

Name: _____

Date: _____

Mansa Musa

Mansa Musa captured the attention of the Arab world when he left his home in the West African kingdom of Mali to make a pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324. Unlike his grandfather Sundiata, Mansa Musa was a devout Muslim. A Muslim is a person who practices Islam. Islamic law requires that all faithful Muslims make a hajj, or holy visit, to the city on the Arabian Peninsula where Islam developed.

Mansa Musa was a very rich king. He was said to have taken more than 500 people with him on the hajj, each carrying a staff of solid gold. When Mansa Musa passed through the Egyptian city of Cairo, legends say he gave away so much gold that the price of gold fell, and the economy was affected for more than twenty years. The appearance of a wealthy king from a faraway land made a deep impression on the people he encountered, causing Mali to appear on maps throughout the Middle East and Europe. For the

first time, sub-Saharan Africa became well known north of the Sahara Desert.

The kingdom of Mali eventually weakened, and the neighboring kingdom of Songhai developed into the last black empire of pre-colonial West Africa. Songhai was destroyed after a bloody war with Morocco. Morocco's sultan wanted West African gold, so in 1590, he sent an army of 3000 men south across the Sahara Desert. The spears and lances of the Songhai warriors were no match for the cannons and muskets of the Moroccan army, but the fighting continued long after the Songhai government had been destroyed. After ten years, the Sultan lost interest and abandoned his army in Songhai. The Moroccan soldiers were either killed or absorbed into the local population. The Moroccan invasion destroyed Songhai and the trade routes that had brought prosperity to the region for hundreds of years.



A drawing of Mansa Musa on an early map of Africa

Answer in complete sentences

1. How was Mansa Musa's religious faith different from that of Sundiata?

*2. Explain why the price of gold fell after Mansa Musa passed through Cairo?

3. What kingdom replaced Mali in West Africa?

*This is a higher order learning question. Any reasonable answer will be graded as correct.

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Fill in the Blanks

Mansa Musa was a M__n__i__k__n (language group) *m__n__r__h (another word for king, but not mansa) from M_____ (kingdom). He made a pilgrimage to M_____ (Islamic holy city) because he was a M_____ (religious faith).

Mansa M_____ was both rich and generous. The legends say he took more than _____ people with him, each carrying a s_____ of solid g_____. When M_____ Musa passed through the E_____ city of Cairo, he gave away so much gold that the p_____ fell and the e_____ was affected for more than t_____ years. The w_____ of Mansa M_____ caught the attention of the rest of the world. Soon, M_____ began to appear on m_____ throughout the Middle E_____ and E_____.

M_____ Musa's successors were less able, and in time, M_____ was replaced by another k_____ named S_____. Songhai flourished until fighting a bloody war with M_____. Three thousand Moroccan s_____ crossed the d_____ in 15_____. They were badly outnumbered, but the s_____ and l_____ of the S_____ warriors were no match for the c_____ and m_____ of the Moroccan army. The two sides fought for more than t_____ years, until the S_____ lost i_____ and a_____ his a_____ in S_____. The Moroccan i_____ was unsuccessful, but it destroyed S_____ the t_____ routes that brought p_____ to West Africa for hundreds of years.

Answer in complete sentences

4. How was Songhai destroyed?

5. Why were the warriors of Songhai outmatched despite having a larger army than Morocco?

*6. Why didn't another kingdom develop in West Africa after the fall of Songhai?

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