Chapter Review and Assessment

SUMMARY

Section 1 Africa, p. 7

- The large and geographically diverse continent of Africa was the birthplace of humanity.
- *Homo erectus*, the ancestor of *Homo sapiens*, appeared in Africa 1.6 million years ago and is associated with the first evidence of human use of fire.
- Egypt was the earliest civilization in Africa, and along with Mesopotamia, one of the two earliest civilizations in world history.
- To the south of Egypt was the ancient region of Nubia, site of the kingdom of Kush.
- War and trade bound Egypt and Kush together, creating opportunities for complex cultural exchange.

Section 2 West Africa, p. 14

- Like Africa as a whole, West Africa is physically, ethnically, and culturally diverse.
- Trade and agriculture were essential components of the region's economy and society.
- The kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhi were famous for the wealth generated by their extensive trading networks. They were also important centers of Islam in Africa.
- The people of the forest region of West Africa are particularly important for African-American history because of their role in the Atlantic slave trade, both as traders and as slaves.
- Although the ancestors of most African Americans came from West Africa, many also came from Central Africa, a region with many social and cultural similarities to West Africa.

Section 3 West African Society and Culture, p. 24

- By the early sixteenth century, most West Africans were farmers who lived in villages composed of extended families and clans called lineages.
- Work was divided along gender lines.
- Most West Africans lived in hierarchically organized states headed by monarchs.
- Slavery was common throughout the region.
- The two most important religious traditions in West Africa were the indigenous tradition and Islam.
- Art and music in West Africa were closely tied to religion among the common people.

REVIEWING KEY TERMS

Write a brief explanation of the following terms.

1. savannah, p. 7
2. Sudan, p. 7
3. hominids, p. 8
4. *Homo erectus*, p. 9
5. ancient Egypt, p. 9
6. pharaoh, p. 10
7. Berbers, p. 15
8. forest region, p. 19
9. patrilineal, p. 24
10. matrilineal, p. 24
11. polygynous, p. 25
12. indigenous, p. 26
13. griots, p. 28

REVIEWING MAIN IDEAS

14. What was the role of Africa in the evolution of modern humanity?
15. Discuss the controversy concerning the racial identity of the ancient Egyptians. What is the significance of this controversy for the history of African Americans?
16. Compare and contrast the western Sudanese empires with the forest civilizations of the Guinea coast.
17. Discuss the role of religion in West Africa. What was the African religious heritage of black Americans?
18. Describe West African society on the eve of the expansion of the Atlantic slave trade. What were the society's strengths and weaknesses?

ANALYZING DOCUMENTS

A Dutch Visitor Describes Benin City in 1602

The town seemeth to be very great; when you enter into it, you go into a great broad street, not paved, which seems to be seven or eight times broader than

the Warmoes street in Amsterdam; which goeth right out and never crooks. . . . It is thought that street is a mile long [this is a Dutch mile, equal to about four English miles] besides the suburbs. At the gate where I entered on horseback, I saw a very high bulwark, very thick of earth, with a very deep broad ditch. . . . Without this gate there is a great suburb. When you are in the great street aforesaid, you see many great streets on the sides thereof, which also go right forth. . . . The houses in this street stand in good order, one close and even with the other, as the houses in Holland stand. . . . Their rooms within are four-square, over them having a roof that is not close [d] in the middle, at which place the rain, wind, and light come in, and therein they lie and eat their meat; they have other places besides, as kitchens and other rooms. . . .

Making Comparisons: According to the Dutch visitor, how does Benin City compare to Amsterdam?

WRITING ACTIVITY

In a short report or research paper, consider these questions:

What were the key features of West African society and culture? What place did slavery have in that society?

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Review and Assessment

For answers, see *Teacher's Resource Manual*.