

GCSE



WJEC GCSE

History

Approved by Qualifications Wales

Guidance for Teaching: Unit 3 Option 3.3

Teaching from 2026

For award from 2028

Version 2 - February 2025



This Qualifications Wales regulated qualification is not available to centres in England.

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SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS

Version	Description	Page number
2	Amended to, awarded for the first time in Summer 2028.	1

Introduction

The WJEC GCSE History has been approved by Qualifications Wales and is available to all centres in Wales. It will be awarded for the first time in Summer 2028, using grades A* to G.

Aims of the Guidance for Teaching

The principal aim of the Guidance for Teaching is to support teachers in the delivery of WJEC GCSE History and to offer guidance on the requirements of the qualification and the assessment process. The Guidance for Teaching is **not intended as a comprehensive reference**, but as support for teachers to develop stimulating and exciting courses tailored to the needs and skills of their learners. The guide offers possible classroom activities and links to useful resources (including our own, freely available digital materials and some from external sources) to provide ideas for immersive and engaging lessons.

Additional ways that WJEC can offer support:

- sample assessment materials and mark schemes
- professional learning events
- examiners' reports on each unit
- direct access to the subject officer
- free online resources
- Exam Results Analysis
- Online Examination Review.

Qualification Structure

WJEC GCSE History consists of four units. The combination of options selected for Units 1, 2 and 3 must include one medieval, one early modern and one modern unit.

In Unit 4, centres can choose to repeat a time period previously studied in Units 1, 2 or 3. **However, the topics chosen for study in Unit 4 must not replicate or overlap with the content of any of the other selected units.**

The qualification is unitised and does not contain tiering. There is no hierarchy to the order the units should be taught.

	Unit title	Type of Assessment	Weighting
Unit 1	An in-depth study on Welsh history	Written examination	30%
Unit 2	An in-depth study on European and/or World history	Non-examination assessment	20%
Unit 3	A study of a period in World history	Written examination	30%
Unit 4	A changing society	Non-examination assessment	20%

Assessment

Summary of Assessment

Unit 3: A study of a period in World history

Written examination: 1 hour

30% of qualification

60 marks

Learners will study one of the following six historical topics to undertake a breadth study of an extended historical period.

Medieval

3.1 The Vikings c.750–c.1066

3.2 The Crusades c.1095–c.1291

Early Modern

3.3 The Songhai Empire c.1464–c.1591

3.4 The Mughal Empire c.1526–c.1707

Modern

3.5 Russia and the Soviet Union c.1861–c.1953

3.6 Changes in US society c.1880–c.1980

Each option will be assessed by compulsory questions. These will focus on historical knowledge of the topic, second order historical concepts and the analysis and evaluation of historical sources and interpretations.

Unit 3 Assessment objectives and weightings

AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the features and characteristics of the period studied	10%
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding to historical concepts such as cause and consequence, continuity and change, similarity and difference, and significance	10%
AO3	Analyse, evaluate, or make judgements on source material, historical interpretations and historical debates, synthesising these strands where appropriate	10%

Overview of Unit 3: Option 3.3

A study of a period in World history

(30% of the qualification)

The purpose of Unit 3 is to provide an overview of an extended historical period enabling learners to explore key concepts. The aim of this option is to develop a learner's understanding of how the Songhai Empire changed and developed across the period from c.1464 to c.1591.

Time period	Option 3.3	
Early Modern	3.3	The Songhai Empire c.1464–c.1591
	3.3.1	The early Songhai Empire under the Sonni Dynasty
	3.3.2	The rule of Askia Muhammad, c.1493–1528
	3.3.3	The Golden Age of Songhai in the sixteenth century
	3.3.4	Life in the Songhai Empire in the sixteenth century
	3.3.5	The decline and fall of the Songhai Empire

Scheme of Learning Option 3.3 Early Modern: The Songhai Empire c.1464–c.1591

This scheme of learning is provided as an illustrative example. It is designed to offer structure and inspiration but allows for adaptation to meet the unique needs, preferences, and dynamics of individual classes. Teachers are encouraged to modify elements as needed to align with their students' abilities and learning goals.

For each section of content in this unit, WJEC is also providing blended learning resources and knowledge organisers. These can be found on: <https://resources.wjec.co.uk/>

3.3 Background: the establishment of the kingdom of Songhai in the Middle Ages (Each option begins with a background section. These sections are intended to provide learners with necessary context in order to access the historical topic. Learners will not be directly assessed on the content of the background sections).				
Learners should be aware of:	Knowledge	Activities and Outcomes	Resources	Suggested timing (hours)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the geographical, trading and religious context of West Africa. 	<p>The location of West Africa.</p> <p>The importance of trading to West Africa, including the types of goods that were traded.</p> <p>Religious tradition, including the pagan religious traditions of West Africa and the advance of Islam in West Africa.</p>	<p>Activities: Look at a map(s) of West Africa to identify key locations.</p> <p>Research task – identify goods traded and religious traditions of West Africa.</p> <p>Outcome: Learners can show their understanding of where West Africa was, comment on the types of goods traded and religion in the area.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Summarise the impact of trading on the area.</p>	<p>Map(s): Introducing the Realm</p> <p>Website(s): West Africa Kingdoms - BBC</p> <p>Kingdom of Mali Primary Sources</p> <p>Article(s): Trade Across the Sahara</p> <p>Video(s): Mansa Munka and Islam in Africa - Crash Course World History</p>	1 hour

