Ancient Mali

Maria Bessler
Culture Kit
Social Studies Methods
Professor Gail McEachron
## Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historical Narrative</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Plan #1 Map and Globe Skills</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Plan #2 Art Series</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Plan #3 Biography</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Plan #4 Inquiry</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifact #1</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifact #2</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Assessment</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate Assessment</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A: Standards</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Historical Narrative—Ancient Mali

I. Introduction and Alignment with Standards

The ancient civilization of Mali originated as a tiny kingdom within the ancient empire of Ghana. Mali seized its freedom in 1230 A.D. when an exiled Malinke prince, Sundjata reclaimed the throne from the Susu. Sundjata established a strong empire, and was known as the “hungering lion” or “the lion king”. Mali is located around the Niger River, which is the main source of water that fuels its agriculture. The empire of ancient Mali is important for students to study because it is a good contrast for Virginia third grade students to make with the ancient empires of Greece and Rome. When learning about Mali, students learn about government, economics, Mali’s physical environment, the oral tradition of storytelling, and develop map and globe skills (Appendix A). Ancient Mali is yet another ancient civilization for students to learn about and compare to modern-day life. It is a civilization very different from the one that they know today, and yet they may identify with different aspects of the culture, further proving the need to implement a multicultural and diverse social studies curriculum in the classroom.

II. Key Ideas and Events

The emperor Sundjata founded and ruled over the empire of Mali, and was a kind and respectful ruler. Sundjata expanded the empire out into small surrounding kingdoms who pledged their allegiance to Sundjata with token gifts of the millet, rice, and arrows, as well as other crops that were grown around the empire. The new empire encompassed the salt mines of the north and the gold mines of south. The Niger River was the main source of water for this land-locked empire. It was used to its full capacity, as a source of water for humans, pets and
animals bred for sale, and agricultural venues. The economy of the empire of ancient Mali was strengthened through farming, and further enhanced through the salt-gold trade.

Mali lies between the gold mines in the Sahara Desert and the salt mines in Western Africa. The Niger River is still used for fishing, drinking water, and watering crops, but also serves as a trade route. The major cities of Timbuktu and Djenne were built near the Niger River. The Niger River was used as a method of transportation, as it was much easier to boat along the river than hiking goods across the desert. Mali became an important trade center in West Africa, and people would trade salt as currency for gold. Salt was a valued resource in the desert. It was used as a seasoning for food and which also replaced the sodium levels in the body that were depleted by profuse sweating due to the hot climate. The gold mines in Mali dominated the trade for gold, and there was so much gold to be mined that the people only had to deliver the gold nuggets they found to the emperor, and were allowed to keep all of their gold dust. People from Northern, Southern, and Eastern Africa came to trade in the Mali marketplaces, making Mali one of the richest empires in Africa. Sundjata strengthened the empire of ancient Mali so greatly, that upon his death in 1255 A.D. the empire remained strong and secure until his great-nephew became the single other greatest emperor of Mali: Mansa Musa.

Mansa Musa went on a historical pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324 A.D. “Mansa Musa was accompanied by a caravan consisting of 60,000 men including a personal retinue of 12,000 slaves, all clad in brocade and Persian silk. He also brought with him 80 to 100 camels loaded with 300 pounds of gold each. The emperor himself rode on horseback and was directly preceded by 500 slaves, each carrying a 4 pound staff of solid gold,” (Wikipedia.org). Mansa Musa lavished extravagant amounts of gold and riches to all he met along his way. Every Friday he
would donate the money necessary to construct a mosque (Muslim place of worship) wherever he happened to be spending the night. He ended up giving away all of the wealth he brought on his pilgrimage, or hajj, and had to borrow money to make the return trip home. Islam is a Muslim religion that believes in one God as reported by the prophet Muhammad, and Mecca is the holy city of Islam in Saudi Arabia, an East African country. Mecca is also the birthplace of Muhammad. Mansa Musa’s pilgrimage was the turning point for Mali, as people began pouring into this trading city and the economy started to flourish. Mansa Musa’s hajj brought great recognition to ancient Mali, and placed it on the map in many countries. Mansa Musa built the Sankore University in Timbuktu for Muslim scholars. He also brought the architect Abu-Ishaq Ibrahim-es-Saheli back from his pilgrimage with him, who introduced the mud construction building technique that Mali has since used with its mosques for centuries. Mansa Musa’s many contributions raised awareness of the empire of Mali in other countries, which was a goal of his. He also reaped the benefits of his generosity from his hajj from the many talented scholars, artists, merchants, and diplomats who came flocking into this powerful trading empire.

Both Sundjata and Mansa Musa are examples of good leaders, and students can compare and contrast them and their empires to the government leaders and democracy present in the United States.

III. Men, Women, Youth, and Children

The majority of the people in Mali are nomadic, traveling with their herds of cattle and other animals across the desert in search of grazing grounds. With the large amount of desertification in Mali, the people have resorted to making their homes out of the materials available, fashioning mud and brush huts, which are suitable for the nomadic lifestyle as they can
be easily built, abandoned and then returned to year after year. The children of Mali are quite responsible from a young age, with older children often looking after younger children. Unfortunately, in Mali it is still acceptable for men to beat their wives, and 93.7% of the women still undergo genital mutilation, and then go on to bear an average of 6.89 children each (AFROL Gender Profiles: Mali). Gender-stereotyped roles exist in Mali, with women taking care of the family and the home, while the men hold leadership positions and bring home food for their families.

