CULTUREGUIDE

PALESTINE

SERIES 1
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FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

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PALESTINE CULTUREGUIDE

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Table of Contents

Why Study Cultures? 2

Traditions

Family and Friendship 3

Folklore & Language

Euphemisms and Proverbs 7

Food

Etiquette at Meals 10

Cross-cultural Contributions

Arabic Language and Calligraphy 13

Reference Material

Facts about Palestine 16

History and Holidays 17

Additional Resources 21

Visuals 23

WHY STUDY CULTURES?

For most of us, cultures are misunderstood; they are nebulous, vague, and hidden. Like the famous iceberg analogy, we know that most of what a culture is cannot be seen. But what does that mean? And why, then, should we study cultures if we do not know what we're studying in the first place?

In the late twentieth century, Brigham Young University did not embrace a new discipline, but rather a new area of study—the study of cultures. Typically, anthropology is the social science that studies cultures. Why should they have all the fun? The study of cultures unites other academic disciplines (as needed), drawing upon literature, political science, sociology, and even the more applied areas of nursing, social work, law, and business. The study of cultures has grown into nothing short of a revolt against disciplines, "a mode of inquiry" that looks at things in new ways.[1]

In 1982, the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies established Intercultural Outreach[2] as a formal program to help build bridges of intercultural understanding. Since then, more than 10,000 *gratis* cultural presentations have been given to local area public schools, taking students to new places using language, multimedia, and imagination. *CultureGuides* derive from the same expertise that has been honed in classrooms—with the exciting exception that these intercultural learning tools are not geographically bound. Thanks to the Internet, accessible multimedia technology, and our trusty eMACs, a limitless audience can learn about different cultures.

Globalization, the driving paradigm of the post-Cold War world, means that now, more than ever, culture matters. Culture is the invisible context that may keep us from understanding important people, places, and ideas; it exists whether or not we think about it. Intercultural education can help us, not only as an intellectual exercise, but also in very practical ways to combat racism, to expand business, and to communicate effectively.

CultureGuides share the same aim as Edward T. Hall, the eminent cultural scholar, to try to "make culture real."[3] Even though our "student guides" are not present in every classroom, we hope that *CultureGuides* will make classrooms of the mind and cultural laboratories wherever you may reside.

[1] Ziauddin Sardar and Borin Van Loon. *Introducing Cultural Studies*, Totem Books, New York: 1998.

[2] The program was originally called International Outreach when it was established in 1982, but it was renamed Intercultural Outreach in 2006 to better reflect its aims.

[3] *The Edge: The E-Journal of Intercultural Relations*, Summer 1998, Vol. 1(3) Posted 10/11/98, http://interculturalrelations.com/v1i3Summer1998/sum98sorrellshall.htm.

TRADITIONS

FAMILY AND FRIENDSHIP

Arabic culture is built on beliefs about family and friendship that are rooted in tradition and religion. Arab society emphasizes the family unit and enforces clearly defined male and female roles. Palestinians depend on their family unit and gender roles for social survival. The emphasis placed on family also affects the nature of friendship: Palestinians do not take their friendships lightly.

Starting Points

1. Look at pictures of Arabic families (**see Traditions Visuals 1 and 2**). What can you tell about these people just by looking at their clothing and surroundings? What can you tell about their culture and society? Perhaps you can tell from the pictures that Palestinians have a unique culture and interesting traditions. Much of their culture and traditions are based on Palestinian beliefs concerning family and friends.

2. How much do you share your possessions with your family? Would you mind sharing your car with your grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins? Would you feel differently if they helped you buy the car? This kind of sharing among families is common in Palestine.

3. Do you think your family has anything to do with your success in life? What about your honor or trustworthiness? Does social or economic success depend on whether you are a man or a woman? Is success affected by friendships? In Palestine, honor, family, gender, and friendship all determine who you are and what you can become.

