

# Sub-Saharan Africa

Unit Throughlines	Learning Progression
<p><b>How do we best tell the stories of ancient African societies and the factors that shaped them?</b></p> <p><b>EU 1.</b> Historians are revising African history by using archaeology, written texts, and oral traditions to uncover the continent's past; new research led by African scholars is providing a more accurate and complete understanding, though some details may still remain elusive due to the nature of evidence.</p> <p><b>EU 2.</b> Geography shapes human communities by influencing soil, climate, and rainfall across Africa; these environmental factors created diverse challenges and opportunities, prompting African societies to develop innovative solutions and adapt to their surroundings.</p> <p><b>EU 3.</b> Knowledge and traditions are preserved and adapted through oral and written forms of literacy; African societies maintained continuity through the sharing of beliefs and knowledge while also embracing new influences that enriched their art, religion, language, and culture.</p>	<p><b>Environment and Adaptation in Sub-Saharan Africa   8 Lessons</b></p> <p><b>What are the defining aspects of Africa's environment, and how have people adapted to its challenges while using its resources?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>L 1. Engage with the Africa unit's Essential Question, and generate new questions about the continent through a close-looking exercise with contemporary photographs from the panAFRICApject.</li> <li>L 2. Analyze the point of view and purpose of several map types and spatial representations of the African continent.</li> <li>L 3. Distinguish between several ecoregions of Africa on a three-dimensional map representation, and draw inferences about the effects of physical environments on the people who live there, applying disciplinary language.</li> <li>L 4. Determine the main idea of a text about an African region, and draw an inference about human adaptation to environmental challenges/advantages.</li> <li>L 5. Conduct research about a specific African country, gathering and organizing information from several secondary sources and using research evidence to answer a Supporting Question.</li> <li>L 6. Conduct research about a specific African country, gathering and organizing information from several secondary sources and using research evidence to answer a Supporting Question.</li> <li>L 7. Conduct research about a specific African country, gathering and organizing information from several secondary sources and using research evidence to answer a Supporting Question.</li> <li>L 8. Analyze how African populations have interacted with their environment by examining key geographical features, climate patterns, and resource use; and synthesize findings to construct an evidence-based claim.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ancient African Traditions, Knowledge, and Power   6 Lessons</b></p> <p><b>How do stories, artifacts, and written records help us understand the unique features of ancient African societies?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>L 9. Explain the point of view in two interpretations of Africa's ancient history.</li> <li>L 10. Analyze the characteristics of four complex societies of ancient Africa by choosing and applying relevant questions to sets of primary and secondary sources.</li> </ul>

**EU 4.** Africa's societies are interconnected through trade and cultural exchanges with neighboring and distant regions; openness to outside influences led to advancements in various aspects of society, including art, religion, and technology, benefiting societies both within and outside the continent.

**EU 5.** African societies have diverse forms of governance that reflect their unique cultures and traditions; in many societies, leadership was balanced by ethical beliefs, religious practices, and the influence of community and social groups, creating complex and interconnected political systems.

### Key Practice Standards

**PS 2.** Develop relevant guiding questions with peer support.

**PS 4.** Compare and contrast points of view of people in the same world region across multiple sources, while clearly distinguishing opinion from fact.

**PS 6.** Use evidence and reasoning to support a claim.

### Key Literacy Standards

**RCA-H.6-8.2.** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

**RCA-H.6-8.6.** Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

- L 11. Analyze the characteristics of four complex societies of ancient Africa by applying relevant questions to sets of primary and secondary sources and discussing answers.
- L 12. Describe written and oral traditions of literacy in several societies of ancient Africa, and analyze, in verbal and written responses, the power of scribes and storytellers.
- L 13. Describe written and oral traditions of literacy in several societies of ancient Africa, and analyze, in verbal and written responses, the power of scribes and storytellers.
- L 14. Analyze an artifact, develop guiding questions, and make a claim about an ancient African society.

### In-Depth Inquiry: Historic Occupations and Civic Values | 3 Lessons

#### Which role—the ironsmith, the farmer, or the king—do you think had the greatest influence on ancient West African societies?

- L 15. Analyze the significance of occupational roles in ancient West African societies by developing guiding questions and examining historical sources and proverbs.
- L 16. Analyze and make a judgment about the contributions of specialized occupations in ancient West African societies by applying questions to probe sources.
- L 17. Synthesize key learnings from the cluster by analyzing how different occupations contributed to the organization and values of ancient West African societies and constructing a written response supported by evidence.

### Trade and Transformation in Ancient Africa | 7 Lessons

#### How did Africa's geography influence local and global trade?

- L 18. Analyze maps to generate predictions about ancient trade networks in three African regions.
- L 19. Analyze travelers' accounts to generate more ideas about ancient trade networks in three African regions.
- L 20. Analyze travelers' accounts to generate more ideas about ancient trade networks in three African regions.
- L 21. Analyze the effects of the ancient Indian Ocean trade network on Swahili Coast societies.
- L 22. Explain the means and motives behind the trans-Saharan trade of ancient West Africa and its neighbors by participating in a webquest.
- L 23. Identify effects of the ancient sub-Saharan trade on the empire of Ghana/Wagadou by analyzing two contrasting sources, noticing differences of purpose and perspective.
- L 24. Explain a judgment collaboratively in a written poster, then consider diverse perspectives on the question of trade's consequences for West African and Swahili societies.

### Religion and Religious Tolerance in Ancient Africa | 5 Lessons

#### How did religious traditions develop, adapt, and interact with one another in ancient sub-Saharan Africa?

**SLCA.6-8.1.** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on discipline-specific topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**WCA.6-8.1.** Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.

- L 25. Explain the development of Christianity and Islam in ancient sub-Saharan Africa using a Graphic Organizer to identify ways that African people both adapted and preserved religious traditions.
- L 26. Describe common features of African indigenous religions and their interactions with other religious traditions in sub-Saharan Africa.
- L 27. Define religious tolerance, and apply the concept to historical and contemporary African examples by crafting argument statements.
- L 28. Define religious tolerance, and apply the concept to historical and contemporary African examples by crafting argument statements.
- L 29. Use the Know and Wonder Chart and Inquiry Charts to identify important takeaway learnings from each cluster of the unit.

### Summative Assessment | 1 Day

The Summative Assessment for Unit 6.3 provides students with the opportunity to showcase the knowledge and skills they have developed throughout the unit. Students will engage in structured activities that guide them toward crafting a well-supported written response to the Unit Essential Question:

- *How do we best tell the stories of ancient African societies and the factors that shaped them?*

Students will begin with a collaborative Discussion Diamond activity, where they will generate and organize possible responses to the Essential Question using evidence from the unit. They will then individually compose a two-paragraph written argument, utilizing unit sources and explaining how those sources support their claim. By engaging in collaborative discussions and evidence-based writing, students will demonstrate their understanding of the ways in which historians can best share accurate portrayals of ancient sub-Saharan Africa.