

# WEST AFRICAN HISTORY

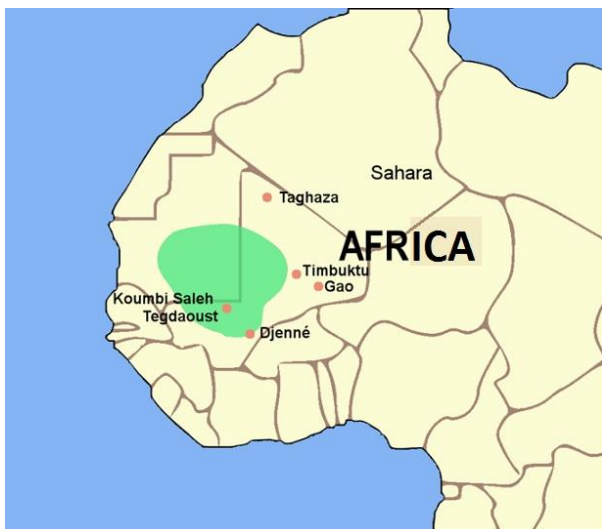
In the 600s and 700s, Islam began to spread across \_\_\_\_\_ Africa. As Arabs gained control, they converted Africans, especially the upper classes, to their religion.

The \_\_\_\_\_ Desert spreads 3,200 miles across the northern third of Africa.

With the introduction of the \_\_\_\_\_ in the 7th century trade began to increase between North Africa and West Africa.



The empire of **Ghana** thrived from 400 to 1238. It had \_\_\_\_\_ mines and \_\_\_\_\_ mines. It resisted converting to Islam, but fell to Islamic crusades by the Berbers.



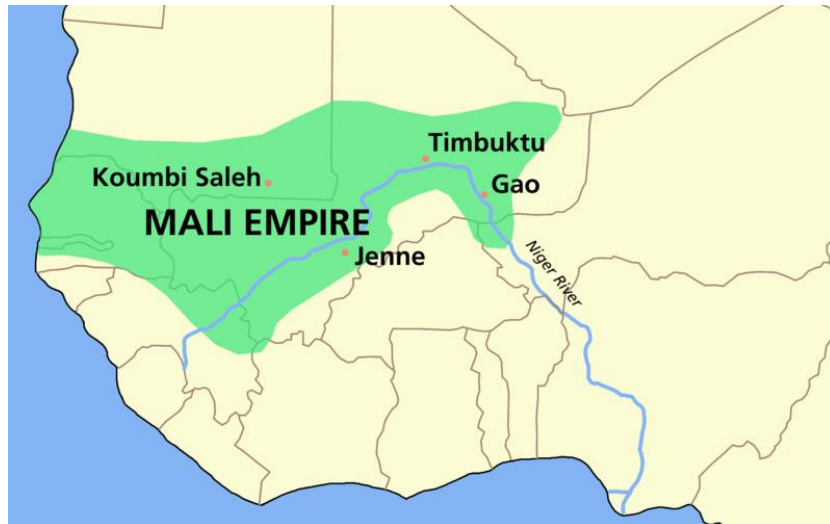
Demand for \_\_\_\_\_ from the north increased trade. Arab traders brought goods and the \_\_\_\_\_ religion.

Attacks on Ghana by the Mandingo people of West Africa ended their empire.

The Mandingo people created a new empire called \_\_\_\_\_.

# MALI EMPIRE

Sundiata was a prince who spent much of his childhood in \_\_\_\_\_.  
Sundiata won back his throne in 1230. He expanded the kingdom's land and strengthened the country. He ruled for 25 years until 1255.



It is said that Mansa Musa's predecessor (perhaps his brother) sent a fleet of \_\_\_\_\_ ships across the Atlantic Ocean to find out what was on the other side. The King of Mali never returned. This was 180 years before Christopher \_\_\_\_\_!!

Mansa Musa was said to have been Sundiata's grandson. He took the throne in 1312. He was a devout Muslim. He was able to unite many cultures, villages and tribes. The size of the empire doubled.

