

## Sub-Saharan Africa



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*The ruins of Kilwa Kisiwani, once a key port in the African trade network along the Swahili Coast. Image by Ron Van Oers via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.*



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## Acknowledgements

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### Lead Curriculum Authors: Primary Source

***Lead Author***

Susan Zeiger

***Editor***

Deborah Cunningham

***EL Specialist***

Tanya Bogaty

***Contributing Authors***

Rachel Barker

Christine Gonzalez

Jennifer Boyle Nigro

Jill Stevens

Sara Wahid

Elsa Wiehe

### 2024-25 Curriculum Revisions: Educurious by NCEE

***Lead Author***

Claire Stragand

***Lead Reviewer***

Kasha Browning

***Editor***

Gayle Klim

***EL Specialist***

Becky Lawrence

### Multilingual Learner Specialists: Transformative Learning Collaborative

Allison Audet

Paula Merchant

### Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Kathryn Gabriele

Dylan Geesey

Reuben Henriques

Rebekah Judson

Miesha Keita

Katherine Tarca



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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Unit 3, Cluster 1 Inquiry Chart*

<b>Unit EQ</b>	How do we best tell the stories of ancient African societies and the factors that shaped them?
<b>Cluster SQ</b>	<b>What are the defining aspects of Africa's environment, and how have people adapted to its challenges while using its resources?</b>
<b>What questions will we ask?</b>	

What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
<b>Lesson 2:</b> We analyzed various map projections to better understand how the continent of Africa is depicted and viewed by the world.	
<b>Lesson 3:</b> We completed a digital scavenger hunt by analyzing three-dimensional maps of African ecoregions to understand the diversity of the continent's climates.	



What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
<b>Lesson 4:</b> We analyzed secondary source texts about several African regions to better understand human adaptation to environmental challenges.	
<b>Lesson 7:</b> We conducted research on a chosen African country and created a postcard to demonstrate our new knowledge of the nation and the environmental challenges faced by its population.	
<b>Lesson 8:</b> We made a claim about how African populations have adapted to their environment using evidence from throughout the cluster.	

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Gallery Walk Note Catcher*

### Tools for Observing and Discussing Photographs:

- In this photograph, I notice \_\_\_\_.
- This image makes me think about \_\_\_\_.
- The first thing that stands out to me is \_\_\_\_.
- The setting in this picture looks like \_\_\_\_.
- How does this photograph relate to \_\_\_\_?
- What story is this photo telling us about \_\_\_\_?
- What do we need to know to better understand \_\_\_\_ in this image?

### Unit 3 Themes:

- Innovation & technology
- Trade & economy
- Environment & people
- Government
- Women
- Rural life
- Agriculture
- Art & creativity
- Urban life
- Education
- Preserving culture
- Religion

Photograph	Round #1: Observe & Question	Round #2: Connect to Themes
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Does this community have a water-based economy?</li><li>• How does fishing play a role in this culture's identity and daily life?</li><li>• Has this population ever experienced issues due to overfishing?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trade &amp; economy</li><li>• Environment &amp; people</li></ul>
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		



Photograph	Round #1: Observe & Question	Round #2: Connect to Themes
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Know and Wonder Chart*

**Unit 3 Essential Question: How do we best tell the stories of ancient African societies and the factors that shaped them?**

What do you already know?	What do you wonder?





Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Know and Wonder Chart (Word Bank)*

**Unit 3 Essential Question: How do we best tell the stories of ancient African societies and the factors that shaped them?**

What do you already know?	What do you wonder?
<i>I know that ancient African societies... Ancient African people used ___ to... One important thing about Africa is... Some factors that shaped African societies are...</i>	<i>I wonder how... I want to know why... How did ancient African societies...? What was the role of ___ in ancient Africa?</i>

Word Bank:	Word Bank:
pyramids trade rivers kingdoms culture farming gold leaders	geography trade routes leaders traditions storytelling technology environment



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Analyzing Historical Maps*

### Part 1: Observe and Discuss

**Directions:** Closely examine the historical map(s) you were assigned. First, brainstorm and discuss each map with a classmate. Then, write shorthand notes using the Describe, Reflect, and Question prompts below.

**Describe** what you see. What do you notice first? What labels do you see? What types of information are shown on the map? What clues tell you when it was made?

- Map A: \_\_\_\_\_
- Map B: \_\_\_\_\_
- Map C: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reflect** on the purpose of the map. Why do you think this map was made? Who do you think might use it? What does this map tell you about what people who made it know and didn't know?

- Map A: \_\_\_\_\_
- Map B: \_\_\_\_\_
- Map C: \_\_\_\_\_

**Question** the map. What is being left out? Whose voice is missing? How is this map influencing the people who use it?

- Map A: \_\_\_\_\_
- Map B: \_\_\_\_\_
- Map C: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 2: Summarize Your Findings**

**Directions:** Reference your notes from the discussion above, then summarize the information for each map using full sentences.

Main Ideas	Map A	Map B	Map C
<b>Setting</b> (time and place)			
<b>Audience</b>			
<b>Purpose</b>			
<b>Perspective</b> (point of view)			

**Text source:** Adapted from [Teacher's Guide: Analyzing Maps](#) from the Library of Congress.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Analyzing Historical Maps (Sentence Starters)*

### Part 1: Observe & Discuss

**Directions:** Closely examine the historical map(s) you were assigned. First, brainstorm and discuss each map with a classmate. Then, write shorthand notes using the Describe, Reflect, and Question prompts below.

**Describe** what you see. What do you notice first? What labels do you see? What types of information are shown on the map? What clues tell you when it was made?

- **Map A:** *The first thing I notice is* \_\_\_\_\_.

*The map shows* \_\_\_\_\_ (borders, cities, rivers, etc.)

- **Map B:** *The first thing I notice is* \_\_\_\_\_.

*The map shows* \_\_\_\_\_ (borders, cities, rivers, etc.)

- **Map C:** *The first thing I notice is* \_\_\_\_\_.

*The map shows* \_\_\_\_\_ (borders, cities, rivers, etc.)

**Reflect** on the purpose of the map. Why do you think this map was made? Who do you think might use it? What does this map tell you about what people who made it know and didn't know?

- **Map A:** *This map might be useful for* \_\_\_\_\_ (explorers, travelers, leaders, etc.)
- **Map B:** *This map might be useful for* \_\_\_\_\_ (explorers, travelers, leaders, etc.)
- **Map C:** *This map might be useful for* \_\_\_\_\_ (explorers, travelers, leaders, etc.)

**Question** the map. What is being left out? Whose voice is missing? How is this map influencing the people who use it?

- **Map A:** *The map does not show* \_\_\_\_\_.
- **Map B:** *The map does not show* \_\_\_\_\_.
- **Map C:** *The map does not show* \_\_\_\_\_.

**Part 2: Summarize Your Findings**

**Directions:** Reference your notes from the discussion above, then summarize the information for each map using full sentences.

Word Bank			
old	new	travel	explore
trade	teach	geography	navigation
borders	missing	show	guide

Main Ideas	Map A	Map B	Map C
<b>Setting</b> (time and place)	<i>This map shows ____</i>  <i>from...</i>	<i>This map shows ____</i>  <i>from...</i>	<i>This map shows ____</i>  <i>from...</i>
<b>Audience</b>	<i>This map was made for...</i>	<i>This map was made for...</i>	<i>This map was made for...</i>
<b>Purpose</b>	<i>This map was created to...</i>	<i>This map was created to...</i>	<i>This map was created to...</i>

Main Ideas	Map A	Map B	Map C
<b>Perspective</b> (point of view)	<i>The map shows...</i>	<i>The map shows...</i>	<i>The map shows...</i>

**Text source:** Adapted from [Teacher's Guide: Analyzing Maps](#) from the Library of Congress.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Google Earth Tour: The Geography of Africa*

### Student Information Organizer

**Directions:** As you explore the Google Earth Tour, complete the tasks and answer the questions to record what you learn about the geography of Africa. Use the Word Bank to help write your responses.

View the Google Earth Tour here:

[People First: Key Concepts in the Geography of Africa](#)

Word Bank			
climate	weather	ecoregion	rainfall (precipitation)
rainforest	tributary	savanna	arid
steppe	semiarid	Sahel	desert
oasis	highland	plateau	Mediterranean climate
Swahili coastal climate	Ethiopian Highlands	altitude (elevation)	

Student Tasks	Student Notes
<p>1. What can a satellite picture tell you about a continent's climate?</p> <p>Carefully look at the colors and textures. How many climate zones can you identify?</p>	

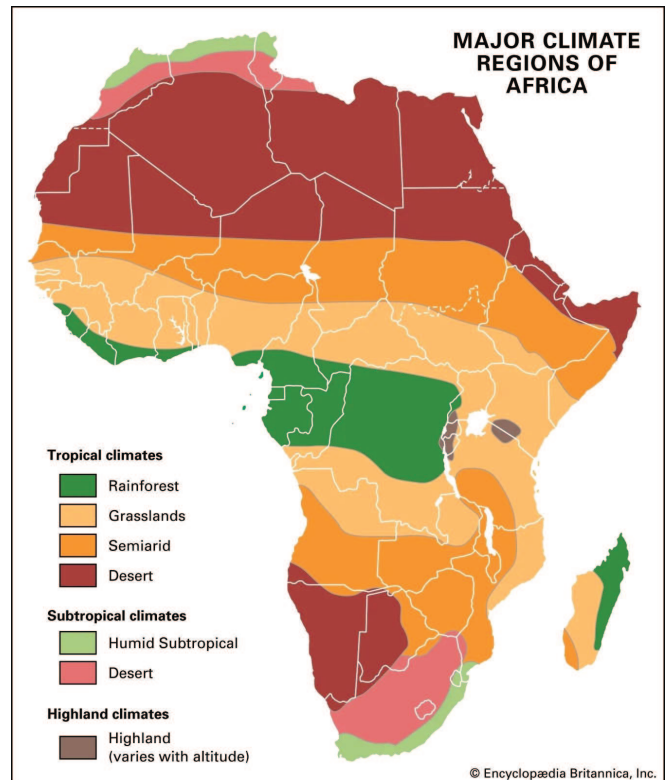
Student Tasks	Student Notes
<p>2. What is the difference between climate and weather?</p> <p>You are here viewing the town of Ain Sefra in Algeria, which is known as the "gateway of the desert" when coming from the north. As you can see from the pictures, in 2016 and in 2018 it snowed in Ain Sefra. Snow is a type of rainfall. So, from this example, what do you conclude about the difference between climate and weather?</p> <p>Learn more: Snowfall in Ain Sefra: "<a href="#">It snowed in one of the hottest places in the world</a>" from CNN</p>	
<p>3. Can you identify six of Africa's climate zones based on this map of annual average rainfall?</p> <p>Circle six climate zones on this map.</p>	 <p>2015 annual rainfall in Africa. Image by Joshua Stevens via Wikimedia Commons is in the public domain.</p>



**Ecoregions and Examples**

4. Climate zones are ecoregions. What is an ecoregion?

How important is latitude in determining climate zones? Use your Africa map as evidence.



Major climate regions of Africa. Image courtesy of Encyclopedia Britannica.

**Ecoregions and Examples****5. Ethiopian Highlands**

How might altitude affect people's athletic performance?

Here you are viewing the capital city of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa. It is the 5th highest capital in the world and located in the Ethiopian Highlands, which are a plateau (a large, elevated, flat surface) that forms the largest contiguous elevated area in Africa. This is why the Ethiopian Highlands are often called the "Roof of Africa." Two out of the top three male marathon runners in the world are Ethiopian (2020). Pictured here is marathon champion Kenenisa Bekele.

How might altitude affect his performance?

Learn more: A blog post on the science of marathon training and its connection to Ethiopia: "[Why Training with Altitude Can Give You the Competitive Edge](#)" (Polar)

**6. Rainforest: banks of the Congo River (Democratic Republic of Congo)**

The rainforest ecoregion is home to the Congo River Basin, the 2nd longest river in Africa, into which many other rivers (tributaries) flow.

How could the river be a resource to people in the rainforest ecoregion?

Learn more:

- "[The Main Road Through the Heart of Africa Is the Congo River](#)" (National Geographic)
- "[On The Congo, A Floating Marketplace For A Nation](#)" (NPR)

## Ecoregions and Examples

**7. Savanna grassland: baobab tree in Western Madagascar**

The savanna is a grassland area that has fewer trees than the rainforest region. The baobab is an important tree that can be found throughout savanna ecoregions, including on the island of Madagascar.

How is the baobab tree a resource for people in the savanna region?

How do people in the savanna region of Madagascar use the baobab tree?

Learn more about baobabs in the savanna:

- "[Tree of life: Giant baobab turned into living water tank in Madagascar](#)" (New Scientist)
- "[Baobab, Nature's Water Tanks](#)" (Panos pictures)

**8. Semiarid: the Great Mosque of Djenne in Mali**

The Sahel ecoregion is characterized by low average annual rainfall and fewer trees and grasslands. This is why it is semiarid. Here you see the town of Djenne in modern-day Mali. The Great Mosque is the center of life and prayer in Djenne.

How is this mosque an example of a building that draws from semiarid region resources?

Learn more: "[Djenne](#)" (Britannica Kids)

## Ecoregions and Examples

**9. Desert: date palm and its importance**

This is the park of Lala Fatna in Algeria.

What are these trees? In what ways could they be of importance to people?

Learn more:

- [Learn how dates are cultivated in Morocco](#) (Marocopedia English)
- [Dates: The Sticky History of a Sweet Fruit](#) (National Geographic)

**10. Swahili Coast: Lamu Island, Kenya**

This is a view of mangrove forests on the island of Lamu, in Kenya, on the long Swahili Coast, which stretches from Somalia to Mozambique. Mangroves are trees with roots that arch above and into the water and can be found on tropical coastlines. Lamu is an island on the Swahili Coast. Examine the pictures of the buildings from the Swahili Coast. Look at the picture of the ceiling of the Swahili house in Lamu, Kenya.

How might the environment of the Swahili Coast determine how houses were made?

Learn more: [Swahili House Museum, Lamu Kenya](#) (Zamani Project)

**Source:** This activity was developed by the African Studies Center at Boston University's Pardee School of Global Studies and is used with permission.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Google Earth Tour: The Geography of Africa (Sentence Frames)*

### Student Information Organizer

**Directions:** As you explore the Google Earth Tour, complete the tasks and answer the questions to record what you learn about the geography of Africa. Use the Word Bank, Key Terms, and sentence frames to help write your responses.

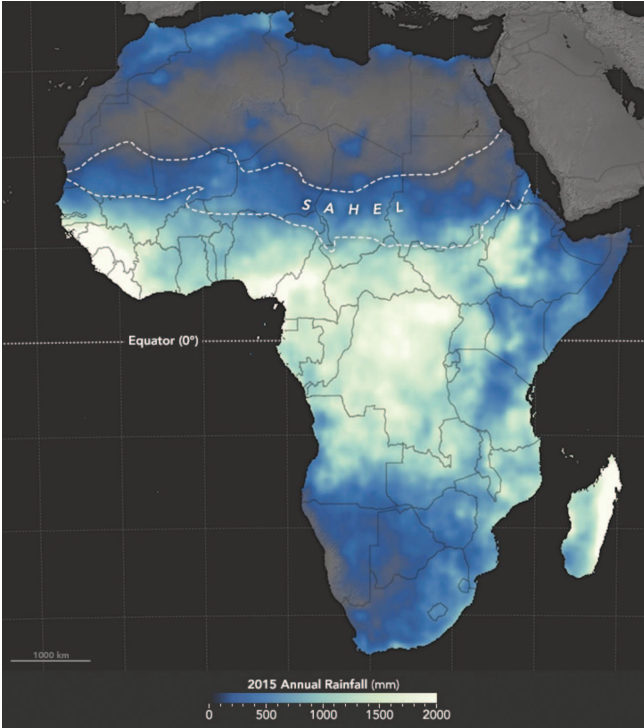
View the Google Earth Tour here:

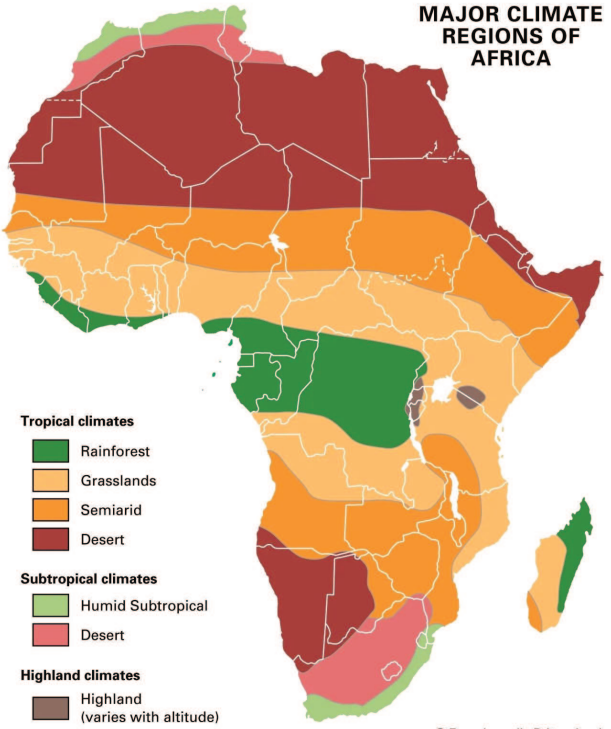
[People First: Key Concepts in the Geography of Africa](#)

Word Bank			
climate	weather	ecoregion	rainfall (precipitation)
rainforest	tributary	savanna	arid
steppe	semiarid	Sahel	desert
oasis	highland	plateau	Mediterranean climate
Swahili coastal climate	Ethiopian Highlands	altitude (elevation)	

Key Terms	
<b>altitude</b>	height above sea level
<b>resource</b>	something valuable or useful to people
<b>savanna</b>	a grassland ecosystem with few trees
<b>semiarid</b>	an area with low rainfall, but not completely dry
<b>desert</b>	a very dry area with little rain
<b>mangroves</b>	coastal trees with roots in water

Student Tasks	Student Notes
<p>1. What can a satellite picture tell you about a continent's climate?</p> <p>Carefully look at the colors and textures. How many climate zones can you identify?</p>	<p><i>A satellite picture can show me ____ because ____.</i></p>
<p>2. What is the difference between climate and weather?</p> <p>You are here viewing the town of Ain Sefra in Algeria, which is known as the "gateway of the desert" when coming from the north. As you can see from the pictures, in 2016 and in 2018 it snowed in Ain Sefra. Snow is a type of rainfall.</p> <p>So, from this example, what do you conclude about the difference between climate and weather?</p> <p>Learn more: Snowfall in Ain Sefra: "<a href="#">It snowed in one of the hottest places in the world</a>" from CNN.</p>	<p><i>Characteristics of climate include ____, while weather involves ____.</i></p>

Student Tasks	Student Notes
<p>3. Can you identify six of Africa's climate zones based on this map of annual average rainfall?</p> <p>Circle six climate zones on this map.</p> <p><i>The six climate zones I can identify are ____.</i></p>	 <p>2015 annual rainfall in Africa. Image by Joshua Stevens via Wikimedia Commons is in the public domain.</p>

Student Tasks	Student Notes
<p>4. Climate zones are ecoregions. What is an ecoregion?</p> <p><i>An ecoregion is ____.</i></p> <p>How important is latitude in determining climate zones? Use your Africa map as evidence.</p>	<div data-bbox="824 306 1464 1066"><p><b>MAJOR CLIMATE REGIONS OF AFRICA</b></p><p>© Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.</p></div> <p>Major climate regions of Africa. Image courtesy of Encyclopædia Britannica.</p>



Ecoregions and Examples	
<p><b>5. Ethiopian Highlands</b> How might altitude affect people's athletic performance?</p> <p>Here you are viewing the capital city of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa. It is the 5th highest capital in the world and located in the Ethiopian Highlands, which are a plateau (a large, elevated, flat surface) that forms the largest contiguous elevated area in Africa. This is why the Ethiopian Highlands are often called the "Roof of Africa." Two out of the top three male marathon runners in the world are Ethiopian (2020). Pictured here is marathon champion Kenenisa Bekele.</p> <p>How might altitude affect his performance?</p> <p>Learn more: A blog post on the science of marathon training and its connection to Ethiopia: "<a href="#">Why Training with Altitude Can Give You the Competitive Edge</a>" (Polar)</p>	<p><i>Altitude can affect athletic performance because ____.</i></p>
<p><b>6. Rainforest: banks of the Congo River (Democratic Republic of Congo)</b> The rainforest ecoregion is home to the Congo River Basin, the 2nd longest river in Africa, into which many other rivers (tributaries) flow.</p> <p>How is the river a resource to people in the rainforest ecoregion?</p> <p>Learn more:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "<a href="#">The Main Road Through the Heart of Africa Is the Congo River</a>" (National Geographic)</li><li>• "<a href="#">On The Congo, A Floating Marketplace For A Nation</a>" (NPR)</li></ul>	<p><i>The Congo River is an important resource because ____.</i></p>

Ecoregions and Examples	
<p><b>7. Savanna grassland: baobab tree in Western Madagascar</b></p> <p>The savanna is a grassland area that has fewer trees than the rainforest region. The baobab is an important tree that can be found throughout savanna ecoregions, including on the island of Madagascar.</p> <p>How is the baobab tree a resource for people in the savanna region?</p> <p>How do people in the savanna region of Madagascar use the baobab tree?</p> <p>Learn more about baobabs in the savanna:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "<a href="#">Tree of life: Giant baobab turned into living water tank in Madagascar</a>" (New Scientist)</li><li>• "<a href="#">Baobab, Nature's Water Tanks</a>" (Panos pictures)</li></ul>	<p><i>The baobab tree is important because ____.</i></p> <p><i>People in Madagascar use baobab trees by ____.</i></p>
<p><b>8. Semiarid: the Great Mosque of Djenne in Mali</b></p> <p>The Sahel ecoregion is characterized by low average annual rainfall and fewer trees and grasslands. This is why it is semiarid. Here you see the town of Djenne in modern-day Mali. The Great Mosque is the center of life and prayer in Djenne.</p> <p>How is this mosque an example of a building that draws from semiarid region resources?</p> <p>Learn more: "<a href="#">Djenne</a>" (Britannica Kids).</p>	<p><i>The Great Mosque is an example of a building that uses ____.</i></p>

Ecoregions and Examples	
<p><b>9. Desert: date palm and its importance</b> This is the park of Lala Fatna in Algeria.</p> <p>What are these trees? In what ways could they be of importance to people?</p> <p>Learn more:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Learn how dates are cultivated in Morocco</a> (Marocopedia English)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Dates: The Sticky History of a Sweet Fruit</a> (National Geographic)</li> </ul>	<p><i>The date palm is important because ____.</i></p>
<p><b>10. Swahili Coast: Lamu Island, Kenya</b> This is a view of mangrove forests on the island of Lamu, in Kenya, on the long Swahili Coast, which stretches from Somalia to Mozambique.</p> <p>Mangroves are trees with roots that arch above and into the water and can be found on tropical coastlines. Lamu is an island on the Swahili Coast. Examine the pictures of the buildings from the Swahili Coast. Look at the picture of the ceiling of the Swahili house in Lamu, Kenya.</p> <p>How might the environment of the Swahili Coast determine how houses were made?</p> <p>Learn more: <a href="#">Swahili House Museum, Lamu Kenya</a> (Zamani Project)</p>	<p><i>The environment of the Swahili Coast might affect house construction because ____.</i></p>

**Source:** This activity was developed by the African Studies Center at Boston University's Pardee School of Global Studies and is used with permission.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Analyzing Regional Environments Packet

**Cluster 1 Supporting Question:** *What are the defining aspects of Africa’s environment, and how have people adapted to its challenges while using its resources?*

Part 1: Background Information

- **Title of article:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Context of the article:**

Region of Africa	Group(s) of People	Country or Countries Involved

- **Determine the main idea:** Was your article primarily (mostly) about an environmental challenge or an environmental advantage of this region? State your answer in a sentence below.  
*The environmental challenge described in this region was...*  
*OR*  
*The environmental advantage described in this region was...*

- **Craft a conclusion:** Explain how the African community you read about either adapted to this challenge or used the environment for their benefit.

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**Part 2: “Give One, Get One”**

Kenya	Maasai
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Environmental conditions:</li><li>• Adaptation(s):</li><li>• Conclusion:</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Environmental conditions:</li><li>• Adaptation(s):</li><li>• Conclusion:</li></ul>
Equatorial Africa	South Africa
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Environmental conditions:</li><li>• Adaptation(s):</li><li>• Conclusion:</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Environmental conditions:</li><li>• Adaptation(s):</li><li>• Conclusion:</li></ul>





Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *The Mosquito Menace in Equatorial Africa*

### Key Terms

<b>millennia</b>	plural of millennium; thousands of years
<b>equatorial</b>	at the latitude of the equator
<b>breed</b>	give birth to; reproduction in animal, fish, and plant species
<b>insecticide</b>	a chemical or substance that kills a particular insect

The equator stretches in a band from east to west across the center of the African continent. For **millennia**, the climate of this region has brought moist hot air and abundant rainfall to the green forest areas of central Africa. That's been great news for one particular creature—the mosquito! But mosquitos have been a notable challenge for human life in this region.

No one enjoys an itchy mosquito bite. But mosquitoes can present much greater threats. Some species of mosquito carry disease to human populations by hosting bacteria or parasites. In **equatorial** Africa, the *Anopheles* mosquito carries the parasite that spreads a dangerous disease called malaria. Equatorial Africa is one of the ideal environments for this mosquito to live.

The African people who inhabit these areas have been managing mosquito exposure and its related health risks since long ago. Modern researchers are studying the traditional ways that equatorial people have protected themselves from insect-carrying disease. For centuries, if not longer, people in this region have collected and cultivated a variety of insect repellent plants. Typically they dry the leaves, then burn them in the early evening when mosquito activity is at its height. The smoke scatters mosquitoes away from the areas where people have gathered to cook, talk, and put children to bed. This traditional scientific knowledge should be better known since it could be an inexpensive and sustainable way to help more equatorial people today.

Settlement patterns and housebuilding choices were another ancient practice to meet the challenge of mosquito-borne diseases. Equatorial people knew that they should place their homes in drier areas away from large puddles of standing water where mosquitoes **breed**. This practice reduced the exposure of families and communities to malaria from mosquito bites. It also protected their valuable cattle and other domestic animals from disease. When Europeans first arrived to colonize this region, they did not understand this choice. They were eager to take land along rivers and ponds; this was considered the best land in Europe. When malaria began to strike the newcomers, they did not recognize its connection to the insects that surrounded them.



Insecticide-treated bed nets. Image by Maggie Hallahan courtesy of the CDC is in the public domain.

Today there are widespread practices to fight malaria. Modern African healthcare and hospitals are saving lives. So too are laboratory-developed medicines called antimalarial drugs. But preventing disease before it happens is still the best policy, rooted in ancient wisdom. Governments in this region distribute **insecticide**-treated bed nets to protect people sleeping at night. Scientists believe this innovation has been the number one weapon to fight malaria.

In all these ways, people in the nations of equatorial Africa are meeting the environmental challenge of disease exposure and protecting life.

#### Text sources:

- Stonely, Avery. 2023. "[Prevalence of Malaria in Sub-Saharan Africa](#)." Ballard Brief, Winter.
- Karunamoorthi, Kaliyaperumal and Teklu Hailu. 2014. "[Insect repellent plants traditional usage practices in the Ethiopian malaria epidemic-prone setting: an ethnobotanical survey](#)," *Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine*. February 12.
- Parker, John and Richard Rathbone. 2007. *African History: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, pp. 10-16.

Further learning for students: [What is malaria?](#) (Khan Academy)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Unlocking the Potential of South Africa's Oceans*

### Key Terms

<b>maritime</b>	related to the ocean
<b>unlock the potential</b>	an expression that means to release the possibilities inside a person or thing
<b>sustainable</b>	ensuring that there will be enough resources for future generations

The nation of South Africa is hugged by two great oceans: the Indian and Atlantic Oceans. It has more than 1,700 miles of coastline—the third longest coastline of any African country. Minerals, plants, and animals are abundant on the shores and under the waters.

These oceans have contributed to the economy for centuries. Fishing, shipping, and other **maritime** trades generated great wealth for South Africa in the past. But under colonization and apartheid, access to the ocean's wealth was highly unequal.

In South Africa today, economists and government officials want to **unlock the potential** of South Africa's oceans and marine resources. Their plan is called Operation Phakisa. The word *phakisa* means “hurry up” in the Sesotho language. It shows how urgent they consider this effort to be.

Aquaculture (raising marine plants and animals for human use), renewable energy, and recreation and tourism can all contribute to what environmentalists call a new “blue economy” for Africa. Island nations of Africa, such as the Seychelles, have already shown that it can be done. But developing coastal economies can also cause environmental harm to oceans. South Africa's scientists and leaders know that careful steps are needed to ensure that oceans and communities are properly protected.



Fishing boats on the Paternoster Beach in South Africa. Image by Mike Lomax via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

One step toward **sustainable** use of the oceans is restoring fishing rights for local African communities. In South Africa, tens of thousands of fishers, men and women, make their living from the sea. Under colonization and apartheid, they were pushed away from the coast and forbidden to sell what they caught.

Today, small-scale fishing households must compete with large industrial fishing operations that overfish the waters. That's why community activists fought for, and recently won, economic rights for small fishers in South Africa. They also won recognition of their lifestyle and culture.

Many people see this as a small but important step toward sustainable development of the coast.

#### Text sources:

- Nel, Heather. 2015. "[What South Africa can do to harness a neglected resource- its oceans.](#)" *The Conversation*, October 4.
- Auld, Kathleen and Loretta Feris. 2022. "[South Africa's small-scale fishers have been marginalised since Apartheid; what needs to change.](#)" *The Conversation*, November 23.
- Ortega-Cisneros, Kelly et al. 2021. "[Assessing South Africa's potential to address climate change in the fisheries sector.](#)" *Frontiers in Marine Science*, June 9..



## *Planting a Better Future for Kenya's Land and People*

Wangari Maathai always had an attachment to trees. As a child, she learned from her grandmother that a large fig tree near her family home in central Kenya was sacred and not to be disturbed. She gathered water for her mother at springs protected by the roots of trees. In the mid-1970s, Maathai started a campaign to help the land and meet the basic needs of rural women in Kenya. They began planting trees together—millions of them. Her Green Belt Movement has now planted more than 51 million trees across Kenya, many of which still stand. In 2004 her work was internationally recognized with the Nobel Peace Prize.



Wangari Maathai. Image by Martin Sotelo via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0 IGO.

### Key Terms

<b>degrade</b> (past tense, <b>degraded</b> )	in science, to break down, make worse
<b>degradation</b>	in science, the act or condition of being made worse
<b>attain</b>	to achieve or accomplish
<b>replenish</b>	to renew or refresh

### Putting the Pieces Together

In large parts of Africa, the natural state of the soil is poor for farming. The soil of Kenya needs to be respected and carefully treated in order to stay healthy for producing.

In the mid-1970s, Maathai became aware of Kenya's environmental decline: watersheds drying up, streams disappearing, and the desert expanding south from the Sahara. Vast forests had been cleared for farms or plantations of fast-growing exotic trees. These plantations drained water and **degraded** the soil.

Maathai began making connections others hadn't. "Listening to the women talk about water, about energy, about nutrition, it all boiled down to the environment," she said. "I came to understand the linkage between environmental **degradation** and the felt needs of the communities."

### A Groundbreaking Leader

As a girl, Wangari Maathai worked hard to **attain** an education. She had to overcome bias against women when she chose to earn a degree in biological science. She trained as a scientist but still had trouble getting male scientists to respect her.

Eventually she had the idea of using trees to overcome the environmental challenges her nation faced. Trees **replenish** the soil, provide fuel wood, protect watersheds, and promote better nutrition (by growing fruit). Maathai set up a tree nursery in a forest on the outskirts of Nairobi, later shifting it to her backyard. But the idea did not catch fire. She needed help.

Eventually she thought of asking rural women to be her tree farmers. In 1977, the Green Belt Movement was born. Government foresters initially resisted. They didn't believe uneducated rural women could plant and tend trees. Women, too, didn't think they could do it. But Maathai showed them how, building on skills they already had.

### The Trees Grow—and Branch Out

Over the years, the Green Belt Movement has built other community activities into tree-planting efforts. Among these are cultivation of more nutritious indigenous foods and low-tech but effective ways to collect and store rainwater. The Green Belt Movement also fought for political democracy in Kenya. Maathai noted that a community cannot protect its environment if it does not have a political voice.

Fifty-one million trees later—and growing!—the Green Belt Movement is famous around the world. Sadly, Dr. Wangari Maathai died of cancer in 2011. But she lived to see her idea take root. Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, and other African countries have integrated the Green Belt Movement's approach. These female foresters showed that working together, regular people can heal the environment and improve their communities.

