



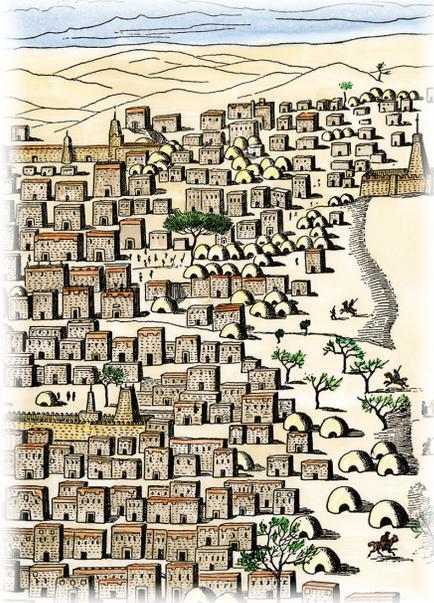
GRADE 5 LOUISIANA SOCIAL STUDIES

# West African Kingdoms

Sunni Ali

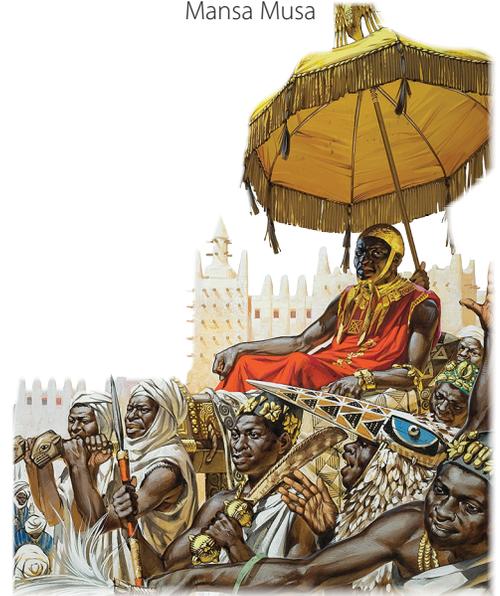


## Teacher Guide

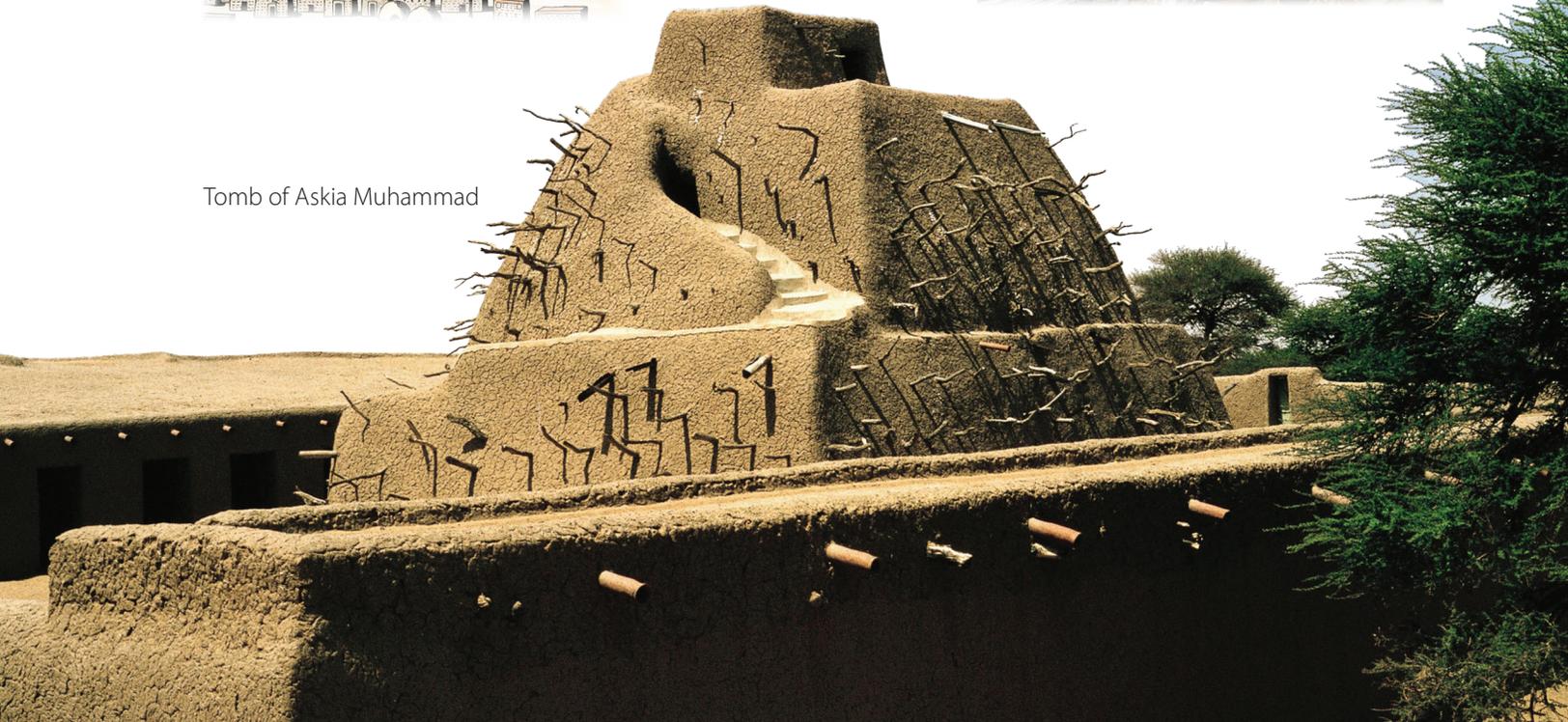


Timbuktu

Mansa Musa



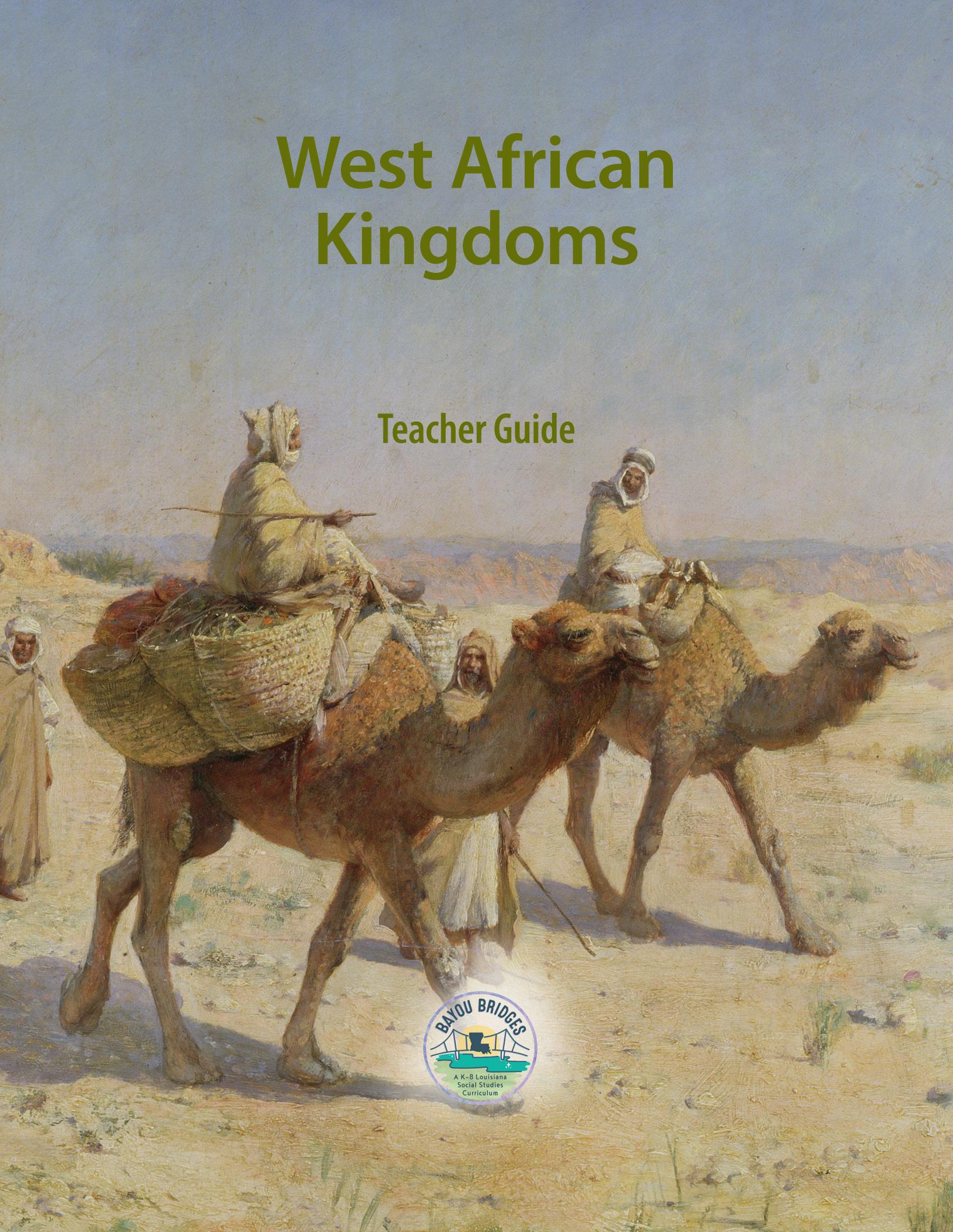
Tomb of Askia Muhammad





# West African Kingdoms

## Teacher Guide



## Creative Commons Licensing

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.



You are free:

**to Share**—to copy, distribute, and transmit the work

**to Remix**—to adapt the work

**Under the following conditions:**

**Attribution**—You must attribute the work in the following manner:

*This work is based on an original work of the Core Knowledge® Foundation ([www.coreknowledge.org](http://www.coreknowledge.org)) and the additions from the Louisiana Department of Education, made available through licensing under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike4.0 International License. This does not in any way imply that the Core Knowledge Foundation or the Louisiana Department of Education endorses this work.*

**Noncommercial**—You may not use this work for commercial purposes.

**Share Alike**—If you alter, transform, or build upon this work, you may distribute the resulting work only under the same or similar license to this one.

**With the understanding that:**

For any reuse or distribution, you must make clear to others the license terms of this work. The best way to do this is with a link to this web page:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

Copyright © 2023 the Louisiana Department of Education for the additions to CKHG and the Core Knowledge Foundation for its predecessor work CKHG.

[www.coreknowledge.org](http://www.coreknowledge.org)

All Rights Reserved.

Core Knowledge®, Core Knowledge Curriculum Series™, Core Knowledge History and Geography™, and CKSci™ are trademarks of the Core Knowledge Foundation. Bayou Bridges is a trademark of the Louisiana Department of Education.

Trademarks and trade names are shown in this book strictly for illustrative and educational purposes and are the property of their respective owners. References herein should not be regarded as affecting the validity of said trademarks and trade names.

# West African Kingdoms

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
<i>West African Kingdoms</i> Sample Pacing Guide .....	10
Chapter 1 <b>TOPIC: The Ghana Empire</b> .....	13
Chapter 2 <b>TOPIC: The Mali Empire</b> .....	22
Chapter 3 <b>TOPIC: The Songhai Empire</b> .....	30
Teacher Resources .....	38



**West African Kingdoms**  
**Teacher Guide**

Bayou Bridges Louisiana Social Studies, Grade 5

# Introduction

## ABOUT THIS UNIT

### The Big Idea

---

Three large and powerful kingdoms rose and fell in West Africa before the modern era.

From the 600s to the mid-1500s CE, West Africa produced three mighty civilizations that were rich in wealth, knowledge, and military power. The empire of Ghana became one of the richest kingdoms because of its location in the center of important trade routes. Ghana was succeeded and eclipsed by the kingdom of Mali, which used its vast gold resources to expand its wealth and assert itself as a hub of the Islamic world. The next empire to grow in West Africa was Songhai, which also expanded to impressive proportions.

## What Students Should Already Know

Students using Bayou Bridges should already be familiar with:

- medieval Europe: feudalism, the role of the Catholic Church, the growth of monasteries, the rise of Charlemagne, the growth of towns, the Crusades, the Black Death, the Hundred Years' War, the Magna Carta
- origins and tenets of Islam
- growth of the Islamic empire across Southwest Asia and North Africa
- Europe: the Alps, Ural Mountains, North European Plain; English Channel, Mediterranean Sea
- Southwest Asia and North Africa: Arabian Peninsula; Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea, Red Sea, Black Sea, Caspian Sea

## What Students Need to Learn

- trans-Saharan trade leading to a succession of flourishing kingdoms: Ghana, Mali, and Songhai
- the importance of camel caravans; trade in gold, iron, salt, ivory, and enslaved people; the city of Timbuktu as a center of trade and learning; the spread of Islam into West Africa through merchants and travelers
- the great rulers of Mali: Sundiata Keita and Mansa Musa
- the great rulers of Songhai: Sunni Ali and Askia Muhammad
- Niger River, Gulf of Guinea; the Sahara; Djenne and Timbuktu

### Time Period Background

This timeline provides an overview of key events related to the content of this unit. Use a classroom timeline with students to help them sequence and relate events that occurred from 600 CE to 1528 CE.

600s CE	Trans-Saharan trade routes help fuel the rise of the Ghana Empire.
1100s CE	By the end of the twelfth century, the Ghana Empire is an Islamic society.
1235 CE	Sundiata Keita establishes the Mali Empire.
1312–37 CE	Mansa Musa is the most powerful ruler of the Mali Empire.
1468 CE	Songhai king Sunni Ali conquers what had once been the Mali Empire.
1493–1528 CE	Emperor Askia Muhammad expands the Songhai Empire and makes it a strict Islamic state.

## A SPECIAL NOTE TO TEACHERS—TALKING ABOUT SLAVERY

While the topic of slavery is not a primary focus in this unit, students will read and learn about slavery in historical West African society. When you encounter references to slavery, you may want to note that today, we recognize that slavery is a cruel and inhumane practice. In earlier eras of history and in different societies, however, slavery was a generally accepted practice.

