AIM:

HOW DID ASIA AND ARABIA INFLUENCE THE EASTERN COAST OF AFRICA?

Do Now: From our study of West Africa, describe what makes a “blended culture”?
I. The Geographic Advantages of Africa’s East Coast

A. The east coast of Africa faces the Indian Ocean. Throughout the centuries, the ocean has connected Africa with Arabia, Persia, India, and even China.

B. As early as 100 AD, the Romans had heard of African ports far south of Egypt.

C. Sailors learned that they could use the seasonal winds known as monsoons to sail back and forth across the ocean.
D. Arab traders could pick up Chinese porcelain, spices from Southeast Asia and India, coffee from Arabia, then travel southwest along the African coast.

E. As they went, they stopped at a series of port cities and traded their goods for African gold, ivory, pearls, and slaves. They sailed back northeast when the monsoon wind changed.
II. City-State Government

A. The African trading ports competed with each other, but they had no interest in territorial conquest.

B. Their focus was on controlling the trade routes to the seaport, not the land.

C. Many of these ports developed a city-state form of government, an independent state made up of a city and its surrounding area.

D. Rulers became rich from taxes on the goods that passed through their port, and acted more as business managers than governors.
III. SWAHILI CULTURE

A. The African coast was influenced by foreign culture as well as trade.

B. Traders from Arabia and Persia sometimes settled in the African trade cities, marrying local women.

C. The language known as Swahili today is basically a Bantu African language, with many words added from Asian languages.

D. Many Swahili adopted Islam as their religion. Mosques were constructed, and people prayed in Arabic.
IV. From Riches to Ruins

A. In 1498, the first European explorer -- Vasco da Gama -- arrived.

B. Da Gama was sponsored by the king of Portugal, who wanted him to find a sea route to India.

C. If the Portuguese could bypass the Arab traders of the Middle East, they could profit from the Asian spice trade.
Vasco da Gama's First Voyage

Europe

Africa

India

Lisbon

Malindi

Mombasa

Calicut

Atlantic Ocean

Cape of Good Hope