Mali prospered due to the trade of \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

**GOLD:** The tribal people of Mali who controlled gold sources were very \_\_\_\_\_ about their locations. If any king of Mali tried to dictate terms to them, they would stop or slow production.

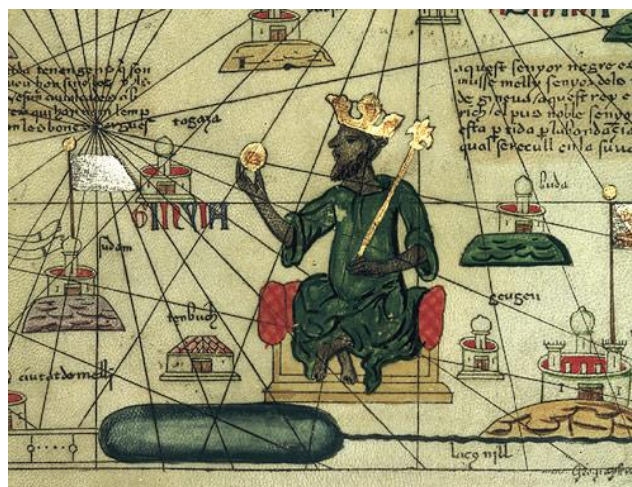
**SALT:** During Mansa Musa's time major salt mines were in a district called Taghanza. Many \_\_\_\_\_ worked in the mines. Their houses and even their mosque was made of \_\_\_\_\_.

**SCHOLARSHIP:** Scholarship was also important in Mali. The city of \_\_\_\_\_ had some of the world's first universities. It was a renowned center of learning, with three universities and at least 150 schools with free tuition to promising students.

**PILGRIMAGE:** One of the \_\_\_\_\_ Pillars of Islam has each Muslim make a pilgrimage to \_\_\_\_\_. Mansa Musa chose to make this pilgrimage in 1324. He traveled with hundreds of servants dressed in fine clothes and carrying staffs made of \_\_\_\_\_.

Along the way, Mansa Musa gave gold to \_\_\_\_\_ people. It is said he also paid to have a \_\_\_\_\_ built wherever he stopped on Friday.

He gave away so much gold that the price of gold dropped!



**Above:** This is from the 1375 Catalan Atlas of the Known World. It shows Mansa Musa holding a gold nugget and wearing a European-style crown.

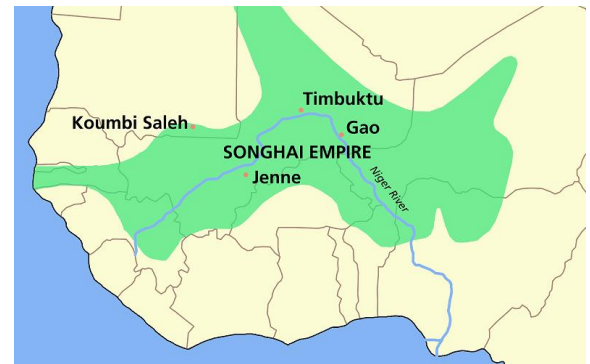
# KINGDOM OF SONGHAI

As Mali declined, Songhai began to grow. By the time \_\_\_\_\_ sailed to the Americas, Songhai was the most important power in \_\_\_\_\_ Africa.

In 1493, a powerful \_\_\_\_\_ named Askia Mohammad, took power from the king. He strengthened the empire and made it one of the largest in West Africa's history.

He built a professional army of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of war.

Under his rule, \_\_\_\_\_ expanded with Europe and Asia.

