

Lesson 1 - Introduction to the Arab World



Essential Question:

- What are your perceptions of the Arab world and how accurate are they?

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Identify the countries that are part of the Arab world
- Explain basic characteristics of the Arab world

Standards alignment:

- Common Core Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies
 - RH 1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
 - RH 4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
 - RH 7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
 - RH 8. Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- National Standards for Foreign Language Education
 - Standard 4.2: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

Materials:

- Map of the Arab world (with labels)
- Map of the Arab world (without labels)
- Arab World FAQ handout
- Student response handout
- Additional resources: profiles of each Arab country

Procedure (suggested time):

Opening/Hook/Activate Prior Knowledge/Do Now: (7)

As students come in, they should write their answer in a journal or on other paper to the prompt you have written on the board:

List as many countries as you can where people speak Arabic. What do you know about these countries? Think about history, culture, famous people –

After students have written for five minutes, ask volunteers to share. Record answers on the board or on chart paper.

Finger Diagnostic: (2) Tell students you want to get a sense of what they know. They will hold up the amount of fingers that shows what they think of the following statement, with zero being not at all and ten being completely: “I know a lot about the culture, history and language in the Arab world.” Tell students to notice what they see around the room.

Explain that in this lesson, students will learn basic information about the Arab World, to prepare them to study the life of the famous Arab singer, Umm Kulthum. Tell them they will be able to see whether the information they recorded earlier is accurate.

Reading expository text: (10)

In pairs, students should read the FAQ. Tell them the purpose of the reading is to learn basic information about the Arab World and to see if what they learn is the same as what they already thought. Tell them to put a star by any information they learn that is new. (See directions on handout.)

After students have had a chance to read, ask pairs to share information that they did not know before – the information they starred. Ask other pairs if they starred the same information.

Build Geography Skills: Inquiry Activity: (optional) (10)

Using Atlases, have students label the Arab countries on the map provided. They can then answer the basic geography questions that follow.

Closing: Synthesis through writing (10)

Ask students to respond to the following prompt, based on what they have learned about the Arab World:

Many young people in the United States do not know much about the Arab World. What are three main facts you think it is important for Americans to know? Why did you choose these facts?

OR

Plan a travel itinerary through the Arab World. Choose the dates of your travel. Then choose three places you would stop. Explain why you chose these places and what you would do in each.

Frequently Asked Questions about Arabs and the Arab World

DIRECTIONS: Read the FAQ about the Arab World below. Put a star by any information that is new to you.

Who is an Arab?

"Arab" is a cultural and linguistic term. It refers to those who speak Arabic as their first language. Arabs are united by culture and by history. Some have blue eyes and red hair; others are dark skinned; many are somewhere in between. Most Arabs are Muslims but there are also millions of Christian Arabs and thousands of Jewish Arabs, just as there are Muslim, Christian, and Jewish Americans.

What is the Arab World?

The Arab World consists of 22 countries in the Middle East and North Africa: Algeria, Bahrain, the Comoros Islands, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. Iran and Turkey are not Arab countries and their primary languages are Farsi and Turkish respectively. Arab countries have a rich diversity of ethnic, linguistic, and religious communities. These include Kurds, Armenians, Berbers and others. There are over 300 million Arabs.

What is the Muslim World?

There are an estimated 1.57 billion Muslims in the world. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation has 57 member states. The ten countries with the largest Muslim population are: Indonesia (202.9 million), Pakistan (174.1 million), India (160.9 million), Bangladesh (145.3 million), Egypt (78.5 million), Nigeria (78.1 million), Iran (73.8 million), Turkey (73.6 million), Algeria (34.2 million), and Morocco (31.9 million). Of these countries, only three are Arab countries: Egypt, Algeria, and Morocco. Most Arabs are Muslims, but most Muslims are not Arabs.

