

Core Lesson 1

World Travel and Trade

VOCABULARY

merchant
kingdom
caravan

Vocabulary Strategy

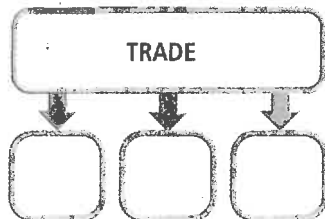
merchant

Trader is a synonym for **merchant**. To earn money, merchants trade goods that people want.



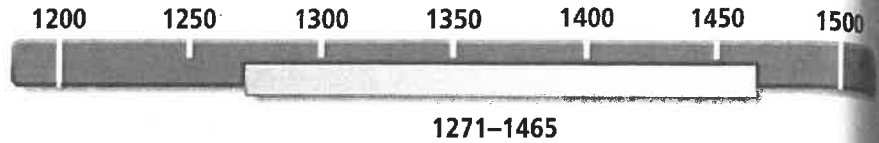
READING SKILL

Cause and Effect Note the effects that trade had on people in Europe, Asia, and Africa.



STANDARDS

SS.A.1.2.1.5.1 People, ideas, decisions,
World Travel and Trade



Build on What You Know Have you ever traded one thing for something you wanted more? Hundreds of years ago, people made long journeys to trade the goods they had for other goods they wanted.

Trade with China

Main Idea Trade between Europe and Asia spread new ideas.

Before 1500, there were few connections between the Eastern and the Western hemispheres. Most Europeans, Africans, and Asians did not know that the Americas existed. The Vikings, a group of people from northern Europe, had sailed to what is now eastern Canada and started a settlement there. The settlement did not last, however, and other Europeans didn't follow them. Some historians believe that African or Asian sailors may have also traveled to the Americas, but if they did, few people learned of the journeys.

Marco Polo Travels to China

The travelers to distant places were often merchants. A **merchant** is someone who buys and sells goods to earn money. In 1271, three merchants from Venice, Italy, began a trading journey to China. One of them was **Marco Polo**. He was only about 17 years old when he left Italy with his father and uncle. The journey to China took three years.

Marco Polo stayed in China for 16 years. He worked for China's ruler, **Kublai Khan** (KOO bly KAHN). While traveling in China, Marco Polo saw many inventions, such as paper, printing, and gunpowder.



Traveling Merchants This illustration, made in the 1300s, shows Marco Polo and his family traveling by camel and horse on the Silk Road.

When Polo returned to Venice, he told of his travels in a book. His stories of the East and the journey on the Silk Road fascinated Europeans. They became more interested in traveling to Asia. The Silk Road was not one road, but several trade routes connecting China to Europe. Merchants traveled the routes to China to buy silk, spices, and other goods. The Chinese made silk, which is a very finely woven cloth. Wealthy Europeans were willing to pay high prices for silk. Merchants became rich by bringing goods from Asia to Europe on the Silk Road.

Chinese Sailors Explore

More than 100 years after Marco Polo visited China, the Chinese explored the world. The ruler of China wanted to impress other countries with China's power. He sent Admiral Zheng He (jung HUH) on a series of voyages. In 1405, Zheng He set sail with hundreds of ships and thousands of sailors. Some of the ships were longer than a football field. Zheng He sailed throughout Southeast Asia and all the way to Africa's east coast. Zheng He traded goods, such as gold and silk, with the people he met. He once brought a giraffe from Africa back to China.

