

Geography Standard: **1**

EXPEDITION HALL

Check out:
X1: Globe Projector

STANDARDS

- **Standard #1:** How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective

ACTIVITIES

- Crack the Code
- Lewis and Clark Expedition: Create Your Own Adventure
- The Red Album

Lesson Plans

Grade Level: K-2 3-5 6-8 9-12

Select Lesson Plans

Alike and Different: The Middle East and the United States

ALIKE AND DIFFERENT: THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE UNITED STATES

Overview:

This lesson will ask students to examine the similarities and differences between the Middle East and their own city, state, and country. Students will practice basic map skills by examining maps of the Middle East at National Geographic's Web site and maps of their own region, looking for similar features: rivers, lakes, cities, marshes, etc. They will look at a map of Amman and compare it to a map of their own city, a city they have visited, or any major U.S. city. Finally, they will fill in and label their own blank outline maps of the Middle East region and the United States.

Connections to the Curriculum:

Geography

Connections to the National Geography Standards:

Standard 1: "How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective"

Standard 3: "How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on Earth's surface"

Standard 4: "The physical and human characteristics of places"

Time:

Two to three hours

Materials Required:

- Computer with Internet access
- Globe or wall map of the world
- Copy of Middle East matching game (in the text below) for each small group
- Maps of students' own city, state, and country
- Blank Xpeditions outline maps of the Middle East region, one for each student
- Blank Xpeditions outline maps of the United States and of the students' home state (select the state from the right-hand dropdown box), one for each student
- Writing and drawing materials

Objectives:
Students will

- explore maps of the Middle East;
- use maps of the Middle East to match the names of countries with facts about them;
- look at a city map of Amman and compare it to a map of their own city (or a different city of their choice); and
- fill in maps of the Middle East and their own region, labeling important places and geographical features.

Geographic Skills:
Asking Geographic Questions
Acquiring Geographic Information
Organizing Geographic Information
Answering Geographic Questions

S u g g e s t e d P r o c e d u r e

Opening:

Using a wall map of the world or a globe, make sure students know where the Middle East is located. Next, using the maps at National Geographic's Web site, introduce students to the Middle East region. What do they know about it already? Which countries and bodies of water can they name or find on the maps?

Development:

Ask students to form small groups and go to National Geographic's [MapMachine Flags and Facts page](#). Ask them to click on the appropriate continent (Asia). In the popup window, they can click on the names of countries in the Middle East region and read about them. They will use this information to match the names of the each country below with the fact that describes it. On each Flags and Facts page, they may need to click on the links to the CIA World Factbook and/or the outline map under the name of the country in order to find the information they need to make the matches.

1. In which country do the Tigris and Euphrates rivers meet?
2. Which small peninsular country contains the world's largest natural gas field?
3. Which country was ruled by King Hussein from 1953 until his death in 1999?
4. In which country does 99% of the population live on less than 4% of the land?
5. Which country has been involved in a five-decade struggle with Palestinian Arabs?
6. Which country is a federation of sheikhdoms?
7. Which country's capital is the ancient city of Sanaa?
8. Which former British protectorate is an archipelago?
9. Which country has the largest minority population of Christians?
10. Which country borders Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, Israel, and Lebanon?
11. Which country touches both the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea?
12. Which country is rebuilding its infrastructure after an invasion by Iraq in 1990-91?
13. Which country was once the center of the Ottoman Empire?

14. Which areas are occupied mostly by Palestinian Arabs who are in conflict with Israel?
15. Which rapidly developing sultanate is largely Ibadhi Muslim?
16. Which country touches both the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf?

- a) Bahrain
- b) Egypt
- c) Iran
- d) Iraq
- e) Israel
- f) Jordan
- g) Kuwait
- h) Lebanon
- i) Oman
- j) Qatar
- k) Saudi Arabia
- l) Syria
- m) Turkey
- n) United Arab Emirates
- o) West Bank and Gaza Strip (see information under Israel)
- p) Yemen

Answer key: 1)d. 2)j. 3)f. 4)b. 5)e. 6)n. 7)p. 8)a. 9)h. 10)l. 11)k. 12)g. 13)m. 14)o. 15)i. 16)c.

Now that they are better acquainted with the region, ask students to look at maps of their own region (state and country). Do they see similar geographic features? How are the regions alike? How are they different?

Finally, ask students to look at a map of Amman, Jordan. What do they see in Amman that reminds them of their own city? Does the city they live in (or one nearby) have bridges? Zoos? Memorials? Parks? A river? Ask them to list as many things as they can that are similar to things they find in their own city.

[Note: If students have questions about a word or term that is new to them, they can look it up online in the dictionary or the [Encyclopedia Britannica](#).]

Closing:

Bring students back together as a class and ask them to discuss what they have learned. What did they find most challenging about reading the maps and searching for information? Were they surprised to find that their city has so much in common with a city so far away?

Suggested Student Assessment:

Give each student a copy of the blank Xpeditions [outline map of the Middle East region](#), and ask them to fill in or label the following:

- Country names
- Capital (and other major) cities
- Bodies of water: the Tigris, Euphrates, Nile, and Jordan rivers; the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Aden, Red Sea, Mediterranean Sea

Now ask them to use blank Xpeditions outline maps of the U.S. and their state (click on the state in the right-hand dropdown box) and fill in similar information: names of major cities, capitals, rivers, lakes, mountain ranges, etc. They should create a legend that uses symbols; for example, a star could indicate a capital city, and brown zigzags could indicate a mountain range. The legend should be the same for all the maps, to illustrate similarities and differences between regions.

Related Links:

[National Geographic: Flags and Facts](#)

[National Geographic: Xpeditions Atlas](#)