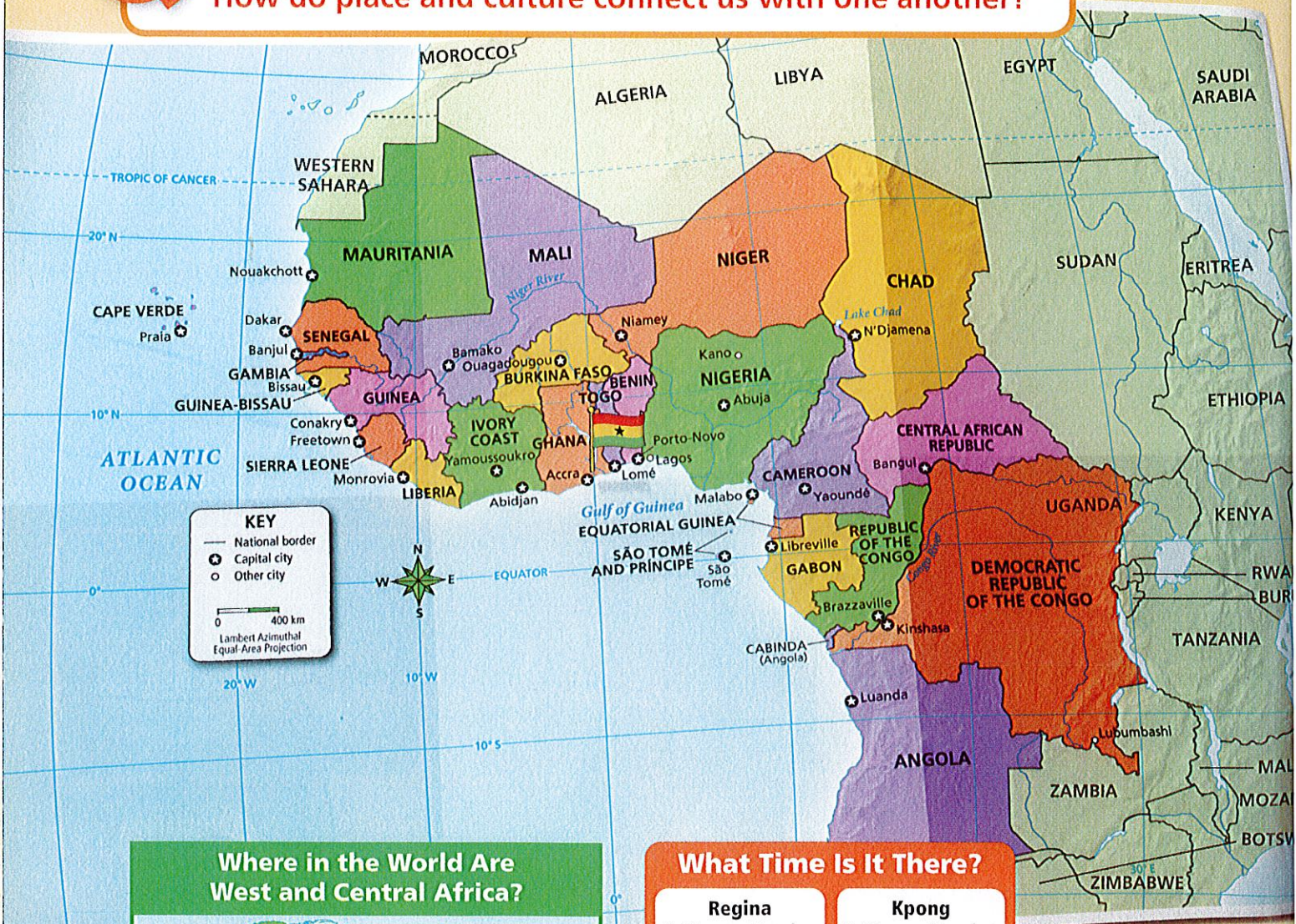


The Land and People of West and Central Africa



Chapter Focus Question

How do place and culture connect us with one another?



Where in the World Are West and Central Africa?

Regina to Kpong: 10 545 km

What Time Is It There?

