

ASSIGNMENT SHEET -- Course #213  
THE MIDEAST

Page references are to the following books:

J - Jaeckel, The Middle East  
E - Ewing, The Middle East and Moslem Culture  
ST - Stavrianos, Middle East Culture Area in Perspective  
P - Peretz, The Middle East Selected Readings  
Sch- Scholastic Book Services - Israel, The Promised Land

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#1. Why is the Middle East Important?

J:5-6 ST:6-8 P:9-14

1. Why do difficulties arise when the term Middle East is used?
2. Explain why the term Middle East has been a bridge to three continents.

#2. Has Geography been kind to the Middle East?

J:9-19 Map-11 ST:6-10 15-17, 21-22, 24-29

1. On your outline map locate and fill in the following: Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt, Saudi-Arabia, Iran, Turkey, Suez Canal, Dardanelles, Nile River, Tigris-Euphrates Rivers, Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, Persian Gulf.
2. "Only 5% of the middle eastern land surface is cultivated." How does geography help to explain this?
3. Briefly discuss this statement with reference to the Middle East: "An area's history and culture is a mirror of its geography."

#3. How do we view the people of the Middle East?

1. Make a list of 10 things that enter your mind when you hear the term Middle East.
2. Where did you get your impressions from? (Do not use reference books or materials)

#4. Is there a typical Middle Easterner?

P:24-25

1. Assume that you are taking a trip in the Middle East through Egypt, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan and Saudi-Arabia. Describe the different types of people you would expect to find along the way.
2. Explain the reasons for the type of people you would encounter.
3. In which areas would you feel most comfortable?

#5. Is the Middle East's past more important than its present?

E:256-267 ST:11-12 J:28-35 Map-P.34

1. Many of the great contributions of Ancient Egypt can be traced to man's attempts to control the Nile River. Explain. Give examples.
2. For each of the following ancient peoples below, describe 2 reasons why we of the modern world are indebted to them: Sumerians, Hebrews, Babylonians, Phoenicians.
3. Identify: Monotheism, Hieroglyphics, Pyramids, Pharaoh, Cuneiform, Semites, Hammurabi.
4. Can civilization advance through constant invasions and warfare?

#6. Why did Islam triumph in the Middle East?

J:39-43 ST:12-14, 60-62 E:279-281

1. Identify or define: Mohammed, Mecca, Hegira, Islam, Moslem, Allah, Koran.
2. Assume you are a reporter interviewing Mohammed. Write a brief news article that explains the reasons for the Triumph of Islam by 750 AD.
3. Could the Arabs have united without Islam? Explain your answer.

#7. Has Islam shaped a unique culture in the Middle East?

P:34-37 J:40-41 ST:60-61, 63-65 E:279, 281-282

1. Explain the meaning and significance of the Five Pillars of Islam (Faith, Fasting, Alms, Giving, Prayer, Pilgrimage to Mecca)
2. How are these beliefs similar to the beliefs of your religion? How are they different?
3. Is Islam, a religion founded in the 17th century, capable of meeting the challenges of the 20th century?