In addition to farming, hunting is prevalent in Mali as well, with hunters being celebrated members in their communities. The hunter’s tunic was (and still is) worn by the Bamana people in the country of Mali. The tunics are worn by the hunters and are adorned with animal fur, skin, teeth, claws, shells, small pieces of mirror/metal, and may have pockets containing secret amulets to ward off evil spirits and dangerous animals. The tunics are worn in festivals and parades, and are a symbol of the hunter’s status (and skill) among the Bamana people. Plain tunics are worn during actual hunting.

Griots are an important figure in the empire of ancient Mali and remain so in Mali today. A *griot* is an oral historian, a storyteller, and instrumentalist. A griot is usually associated with a particular family lineage, and is responsible for remembering and being able to recite historical family events and the family’s ancestry many generations removed. Given the great amount of information, and the fact that the empire of ancient Mali relied on oral historians rather than written histories, griots typically passed their knowledge down through their own families. Thus, the griot’s family and the family whose history they keep track of remain associated through time. Famous tales of Sundjata and Mansa Musa are passed down by these storytellers generation through generation.
IV. Legacy

Unfortunately, after Mansa Musa’s death in 1337 A.D., his son Maghan became the new mansa, and subsequently squandered most of his wealth. The small kingdoms and states that made up the empire of ancient Mali began to rebel and claim their independence, and the empire collapsed. Eventually Mali was sapped of its power and territory, much resembling its original state when Sundjata took the throne. In the empire of ancient Mali the strength of the empire very much depended on the strength of the ruler, as evidenced by Mali’s decline post-Mansa Musa. The study of the rise and fall of this ancient civilization can be compared and contrasted with the Civil War, when the South decided to break away from the United States (the North) and claim its independence. Unlike the North, ancient Mali did not have the resources to fight and claim back the rebel states. Thus divided, the empire fell.
Historical Narrative Bibliography


Lesson #1—Map Skills

**Audience:** Primary; Grade 3

**Standards: Introduction to History and Social Science**

**Geography**

3.4 The student will develop map skills by
   a) locating Greece, Rome, and West Africa;
   b) describing the physical and human characteristics of Greece, Rome, and West Africa;
   c) explaining how the people of Greece, Rome, and West Africa adapted to and/or changed their environment to meet their needs.

**Materials/Space/Time:** classroom whiteboard, whiteboard markers, classroom wall map of the world, pointer, overhead projector, map handout of ‘Western Africa: Mali’, overhead transparency of ‘Western Africa: Mali’, scissors, glue sticks, multiple choice question handout; average classroom space and size (~20 students); one hour

**Lesson Description:**

**Anticipatory Set:** The teacher will draw a compass rose on the whiteboard with the cardinal directions (labeled N, S, E, and W). Students should have learned the compass rose and the cardinal directions prior to this lesson. As a review, call on students to answer what the N, S, E, and W stand for (e.g. “N stands for North, and that direction is up.”). The teacher will pull down the classroom wall map of the world, and ask the students how they could use those directions to describe where Mali is in relation to Virginia. Students may answer that Mali is south or east of Virginia. The teacher will then begin discussing the ancient empire of Mali and its physical conditions (see Background Information).

**Objective and Its Purpose:**

1. Given a simplified map of Mali, students will correctly use the cardinal and inter-cardinal directions when describing directional relationships of locations on a map.

**Input/Modeling:** The teacher will go to the whiteboard, and introduce the concept of inter-cardinal directions (SE, SW, NE, and NW) by drawing them in on the compass rose. Show students how each inter-cardinal direction is named by looking at the cardinal directions on either side of it. Going back to the classroom wall map of the world, the teacher will point to Virginia, and point to Mali in Western Africa. Mali is southeast of Virginia, and the teacher can trace the directions of east, southeast, and south out from Virginia to show students that SE is the best answer.

**Check for Understanding:** Remaining at the classroom wall map of the world, the teacher will point to different locations around the world. The students should determine the direction of each location in relation to Virginia. The teacher can call on a student to give an answer, and the other members of the class can give the thumbs up–thumbs down sign if they agree or disagree. This part of the lesson is flexible in which parts of the map the teacher chooses, and time spent here can be determined by the teacher’s discretion. The teacher should be sure that the class has
exposure to each inter-cardinal direction, and the cardinal directions can be included in this section of the lesson as well.

**Guided Practice:** Pass out the map handout “Western Africa: Mali” to the students. Students should cut out the symbols for the salt mines, gold mines, and the mosques in Djenne and Timbuktu (students will have learned about mosques prior to this lesson). The teacher will instruct the students to place the Djenne symbol on their map (but not glue it yet) on the circle with the red box inside. The teacher will then instruct the students in placing the rest of the symbols on their map by giving the following statements:

1. Place Timbuktu in the circle northeast of Djenne.
2. Place the salt mines in the circle northwest of Timbuktu.
3. Place the gold mines in the circle west of Djenne.

The teacher will circulate the classroom as the students place the symbols on their maps according to the statements given by the teacher. The teacher should place an overhead transparency of the “Western Africa: Mali” map on the overhead and have a couple of students come up and place the symbols correctly on the map. The students should then glue their symbols on their maps. Have students create a map legend by drawing the symbols for a mosque (a city), gold mines, and salt mines and labeling them.

**Independent Practice:** Erase the compass rose from the whiteboard. Using their maps, students will answer the multiple-choice questions about the directional relationships of the symbols on their maps.

