**Program Description**

In “The Moors of Spain,” discover how the Moors built a vast empire that drew 5.5 million Muslims into Spain by the 10th century. See how Muslims and Christians clashed during the bloody wars of the Crusades in “Muslims and Christians in Medieval Times.” Journey to Spain and take an up-close look at one of the most stunning feats of architecture: the citadel and palace known as “The Alhambra of Spain.” The culture of the Moors bears similarities to the Ottoman Empire. Learn about this powerful state and its best-known ruler in “Suleiman, Leader of the Ottoman Empire.” In “Spherical Trigonometry and the Moors’ Decline,” see how Muslim scholars revolutionized navigation principles by accounting for the spherical shape of the Earth.

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**Onscreen Questions**

- How was the need to pray toward Mecca a math problem?
- How did the Crusades affect life in Europe?
- Why did the Moors reject physical depictions of people and animals?
- How were the Moorish and Ottoman cultures different? How were they alike?
- How has the legacy of the Moors endured?

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**Lesson Plan**

**Student Objectives**

- Identify some of the achievements of the Moors and the Ottomans.
- Describe the economic, social, and political climate of the Moor and Ottoman empires.

**Materials**

- *Culture and Math: The Moors of Spain* video
- Encyclopedias and other reference materials with information about the Moor and Ottoman empires
• Computer with Internet access (optional)
• Construction paper
• Markers or colored pencils
• Rulers
• Writing paper
• Pencils and erasers

**Procedures**

1. Introduce students to the Moor and Ottoman empires by showing *Culture and Math: The Moors of Spain*. After watching the video, ask students: When did the Moor and Ottoman empires exist? What were some of the achievements of the Moors and the Ottomans? How were these civilizations similar? How were they different? What legacy did the Moors and the Ottomans leave behind?

2. Ask students to make a chart to compare the Moor and Ottoman empires. Have each student divide a piece of construction paper into two columns, labeling one “Moor” and the other “Ottoman.” Then, have students create rows labeled “Beginning and End,” “Social Achievements,” “Political Achievements,” and “Economic Achievements.”

3. Have students use *Culture and Math: The Moors of Spain*, encyclopedias, and other reference materials to research when and how the empires began; when and why they fell; and the social, political, and economic achievements of each empire. Students should fill this information in on their charts, writing in complete sentences and using different colored pens or pencils for each category of information.

4. When students have finished working on their charts, discuss the two empires with the class. When did the Moor Empire begin? Why did it collapse? When and how did the Ottoman Empire begin? Why did it collapse? What are some similarities between the Moors and the Ottomans? What are some differences? What are some advances or contributions each civilization made?

5. Ask students to think about which empire has had a lasting impact. Why? Have students write a one- to two-page essay explaining their choice.

6. Ask volunteers to share their essays with the rest of the class and talk about the legacy of both empires.

**Assessment**

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

- **3 points**: Students created easy-to-read, informative charts that correctly addressed the stated criteria; easily identified numerous advances made by the Moor and Ottoman
societies, and described the economic, social, and political climate of the Ottoman and Moor empires in great detail; wrote interesting, intelligent, and thoughtful essays that clearly explained their choice of which empire has had a lasting impact.

- **2 points:** Students created generally easy-to-read, somewhat informative charts that correctly addressed most of the stated criteria; identified some advances made by the Moor and Ottoman societies, and described the economic, social, and political climate of the Ottoman and Moor empires in sufficient detail; wrote somewhat interesting, intelligent, and thoughtful essays that described their choice of which empire has had a lasting impact.

- **1 point:** Students created illegible or uninformative charts that correctly addressed little to none of the stated criteria; identified few advances made by the Moor and Ottoman societies, and described the economic, social, and political climate of the Ottoman and Moor empires in little detail; wrote incomplete essays that did not clearly describe their choice of which empire has had a lasting impact.

**Vocabulary**

**Arabic**

*Definition:* Of or relating to Arabia, the Arabs, their language, or their culture

*Context:* The Muslims’ Arabic culture blended with those of Africa and Persia.