		<p>Advanced outcome: Learners can make links between trading and religion in West Africa.</p>	<p>What was precolonial West Africa like?</p> <p>Book(s): <i>West African Kingdoms</i>, KS3 Depth Study Textbook(s): OUP, Chapter 1</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the decline of the Mali Empire and the origins of the Songhai Empire. 	<p>The location and development of the Mali Empire.</p> <p>The golden age of Mali under Mansa Musa.</p> <p>The fall of the Kingdom of Mali and the rise of the Songhai Empire.</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using a map(s) identify the location of the Mali and Songhai Empire evaluate the importance of their position within West Africa timeline – place key events from the history of the Mali Empire into chronological order discussion – why did the Mali Empire decline? How did this affect the growth of the Songhai Empire? <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate that they understand why the Songhai Empire was successful, making links with the decline of the Mali Empire.</p> <p>Advanced activity: List the positive and negative aspects of the decline of the Mali Empire.</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can evaluate the impact of the decline of the Mali Empire on West Africa.</p>	<p>Book(s): <i>West African Kingdoms</i>, KS3 Depth Study textbook OUP</p> <p>Map(s): Mali Empire</p> <p>Video(s): History of the Songhai Empire</p> <p>Podcast(s): The Songhay Empire 1450 – 1591 / Historical Association</p>	<p>1 hour</p>

3.3.1 The early Songhai Empire under the Sonni Dynasty				
Learners should understand:	Knowledge	Activities and Outcomes	Resources	Suggested timing (hours)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sonni Ali and his leadership of the Songhai Empire, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> his ancestry and accession to power his religious beliefs and relationships with the Islamic scholars. 	<p>Sonni Ali's family background.</p> <p>The reasons for and impact of Sonni Ali's mixture of paganism (magic) and Islam.</p> <p>The ways in which Sonni Ali's religious beliefs differed from Islamic scholars.</p> <p>The reasons why some Muslim scholars criticised Sonni Ali.</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> timeline – place key events from Sonni Ali's life into chronological order summarise Sonni Ali's religious beliefs compare and contrast Sonni Ali's beliefs with Muslim scholars discussion – Why were Muslim scholars critical of Sonni Ali? source work – compare and contrast varying views of Sonni Ali. <p>Outcome:</p> <p>Learners can demonstrate that they understand how Sonni Ali came to power and the ways in which his religious beliefs impacted on his relationships with Muslim scholars.</p> <p>Advanced activity:</p> <p>Assess the importance of Sonni Ali's religious beliefs to the establishment of the Songhai Empire.</p> <p>Advanced outcome:</p> <p>Learners can make links between Sonni Ali's religious beliefs and his leadership style.</p>	<p>Article(s):</p> <p>Biography of Sonni Ali, Songhai Monarch</p> <p>Book(s):</p> <p><i>The Songhai Empire</i>, by Captivating History</p> <p><i>The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony</i>, Molefi Kete Asante, 2012</p> <p><i>Medieval Islamic Civilization: L-Z</i>, Meri & Bacharach, 2004</p> <p><i>Songhay</i>, Adeleke Tunde, 1996</p>	1 hour