**Closure:** Collect the maps and the multiple-choice questions. The teacher can go over the questions if time permits, reading each one aloud and asking the class what they chose for the answer.

**Evaluation:**

- **Formative:** The teacher will observe participation during ‘Check for Understanding’ and while the students are working on their maps. The teacher should correct any student who seems to be confused about cardinal/inter-cardinal directions.
- **Summative:** The teacher will evaluate the maps made by the students and the multiple-choice questions.

**Background Information/Content:** Mali is located in West Africa, and is nearly two times the size of Texas. Although the Niger River runs through Mali, the majority of the land is desert or very dry. Just a tiny portion of the land (2%) can be used for growing crops. Mali lies between the gold mines in the Sahara Desert and the salt mines in Western Africa. The Niger River is used for fishing, drinking water, and watering crops, but also serves as a trade route. The major cities of Timbuktu and Djenne were built near the Niger River. The Niger River was used as a method of transportation, as it was much easier to boat along the river than hiking goods across the desert. Mali became an important trade center in West Africa, and people would trade salt as currency for gold. Salt was a valued resource in the desert. It was used as a seasoning for food and which also replaced the sodium levels in the body that were depleted by profuse sweating due to the hot climate. People from Northern, Southern, and Eastern Africa came to trade in the Mali marketplaces, making Mali one of the richest empires in Africa.
Resources:


Western Africa: Mali

Map Symbols

- Timber
- Rice
- Dye

Map Legend
1. The salt mines are ______ of the gold mines.
   A. Northeast
   B. Southeast
   C. Northwest
   D. Southwest

2. The gold mines are ______ of the salt mines.
   A. NW
   B. SE
   C. NE
   D. SW

3. Timbuktu is ______ of the salt mines.
   A. South
   B. Southeast
   C. Southwest
   D. East
Lesson #2 — Art Series

Audience: Primary, Grade 3

Standards: Introduction to History and Social Science

Economics
3.7 The student will explain how producers use natural resources (water, soil, wood, and coal), human resources (people at work), and capital resources (machines, tools, and buildings) to produce goods and services for consumers.

National Standards for Art Education (Visual Arts)

Visual Communication and Production
3.11 The student will create a work of art in clay, using the coil-building process.

Cultural Context and Art History
3.16 The student will identify and examine objects of the early West African empire of Mali.
3.17 The student will identify how works of art reflect times, places, and cultures.

Objective:
1. After a class discussion of a wooden Malian Chi Wara headdress, students will be knowledgeable of its characteristics and use in Malian rituals.
2. Given modeling clay, students will create their own original model of a headdress piece, which incorporates characteristics from at least two different animals (African or their choice).

Materials/Space/Time: overhead of Chi Wara headdress, Post-it notes, overhead projector, clay model of a Chi Wara headdress, “African Art” PowerPoint (attached), modeling clay, toothpicks, damp paper towels for clean up, plastic plates to set the models on, whole class (~20 students), space for individual student work; one hour

Lesson Description:
Introduction: The class has been learning about the ancient empire of Mali in Western Africa. Place an overhead of a Chi Wara headdress up on the overhead projector (but have it covered with Post-it notes so that the students cannot see what it is. Announce to the class that today they are about to see an art form of an animal that they’ve never seen before. Remove the Post-its one by one, having the students make predictions about what the animal could be, as different parts of the art form are revealed. If possible, have a previously made, rough model of the Chi Wara headdress (made of modeling clay) available to show the students.

Content Focus: Key Questions: Objective: What do you see? What body parts does the animal have? What do you think this art form is made of? What are some characteristics of this art form? What would you call this art form? Reflective: If you were the artist, how would you have chosen the animals to include in your sculpture? Get up and put your body in the same position that this animal is in. How does your body feel? What do you feel like you are about to do? Interpretive: Why do you think the artist chose to use these materials? What are the holes at the bottom of the sculpture for? Why do you think the artist chose to include body parts of different animals? Why didn’t he carve the art form in the image of just one animal? Decisional: Do you think the artist chose to include body parts of multiple animals because they were significant? How? What is the purpose of this art form?
Show a PowerPoint on the three animals that this Chi Wara headdress was comprised of (antelope, aardvark, and pangolin), other Malian headdresses, and African animals (see attached “African Art” PowerPoint). Discuss the cultural history of the Chi Wara headdress (see Background Information/Content, and if possible, read the history of the Chi Wara headdress to the students from the 1st web resource listed*, which includes wonderful descriptions of the cultural history). Tell the students that they will have a chance to create their own models of a Malian-style headdress out of modeling clay, and can use ideas from the PowerPoint when making their creation.

Pass out modeling clay and toothpicks to the students. Have each student create their own original sculpture of a headdress, keeping in mind the characteristics of the Malian sculptures. Discuss the materials that the Malian headdress and the student headdresses are made of (wood, soil (clay), and water), and that these are called natural resources (raw materials that come from straight from the earth). Some natural resources are renewable, and some are non-renewable. Wood can be regenerated by planting seeds to grow new trees. Ask students why this may be problematic (trees take a while to grow, but not long to cut down). Non-renewable resources either cannot be replaced or may take a very long time to replace. Natural resources are highly-used materials (have students think of different ways that humans use wood, water, and soil). Discuss with students that because the Chi Wara headdress is made of wood, it makes it additionally valuable today because of the deforestation that has occurred in the Sahara Desert.

Closure: Ask students what they thought about creating their sculptures. What animal body parts did they incorporate into their sculptures? Why did they think they were important to include? What relevance (e.g. strengths) do those animal characteristics associate with?