Discussing slavery can be a challenging task. Slavery, which has existed for thousands of years in many cultures, is by definition an inhumane practice—people are reduced to property, to be bought and sold, and often treated with brutality and violence.

Classroom discussion of slavery should acknowledge the cruel realities while remaining mindful of the age of the students. In Bayou Bridges materials, we have attempted to convey the inhumane practices of slavery without overly graphic depictions.

Recently, some historians have questioned the language used to talk about slavery. Some contemporary historians urge that we refer not to slaves but instead to enslaved persons or enslaved workers. The term *slave*, these historians argue, implies a commodity, a thing, while *enslaved person* or *enslaved worker* reminds us of the humanity of people forced into bondage and deprived of their freedom. Other historians, however, argue that by avoiding the term *slave*, we may unintentionally minimize the horror of humans being treated as though they were someone else's property.

In Bayou Bridges, we acknowledge the logic of both perspectives and sometimes refer to slaves while at other times referring to enslaved persons or enslaved workers.

### AT A GLANCE

The most important ideas in Unit 2 are the following:

- The wealth and power of the rulers of the West African empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai came from their control of the trans-Saharan trade in gold and salt.
- Islam was a major influence on the religious, political, and cultural development of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai.
- Mansa Musa is considered the greatest of Mali's emperors.
- Askia Muhammad is considered the greatest of Songhai's emperors.

## WHAT TEACHERS NEED TO KNOW

Each chapter of the Teacher Guide is accompanied by a brief What Teachers Need to Know document that provides background information related to the chapter content. The background information will summarize the chapter content and provide some additional details or explanations. These documents are not meant to be complete histories but rather memory refreshers to help provide context for what students are learning. For fuller, more detailed explanations, see the list of recommended books in this Introduction.

To find the What Teachers Need to Know documents, look for the link to download the Bayou Bridges Online Resources at the beginning of each chapter.

## UNIT RESOURCES

### Student Component

---

*West African Kingdoms* Student Reader—three chapters

### Teacher Components

---

*West African Kingdoms* Teacher Guide—three chapters. The guide includes lessons aligned to each chapter of the *West African Kingdoms* Student Reader, with a daily Check for Understanding and Additional Activities—such as vocabulary practice, primary source analysis, literature connections, and virtual field trips—designed to reinforce the chapter content. Chapter Assessments, a Performance Task Assessment, and Activity Pages are included in Teacher Resources, beginning on page 38.

- The Chapter Assessments test knowledge of each chapter using standard testing formats.
- The Performance Task Assessment requires students to apply and share the knowledge learned during the unit through either an oral or a written presentation.
- The Activity Pages are designed to support, reinforce, and extend content taught in specific chapters throughout the unit.

*West African Kingdoms* Timeline Card Slide Deck—six individual images depicting significant events and individuals related to West African kingdoms. In addition to an image, each card contains a caption, a chapter number, and the Framing Question, which outlines the focus of the chapter. The Teacher Guide will prompt you, lesson by lesson, as to which card(s) to display. The Timeline Cards will be a powerful learning tool, enabling you and your students to track important themes and events as they occurred within this expansive time period.

Use this link to download the Bayou Bridges Online Resources for this unit, where the specific link to the Timeline Card Slide Deck may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

You may wish to print the Timeline Cards to create a physical timeline in your classroom. To do so, you will need to identify available wall space in your classroom on which you can post the Timeline Cards over the course of the unit. The timeline may be oriented either vertically or horizontally, even wrapping around corners and multiple walls—whatever works best in your classroom setting. Be creative—some teachers hang a clothesline so that the image cards can be attached with clothespins!

**600s CE**



**Chapter 1**

**1100s CE**



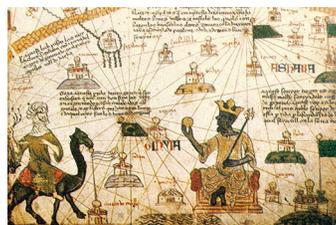
**Chapter 1**

**1235 CE**



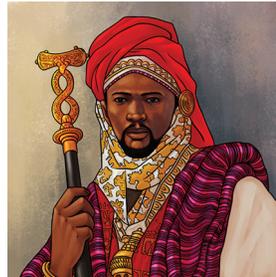
**Chapter 2**

**1312–37 CE**



**Chapter 2**

**1468 CE**



**Chapter 3**

**1493–1528 CE**



**Chapter 3**

### The Timeline in Relation to Content in the Student Reader

The events highlighted in the Unit 2 Timeline Cards are in chronological order, as are the chapters that are referenced. The Student Reader is organized both thematically and chronologically. Each chapter discusses a different kingdom or empire that emerged in West Africa between the 600s CE and 1528 CE, the events of which are reflected in the timeline.

### Understanding References to Time in the *West African Kingdoms Unit*

As you read the text, you will become aware that in some instances general time periods are referenced and in other instances specific dates are cited. That is because the text discusses both trends over time and specific events—for example, the end of the Ghana Empire and the rise of the Mali Empire starting in 1235 CE.

## Time to Talk About Time

Before you use the Timeline Cards, discuss with students the concept of time and how it is recorded. Here are several discussion points that you might use to promote discussion. This discussion will allow students to explore the concept of time.

1. What is time?
2. How do we measure time?
3. How do we record time?
4. How does nature show the passing of time? (Encourage students to think about days, months, and seasons.)
5. What is a specific date?
6. What is a time period?
7. What is the difference between a specific date and a time period?
8. What does *CE* mean?
9. What is a timeline?

## USING THE TEACHER GUIDE

### Pacing Guide

---

The *West African Kingdoms* unit is one of six history and geography units in the Grade 5 Bayou Bridges Louisiana Social Studies Curriculum. A total of twenty days has been allocated to the *West African Kingdoms* unit. We recommend that you do not exceed this number of instructional days to ensure that you have sufficient instructional time to complete all Grade 5 units.

At the end of this Introduction, you will find a Sample Pacing Guide that provides guidance as to how you might select and use the various resources in this unit during the allotted time. However, there are many options and ways that you may choose to individualize this unit for your students, based on their interests and needs. So we have also provided you with a blank pacing guide that you may use to reflect the activity choices and pacing for your class. If you plan to create a customized pacing guide for your class, we strongly recommend that you preview this entire unit and create your pacing guide before teaching the first chapter.

### Reading Aloud

---

Cognitive science suggests that even in the later elementary grades and into middle school, students' listening comprehension still surpasses their independent reading comprehension (Sticht, 1984).

For this reason, in the Bayou Bridges Curriculum Series, reading aloud continues to be used as an instructional approach in these grades to ensure that students fully grasp the content presented in each chapter. Students will typically be directed to read specific sections of each chapter quietly to themselves, while other sections will be read aloud by the teacher or student volunteers. When you or a student reads aloud, always prompt students to follow along. By following along in this way, students become more focused on the text and may acquire a greater understanding of the content.

## Picture This

---

During the reading of each section of the chapter, pause periodically to check student comprehension. One quick and easy way to do this is to have students describe what they see in their minds when reading a particular paragraph. Students who struggle to identify images may need a bit more support.

## Turn and Talk

---

After reading each section of the chapter, whether silently or aloud, Guided Reading Supports will prompt you to pose specific questions about what students have just read. Rather than simply calling on a single student to respond, provide students with opportunities to discuss the questions in pairs or in groups. Discussion opportunities will allow students to more fully engage with the content and will bring to life the themes or topics being discussed. This scaffolded approach—reading manageable sections of each chapter and then discussing what has been read—is an effective and efficient way to ensure that all students understand the content before proceeding to the remainder of the chapter.

For more about classroom discussions, including an evaluation rubric, download the Bayou Bridges Online Resource “About Class Discussions and Debates”:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

## Primary Sources

---

Most chapters include a Student Reader feature and Additional Activities built around the exploration of primary sources. Primary sources are an essential part of understanding history. They are a window to the past and provide a deeper understanding of the human experience. Students are encouraged to explore these sources through the structured activities provided in each chapter.

For more about primary sources, download the Bayou Bridges Online Resource “About Teaching with Primary Sources”:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

To facilitate student engagement with these primary sources, an artifact study activity page and a primary source analysis activity page have been provided in the Teacher Resources for this unit. You may also wish to explore the primary source analysis worksheets from the National Archives, the UCI History Project, the Library of Congress, and the U.S. House of Representatives Archives, links to which can be found in the Online Resources for this unit.

## Framing Questions

---

At the beginning of each Teacher Guide chapter, you will find a Framing Question, also found at the beginning of each Student Reader chapter. The Framing Questions are provided to help establish the bigger concepts and to provide a general overview of the chapter. The Framing Questions, by chapter, are:

Chapter	Framing Question
1	What characterized the African empire of Ghana?
2	How did strong leaders change West Africa?
3	How was the Songhai Empire similar to and different from previous West African empires?

## Core Vocabulary

---

Domain-specific vocabulary, phrases, and idioms highlighted in each chapter of the Student Reader are listed at the beginning of each Teacher Guide chapter, in the order in which they appear in the Student Reader. Student Reader page numbers are also provided. The vocabulary, by chapter, are:

Chapter	Core Vocabulary
1	prosperity, malleability, court, commodity, monopoly, animism, diplomat
2	clan, cosmopolitan, entourage, imam
3	deploy, proximity, thwart, absolute monarch, imperial

## Activity Pages

---

The following activity pages can be found in Teacher Resources, pages 52–59. They are to be used with the chapter specified either for guided reading support, additional activities, or homework. Be sure to make sufficient copies for your students prior to conducting the guided reading or activities.

- Chapter 1—Letter to Family (AP 1.1)
- Chapter 3—Artifact Study (AP 1.2)
- Chapters 1–2—Primary Source Analysis (AP 1.3)

- Chapters 1 and 3—Claims and Evidence (AP 1.4)
- Chapter 3—Ghana, Mali, and Songhai (AP 3.1)
- Chapter 3—Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 1–3 (AP 3.2)

## Additional Activities and Website Links

---

A link to Additional Activities may be found at the end of each chapter in this Teacher Guide. While there are multiple suggested activities for this unit, you should choose activities to complete based on your available instructional time and your students' interests and needs. Many of the activities include website links, and you should check the links prior to using them in class.

Many chapters include activities marked with a . This icon indicates a preferred activity. We strongly recommend including these activities in your lesson planning.

### Books

Bauer, Susan Wise. *The Story of the World: History for the Classical Child*. Vol. 2. Charles City, VA: The Well-Trained Mind Press, 2007.

Brooks, Andrew. *Children's Illustrated Atlas*. London: Dorling Kindersley, 2017.

Gates, Henry Louis. *Wonders of the African World*. New York: Knopf, 2001.

McKissack, Patricia, and Frederick McKissack. *The Royal Kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhay: Life in Medieval Africa*. New York: Henry Holt, 1995.

Reynolds, Jan. *Sahara. Vanishing Cultures*. New York: Lee & Low Books, 1991.

Rumford, James. *Traveling Man: The Journey of Ibn Battuta, 1325–1354*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.

Sharafeddine, Fatima. *The Amazing Travels of Ibn Battuta*. Toronto, ON: Groundwood Books, 2014.

Wisniewski, David. *Sundiata: Lion King of Mali*. New York: Clarion, 1999.

# WEST AFRICAN KINGDOMS SAMPLE PACING GUIDE

For schools using the Bayou Bridges Curriculum Series

TG—Teacher Guide; SR—Student Reader; AP—Activity Page

## Week 1

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

### West African Kingdoms

<p>"The Ghana Empire" Core Lesson (TG &amp; SR, Chapter 1)</p>	<p>"The Ghana Empire" Core Lesson (TG &amp; SR, Chapter 1)</p>	<p>"Primary Source: Excerpt from Ibn Battuta's <i>Travels in Asia and Africa</i>" (TG &amp; SR, Chapter 1, AP 1.3)</p>	<p>"Agriculture and Commerce in West Africa" (TG, Chapter 1 Additional Activities, AP 1.4)</p>	<p> "PRIMARY SOURCE ACTIVITY: The Salt-Gold Trade" (TG, Chapter 1 Additional Activities, AP 1.3)</p>
--	--	--	--	---

## Week 2

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

Day 9

Day 10

### West African Kingdoms

<p>Chapter 1 Assessment</p>	<p>"The Mali Empire" Core Lesson (TG &amp; SR, Chapter 2)</p>	<p>"Primary Source: Leo Africanus's Description of Timbuktu" (TG &amp; SR, Chapter 2, AP 1.3)</p>	<p>"The Epic of Sundiata" (TG, Chapter 2 Additional Activities)</p>	<p>"Mansa Musa" (TG, Chapter 2 Additional Activities)</p>
-----------------------------	---	---	---	---

## Week 3

Day 11

Day 12

Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

### West African Kingdoms

<p> "PRIMARY SOURCE ACTIVITY: 'Kingdom of Mali' by al-Umari" (TG, Chapter 2 Additional Activities, AP 1.3)</p>	<p>Chapter 2 Assessment</p>	<p>"The Songhai Empire" Core Lesson (TG &amp; SR, Chapter 3)</p>	<p>"The Songhai Empire" Core Lesson (TG &amp; SR, Chapter 3) Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 1–3 (TG, Chapter 3 Additional Activities, AP 3.2)</p>	<p>"Primary Source: The Tomb of Askia Muhammad" (TG &amp; SR, Chapter 3, AP 1.2)</p>
---	-----------------------------	--	--	--

## Week 4

Day 16

Day 17

Day 18

Day 19

Day 20

### West African Kingdoms

<p>"The Rise and Fall of Songhai" (TG, Chapter 3 Additional Activities, AP 1.4)</p>	<p>Chapter 3 Assessment</p>	<p>"Ghana, Mali, and Songhai" (TG, Chapter 3 Additional Activities, AP 3.1)</p>	<p>Performance Task Assessment</p>	<p>Performance Task Assessment</p>
---	-----------------------------	---	--	--

# WEST AFRICAN KINGDOMS PACING GUIDE

\_\_\_\_\_ 's Class

(A total of twenty days has been allocated to the *West African Kingdoms* unit in order to complete all Grade 5 history and geography units in the Bayou Bridges Curriculum Series.)

