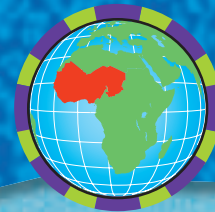


Chapter

16

West Africa



**The World
and Its People**

NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC



To learn more about the people and places of West Africa, view *The World and Its People* Chapter 19 video.



Our World Today

Online

CLICK HERE

Chapter Overview Visit the *Our World Today: People, Places, and Issues* Web site at tx.owt.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 16—Chapter Overviews** to preview information about West Africa.

Guide to Reading

Main Idea

A large, oil-rich country, Nigeria has more people than any other African nation.

Terms to Know

- mangrove
- savanna
- harmattan
- subsistence farm
- cacao
- compound
- civil war

Reading Strategy

Create a chart like the one below. Then list two facts about Nigeria in each category.

Nigeria	Fact #1	Fact #2
Land		
Economy		
People		



Exploring our World

In 1991 Abuja replaced Lagos as Nigeria's capital. The new city was built in an undeveloped region in central Nigeria. Today Abuja has new buildings and a network of roads linking it with other parts of the country. It also has schools. These children prepare to pray at the Islamic Academy in Abuja.



The West African country of **Nigeria** takes its name from the **Niger River**, which flows through western and central Nigeria. One of the largest nations in Africa, Nigeria is more than twice the size of California.

From Tropics to Savannas

Nigeria has a long coastline on the Gulf of Guinea, an arm of the Atlantic Ocean. Along Nigeria's coast, the land is covered with mangrove swamps. A **mangrove** is a tropical tree with roots that extend both above and beneath the water. As you travel inland, the land becomes vast tropical rain forests. Small villages appear in only a few clearings. The forests gradually thin into savannas in central Nigeria. **Savannas** are tropical grasslands with only a few trees. Highlands and plateaus also make up this area. Most of the country has high average temperatures and seasonal rains. The grasslands of the far north have a dry climate. In the winter months, a dusty wind called the **harmattan** blows south from the Sahara.

Reading Check What kinds of vegetation are found in Nigeria?

Economic Challenges

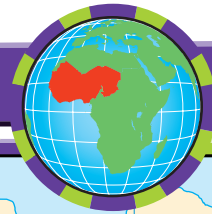
Nigeria is one of the world's major oil-producing countries. More than 90 percent of the country's income comes from oil exports. The government has used money from oil to build highways, schools, skyscrapers, and factories. These factories make food products, textiles, chemicals, machinery, and vehicles. Still, more than one-third of Nigeria's people lack jobs and live in poverty.

Nigeria began to experience economic troubles during the 1980s. As a result of falling world oil prices, Nigeria's income dropped. At the same time, many people left their farms in search of better-paying jobs in the cities. In addition, a few years of low rainfall meant smaller harvests. As a result, food production fell. Nigeria—which had once exported food—had to import food to feed its people.

Despite oil resources, Nigeria's people mainly work as farmers. Most have **subsistence farms**, or small plots that grow just enough



West Africa: Political



Applying Map Skills

TAKS Practice

1. What West African national capital lies farthest north?
2. Which country is almost surrounded by Senegal?

Find NGS online map resources @ www.nationalgeographic.com/maps

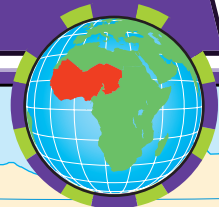
to feed their families. Some work on larger farms that produce such cash crops as rubber, peanuts, palm oil, and cacao. The **cacao** is a tropical tree whose seeds are used to make chocolate and cocoa. Nigeria is a leading producer of cacao beans.

✓ Reading Check How has Nigeria's government used money from oil exports?

Nigeria's People

About 126.6 million people live in Nigeria—more people than in any other country in Africa. The map on page 444 shows that most of the people live along the coast and around the city of **Kano** in the north.

One of the strongest bonds that Africans have is a sense of belonging to a group or family. Nigeria has about 250 ethnic groups. The four largest are the Hausa (HOW•suh), Fulani (foo•LAH•nee), Yoruba (YAWR•uh•buh), and Ibo (EE•boh). Nigerians speak many different





Nigeria's Economy

Nigerian women canoe past an oil refinery in the Niger River delta (left). Cacao pods are harvested in Nigeria (above).

Human/Environment Interaction What are Nigeria's important cash crops?

African languages. They use English in business and government affairs, though. About one-half of Nigeria's people are Muslim, and another 40 percent are Christian. The remaining 10 percent practice traditional African religions.

About 60 percent of Nigerians live in rural villages. The typical family lives in a **compound**, or a group of houses surrounded by walls. Usually the village has a weekly market run by women. The women sell locally-grown products such as meat, cloth, yams, nuts, and palm oil. The market also provides a chance for friends to meet.

Long-standing rural ways are changing, however. Many young men now move to the cities to find work. The women stay in the villages to raise children and to farm the land. The men, when they are able, return home to see their families and to share the money they have made.