Assessment:

Formative: Observation of students’ responses during discussion of the Key Questions and discussion on natural resources.

Summative: Each student will create an original headdress piece out of modeling clay that includes characteristics of at least two different animals. Students will also complete the multiple choice question attached below.

Background Information/Content: The Chi Wara headdress (also known as a “crest mask”) featured on the overhead is located in the Muscarelle Museum at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. The Chi Wara headdress is a popular wooden artifact in Malian culture, especially with the Bamana people. It has been created with many different interpretations but always retains characteristics of three distinct animals. The horns of an antelope, the skin texture of a pangolin, and the body (tail, legs, and ears) of an aardvark are typically represented in each rendition. All three animals dig at the earth. Distinctions can be made between male and female Chi Wara headdresses, as the female versions can have a smaller (baby) antelope figure on their back. The antelope/aardvark/pangolin figure actually represents a mythical creature (Chi Wara) who originally taught the Bamana people of Mali how to farm. The long ears on a Chi Wara may have earring-like accessories, such as red fibers (like the one in the Muscarelle Museum) or cowrie shell. The headdress itself is carved with a four-cornered wooden base, typically rounded underneath and with holes on either side so that it can be
attached to a basket then worn on the head. Fibers and grasses are attached to the head to symbolize rain. The headdresses were worn in dances that celebrated, instructed, and encouraged good farmers/farming skills. Suggestion: for more information, visit the first website* listed under Resources.

Resources:

*Read passages from the following website to the students during the “African Art” PowerPoint:


References:


Summative Evaluation for Lesson Plan #2—Art Series

Circle the Correct Answer

1. Which of the following is NOT an animal that the Chi Wara headdress is based on?

   A. Aardvark
   B. Pangolin
   C. Cattle
   D. Antelope
The Chi Wara Headdress

April 22, 2008
“Chi Wara” Headdress

Antelope

Aardvark
Pangolin

Some Ideas for Your Own African Headdress…

African Elephant
African Giraffe


African Rhinoceros (“Rhino”)

http://news.bbc.co.uk/olmedia/8660060/images/_8660060_rhino1.jpg

African Lion

African Monkey


African Tiger

http://www.jennifermarohasy.com/blog/archives/Male%20Sumatran%20tiger%20in%20the%20wild%20%20TCP%202000.jpg

Other Examples of Malian Headdresses…
Now,

Create Your Own!!

Example of Student Work
Lesson #3—Biography: Mansa Musa

**Audience:** Intermediate Elementary Grade Levels

**Standards:**

**Introduction to History and Social Science Standards of Learning**

*History*

3.2—The student will study the early West African empire of Mali by describing its oral tradition (storytelling), government (kings), and economic development (trade).

**National Social Studies Standards (Middle Grades)**

*Power, Authority, and Governance*

I—Give examples and explain how governments attempt to achieve their stated ideals at home and abroad.

**Objective and Its Purpose:**

1. Students will evaluate Mansa Musa’s pilgrimage to Mecca, the contributions he made along the way, and how this impacted the empire of Ancient Mali.

**Materials/Space/Time:** classroom whiteboard, whiteboard markers, 1-2 bags of gold-wrapped Hershey’s Nuggets candy, copies for every other student of the website resources “Mansa Musa” [http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=512](http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=512) and “Mansa Musa, An African Builder” [http://www.africanevents.com/Essay-Habeeb-MansaMusa.htm](http://www.africanevents.com/Essay-Habeeb-MansaMusa.htm); whole class (~20 students) and space to sit in a circle together, space for small group work (4-5 students); one hour

**Lesson Description:**

**Introduction:** Ask the students for examples of good leaders (parent, president, coach, principal, etc.). Write their answers up on the whiteboard. With each contribution, ask the student to explain why she thinks that person is a good leader. Write these characteristics and accomplishments next to each leader. Tell the class that today they are going to learn about one of Mali’s most famous leaders: Mansa Musa, and the contributions that he made to the empire of Ancient Mali as a result of his pilgrimage to Mecca.

**Content Focus:** Students will have previously learned about Mali’s gold mines and commonly traded products (gold for salt, cattle, beans/rice, etc.) Gather students in a circle on a common floor area to hear the story of Mansa Musa’s reign (very little is known about his early life). Give a description of Mansa Musa’s pilgrimage to Mecca (see Background Information/Content and Resources), identifying key terms such as Mecca, Islam, musa, mosque, hajj, etc. The teacher can give out “pretend gold” (chocolate candy in gold wrappers—i.e. Hershey’s Nuggets) to the students, and gauge their reaction (surely a positive one, similar to the reaction that people had who received gold from Mansa Musa on his pilgrimage). Give students the facts about Mansa Musa, as they will then be doing research in the handouts on his major contributions as a leader. Hand out copies of the website resource, “Mansa Musa” [http://blackhistorypages.net/pages/mansamusa.php](http://blackhistorypages.net/pages/mansamusa.php) to half of the class and copies of the website resource, “Mansa Musa, An African Builder” [http://www.africanevents.com/Essay-Habeeb-MansaMusa.htm](http://www.africanevents.com/Essay-Habeeb-MansaMusa.htm) to the other half of the students. Have the students break into small groups of
4-5 students with each article equally represented by students in each group. Have students read the resource and identify key contributions that Mansa Musa made to Ancient Mali due to his pilgrimage to Africa. How did Mansa Musa strengthen the empire of Ancient Mali? What contributions make him a good leader? Students are free to agree or disagree as long as they explain themselves.