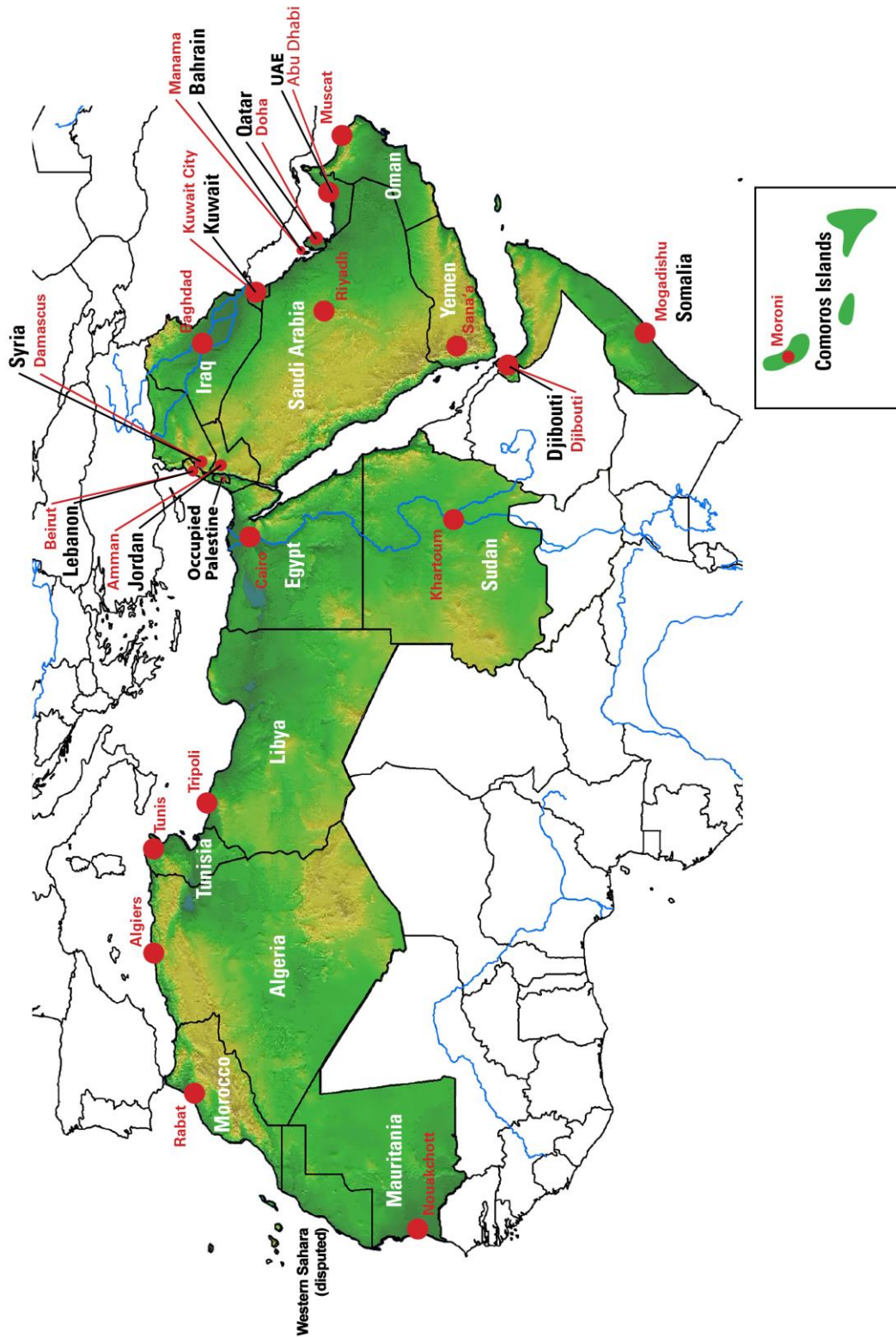
What is the Middle East?

The Middle East is a loose term, not always used to describe the same territory. It usually includes the Arab countries from Egypt east to the Persian Gulf, plus Israel and Iran. Turkey is sometimes considered part of the Middle East, sometimes part of Europe. Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh are usually described as South Asia.

