

## West African Kingdoms Overview

### Introduction

The kingdoms of \_\_\_\_\_ (c. 800–1100), \_\_\_\_\_ (c. 1200–1450), and \_\_\_\_\_ (c. 1450–1600) became powerful in **West Africa**. They controlled important \_\_\_\_\_ **routes** that connected them to **North Africa, Europe, and the Middle East**. These kingdoms grew wealthy by trading valuable resources like \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

### Wealth and Trade

- **Gold-Salt Trade:**
  - \_\_\_\_\_ was mined in West Africa and traded for \_\_\_\_\_, which came from the **Sahara Desert**.
  - Salt was valuable because it was used to **preserve** \_\_\_\_\_ and improve \_\_\_\_\_.
  - These \_\_\_\_\_ were traded along the **Trans-Saharan Trade Routes**, connecting West Africa to the rest of the \_\_\_\_\_.
- **Camels:** \_\_\_\_\_ were essential for trade across the \_\_\_\_\_ **Desert** because they could travel long distances without needing much \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_: A center for **trade and learning**, where merchants, scholars, and goods gathered.
- \_\_\_\_\_: A trading city that was important for commerce and cultural exchange.

### Geography and Climate Zones

- **Climate Zones:**
  - \_\_\_\_\_, like the Sahara, limited \_\_\_\_\_ but encouraged \_\_\_\_\_.
  - \_\_\_\_\_, or grassy plains, were good for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ in some areas provided wood, food, and unique resources like kola nuts.

### Shared Features of West African Kingdoms

1. **Art and Culture:**
  - These kingdoms created beautiful **artwork**, including gold \_\_\_\_\_, bronze \_\_\_\_\_, and clay \_\_\_\_\_.
2. **Religion and Traditions:**
  - Many people practiced \_\_\_\_\_ African religions which were \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Islam spread to **West Africa** through \_\_\_\_\_. Many rulers converted, bringing Islamic \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to their courts. Islamic beliefs mixed with African traditions, creating a unique West African culture.

### 3. Griots:

- \_\_\_\_\_ were storytellers who preserved history through \_\_\_\_\_. They told stories about \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ life.

### Ghana (c. 800–1100)

- **Wealth from Trade:** Ghana controlled the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ merchants who passed through its lands.
- **Iron Tools:** Ghana used \_\_\_\_\_ tools for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to expand its power.
- **Decline:** Ghana weakened after invasions by the \_\_\_\_\_ and the loss of trade routes.

### Mali (c. 1200–1450)

#### Mansa Musa:

- Mali's most famous ruler, known for his \_\_\_\_\_ (pilgrimage) to Mecca. His journey showed the world Mali's wealth and forged \_\_\_\_\_.
- He built \_\_\_\_\_ and supported education, making \_\_\_\_\_ a center for religion and learning.
- Mansa Musa's generosity with gold caused its \_\_\_\_\_ to drop temporarily in regions he visited.

**Agriculture and Trade:** Mali used \_\_\_\_\_ to improve farming, which supported its growing \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ network.

### Songhai (c. 1450–1600)

#### Askia Muhammad:

- A Songhai leader who \_\_\_\_\_ the empire and improved its \_\_\_\_\_.
- He supported \_\_\_\_\_ and kept \_\_\_\_\_ as a cultural hub.

**Military Strength:** Songhai had a strong \_\_\_\_\_ but eventually fell to the \_\_\_\_\_, who used \_\_\_\_\_ **weapons** like cannons.

### East Africa and Islam

- Islam spread slowly through \_\_\_\_\_ **Africa**—arrived in the 700s C.E. but did not gain many followers until the 1100s and 1200s.
- A new \_\_\_\_\_ arose in East Africa known as **Swahili**. It was based on a \_\_\_\_\_ of African and Muslim cultures. \_\_\_\_\_ comes from an Arabic word meaning “people of the coast”.
- By 1331, Swahili came to mean both the culture of East Africa's coast and the language spoken there.

Category	<u><b>Aksum (100-940 C.E.)</b></u>	<u><b>Zimbabwe (1220-1450 C.E.)</b></u>
----------	------------------------------------	---

Location	Located in modern day _____	S.E. Africa, modern day _____
Religion / Culture	_____ became the official religion.	“Great Zimbabwe” means “Great Stone _____.” They were architects.
Economy	Export: Ivory, Incense, Enslaved People, Gold.  Import: Cloth, Metal, Olive Oil.	Export: minerals, ivory, coconut oil, enslaved people.  Import: Silk, glass beads, carpets, pottery.