Colonialism in Ghana and the Fight for Independence

Research Simulation Task | Grades 6 to 12

First Name _____ Last Name _____
Date _____ Class _____

Central Historical Investigation

How did people challenge British colonial rule in the Gold Coast, and to what extent did independence transform political and economic power?

Objective

Explain colonial expansion, evaluate multiple forms of resistance, and construct an argument about the achievement and limits of independence.

Demonstration of Learning

Answer 15 questions and write a RACE response using at least three sources, including a distinction between political sovereignty and economic dependence.

Standards and Literacy Connections

NJSLS Social Studies: 6.2.12.HistoryCC.5.a and 6.2.12.HistoryCC.5.d address decolonization and its legacies. These are high school content targets; grades 6–8 use the case as supported enrichment with historical inquiry practices.

NJSLS ELA: RI.CR.6.1 and W.AW.6.1 anchor evidence and argument. Grades 7–12 increase text complexity and independence using corresponding grade level standards.

CCSS / CCLS disciplinary literacy: RH.6–8.1, RH.9–10.1, RH.11–12.1; WHST.6–8.1, WHST.9–10.1, WHST.11–12.1. Cite evidence and write historical arguments.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Geography: territory, ports, and political boundaries. Economics: exports and market dependence. Civics: sovereignty, protest, elections, and representation. ELA: source analysis and evidence based argument.

Sequence: Days 1–4 read Sources A–E and complete analysis. Day 5 complete the assessment and extended response. All readings are original classroom syntheses, not eyewitness quotations.

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Day 1 Colonial Power and Asante Resistance

Do Now

How might control of trade become control of a territory?

Source A From Sovereign Societies to Colonial Rule

Before British colonial rule, the lands that became Ghana contained established African societies with their own political institutions, trade networks, farming systems, and cultural traditions. Asante was a powerful inland state. Coastal communities also traded and negotiated with Europeans. European forts on the coast became connected to commerce in gold and to the Atlantic trafficking of enslaved people. A trading presence did not mean Europeans already governed the whole interior.

Britain declared the coastal Gold Coast a colony in 1874. Expansion inland involved warfare and resistance, rather than one peaceful agreement accepted by everyone. British forces attacked Kumasi in 1874 and removed valuable Asante objects. In 1900, Yaa Asantewaa, Queen Mother of Ejisu, helped lead resistance to British domination. The Golden Stool represented Asante collective identity and sovereignty. British demands concerning it intensified the conflict. Yaa Asantewaa was captured and exiled; Asante came under colonial rule.

Colonialism placed ultimate political authority in an outside imperial government. Local leaders and African residents continued to act, bargain, organize, and resist, but they did so under unequal power. Gold and cocoa connected the territory to international markets. African farmers were important economic actors, not merely passive laborers. The central question is who could decide how land, labor, trade, and public resources would be governed.

Source Analysis

Explain why the existence of European forts does not prove control of the entire region.

How does Yaa Asantewaa challenge the claim that people simply accepted colonial rule?

Quick Write

How did colonial expansion threaten political and cultural sovereignty? Cite two details.

Exit Ticket Identify one event, its cause, and its consequence.

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