## Week 1

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

*West African Kingdoms*

--	--	--	--	--

## Week 2

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

Day 9

Day 10

*West African Kingdoms*

--	--	--	--	--

## Week 3

Day 11

Day 12

Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

*West African Kingdoms*

--	--	--	--	--

**Week 4**

**Day 16**

**Day 17**

**Day 18**

**Day 19**

**Day 20**

***West African Kingdoms***

--	--	--	--	--

## CHAPTER 1

# TOPIC: The Ghana Empire

**The Framing Question:** What characterized the African empire of Ghana?

### Primary Focus Objectives

- ✓ Describe how, what, and by whom trans-Saharan trade was conducted. (5.11.c)
- ✓ Understand the importance of trans-Saharan trade. (5.11.c)
- ✓ Describe how Ghana became powerful and wealthy and why it declined. (5.11.b)
- ✓ Understand the meaning of the following domain-specific vocabulary: *prosperity*, *malleability*, *court*, *commodity*, *monopoly*, *animism*, and *diplomat*.

### What Teachers Need to Know

For background information, download the Bayou Bridges Online Resource “About The Ghana Empire”:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

### Materials Needed

Activity Pages



AP 1.1

AP 1.3

- individual student copies of Letter to Family (AP 1.1)
- globe or world map
- individual student copies of Primary Source Analysis (AP 1.3)

### Core Vocabulary (Student Reader page numbers listed below)

**prosperity, n.** a condition of being successful, especially financially (5)

*Example:* The region’s prosperity came from its abundant natural resources.

*Variations:* prosper (v.), prosperous (adj.)

**malleability, n.** the ability to be shaped into many forms (5)

*Example:* The malleability of gold made it an ideal metal for minting coins and making jewelry.

*Variations:* malleable (adj.)

**court, n.** the residence of a royal family and supporting staff (7)

*Example:* The esteemed visitor was received at the king's court.

*Variations:* courts

**commodity, n.** a good, commonly a raw material, that can be interchanged with another good of the same type (9)

*Example:* The price of the commodity increased as demand for it rose.

*Variations:* commodities, commodify (v.)

**monopoly, n.** the complete control of the supply of a good or service by one person, country, or company (10)

*Example:* The Ghana Empire had a monopoly on the gold trade because it controlled all gold mines in the region.

*Variations:* monopolies, monopolize (v.)

**animism, n.** the belief that objects, places, and creatures all possess a distinct spiritual essence (11)

*Example:* Because of their belief in animism, the tribe viewed certain animals and objects as sacred.

*Variations:* animist (n.), animistic (adj.)

**diplomat, n.** someone who represents the government of one country in another country (11)

*Example:* The diplomat carried the king's message across the Sahara in hopes that the two kingdoms could reach an agreement.

*Variations:* diplomats, diplomacy (n.), diplomatic (adj.), diplomatically (adv.)

## THE CORE LESSON 35 MIN

### Introduce *West African Kingdoms Student Reader*

5 MIN

Distribute copies of the *West African Kingdoms Student Reader*. Suggest students take a few minutes to look at the cover and flip through the Table of Contents and the images in the book. Ask students to brainstorm individual words or simple phrases describing what they notice in the Table of Contents and various illustrations; record this information in a list on the board or chart paper. Students will likely mention trans-Saharan trade with camel caravans, the spread of Islam, the Ghana Empire, the Mali Empire, Mansa Musa, and the Songhai Empire.

### Introduce "The Ghana Empire"

5 MIN



On a globe or world map, point out the location of Africa and then West Africa. Explain that during Europe's Middle Ages, three powerful kingdoms emerged in West Africa. In this unit, students will learn about the rise and fall of each of these kingdoms. The first of these kingdoms was the empire of Ghana.

Call students' attention to the Framing Question. Tell students to look for details that characterized the empire of Ghana as they read the text.

## Guided Reading Supports for "The Ghana Empire"

25 MIN

When you or a student reads aloud, **always** prompt students to follow along. By following along, students may acquire a greater understanding of the content. Remember to provide discussion opportunities.

### "Traders of Past African Empires" and "Early African Civilizations," pages 2–4

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Read the section "Traders of Past African Empires" on pages 2–4 aloud.**

**SUPPORT**—Point out the word *caravan* in the first paragraph. Explain that a caravan is a group of travelers journeying together, often across a desert. Caravans provided more safety to travelers than traveling independently.

**SUPPORT**—Call attention to the image of the camel caravan on page 3. Point out the camels' splayed feet. Tell students that camels also have long eyelashes that help protect their eyes from sand.

**Invite a volunteer to read the section "Early African Civilizations" on page 4 aloud.**

**After the volunteer reads the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—What physical characteristics of camels make them particularly well suited for long trips across the hot desert? (5.11, 5.11.c)

- » Camels have splayed feet that enable them to walk on the hot sands without sinking. They can also go days without any water.

**INFERENTIAL**—Why were traders willing to risk crossing the dangerous Sahara? (5.11, 5.11.c)

- » Even though the trip across the Sahara was dangerous, the traders could become very wealthy from trading the goods they gathered.

**EVALUATIVE**—How did the West African empires build their wealth? (5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

- » The West African empires built their wealth by controlling gold mines and trade routes.

**LITERAL**—Where did the first humans live? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » The first humans lived in eastern and southern Africa.

## “Africa During Europe’s Medieval Period,” page 5

### Scaffold understanding as follows:

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary terms *prosperity* and *malleability*, and explain their meanings.

### Have students read the section on page 5 with a partner.

**SUPPORT**—Remind students that the term *medieval* generally refers to European history. But the term *medieval*, when broken into its parts, means “middle” and “age.” While we may think of the Middle Ages as being distinctly European, other civilizations and societies around the world, including Japan, China, and the West African kingdoms, all experienced their own “Middle Ages.” (5.3)

### After students read the text, ask the following questions:

**EVALUATIVE**—How did medieval African societies differ from medieval European societies? What contributed to this difference? (5.4, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

- » Unlike in Europe, where power and trade shrank, African civilizations became more prosperous as a result of increased contact and trade.

**LITERAL**—Why was gold considered valuable? (5.11, 5.11.c)

- » Gold was considered valuable because of its rarity, beauty, and malleability.

**LITERAL**—In addition to gold, what other commodities were transported along African trade routes? (5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

- » Iron, ivory, spices, and textiles were transported along African trade routes.

## “Origins of the Ghana Empire,” pages 6–7

### Scaffold understanding as follows:

### Read the first paragraph of the section on pages 6–7 aloud.

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *court*, and explain its meaning.

**SUPPORT**—Tell students that the Soninke (/sohn\*in\*kay/) people started the Ghana Empire. Explain that Ghana earned the nickname “the land of gold” because it controlled the gold trade from the gold mines to the south.

### Read the remainder of the section on page 7 aloud.

**SUPPORT**—Point out the word *domesticated* in the first sentence of the last paragraph on page 7. Explain that to domesticate is to tame and use

for agricultural or other purposes. In this case, people tamed and used camels as pack animals—animals that carried goods.

**After reading the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—Why are the origins of Ghana unclear to historians today? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Most of what historians know about the origins of Ghana was passed down through oral tradition and texts written by Arab merchants.

**LITERAL**—How specifically did the kings and kingdom of Ghana become so wealthy? (5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

- » Ghana became wealthy from taxes collected from merchants passing through the kingdom. Gold also made the king and kingdom wealthy. The king kept any gold nuggets that were found in the mines; the traders were allowed to keep only the gold dust.

**EVALUATIVE**—What role did the domesticated camel play in the growth of Ghana’s wealth? (5.11, 5.11.c)

- » The domesticated camel made it possible to carry goods over long distances in the desert. Over time, more people, especially Arab merchants, adopted the use of camels, which brought more trade to West Africa.

### “The Growth of Trade in the Ghana Empire,” pages 8–10

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Have students read the first two paragraphs of the section on pages 8–9 with a partner.**

 **SUPPORT**—Call attention to the map of Ghana trade routes on page 6. Have students locate the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Guinea, the Niger River, and the Sahara. Have students describe the directions of the trade routes shown on the map. What geographic features may have influenced these routes, and why? Point out that the location of the Ghana Empire is not the same as the location of the present-day country of Ghana. The Ghana Empire encompassed what are now northern Senegal and southern Mauritania. (5.6, 5.7, 5.11, 5.11.a)

**SUPPORT**—Call attention to the goods listed at the end of the first paragraph. Explain that kola nuts were used as a medium of exchange, and they were also chewed for their caffeine. Tell students that Coca-Cola, the popular soft drink, gets its name from the kola nut. The original recipe for this beverage actually used kola nuts.

**SUPPORT**—Call attention to the word *mosques* in the second paragraph. Remind students that a mosque is a Muslim house of worship.

**Have students read the last two paragraphs of the section on pages 9–10 with a partner.**

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *commodity*, and explain its meaning.

**SUPPORT**—Remind students that Islam spread through trade in other parts of the world, including Europe and Asia. Tell students that the practice of slavery had existed in Africa long before trans-Saharan trade routes brought Islam to the continent. People were usually enslaved during times of conflict and conquest. Slaves at this time likely had rights similar to European serfs, and they were not considered chattel, or the personal property of their enslavers. In fact, many enslaved people were likely to be freed before the end of their lives.

**After students read the text, ask the following questions:**

 **LITERAL**—What natural resources were found in the kingdom of Ghana? (5.7, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

» Gold, salt, and iron ore were found in the kingdom of Ghana.

**LITERAL**—What new religion was brought to Ghana, and how did it spread? (5.3, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

» Muslim traders began to share their religion with the people living in Ghana. Some of the Ghanaians converted to Islam as a result.

### **“The Political and Social Structures of the Ghana Empire,” pages 10–11**

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Have students read the section on pages 10–11 independently.**

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *monopoly*, and explain its meaning.

 **SUPPORT**—Refer back to the map of Ghana trade routes on page 6, and have students locate Kumbi Saleh. Note its location between the Senegal and Niger Rivers. Explain to students that the city of Kumbi Saleh was actually made up of two cities that were located six miles apart. Kumbi was the royal city, while Saleh was the center of trade. Muslim traders visiting the kingdom of Ghana lived and traded in Saleh. (5.6, 5.7, 5.11, 5.11.a, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

**After students read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—What role did the king of Ghana play in ruling the empire? (5.11, 5.11.b)

» The king of Ghana controlled trade, made all important decisions that affected the empire, and chose people to fill roles in government.

**LITERAL**—What tasks did working-class people carry out in Kumbi Saleh? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Working-class people built the royal palace and public buildings.

**INFERENTIAL**—Why do you think Ghana’s kings used their trade profits to build beautiful cities? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Ghana’s kings likely built beautiful cities as a way to show off their power and wealth to subjects and visitors.

## “Changes and the Decline of the Ghana Empire,” pages 11–12

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Invite volunteers to read the section on pages 11–12 aloud.**

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary terms *animism* and *diplomat*, and explain their meanings.

 **SUPPORT**—Explain to students that the Sahel is a region that runs across the African continent beneath the Sahara. Use the globe or world map to show students the approximate location of this region. Explain that the Sahel is a generally dry region that receives limited rainfall each year during the summer months.

**After the volunteers read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—What is animism? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Animism is the belief that objects, places, and creatures all possess a distinct spiritual essence.

**EVALUATIVE**—How does animism differ from Islam? (5.4, 5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Animism recognizes spirituality in a variety of beings and places, but it does not recognize a singular all-powerful deity. Islam teaches there is only one God, Allah.

**EVALUATIVE**—How did Ghana change between the 700s and 1200s CE? (5.1, 5.4, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

- » After the 700s CE, Ghana became an Islamic society.

 **INFERENTIAL**—How do you think changes in the local climate in the 1200s CE might have worsened conflicts for Ghana? (5.7, 5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Changes in the local climate would have made water scarcer. This could have resulted in fewer crops being grown and increased competition for water resources between societies.

**Primary Source Feature: “Excerpt from Ibn Battuta’s *Travels in Asia and Africa*,” page 13**

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

 **Background for Teachers:** Ibn Battuta (also spelled Ibn Batuta or Ibn Battutah) was an Arab born in present-day Morocco. One day, he left home to see the world. In thirty years, Ibn Battuta visited every Muslim land as well as many parts of the world beyond. In addition to Africa and the kingdoms of Southwest Asia, he traveled to Ceylon (Sri Lanka), China, southern Russia, and Central Asia. It is estimated he traveled more than seventy-five thousand miles (120,700 km) in his journeys, probably a record unsurpassed until the age of steam travel. Ibn Battuta returned to Morocco and wrote a book about his travels.

**Direct students to the Primary Source Feature on page 13.**

**Introduce the source to students by reviewing what was read about the salt-gold trade,** including its role in the trans-Saharan trade and how it brought immense wealth and power to West African kingdoms like Ghana. Explain that students are going to read a description of a town and its salt mines.

 **Read the Primary Source Feature’s introductory text aloud. Then have students find Toghata (Toghata) on the map of Ghana trade routes on page 6.**

**Invite a volunteer to read the source aloud.**

**SUPPORT**—Have students refer to the image of slabs of salt on page 9 to help them visualize “tables” of salt.

**Ask students to describe what they see in their minds as they read the paragraph.** What do they think Toghata looked like?

**After students have read the excerpt, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—What commodity did the city of Toghata rely on? (5.2, 5.2.a)

» The city of Toghata relied on salt.

**EVALUATIVE**—Which piece of evidence from the excerpt shows that the people who live in Toghata make up the lower classes of society? (5.2, 5.2.b)

» Ibn Battuta shows this by saying, “No one, however, resides in these [houses] except the servants of the merchants, who dig for the salt. . . .”

