

The Influence of Islam on West Africa

In what ways did Islam influence West African society?

PREVIEW

Examine the image below. Think about what you may already know about Islamic influences. Circle any of the categories listed below for which you see examples of Islamic influences in the image.

Answers will vary. Possible answers include:

Categories of Influences

Religious Practices

Government/Law

Education

Language

Architecture

Decorative Arts

Now annotate the image by circling each example of Islamic influence. Draw a line from your circle to the space next to the image. Then, write a sentence there explaining why you believe this is an example of an Islamic influence.



This is a brick and mud Mosque that can be found throughout West Africa.

These people are praying in the streets.

READING NOTES

Social Studies Vocabulary

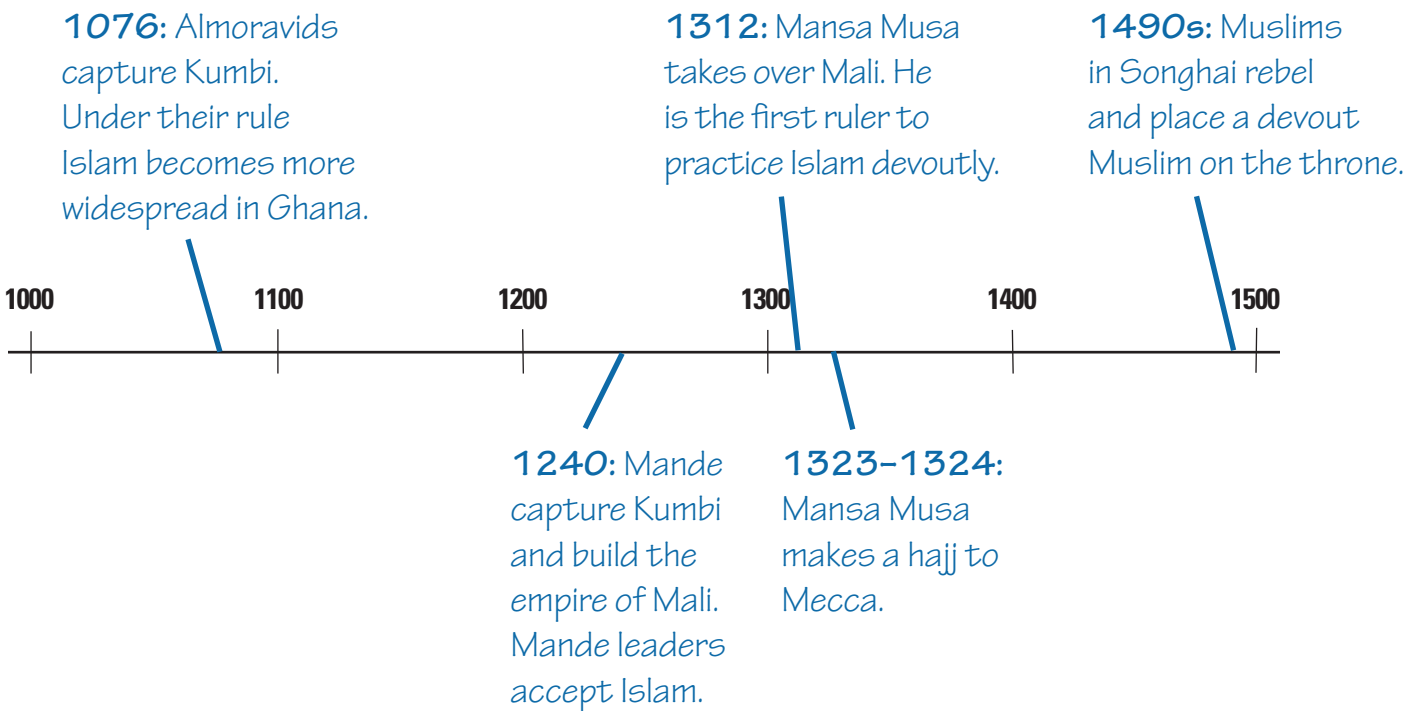
As you complete the Reading Notes, use these terms in your answers.