Nigeria's largest city is the port of **Lagos**, the former capital. Major banks, department stores, and restaurants serve the 11 million people who live in Lagos and its surrounding areas. **Ibadan** (EE•bah•DAH•N), Kano, and Abuja (ah•BOO•jah) lie inland. **Abuja**, the present capital, is a planned city that was begun during the 1980s.

Nigerians take pride in both old and new features of their culture. Artists make elaborate wooden masks, metal sculptures, and colorful cloth. In the past, Nigerians passed on stories, sayings, and riddles by word of mouth from one generation to the next. In 1986 Nigerian writer **Wole Soyinka** (WAW•lay shaw•YIHNG•ka) became the first African to win the Nobel Prize in literature.

History and Government The earliest known inhabitants of the area were the **Nok** people. They lived between the Niger and Benue Rivers between 300 B.C. and A.D. 200. The Nok were known as skilled metalworkers and traders.

Over the centuries, powerful city-states and kingdoms became centers of trade and the arts. People in the north came in contact with Muslim cultures and adopted the religion of Islam. People in the south developed cultures based on traditional African religions.

During the 1400s, Europeans arrived in Africa looking for gold and Africans to take overseas as enslaved laborers. In 1884 European leaders divided most of Africa into colonies. The borders of these colonies, however, often sliced through ethnic lands. As a result, many ethnic groups found their members living in two or more separate territories. By the early 1900s, the British had taken control of Nigeria.

In 1960 Nigeria finally became an independent country. Ethnic, religious, and political disputes soon tore it apart, however. One ethnic group, the Ibo, tried to set up its own country. A **civil war**—a fight between different groups within a country—resulted. In this bloody war, starvation and conflict led to 2 million deaths. The Ibo were defeated, and their region remained part of Nigeria.

Nigeria has faced the challenge of building a stable government. Military leaders have often ruled the country. In 1999 Nigerians were able to vote for a president in free elections. Nigerians are continuing to work towards greater national unity, but face enormous problems.

 **Reading Check** What are the four largest ethnic groups in Nigeria?

 **TAKS Practice**

Section
1

Assessment

Defining Terms

1. **Define** mangrove, savanna, harmattan, subsistence farm, cacao, compound, civil war.

Recalling Facts

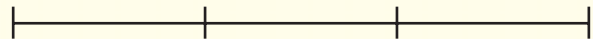
2. **Place** Describe the changes in Nigeria's physical geography as you move from the coast inland.
3. **Place** What is the capital of Nigeria?
4. **Culture** How many ethnic groups are represented by the people of Nigeria?

Critical Thinking

5. **Understanding Cause and Effect** Why did a drop in oil prices cause economic troubles in Nigeria in the 1980s?
6. **Drawing Conclusions** Why do you think an ethnic group, such as the Ibo, would want to set up their own country?

Graphic Organizer

7. **Organizing Information** On a time line like the one below, place the following events and their dates in order: Nigeria becomes independent. Nok people work in metal and trade for goods. Free elections are held. British take control of Nigeria.



Applying Social Studies Skills

8. **Analyzing Maps** Study the physical map on page 436. Into what larger body of water does the Niger River empty?

Critical Thinking

Skill

TX TAKS Practice

Drawing Inferences and Conclusions

Suppose your teacher brought to class a colorful wooden mask, and a classmate said, "Wow. That's from Nigeria." You might infer that your classmate has an interest in African art and, therefore, recognizes the mask as coming from Nigeria.

Learning the Skill

To *infer* means to evaluate information and arrive at a conclusion. When you make inferences, you "read between the lines" or draw conclusions that are not stated directly in the text. You must use the available facts *and* your own knowledge and experience to form a judgment or opinion about the material.

Use the following steps to help draw inferences and make conclusions:

- Read carefully for stated facts and ideas.
- Summarize the information and list the important facts.
- Apply related information that you may already know to make inferences.
- Use your knowledge and insight to develop some conclusions about these facts.

Practicing the Skill

Read the passage below, and then answer the questions that follow.

Nigerian art forms reflect the people's beliefs in spirits and nature. Yoruba masks are carved out of wood, reflecting the forces of



Yoruba wood masks ▲

nature and gods. The masks are used in ceremonies to help connect with the spirit of their ancestors. The masks also appear at funerals in order to please the spirits of the dead. Of all the Yoruba masks, the helmet masks of the Epa cult are the most spectacular.

1. What topic is the writer describing?
2. What facts are presented?
3. What can you infer about the role of masks in Nigerian life?
4. What do you already know about religious ceremonies?
5. What conclusion can you make about traditional religions in Nigeria?

Applying the Skill

Study the photos of Nigerians on page 437. What can you infer about life in Nigeria from the photographs? What evidence supports this inference, or conclusion?

GO TO

Practice key skills with **Glencoe Skillbuilder Interactive Workbook, Level 1.**

Other Countries of West Africa

Guide to Reading

Main Idea

The Sahel countries face a continuing struggle to keep grasslands from turning into desert, but the coastal countries receive plenty of rainfall.

Terms to Know

- overgraze
- drought
- desertification
- bauxite
- phosphate

Reading Strategy

Create five charts like this one, filling in at least one key fact about five West African countries for each category.

