Prepare to Read

Build Background Knowledge

Remind students that in West Africa, trade linked people of different regions and led to the adoption of Islam. Have students review the images in this section and predict what religion is discussed in this section.

Set a Purpose

• WITNESS HISTORY Read the selection aloud or play the audio.
• BUILD WITNESS History Audio CD

Ask Why do rulers like Ezana place inscriptions like this on monuments? (to pay tribute to themselves; to thank their god or gods; to persuade their people to show allegiance)

• Focus Point out the Section Focus Question and write it on the board. Tell students to refer to this question as they read. (Answer appears with Section 3 Assessment answers.)

• Preview Have students preview the Section Objectives and the list of Terms, People, and Places.

• Note Taking Have students read this section using the Structured Read Aloud strategy (TE, p. T20). Have students fill in the Flowchart tracking the effects of trade on societies in East Africa.

SECTION 3

Step-by-Step Instruction

Objectives

As you teach this section, keep students focused on the following objectives to help them answer the Section Focus Question and master core content:

• Explain how religion influenced the development of Axum and Ethiopia.
• Understand how trade affected the city-states in East Africa.
• Describe the economy of Great Zimbabwe.

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Vocabulary Builder

Use the information below and the following resources to teach the high-use words from this section.

High-Use Word

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition and Sample Sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| unify, p. 353 | 2. to form into a single unit  
Rules in several parts of Africa were able to unify many different people into kingdoms and empires. |
| complex, p. 355 | a group of connected buildings that form a single whole  
Some palaces were large complexes made up of many types of rooms. |
Axum Converts to Christianity

In these great centers of international trade, Greek, Egyptian, Arab, and Jewish merchants mingled with traders from Africa, India, and other regions. As elsewhere, ideas spread along with goods. By the 300s, Christianity had reached the region. After converting to the new religion, King Ezana made Christianity the official religion of Axum. At the religion took hold among the people, older temples were replaced with Christian churches decorated with intricately designed biblical murals and religious images painted on wood panels.

At first, Christianity strengthened the ties between Axum, North Africa, and the Mediterranean world. In the 600s, however, Islam began spreading across North Africa and other regions surrounding Axum. Many African rulers embraced this new faith, creating strong cultural ties across much of the continent. Axum, which remained Christian, was now isolated from its own trade network—by distance from Europe and by religion from many former trading partners. Civil war and economic decline combined to weaken Axum, and the kingdom slowly declined.

Ethiopia: A Christian Outpost

Though Axum’s political and economic power faded, its cultural and religious influences did not disappear. This legacy survived among the peoples of the interior uplands, in what is today northern Ethiopia. Although Axum’s empire was only a portion of the present-day nation, when referring to their kingdom as a whole, the Axumites often referred to Ethiopia, which was a term the Greeks used for the region.

An Isolated Ethiopia

Medieval Ethiopia was protected by rugged mountains, and the descendants of the Axumites were able to maintain their independence for centuries. Their success was due in part to the isolate power of their Christian faith, which gave them a unique sense of identity and helped establish a culture distinct from that of neighboring peoples.

One example of Ethiopia’s distinct culture is the unique churches of Lalibela. In the early 1200s, King Lalibela came to power in Ethiopia. During his reign, he directed the building of eleven remarkable churches, which were actually carved from ground level downward into the solid rock of the mountains. These amazing structures still stand today and illustrate the architectural and artistic skill of the craftsmen who created them.

Despite their isolation, Ethiopian Christians kept ties with the Holy Land. In fact, some made pilgrimages to Jerusalem. They also were in touch with Christian communities in Egypt. Over time, Ethiopian Christianity absorbed many local customs. Traditional East African music and dance were adopted, and their influence is still felt in Ethiopian church services today. In addition, the services are still conducted in the ancient language of Geez.

