Assessment: The Influence of Islam on West Africa

1. What protected Ghana from being conquered by Muslim armies in the 700s?
   A. strong walls  
   B. elite warriors  
   C. a peace treaty  
   D. the vast desert

Mastering the Content

Circle the letter next to the best answer.

2. Islam was first brought to West Africa by
   A. slave raiders.  
   B. armed nomads.  
   C. caravan traders.  
   D. religious refugees.

3. Which event in Kumbi, in Ghana, in 1076 contributed to the spread of Islam?
   A. construction of a university  
   B. conquest by the Almoravids  
   C. discovery of gold in the forest  
   D. order for all men to go on a hajj

4. Which of these religious practices of West African Muslims began before Islamic influence reached the region?
   A. studying the Qur'an  
   B. praying to God in Arabic  
   C. building mosques for worship  
   D. praying to the spirits of ancestors

5. One way the Mande people built Mali into an empire was to
   A. construct large irrigation systems.  
   B. find the secret gold mines.  
   C. take control of trans-Saharan trade.  
   D. require military service from women.

6. Which of these resulted from the hajj of Mansa Musa?
   A. Egypt began paying tribute to the kingdom of Mali.  
   B. People in West Africa began to adopt Islamic ideas.  
   C. Armies from West Africa raided as far north as Spain.  
   D. People in other lands learned that Mali was rich and important.
7. Sunni Ali led the Songhai people to
   A. construct new trade routes.
   B. migrate to a different region.
   C. return to the forest to mine gold.
   D. break away from Mali by force.

8. How did the Songhai empire differ from the empire of Mali?
   A. It spread Islam by force.
   B. It began and ended earlier.
   C. It controlled a smaller area.
   D. It restored traditional beliefs.

9. Why did Islam spread fairly easily in Mali?
   A. Rulers of Mali expelled anyone who opposed Islam.
   B. Arab rulers visited Mali and explained Islamic beliefs.
   C. Muslim leaders conquered Mali and imposed Islamic law.
   D. People in Mali blended Islam with their traditional religions.

10. What goes best in the empty box?

    A. increase in attendance at Islamic schools
    B. adoption of Islam by West African rulers.
    C. decline in loyalty to the older Islamic empires
    D. popularity of Islam among the common people

11. What change caused West African courts to follow the practices listed below?
    • written law
    • cases heard by judges
    • followed rules of evidence
    A. introduction of Islamic law
    B. establishment of universities
    C. restoration of customary law
    D. replacement of emirs by sultans
12. Why did people studying at the University of Sankore copy books by hand?
   A. They made students write texts by memory.
   B. They did not have printing press technology.
   C. They wanted to keep books rare and precious.
   D. They thought handmade books were more holy.

13. For what was the city of Timbuktu especially well known?
   A. its productive salt mines
   B. its talented portrait artists
   C. its community of scholars
   D. its sea trade with East Asia

14. As the use of Arabic spread, how were native West African languages maintained?
   A. They were spoken in everyday life.
   B. They were taught in children's schools.
   C. They were required in the royal courts.
   D. They were used for trade and commerce.

15. Which housing style was introduced to West Africa by a Muslim architect?

   - A.
   - B.
   - C.
   - D.
16. What is one artistic form that both West Africans and Muslims valued even before their cultures met?
   A. geometric designs
   B. decorative calligraphy
   C. carvings of animals
   D. bright silks for robes

**Applying Social Studies Skills**

Use the timeline and your knowledge of history to complete the sentences or answer the questions below.

17. Find Ibn Battuta’s visit to West Africa on the timeline. Then use the timeline to determine what was the main West African power at that time.

   The major power that Ibn Battuta visited was

18. About how long after Muhammad’s death did a Muslim ruler come to power in West Africa?

19. What two items on the timeline do you think contributed to the last item on the timeline? Explain your answer.
20. Suppose you are a tour guide in Timbuktu about 1400. Your job is to show foreign visitors around the city. You will stop at three sites: a mosque, a market, and a school. At each site, you will describe how each place shows one to two influences and changes brought about by the spread of Islam into West Africa.

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