



## Islam: History, Society, and Civilization

*The focus of this lesson plan is the Crusades.*

### Subject

World History

### Grade level

6-8

### Duration

Three class periods

### Objectives

Students will

- review facts about the Crusades, the Muslim sultan Saladin, and the impact of the holy wars on the Europeans;
- summarize and respond to a Christian or Muslim account from the period; and
- compare and discuss two points of view.

### Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- Print resources about the Crusades
- **Islam: History, Society, and Civilization** video and VCR (or DVD and DVD player)

### Procedures

1. After watching the program, review facts about the Crusades. Pose these questions to the class to review: What were the Crusades? (*a series of holy wars between European Christians and Muslims in the Middle East*) What was their purpose? (*The Europeans wanted to reclaim the Muslim-held Holy Land for Christians.*) When did they take place? (*1096 to 1291*) Who challenged Christians to reclaim the Holy Land? (*Pope Urban II*) What was the most important city in the Holy Land to the Christians and Muslims? (*Jerusalem*)
2. Continue your review with these questions: Who was the Muslim sultan who took back Jerusalem in 1188? (*Saladin*) How did he reunite the Muslims? (*He declared a jihad, or holy war.*) How was his control of Jerusalem different from Christians' control of the city in 1099? (*He did not destroy the churches and allowed Christian pilgrims to enter; the Christians had massacred Jews and Muslims, burning down mosques and synagogues.*) With which English

king did Saladin communicate? (*King Richard, also known as Richard the Lion Heart*) What was the outcome of their relationship? (*They reached a temporary peace agreement in 1192.*)

3. Remind students that the Crusades resumed about a hundred years later, finally ending when the Muslims regained control of Acre in 1291. Review positive influences the Crusades had on Europeans. (*They began to trade goods and ideas freely with the Muslim world; European scholars were exposed to more advanced mathematics and astronomy; Italian merchants profited by transporting pilgrims and trade goods.*)
4. Ask students to imagine being knight or peasants living in England in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. They left their homes and families and made a long, difficult journey to the Middle East to fight an unknown civilization, making many sacrifices. Now ask the students to imagine themselves as Muslims who defended what they believe is their land against brutal foreign invaders. Tell students that they are going to read one of three primary resources from this period: the letter from Pope Urban II encouraging Europeans to begin the Crusades; an account of a Christian Crusader; and an account from a Muslim who watched his people massacred after losing the city of Acre.
5. Assign students to one of the resources below. Explain that they should summarize the account and find three excerpts that best illustrate the Christian or Muslim point of view.

Pope Urban II: Letter of Instruction to the Crusaders, December 1095  
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/urban2-5vers.html#urban>

The Crusaders Capture Jerusalem, 1099  
<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/crusades.htm>

Richard The Lionheart Massacres the Saracens, 1191  
<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/lionheart.htm>

6. Give students one class period to read their accounts and complete the assignment.
7. Have students read aloud at least one excerpt from their accounts. Then ask students to compare the Muslim and Christian points of view. What drove the Christians to participate in the Crusades? How did the Muslims respond to these invaders? Ask students to explain in their own words the motivation of the Christians or Muslims during the Crusades.

### **Extensions**

For segments **"The History and Teachings of Islam"** and **"Afghanistan, 12 Years Of Violence"**: Hold a class discussion about Islam. Pose these questions: Whose teaching inspired this religion? (*the prophet Muhammad*) When did it begin? (*7<sup>th</sup> century*) How widespread is Islam? (*It is the second largest religion worldwide.*)

Next, ask students to define the following words:

- Muslim (*one who practices Islam*)
- Allah (*Arabic name for God*)
- mosque (*Islamic place of worship*)

- Qur'an (*Islamic holy book*)
- Mecca (*spiritual home of Islam*)
- muezzin (*the holy crier, who calls all Muslims to stop and kneel in the direction of Mecca and recite prayers to Allah five times a day*)
- Five pillars of Islam (*duties that Muslims must perform: declaring one's faith, ritual prayer, charity, spiritual discipline and fasting, and pilgrimage*)

Next, ask students to share some Islamic teachings or beliefs. (*Charity, discipline, basic human rights, tolerance for other religions, responsibility to the poor*) Describe the role of women in most Islamic cultures. (*They may wear veils, but they share many of the same responsibilities and rights as men.*) Finally, ask students to describe the Taliban. (*It is a group of Islamic guerrilla fighters and refugees who wanted to set up a very strict Islamic state; members follow an extreme interpretation of the Qur'an. The Taliban held power over most of Afghanistan, until it was removed from power by a U.S.-led military coalition after the group's leadership was linked to the terrorist attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.*)

Have students write a brief essay on one of two topics: 1) Compare Islam's similarities and differences to another religion. 2) Compare the beliefs of the Taliban to most Muslims, especially the impact it has had on Afghanistan. Have students address whether all Muslims can be fairly judged based on this extremist group.

For the "**Suleiman, Magnificent Leader**" segment: As a class, review the definition of a sultan. (*a Muslim ruler*) Over what empire did Suleiman rule? (*Ottoman empire*) Remind students that Suleiman ruled from 1520 to 1566, considered the golden age of the Ottoman empire; Europeans called him "Suleiman the Magnificent." Ask students to assume the point of view of an Ottoman empire subject and write a short paragraph describing why Suleiman was a magnificent leader. They may choose from the following: a former slave (such as his closest adviser, Ibrahim), a Christian, a Jew living in a conquered territory, an architect, a painter, a Muslim in Constantinople, a poet, a soldier, or someone who had been unjustly imprisoned under a former ruler.

## Evaluation

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

**3 points:** Students actively participated in class discussions; cited several details about the Crusades from the program; wrote thoughtful, complete overviews of their assigned primary resource, including three excerpts.

**2 points:** Students participated in class discussions; cited some details about the Crusades from the program; wrote satisfactory overviews of their assigned primary resource, including two excerpts.

**1 point:** Students participated minimally in class discussions; cited few or no details about the Crusades from the program; wrote an incomplete overview of their assigned primary resource, including one or no excerpts.

## Vocabulary

### Crusades

**Definition:** Expeditions of hundreds of thousands of European knights and pilgrims to the Holy Land to reclaim it from the Muslims for the Christians

**Context:** From 1096 to 1291, lands in the Middle East change hands in a series of eight brutal wars called the Crusades.

### **jihad**

**Definition:** A holy war or spiritual struggle

**Context:** Saladin declared a jihad that united the Muslims against the Christian Crusaders.

### **knight**

**Definition:** A soldier of noble rank in medieval Europe who rode on horseback and was given privileged military status

**Context:** The Knights Templar was a military order of knights sworn to protect pilgrims on their way to the Holy Land.

### **relic**

**Definition:** An object venerated because it once belonged to a saint, martyr, or religious leader

**Context:** Saladin's army captured the holiest relic in Christianity, what Crusaders believe are pieces of the cross on which Jesus died.

### **sultan**

**Definition:** The ruler of a Muslim country, especially during the Ottoman empire

**Context:** In the late 11<sup>th</sup> century, Muslim sultans ruled most of North Africa, Spain, and the eastern shores of the Mediterranean.

## **Academic Standards**

**The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)** has developed national standards to provide guidelines for teaching social studies. To become a member of the NCSS, or to view the standards online, go to <http://www.socialstudies.org>.

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- Culture and Cultural Diversity
- Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Power, Authority, and Governance

## **Credit**

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