Information

Palestinian Families

In Palestine, the family is the fundamental unit of society. Social status is determined primarily by familial relationships. Palestinians believe the family clan to be the most important source of support and the key to social survival. This belief stems from life in medieval Palestine when family sharing was both a way of life and a means of surviving the harsh living conditions of the Arabian Peninsula. Tribal feuds along with food and water scarcity led to kinship groups coming together to protect themselves from raiding tribes and to acquire adequate resources by working together. Large numbers of people were needed to create autonomous groups in which not only food and water would be sufficient, but also other necessities such as clothes, tents, satchels, and tools.

This tradition of family interdependence is practiced in Palestine today as kinship groups pool resources (such as cars and income) and employ each other. Palestinians

do not believe people were placed on earth to live as isolated beings. They believe the family was established from the beginning of time and think of it as an essential and joyful part of life. Individuals are successful only in the family unit, and, without family, individuals diminish their potential. The "I" often heard in America is better termed "we" in Palestine.

The Tradition of Honor

Rather than wealth or accomplishment, the greatest determining factor of prestige is the honor of a kinship group in Palestinian society. Honor is defined by generosity, piety, morality, and respect for others. Without honor, kinship groups have difficulty arranging marriages and obtaining jobs. Members of the community are hesitant to befriend, do business with, or interact with members of a dishonorable clan. Honor is a vital, yet fragile element of a kinship group, which one deviant and unrestrained member of a group can destroy.

Gender Roles in Palestine

Because all members of a family are expected to make contributions to the group, members of kinship groups become stewards over various aspects of life. The necessary tasks of life are partitioned predominantly according to gender. Gender roles are seen as the most orderly and efficient means of accomplishing life's tasks. Men are primarily responsible for protecting and financially supporting their families, while women are responsible for nurturing and educating the younger members of their kinship group.

All male family members work outside of the home to network, earn money, and collaborate to provide for their family. Purchasing on credit is not as common in Palestine as it is in the Western world. When a family buys a home or a car, the payment must be made in full. Job occupations can become the occupation for the whole family; fathers, sons, uncles, brothers, grandfathers, and cousins are all part of the effort. For example, if a family wanted to start a taxi service, members of the kinship group would pool their money to purchase one or more cars. Because the cars would belong to all members of the family, they would all work to make the business a success. The men in a family work to support the entire kinship group. When a child goes to college from any family in the group, money is pooled from all the families to pay for the expenses. However, some young men prefer to pay their own expenses in marriage because of their belief in a common Palestinian proverb: "The one who marries easily, divorces easily."

Similar to the collaboration of Palestinian men, women network and share their resources to educate and nurture children and maintain family unity **(see Traditions Visual 3)**. Instructing children is a tremendously respected position because raising the next generation is vital to the clan's survival and honor. Children are taught how to uphold their family's honor primarily by their mothers. Mothers are the means by which language, values, religion, and life perspectives are passed on. Mothers are a primary influence in the matchmaking process and help make family decisions.

The gender-specific tasks of men and women fulfill all the needs of daily life, so sharing roles is generally seen as repetitive and unnecessary. However, in families with financial difficulty, it is common for women to sell crafts and food to supplement the

income of the men **(see Traditions Visual 2)**. Women are also employed as teachers, because instructing children is traditionally a female role. In the wealthier, educated classes, women can also be professors **(see Traditions Visual 4)**. Some Palestinian women work outside of the home; however, men are the primary breadwinners, while the women generally are working full-time to fulfill their influential roles as mothers and teachers within their families.

Palestinian Friendship

Palestinians believe that individuals, by themselves, are incredibly lonely. Also, an individualistic mentality is considered dangerous to the survival of a family, so Palestinians visit their friends daily. If an American befriended a Palestinian and had a conversation one day and a second run-in a few days later, the American might think the associations were frequent. However, it would not be uncommon to hear the Palestinian say, "What happened to you? Are we not friends?" Palestinians value their friendships greatly; therefore, Palestinians make continual and significant efforts to maintain their friendships.