#### Text sources:

- Macdonald, Mia. 2005. "[The Greenbelt Movement, and the Story of Wangari Maathai](#)" *YES! Magazine*, March 26; adapted.
- Birch, Izzy. 2018. "[Agricultural productivity in Kenya: barriers and opportunities](#)" *K4D*, UK Department for International Development, December.
- Green Belt Movement. "[National Tree Planting Initiative](#)."

Further learning for students: [Wangari Maathai: Defender of the Earth, Fighter for Democracy](#) (video; The Nobel Prize website)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Planting a Better Future for Kenya's Land and People* (Chunked Text)

Wangari Maathai always had an attachment to trees. As a child, she learned from her grandmother that a large fig tree near her family home in central Kenya was sacred and not to be disturbed. She gathered water for her mother at springs protected by the roots of trees.

In the mid-1970s, Maathai started a campaign to help the land and meet the basic needs of rural women in Kenya. They began planting trees together—millions of them. Her Green Belt Movement has now planted more than 51 million trees across Kenya, many of which still stand. In 2004 her work was internationally recognized with the Nobel Peace Prize.



Wangari Maathai. Image by Martin Sotelo via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0 IGO.

### Key Terms

<b>degrade</b> (past tense, <b>degraded</b> )	in science, to break down, make worse
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<b>attain</b>	to achieve or accomplish
<b>replenish</b>	to renew or refresh



### Putting the Pieces Together

In large parts of Africa, the natural state of the soil is poor for farming. The soil of Kenya needs to be respected and carefully treated in order to stay healthy for producing.

In the mid-1970s, Maathai became aware of Kenya's environmental decline: watersheds drying up, streams disappearing, and the desert expanding south from the Sahara. Vast forests had been cleared for farms or plantations of fast-growing exotic trees. These plantations drained water and **degraded** the soil.

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As a girl, Wangari Maathai worked hard to **attain** an education. She had to overcome bias against women when she chose to earn a degree in biological science. She trained as a scientist but still had trouble getting male scientists to respect her.

Eventually she had the idea of using trees to overcome the environmental challenges her nation faced. Trees **replenish** the soil, provide fuel wood, protect watersheds, and promote better nutrition (by growing fruit).

Maathai set up a tree nursery in a forest on the outskirts of Nairobi, later shifting it to her backyard. But the idea did not catch fire. She needed help.

Eventually she thought of asking rural women to be her tree farmers. In 1977, the Green Belt Movement was born. Government foresters initially resisted.

They didn't believe uneducated rural women could plant and tend trees. Women, too, didn't think they could do it. But Maathai showed them how, building on skills they already had.

### The Trees Grow—and Branch Out

Over the years, the Green Belt Movement has built other community activities into tree-planting efforts. Among these are cultivation of more nutritious indigenous foods and low-tech but effective ways to collect and store rainwater.

The Green Belt Movement also fought for political democracy in Kenya. Maathai noted that a community cannot protect its environment if it does not have a political voice.

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Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, and other African countries have integrated the Green Belt Movement's approach. These female foresters showed that working together, regular people can heal the environment and improve their communities.



**Text sources:**

- Macdonald, Mia. 2005. "[The Greenbelt Movement, and the Story of Wangari Maathai](#)" *YES! Magazine*, March 26; adapted.
- Birch, Izzy. 2018. "[Agricultural productivity in Kenya: barriers and opportunities](#)" *K4D*, UK Department for International Development, December.
- Green Belt Movement. "[National Tree Planting Initiative](#)."

Further learning for students: [Wangari Maathai: Defender of the Earth, Fighter for Democracy](#) (video; The Nobel Prize website)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Analyzing Regional Environments Packet (Word Banks)*

**Cluster 1 Supporting Question:** *What are the defining aspects of Africa's environment, and how have people adapted to its challenges while using its resources?*

### Part 1: Background Information

• **Title of article:** \_\_\_\_\_

• **Context of the article:**

Region of Africa	Group(s) of People	Country or Countries Involved

- **Determine the main idea:** Was your article primarily (mostly) about an environmental challenge or an environmental advantage of this region? State your answer in a sentence below.

*The environmental challenge described in this region was...*

*OR*

*The environmental advantage described in this region was...*

Sentence Frames:

- *My article was mostly about an environmental challenge OR an environmental advantage.*
- *The environmental challenge/advantage in this region was \_\_\_\_.*

Word Bank		
drought	fertile soil	malaria
coastline	grazing land	farming

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- **Craft a conclusion:** Explain how the African community you read about either adapted to this challenge or used the environment for their benefit. Use the paragraph frame below to craft your answer.
  - *The \_\_\_\_ (name of group that you studied) community faced the challenge of \_\_\_\_ (describe the problem). To adapt, they \_\_\_\_ (explain the solution they used). By doing this, they were able to \_\_\_\_ (describe the benefit or result). One example of how they used the environment to help them was \_\_\_\_ (give a specific example from the reading). Because of their actions, \_\_\_\_ (explain the long-term impact or success). This shows that \_\_\_\_ (conclude with a lesson or big idea from the story).*

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## Part 2: “Give One, Get One”

Sentence Frames:

- *I noticed that African communities often \_\_\_\_.*
- *A common theme is that people use \_\_\_\_ to adapt to their environments.*

Word Bank		
planting trees	preventing mosquito bites	farming
raising cattle	fishing	using traditional knowledge

Kenya	Maasai
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Environmental conditions:</li><li>• Adaptation(s):</li><li>• Conclusion:</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Environmental conditions:</li><li>• Adaptation(s):</li><li>• Conclusion:</li></ul>

Equatorial Africa	South Africa
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Environmental conditions:</li><li>• Adaptation(s):</li><li>• Conclusion:</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Environmental conditions:</li><li>• Adaptation(s):</li><li>• Conclusion:</li></ul>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Africa Geography Scavenger Hunt*

1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.
7.	8.
9.	10.
11.	12.
13.	14.
15.	16.
17.	18.
19.	20.

Questions I have:





Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Postcard from Africa Packet*

Congratulations! Your social studies teacher entered you into a contest, and you won!

You get to travel to any country of your choice in Africa. Sadly, your teacher can't join you but would appreciate a postcard!

To show your new knowledge of the country, include interesting aspects that you have learned about the country's geography, environment, and people. Touch on the following topics in your postcard (in any order):

- Where you are (country and region): Put this in your greeting.
- What is one important language you hear spoken?
- What is the environment/physical geography like?
- What kind of souvenir will you bring back to your teacher?
  - Your souvenir must relate to some aspect of your country's human geography.

### **Additional Guidelines:**

### **Answer Our Supporting Question:**

*What are the defining aspects of Africa's environment, and how have people adapted to its challenges while using its resources?*

### **Front of the Postcard:**

- Draw and color a picture of your country or of a specific place in your country.
- Consider the ecoregion of your country and its specific geographic features.
- Relate your picture to what you learned.

**Back of the Postcard:**

The back of the postcard will include a note to your teacher and a postage stamp design related to your country. Be sure to address the following questions:

- Where you are (country and region): Put this in your greeting.
- What is one important language you hear spoken?
- What is the environment/physical geography like?
- What kind of souvenir will you bring back to your teacher?
  - Your souvenir must relate to your country's human geography.

## EXAMPLE POSTCARD

Front of Postcard:



Image created by Primary Source.

**Back of Postcard:**

Hello!

Greetings from Egypt! I'm in Cairo, the capital city, and it's so full of life. The streets are busy with cars, markets, and the sound of people speaking Arabic, which is the main language here.

Did you know that Egypt is in North Africa? And part of Egypt is technically in Asia? Egypt is bordered by the Mediterranean Sea to the north and the Red Sea to the east.

I visited the pyramids near Giza, and they're even more amazing than I imagined. These ancient wonders were built thousands of years ago, showing how skilled and determined the people of ancient Egypt were. They adapted to life in the desert by using the Nile River for farming and transportation. Even today, the Nile is still the heart of the country, helping people grow crops and build their lives.

The environment here can be tough-the deserts are hot and dry-but the people of Egypt have always found ways to thrive. They use irrigation from the Nile to water their fields, just like their ancestors did.

I'm sending you a papyrus bookmark as a souvenir. Papyrus is an ancient plant that grows along the Nile, and Egyptians used it to make paper thousands of years ago. It's a reminder of how people here have always used the resources around them wisely.

See you soon!



## Resource List:

- [CountryReports.org — Countries in Africa](https://countryreports.org/)
- [BBC News — Country Profiles, Africa](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa)
- [National Geographic Kids](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/kids/)
- [UNESCO](https://www.unesco.org/)

## Notes

Name of your country and region:

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Official or main spoken languages of your country:

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Climate and important physical features of your country:

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Supporting Question: *What are the defining aspects of Africa's environment, and how have people adapted to its challenges while using its resources?*

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Facts about the people of your country, their customs, traditions, and ways of life (human geography):

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Anything else you discover about your country that is special or important:

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Bibliography/resources used:

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**Final Postcard Paragraph:**

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## *Africa Geography Scavenger Hunt Clues*

**Teacher Preparation:** Copy these questions, and cut them out. Tape them around your classroom.

1. Name three countries on the east coast of Africa.	2. What is the name of the largest desert in Africa?
3. What sea borders Africa to the north?	4. What is the name of the ocean that borders Africa to the west?
5. What is the southernmost country in Africa called?	6. What is the name of Africa's northernmost mountain range?
7. Name two countries in central Africa.	8. What is the name of the river that begins in Lake Victoria and ends in the Mediterranean Sea?
9. Name the large river in West Africa.	10. What is the name of Africa's largest island nation, and what ocean is it in?
11. What is the name of the country north of South Africa and south of Angola?	12. Name one country almost entirely covered by the Sahara Desert.
13. Which country has Nairobi for its capital?	14. Name two landlocked countries in Africa that begin with the letter C.
15. Name one desert in southern Africa.	16. Victoria Falls is part of which southeastern river?
17. Which continent lies directly north of Africa, and which continent is east of Africa?	18. Which line of latitude runs through the center of Africa?

19. <b>Mt. Kilimanjaro is in which <i>East</i> African country?</b>	20. <b>Where is most of Africa's rainforest located: <i>East Africa, South Africa, or Central Africa</i>?</b>
21. <b>Which continent lies directly <i>north</i> of Africa, and which continent is <i>east</i> of Africa?</b>	22. <b>Which line of latitude runs through the <i>center</i> of Africa?</b>



*Postcard Project Rubric*

Criteria	Exemplary (4 Pts)	Proficient (3 Pts)	Developing (2 Pts)	Beginning (1 Pt)	Points:
<b>Research &amp; Accuracy</b>	Includes accurate, detailed, and well-organized information from multiple sources; directly answers the Supporting Question	Includes mostly accurate and relevant information from multiple sources; addresses the Supporting Question	Includes some information but lacks accuracy, relevance, or organization; partially answers the Supporting Question	Includes little or inaccurate information; does not answer the Supporting Question	
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	Clearly distinguishes fact from opinion; connects research to conclusions thoughtfully and critically	Mostly distinguishes fact from opinion; makes some connections between research and conclusions	Attempts to distinguish fact from opinion, but connections are unclear or underdeveloped	Does not distinguish fact from opinion or connect research to conclusions	
<b>Writing Quality</b>	Writing is clear, organized, and engaging; effectively communicates ideas with appropriate tone and vocabulary	Writing is mostly clear and organized; communicates ideas with some appropriate tone and vocabulary	Writing is unclear or disorganized; uses minimal appropriate tone or vocabulary	Writing is incomplete, unclear, or lacks effort; does not communicate ideas effectively	
<b>Visual Illustration</b>	Illustration is creative, detailed, and visually enhances the postcard; clearly connects to the text	Illustration is neat and enhances the postcard; connects to the text	Illustration is incomplete or lacks detail; connection to the text is minimal	Illustration is missing or unrelated to the text	
<b>Total Points:</b>					



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Postcard from Africa Packet (Sentence Frames)*

Congratulations! Your social studies teacher entered you into a contest, and you won!

You get to travel to any country of your choice in Africa. Sadly, your teacher can't join you but would appreciate a postcard!

To show your new knowledge of the country, include interesting aspects that you have learned about the country's geography, environment, and people. Touch on the following topics in your postcard (in any order):

- Where you are (country and region): Put this in your greeting.
- What is one important language you hear spoken?
- What is the environment/physical geography like?
- What kind of souvenir will you bring back to your teacher?
  - Your souvenir must relate to some aspect of your country's human geography.

### **Additional Guidelines:**

### **Answer Our Supporting Question:**

*What are the defining aspects of Africa's environment, and how have people adapted to its challenges while using its resources?*

### **Front of the Postcard:**

- Draw and color a picture of your country or of a specific place in your country.
- Consider the ecoregion of your country and its specific geographic features.
- Relate your picture to what you learned.

**Back of the Postcard:**

The back of the postcard will include a note to your teacher and a postage stamp design related to your country. Be sure to address the following questions:

- Where you are (country and region): Put this in your greeting.
- What is one important language you hear spoken?
- What is the environment/physical geography like?
- What kind of souvenir will you bring back to your teacher?
  - Your souvenir must relate to your country's human geography.

## EXAMPLE POSTCARD

Front of Postcard:



Image created by Primary Source.

## Back of Postcard:

Hello!

Greetings from Egypt! I'm in **Cairo**, the capital city, and it's so full of life. The streets are busy with cars, markets, and the sound of people speaking **Arabic**, which is the main language here.

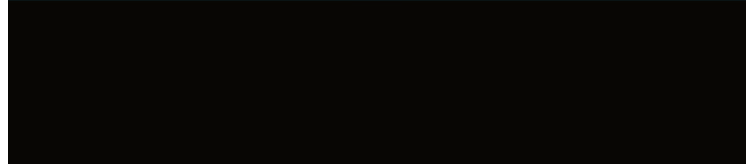
Did you know that Egypt is in North Africa? And part of Egypt is technically in Asia? Egypt is **bordered** by the Mediterranean Sea to the north and the Red Sea to the east.

I visited the **pyramids** near Giza, and they're even more amazing than I imagined. These ancient wonders were built thousands of years ago, showing how skilled and determined the people of ancient Egypt were. They adapted to life in the desert by using the Nile River for farming and transportation. Even today, the Nile is still the heart of the country, helping people grow crops and build their lives.

The environment here can be tough—the deserts are hot and dry—but the people of Egypt have always found ways to thrive. They use **irrigation from the Nile** to water their fields, just like their ancestors did.

I'm sending you a papyrus bookmark as a **souvenir**. **Papyrus** is an ancient plant that grows along the Nile, and Egyptians used it to make paper thousands of years ago. It's a reminder of how people here have always used the resources around them wisely.

See you soon!



**Resource List:**

- [CountryReports.org — Countries in Africa](#)
- [BBC News — Country Profiles, Africa](#)
- [National Geographic Kids](#)
- [UNESCO](#)

**Notes**

Name of your country and region:

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Official or main spoken languages of your country:

*The main language spoken here is*

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Climate and important physical features of your country:

*The climate here is* \_\_\_\_\_ *(ie., warm, cold)*

*The temperature can be as high as* \_\_\_\_\_ *or as low as* \_\_\_\_\_.

*There is* \_\_\_\_\_ *(a lot of/little)* \_\_\_\_\_ *(rain/snow/sunshine) here.*

**Supporting Question:** *What are the defining aspects of Africa's environment, and how have people adapted to its challenges while using its resources?*

*A defining aspect of this environment is* \_\_\_\_\_ *(climate, temperature, geographical features)*

*People in* \_\_\_\_\_ *(country or region) adapt to the* \_\_\_\_\_ *(environment type: desert, rainforest, savanna) by* \_\_\_\_\_ *(farming techniques, types of building structures, etc.)*

Facts about the people of your country, their customs, traditions, and ways of life (human geography):

*The main religion/religions in this region is/are* \_\_\_\_\_.

*One important tradition here is* \_\_\_\_\_.

*A common food is \_\_\_\_\_, which is made of* \_\_\_\_\_.

Anything else you discover about your country that is special or important:

*Something that makes this country (or region) special is* \_\_\_\_\_.

*A famous landmark in my country is \_\_\_\_\_ because* \_\_\_\_\_.

*One important event in my country's history is* \_\_\_\_\_.

Bibliography/Resources Used:

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**Sentence Starters for Your Postcard**

- *Hello from \_\_\_\_! (country and region)*
- *The people here speak \_\_\_\_\_. (language spoken)*
- *The climate is \_\_\_\_\_. (hot, dry, rainy, humid, etc.)*
- *Some important physical features are \_\_\_\_\_. (rivers, mountains, deserts, etc.)*
- *People here use the land by \_\_\_\_\_.*
- *A special souvenir I am bringing back is \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.*



Word Bank		
Geography & Climate	Human Geography	Souvenirs
rainforest	language	artwork
desert	tradition	jewelry
river	market	clothing
mountain	clothing	musical instruments
grassland	food	handwoven baskets
ocean	music	books
dry	farming	
humid	city	
rainy	village	
hot		
cold		

Final Postcard Paragraph:



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Distinguishing Opinions from Facts*

**Directions:** Read each statement below about a place on the African continent. Decide if the author of this statement was writing an **opinion** or a **fact**. The statement you need to judge is in **bold type**. Explain your conclusion with an annotation (note) in the sidebar panel.

Remember these definitions:

- Fact: a statement that can be checked or proven true by research using evidence
- Opinion: an expression of belief about something based on point of view or values; it cannot be proven.

Statement	Fact or Opinion?	Annotation—How did you decide?
<b>I think the yummiest street food in Accra is a meat skewer called chichinga.</b> Sadly, my friend from Ghana could not eat it because he is a vegetarian.		
<b>Lake Victoria is the largest lake in the African continent, with a surface area of 23,146 square miles.</b> I loved seeing that because I love water!		
<b>Dar Es Salaam is the most beautiful city in Tanzania;</b> I saw it with my own eyes, so I know it is true.		
<b>Dar Es Salaam has the biggest population of any city in Tanzania,</b> according to data from several websites.		

Statement	Fact or Opinion?	Annotation—How did you decide?
You will die happy if you get to see the lions on safari in Botswana.		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Postcard Project: Self Evaluation and Peer Review*

### Self-Evaluation

**Directions:** Review your postcard carefully.

- Use the rubric below to assess your work in a number of areas.
- Reflect on your strengths and areas for improvement.
- Score yourself in each category by circling the level (4, 3, 2, or 1) that best matches your work. Then total up your scores.

Criteria	Exemplary (4 Pts)	Proficient (3 Pts)	Developing (2 Pts)	Beginning (1 Pt)	Points:
<b>Research &amp; Accuracy</b>	Includes accurate, detailed, and well-organized information from multiple sources; directly answers the Supporting Question	Includes mostly accurate and relevant information from multiple sources; addresses the Supporting Question	Includes some information but lacks accuracy, relevance, or organization; partially answers the Supporting Question	Includes little or inaccurate information; does not answer the Supporting Question	
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	Clearly distinguishes fact from opinion; connects research to conclusions thoughtfully and critically	Mostly distinguishes fact from opinion; makes some connections between research and conclusions	Attempts to distinguish fact from opinion, but connections are unclear or underdeveloped	Does not distinguish fact from opinion or connect research to conclusions	

Criteria	Exemplary (4 Pts)	Proficient (3 Pts)	Developing (2 Pts)	Beginning (1 Pt)	Points:
<b>Writing Quality</b>	Writing is clear, organized, and engaging; effectively communicates ideas with appropriate tone and vocabulary	Writing is mostly clear and organized; communicates ideas with some appropriate tone and vocabulary	Writing is unclear or disorganized; uses minimal appropriate tone or vocabulary	Writing is incomplete, unclear, or lacks effort; does not communicate ideas effectively	
<b>Visual Illustration</b>	Illustration is creative, detailed, and visually enhances the postcard; clearly connects to the text	Illustration is neat and enhances the postcard; connects to the text	Illustration is incomplete or lacks detail; connection to the text is minimal	Illustration is missing or unrelated to the text	
<b>Total Points:</b>					

**Peer Review**

**Directions:** Exchange postcards with a partner.

- Review their postcard using the same rubric, and score their work honestly.
- Provide feedback by writing 1–2 positive comments and 1 suggestion for improvement.
- Then, return the postcard and review form to your partner.

Criteria	Exemplary (4 Pts)	Proficient (3 Pts)	Developing (2 Pts)	Beginning (1 Pt)	Points:
<b>Research &amp; Accuracy</b>	Includes accurate, detailed, and well-organized information from multiple sources; directly answers the Supporting Question	Includes mostly accurate and relevant information from multiple sources; addresses the Supporting Question	Includes some information but lacks accuracy, relevance, or organization; partially answers the Supporting Question	Includes little or inaccurate information; does not answer the Supporting Question	
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Criteria	Exemplary (4 Pts)	Proficient (3 Pts)	Developing (2 Pts)	Beginning (1 Pt)	Points:
<b>Visual Illustration</b>	Illustration is creative, detailed, and visually enhances the postcard; clearly connects to the text	Illustration is neat and enhances the postcard; connects to the text	Illustration is incomplete or lacks detail; connection to the text is minimal	Illustration is missing or unrelated to the text	
<b>Total Points:</b>					

Feedback
Positive comments (+):
Suggestion for improvement (-):



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Distinguishing Opinions from Facts (Word Bank)*

**Directions:** Read each statement below about a place on the African continent. Decide if the author of this statement was writing an **opinion** or a **fact**. The statement you need to judge is in **bold type**. Explain your conclusion with an annotation (note) in the third column.

**Remember these definitions:**

- Fact: a statement that can be checked or proven true by research using evidence
- Opinion: an expression of belief about something based on point of view or values; it cannot be proven

**Sentence Frames:**

- *This is a \_\_\_\_ (fact or opinion).*
- *The reason is it \_\_\_\_ (pick reason from the word bank).*

Word Bank	
Fact	Opinion
can be proven true	personal belief
based on evidence	feeling or preference
uses numbers, data, or facts	cannot be checked or proven

Statement	Fact or Opinion?	Annotation—How did you decide?
<b>I think the yummiest street food in Accra is a meat skewer called chichinga.</b> Sadly, my friend from Ghana could not eat it because he is a vegetarian.		
<b>Lake Victoria is the largest lake in the African continent, with a surface area of 23,146 square miles.</b> I loved seeing that because I love water!		

Statement	Fact or Opinion?	Annotation—How did you decide?
<b>Dar Es Salaam is the most beautiful city in Tanzania;</b> I saw it with my own eyes, so I know it is true.		
<b>Dar Es Salaam has the biggest population of any city in Tanzania,</b> according to data from several websites.		
<b>You will die happy if you get to see the lions on safari in Botswana.</b>		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cluster 1 Formative Assessment Task

Part 1—Gather Evidence

**Part 1 Directions:** Use provided resources (readings, maps, or videos) to gather evidence on two specific examples of Africa's environment, the associated challenges, and how populations adapt to these challenges.

Country or Region in Africa	Environmental Conditions	Challenge	Adaptation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Egypt</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Harsh desert environment</li><li>Hot climate</li><li>Drought and flooding conditions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Creating a sustainable food system</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Egyptians built canals and basins to manage the Nile River's flooding and direct water to their crops during the dry season.</li><li>This allowed them to cultivate fertile land even in arid conditions.</li></ul>

**Part 2—Form a Claim**

**Part 2 Directions:** Review the evidence you listed above, and think about the question: *How have people in Africa adapted to challenges of the environment while using its resources?*

Write a claim that summarizes your answer in one clear sentence.

**Claim:**

**Part 3—Write a Paragraph**

**Part 3 Directions:** Use your claim, evidence, and reasoning to construct a paragraph in response to the Cluster 1 Supporting Question: *What are the defining aspects of Africa's environment, and how have people in Africa adapted to challenges of the environment while using its resources?*

Follow this structure:

- **Topic sentence:** Introduce the topic.
- **Claim:** Use the claim you drafted above in Part 2.
- **Evidence & reasoning:** Provide two examples from your notes, and explain how the evidence supports your claim.
- **Conclusion:** Summarize how people's adaptations show their ability to overcome challenges.

**Part 4—Develop Guiding Questions**

In this cluster, you investigated the following Supporting Question: *What are the defining aspects of Africa's environment, and how have people adapted to its challenges while using its resources?*

**Part 4 Directions:** If you were to continue researching, what would you still want to know? Brainstorm two new questions below that are related to your learning from this cluster.

1.
2.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Cluster 1 Formative Assessment Task (Word Bank)

### Part 1—Gather Evidence

**Part 1 Directions:** Use provided resources (readings, maps, or videos) to gather evidence on two specific examples of Africa's environment, the associated challenges, and how populations adapt to these challenges.

Word Bank		
Conditions	Challenges	Adaptations
desert	drought	irrigation
savanna	flooding	farming
rainforest	heat	fishing
river	water	trade
hot	poor soil	building materials
dry		
wet		
lush		
arid		

### Key Terms

<b>environment</b>	land, water, weather, plants, animals
<b>challenge</b>	something difficult
<b>adaptation</b>	a change that helps people live better
<b>canal</b>	a water path made by people
<b>drought</b>	when there is no rain for a long time

Country or Region in Africa	Environmental Conditions	Challenge	Adaptation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Egypt</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Harsh desert environment</li><li>• Hot climate</li><li>• Drought and flooding conditions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creating a sustainable food system</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Egyptians built canals and basins to manage the Nile River's flooding and direct water to their crops during the dry season.</li><li>• This allowed them to cultivate fertile land even in arid conditions.</li></ul>



Part 2—Form a Claim

**Part 2 Directions:** Review the evidence you listed above, and think about the question: *How have people in Africa adapted to challenges of the environment while using its resources?*

Write a claim that summarizes your answer in one clear sentence.

<b>Sentence Starters:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>One way people have adapted to ____ (conditions) is by _____. (action taken/resources used)</li><li>Africa’s environment has _____. (deserts, rivers, forests, etc.)</li><li>People adapt by _____. (farming, digging wells, building canals, etc.)</li></ul>
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Word Bank			
deserts	rivers	savannas	droughts
floods	heat	the Sahara	Nile River

<b>Claim:</b>	
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**Part 3—Write a Paragraph**

**Part 3 Directions:** Use your claim, evidence, and reasoning to construct a paragraph in response to the Cluster 1 Supporting Question: *What are the defining aspects of Africa's environment, and how have people in Africa adapted to challenges of the environment while using its resources?*

Follow this structure:

- **Topic sentence:** Introduce the topic.
  - *People in Africa \_\_\_\_.*
  - *The environment in Africa is \_\_\_\_.*
  - *In different parts of Africa, \_\_\_\_.*
- **Claim:** Use the claim you drafted above in Step 2.
- **Evidence & reasoning:** Provide two examples from your notes, and explain how the evidence supports your claim.
  - *For example, in \_\_\_\_, (region) people \_\_\_\_ (adaptation) to overcome \_\_\_\_. (challenge)*
- **Conclusion:** Summarize how people's adaptations show their ability to overcome challenges.
  - *These examples show \_\_\_\_.*
  - *This proves that people in Africa \_\_\_\_.*
  - *People can \_\_\_\_ even when the environment is \_\_\_\_.*

Part 4—Develop Guiding Questions

In this cluster, you investigated the following Supporting Question: *What are the defining aspects of Africa’s environment, and how have people adapted to its challenges while using its resources?*

**Part 4 Directions:** If you were to continue researching, what would you still want to know? Brainstorm two new questions below that are related to your learning from this cluster.

Sentence Starters:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>How do populations ___?</i></li><li>• <i>What happens if ___?</i></li><li>• <i>Why do people choose to ___?</i></li></ul>
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1.
2.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Unit 3, Cluster 2 Inquiry Chart*

<b>Unit EQ</b>	How do we best tell the stories of ancient African societies and the factors that shaped them?
<b>Cluster SQ</b>	<b>How do stories, artifacts, and written records help us understand the unique features of ancient African societies?</b>
<b>What questions will we ask?</b>	

What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
<b>Lesson 9:</b> We explored how Eurocentric bias and diverse perspectives influence the writing of African history by comparing two views on the subject, helping us better understand the role of artifacts and records in studying ancient African societies.	
<b>Lesson 10:</b> We compared and contrasted archaeological sites and artifacts from four regions of sub-Saharan Africa.	

What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
<p><b>Lesson 14:</b> We examined how knowledge was preserved and shared in African societies through the roles of scribes, storytellers, and other cultural traditions. By analyzing oral histories, written records, stories, and artifacts, we explored how historians use a variety of sources to understand and interpret the past, culminating in a primary source analysis that highlighted how knowledge was passed down through generations.</p>	

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *One of Africa's Best Kept Secrets—Its History*

### Observe

Look at the title above. Answer the following questions:

- What do you think this article will be about? What does the phrase "best kept secret" suggest?
- What does it suggest about African history?

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### Read

**Directions:** Follow along as your teacher reads the text below aloud. Underline or highlight important phrases, and take notes in the margins. Focus on finding evidence of the following in the text:

- The author's reasons for learning African history
- Her point of view about African history

The Great Pyramid of Giza in Cairo is rightly considered one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. But travel further south along the River Nile, and you will find a thousand pyramids that belonged to the Kingdom of Kush, in what is now Sudan.

Kush was an African superpower. Its influence extended to what is now called the Middle East. The kingdom lasted for many hundreds of years. In the 8th century BC, it conquered Egypt and governed for the best part of a century. What remains of the kingdom is equally impressive. More than 300 of these pyramids are still intact. They are almost untouched since they were built nearly 3,000 years ago.

Some years ago I visited these pyramids. On my return to the UK, I asked my parents what they knew of their country's historic sites. Not much, it turned out.

This was odd since both of them could tell you a lot about key points in British history. My own Sudanese parents were fluent in English and highly educated. But by and large, they were taught according to a Western curriculum. Even when they looked at their own history,

it would have been through the perspective of Western scholars.

I wondered why my parents did not know enough about their own country's history. Was this true of many other Africans? As I talked to people, I discovered that this was indeed the case.

A few years later, at UNESCO's Paris headquarters, I saw on the bookshelves of the Ethiopian-born director a set of books. It was called the [\*General History of Africa\*](#). It turned out that this is one of UNESCO's and the continent's best kept secrets: Africa's history written by African scholars.

The *General History of Africa* is a good start. UNESCO plans to incorporate this research into schools across the African continent. Hopefully, future generations will have a better idea of their history. They will see there is much for them to be proud of from their past—a past which provides the foundation for an even greater future.



**Exit Ticket****Connect**

**Directions:** Write a paragraph (4–6 sentences) comparing and contrasting the two perspectives that we have studied today (see Trevor-Roper's quote below). Use evidence from the texts to support your ideas. Address the following questions:

- What does Zeinab Badawi believe about the history of Africa?
- How is her point of view different from the quote you read at the start of class (see below)? In what ways is it similar?
- Why do you think it's important for us to learn about Badawi's point of view?

**Quote from Hugh Trevor-Roper:**

"[Students today] demand that they be taught the history of black Africa. Perhaps in the future there will be some African history to teach. But at present there is none, or very little: there is only the history of Europe in Africa. The rest is largely darkness."

**Text sources:**

- Badawi, Zeinab Badawi. 2017. "[One of Africa's Best Secrets – Its History](#)." BBC, June 30; slightly adapted
- Trevor-Roper, Hugh. 1963. *The Rise of Christian Europe*. Harcourt, Brace & World.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Extension: Great Zimbabwe Discussion Questions*

**Video:** [Who built Great Zimbabwe? And why?](#) (TEDEd)

After watching the "Who built Great Zimbabwe? And why?" video, discuss the questions below.

Discussion goals:

- Use at least one point of evidence from the video to back up your answer.
- Use the terms **Eurocentric** and **point of view** somewhere in your answers.

Question	Answers (2–3 points for each)
What two or three kinds of evidence tell historians that an important civilization flourished in southern Africa during the 14th and 15th centuries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
Centuries later, how did the European-controlled government try to hide the fact that local African people built Great Zimbabwe? Why did the government do this?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
Challenge questions ( <b>Optional</b> ):  Can you guess/infer the filmmakers' purpose for making this film? What clues help you answer?  Can you guess or infer the filmmakers' point of view about African history? What clues help you answer?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*One of Africa’s Best Secrets—Its History (Vocabulary)*

Observe

Look at the title above. Answer the following questions:

- What do you think this article will be about? What does the phrase "best kept secret" suggest?
- What does it suggest about African history?

Read

**Directions:** Follow along as your teacher reads the text below aloud. Underline or highlight important phrases, and take notes in the margins. Focus on finding evidence of the following in the text:

- The author’s reasons for learning African history
- Her point of view about African history

Key Terms	
UNESCO	an organization that helps with education and culture around the world
scholars	experts who study and write about important topics
perspective	a way of thinking or seeing something

Famous Pyramids

The Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt is famous around the world. It is one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

But if you travel farther south along the River Nile, you will find something amazing—more than 1,000 pyramids! These pyramids belonged to the Kingdom of Kush, which is in modern-day Sudan.

