Year 7
Subject: History
Topic/Unit: Empire of Mali
When: Autumn Half Term 2

Huntington School
Learn and succeed

Overview: This unit explores the Mali Empire during the 14th century, specifically the reign of Emperor Mansa Musa I, often cited as the wealthiest individual in human history.

Why this? Why now? This study is positioned to broaden students' understanding of the medieval world beyond European borders, challenging common misconceptions by presenting pre-colonial Africa as a site of immense wealth, sophisticated governance, and global connectivity.

Building on...building to: The curriculum builds upon prior knowledge of the medieval power, The **Byzantine Empire** and Emperor Alexios, allowing students to compare different forms of medieval authority and religious influence. It leads toward study of Transatlantic Slavery and Abolition in Year 8.

Sequence summary:

- **Lesson 1: The Golden Journey:** Introduction to Mali's geography and the scale of Mansa Musa's 4,000-mile **hajj** to Makkah.
- **Lesson 2: Power and Wealth:** Analysis of Mali's natural resources, particularly its control of nearly half the world's salt and gold supplies, and the military expansion into cities like Gao.
- **Lesson 3: Culture and Legacy:** Investigation into the establishment of Islam, the architectural feat of the Djinguereber Mosque, and Timbuktu's development as a premier trade and cultural centre.
- **Lesson 4: Historical Writing:** Structured practice in constructing explanatory paragraphs to prove what Mali reveals about medieval power and religion.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Mansa, Hajj, Jeli, Emirs, Pre-colonial, Empire**

Assessments: Retrieval quiz and whiteboard recall tasks. Practice assessment consists of an extended writing task: "What does the story of Mansa Musa reveal about medieval Africa?". Knowledge from this unit will be used and assessed in History assessment 2.

Able and interested: Students may want to further analyse the **Catalan Atlas** to interpret how medieval Europeans perceived African monarchs. They may also evaluate the curriculum's "hidden history" by debating why certain African narratives were historically omitted from Western textbooks.

Inclusion, Personal Development and Wider Skills:

- **Personal Development:** Enhancing religious literacy through the study of Islamic traditions and the significance of the **Kaaba**.
- **Wider Skills:** Developing geographic literacy through map annotations and evidence-based writing skills.
- **Inclusion:** Use of visual glossaries, scaffolding for explanatory sentences, and guided reading strategies.