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| Mali | patrilineal |
| Mansa Masu | textile |
| Songhai | |

Section 1

On the timeline, place four dates that you believe were significant to the spread of Islam in West Africa. For each entry, write a short caption that explains why that date was important to the spread of Islam.

Timelines will vary. Possible answers:



Sections 2 to 7

If you are doing the activity, do all three parts. (Note: If you are not doing the activity, skip Step 1 for each chart.)

Read one of Sections 2 to 7, and analyze the posted photographs for examples of that influence of Islam on West Africa. Then follow these steps to fill in the charts below.

Step 1 Write the letter of each photograph that shows an example of the influence of Islam on West Africa and a brief explanation of that example. (An example is given below.)

Step 2 Answer the questions in the second column from your reading of that section.

Step 3 Make a simple illustration of something you think best represents that influence of Islam on West Africa.

Section 2 Influence of Islam on Religious Practices		
Letter of Placard and Explanation	Questions for this Section	Simple Illustration
<p>D shows a mosque with minarets</p> <p>A shows a mosque</p> <p>B shows two girls studying the Qur'an</p> <p>C shows Muslims praying</p> <p>E shows the celebration of an Islamic festival</p> <p>F shows boy reading Qur'an</p> <p>H shows people praying</p>	<p>List two ways that West Africans adopted Islamic religious practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They learned the Five Pillars of Islam. They fasted, worshipped in mosques, and went on pilgrimages. <p>List two examples of how they preserved their own religious practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They showed respect for dead ancestors. They kept their beliefs in spirits and used amulets to protect themselves from harm. 	<p>Illustrations will vary.</p>

Section 3 Influence of Islam on Government and Law		
Letter of Placard and Explanation	Questions for this Section	Simple Illustration
<p>C shows an emir, the title of a ruler in Islamic lands</p> <p>E shows the emir's horsemen, soldiers of the Islamic ruler</p> <p>G shows a shari'ah court. Shari'ah was the law of Islam.</p>	<p>How did the line of succession change with the arrival of Islam?</p> <p>Before, succession to the throne had been matrilineal. After the arrival of Islam, succession became patrilineal, or passed from father to son</p> <p>How did the structure of government change under Islamic influence?</p> <p>Government became more centralized and kings exercised more control over local leaders.</p> <p>Give one example of how shari'ah was different from customary law.</p> <p>Customary law was often not written down, but shari'ah was written law.</p>	<p>Illustrations will vary.</p>

Section 4 Influence of Islam on Education		
Letter of Placard and Explanation	Questions for This Section	Simple Illustration
<p>B shows a Qur'anic school</p> <p>F shows a boy reading</p>	<p>List three ways that the Islamic love of learning influenced West Africa.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Timbuktu became a center of learning with many universities.</i> • <i>Local schools were set up where children could learn the Qur'an.</i> • <i>Muslims' love of books led to the development of large libraries.</i> 	<p>Illustrations will vary.</p>

Section 5 Influence of Islam on Language		
Letter of Placard and Explanation	Questions for This Section	Simple Illustration
<p>B shows Arabic writing in a book</p> <p>H shows Arabic writing on a sign</p>	<p>Though West Africans still used their native language in everyday speech, in what aspects of society did Arabic become the primary language?</p> <p><i>Arabic became the language of religion, learning, commerce and government.</i></p> <p>How did the use of Arabic in West Africa become an important tool for historians?</p> <p><i>Scholars used Arabic to write about the history and culture of West Africa.</i></p>	<p>Illustrations will vary.</p>

