

## EARLY WEST AFRICAN CIVILIZATIONS STUDY GUIDE ANSWERS

### 13.1

1. In West Africa, what do the different regions running east and west have in common?  
**They are all warm.**
2. Which list of regions is in order from most rainfall to least?  
**Rain forest, savannah, Sahel, Sahara**
3. Which two factors contributed *most* to the survival of early West African villages?  
**Work and family**
4. Farming in Africa improved around 500BC because  
**People learned how to make iron tools.**
5. What were extended families? What were three benefits?
  - **Age sets helped people of the village to work together.**
  - **Extended families helped farm, hunt, and raise livestock.**
  - **Loyalty to family helped keep society together.**
6. Explain the importance of Animism in early West African society.  
**The belief that bodies of water, animals, trees and other natural objects have spirits**
7. Why do you think many people lived in West Africa? What geographical feature presents obstacles to humans living and traveling in North Africa? Why?  
**People lived in West Africa because the Niger River provided people living the region with water, food, and transportation. There are other resources such as gold, forests, and salt for trade from the Sahara Desert. The geographical feature that presents an obstacle to humans living and traveling in North Africa is the Sahara Desert because of its vast size, extremely high temperatures, bandits trying to steal from traders, and lack of water.**

## 13.2

1. List three main characteristics of the Soninke people?

- They lived in small groups and farmed along the Niger River.
- After AD 300, they began to band together to protect against attacks from nomadic hunters.
- They were among the earliest people in West Africa.

2. Which of the best explains the usefulness of the practice of silent barter?

Silent barter ensured that trading was peaceful and that locations of mines remained secret.

3. What is one way that Ghana's rulers become wealthy?

Traders had to pay taxes when they passed through Ghana.

4. Who were the Almoravids?

Muslims who attacked Ghana and cut off trade routes.

## 13.3

1. After conquering Ghana and taking over salt and gold trades, who improved agriculture and had new farmlands of beans, onion, and cotton?

Sundiata of Mali Empire

2. Which of the following best illustrates a similarity between the development of the Gana and Mali empires?

Both empires lay along the upper Niger River, where fertile soil made food plentiful.

3. Which of the following is a method Sundiata used to gain more power in Mali?

He took power away from local chiefs and leaders, including important religious leaders.

4. Mansa Musa

- He hired artists and architects to build mosques in Mali.
- He sent scholars to study in Morocco and then to set up schools in Mali.
- He stressed the importance of reading and writing in Arabic, the language of the Qur'an.

5. How did Mansa Musa become such a great ruler? What accomplishments did he make that have left a lasting impact on African society?

Mansa Musa was a skillful leader who made a pilgrimage to Mecca. He sent scholars to study in Morocco and later established schools to teach the Qur'an. Mansa Musa stressed the teaching and learning of the Arabic language, and hired Muslims to build mosques in Mali, Mali's people likely became more knowledgeable about the Qur'an and Arabic.

6. What was the significance of Timbuktu to the spread of learning and the impact on Islam?

The African capital of Timbuktu had a strategic location along the Niger River where goods were traded, there were mosques, and scholars came to study Islam and the Arabic language.

7.

Salt trade was key to the rise of the African capital of Timbuktu because of its strategic location along the Niger River rulers were able to increase goods to trade and build armies to protect traders.

8. Sunni Ali

Brought peace and stability to the area."

9. What affect did the shared Muslim religion of the Songhai leaders and African Berbers have on the Songhai Empire?

The Songhai Empire grew richer.

## 13.4

1. Why was an oral history so important to the African culture?

- It helped pass down African history to future generations.
- Africa did not have a written history.
- Griots helped unite African communities with stories from the past.

2. What is a proverb? Give an example of an African proverb?

Short saying of wisdom or truth. It takes a whole village to raise a child.