**INFERENTIAL**—Look at the image of slabs of salt on page 9. What evidence in the image suggests that the practices described by Ibn Battuta still occur today? (5.2, 5.2.a, 5.2.b, 5.2.c)

» The image shows the salt stacked in blocks, or, as Ibn Battuta calls them, “tables.” Ibn Battuta explains that the salt is used as currency and is cut into different weights. The scale in the image suggests that salt may have a similar function today.



**Distribute Primary Source Analysis (AP 1.3), and have students complete the Activity Page independently.**

## Timeline Card Slide Deck

- Show students the Chapter 1 Timeline Cards. Read and discuss the captions, making particular note of any dates.
- Invite students to note any comparisons with events previously studied or any examples of change or continuity that they notice. **(5.1)**
- Review and discuss the Framing Question: “What characterized the African empire of Ghana?”



### “CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING” 10 MIN

#### Ask students to:

- Write a short answer to the Framing Question: “What characterized the African empire of Ghana?”
  - » Key points students should cite include: camels were resilient pack animals and played an important role in trans-Saharan trade and the wealth of West Africa; the first humans originated in southern and eastern Africa before migrating north and west; West African kingdoms flourished during the medieval period due to trade and increased contact between civilizations; control of the gold-salt trade made West African kingdoms powerful; the origins of the Ghana Empire are unclear; Ghana’s kings were the only people allowed to own gold nuggets, while others were allowed to trade gold dust; West Africa supplied trans-Saharan traders with gold, salt, enslaved people, iron, ivory, kola nuts, shea butter, and cloth; by the 1200s CE, Ghana was an Islamic society; Kumbi Saleh was the capital of Ghana and was an important center of trade; Islam replaced traditional belief in animism; Ghana was weakened by conflict and climate change before being defeated by the Susu people.
- Choose one of the Core Vocabulary words (*prosperity, malleability, court, commodity, monopoly, animism, or diplomat*) and write a sentence using the word.

To wrap up the lesson, ask several students to share their responses.

**Note:** Distribute copies of Letter to Family (AP 1.1) for students to take home.



## Additional Activities

Download the Bayou Bridges Online Resources for this unit, where the Additional Activities for this chapter may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

# TOPIC: The Mali Empire

**The Framing Question:** How did strong leaders change West Africa?

## Primary Focus Objectives

---

- ✓ Describe the origin and growth of the kingdom of Mali. (5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)
- ✓ Summarize the importance of Sundiata, Islam, and Timbuktu to the history of Mali. (5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)
- ✓ Explain the significance of Mansa Musa’s reign in Mali. (5.11, 5.11.b)
- ✓ Describe Mansa Musa’s pilgrimage to Mecca. (5.11, 5.11.b)
- ✓ Understand the meaning of the following domain-specific vocabulary: *clan*, *cosmopolitan*, *entourage*, and *imam*.

## What Teachers Need to Know

---

For background information, download the Bayou Bridges Online Resource “About The Mali Empire”:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

## Materials Needed

---

Activity Page



AP 1.3

- individual student copies of Primary Source Analysis (AP 1.3)

## Core Vocabulary (Student Reader page numbers listed below)

---

**clan, n.** a group of families claiming a common ancestor (16)

*Example:* The leaders of the clan met regularly to make decisions for its members.

*Variations:* clans

**cosmopolitan, adj.** composed of people from many parts of the world (17)

*Example:* Timbuktu became a cosmopolitan city as people from around the Muslim world came to study at its universities.

**entourage, n.** people who surround an important person (19)

*Example:* The king traveled with an entourage of several hundred people as a show of his wealth and status.

*Variations:* entourages

**imam, n.** a Muslim worship leader (20)

*Example:* The imam gave daily lessons to young children so they could learn the beliefs and teachings of Islam.

*Variations:* imams

## THE CORE LESSON 35 MIN

### Introduce “The Mali Empire”

5 MIN

Have students recall what they learned about the kingdom of Ghana in Chapter 1. Encourage students to share what they remember. Students should note that Ghana was the first powerful West African trading kingdom. It became very wealthy and very powerful from the gold and salt trade. Read aloud the last paragraph of Chapter 1 on pages 11–12, in which Mali is described as a successor to Ghana. Explain that this chapter is about the next great West African power and two strong leaders who helped make it great: Sundiata Keita and Mansa Musa.

Call students’ attention to the Framing Question. Tell students to look for details about how strong leaders changed West Africa as they read the text.

### Guided Reading Supports for “The Mali Empire”

30 MIN

When you or a student reads aloud, **always** prompt students to follow along. By following along, students may acquire a greater understanding of the content. Remember to provide discussion opportunities.

#### “A Powerful New Empire,” page 14

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Read the section on page 14 aloud.**

 **SUPPORT**—Call attention to the Mali Empire map on page 18. Have students locate the Mali Empire. Then have students refer back to the map of Ghana trade routes in Chapter 1 on page 6. How do the two empires compare? (5.4, 5.6, 5.7, 5.11, 5.11.b)

**After reading the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—At its height, how many camels passed through the Mali Empire each year? (5.11, 5.11.b)

» As many as twelve thousand camels passed through the Mali Empire each year.

**EVALUATIVE**—How was the Mali Empire similar to the Ghana Empire?  
(5.4, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

- » Both the Ghana and Mali Empires grew wealthy from the gold and salt trade routes of West Africa.

### “Sundiata,” pages 14–17

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Have students read the section on pages 14–17 with a partner.**

**Note:** The name *Sundiata Keita* is pronounced (/soon\*jah\*tah/kay\*tah/). Say the name aloud, and have students repeat it after you.

**SUPPORT**—Point out the word *fortified* in the first paragraph of the section. Explain that *fortified* means strengthened.

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *clan*, and explain its meaning.

**Note:** The term *griot* is pronounced (/gree\*oh/). Say the word aloud, and have students repeat it after you.

**SUPPORT**—Point out the word *hierarchy* in the last paragraph of the section. Remind students that they encountered this word in Unit 1, when they read about feudalism. Help them recall that a hierarchy is a system in which people are ranked according to their ability, family, wealth, or other characteristic. To help students remember, tell them that in a hierarchy (higher-archy), some people have higher status.

**SUPPORT**—Remind students what they have learned about the social structure of medieval Europe. Both societies—feudal Europe and the kingdom of Mali—developed a distinct hierarchy with a king and upper classes at the top.

**Note:** The name *Mansa Musa* is pronounced (/mahn\*sah/moo\*sah/). Say the name aloud, and have students repeat it after you.

**After students read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—Who founded the kingdom of Mali? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Sundiata Keita founded the kingdom of Mali.

**LITERAL**—What were some of Sundiata’s greatest accomplishments off the battlefield? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Sundiata created a central government that brought peace and order to Mali. He also gained control of trade routes and gold mines that helped Mali prosper.

**EVALUATIVE**—What is a similarity between the kings of Mali and the kings of Ghana? (5.3, 5.4, 5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Like the kings of Ghana, the kings of Mali were the only people allowed to own gold nuggets.

**INFERENTIAL**—Sundiata assigned occupations to specific families. What do you think are some of the positives and negatives of this decision? (5.3, 5.11, 5.11.b)

- » One benefit of this decision is that the king could make sure that everything needed to make the empire run would be taken care of. One negative of this decision is that it gave people very little social mobility, and they were not able to choose the job or task that they were best at.

### “The Rise of Timbuktu and Trade in the Mali Empire,” pages 17–18

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *cosmopolitan*, and explain its meaning.

**Have students read the first paragraph of the section on page 17 with a partner.**

 **SUPPORT**—Have students refer to the Mali Empire map on page 18 and locate the city of Timbuktu. Explain that the city of Timbuktu still exists today in the present-day country of Mali. Today’s Mali, however, is shaped differently from the historical empire of Mali. It is a landlocked country, meaning it is surrounded by land. It does not extend to the Atlantic coast. Tell students that although Timbuktu was a center of trade and learning, it was also on the edge of the Sahara. This isolated it from people on the other side of the desert. Over time, Timbuktu became a symbol to Europeans of someplace magnificent and far away. Today, many people still use the expression “from here to Timbuktu” to mean something very far away. (5.6, 5.7, 5.11, 5.11.a)

**Have students read the remainder of the section on pages 17–18 independently.**

**After students read the text, ask the following questions:**

 **EVALUATIVE**—How did Timbuktu’s location make it a center for trade? (5.7, 5.11, 5.11.a, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

- » Timbuktu was located on the Niger River near the edge of the Sahara. This meant that traders from many regions passed through it.

**LITERAL**—What goods were bought and sold in Timbuktu and across the Mali Empire? (5.11, 5.11.a, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

- » In Timbuktu and across the Mali Empire, people bought and sold enslaved people, ivory, horses, weapons, and sugar.

**EVALUATIVE**—Why did the price of gold continue to rise, and what effect did this have on Mali? (5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

- » The price of gold rose because there was growing demand for it in Europe to make coins. This made the Mali Empire even wealthier because they controlled the gold mines once owned by Ghana.

**EVALUATIVE**—Why was Mali’s acceptance of Islam important? (5.8, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

- » The willingness of Mali to accept Islam increased trade. It also led to the development of universities and elite military forces.

## “Mansa Musa,” pages 18–20

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Invite volunteers to read the section on pages 18–20 aloud.**

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *entourage*, and explain its meaning.

**SUPPORT**—Remind students that in Unit 1, *The Medieval World*, they learned that the fifth pillar of Islam is the hajj. All Muslims who are able must make a pilgrimage to the city of Mecca at least once in their lifetime.

**CHALLENGE**—Call attention to the image from the Catalan Atlas on page 15. Read the caption aloud. Explain that this Catalan Atlas was created for Charles V of France around the year 1375 CE. The atlas contains details of the world as European mapmakers knew them in the 1300s. The map extends into western Africa and shows the Mali Empire. What does the appearance of Mansa Musa reveal about his status? What does it tell us about Europeans’ ideas of him and West Africa? (5.2, 5.2.a)

**SUPPORT**—Call attention to the image of Mansa Musa on page 19, and read the caption aloud. Ask students to consider why Mansa Musa would want to travel in a litter during his journey. Have students compare this image of Mansa Musa with the image from the Catalan Atlas. What do the images have in common? What does that tell us about Mansa Musa? (5.2, 5.2.a, 5.2.c)

**Note:** The name *Sankoré* is pronounced (/san\*core\*ay/). Say the name aloud, and have students repeat it after you.

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *imam*, and explain its meaning.

**After the volunteers read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—What does Mansa Musa’s decision to travel to Mecca tell us about him? (5.8, 5.11, 5.11.d)

- » Mansa Musa was a devout Muslim. According to the religion of Islam, followers who are physically able and can afford to travel must make a pilgrimage to Mecca.

**INFERENTIAL**—Mansa Musa was very famous, even outside of Mali. How and why do you think tales of Mansa Musa spread from Africa and the Middle East to Europe and Asia? (5.3, 5.11, 5.11.d)

- » Hearing about his gold, wealth, and grand houses would have been very impressive. Traders and other travelers likely spread stories about Mansa Musa’s wealth far and wide.

**LITERAL**—What were some ways Mali benefited from Mansa Musa’s rule? (5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.d)

- » Mansa Musa increased the size of the Mali Empire as well as trade with other countries. He also built mosques, schools, libraries, and universities.

**“Decline of the Mali Empire,” page 20**

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Have students read the section on page 20 independently.**

**After students read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—Why did Mali’s rulers grow weaker over time? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Internal power struggles weakened Mali’s rulers.

**LITERAL**—What external threats weakened the Mali Empire? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » The Mali Empire was weakened by rival kingdoms that expanded and gained control of crucial trade routes. The arrival of Portuguese merchant ships also posed competition to trading caravans.

**LITERAL**—When was the Mali Empire conquered? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » The Mali Empire was conquered in 1468 CE.

**Primary Source Feature: “Leo Africanus’s Description of Timbuktu,” page 21**

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**



**Background for Teachers:** Leo Africanus was an Islamic scholar, diplomat, and traveler. Born circa 1485 CE in Granada, Spain, and educated in Morocco, Leo

Africanus traveled extensively through North Africa and the Mediterranean world. During one such journey, he was captured by Christian pirates and delivered as a gift to Pope Leo X, who later freed him and baptized him as a Christian. Leo Africanus's book *Geographical History of Africa* was finished around 1526 and was translated and published in English in 1600 CE.

**Direct students to the Primary Source Feature on page 21.**

**Introduce the source to students by reviewing what students read about Timbuktu and its importance to Mali.** Explain that students are going to read a description of Timbuktu written by someone who visited the city around 1510 CE, when it was under the control of the Songhai Empire. Students will read more about Songhai in the next chapter.

**Read the source's introductory text aloud.**

**Invite volunteers to read the excerpt aloud.**

**SUPPORT**—Explain that limestone is a type of rock, while thatch is a type of roof made from straw.

**SUPPORT**—Explain that Granada is a city in Spain. For many years, it was controlled by Muslims as part of the Islamic empire.

**After the volunteers read the text, ask students to describe what they see in their minds as they read the paragraph.** What do they think Timbuktu looked like in 1510 CE?

**After students have read the excerpt, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—According to the source, where is Timbuktu located? (5.2, 5.2.a, 5.11, 5.11.a, 5.11.b)

- » According to the source, Timbuktu is located twelve miles from the Niger River.

**LITERAL**—What goods are sold in Timbuktu? (5.2, 5.2.a, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

- » Linen and cotton textiles are sold in Timbuktu.

**EVALUATIVE**—Recall what you read about the village of Toghaza in Chapter 1. How does Ibn Battuta's description of Toghaza compare to Leo Africanus's description of Timbuktu? Cite evidence to support your response. (5.2, 5.2.a, 5.2.c, 5.5, 5.5.b, 5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Ibn Battuta's description of Toghaza is more negative than Leo Africanus's description of Timbuktu. Leo Africanus also indicates that unlike Toghaza, many people, not just the servants of merchants, live in Timbuktu and that the town has many more industries. He shows this when he says, "There are shops, craftsmen, and merchants, especially those who sell linen and cotton textiles. . . . Corn, cattle, milk and butter is found in abundance here."