The Kingdom of Kush was powerful. It controlled land in Africa and the Middle East. This kingdom lasted hundreds of years. In the 8th century BCE, it even conquered Egypt and ruled there for nearly 100 years.

Today, there are still more than 300 Kushite pyramids standing. They are almost untouched after 3,000 years.

### The Author's Visit

A few years ago, I visited these pyramids. When I returned to the UK (United Kingdom), I asked my parents what they knew about these historic sites. Their answer surprised me: not much.

This was strange. My parents knew a lot about important events in British history.

My parents are from Sudan. They are well-educated and speak English fluently. But their education focused on Western history. Even when they learned about Sudan, they studied it through Western ideas.

### A Missing History

I wondered: Why didn't my parents know more about Sudan's history? Was this true for other Africans too?

When I asked people, I found out it was true. Many Africans did not know much about their own history.

### An Important Discovery

A few years later, I visited **UNESCO** headquarters in Paris. On a bookshelf, I saw a set of books called the *General History of Africa*.

These books were written by African **scholars**. They tell the story of Africa's history from an African **perspective**, not a Western one.

This surprised me because few people knew about these books.

### Hope for the Future

The *General History of Africa* is a good start. UNESCO wants schools in Africa to use this research.

Hopefully, future students will learn more about their history. They will feel proud of their past. Knowing this history will help them build a better future.

## Exit Ticket

## Connect

**Directions:** Write a paragraph (4–6 sentences) comparing and contrasting the two perspectives that we have studied today (see Trevor-Roper's quote below). Use evidence from the texts to support your ideas. Address the following questions:

- What does each author believe about the history of Africa?
- How would you summarize each author's *point of view* about the subject of African history?
- How are the two perspectives similar and different?
- Whose perspective do you agree with more, and why?

## Quote from Hugh Trevor-Roper:

"[Students today] demand that they be taught the history of black Africa. Perhaps in the future there will be some African history to teach. But at present there is none, or very little: there is only the history of Europe in Africa. The rest is largely darkness."

**Sentence Frames:**

- *Both perspectives discuss \_\_\_, but they differ in \_\_\_.*
- *\_\_\_ believes that African history is \_\_\_ and provides evidence such as \_\_\_.*
- *The author's point of view is that African history is \_\_\_ and \_\_\_.*
- *\_\_\_ believes that \_\_\_ and hopes that \_\_\_.*
- *I agree more with \_\_\_ because \_\_\_.*

Word Bank			
history	future	pyramids	Western scholars
pride	education	influence	generations
perspective	point of view	belief	

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**Text sources:**

- Badawi, Zeinab Badawi. 2017. "[One of Africa's Best Secrets – Its History](#)." BBC, June 30; slightly adapted
- Trevor-Roper, Hugh. 1963. *The Rise of Christian Europe*. Harcourt, Brace & World.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *My Archaeology Log*

### Compare Four Complex African Societies

Congratulations! You will be traveling to four archaeological sites in Africa to learn more about the complex societies of Aksum, Mapungubwe, Kilwa, and Djenné-Djeno. In each archaeological site, you will be responsible for finding artifacts and information to help answer some very important questions about each society.

#### Before you travel:

Other archaeologists around the world have compiled a list of questions they'd like you to answer as you research each society.

1. What kinds of technology did each society use? (tools, materials, methods)
2. How did the environment affect how people in each society lived? (climate, conditions, temperature, natural disasters, desert, rainforest)
3. How did each society protect people's well-being? (food, shelter, safety)

#### Brainstorm three of your own questions:

What are your additional questions about the characteristics of Africa's complex societies and the ways they were organized? Think about your questions using at least two of these categories (or others that you can think of):

Categories		
government	trade	communication
religion	natural resources	other?

Example: *What religions did people in each society follow?*

Your questions:

1.
2.
3.

As you travel to each archaeological site, keep in mind the three questions of other archaeologists as well as your own questions. If you find the answers to any of them, record them in your log on the next page. Use **artifacts** and **architecture**, as well as written information, to help you in your hunt for answers!

**Observe**

First, study images of artifacts, ruins, and landscapes from each society.

- Sketch an artifact or site that stands out to you.
- Describe the materials used and what the artifact tells you about daily life.

**Read**

Research the history of each society using texts and artifacts.

- Look for answers to the guiding questions using your Ancient African Artifacts Packet.
- Take notes in your Archaeology Log.

Aksum (Axum)

Region and time period:

Climate/environment:

Archaeologist's question (choose one from the first page):

Question:	Answer:	Evidence/Artifact:

Other relevant information about this society:

Sketch your favorite artifact:

Mapungubwe

Region and time period:

Climate/environment:

Archaeologist's question (choose one from the first page):

Question:	Answer:	Evidence/Artifact:

Other relevant information about this society:

Sketch your favorite artifact:

Kilwa

Region and time period:

Climate/environment:

Archaeologist's question (choose one from the first page):

Question:	Answer:	Evidence/Artifact:

Other relevant information about this society:

Sketch your favorite artifact:

Djenné-Djeno (Jenne-Jeno)

Region and time period:

Climate/environment:

Archaeologist's question (choose one from the first page):

Question:	Answer:	Evidence/Artifact:

Other relevant information about this society:

Sketch your favorite artifact:

**Connect:**

- Compare and contrast the complex societies based on your findings.
- Identify patterns and make connections to other civilizations or modern societies.

**Compare and Contrast Complex African Societies**

List key <u>differences</u> between the societies.	List key <u>similarities</u> . Star the most important one and explain why.

Summarize Your Findings

As an archaeologist, it is your job to summarize your findings so that people can learn about these great societies.

- In 5–7 sentences, write an archaeological report (a summary using evidence) about what you’ve learned and about the answers to your questions.
- Use your notes to support your points.
- Include one similarity and one difference between the societies.
- Summarize how these societies adapted to their environments and developed unique cultures.

Word Bank		
similar / unlike	same / different	while
something they shared was	on one hand / on the other hand	in contrast with



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Archaeology Background Letters*

### **Aksum (Axum)**

Massachusetts archaeologists: welcome to the Aksum site! We're glad you are here to help us. There are many questions to answer about this fascinating ancient civilization. Here's what we know so far:

The kingdom of Aksum was founded in the 1st century CE and was strongest in the 3rd to 6th centuries CE. It was located on a plateau of rich land close to the Red Sea. This location was good for farming and grazing animals and for trade by water.

The site where our archaeology crew has been digging was the capital city of the kingdom. This was a large city, with a population up to 20,000 people. Here we uncovered the building stones of palaces and the burial sites of important leaders. The most unusual findings of this site are the gigantic stone pillars called stelae (STELL-ay). They are covered in interesting decorations. Sometimes the stelae have writing in the special written script of the Aksumite culture called Ge'ez. The stelae are incredibly tall, sometimes 100 feet tall. It must have taken a lot of engineering and organization to put up these monuments.

Away from the palace area, we found evidence of the comfortable and simpler homes of families. At these sites we've uncovered pottery and learned what people liked to eat. One favorite thing was fancy olive oil from far away! We know because we found the old olive oil containers in their homes. We also dug up gold, silver, and bronze coins that were made by the kingdom of Aksum.

The last topic we can report on is religion. In the early layers of the site, we found evidence that the Aksumites practiced a polytheistic religion. The god we found mentioned the most was Mahrem, the god of war and kings. Later, in the middle of the 4th century CE, an important king named Ezana became Christian and made his kingdom Christian too. This eventually became the Christian church of Ethiopia. See if you can find evidence for Christianity in our artifacts below.  
Good luck with your work. We are excited to see what questions you can answer!

#### **Text sources:**

- Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Kingdom of Axum](#)" *World History Encyclopedia*. March 21.
- Urbanus, Jason. 2023. "[Africa's Merchant Kings](#)." *Archaeology Magazine*. July/August.

## Kilwa

Hello to our fellow archaeologists, and welcome to Kilwa! You will love this beautiful site on Africa's east coast, along the Indian Ocean. (Look closely on a map, and you will see that Kilwa is actually an island. How cool is that?) We need your skills to help us better understand this African civilization. Here's what we have learned so far:

Between the 12th and 15th centuries CE, Kilwa was a powerful city-state, one part of the Swahili Coast civilization. At its height, Kilwa probably had 10,000 residents. People lived well from farming, fishing, and trading with other civilizations.

Kilwa was ruled by a leader called the sultan. The sultan settled legal disputes and protected the community. The sultan's government also made its own Kilwa coins to use for trade and business. Arabic script was used for recordkeeping.

The most unique feature of this civilization was its grand architecture. The buildings were constructed from ocean coral, then decorated with shells, pottery, and colorful paint. You can visit the site where the sultan's palace once stood. In its time it had large rooms, gardens, courtyards, and an outdoor swimming pool with an ocean view!

One other site we want you to check out is the Great Mosque of Kilwa. The rulers and citizens of Kilwa practiced Islam. They used Arabic to study their holy books. Their large and stately mosque was evidence of their religious faith. We know of six mosques that were built in ancient Kilwa, but this is the grandest.

Good luck with your work. We are excited to see what questions you can answer!

### Text sources:

- Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Kilwa](#)" *World History Encyclopedia*. March 21.
- Noain Maura, María José. 2020. "[This abandoned East African city once controlled the medieval gold trade.](#)" *National Geographic*. September 3.

## Mapungubwe

Hello to you, our fellow archaeologists, and welcome to Mapungubwe! We can really use your help figuring things out at this ancient site. Here's what we know so far:

The kingdom of Mapungubwe was established near a very important river in southern Africa, the Limpopo River. The land there was rich for farming grains and grazing cattle. Long before the rise of this civilization, control of large cattle herds was a main source of wealth in this area.

In the 11th century CE, people of this region developed a complex society led by a royal leader and his court. This is the oldest known organized state in southern Africa. It existed between the 11th and 13th century CE. At its height it may have had 5,000 residents.

The physical layout of this small kingdom is one of its most intriguing features. Archaeological evidence shows us that royalty lived at the top of a high hill that is rather difficult to climb. It required clever engineering and organization to build there. We don't know how they got materials to the top of this hill to make the large stone palaces and buildings found on this site.

Social classes seemed to be important in this kingdom. The royalty at the top of the hill had a more varied diet and ate more, including more meat. Down below, common people and lower elites lived on flat land in simpler homes. They ate fewer foods. But we know they produced plenty of surplus food because of the grain storage houses we found there.

Because Mapungubwe had no written script, everything we know comes from archaeological evidence alone. (This makes our work as archaeologists especially important!) The people of this civilization crafted iron metalwork and lots of pottery. The most remarkable items we have found were delicate and beautiful objects made from gold. Some were decorated with very thin sheets of gold, a difficult technique to learn.

Leaders of Mapungubwe seem to have valued the beauty of gold. These special items may have been used in religious ceremonies or to look elegant and dazzling. Royalty were buried on the hill surrounded by these gold objects. This is a hint about their religious belief in the afterlife. Otherwise we don't know much about their religion.

We have a theory that Mapungubwe traded over long distances to get the goods and resources they wanted. The evidence for this may surprise you: the people of the ancient Mapungubwe kingdom had beads from India and pottery from China! Use the map of our site to see how far away these items had to travel!

### Text sources:

- Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Mapungubwe](#)" *World History Encyclopedia*. March 15.
- South African History Online. 2011. "[Mapungubwe](#)." February 22.
- The MET Museum. 2001. "[Mapungubwe](#)." December 1.

## Djenné-Djeno (Jenne-Jeno)

Massachusetts archaeologists: welcome to the archaeological site of Djenné-Djeno! We're glad you are here to help us. There are many questions to answer about this unusual civilization—one of the most ancient of sub-Saharan Africa. Here's what we have learned from our research so far:

Djenné-Djeno was a complex society in early West Africa. It was settled in the great flood plane where the Bani and Niger rivers weave together. One of the surprising things about Djenné-Djeno is how old it is. The oldest phase of this society goes back to about 250 BCE. People depended on fishing, farming, and grazing domestic animals. This was an early site for ironmaking as well.

Later, between 300 and 900 CE, the civilization reached its height. Djenné-Djeno was organized like a large spread-out city, with neighborhoods extending for miles. We also found evidence that the residents built a large wall around their city. But we don't know why.

At this time Djenné-Djeno became much more crowded. It may have had 10,000 residents or even more. The population still depended on fishing, but now they became excellent at growing native African rice. We think there were specialty neighborhoods where pottery was made and others for ironworkers and their families. What we haven't found at this site are any palaces or very wealthy homes. This makes us think that Djenné-Djeno may have been a city based on cooperation and peaceful trade between neighborhoods and other nearby settlements. But we can't know that for sure.

The most unique and remarkable thing about the complex society of Djenné-Djeno is its artwork. This was a society full of amazing artists! They made hundreds of small statues from terra-cotta, a type of clay. These depict (show) people and animals in a special style found nowhere else. We found these statues in the places where people lived. Sometimes they were in small household shrines or in a circle with offerings of food nearby. This makes us think that the statues were part of their religion. Our theory is that people were honoring or worshiping their loved ones from the past.

### Text sources:

- Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Djenne-Djenno](#)" *World History Encyclopedia*. April 12.
- Ancient Origins. 2023. "[Clay Wonders: The Handmade Figurines of Djenne-Djeno](#)." March 17.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Ancient African Artifacts Packet*

### Mapungubwe

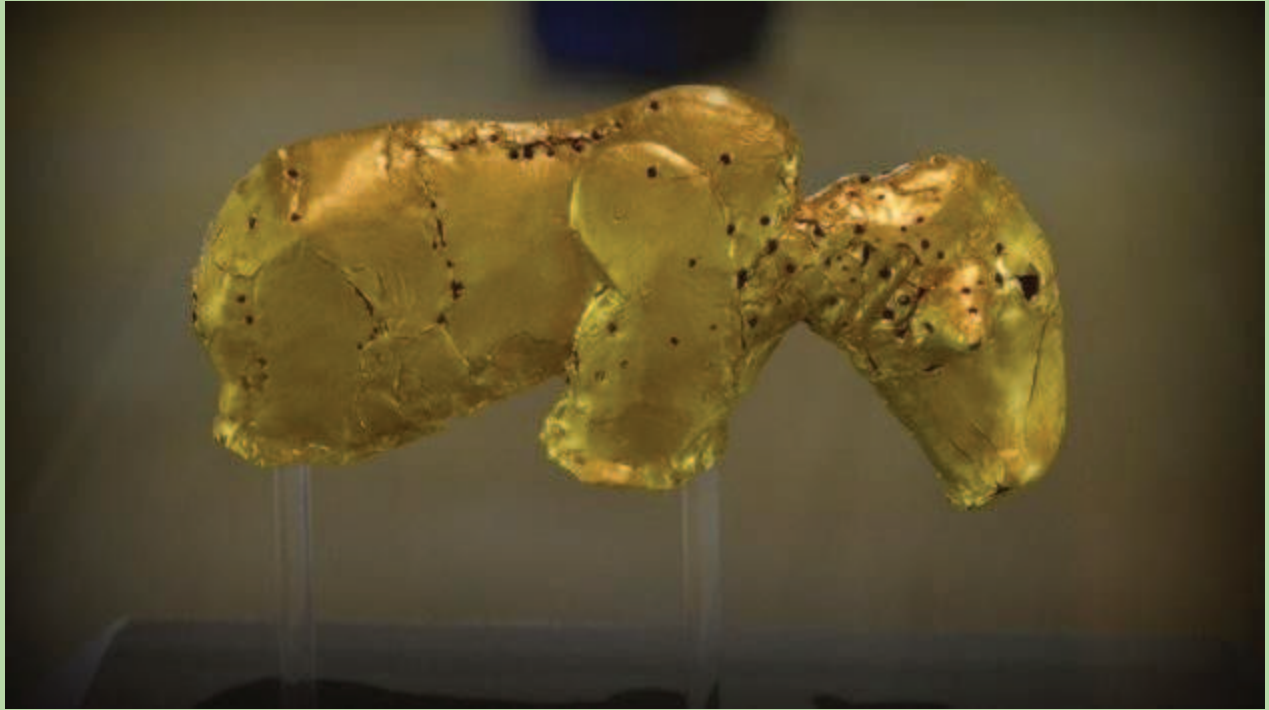
**Directions:** After reading the Archaeology Background Letter:

1. Open the Mapungubwe Archaeological Site from UNESCO. Use the tabs at the top of the article to navigate. Click on the Maps tab, and zoom into the Google map to understand the civilization's location. Then click on the Gallery to search the photos for any evidence that could help you answer the questions in your Archaeology Log.
2. Watch the "Mapungubwe - Lost Kingdoms of Africa - Great Zimbabwe" video (4:25) by BBC for more evidence.
3. Last, closely study the artifacts that follow.



Golden Rhinoceros c. 1075, made with wood and covered in gold; found at Mapungubwe Archaeological Site. Image courtesy of University of Pretoria Museums, Mapungubwe Archive. Copyright permission.

## Mapungubwe



Golden Cow, 11th century; found at Mapungubwe Archaeological Site. Image courtesy of University of Pretoria Museums, Mapungubwe Archive. Copyright permission.



## Mapungubwe



Golden Bowl created in the 11th century; found at Mapungubwe Archaeological Site. Image courtesy of University of Pretoria Museums, Mapungubwe Archive. Copyright permission.

## Kilwa

**Directions:** After reading the Archaeology Background Letter:

1. Open the Kilwa Kisiwani Archaeological Site from UNESCO. Use the tabs at the top of the article to navigate. Click on the Maps tab, and zoom into the Google map to understand the civilization's location. Then click on the Gallery tab to search the photos for any evidence that could help you answer the questions in your Archaeology Log.
2. Watch the "Explore the Ruins of a Medieval East African Empire" video (3:40) by Atlas Obscura for more evidence.
3. Last, closely study the artifacts that follow.



Kilwa pot shards, c. 9th-13th centuries; some was created in China; the rest was made locally. Image courtesy of the British Museum. Used with permission.



## Kilwa



Kilwa Sultanate Falus coin, c. 1294-1308. Image courtesy of The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Australia. Used with permission.

## Djenné-Djeno (Jenne-Jeno)

**Directions:** After reading the Archaeology Background Letter:

1. Open the Djenné Djeno Archaeological Site from UNESCO. Use the tabs at the top of the article to navigate. Click on the Maps tab, and zoom into the Google map to understand the civilization's location. Then click on the Gallery tab to search the photos for any evidence that could help you answer the questions in your Archaeology Log.
2. Watch the "What This Object from a Lost Society Tells Us About a Whole Civilization" video (2:33) by The Met for more evidence.
3. Last, closely study the artifacts that follow.

**Found at Djenné-Djeno:** house sites, craft workshops, giant ritual burial mounds, evidence of huge population, artworks

**Not found:** palaces, elaborate architecture



Copper bracelet found at Djenne-Djeno archaeological site. Image courtesy of The Met, CC0 1.0.

## Djenne-Djeno



A bearded man atop an adorned horse; found at Djenne-Djeno archaeological site. Image courtesy of Franko Khoury via Wikimedia Commons is in the public domain.

## Aksum (Axum)

**Directions:** After reading the Archaeology Background Letter:

1. Open the Aksum (Axum) Archaeological Site from UNESCO. Use the tabs at the top of the article to navigate. Click on the Maps tab, and zoom into the Google map to understand the civilization's location. Then click on the Gallery tab to search the photos for any evidence that could help you answer the questions in your Archaeology Log.
2. Watch the "Aksum" video (2:52) by UNESCO for more evidence.
3. Last, closely study the artifacts that follow.



The Ezana Stone, a giant carved stele with Greek, Sabaan, and Ge'ez (the holy language of Ethiopia). It depicts the reign of the kings. Image by A. Davey via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 2.0.

## Aksum



Copper coin of King Joel, minted c. 6th century CE. It depicts a king on one side and the Christian cross on the other. Image courtesy of the British Museum. Used with permission.



## Chronology Sorting Cards

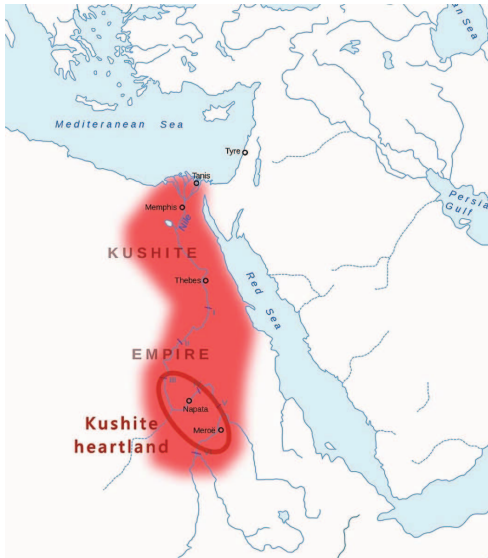
**Note to teachers:** Throughout this course, students explore a number of different time periods, events, and moments of historical significance. Given that this course is taught thematically, these events are not taught chronologically. However, it is still helpful for students to visualize the many different time periods they explore throughout the unit. To support students in their chronological reasoning, challenge groups of students to arrange these facts with various ancient African societies.

**Directions:** In advance, print out several copies of this document (one-sided), cut up the cards, and organize them into stacks with paper clips. These stacks will be given to groups of students to sort.

<b>Challenge Fact:</b>  This civilization was long-lasting and so powerful, it once ruled over ancient Egypt (to the north).	<b>Challenge Fact:</b>  This civilization traded closely with its neighbors in the southern part of the Arabian peninsula.
<b>Challenge Fact:</b>  This site is the oldest discovered city in West Africa.	<b>Challenge Fact:</b>  This ancient culture, maker of remarkable art, was located in what is now modern-day Nigeria.
<b>Challenge Fact:</b>  This society in Southern Africa built massive stone walls and buildings.	<b>Challenge Fact:</b>  This grand and beautiful city-state was a trading center along the Indian Ocean coast.
<b>Challenge Fact:</b>  This is the earliest known kingdom in what is now South Africa. It was built on rocky cliffs.	



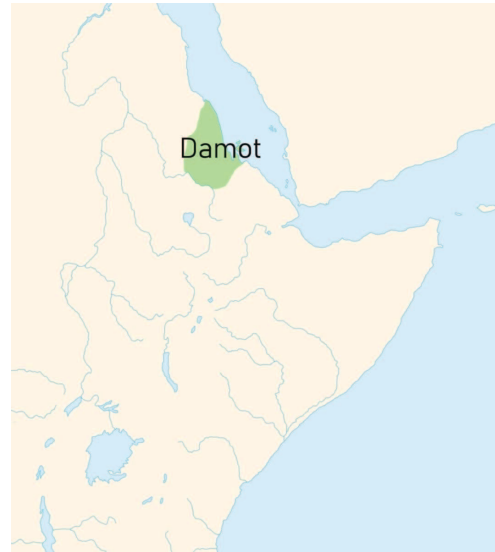
## Kingdom of Kush (or Nubia)



circa **1070 BCE–350 CE**

Kingdom of Kush. Image by Lommes via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

## Kingdom of Da'amat

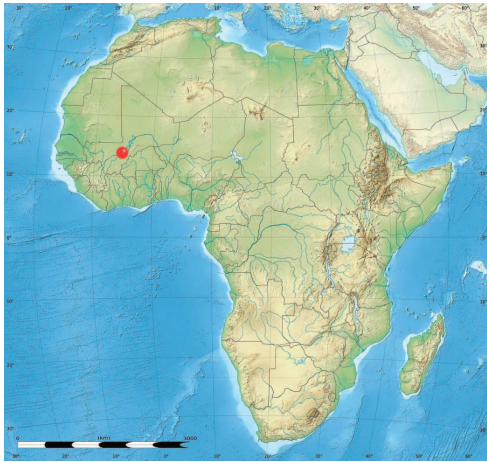


circa **950–450 BCE**

Kingdom of Da'amat. Image by Aldan-2 via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.



## Djenne-Djeno urban settlement



circa **250 BCE–1100 CE**

Djenne-Djeno urban settlement. Image by Eric Gaba (Sting) via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

## Nok society



circa **500 BCE–200 CE**

Nok society. Image by NordNordWest via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

## Empire of Aksum (or Axum)



circa **100–950 CE**

Empire of Aksum. Image by Eric Gaba (Sting) via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

## Empire of Ghana



circa **550–1250 CE**

Empire of Ghana. Image by Amitchell125 via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

## Great Zimbabwe



circa **1300–1450 CE**

Great Zimbabwe. Image by Eric Gaba (Sting) via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

## Kilwa city-state



circa **950–1450 CE**

Kilwa Kisiwani city-state. Image by AbdurRahman AbdulMoneim via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

## Kingdom of Mapungubwe



circa **1150–1250 CE**

Kingdom of Mapungubwe. Image by NordNordWest via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

### Text sources:

- BlackPast.org. [Global African History Timeline](#)
- British Museum. 2024. [African Kingdoms Timeline](#). January.
- South African History Online. 2015. "[Africa Timeline](#)." May 31.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *My Archaeology Log (Sentence Frames)*

### Compare Four Complex African Societies

Congratulations! You will be traveling to four archaeological sites in Africa to learn more about the complex societies of Aksum, Mapungubwe, Kilwa, and Djenné-Djeno. In each archaeological site, you will be responsible for finding artifacts and information to help answer some very important questions about each society.

#### Before you travel:

Other archaeologists around the world have compiled a list of questions they'd like you to answer as you research each society.

1. What kinds of **technology** did each society use? (tools, materials, methods)
2. How did the **environment** affect how people in each society lived? (climate, conditions, temperature, natural disasters, desert, rainforest)
3. How did each society **protect** people's well-being? (food, shelter, safety)

#### Brainstorm three of your own questions:

What are your additional questions about the characteristics of Africa's complex societies and the ways they were organized? Think about your questions using at least two of these categories (or others that you can think of):

Categories		
government	trade	communication
religion	natural resources	other?

Example: *What religions did people in each society follow?*

Use the word bank to help write your questions:

- *What \_\_\_ did each society have?*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Word Bank				
food	shelter	safety	religion	climate
traditions	customs	language	culture	temperature
buildings	water	farming	tools	

As you travel to each archaeological site, keep the archaeologists' three questions and your own questions in mind. As you find answers, record them in your log on the next page. Use **artifacts**, **architecture**, and **written information** to help you!

### Observe

First, study images of artifacts, ruins, and landscapes from each society.

- **Sketch** an artifact or site that stands out to you.
- **Describe** the materials used and what the artifact tells you about daily life.

<b>Sentence Frames for Discussion:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>One artifact I found is a ____.</i></li><li>• <i>It is made of ____ and was used for ____.</i></li><li>• <i>This tells me that people in this society ____.</i></li></ul>
--	--



### Read

Research the history of each society using texts and artifacts.

- Look for answers to the guiding questions using your Ancient African Artifacts Packet.
- Take notes in your Archaeology Log.

Aksum (Axum)

Region and time period:

Climate/environment:

Archaeologist's question (choose one from the first page):

Question:	Answer:	Evidence/Artifact:

Other relevant information about this society:

Sketch your favorite artifact:

Mapungubwe

Region and time period:

Climate/environment:

Archaeologist's question (choose one from the first page):

Question:	Answer:	Evidence/Artifact:

Other relevant information about this society:

Sketch your favorite artifact:



Kilwa

Region and time period:

Climate/environment:

Archaeologist's question (choose one from the first page):

Question:	Answer:	Evidence/Artifact:

Other relevant information about this society:

Sketch your favorite artifact:

Djenné-Djeno (Jenne-Jeno)

Region and time period:

Climate/environment:

Archaeologist's question (choose one from the first page):

Question:	Answer:	Evidence/Artifact:

Other relevant information about this society:

Sketch your favorite artifact:

Connect

- Compare and contrast the complex societies based on your findings.
- Identify patterns and make connections to other civilizations or modern societies.

Key Terms	
<b>difference</b>	a quality that makes one person or thing unlike another
<b>similarity</b>	a quality that makes one person or thing like another

Compare and Contrast Complex African Societies

List key <u>differences</u> between the societies.	List key <u>similarities</u> . Star the most important one and explain why.

### Summarize Your Findings

As an archaeologist, it is your job to summarize your findings so that people can learn about these great societies.

- In 4–6 sentences, write an archaeological report (a summary using evidence) about what you've learned and about the answers to your questions.
- Use your notes to support your points.
- Include one similarity and one difference between the societies.
- Summarize how these societies adapted to their environments and developed unique cultures.

<b>Sentence Frames:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>One similarity among these complex societies is ____.</i></li> <li>• <i>A key difference between the societies is ____.</i></li> <li>• <i>In contrast to ____, ____ had ____.</i></li> <li>• <i>An artifact from the ____ society shows ____.</i></li> <li>• <i>This is important because ____.</i></li> </ul>
-------------------------	--

Word Bank		
Compare & Contrast	Technology & Artifacts	Society & Culture
similar / unlike	tools	government
same / different	pottery	religion
while	buildings	merchants
in contrast with	gold	farmers
something they shared was	trade	kings
on one hand / on the other hand	materials	trade routes
	ruins	environment
		protection

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Archaeology Background Letters (Bold Text)*

### Aksum (Axum)

Welcome, Archaeologists! We are glad you are here to help us! There are many questions about this amazing ancient civilization. Here's what we know so far:

#### A Powerful Kingdom

The kingdom of **Aksum** was founded in the **1st century CE** and was strongest between the **3rd and 6th centuries CE**. It was located on a **plateau** near the **Red Sea**, making it great for **farming, raising animals, and trade**.

#### The Capital City

The capital of Aksum was a **large city** with up to **20,000 people**. We found **palace ruins** and **burial sites of leaders**. One of the most **amazing** discoveries is the **stone pillars called stelae (STELL-ay)**. These tall, decorated monuments sometimes have writing in **Ge'ez, the Aksumite script**. Some are **100 feet tall**, showing advanced **engineering**.

#### Everyday Life

Away from the palaces, we found **simpler homes**. People used **pottery** and ate **fancy olive oil** from far away! We also found **gold, silver, and bronze coins** made by the kingdom.

#### Religion in Aksum

At first, Aksumites followed a **polytheistic religion**. The most important god was **Mahrem, the god of war and kings**. Later, in the **4th century CE**, King **Ezana** became **Christian** and made the kingdom Christian too. This led to the **Christian Church of Ethiopia**.

Good luck with your work! We can't wait to see what you find!

#### Text sources:

- Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Kingdom of Axum](#)" *World History Encyclopedia*. March 21.
- Urbanus, Jason. 2023. "[Africa's Merchant Kings](#)." *Archaeology Magazine*. July/August.

## Kilwa

### Welcome to Kilwa!

This **beautiful site** is on **Africa's east coast**, along the **Indian Ocean**. (Look at a map—you'll see Kilwa is an **island**!) Here's what we have learned so far:

### A Powerful City-State

Between the **12th and 15th centuries CE**, **Kilwa** was part of the **Swahili Coast civilization**. It had about **10,000 people** who lived by **farming, fishing, and trading**.

### The Sultan's Role

Kilwa was ruled by a **sultan**, who made **laws** and protected the people. The government also created **Kilwa coins** for **trade**. The people used **Arabic script** for **recordkeeping**.

### Grand Buildings

Kilwa's most unique feature was its **architecture**. Buildings were made from **coral** and decorated with **shells, pottery, and paint**. The **sultan's palace** had **large rooms, gardens, courtyards, and even an outdoor pool** with an ocean view!

### Religion in Kilwa

The people of Kilwa followed **Islam**. They studied religious books in **Arabic**. The most important building was the **Great Mosque of Kilwa**. There were **six mosques**, but this one was the largest.

Good luck, archaeologists! We are excited to see what you find!

### Text sources:

- Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Kilwa](#)" *World History Encyclopedia*. March 21.
- Noain Maura, María José. 2020. "[This abandoned East African city once controlled the medieval gold trade.](#)" *National Geographic*. September 3.



## Mapungubwe

Welcome to Mapungubwe! We need your help to learn more about this ancient site. Here's what we know:

### A Kingdom by the River

The **Mapungubwe Kingdom** was near the **Limpopo River** in **southern Africa**. The land was great for **farming** and **raising cattle**. Cattle were very important for **wealth**.

### The First Southern African State

Mapungubwe began in the **11th century CE** and lasted until the **13th century CE**. It was the **oldest organized state** in **southern Africa**, with about **5,000 people**.

### A Hilltop Palace

The **royal family** lived on **top of a high hill**. Building there required **great engineering skills**. Below, common people lived on **flat land**. They had **simpler homes** and ate **less food** than the royals. But they stored **extra grain** for trade and emergencies.

### No Written Records

Mapungubwe had **no writing**, so everything we know comes from **archaeology**. The people were skilled in **ironworking** and **pottery**. They also made **beautiful gold objects**. **Gold sheets** covered some items, showing **high skill**.