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the importance of Sonni Ali's military campaigns, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strategies and tactics the seizure of Timbuktu (1468) and Djenné (1472) and their importance. 	<p>Sonni Ali's naval development and its impact on the expansion of the empire.</p> <p>The development of a professional army.</p> <p>The events leading up to the seizure of Timbuktu, the capture and aftermath.</p> <p>The events leading up to the seizure of Djenne, the capture and aftermath.</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> summarise Sonni Ali's naval development and its importance compare and contrast the importance of the development of the navy and army create a war report on the seizure of Timbuktu from the perspective of the Songhai vs. Muslim scholars in the city creative writing – create a first-person narrative outlining the events leading up to, and aftermath of, Sonni Ali's capture from the perspective of a Timbuktu resident using a map(s) chart the expansion of the empire under the rule of Sonni Ali. Label the key locations that Sonni Ali captured such as Timbuktu and Djenne focus question – how did controlling cities such as Timbuktu strengthen Sonni Ali's empire economically and culturally? <p>Outcome:</p> <p>Learners can demonstrate that they understand the developments in the navy and army. Learners can evaluate the importance of the seizure of Timbuktu and Djenne.</p>	<p>Article(s): The Songhai Empire: Summary of Sonni Ali's empire expansion - World History Volume 2</p> <p>Book(s): <i>Timbuktu and the Songhay Empire: Al-Sa'dī's Ta'riḫ Al-Sūdān Down to 1613 and Other Contemporary Documents</i>, Brill</p> <p><i>The Songhai Empire</i> by Captivating History</p> <p>African Kingdoms, A Level EBook: OCR</p>	<p>2 hours</p>
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		<p>Advanced activity: Was Sonni Ali a conqueror focusing on expansion or empire builder showing innovation and good leadership?</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can evaluate the importance of Sonni Ali’s campaigns to the strength of the Songhai Empire.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the nature and impact of Sonni’s rule, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> his adaptable leadership style and the importance of inclusivity to the stability of the Songhai Empire his death in 1492, and the end of the Sonni Dynasty under Sonni Baru at the Battle of Anfao, 1493. 	<p>The reasons for and impact of Sonni Ali’s leadership style.</p> <p>The reasons for and impact of Sonni Ali’s tolerance of other religions.</p> <p>The debate over Sonni Ali’s cause of death.</p> <p>Sonni Baru’s accession to power on the death of Sonni Ali.</p> <p>The reasons why Sonni Baru failed to maintain control of the Songhai Empire including lack of experience, the challenge by Askia Muhammad (known as Muhammad Ture prior to ruling the Empire) and the events of the Battle of Anfao.</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> summarise Sonni Ali’s policy of inclusivity and examine its impact on the stability of the empire write an obituary for Sonni Ali debate – what was Sonni Ali’s greatest achievement? create a documentary or news report on the life and impact of Sonni Ali’s rule using digital tools. These can be edited and shared with the class. <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate an understanding of varying interpretations of Sonni Ali including that of oral history and Muslim scholars.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Place events in Sonni Ali’s rule in order of most to least successful.</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can evaluate the significance of individual policies and events during the reign of Sonni Ali.</p>	<p>Book(s): <i>The Songhai Empire</i> by Captivating History, Chapter 4</p> <p><i>The Royal Kingdoms of Ghana, Mali and Songhay: Life in Medieval Africa</i>, P & M McKissack, 2016</p> <p>African Kingdoms, A Level EBook: OCR</p> <p>Video(s): Songhai Empire: The Fall of Africas Greatest Empire</p>	2 hours

3.3.2 The rule of Askia Muhammad, c.1493–1528				
Learners should understand:	Knowledge	Activities and Outcomes	Resources	Suggested timing (hours)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the emergence of Askia Muhammad including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> his early life and extensive education his rise to power through the ranks. 	<p>Askia Muhammad's family background.</p> <p>Askia Muhammad's early education and military experience.</p> <p>The reasons why Askia Muhammad was suitable to rule the Songhai Empire.</p>	<p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> create a CV for Askia Muhammad to outline his suitability to rule the Songhai Empire. <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate that they have a knowledge of Askia Muhammad's background and evaluate his suitability for leadership.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Create a digital timeline of the Songhai Empire from 1464 to 1493.</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can identify the main developments in the growth of the Songhai Empire from 1493 to 1528.</p>	<p>Video(s): Askia Muhammad and The Songhai Empire Askia Muhammad</p> <p>Book(s): <i>The Songhai Empire</i>, by Captivating History, Chapter 5 African Kingdoms, A Level EBook: OCR</p>	1 hour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Muhammad's rule, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the overthrowing of Sonni Baru his promotion of Islamic education and Sharia law. 	<p>The reasons why Askia Muhammad overthrew Sonni Baru.</p> <p>The consequences of Askia Muhammad overthrowing Sonni Baru.</p> <p>Askia Muhammad's religious beliefs.</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> summarise Askia Muhammad's religious beliefs and compare them to that of Sonni Ali research different aspects of Sharia Law and present findings. compare and contrast opinions of Askia Muhammad's promotion of Islam. 	<p>Website(s): Sharia Law - BBC Religions Quranic Verses on Education - Qiratul Quran</p>	2 hours

