



## From Medieval Times to Today

### Subject

World History/Geography

### Grade level

5-8

### Duration

Two to three class periods

### Objectives

Students will

- trace the medieval trade routes of Europe and Asia;
- identify important commodities traded during the Middle Ages; and
- describe some of the uses of commodities in the Middle Ages.

### Materials

- Pencils and rulers
- Colored markers or crayons
- Large white construction paper (at least one sheet per student)
- Encyclopedias, geography textbooks, and other library resources
- Computer with Internet access (optional)
- *From Medieval Times to Today* video and VCR or DVD and DVD player

### Procedure

1. Begin the lesson by introducing the concept of trade. Ask students: What is trade? When did civilizations begin trading? What kinds of goods are traded today and why?

Once students have shown that they understand the concept, discuss trade in the Middle Ages. Ask students: How was trade in the Middle Ages different from trade today? What kinds of goods were traded in the Middle Ages? How did people travel between countries to conduct trade?

2. Tell students that they will be making a map of Europe and Asia, identifying medieval trade routes on these continents. Each map should trace at least three different routes and must identify the cities at the ends of each route and the goods traded between these cities. Talk about ways to identify these goods (writing the names of the goods on the map or using symbols and a

key).

3. Have students draw their maps on a large piece of white construction paper. Suggest that each trade route be traced in a different color for easy identification. Allow students to identify additional cities and commodities along the routes. In addition to geography and history texts, students may use the following Web sites to research their maps:
  - [http://history.smsu.edu/jchuchiak/HST%20101--Lecture%2024--Maps\\_of\\_medieval\\_trade\\_routes.htm](http://history.smsu.edu/jchuchiak/HST%20101--Lecture%2024--Maps_of_medieval_trade_routes.htm)
  - <http://www1.enloe.wake.k12.nc.us/enloe/CandC/showme/trading.html#trade>
  - [http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian\\_Studies/dweb/society/structure/routes.jpg](http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/dweb/society/structure/routes.jpg)
  - <http://sumy.net.ua/History/map/6!.php>
  - <http://www.ucalgary.ca/HIST/tutor/imagemid/hanseaticSmall.gif>
  - <http://www.blackstudies.ucsb.edu/antillians/trade2.html>
  - [http://www.cc.colorado.edu/Dept/HY/Ashley/hy105/Map\\_-\\_Medieval\\_Trade\\_Routes\\_and\\_Regional\\_Products.JPG](http://www.cc.colorado.edu/Dept/HY/Ashley/hy105/Map_-_Medieval_Trade_Routes_and_Regional_Products.JPG)
  - <http://www.cc.colorado.edu/Dept/HY/Ashley/HY104/images/MapKeys/eruasiatrademap.jpg>
  - <http://www.enloe.wake.k12.nc.us/enloe/CandC/showme/commodity.html>
4. Student will share the finished maps with the rest of the class. Talk about the commodities traded in medieval times and their uses. Discuss the different trade routes and which might be more difficult to travel. Discuss the ways trade changed the culture of medieval societies, including negative aspects, such as disease, that spread easily along routes of trade.

### **Evaluation**

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

**3 points:** Students actively participated in class discussions; were able to use resource materials without teacher guidance; and created unique and well-researched trade maps that correctly identified at least three trade routes in three different colors as well as the commodities traded along these routes.

**2 points:** Students somewhat participated in class discussions; used resource materials with limited teacher guidance; and created maps that correctly identified two trade routes in two different colors as well as the commodities traded along these routes.

**1 point:** Students did not participate in class discussions; were unable to use resource materials without teacher guidance; and created disorganized maps that identified one or no trade routes and only a few of the commodities traded in Europe and Asia.

### **Vocabulary**

**empire**

**Definition:** A major political unit having a large territory, or a number of territories, under one sovereign ruler

**Context:** Some of the world's greatest empires existed during the Middle Ages.

### **Islam**

**Definition:** The religious faith of Muslims, which includes the belief that Allah is the sole god and Muhammad is his prophet

**Context:** Islam spread from Mecca to Africa, Asia Minor, and Spain.

### **Middle Ages**

**Definition:** The historical period of time between the fall of the Roman empire in A.D. 476 and the start of the Renaissance in 1453

**Context:** If you had lived a thousand years ago, you would have experienced life in the Middle Ages.

### **Silk Road**

**Definition:** A medieval trade route connecting China with the Middle East and the Roman empire

**Context:** China had been one of the most advanced empires in the world for centuries, in part because the Silk Road linked it to other countries.

### **trade**

**Definition:** The business of buying, selling, or bartering commodities

**Context:** In trade, they took beads and porcelain from as far away as China.

### **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 standards:

- Culture
- Production, Distribution, and Consumption
- Global Connections

The National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE) provides 18 national geography standards that the geographically informed person knows and understands. To view the standards online, go to [www.ncge.org](http://www.ncge.org).

This lesson plan addresses the following standards:

- Places and Regions
- Environment and Society

### **Credit**

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