Regina 9:00 a.m. Monday	Kpong 3:00 p.m. Monday

A String of Dreams

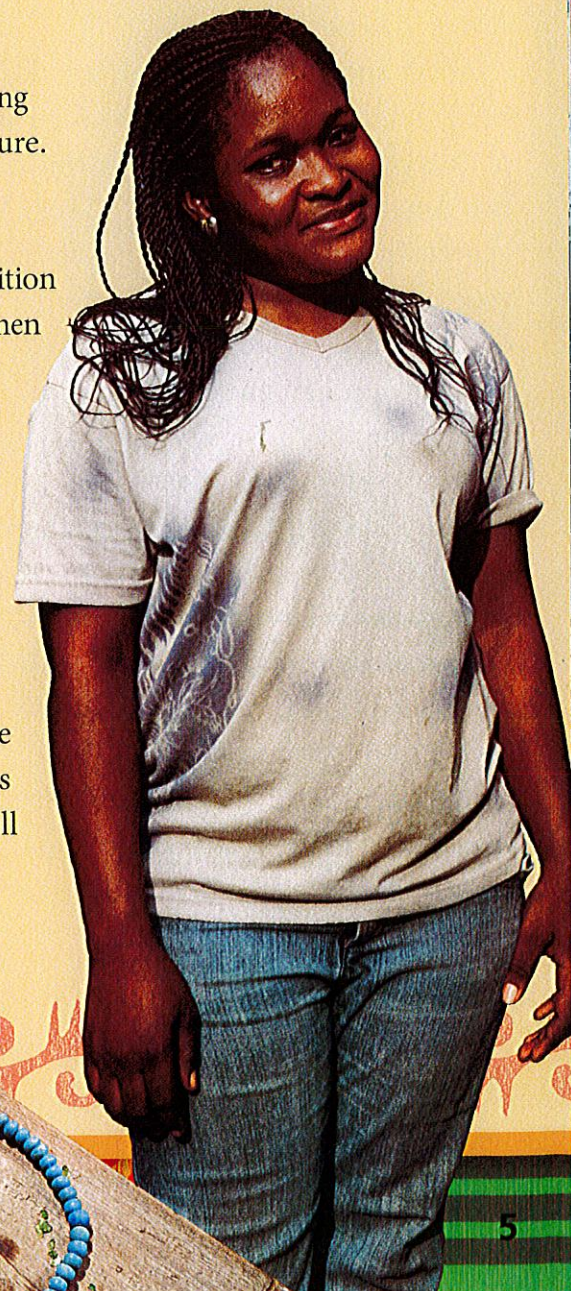
In this section, you'll read about Evelyn, a girl from Ghana who hopes to go to university and continue the family business. How are Evelyn's values and beliefs a reflection of her family?

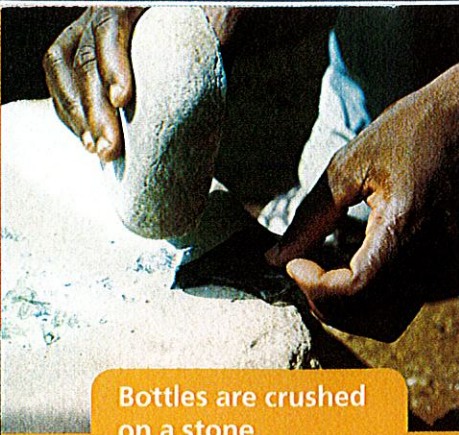
Story by Chrispat Okutu

The Kaneshie Market in Accra, Ghana, is full of vendors selling everything from coconuts and chickens to textiles and furniture. Men, women, and children of all ages hustle to sell the goods balanced atop their heads or heaped in their heavy carts.

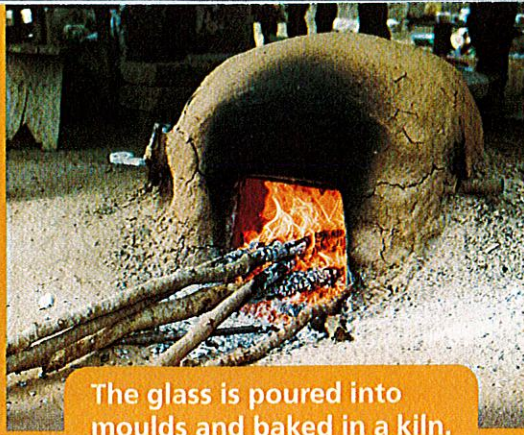
In West Africa, where Ghana is located, there is a long tradition of women trading in the marketplace. In some countries, women organize and dominate many local markets. Overall, though, women earn less than men. In Ghana, about 50 percent of women and about 65 percent of men can read and write.