	<p>The reasons for the promotion of Islamic education.</p> <p>The impact of Sharia Law to the stability of the Songhai Empire under Askia Muhammad.</p>	<p>Outcome: Learners can explain how Askia Muhammad came to power and the importance of Islam to his method of rule.</p> <p>Advanced activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> debate – was Sonni Baru or Askia Muhammad better equipped to rule the Songhai Empire? source evaluation - examine extracts of Quranic Verses on Education (Qiratul Qu’ran) to consider how these would have influenced Askia Muhammad’s policies. <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can compare and contrast the suitability for leadership and skills of Sonni Ali and Askia Muhammad.</p>	<p>Book(s): <i>The Songhai Empire</i>, by Captivating History, Chapter 5</p> <p><i>Introduction to the History of African Civilization</i>, C. Magbaily Fyle, 1999</p> <p><i>An Introduction to Islam in the 21st Century</i>, McCloud. Hibbard & Saud, 2013</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> administrative reforms under Askia Muhammad, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> political and administrative change; including centralised administration, the role of key officials and the promotion of meritocracy developments in military organisation. 	<p>The reasons for, and impact of, centralised administration on the Songhai Empire.</p> <p>The role of appointed governors (Faris).</p> <p>The role of key officials (provincial governors, tax collectors and military officials) and their importance to the stability of the empire.</p>	<p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> using a map(s) chart the expansion of the empire under the rule of Askia Muhammad. discussion – What challenges would Askia Muhammad have faced when ruling a vast and diverse empire? write job descriptions for the new administrative system. <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of how Askia Muhammad maintained control of the Songhai Empire.</p>	<p>Book(s): African Kingdoms, A Level EBook: OCR</p> <p><i>The Epic of Askia Muhammad</i>, translated by T. Hale</p> <p><i>A Social History of Timbuktu, the role of the Muslim Scholars and Notables</i>, Elias N. Saad</p>	<p>3 hours</p>

	<p>The importance of meritocracy and how it was applied to Songhai administration.</p> <p>Askia Muhammad's military reforms and their impact on the strength and expansion of the empire.</p>	<p>Advanced activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> learners can create a Venn diagram to compare the rules of Sonni Ali and Askia Muhammad. writing – How did Askia Muhammad's administrative reforms contribute to the stability and strength of the Songhai Empire? <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can develop a detailed understanding of the administrative reforms to assess their significance.</p>	<p><i>Tradition, Culture and Development in Africa</i>, Ambe J. Njoh, 2006</p> <p><i>Man Know Thyself Volume 1</i>, Rick Duncan, 2013</p> <p><i>Great Kingdoms of Africa</i>, John Parker, 2023</p> <p>Article(s): Askia the Great - World History Volume 2</p> <p>Askia the Great Presided Over an Expanding Empire</p> <p>Askia the Great: Revolt Leader to Powerful Songhai Emperor</p> <p>Webpage(s): Songhai: Lumen Learning</p>	
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3.3.3 The Golden Age of Songhai in the sixteenth century

Learners should understand:	Knowledge	Activities and Outcomes	Resources	Suggested timing (hours)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the economic prosperity of the empire, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the economic and cultural significance of the trans-Saharan trade routes, including the slave trade the importance of market centres including Gao, Timbuktu and the currency system. 	<p>The location, cultural and economic importance of the trans-Saharan trade routes.</p> <p>The economic reasons for slavery and its importance to the empire.</p> <p>The location of Gao and Timbuktu in relation to the trans-Saharan trade routes.</p> <p>Types of goods bought and sold in market centres such as Gao.</p> <p>The importance of trading and market centres to the prosperity of the Songhai Empire.</p> <p>The currency system and its importance to trading in the empire.</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> using a map(s) learners can look at the main trade routes and how they link to key cities such as Timbuktu and Gao. Learners to consider why these were important to the empire. learners to research one of the market centres to create a market profile outlining which goods were traded in the city and how did this contribute to the prosperity of the empire evaluate a range of sources that discuss currency in the Songhai Empire and identify the advantages of having a standardised currency system in the empire. <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the importance of market centres and trade routes to the economic prosperity of the empire.</p> <p>Advanced activities Writing – How did the trans-Saharan trade routes contribute to the Songhai Empire's economic and cultural development?</p>	<p>Book(s): African Kingdoms, A Level EBook: OCR</p> <p>Timbuktu & the Songhay Empire, John Hunwick, 2003</p> <p>Slavery and Slaves in Muslim Africa, John Willis, 1985</p> <p>Website(s): Songhai, African Empire, 15-16th Century</p> <p>Article(s): The causes and effects of trans-Saharan trade</p>	2 hours

		<p>Advanced outcome: Learners can evaluate the impact of the trans-Saharan trade routes to the prosperity of the empire.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cultural and intellectual developments, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the advancements in poetry, literature and science including the importance of manuscripts Timbuktu and Djenné as centres of learning, including the development of libraries. 	<p>The cultural importance of poetry, literature and science in the Songhai Empire.</p> <p>The significance of manuscripts.</p> <p>The role of Timbuktu and Djenne as centres of learning including the development of their libraries.</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> source work - look at examples of manuscripts and discuss why they were so important. watch video(s) clips about the various educational institutions in Timbuktu to identify their importance compare and contrast Timbuktu and Djenne as learning centres discussion – why was learning so important in Timbuktu and Djenne? summarise the main advancements in poetry, literature and science. <p>Outcome: Learners can consider the influence and impact of culture and heritage on the Songhai people.</p> <p>Advanced activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> read extracts of Leo Africanus' description of Timbuktu. What can we learn from this account about the importance of Timbuktu to the empire? <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can evaluate Europeans views of Timbuktu and the Songhai Empire.</p>	<p>Video(s): Djingereber Mosque in Timbuktu, Mali</p> <p>The Sankoré University of Timbuktu</p> <p>Sankoré Madrasah</p> <p>Ahmed Baba - Timbuktu's Famous Scholar</p> <p>Primary Source(s): Leo Africanus description of Timbuktu</p>	3 hours