**Closure:** Have students report their findings from the two resources, compiling a list on the whiteboard for students to copy in their interactive social studies notebooks. Discuss the two resources as a class, looking at the similarities and differences in terms of facts and contributions that the author of each article chose to talk about. Ask students which actions of Mansa Musa make him a good leader (or not). How do students feel about the way that Mansa Musa affected Egypt’s economy by giving away so much gold there?

**Evaluation**

**Formative:** Observation of student participation in their small groups, and student’s ability to identify Mansa Musa’s key contributions from the web resources supplied.

**Summative:** Completion of short answer questions at the end of the lesson (see below).

**Background Information/Content:** Mansa Musa was arguably Mali’s most famous *musa*, or emperor/ruler, who went on a historical pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324. “Mansa Musa was accompanied by a caravan consisting of 60,000 men including a personal retinue of 12,000 slaves, all clad in brocade and Persian silk. He also brought with him 80 to 100 camels loaded with 300 pounds of gold each. The emperor himself rode on horseback and was directly preceded by 500 slaves, each carrying a 4 pound staff of solid gold,” (Wikipedia.org). Mansa Musa lavished extravagant amounts of gold and riches to all he met along his way. Every Friday he would donate the money necessary to construct a mosque wherever he happened to be spending the night. He ended up giving away all of the wealth he brought on his pilgrimage, or *hajj*, and had to borrow money to make the return trip home. Islam is a Muslim religion that believes in one God as reported by the prophet Muhammad, and a *mosque* is a Muslim place of worship. Mecca is the holy city of Islam in Saudi Arabia, an East African country. Mecca is also the birthplace of Muhammad. Mansa Musa’s pilgrimage was the turning point for Mali, as people began pouring into this trading city and the economy flourished. Mansa Musa built the Sankore University in Timbuktu for Muslim scholars. He also brought the architect Abu-Ishaq Ibrahim-es-Saheli back from his pilgrimage with him, who introduced the mud construction building technique that Mali has now used with its mosques for centuries. For more information, refer to the 3rd Resource, as well as the others, before teaching this lesson.
A Picture of Mansa Musa on a 1375 map of Africa and Europe
Mansa Musa’s famous pilgrimage raised awareness about Mali in other countries. His generosity on his trip caused Mali to become well known, as evident here when it is included on this map.
Summative Evaluation—Short Answer Questions for Lesson #3: Mansa Musa

1. What does *hajj* mean?
   
   A. Travel  
   B. Caravan  
   C. Servant  
   D. Pilgrimage

2. Name three of Mansa Musa’s contributions to the Empire of Ancient Mali as a result of his pilgrimage. Use complete sentences.

   Ex: “Mansa Musa strengthened the empire of Ancient Mali because he_______ which ______.”

   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
Lesson #4—Inquiry: Deforestation

**Issue:** The effects of deforestation in Africa

**Audience:** Heterogeneous sixth grade classroom

**Standards:** National Council for the Social Studies (Middle Grades)

*People, Places, and Environments*

- h. examine, interpret, and analyze physical and cultural patterns and their interactions, such as land use, settlement patterns, cultural transmission of customs and ideas, and ecosystem changes.
- k. Propose, compare, and evaluate alternative uses of land and resources in communities, regions, nations, and the world.

*Global Connections*

- d. explore the causes, consequences, and possible solutions to persistent, contemporary, and emerging global issues, such as health, security, resource allocation, economic development, and environmental quality.

**Essential Question:** What are the effects of deforestation on the African landscape?

**Behavioral Objectives:**

1. Given the opportunity to do research, students will demonstrate through documented responses that the information gained from sources is directly related to the questions posed.
2. Given the opportunity to do research, students will synthesize information learned about deforestation and apply it to issues surrounding desertification in Africa.

**Materials/Space/Time:** Computer access for a class of ~25 students, copies of attached research worksheet for each student; classroom space for whole group discussion, small group discussion, and individual student research; 2-3 class periods

**The Lesson Proper**

**Introduction:** Begin by asking students to close their eyes and visualize walking across a sandy beach. Do their feet sink into the sand? Is it possible to walk on top of the soft sand without your feet sinking in? Now have students visualize walking through a forest with a dirt floor. What does the ground feel like there? What are some examples of the vegetation in each location? What does the consistency of the ground tell us about the amount of vegetation? Have students access the website “National Geographic: Congo Trek 360” (see Resources) and examine the forest using the virtual tour. Then have students visit the web site “Sahara: Desert Landscapes” (see Resources) and view the photos there of the Sahara desert. Students should now have a visual of the drastic differences between forested and desert landscapes.

**Content Focus:** Ask the class to name all the benefits that trees provide (timber, fuel, logging, shelter, food, turn carbon dioxide into oxygen, provide habitat for a variety of animals). Ask students for a definition of deforestation, then provide one (the removal of trees from an area of
land) and do the same with the word desertification (the process by which land becomes increasing dry with lack of vegetation, creating desert conditions). Just how much deforestation occurs in Mali, Africa each year? What are these trees being used for? What effect does this have on the land? See Background Information/Content for details. Have students research causes and effects of deforestation in Africa using the research worksheet provided (attached). Direct students towards reputable websites such as those listed below in Resources, or peruse additional education websites. Inappropriate content should not be an issue if the school has an Internet filter.