### Trade and Religion

Mapungubwe traded over **long distances**. We found **beads from India** and **pottery from China**. **Gold objects** found in royal **burial sites** suggest a belief in the **afterlife**, but we know little else about their **religion**.

Archaeologists, let's find out more!

#### Text sources:

- Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Mapungubwe](#)" *World History Encyclopedia*. March 15.
- South African History Online. 2011. "[Mapungubwe](#)." February 22.
- The MET Museum. 2001. "[Mapungubwe](#)." December 1.

## Djenné-Djeno (Jenne-Jeno)

Welcome to Djenné-Djeno! This is one of the **oldest** civilizations in **sub-Saharan Africa**. Here's what we have learned:

### An Ancient Settlement

Djenné-Djeno was founded around **250 BCE** in **West Africa**. It was located where the **Bani and Niger Rivers** meet. People survived by **fishing, farming, and raising animals**. They were also **early ironmakers**.

### A Growing City

Between **300 and 900 CE**, the city expanded. It had **many neighborhoods** stretching **for miles**. A **large wall** was built around it, but we don't know why. By this time, the city had **10,000 or more people**.

### A Peaceful Society?

Djenné-Djeno had **no palaces** or **rich homes**. This makes us think it was based on **cooperation and trade**, not kings or rulers. People grew **African rice** and lived in different areas for **pottery making** and **ironwork**.

### Amazing Art

The most special thing about Djenné-Djeno is its **art**. The people made **hundreds of small clay statues** called **terra-cotta figures**. These statues showed **people and animals** in a unique style.

### Religion and Statues

Statues were found in **household shrines** and places with **food offerings**. This suggests they were used for **religion**. Maybe people honored or **worshiped their ancestors**.

Archaeologists, let's discover more together!

#### Text sources:

- Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Djenne-Djenno](#)" *World History Encyclopedia*. April 12.
- Ancient Origins. 2023. "[Clay Wonders: The Handmade Figurines of Djenne-Djeno](#)." March 17.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Writing Systems in Ancient Africa*

In the diverse societies of ancient sub-Saharan Africa, people used many different types of scripts and writing systems. Writing was used for learning and prayer, commerce and law, and the recording of history. Read about three of these ancient writing systems below. As you read, annotate the article:

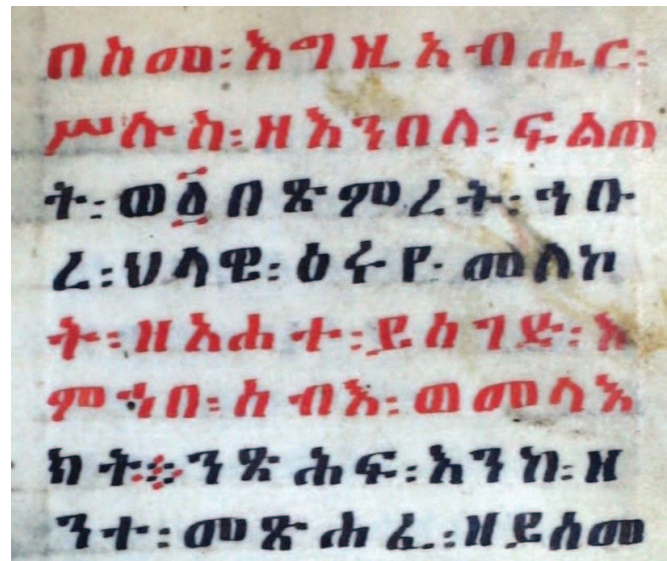
1. Single underline information about **who** used this type of writing.
2. Double underline information about **what the writing was used for**.
3. At the end, go back and explain one of your annotations with a note in the margin.

### #1: Ge'ez

Ge'ez is an early ancient script from Ethiopia. It is an alphabetic script. Inscriptions in Ge'ez were found at many archaeological sites from the Kingdom of Aksum. They told the histories of kings and praised their accomplishments.

Scribes were specially trained to write Ge'ez. They were respected individuals who created Christian holy books and healing scrolls with this writing. These books were valued by the community.

In ancient times, Ge'ez was related to the daily language spoken in Ethiopia. In modern Ethiopia, people no longer speak Ge'ez in daily life. But Ge'ez is still used in Ethiopian Christian prayer books and rituals.



Sample of Ge'ez writing (detail). Image from Miami University Libraries via Wikimedia Commons is in the public domain.

**#2: Nsibidi**

Nsibidi is an ancient system of writing used by several ethnic groups of West Africa. There are hundreds of symbols, and each represents an idea, an action, or a thing.

Nsibidi symbols do not connect to any particular spoken language. Instead they helped people communicate in symbols across several different languages.

In ancient times, knowledge of how to write or draw these symbols was specialized knowledge. The knowledge belonged to secret societies of elite men.

They used the symbols for trade and in religious ceremonies and rituals.

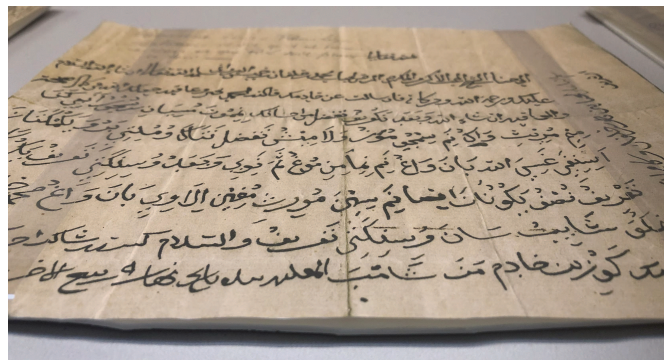
The beautiful geometric designs of Nsibidi writing can still be seen on fabrics, houses, artwork, and body tattoos in West Africa today.



Nsibidi ideographic characters on Ukara cloth. Image by Ukabia via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 3.0.

**#3: Arabic**

Arabic is an alphabetic writing system that is used by about a billion people throughout the world today. This includes many millions of African people. Originally Arabic script was developed to write the Arabic language. Later the script was adapted to write other languages. The African languages of Kiswahili and Hausa use Arabic writing.



Document in Kiswahili, Arabic alphabet. Image by Hispalois via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

Arabic writing was brought to sub-Saharan Africa in ancient times by Arabic-speaking traders and travelers. African merchants began to use Arabic writing for contracts and trade. Later, when they converted to Islam, merchants used Arabic for prayer and study. African Muslim teachers and imams (religious leaders) used Arabic writing to teach and inspire others.

During the 14th century, the West African city of Timbuktu developed as a great center for learning. Here, scribes and scholars used Arabic writing to preserve valuable knowledge about science, mathematics, medicine, nature, poetry, and religion.

**Text sources:**

- Smithsonian Institute, National Museum of African Art. 2020. "[In-Scribing Meaning: Writing and Graphic Systems in African Art](#)." December 20.
- Mark, Joshua. 2011. "[Writing](#)." *Ancient History Encyclopedia*, April 28.
- National Park Service. 2015. "[Nsibidi Symbols](#)." November 10.
- Abu-Haidar, Farida. 1997. "Introduction: Arabic Writing in Africa," *Research in African Languages*, vol 28, autumn, pp. 1–4.
- Jarus, Owen. 2013. "[Timbuktu, Historical Centre of Learning](#)," *LiveScience*, January 21.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Writing Systems in Ancient Africa (Key Terms)*

In the diverse societies of ancient sub-Saharan Africa, people used many different types of scripts and writing systems. Writing was used for learning and prayer, commerce and law, and the recording of history. Read about three of these ancient writing systems below. As you read, annotate the article:

1. Single underline information about **who** used this type of writing.
2. Double underline information about **what the writing was used for**.
3. At the end, go back and explain one of your annotations with a note in the margin.



## Key Terms

**alphabetic script** a system of writing using letters

**inscription** writing carved into a surface

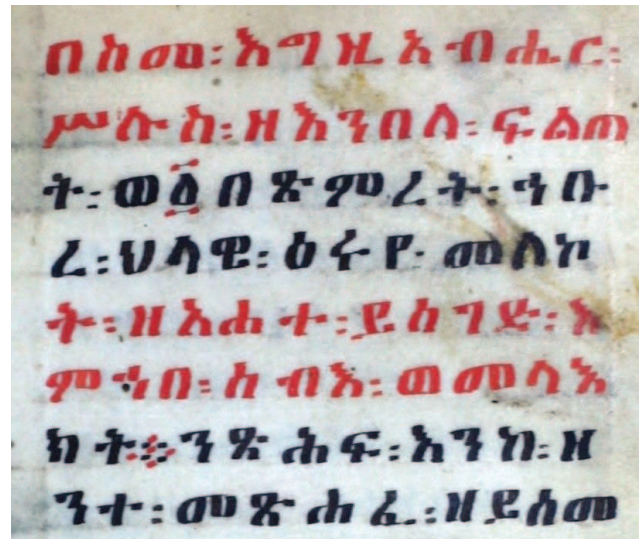
**scribes** people whose job it is to copy manuscripts or books

## #1: Ge'ez

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In ancient times Ge'ez was related to the daily language spoken in Ethiopia. In modern Ethiopia, people no longer speak Ge'ez in daily life. But Ge'ez is still used in Ethiopian Christian prayer books and rituals.



Sample of Ge'ez writing (detail). Image from Miami University Libraries via Wikimedia Commons is in the public domain.



**Key Terms**

<b>symbols</b>	pictures or signs that represent something
<b>ceremonies</b>	special events with rituals
<b>geometric designs</b>	shapes and patterns

**#2: Nsibidi**

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In ancient times, knowledge of how to write or draw these symbols was specialized knowledge. The knowledge belonged to secret societies of elite men. They used the symbols for trade and in religious **ceremonies** and rituals.

The beautiful **geometric designs** of Nsibidi writing can still be seen on fabrics, houses, artwork, and body tattoos in West Africa today.



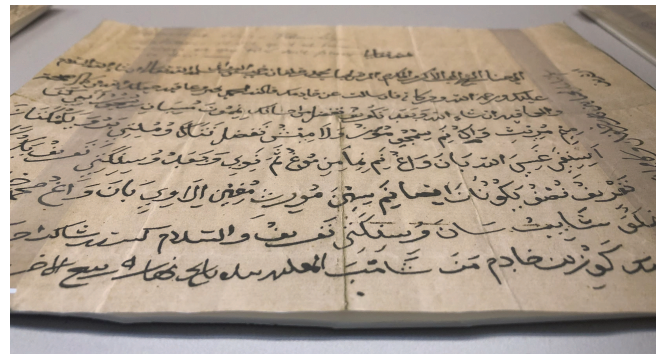
Nsibidi ideographic characters on Ukara cloth. Image by Ukabia via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 3.0.

## Key Terms

<b>merchants</b>	people who trade goods
<b>imams</b>	religious leaders in Islam
<b>scribes</b>	people whose job it is to copy manuscripts or books
<b>preserve</b>	to keep something safe

## #3: Arabic

Arabic is an alphabetic writing system that is used by about a billion people throughout the world today. This includes many millions of African people. Originally Arabic script was developed to write the Arabic language. Later the script was adapted to write other languages. The African languages of Kiswahili and Hausa use Arabic writing.



Document in Kiswahili, Arabic alphabet. Image by Hispalois via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

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During the 14th century, the West African city of Timbuktu developed as a great center for learning. Here, **scribes** and scholars used Arabic writing to **preserve** valuable knowledge about science, mathematics, medicine, nature, poetry, and religion.

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- Smithsonian Institute, National Museum of African Art. 2020. "[In-Scribing Meaning: Writing and Graphic Systems in African Art](#)." December 20.
- Mark, Joshua. 2011. "[Writing](#)." *Ancient History Encyclopedia*, April 28.
- National Park Service. 2015. "[Nsibidi Symbols](#)." November 10.
- Abu-Haidar, Farida. 1997. "Introduction: Arabic Writing in Africa," *Research in African Languages*, vol 28, autumn, pp. 1–4.
- Jarus, Owen. 2013. "[Timbuktu, Historical Centre of Learning](#)," *LiveScience*, January 21.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# The Role of Oral Tradition

## Part 1: Think-Pair-Share

**What is something you learned to do at home from a family member or in your community from an “elder?”**

Brainstorm this question by adding notes in the Graphic Organizer below. You will choose your best idea and bring it to class for an activity. Please note:

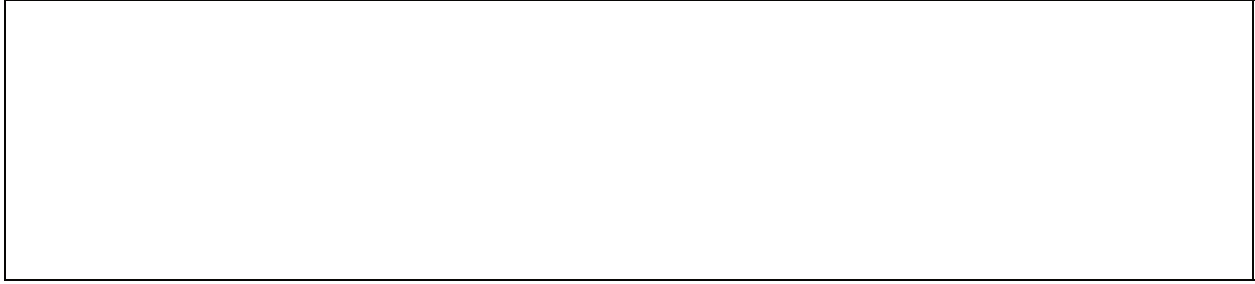
- It could be something you learned how to make, something you learned to do, or a tradition you keep that’s important to you.
- Keep in mind that an “elder” does not have to be old in years. It is someone who is older than you and has knowledge and experience.

Make a list here:

Things an elder taught you to do (skills, how to complete a task, creative projects, special interests, etc.):	The person who taught you (family member, teacher, coach, family friend, community leader, counselor, etc.):

Describe your best idea from the list above to share with the class:

Create a sketch or illustration of your best idea from the list above to share with the class:



## Part 2: Interview Your “Elder”

If possible, interview the person who taught you something valuable. If you cannot interview the specific person who taught you, try to talk with someone who also knows your elder and can help you answer these questions.

### Suggested questions for the interview:

- You taught me \_\_\_\_\_. (how to make.../how to...) Why was it important to you that I learned how to do this?
- How did you teach me to do this?
  - What was the hardest part of teaching this to me?
  - What was the most enjoyable part of teaching this to me?
- What is your favorite part about doing this activity?
- Is this skill or activity something that has been passed down in our family or community?
- How has this skill changed over time, if at all?
- Are there any stories or memories connected to teaching or doing this activity?
- Why do you think it's important for me (or others) to learn this?

**Your notes and takeaways:**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *West African Oral Tradition One-Pager*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Present-to-Past Connection**  
A person similar to a griot today is:  
  
because:

One **SIMILARITY**  
between griots  
and scribes

One **DIFFERENCE**  
between griots  
and scribes

**Griots and  
the West  
African Oral  
Tradition**

Draw a picture or symbol  
for a griot (or import one  
from an online search).

An insight I gained about the  
Cluster 2 Supporting Question

A griot was powerful because...





Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *The Role of Oral Tradition (Sentence Frames)*

### Part 1: Think-Pair-Share

**What is something you learned to do at home  
from a family member or in your community from an “elder?”**

Brainstorm this question by adding notes in the Graphic Organizer below. You will choose your best idea and bring it to class for an activity. Please note:

- It could be something you learned how to make, something you learned to do, or a tradition you keep that’s important to you.
- Keep in mind that an “elder” does not have to be old in years. It is someone who is older than you and has knowledge and experience.

Make a list here:

Things an elder taught you to do (skills, how to complete a task, creative projects, special interests, etc.):	The person who taught you (family member, teacher, coach, family friend, community leader, counselor, etc.):
• <i>Example: How to make bread</i>	• <i>Example: My grandmother</i>

Describe your best idea from the list above to share with the class:

Sentence frames: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>I learned how to ___ from ___.</i></li><li>• <i>This is important to me because ___.</i></li></ul>

Create a sketch or illustration of your best idea from the list above to share with the class:



**Part 2: Interview Your “Elder”**

If possible, interview the person who taught you something valuable. If you cannot interview the specific person who taught you, try to talk with someone who also knows your elder and can help you answer these questions.

- Think about the questions you will ask in the language of your elder, and practice asking the questions in the home language of your elder, if you speak it.
- Add your notes and takeaways in whichever language is easiest to document during the interview. Then add notes in English to share in class.

**Suggested questions for the interview:**

- You taught me \_\_\_\_\_. (how to make.../how to...) Why was it important to you that I learned how to do this?
- How did you teach me to do this?
  - What was the hardest part of teaching this to me?
  - What was the most enjoyable part of teaching this to me?
- What is your favorite part about doing this activity?
- Is this skill or activity something that has been passed down in our family or community?
- How has this skill changed over time, if at all?
- Are there any stories or memories connected to teaching or doing this activity?
- Why do you think it's important for me (or others) to learn this?

**Your notes and takeaways:**



- *What I learned:*
- *You taught me by...*
- *The hardest part was...*
- *The most fun part was...*
- *A story or memory:*
- *Why it's important:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Cluster 2 Formative Assessment Task***Part 1:** Observe and Analyze

**Directions:** Analyze the two primary sources below. Using bullet points for all sections, take general notes in the Graphic Organizer below, then answer a few analysis questions.

Artifact #1:	Artifact #2:
 <p data-bbox="276 1289 724 1377">A griot performs in Diffa, Niger. Image by Roland via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0.</p>	 <p data-bbox="912 1247 1328 1335">Tombstone of Princess Aisha of Kilwa, c. 1360. Image courtesy of African History Extra.</p>
<p><b>Description:</b> A modern-day griot performs at Diffa, Niger, West Africa. His instrument is likely a gurmi. Griots pass knowledge down from one generation to the next by memorizing and sharing oral histories, songs, and traditions.</p>	<p><b>Description:</b> Tombstone of princess Aisha of Kilwa, c. 1360. The Swahili stone-carved tombstone, bearing Arabic inscriptions, showcases the use of written records to record important history.</p>

General Observations:	Inferences (Conclusions):
Artifact #1:	Artifact #1:
Artifact #2:	Artifact #2:

**Analysis Questions:**

1. What do these artifacts show about the different ways history was preserved in sub-Saharan Africa?

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2. How might someone living in these societies view the importance of oral and written traditions?

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3. How might an outsider (e.g., an Arab trader or European explorer) view these traditions? Distinguish between fact and opinion in these perspectives. Use the artifacts as evidence.

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[illegible]

**Part 3:** Continue the Inquiry

**Directions:** If you were to continue researching, what would you still want to know? Brainstorm two new questions below that are related to your learning from this cluster.

1.

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2.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Cluster 2 Formative Assessment Task (Sentence Starters)***Part 1:** Observe and Analyze

**Directions:** Analyze the two primary sources below. Using bullet points for all sections, take general notes in the Graphic Organizer below, then answer a few analysis questions.

Artifact #1:	Artifact #2:
 <p data-bbox="276 1289 724 1381">A griot performs in Diffa, Niger. Image by Roland via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0.</p>	 <p data-bbox="912 1247 1328 1339">Tombstone of Princess Aisha of Kilwa, c. 1360. Image courtesy of African History Extra.</p>
<p><b>Description:</b> A modern-day griot performs at Diffa, Niger, West Africa. His instrument is likely a gurmi. Griots pass knowledge down from one generation to the next by memorizing and sharing oral histories, songs, and traditions.</p>	<p><b>Description:</b> Tombstone of princess Aisha of Kilwa, c. 1360. The Swahili stone-carved tombstone, bearing Arabic inscriptions, showcases the use of written records to record important history.</p>

General Observations:	Inferences (Conclusions):
Sentence starters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>I see...</i></li><li>• <i>The setting is...</i></li><li>• <i>The person is...</i></li><li>• <i>The stone has...</i></li></ul>	Sentence starters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>This suggests that...</i></li><li>• <i>It shows that ___ was important because...</i></li><li>• <i>The setting shows...</i></li></ul>
Artifact #1:	Artifact #1:
Artifact #2:	Artifact #2:

Analysis Questions:

1. What do these artifacts show about the different ways history was preserved in sub-Saharan Africa?

- *This artifact shows \_\_\_ traditions in ancient Africa.*

2. How might someone living in these societies view the importance of oral and written traditions?

- *Someone living in this society may think oral and written traditions were important because...*

3. How might an outsider (e.g., an Arab trader or European explorer) view these traditions? Distinguish between fact and opinion in these perspectives. Use the artifacts as evidence.

- *An outsider might think \_\_\_ after seeing oral history shared and/or written records.*

Part 2: Make a Claim with Evidence

**Directions:** Based on your observations, make a claim about the importance of oral and written traditions in ancient sub-Saharan Africa. Use the sentence frames and word bank to help draft your claim.

- Use at least two pieces of evidence from the artifact (symbols, materials, setting, craftsmanship) and reasoning to support your claim.
- Write a short paragraph (4–6 sentences) reflection.

**Sentence Frames:**

- *Both \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ were important in keeping history alive in ancient Africa.*
- *In West Africa, griots shared history through \_\_\_.*
- *In East Africa, people used \_\_\_ to write down important names.*
- *These artifacts show African societies used different ways to remember \_\_\_.*

Word Bank				
griots	memory	storytelling	oral history	history
oral tradition	written records	tombstone	Arabic writing	

**Draft your claim here:**

**Two pieces of evidence from the artifact to support your claim** (describe your observations and inferences):

1.

2.

**Write your response here** (4–6 sentences):

**Part 3:** Continue the Inquiry

**Directions:** If you were to continue researching, what would you still want to know? Brainstorm two new questions below that are related to your learning from this cluster using the sentence starters below and/or the question models on your **Inquire Language and Literacy Builder** handout.

- *How did \_\_\_ help preserve history in ancient Africa?*
- *How did \_\_\_ play a role in people's lives?*
- *How are oral traditions and \_\_\_ different or similar?*

1.

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2.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Unit 3, Cluster 3 Inquiry Chart*

<b>Unit EQ</b>	How do we best tell the stories of ancient African societies and the factors that shaped them?
<b>Cluster SQ</b>	<b>Which role—the ironsmith, the farmer, or the king—do you think had the greatest influence on ancient West African societies?</b>
<b>What questions will we ask?</b>	

What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
<b>Lesson 15:</b> We looked at pictures of an ironsmith, a farmer, and a king and shared our ideas about which one would be most important in starting a new civilization.	
<b>Lesson 16:</b> We investigated evidence about the roles of ironsmiths, farmers, and kings in ancient West African societies to determine which was most significant while also recognizing how these occupations were interconnected and essential for a complex society to thrive.	





Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence: Occupations and Society in Ancient Ghana

**Question #1:** What did occupational specialization and social structure look like in ancient West African societies?

As you read, underline any evidence that might answer the inquiry supporting question. Begin to think: What are some of the specialized occupations you find evidence for here?

Evidence #1:

“Kumbi Saleh [a city in the ancient West African empire of Ghana excavated by archeologists] had at least two large cemeteries, which archaeologists have used to estimate the city’s population. They think the town had 15,000 to 20,000 inhabitants... When the archaeologists excavated the cemeteries, they found iron objects including knives, lances, nails, farming tools, and a pair of scissors.”

**Text source:** Conrad, David. 2005. *Empires of Medieval West Africa: Ghana, Mali, and Songhay*. Facts on File, p. 72.

From the above paragraph, list:

Possible Specialized Occupations	Evidence

Evidence #2:

Al-Bakri [an Arab geographer who lived at the time of the Ghana empire] said the king had a palace and a number of domed dwellings that were surrounded with an enclosure, like a city wall...The biggest and best building was for the king, who was the head of a very large family with many wives and concubines (women who lived much like wives but were not legally married to the king), scores of children, and dozens of relatives. Some buildings would be for individual wives, each with her children, relatives, servants, and slaves. There would be quarters for guests, palace guards, messengers, and for other servants and slaves. There would also be granaries, stables, toilet and bath enclosures, places to cook in wet weather (otherwise they cooked outside), and other storage and utility buildings. Before Islam came to the Ghana Empire, the kings practiced only the traditional Soninke religion.

**Text source:** Conrad, David. 2005. *Empires of Medieval West Africa: Ghana, Mali, and Songhay*. Facts on File, p. 72–73.

From the above paragraph, list:

Possible Specialized Occupations	Evidence

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

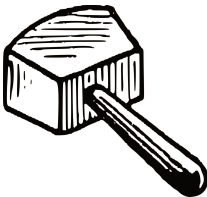
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence: The Benefits of Occupations

Question #2: How did ironsmiths, farmers, and kings benefit their societies?

Remember, a *benefit* does something *good* for the community or helps the community in some way.

How did ironsmiths *benefit* their societies?



Read:	In a few words, describe how ironsmiths benefited their societies:	List evidence from the text to back up your statement:
<p>“For centuries, tools made from iron have helped Africans forage, hunt, and farm the soil, making prosperity possible through efficient and effective management of household and agricultural chores. Knives, hoes, plows, sickles, machetes, and axes have long been among the blacksmith’s most valuable creations. In particular, short- and long-handled hoes for cultivating and sickles for harvesting have enabled African peoples to survive and thrive. Hoe blade designs vary widely from culture to culture depending upon climate, terrain, soil type, and crop.”</p>		

Text source: Smithsonian National Museum of African Art. "[Striking Iron: The Art of African Blacksmiths](#)." (adapted quote)

How did farmers *benefit* their societies?



Read:	In a few words, describe how farmers benefited their societies:	List evidence from the text to back up your statement:
<p><b>Source #1:</b> “African rice has been cultivated for 3,500 years. Between 1500 and 800 BCE, <i>Oryza glaberrima</i> (the scientific name for African rice) was spread from its original center, the Niger River delta, and extended to Senegal...African rice helped Africa conquer its famine of 1203.”</p> <p><b>Source #2:</b> [Farming in ancient West and Central Africa] “brought an increase in the scale of food production and in its quality...One of the most valuable of the tree crops was the oil palm...The preparation of palm fruits to make cooking oil enhanced the nutritional quality of the diet with both proteins and vitamins, further enhancing health and leading to population growth.”</p>		

**Text source:** Birmingham, David. 1998. “[Central Africa: Early society and economy](#).” Britannica Online. Updated April 13, 2025.

How did kings *benefit* their societies?



Read:	In a few words, describe how kings benefited their societies:	List evidence from the text to back up your statement:
<p><b>Source #1:</b> Al-Idrisi [an Arab visitor to the empire of Ghana] was impressed by the “righteousness” of Ghana’s ruler, who by that time had become a Muslim. Al-Idrisi describes a daily procession to uphold justice in which the king and his corps of army commanders went on horseback every morning through the streets of the town. Anyone who has suffered injustice or misfortune confronts [the king] and stays there until the wrong is remedied.”</p> <p><b>Source #2:</b> The civil government [of Ghana] was backed by a large, powerful army...It is said that the king of Ghana could put 200,000 soldiers into the field. Of these, 40,000 were archers, and some of the troops rode small horses...Other weapons included swords, long spears, and short throwing javelins.</p>		

**Text source:** Conrad, David. 2005. *Empires of Medieval West Africa: Ghana, Mali, and Songhay*. Facts on File, p. 76.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Evidence: Reputations of Three Occupations*

Use the **artifacts** to find **evidence** for the *reputations* of the ironsmith, farmer, and king.

### **Artifact: The Ironsmith**

Bronze metal staff from the Yoruba people of West Africa



A leader with a high reputation would hold a staff like this one for ceremonies or other important occasions. This staff shows Ogun, the god of iron in several ancient West African cultures. In ancient Yoruba myth, Ogun brought ironmaking to humans. The iron tools of Ogun were associated with a successful hunter, a powerful leader, and a good harvest for the farmer.

Staff Finial of Ogun. Image courtesy of New Orleans Museum of Art.

## Examining Artifacts: The Ironsmith

<b>Describe what you see:</b>	<b>Do you see...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Objects?</li><li>• Text?</li><li>• Symbols?</li><li>• Facial expressions?</li><li>• Natural materials?</li></ul>
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<b>Use the description to write what you <i>think</i> this artifact represents:</b>	<b>What was the <i>reputation</i> of the ironsmith, according to this artifact?</b>
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## Artifact: The Farmer

Carved wooden headdress of the Bamana people of West Africa, worn at a harvest festival

To the Bamana people of West Africa, “farming is the most important and noblest profession.” A dancer would wear this headdress on her head at a harvest celebration. The long horns symbolize the tall stalks of the millet crop. The mythical creature, similar to an antelope, is a *chi wara*. In ancient Bamana myth, the *chi wara* taught agriculture to humans. The female *chi wara* is carrying a baby on its back the way a female farmer would carry her baby in the fields.



Female Headdress (Chiwara). Image courtesy of The Fralin Museum of Art at the University of Virginia. Used with permission.

**Text source:** The Fralin Museum of Art at the University of Virginia. [African Art: Aesthetics and Meaning](#).

## Examining Artifacts: The Farmer

<b>Describe what you see:</b>	<b>Do you see...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Objects?</li><li>• Text?</li><li>• Symbols?</li><li>• Facial expressions?</li><li>• Natural materials?</li></ul>
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<b>Use the description to write what you <i>think</i> this artifact represents:</b>	<b>What was the <i>reputation</i> of the farmer, according to this artifact?</b>
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## Artifact/Cultural Practice: The King

Burial of a king in ancient Ghana, Soninke people of West Africa

“When their king dies, they construct over the place where his tomb will be an enormous dome of saj wood. Then they bring him on a bed covered with a few carpets and cushions and place him inside the dome. At his side they place his ornaments, his weapons, and the vessels from which he used to eat and drink, filled with various kinds of food and beverages. They place there too the men who used to serve his meals. They close the door of the dome and cover it with mats and furnishings. Then the people assemble, who heap earth upon it until it becomes like a big hillock.”

**Text source:** Birmingham, David. 1998. “[Central Africa: Early society and economy](#).” Britannica Online. Updated April 13, 2025.

## Examining Artifacts: The King

<b>Describe the artifacts and actions (practices) you read about from this first-hand primary source observation:</b>	<b>Did this writer observe...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Objects?</li><li>• Text?</li><li>• Symbols?</li><li>• Emotions?</li><li>• Natural materials?</li></ul>
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<b>Use the description to write what you <i>think</i> this set of cultural practices represents:</b>	<b>What was the <i>reputation</i> of the king, according to these practices?</b>
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Who Had the Most Significant Role in West African Society?*

**Directions:** Using bullet points, fill out the Graphic Organizers below in order to prepare for a short-answer response.

**Reflect on what you have learned about ancient West African society.**

1. How was society structured? What occupations did people have?

2. How did the occupations of farmer, ironsmith, and king benefit society?

3. What was the reputation of the farmer, the ironsmith, and the king?

**Think about what made someone essential in ancient West Africa. Brainstorm your own criteria for judging their importance:**

- What made someone essential in ancient West Africa?
- What criteria will you use to judge?

What evidence do you have that the farmer, ironsmith, or king followed the criteria above?

Occupation	Criteria <i>(Why are they important?)</i>	Evidence <i>(What shows their importance?)</i>
farmer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
ironsmith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
king	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>

Use your notes to make an argument in response to this analysis question:

- Who played the most significant role in the development of ancient West African societies: the ironsmith, the farmer, or the king?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Cluster 3 Formative Assessment Task*

**Directions:** At the end of this lesson, reflect on what you have learned about the roles of different occupations in ancient West African societies. Your task is to think about which role—the ironsmith, the farmer, or the king—you believe had the greatest influence on the organization and values of society.

Based on what you have learned, which role—the ironsmith, the farmer, or the king—do you think had the greatest influence on ancient West African societies? Defend your answer with at least two pieces of evidence from the lesson or resources we’ve used.

- Your response should be one short paragraph.
- Explain your reasoning and provide evidence to support your choice.

#### **Example Structure for Student Responses:**

- **Topic Sentence:** Introduce the topic of the paragraph.
- **Claim:** Make a solid argument in response to the Supporting Question.
- **Evidence & Reasoning:** Provide two examples from your learning during the In-Depth Inquiry, and explain how the evidence supports your claim.
- **Conclusion:** Summarize how people’s adaptations show their ability to overcome challenges.





Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Cluster 3 Formative Assessment Task (Sentence Starters)*

**Directions:**

At the end of this lesson, think about what you learned about different jobs in ancient West African societies: ironsmiths, farmers, and kings.

Choose one job that you think was the most important in shaping society. Then write one short paragraph using the sentence starters below.

