



Celebrate Lindbergh!



A Monthly Idea Newsletter for Teachers and Homeschoolers--
During a Year of Celebration!

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JANUARY = COMPASSION

Compassion is understanding or respecting another person's thoughts, feelings or beliefs.

In the 1960s, Charles Lindbergh visited Kenya at least six times. Sometimes he went on safari at the Maasai Mara, a wildlife preserve, with a local guide and other times he just visited the Maasai people.

Why did Charles Lindbergh go to Kenya?

Charles Lindbergh met John L. N. Ole Konchellah at a conference in Kohr, Switzerland in 1961. John Konchellah was wearing his traditional Maasai dress and made a speech about the values of: honesty, unselfishness, purity, and love. After the speech, Charles asked John to have tea with him. They talked about Charles' interests in the environment and conservation and the Maasai people. That day was the beginning of a friendship that started with letter writing and grew to visits across continents.

First, John flew to the United States in 1962 and visited with Charles on his way back from the World's Fair in Seattle. Then Charles flew to Nairobi. He didn't know where John lived, so he began asking people how he could find him. Charles drove a Volkswagon Beetle all the way to Kilgoris (about 300 miles West of Nairobi) on very difficult roads.¹ During his visits with John, he saw several Maasai villages and met the Maasai elders. After learning about his New York-to-Paris flight, the elders gave Charles the name "**Entoros**"—which means **hero**. When Charles saw the Maasai Mara he became very interested in the conservation of its forests and animals.

On his later visits to Kenya, Charles talked about the need to preserve wildlife, forests and also the Maasai culture. The Maasai live a more relaxed lifestyle (they do not think much about time). They also believe in living among the wild animals (elephants, wildebeests, lions, zebra, etc.) and not killing them for trophies. The Maasai live in harmony with nature.

The Maasai liked Charles because, like the Maasai, he was quiet and observed nature and the world around him. He also spent long quiet periods listening to them and then asked thoughtful questions. He respected them and really tried to understand the Maasai way of life. He even lived as a Maasai for a while.

(continued above...)

Years ago, the Maasai were nomadic people, which means that they moved around a lot to find grass and water for their cows. Cows were and still are very important in their culture, including the skin. Some of their main foods are milk, meat, and blood mixed with milk to drink. They also raise sheep, goats and donkeys. The women build huts called "Emanyatta". They are round and made of sticks, mud, and tall grass. The men care for the animals. They have large families. Children under the age of four sleep in a hut with their parents, children four and older sleep at their grandparents or a friend's house or in the hut where they store the corn.

John became a member of parliament in Kenya and helped to protect animals and nature by making new laws. Charles continued to travel around the world visiting wild places and traditional people. Charles and John remained friends until Charles died in 1974. John always wished that he could visit Charles at his home, just like Charles had visited him in Kilgoris. In 1992, John made a trip to Lindbergh's boyhood home of Little Falls, Minnesota, to finally be where his friend, Charles, had grown up learning to love nature. He died in 1993, less than a year later.

Charles and John showed deep compassion for each other, the Maasai culture, and the environment, which developed into a long and devoted friendship.

¹ On a trip to Little Falls in 1970, Charles Lindbergh left his Volkswagon Beetle behind when he needed to quickly fly to a meeting. He later called and donated it to the Minnesota Historical Society. It can be seen now in St. Paul, Minnesota, and in the fall of 2002 in Little Falls, Minnesota.

Sources: A speech delivered by John Ole Konchellah in August, 1992 in Little Falls, Minnesota, and a series of articles written by Dr. Richard Logan, a professor who studied Lindbergh's interest in the Maasai and traveled to Maasailand. Additional material came from letters written by school children at the Lindbergh-Konchellah School near Kilgoris.





Compassion Project Ideas:

Have your class volunteer for:

- helping at the Humane Society
- visit with the elderly at a local Senior Citizen Home
- making decorations for winter holidays for shut-ins
- feeding the birds* during the winter—they're hungry!

*Spread Peanut Butter on pine cones and roll in bird seed. Tie on a string and hang outside for birds to enjoy a treat.



Looking Ahead...

Charles Lindbergh's 100th Birthday is February 4, 2002. Make plans for a birthday bash.



W I N T E R

Literature Link! Focus on COMPASSION

The Little Fishes by Eric Christian Haugaard
I Know a Place by Karen Ackerman
The Lion and the Gypsy by Geoffrey Paterson
The Comeback Dog by Jane Resh Thomas
Wander by Susan Hart Lindquist
Amanda's Choice by Isabelle Holland
The Witch Child by Imogen Chichester
The Talking Eggs by Robert San Souci



Vocabulary:

- Culture –
- Elders –
- Safari –
- Nomad –

Discussion Starters:

- Compare the characteristics of the Maasai and the American culture.
- How can you live in harmony with nature, like the Maasai?
- Compassion is a deep awareness of another person's feelings. How did Charles try to learn about his friend, John?
- What does the traditional Maasai dress look like? What is its primary color?

Geography:

- Find the continent of Africa, and then the country of Kenya. Where is the city of Nairobi? Where is the Maasai Mara?
- Find Kohr, Switzerland.
- Find Seattle, Washington.
- Find Little Falls, Minnesota.
- What famous landmark was built in 1962 for the Seattle World's Fair?