- #8. Do we owe a debt to the Arab world?  
 ST:43, 62 J:42-43 E:283-285  
 Imagine that an Arab visitor to Dewey High School is about to deliver a lecture before your class on Arabic cultural contributions to civilization (800-1000).
1. In a brief essay, explain what contributions he would emphasize in the areas of art, architecture, mathematics, science, medicine, education and agriculture.
  2. Make a list of Arabic words that are in use in the English language.
  3. Explain: "While Christian European culture declined in the Middle Ages (500-1500) the Arabs developed a glorious civilization."
- #9. Did the Arab World have to decline?  
 E:280-283, 285-287 J:43-46 ST:45-47
1. Many people feel that the Islamic faith, with its emphasis on tradition and the past, helped bring about the decline of the Arab world. Do you agree? Why or why not? Explain your reasons.
  2. Do civilizations which go through periods of greatness eventually have to decline and fall? Explain your answer.
- #10. Could the Middle East have avoided European imperialism?  
 P:114-122, 111-114 J:45-53, 149 E:296-300
1. Why were the great European powers interested in gaining control over areas of the Middle East during the 19th and early 20th centuries?
  2. If you were the Sultan of Turkey, what reforms would you have introduced in your empire before 1914?
  3. Why was the Ottoman Empire unable to resist European imperialism?
- #11. How did Ataturk attempt to build a modern Turkey?  
 E:300-302 ST:23-25 J:59-67
1. Define the term Nationalism.
  2. Describe one reform Ataturk introduced in Turkey in each of the following areas: a) religion b) education c) dress
  3. In your opinion, was Ataturk good for Turkey?
- #12. How do the people of the Middle East live?  
 J:19-22 E:273-276
1. Assume that you are touring the Middle East. Write a brief letter home comparing your life to that of a Middle Eastern a) fellah b) city dweller c) bedouin.
- #13. Is man or nature more responsible for the Middle East's underdeveloped condition?  
 P:190-200 J:18-22, 140-144 P:21-23, 15-21 ST:30-43, 8-10, ST:65, 51-59
1. "Mother nature has been unkind to her Middle Eastern children" Agree or disagree with the statement. Give examples.
  2. Explain why each of the following are now major problems facing the governments of the Middle East: a) illiteracy b) scarcity of capital c) overpopulation d) unstable governments e) low life expectancy f) unequal distribution of land.
  3. "The Middle East is rich in oil yet poor" Explain this statement.
  4. "Industrial development should only be the goal of those Middle Eastern states that have the potential." Agree or disagree with the statement.
- #14. Can Egypt overcome the problems facing her?  
 P:175-186 ST:52-54, 34-35, 18-19 J:89-90, 94-98
1. Why has Egypt been called the "gift of The Nile"?
  2. Why has Nasser called the Aswan Dam the key to Egypt's future?
  3. What threats would industrialization present to Egyptian culture? Could Egypt survive?
  4. Should the Egyptians concentrate their efforts upon agricultural development before industrial development? Explain your answer.
  5. How has Arab socialism given Egypt a program to lessen her dependence on the Nile?

#15. Can the Arab World unite?

P:154-157

1. Describe at least three forces which unite the Arab World.
2. Describe three forces which tend to cause disunity in the Arab World.
3. Is the creation of a United Arab World a realistic goal? Why or why not?

#16. Should a Jewish State have been created in the Middle East?

P:216-216 J:126-133 E:310-311 Sch:23-36

1. Define the term Zionism.
2. Why did Jews long for a homeland in Palestine before 1914?
3. Explain the role of each of the following in the creation of Israel:  
a) Theodore Herzl      b) Chaim Weizman  
c) Ben Gurion          d) Ralph Bunche
4. What arguments could an Arab and an Israeli sympathizer use in answering the question "Should a Jewish State be created?"

#17. Is Israel a Middle Eastern State?

Sch:45-49, 73-95

1. With reference to Israel, describe each of the following and explain how they resemble or differ from conditions in the Arab countries of the Middle East:  
a) Government    b) role of religion    c) attitude towards women  
d) education    e) standard of living    f) arts

#18. Is Israel a model for modernization in the Middle East?

J:131-138 ST:50-52, 54-55 E:311 Sch:53-57

1. "Israel has made the desert bloom" - Explain. Give examples.
2. Describe Israeli success in agriculture, science and industry. How do you account for this success?
3. "People are the most important resource of Israel" - Explain. Give examples.
4. "If you can't beat them learn from them" - Would this be a good motto for the Arabs?
5. Are there factors which contributed to the modernization of Israel which the Arabs cannot adopt? Explain your answer.

#19. Has the establishment of Israel doomed the Middle East to perpetual crisis?

J:132-134 P:224-234 Sch:107-116

1. Why did Israel and her Arab neighbors go to war in 1948? Describe 2 major results.
2. What problems has the existence of Palestinian refugees presented to Israel and the Arab states?
3. Why did Israel and the Arabs go to war in 1956 and 1967?
4. How did the Israeli victory in 1967 increase the bitterness and raise new problems for the Middle East?

#20. Will World War III start in the Middle East?

Sch:107-126 P:224-234 J:132-134, 149-150, 152-155

1. Explain the role that each of the following has played in bringing about tensions in the Middle East: a) desire for Arab oil    b) Palestinian refugees    c) strategic location  
d) Soviet-U.S. rivalry    e) Guerilla organizations    f) Arab Nationalism    g) Suez Canal.
2. Choose two (2) of the above problems and propose a possible solution to the problem.