**Distribute Primary Source Analysis (AP 1.3), and have students complete the Activity Page independently.**

## Timeline Card Slide Deck

---

- Show students the Chapter 2 Timeline Image Cards. Read and discuss the captions, making particular note of any dates.
- Invite students to note any comparisons with events previously studied or any examples of change or continuity they notice. **(5.1)**
- Review and discuss the Framing Question: “How did strong leaders change West Africa?”



**“CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING” 10 MIN**

### Ask students to:

- Write a short answer to the Framing Question: “How did strong leaders change West Africa?”
  - » Key points students should cite include: Sundiata Keita was a skilled warrior and leader who defeated the Susu people and established the Mali Empire; Sundiata Keita introduced a new social structure to Mali while upholding many traditions passed on from the Ghana Empire; Mansa Musa was one of the richest people in the world; Mansa Musa’s pilgrimage to Mecca grew global interest in Mali and helped make the empire a center of Islamic learning and culture; Mansa Musa built universities, schools, libraries, and mosques in Timbuktu, including the Sankoré mosque and university; internal and external factors contributed to the decline of Mali.
- Choose one of the Core Vocabulary words (*clan*, *cosmopolitan*, *entourage*, or *imam*) and write a sentence using the word.

To wrap up the lesson, ask several students to share their responses.

## Additional Activities

---

Download the Bayou Bridges Online Resources for this unit, where the Additional Activities for this chapter may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

# TOPIC: The Songhai Empire

**The Framing Question:** How was the Songhai Empire similar to and different from previous West African empires?

### Primary Focus Objectives

---

- ✓ Summarize the fall of the Mali Empire and the rise of the Songhai Empire. (5.11, 5.11.b)
- ✓ Describe the social, political, and economic structure of the Songhai Empire. (5.11, 5.11.b)
- ✓ Explain how Sunni Ali and Askia Muhammad came to power and their contributions to Songhai. (5.11, 5.11.b)
- ✓ Describe the importance of trade to Songhai. (5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)
- ✓ Understand the meaning of the following domain-specific vocabulary: *deploy*, *proximity*, *thwart*, *absolute monarch*, and *imperial*.

### What Teachers Need to Know

---

For background information, download the Bayou Bridges Online Resource “About The Songhai Empire”:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

### Materials Needed

---

Activity Page



AP 1.2

- individual student copies of Artifact Study (AP 1.2)
- Internet access
- capability to display Internet in the classroom
- Google Arts & Culture slideshow “The Tomb of Askia”

Use this link to download the Bayou Bridges Online Resources for this unit, where the specific link to the slideshow may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

## Core Vocabulary (Student Reader page numbers listed below)

---

**deploy, v.** to move troops into position for a military action (24)

*Example:* The general chose to deploy his troops in the early hours of the morning to maintain the element of surprise.

*Variations:* deploys, deploying, deployed, deployment (n.)

**proximity, n.** nearness in space (25)

*Example:* The proximity of the town to the Niger River helped it become an important location for trade and shipping.

*Variations:* proximities, proximal (adj.)

**thwart, v.** to prevent something (27)

*Example:* The king hoped to thwart future invasions by building a large wall around the city.

*Variations:* thwarts, thwarting, thwarted

**absolute monarch, n.** a king or queen who has the unchecked authority to do whatever they want without any restrictions (28)

*Example:* Many subjects resented that the absolute monarch frequently abused their power.

*Variations:* absolute monarchs, absolute monarchy (n.)

**imperial, adj.** related to an emperor, empress, or empire (29)

*Example:* The imperial council improved the ruler's ability to manage the vast empire.

*Variations:* imperialism (n.), imperially (adv.)

### THE CORE LESSON 35 MIN

## Introduce “The Songhai Empire”

---

5 MIN

Explain that the empires of West Africa followed a similar pattern: they rose by conquering an empire that was becoming weak, flourished for a time, and in turn declined and were eclipsed by a new group. Ask students which empires they have read about in this unit followed this pattern (*Ghana and Mali*). Briefly review with students what they learned about the Mali Empire, including that Mali was conquered by the kingdom of Songhai in 1468 CE. Explain to students that during this lesson, they will learn about Songhai.

Call students' attention to the Framing Question. Tell students to look for ways that the Songhai Empire was similar to and different from the empires of Ghana and Mali as they read the text.

When you or a student reads aloud, **always** prompt students to follow along. By following along, students may acquire a greater understanding of the content. Remember to provide discussion opportunities.

## “A New Empire Takes Hold,” pages 22–24

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Read the first two paragraphs of the section on page 22 aloud.**

**Note:** The name *Gao* is pronounced /gow/, like cow. Say the name aloud, and have students repeat it after you.

 **SUPPORT**—Call attention to the map of the Songhai Empire on page 27. Have students locate Gao and determine its position relative to Timbuktu. (*Gao is southeast of Timbuktu.*) (5.6, 5.11, 5.11.a)

**Have students read the remainder of the section on page 24 with a partner.**

**After students read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—What did Mansa Musa ask Ali Kolon to do? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Mansa Musa asked Ali Kolon to lead military expeditions and battles on behalf of Mali.

**LITERAL**—Why was Mansa Musa’s request to Ali Kolon unusual? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » This was unusual because Ali Kolon was Mansa Musa’s prisoner.

**LITERAL**—How did Ali Kolon finally manage to escape? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Each time he was released from captivity to lead a military expedition, he secretly hid the food and weapons he would need for an escape.

## “Strong Leaders and Trade in the Songhai Empire,” pages 24–26

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Read the first paragraph of the section on pages 24–25 aloud.**

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary terms *deploy* and *proximity*, and explain their meanings.

**Note:** The name *Djenne* is pronounced (/jen\*nay/). Say the name aloud, and have students repeat it after you.

**Have students read the remainder of the section on pages 25–26 independently.**

**After students read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—Who once held the territory that Sunni Ali conquered? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » The Mali Empire

**EVALUATIVE**—Why was Timbuktu such a prize for the Songhai Empire? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » As an important trading center, Timbuktu was a famous and prosperous city, a source of wealth for any conquering group. Because the city had also been a center of Muslim religion and learning, universities, books, and the ideas contained in them also came under Songhai rule.

**EVALUATIVE**—How did Askia Muhammad spread Islam in his empire? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Askia Muhammad supported the building of mosques, brought Arab scholars to Timbuktu, and replaced ethnic Songhai officials with Arab Muslims.

### **“The Portuguese in West Africa,” pages 26–28**

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Invite volunteers to read the section on pages 26–28 aloud.**

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *thwart*, and explain its meaning.

**SUPPORT**—Explain to students that the slave trade was one reason for the presence of Portuguese traders in West Africa. Over time, the slave trade would devastate populations in West Africa and other parts of the African continent.

 **SUPPORT**—Call attention to the map of the Songhai Empire on page 27. Have students refer back to the maps of the Ghana Empire on page 6 and the Mali Empire on page 18. How does the size of the Songhai Empire compare to the West African empires that came before it? (5.6, 5.11, 5.11.a, 5.11.b)

**After the volunteers read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—Which challenge faced by the Songhai Empire made it more difficult to build wealth than the Ghana and Mali Empires? (5.11, 5.11.c)

- » The Songhai Empire did not gain access to the gold fields in the southern part of West Africa.

**LITERAL**—Why did new routes across the Mediterranean pose a threat to trans-Saharan trade? (5.11, 5.11.c)

- » These new sea routes were a much faster way of getting to North Africa than crossing the desert.

### “The Political Structure of the Songhai Empire,” pages 28–29

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Have students read the section on pages 28–29 with a partner.**

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary terms *absolute monarch* and *imperial*, and explain their meanings.

**SUPPORT**—Remind students that the kingdoms of Europe were also ruled by absolute monarchs. Explain that the Magna Carta, the document King John of England was forced to sign, was a major step toward limiting the power of absolute monarchs.

**After students read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—How did Askia Muhammad help the Songhai Empire run efficiently? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » He helped the empire run efficiently by creating a centralized government and self-governing provinces.

**EVALUATIVE**—Why was Askia Muhammad’s imperial council of senior officials significant? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » Askia Muhammad’s imperial council of senior officials was significant because it was the first time this structure was used in a West African empire.

**INFERENTIAL**—Why do you think Askia Muhammad filled many local positions with his relatives? (5.11, 5.11.b)

- » By appointing his relatives to positions of power, he could guarantee that he would have someone loyal reporting to him and carrying out his will around the empire.

## “The Social Structure of the Songhai Empire,” pages 29–31

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Have students read the section on pages 29–31 independently.**

**SUPPORT**—Draw a triangle on the board or chart paper, labeling the following levels from top to bottom to illustrate the social system and hierarchy of the Songhai Empire: (1) descendants of the original Songhai people, government workers; (2) traders, merchants, and soldiers; (3) farmers and craftspeople; and (4) enslaved workers.

**After students read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—What was the social system of the Songhai Empire like?  
(5.11, 5.11.b)

- » The Songhai had a very strict social system. The king’s family was at the top of the system and had special rights and privileges. Enslaved workers were at the bottom, with few rights. In between were traders, merchants, and soldiers, followed by farmers and craftspeople.

**LITERAL**—What factors led to the downfall of the Songhai Empire?  
(5.11, 5.11.b)

- » In the late 1500s, internal conflict, drought, and disease weakened the empire. It was later invaded by the leader of Morocco.

## Primary Source Feature: “The Tomb of Askia Muhammad,” page 32

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

 **Background for Teachers:** The Tomb of Askia Muhammad was commissioned by Askia Muhammad in 1495. Located in Gao, Mali, the complex includes two mosques, a pyramidal tower, a courtyard, and a cemetery.

**Direct students to the Primary Source Feature on page 32.**

**Introduce the source to students by reminding students of who Askia Muhammad was and the details they learned about his tomb in Gao.**

**Give students a moment to study the image before asking:**

- What do you see in the image?
- What do you think about it?
- What do you wonder about it?

**Tell students that they are going to “visit” the tomb. Display the Google Arts & Culture slideshow “The Tomb of Askia.”** Progress through the slideshow slowly, inviting volunteers to read the captions and giving students sufficient time to analyze the image on each slide.

**After students have viewed the slideshow, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—What is the tomb made of? (5.2, 5.2.b)

- » The tomb is made of mud.

**EVALUATIVE**—How does the tomb reflect multiple traditions and belief systems? Cite evidence from the images to support your response. (5.2, 5.2.b, 5.3, 5.5, 5.5.a, 5.11, 5.11.b)

- » The tomb reflects Askia Muhammad’s Islamic religion and how he was impressed by the Egyptian pyramids. This is demonstrated by the pyramidal tower at his tomb. It also includes mounds that reflect traditional West African burial practices. This is shown by the use of local building materials like mud and the rounded nature of the structures.

**INFERENTIAL**—What makes the Tomb of Askia significant? (5.3, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

- » The Tomb of Askia is significant because it has lasted for hundreds of years. It is also significant because it represents the coming together of many traditions and belief systems that occurred as a result of trans-Saharan trade.

Activity Page



AP 1.2

**Distribute Artifact Study (AP 1.2), and have students complete the Activity Page with a partner.**

## Timeline Card Slide Deck

---

- Show students the Chapter 3 Timeline Cards. Read and discuss the captions, making particular note of any dates.
- Invite students to note any comparisons with events previously studied or any examples of change or continuity they notice. (5.1)
- Review and discuss the Framing Question: “How was the Songhai Empire similar to and different from previous West African empires?”



## “CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING” 10 MIN

### Ask students to:

- Write a short answer to the Framing Question: “How was the Songhai Empire similar to and different from previous West African empires?”
  - » Key points students should cite include: Mansa Musa took Ali Kolon and Sulayman Nar hostage to keep the Songhai people from revolting against Mali; Mansa Maghan’s weak leadership allowed Ali Kolon to escape and become the leader of Gao, an area that, like Ghana and Mali, benefited from proximity to the Niger River; Sunni Ali used a strong military to conquer territory once held by Mali, including trans-Saharan trade through Timbuktu and Djenne, making Songhai a powerful trading empire like Ghana and Mali; Askia Muhammad, Songhai’s first emperor, made Songhai a strict Islamic society; like Mali, Songhai spread Islam by building mosques and bringing Arab scholars to West Africa; unlike Ghana and Mali, Songhai did not control southern gold mines in West Africa, resulting in a threat to trade; Askia helped the empire run more efficiently by creating a centralized government and making self-governing provinces; Songhai had a distinct social structure with the king and his family at the top, soldiers and traders and merchants in the upper middle, farmers and craftspeople in the lower middle, and enslaved people at the bottom; internal conflict, drought, disease, and invasion led to the end of the Songhai Empire, much like the Ghana and Mali Empires before it.
- Choose one of the Core Vocabulary terms (*deploy, proximity, thwart, absolute monarch, or imperial*) and write a sentence using the word.

To wrap up the lesson, ask several students to share their responses.