**1. Topic Sentence:**

*In ancient West Africa, people had different important jobs like ironsmiths, farmers, and kings.*

**2. Claim—State your opinion clearly:**

*I think the most important role in ancient West African society was the (ironsmith/farmer/king) because...*

**3. Evidence & Reasoning—Support your opinion with examples:**

*One reason is that...*

*This job helped society by...*

*Another example is...*

*This shows that...*

**4. Conclusion—Restate your main idea:**

*Because of these reasons, the (ironsmith/farmer/king) had the greatest influence on society.*



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Who Had the Most Significant Role in West African Society?* (Word Bank)

**Directions:** Using bullet points, fill out the Graphic Organizers below in order to prepare for a short-answer response.

**Reflect on what you have learned about ancient West African society:**

1. How was society structured? What occupations did people have?

*In ancient West African society, people had various jobs like...*

2. How did the occupations of farmer, ironsmith, and king benefit society?

Word Bank			
growing food	making tools and weapons	keeping people safe	creating laws
organizing trade			

*The farmer helped by...*

*The ironsmith was important because...*

*The king helped society by...*

3. What was the reputation of the farmer, the ironsmith, and the king?

Word Bank			
respected	powerful	skilled	hardworking
important for survival			

*The farmer was known as...*

*The ironsmith was seen as...*

*The king was respected because...*

**Think about what made someone essential in ancient West Africa. Brainstorm your own criteria for judging their importance:**

- What made someone essential in ancient West Africa?
- What criteria will you use to judge?

*Someone was essential if they...*

What evidence do you have that the farmer, ironsmith, or king followed the criteria above?

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Criteria</b> (Why are they important?)	<b>Evidence</b> (What shows their importance?)
farmer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
ironsmith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
king	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>

Use your notes to make an argument in response to this analysis question:

- Who played the most significant role in the development of ancient West African societies: the ironsmith, the farmer, or the king?

*I think the \_\_\_\_\_ (ironsmith/farmer/king) was the most important role in West African society because...*

*They were important for....*

*One piece of evidence is...*



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Unit 3, Cluster 4 Inquiry Chart*

<b>Unit EQ</b>	How do we best tell the stories of ancient African societies and the factors that shaped them?
<b>Cluster SQ</b>	<b>How did Africa's geography influence local and global trade?</b>
<b>What questions will we ask?</b>	

What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
<b>Lesson 18:</b> We studied a series of maps in order to predict why certain trade routes developed while considering geography and modes of transportation.	
<b>Lesson 19:</b> We completed readings on major ancient African trade networks using the 3 reads strategy while categorizing our notes.	

What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
<b>Lesson 20:</b> We took on the role of an ancient consumer and completed a “product review” to better understand the importance of trade in ancient sub-Saharan Africa.	
<b>Lesson 21:</b> We completed a reading on the slave trade that was prominent on the Swahili Coast and reflected on our emotions with this new knowledge.	
<b>Lesson 22:</b> We completed a webquest to learn about the reliance on camel caravans as a part of the trans-Saharan trade network.	
<b>Lesson 23:</b> We analyzed two contrasting sources, noticing differences of purpose and perspective, in order to identify effects of the ancient sub-Saharan trade on the Empire of Ghana/Wagadou.	
<b>Lesson 24:</b> We made a claim to explain how Africa's geography influenced its trade networks and the effects on local and global societies.	




Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The Geography of African Trade Networks

1. Red Sea Trade Network

 Adulis (Eritrea)	Berenice (Egypt)	Berbera (Somalia—ancient name was Malao)	Aksum (Ethiopia)
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**Directions:** Pin these locations on your map. Then take notes in the Graphic Organizer below.

Observations	Inferences	Ideas & Questions
What do you notice or observe about this starred African trading center?	What do you think or infer would make it a good place for trade?	List out any additional insights and/or questions below.

Make a Prediction
How do you predict this trade network functioned to meet the needs or wants of communities?

2. Swahili Coast (Indian Ocean) Trade Network


 Mogadishu (Somalia)	Mombasa (Kenya)	Kilwa (Tanzania)	Madagascar	Calicut Port (Kerala State, India)
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**Directions:** Pin these locations on your map. Then take notes in the Graphic Organizer below.

Observations	Inferences	Ideas & Questions
What do you notice or observe about this starred African trading center?	What do you think or infer would make it a good place for trade?	List out any additional insights and/or questions below.

Make a Prediction
How do you predict this trade network functioned to meet the needs or wants of communities?

3. Trans-Saharan Trade Network

 Awdaghust (nearby modern location to look up is Kiffa, Mauritania)	Bambuk Goldfields (nearby modern location is Bakel, Senegal)	Djenne (Mali)	Tadmakka (nearby modern location is village of Essouk, Mali)	Sijilmasa (Morocco)
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**Directions:** Pin these locations on your map. Then take notes in the Graphic Organizer below.

Observations	Inferences	Ideas & Questions
What do you notice or observe about this starred African trading center?	What do you think or infer would make it a good place for trade?	List out any additional insights and/or questions below.

Make a Prediction
How do you predict this trade network functioned to meet the needs or wants of communities?




Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The Geography of African Trade Networks (Word Banks)

1. Red Sea Trade Network

 Adulis (Eritrea)	Berenice (Egypt)	Berbera (Somalia—ancient name was Malao)	Aksum (Ethiopia)
---	---------------------	--	---------------------

**Directions:** Pin these locations on your map. Then take notes in the Graphic Organizer below.



Observations What do you notice or observe about this starred African trading center?	Inferences This place might be good for trade. Why?	Ideas & Questions List out any additional insights and/or questions below.
Write in short phrases or words. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>This place might be good for trade because...</i></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>I wonder...</i></li></ul>

Word Bank		
spices	ivory	gold
boats	Arabian Peninsula	Egyptian gods

**Make a Prediction**

How do you think this trade network helped meet the needs or wants of the people?

*I predict that the \_\_\_\_ (Adulis/Berenice/Berbera/Aksum) trade network worked by...*

*I think the \_\_\_\_ (Adulis/Berenice/Berbera/Aksum) trade network helped by...*

*I believe the \_\_\_\_ (Adulis/Berenice/Berbera/Aksum) trade network worked well because...*

**2. Swahili Coast (Indian Ocean) Trade Network**

 Mogadishu (Somalia)	Mombasa (Kenya)	Kilwa (Tanzania)	Madagascar	Calicut Port (Kerala State, India)
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**Directions:** Pin these locations on your map. Then take notes in the Graphic Organizer below.



<b>Observations</b> What do you notice or observe about this starred African trading center?	<b>Inferences</b> This place might be good for trade. Why?	<b>Ideas &amp; Questions</b> List out any additional insights and/or questions below.
Write in short phrases or words. •	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>This place might be good for trade because...</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>I wonder...</i></li> </ul>

Word Bank		
textiles	spices	ivory
India	Arabia	boats
ports		

**Make a Prediction**

How do you think this trade network helped meet the needs or wants of the people?


*I predict that the \_\_\_\_ (Mogadishu/Mombasa/Kilwa/Madagascar/Calicut Port) trade network worked by...*

*I think the \_\_\_\_ (Mogadishu/Mombasa/Kilwa/Madagascar/Calicut Port) trade network helped by...*

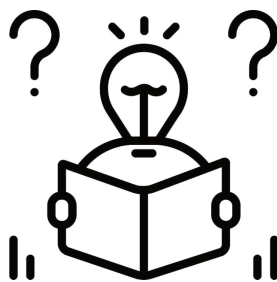
*I believe the \_\_\_\_ (Mogadishu/Mombasa/Kilwa/Madagascar/Calicut Port) trade network worked well because...*



**3. Trans-Saharan Trade Network**

 Awdaghust (nearby modern location to look up is Kiffa, Mauritania)	Bambuk Goldfields (nearby modern location is Bakel, Senegal)	Djenne (Mali)	Tadmakka (nearby modern location is village of Essouk, Mali)	Sijilmasa (Morocco)
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**Directions:** Pin these locations on your map. Then take notes in the Graphic Organizer below.



<b>Observations</b> What do you notice or observe about this starred African trading center?	<b>Inferences</b> This place might be good for trade. Why?	<b>Ideas &amp; Questions</b> List out any additional insights and/or questions below.
Write in short phrases or words. •	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>This place might be good for trade because...</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>I wonder...</i></li> </ul>

Word Bank		
camel caravans	salt	gold
West Africa	North Africa	desert
trade routes		

**Make a Prediction**

How do you think this trade network helped meet the needs or wants of the people?

*I predict that the \_\_\_ (Awdaghust/Bambuk Goldfields/Djenne/Tadmakka/Sijilmasa) trade network worked by...*

*I think the \_\_\_ (Awdaghust/Bambuk Goldfields/Djenne/Tadmakka/Sijilmasa) trade network helped by...*

*I believe the \_\_\_ (Awdaghust/Bambuk Goldfields/Djenne/Tadmakka/Sijilmasa) trade network worked well because...*

**Image sources:**

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## *Reading: African Trade Networks*

### Primary Document #1: The Red Sea Trade Network

#### Background about the author and text:

This account of the Red Sea trade routes was written by a Greek sailor or ship captain living in the 1st century CE. It is the oldest detailed description of African trade that has been found so far. The name of the author is unknown, but historians think he was a Greek person living in Egypt. The original name of the book is the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*. That is what ancient Greeks called the Red Sea. A “periplus” is an account of sea voyages in foreign lands. This author described daily life and trading customs along the Red Sea coast in northeast Africa.

#### Adapted Text

1. On the mainland, opposite Mountain Island, lies Adulis. It is a fair-sized village. From Adulis to the city of the Aksumites is a 5-day journey. African traders bring all the ivory from the lands beyond the Nile to Aksum, and from there to Adulis.

Before the harbor lies Mountain Island. Ships coming to Adulis now anchor here because of attacks from the land.

Items that are imported into Adulis for Africans to buy are plain cloth made in Egypt, sheets of soft copper used for cooking utensils, bracelets and anklets for the women, small axes and swords, wine from Italy (not much), and olive oil (not much). For the king, gold and silver plates are also **imported**. Items that are **exported** out of Adulis are ivory, tortoiseshell, and rhinoceros horn.

2. Beyond Adulis, following the coast to the south, is the Cape of Spices. African farmers produce cinnamon and frankincense there to sell and export.
3. To the south there is another market-town called Opone. The same things are imported as already mentioned. And from Opone, slaves of the better sort are exported, which are brought to Egypt in increasing numbers. Also a great quantity of tortoiseshell is exported, better than that found elsewhere.

**Text source:** [The Voyage Around the Erythraean Sea](#) by Silk Road Seattle.

## Primary Document #2: The Swahili Coast/Indian Ocean Trade Routes

### Background about the author and text:

This account of trade on the Swahili coast was written by Ibn Battuta. Ibn Battuta was a scholar, judge, and traveler from Tangiers, Morocco, in North Africa. He lived in the 14th century. He was a Muslim, and his special reason for traveling was to learn how Muslims lived in other parts of the Islamic world. Historians consider him one of the greatest travelers of history because he went to so many places and wrote a detailed book about his experiences. Although he did not engage in trade as a career, he traveled with merchants and observed the customs of trade in those places. Ibn Battuta traveled down the East African coast by ship around 1330 and later wrote this account.

### Adapted Text

1. We sailed for 15 days and came to Maqdashaw. (The modern name is Mogadishu, Somalia.) This is a town of enormous size. Its inhabitants are merchants possessed of vast resources. They own large numbers of camels and quantities of sheep. In this place, African people make excellent woven fabrics named for the town that are unequaled. These fabrics are exported to Egypt and elsewhere.

The people of Maqdashaw have a custom. When a vessel reaches the harbor, small boats come out to it. In each small boat, there are young men of the town, each one bringing a covered platter containing food. One of the young men presents it to one of the merchants on the ship, saying, "This is my guest." The merchant, when he leaves the boat, goes to the house of his host.

2. We came to the island of Mambasa, a large island 2-days journey. (The modern name is Mombasa, Kenya.) The island has banana, lemon, and citron trees. Their food consists mostly of bananas and fish. They are Muslims, pious, honorable, and upright, and their mosques are of wood, admirably constructed.
3. We stayed one night on this island and sailed on to the city of Kulwa, a large city on the seacoast. (Today it is a historic site called Kilwa.) The city of Kulwa is one of the finest and most substantially built towns. [Their sultan (or local ruler) is known for] the multitude of his gifts and acts of generosity. The items that he and his subjects trade away are mostly ivory; they seldom give gold.

**Text source:** Gibb, H.A.R. (ed.) 1962. *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354*. Cambridge University Press.

## Primary Document #3: The Trans-Saharan Trade Network

### Background about the author and text:

This account of trade networks in West Africa and across the Sahara Desert was written by a geographer and historian known as al-Bakri. He was from a Spanish Arabic family who lived his whole life in Islamic Spain. Though he did not travel himself, historians believe he talked to many travelers and merchants and collected their accounts. In 1068 he published an important book called *Book of Highways and Kingdoms*. It is the most detailed contemporary account that historians have of the West African empire of Ghana written during the medieval period. Here he describes the market in one large West African town.

### Adapted Text:

In Awdaghust there is one main mosque and many smaller ones. All are well attended. West African people grow wheat there by digging with hoes and watering with buckets. Only the kings and the rich eat wheat. The rest of the people eat **sorghum**. They also produce excellent cucumbers, and there are a few small fig trees and some vines. There are plantations of **henna** that produce a large crop to sell.

Awdaghust possesses wells with water. Cattle and sheep are so numerous that for a mithqal one may buy 10 rams or more. (A mithqal was a coin used in the Islamic world.) Honey too is very abundant, brought from the land of the Sudan and sold in the market. The people of Awdaghust enjoy extensive benefits and huge wealth. The market there is at all times full of people. Due to the great crowd and the noise of voices, it is almost impossible for a man to hear the words of one sitting beside him. Their sales are in gold, and they have no silver. There are handsome buildings and fine houses.

- **sorghum**: a nutritious grain first grown in Africa (also called millet)
- **henna**: a plant that makes a beautiful red dye used for hair and body paint since ancient times

**Text source:** [Kingdom of Ghana - Primary Source Documents](#). Boston University Pardee School of Global Studies.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Ancient African Trade Analysis Sheet***3 Reads Activity****Directions:** Follow the steps of Observe, Read, and Connect.**Observe:** Read the document once through for an overall understanding (the “gist”).**Read:** Read again, and record your answers for the “what, who, why, and how” questions.**Connect:** Read once more, and connect the excerpt to the larger historical context, taking relevant notes. Use the last box to write any of your own thoughts, questions, or observations that do not fit into these boxes.

	What?	Who?	Why & How?	Observations & Questions
	<p>List all items you found that were produced, sold, or traded in this African region.</p> <p>If possible, mark (I) for import and (E) for export.</p>	<p>List individuals or groups of people who were involved in the trade of this African region.</p>	<p>Explain why these trades took place and how they were supported by factors like transportation, communication, money, etc.</p>	<p>List any additional observations, inferences, or questions below.</p>
<b>#1: Red Sea Trade Network</b>				



	What?	Who?	Why & How?	Observations & Questions
	<p>List all items you found that were produced, sold, or traded in this African region.</p> <p>If possible, mark (I) for import and (E) for export.</p>	<p>List individuals or groups of people who were involved in the trade of this African region.</p>	<p>Explain why these trades took place and how they were supported by factors like transportation, communication, money, etc.</p>	<p>List any additional observations, inferences, or questions below.</p>
<b>#2: Swahili Coast/ Indian Ocean Trade Routes</b>				

	What?	Who?	Why & How?	Observations & Questions
	<p>List all items you found that were produced, sold, or traded in this African region.</p> <p>If possible, mark (I) for import and (E) for export.</p>	<p>List individuals or groups of people who were involved in the trade of this African region.</p>	<p>Explain why these trades took place and how they were supported by factors like transportation, communication, money, etc.</p>	<p>List any additional observations, inferences, or questions below.</p>
#3: Trans-Saharan Trade Network				

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Ancient African Trade Analysis Sheet (Sentence Frames)***3 Reads Activity****Directions:** Follow the steps of Observe, Read, and Connect.**Observe:** Read the document once through for an overall understanding (the “gist”).**Read:** Read again, and record your answers for the “what, who, why, and how” questions.**Connect:** Read once more, and connect the excerpt to the larger historical context, taking relevant notes. Use the last box to write any of your own thoughts, questions, or observations that do not fit into these boxes.

	What?	Who?	Why & How?	Observations & Questions
	<p>List all items you found that were produced, sold, or traded in this African region.</p> <p>If possible, mark (I) for import and (E) for export.</p>	<p>List individuals or groups of people who were involved in the trade of this African region.</p>	<p>Explain why these trades took place and how they were supported by factors like transportation, communication, money, etc.</p>	<p>List any additional observations, inferences, or questions below.</p>
#1: Red Sea Trade Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ivory-hard white substance that forms the tusks of elephants and other animals (E)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>African traders from the region beyond the Nile</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The trade took place because of the demand for specific goods (ivory, tortoiseshell, and slaves) and because of the supply of valuable imports (cloth, copper, olive oil).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why was the product ____ so in demand?</li> <li>What factors led to ____?</li> </ul>

	What?	Who?	Why & How?	Observations & Questions
	<p>List all items you found that were produced, sold, or traded in this African region.</p> <p>If possible, mark (I) for import and (E) for export.</p>	<p>List individuals or groups of people who were involved in the trade of this African region.</p>	<p>Explain why these trades took place and how they were supported by factors like transportation, communication, money, etc.</p>	<p>List any additional observations, inferences, or questions below.</p>
<b>#2: Swahili Coast/ Indian Ocean Trade Routes</b>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Why was the product ____ so in demand?</i></li><li>• <i>What factors led to ____?</i></li></ul>

	What?	Who?	Why & How?	Observations & Questions
	<p>List all items you found that were produced, sold, or traded in this African region.</p> <p>If possible, mark (I) for import and (E) for export.</p>	<p>List individuals or groups of people who were involved in the trade of this African region.</p>	<p>Explain why these trades took place and how they were supported by factors like transportation, communication, money, etc.</p>	<p>List any additional observations, inferences, or questions below.</p>
<b>#3: Trans-Saharan Trade Network</b>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Why was the product ____ so in demand?</i></li><li>• <i>What factors led to ____?</i></li></ul>

## *Reading: African Trade Networks (Adapted Text)*

### Primary Document #1: The Red Sea Trade Network

#### Background about the author and text:

This text was written by an unknown Greek sailor in the 1st century CE. It is the oldest detailed description of African trade. The book is called the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*. The author described daily life and trade along the Red Sea in Northeast Africa.

#### Adapted Text

1. Adulis is a village near Mountain Island. It takes 5 days to travel from Adulis to Aksum. Traders bring ivory from the Nile region to Aksum then to Adulis.
2. Ships anchor at Mountain Island to avoid attacks. Goods **imported** to Adulis include Egyptian cloth, copper for cooking, jewelry, axes, swords, Italian wine, and olive oil. Gold and silver plates are brought for the king. Goods **exported** from Adulis include ivory, tortoiseshell, and rhinoceros horn.
3. South of Adulis is the Cape of Spices, where cinnamon and frankincense are grown and sold. Further south is Opone, which imports the same goods. Opone exports slaves and tortoiseshell.

**Text source:** [The Voyage Around the Erythraean Sea](#) by Silk Road Seattle.

## Primary Document #2: The Swahili Coast/Indian Ocean Trade Routes

### Background about the author and text:

Ibn Battuta, a scholar and traveler from Morocco, wrote this account in the 14th century. He traveled to learn about Muslim life and observed trade customs.

### Adapted Text

1. We sailed for 15 days to Maqdashaw (now Mogadishu, Somalia). It is a large town with wealthy merchants who own many animals. The town is known for its special fabrics, which are exported to Egypt.
2. When ships arrive, local young men bring food to welcome merchants. The merchants stay with these hosts.
3. Next, we visited Mambasa (now Mombasa, Kenya). The island grows bananas, lemons, and citrons. People eat bananas and fish. They are Muslims and have well-built wooden mosques.
4. We then sailed to Kulwa (now Kilwa). It is a strong and beautiful city. The local ruler is generous. The main traded good is ivory.

**Text source:** Gibb, H.A.R. (ed.) 1962. *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354*. Cambridge University Press.



## Primary Document #3: The Trans-Saharan Trade Network

### Background about the author and text:

Al-Bakri, a geographer from Islamic Spain, wrote about trade in West Africa in 1068. His book, *Book of Highways and Kingdoms*, is an important historical source.

Adapted Text:

Awdaghust has one large mosque and many small ones. People grow wheat, but only the rich eat it. Most people eat **sorghum**, a common grain. They also grow cucumbers, figs, and **henna** for trade.

The town has wells for water and many cattle and sheep. Honey is brought from Sudan and sold in the market. The market is busy and loud, filled with people trading goods. They trade using gold, not silver. The town has many fine buildings and homes.

- **sorghum**: a nutritious grain first grown in Africa (also called millet)
- **henna**: a plant that makes a beautiful red dye used for hair and body paint since ancient times

**Text source:** [Kingdom of Ghana - Primary Source Documents](#). Boston University Pardee School of Global Studies.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Ancient African Goods: Consumer Product Reviews*

### Part 1: Generating Questions

**Directions:** Imagine you are an ancient world customer (in other words, a **consumer**) who bought a product and really liked it...a lot! Now it's your turn to come up with creative questions to help others think about why this product is important. Generate three questions prior to beginning your research.

### Part 2: Researching Your Product

**Directions:** We want to know where you live, why you need or want this product, and what you like best about it. Use information from the article you read to answer the question prompts below.

#### African Trade Goods: Topics and Links

<a href="#">Ivory in the Ancient World</a> from World History	<a href="#">Rhino Horn Use: Fact vs. Fiction</a> from PBS Nature (Note: Use first four paragraphs.)	<a href="#">Woven Fabrics from East Africa</a>
<a href="#">What Are Frankincense and Myrrh?</a> from How Stuff Works (Note: Begin reading under the section heading, "A Brief History of Frankincense and Myrrh")		<a href="#">Tortoiseshell</a>

Your assigned good	Who were the consumers?	Why was this good in demand?	Sketch or illustrate your assigned good/product

**Part 3: Acting as Consumers**

1. What is your **society or civilization**?

2. Why were you **interested** in this product? Does it exist where you live?

3. How is this product **used** where you live?

4. What do you like **best** about this product?

**Wait until you complete the class concept map to fill this next question out:**

1. Which *other* product would you most likely purchase, and why?

## *Woven Fabrics from East Africa*

Over the centuries, skilled East African weavers exported woven cloth to other regions of the African continent and to other distant societies. These strong and fine fabrics were important for many activities of the ancient world.

One example was Somalia. The coast of Somalia was famous from early times for the fine white cloth it produced from cotton thread. Traveler Ibn Battuta wrote about the “unequalled” cloth of Mogadishu that was sold to Egypt and other places. In fact, one historian wrote, “Before the introduction of the cheap American cotton cloth in the 19th century, Mogadishu (on the East African coast) was the textile manufacturing center. Its clothes were desired not only in the Horn of Africa. They were exported to the Red Sea, (Arabian) Gulf, and Indian Ocean countries.”

Another example was the East African city of Sofala, part of the Swahili coast city-state of Kilwa. There, weavers made an extremely strong type of cloth. It was used primarily for the cloth of sailboats navigating the Indian Ocean. The Portuguese from southwest Europe were eager to buy this cloth for their ships.

East African ingenuity and skill in producing fabric helped bring wealth to the Swahili coastal states. And the cloth that they exported helped support the lifestyles and economies of neighboring and far-away societies.

### **Text sources:**

- William Gervase Clarence-Smith, [Locally Produced Textiles on the Indian Ocean Periphery, 1500-1800: East Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia](#). Adapted by Primary Source.
- Abdullahi, Mohamed Diriye. 2001. *Culture and Customs of Somalia*. Greenwood Publishing, pp. 99-100. Adapted by Primary Source.



## Tortoiseshell

Tortoiseshell has long been used as a special valued material for art objects, jewelry, and personal items such as combs and eyeglass frames.

The term “tortoiseshell” generally refers to the carapacial (dorsal shell) and plastron (belly) plates of the hawksbill sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*). The use of tortoiseshell dates back at least to pre-dynastic Egypt (3500-3100 BCE). Dishes, combs, bracelets, and the like are known from this period. Tortoiseshell objects were popular with both the ancient Greeks and the wealthy citizens of ancient Rome.



Apollo black bird AM Delphi. Image by Fingalo via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0 DE.

The vast majority of worked tortoiseshell material comes from the shells of two species of sea turtles: the hawksbill and, more rarely, the green turtle. The shells of these turtles exhibit attractive patterns that normally consist of light to dark brown patches. The popularity of tortoiseshell during the 18th through early 20th centuries caused these animals to be hunted almost to extinction. This led to a near-worldwide ban on collection in the 1970s and a ban on international trade of tortoiseshell products.

**Text source:** Hainschwang, Thomas and Laurence Leggio. 2006. "[The Characterization of Tortoise Shell and Its Imitations](#)." *Gems and Gemology* online. Spring. (Adapted quote)





Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Reading: The Slave Trade and the Swahili Coast*



Contemporary Engraving of Zanzibar Slave Market. Image by Adam Jones from Kelowna, BC, Canada via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0.

The Swahili Coast was a place where traders from Asia, the Middle East, and Africa all met to trade. They traded ivory, cloves, spices, and textiles. The marketplaces were, and still are, bustling places. There, goods were traded for other goods and for currency. Ideas, rules, laws, and religions were also traded in East Africa. So was language.

But something else was traded in the colorful markets of East Africa: people to be used as enslaved workers.

People have been traded back and forth into enslavement in many societies and civilizations from the ancient period forward. In North and East Africa, trading human beings became widespread in the 7th century. This was many centuries before Europeans began bringing West African people as enslaved workers across the Atlantic Ocean.

Before traders from the Middle East and Asia came to East Africa, many African ethnic groups traded people they had captured through wars. In many African societies, there were no prisons. If someone broke the law, they were enslaved by their own people, or sold to others. These enslaved people were a recognized part of the community. They typically had rights in law and society.

As the centuries went on, Arab merchants from the Middle East noticed the slave trade in East Africa. They began to participate in it. The island of Zanzibar (off the coast of what is now Tanzania) became the largest slave market in East Africa. The slave market was a place of great injustice. Human beings were chained and often mistreated, whether they had committed a crime or not. They were sold to places like the Middle East, India, Persia, and East Asia. Three out of four people bound for slavery died before they reached their destination.



Dried cloves, used as a spice for cooking, baking, and in tea. Image by Brian Arthur via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 2.5.

Most of these enslaved people were brought to Egypt and Saudi Arabia. There they worked in the households, farms, and businesses of elite members of society. Many were brought to Oman, across the Red Sea, to work on clove plantations.

By the late 1800s, countries around the world began to outlaw the African slave trade. They signed documents and treaties that made it illegal to bring enslaved workers from Africa. However, it was not until 1909 that slavery was officially abolished in East Africa.

The impact of the slave trade in Africa was devastating to East African societies and people. It created an atmosphere of insecurity and fear. Even now, over 100 years after slavery was abolished, people still remember how slavery affected their communities.

**Part 1:** Comprehension Questions

**Directions:** Answer each question below, referring back to the reading. There is no need for full sentences, just bullet point notes.

1. What goods were traded on the Swahili Coast?

2. What else was traded or exchanged besides goods?

3. How did practices of enslavement change over time?

4. When was slavery officially abolished in East Africa?

5. Based on the reading, what was the most significant impact of the East African slave trade on societies? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

**Part 2:** Personal Reflection

**Directions:** Review the list of emotions in the box below, then select one emotion (circle it) that best describes how you feel after reading about the slave trade.

**Emotion Box**

sad	angry	confused	aware	sorrowful
crushed	heavy	curious	uncertain	wondering

Why do you feel this way? What did you read that caused you to feel this emotion? (Answer in 2–3 sentences.)

Authored by Primary Source

**Text sources:**

- Frohlich, Slija. 2019. "[East Africa's Forgotten Slave Trade](#)." Deutsche Welle, August 22.
- Holloway, Joseph. "[Slavery as an Ancient World Institution](#)." The Slave Rebellion.
- Wright, John. 2007. *The Trans-Saharan Slave Trade*. NY: Routledge.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Reading: The Slave Trade and the Swahili Coast (Sentence Frames)*



Contemporary Engraving of Zanzibar Slave Market. Image by Adam Jones from Kelowna, BC, Canada via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0.

The Swahili Coast is a place in East Africa. People from Asia, the Middle East, and Africa came here to trade things like **ivory**, **spices**, and **cloth**. The marketplaces were busy, filled with people trading goods and ideas.

But something sad also happened. People were traded and forced to become **enslaved** workers.

Trading people started long ago. In East Africa, this became common in the 7th century. This was before Europeans started trading enslaved people from West Africa.

In some African societies, there were no prisons. If someone broke the law, they were enslaved or sold. These enslaved people still had some rights and were part of the community.

Later, **traders** from the Middle East came to East Africa. They saw the slave trade and joined it. The island of Zanzibar became a large slave market. People were chained and sold. Many died before reaching their destinations.



Dried cloves, used as a spice for cooking, baking, and in tea. Image by Brian Arthur via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 2.5.

Most enslaved people went to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Oman. They worked in homes, farms, and on clove plantations.

By the late 1800s, countries stopped the slave trade. But in East Africa, slavery was not officially banned until 1909. The slave trade hurt East African societies. Even today, people remember the harm it caused.

**Part 1:** Comprehension Questions

**Directions:** Answer each question below, referring back to the reading. There is no need for full sentences, just bullet point notes.

1. What goods were traded on the Swahili Coast?

2. What else was traded or exchanged besides goods?

3. What was Zanzibar known for?

4. What happened to most enslaved people on their way to new places?

5. When was slavery officially abolished in East Africa?

6. Based on the reading, what was the most significant impact of the East African slave trade on societies? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

**Part 2: Personal Reflection**

**Directions:** Review the list of emotions in the box below, then select one emotion (circle it) that best describes how you feel after reading about the slave trade.

Emotion Box				
sad	angry	confused	aware	sorrowful
crushed	heavy	curious	uncertain	wondering

Why do you feel this way? What did you read that caused you to feel this emotion? (Answer in 2–3 sentences.)

<b>Sentence Frames:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I chose the emotion ____ because ____.</li> <li>• I feel this way because I read that ____.</li> <li>• I feel ____ because I read that ____.</li> <li>• This made me feel ____ because ____.</li> </ul>
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Word Bank				
trade	merchants	marketplace	injustice	community
abolish	devastating	upset	sad	confused
surprised	curious	thoughtful	sorrowful	shocked
enslaved workers	fear	freedom	treatment	impact
rights	history			

Authored by Primary Source

**Text sources:**

- Frohlich, Slija. 2019. "[East Africa's Forgotten Slave Trade](#)." Deutsche Welle, August 22.
- Holloway, Joseph. "[Slavery as an Ancient World Institution](#)." The Slave Rebellion.
- Wright, John. 2007. *The Trans-Saharan Slave Trade*. NY: Routledge.



## *Reading: Trading Gold for Salt*



Camel caravan in Mauritania. Image by Valerian Guillot via Wikimedia Commons is in the public domain.

If you could choose between a pile of salt and a pile of gold, you would probably choose the gold. After all, you know that you can always buy a container of salt for about 45 cents at the local supermarket. But what if you could not easily get salt, and without it you could not survive? In fact, throughout history, salt has been very difficult to obtain in many parts of the world, and people feared a lack of salt the way we in the industrialized world fear a shortage of fuel oil.

Once cultures began relying on grain, vegetable, or boiled meat diets instead of mainly hunting and eating roasted meat, adding salt to food became an absolute necessity for maintaining life. Because the Akan lived in the forests of West Africa, they had few natural resources for salt and always needed to trade for it. Gold, however, was much easier to come by. Every Akan knew how to find tiny grains of gold sparkling in the river beds after a rainfall. The people who lived in the desert of North Africa could easily mine salt but not gold. They craved the precious metal that would add so much to their personal splendor and prestige. These mutual needs led to the establishment of long-distance trade routes that connected very different cultures.

Camel caravans from North Africa carried bars of salt as well as cloth, tobacco, and metal tools across the Sahara to trading centers like Djenne and Timbuktu on the Niger River. Some items for which the salt was traded include gold, ivory, slaves, skins, kola nuts, pepper, and sugar.

**Text source:** Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies. Essay, part 2: [Trading Gold for Salt](#).

**Part 1:** Comprehension Questions

**Directions:** Answer each question below, referring back to the reading. There is no need for full sentences, just bullet point notes.

1. Why did the Akan people need to trade for salt?

2. Why did the people in North Africa want gold?

3. What items did camel caravans carry across the Sahara?

4. Name two cities where trading took place.

**Part 2:** Camel Webquest

**Directions:** Answer each question below as you explore various websites and watch a video clip. There is no need for full sentences, just bullet point notes.

- **Stop #1:** How did the skills and knowledge of North African cameleers (people who train and manage camels) make caravans successful and profitable?

- **Stop #2:** Why were camels the breakthrough solution for trans-Saharan trade?