Country	
Land	
Economy	
Culture	



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Exploring our World

Slowly but surely, the desert is creeping into grassy inland areas of West Africa north of Nigeria. Over the past 100 years, a stretch of the Sahara about 100 miles (161 km) wide has swallowed parts of countries in West Africa.

This growing desert is like an invading army slowly taking over the countries of the vast Sahel.



Five countries—**Mauritania** (MAWR•uh•TAY•nee•uh), **Mali** (MAH•lee), **Burkina Faso** (bur•KEE•nuh FAH•soh), **Niger** (NY•juhr), and **Chad**—are located in an area known as the **Sahel**. The word *Sahel* comes from an Arabic word that means “border.” In addition to the Sahel countries, West Africa includes 11 coastal countries. One country—**Cape Verde**—is a group of islands in the Atlantic Ocean. The other countries, including **Togo** and **Benin**, stretch along the Gulf of Guinea and the Atlantic coast.

Land and History of the Sahel

The Sahel receives little rainfall, so only short grasses and small trees can support grazing animals. Most people have traditionally herded livestock. Their flocks, unfortunately, have overgrazed the land in some places. When animals **overgraze** land, they strip areas so bare that plants cannot grow back. Then bare soil is blown away by winds.

In the Sahel, dry and wet periods usually follow each other. When the seasonal rains do not fall, drought takes hold. A **drought** is a long period of extreme dryness and water shortage. The latest drought occurred in the 1980s. Rivers dried up, crops failed, and millions of animals died. Thousands of people died of starvation. Millions of others fled to more productive southern areas. Overgrazing and drought have led to **desertification** where grasslands have become deserts.

History From the A.D. 500s to 1500s, three great African empires—**Ghana** (GAH•nuh), **Mali**, and **Songhai** (SAWNG•hy)—arose in the Sahel. These empires controlled the trade in gold, salt, and other goods between West Africa and the Arab lands of North Africa and Southwest Asia. To learn more about the salt trade, turn to page 450.

In the early 1300s, Mali's most famous ruler, **Mansa Musa**, made a journey in grand style to Makkah. This is the holy city of Islam located in the Arabian Peninsula. A faithful Muslim, Mansa Musa made his capital, Tombouctou (TOH•book•TOO), a leading center of Islamic learning. People came from all over the Muslim world to study there.

Invaders from North Africa defeated Songhai—the last of the great empires—in the late 1500s. During the 1800s, the Sahel region came under French rule. The French created five colonies in the area. In 1960 these five colonies became the independent nations of Mauritania, Mali, Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), Niger, and Chad.

 **Reading Check** What has caused the desertification of the Sahel?

The People of the Sahel

The Sahel countries are large in size but have small populations. If you look at the population map on page 444, you will see that most people live in the southern areas of the Sahel. Rivers flow here, and the land can be farmed or grazed. Yet even these areas do not have enough water and fertile land to support large numbers of people.

EXPLORING CULTURE

Clothing

To protect themselves from the hot Saharan sun, the Tuareg people wear layers of clothing under their long flowing robes. These loose cotton clothes help slow the evaporation of sweat and conserve body moisture. As a sign of respect for their superiors, Tuareg men cover their mouths and faces with veils. Women usually wear veils only for weddings. The veils are made of blue cloth dyed from crushed indigo. The blue dye easily rubs off onto the skin, earning the men the nickname “the Blue Men of the Desert.”

Looking Closer How is the clothing of the Tuareg appropriate for the land in which they live?



Today most people in the Sahel live in small towns. They are subsistence farmers who grow grains, such as millet and sorghum (SAWR•guh•m). For years, many people were nomads. Groups such as the Tuareg (TWAH•rehg), for example, would cross the desert with herds of camels. The Fulani herded cattle, goats, and sheep. The recent droughts forced many of them to give up their traditional way of life and move to the towns. Here they often live in crowded camps of tents.

Two countries in the Sahel, Mali and Burkina Faso, are among the poorest countries in the world. The landlocked countries of the Sahel have problems getting their products to overseas markets.

The people of the Sahel practice a mix of African, Arab, and European traditions. Most are Muslims and follow the Islamic religion. They speak Arabic as well as a variety of African languages. In many of the larger cities, French is also spoken.

 **Reading Check** Why have many people in the Sahel given up the nomadic lifestyle?

The Coastal Countries

If you look at the map on page 444, you will see the Cape Verde Islands off the Atlantic Coast. Skipping to **Senegal**, follow the countries in order around the coast: **Gambia**, **Guinea-Bissau**, **Guinea**, **Sierra Leone**, **Liberia**, **Côte d'Ivoire**, **Ghana**, **Togo**, and **Benin**.

Sandy beaches, thick mangrove swamps, and rain forests cover the shores of West Africa's coastal countries. Highland areas with grasses and trees lie inland. Several major rivers flow from these highlands to the coast. They include the Senegal, Gambia, Volta, and Niger Rivers. Rapids and shallow waters prevent large ships from traveling far inland.

Because they border the ocean, the coastal countries receive plenty of rainfall. Warm currents in the Gulf of Guinea create a moist, tropical rain forest climate in most coastal lowlands year-round. For many years, tropical disease, thick rain forests, and river rapids kept European explorers from entering the interior.

