

West African Kingdoms Griot Story and Mask

Task - Students will be creating a Griot Mask accompanied by a presentation (epic poem, journal entry, dramatic reading) that describes how trade impacted the welfare and security of West African communities.

Persistent Issue – What actions are justified in the interest of welfare and security of the community?

Central Question – Did trade increase the welfare and security of West African Communities?

- To what extent did trade impact West African communities?

LESSON PURPOSES:

- 1) Describe the influence of global trade on West African communities.
- 2) Describe the influence of West African communities on global trade.
- 2) Locate Ghana, Mali, and Songhai and their trade routes on a map.
- 3) Analyze the pros and cons of trade on West African communities.
- 4) Explain the tensions between traditional African religions and Islam.
- 5) Create a dramatic narrative and visual representation of a group's perspective on trade.
- 6) Take a position on how you think global trade impacted welfare and security in West African communities.

Grabber: The teacher will guide the students through a discussion of how international trade impacts their local community. Help them think about positives (maybe new businesses, ideas, vibrancy) and negatives (has the community lost manufacturing jobs? Has the culture of the community begun to change?).

PowerPoint: The teacher will provide an overview of the West African Kingdoms: Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. Key terms, people, and events will be introduced by the teacher. The teacher may provide this note guide to their students if they wish.

Assignment Details:

Students will create an epic poem, journal entry, or dramatic reading accompanied by a Griot Mask that highlights the impacts of global trade on West African communities. Students will be in pairs with each pair focusing on one of the community perspectives related to rulers, religion, merchants, farmers, and enslaved people. You may assign more than one pair to a perspective.

Step 1: Document Investigation – How did trade affect my group's welfare and security?

Divide students into pairs based on multiple intelligences. Each pair will read documents to find out the impact trade had on West African communities focused on their assigned perspective. You can assign more than one pair to the perspectives:

- Enslaved people
- Farmers
- Religious people
- Merchants
- Rulers

In addition to the fact sheets for their perspective, also provide each pair with the appropriate page of this graphic organizer (Africa Project Fact Collection) to help them reach conclusions. Their task is to determine

how trade impacted their assigned group in each of the three kingdoms and determine if they felt it was overall positive or negative over time.

Step 2: Griot Story/ Mask Creation (Museum Exhibit Creation) How was my group's welfare and security impacted by trade?

Using the information from their document set, pairs of students will create a presentation that highlights how their assigned group's welfare and security was affected by the emergence of global trade in West Africa. Teacher will make available instructions for the letters and mask as well as the rubric to explain the various roles and criteria for success in their productions. Teacher will show models of letters (TikTok model) and visuals (on instruction guide) to help prepare students for their tasks.

In preparation for the project, students will have one of the following roles within their pairing:

Letter Writers

- Writes the three letters explaining how trade affected welfare and security in West Africa over time and if it was positive or negative.
- Coordinates with the mask designer to ensure that elements in the mask directly relate to the three letters.
- Responsible for reading their letters to the class on presentation day.

Mask Designer

- Creates the Griot Mask that will help reinforce the letters through visuals.
- Coordinates with letter writer to ensure visuals demonstrate how trade changed over time and if it was positive/negative.
- Responsible for presenting the mask to the class and explaining the symbols and colors after the story has been presented.

Step 3: Presenting the letters and griot mask – Learning from other Presentations

After completing their letters and the accompanying griot mask, students will be given time to rehearse. Once all pairs are prepared, each will present their letters and mask to the class. Both members of the pair will have to participate in the presentation.

Students in the audience will be given a graphic organizer to record information from the different presentations. They will use this information to complete the individual component of this project in the form of a summary essay of their findings.

Teacher should lead a short discussion (see discussion guide) on the impacts that trade had on the communities of the West African kingdoms, of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai.

Afterwards, students will write a 3-4 paragraph essay that summarizes both the positive and negative impacts that trade had on these communities, and they will also take a position on whether trade improved or diminished welfare and security. Students will be writing this from their own perspective, not the one assigned for the project. Teacher should review the rubric prior to students writing their essay.