In America, there is a sense of personal space that does not exist in Palestine. Americans typically require personal space in order to be comfortable, especially in the company of strangers. When an American enters a movie theater or steps onto a bus, he or she usually finds a seat that is a significant distance away from another person. In Palestine, individuals do not avoid sitting next to friends they see in public places, especially if the friend is alone. Friends walk close together (sometimes holding hands) and sit close together, even if the area is not crowded. Palestinians believe that everyone wants friends, and they do not understand why someone would want to sit alone. To Palestinians, loneliness is undesirable and has a negative effect on society; life is only worth something if others are there to share it. Furthermore, in Palestine, staring at other people is usually not considered rude or an invasion of privacy as it is in America.

Activities

1. Take a trip to a place where people in the United States interact, such as a grocery store, park, or bus stop. Observe how people act in public. How do they treat their family? Their friends? Strangers? How close together do they stand or sit? What is said? How does what you observe compare to the way people act in Palestine? Record your observations in a journal.

2. In groups, write short skits that illustrate principles of Palestinian friendships and family relationships. Use different settings such as home, a bus stop, school, and so forth. Perform your skit and then participate in a class discussion about what is necessary to maintain a friendship.

3. Using the Gender Roles Survey **(see Traditions Visual 5)**, find out how people in the community feel about gender roles in the United States. Compile the survey results of the entire class. What are common attitudes about men and women in the workforce and at home? How do these views compare to the traditional views of gender roles in Palestine? Did you observe any trends? How do you explain them? Report your findings to the class.

4. Write a letter to a friend expressing your gratitude for his or her friendship.
5. Write a one-page paper about differences and similarities between Palestinian and American ideas about friendship.

Discussion Questions

1. How do Palestinian families support each other? How do your parents and siblings support you? Are families as important in America as they are in Palestine? How do Americans express the importance of their families?
2. Why is honor a vital aspect of Palestinian kinship groups? How do Americans define honor? Is honor important for families in America? How can we bring honor or dishonor to our families?
3. What are some positive or negative aspects of gender roles? Would you prefer stricter or more lenient gender roles in America? Why are there distinct gender roles in Palestinian society? How do they compare with American gender roles?
4. Standards of friendship are different in every country. How might these differences influence a particular society? Can we see these effects in our society? How do standards of friendship in America compare to those in Palestine?
5. What do you know about Palestine? What were your perceptions about Palestine compared to your perception now? Discuss your answers with your classmates and discuss the biased views that many people have about this country. How are these biases formed? Emphasize the need to be open-minded about other cultures.
6. Where does the idea of personal space come from? What are your observations of personal space in America? How is it different in Palestine? Why?

FOLKLORE & LANGUAGE

EUPHEMISMS AND PROVERBS

Different styles of communication exist in every culture. In order to understand Palestinian proverbs, it is important to learn about Palestinian culture. In Palestine, some topics are considered inappropriate for conversation in social situations. Many Arabic proverbs contain information regarding Arabic feelings about life and sentiments not otherwise addressed.

Starting Points

1. Look at the following examples of an American proverb and an Arabic proverb:

American	Arabic
Don't cry over spilled milk.	The knife of the family does not cut.

   What do you think the proverbs mean **(see Folklore & Language Visual 1)**?

   The American proverb means that when you can't do anything about what went wrong, don't worry about it, whereas the Arabic proverb means that you should not be hurt by offensive things that relatives may say. These figures of speech are called proverbs and are a large part of Arabic conversation.

2. What kind of power does language hold? Do you think you can make something good or bad happen just by talking about it? In Palestine, they believe that what they talk about can literally bless or curse them. Because of this, words are taken very seriously in Palestine.

3. What is a euphemism? What is a proverb? Why do we use euphemisms and proverbs in conversation? Have you ever thought about how these sayings are part of culture? Many interesting aspects of Palestinian culture are expressed through proverbs, euphemisms, and poetry.

Information

Arabic Conversation

Arabs view weaving words into conversation as an art form. They also believe that the words they speak can have an effect for good in their lives. Arabs pepper their conversations with hundreds of proverbs and euphemisms that reflect the Arabic attitude toward life, such as *Inshaallah* [in-shah-lah], which means, "If God wills."