Damage to rain forests is also a problem along the densely settled West African coast, where forests have been cleared to make space for palm, coffee, cacao, and rubber plantations, as well as for many small farms. Population pressure on cultivated land is increasing rapidly. Dense clusters of settlements ring port cities such as **Abidjan** (Côte d'Ivoire), **Accra** (Ghana), and **Lagos** and **Port Harcourt** (Nigeria). Oil discoveries in eastern Nigeria and Gabon are now attracting even more people to the West African coast.

Despite rich agricultural resources, coastal West African countries import more in industrial goods than they export in natural products. Why? Agricultural products often rise and fall in price suddenly, and their value is not equal to finished goods. To meet their countries' needs, governments have to borrow money from other countries or international organizations.

 **Reading Check** What is attracting people to the West African coast?

Exploring Economics

Monoculture

The economies of some West African countries, such as Côte d'Ivoire, depend upon the production of one or two major crops. This practice is called monoculture. While this has the advantage of being able to produce enough product to export, it also has disadvantages. If worldwide demand for the product drops, the price also drops. A major drought or epidemic could destroy harvests and wipe out the nation's only major source of income.

History of the Coastal Countries

Ancient Ghana, an empire located at the headwaters of the Senegal and Niger Rivers, flourished between A.D. 700 and 1200. The people of Ghana knew how to make iron weapons, which they used to conquer neighboring groups of farmers and herders. Located on trade routes that connected the gold mines in the rain forests of West Africa with the copper and salt mines in the Sahara, Ghana prospered by taxing the goods that moved north and south along these trade routes. Ghana also had major deposits of gold.

The capital city of ancient Ghana covered a square mile and housed 30,000 people. The kingdom had a well-developed bureaucracy, controlled a large population, and could field an army of 200,000 warriors—at a time when major European battles involved only small numbers of soldiers. The wealth of the king's court was legendary. Europeans called Ghana “the land of gold.” This empire fell into decay in the 1200s.

In later times, the powerful and wealthy kingdoms of **Ashanti** and **Abomey** ruled West Africa's coastal region. These kingdoms were centers of trade, learning, and the arts. From the late 1400s to the early 1800s, Europeans set up trading posts along the West African coast. From these posts they traded with Africans for gold, ivory, and other goods that people in Europe wanted.

Effects of Slave Trade Many African states had sold people as slaves to Europeans and Asians long before the Portuguese reached Africa. Most of these slaves were prisoners of war captured in local battles. Only after the development of European sailing ships did the trade in human beings become a major source of income for the kings of West African states, however.

The Europeans also enslaved and forced millions of Africans to migrate to the Americas to work on plantations and in mines. This trade in human beings, which also took place among African countries, was a disaster for West Africa. The removal of so many young and skilled people devastated West African families, villages, and economies.

The French, British, and Portuguese eventually divided up the coastal region and set up colonies to obtain the region's rich resources. In 1957 Ghana became the first country in Africa to become independent. By the late 1970s, no West African country was under European rule.

Reading Check What two things allowed ancient Ghana to prosper economically?

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

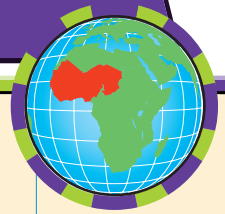
On Location



Niger Highway

Rivers of West Africa provide not only water but transportation. Here, freight boats on the Niger River deliver goods to Benin's people.

Place What prevents large ships from traveling far inland on West Africa's rivers?



Applying Map Skills

TAKS Practice

1. What are the five largest cities in Nigeria?
2. Where are the region's most densely populated areas?

Find NGS online map resources @ www.nationalgeographic.com/maps

Cities

- City with more than 5,000,000 people
- City with 1,000,000 to 5,000,000 people
- City with 500,000 to 1,000,000 people

People of the Coastal Countries

People in coastal West Africa cherish family ties. Some practice traditional African religions, whereas others are Christian or Muslim. Local African languages are spoken in everyday conversation. Reflecting the region's colonial histories, languages such as French, English, and Portuguese are used in business and government. Most of the people in Gambia, Senegal, and Guinea work in agriculture. Guinea is also rich in bauxite and diamonds. **Bauxite** is a mineral used to make aluminum. Guinea has about 25 percent of the world's reserves of bauxite. Senegal is an important source of phosphate. **Phosphate** is mineral salt that has phosphorus, which is used in fertilizers.

Liberia is the only West African nation that was never a colony. African Americans freed from slavery founded Liberia in 1822. **Monrovia**, Liberia's capital, was named for James Monroe—the president of the United States when Liberia was founded. From 1989 to 1996, a civil war cost many lives and destroyed much of the country's economy.

Like Liberia, Sierra Leone was founded as a home for people freed from slavery. The British ruled Sierra Leone from 1787 to 1961. Most of the land is used for farming, but the country also has mineral resources, especially diamonds.