- **Stop #3:** How did technology (such as camel saddles) make caravans successful and profitable?

### Part 3: Reflection

**Directions:** Answer the question below using complete sentences. Give your three most convincing reasons.

Why do historians say camels made the gold and salt trade possible?



## *Reading: Trading Gold for Salt (Sentence Starters)*



Camel caravan in Mauritania. Image by Valerian Guillot via Wikimedia Commons is in the public domain.

### Introduction

If you could choose between a pile of **gold** and a pile of **salt**, what would you pick? Most people would choose gold. Salt is cheap today—you can buy it at the store for less than a dollar. But in the past, getting salt was hard. Without it, people couldn't survive.

### Why Was Salt Important?

A long time ago, people hunted animals for food. Meat gave them all the salt they needed. But when people began eating more **grains** and vegetables, they needed to add salt to their food to stay healthy.

The **Akan** people lived in the forests of West Africa. There was no salt there, so they had to trade for it. Gold was easy for them to find. After rainstorms, they could see little pieces of gold sparkling in riverbeds.

In North Africa, people had lots of salt but no gold. They wanted gold to show they were rich and important.

### How Did They Trade?

**Camel caravans** carried bars of salt across the hot **Sahara Desert**. They also brought **cloth**, **tobacco**, and **metal tools** to trading cities like Djenne and Timbuktu by the Niger River.

In return, the caravans carried back **gold**, **ivory**, **enslaved people**, **animal skins**, **kola nuts**, **pepper**, and **sugar**.

**Text source:** Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies. Essay, part 2: [Trading Gold for Salt](#).

**Part 1:** Comprehension Questions

**Directions:** Answer each question below, referring back to the reading. There is no need for full sentences, just bullet point notes.

1. Why did the Akan people need to trade for salt?

2. Why did the people in North Africa want gold?

3. What items did camel caravans carry across the Sahara?

4. Name two cities where trading took place.

**Part 2:** Camel Webquest

**Directions:** Answer each question below as you explore various websites and watch a video clip. There is no need for full sentences, just bullet point notes.

- **Stop #1:** How did the skills and knowledge of North African cameleers (people who train and manage camels) make caravans successful and profitable?

**Sentence Starters:**

- *The cameleers helped by...*
- *They knew how to...*
- *One important skill was...*

- **Stop #2:** Why were camels the breakthrough solution for trans-Saharan trade?

**Sentence Starters:**

- *Camels were the best solution because they...*
- *Unlike other animals, camels can...*
- *This made travel across the desert...*

- **Stop #3:** How did technology (such as camel saddles) make caravans successful and profitable?

**Sentence Starters:**

- *Camel saddles helped by...*
- *Saddles made it possible to...*
- *This technology allowed caravans to...*

**Part 3: Reflection**

**Directions:** Answer the question below using complete sentences. Give your three most convincing reasons. Use the word bank and sentence starters to help you.

Why do historians say camels made the gold and salt trade possible?

**Sentence Starters:**

- *One reason camels made the trade possible is because they...*
- *Camels were important for crossing the Sahara Desert because...*
- *Without camels....*

**Word Bank**

caravan	camels	hot
dry	Sahara Desert	trade
travel	survival	exchange



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Kingdom of Ghana Note Catcher*

### Part 1: Video Clip

**Directions:** Watch the BBC News Africa video clip "[Episode 10: Desert Empires](#)" [18:42–21:50], and answer the questions about the Soninke people's history and lifestyle.

1. Why are the Soninke people important in the history of the Ghana Empire (Wagadou)?

2. From the film, what is one thing you learned about the lives or lifestyles of Soninke people in the ancient world?

3. From the film, what is one thing you learned about the lives of Soninke people today?

### Part 2: Article Comprehension Questions

**Directions:** Read each section of the article "[Kingdom of Ghana](#)," and answer the questions based on what you learned.

### Section 1 (Paragraphs 1–3)

For Section 1, search for and write down 3–5 words related to money. Add them to this box.

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According to the author, strategic (carefully planned) governing plus great location led to **what**?

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## Section 2 (“Gold in Wagadugu”)

What were the accomplishments of the Soninke people, as described in this section?

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## Section 3 (“Ghanaian Politics”)

What is the main theme of this section?

Is this section strongly or weakly related to trade? Explain what makes you think so.

## Section 4 (“Trans-Saharan Trade”)

What is a positive consequence of trade described in this section?

What is a negative consequence of trade described in this section?

**“Brain Teaser” (If you have extra time at the end!)**

**Directions:** If you finish early, answer the fun fact questions below to learn more.

What is one interesting “fun fact” from the article that is not relevant to the topic of trans-Saharan trade? (There is more than one potential answer to this question; choose the one you liked learning about the best!)

Summarize it here:

Why do you think the author chose to include this fact? Share your best guesses:



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Kingdom of Ghana Note Catcher (Sentence Starters)*

### Part 1: Video Clip

**Directions:** Watch the BBC News Africa video clip "[Episode 10: Desert Empires](#)" [18:42–21:50], and answer the questions about the Soninke people's history and lifestyle.

1. Why are the Soninke people important in the history of the Ghana Empire (Wagadou)?

*The Soninke people are important because...*

2. From the film, what is one thing you learned about the lives or lifestyles of Soninke people in the ancient world?

*In ancient times, the Soninke people...*

3. From the film, what is one thing you learned about the lives of Soninke people today?

*Today, the Soninke people...*

### Part 2: Article Comprehension Questions

**Directions:** Read each section of the article "[Kingdom of Ghana](#)," and answer the questions based on what you learned.

### Section 1 (Paragraphs 1–3)

For Section 1, search for and write down 3–5 words related to money. Add them to this box.

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- 
-

According to the author, strategic (carefully planned) governing plus great location led to **what**?

- 

## Section 2 (“Gold in Wagadugu”)

What were the accomplishments of the Soninke people, as described in this section?

- *One accomplishment of the Soninke people was...*
- *Another accomplishment of the Soninke people was...*

## Section 3 (“Ghanaian Politics”)

What is the main theme of this section?

- *The main theme of this section is...*

Is this section strongly or weakly related to trade? Explain what makes you think so.

- *This section is (strongly/weakly) related to trade because...*

## Section 4 (“Trans-Saharan Trade”)

What is a positive consequence of trade described in this section?

- *One good result of trade was...*

What is a negative consequence of trade described in this section?

- *One bad result of trade was...*

## “Brain Teaser” (If you have extra time at the end!)

**Directions:** If you finish early, answer the fun fact questions below to learn more.

What is one interesting “fun fact” from the article that is not relevant to the topic of trans-Saharan trade? (There is more than one potential answer to this question; choose the one you liked learning about the best!)

Summarize it here:

- *One interesting fun fact I learned is that...*

Why do you think the author chose to include this fact? Share your best guesses:

- *I think the author included this fact because...*





Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cluster 4 Formative Assessment Task

Step 1: Observe and Analyze

**Directions:** Analyze the primary source below. Using bullet points for all sections, take general notes in the Graphic Organizer below, then answer a few analysis questions.

**Primary Source:**  
Excerpt from Ibn Battuta's travels in the city of Mogadishu in East Africa (14th century)

"I sailed from Aden in a small vessel belonging to the people of Sawahil [the Swahili Coast], and after 15 days or so arrived at the city of Mogadishu, which is a town of enormous size. Its inhabitants are merchants engaged in trade and are possessed of vast resources; they own large numbers of camels, of which they slaughter hundreds every day, and have quantities of sheep. In this city are manufactured the woven fabrics named after it, which have no rival, and are exported from it to Egypt and elsewhere."

**Text source:** Fordham University. 1996. "[Internet Medieval Sourcebook, Ibn Buttuta](#)." April 14, 2025.

General Observations:	Inferences (Conclusions):

**Analysis Questions:**

1. Who created this source? What do we know about the author and what might impact their perspective?

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2. What facts can we learn from this source about trade on the Swahili Coast at this time?

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3. What do you think was Ibn Battuta's opinion about trade in this region, and how do you know?

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Step 2: Make a Claim with Evidence

**Directions:** Using evidence from the source and your sources you have used throughout the cluster, explain how Africa's geography influenced its trade networks and the effects on local and global societies. Be sure to:

- Identify key geographic features, and explain their impact on trade.
- Use cause and effect reasoning to show how geography affected trade patterns.
- Discuss at least two effects of trade on societies in Africa or beyond.

Support Your Answer:

- Use at least two pieces of evidence to support your claim.
- Write a short paragraph (4–6 sentences) reflection.

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**Step 3:** Continue the Inquiry

**Directions:** If you were to continue researching, what would you still want to know? Brainstorm two new questions below that are related to your learning from this cluster.

1.

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2.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cluster 4 Formative Assessment Task (Sentence Starters)

Step 1: Observe and Analyze

**Directions:** Analyze the primary source below. Using bullet points for all sections, take general notes in the Graphic Organizer below, then answer a few analysis questions.

**Primary Source:**  
Excerpt from Ibn Battuta's travels in the city of Mogadishu in East Africa  
(14th century)

"I sailed from Aden in a small vessel belonging to the people of Sawahil [the Swahili Coast], and after 15 days or so arrived at the city of Mogadishu, which is a town of enormous size. Its inhabitants are merchants engaged in trade and are possessed of vast resources; they own large numbers of camels, of which they slaughter hundreds every day, and have quantities of sheep. In this city are manufactured the woven fabrics named after it, which have no rival, and are exported from it to Egypt and elsewhere."

**Text source:** Fordham University. 1996. "[Internet Medieval Sourcebook, Ibn Buttuta](#)." April 14, 2025.

General Observations:	Inferences (Conclusions):
Sentence starters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I see...</li><li>The author describes...</li><li>We learn that...</li></ul>	Sentence starters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>This suggests that...</li><li>It shows that ____ was important because...</li></ul>

**Analysis Questions:**

1. Who created this source? What do we know about the author and what might impact their perspective?

- *This source was written by...*
- *His writing shows...*
- *His ideas may be influenced by...*

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2. What facts can we learn from this source about trade on the Swahili Coast at this time?

- *We learn that trade on the Swahili coast included...*
- *The people traded with...*
- *The city was known for...*

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3. What do you think was Ibn Battuta's opinion about trade in this region, and how do you know?

- *I think Ibn Battuta felt \_\_\_ about trade in this region.*
- *He said the city was \_\_\_ and that the goods were...*

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**Step 2:** Make a Claim with Evidence

**Directions:** Using evidence from the source and your sources you have used throughout the cluster, explain how Africa's geography influenced its trade networks and the effects on local and global societies. Be sure to:

- Identify key geographic features, and explain their impact on trade.
- Use cause and effect reasoning to show how geography affected trade patterns.
- Discuss at least two effects of trade on societies in Africa or beyond.

**Support Your Answer:**

- Use at least two pieces of evidence from the artifacts in Step 2 and reasoning to support your claim.
- Write a short paragraph (4–6 sentences) reflection.

**Sentence Starters:**

- *One way Africa's geography influenced trade is ...*
- *Geography affected trade because...*
- *Trade had an effect on \_\_\_ because...*
- *Two effects of trade on societies are \_\_\_ and \_\_\_.*
- *In conclusion, geography helped trade by...*

Word Bank			
trade	geography	camels	caravans
Sahara Desert	dunes	mountains	resources
society	harsh	dry	hot
travel	gold	salt	

**Draft your claim here:**

**Use two pieces of evidence from the artifact to support your claim** (describe your observations and inferences):

1.

2.

**Write your response here** (4–6 sentences):



**Step 3:** Continue the Inquiry

**Directions:** If you were to continue researching, what would you still want to know? Brainstorm two new questions below that are related to your learning from this cluster.

- *What impact did \_\_\_ have on...?*
- *How did \_\_\_ change the way people...?*

1.

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2.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Unit 3, Cluster 5 Inquiry Chart*

<b>Unit EQ</b>	How do we best tell the stories of ancient African societies and the factors that shaped them?
<b>Cluster SQ</b>	<b>How did religious traditions develop, adapt, and interact with one another in ancient sub-Saharan Africa?</b>
<b>What questions will we ask?</b>	

What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
<b>Lesson 25:</b> We practiced making a claim using evidence from our research on the development of various religions in Africa.	
<b>Lesson 26:</b> We annotated a reading and took notes on the history of indigenous religions in Africa.	
<b>Lesson 27:</b> We compared anecdotes about religious tolerance in two different African empires and evaluated the actions of their prominent leaders.	

What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
<b>Lesson 28:</b> We observed various religious artifacts from Africa in a Gallery Walk and discussed our inferences in a Concentric Circles discussion.	

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *From Trade to Tradition: The Journey of Christianity and Islam in Africa*

The Christianity and Islam in Africa Student Slide Deck will help you explore the development of two major religions in ancient Africa: **Christianity** and **Islam**. Today you will take on the role of an investigator, gathering evidence as you read and analyze each slide.

- Record your findings below as you browse the Student Slide Deck.

Throughout your learning, keep this question in mind:

How did Islam and Christianity develop in ancient Africa, and how did African people adapt the religions to their own circumstances and environments?

Christianity in Africa (†)		
Slide # and Topic	Question or Focus	Your Notes (Key Ideas/Information)
<b>Slide 3:</b> The Beginning of Christianity in Africa	Why do you think Christianity came to North Africa so early?	
<b>Slide 4:</b> The Spread of Christianity in Africa	How do you think ancient trade routes helped spread Christianity into Africa?	
<b>Slide 5:</b> Christianity in Aksum	Who helped spread Christianity in Africa, and what methods did they use?	
<b>Slide 6:</b> The Development of Ethiopian Christianity	How did African people both <b>preserve</b> and <b>adapt</b> religious traditions?	

Christianity in Africa (✝)		
Slide # and Topic	Question or Focus	Your Notes (Key Ideas/Information)
<b>Slide 7:</b> The Churches of Lalibela	How do geography and environment affect how people practice their religion?	
<b>Slide 8:</b> Ethiopian Christian Art	How did African people both <b>preserve</b> and <b>adapt</b> religious traditions?	

Islam in Africa (🕌)		
Slide # and Topic	Question or Focus	Your Notes (Key Ideas/Information)
<b>Slide 9:</b> The Beginnings of Islam in Africa	Who helped spread Islam into sub-Saharan Africa, and how did they do it? Why do you think trade routes were important in spreading Islam to new regions?	
<b>Slide 10:</b> Islam in West Africa	What is one way West African Muslims preserved religious tradition? What is one way West African beliefs influenced Islam?	

Islam in Africa (🇹🇵)		
Slide # and Topic	Question or Focus	Your Notes (Key Ideas/Information)
<b>Slide 11:</b> Learning Islam Through Literacy	How could the manuscripts in an ancient library help make a society strong?	
<b>Slide 12:</b> Mosques of West Africa	How does the design of the Djenné mosque, and the annual festival to care for it, show West African Muslims adapting religious traditions to their environment?	
<b>Slide 13:</b> Islam in East Africa	What evidence does the film share of how Muslim communities on the Swahili coast adapted their practices to local conditions or traditions?	
<b>Slide 14:</b> Mosques of the Swahili Coast	Compare the Great Mosque of Kilwa with the Great Mosque of Djenné. What is one way they are similar and one way they are different?	





Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Using Evidence to Support a Claim*

**Directions:** Reference your notes on Islam and Christianity in Africa to answer the question below in 4–6 sentences:

*Was preserving religious traditions, or adapting and changing them, the bigger story of how Islam and Christianity developed in sub-Saharan Africa?*

### Step 1: Choose Your Claim

First, select one of the following claims before gathering evidence to support it.

- **Claim A:** Preserving religious traditions was a big part of the history of Christianity and Islam in sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Claim B:** Adapting and changing religious traditions was a big part of the history of Christianity and Islam in sub-Saharan Africa.

### Step 2: Gather Your Evidence

Use the space below to gather evidence from today's activity that supports your claim.

**Claim (A or B):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Evidence:**

1.

2.

3. (Optional)

**Step 3: Write Your Paragraph**

Using your evidence, write a paragraph (4–6 sentences) answering the prompt. Be sure to:

- Clearly state your claim.
- Include at least two pieces of evidence from your notes.
- Explain how your evidence supports your claim.
- Use complete sentences and proper punctuation.

**Your Response:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *From Trade to Tradition: The Journey of Christianity and Islam in Africa (Key Terms)*

The Christianity and Islam in Africa Student Slide Deck will help you explore the development of two major religions in ancient Africa: **Christianity** and **Islam**. Today you will take on the role of an investigator, gathering evidence as you read and analyze each slide.

- Record your findings below as you browse the student slide deck.

Throughout your learning, keep this question in mind:

How did Islam and Christianity develop in ancient Africa, and how did African people adapt the religions to their own circumstances and environments?

Key Terms: General	
<b>religion</b>	a system of beliefs about the meaning of life, worship, and moral values
<b>belief</b>	an idea or principle that is accepted as true
<b>tradition</b>	a belief or way of doing something that is passed down over time
<b>influence</b>	the power to have an effect on someone or something
<b>values</b>	principles or standards of behavior that are considered important
<b>trade</b>	the activity or process of buying, selling, or exchanging goods or services
<b>adapt</b>	to change (something) so that it works better or is better suited for a purpose
<b>preserve</b>	to keep (something) in its original state

**Key Terms:  
Related to  
Christianity**

<b>church</b>	a building used for public Christian worship
<b>missionaries</b>	people sent on a religious mission, especially to promote Christianity in foreign places
<b>Bible</b>	the holy book of Christianity
<b>icons</b>	religious images used in worship
<b>Ge'ez</b>	an ancient Ethiopian language used in religious contexts

**Key Terms:  
Related to  
Islam**

<b>Muslim</b>	a follower (person) of the religion of Islam
<b>mosque</b>	a place of worship for Muslims
<b>scholars</b>	people who study a subject in detail
<b>merchants</b>	people involved in trade or selling goods
<b>Quran</b>	the holy book of islam
<b>manuscripts</b>	handwritten books or documents

## Christianity in Africa (✝)

Slide # and Topic	Question or Focus	Your Notes (Key Ideas/Information)
<b>Slide 3:</b> The Beginning of Christianity in Africa	Why do you think Christianity came to North Africa so early?	<i>Christianity came to North Africa early because...</i>  <i>One reason is...</i>  <i>Another reason is...</i>
<b>Slide 4:</b> The Spread of Christianity in Africa	How do you think ancient trade routes helped spread Christianity into Africa?	<i>Trade routes helped spread Christianity because...</i>  <i>Traders and missionaries...</i>
<b>Slide 5:</b> Christianity in Aksum	Who helped spread Christianity in Africa, and what methods did they use?	<i>Those who helped spread Christianity were...</i>  <i>They used methods such as...</i>
<b>Slide 6:</b> The Development of Ethiopian Christianity	How did African people both <b>preserve</b> and <b>adapt</b> religious traditions?	<i>Ethiopian Christians preserved traditions by...</i>  <i>They adapted traditions by...</i>
<b>Slide 7:</b> The Churches of Lalibela	How do geography and environment affect how people live?	<i>The geography affected people by...</i>  <i>They built churches using...</i>
<b>Slide 8:</b> Ethiopian Christian Art	How did African people both <b>preserve</b> and <b>adapt</b> religious traditions?	<i>They preserved traditions by...</i>  <i>They adapted traditions by...</i>

## Islam in Africa (🇹🇿)

Slide # and Topic	Question or Focus	Your Notes (Key Ideas/Information)
<b>Slide 9:</b> The Beginnings of Islam in Africa	Who helped spread Islam into sub-Saharan Africa, and how did they do it? Why do you think trade routes were important in spreading Islam to new regions?	<i>Islam spread to Africa because...</i>  <i>Trade routes were important in spreading Islam because...</i>
<b>Slide 10:</b> Islam in West Africa	What is one way West African Muslims preserved religious tradition? What is one way West African beliefs influenced Islam?	<i>They preserved Islam by...</i>  <i>One way West African beliefs influenced Islam was through...</i>
<b>Slide 11:</b> Learning Islam Through Literacy	How could the manuscripts in an ancient library help make a society strong?	<i>The manuscripts helped society because...</i>  <i>They taught people about...</i>
<b>Slide 12:</b> Mosques of West Africa	How does the design of the Djenné mosque, and the annual festival to care for it, show African Muslims adapting religious practice to their environment?	<i>The mosque was built with...</i>  <i>The festival helps because...</i>
<b>Slide 13:</b> Islam in East Africa	What evidence does the film share of how Muslim communities on the Swahili Coast adapted their practices to local conditions or traditions?	<i>One way they adapted was...</i>  <i>Another way was...</i>

Slide # and Topic	Question or Focus	Your Notes (Key Ideas/Information)
<b>Slide 14:</b> Mosques of the Swahili Coast	Compare the Great Mosque of Kilwa with the Great Mosque of Djenne. What is one way they are similar and one way they are different?	<i>One similarity is...</i>  <i>One difference is...</i>





Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Using Evidence to Support a Claim (Key Terms)*

**Directions:** Reference your notes on Islam and Christianity in Africa to answer the question below.

*Was preserving religious traditions, or adapting and changing them, the bigger story of how Islam and Christianity developed in sub-Saharan Africa?*

### Step 1: Choose Your Claim

First, select one of the following claims before gathering evidence to support it.

- **Claim A:** Preserving religious traditions was a big part of the history of Christianity and Islam in sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Claim B:** Adapting and changing religious traditions was a big part of the history of Christianity and Islam in sub-Saharan Africa.

### Key Terms

<b>preserve</b>	to keep (something) in its original state
<b>adapt</b>	to change (something) so that it works better or is better suited for a purpose
<b>tradition</b>	a belief or way of doing something that is passed down over time
<b>evidence</b>	information that supports an idea or claim
<b>culture</b>	the way of life, customs, and beliefs of a group of people
<b>beliefs</b>	ideas that people accept as true

**Step 2: Gather Your Evidence**

Use the space below to gather evidence from today's activity that supports your claim. List key words and phrases connected to your evidence.

**Claim (A or B):** \_\_\_\_\_**Evidence:**

1.

2.

3. (Optional)

**Step 3: Write Your Paragraph**

If writing a full paragraph feels challenging, start by discussing your claim and evidence with your group or teacher. Use the sentence frames below to guide your discussion. Then, using your evidence, write a paragraph (4–6 sentences) answering the prompt. Be sure to:

- Clearly state your claim.
- Include at least two pieces of evidence from your notes.
- Explain how your evidence supports your claim.
- Use complete sentences and proper punctuation.

<b>Sentence Frames:</b>	<i>I believe that ____ (preserving religious tradition OR adapting religious tradition) was more important in the spread of Christianity and Islam across sub-Saharan Africa because ____.</i>  <i>One reason ____ (preservation OR adaptation) of religious tradition was more significant is because ____.</i>  <i>For example, ____ shows that ____.</i>  <i>This evidence proves that ____.</i>
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**Key Terms**

<b>religion</b>	a system of beliefs about the meaning of life, worship, and moral values
<b>belief</b>	an idea or principle that is accepted as true
<b>tradition</b>	a belief or way of doing something that is passed down over time
<b>influence</b>	the power to have an effect on someone or something
<b>values</b>	principles or standards of behavior that are considered important
<b>adapt</b>	to change (something) so that it works better or is better suited for a purpose
<b>preserve</b>	to keep (something) in its original state
<b>Christianity</b>	the religion that is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ; the religion of Christians
<b>Islam</b>	the religion which teaches that there is only one god and that Muhammad is god's prophet; the religion of Muslims

**Your Response:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Reading: African Indigenous Religions*

**Directions:** As you read, you'll be prompted to annotate the text. At the end, you'll be asked to create a list of at least five important features of African indigenous religions.

Africa is a large continent with diverse ways of experiencing religion. Africa's indigenous religions are not a single unified religion but many different religions. They vary depending on where their followers live and what their ethnic or cultural backgrounds are. But although the religions are diverse, scholars who study them find some important features that many or most have in common.

**Underline an idea about indigenous religions in the above paragraph. Then underline its opposite idea.**

In African indigenous religions, the word *religion* doesn't just refer to "traditions, rituals, and beliefs." It is also about how people behave and what they do in daily life. These actions and behaviors have been passed down from generation to generation. For followers of indigenous religions in Africa, religious beliefs can affect how they work, treat illnesses, educate their children, and many other actions.

**Underline the most important sentence in the paragraph above.**

Two features shared by African indigenous religions are belief in God and belief in spirits. Each religion recognizes an all-powerful, all-knowing God, who created people and the world. Each religion also features other lesser spirits or deities that are actively connected to a person's life, actions, and habits. Some but not all African indigenous religions also recognize spirits in the natural world and in natural forces such as rain, water, or fire.

**Underline the two most important sentences in the paragraph above.**

Another common belief is the belief in ancestors. Ancestors were people in a family or community who recently died or who passed away a long time ago. Most African indigenous religions teach great respect for ancestors. Followers show their respect by building shrines, by communicating with their ancestors, and by living in a way that would make their ancestors proud. Many African indigenous religions believe that ancestor spirits stay near their families or communities to assist in daily life and to help them communicate with God.

**Underline the most important sentence in the paragraph above.**

Most indigenous religions in Africa have religious leaders such as priests and healers. These leaders perform specific tasks, duties, and rituals to honor God, spirits, and ancestors. Women as well as men can become religious leaders. This is their profession, and they train for a long time to become trusted leaders. They might hold ceremonies for new births or deaths or for good fortune. People also go to healers and priests for advice.

**Underline the most important sentence in the paragraph above.**

Maybe most importantly, African indigenous religions help people understand the differences between right and wrong and how to live in a way that is beneficial to the community and to themselves. These religions teach their followers to behave in ways that are appropriate and, through ancestors, priests, and deities, communicate how people should behave.

**Underline the most important sentence in the paragraph above.**

**Text source:** Exploring Africa. "Indigenous African Religions," by Michigan State University; adapted with permission by Primary Source.

**Directions:** Now review the sentences you've underlined, and create a list of at least five important features of indigenous religions in Africa. Write them in the box below:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

## Historical Evidence of Indigenous Religion

**Directions:** Read and annotate the background information and primary source text.

**Background of Text:** This description was written around 1068. The author was a geographer and historian known as al-Bakri. He was from a Spanish Arabic family and lived his whole life in Islamic Spain. Though he did not travel himself, historians believe he talked to many travelers and merchants and collected their observations. It is the most detailed account that historians have of the West African empire of Ghana written during that time.

### Key Terms

<b>paganism</b>	an old word that monotheistic people sometimes used to describe religions they found strange or different
<b>idols</b>	images of a god, used as an object to worship
<b>sorcerers</b>	witches
<b>tombs</b>	gravestones

**Text:** Al-Bakri Describes Religion in the Kingdom of Ghana, 1068 CE

The king of Ghana practices his Soninke religion [the religion of his ethnic group]. The people follow the king's religion. Their religion is **paganism** and the worship of **idols**.

Around the king's palace are domed buildings and a sacred forest of trees. That is the place where the **sorcerers** of these people live. They are the men in charge of the religious practices.

The sacred forest is also the place for the **tombs** of their ancestor kings. They make sacrifices to their ancestors and make offerings of special drinks.

**Text source:** Levtzion, Nehemia and J.F.P. Hopkins, eds. 1981. *Corpus of Early Arabic Sources for West African History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 63–64.





Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Reading: African Indigenous Religions (Annotations)*

**Directions:** As you read, you will be asked to highlight important ideas. At the end, you will create a list of at least five key features of African indigenous religions.

### **Africa's Diverse Religions**

Africa is a large continent with many ways of practicing religion. African indigenous religions are not just one religion but many different religions. These religions vary by location and culture. However, scholars have found common features shared by many of these religions.

**Underline an idea about indigenous religions in the above paragraph. Then underline its opposite idea.**

### **Religion in Daily Life**

In African indigenous religions, religion is not just about traditions, rituals, and beliefs. It is also about how people live every day. These practices are passed down from one generation to the next. Religion can affect work, healing, teaching children, and other daily actions.

**Underline the most important sentence in the paragraph above.**

### **Belief in God and Spirits**

Many African indigenous religions believe in one powerful God, who created people and the world. They also believe in lesser spirits that are connected to a person's life. Some religions also recognize spirits in nature, like in rain, water, or fire.

**Underline the two most important sentences in the paragraph above.**

### **Respect for Ancestors**

Ancestors are family members who have died. Most African indigenous religions teach respect for ancestors. Followers may build shrines, talk to ancestors, and try to live in ways that make them proud. Many believe that ancestors stay close to help and to connect with God.

**Underline the most important sentence in the paragraph above.**

### **Religious Leaders**

Religious leaders, like priests and healers, have important roles. They perform ceremonies and rituals to honor God, spirits, and ancestors. Both men and women can be leaders. These leaders help with ceremonies for births, deaths, or good fortune and give advice to the community.

**Underline the most important sentence in the paragraph above.**

### **Right and Wrong**

Indigenous religions help people understand what is right and wrong. They teach how to live well and treat others with respect. Ancestors, priests, and spirits help guide people in their behavior.

**Underline the most important sentence in the paragraph above.**

**Text source:** Exploring Africa. "Indigenous African Religions," by Michigan State University; adapted with permission by Primary Source.

**Directions:** Now review the sentences you've underlined and create a list of at least five important features of indigenous religions in Africa. Write them below:

1. *African indigenous religions are \_\_\_\_, but they also \_\_\_\_.*

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2. *Religion affects daily life because people \_\_\_\_.*

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3. *People believe in a God who \_\_\_\_ and spirits that \_\_\_\_.*

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4. *Ancestors are important because they \_\_\_\_, and people show respect by \_\_\_\_.*

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5. *Religious leaders help people by \_\_\_\_.*

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## Historical Evidence of Indigenous Religion

**Directions:** Read and highlight key ideas from the text.

**Background of Text:** This description was written around 1068 by al-Bakri, a historian from Islamic Spain. He gathered stories from travelers and merchants. His writing is one of the most detailed accounts of the West African empire of Ghana.

### Key Terms

<b>paganism</b>	an old word that monotheistic people sometimes used to describe religions they found strange or different
<b>idols</b>	images of a god, used as an object to worship
<b>sorcerers</b>	witches
<b>tombs</b>	gravestones

**Text:** Al-Bakri Describes Religion in the Kingdom of Ghana, 1068 CE

The king of Ghana practices his Soninke religion [the religion of his ethnic group]. The people follow the king's religion. Their religion is **paganism** and the worship of **idols**.

Around the king's palace are domed buildings and a sacred forest of trees. That is the place where the **sorcerers** of these people live. They are the men in charge of the religious practices.

The sacred forest is also the place for the **tombs** of their ancestor kings. They make sacrifices to their ancestors and make offerings of special drinks.

**Text source:** Levtzion, Nehemia and J.F.P. Hopkins, eds. 1981. *Corpus of Early Arabic Sources for West African History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 63–64.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Religious Tolerance in Ancient Africa: Two Historical Anecdotes*

**Historical Anecdote #1: Ghana Empire**

In the empire of Ghana, Tunka Manin rose to be king in the year 1063 CE. The ruler before him was King Bassi, the uncle of Tunka Manin. King Bassi was widely praised because he loved justice and expressed friendship for Muslims.

King Tunka Manin practiced the indigenous religion of his Soninke people. But he brought many Muslims to work for him. The official in charge of his treasury, his interpreters, and most of his government officials were Muslims.

The king’s capital city was made up of two towns connected by houses and neighborhoods. The king’s palace was in one town. Beside his palace a mosque had been built. Muslims who were visiting the king’s court were welcomed to pray there. The other town was set up for Muslim travelers and traders who came to Ghana for a longer stay. They had wells for water and gardens to grow food. In this town there were 12 mosques, and imams were hired to lead them. (Imams are spiritual leaders of the Muslim faith.)

**Text source:** al-Bakri, The Book of Roads and Kingdoms.

How did Ghana’s rulers act toward religious outsiders? Identify three actions.	Did these actions express religious tolerance or not? Explain your thinking.
1.	
2.	
3.	

## Historical Anecdote #2: Kingdom of Axum

The kingdom of Axum was ruled by King Armah in 615 CE. Like most of the Axumite kings before him, he was a Christian.

At that time, early Muslim followers of the prophet Muhammed were receiving harsh treatment by the rulers of Arabia. The Muslims believed that the kings of Axum had a reputation for generosity and fairness.

More than 70 Muslims crossed the Red Sea by boat and asked for shelter in the kingdom of Axum. King Armah welcomed them, offering protection.

The leaders of Arabia did not like these Muslims to be living abroad in a powerful African kingdom. They worried this could threaten their political power and hurt their reputation. Soon they sent messengers to the king of Axum. The messengers spread negative stories about the Muslims and urged the king to expel them.

The king refused. Instead he called a hearing. He asked the Muslim migrants to teach him about their beliefs. He listened, and found their words wise and sincere. The king of Axum ruled the Muslim migrants were free to live in Axum for as long as they wished.

