ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:
- How do cultural factors influence the development and change in political, social, economic, and religious systems?
- How do cultural traditions endure over time?
- What is COVID-19, what are its symptoms, and how can you keep yourself and your family safe?

PROCEDURES:
- **Assignment #1** Read the article about how culture was transferred from one generation to another in West Africa.
- Answer the questions below the article on your own piece of paper.
- **Assignment #2** Read the lyrics to the Flocabulary rap song called “What is COVID-19?”
- Complete the matching vocabulary activity from terms used within the rap song.
- Complete the multiple choice questions based on the information presented in the rap song.

WORK TO BE RETURNED:
- Questions from the “Cultural Legacy of West Africa” text.
- Vocabulary matching activity
- Multiple choice questions from Flocabulary

RESOURCES:
- History Alive! The Medieval World and Beyond- Lesson 14 - The Cultural Legacy of West Africa text
- Flocabulary lyrics and vocabulary terms

TIME ALLOCATED:
- 2 (30) minute Assignments

**Assignment #1**

*Directions: Read the following text and then answer the questions in complete sentences on your own paper.*

**The Cultural Legacy of West Africa- Written Traditions**

For centuries, the beliefs, values, and knowledge of West Africans were transmitted orally from one generation to the next. In medieval times, written traditions also became important.

A griot is a verbal artist of the Mande people. Griots are poet-musicians who tell stories, sing songs of praise and recite poems, often while playing a drum or stringed instrument. Although they perform music, dance, and drama, griots are much more than skilled entertainers. They also educate their audiences with historical accounts and genealogies, or histories of people’s ancestry. In many ways, they are the record keepers and historians of their people.

Long before the Mande had written histories, griots preserved the memory of the past. Every village had its own griot who memorized all the important events that occurred there. Griots could recite everything from births, deaths, and marriages, to battles, hunts, and the succession of kings. Some griots could tell the ancestry of every villager, going back centuries and were known to speak for hours and, sometimes, even for days.

This rich oral tradition passed from griot to griot. Rulers relied on griots as their trusted advisors because they used the griots’ knowledge of history to shed light on their current problems.

The most cherished information in griot history is the story of Sundjata Keita. Sundjata was the king who founded Mali’s empire in the 13th century. In fact, griot stories were told about him even in his own lifetime.
West Africa’s oral tradition includes hundreds of old stories called folktales. West Africans told folktales to pass along their history and to teach young people morals and values. Many traditional folktales were brought to the Americas by West Africans who were sold into slavery beginning in the 1500s. The tales were spread orally among the enslaved Africans as well as their descendants, and became part of the culture of North and South America and the West Indies.

One example is a type of folktale known as a “trickster tale.” These stories tell of a clever animal or human who outsmarts others. Trickster tales are popular in many cultures. In West Africa, one famous trickster was the hare. West Africans brought tales of the hare to America, where he became known as Brer Rabbit. In the 19th century, a writer named Joel Chandler Harris retold a number of African American stories about Brer Rabbit. These stories have since been woven into American culture.

West African oral tradition includes proverbs, or popular sayings. Proverbs are found in all cultures. West African proverbs use images from everyday life to express ideas or give advice and reveal a great deal about the wisdom and values of West Africans.

One proverb illustrates how Africans valued their stories. The proverb states, “A good story is like a garden carried in the pocket.” Another explains the importance of oral tradition. “Every time an old man dies,” the proverb says, “it is as if a library has burnt down.” Enslaved West Africans brought proverbs like these to the Americas.

After Islam spread to West Africa, written tradition became more important. Muslims published many works in Arabic. A number of these writings were preserved in mosques and Qur’anic schools. Today, they are a key source of information about West African history, legends, and culture.

Modern writers in West Africa are adding to the literacy legacy of the region. Some of them have turned ancient oral traditions into novels and other works.

**Questions:**

1. What are griots? Why were they important in West African culture?

2. Why has oral tradition been so important in West Africa?

3. How have West African folktales become a part of the culture in the Americas?

4. How do West African written and oral traditions influence life today?

5. How have you learned about your family’s history? Compare it to the way the people of Mali learned about theirs.

6. How would you write the history of what is happening in our world today?
A coronavirus is a type of virus. In fact, there are multiple different kinds. COVID-19 is the illness caused by A brand new coronavirus that hadn’t been identified in humans until late 2019. “CO” for corona, “VI” for virus, “D” for disease, “19” for the year it was first seen. According to the CDC, it spreads mainly from person to person when they’re in close contact, within six feet, and droplets from a cough or sneeze. From someone infected with COVID-19 Land in the nose or mouth of or gets inhaled by somebody else who is close by. The CDC also says that it might spread from touching surfaces where the virus is found, then touching the nose, mouth, or eyes—but, they emphasize, this way is less likely. So, here’s the CDC’s top tips to help limit spread and keep from getting sick: Wash your hands often with water and soap for 20 seconds at least, count as you go. If you can’t wash your hands, use hand sanitizer. And try not to touch your nose, mouth, or eyes With unwashed hands. If you know someone’s sick Give them space and keep your distance. And if COVID-19 starts to spread in your community, the CDC says it’s best to stay home away from large crowds. A little bit of distance can be a big help. Now, let’s talk about symptoms. The signs that a person might have this illness are fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Symptoms can take two to 14 days to surface. The CDC says older adults and those with health problems are more at risk. But no two cases are the same—there’s been a wide range, mild to severe. If symptoms appear it’s best to contact a medical professional. They’re best equipped to offer advice that’s credible. In the middle of a stressful time, it can be easy to forget that it’s best to be kind. Anxiety might lead people to reject certain groups, assuming that they’re at greater risk. So keep in mind, anyone can get sick no matter their race, profession or ethnic background. We’re all in this together.

**Vocabulary: Match each vocabulary term used in the rap, with their correct definition.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>coronavirus</td>
<td>a change that is a sign of some sickness, disease, or problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identified</td>
<td>nervousness or worry, usually about something that is about to happen or that you are afraid will happen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infected</td>
<td>having an illness caused by bacteria or viruses in the body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inhaled</td>
<td>dependable; reliable; reasonable to believe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emphasize</td>
<td>to give extra attention to something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>symptoms</td>
<td>discovered in 2019, it is a member of the Coronaviridae family of viruses, which cause a variety of illnesses in birds and mammals and also that can sicken humans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>credible</td>
<td>to breathe in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anxiety</td>
<td>to recognize who or what someone or something is</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Directions:** Highlight or circle the correct answer for each of the questions below.

1. COVID-19 is an illness caused by a new type of:

2. The new coronavirus was first identified in humans in what year?

3. COVID-19 is transmitted through:
   a. Undercooked food   b. Contaminated water
   c. Contact with infected animals   d. Droplets from coughs and sneezes

4. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, experts say we should _____ regularly.
   a. exercise   b. drink water   c. travel abroad   d. wash our hands

5. Make sure to wash your hands for at least _______ seconds each time.
   a. 10   b. 20   c. 30   d. 40

6. It’s especially important to wash your hands before _________________.
   a. going to bed   b. touching your face
   c. coughing or sneezing   d. doing your homework

7. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and ________________:

8. Symptoms can take up to _______ days to surface.
   a. 10   b. 14   c. 20   d. 28

9. True or False: Elderly people and those with health problems are most at risk of severe symptoms.
   a. True   b. False

10. If you experience symptoms, it’s best to ____________________________.
    a. Go to school   b. Contact a doctor
    c. Play your favorite sport   d. Spend time with your friends