

Kingdoms on the Move

Trace how Kush and Axum gained power, changed, and left lasting influences.

SS.6.W.3.18 "Describe the rise and fall of the ancient east African kingdoms of Kush and Axum and Christianity's development in Ethiopia."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that show a kingdom growing stronger, and circle details that show a kingdom losing power. Number 1, 2, and 3 beside the events that explain Christianity's development in Ethiopia.

Kush, Axum, and Ethiopia

- ① Along the Nile River south of Egypt, the kingdom of Kush grew because its farmers used river water and its traders moved gold, ivory, iron, and other goods. Its early capital was Napata. Around 750 BCE, Kushite kings conquered Egypt and ruled there as Egypt's Twenty-fifth Dynasty. Later, after conflict with Assyria, Kush's rulers centered their kingdom at Meroe. Meroe became known for ironworking and trade with peoples across northeastern Africa. This wealth supported cities, temples, and royal tombs.
- ② Over time, trade routes shifted away from Meroe, and the kingdom faced pressure from neighboring peoples. By about 350 CE, Kush had fallen, likely after attacks from the rising kingdom of Axum. Across the Red Sea trade routes, Axum grew in the highlands of what is now Ethiopia and Eritrea. Its rulers controlled trade linking inland Africa, Arabia, India, and the Mediterranean world. Axum minted coins, built large stone monuments called stelae, and used the port of Adulis to exchange goods such as ivory and incense.
- ③ In the 300s CE, King Ezana of Axum adopted Christianity after being influenced by Frumentius, a Christian teacher from the Mediterranean region. Ezana made Christianity an important religion in his kingdom. Over centuries, Christianity became deeply rooted in Ethiopia, where the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church developed its own long tradition. Axum later declined as Red Sea trade patterns changed and Muslim powers gained control of key coastal routes. By about the 700s CE, Axum had lost much of its trade wealth and political power.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Give two ways Kush's geography and resources supported its rise.

2 What two pressures contributed to Kush's fall?

3 How did Axum's trade connections help it become powerful?

4 How did Christianity develop in Ethiopia after King Ezana adopted it?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a five-sentence museum label comparing Kush and Axum. Include one reason Kush rose, one reason it fell, one reason Axum rose, and how Christianity continued in Ethiopia after Axum declined.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details that show a kingdom growing stronger, and circle details that show a kingdom losing power. Number 1, 2, and 3 beside the events that explain Christianity's development in Ethiopia. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Give two ways Kush's geography and resources supported its rise.	Nile River water supported farming, and trade in goods such as gold, ivory, and iron brought wealth.
2	What two pressures contributed to Kush's fall?	Trade routes shifted away from Meroe, and Kush faced pressure from neighboring peoples, including likely attacks from Axum.
3	How did Axum's trade connections help it become powerful?	Axum controlled routes linking inland Africa with Arabia, India, and the Mediterranean world. Its port of Adulis helped it exchange valuable goods.
4	How did Christianity develop in Ethiopia after King Ezana adopted it?	Ezana made Christianity important in Axum. Over centuries, it became deeply rooted in Ethiopia, where the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church developed a long tradition.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Kush grew through Nile farming and trade in valuable goods. When trade routes moved and neighboring forces attacked, Kush lost power. Axum rose by controlling routes that linked Africa with Arabia, India, and the Mediterranean. King Ezana's adoption of Christianity made it important in Axum. Christianity remained deeply rooted in Ethiopia even after Axum's trade wealth and political power declined.

Accept equivalent cause-and-effect explanations supported by the passage. For the museum label, check for all four required ideas and an accurate comparison of the kingdoms.