Section 6 Influence of Islam on Architectural Styles		
Letter of Placard and Explanation	Questions for This Section	Simple Illustration
<p>A shows the use of mud and projecting beams, as in the architecture introduced by al-Saheli</p> <p>D shows the use of mud and projecting beams, as in the architecture introduced by al-Saheli</p> <p>H shows a mosque with minarets, a necessary element of all mosques</p>	<p>What two new architectural changes were influenced by Islam? <i>People designed mosques and brick, flat-roofed houses.</i></p> <p>How were the homes built by Al-Saheli different from traditional West African houses? <i>Traditional homes were round with a cone-shaped, thatched roof. Al-Saheli built rectangular homes made of brick with flat roofs, no windows and a single door.</i></p>	<p><i>Illustrations will vary.</i></p>


Section 7 Influence of Islam on Decorative Arts		
Letter of Placard and Explanation	Questions for This Section	Simple Illustration
<p>B shows Arabic robes</p> <p>C shows geometric designs on walls and men in Arabic dress</p> <p>D shows geometric designs on clothes and Arabic robes</p> <p>E shows Arabic robes</p> <p>F shows an Arabic robe</p> <p>G shows Arabic dress</p> <p>H shows Arabic robes</p>	<p>List and describe two new decorative arts or styles that West Africans adopted from Muslims. <i>West Africans adopted calligraphy, or decorative writing, and geometric patterns for their art and textiles.</i></p> <p>How did West African clothing change with the arrival of Islam? <i>West Africans adopted the flowing Arabic robes worn by Muslims.</i></p>	<p><i>Illustrations will vary.</i></p>

PROCESSING

Use the figure of the West African below to create a sensory figure by showing what he sees, hears, feels, tastes, or smells. Follow these steps:

1. In each box, your sensory sentence will begin “With my _____, I . . .”
You must complete the sentence by describing a concrete example of an Islamic influence in West Africa. Refer to any of the five senses in your sentences.
2. Each sensory sentence should relate to a different one of the six topics you studied—religious practices, government and law, education, language, architectural styles, and decorative arts. For example, “With my ears, I hear Muslims in West Africa being called to prayer five times each day.”

With my _____, I



With my ears, I hear Muslims in West Africa being called to prayer five times each day.

With my _____, I

Use this rubric to evaluate the Processing assignment.

Score	Description
3	Student completes all four sensory sentences. Sensory sentences accurately relate to one of the six topics studied. There are no spelling or grammar errors.
2	Student completes at least three sensory sentences. Sensory sentences are somewhat related to one of the six topics studied. There are some spelling or grammar errors.
1	Student does not complete several of the sensory sentences. Sensory sentences are not related to one of the six topics studied. There are many spelling or grammar errors.

INVESTIGATING PRIMARY SOURCES

Identifying and Evaluating Evidence

Use the reading to create a claim to answer this question: *What does Ibn Battuta’s writing reveal about Islam in medieval Mali?*

Claim: *Claims will vary. Accept all reasonable responses.*

What evidence from the primary source documents support your claim? Fill out the chart below. Circle the two strongest pieces of evidence.

Source	Evidence	How does this support the claim?

Evidence will vary, but should relate to the claim. Students should provide evidence from multiple sources. The evidence should come from the primary sources themselves, but students may use the supporting text to explain how the source supports the claim. Explanations should be reasonable.

You can use this evidence to strengthen your claim. Write your revised claim below.

Claims should be more nuanced than the first claim. The evidence should better support the revised claim.

Constructing an Argument

Create an argument to answer the question: *What does Ibn Battuta's writing reveal about Islam in medieval Mali?* Your argument should:

- clearly state your claim.
- include evidence from multiple sources.
- provide explanations for how the evidence supports the claim.

Use this rubric to evaluate your argument. Make changes as needed.

Score	Description
3	The claim clearly answers the question. The argument uses evidence from two or more primary sources that strongly support the claim. The explanations accurately connect to the evidence and claim.
2	The claim answers the question. The argument uses evidence from one or more primary sources that support the claim. Some of the explanations connect to the evidence and claim.
1	The claim fails to answer the question. The argument lacks evidence from primary sources. Explanations are missing or are unrelated to the evidence and claim.