## Additional Activities

---

Download the Bayou Bridges Online Resources for this unit, where the Additional Activities for this chapter may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

# Teacher Resources

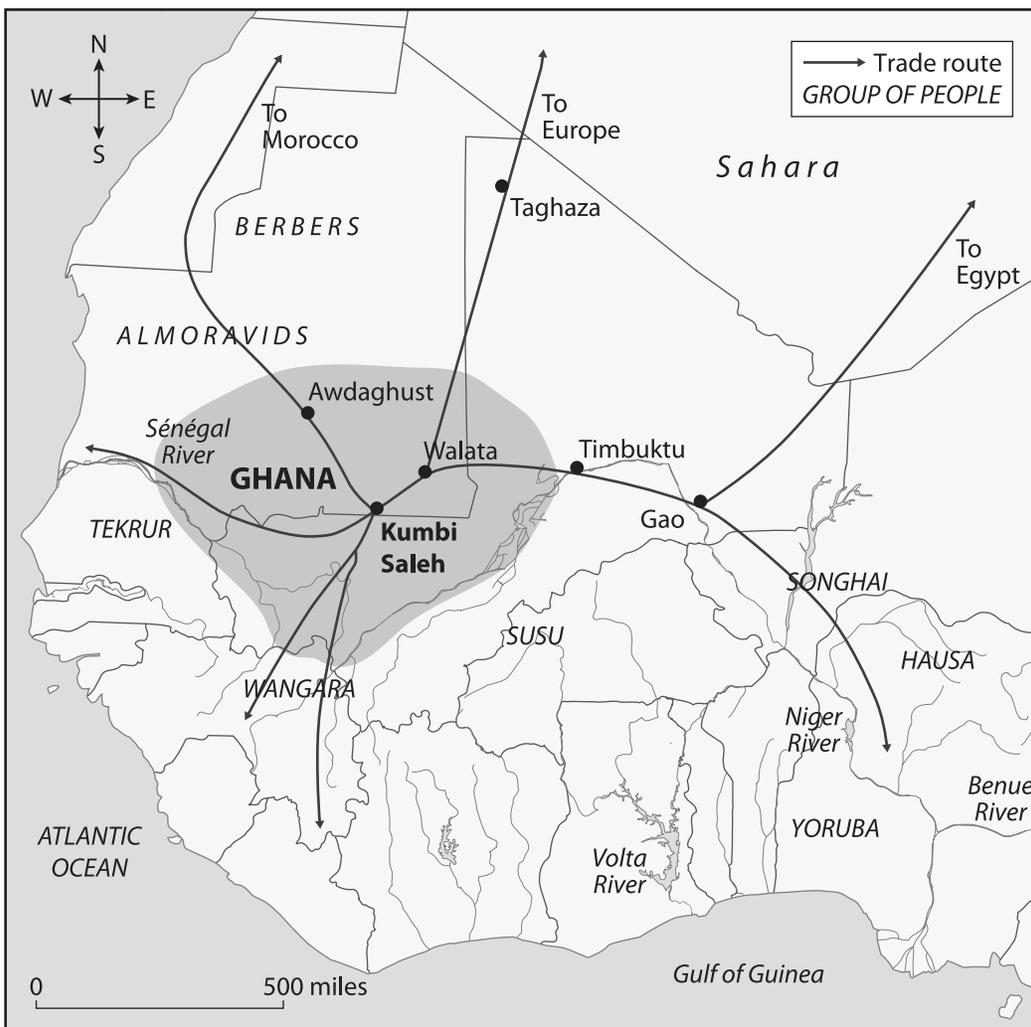
<b>Chapter Assessments: <i>West African Kingdoms</i></b>	<b>39</b>
• Chapter 1: The Ghana Empire	39
• Chapter 2: The Mali Empire	42
• Chapter 3: The Songhai Empire	45
<b>Performance Task: <i>West African Kingdoms</i></b>	<b>48</b>
• Performance Task Scoring Rubric	49
• Performance Task Activity: <i>West African Kingdoms</i>	51
<b>Activity Pages</b>	<b>52</b>
• Letter to Family (AP 1.1)	52
• Artifact Study (AP 1.2)	53
• Primary Source Analysis (AP 1.3)	55
• Claims and Evidence (AP 1.4)	56
• Ghana, Mali, and Songhai (AP 3.1)	57
• Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 1–3 (AP 3.2)	59
<b>2022 Louisiana Student Standards for Social Studies: Grade 5</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Answer Key: <i>West African Kingdoms</i>—Chapter Assessments and Activity Pages</b>	<b>63</b>

## Assessment: Chapter 1—“The Ghana Empire”

A. On your own paper, write the letter that provides the best answer.

- How did the kings of Ghana grow their kingdom’s economy? (5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)
  - They produced illuminated manuscripts.
  - They collected taxes from traders.
  - They maintained a strong military.
  - They explored new territories.

Use the map to answer questions 2 and 3.



- Which detail from the map supports the conclusion that Kumbi Saleh was the most important city in Ghana? (5.5, 5.5.a, 5.6, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)
  - It was close to an ocean.
  - It was near the Volta River.
  - It was at the edge of the Sahara.
  - It was at the center of several trade routes.

3. From which city did traders take a route to Egypt? (5.6, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)
- a) Gao
  - b) Walata
  - c) Timbuktu
  - d) Awdaghust
4. Use the image to answer the question.



Why were the animals in the image ideal for the trans-Saharan trade? Select the **two** correct answers. (5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

- a) They were easy to ride.
  - b) They were friendly and calm.
  - c) They could remember the location of oases.
  - d) They could travel several days without water.
  - e) They had broad feet for walking on hot sand.
5. What was one effect of the trans-Saharan trade? (5.11, 5.11.c)
- a) People in North Africa ended the slave trade.
  - b) People in West Africa converted to Islam.
  - c) Demand for gold decreased in Europe.
  - d) Demand for salt increased in Asia.

Use the passage from Ibn Battuta's *Travels in Asia and Africa* to answer questions 6 and 7.

After a journey of five and twenty days, [we] arrived at Toghaza, a village in which there is nothing good, for its houses and mosque are built with stones of salt, and covered with the hides of camels. For this, they dig in the earth, and find thick tables of it, so laid together as if they had been cut and placed under ground. No one, however, resides in these [houses] except the servants of the merchants, who dig for the salt. . . . To them come the people of Sudan from their different districts, and load themselves with the salt, which among them passes for money, just as gold and silver does among other nations; and for this purpose, they cut it into pieces of a certain weight, and then make their purchases with it.

6. Which line from the passage shows that salt was as valuable as precious metals in West Africa? (5.2, 5.2.a, 5.2.b, 5.11)
- a) "There is no tree in the place; it has nothing but sand for soil; and in this are mines of salt."
  - b) "No one, however, resides in these [houses] except the servants of the merchants, who dig for the salt. . . ."
  - c) "For this, they dig in the earth, and find thick tables of it, so laid together as if they had been cut and placed under ground."
  - d) "To them come the people of Sudan from their different districts, and load themselves with the salt, which among them passes for money. . . ."
7. Why were the economic activities described in the passage important to Ghana? (5.2, 5.2.a, 5.11)
- a) Salt was a key source of wealth.
  - b) Salt was used in gold mining.
  - c) Salt was an important part of their diet.
  - d) Salt helped homes stay cool in the summer.
8. Which commodity helped Ghana expand its empire through conquest? (5.11, 5.11.b)
- a) iron
  - b) gold
  - c) kola nuts
  - d) shea butter
9. What were the original religious beliefs of people living in the Ghana Empire? (5.11)
- a) They believed that plants and animals were sacred.
  - b) They believed that the king was the son of a god.
  - c) They believed that all people should visit Mecca.
  - d) They believed that Muhammad was a prophet.
10. What is one reason why the Ghana Empire fell? (5.11, 5.11.b)
- a) The southern mines produced less gold.
  - b) Conflict arose between Ghana's leaders.
  - c) The people of Mali defeated Ghana's kings.
  - d) Changing weather patterns caused difficulties.

**B. On your own paper, write a well-organized paragraph in response to the following prompt.**

Domesticating camels had the greatest effect on Ghana's wealth.

Use evidence from the chapter to support or refute this claim. (5.5, 5.5.c, 5.5.d, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

## Assessment: Chapter 2—“The Mali Empire”

---

**A. On your own paper, write the letter that provides the best answer.**

1. How were the Ghana Empire and the Mali Empire similar? Select the **two** correct answers. (5.4, 5.11, 5.11.b)
- a) They were powerful because of their location on the Niger River.
  - b) They were centers of traditional religious beliefs and culture.
  - c) They were influenced by Muslim merchants and scholars.
  - d) They were wealthy because of the gold-salt trade.
  - e) They were destinations for Christian scholars.

Use this image to answer questions 2 and 3. The Catalan Atlas is a European map of the medieval world, made in 1375 CE.



2. What conclusion about Mansa Musa is supported by the image? (5.2, 5.2.a, 5.2.b, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.d)
- a) He was famous around the world for his religious devotion.
  - b) He was famous around the world for his wealth.
  - c) He was admired for his strong leadership.
  - d) He was admired for his love of education.
3. Which detail from the image supports your answer in question 2? (5.2, 5.2.a, 5.2.b, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.d)
- a) Mansa Musa is holding a gold nugget.
  - b) Mansa Musa is shown wearing a robe.
  - c) Arabic script appears above the throne.
  - d) West African buildings appear in the background.

4. How did Sundiata Keita bring peace and order to Mali? (5.11, 5.11.b)
- He formed a strong central government.
  - He ended the trans-Saharan trade.
  - He defended the empire from lions.
  - He captured gold and salt mines.
5. Which group would have been in the middle of Mali's social hierarchy? (5.11, 5.11.b)
- enslaved people
  - warriors
  - traders
  - griots

Use the map to answer questions 6 and 7.



6. Which conclusion is supported by the map? (5.6, 5.11, 5.11.a)
- Most major trade routes to Mali ran north to south.
  - Farming was an important activity in Mali.
  - Mali had more gold fields than Ghana.
  - Djénne was larger than Timbuktu.

7. Based on the map, what is one reason Timbuktu became an important center of trade? (5.6, 5.7, 5.11, 5.11.a)
- a) It was located on the Niger River.
  - b) It was close to the Atlantic Ocean.
  - c) It was positioned along the desert.
  - d) It was far from southern rainforests.

8. Why was Mansa Musa's pilgrimage to Mecca important? (5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.d)
- a) It decreased European interest in West Africa.
  - b) It decreased competition for the gold trade.
  - c) It brought the Islamic golden age to Mali.
  - d) It brought the Christian religion to Mali.

9. This passage was written by Leo Africanus. Use the passage to answer the question.

The houses in the city are now all built of limestone and covered with thatch. There is a temple, made of stone and lime. A palace is in the city too, which was built by the skilled workers of Granada. There are shops, craftsmen, and merchants, especially those who sell linen and cotton textiles. Here you can find merchants who bring cloth from Europe. All the women except the young female servants keep their faces covered, and they sell food that people need. The people who live [here] are wealthy. There are wells that bring up clean water. Whenever the Niger River overflows, they bring water into the town by way of a small gate that controls the water. Corn, cattle, milk and butter is found in abundance here. But, there is not much salt.

Which city is described in the passage? (5.2, 5.2.a, 5.11, 5.11.b)

- a) Djenne
  - b) Toghaza
  - c) Timbuktu
  - d) Kumbi Saleh
10. Why did the arrival of Portuguese ships weaken Mali? (5.11, 5.11.b)
- a) They caused power struggles in West Africa.
  - b) They introduced the slave trade to West Africa.
  - c) They posed stiff competition to trading caravans.
  - d) They threatened to capture important gold mines.

- B. On your own paper, write a well-organized paragraph in response to the following prompt.**

Mansa Musa was the most important ruler of Mali.

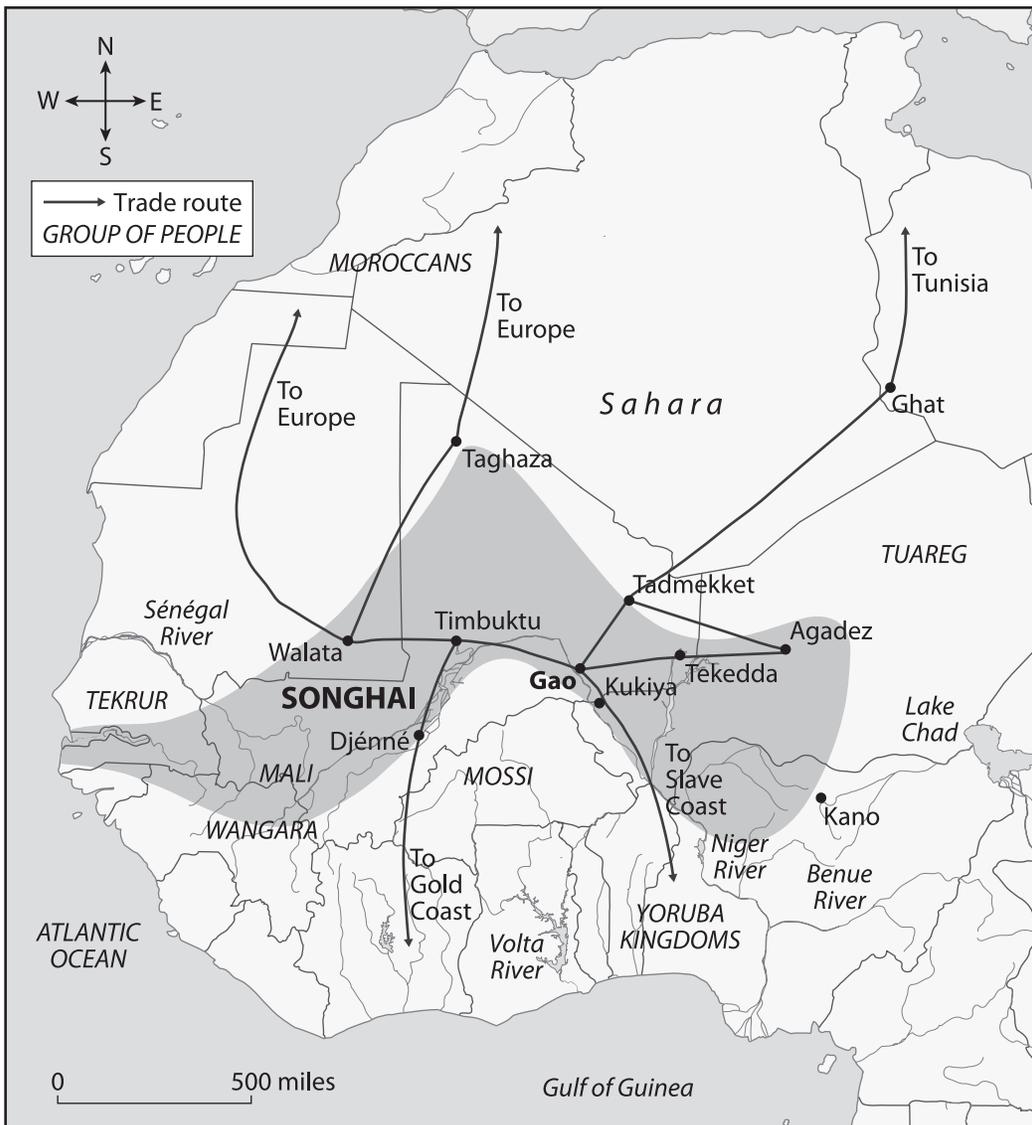
Using evidence from the chapter, support or refute this claim. (5.2.b, 5.5, 5.5.a, 5.5.d, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.d)

## Assessment: Chapter 3—“The Songhai Empire”

A. On your own paper, write the letter that provides the best answer.

1. Who was Ali Kolon? (5.11, 5.11.b)
  - a) He was a Songhai prince who became chief of Gao.
  - b) He was a Malian warrior who conquered Niani.
  - c) He was the leader of the Susu people.
  - d) He was the son of Mansa Musa.