Côte d'Ivoire has a French name that means "ivory coast." From the late 1400s to the early 1900s, a trade in elephant ivory tusks in Côte d'Ivoire brought profits to European traders. Today the ivory trade is illegal, and the country protects its few remaining elephants. The port of Abidjan is the largest urban area and economic center. It has towering office buildings and wide avenues. Abidjan is the official seat of government, but **Yamoussoukro** (YAH•MOO•SOO•kroh), some 137 miles (220 km) inland, has been named the new capital.

Ghana's people belong to about 100 ethnic groups. The Ashanti and the Fante are the largest. Many groups still keep their local kings, but these rulers have no political power. The people respect these ceremonial rulers and look to them to keep traditions alive. About 35 percent of Ghana's people live in cities. Accra, on the coast, is the capital and largest city. A giant dam on the Volta River provides hydroelectric power to urban areas. The dam also has created **Lake Volta**, one of the world's largest artificial lakes.

 **Reading Check** What are the capitals of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire?

 **Our World Today** **Online**

Web Activity Visit the **Our World Today: People, Places, and Issues** Web site at tx.owt.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 16—Student Web Activities** to learn more about Liberia.



 **TAKS Practice**

Section 2 Assessment

Defining Terms

1. **Define** overgraze, drought, desertification, bauxite, phosphate.

Recalling Facts

2. **History** What three great empires ruled in the Sahel from A.D. 500 to 1500?
3. **Economics** What types of goods must West African countries import?
4. **History** Which West African country was never a colony?
5. **Government** How much political power do the local kings in Ghana have?

Critical Thinking

6. **Making Predictions** What problems do you think will arise as people move from the Sahel to more productive areas?
7. **Drawing Conclusions** Why do governments of coastal West African countries have to borrow money?

8. **Analyzing Information** What West African products do you use?

Graphic Organizer

9. **Organizing Information** On a diagram like this one, record at least three different facts about the three ancient African empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai.

Ghana	Mali	Songhai

Applying Social Studies Skills

10. **Analyzing Maps** Study the population density map on page 444. Why would you expect the heavy population centers to be located along the coast?

Making Connections

CULTURE

GOVERNMENT

PEOPLE

TECHNOLOGY

Great Mosque of Djenné

In the West African city of Djenné (jeh•NAY), Mali, stands a huge structure built entirely of mud. It is the Great Mosque of Djenné, and it covers an area the size of a city block. Considered one of Africa's greatest architectural wonders, the existing Great Mosque is actually the third mosque to occupy the location.

Djenné

Located between the Sahara and the African savanna, the city of Djenné was an important crossroads on a trade route connecting northern and southern Africa. Caravans and boats carried gold, salt, and other goods through the city.

During the A.D. 1200s, the ruler of Djenné ordered the construction of the first Great Mosque. Having recently converted to Islam, he had his palace torn down to make room for the huge house of worship. The city became an important Islamic religious center. Over the years, political and religious conflicts led to a decline in the city. People abandoned the Great Mosque, and a second, much smaller one replaced it. Then in 1906, builders began to raise a new Great Mosque. Today the Great Mosque is once more an important part of the religious life of the people of Djenné.

The Great Mosque

Built facing east toward Makkah, the holy city of Islam, the Great Mosque of Djenné is constructed from the same sun-dried mud bricks as most of the rest of the city. The mud walls of the mosque vary in thickness between 16 and 24 inches (41 and 61 cm), providing insulation to keep the interior cool. Roof vents can be removed at night to allow cooler air inside.

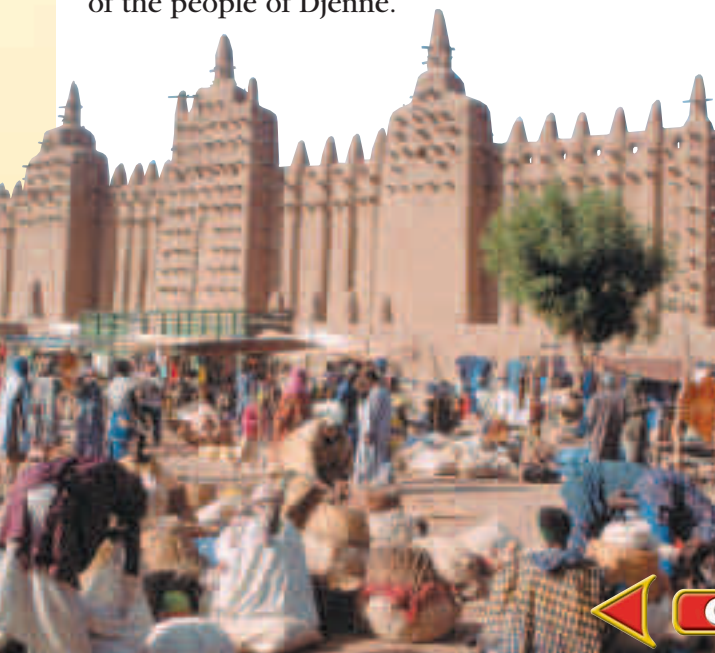
With its five stories and three towers, or minarets, the mosque rises above the surrounding buildings. Inside the mosque, the main prayer hall is open to the sky. Although the mosque contains loudspeakers used to issue the call to prayer, there are few other modern improvements.