History Background

Lalibela The city of Lalibela was the capital of the Ethiopian kingdom for about three hundred years. It was originally named Roha but was renamed after the king to honor him. To build the churches, workers had to dig a trench into the ground to expose a large rectangular chunk of rock that would form the church. Then teams worked on the inside of the rectangle to make the interior of the church and on the outside to create the decorations on the outer walls. The eleven churches are clustered in two groups. The largest church, the House of the Savior of the World, is more than 100 feet long, nearly 80 feet wide, and 35 feet deep. Today, more than a thousand pilgrims visit the churches and the thousands of pilgrims who come to visit the site to worship.
East African City-States

Instruct
■ Introduce: Vocabulary Builder
  Have students read the Vocabulary Builder term complex and its definition. Ask What does the royal palace complex tell you about Kilwa and its ruler? (Example: The ruler was wealthy and had many people working for him and for whom he was responsible, which is why so many rooms were needed.)
■ Teach
  Ask Why did the East African city-states become important trading centers? (They were ideally located for trade with Asia, and, therefore, linked inland Africa with goods and markets in the east.) How did the Swahili culture and language develop? (The existing East African culture over time absorbed elements of Arabic language and culture as they were introduced through trade and settlement.)
■ Quick Activity
  Divide the class into small groups and have them read the Traveler’s Tales. Then have each group create a list of the positive and negative aspects of the trading tradition described by Ibn Battuta. Have each group present their list to the class. To have students learn more about the travels of Ibn Battuta, have them read the selection Ibn Battuta and complete the worksheet.
Independent Practice
Primary Sources
  To help students better understand life in East Africa in this period, have them read the selection Swahili Cities of East Africa and complete the worksheet.
Monitor Progress
  Circulate to make sure students understand the readings on the worksheets and are answering the questions accurately.

Answer
  Isolation allowed the people of Ethiopia to remain independent and helped them develop a unique sense of identity based largely on their religion.

Ibn Battuta Witnesses a Unique Trading Tradition

Mauritanian trader, or judge, Ibn Battuta (1304–c. 1368) was born in Tangier to a Berber family of the Muslim faith. After he completed his education at the age of 21, Battuta decided to make the hajj, or Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca. What started as a reasonably challenging trek for the period became one of the great journeys of medieval times. During nearly 30 years of travel, Battuta visited much of Southwest Asia, West Africa, southern Europe, India, and China. Along the way he gained fame and wealth and met kings, sheiks, and holy men—including the Byzantine emperor and the sultan of Delhi—as well as ordinary people. In this excerpt from his book, The Travels, or Rihlah, Ibn Battuta describes the unique trading tradition of Mogadishu.

East African City-States

While Aswan declined, a string of commercial cities—including Kilwa, Mogadishu, Mombasa, and Sofala—gradually arose along the East African coast. As early as the 700s, sailors had learned that the annual monsoon winds could carry sailing ships between India and Africa. On the East African coast, rulers took advantage of the opportunities for trade that these winds provided. They welcomed ships from Arabia, Persia, and China. Traders acquired ivory, leopard skins, iron,
Trade was not only beneficial to the merchants; it also helped local rulers build strong, independent city-states. Although they competed for trade, relations between the city-states were generally peaceful. A Muslim visitor described Kilwa, the most successful city-state, as “one of the most beautiful and well-constructed towns in the world.” Its royal palace still stands on cliffs that today overlook the ocean. The complex consists of courtyards, terraces, and nearly 100 rooms. Built of coral and cut stone, the structure is evidence of the city’s splendor.

Trade Shapes Swahili

As more settlers arrived, the local East African culture absorbed cultural elements from those new residents. For example, the architecture of private houses and palaces illustrated a blend of East African and Arabic designs that created unique and elegant Swahili buildings and furnishing. In addition, over time many Arabic words were absorbed into the local Bantu-based language. In fact, the term mkuu comes from an Arabic word meaning “of the coast.” The language itself was eventually written in Arabic script.

Vocabulary Builder

mkuu (kah-moo) — (KAHM-oo) — (kah-oo) — (KAHM-oo) — (kah-moo) — (kah-moo)

Sambuq sailing along the East African coast

The Stone Houses of Great Zimbabwe

Instruct

■ Introduce: Have students look at the image of the ruins of Great Zimbabwe on the next page. Ask: What do these ruins tell us about the people of Great Zimbabwe? (Sample: The bricks and strong structures imply that they were skilled in construction and needed walls for protection.) Explain that little is known about Great Zimbabwe and that most of what we do know has been learned from the ruins.

