Early Islamic Civilization and African Kingdoms
After the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, the power of the pope increased throughout medieval Europe.
Hagia Sophia, or Church of the Holy Wisdom, was built in the 500s CE in Constantinople as the main cathedral for the Eastern Empire.
In 1054 CE, a split occurred in the Church in the Eastern and Western Empires.
In 610 CE, Muhammad had his first vision of an angel speaking to him as God’s messenger.

**Big Question:** Within the religion of Islam, who is Muhammad?
Big Question: What does Muhammad’s decision regarding the replacement of the holy stone reveal about his character?

In 622 CE, Muhammad and his followers escaped to Medina (the Hegira).
Big Question: Why was the flight to Medina the start of a new period in the history of Islam?
CHAPTER 4: Islamic Culture

Big Question: How did the Islamic Empire contribute to the development of Western knowledge and culture?

750–1200 CE: Europeans became aware of Islamic knowledge, especially in medicine and mathematics.
CHAPTER 4: Islamic Culture

Big Question: How did the Islamic Empire contribute to the development of Western knowledge and culture?

The distinctive features of Islamic art and architecture were introduced to Europeans.
Big Question: What events caused the First Crusade?

Pope Urban II called on Christians to recapture the Holy Land during the First Crusade (1096–1099 CE).
Big Question: What events caused the First Crusade?
CHAPTER 5: The Crusades

Big Question: What events caused the First Crusade?

In 1192 CE, at the end of the Third Crusade, Richard the Lionhearted and Saladin arrived at a compromise regarding the Holy Land.
Big Question: What events caused the First Crusade?

In 1453 CE, the Ottoman Turks captured Constantinople and renamed it Istanbul. They converted the church Hagia Sophia into a mosque.
Early and Medieval African Kingdoms Timeline Cards
The ancient Egyptian civilization began around 3150 BCE and lasted thousands of years, thanks to the fertile land of the Nile River.

**Big Question:** How might the geography of Africa have influenced the development of early African kingdoms and empires?
1500–1000 BCE: The Egyptian Empire spread to include the rich trading center of Kush.

**Big Question:** How did trade contribute to the rise of the Kush and Aksum kingdoms?
CHAPTER 2: The Kingdoms of Kush and Aksum

730–591 BCE: The Kushites defeated and ruled the Egyptians for 150 years. In 591, after another defeat by the Egyptians, the Kushites moved their capital to Meroë. Kushite kings were buried in these pyramids.

Big Question: How did trade contribute to the rise of the Kush and Aksum kingdoms?
350 CE: The kingdom of Kush ended when it was attacked by its southern neighbor, Aksum.

Big Question: How did trade contribute to the rise of the Kush and Aksum kingdoms?
700s CE: In the 700s, when Arabs of the eastern Mediterranean conquered North Africa and Spain, trade routes were extended even farther. The caravans also helped to transport both goods and new ideas from the East to Spain, and beyond.

**Big Question:** How did trade help spread ideas?
CHAPTER 4: Ghana, Land of Gold

300–1200s CE: Ghana became very rich and powerful by controlling the gold-salt trade.

Big Question: Why was salt almost as valuable as gold during this time?
CHAPTER 5: Mali and Sundiata Keita

1230–1255: Sundiata became a powerful leader in the empire of Mali.

**Big Question:** Why might legendary stories have sprung up around Sundiata?
1307–1332: During his rule, Mansa Musa expanded the empire of Mali and made it even more powerful.

**Big Question:** What was so extraordinary about Mansa Musa’s pilgrimage to Mecca?
1324: During his pilgrimage to and from Mecca, Mansa Musa lavished gold upon many people.

**Big Question:** What was so extraordinary about Mansa Musa’s pilgrimage to Mecca?
CHAPTER 7: Songhai and Askia Muhammad

1461–Early 1600s: The Songhai Empire was centered around the Niger River.

Big Question: As Askia Muhammad expanded his empire, how did Islam grow within it?
1493–1538: During the rule of Askia Muhammad, Islam spread throughout the Songhai Empire. Askia Muhammad’s tomb is still an important historical site today.

**Big Question:** As Askia Muhammad expanded his empire, how did Islam grow within it?
Big Question: Why were the travels of Ibn Battuta so extraordinary for the time in which he lived?

1320s–1350s: Ibn Battuta traveled extensively throughout the medieval Muslim world. He published a book of his travels called *Rihlah*.
**Medieval Islamic Empires**

*Subject Matter Expert*

Ahmed H. al-Rahim, PhD, Department of Religious Studies, University of Virginia

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**Early and Medieval African Kingdoms**

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