Mansa Musa: Lion of Mali

Students learn how factors of physical and human geography influenced the rise of the Mali kingdom and its greatest leader, Mansa Musa.

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<tr>
<th>National Geography Standards</th>
<th>Arizona Geography Strand</th>
<th>Other Arizona Standards</th>
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<td><strong>Element 2 Places and Regions</strong> 4. The physical and human characteristics of places.</td>
<td><strong>Grade 6</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Element 6 The Uses of Geography</strong> 17. How to apply geography to interpret the past.</td>
<td><strong>Concept 1 The World in Spatial Terms</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strand 2 World History</strong></td>
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<td><strong>PO 4.</strong> Locate physical and human features (e.g., significant waterways, mountain ranges, cities, countries) in regions of the world on a map.</td>
<td><strong>Concept 3 World in Transition</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Concept 2 Places and Regions</strong></td>
<td><strong>PO 2.</strong> Describe the development of the Medieval kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai:</td>
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<td><strong>PO 1.</strong> Identify regions studied in Strand 2 using a variety of criteria (e.g., climate, landforms, culture, vegetation).</td>
<td>a. Islamic influences</td>
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<td><strong>PO 3.</strong> Describe the interactions of people in different places and regions.</td>
<td>b. mining of gold and salt centers of commerce</td>
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<td><strong>Concept 2 Places and Regions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>PO 1.</strong> Identify the characteristics that define a region:</td>
<td><strong>Concept 3 World in Transition</strong></td>
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<td>a. physical processes such as climate, terrain, and resources</td>
<td><strong>PO 3.</strong> Compare the development of empires (e.g., Mali).</td>
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<td>b. human processes such as religion, political organization, economy, and demographics</td>
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<td><strong>PO 4.</strong> Analyze the differing political, religious, economic, demographic, and historical ways of viewing places and regions.</td>
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<td><strong>PO 5.</strong> Examine how the geographic characteristics of a place affect the economics and culture</td>
<td><strong>Reading 6-8 and 9-10.RH.4</strong> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.</td>
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Mansa Musa Lion of Mali

Overview

Students are often presented with information from European or North American locations. But as civilizations were developing on these continents, they were also developing in Asia, South America, Australia, and Africa. In this lesson students receive a glimpse of the Mali kingdom in Africa and its leader, Mansa Musa.

Purpose

Students will gain a better understanding of how human and physical geography has been a determinant in the success or demise of early civilizations. In this lesson, the Medieval African kingdom of Mali, in particular, is examined through the eyes of Mansa Musa, one of the great “lion” kings.

Materials

- *Mansa Musa, The Lion of Mali* by Khephra Burns
- Sample Lion picture
- Student vocabulary cards
- *Manka Musa* Reading Organizer worksheet
- 14th Century Mali map
- Mali Math-up worksheet
- Mali Match-up flashcards
- Atlas or map of region from textbook
- Colored pencils

Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Locate landforms and water bodies in the physical region of Mali (Western Sahara Africa).
2. Examine how human interactions through trade and travel shaped the culture of the Mali kingdom.
3. Analyze how physical geography played a role in the development and expansion of the Mali kingdom.

Procedures

Prerequisite Skills: Students should have some background knowledge of the Islamic religion.

SESSION ONE (85 minutes)

1. Anticipatory Set
   Show students the picture of a lion. Ask them to list as many adjectives they can think of that describe a lion. Verbally share and discuss lion attributes.

   Explain that they will hear a story about Mansa Musa, nicknamed the Lion of Mali. Discuss how this leader might have received his nickname/have similar attributes to a lion.

2. Go over student vocabulary cards to build academic vocabulary necessary to understand the story, *Mansa Musa, The Lion of Mali*.

3. Distribute *Mansa Musa* Reading Organizer to each student. Go over and clarify directions.

4. Read and display pictures from *Mansa Musa, The Lion of Mali*.

5. Closure
   Have students pair share ideas from *Mansa Musa* Reading Organizer. Collect.

SESSION TWO (85 minutes)

6. Anticipatory Set
   Distribute 14th Century Mali map. Have students recall and discuss locations identified on map as related to *Mansa Musa, The Lion of Mali* story.

7. Students will use their atlas/textbook map and colored pencils to locate and label features listed in Map Legend.

8. Once finished, students will turn their map over and begin reading directions, quotes, and questions from Mali Match-up worksheet.

9. When all students have finished map and have moved onto the Mali Match-up worksheet, display on overhead/projector. Reread and clarify instructions.

10. Distribute Mali Match-up flashcards. Students will match the flashcard “answers” to the appropriate “questions” from the Mali Match-up worksheet.

11. Closure
   Have students exchange papers for peer grading, go over correct answers. Collect along with flashcards.

Assessment

- *Mansa Musa* Reading Organizer worksheet—students will correctly identify at least 5 ideas per category (16/20 ideas required for 80% mastery).
**Mansa Musa Lion of Mali**

- 14th Century Mali map - students will correctly label 25 items, from Map Legend and compass rose (20/25 items labeled required for 80% mastery).
- Mali Match-up worksheet - students will analyze quotes and correctly match 10 questions to flashcards answers (8/10 matches required for 80% mastery).

**Extensions**

Tie this lesson to the development of the medieval kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. Use a blank map of Africa to show the movement and expansion of the three Medieval African tribes and identify major regional geographic features.

Write a literary response to the book, *Mansa Musa, The Lion of Mali*.

Determine the actual measure of objects using a scale drawing or map. Add scale to 14th Century Mali map and determine distances traveled in *Mansa Musa*.

Explain the composition, properties, and structure of the Earth’s rivers. Use *National Geographic: Xpeditions Lesson—Navigating the Niger (Grades 6–8)* to explore the great water source of the Mali kingdom.

Classify musical examples by culture. Listen to the traditional sounds of Mali with a CD such as *Putumayo Presents: Mali*.

Discuss abundant vs. scarce resources. What does it mean? Which resources were abundant and scarce in medieval Mali? What natural resources are abundant and scarce in Arizona?

Write a narrative about life in present-day Arizona from the perspective of a traveler. Be sure to consider the story *Mansa Musa, Lion of Mali* and how the traveler met a native of the area who helped to reveal the geographic features and culture of the area.

**Sources**

- Kola Nuts [http://www.solarnavigator.net/solar_cola/cola_nuts.htm](http://www.solarnavigator.net/solar_cola/cola_nuts.htm)