

## PRIMARY SOURCE SET

The following secondary source describes the context of the primary sources used by fifth-grade teacher Andrea Bell-Myers in a social studies unit comparing African kings across time and space. Andrea's lesson is highlighted in [Culturally Relevant Pedagogy Using Primary Sources: Tenet 1 in an Elementary Classroom](#).

### KOBENA GYAN, KING OF ELMINA (500 Lexile score)

Kobena Gyan was the king of Elmina in 1872. Elmina was a city in Ghana, Africa. In 1872, the British invaded King Kobena's city kingdom.

Before, the people of Elmina had traded with the Dutch. Things changed when the Dutch "sold" all the cities in Ghana they traded with to the British, as if they owned them. King Kobena did not believe that his city belonged to anyone. His city could not be bought or sold. The people of Elmina agreed with their King.

The new British governor came to Elmina. His name was Pope Hennessy. He knew he needed King Kobena's friendship if he was going to be in charge of Elmina.

On March 12, 1873, King Kobena met with the British governor and his soldiers. They told him to sign his name on a paper that promised he would listen to the British governor and obey him.

"I am not afraid of your power," King Kobena said. "I will not sign any paper." He went on to say that he and his people promised to fight the British for their city. The British did not like his answer. They arrested him and sent him away to Sierra Leone, a nearby country controlled by the British. They did not give King Kobena a trial or a fair chance to tell his side.

Four years later, the British governor had taken over the city. The people of Elmina signed a paper saying they wanted their king back. The British governor said that King Kobena could come back, but *only* if he promised to give up being king. When King Kobena heard about this, he said no. He would not come back unless he could come back as the rightful king of his city.

King Kobena stayed in Sierra Leone until 1894. He was dying and came back to Elmina to see his people for the last time. The photo shows him in the center surrounded by his family and tribesmen. He died in 1896.

#### Sources:

Manus Ulzen, T. P. *Java Hill: An African Journey*. Xlibris Corporation, 2013. Retrieved from [Google Books](#). (Accessed November 15, 2018.)

"May 17, 1894: Kobena Gyan, King of Elmina returns from exile in Sierra Leone after 21 years." Edward A. Ulzen Memorial Foundation, May 19, 2018. Retrieved from [Edward A. Ulzen Memorial Foundation](#). (Accessed November 15, 2018.)