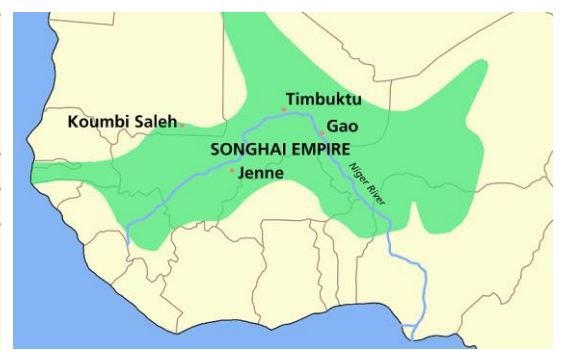
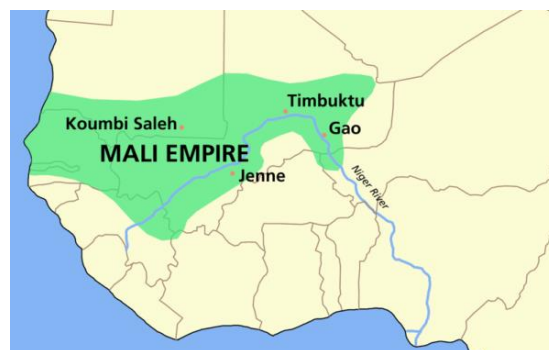
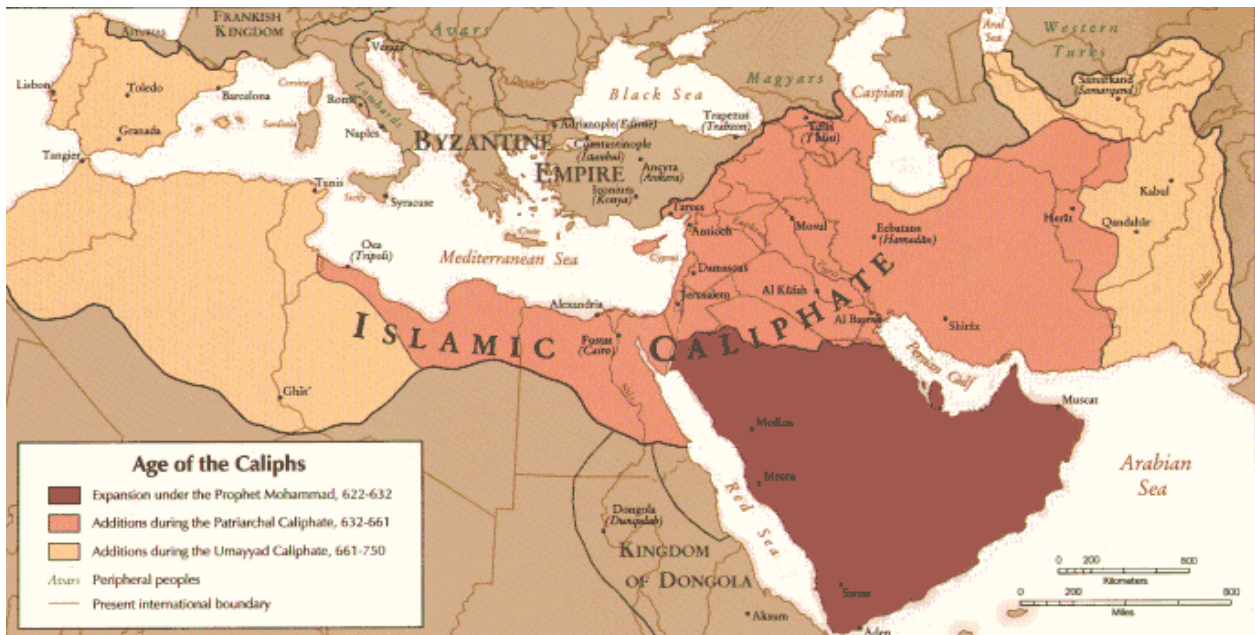
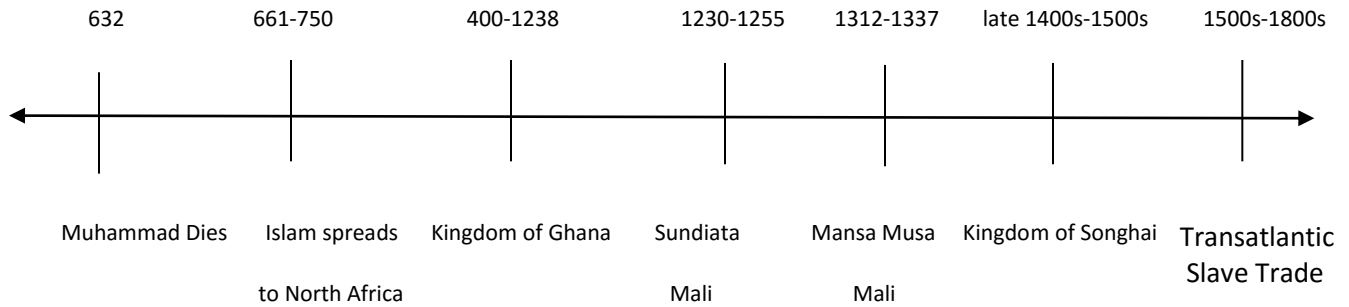