Just as Palestinians believe that religious phrases can bring literal blessings and power, they believe that talk of destructive forces can bring harm and danger. Americans might consider Palestinians to be superstitious because of their belief that references to certain topics can bring physical, financial, or emotional disaster to both them and their families. Arabs use euphemisms in conversation to discuss death, illness, or

events that would make them uncomfortable if spoken of directly. Frequent references to misfortunes in life are believed to be catalysts for more misfortunes to come. Topics that could bring embarrassment or dishonor to a family's reputation are avoided so that the embarrassment or dishonor will not be intensified. Because Palestinians believe words have great power, swearing and cursing are considered extremely offensive. Palestinians fear that curses bring misfortune just by being uttered.

One way to know whether a subject is sensitive is if an Arab avoids answering direct questions about it. When this is the case, it is best to change the subject. For example, political topics are highly sensitive; if someone does not make it to work one day because of road blocks due to political conflicts, an explanation such as "I was tired" could possibly be given. This excuse could have also been used as an explanation for being sick, hurt, or afflicted with a number of other maladies. Words like "cancer" are avoided; a person with cancer might be described as having "it."

The Evil Eye

Palestinians fear envy because they believe it causes misfortune. It is referred to as "the evil eye." Envy is considered to be a destructive force in society that is able to physically harm another individual. If someone were to admire the home of a Palestinian and in the near future a disaster or accident brought damage to the home, the Palestinian would believe that the admirerer's envy of the house brought bad luck to the home. Although traditionally the friendship would be ruined, this is not necessarily the case today.

The open and verbal admiration of small, portable objects should be avoided because Arabs will feel compelled to give an admirer the object, even if they do not want to, in order to safeguard themselves and their family against the consequences of envy. Consequently, Arabs are quick to offer blessings upon another or give an object to an admirer in order to avoid the evil eye and cursing. Americans should be very careful about complimenting or openly admiring an Arab's possessions; the generosity of Arabs can easily be exploited.

The Art of Words

The tradition of honoring the eloquent has existed for centuries. In ancient Arabia, word usage was so important that warring tribes would declare a sort of cease-fire throughout the Arabian Peninsula. During this time, fighting would be banned at sacred locations called *harams*. Warriors and other members of kinship groups would gather to participate in poetry and storytelling contests. The winners of these contests brought great honor to their clans. Once the contests were over, war would often reconvene.

The use of words in Palestine continues to be a significant aspect of society. Arabs avoid family disagreements and disputes within the sight of others. This is done to preserve family honor. A person's knowledge and ability to appropriately use proverbs enhances his or her image as wise and insightful. By studying the poetry and proverbs of the Middle East, a foreigner can gain a more intimate perspective on Arabic philosophies **(see Additional Resources)**.

Activities

1. Read some Arabic proverbs and discuss their meanings as a class **(see Folklore & Language Visual 1)**.
2. In teams of two, compete to complete the American/Arabic Proverbs worksheet **(see Folklore & Language Visual 2)**.
3. Write your own proverb or story based on an Arabic proverb.
4. In groups of four or five, write and perform skits on how personal information can be used to enhance or damage a family's honor.
5. Complete the word search on Arabic proverbs **(see Folklore & Language Visual 3)**. As a class, discuss what each of the words have to do with Arabic proverbs.
6. Create proverbs based on your culture, family, and community. Share your proverbs with the class. Discuss which proverb best fits the intended meaning.

Discussion Questions

1. How does using proper language help preserve a Palestinian family's honor?
2. How does Arabic conversation reflect Palestinian culture? Does what we say reflect our culture and beliefs?
3. Is it appropriate to discuss illness and death in American culture? What euphemisms are sometimes used in discussions about these topics?
4. If it were not appropriate to tell family or friends about a certain illness, how would you address questions from them if you were sick with that illness?
5. Does American culture have any superstitions similar to the concept of "the evil eye"? Do you think that envy is detrimental to society? Why or why not?
6. Why is language important in Palestinian culture? How do Americans value poetry and eloquence compared to Palestinians?