Use this map to answer questions 2 and 3.



2. Which city shown on the map was important to both Mali and Songhai? **(5.6, 5.11, 5.11.a, 5.11.b)**
  - a) Ghat
  - b) Kano
  - c) Djenne
  - d) Timbuktu
  
3. Which physical feature was north of the Songhai Empire? **(5.6, 5.11, 5.11.a, 5.11.b)**
  - a) Niger River
  - b) Atlantic Ocean
  - c) Gulf of Guinea
  - d) Sahara
  
4. What good was carried from Timbuktu through Toghata to Europe? **(5.11, 5.11.a, 5.11.b)**
  - a) furs
  - b) gold
  - c) salt
  - d) wood
  
5. How did Sunni Ali expand the Songhai Empire? **(5.11, 5.11.b)**
  - a) He invited European rulers to visit his palace in Timbuktu.
  - b) He invited Muslim scholars to study at his university in Gao.
  - c) He used his strong military to control travel on the Niger River.
  - d) He used his diplomats to negotiate with neighboring kingdoms.
  
6. How did Askia Muhammad improve trade in Songhai? **(5.11, 5.11.b)**
  - a) He introduced a system of weights and measures.
  - b) He reduced travel time by using sea routes.
  - c) He allowed all people to own gold nuggets.
  - d) He took prisoners from nearby kingdoms.
  
7. Why did Askia Muhammad replace ethnic Songhai officials across the empire? **(5.8, 5.11, 5.11.b)**
  - a) He wanted to end slavery.
  - b) He wanted to spread Islam.
  - c) He wanted to regulate trade.
  - d) He wanted to support education.

8. How were the social structures of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai similar? Select the **two** correct answers. (5.4, 5.11, 5.11.b)
- a) All politicians were related to the king.
  - b) The intellectual class had special rights.
  - c) Enslaved people held the lowest status.
  - d) Farmers were more important than artisans.
  - e) The army was made up of professional soldiers.

Use this image of a tomb in Gao to answer questions 9 and 10.



9. Who does this structure honor? (5.2, 5.2.a, 5.11, 5.11.b)
- a) Askia Muhammad
  - b) Mansa Maghan
  - c) Sunni Ali
  - d) Ali Kolon
10. Why is this structure significant? (5.2, 5.2.a, 5.11, 5.11.b)
- a) It is the largest historical monument in West Africa.
  - b) It was designed by artisans from Granada, Spain.
  - c) It is part of the biggest mosque in the world.
  - d) It was built in less than a year.

**B. On your own paper, write a well-organized paragraph in response to the following prompt.**

Make a claim about the leadership of Askia Muhammad, and support it with evidence from the chapter. (5.2, 5.2.b, 5.5, 5.5.a, 5.11, 5.11.b)

## Performance Task: *West African Kingdoms*

**Teacher Directions:** West Africa gave rise to three major empires: Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. To varying degrees, each empire was shaped by trans-Saharan trade and the spread of Islam.

Activity Page



AP 1.4

Ask students to give a presentation in response to the following prompt. Encourage students to use information from their Student Reader and Additional Activities in their responses. Have students use the Claims and Evidence Activity Page (AP 1.4) to organize their thoughts and plan their presentations.

### Prompt:

Give a presentation explaining how trade or religion shaped the West African empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. (5.5, 5.5.a, 5.5.c, 5.5.d, 5.11, 5.11.b, 5.11.c)

A sample table, completed with possible notes, is provided below to serve as a reference for teachers, should some prompting or scaffolding be needed to help students get started.

<b>Sample Claim:</b>	<b>Trade played the most significant role in shaping the West African empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai.</b>
<b>Reason:</b>	Trade allowed West African kingdoms to grow wealthy and powerful.
<b>Evidence:</b>	Ghana and Mali controlled gold mines, while all three empires controlled the gold-salt trade.  West African kingdoms attracted trans-Saharan trade and benefited from the exchange of luxury goods.  Wealth from trade enabled West African kingdoms to expand their influence in Africa and to gain renown in Europe and Asia.
<b>Counterclaim and Answer:</b>	Religion was most important in shaping the West African empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. While Islam was key in shaping these kingdoms, it would not have arrived in West Africa without trans-Saharan trade.

## Performance Task Scoring Rubric

---

**Note:** Students should be evaluated on the basis of their presentation using the rubric.

Students should not be evaluated on the completion of the Claims and Evidence Activity Page (AP 1.4), which is intended to be a support for students as they think about their written responses.

<b>3</b>	<p>Response is accurate, detailed, and persuasive. It addresses all parts of the prompt. The claim is clearly stated, well developed, and fully supported with relevant information that includes both content knowledge and source details. The response demonstrates sound, cohesive reasoning and analysis, making insightful and well-explained connections between the claim, information, and evidence. The presentation is clearly articulated, is focused, and demonstrates strong understanding of West African empires.</p> <p>Response may cite some or all of the following details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• West African empires dominated the gold-salt trade.</li><li>• Trans-Saharan trade brought immense wealth and status to West African empires.</li><li>• West African empires conquered neighboring territories to further control trade, making them wealthier and more powerful.</li><li>• Wealth from trans-Saharan trade enabled West African rulers to build cosmopolitan cities that attracted more trade, as well as scholars from around the world.</li><li>• Islam influenced government and military structures in West Africa.</li><li>• The adoption of Islam encouraged more trade with North Africa and made West Africa a center of Islamic learning and culture.</li></ul>
<b>2</b>	<p>Response is mostly accurate, is somewhat detailed, and addresses the prompt. The claim is clearly stated and sufficiently supported and developed with some relevant information that includes both content knowledge and source details. The response demonstrates a general understanding of West African empires, with analysis and reasoning that are somewhat cohesive and sound but may be uneven. Connections between the claim, information, and evidence are made, but some explanations may be missing or unclear. The presentation is organized.</p>

<b>1</b>	Response shows effort but is incomplete or limited and only partially addresses the prompt. The claim may be inaccurate or vague, but it is supported by at least one piece of relevant information or evidence. The response shows some understanding of West African empires, but analysis and reasoning, while accurate, are vague, incomplete, or lacking connections. The presentation may also exhibit issues with organization and/or focus.
<b>0</b>	Response is too brief or unclear to evaluate. It lacks an identifiable claim, accurate or relevant supporting information, and accurate analysis or reasoning. The response demonstrates minimal or no understanding of West African empires. The presentation may exhibit major issues with organization and/or focus.



**Activity Page 1.1****Use with Chapter 1****Letter to Family**

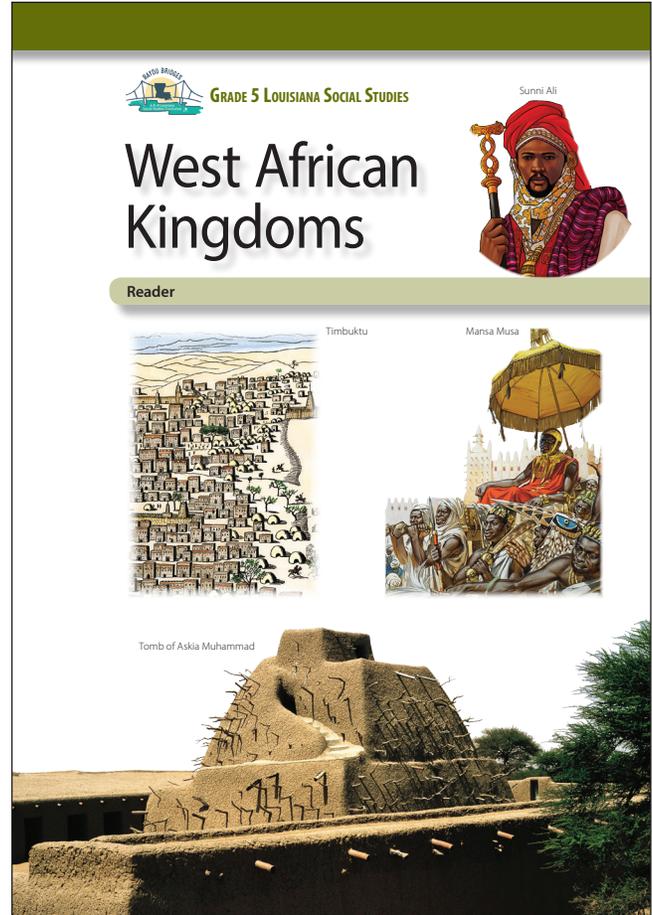
During the next few weeks, as part of our study of the Bayou Bridges Louisiana Social Studies Curriculum, your child will be learning about West Africa and the rise and fall of the empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai.

In this unit, students will identify geographic features in Africa; examine the role of trans-Saharan trade in West Africa; describe the economic, political, and social characteristics of West African kingdoms; identify key events and leaders that shaped the empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai; and analyze primary sources and evaluate claims and evidence related to Ghana, Mali, and Songhai.

As part of their exploration, students will also learn a little about the role of conquest and the slave trade in West African kingdoms during this time. This information is presented in a factual, age-appropriate way rather than in a manner that suggests the value or correctness of any particular culture or practice.

Sometimes students have questions regarding how the information they are learning relates to themselves and their own experiences. In such instances, we will encourage each student to discuss such topics with you. We recognize that the best place to find answers to those types of questions is with your family and the adults at home.

Please let us know if you have any questions.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity Page 1.2**

**Use with Chapter 3**

**Artifact Study**

**Describe the artifact.**

- 1. What type of object is it? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Where is it from? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. When was it made? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. What color is it? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. What shape is it? \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. What size is it? \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. What is it made of? \_\_\_\_\_

**Think about the artifact.**

- 8. What knowledge or experience was needed to create it?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 9. Why was it made? What is its purpose?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 10. Could it have been made by one person, or did it need to be made by a group?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 11. How has the artifact changed over time?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity Page 1.2** *(continued)*

**Use with Chapter 3**

**Think about context.**

**12.** What do you know about the time and place the artifact was created?

---

---

**Draw a conclusion about the artifact.**

---

---

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

**Primary Source Analysis**

<p><b>Describe the source.</b></p>	<p><b>Connect the source to what you know.</b></p>
<p><b>Understand the source. Identify its message, purpose, and/or audience.</b></p>	<p><b>Draw a conclusion from or about the source.</b></p>

**SOURCE:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

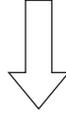
Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity Page 1.4**

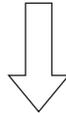
**Use with Chapters 1 and 3 and Performance Task**

**Claims and Evidence**

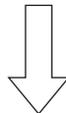
**STATE THE CLAIM** *What opinion or position are you defending?*



**STATE THE REASON** *Why should someone agree with this claim?*



**IDENTIFY THE EVIDENCE** *What details from the text and sources support the reason?*



**RECOGNIZE A COUNTERCLAIM** *What different opinion or position might someone have?  
What argument might be used against you?*

**ANSWER THE COUNTERCLAIM** *How will you disprove the counterclaim?*

**Activity Page 3.1**

**Use with Chapter 3**

**Ghana, Mali, and Songhai**

**Directions: Study the map. Use it to answer the questions on the next page.**



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity Page 3.1 (continued)**

**Use with Chapter 3**

1. Which empire reached as far as the Atlantic Ocean?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Which was the smallest of the three empires?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which empire stretched the farthest east?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Which body of water was important to all three empires?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Which city was important to both Mali and Songhai?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. How did the expansions of the Mali and Songhai Empires compare?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Based on the map, were the three empires at the beginning, middle, or end of the trans-Saharan trade routes?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Activity Page 3.2

## Use with Chapter 3

## Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 1–3

For each word, write the letter of the definition.