Evelyn, a Ghanaian girl, takes part in her region's tradition of women selling goods in the marketplace. She helps her grandmother make and sell their authentic Ghanaian beads at different markets near their home village of Kpong. Kpong lies about 48 kilometres away from the bustling markets of Accra. Kpong is Evelyn's home and where her grandmother's bead business, Adede Beads Enterprises, is located. The farms and thick greenery that surround the small village of Kpong are very different from Accra.

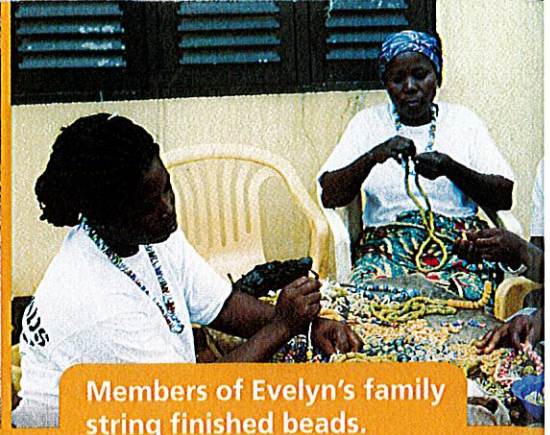




Bottles are crushed on a stone.



The glass is poured into moulds and baked in a kiln.



Members of Evelyn's family string finished beads.

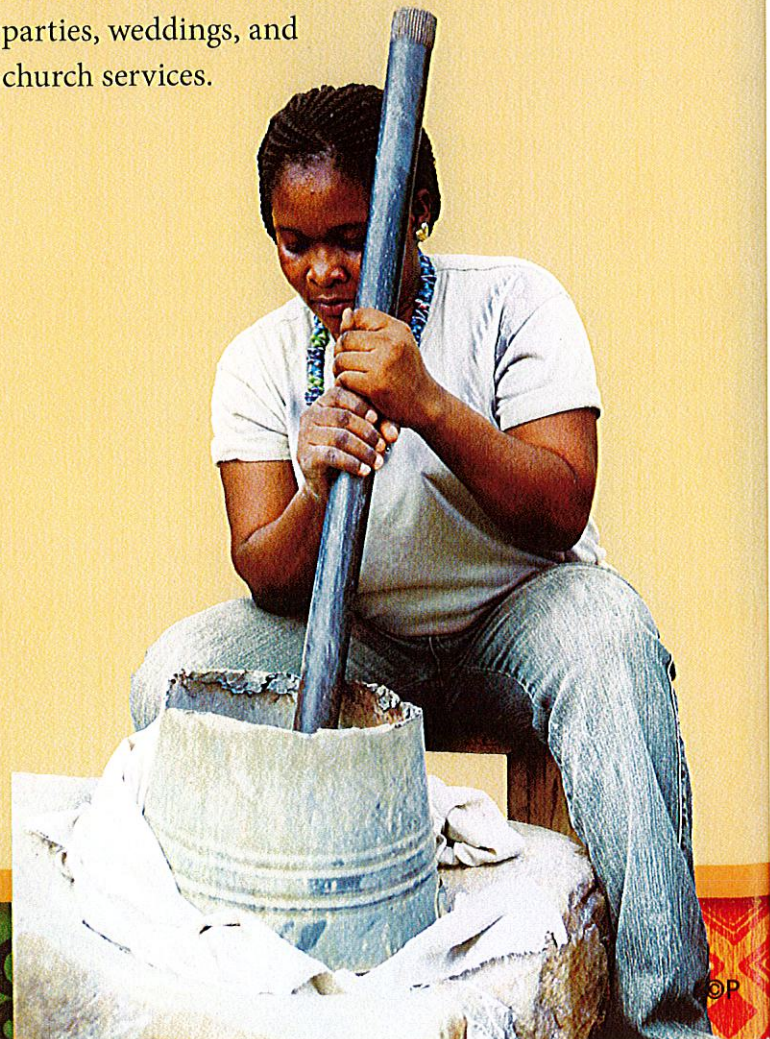
Evelyn's grandmother, Madam Adede, is a successful entrepreneur. She has been running the bead business she inherited from her grandfather for more than 31 years. Adede owns a small home where she and her family live and work. A building in the backyard serves as her bead factory.