Maintaining the Mosque

Rain, wind, and heat can damage mud structures, and without care the Great Mosque would soon deteriorate. Each spring the people of Djenné plaster the mosque from top to bottom with fresh mud. It is a great festival day, and nearly everyone volunteers. Workers climb up the sides of the mosque on wooden rods permanently mounted to the walls. They dump mud and water onto the walls, then smooth it with their bare hands. The townspeople know that, with such care, the Great Mosque will remain a place of worship for generations to come.

Making the Connection

1. When was the first Great Mosque built?
2. What elements of the Great Mosque help keep the inside cool?
3. **Making Comparisons** In what way is the Great Mosque like the other buildings in Djenné? In what way is it different?





Section 1

Nigeria

Terms to Know

mangrove
savanna
harmattan
subsistence farm
cacao
compound
civil war

Main Idea

A large, oil-rich country, Nigeria has more people than any other African nation.

- ✓ **Place** Nigeria's major landforms are coastal lowlands, savannas, highlands, plateaus, and partly dry grasslands.
- ✓ **Economics** More than 90 percent of Nigeria's income comes from oil exports.
- ✓ **Culture** Nigeria has about 250 ethnic groups. The four largest ethnic groups are the Hausa, Fulani, Yoruba, and Ibo.

Section 2

Other Countries of West Africa

Terms to Know

overgraze
drought
desertification
bauxite
phosphate

Main Idea

The Sahel countries face a continuing struggle to keep grasslands from turning into desert, but the coastal countries receive plenty of rainfall.

- ✓ **Region** The Sahel countries are Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, and Burkina Faso.
- ✓ **Region** The Sahel receives little rainfall, so only short grasses and small trees can support grazing animals.
- ✓ **Human/Environment Interaction** Overgrazing and drought have caused many grassland areas in this region to become desert.
- ✓ **Region** The 11 countries that make up coastal West Africa are Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, and Benin.
- ✓ **Economics** West Africa's coastal countries import more in industrial goods than they export in natural products.

The port of Abidjan,
Côte d'Ivoire ▶



Assessment and Activities



Using Key Terms

Match the terms in Part A with their definitions in Part B.

A.

- | | |
|--------------|---------------------|
| 1. overgraze | 6. phosphate |
| 2. harmattan | 7. desertification |
| 3. drought | 8. cacao |
| 4. mangrove | 9. subsistence farm |
| 5. compound | 10. savanna |

B.

- process in which deserts expand
- a group of houses surrounded by a wall
- a dusty wind that blows south from the Sahara
- mineral salt used in fertilizers
- tropical tree whose seeds are used to make cocoa and chocolate
- tropical grassland with scattered trees
- produces enough to support a family's needs
- extended period of extreme dryness
- when animals strip the land so bare that plants cannot grow
- tropical tree with roots above and beneath the water



Reviewing the Main Idea

Section 1 Nigeria

- Economics** What is Nigeria's major export?
- History** Why have there been so many conflicts in Nigeria since 1960?
- Culture** Who was the first African to win the Nobel Prize in literature?
- Culture** What are the four largest ethnic groups in Nigeria?

Section 2 Other Countries of West Africa

- Region** What is the meaning of the word *Sahel*?
- History** Who was Mansa Musa?
- Culture** What religion do most people of the Sahel follow?
- History** What has led to desertification in the Sahel?
- Movement** Why are ships unable to sail very far inland in coastal West Africa?
- History** What was the slave trade?
- History** What early kingdom was called "the land of gold"?
- Culture** What are the largest ethnic groups in Ghana?

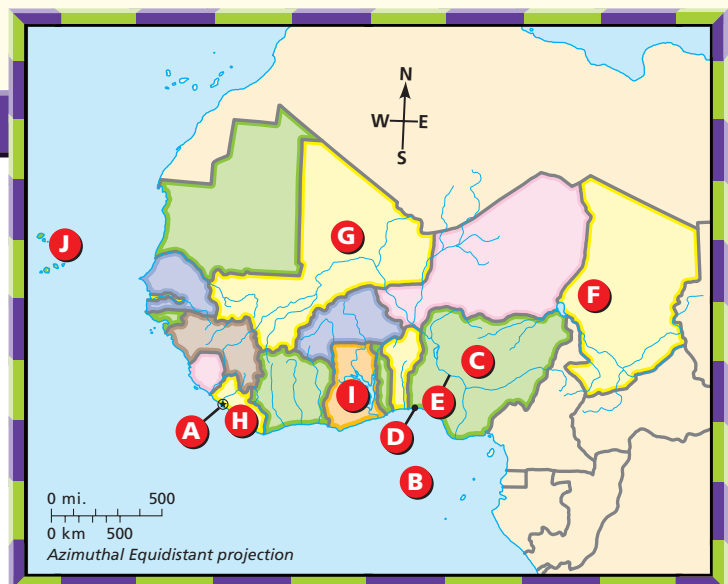
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

West Africa

Place Location Activity

On a separate sheet of paper, match the letters on the map with the numbered places listed below.

