**AFRICA**

**IDENTIFICATIONS** (Factual and conceptual)

For each of the following, identify by answering the questions – Who? What? When? Where? Describe the significance by answering the questions – Why is this important? Why do we study this?

rain forest

hunting and gathering societies

hierarchical

hieroglyphic

patrilineal/patriarchal

Berbers

savanna

lineages

nuclear families

polygynous families

secret societies

assimilation

polytheistic

animistic

terra-cotta

call-and-response

griots

**OBJECTIVE/ANALYTICAL QUESTIONS**

**A Huge and Diverse Land**

1. Which body of water does not border the continent of Africa?

a. Black Sea

b. Atlantic Ocean

c. Mediterranean Sea

d. Indian Ocean

(Answer: a; page 6)

2. Most of the northern third of the African continent is made up of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Desert.

(Answer: Sahara; page 6)

**The Birthplace of Humanity**

3. The earliest known hominids were the

a. australopithecines.

b. Homo sapiens.

c. Homo erectus.

d. paleoanthropologists

(Answer: a; page 8)

4. Examine Map 1-1. What does the geography of Africa tell you about the possibility for settlement?

(Answer, page 7)

5. According to the “out-of-Africa” model for development of man,

a. modern humans actually emerged in Europe about 200,000 years ago, rather than Africa.

b. African peoples and other human groups are actually very distinct genetically, since many different groups developed at the same time from different types of hominids.

c. modern humans evolved in Europe, Africa and Asia from Homo erectus and archaic Homo sapiens.

d. modern humans originated in Africa, and began migrating to the rest of the world about 100,000 years ago.

(Answer: d; page 8)

**Ancient Civilizations and Old Arguments**

6. Which of the following are generally regarded as the earliest human civilizations?

a. Mexico and China

b. Egypt and Mesopotamia

c. China and Africa

d. Mesopotamia and China

(Answer: b; pages 8-9)

7. Ancient Egyptians

a. tended to regard themselves as “white,” but actually exhibited a mixture of racial features.

b. died out quickly and did not influence the development and culture of Greece and later Western civilizations.

c. were very dependent on the Nile for their protection, agriculture, transportation and communications.

d. left very few remains of their civilization in any form.

(Answer: c; pages 9-10)

8. Why did scholars begin to debate whether Egyptians were black or white?

(Answer, page 9)

9. The Great Pyramids were constructed as

a. markers for the summer and winter solstices.

b. primitive astronomical observatories.

c. temples for the Egyptian god, Ra.

d. royal funeral architecture.

(Answer: d; page 10)

10. Discuss the importance of the Nile to Egyptian culture.

(Answer, page 9)

11. Discuss the class system of ancient Egypt. How is this similar to or different from West African culture?

(Answer, pages 9, 22)

12. Briefly describe Egyptian religion. What role did the king play?

(Answer, pages 9-10)

13. Examine Map 1-2. Where are most of the pyramids and cities? What does this tell you?

(Answer, page 10)

14. Women in ancient Egypt

a. developed significant amounts of power, since Egyptian culture was matrilineal.

b. were treated as property, and were allowed no legal rights once married.

c. held a relatively high status, and were able to own property, serve as priests or public officials and even become rulers.

d. frequently took more than one husband, in order to produce as many children as possible.

(Answer: c; page 9)

15. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, a part of the Kushite civilization, became Africa’s first industrial center, exploiting nearby resources of iron.

(Answer: Meroë; page 11)

16. The nation of Axum is significant because

a. they overtook the Egyptians while the Great Pyramids were being built.

b. they were influenced by Hebrew culture, and became the first Christian state in sub-Saharan Africa.

c. they became extremely wealthy through exploiting nearby iron resources.

d. their success rested entirely upon trade, and their influence fell with the decline of Rome.

(Answer: b; page 11)

17. Briefly describe the influences on Egypt by its southern neighbors of Nubia and Kush.

(Answer, pages 10-11)

**West Africa**

18. Discuss the importance of the camel in West African culture.

(Answer, page 13)

19. Discuss the influence of military technology on the rise and fall of the Ghana, Songhai, and Akan areas.

(Answer, pages 12-18)

20. Many of the western Sudanese kingdoms were similar in what respects?

(Answer, pages 12-16)

21. What was not a general characteristic of the western Sudanese kingdoms of Ghana, Mali and Songhai?

a. They were generally very peaceful, and prospered without the use of warfare.

b. Some of their cities became quite large and well developed.

c. Their main source of wealth was trade.

d. Muslims maintained at least a nominal presence in each.

(Answer: a; pages 13-16)

22. Where was the first known kingdom in the western Sudan?

a. Meroë

b. Ghana

c. Songhai

d. Egypt

(Answer: b; page 13)

23. How did Soninke monarchs become wealthy and powerful before the fifth century CE?

a. through trade, and with the introduction of the camel providing better transportation

b. through constant warfare, and plundering their neighbors

c. through the mining of copper and lead

d. through the slave trade

(Answer: a; page 13)

24. What does Al Bakri’s description tell you about gender differences between Arabs and Ghana?

(Answer, page 14)

25. Who were West Africa’s chief trading partners before the fifth century CE?

a. the Egyptians

b. the Spanish and French

c. Roman merchants and the Berbers

d. the Greeks

(Answer: c; page 13)

26. Examine Map 1-3. What trade advantages might Mali have had that Ghana lacked? How might this have affected the power and longevity of these two kingdoms?

(Answer, page 13)

27. What African empire became powerful in the 1200s after Ghana fell to the Almoravids?

a. The Soninke formed the Empire of the Congo.

b. The Mandinka formed the Mali Empire.

c. The Almoravids formed the Second Ghanaian Empire.

d. The Egyptians formed the first dynasty of pharaohs.