Adede specializes in the ancient craft of bead making practised by the Krobo people of eastern Ghana. Adede taught this craft to two daughters and six grandchildren. She expects the business to continue for many generations. Adede has chosen Evelyn to take over her business someday. Evelyn has just graduated from high school. She hopes to study accounting at a university. But the cost won't be easy for her family to afford.

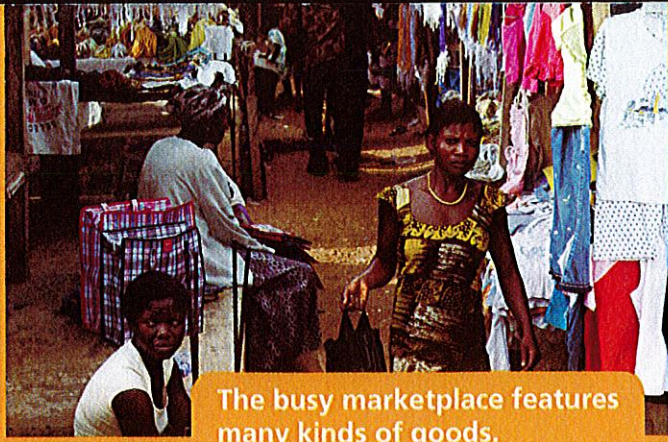
Evelyn already plays an important role in the family business. It is her job to crush glass in preparation for making the beads. Today she is making transparent glass beads, which are formed from a very fine glass powder. Evelyn begins by breaking glass bottles they have collected. It is hard work, but Evelyn is accustomed to the heavy labour and stifling heat that come with everyday life at the bead factory in Kpong.

Crushing the glass is the first of many steps necessary to produce a finished piece of clear beaded jewellery. Adede explains that they also make glazed beads and bodom beads. The word *bodom* means "dog" in Twi, a common language in Ghana. The bodom beads are very large, bold beads, named for their resemblance to the attention-getting bark of a dog.

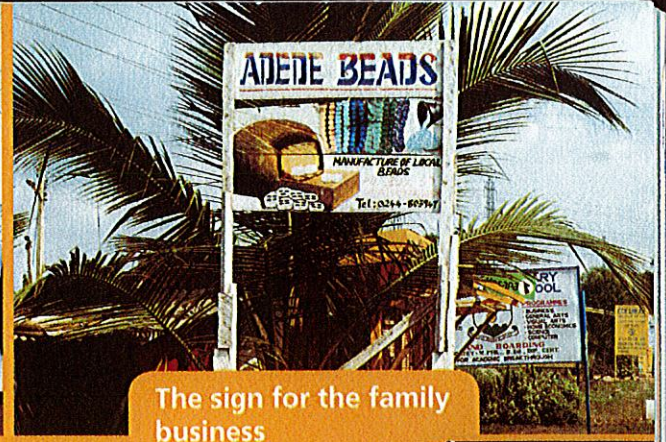
Beads, such as those made by Evelyn, are worn not only for adornment, but also to identify the various ethnic cultures of Ghana. Beads are often worn at parties, weddings, and church services.



Evelyn crushes bottle glass to make beads. The pail blocks the glass from flying up into her eyes or spilling on the ground.



The busy marketplace features many kinds of goods.



