

SIXTH GRADE SCHOOL TOURS AT THE HACKETT HOUSE Timbuktu, Mali

GREETING: BONJOUR!

I. Location/Geography (Arizona History and Social Science Standards 6.G1.1, 6.G2.1, 6.G3.2, 6.G4.1)

A. Hemisphere/Continent

1. Timbuktu is located in the southern hemisphere, on the continent of Africa, and on the southern edge of the Sahara Desert 15 km north of the main channel of the Niger River.
2. The Sahara Desert covers 58% of Mali. The rainfall is less than 7 inches per year.
3. Timbuktu's climate is hot and dry throughout much of the year with average high temperatures of 104 degrees and low temperatures not dropping below 86 degrees. In the winter, nighttime temperatures can drop to a very cold 40 degrees.
4. Timbuktu weather is dry with dusty trade winds often picking up dust particles, limiting visibility. The dust/sand settles causing desertification and furthering decline in their standard of living.

B. Influence of Water on Development

1. The Niger River aided the economic position of the city in the Middle Ages through the transportation of goods, especially salt.
2. Importance of salt: Salt's ability to preserve food was a foundation of civilization. It eliminated the dependence on seasonal availability of food and it allowed travel over long distances. However, salt was difficult to obtain, and so it was a highly valued trade item. (Salt is in the cabinet)
3. Since the flooding of the Niger River has moved its course its original path, water is scarce. Provision for water is obtained through the use of cone wells, hand wells, or flooding river waters. Women and children carry water in buckets to be used for drinking, cooking and hygiene from the wells twice a day.

II. Historical Perspective (Arizona History and Social Science Standards 6.SP1.1, 6.SP1.3, 6.SP2.1, 6.C4.1)

- A. Timbuktu originated as a seasonal Tuareg nomad camp around a well that was maintained by a group of slaves under an old woman named Buktu, meaning "place of Buktu."
1. In the 12th century Timbuktu became a permanent settlement & a major trading center in the Malian Empire.
 2. During the 13th - 15th centuries, Timbuktu's "Golden Age" was an important time of trade, culture and learning.
 - a. Upon returning from his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324, King Mansa Musa I annexed Timbuktu. The city became part of the Mali Empire, and King Musa ordered the construction of a royal palace, grand mosques and Islamic learning centers. (Point to picture of mosque - made of mud brick)

- b. Education was very important as Timbuktu was a world center of Islamic teaching, arts and science. Even the slaves were literate.
 - c. An active trade in books between Timbuktu and other parts of the Islamic world encouraged thousands of manuscripts to be written under the support of emperor Askia Mohammed.
 - 3. Throughout Timbuktu's history, it has been invaded and conquered many times by tribal factions of Tuareg and Songayan empires, Moroccan occupation, and French colonial rule. The primary reason was to gain economic control over the trade routes and gold mines.
 - 4. French is the official language of Timbuktu. (Make sure students get the connection of why French is the official language.)
- B. Why is it that today Timbuktu is one of the poorest countries in the world with the inhabitants earning less than \$500 per year?
- 1. Water scarcity limits the production of crops, herding animals, and hygiene, and is a barrier to improving the lives of the poverty-ridden people. (Scarcity: severely limited supply; Adapt: to make more suitable by changing)
 - 2. Limited transportation opportunities
 - 3. Numerous invasions and political turmoil
 - 4. Lack of educational skills

Due to the need for manpower in cultivating the crops, herding animals, carrying water, and assisting in leather and/or jewelry work, children's education is usually 6 years of primary education and 3 years of secondary education. There are much fewer students in secondary education levels.

III. Cultural/Connections (Arizona History and Social Science Standards 6.SP1.2, 6.SP1.3, 6.H1.2, 6.H3.2)

A. How are we in Tempe connected to Timbuktu?

1. We live in a desert and are highly dependent on water.
2. We can identify with Timbuktu's hot temperatures, dust storms, droughts and floods.
3. Because there is not enough rainfall to grow crops, farmers must use irrigation methods.
4. We both have rivers, Salt River and Niger River.
5. Tempe Sister Cities have provided 7 hand water wells to ease the burden of supplying water to the inhabitants of Timbuktu. (See well artifact in cupboard)
6. They play basketball - only barefoot!

B. Cultural Differences

1. Food preparation: There are no grocery stores or fast food restaurants in Timbuktu.
 - a. Families cultivate crops in small plots and must carry water up cone wells to irrigate. Some families have adapted to being part of cooperatives wherein water is pumped from the river. The families themselves consume nearly all crops.
 - b. Women and girls pound millet for 6 - 8 hours to make flour for bread.
2. Religious culture is predominantly Muslim.
3. Marriages are arranged for girls usually by age 12 to older men. Girls are married by age 14. (This is changing)
 - a. Women cannot own anything.
4. Shoes are taken off in homes where rugs are present. There is little furniture; rather they utilize pillows on the floor.
 - a. Food is eaten from a central dish with the right hand only.