FOOD

ETIQUETTE AT MEALS

Social activities are incredibly important to Palestinians. The most common social activity is dining. In Palestine, friendship and food are essential parts of social interaction. Arabs spend much time visiting with each other during meals. Because social dining is so important, knowing correct etiquette is invaluable. Learning basic principles of Palestinian etiquette leads to a greater understanding of this culture.

Starting Points

1. Imagine two guests at a formal dinner table. One is dressed in ragged jeans and a t-shirt, while the other is in a collared shirt and slacks. What does their clothing suggest to you as their host? Dress, posture, and other aspects of etiquette are very important in Palestinian culture.
2. Do we host fancy dinners for our friends? Why or why not? In Palestine, dining with friends is a very important part of social interaction. Using proper etiquette at meals shows respect and demonstrates that you care about those around you.
3. What are some examples of table etiquette in America? Why do we use etiquette? Palestinian etiquette has both similarities and differences to American etiquette. Understanding and using proper dining etiquette is essential for living in Palestine because improper manners may be misinterpreted as disrespect.

Information

Greetings

Different cultures have different acceptable, or inacceptable, greetings. In most situations in Palestine, especially before a meal, failing to shake hands when meeting someone or saying good-bye is considered rude. When an American man is introduced to an Arab woman, it is the woman's choice whether to shake hands or not; she should be allowed to make the first move. Two men should always shake hands. When saying good-bye to guests, a gracious host accompanies them to the outer gate or to their cars.

When a woman enters a room, men stand to show respect. Everyone stands when new guests arrive at a social gathering, as well as when an elderly or high-ranking person enters or leaves a room. Men allow women to precede them through doorways, and they offer their seats to women if no other seats are available.

Posture

At a meal, it is important to sit properly. Slouching, draping your legs over the arm of a chair, reclining on an arm rest, or sitting casually in any other way when talking with someone communicates a lack of respect for the person. You should either place

your legs squarely in front of you or cross your ankles. Propping your legs on desks or lounging on tables is inappropriate. Sitting in a manner that allows the sole of your shoe to face another person is considered highly offensive.

Dress

Casual dress at social events may be interpreted as a lack of respect for the hosts. For dress in general, Arabs have well established ideas about what constitutes proper masculine and feminine appearance. They do not approve of women dressing in masculine clothing or of men having long hair. They believe that gender is determined by God and should not be taken lightly. Dressing in a way that emphasizes your gender shows respect toward God.

Food and Drink

Palestinians follow many customs and rules of etiquette regarding food and drink. For example, a devout Muslim will not eat pork or drink alcohol. In some social situations, it may be considered inappropriate for women, regardless of their religion, to drink alcoholic beverages or smoke. However, if a man lights a cigarette in a group, he must be prepared to offer a cigarette to every man.

Arabs consider the left hand to be unclean. When eating with Arabs, especially when taking food from communal dishes, guests should always use their right hand.

Arabs love to honor their guests by serving them a lot of food. Guests should pace themselves while eating because an Arabic hostess will often pile more food on guests' plates, even if the guests are already full. Furthermore, Arabs often serve coffee as a sign of hospitality.

At a restaurant, Arabs almost always insist on paying, especially if there are not many people in the party or if the meal is business related. An appropriate response is to graciously accept the ritual gesture and then return the favor in the future.

Gifts

During an Arabic meal, it is important not to overly admire a person's possessions. If a guest admires a small, portable object, an Arab may insist that it be taken as a gift. Guests must use caution in expressing admiration for objects **(see Folklore & Language Information)**. When gifts are given, they should be accepted with both hands and should not be opened in the presence of the giver.

Other Points of Etiquette

In the United States, it is not considered rude to take pictures at an informal meal or gathering, especially during holidays. However, as a common courtesy, one should not photograph Arabs without their permission. To do so is rude and distasteful. Privacy is taken very seriously, and Arabs often feel that unwanted photographs are a disruption of their privacy.

Most Arabs do not like to touch household animals, especially dogs. In Palestine, many dogs roam wild. They are very dirty and are often seen scavenging in trash cans. Arabs may not make the distinction between a domesticated dog and a wild dog, so pets should be kept out of sight when guests are present.