**Islam**

*Definition:* A monotheistic religion characterized by the acceptance of the doctrine of submission to God and to Muhammad as the chief and last prophet of God

*Context:* Within a few hundred years, the Muslims disappeared from Spain, but the knowledge they gathered, preserved, and shared made its way throughout Europe.

**mosque**

*Definition:* A Muslim house of worship

*Context:* Suleiman hired great architects to build magnificent mosques and other buildings throughout the Ottoman Empire.

**Muslim**

*Definition:* A believer in or adherent of Islam

*Context:* Muslim scholars came to realize that because the Earth is not flat, plane trigonometry would not be accurate for measuring long distances.
**preserve**  
*Definition:* To keep in perfect or unaltered condition  
*Context:* Muslim scholars preserved the knowledge of Greece and Rome.

**prestige**  
*Definition:* Prominence, distinction, or importance  
*Context:* Under Suleiman, the Ottoman Empire reached the height of its power and prestige.

**testament**  
*Definition:* Something that serves as tangible proof or evidence  
*Context:* The Alhambra is a testament to Muslim design.

**Academic Standards**

**National Center for History in the Schools (NCHS)**  
The National Center for History in the Schools has developed standards for the teaching of history. To view the standards online, go to [http://nchs.ucla.edu/standards/toc.html](http://nchs.ucla.edu/standards/toc.html).

This lesson plan addresses the following standards:

- Era 4: Expanding Zones of Exchange and Encounter, 300-1000 CE: Causes and consequences of the rise of Islamic civilization in the 7th-10th centuries

- Era 5: Intensified Hemispheric Interactions, 1000-1500 CE: The maturing of an interregional system of communication, trade, and cultural exchange in an era of Chinese economic power and Islamic expansion; Patterns of crisis and recovery in Afro-Eurasia, 1300-1450

**The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)**  
The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has developed national standards to provide guidelines for teaching social studies. To view the standards online, go to [http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands](http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands).
This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- Culture
- Time, Continuity, and Change
- People, Places, and Environments

**DVD Content**

This program is available in an interactive DVD format. The following information and activities are specific to the DVD version.

**How to Use the DVD**

The DVD starting screen has the following options:

*Play Video* — This plays the video from start to finish. There are no programmed stops, except by using a remote control. With a computer, depending on the particular software player, a pause button is included with the other video controls.

*Video Index* — Here the video is divided into four parts (see below), indicated by video thumbnail icons. Watching all parts in sequence is similar to watching the video from start to finish. Brief descriptions and total running times are noted for each part. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the remote for TV playback; on a computer, click once to highlight a thumbnail and read the accompanying text description and click again to start the video.

*Curriculum Units* — These are specially edited video segments pulled from different sections of the video (see below). These nonlinear segments align with key ideas in the unit of instruction. They include onscreen viewing questions, reproduced in this Teacher’s Guide. Total running times for these segments are noted. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the TV remote or click once on the Curriculum Unit title on a computer.

*Standards Link* — Selecting this option displays a single screen that lists the national academic standards the video addresses.

*Teacher Resources* — This screen gives the technical support number and Web site address.

**Video Index**

**I. The Moors and Mecca (4 min.)**
The Muslim Empire rose to stunning heights and helped fuel Europe’s rebirth after the fall of Rome.
II. Muslims and Christians in Medieval Times (5 min.)
The rise of Christian nation-states in Europe led to new conflicts with Muslims in the Middle East. Examine the reasons for the Crusades, and learn how these events led to the Renaissance.

III. The Alhambra of Spain (2 min.)
The Muslims left their mark throughout Spain, but none shows the beauty of their artistry and craftsmanship like the Alhambra in Granada.

IV. Suleiman, Leader of the Ottoman Empire (6 min.)
Meet the force behind the Ottoman Empire and one of the most progressive leaders of the 16th century.

V. Spherical Trigonometry and the Moors’ Decline (5 min.)
From high art to navigation, explore Islam’s uniquely close relationship with mathematics, and see how its achievements were not enough to prevent its expulsion from Spain.