

Questions about West Africa, 500 C.E. to 1600 C.E.
7th Grade Social Studies

1. What is an **extended family**?
 - a. a family whose members live very far apart from one another
 - b. an immediate family of parents and their children, plus other close relatives, such as grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins
 - c. a family whose members travel very far to trade with other people
 - d. none of the above

2. What made tools, made of iron, superior to tools made from other materials?
 - a. the tools could be sharpened, and also be made into weapons for hunting and defense
 - b. the tools lasted longer, and more land could be farmed for growing crops
 - c. the tools were harder and could cut materials better, as well as dig into hard, dry dirt
 - d. all of the above

3. **Blacksmiths** were very well-respected people in West African communities. What did **blacksmiths** do?
 - a. they evaluated farmland for the richness of the soil and ability to grow crops
 - b. they were a kind of medical doctor in ancient villages
 - c. they were able to make valuable tools for the people of the community, including axes, hoes, and weapons, such as spears
 - d. none of the above

4. Rulers of kingdoms collected **tribute** from people that they conquered. What is **tribute**?
 - a. a form of tax used to help build up the kingdom's military power and the ruler's wealth
 - b. a symbol of power shown by the king over the people he conquered
 - c. the way the conquered people showed that they accepted the authority of the king collecting the tribute
 - d. all of the above

5. As a result of improved farming methods, West African communities often produced a **surplus** of goods. What is a **surplus**?
 - a. a kind of squash similar to pumpkins and zucchinis with great nutritional value
 - b. a quantity of a product that is more than what is needed by the people who make it
 - c. a special type of iron hoe used for plowing fields
 - d. none of the above

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6. Why was trade with other communities, both near and far, so important to the people of West Africa?
 - a. trade helped them become wealthier by selling the surplus of goods they produced, as well as by charging a tribute to traders
 - b. it allowed them to obtain products they could not make themselves, because they did not have the resources or knowhow
 - c. it allowed for the exchange between peoples of cultural arts, ideas, and methods for farming and making products
 - d. all of the above

7. What did traders passing through Ghana on the trans-Saharan trade routes have to do each time they brought goods through Ghana?
 - a. they had to pay heavy taxes on their goods to the kingdom of Ghana
 - b. they had to stop for a period of two weeks to worship the gods of the people of Ghana
 - c. they had to serve as farm workers to the farm owners in the Ghana region
 - d. all of the above

8. Which was true about trade that occurred in Ghana?
 - a. items such as salt, copper, and cowrie shells came from the north, and products such as gold, nuts, animal hides, ivory, and human slaves came from the south
 - b. the religion of Islam spread through trade that passed through the region
 - c. the introduction of camels increased the quantity of trade, and decreased the time it took for goods to be moved
 - d. all of the above

9. To West Africans, why was salt considered more precious than gold?
 - a. because people perspire (sweat) in hot temperatures, their bodies lose salt, and salt was needed to stay alive
 - b. because animals perspire (sweat) in hot temperatures, their bodies lose salt, and salt was needed to keep animals, like cattle, alive
 - c. because salt could be used to keep food from spoiling without refrigeration, and it improved the taste of food
 - d. all of the above

10. What secret did the people of the Wangara area, in the forests south of Ghana, protect so carefully?
 - a. the location of their gold mines
 - b. the secret language code used by soldiers in their army
 - c. the recipe for turning salt into gold
 - d. none of the above

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11. What led to the **decline** of the Empire of Ghana?
- the population grew too large for the resources that were available
 - there was a lack of water for growing crops
 - too many trees were cut down for the production of iron products
 - all of the above
12. In Ghana, when the king died, his son did not inherit the throne. The royal inheritance was **matrilineal**. What does **matrilineal** mean?
- that ascendance to the throne was traced through the woman's bloodlines rather than the man's; in Ghana, the king's sister's son took over the throne (ascendance means coming into power)
 - that a wrestling match between the king's sons occurred to determine who the next king would be
 - that the king's first born son had to have the same birthmark on his skin as his father
 - that a test of language and intelligence was given before a new king was chosen
13. What event that occurred in the year 1324 C.E. raised the empire of Mali's **notoriety**? (**notoriety** means being well-known)
- a massive amount of gold was found near a great waterfall
 - a 100 year-long war ended between the empires of Mali and Ghana
 - the hajj, or pilgrimage, was made by Mansa Musa and tens of thousands of his people, to the sacred city of Makkah, Arabia
 - an earthquake, measuring 9.3 on the Richter Scale, struck the city's center, and destroyed the large buildings and killed millions of people
14. There were many items that were traded between North Africa and the forests south of Ghana. What two products traded were in greatest demand?
- gold and salt
 - nuts and animal hides
 - clothing and fruit
 - silver and lumber (wood products)
15. What was true about the silent trades with the Wangarans?
- all kinds of products, including leather, silk, cotton, wool, nuts and fruits, as well as salt and gold, were traded
 - drums were used to announce a willingness to trade
 - the people trading never physically saw one another
 - all of the above

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16. What changes occurred in West Africa once the Muslim Faith was widely adopted?
- the line of succession to the throne of kingdoms changed from matrilineal (traced through the woman's bloodlines) to patrilineal (traced through the man's bloodlines)
 - the governments of West African kingdoms became highly centralized, with kings taking more power for themselves
 - the adoption of the shari'ah (Islamic Law, which was written), replaced West African traditional customary law
 - all of the above
17. As more and more West Africans adopted the Muslim Faith, they needed to study the Qur'an and memorize passages and teachings in it. In what **language** was the Qur'an written?
- Latin
 - Italian
 - Arabic
 - English
18. West Africans who had converted to Islam needed a place to worship. Holy **shrines** were built all over Mali. What are Islamic **shrines** called? (**shrine** means a holy place of worship)
- mosques
 - sultans
 - amulets
 - caravans
19. What is the name given to West African storytellers and historians who pass their knowledge and wisdom down through the oral tradition?
- ngoni
 - griots
 - sultans
 - kente
20. West African music is an important part of life for its people. Which is true about the importance of music in West Africa?
- it celebrates important historic events of a country
 - it celebrates important events in people's lives, like birth, marriage, and death
 - it communicates feelings, values people hold, and ideas they have
 - all of the above