IV. Economic/Trade (Arizona History and Social Science Standards 6.E3.2, 6.E5.1, 6.G3.1, 6.G3.2, 6.H1.2)

A. Trade Routes:

1. During the Middle Ages Timbuktu flourished from the trade in salt, gold, ivory, and slaves.
2. To barter is to trade for goods without the use of money.
 - a. Because Timbuktu is so poor, currency or money has little value. Food from the family plots is likely traded for meat or other crops.
3. Until the 1960s most of the salt slabs were transported by large salt caravans twice a year.
 - a. The caravans consisted of several thousand camels. It took three weeks each way transporting food to the miners and returning with each camel loaded with four or five 30 kg slabs of salt. They were then loaded on boats navigating the Niger River to other towns in Mali.
 - b. Today salt slabs are transported by truck even though the roads are not always paved.
4. Timbuktu's economy today is based on the individual efforts of craftsmen, herding and tourism.
 - a. Sons are taught by their fathers the family trade: jewelry making or leatherwork.
 - b. The rare manuscripts found in Timbuktu's libraries and inclusion of UNESCO's World Heritage Site designations are drawing tourists.

V. Conclusion

During the latter part of the medieval period Timbuktu grew to be a bustling center of activity with trading centers, caravans, religious mosques and education. However, throughout Timbuktu's history numerous invasions and political tensions have caused the decline of this city. In 1988 Timbuktu was selected as a UNESCO's World Heritage Site for its influence of early Islamization in Africa, the culture and scholarly contributions of the Golden Age during the Songhay Empire, and the construction of the mosques.

Timeline

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| c. 1100 | Timbuktu was just a seasonal Tuareg nomad camp located around a well maintained by a woman named "Buktu" |
| 1200-1400 | Timbuktu becomes a major trading center in the Malian Empire reaching a population of 100,000 during this time.

1324 Mansa Musa, King of Mali annexes Timbuktu and begins the "Golden Age" of architectural, religious and educational pursuits. |
| 1375 | Timbuktu appeared in the Catalan Atlas (the most important map of the medieval period), showing that it was a commercial center linking to North African cities. |
| 1893 | Timbuktu was annexed by a small group of French soldiers. Timbuktu became part of French Sudan (Soudan Francais), a colony of France. |
| 1960 | Mali became an independent country. |
| 1991 | Became a Tempe Sister City |

ARTIFACTS GIVEN TO STUDENTS - BEADS TO SYMBOLIZE TRADING

ARTIFACTS FROM TIMBUKTU:

Wooden carved giraffe

Wood and stone beads

Warrior's Leather Vest

African wall decoration

Leather thongs

African cloth for Covering Table

Hand dyed leather bag with leather fringe

Hand dyed leather pillow

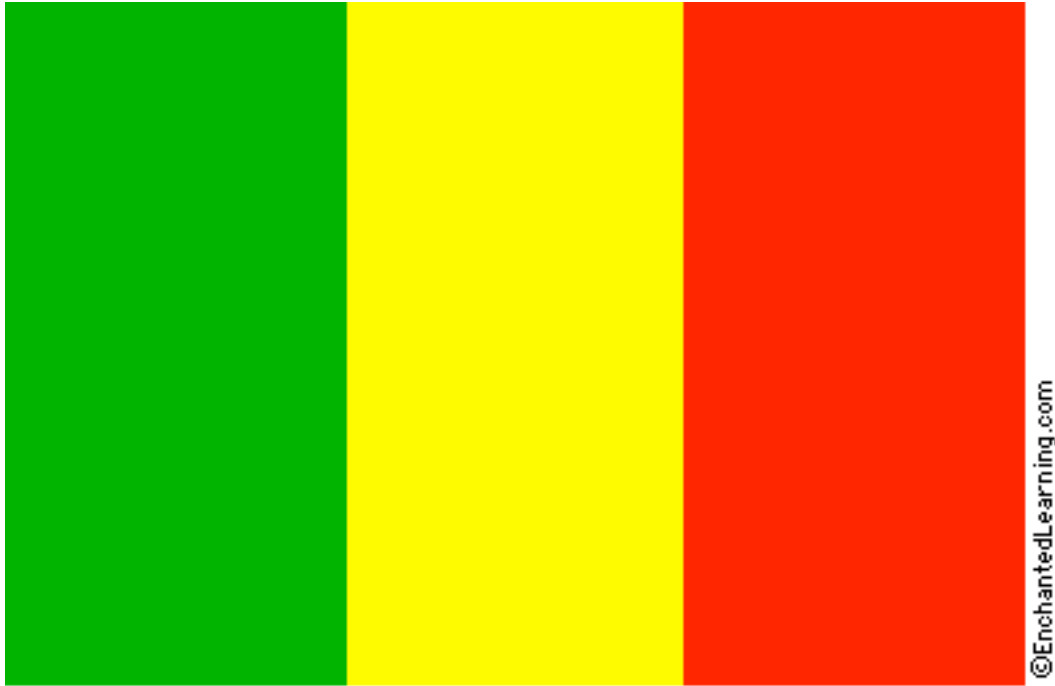
Woven African hat

Ornate weapons

Model and pictures of wells dug

Camel and goat puppets

FLAG OF MALI



Mali is a country in western Africa. Mali's flag is a green, yellow and red tricolor with vertical stripes (the green stripe is by the flagpole). These are the pan-African colors. Mali's flag was adopted on March 1, 1961.

The original flag of Mali (1959) was similar to today's flag, but pictured a black person (a kanaga symbol) in the central yellow stripe. In 1961, soon after independence from France and after Senegal left the Mali federation, this flag was banished because of religious objections (in the Muslim religion, images of beings are not allowed).