He was interested in learning to \_\_\_\_\_ better and looked to better the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ system of Songhai. Learning flourished and Mali's universities produced some distinguished scholars.

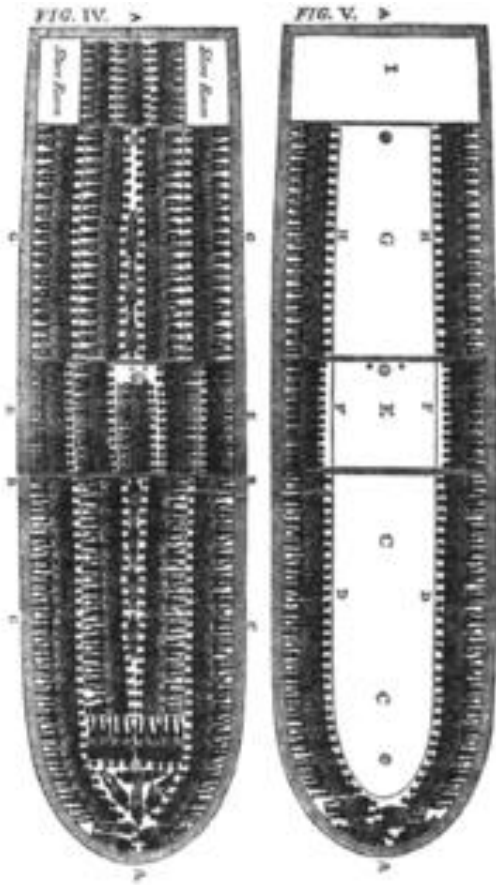
For the next hundred years, Songhai went through periods of decline and rebuilding. In 1591, a \_\_\_\_\_ army crossed the \_\_\_\_\_ to attack Songhai. Most of the Moroccan soldiers died, but their cannons overpowered Songhai's 27,000 warriors.

The golden age of West Africa was over.

# TIMELINE OF WEST AFRICAN HISTORY



# TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE 1500S-1800S



Slaves were sold by Africans to \_\_\_\_\_ slave traders.

They were transported to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ America.

There were often \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ slaves on one ship.

## ANSWERS

Islam began to spread across North Africa as Arabs gained control and converted Africans, especially the upper classes to their religion.

The Sahara Desert spreads 3,200 miles across the northern third of Africa.

With the introduction of the camel in the 7th century trade began to increase between North Africa and West Africa.

The empire of Ghana thrived from 400 to 1238. It had gold mines and salt mines. It resisted converting to Islam, but fell to Islamic crusades by the Berbers.

Demand for gold from the north increased trade.

Arab traders brought goods and the Muslim religion.

Attacks on Ghana by the Mandingo people of West Africa ended their empire.

The Mandingo people created a new empire called Mali.

## MALI

Sundiata was a prince who spent much of his childhood in exile.

Sundiata won back his throne in 1230. He expanded the kingdom's land and strengthened the country. He ruled for 25 years until 1255.

It is said that Mansa Musa's predecessor (perhaps his brother) sent a fleet of 2,000 ships across the Atlantic Ocean to find out what was on the other side. The King of Mali never returned. This was 180 years before Christopher Columbus !!

Mansa Musa was said to have been Sundiata's grandson. He took the throne in 1312. He was a devout Muslim. He was able to unite many cultures, villages and tribes. The size of the empire doubled.

