

Bell Work

- What makes people do great things? What would inspire you to go the extra mile or take an extra risk? Write a paragraph that explains your answer.

West African Culture

- 7.15 Examine the importance of written and oral traditions in the transmission of African history and culture.

What is a griot?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aF2287N0kAc&list=PLMbw11lgUbd8qgb8PN0SvqsidKDRoapSB>

The Epic Begins

Traditional West African Griot



- **The griots of West Africa still tell the 700 year old story of a sickly boy named Sundiata, who grew up to become a great warrior, expelled a brutal warrior, and united the Mandinka people.**

Read, Pair and Share

- Read the Excerpt from *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*

- Complete Handout with your group

Soumaoro, the Tyrant

- **Soumaoro was a tyrant who ruled the small state of Kaniaga, but he managed to conquer a great deal of West Africa.**
- **Soumaoro was hostile to the Mandinka people who lived in the region.**
- **His taxes were high, he felt it was his privilege to carry off Mandinka women, and he failed to maintain law and order along the trade routes that once prospered in ancient Ghana.**



Soumaoro's mistake

- Sundiata was one of twelve brothers who were the children of a Mandinka warrior.
- Soumaoro killed eleven of the brothers, but spared Sundiata because he believed the boy would soon die anyway.
- That mistake would lead to Soumaoro's downfall.



Sundiata Defeats Soumaoro

- The ill child boy recovered and eventually assembled an army to confront Soumaoro.
- Sundiata's forces killed Soumaoro and destroyed his forces in the Battle of Kirina in 1235.
- Sundiata then became mansa, or king, of a new empire that we know today as Mali.
- Mali means "where the king resides."



Sundiata as Leader

- Sundiata proved himself a great warrior, but he was less interested in power than in once again making West Africa a safe place to travel and trade.
- He converted to Islam, but only as a gesture of goodwill to the merchants and traders.
- To his own people, Sundiata presented himself as a champion of traditional West African religion.

• Mosque in Djenne



Exit Ticket

- Why is oral tradition so important in African culture?