1. arid  difficult to farm, dry
2. Axum  Kingdom located in Ethiopian highlands; defeated kingdom of Kush around 300 B.C.E. and succeeded by Ethiopia. Received strong influence from Arabian peninsula; eventually converted to Christianity.
3. Berbers  a member of a North African, primarily Muslim people living in settled or nomadic tribes from Morocco to Egypt.
4. cataract  a huge waterfall on a river
5. city-state  city that is like a small country and governs itself
6. culture  the ways of living developed by a people including their way of behaving, their knowledge, tools and beliefs.
7. Ghana  the first West African kingdom based on the gold and salt trade.
8. griot  person who recites the oral traditions of a tribe or clan. A learned storyteller, entertainer, or historian.
9. Ibn Battuta  (1304-1369) Moroccan Muslim scholar, the most widely traveled individual of his time. He wrote a detailed account of his visits to Islamic lands from China to Spain and the western Sudan. His writings gave a glimpse into the world of that time period.
10. iron  Material used for weapons and tools that became cheap and more widely available around 1000 B.C.E.
11. isolation  separation from
12. kingdom  term for monarchy, an early form of government headed by a king or queen
13. Kush  An African state that developed along the upper reaches of the Nile c. 100 B.C.E.; conquered Egypt and ruled it for several centuries.
14. Mali  Empire created by indigenous Muslims in western Sudan of West Africa from the thirteenth to fifteenth century. It was famous for its role in the trans-Saharan gold trade.
15. Mansa Musa  Ruler of Mali (r. 1312-1337). His pilgrimage through Egypt to Mecca in 1324-1325 established the empire's reputation for wealth in the Mediterranean world. (p. 376)
16. matrilineal  describes a society in which people trace their ancestry through their mothers.
17. Niger River Valley  major river valley which contributed to the social, economic, and political growth of three ancient African empires--Ghana, Mali, and Songhai.
18. oral tradition  the passing of poems, songs and stories by word of mouth from one generation to another
19. patrilineal  describes a society in which people trace their ancestry through their fathers.
20. pre-literate  a society in which the vast majority of the people cannot read or write
21. proverb  a short statement of a general truth, one that condenses common experience into memorable form
22. rainforest  a tropical forest, usually of tall, densely growing, broad-leaved evergreen trees in an area of high annual rainfall.
23. Rift Valley  formed when part of the Ethiopian plateau sank, this is a steep-sided structural crack that runs north and south near the plateau's eastern edge.
24. Sahara  the world's largest desert (3,500,000 square miles) in northern Africa.
25. Sahel  vast area of relatively dry grasslands called savannas, dotted with a few trees and thorny bushes. South of the Sahara, unpredictable rainfall.
26. savanna  an area of grassland with scattered trees and bushes
27. silent barter  a method of exchanging goods by displaying items for acceptance of equal value; merchants and traders do not meet face to face
28. Songhai  a West African empire that conquered Mali and controlled trade from the 1400s to 1591
29. Sundiata  the founder of Mali empire. He crushed his enemies and won control of the gold trade routes
30. Timbuktu  a City on the Niger River It was founded sometime after 1000. As part of the Mali empire, Timbuktu became a major major terminus of the trans-Saharan trade and a center of Islamic learning.
31. tribe  basic unit of social organization, along with family and clan. Tribal royalties are stronger than national identities. Tribes rather than individuals own land.