**Text source:** Safieddine, Shahnaze. "[Migration to Abyssinia](#)." Al-Islam.org.

How did Axum’s rulers act toward religious outsiders? Identify three actions.	Did these actions express religious tolerance or not? Explain your thinking.
1.	
2.	
3.	

## *Matching Activity: Religious Tolerance*

**Teacher Directions:** Cut up the cards below in preparation for a student matching activity. Create enough “stacks” so that each group of students has access to one.

### **Four Aspects/Categories of Religious Tolerance**

#### **Category #1:**

Learning about  
and respecting  
diverse religions

#### **Category #2:**

Coexisting and  
cooperating with  
people from  
different faiths

#### **Category #3:**

Defending, with  
words and  
actions, the  
rights of others  
to believe freely

#### **Category #4:**

Creating laws  
and policies that  
protect freedom  
of belief (and  
freedom to not  
believe)

## Societal Scenarios

### Scenario A:

Two best friends from different religious traditions decide to take turns being with one another's families when they celebrate holidays.

### Scenario B:

After hateful words are spray painted on a Buddhist temple building, community members from nearby churches, mosques, synagogues, and a Hindu temple attend a candlelight service of solidarity.

### Scenario C:

A town holds a peaceful march where participants hold up signs expressing their appreciation for the different religions represented in their town.

### Scenario D:

The Constitution of the United States protects people's right to worship in their own way and protects people's right to not practice religion.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Religious Tolerance in Ancient Africa: Two Historical Anecdotes (Sentence Frames)*

Historical Anecdote #1: Ghana Empire

A long time ago, in the empire of Ghana, a man named Tunka Manin became king in the year **1063 CE**. The king before him was **King Bassi**, his uncle. People liked King Bassi because he was fair and kind to Muslims.

King Tunka Manin followed the **traditional religion** of his Soninke people, but he **welcomed Muslims** into his government. Many important people who worked for him, such as his **treasurer** (money manager) and **interpreters** (translators), were Muslims.

The king’s capital city had two parts. One part had the king’s **palace** and a **mosque** (a Muslim place of worship). Muslims visiting the king could pray there. The second part was for **Muslim travelers and traders** who stayed in Ghana. They had **wells** for water, **gardens** for food, and 12 mosques with religious leaders called **imams**.

**Text source:** al-Bakri, The Book of Roads and Kingdoms, adapted

How did Ghana’s rulers act toward religious outsiders? Identify three actions.	Did these actions express religious tolerance or not? Explain your thinking.
<div>1. King Basi was _____ and _____ toward Muslims.</div> <div>2. King Tunka Manin allowed Muslims to _____ in the government.</div> <div>3. The capital city had _____ and _____ for Muslims.</div>	<div>• I think these actions (did/did not) show religious tolerance because _____.</div> <div>• The rulers (accepted/did not accept) Muslims in their society by _____.</div>

## Historical Anecdote #2: Kingdom of Axum

The **kingdom of Axum** was ruled by **King Armah** in **615 CE**. Like many Axumite kings before him, he was a Christian.

At that time, some **Muslims** in Arabia were treated **unfairly**. These Muslims knew that the kings of Axum were **kind and fair**, so 70 Muslims traveled across the Red Sea to ask for safety in Axum.

King Armah **welcomed** the Muslims and gave them **protection**. The rulers of Arabia did not like this. They sent messengers to the king and told bad stories about the Muslims. They wanted the king to send the Muslims away.

King Armah refused. Instead, he listened to the Muslims and learned about their beliefs. He thought their words were **wise and honest**. So he decided the **Muslims could stay in Axum as long as they wanted**.

**Text source:** Safieddine, Shahnaze. “[Migration to Abyssinia](#).” Al-Islam.org.

How did Axum’s rulers act toward religious outsiders? Identify three actions.	Did these actions express religious tolerance or not? Explain your thinking.
<div>1. King Armah _____ the Muslim refugees.</div> <div>2. He refused to _____ Muslims, even when other rulers asked him to.</div> <div>3. He _____ to the Muslims and allowed them to _____.</div>	<div>• I think these actions (did/did not) show religious tolerance because _____.</div> <div>• King Armah (respected/did not respect) different religions by _____.</div>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Gallery Walk Note Catcher

**Directions:** When directed, circulate the room to observe and read a series of artifacts related to religious tradition in sub-Saharan Africa. Identify key religious traditions, rituals, and interactions.

During Round #2, use the chart below to track your observations. Then answer the reflection questions to the best of your ability.

Artifact	Region/Kingdom	Religion Involved	Key Religious Traditions, Rituals, and Practices	Interactions and Influences
1	Inside of the Great Enclosure, Great Zimbabwe ruins	Indigenous, ancestor worship, possible burial site for chiefs	Offerings and sacrifices to ancestors	Connection to trade and wealth, influenced by regional traditions
2				
3				
4				

Artifact	Region/Kingdom	Religion Involved	Key Religious Traditions, Rituals, and Practices	Interactions and Influences
5				
6				
7				
8				

Reflection Questions:

1. How did trade influence religious interactions in the regions studied?

2. In what ways did indigenous religious beliefs persist despite the introduction of new religions?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Cluster 5 Formative Assessment Task

### Step 1: Observe and Analyze

**Directions:** Analyze the two primary sources below. Using bullet points for all sections, take general notes in the Graphic Organizer, then answer a few analysis questions.

#### Primary Source #1: A Kanaga mask of the Dogon people, Mali



**Description:** The so-called Kanaga mask is one of the many mask types known to the Dogon. Much more than other masks, it is highly abstracted. There are many different interpretations of the meaning: it is regarded as a female ghost, a (crane) bird, a lizard, or a hand.

Most masks are now seen as part of dualistic opposites. For example, the Kanaga mask is seen as the female counterpart of the male sirige mask.

Usually, a few Kanaga masks dance in a row in which a huge sweep of the head is made rhythmically so that the masks scrape the ground; that can probably be seen as a communication with earth spirits. Dogon masks, and therefore kanaga masks as well, traditionally dance especially at large collective funeral rituals called dama. Dama lasts six days and is held once in a fixed number of years, every 13 years on average. Dama is in fact a kind of farewell ritual in which the spirits of the people who have died in the previous years take leave of the community of people and pass into the community of ancestors.

**Image and description source:** A Kanaga mask of the Dogon people. Image courtesy of the National Museum of World Cultures via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

**Primary Source #2:**  
**Al-Bakri's Description of the Kingdom of Ghana (11th Century)**

**Description:** Al-Bakri's 11th-century account describes the city of Ghana as comprising two towns: one inhabited by Muslims with twelve mosques and another where the king resides, six miles away. This highlights the coexistence of indigenous beliefs and Islam.

Between these two towns are continuous habitations... In the king's town, and not far from his court of justice, is a mosque, where the Muslims who arrive at his court pray. Around the king's town are domed buildings and groves and thickets, where the sorcerers of these people, men in charge of the religious cult, live. In them, too, are their idols and the tombs of their kings.

These woods are guarded, and none may enter them and know what is there... The king's interpreters, the official in charge of his treasury, and the majority of his ministers are Muslims. Among the people who follow the king's religion, only he and his heir apparent (who is the son of his sister) may wear sewn clothes. All other people wear robes of cotton, silk, or brocade, according to their means. All of them shave their beards, and women shave their heads. The king adorns himself like a woman, wearing necklaces round his neck and bracelets on his forearms, and he puts on a high cap decorated with gold and wrapped in a turban of fine cotton. He sits in audience or to hear grievances against officials in a domed pavilion around which stand 10 horses covered with gold-embroidered materials. Behind the king stand 10 pages holding shields and swords decorated with gold, and on his right are the sons of the kings of his country, wearing splendid garments and their hair plaited with gold.

The governor of the city sits on the ground before the king, and around him are ministers seated likewise. At the door of the pavilion are dogs of excellent pedigree who hardly ever leave the place where the king is, guarding him. Round their necks they wear collars of gold and silver studded with a number of balls of the same metals. The audience is announced by the beating of a drum, which they call duba, made from a long, hollow log. When the people who profess the same religion as the king approach him, they fall on their knees and sprinkle dust on their head, for this is their way of greeting him. As for the Muslims, they greet him only by clapping their hands...

Their religion is paganism and the worship of idols...

**Text source:** Boston University Pardee School of Global Studies, African Studies Center. [Writings of al-Bakri](#).

General Observations	Inferences (Conclusions)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li></li></ul>

**Analysis Questions:**

1. Who created this source? What do we know about the author and what might impact their perspective?

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2. What facts can we learn from these sources about the presence of religion and religious tolerance in ancient African societies?

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3. What do you think was al-Bakri's opinion about religious practices in this region, and how do you know?

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### Step 2: Continue the Inquiry

**Directions:** If you were to continue researching, what would you still want to know? Brainstorm two new questions below that are related to your learning from this cluster.

1.

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2.

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## *Ancient Africa Religious Artifacts Source Collection*

**Directions:** Analyze and annotate the set of artifacts below. Identify key religious traditions, rituals, and interactions.

**Artifact #1:** Inside the Great Enclosure, Great Zimbabwe ruins, 1997



**Description:** The city of Great Zimbabwe existed in the sub-Saharan region of Africa from the 11th century to the mid-16th century. The city grew from a community of farmers and cattle herders to a major economic center, deriving power and wealth from its proximity to resources of gold and the trading routes along the Indian Ocean. Great Zimbabwe reached its peak with 18,000 residents by the mid-14th century.

The complex may have functioned at this later date as a religious site, perhaps as a place of burial for chiefs. Alternatively, it may always have functioned as a religious site, where ancestors were worshipped and given sacrifices and votive offerings.

**Text sources:**

- Kemezis, Kathleen. 2010. "[Great Zimbabwe](#)." BlackPast. January 28.
- Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Great Zimbabwe](#)." World History Encyclopedia, March 14.

**Image source:** Inside of the Great Enclosure, Great Zimbabwe ruins, 1997. Image by Jan Derk via BlackPast.org is in the public domain.

**Artifact #2:** Adoption of Christianity in Aksum

In the mid-4th century CE, the king of Aksum, Ezana I, officially adopted Christianity. Prior to that, the people of Aksum had practiced an indigenous polytheistic religion that was prevalent on both sides of the Red Sea, with some local additions such as Mahrem, god of war, upheaval, and monarchy, who was the most important Aksumite god. Other notable gods included the moon deity Hawbas; Astar, the representation of the planet Venus; and the chthonic gods Beher and Meder. Such gods, as well as ancestors, had sacrifices made in their honor, especially cattle—either living animals or votive representations of them.

Traders and Egyptian missionaries had brought Christianity to the region during the early centuries of the 1st millennium CE, and the official acceptance by Aksum may have occurred because the kingdom had important trade connections to the North African provinces of the Roman Empire, which itself had adopted Christianity a couple of decades earlier. Indeed, there were many trade and diplomatic connections directly between Constantinople and Aksum, and it is probable that this passage of individuals to and from also introduced Christianity into Ethiopia. It is important to note, though, that the more ancient indigenous religious beliefs likely carried on for some time, as indicated by the careful wording of rulers' inscriptions, so as not to alienate the part of the population that did not accept Christianity.

**Text source:** Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Kingdom of Axum](#)." World History Encyclopedia, March 21.



**Artifact #3:** Saint Frumentius icon

**Description:** A modern representation of Saint Frumentius, who is credited with introducing the African kingdom of Axum to Christianity in the mid-4th century CE.

**Image and description source:** Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Saint Frumentius](#)." *World History Encyclopedia*. March 20.

**Artifact #4:** Spread of Islam in West Africa

Islam spread through parts of West Africa via the Arab merchants who traded there. Noted Muslim travelers and chroniclers like Ibn Battuta (1304–1369) and Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406) recorded that even Mali's first ruler Sundiata converted to Islam. However, the Malinke oral tradition, which was kept up over the generations by specialized bards (griots), presents a different story. Although recognizing Islam was present in Mali long before Sundiata's reign, the oral tradition maintains that the first ruler of the Mali Empire did not reject the indigenous animist religion. We do know that Sundiata's son, Mansa Uli, went on a pilgrimage to Mecca in the 1260s or 1270s, and this would be a continuing trend among many of Mali's rulers.

Islam in West Africa really took off, though, from the reign of Mansa Musa. He famously went to Mecca and, impressed with what he saw on his travels, brought back home Muslim architects, scholars, and books. Mosques were built, such as Timbuktu's great mosque, and Quranic schools and universities were established, which quickly gained an international reputation. Studies were actually much wider than religion and included history, geography, astronomy, and medicine. Great libraries were built up with tens of thousands of books and manuscripts, many of which survive today.

As more people were converted, so more Muslim clerics were attracted from abroad, and the religion was spread further across West Africa. Many native converts studied in such places as Fez, Morocco, and became great scholars, missionaries, and even saints, and so Islam came to be seen no longer as a foreign religion but a black African one. Despite the spread of Islam, it is also true that ancient indigenous animist beliefs continued to be practiced, especially in rural communities, as noted by travellers like Ibn Battuta, who visited Mali around 1352. In addition, Islamic studies were conducted in Arabic, not native languages, and this further impeded its popularity outside the educated clerical class of towns and cities. Even the Islam that did take hold in Mali was a particular variation of that practiced in the Arab world, perhaps because Mali rulers could not afford to completely dismiss the indigenous religious practices and beliefs that the majority of their people clung on to.

**Text source:** Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Mali Empire](#)." *World History Encyclopedia*. March 11.

**Artifact #5:** al-Bakri's description of the Kingdom of Ghana, 11th century

**Description:** al-Bakri's 11th-century account describes the city of Ghana as comprising two towns: one inhabited by Muslims with twelve mosques and another where the king resides, six miles away. This highlights the coexistence of indigenous beliefs and Islam.

Between these two towns are continuous habitations...In the king's town, and not far from his court of justice, is a mosque, where the Muslims who arrive at his court pray. Around the king's town are domed buildings and groves and thickets, where the sorcerers of these people, men in charge of the religious cult, live. In them, too, are their idols and the tombs of their kings.

These woods are guarded, and none may enter them and know what is there...The king's interpreters, the official in charge of his treasury, and the majority of his ministers are Muslims.

Among the people who follow the king's religion, only he and his heir apparent (who is the son

of his sister) may wear sewn clothes. All other people wear robes of cotton, silk, or brocade, according to their means. All of them shave their beards, and women shave their heads.

The

king adorns himself like a woman, wearing necklaces round his neck and bracelets on his forearms, and he puts on a high cap decorated with gold and wrapped in a turban of fine cotton.

He sits in audience or to hear grievances against officials in a domed pavilion around which stand 10 horses covered with gold-embroidered materials. Behind the king stand 10 pages holding shields and swords decorated with gold, and on his right are the sons of the kings of his country, wearing splendid garments and their hair plaited with gold.

The governor of the city sits on the ground before the king, and around him are ministers seated likewise. At the door of the pavilion are dogs of excellent pedigree who hardly ever leave the place where the king is, guarding him. Round their necks they wear collars of gold and silver studded with a number of balls of the same metals. The audience is announced by the beating of a drum, which they call duba, made from a long, hollow log. When the people who profess the same religion as the king approach him, they fall on their knees and sprinkle dust on their head, for this is their way of greeting him. As for the Muslims, they greet him only by clapping their hands...

Their religion is paganism and the worship of idols...

**Text source:** Pardee School of Global Studies at Boston University. "[Kingdom of Ghana Primary Source Documents](#)"



**Artifact #6:** The Great Mosque of Djenné

**Description:** The Great Mosque of Djenné is situated in a large market square, making it a constant presence in the everyday lives of residents. For one day each year, however, the structure becomes the focus of the city's ritual life as well. Mud architecture thrives in parts of the world where there is enough water to mix plaster and form bricks but not so much rain to put the dried walls in constant danger of dissolving. Despite the prevailing dryness of the Djenné region, its mud buildings require constant upkeep. During the annual festival known as Crepissage, thousands of people gather to replaster the walls of the Great Mosque. Although the wood poles that jut out from the building embellish the surface of its walls in a decorative manner, their primary function is practical; these rungs serve as scaffolding for those participating in the repairs. Today, the future of the festival and the mosque itself are threatened by a waning population and a lack of participation from the city's youth.

**Text source:** Annenberg Learner. "[Art: Great Mosque.](#)"

**Image source:** Djenné great mud mosque. Image by Ruud Zwart via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.5 NL.

**Artifact #7:** A Kanaga mask of the Dogon people, Mali

**Description:** The so-called Kanaga mask is one of the many mask types known to the Dogon. Much more than other masks, it is highly abstracted. There are many different interpretations of the meaning: it is regarded as a female ghost, a (crane) bird, a lizard, or a hand.

Most masks are now seen as part of dualistic opposites. For example, the Kanaga mask is seen as the female counterpart of the male sirige mask.

Usually, a few Kanaga masks dance in a row in which a huge sweep of the head is made rhythmically so that the masks scrape the ground; that can probably be seen as a communication with earth spirits. Dogon masks, and therefore kanaga masks as well, traditionally dance especially at large collective funeral rituals called dama. Dama lasts six days and is held once in a fixed number of years, every 13 years on average. Dama is in fact a kind of farewell ritual in which the spirits of the people who have died in the previous years take leave of the community of people and pass into the community of ancestors.

**Image and description source:** A Kanaga mask of the Dogon people. Image courtesy of the National Museum of World Cultures via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.



**Artifact #8:** Traditional Vodun dancer enchanting gods and spirits, Benin, West Africa

**Description:** Voodoo (also Vodun and Voudou) is a religion practiced by almost 60,000,000 people today in West Africa and Haiti. On the African continent, believers are largely part of the Aja, Ewe, and Fon communities of Benin, Togo, Ghana, and Nigeria, representing 60% of all West Africans. Its origins can be traced to 6,000 years ago in what is now Benin, the geographical heart of Voodoo, where it was declared the official religion in 1990. Voodoo's principal practitioners are the Fon people, the largest ethnic group in the country, who are also present in Nigeria and Togo, with a total population of approximately 3,500,000.

The Voodoo religion has historically been subject to many misconceptions and misinterpretations, most propagated by Western media portraying it as associated with devil worship and black magic. Voodoo is embodied in a cosmological structure that includes philosophical and medicinal practices and beliefs. Voodoo includes the belief in both maleficent and benevolent spirits assigned to varying forces on Earth, which have a specific hierarchy and, in some cases, can represent different tribes or nations.

One of the primary tenets of Voodoo is that in the afterlife, the dead pass to another realm of reality, becoming ancestors that coexist with the living. They can grant protection and favors to the living in exchange for offerings and sacrifices. Despite the belief in different entities and spirits, Voodoo is a monotheistic religion, a structure that facilitated a syncretism with Roman Catholicism, driven by the slave trade from West Africa to the Caribbean and the Americas.

**Text source:** Gomez-Garcia, Juan Sebastian. 2024. "[Zangbeto: Get to Know Voodoo's Whirling Spirit Dance.](#)" TheCollector.com. December 23.

**Image source:** Ganvie Voodoo Dancer. Image by David Stanley from Nanaimo, Canada via Wikimedia Commons, CCA 2.0.



## *Ancient Africa Religious Artifacts Source Collection (Key Ideas)*

**Directions:** Analyze and annotate the set of artifacts below. Identify key religious traditions, rituals, and interactions.

**Artifact #1:** Inside the Great Enclosure, Great Zimbabwe ruins, 1997



- **Location:** Zimbabwe, sub-Saharan Africa
- **Time Period:** 11th to mid-16th century
- **Key Ideas:**
  - Grew from a farming and cattle herding community to a major economic center
  - Gained wealth from gold resources and trade routes
  - May have been a religious site for ancestor worship and burials of chiefs

**Text sources:**

- Kemezis, Kathleen. 2010. "[Great Zimbabwe](#)." BlackPast. January 28.
- Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Great Zimbabwe](#)." World History Encyclopedia, March 14.

**Image source:** Inside of the Great Enclosure, Great Zimbabwe ruins, 1997. Image by Jan Derk via BlackPast.org is in the public domain.

**Artifact #2:** Adoption of Christianity in Aksum**Location:** Aksum, Horn of Africa (modern-day Ethiopia and Eritrea)**Time Period:** Mid-4th century CE**Key Ideas:**

- Practiced a polytheistic religion with gods like Mahrem (war), Hawbas (moon), and Astar (Venus); sacrifices, especially cattle, were common.
- Christianity was introduced by Egyptian missionaries and officially adopted by King Ezana I in the mid-4th century CE.
- Adoption of Christianity was influenced by trade with the Roman Empire, but indigenous beliefs likely continued alongside the new religion.

**Text source:** Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Kingdom of Axum](#)." World History Encyclopedia, March 21.

**Artifact #3:** Saint Frumentius icon

- **Location:** Aksum, sub-Saharan Africa
- **Who:** Saint Frumentius
- **Key Ideas:**
  - Credited with introducing Christianity to Aksum
  - Helped the kingdom convert to Christianity in the mid-4th century CE

**Image and description source:** Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Saint Frumentius](#)." *World History Encyclopedia*. March 20.

**Artifact #4:** Spread of Islam in West Africa

- **Time Period:** 11th century
- **Key Ideas:**
  - City had two towns: one for Muslims with mosques and one for the king and traditional religion.
  - The king wore gold decorations and held court in a domed pavilion.
  - Muslims greeted the king by clapping, while others showed respect by kneeling and sprinkling dust on their heads.

**Text source:** Cartwright, Mark. 2019. "[Mali Empire](#)." *World History Encyclopedia*. March 11.

**Artifact #5:** al-Bakri's description of the Kingdom of Ghana, 11th century**Location:** West Africa**Time Period:** Middle Ages (around the 13th to 14th century)**Key Ideas:**

- The king's town has a mosque, but the king follows a different religion with idols and special tombs in sacred woods.
- The king lives in a fancy tent, wears gold jewelry and a tall hat, and is protected by guards, horses, and dogs with gold and silver collars.
- People greet the king in different ways based on their religion—some clap, others kneel and put dust on their heads.

**Text source:** Pardee School of Global Studies at Boston University. "[Kingdom of Ghana Primary Source Documents](#)"



**Artifact #6:** The Great Mosque of Djenné

**Location:** Djenné, Mali (West Africa)

**Time Period:** Built in the 13th century, rebuilt in 1907, still used today

**Key Ideas:**

- The Great Mosque is made of mud and is in the middle of a busy market square.
- Every year, people join together in a big festival called Crepissage to fix the mosque by adding fresh mud.
- Fewer young people are helping now, so the mosque and the festival may not last in the future.

**Text source:** Annenberg Learner. "[Art: Great Mosque.](#)"

**Image source:** Djenné great mud mosque. Image by Ruud Zwart via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.5 NL.

**Artifact #7:** A Kanaga mask of the Dogon people, Mali

**Location:** Mali, West Africa

**Time Period:** Used for many generations by the Dogon people

**Key Ideas:**

- The Kanaga mask has an abstract shape and may look like a ghost, bird, lizard, or hand.
- It is used in dances during a special funeral ceremony called dama, which happens every 13 years.
- The dance helps guide the spirits of the dead to join the ancestors.

**Image and description source:** A Kanaga mask of the Dogon people. Image courtesy of the National Museum of World Cultures via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

**Artifact #8:** Traditional Vodun dancer enchanting gods and spirits, Benin, West Africa

**Location:** West Africa (especially Benin, Togo, Ghana, and Nigeria) and Haiti

**Time Period:** Began about 6,000 years ago; still practiced today

**Key Ideas:**

- Voodoo is a religion that believes in one God and many spirits connected to nature and ancestors.
- People give offerings to spirits and ancestors to ask for help and protection.
- Voodoo is often misunderstood, but it includes beliefs about healing, nature, and respecting the dead.

**Text source:** Gomez-Garcia, Juan Sebastian. 2024. "[Zangbeto: Get to Know Voodoo's Whirling Spirit Dance](#)." TheCollector.com. December 23.

**Image source:** Ganvie Voodoo Dancer. Image by David Stanley from Nanaimo, Canada via Wikimedia Commons, CCA 2.0.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Gallery Walk Note Catcher (Sentence Frames)*

**Directions:** When directed, circulate the room to observe and read a series of artifacts related to religious tradition in sub-Saharan Africa. Identify key religious traditions, rituals, and interactions.

During Round #2:

- Use the chart to write what you observe about each artifact.
- Use the word bank and sentence frames to help you.
- Answer the reflection questions at the end using simple sentences or bullet points.

Word Bank			
Region/Kingdom	Religion	Traditions/Practices	Interactions/ Influences
Great Zimbabwe	indigenous	offerings	trade routes
Axum	Islam	sacrifices	new religions
Mali	Christianity	prayer	cultural exchange
Ghana	ancestor worship	fasting	spread of beliefs
Egypt		trade	
Swahili Coast		burial	
		ceremonies	

Artifact	Region/Kingdom  <i>The artifact comes from ____. (region/kingdom)</i>	Religion Involved  <i>The religion involved in the artifact is ____.</i>	Key Religious Traditions, Rituals, and Practices  <i>A key tradition or practice is ____.</i>	Interactions and Influences  <i>This artifact shows how ____ (trade, religion, or culture) influenced the region.</i>
1	Inside of the Great Enclosure, Great Zimbabwe ruins	Indigenous, ancestor worship, possible burial site for chiefs	Offerings and sacrifices to ancestors	Connection to trade and wealth, influenced by regional traditions
2				
3				
4				
5				

Artifact	Region/Kingdom <i>The artifact comes from ____. (region/kingdom)</i>	Religion Involved <i>The religion involved in the artifact is ____.</i>	Key Religious Traditions, Rituals, and Practices <i>A key tradition or practice is ____.</i>	Interactions and Influences <i>This artifact shows how ____ (trade, religion, or culture) influenced the region.</i>
6				
7				
8				

**Reflection Questions**

1. How did trade influence religious interactions in the regions studied?

*Trade helped spread \_\_\_\_*

*People shared \_\_\_\_ through trade.*

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2. In what ways did indigenous religious beliefs persist despite the introduction of new religions?

*Indigenous beliefs continued because \_\_\_\_.*

*Some traditions, like \_\_\_\_, stayed the same.*

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Cluster 5 Formative Assessment Task (Sentence Starters)*

### **Step 1:** Observe and Analyze

**Directions:** Analyze the two primary sources below. Using bullet points for all sections, take general notes in the Graphic Organizer, then answer a few analysis questions.

#### **Primary Source #1: A Kanaga mask of the Dogon people, Mali**



**Description:** The so-called Kanaga mask is one of the many mask types known to the Dogon. Much more than other masks, it is highly abstracted. There are many different interpretations of the meaning: it is regarded as a female ghost, a (crane) bird, a lizard, or a hand.

Most masks are now seen as part of dualistic opposites. For example, the Kanaga mask is seen as the female counterpart of the male sirige mask.

Usually, a few Kanaga masks dance in a row in which a huge sweep of the head is made rhythmically so that the masks scrape the ground; that can probably be seen as a communication with earth spirits. Dogon masks, and therefore kanaga masks as well, traditionally dance especially at large collective funeral rituals called dama. Dama lasts six days and is held once in a fixed number of years, every 13 years on average. Dama is in fact a kind of farewell ritual in which the spirits of the people who have died in the previous years take leave of the community of people and pass into the community of ancestors.

**Image and description source:** A Kanaga mask of the Dogon people. Image courtesy of the National Museum of World Cultures via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

**Primary Source #2:  
Al-Bakri's Description of the Kingdom of Ghana (11th Century)**

Between these two towns are continuous habitations... In the king's town, and not far from his court of justice, is a mosque, where the Muslims who arrive at his court pray. Around the king's town are domed buildings and groves and thickets, where the sorcerers of these people, men in charge of the religious cult, live. In them, too, are their idols and the tombs of their kings.

These woods are guarded, and none may enter them and know what is there... The king's interpreters, the official in charge of his treasury, and the majority of his ministers are Muslims. Among the people who follow the king's religion, only he and his heir apparent (who is the son of his sister) may wear sewn clothes. All other people wear robes of cotton, silk, or brocade, according to their means. All of them shave their beards, and women shave their heads. The king adorns himself like a woman, wearing necklaces round his neck and bracelets on his forearms, and he puts on a high cap decorated with gold and wrapped in a turban of fine cotton. He sits in audience or to hear grievances against officials in a domed pavilion around which stand 10 horses covered with gold-embroidered materials. Behind the king stand 10 pages holding shields and swords decorated with gold, and on his right are the sons of the kings of his country, wearing splendid garments and their hair plaited with gold.

The governor of the city sits on the ground before the king, and around him are ministers seated likewise. At the door of the pavilion are dogs of excellent pedigree who hardly ever leave the place where the king is, guarding him. Round their necks they wear collars of gold and silver studded with a number of balls of the same metals. The audience is announced by the beating of a drum, which they call duba, made from a long, hollow log. When the people who profess the same religion as the king approach him, they fall on their knees and sprinkle dust on their head, for this is their way of greeting him. As for the Muslims, they greet him only by clapping their hands...

Their religion is paganism and the worship of idols...

**Text source:** Boston University Pardee School of Global Studies, African Studies Center. [Writings of al-Bakri](#).

General Observations	Inferences (Conclusions)
Sentence starters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>I see...</i></li><li>• <i>The author describes...</i></li></ul>	Sentence starters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>This suggests that...</i></li><li>• <i>It shows that ____ was important because...</i></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>

**Analysis Questions:**

1. Who created this source? What do we know about the author and what might impact their perspective?

- *The source was written by...*
- *The author's background...*

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2. What facts can we learn from these sources about the presence of religion and religious tolerance in ancient African societies?

- *In the source \_\_\_, we learn about...*

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3. What do you think was al-Bakri's opinion about religious practices in this region, and how do you know?

- *Al-Bakri thought that...*
- *In his text, he describes...*

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**Step 2:** Continue the Inquiry

**Directions:** If you were to continue researching, what would you still want to know? Brainstorm two new questions below that are related to your learning from this cluster.

- *What did ancient African societies believe about \_\_\_?*
- *How did groups \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ interact?*

1.

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2.

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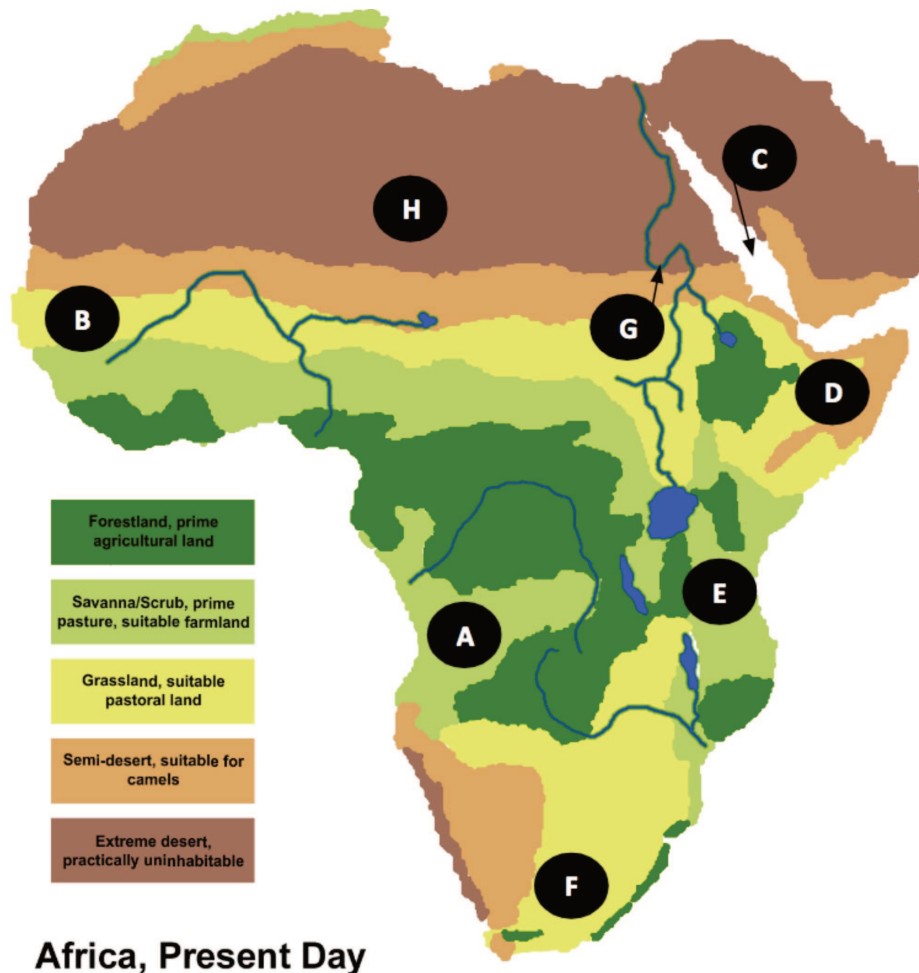
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Sub-Saharan Content Assessment*

### Section 1: Geography

Identify the following features on the map of the African continent below.