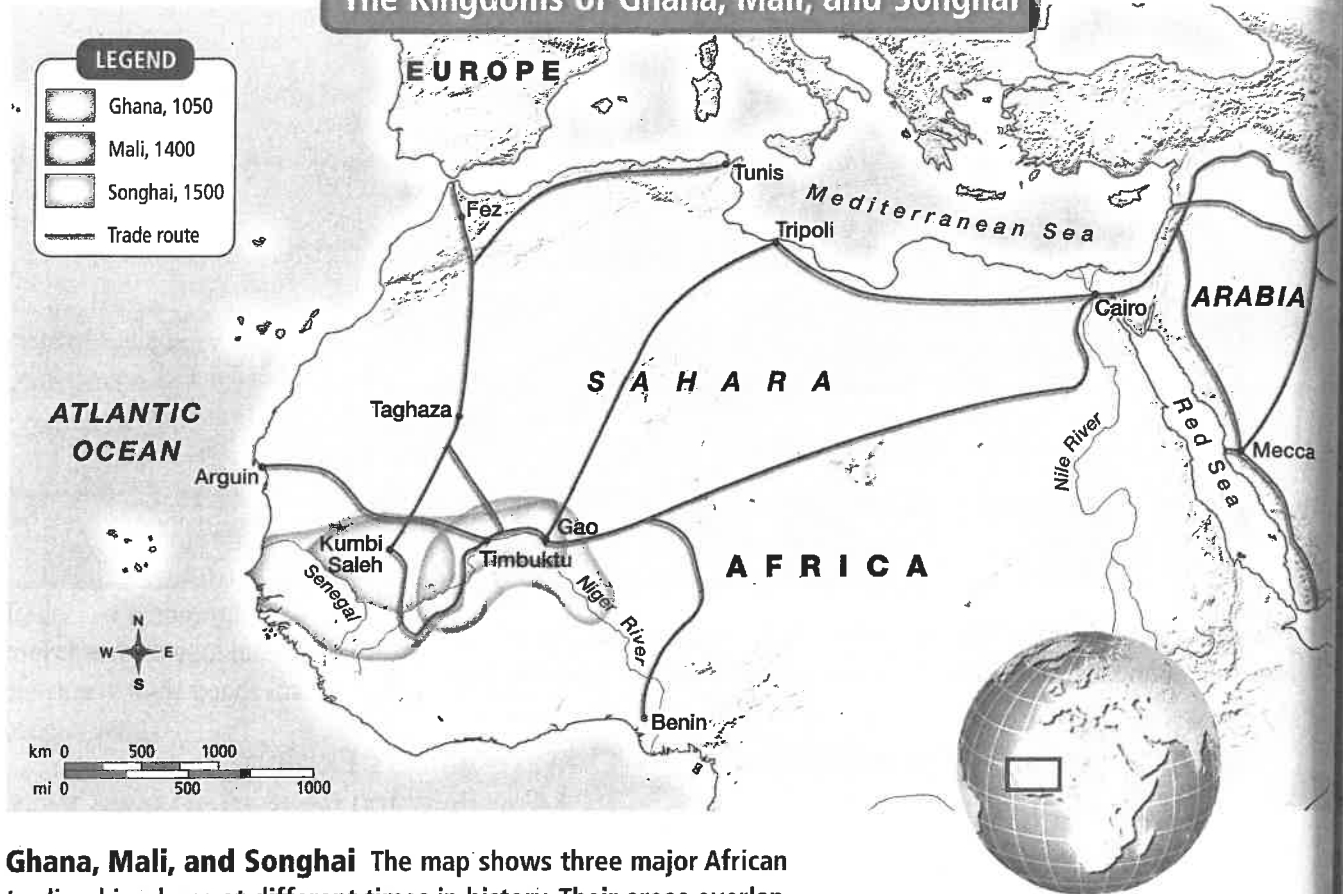
In 1434, a new ruler stopped Chinese exploration. He believed that China did not need to have contact with other countries. Zheng He's amazing voyages came to an end.

REVIEW What was the importance of the Silk Road?

Zheng He The Chinese explorer sits on one of his boats.



The Kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai



Ghana, Mali, and Songhai The map shows three major African trading kingdoms at different times in history. Their areas overlap.

SKILL Reading Maps Which kingdom covered the largest area?

African Trading Kingdoms

Main Idea People in West Africa gained wealth and knowledge through trade.

Trade took place in Africa as well as in Europe and Asia. Several kingdoms in West Africa grew strong through trade. A **kingdom** is a place ruled by a king or queen.

The first West African trading kingdom was Ghana, which grew powerful in the 700s. Ghana was rich in gold, but did not have enough salt. Salt was used to keep food from spoiling. Merchants from Arabia brought salt to Ghana by crossing the Sahara, the largest desert in the world.

This desert crossing was dangerous. For safety, merchants traveled in large caravans, using camels to carry their goods and supplies. A **caravan** is a group of people and animals who travel together. After reaching Ghana, the Arab merchants traded their salt for gold.

Arab merchants taught people in Ghana about their religion, Islam. Many people in Ghana became Muslims, or followers of Islam.

By 1240, the nearby Kingdom of Mali had taken control of Ghana. Mali's cities became new centers for trade. One of its largest and most important cities was Timbuktu (TIHM buhk TOO).

Mansa Musa

Mali's greatest king was the Muslim ruler, **Mansa Musa** (MAHN sah MOO sah). One person said that Mansa Musa was

“the most powerful, the richest, the most fortunate, the most feared by his enemies, and the most able to do good to those around him.”

In 1324, Mansa Musa traveled to Mecca, the most holy Muslim city in Arabia. He set up trade agreements with the cities he visited. When he returned to Mali, he brought scholars and artists from Arabia with him. They made Timbuktu a center for learning and art as well as trade.

Mali grew weaker after Mansa Musa's rule. A new kingdom called Songhai (SONG hy) took over much of Mali in 1468. For over one hundred years, Songhai continued the trade begun by the earlier kingdoms.

REVIEW What effect did trade with North Africa have on Ghana's culture?

Lesson Summary

Trade connected people in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Marco Polo, Zheng He, and Mansa Musa spread new ideas as well as goods. Their travels inspired others to explore even farther, seeking new trade routes and new knowledge.

Why It Matters . . .

Trade and travel brought the people of Asia, Europe, and Africa in contact with each other. Ideas and goods began to flow freely between them.



Mansa Musa
He brought hundreds of pounds of gold with him to Mecca to give away as gifts.

Lesson Review



1 **VOCABULARY** choose the correct words to complete this sentence.

merchant caravan kingdom

A _____ traveled in a _____ for safety and protection.

2 **READING SKILL** What effect did Mansa Musa's trip to Mecca have on Mali?

3 **MAIN IDEA: Culture** What did Europeans learn from Marco Polo's trip to China?

4 **MAIN IDEA: Economics** What did Ghana and Arabia trade with each other?

5 **PEOPLE TO KNOW** Why do you think Marco Polo is remembered today?

6 **TIMELINE SKILL** In what year did Mansa Musa visit Mecca?

7 **CRITICAL THINKING: Synthesize** Explain how trade increased connections among Europe, Asia, and Africa.

WRITING ACTIVITY What were some of the reasons that people traded with each other in Marco Polo's time and Mansa Musa's time? Write two paragraphs explaining your answer.