Activities

1. Bring a small, inexpensive object to class. As a class, demonstrate Arabic gift-giving practices with the object, as well as the concept of "the evil eye."
2. Study the list of Palestinian etiquette. See who can most quickly memorize and recite the items on the list **(see Food Visual 1)**.
3. Eat lunch in the classroom and abide by traditional Arabic etiquette. Compete by choosing someone to be the host or hostess and setting a reward for people who follow all the rules. Those who catch others breaking the rules get extra points, while those who break the rules must offer their most sincere apologies to the host or hostess.
4. Write a paper about a traditional meal at your house. How does this meal differ from a traditional Palestinian meal? Reflect on what you like and dislike about each country's traditions and the benefits and drawbacks.
5. In groups, perform skits in which an individual does something that would be considered inappropriate at a Palestinian dinner table. See if the other students in the class can pick out the breach of etiquette.
6. Create two travel brochures, one for Palestine and one for the United States. For each include a section about etiquette, including what is expected at meals.

Discussion Questions

1. Why are meals an important social situation for Palestinians? How do Americans use dining as a social event? How do meals in these two cultures compare in terms of being casual or proper? Do you prefer one type of meal over the other? Why?
2. Why might posture be such an important indicator of respect for the host in Palestine? How do Americans interpret posture? How do people show respect to a host in the United States?
3. What are some American rules of etiquette that foreigners should know? Why are these rules important? Are these rules widespread in the United States or restricted to each region? How important are these rules? What are the consequences for breaking these rules?
4. Why do Palestinians feel that they need to be so generous with their belongings? How does this attitude affect Palestinian society? How might that same generosity affect American society? Would such a tradition be possible in the United States? Why or why not? What does this perspective of generosity reveal about the values of the citizens of each country?
5. How important is the way you dress? Are there certain expectations of dress in America? How does clothing reflect one's culture and beliefs?
6. What is etiquette and why is it so important? How is American etiquette different from Palestinian etiquette? How are they the same? What reasons are there for their similarities or differences?

CROSS-CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS

ARABIC LANGUAGE AND CALLIGRAPHY

Arabs take pride in the Arabic language and its development into calligraphy. The language is extremely complex and beautiful. The Arabic language and calligraphy have influenced many other languages, calligraphic styles, and alphabets worldwide.

Starting Points

1. Look at a picture of a mosque **(see Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 1)**. What do you notice about the design of the blue borders on the walls? Calligraphy is an art form and a very important aspect of the Arabic culture **(see Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 2)**.

2. What do the words algebra, safari, and jar have in common? They are all derived from Arabic words **(see Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 3 and Additional Resources)**.Why do languages share and borrow words? How does this borrowing influence the cultures involved? Palestinians are proud of Arabic's wide influence on other languages.

3. If you were told to create a work of art without any depictions of animals, places, people, or things, what would you do? In Palestine, they developed calligraphy, which focused on embellishing the written word rather than depicting places, people, or objects. Because of their beliefs, nearly all Arabic art is made up of calligraphy.

Information

The Written Word

Palestinians consider Arabic to be the supreme language. It is highly complex, and many Palestinians believe it was the language uttered by God when he revealed the *Qur'an* [kuh-ran] to the prophet and founder of Islam, Muhammad. Palestinians take great pride in their language and believe that the written word has literal power. Because of this, calligraphy was developed to embellish the written word. Calligraphy developed from the ornate cursive scripts used to adorn the Arabic letters. Calligraphy is used to decorate the pages of the Qur'an, mosques, signs, letters, and anywhere the written word is found **(see Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 4)**. It is an art form that requires a great deal of skill and is one of Arabia's greatest contributions to the art world. In Palestine today, there are various forms of cursive scripts and calligraphy used on signs, posters, letters, billboards, and in religious shrines. The art form is as prevalent today as it was in the past.