Write the letter of the following features:

\_\_\_ Sahara Desert  
Highlands

\_\_\_ Swahili Coast

\_\_\_ The Red Sea

\_\_\_ Ethiopian

Next, draw on the map to illustrate various trade networks using arrows and circles. This does not need to be exact or precise; just provide an idea of how regions were connected through trade.

**Image source:** Africa Climate Today. Image by Ingoman via Wikimedia Commons is in the public domain.

**Map Analysis Questions:**

1. Choose one feature that you labeled, and explain how it has **influenced the lives of people** in sub-Saharan Africa.

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2. Where would you expect to find a larger population: near modern-day **Chad** or **Kenya**? Why?

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**Image source:** Political Map of Africa (2021). Image by US Government (Central Intelligence Agency) via Wikimedia Commons is in the public domain.

## Section 2: Vocabulary

1. Which two examples describe how people in ancient sub-Saharan Africa **adapted** to their environment? Circle two.
  - A. Developing farming techniques suited to dry savanna regions
  - B. Building homes from imported marble and stone
  - C. Using natural river systems for fishing and transportation
  - D. Ignoring seasonal weather patterns when growing crops
  
2. Who in ancient **sub-Saharan Africa** would most likely be responsible for recording important information such as trade agreements or royal histories?
  - A. A village leader overseeing farming
  - B. A scribe working in a royal court
  - C. A warrior preparing for battle
  - D. A merchant traveling across the Sahara
  
3. Which of these is an example of **archaeological evidence** that helps historians learn about ancient sub-Saharan Africa?
  - A. Oral stories passed down from generation to generation
  - B. Ancient tools and pottery discovered at excavation sites
  - C. Modern trade routes connecting African nations
  - D. Legends describing the founding of early empires
  
4. Which of these is a reason why the **trans-Saharan trade** routes were important to ancient sub-Saharan African societies?
  - A. The trade prevented the spread of cultural traditions between different regions.
  - B. The trade encouraged the spread of new religions and ideas across Africa.
  - C. The trade caused people to settle permanently in one location.
  - D. The trade made it easier for empires to avoid contact with foreign merchants.
  
5. How did ancient sub-Saharan African societies work to **preserve** important knowledge and traditions?
  - A. By passing down stories and histories through oral storytelling
  - B. By refusing to interact with traders from other regions
  - C. By limiting the use of natural resources like wood and stone
  - D. By isolating themselves from neighboring communities

Section 3: Paragraph Answer

Answer the following question in a paragraph that has:

- A specific and accurate claim
- Specific factual evidence from the unit
- Clear reasoning.

You can use this source to help remind you of some important ideas about trade in ancient sub-Saharan Africa, but you can also use other information from the unit that you remember.

“Aksum managed trade between India and the Mediterranean. It traded in gold, spices, exotic animals, and much more. In the 1st century CE, Aksum became very wealthy and powerful. It could afford to build a strong navy to patrol the Red Sea and protect its trade routes. By the 1st century CE, experts had begun writing about Aksum’s wealth and power.

Aksum grew quickly. Many monuments were built as well as detailed tombs for important members of society...At its height, Aksum controlled North Ethiopia and parts of Sudan. It had the wealth to buy swords and ships, and there were no other kingdoms in East Africa to challenge it. Aksum was in the center of an ancient trade network that connected Africa, Europe, and Asia, making it easy for it to learn about new technologies.”

**Text source:** Baker, David. OER Project. "[Ancient Agrarian Societies: Aksum](#)."

What is one way that trade influenced ancient sub-Saharan African societies, and why did it have that effect?

## Section 4: Applied Historical Inquiry

Read the following scenario and the quotes by ancient African leaders that illustrate their beliefs and values. Then answer the questions below.

**Scenario:** A local school is considering how to use a new grant to improve its educational offerings. The school leader is evaluating three options.

- **Option 1:** Establish a cultural learning center.
  - **Goal:** Provide a space where students can learn about African history, storytelling, and traditions through workshops and presentations.
- **Option 2:** Create a digital library.
  - **Goal:** Offer students access to a wide range of texts, including traditional African literature, oral histories, and modern educational resources.
- **Option 3:** Develop a mentorship program.
  - **Goal:** Pair students with community elders and leaders to learn from their experiences and wisdom, encouraging the passing down of knowledge across generations.

1. Which of these statements is a **fact**? Circle one.

- A. The library will provide students with a space to read books.
- B. The principal hopes students will be inspired by the mentorship program.
- C. The mentorship program will connect students with community leaders.
- D. The cultural learning center will involve guest speakers.

2. Which of these statements is an **opinion**? Circle one.

- A. Oral storytelling is the most important form of education.
- B. Many people in the community want better access to books.
- C. A new cultural center will be built in the downtown area.
- D. The digital storytelling workshop is held on Tuesdays.



**"When an elder dies, a library burns to the ground."**

– African proverb

**Text source:** LizJansen.com. 2020. "[Healing Through Stories](#)." July 24.

3. Based on this quote and what you've learned, what does it show about the importance of oral tradition in ancient African societies? How do oral and written traditions compare, and which do you think was more effective at the time? How could this affect the leader's choice on how to spend the new funding?

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**"The ink of a scholar is more precious than the blood of a martyr."**

– Ahmed Baba, 16th-century scholar of Timbuktu

**Text source:** Hirsch, Afua. 2013. "[Mali: Timbuktu's literary gems face Islamists and decay in fight for survival](#)." *The Atlantic*. May 21.

4. Based on this quote and your learning from the unit, how might the importance of written tradition impact the community leader's decision on how to use the new funding?

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5. What do you think the community leader should do? What belief or value makes you think that?

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## Scoring Guidance

### Section 1: Geography (8 points)

- 1 point per correctly labeled map feature
- 2 points for each short-answer question

### Section 2: Vocabulary (10 points)

- 2 points per correct answer

### Section 3: Paragraph Answer (9 points)

- 3 points for a claim that answers the question and makes a factually accurate statement about trade's effects on ancient sub-Saharan African societies
- 3 points for evidence, from the text or elsewhere in the unit, that accurately and precisely describes at least one central aspect of trans-Saharan trade
- 3 points for reasoning that fully and accurately explains how this element of trade influenced society

### Section 4: Applied Historical Inquiry (8 points)

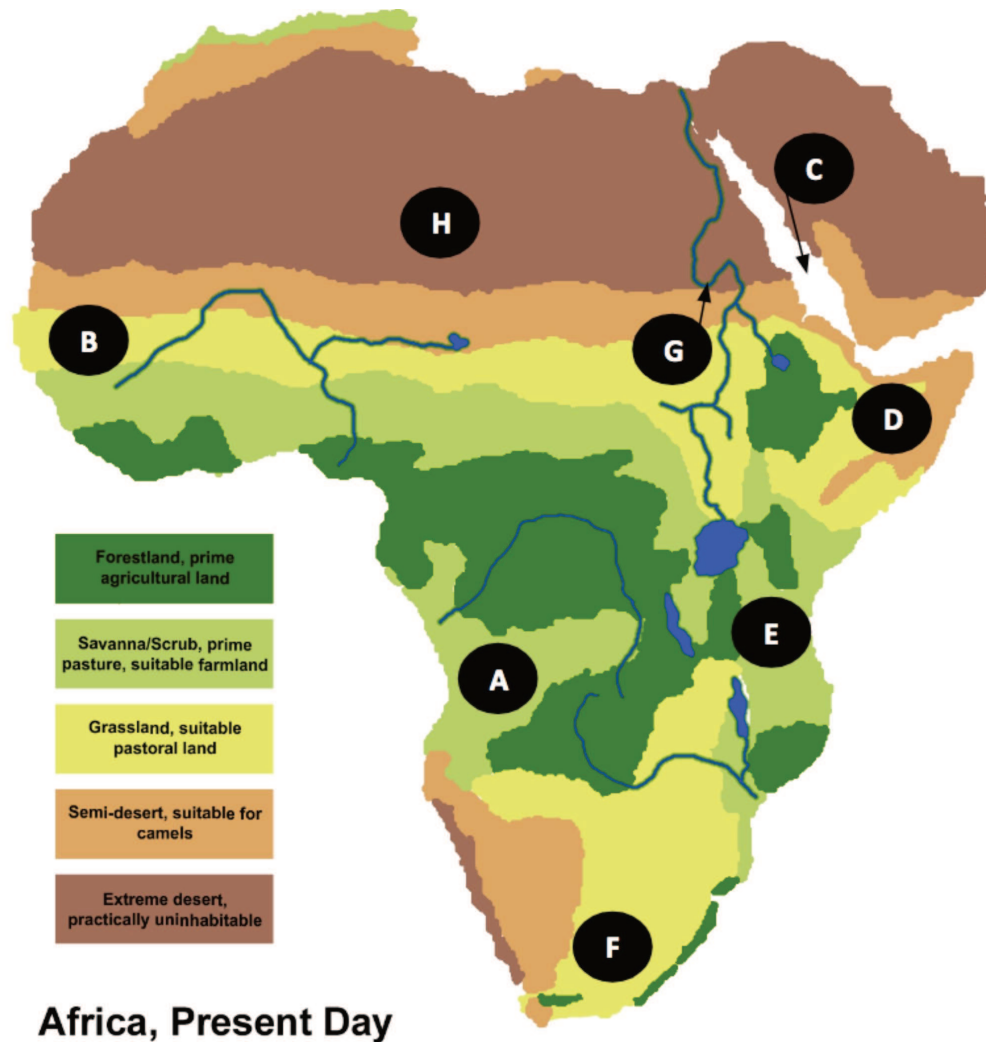
- 1 point for correctly identifying which statement is a fact
- 1 point for correctly identifying which statement is an opinion
- 2 points for providing clear and accurate analysis of two quotes and their connection to the importance of oral and written tradition
- 2 points for providing an opinion and reasoning regarding the scenario provided

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Sub-Saharan Content Assessment (Sentence Frames)*

### Section 1: Geography

Identify the following features on the map of the African continent below.



Write the letter of the following features:

\_\_\_ Sahara Desert      \_\_\_ Swahili Coast      \_\_\_ The Red Sea      \_\_\_ Ethiopian Highlands

Next, draw on the map to illustrate various trade networks using arrows and circles. This does not need to be exact or precise; just provide an idea of how regions were connected through trade.

**Image source:** Africa Climate Today. Image by Ingoman via Wikimedia Commons is in the public domain.

**Map Analysis Questions:**

1. Choose one feature that you labeled, and explain how it has **influenced the lives of people** in sub-Saharan Africa.

The \_\_\_\_\_ (geographic feature) influenced trade by

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2. Where would you expect to find a larger population: near modern-day **Chad** or **Kenya**? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_ (Chad / Kenya) would likely have a larger population because

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**Image source:** Political Map of Africa (2021). Image by US Government (Central Intelligence Agency) via Wikimedia Commons is in the public domain.

## Section 2: Vocabulary

1. Which two examples describe how people in ancient sub-Saharan Africa **adapted** to their environment? Circle two.
  - A. Developing farming techniques suited to dry savanna regions
  - B. Building homes from imported marble and stone
  - C. Using natural river systems for fishing and transportation
  - D. Ignoring seasonal weather patterns when growing crops
  
2. Who in ancient **sub-Saharan Africa** would most likely be responsible for recording important information such as trade agreements or royal histories?
  - A. A village leader overseeing farming
  - B. A scribe working in a royal court
  - C. A warrior preparing for battle
  - D. A merchant traveling across the Sahara
  
3. Which of these is an example of **archaeological evidence** that helps historians learn about ancient sub-Saharan Africa?
  - A. Oral stories passed down from generation to generation
  - B. Ancient tools and pottery discovered at excavation sites
  - C. Modern trade routes connecting African nations
  - D. Legends describing the founding of early empires
  
4. Which of these is a reason why the **trans-Saharan trade** routes were important to ancient sub-Saharan African societies?
  - A. The trade prevented the spread of cultural traditions between different regions.
  - B. The trade encouraged the spread of new religions and ideas across Africa.
  - C. The trade caused people to settle permanently in one location.
  - D. The trade made it easier for empires to avoid contact with foreign merchants.
  
5. How did ancient sub-Saharan African societies work to **preserve** important knowledge and traditions?
  - A. By passing down stories and histories through oral storytelling
  - B. By refusing to interact with traders from other regions
  - C. By limiting the use of natural resources like wood and stone
  - D. By isolating themselves from neighboring communities

## Section 3: Paragraph Answer

Answer the following question in a paragraph that has:

- A specific and accurate claim
- Specific factual evidence from the unit
- Clear reasoning.

You can use this source to help remind you of some important ideas about trade in ancient sub-Saharan Africa, but you can also use other information from the unit that you remember.

“Aksum managed trade between India and the Mediterranean. It traded in gold, spices, exotic animals, and much more. In the 1st century CE, Aksum became very wealthy and powerful. It could afford to build a strong navy to patrol the Red Sea and protect its trade routes. By the 1st century CE, experts had begun writing about Aksum’s wealth and power.

Aksum grew quickly. Many monuments were built as well as detailed tombs for important members of society....At its height, Aksum controlled North Ethiopia and parts of Sudan. It had the wealth to buy swords and ships, and there were no other kingdoms in East Africa to challenge it. Aksum was in the center of an ancient trade network that connected Africa, Europe, and Asia, making it easy to learn about new technologies.”

**Text source:** Baker, David. OER Project. "[Ancient Agrarian Societies: Aksum](#)."

What is one way that trade influenced ancient sub-Saharan African societies, and why did it have that effect?

Word Bank			
trade	trade routes	travel	exchange
merchants	gold	spices	power
technology	religions		

Trade influenced ancient sub-Saharan African societies  
by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

For example, \_\_\_\_\_

These changes happened because \_\_\_\_\_



## Section 4: Applied Historical Inquiry

Read the following scenario and the quotes by ancient African leaders that illustrate their beliefs and values. Then answer the questions below.

**Scenario:** A local school is considering how to use a new grant to improve its educational offerings. The school leader is evaluating three options.

- **Option 1:** Establish a cultural learning center.
  - **Goal:** Provide a space where students can learn about African history, storytelling, and traditions through workshops and presentations.
- **Option 2:** Create a digital library.
  - **Goal:** Offer students access to a wide range of texts, including traditional African literature, oral histories, and modern educational resources.
- **Option 3:** Develop a mentorship program.
  - **Goal:** Pair students with community elders and leaders to learn from their experiences and wisdom, encouraging the passing down of knowledge across generations.

1. Which of these statements is a **fact**? Circle one.

- A. The library will provide students with a space to read books.
- B. The principal hopes students will be inspired by the mentorship program.
- C. The mentorship program will connect students with community leaders.
- D. The cultural education event will involve guest speakers.

2. Which of these statements is an **opinion**? Circle one.

- A. Oral storytelling is the most important form of education.
- B. Many people in the community want better access to books.
- C. A new cultural center will be built in the downtown area.
- D. The digital storytelling workshop is held on Tuesdays.

**"When an elder dies, a library burns to the ground."**

— African proverb

**Text source:** LizJansen.com. 2020. "[Healing Through Stories](#)," July 24.



3. Based on this quote and what you've learned, what does it show about the importance of oral tradition in ancient African societies? How do oral and written traditions compare, and which do you think was more effective at the time? How could this affect the leader's choice on how to spend the new funding?

The quote shows how \_\_\_\_\_.

Oral traditions were effective because \_\_\_\_\_.

This might influence the leader to choose \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ to preserve these traditions.

**"The ink of a scholar is more precious than the blood of a martyr."**

– Ahmed Baba, 16th-century scholar of Timbuktu

**Text source:** Hirsch, Afua. 2013. "[Mali: Timbuktu's literary gems face Islamists and decay in fight for survival](#)." *The Atlantic*. May 21.

4. Based on this quote and your learning from the unit, how might the importance of written tradition impact the community leader's decision on how to use the new funding?

This quote shows \_\_\_\_\_.

The importance of written tradition may impact the community leader's decision because \_\_\_\_\_.

5. What do you think the community leader should do? What belief or value makes you think that?

I think the leader should choose \_\_\_\_\_

because it supports \_\_\_\_\_.

## Scoring Guidance

### Section 1: Geography (9 points)

- 1 point per correctly labeled map feature
- 2 points for each short-answer question

### Section 2: Vocabulary (10 points)

- 2 points per correct answer

### Section 3: Paragraph Answer (9 points)

- 3 points for a claim that answers the question and makes a factually accurate statement about trade's effects on ancient sub-Saharan African societies.
- 3 points for evidence, from the text or elsewhere in the unit, that accurately and precisely describes at least one central aspect of trans-Saharan trade.
- 3 points for reasoning that fully and accurately explains how this element of trade influenced society.

### Section 4: Applied Historical Inquiry (7 points)

- 1 point for correctly identifying which statement is a fact.
- 1 point for correctly identifying which statement is an opinion.
- 3 points for providing clear and accurate analysis of two quotes and their connection to the importance of oral and written tradition.
- 2 points for providing an opinion and reasoning regarding the scenario provided.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Summative Discussion Diamond*

**Directions:**

1. Write your answer to the Unit Essential Question on your corner of the Discussion Diamond.
  - Support your answer with an artifact, map, or other source from the unit.
  - Explain why you chose that source and how it helps you answer the question.
2. As a group, discuss all of the answers and evidence.
3. Select the best answer and evidence, and write it in the center of the Diamond.

A diamond-shaped graphic organizer with four vertices. Each vertex is labeled with 'Name:' and 'Date:'. Four lines extend from each vertex: one upwards from the top, one downwards from the bottom, one to the left from the left, and one to the right from the right.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Summative Assessment Task (Sentence Frames)*

**Directions:** Use the sources, information from your Discussion Diamond, and knowledge of sub-Saharan Africa's history to write an argument about how to best share stories of ancient African societies. You can use the included sentence frames to help you with your written responses.

In this Summative Assessment Task, you will be answering our unit's Essential Question:

*How do we best tell the stories of ancient African societies and the factors that shaped them?*

**Introduction**

(1 paragraph):

Restate the question, and provide a thesis/claim statement.

Sentence frames:

- *The stories of ancient African societies are important because \_\_\_\_.*
- *One way we can tell these stories is by \_\_\_\_.*

**Body Paragraph 1:**

Use specific evidence from the sources to support your claim.

Explain what we know about how goods, ideas, and cultural practices were exchanged across ancient sub-Saharan Africa.

Sentence frames:

- *In ancient sub-Saharan Africa, people shared \_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_.*
- *One example from the sources is \_\_\_\_.*
- *This shows that people \_\_\_\_.*
- *Sharing goods and ideas was important because \_\_\_\_.*

**Transition Sentence:**Sentence frames:

- *Another important part of ancient African societies was \_\_\_\_.*
- *Geography also shaped these societies because \_\_\_\_.*

<p><b>Body Paragraph 2:</b></p> <p>Use specific evidence from the sources to support your claim.</p> <p>Explain how geography (like rivers, deserts, and mountains) has shaped the way ancient African societies lived and traded.</p> <p><u>Sentence frames:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Geography affected life in ancient Africa because ____.</i></li><li>• <i>For example, the ____ made it ____ (easier/ harder) to ____.</i></li><li>• <i>Due to harsh geographical features, people had to ____.</i></li></ul>	
<p><b>Transition Sentence:</b></p> <p><u>Sentence frame:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>These stories help us better understand ____.</i></li></ul>	

**Conclusion**

(1 paragraph):

Summarize your main points.

Explain how stories of ancient African societies can be shared in a respectful and accurate way.

Sentence frames:

- *In conclusion, the best way to tell the stories of ancient African societies is \_\_\_\_.*
- *These stories are important because \_\_\_\_.*
- *We should share them by \_\_\_\_ so that \_\_\_\_.*

**Checklist Before Submitting:**

- Did I answer the question in my introduction?
- Did I include examples from at least two sources?
- Did I explain how stories of ancient African societies can be shared in a respectful and accurate way?
- Did I check my spelling and grammar?



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Summative Assessment Task*

**Directions:** Use the sources, information from your Discussion Diamond, and knowledge of sub-Saharan Africa's history to write an argument about how to best share stories of ancient African societies. In this Summative Assessment Task, you will be answering our unit's Essential Question:

*How do we best tell the stories of ancient African societies and the factors that shaped them?*

<b>Introduction</b> (1 paragraph):  Restate the question, and provide a thesis/claim statement.	
<b>Body Paragraph 1:</b>  Use specific evidence from the sources to support your claim. Explain what we know about how goods, ideas, and cultural practices were exchanged across ancient sub-Saharan Africa.	
<b>Transition Sentence:</b>	

<b>Body Paragraph 2:</b>  Use specific evidence from the sources to support your claim. Explain how geography (like rivers, deserts, and mountains) has shaped the way ancient African societies lived and	
<b>Transition Sentence:</b>	
<b>Conclusion</b> (1 paragraph):  Summarize your main points.  Explain how stories of ancient African societies can be shared in a respectful and accurate way.	

### Checklist Before Submitting:

- Did I answer the question in my introduction?
- Did I include examples from at least two sources?
- Did I explain how stories of ancient African societies can be shared in a respectful and accurate way?
- Did I check my spelling and grammar?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Sub-Saharan Africa Summative Rubric*

Standard	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching
<b>Practice Standard 2</b> Develop relevant guiding questions with peer support.	The writer develops two or more meaningful guiding questions that are clearly connected to the task.  Questions reflect collaboration with peers and support deep inquiry into African history.	The writer develops at least one guiding question that is relevant to the task and shows peer collaboration.  Questions somewhat reflect collaboration with peers and support deep inquiry into African history.	The writer provides no guiding question, or the question is unclear or not related to the topic.  There is little or no evidence of peer collaboration.
<b>Practice Standard 4</b> Compare and contrast points of view of people in the same world region across multiple sources, while clearly distinguishing opinion from fact.	The writer compares at least two perspectives from different sources, clearly distinguishing fact from opinion.  The writer thoughtfully analyzes similarities and differences.	The writer compares perspectives from at least two sources and distinguishes fact from opinion.  Some analysis of similarity/difference is included.	The writer offers a limited or unclear comparison of perspectives and may confuse fact with opinion.
<b>Practice Standard 6</b> Use evidence and reasoning to support a claim.	Across all responses:  <b>Claim:</b> The thesis is clear, insightful, and directly answers the question. <b>Evidence:</b> The writer uses strong, relevant evidence from multiple sources. <b>Reasoning:</b> The writer explains how the evidence supports the claim with thoughtful and well-developed reasoning.	Across all responses:  <b>Claim:</b> The thesis answers the question clearly. <b>Evidence:</b> The writer includes relevant evidence from at least two sources. <b>Reasoning:</b> The writer explains how the evidence supports the claim.	Across all responses:  <b>Claim:</b> The thesis is vague or only partially answers the question. <b>Evidence:</b> The writer uses minimal or unclear evidence. <b>Reasoning:</b> The connection between evidence and claim is weak or incomplete.

**Overall Feedback:**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_






Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Word Map Example*

**Directions:** Explore this word for your personal dictionary. Use a bilingual dictionary, a thesaurus, and a partner. Prepare to share your findings!

turning\_point  
word

important moment when a big change occurs and things are not the same afterward  
definition

 <p><b>Illustrate:</b> Draw a picture or diagram to help you remember the meaning of the word.</p> 	 <p><b>Word Forms:</b> Write down or look up different forms of the word.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We <u>reached a</u> turning point in our relationship.</li> <li>• The new law <u>marks a</u> turning point for civil rights.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Synonyms:</b> Use a thesaurus to look up two words that are similar.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• crossroad</li> <li>• milestone</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Translanguage:</b> Use a bilingual dictionary to translate the words and write them here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• momento crucial</li> </ul>

**Image sources:** "Sketch" by Adrien Coquet, "Puzzle pieces" by shashank singh, "Translate" by Uswa KDT, "Complement" by Brandon Shields, all via Noun Project, licensed under CC BY 3.0; "Turning Point" by Educurious via Canva.





# QUESTION

## Language and Literacy Builder

We ask questions to...

- Ask about what we see, think, and wonder
- Make predictions about what we think the answers will be

	Who	What	Where	When	Why
	Who (made/wrote)... ?	What (is/are)... ?	Where (is/was)... ?	When (is/was)... ?	Why (is/was)... ?
	Who (was/wasn't)... ?	What (do/does)... ?	Where (did/does)... ?	When (does/did)... ?	Why (does/did)... ?
	Who (will/would)... ?	What (can/could)... ?	Where (will/would)... ?	When do you think... ?	Why (will/would)... ?
Less complex ⇒	<u>Who made</u> this map?	<u>What are</u> these tools made for?	<u>Where is</u> this artifact from?	<u>When was</u> this document written?	<u>Why was</u> this painting made?
More complex ⇒	<u>Who was</u> this map made for?	<u>What do</u> these tools tell us about life back then?	<u>Where did</u> the archeologist find it in the ancient city?	<u>When did</u> writing become common in this society?	<u>Why did</u> this painting become popular?
Most complex ⇒	<u>Who would</u> be able to tell us more about this map today?	<u>What can</u> the size of these tools tell us about their use?	<u>Where would</u> you get more information about this artifact?	<u>When do you think</u> these ideas spread to other societies?	<u>Why does</u> it matter that the painting was made 40 years later?







# CAUSE-EFFECT

## Language and Literacy Builder

We think about causes and effects to...

- Understand how events in history are connected
- Explain why people, societies, ideas, and places change over time

	Less complex ⇒	More complex ⇒	Most complex ⇒
Focus on the CAUSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I think ___ causes ___.</li> <li>• The cause (is/was) ___.</li> <li>• Because (of) ___, ___.</li> <li>• Due to ___, ___.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One factor (is/was) ___.</li> <li>• Since ___, ___.</li> <li>• As a result of ___, ___.</li> <li>• ___ happened because ___.</li> <li>• ___ caused ___ because ___.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several factors caused ___. They (are/were) ___, ___, and ___.</li> <li>• If ___ (had/hadn't / was/wasn't) ___, ___ (would/wouldn't) ___.</li> </ul>
CAUSE → Effect	<i>Due to the storm</i> , the game was cancelled.	<i>As a result of my hard work</i> , I got a good grade on my project.	<i>If the geographic location <u>wasn't</u> as fertile for agriculture</i> , the society <u>wouldn't</u> have flourished.
Focus on the EFFECT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I think ___ was caused by ___.</li> <li>• The effect (is/was) ___.</li> <li>• The result (is/was) ___.</li> <li>• ___, so ___.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One outcome (is/was) ___.</li> <li>• ___ happened because (of) ___.</li> <li>• ___ as a consequence of ___.</li> <li>• ___; therefore, ___.</li> <li>• ___ is a result of ___ because ___.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ___ led to many changes, such as ___, ___, and ___.</li> <li>• One important effect of ___ (is/was) ___ because ___.</li> </ul>
EFFECT → Cause	The game was cancelled <u>because of</u> the storm.	I want a good grade in the class; <u>therefore</u> , I worked hard on my project.	<u>One important effect of living near fertile valleys <u>was</u></u> that early complex societies could grow a surplus of food.





# SUMMARIZE

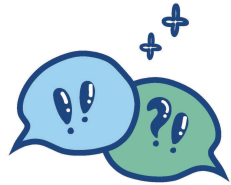
## Language and Literacy Builder

We summarize to...

- Identify the main idea and supporting details
- Show we understand and can share with others

Less complex ⇒	More complex ⇒	Most complex ⇒
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <u>main idea</u> of this <u>source</u> is...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <u>topic</u> of this <u>source</u> is...</li> <li>• The <u>author's main idea</u> is that...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the <u>source</u> ("<u>title</u>"), (<u>author's name</u>) <u>explains</u>...</li> </ul>
<p>The <u>main idea</u> of this <u>video</u> is <i>how humans changed over millions of years.</i></p>	<p>The <u>subject</u> of this <u>video</u> is <i>human evolution.</i></p> <p>The <u>narrator's message</u> is that <i>humans evolved because of many influences.</i></p>	<p>In the <u>video</u> "Human Evolution," the Natural History Museum <u>explains</u> <i>how early humans developed and spread across the globe.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One supporting <u>detail</u> is...</li> <li>• <u>Another detail</u> is...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <u>first</u> important <u>detail</u> is...</li> <li>• The <u>second key detail</u> is...</li> <li>• <u>Finally</u>, the <u>last</u> important <u>detail</u> is...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the <u>first part</u>, the <u>author</u>...</li> <li>• In the <u>second part</u>, the <u>author</u>...</li> <li>• The most significant <u>section</u> is...</li> <li>• The <u>author concludes</u> that...</li> </ul>
Helpful words for summaries		
<p><b>Transition words</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one → another</li> <li>• first → next → finally</li> <li>• one → in addition → last</li> <li>• first → second → third → finally</li> </ul> <p><b>Main idea:</b> point, main point, message, central message, big idea</p>	<p><b>Topic:</b> focus, subject</p> <p><b>Detail:</b> key detail, point, reason, evidence, piece of evidence</p> <p><b>Source types:</b> artifact, article, document, drawing, graphic, illustration, image, letter, map, newspaper, photograph, primary source, secondary source, video, website</p>	<p><b>Parts of sources:</b> paragraph, part, section</p> <p><b>Author:</b> narrator, historian, journalist, writer, scholar</p> <p><b>Author verbs:</b> explains, compares, concludes, contrasts, defines, describes, discusses, explores, investigates, presents, recommends, shows</p>





# CONNECT

## Language and Literacy Builder

We connect to our inquiry questions...

- By comparing sources, points of view, and relevant evidence to help us answer our questions

Less complex ⇒	More complex ⇒	Most complex ⇒
I think...	These two sources show...	The evidence in these sources is significant because...
One connection is... Another connection is...	This source shows ___, but the other source shows...	Based on evidence that shows ___, we conclude that...
Both sources show...	These sources help answer our question about ___ because...	Of all the sources we've reviewed, the most useful for answering our question are ___ and ___ because...
This source helps answer our question because...	This information matters because...	From these sources, we've learned ___. This is important because...
This source helps answer our question <u>because</u> it shows human brains got bigger during the Paleolithic Era.	This information matters because it tells us how changes in brains and bodies led to big changes in how early humans lived.	From these sources, we've learned that physical changes led early humans to evolve in many ways. <u>This is important because</u> it prepared the earliest humans to become modern humans that are similar to us today.





# OBSERVE

## Language and Literacy Builder

We observe sources to...

- Notice details that help us understand a source
- Ask and answer questions about what we see

	Less complex ⇒	More complex ⇒	Most complex ⇒
Questions to ask myself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do I see?</li> <li>• What <u>details</u> do I notice?</li> <li>• What <u>features</u> do I see?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What <u>features</u> do I notice in this <u>source</u>?</li> <li>• What <u>sourcing</u> details can I identify about this <u>source</u>?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What unexpected <u>details</u> stand out to me?</li> <li>• What new things do I notice when I change my perspective?</li> </ul>
Ways to share observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I see ___ on this <u>source</u>.</li> <li>• I notice ___ in this <u>source</u>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One <u>detail</u> I see in this <u>source</u> is...</li> <li>• A sourcing detail I notice is...</li> <li>• Something I notice but can't explain is...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I notice ___, which seems important because...</li> <li>• After looking at the <u>source</u> again, something new I see is...</li> <li>• I (see/don't see) ___, which makes me wonder...</li> </ul>
	Things to look for	Source types and details	Examples
How to make observations	<p><b>Details to look for:</b> places, people, events, geography, action, perspective, purpose, patterns, words, numbers, information, colors, map keys</p> <p><b>Features of sources:</b> title, author, headings, sections, photos, images, captions, graphics, charts, maps, vocabulary definitions, organization</p>	<p><b>Source types:</b> article, artifact, document, drawing, graphic, illustration, image, letter, map, newspaper, photograph, primary source, secondary source, video, website</p> <p><b>Sourcing details:</b> author, audience, publication date, title, location, date, materials used in an artifact, size of an artifact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I see <u>mountains</u> on this <u>map</u>.</li> <li>• I see <u>drawings</u> on this <u>artifact</u>.</li> <li>• I notice <u>two charts</u> on this <u>website</u>.</li> <li>• I notice <u>big words</u> in this <u>letter</u>.</li> <li>• One <u>feature</u> I see in this <u>article</u> is many sections with headings.</li> <li>• I <u>don't see</u> any people, which makes me wonder if the city was abandoned.</li> </ul>





Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Word Map

**Directions:** Explore this word for your personal dictionary. Use a bilingual dictionary, a thesaurus, and a partner. Prepare to share your findings!

\_\_\_\_\_  
word\_\_\_\_\_  
definition**Represent the Word:**

Draw a picture or diagram to help you remember the meaning of the word.

**Word Forms:**

Write down or look up different forms of the word.

**Synonyms:**

Use a thesaurus to look up two words that are similar.

**Translanguage:**

Use a bilingual dictionary to translate the words and write them here.

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