

## The Empires of Ancient Africa

**WebQuest Description:** Use this webquest to introduce yourself to the world of ancient African kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai.

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Curriculum:** Social Studies

**Keywords:** Africa, geography, early civilizations, Mali, Ghana, Songhai

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### Introduction

Before European nations began to travel the globe by sea, the world was a strikingly different place. Major cultural powers can be found all over the globe, some in places that we would least expect today. Dive into the cultures of early Africa to learn more about the cultures, economy, and governments of some of world's most&nbsp;forgotten&nbsp;about empires.&nbsp;

### Tasks

You will use the research tools provided (use more if you wish) to compose a compare and contrast essay on two of the early African kingdoms.&nbsp;This is an individual assignment.Products:&nbsp;Complete the chart provided over the three kingdoms.Complete the venn diagram provided to organize your essay.Compose a 5 paragraph essay.&nbsp;

### Process

ResearchUsing the following resources, study the three major kingdoms of Africa. Fill out the chart on each kingdom as you read. You will be using this chart to compose your essay. Be as detailed as possible.&nbsp;Click the back button when you are finished reading any direct links to be returned to the WebQuest.Brief Overview of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai:&nbsp;Trade in Ghana and Mali:&nbsp;Collapse of Mali and SonghaiGhana<http://www.ushistory.org/civ/7a.aspx>[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/ghan/hd\\_ghan.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/ghan/hd_ghan.htm)[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ghana\\_Empire#Economy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ghana_Empire#Economy)[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mali\\_Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mali_Empire)<http://www.thenagain.info/WebChron/Africa/Mali.html><http://www.mapsofworld.com/mali/history/kingdom-of-mali.html>[http://rupertthopkins.com/pdf/Kingdom\\_of\\_Mali.pdf](http://rupertthopkins.com/pdf/Kingdom_of_Mali.pdf)[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/sghi/hd\\_sghi.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/sghi/hd_sghi.htm)[http://www.rupertthopkins.com/pdf/The\\_Kingdom\\_of\\_Songhai.pdf](http://www.rupertthopkins.com/pdf/The_Kingdom_of_Songhai.pdf)[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Songhai\\_Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Songhai_Empire)  
The chart is broken into three columns: Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. Under each category, fill in the information pertaining to the kingdom's trading&nbsp;accomplishments, government, culture, and downfall. Type your answers into the chart as you go. Make sure to site any additional resources that you use (if any) at the bottom of your chart using MLA format.&nbsp;A link to the chart is listed below.&nbsp;The EssayOnce your research is complete, choose two of the kingdoms to compare and contrast. Complete a Venn diagram to help with the organization of your ideas. (This will be turned in with your essay).&nbsp;A link to the venn diagram is listed below.Your essay will be composed of five paragraphs: Introduction, 3 body paragraphs, conclusion.The first body paragraph will discuss the similarities of your two kingdoms.The second body &nbsp;paragraph will discuss the differences between the two kingdoms.The final body paragraph will be your opinion as to which kingdom influenced trade in Western Africa the most. Cite reasons from your research to support your answer.&nbsp;Type your essay in Times New Roman 12 pt font. Don't forget to include an appropriate title and your heading.The MapUsing the outline map below, identify the kingdom regions of ancient Ghana, Mali, and Songhai.&nbsp;These areas will overlap somewhat. Sketch your images using regular pencil first. Follow up by lightly coloring with colored pencil, using a different color for each kingdom.&nbsp;Also, identify major landforms such as bodies of water, geographic formations, etc. Include a symbol for these in your legend.Include a legend on your map. The legend should aide the viewer in reading your map. Remember to use TODALS (Title, Orientation, Date, Author, Legend, Source).If you do not remember the TODALS, use these links as a guide:&nbsp;What all Maps Must HaveElements Found on Most MapsDefinition of Map ElementsProduct:You will submit four items in class to receive credit on this assignment.1. Turn in your completed chart on the three kingdoms. If you used additional sources, these should be cited using MLA format.2. Turn in your completed venn diagram.3. Turn in your typed essay.&nbsp;4. Africa Map

### Evaluation

The following rubric will be used to grade each portion of the assignment. All points earned will be combined to produce a final grade out of 100.&nbsp;Read over the rubric to get an idea of how each section will be graded. Upon submission, you should have a good feel for what kind of grade you can expect.