**Predicted Outcomes:** Some students will focus on the different causes of deforestation, such as mining, war, cattle raising, fires, commercial agriculture, logging, overgrazing, and soil degradation. Other students may choose to focus on the statistics surrounding deforestation and how it can lead to desertification, such as the current rate of deforestation, the number of kilometers of forest lost each year, the current number of African species compared to the past, etc.

**Closure:** Have students form into small groups of 4-5 students to share the information that they discovered. Encourage students to make inferences, synthesizing any relevant information they found to make generalizations and draw conclusions. Be sure to have a respectful environment for sharing different opinions, research, and views that the students may have formed about the issues of deforestation and desertification. How can deforestation be prevented? Decide as a class which points are the strongest and can be supported with the most research. What other information is needed? What kind of information was hard to find?

**Evaluation**
- **Formative:** Observation of student participation in researching and discussion.
- **Summative:** Completion of the attached essay question below.

**Background Information/Content:** Deforestation is taking place in Mali at an alarming rate of 6 million tons of timber a year to provide fuel and timber. Additionally, many Malians are nomadic people who raise cattle. Wooden areas that are logged tend to become grazing grounds for cattle, which trample or consume any regenerative growth. Soil erosion is another cause for concern that is inevitably associated with deforestation, and can lead to desertification in Mali. The already limited amount of agriculturally viable land surrounding the Niger River is at risk of turning into desert as more and more trees keep being logged. The people of Mali do use a mud construction technique when building their mosques and mud huts, but wooden beams are often embedded for support.
Resources:


This website details the problems on deforestation in Africa, and then goes into a variety of solutions as to how to improve the situation. The proposed solutions include: regulating the logging industry, forest protection schemes, and regulating human activity, the population, and the environment to improve this growing problem. This is a reputable web site because it gives initial statistics about the causes of deforestation that are then addressed in detail in the various proposed solutions.


This website contains a complete biodiversity breakdown for the current environmental conditions in Mali. It has statistics for forest cover, change in forest cover, protected areas, the disturbances affecting forest land, the biodiversity of plant and animal life, and the value and consumption of forests. The statistics on this website will be a valued resource for students examining the current environmental conditions of Mali and its wildlife.


This website breaks down the different causes of deforestation in Africa into different topics: soil degradation and desertification, cattle raising, deforestation and overgrazing, commercial agriculture, logging, fires, war, and mining. This site is quite easy to use, although the information is a bit limited, it is a good starting point for selecting an angle to research about deforestation. It provides many different directions that a student could select from to address the issues of deforestation and desertification without getting wading through line after line of statistics.

Student Investigation—Deforestation in Africa

1) What are some of the benefits trees give us?

2) What further questions do you have about deforestation?

3) Investigate your questions by conducting further research. Record your findings below.

Question:

Resource consulted:

Relevant information discovered:

Additional information discovered:

Additional questions:

Time devoted to today’s research:
Student Investigation—Deforestation in Africa

1) **What are some of the benefits trees give us?**
   Trees shelter creatures and are habitats, and provide food to animals that eat leaves, like giraffes. Trees convert the carbon dioxide we breathe out into oxygen that we breathe in.

2) **What further questions do you have about deforestation?**
   I guess I’d like to know how fire can cause deforestation, since my teacher mentioned that it was one of the causes.

3) **Investigate your questions by conducting further research. Record your findings below.**

   **Question:**
   How can fire contribute to deforestation in Africa?

   **Resource consulted:**

   **Relevant information discovered:**
   Fires are especially harmful because they can get easily out of hand and damage lots of plants as well as animals. Fire also releases carbon monoxide, a gas that contributes to global warming.

   **Additional information discovered:**
   Trees help filter harmful gases from the air, so by burning trees people are putting more carbon monoxide into the air and at the same time leaving less trees to help get rid of it.

   **Additional questions:**
   How much carbon monoxide one tree can filter from the air in a month?

   **Time devoted to today’s research:** 10:00-10:25am (25 minutes)
NAME___________________________

Summative Evaluation Essay Question

1. Should the people of Mali be allowed to cut down trees to strengthen the structure of their mud buildings? How does deforestation affect the environmental quality of the ecosystem? State your reasoning and support it with research. (10 pts)
Ancient Mali: Artifact #1—Hunter’s Tunic
Primary Activity

Background Information: The hunter’s tunic was (and still is) worn by the Bamana people in the country of Mali. The tunics are worn by the hunters and are adorned with animal fur, skin, teeth, claws, shells, small pieces of mirror/metal, and may have pockets containing secret amulets to ward off evil spirits and dangerous animals. The tunics are worn in festivals and parades, and are a symbol of the hunter’s status among the Bamana people. Plain tunics are worn during actual hunting.

Small Group Activity: Students should be in groups of 4-5, and each group will have a set of cards with different hunter’s tunics on them. Students will work with their group members to identify common items seen on the shirts. Groups should formulate hypotheses about who may have worn the shirts, what type of lifestyle these shirts are from, why these items are on the shirts, general observations, etc. and be prepared to share their thoughts with the class orally.

Whole Group Activity: Teacher will give a brief lesson on the history of the hunter’s tunic, showing a slideshow of some hunters’ tunics (from 1st Reference) and comparing and contrasting the decorated tunics vs. plain tunics and when they were each worn.

Individual Activity: Students will create their own hunter’s tunics by drawing symbols on beige t-shirts with fabric markers. A pocket can be attached to the shirt by the teacher by gluing an extra piece of fabric on three sides and attaching it to the shirt. Students may create a basi (secret item) out of modeling clay to keep in a secret pocket.