The sign for the family business

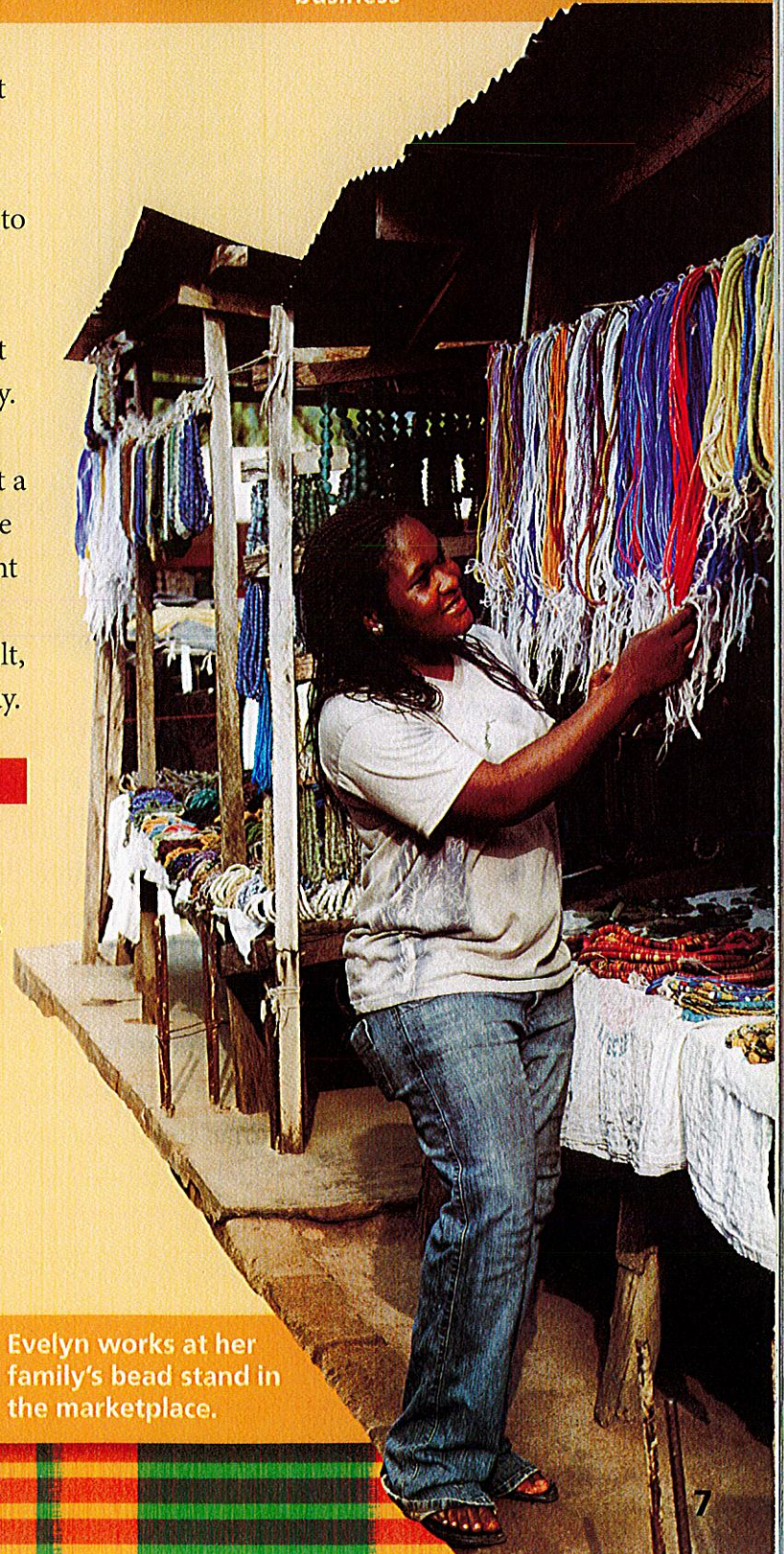
Today the family is taking its beads to sell at the Krobo Odumase Market a few kilometres from Kpong. Adede's bead stand in the marketplace displays their colourful jewellery to the buyers in the market.

Everyone works hard to sell as much as possible. They need money not only to support the family but also to send Evelyn to university.

For her part, Evelyn plans to pay back this kindness. Evelyn says, "After university, I'll get a job outside and help my grandma, too, because I have my siblings to take care of. It's important to have two jobs. So if one fails, you have the other one." The road ahead of Evelyn is difficult, but her family's bead business has paved the way.

INQUIRING MINDS

1. How are roles and responsibilities similar and different in your family and Evelyn's family?
2. How might values and beliefs in Ghana influence Evelyn's future? How do your family's values and beliefs influence what you do?



Evelyn works at her family's bead stand in the marketplace.