what you find out with the class.

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EXTENSION

If other learners are from the same ethnic group as you, put your notes together to make one story. Share your story with the class.

The Guan ethnic group

In Basic 2, you learnt that the Guan were the first group of people who came to Ghana. They migrated from the Mossi region of what is called Burkina today around 1000 **AD**. They migrated because they were being **threatened** by the Mossi-Dagomba. They moved southwards through the Volta valley and settled along the Black Volta, throughout the Afram Plains in the Volta Gorge in the Akwapim Hills.

The Guan lived all over Ghana. Today the Guan can be found in these regions:

- Oti
- North East
- Bono East
- Eastern.
- Northern
- Savannah
- Central

The language and the **customs** of the Guan often became mixed up with those of other ethnic groups.

The Nkonya, Anum, Larteh, Nawuri, Achode, and Nchumuru are all part of the Guan.

KEYWORDS

AD
threaten
customs



A young woman from the Guan ethnic group

The **Guan** spread throughout Ghana when they arrived. They migrated into the country in three (3) groups:

- The first group settled in the Northern Region.
- The second group settled in the Eastern Region.
- The third group settled in the Volta Region.
- They also settled in the Oti, North East, Savannah, Bono and Central Regions.

Activity 2  Pairs

- 1 Where did the Guan migrate from?
- 2 Where do they live today?
- 3 State two (2) groups that are part of the Guan

Exercise 2

Write the sentences in your exercise book. Use the words to help you complete the sentences.

1000 AD

Bono East

Savannah

Mossi

- 1 The Guan migrated from the _____ Region.
- 2 They migrated in _____.
- 3 Two (2) of the regions where they live today are _____ and _____.


The Mole-Dagbani ethnic group

The Mole-Dagbani migrated to Ghana in the 13th century. They travelled from northeast of Lake Chad to the south of the Niger bend to a small town in Mali, which is modern day Nigeria. They were led by Tohazie who was a great warrior. The reason they migrated was because of wars and because they wanted to trade.


They moved into Northern Ghana from Zamfara in Nigeria. They built their first settlement at Pusiga. They also crossed over to Burkina Faso and Togo.

Today the Mole-Dagbani live in the following regions in Ghana:

- Northern
- Savannah
- Bono
- Ahafo.



I live in the Savannah region.



We migrated from Nigeria.

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The Mole-Dagbani ethnic group is made up of smaller groups, such as the Dagomba, Mamprusi and Mossi. They speak the Dagbani language which is a sub-group of the Gur language. They are the second largest ethnic group in Ghana.

Activity 3

Pairs

- 1 On the map, show how the Mole-Dagbani came to Ghana.
- 2 Now draw, sketch or trace your own map and show the route on your map.

**Exercise 3**

- 1 Which smaller groups form part of the Mole-Dagbani ethnic group?
- 2 What language do the Mole-Dagbani speak?
- 3 Where do the Mole-Dagbani live today?

EXTENSION

Work in small groups.

Make up a song about the migration of the Mole-Dagbani and the Guan ethnic groups.

The Akan ethnic group

Ancestors of the Akan came from North Africa or the Middle East. There are two **theories** about how they migrated to Ghana.

According to one theory, the Akan originated from Tigris and Euphrates in Mesopotamia (Iraq or Iran) and from there they migrated to the ancient Ghana Empire. From the ancient Ghana Empire, they migrated to present day Ghana in the 17th century.

While they were living in the ancient Ghana Empire they became wealthy and powerful. They moved to present day Ghana because of the growth of their population.

The Fante group of the Akan settled on the coast of Ghana.

The second theory is that the Akan came from between Lake Chad and the Benue River. They moved to places like Iboland, Yorubaland, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, and the region between the Black Volta and the Comoe River.

Part of this group moved further south through the forests of modern-day Benin and Togo and finally settled between the confluence of the Pra and Ofin rivers where they developed into the Akan of today.

They then entered Ghana at the Dahomey Gap.

Today the Akan live in the following regions:

- Ashanti
- Bono
- Bono East
- Ahafo
- Western
- Western North
- Eastern, Central.

KEYWORD

theory

The Akan ethnic group is the largest ethnic group in Ghana.



In which regions can the Akan ethnic group be found?



Strand 2: My country Ghana**The Ga-Adangbe ethnic group**

The Ga-Adangbe migrated from Egypt from a city called Goshen. They began to leave Egypt during 672–525 **BC**. On that journey, they crossed Ethiopia and moved into Nigeria.

According to **oral traditions** recorded among the Ga and Adangbe, their ancestors migrated from the region of southern Nigeria to the Accra plains in the 11th century.

KEYWORDSBC
oral traditions

Other versions state that the Ga-Adangbe migrants came from the region of Tetetutu in the Benin/Togo region and Cameroon. From there they migrated across West Africa and finally stopped in Ghana, which became their permanent home.

They settled in the Greater Accra Region in the 12th century.

The Ga-Adangbe started migrating as a result of Yoruba expansion that pushed them out. The Dangme of Ladoku migrated eastward to the Togo region as a result of civil wars and Akwamu invasion.

Today, the Ga-Adangbe live in the Greater Accra Region and the Eastern Region.

The Ewe ethnic group

According to the oral history of the Ewe that goes back to between 500 to 1200 AD, they were originally led by an ancestor named “Gu”. Their original homeland was Oyo in Western Nigeria. They migrated south from Yorubaland in Nigeria in the 17th century.

They had to move on because of attacks from other groups and moved from Sudan and Ethiopia to the ancient Ghana, Songhai and Mali Empires. They finally split into different groups that settled in Nigeria, Benin, Togo and the south-eastern Volta Region of Ghana in around 1500 to 1700 AD.

Today the Ewe live in Anloga and Keta in the Volta Region and in the Oti Region.

The Ewe now live in the Volta Region of Ghana.



Activity 4  Pairs

- 1 Look at the map in Activity 3 again.
- 2 Trace, draw or sketch the map and show the routes the Akan, the Ga-Adangbe and the Ewe followed to come to Ghana.



Map of Africa showing the countries where the different ethnic groups migrated from

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Where each ethnic group of Ghana came from

This map below shows the regions where the main ethnic groups of Ghana **migrated** from.

KEYWORD

migrate



The Ewe migrated from Benin and Nigeria. They migrated in the 17th Century.