The History of Calligraphy

When Islam was introduced to the Arabian Peninsula, polytheism, or the belief in more than one god, was widespread. Muhammad sought to purge the practice of

idolatry and polytheism from Arabia in the name of *Allah* [ah-lah] (God). Muhammad stressed idolatry as a heinous crime, because God revealed to Moses that idolatry was forbidden. Any graven image in the form of man, animals, or any object was expressly forbidden in religious art because people tended to worship the depiction instead of God. As a result, many religious structures in Palestine do not display pictures **(see Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 5)**. Because idols were not tolerated in Islam, the written word became the ultimate form of religious art. Throughout the centuries, the ability to depict the written word artistically has become an increasingly treasured and sacred art form. Calligraphers must train throughout their lives to become masters of the art.

In English, there may be three or four forms for a particular letter. For example, the letter *A* can be written either in cursive or in print and can be either uppercase or lowercase. Arabic is even more complex. Letters are written in various forms depending on whether they stand alone or are the first, middle, or last letter in a word. The embellishment of calligraphy adds to this complexity. Letters written in calligraphy and other cursive forms often look drastically different than the plain letters.

Arabic in English

Many English words originate from the Arabic alphabet. Words we use in our everyday English language have been adopted from our Arab friends, such as "algebra," "safari," or "mattress" **(see Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 3 and Additional Resources)**. For example, "mattress" came from the Arabic word *al-matrah* [ehl-mutru-h] for a place where something is thrown, such as a carpet, mat, or cushion. Algebra comes from the Arabic word, *al-jabr* [ehl-jub-er] meaning, to reunite broken parts or to set broken bones. Safari came from the Arabic word *safar* [suffer] meaning journey. Many of the Arabic words we use today have passed through Spanish and Latin, so they are not exactly the same as their Arabic counterparts but are still similar.

Activities

1. After studying the Arabic alphabet **(see Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 2)**, create a new alphabet or form of calligraphy for the English alphabet. Have a calligraphy contest and vote on the best rendition of a word.
2. Research three English words that come from Arabic and why they were adopted into the English language. What does the original Arabic word mean? Use your research to create an educational tool that teaches elementary school students about language in a fun, creative way.
3. Write a short paper in your most artistic (but still legible) handwriting about what you have learned about Arabic language and writing.
4. Research Arabic art through Internet and library resources. How does this art reflect Arabic culture? How is it diferent from Western-style art? Share your ideas in class.
5. Create a work of art based on calligraphy or geometrical design. Try creating a billboard or newsprint advertisement using only calligraphy and geometric designs.

Discussion Questions

1. Why are Palestinians proud of their language? Is written language celebrated and revered in America as much as it is in Palestine? Should Americans change their perception of written language as an art form?
2. Why are mosques decorated with calligraphy rather than paintings of people or animals? How are religious, civic, and public buildings in America decorated? How does the style and decoration of a building affect those who visit it?
3. Is there a supreme art form in America? Are there certain types of art that are perceived as more moving or powerful than other art forms? What forms of art in the United States might not be acceptable in Palestine?
4. Should Americans learn to perfect and focus on their handwriting as much as Arabs do? Why or why not? Is the way we write important? What does handwriting communicate about the author beyond the content of the writing?
5. Why do Palestinians treasure their art forms? Do Americans value art? Why is art important in any culture?
6. How is art used today? How do Americans use art compared to Palestinians? What are some reasons for the differences or similarities?

FACTS ABOUT PALESTINE

Official Name: Filistine (Palestine)

Capital: Al-Quds (Jerusalem)

Government Type: democratic (the Palestinian Authority was created by agreement of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel as a temporary instrument of self-rule for Palestinians living on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip)

Area: historic Palestine: 26,323 sq km (10,162 sq miles); current Palestinian territories: 6,220 sq km (Gaza Strip 360 sq km, West Bank 5,860 sq km)

Land Boundaries: Gaza Strip: 62 km (Egypt 11 km, Israel 51 km); West Bank: 404 km (Israel 307 km, Jordan 97 km)

Climate: Temperate, mild winters, dry and warm to hot summers

Lowest Point: Dead Sea -408 m

Highest Point: Tal A'sur 1,022 m (West Bank)

