

David Livingstone: Crossing Cultures

An educational worksheet for children aged 9-13 published by

LivingstoneOnline.org

Written at Kuruman on the 22nd of December 1841 to
James Risdon Bennett

My Dear Sir,

I wrote you last October but having had no opportunity of transmitting it for a long time afterwards the letter became so old I was ashamed to send it; I have now been longer in the country & having lately returned from a long journey in the Interior perhaps the information I can now give will be more acceptable than that I should have given by sending the other.

The Bechuanas you know are divided into a great many tribes each of which is independent of all others But they have all the same language & they don't differ much with respect to their customs & mode of life; they are all under the feudal system of Government, the chieftainship is hereditary.

David Livingstone

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Experiences and Outcomes:

Literacy and Numeracy

Students can practice deep reading and textual analysis to explore Livingstone's letter.

Social and Cultural Studies

Students can explore the differences between cultures and what happens when those cultures meet. How was the society Livingstone lived in different from today?

Suggested Questions:

In this letter David is telling his friend about the people who live near him at Kuruman. What are they called?

We know that different places have different cultures, but cultures also change over time. For example, sometimes the words that David uses are not the same as we would use now. Do you think this letter sounds old-fashioned? If so, why?

Further Reading:

The image below is an engraving taken from one of David's books, published by John Murray, showing a woman preparing food.

We are not told where she is from or what she is making. Think about when you last made yourself something to eat. What was the same as and what was different from the image? What would you want people to know about you?

Click on the image to discover more about the John Murray archive at The National Library of Scotland.



Image courtesy of the National Library of Scotland,

This educational resource was developed by Kate Simpson and Megan Ward, who are staff of *Livingstone Online* (livingstoneonline.org). *Livingstone Online* is the leading site for learning more about the life and writings of David Livingstone. Visit our site to discover an array of images and texts that supplement the educational material found in this worksheet.