Historical Periods in African History

Directions: Cut out the information along the dotted lines. Then, carefully examine the map on each card and match it with its corresponding period title and description. Finally, attach the cards to your timeline.

East African Swahili-speaking states grew from trading with China (silk, porcelain), India (spices, rice, cotton, cloth), and the Middle East (glass, pearls, fabric).

The Muslim faith spreads from the Middle East to North, West, and East Africa, mixing with Arabic and African cultures.

Gradual migrations of Bantu-speaking peoples spread ironworking technology throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

Europeans initiate trade of enslaved Africans to the Americas. Arabs trade slaves in the east. Some African societies also participate in the trade.

Ottoman Turks conquer African states of Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, and Egypt, consolidating the influence of Islam in North Africa.

Eight western European nations divide Africa into colonies whereby Europeans control Africans politically and exploit them economically.

African nations win independence from European nations after many years of resistance. The new nations struggle with the political and economic legacy of colonialism.

Great empires grew by controlling the trans-Saharan trade of gold, salt, and other goods. Ghana maintained its traditional religion while Mali and Songhai were influenced by Islam.

Slave Trade (c. 1600–1880s)

European Colonialism (1880s–1960s)

Turkish Empire (c. 1500–1918)

African Independence (1957–present)

West African Trading Empires (c. 800–1600)

Rise of Islam (c. 650–1000)

Bantu Migrations (c. 500 B.C.– A.D. 1500)

Swahili Trading States (c. 1200–1500)
A Timeline of Selected Periods

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in African History

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