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • military advancements under the Askia dynasty, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of the commitment to Islam in unifying the army • the organisation into divisions, specialisation and the professionalism of the Songhai army. 	<p>The role of Islam in unifying the Songhai army.</p> <p>Military organisation including the use of specialised units such as archers, spearmen and mounted soldiers.</p> <p>The impact of the military becoming professionalised.</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion – why was a strong and well organised army important for the Songhai Empire? • list the benefits of having a professional army • summarise the main changes made to the Songhai army during the Askia dynasty • source evaluation - Leo Africanus account of the Songhai army • evaluate the importance of Islam to the army. <p>Outcome: Learners can explain and evaluate the main changes to the military, identifying the importance of specialism.</p> <p>Advanced activity: Digital task - how did Islam help unify the Songhai army?</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can draw conclusions as to the importance of Islam in the army.</p>	<p>Book(s): <i>The Songhai Empire</i>, by Captivating History, Chapter 5</p> <p>Webpage(s): The Songhai Empire – Humanities LibreTexts</p>	<p>3 hours</p>
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3.3.4 Life in the Songhai Empire in the sixteenth century				
Learners should understand:	Knowledge	Activities and Outcomes	Resources	Suggested timing (hours)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the social organisation of the Songhai Empire, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the organisation of people according to social class the role of women including artisan work and craftwork. 	<p>The class structure of the Songhai Empire including nobility, freemen, artisans, traders and slaves.</p> <p>The impact of the class structure.</p> <p>The role of women including domestic life, artisans and trade.</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> create a digital representation of the Songhai class structure showing the different roles and responsibilities research a type of craft used in the Songhai Empire creative writing – a diary extract for a woman living in the Songhai Empire compare and contrast the roles of men and women within the empire. <p>Outcome: Learners can develop a knowledge an understanding of Songhai organisation and culture.</p> <p>Advanced activity: In what ways did women contribute to the Songhai economy?</p> <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can evaluate the importance of the class structure.</p>	<p>Book(s): <i>Empires of Medieval West Africa: Ghana, Mali, and Songhay</i> By David C. Conrad</p> <p>Article(s): Songhai Women: Tradition and Change along the banks of the Niger River</p> <p>Africa's Last Empire: Ancient Songhai</p> <p>Songhai - World Cultures</p> <p>Songhai People - Wikipedia</p> <p>Image(s): Songhai Woman</p>	2 hours

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the culture of the Songhai people, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the importance of traditional dance, clothing, body art, music and storytelling special events such as the Gani Festival and Askia Festival. 	<p>Forms of traditional dance and the maintenance of traditional culture.</p> <p>Traditional clothing worn in the empire.</p> <p>The reasons for and examples of body art.</p> <p>The significance of storytelling and music to Songhai culture and traditions.</p> <p>The importance of the Gani Festival and the ways it was celebrated.</p> <p>The importance of the Askia Festival and the ways it was celebrated.</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> look at modern examples of African dance and music and discuss – what is its purpose? Why is it important to people? look at examples of modern-day body art and discuss - What is its function? Why would the Songhai people have used body art? create mind map(s) on dance, music and body art in the Songhai Empire label traditional clothing digital - compare and contrast the Askia and Gani festivals create a social media post for the Askia or Gani festivals. <p>Outcome: Learners can demonstrate an understanding of the importance of traditions, dance and symbolism to the Songhai people and culture.</p> <p>Advanced activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> create a digital summary of Songhai culture, highlighting the importance to the Songhai people. <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can identify the significance of Songhai cultural activities.</p>	<p>Image(s): Kora (Instrument) Songhai Headdress Songhai clothing</p> <p>Video(s): Doundounba, West African Dance The Dazzling Diversity of African Dance - TED West African Traditional Dance African Dance: MALI West African Dance The Songhai Empire: Africa's Age of Gold</p> <p>Webpage(s): African Culture Face and Body Art</p>	<p>2 hours</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the significance of slavery, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the reasons for slavery within the empire such as capture through warfare or debt the uses of slavery in terms of labour and social status for the upper classes. 	<p>How people became slaves within the Songhai Empire including capture through warfare and due to debt.</p> <p>The economic reasons why slaves were valued.</p> <p>The status and rights of slaves.</p> <p>The use of slaves in the construction of the Songhai Empire.</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discussion – reasons for slavery within the Songhai Empire using a map(s) identify the trans-Saharan slave trade routes create a mind map on the uses of slaves within the empire and their economic importance create a social pyramid showing the hierarchy of the Songhai Empire and where slaves fitted within this debate – were slaves vital to the success of the Songhai Empire? <p>Outcome: Learners can evaluate the impact of slavery on the empire and its economic importance.</p> <p>Advanced activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> source work – evaluate the importance of slavery in comparison to other factors such as the professional army and role of religion in the maintenance of the empire. <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can evaluate the importance of slaves within the empire and decide if this was one of the most important reasons for its success.</p>	<p>Website(s): The Songhai Empire and Slavery</p> <p>Article(s): Songhai, African Empire 15-16th century</p> <p>Video(s): The Songhai Empire: Africa's Age of Gold (section at 22 mins)</p>	<p>2 hours</p>
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3.3.5 The decline and fall of the Songhai Empire				
Learners should understand:	Knowledge	Activities and Outcomes	Resources	Suggested timing (hours)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the impact of leadership problems, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the succession problems faced after the death of Askia Daoud the importance of regional rivalries including governors and military commanders. 	<p>Reasons for the death of Askia Daoud.</p> <p>The potential successors to Askia Daoud and the resulting succession problems.</p> <p>The impact of regional rivalries.</p> <p>The weakening of the empire because of tension and instability.</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discussion – Why do succession issues happen? Why were there succession issues after the death of Askia Daoud? create a diagram to show the regional differences and rivalries. timeline – place regional issues and problems into chronological order. <p>Outcome: Learners can summarise the main succession problems and compare these with the issue of regional rivalries.</p> <p>Advanced activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> place the impact of succession problems in order of importance with justification. <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can consider the viewpoints of contemporaries and historians regarding the impact of succession problems.</p>	<p>Video(s): The Songhai Empire: Africa's Age of Gold</p> <p>Book(s): African Kingdoms, A Level EBook: OCR</p>	2 hours