Ancient Mali: Artifact #1—Hunter’s Tunic
Intermediate Activity

Background Information: The hunter’s tunic was (and still is) worn by the Bamana people in the country of Mali. The tunics are worn by the hunters and are adorned with animal fur, skin, teeth, claws, shells, small pieces of mirror/metal, and may have pockets containing secret amulets to ward off evil spirits and dangerous animals. The tunics are worn in festivals and parades, and are a symbol of the hunter’s status among the Bamana people. Plain tunics are worn during actual hunting.

Small Group Activity: Students should be in groups of 4-5, and each group will have a set of cards with different hunter’s tunics on them. Students will work with their group members to identify common items seen on the shirts. Groups should formulate hypotheses about who may have worn the shirts, what type of lifestyle these shirts are from, why these items are on the shirts, general observations, etc. and compose a written list of the groups’ observations and hypotheses to share with the class.

Whole Group Activity: Teacher will give a brief lesson on the history of the hunter’s tunic, showing a slideshow of some hunters’ tunics (from 1st Reference) and comparing and contrasting the decorated tunics vs. plain tunics and when they were each worn.

Individual Activity: Students will create their own hunter’s tunic, by first tie-dying their t-shirts to achieve the same brown hue as the example tunics from the pictures, and then attaching beads, shells, pieces of animal-print fabric, craft mirror pieces, among other available, related items to their shirts by safety-pins, craft glue, hot glue gun, or sewing the items by hand. A secret pocket may be created by gluing an extra piece of brown fabric on three sides and attaching it to the shirt. Students may create a basi (secret item) out of modeling clay to keep in a secret pocket.


Hunters’ Tunics for the Small Group Cards
Copy, cut, and glue to index cards. Make as many sets as number of small groups.

Ancient Mali: Artifact #1—Hunter’s Tunic
Primary Assessment

Choose and Circle Your Best Answer

1. Which picture shows a Malian hunter’s tunic?

A.  

B.  

C.  

D.  

2. The attachments on a hunter’s tunic represent the hunter’s:
   a.  Skill
   b.  Age
   c.  Favorite animals
   d.  Money
1. List at least four items that you might find on a Malian hunter’s tunic

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

2. The decorated hunter’s tunic was worn during hunting. (True/False)

If you chose False, when was it worn?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
Ancient Mali: Artifact #2—Ngoni

Primary Activity

**Background Information:** A nгони (griot lute) is a traditionally plucked instrument originating in Western Africa and in the ancient empire of Mali. It is used by griots, or oral historians/storytellers/instrumentalists. Griots are usually associated with a particular family lineage, and are responsible for remembering and being able to recite historical family events and the family’s ancestry many generations removed. The griots play the nгони for the music itself and for accompaniment while they tell their stories. The body of the nгони is made from a hollowed-out wooden frame, and is covered by a dried animal skin stretched over it. A wooden shaft is inserted into the body of the frame, and it has 4—7 strings (made of fishing line) attached to it by strips of leather. The nгони was also played during hunter’s ceremonies. The West African nгони is believed to be a predecessor of the American banjo.

**Individual Activity:** Students will each have a photo of a nгони and a banjo (both unlabeled). Students will work to note similarities and/or differences between the two instruments. Students should formulate hypotheses about what these objects might be, and when they may have been used. Students should be prepared to share their observations orally with the rest of the class when called on.

**Whole Group Activity:** The teacher will give a brief lesson on the history of the nгони, comparing and contrasting the traditional nгони with the banjo by re-examining the two pictures and playing a sample sound clip of each instrument. Teacher can give an example of an oral history by recounting traditions, family names, and events that come from her own family background.

**Small Group Activity:** Students will pair up with a partner or two, and will work to re-construct their own (or an invented family history). One student can play the role of the griot, and the other student can be of the family that the griot is assigned to. Working together, the students can create a short fictional/factual family history that they present orally to the class.

Ancient Mali: Artifact #2—Ngoni

Intermediate Activity

**Background Information:** A ngoni (griot lute) is a traditionally plucked instrument originating in Western Africa and in the ancient empire of Mali. It is used by griots, or oral historians/storytellers/instrumentalists. Griots are usually associated with a particular family lineage, and are responsible for remembering and being able to recite historical family events and the family’s ancestry many generations removed. The griots play the ngoni for the music itself and for accompaniment while they tell their stories. The body of the ngoni is made from a hollowed-out wooden frame, and is covered by a dried animal skin stretched over it. A wooden shaft is inserted into the body of the frame, and it has 4—7 strings (made of fishing line) attached to it by strips of leather. The ngoni was also played during hunter’s ceremonies. The West African ngoni is believed to be a predecessor of the American banjo.

**Individual Activity:** Students will each have a photo of a ngoni and a banjo (both unlabeled). Students will work to note similarities and/or differences between the two instruments. Students should formulate hypotheses about what these objects might be, and when they may have been used, and should compose a written list of these hypotheses and observations to share with the rest of the class.

**Whole Group Activity:** The teacher will give a brief lesson on the history of the ngoni, comparing and contrasting the traditional ngoni with the banjo by re-examining the two pictures and playing a sample sound clip of each instrument. Teacher can give an example of an oral history by recounting traditions, family names, and events that come from her own family background.

**Small Group Activity:** Students will pair up with a partner or two, and will work to re-construct their own (or an invented family history). One student can play the role of the griot, and the other student can be of the family that the griot is assigned to. Working together, the students can create a short fictional/factual family history that they use recording software to document and then turn in to the teacher.