Category and Score	Beginning	Developing	Very Good	Exemplary	Score
Kingdoms Chart	10pts No effort was seen and very little research is evident.	15pts Some effort was seen and there is some evidence of research.	20pts An adequate amount of effort was seen and there is enough research to complete the essay. More thought could have been given to some areas.	25pts The student conducted solid research, even adding some outside sources. Their notes look well organized and thoughtfully completed.	25
Venn Diagram	5pts Little effort was seen in completing the diagram. No correlation between research and essay formation.	10pts Some effort was made to use notes to complete the diagram. More research could be present.	15pts A fair amount of research and though can be seen.	20pts The research and effort are superb. The viewer can clearly see how the essay will be formed.	20
Essay	10pts Very little research is present. The essay is mostly opinion. Little to no organization. Did not follow the guidelines.	15pts Some research and organization are present, but more is needed. Guidelines were somewhat followed.	25pts Research and organization are average. Essay could have used stronger language. Essay guidelines were followed.	35pts Research and essay formation are superb. Writer uses strong varied language and has a convincing final argument.	35
Map	5pts Map contains no legend, no color, no identification of geographic formations. Guidelines for map were not followed. No effort is seen.	10pts Author left off several details listed in the guidelines, but the general idea of where the kingdoms were is evident. Some effort is evident.	15pts Author followed the guidelines, but left off one or two insignificant points. Research and effort are evident.	20pts Map is clear and concise. Great effort is evident.	20
				Total Score	100

## Conclusion

As we move through the early explorations and the growth of the United States, think back to this unit. The U.S. is one of the shortest lived countries in the world. How does our economy, government, and way of life compare to that of the kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai? In many ways we are very similar. In others, we are strikingly different. Also, as we discuss the issue of slavery, reflect back on the topics that you discussed today. Many students enter the subject thinking that Africans were savage and tribal beings. Do you think so? How has this research affected your perception? If you would like to learn more about early African cultures, follow these links. [Culture of Africa](#) [Links to Several Early Cultures](#) [Early African History](#)

## Teacher Page

This WebQuest is designed to utilize a computer lab for approximately one day. During that time, students will conduct the bulk of their research. The following day in class there will be a discussion over key points in their research and on how to formulate the essay. Whatever time was not used in class to complete the essay will be assigned for homework. All together, the assignment is designed to allow for 4 days of completion time.

### Standards

TEKS 113 Social Studies

(b) Knowledge and skills.

(1) History. The student understands that historical events influence contemporary events. The student is expected to:

(A) trace characteristics of various contemporary societies in regions that resulted from historical events or factors such as invasion, conquests, colonization, immigration, and trade; and

(B) analyze the historical background of various contemporary societies to evaluate relationships between past conflicts and current conditions.

(2) History. The student understands the influences of individuals and groups from various cultures on various historical and contemporary societies. The student is expected to:

(A) identify and describe the influence of individual or group achievements on various historical or contemporary societies

(B) evaluate the social, political, economic, and cultural contributions of individuals and groups from various societies, past and present.

(3) Geography. The student uses geographic tools to answer geographic questions. The student is expected to:

(A) pose and answer geographic questions, including: Where is it located? Why is it there? What is significant about its location? How is its location related to the location of other people, places, and environments?;

(D) create thematic maps, graphs, charts, models, and databases depicting aspects such as population, disease, and economic activities of various world regions and countries.

(4) Geography. The student understands the factors that influence the locations and characteristics of locations of various contemporary societies on maps and globes and uses latitude and longitude to determine absolute locations. The student is expected to:

(D) identify and locate major physical and human geographic features such as landforms, water bodies, and urban centers of various places and regions;

(E) draw sketch maps that illustrate various places and regions; and

(D) identify and locate major physical and human geographic features such as landforms, water bodies, and urban centers of various places and regions;

(E) draw sketch maps that illustrate various places and regions; and

(15) Culture. The student understands the similarities and differences within and among cultures in various world societies. The student is expected to:

(A) define culture and the common traits that unify a culture region;

(B) identify and describe common traits that define cultures;

(E) analyze the similarities and differences among various world societies; and

(F) identify and explain examples of conflict and cooperation between and among cultures.

#### TEKS 110 Language Arts

(14) Writing/Writing Process. Students use elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. Students are expected to:

(A) plan a first draft by selecting a genre appropriate for conveying the intended meaning to an audience, determining appropriate topics through a range of strategies (e.g., discussion, background reading, personal interests, interviews), and developing a thesis or controlling idea;

(B) develop drafts by choosing an appropriate organizational strategy (e.g., sequence of events, cause-effect, compare-contrast) and building on ideas to create a focused, organized, and coherent piece of writing;

(C) revise drafts to clarify meaning, enhance style, include simple and compound sentences, and improve transitions by adding, deleting, combining, and rearranging sentences or larger units of text after rethinking how well questions of purpose, audience, and genre have been addressed;

(D) edit drafts for grammar, mechanics, and spelling; and

(E) revise final draft in response to feedback from peers and teacher and publish written work for appropriate audiences.

(17) Writing/Expository and Procedural Texts. Students write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. Students are expected to:

(A) create multi-paragraph essays to convey information about a topic that:

(i) present effective introductions and concluding paragraphs;

(ii) guide and inform the reader's understanding of key ideas and evidence;

(iii) include specific facts, details, and examples in an appropriately organized structure; and

(iv) use a variety of sentence structures and transitions to link paragraphs;

#### Credits

Thank you for completing my WebQuest!

This was composed as a project for ETEC 5302 at TAMUCC. It will also be used in my 8th grade classroom during the upcoming year.

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**Other**