Study Guide for African Portion of the Islam/Africa Benchmark Assessment

1. Describe the different parts of West African village society. Include family unit, extended family, village chiefs and council of elders. (Pgs. 116-117)

2. Along what river did the great civilizations of West Africa arise? (Pg. 130)

3. Describe the different uses of iron in West Africa and what people discovered it? (Pg. 118)

4. Why was the camel an important animal in desert trading? (Pg. 119)

5. Describe the gold and salt trade in West Africa. (Pgs. 120, 123-133)

6. Describe the importance of the city of Timbuktu. (Pgs. 139 & 144)

7. What group of people led camel caravans across the Sahara Desert? (Pg. 130)

8. Why was the location of the Empire of Ghana important? (Pg. 131)

9. Why was salt so valuable to the people of Africa? (Pg. 131)
10. How did Ghana’s rulers become wealthy from the traders that passed through their empire? (Pg. 133)

11. What did the Empires of Ghana and Mali have in common? (Pg. 136)

12. Describe what happened to Mali under the reign of Sundiata. (Pg. 137)

13. Describe the importance of Mansa Musa’s pilgrimage to Mecca. (Pg. 138)


15. Define griot. How were they important to the history of Africa? (Pg. 147)

16. Describe the different vegetation zones in West Africa? (Pg. 114)

17. How did Mansa Musa show religious tolerance? (Pg. 140)

18. What two leaders brought wealth and stability to the Kingdom of Songhai? (143-144)