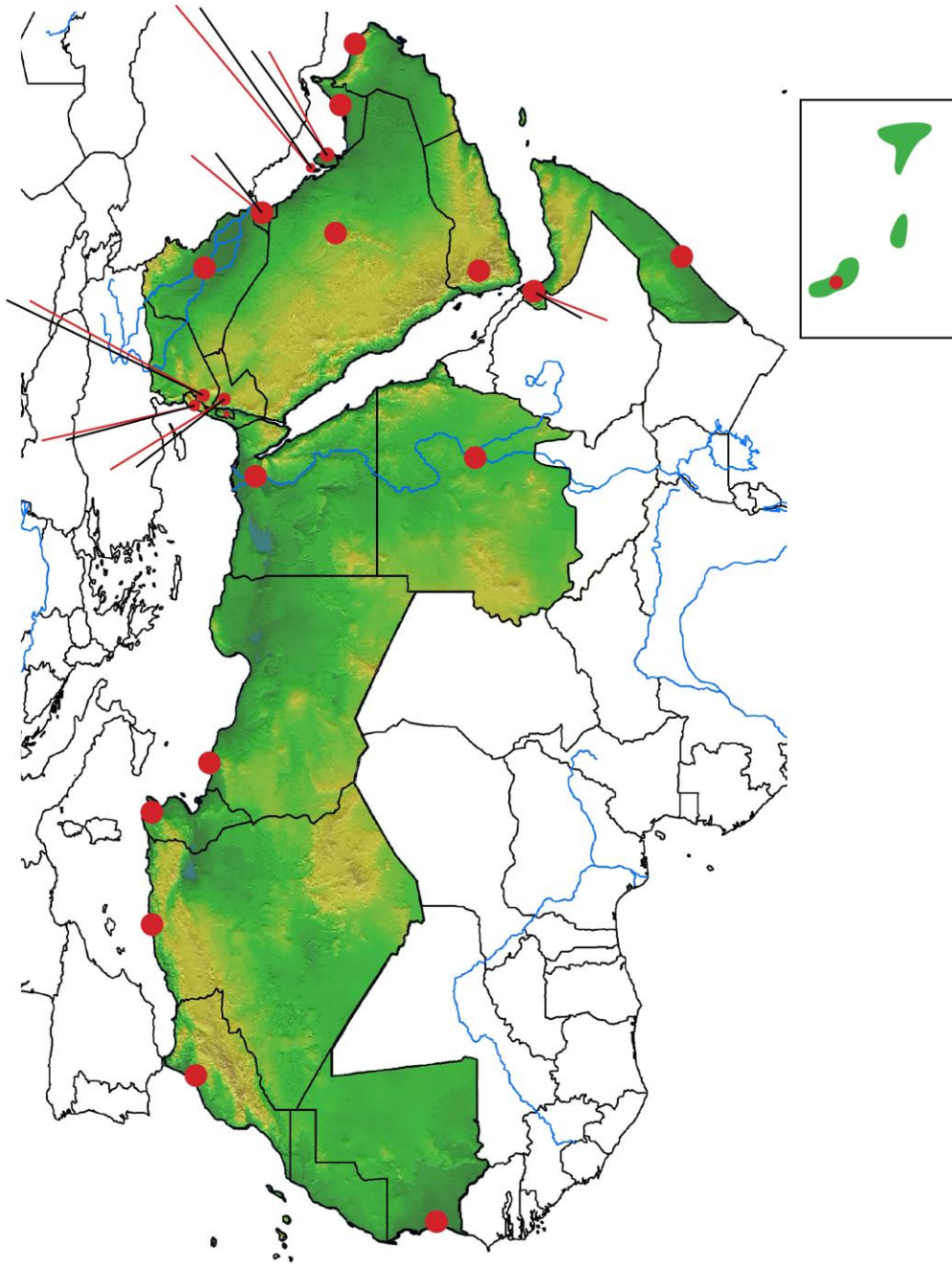
Who are Arab Americans?

Arab Americans are Americans of Arab descent. There are Americans with roots in each Arab country, but most originate from Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine. There are also substantial communities from Egypt, Yemen and Iraq. The first immigrants arrived in the late 19th century. A second wave of immigration started after World War II, and still continues. The largest communities of Arab Americans live in the Detroit-Dearborn area.

Map of the Arab World (with labels)



Map of the Arab World (without labels)



Additional Resources: Country Profiles

For further information on the 22 Arab countries, see the following links:

BBC Country Profiles

[Algeria](#)
[Bahrain](#)
[Comoros Islands](#)
[Djibouti](#)
[Egypt](#)
[Iraq](#)
[Jordan](#)
[Kuwait](#)
[Lebanon](#)
[Libya](#)
[Morocco](#)
[Mauritania](#)
[Oman](#)
[Palestinian territories](#)
[Qatar](#)
[Saudi Arabia](#)
[Somalia](#)
[Sudan](#)
[Syria](#)
[Tunisia](#)
[United Arab Emirates](#)
[Yemen](#)

Al-Jazeera Country Profiles

[Algeria](#)
[Bahrain](#)
[Comoros Islands](#)
[Djibouti](#)
[Egypt](#)
[Iraq](#)
[Jordan](#)
[Kuwait](#)
[Lebanon](#)
[Libya](#)
[Mauritania](#)
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