■ Teach: Ask: How did the Bantu-speakers influence the development of Great Zimbabwe? (They introduced iron, missing methods, and improved farming skills, which led to the building of enclosures and eventually to protective walls.) How have archaeologists determined that Great Zimbabwe was a center of trade? (They found artifacts in the ruins that are from India and China and items that prove skilled artisans resided in the city)

■ Quick Activity: Show students Great Zimbabwe: Lost City of Africa from the Witness History Discovery School™ video program. Ask: How did the ancient city of Great Zimbabwe become symbolic for people in current-day Zimbabwe? (The ancient city represented an advanced African culture rather than a European culture. When the people gained black-majority rule in 1979, they changed the name of the country from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe to honor their heritage).

Independent Practice

Have students write down the four red headings listed in this section. Then have them write a short summary describing each heading using the information they have learned in the section.

Monitor Progress

Check Reading and Note Taking Study Guide entries for student understanding.

Answers

Thinking Critically

1. Draw Conclusions: Why do you think the merchants of Mogadishu used this method to conduct business?

2. Analyze Information: According to Ibn Battuta, regular merchants who traveled to Mogadishu were exempt from this strict trading practice. Why do you think some merchants were allowed this freedom?

Link to Geography

Monsoon Winds Monsoons are dominant winds that blow in one direction for half the year and in the opposite direction for the other half. The most well-known monsoons are those that affect southern Asia and eastern Africa, but there are examples in the Gulf of Mexico, Europe, and Australia as well. Monsoons blow from cold areas to warm areas. During the summer, they move from the ocean toward the land. In winter, they blow in the other direction. Summer monsoons tend to carry heavy rains. The winter winds are dry.
Assess Progress

- Have students complete the Section Assessment.
- Administer the Section Quiz.
- Progress Monitoring Transparencies, p. 46

Reteach

- If students need more instruction, have them read the section summary.
- Reading and Note Taking Study Guide, p. 104
- Adapted Reading and Note Taking Study Guide, p. 104
- Spanish Reading and Note Taking Study Guide, p. 104

Extend

- Have students take the role of an outsider visiting one of the areas discussed in the section—the kingdoms of Axum or Ethiopia, the city-states of East Africa, or Great Zimbabwe. Have them write a diary entry describing what they see and what they think about it.

Answer

Great Zimbabwe is still being debated. Archaeologists believe that the ruins were built by a succession of Bantu-speaking peoples who settled in the region between 900 and 1500. These newcomers brought iron, mining methods, and improved farming skills. Early settlers raised cattle and built stone enclosures to protect their livestock. In time, these settlers improved their building methods and erected large walls and palaces.

The capital probably reached its height about 1500. By then, it had tapped nearby gold resources and created profitable commercial links with coastal cities such as Sofala. Archaeologists have found beads from India and porcelains from China, showing that Great Zimbabwe was part of a trade network that reached across the Indian Ocean. In addition, they have found artifacts that indicate that Great Zimbabwe had artisans skilled in making jewelry and weaving cotton cloth.

Very little is known about the government in Great Zimbabwe. However, after studying the architecture and artifacts of the ruins, some scholars have suggested that the ruler was a god-king who provided over a large court. Below the king, a central bureaucracy may have ruled an inner ring of provinces, while appointed governors had authority in more distant villages. Although there is much about Great Zimbabwe that remains unknown, as archaeologists continue their research, we are learning more about how the capital and empire developed.

Zimbabwe Falls to Ruins

By 1500, Zimbabwe was in decline. Some scholars suggest that the population had grown too great. Civil war and dwindling trade probably contributed as well. By then, Portuguese traders were pushing inland to find the region’s source of gold. They failed to discover the gold mines, but their attempts further weakened the small states that formed in the region as Zimbabwe declined.

Checkpoint

How do the ruins of Great Zimbabwe reflect the capital’s former prosperity?

Terms, People, and Places

- Zimbabwe Falls to Ruins
- Writing About History

Writing About History

Quick Write: Use Sensory Details. Chose one of the locations from this section. Suppose you are a merchant or traveler entering the city for the first time. What sights and sounds do you encounter? Write a letter to your family that describes your experiences from the moment you enter the city until you reach your final destination.

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