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the economic and environmental factors affecting the success of the empire, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the decline of trade routes the impact of drought and famine. 	<p>The reasons for the decline of the trans-Saharan trade routes</p> <p>The impact of drought on the Songhai people and strength of the empire.</p> <p>The impact of famine on the Songhai people and strength of the empire.</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> research task – why did the trade routes decline? group task – consider the impact of drought on different groups within the Songhai Empire such as women, traders and farmers debate – the decline of the trans-Saharan trade routes was more important than regional problems in the decline of the Songhai Empire summarise the long term reasons for the decline of the Songhai Empire. <p>Outcome: Learners can compare the impact of environmental factors to human factors in causing the decline of the Songhai Empire.</p> <p>Advanced activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> create a digital representation of the trade routes, showing their decline. <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can develop a detailed understanding of the impact of the trade routes on the success of the Songhai Empire.</p>	<p>Video(s): The Songhai Empire: Africa's Age of Gold</p> <p>Book(s): <i>Pre-colonial West Africa</i>, Ibiang Oden Ewa, Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, 2017</p> <p>Article(s): West African Kingdoms: Songhay</p> <p>Webpage(s): The Songhai Empire - Humanities LibreTexts</p>	2 hours
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the threat from Morocco and the collapse of the Songhai Empire, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moroccan advantages and the Battle of Tondibi, 1591 the impact of the destruction of Timbuktu and the division of Songhai territory and the formation of smaller kingdoms. 	<p>Reasons for the Moroccan threat.</p> <p>The events leading up to, during and after the Battle of Tondibi.</p> <p>The events leading to the destruction of Timbuktu and its impact on the prosperity of the Songhai Empire.</p> <p>The division of the Songhai Empire into smaller kingdoms.</p>	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discuss reasons for the threat from Morocco watch the video clip about the Battle of Tondibi creative writing – write a battle account for the Battle of Tondibi from a first person perspective look at a map(s) of the Songhai Empire before and after the Battle of Tondibi to calculate the land lost. <p>Outcome: Learners can identify the trigger for the collapse of the Songhai Empire.</p> <p>Advanced activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> learners to rank the causes of the decline of the Songhai Empire in order of importance with justification. <p>Advanced outcome: Learners can draw conclusions as to why the Songhai Empire collapsed.</p>	<p>Article(s): The Fall of Africa's Greatest Kingdom</p> <p>The Battle of Tondibi : The Moroccan Conquest of the Songhay Empire</p> <p>Video(s): Songhai vs Morocco: Resistance Against Invasion</p> <p>The Battle of Tondibi: Epic Clash of Empires</p> <p>The Fall of Songhai: The Battle of Tondibi</p> <p>The Songhai Empire: Africa's Age of Gold</p> <p>Webpage(s) 3.3: The Songhai Empire - Humanities LibreTexts</p> <p>Book(s) African Kingdoms, A Level EBook: OCR</p>	3 hours
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Learning Experiences

Learners should be encouraged to consider the following learning experiences and skills to further develop their understanding, appreciation and awareness of the subject content. Information in the table below provides opportunities for teachers to integrate the learning experiences into delivery.