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. Gulf of Guinea | 6. Lagos |
| 2. Nigeria | 7. Mali |
| 3. Niger River | 8. Ghana |
| 4. Liberia | 9. Chad |
| 5. Cape Verde | 10. Monrovia |



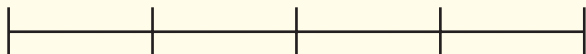
Our World Today Online

Self-Check Quiz Visit the *Our World Today: People, Places, and Issues* Web site at tx.owt.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 16—Self-Check Quizzes** to prepare for the Chapter Test.



Critical Thinking

- 23. Evaluating Information** What do you feel is the major challenge facing the countries of West Africa today? Explain your answer.
- 24. Sequencing Information** After reviewing the entire chapter, choose what you feel are five of the most important events in the history of West Africa. Place those events and their dates on a time line like this one.



Current Events Journal



- 25. Writing a Poem** Read a newspaper or magazine article about one of the countries of West Africa. Imagine that you are there and write an “I am . . .” poem. Begin each line with the words “I am . . .” and then complete it with a description, action, or emotion that you feel relates to the subject. Share your poem with the rest of the class.



Mental Mapping Activity

- 26. Focusing on the Region** Create a simple outline map of West Africa, then label the following:

- Niger River
- Senegal
- Atlantic Ocean
- Côte d’Ivoire
- Gulf of Guinea
- Chad
- Tropic of Cancer
- Mali
- Nigeria
- Mauritania
- Niger
- Liberia



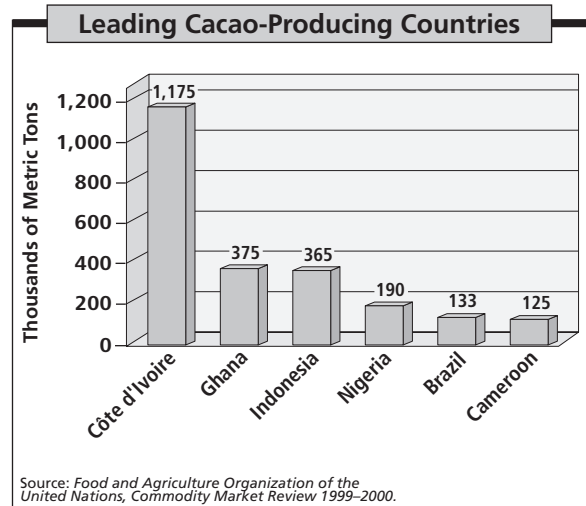
Technology Skills Activity



- 27. Using the Internet** Conduct a search for information about one of the ancient empires or kingdoms of West Africa. Look for maps, pictures, and descriptions of the important rulers. Then write a report using the information you found. Share your report with the rest of the class.



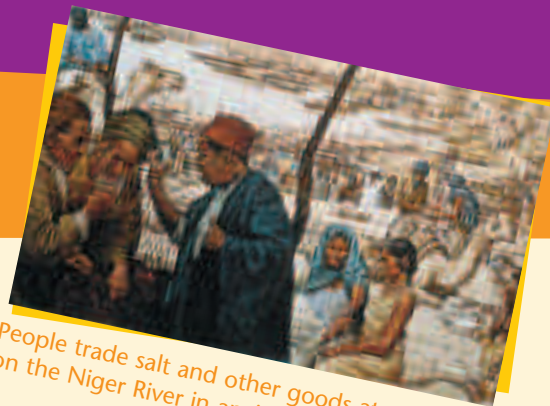
Directions: Study the graph, and then answer the question that follows.



- 1. What countries on the graph are leading cacao-producing countries from West Africa?**

- A Ghana, Indonesia, and Nigeria
- B Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Indonesia
- C Côte d’Ivoire, Nigeria, and Cameroon
- D Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria

Test-Taking Tip: The important words in this question are “from West Africa.” You need to use information on the graph as well as information you learned in Chapter 16 to answer this question. As with any graph, read the title bar and information along the side and bottom of the graph first. Then analyze and compare the sizes of the bars to one another.



People trade salt and other goods at a market on the Niger River in ancient Africa.

PLEASE PASS THE SALT:

Africa's Salt Trade

Passing the salt at dinner may not be a big deal, but in parts of Africa, salt built empires. How did such a basic substance come to play such an important role in Africa?

Good as Gold

Salt is essential for life. Every person contains about 8 ounces (227 g) of salt—enough to fill several saltshakers. Salt helps muscles work, and it aids in digesting food. In hot climates, people need extra salt to replace the salt lost when they sweat. In tropical Africa, salt has always been precious.

Salt is plentiful in the Sahara and scarce in the forests south of the Sahara (in present-day countries such as Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire). These conditions gave rise to Africa's salt trade. Beginning in the A.D. 300s, Berbers drove camels carrying European glassware and weapons from Mediterranean ports into the Sahara. At the desert's great salt deposits, such as those near the ancient sites of Terhazza and Taoudenni, they traded European wares for salt.

The salt did not look like the tiny crystals in a saltshaker. It was in the form of large slabs, as hard as stone. The slabs were pried from hardened salt deposits that were left on the land long ago when landlocked seas evaporated. The salt slabs were loaded onto camels, and the animals were herded south. To people in the south, salt was literally worth its weight in gold. The slabs were cut into equal-sized blocks and exchanged for gold and other products such as ivory and kola nuts. Salt was also traded for enslaved people.