Mali prospered due to the trade of gold, salt and slaves.

**GOLD:** The tribal people of Mali who controlled gold sources were very secretive about their locations. If any king of Mali tried to dictate terms to them, they would stop or slow production.

**SALT:** During Mansa Musa's time major salt mines were in a district called Taghanza. Many slaves worked in the mines. Their houses and even their mosque was made of salt.

**SCHOLARSHIP:** Scholarship was also important in Mali. The city of Timbuktu had some of the world's first universities. It was a renowned center of learning, with three universities and at least 150 schools with free tuition to promising students.

**PILGRIMAGE:** One of the Five Pillars of Islam has each Muslim make a pilgrimage to Mecca. Mansa Musa chose to make this pilgrimage in 1324. He traveled with hundreds of servants dressed in fine clothes and carrying staffs made of gold.

Along the way, Mansa Musa gave gold to poor people. It is said he also paid to have a mosque built wherever he stopped on Friday.

He gave away so much gold that the price of gold dropped!



## KINGDOM OF SONGHAI

As Mali declined, Songhai began to grow. By the time **Columbus** sailed to the Americas, Songhai was the most important power in Western Africa.

In 1493, a powerful **general** named Askia Mohammad, took power from the king. He strengthened the empire and made it one of the largest in West Africa's history.

He built a professional army of **slaves** and **prisoners** of war.

Under his rule, **trade** expanded with Europe and Asia.

He was interested in learning to **govern** better and looked to better the **education** and **legal** system of Songhai. Learning flourished and Mali's universities produced some distinguished scholars.

For the next hundred years, Songhai went through periods of decline and rebuilding. In 1591, a **Moroccan** army crossed the **Sahara** to attack Songhai. Most of the Moroccan soldiers died, but their cannons overpowered Songhai's 27,000 warriors.

The golden age of West Africa was over.

Slaves were sold by Africans to European slave traders.

They were transported to South and North America.

There were often 350 to 600 slaves on one ship.



For those of you who might come across these worksheets out there on the internet, this is by no means a comprehensive history of West Africa. My kids are quite young (7 and 9) and we are going over some highlights of West African history.

After reading a number of history books and story books, I created these pages to highlight some of the key points we learned.

Feel free to use this in your homeschool or classroom, but bear in mind there are other resources that will be much more thorough and accurate than what I created here as notebook pages for my kids!

Happy Learning!

Kind regards,

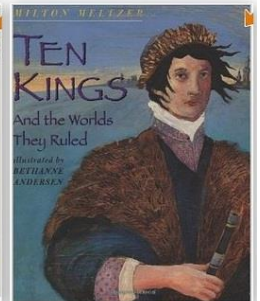
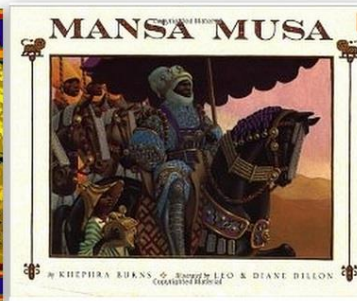
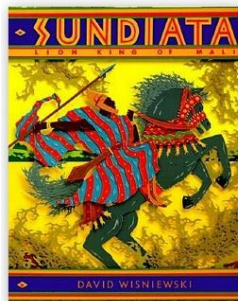
Liesl , homeschoolden.com

## BOOKS WE USED:

*These are affiliate links:*

[Sundiata: Lion King of Mali](#) by David Wisniewski (picture book)

[Mansa Musa](#) by Khephra Burns (a long picture book, some fact, some fiction)



[Ten Kings: And The Worlds They Rule](#) by Milton Meltzer (this was a great resource. We read the chapter aloud together.)

[The Story of the World \(Vol. 2\)](#) Chapter 29 by Susan Wise Bauer

[Journey Into Africa](#) by Ann Jansen (a curriculum written by a Christian author. It covers geography, history and contemporary African culture. It also includes stories about contemporary missionaries. Very thorough and written on the elementary level. Lots of pictures and illustrations.)