Learning Experience	Exemplification of Learning Experience
Participate in educational visits in person or digitally	Digital visit – UNESCO World Heritage Convention Video(s): tour of Timbuktu. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4V-QAzKQ3A Digital tour – The Tomb of Askia Muhammad https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1139/Video(s): Digital tour – The Great Mosque at Djenne. https://www.cyark.org/projects/djenne-mosque/tapestry2
Develop empathy, tolerance, compassion and curiosity through studying different historical contexts	The study of religious polices throughout the history of the Songhai Empire allows for learners to reflect on the attitudes of others towards tolerance, including self-reflection.
Engage in collaborative working	There are opportunities for learners to develop their understanding of viewpoints and content through debate, discussion, presentations, pair work and group work.

Opportunities for embedding elements of the Curriculum for Wales

Option 3.3 Early Modern: The Songhai Empire, c.1464–c.1591

Curriculum for Wales Strands	
Cross-cutting Themes	
Local, National & International Contexts	<p>Unit 3 provides centres with six different historical topics relating to world history. The optional topics provide opportunities to enhance learners' understanding of the world and the diverse experiences of its peoples. Options allow for the study of marginalised regions of the world, the histories of dispossessed peoples and forgotten empires, especially of the global South.</p> <p>Option 3.3 The Songhai Empire c.1464 - 1591 allows centres and learners to explore early modern history within Africa. Learners develop understanding of the decline of the Mali Empire and the growth of the Songhai Empire through to its demise. This unit overturns the traditional European view that Africa was not civilised prior to colonialisation.</p>
Human Rights Education and Diversity	<p>This unit allows learners to consider the rights of individuals within a diverse and expanding empire. The status and role of different classes, religions and genders are considered. This unit allows learners to consider the impact of an expanding empire that contains people of many religions. Religious polices are examined such as inclusivity and Sharia Law. The impact of slavery is considered.</p>
Careers and Work-Related Experiences	<p>Learners can develop an understanding of work and careers in the Songhai Empire including the professionalisation of the army, naval development, the role of key officials and women.</p>

Cross-curricular Skills – Literacy

There are many opportunities to include Literacy in GCSE History. These opportunities include the analysis of source material, extended writing opportunities, vocabulary development, debating and discussion. These opportunities are important to learners because they will develop cross-curricular skills which underpin the four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales, as well as communication skills which can be used across subjects and prepare them for future education or employment.

Below are some examples of how Literacy can be embedded into teaching and learning for GCSE History.

Listening	Learners will have the opportunity to assess the accuracy and reliability of source material and share views through discussion and verbal questioning techniques when being taught the specification content.
	Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners are encouraged to debate and respond to the views of others. • Learners will have opportunities to listen to podcasts and recordings in order to develop their vocabulary and listening skills. • Use of oral history and interviews develop listening skills and the ability to respond to others appropriately. • Learners have the opportunity to share and respond to peer presentations.
Reading	Learners will have the opportunity to read contemporary source material as well as a variety of historical interpretations, before critically evaluating the sources, analysing their content, and comparing and contrasting sources focusing on the interpretation they give on events.
	Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners can use a range of reading techniques such as skimming and scanning or reading for a purpose. • Reading extracts from a wide range of sources such as speeches, articles, diary extracts, historians and newspapers. • Comparing and contrasting the content of historical sources. • Assessing the reliability and accuracy of the text to develop the skill of critical reading.

Speaking	Learners will have the opportunity to develop their understanding of viewpoints and content through debate, discussion, presentations and group work.
	Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debating the most important reason why an event happened • Asking questions for clarification and development of understanding. • Learners can develop speaking skills through group and pair work.
Writing	Learners will have the opportunity to use a range of subject-specific vocabulary, idiomatic language and be able to present their work digitally. They will also have opportunities to reflect on the structure and content of their writing.
	Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role modelling of answers through teacher, peer and self-assessment activities. • Learners have the opportunity to use a wide range of writing styles such as formal, informal and first person.

Cross-curricular Skills – Numeracy

There are many opportunities to include Numeracy in GCSE History, for example analysing population change, interpreting statistics in primary and secondary sources, analysing graphs and timelines and engaging with concepts such as chronological awareness. These opportunities are important to learners because it allows them to contextualise events and quantify change. Learners can draw evidence-based conclusions based on statistics and numerical data.

Below are some examples of how Numeracy can be embedded into teaching and learning for GCSE History.

Learning about geometry helps us understand shape, space and position and learning about measurement helps us quantify in the real world	Learners will have opportunities to analyse maps in order to understand the growth and development of empires or the geographical representation of wars.
	Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners can analyse maps, structures and artifacts. • Learners can then analyse land division and urban planning. • There are opportunities to analyse military strategies and fortifications.
Learning that statistics represent data, and that probability models chance, help us make informed inferences and decisions	Learners will have the opportunities to examine or interpret data and graphs through source analysis.
	Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners can analyse data to draw conclusions on statistics such as population growth, costs and land expansion. • Secondary material such as graphs and charts can be interpreted. • There are opportunities for learners to create their own numerical representations of data gathered.