Materials for Individual Activity

Malian Ngoni


American Banjo

Sound Clips for Whole Group Activity

What the Ngoni sounds like:
http://www.civilization.ca/educat/oracle/modules/cbegin/movies/quick/movie01_e.html

What a Banjo sounds like:
http://www.banjonews.com/BNlhtml/2mp3.html

Ancient Mali: Artifact #2—Ngoni
Primary Assessment

1. Which of the following answers does NOT describe the ngoni?

   A. Instrument
   B. Lute
   C. Tool for hunting
   D. Used by griots

Ancient Mali: Artifact #2—Ngoni
Intermediate Assessment

1. How is the ngoni made? Describe the materials that it is made of.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Ancient Mali Culture Kit Pre/Post Test—Primary

1. Which picture shows a Malian hunter’s tunic?

A.  

B.  

C.  

D.  

2. The attachments on a hunter’s tunic represent the hunter’s:

   e. Skill
   f. Age
   g. Favorite animals
   h. Money

3. Which of the following is NOT an animal that the Chi Wara headdress is based on?

   a. Aardvark
   b. Pangolin
   c. Cattle
   d. Antelope
4. Which of the following answers does NOT describe the ngoni?

   a. Instrument  
   b. Lute  
   c. Tool for hunting  
   d. Used by griots

Use the map provided for questions 5-7.
5. The salt mines _________ of the gold mines _______.
   a. Northeast
   b. Southeast
   c. Northwest
   d. Southwest

6. The gold mines _________ of the salt mines _______.
   a. NW
   b. SE
   c. NE
   d. SW

7. Timbuktu _________ of the salt mines _______.
   a. South
   b. Southeast
   c. Southwest
   d. East
Ancient Mali Culture Kit Pre/Post Test—Intermediate

All multiple-choice questions are 2 points each

1. What does *hajj* mean?
   A. Pilgrimage
   B. Supplies
   C. Gold
   D. Islam

2. Which of the following is one of Mansa Musa’s major contributions to the empire of Ancient Mali?
   A. He brought back supplies to Mali.
   B. He drew scholars and architects to Mali.
   C. He gave every family a camel.
   D. He let people keep any gold dust they found.

2. The building technique now used in Mali involves ________.
   A. Metal
   B. Bricks
   C. Straw
   D. Mud

3. Sundjata was Mansa Musa’s ________.
   A. Father
   B. Great-uncle
   C. Cousin
   D. Uncle

4. Which of the following is NOT a material that makes up the ngoni?
   A. Bamboo
   B. Dried animal skin
   C. Wood
   D. Fishing line
5. Deforestation means to ____________.

A. Use trees to build houses
B. Remove trees from the land
C. Plant trees in open fields
D. Replace trees that have been cut down

6. Should the people of Mali be allowed to cut down trees to strengthen the structure of their mud buildings? How does deforestation affect the environmental quality of the ecosystem? State your reasoning and support it with research. (10 pts)
Appendix A: Standards

Introduction to History and Social Science

History
3.2 The student will study the early West African empire of Mali by describing its oral tradition (storytelling), government (kings), and economic development (trade).

Geography
3.4 The student will develop map skills by
d) locating Greece, Rome, and West Africa;
e) describing the physical and human characteristics of Greece, Rome, and West Africa;
f) explaining how the people of Greece, Rome, and West Africa adapted to and/or changed their environment to meet their needs.

Economics
3.7 The student will explain how producers use natural resources (water, soil, wood, and coal), human resources (people at work), and capital resources (machines, tools, and buildings) to produce goods and services for consumers.

People, Places, and Environments
d) Explore the causes, consequences, and possible solutions to persistent, contemporary, and emerging global issues, such as health, security, resource allocation, economic development, and environmental quality.
h) Examine, interpret, and analyze physical and cultural patterns and their interactions, such as land use, settlement patterns, cultural transmission of customs and ideas, and ecosystem changes.
k) Propose, compare, and evaluate alternative uses of land and resources in communities, regions, nations, and the world.

Global Connections

Power, Authority, and Governance
i) Give examples and explain how governments attempt to achieve their stated ideals at home and abroad.

Visual Communication and Production
3.11 The student will create a work of art in clay, using the coil-building process.

Cultural Context and Art History
3.16 The student will identify and examine objects of the early West African empire of Mali.
3.17 The student will identify how works of art reflect times, places, and cultures.
## Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Plan/Artifact</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Plan #2</td>
<td>Air Dry Modeling Clay</td>
<td>2.5 lb for $5.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Toothpicks</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plastic Plates</td>
<td>$3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Plan #3</td>
<td>Hershey’s Nuggets Candy</td>
<td>$5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifact #1</td>
<td>T-shirts</td>
<td>5 shirts for $12.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fabric Markers</td>
<td>$3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Craft glue</td>
<td>$2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fabric scraps</td>
<td>$5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brown dye</td>
<td>$4.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mirror pieces</td>
<td>$6.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cowrie shells</td>
<td>$0.09 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mini hot glue gun</td>
<td>$4.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needles</td>
<td>$1.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thread</td>
<td>$2.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beads</td>
<td>$5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shells</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Expenses: about $69.15**

The majority of these prices were retrieved from Amazon.com.

Obviously not all of these items are necessary. The items pertaining to Artifact #1 are certainly flexible, depending on what the teacher has on hand. Students could be responsible for bringing in their t-shirt to tie-dye, as well as some of the various items to be attached to the shirts.