- |       |                      |  |
|-------|----------------------|--|
| _____ | 1. prosperity        | a) a good, commonly a raw material, that can be interchanged with other goods of the same type       |
| _____ | 2. malleability      | b) a king or queen who has the unchecked authority to do whatever they want without any restrictions |
| _____ | 3. court             | c) the belief that objects, places, and creatures all possess a distinct spiritual essence           |
| _____ | 4. commodity         | d) people who surround an important person   |
| _____ | 5. monopoly          | e) a condition of being successful, especially financially   |
| _____ | 6. animism           | f) composed of people from many parts of the world   |
| _____ | 7. diplomat          | g) someone who represents the government of one country in another country                           |
| _____ | 8. clan              | h) the complete control of the supply of a good or service by one person, country, or company        |
| _____ | 9. cosmopolitan      | i) a group of families claiming a common ancestor  |
| _____ | 10. entourage        | j) to move troops into position for a military action  |
| _____ | 11. imam             | k) ability to be shaped into many forms  |
| _____ | 12. deploy           | l) to prevent something  |
| _____ | 13. proximity        | m) a Muslim worship leader   |
| _____ | 14. thwart           | n) nearness in space   |
| _____ | 15. absolute monarch | o) related to an emperor, empress, or empire   |
| _____ | 16. imperial         | p) the residence of a royal family and supporting staff  |

- 5.1** Create and use a chronological sequence of related events to compare developments and describe instances of change and continuity.
- 5.2** Use a variety of primary and secondary sources to:
- a)** Analyze social studies content.
  - b)** Explain claims and evidence.
  - c)** Compare and contrast multiple sources.
- 5.3** Explain connections between ideas, events, and developments in world history.
- 5.4** Compare and contrast events and developments in world history.
- 5.5** Construct and express claims that are supported with relevant evidence from primary and/or secondary sources, content knowledge, and clear reasoning in order to:
- a)** Demonstrate an understanding of social studies content.
  - b)** Compare and contrast content and viewpoints.
  - c)** Explain causes and effects.
  - d)** Describe counterclaims.
- 5.6** Create and use geographic representations to locate and describe places and geographic characteristics, including hemispheres; landforms such as continents, oceans, rivers, mountains, deserts; cardinal and intermediate directions; latitude and longitude, climate, and environment.
- 5.7** Use geographic representations and historical information to explain how physical geography influenced the development of civilizations and empires.
- 5.8** Describe the origin and spread of major world religions as they developed throughout history.
- 5.9** Describe the geographic, political, economic, and cultural structures of Europe during the Middle Ages.
- a)** Identify and locate geographic features of Europe, including the Alps, Atlantic Ocean, North European Plain, English Channel, Ural Mountains and the Mediterranean Sea.
  - b)** Describe the role of monasteries in the preservation of knowledge and the spread of the Catholic Church throughout Europe.
  - c)** Explain how Charlemagne shaped and defined medieval Europe, including the creation of the Holy Roman Empire, and the establishment of Christianity as the religion of the Empire.
  - d)** Describe the development of feudalism and manorialism and their role in the medieval European economy.

- e) Describe the significance of the Magna Carta, including limiting the power of the monarch, the rule of law, and the right to trial by jury.
- f) Explain how the Crusades affected Christian, Muslim, and Jewish populations in Europe.
- g) Describe the economic and social effects of the spread of the Black Death (Bubonic Plague) from Central Asia to China, the Middle East, and Europe, and its effect on the global population.
- h) Describe the significance of the Hundred Years' War, including the roles of Henry V in shaping English culture and language and Joan of Arc in promoting a peaceful end to the war.

**5.10** Describe the geographic, political, economic, and cultural structures of Southwest Asia and North Africa.

- a) Identify and locate the geographic features of Southwest Asia and North Africa, including the Arabian Peninsula, the Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea, Red Sea, Black Sea, and the Caspian Sea.
- b) Describe the diffusion of Islam, its culture, and the Arabic language throughout North Africa and Southwest Asia.
- c) Summarize the contributions of Islamic scholars in the areas of art, medicine, science, and mathematics.

**5.11** Describe the geographic, political, economic, and cultural structures of Medieval West African Kingdoms.

- a) Identify and locate the geographic features of West Africa, including the Atlantic Ocean, Niger River, Djenne, the Sahara, Gulf of Guinea, and Timbuktu.
- b) Describe the growth of the kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai, including cities such as Djenne and Timbuktu as centers of trade, culture, and learning.
- c) Describe the role of the Trans-Saharan caravan trade in the changing religious and cultural characteristics of West Africa and in the exchange of salt, gold, and enslaved people.
- d) Explain the importance of the Malian king Mansa Musa and his pilgrimage to Mecca.

**5.12** Describe the origins, accomplishments, and geographic diffusion of the Renaissance as well as the historical developments of the Protestant Reformation and Scientific Revolution.

- a) Explain how the location of the Italian Peninsula affected the movement of resources, knowledge, and culture throughout Italy's independent trade cities.
- b) Identify the importance of Florence, Italy and the Medici Family in the early stages of the Renaissance.
- c) Explain the development of Renaissance art, including the significance of Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, William Shakespeare, and systems of patronage.
- d) Explain how Johannes Gutenberg's printing press affected the growth of literacy and diffusion of knowledge.
- e) Explain the significant causes of the Protestant Reformation, including the selling of indulgences and Martin Luther's 95 Theses.
- f) Compare and contrast heliocentric and geocentric theories of the Greeks (geocentric) and Copernicus (heliocentric).
- g) Describe Galileo Galilei's theories and improvement of scientific tools, including the telescope and microscope.

**5.13** Describe the geographic, political, economic, and cultural structures of Indigenous civilizations of the Americas.

- a) Identify and locate the geographic features of the Americas, including the Andes Mountains, Appalachian Mountains, Great Plains, Pacific Ocean Mountains, Gulf of Mexico, Rocky Mountains, Atlantic Ocean, Mississippi River, Amazon River, South America, Caribbean Sea, North America, Yucatan Peninsula, and the Central Mexican Plateau.
- b) Explain the effects of geographic features on Indigenous North American cultures (Northeast, Southeast, and Plains), including clothing, housing, and agriculture.
- c) Describe the existence of diverse networks of Indigenous North American cultures, including varied languages, customs, and economic and political structures.
- d) Explain the effects of geographic features and climate on the agricultural practices and settlement of the Aztec and Inca civilizations.
- e) Explain how the Aztec built and controlled a powerful empire that covered much of what is now central Mexico.
- f) Describe Aztec religious beliefs and how they were linked to the traditions of the society.
- g) Describe Tenochtitlán and the surrounding landscape, including aqueducts, massive temples, and chinampa agriculture.
- h) Identify Moctezuma II and describe features of his reign.
- i) Explain how the Inca built and organized their empire and how Inca engineers overcame challenges presented by the geography of the land.
- j) Explain how the Inca kept their empire together without a written language.

**5.14** Analyze the motivations for the movement of people from Europe to the Americas and describe the effects of exploration by Europeans.

- a) Analyze why European countries were motivated to explore the world, including religion, political rivalry, and economic gain.
- b) Identify the significance of the voyages and routes of discovery of the following explorers by their sponsoring country: England: Henry Hudson; France: Jacques Cartier; Portugal: Vasco da Gama, Bartolomeu Dias; Spain: Christopher Columbus, Hernando de Soto, Ferdinand Magellan, and Amerigo Vespucci.
- c) Describe Prince Henry the Navigator's influence on exploration, voyages, cartographic improvements, and tools related to exploration, including the compass, caravel, and astrolabe.
- d) Describe how the Aztec and Inca empires were eventually defeated by Spanish conquistadors.
- e) Explain the impact of the Columbian Exchange on people, plants, animals, technology, culture, ideas, and diseases among Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and examine the major effects on each continent.
- f) Explain how Spanish colonization introduced Christianity, the mission system, and the encomienda system to the Americas as well as the transition to African slavery.
- g) Describe the development of the transatlantic slave trade and the experiences of enslaved people in the Americas.

## Answer Key: West African Kingdoms

### Chapter Assessments

#### Chapter 1

- A. 1. b 2. d 3. a 4. d, e 5. b 6. d 7. a 8. a 9. a 10. d
- B. Students should clearly support or refute the given claim and support their response with relevant evidence, such as Ghana owned gold mines and controlled the gold-salt trade; Ghana exported numerous luxury goods to Arab traders; acceptance of Islam increased trade with North Africa. Answers should include explanations of how the evidence supports the response.

#### Chapter 2

- A. 1. c, d 2. b 3. a 4. a 5. d 6. a 7. a 8. c 9. c 10. c
- B. Students should clearly support or refute the given claim and support their response with relevant evidence, such as Sundiata Keita founded the Mali Empire and established a strong central government that brought peace and efficiency; Mansa Musa's pilgrimage encouraged interest in and trade with West Africa; Mansa Musa made Timbuktu a center of Islamic learning by building mosques, schools, universities, and libraries. Answers should include explanations of how the evidence supports the claim.

#### Chapter 3

- A. 1. a 2. d 3. d 4. b 5. c 6. a 7. b 8. b, c 9. a 10. a
- B. Students should clearly state an accurate claim and support it with relevant evidence, such as Askia Muhammad was the first emperor of Songhai; he used his strong army to expand the empire and build its wealth through trade; he made Songhai an Islamic society by replacing ethnic Songhai rulers, installing Muslim judges, and continuing the cultural work of Mansa Musa. Answers should include explanations of how the evidence supports the claim.

### Activity Pages

#### Primary Source Analysis (AP 1.3): Chapter 1 Primary Source Feature

**Describe the source:** The source is a primary source account of a trip through a village in the Ghana Empire

called Teghaza. The author of the source explains what the village looks like and the economic activities that happen there, namely mining salt.

**Connect the source to what you know:** Controlling the salt trade brought significant wealth and power to the Ghana Empire. Salt was important for preserving food and for providing important minerals that were lost from sweating.

**Understand the source. Identify its message, purpose, and/or audience:** The purpose of the source is to describe Teghaza. Battuta explains that the village is built from salt and that people come to the village specifically to take salt away for trade.

**Draw a conclusion from or about the source:** The source supports several conclusions. Ibn Battuta mentions that the mosque is made of salt, meaning that the village supports a Muslim population. Ibn Battuta uses the phrase "nothing good" when describing the village, suggesting that he finds it unimpressive. Finally, the author explains that people can make purchases with salt, supporting the conclusion that salt was immensely valuable.

#### Primary Source Analysis (AP 1.3): Chapter 2 Primary Source Feature

**Describe the source:** The source is a primary source account of Leo Africanus's visit to Timbuktu during the Songhai Empire. He describes the characteristics of the town, including what the structures are made of, and the types of economic activities that take place there.

**Connect the source to what you know:** Timbuktu was an important center of trade and culture during the Mali Empire. It grew in importance during the reign of Mansa Musa.

**Understand the source. Identify its message, purpose, and/or audience:** The intended audience of the source is European readers who have never traveled to Timbuktu.

**Draw a conclusion from or about the source:** The source supports the conclusion that Timbuktu was an international city. Leo Africanus reveals this by saying that the palace was built by skilled workers from Granada, a city in Spain.

### Artifact Study (AP 1.2): Chapter 3 Primary Source Feature

1. photographs of a tomb and surrounding buildings
2. Gao in West Africa
3. 1400s CE
4. tan and brown
5. The tower is shaped like a small, rounded pyramid. The other buildings are one to two stories high and square or rectangular.
6. The tower is seventeen meters high. The surrounding buildings create a large burial complex.
7. mud and sticks
8. To make the tomb, architects and builders would need to know how to design the structure and how to build with local materials like mud, stones, and sticks.
9. The tomb was made to honor Askia Muhammad.
10. The tomb would have been made by many people.
11. The tomb is largely unchanged despite experiencing harsh weather in West Africa.
12. The tomb was created after the death of Askia Muhammad, during a time when the Songhai Empire was expanding.

**Draw a conclusion about the artifact:** The tomb was meant to show the power of Askia Muhammad while also showing the power and wealth of his successors.

### Ghana, Mali, and Songhai (AP 3.1)

1. Mali
2. Ghana
3. Songhai
4. Niger River
5. Timbuktu
6. Mali expanded to the west while Songhai expanded to the east.
7. The three empires were likely the ending point of trans-Saharan trade routes.

### Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 1–3 (AP 3.2)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. e | 9. f  |
| 2. k | 10. d |
| 3. p | 11. m |
| 4. a | 12. j |
| 5. h | 13. n |
| 6. c | 14. l |
| 7. g | 15. b |
| 8. i | 16. o |



**CKHG™**  
Core Knowledge **HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY™**

**Editorial Directors**

Rosie McCormick

Ilene Goldman

in partnership with



## Subject Matter Expert

Salmon A. Shomade, JD, PhD

## Illustration and Photo Credits

A Camel Train, 1899 (panel)/Lazerges, Paul John Baptiste (1845–1902) / French/  
Private Collection/Photo © Bonhams, London, UK / Bridgeman Images: i, iii, 40

Illuminated Koran / Photo © Zev Radovan / Bridgeman Images: 5b

Mali: Mansa Musa, King of Mali, holding a sceptre and a piece of gold. Detail from  
the Catalan Atlas, 1375 / Pictures from History / Bridgeman Images: 5d, 42

Mansa Kankan Musa I, 14th century king of the Mali empire (gouache on paper)/  
McBride, Angus (1931–2007) / British/Private Collection/© Look and Learn /  
Bridgeman Images: Cover C, 52c

North Wind Picture Archives / Alamy Stock Photo: Cover B, 52b

Universal Images Group North America LLC / DeAgostini / Alamy Stock Photo:  
Cover D, 47, 52d

Within this publication, the Core Knowledge Foundation has provided hyperlinks to independently owned and operated sites whose content we have determined to be of possible interest to you. At the time of publication, all links were valid and operational and the content accessed by the links provided additional information that supported the Core Knowledge curricular content and/or lessons. Please note that we do not monitor the links or the content on such sites on an ongoing basis and both may be constantly changing. We have no control over the links, the content or the policies, information-gathering or otherwise, of such linked sites.

By accessing these third-party sites and the content provided therein, you acknowledge and agree that the Core Knowledge Foundation makes no claims, promises, or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of the content of such third-party websites, and expressly disclaims liability for errors and omissions in the either the links themselves, or the contents of such sites.

If you experience any difficulties when attempting to access one of the linked resources found within these materials, please contact the Core Knowledge Foundation:

Core Knowledge Foundation

801 E. High St.

Charlottesville, VA 22902

Email: [coreknow@coreknowledge.org](mailto:coreknow@coreknowledge.org)





## Bayou Bridges: A K–8 Louisiana Social Studies Curriculum

A comprehensive program in world and U.S. history, integrating topics in geography, civics, economics, and the arts, exploring civilizations, cultures, concepts, and skills specified in the 2022 Louisiana Student Standards for Social Studies

### **Bayou Bridges**

units at this level include:

**The Medieval World**

**West African Kingdoms**

**Civilizations in North America**

**The Inca and Aztec Empires**

**Renaissance and Reformation**

**Age of Contact**

[www.coreknowledge.org](http://www.coreknowledge.org)