



EARLY PEOPLES

Africans of the Ghana, Mali, and Songhai Empires

Africans of the Ghana, Mali, and Songhai Empires explores the daily life, history, and culture of the early African peoples of the Ghana, Mali, and Songhai empires.

What did you learn?

QUESTIONS

1. In the Mali Empire, merchants sold grain at the salt mines of ...
 - a. Taghaza
 - b. Timbuktu
 - c. The Niger River
 - d. Songhai
2. In the culture of the Mande people of the Mali Empire, the farmers made up a caste called the ...
 - a. Horonnu
 - b. Nyamakalalu
 - c. Okra
 - d. Delta
3. The Sankore Mosque is made of mud brick and of a type of hard clay cut into squares, called ...
 - a. Jingereber
 - b. Claystone
 - c. Mali stone
 - d. Timbuktu stone
4. Moroccans defeated the Songhai using a firearm called a ...
 - a. Rifle
 - b. Baroquebus
 - c. Harquebus
 - d. Tuareg
5. What is a *griot*?
6. What is an *ulama*?

TRUE OR FALSE?

- _____ 1. Ghana began to grow into an empire after conquering a key trading city called Soso.
- _____ 2. Timbuktu was founded in about 1100.
- _____ 3. The emperors of Mali and Ghana commanded mostly volunteer armies.
- _____ 4. The musicians, storytellers, and keepers of the oral history of West Africa were called griots.
- _____ 5. Mali warriors were thought to have the most power to control nyama.
- _____ 6. The freezing weather in West Africa meant that warm clothing was worn at all times.

ANSWERS

- 1. a. Taghaza.** According to section "Trade" on page 15, we know that "In the Mali Empire, rice grown in the east was transported inland and traded for iron. Grain merchants sold millet (*MIHL iht*) and sorghum (*SAWR guhm*) in cities such as Timbuktu and at the salt mines of Taghaza (*tah GAH zah*)." So, the correct answer is A.
- 2. a. Horonnu.** According to section "Farmers" on page 30, we know that "In the culture of the Mande people of the Mali Empire, the farmers made up a caste called the horonnu (*hohr oh noo*)." So, the correct answer is A.
- 3. d. Timbuktu stone.** According to section "Mosques" on page 45, we know that "The mosque is made of mud brick and of a type of hard clay cut into squares, called Timbuktu stone." So, the correct answer is D.
- 4. c. Harquebus.** According to section "Invaders Conquer the Last Great African Empire" on page 56, we know that "Songhai warriors were no match for the better-armed Moroccans, who carried a type of firearm called a harquebus (*HAHR kwuh buhs*)." So, the correct answer is C.
- According to page 60, a *griot* is a "traditional musician, storyteller, and keeper of history in West Africa."
- According to page 61, an *ulama* is a "Muslim religious expert or a scholar in Islamic law."

TRUE OR FALSE? ANSWERS

- 1. False.** According to section "The Ghana Empire" on page 7, we know that "Ghana began to grow into an empire in the 900's. It did so by defeating neighboring kingdoms and by conquering a key trading city in the Sahara called Awdaghust (*ah dah GOHST*)." So, the correct answer is False.
- 2. True.** According to section "Major Cities" on page 18, we know that "Timbuktu was founded in about 1100." So, the correct answer is True.
- 3. True.** According to section "Warriors" on page 26, we know that "The emperors of Mali and Ghana commanded large armies with skilled cavalries. But these armies were primarily made up of volunteers." So, the correct answer is True.
- 4. True.** According to section "Griots" on page 34, we know that "Griots were musicians, storytellers, and keepers of the oral history of West Africa." So, the correct answer is True.
- 5. False.** According to section "Traditional Belief and Gods" on page 41, we know that "Blacksmiths and masons, those who work with stone and brick, were thought to have the most power to control nyama." So, the correct answer is False.
- 6. False.** According to section "Shelter and Clothing" on page 51, we know that "The hot weather in West Africa meant that clothing was not needed for warmth. In the countryside, people might wear very little clothing or no clothing at all. In the courts of Mali and Ghana, people might sometimes appear in public wearing no clothing." So, the correct answer is False.