Cross-curricular Skills – Digital Competence

There are many opportunities to include Digital Competence in GCSE History. Learners can make use of digital technology to access a broad range of historical sources and to undertake research of a historical topic. Learners will also have the opportunity to develop their digital skills in preparing and completing their non-examination assessments. These opportunities will allow learners to develop cross-curricular skills which underpin the four purposes of the curriculum, as well as allowing further access to historical information while fostering current and future critical thinking and ethical awareness.

Below are some examples of how Digital Competence can be embedded into teaching and learning for GCSE History.

Citizenship	Learners will develop an understanding of the importance of attributions, including the use of resources in digital formats such as e-books and online articles. Learners will be required to address attributions when analysing items for their historical enquiry and to think critically about the authors of digital evidence.
	Example
	Learners should be made aware of copyright and plagiarism when looking at historical evidence and when developing and presenting their own arguments in relation to a topic.
Interacting and Collaborating	Learners can work collaboratively (digitally) on tasks in preparation for the exam. These could include peer assessment, responding to teacher feedback or work creation.
	Example
	In groups, learners could research and present a topic to introduce an area of study.
Producing	Learners have opportunities to research a variety of sources digitally.
	Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of national and international archives to find source materials that link to the area of study.

Integral Skills	
Creativity and Innovation	There are many opportunities to include Creativity and Innovation in GCSE History. These opportunities are important to learners to become more engaged in lessons and enjoy learning through stimulating tasks. Deeper understanding is developed through the encouragement for learners to take an active role in their learning.
	Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners will demonstrate creativity when developing responses, expressing their opinions about relevant historical issues and critically evaluating sources and evidence within assessments. • Learners have opportunities to be creative and innovative when presenting information and findings.
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	There are many opportunities to include Critical Thinking and Problem Solving in GCSE History. These opportunities are important to learners because they develop the ability to think analytically, and to collect, reflect and critically evaluate evidence in order to make informed judgements on a range of topics. This skill can be applied to real-life scenarios.
	Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners will have opportunities to ask meaningful questions of source material and historical interpretations, as well as to evaluate them as part of their process of developing relevant critical arguments. • Learners will develop their ability to see issues from multiple viewpoints. • Studying continuity and change over time allows learners to develop their problem-solving skills that can be applied in their future lives. • Learners will evaluate sources and historical interpretations in terms of reliability, bias and purpose. • Critical thinking and problem solving encourages independent learning and promotes the ability to come to reasoned and informed decisions in other aspects of life such as further education or work.

<p>Planning and Organisation</p>	<p>There are many opportunities to include Planning and Organisation in GCSE History. These opportunities are important to Learners because these integral skills allow Learners to engage with the past, analyse information and communicate their findings which allow Learners to enhance their academic understanding and prepare them to apply historical knowledge in modern contexts.</p> <p>Below are some examples of how Planning and Organisation can be embedded into teaching and learning of GCSE History.</p> <p>Example</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners will have opportunities to plan and then complete their response to an enquiry question.
<p>Personal Effectiveness</p>	<p>There are many opportunities to include Personal Effectiveness in GCSE History. These opportunities are important to learners because it develops resilience and the ability to work effectively. This helps to develop learners' time management skills and the ability to prioritise tasks, enhancing learners' ability to become adaptable individuals.</p> <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning about potentially sensitive topics will allow learners to develop their emotional intelligence and historical awareness. Opportunities for peer, self and teacher assessment encourage learners to develop effective strategies to improve their work. Collaborating on a research task or presentation. Developing resilience through the revision and remodelling of answers. There are opportunities for learners to express their opinions about relevant historical issues, contemporary source materials and historical interpretations.

Glossary for Option 3.3 The Songhai Empire, c.1464–c.1591

Term	Definition
Army Specialisation	Improvements to make the army more effective with people having defined roles.
Askia Dynasty	The ruling dynasty of the Songhai Empire after the Sonni dynasty.
Dynasty	Rulers from the same family.
Empire	A group of nations or peoples ruled by another.
Gani Festival	One of the most important festivals to the Songhai, focusing on gratitude for harvest through music, storytelling and dance.
Mali Empire	West African kingdom at its height in the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries.
Meritocracy	Promoting individuals based on skills and performance.
Morocco	North African country.
Paganism	Beliefs and practices outside of the world's major religions, often based on nature and rituals.
River Niger	Third longest river in Africa flowing through several countries.
Sahara	Desert spanning across North Africa.
Sharia Law	A legal system based on Islamic principles.
Sonni Dynasty	The ruling dynasty of the Songhai Empire from the late fourteenth century to the early fifteenth century.
Songhai	People living along the River Niger in the areas of Timbuktu and Gao.