(Answer: b; page 14)

28. Mansa Musa, a ruler of the Mali Empire in thefourteenth century,

a. was known for his extreme cruelty to his slaves.

b. introduced Christianity to the West Sudan region.

c. was one of the wealthiest men the world has known.

d. was massacred by European armies after trying to stop the slave trade.

(Answer: c; page 15)

29. Which Songhai leader was a devout Muslim who helped spread Islam in Africa and established the Sankore Mosque at Timbuktu?

a. Mansa Musa

b. Sunni Ali

c. Sundiata Mali

d. Askia Muhammad Toure

(Answer: d; page 15)

30. Examine Map 1-4. Why did the Empire of Songhai and the Kongo Kingdom become powerful traders? What advantages did they have?

(Answer, page 16)

31. The peoples of the forest regions of Western Africa are important in the study of African-American history because

a. they were the first region to open trade with Egypt and other Mediterranean areas.

b. they converted to Christianity in significant numbers.

c. they played an important role in the slave trade, both as traders and victims.

d. actually, the forest regions never became powerful enough to influence African history.

(Answer: c; page 17)

32. Why did the forest region cultures of West Africa not grow as large as the Sudanese cultures?

(Answer, pages 16-17)

33. Why did it take until the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries for agriculture to replace hunting and gathering in parts of the forest region of West Africa?

a. No one settled in the region until that time.

b. The area was densely forested, and clearing it took a lot of effort.

c. The forest region was constantly threatened by disease and European warfare.

d. Forest region cultures were too dominated by the slave trade to develop agriculture.

(Answer: b; page 16)

34. The Yoruba culture is notable for

a. Benin City, a huge urban area open to European travelers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

b. the prominent role of women, who often conducted trade and commerce.

c. its status as that of the first settlers of the West African forest region.

d. None of these are correct.

(Answer: b; page 18)

35. What was the Kingdom of Benin known for up to the seventeenth century?

a. elaborate, skillful work with diamonds

b. a large, sophisticated capital city, which had no beggars

c. a complete lack of slavery, unusual at the time

d. the only society dominated politically by women

(Answer: d; page 18)

36. Examine Map 1-5. How did Benin become a major slaving center even though it was not on an established   
trans-Saharan route? How did trade routes change?

(Answer, page 19)

**Kongo and Angola**

37. The Portuguese referred to the area around the Congo River as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

(Answer: Angola; page 19)

38. What distinguished the Kingdom of Kongo from many other African kingdoms?

a. *Mani Kongo* Nzinga Knuwu began a tradition of welcoming early Portuguese missions.

b. The Kongo had no access to water travel.

c. The Kongo launched a holy war against Christian missionaries.

d. The Kongo maintained gender equality.

(Answer: a; page 19)

**West African Society and Culture**

39. Most West Africans in the early sixteenth century made a living as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

(Answer: farmers; pages 19-20)

40. In a matrilineal society

a. women dominate the politics, culture and social life of the group completely.

b. the culture will be far more peaceful and in harmony with nature.

c. women control the property and legal system of the group.

d. political power passes through women – a chief would be succeeded by his sister’s son, rather than his own.

(Answer: d; page 20)

41. Discuss ways one Dutch visitor compared Benin to European cities.

(Answer, page 20)

42. Discuss several cultural differences between the West African cultures on the savannah and the forest.

(Answer, pages 16-25)

43. Discuss the differences between patrilineal and matrilineal lineages in West Africa.

(Answer, page 20)

44. Women in West African society generally

a. were dominated by older women and had some formal governmental offices and posts.

b. were considered the free and independent individuals.

c. had more sexual freedom than women in Europe.

d. generally were responsible for nothing other than the care of children.

(Answer: d; page 22)

45. In the hierarchal society of West Africa, slavery

a. had no place and never existed until white Europeans (the Portuguese) introduced it.

b. was a permanent condition – the children of African slaves were also always slaves.

c. functioned as a means of assimilation into West African societies.

d. was introduced by the Greeks and Romans.

(Answer: c; page 22)

46. The Islamic religion in West Africa

a. was stronger in rural areas than in the cities.

b. was polytheistic, recognizing Allah, Muhammad and Jesus as divine.

c. was similar to Chinese religions in placing high importance on the spirits of ancestors.

d. was introduced by Arab travelers, and took root mainly among merchants and bureaucrats.

(Answer: d; page 22)

47. In the West African forest region, indigenous religion remained predominantly polytheistic and animistic. This meant that

a. they did not believe in an all-powerful creator god.

b. they worshiped different animals as gods, especially cows.

c. they did not believe in an afterlife, or in dead family members having any type of importance to the living.

d. they saw the force of God in all things, including humans, rocks and trees.

(Answer: d; page 22)

48. Many West African prose tales centered on

a. “trickster” animal characters.

b. their gods and goddesses.

c. tales of slavery and the evils of white men.

d. All of these are correct.

(Answer: a; page 23)

49. What differences do you see between the practice of Christianity, Islam and the indigenous religions in Western Africa? Discuss regional and class differences in particular.

(Answer, pages 21-22)

50. How was West African art and music related to religion?

(Answer, page 23)

51. Which of the following is true about the role of technology in West African culture?

a. It really played little role, since West Africa had almost no technology.

b. The use of silver to produce religious idols was the most important feature.

c. Interestingly, West Africans refused to build temples, preferring to worship outdoors.

d. Rice production, and its technology, became important for African American history.

(Answer d; pages 24-25)