Rise and Decline

Before camels arrived in Africa from Asia in A.D. 300, only a trickle of trade, mostly carried by human porters, made it across the blistering desert. In time, caravans of thousands of camels loaded with tons of salt arrived at southern markets.

Local kings along the trade routes put taxes—payable in gold—on all goods crossing their realms. The ancient empires of Mali, Ghana, and Songhai rose to great power from wealth brought by the salt trade.

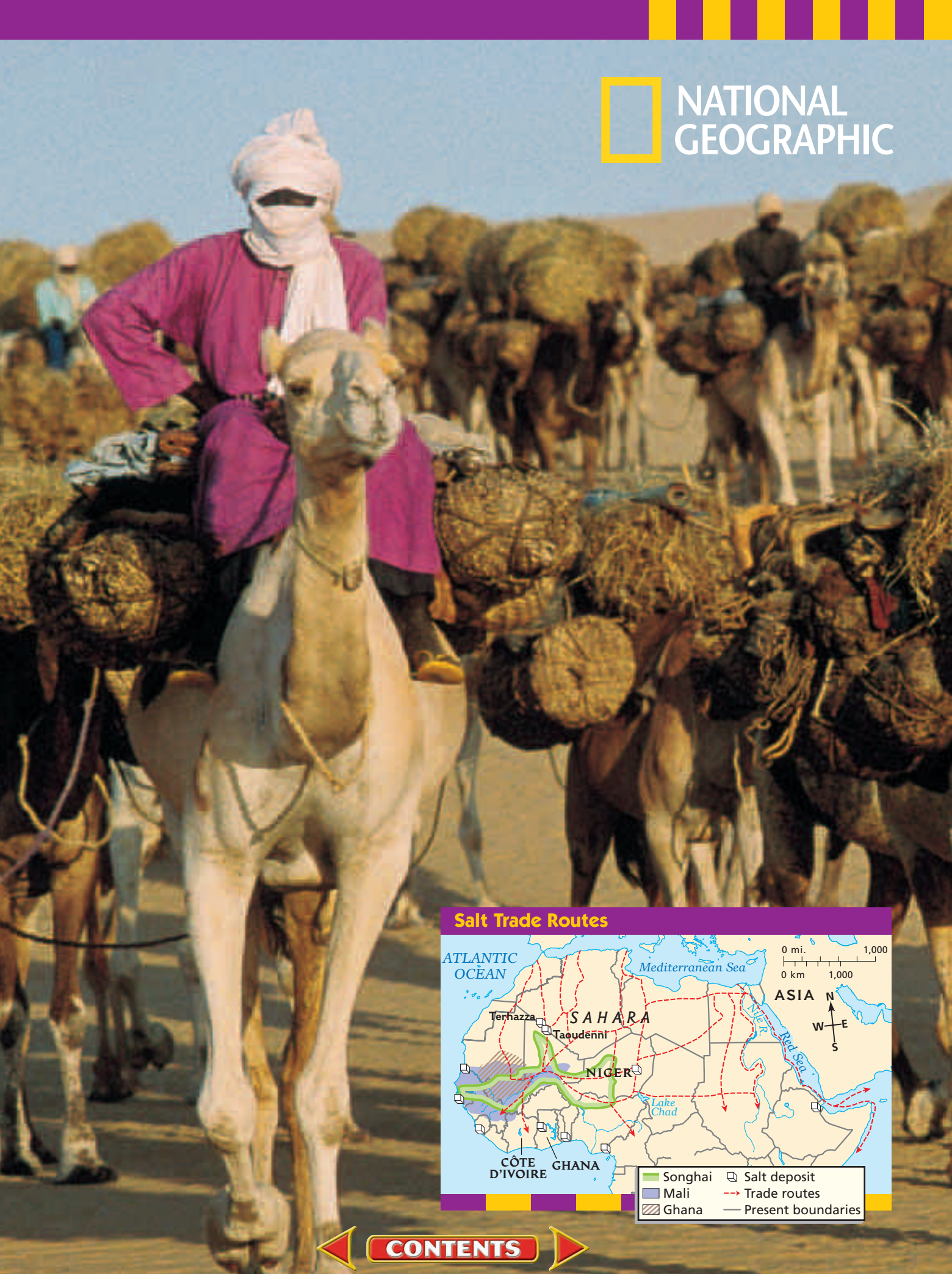
Trade routes also provided avenues for spreading ideas and inventions. By the A.D. 800s, Arab traders brought to Africa a system of weights and measures, a written language, and the concept of money. They also brought a new religion: Islam.

Today trucks have replaced many of the camels. Salt no longer dominates trade in the region. However, salt is still important, and the salt trade continues in Mali and in the markets of other West African nations.

QUESTIONS

- 1 What goods were exchanged in the salt trade?
- 2 How did the salt trade affect regions south of the Sahara?

A present-day salt caravan in Niger ▶



Salt Trade Routes

