

BACKGROUND UNIT

GLOSSARY

Aksum (also Axum)

an ancient African kingdom, centered in today's Ethiopia and covering other parts of northern and eastern Africa, that existed from about 80 BCE to 825 CE

civilization

a society that is advanced and highly organized socially, politically and culturally

colonize/colonialism

take control of land outside your own borders/ the policy or practice of occupying or controlling another country

empire

a group of countries or territories under the control of a single ruler or authority

eurocentrism

focusing on or valuing the history and culture of Europe and the West over other parts of the world

Ghana

a West African kingdom that existed from about 300 CE to 1100 CE, located in today's southeastern Mauritania and western Mali

Great Zimbabwe

an ancient city in southern Africa, built by the Shona people and existing from the 11th to the mid-16th centuries CE

griot/griotte

a storyteller in West Africa who passes down history and traditions orally

kingdom

a country, state or territory ruled by a king or queen

Kush

an ancient North African kingdom, centered in today's Sudan, that existed from about 1070 BCE through the 4th century CE

Mali

an ancient kingdom spanning many West African countries that existed from about 1235 CE to 1670 CE

Mansa Musa (1279–c. 1337)

the tenth emperor of the Mali Empire, thought to be the wealthiest individual of the Middle Ages and of all of human history

racism

prejudice or discrimination, based on race, directed against people with less social power by people with more social power in a society. Racism can be expressed by individuals through their beliefs, attitudes and actions. Racism can also be institutional or carried out through a system of laws, policies, practices and values that benefit those with more power and harm those with less power.

Sahara Desert

The world's largest desert, located in northern Africa

stereotype

a generalization about a person or group without regard for individual differences; the false idea that all members of a group are the same and think and behave in the same way