Natural Resources: arable land, natural gas

Natural Hazards: droughts

Population: Palestinians: 3,761,904 (West Bank 2,385,615, Gaza Strip 1,376,289); Israeli settlers: more than 5,000 in Gaza Strip; about 187,000 in West Bank (July 2005)

Ethnic Groups: Gaza Strip: Palestinian Arab and other 99.4%, Jewish 0.6%; West Bank: Palestinian Arab and other 83%, Jewish 17%

Religions: Gaza Strip: Muslim (predominantly Sunni) 98.7%, Christian 0.7%, Jewish 0.6%; West Bank: Muslim 75% (predominantly Sunni), Jewish 17%, Christian and other 8%

Languages: Arabic (official language), Hebrew (spoken by Israeli settlers and Palestinians), English (widely understood)

GDP: Gaza Strip: $768 million (East Jerusalem not included, 2003); West Bank:1.8 billion (2003 est.)

GDP Per Capita: Gaza Strip: $600; West Bank: 1,100 (2003 est.)

GDP Composition By Sector: agriculture 9%, industry 28%, services 63%

Labor Force: Gaza Strip: 278,000; West Bank: 614,000 (2005)

Unemployment Rate: Gaza Strip and West Bank: 31% (January–September 2005 avg.)

Industries: generally small family businesses that produce cement, textiles, soap, olive-wood carvings, and mother-of-pearl souvenirs; the Israelis have established some small-scale modern industries in an industrial center

Agricultural Products: olives, citrus, vegetables, beef, dairy products

Exports: olives, fruit, vegetables, flowers, limestone

Imports: food, consumer goods, construction materials

Trade Partners: Israel, Jordan, Gaza Strip

Currency: new Israeli shekel (ILS) and Jordanian dinar (JOD)

Exchange Rate: 4.4877 ILS = $1 U.S. (2005 est.)

HISTORY AND HOLIDAYS

TIME LINE

3000 B.C.E.	Canaanites (earliest known inhabitants of Palestine) develop city-states
1125	The Israelites invade the area and conquer the various Canaanite tribes and Philistines living there
722 B.C.E.–	Israel conquered by Assyria (722 B.C.E.), and Judah by Babylon (586);
638 C.E.	the indigenous peoples (various Jewish and Arab groups) fall under the rule of several empires (Persian, Greek, Egyptian, Syrian, Roman, Byzantine)
0–33 C.E.	Ministry of Jesus of Nazareth
638	Arabs conquer Filistine (Palestine); residents support their Arab cousins (the biblical Abraham is believed to be the ancestor of both the Israelites and the Arabs); Palestine, especially Jerusalem, is declared sacred by the prophet Muhammad
750–1917	Power traded by several Arab empires, ending with Ottoman Turks
1897	Establishment of the World Zionist Organization (WZO) in support of the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine
1914–17	Palestinian Arabs support the British in World War I in return for independence (which the Palestinians did not receive)
1917	Balfour Declaration: the British government declares open support of the Zionist movement
1919	Palestinians convene for their first national conference
1920	Under the mandate system of the League of Nations, Palestine is placed under the administration of Great Britain at the San Remo Conference; Palestine comes under British rule with Sir Herbert Samuel as High Commissioner
1922	League of Nations issues a mandate calling for a Jewish homeland in Palestine
1930s	Palestinian resistance to rapid Jewish immigration and European (especially British) support of a Jewish homeland erupts into violence between Jewish and Arab groups
1947	Great Britain turns the "Palestinian Question" over to the United Nations; United Nations dictates a partition of British-ruled Palestine into separate Arab and Jewish states with Jerusalem as a neutral and sacred site under UN jurisdiction; hostilities erupt into violence for and against the resolution
1948	The British leave Palestine; the Arab-Israeli War begins as Zionists proclaim a state of Israel and Arabs (from Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq) try to push them out; Israel wins, leaving only the Gaza Strip to Egypt and the West Bank to Jordan
1949	Israel becomes a member of the United Nations
1964	Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) established at the first National Palestinian Council

5–10 Jun 1967	Six Days War: after Israel strikes Egypt and Syria, then Egypt, Jordan, and Syria attack Israel; Israel takes the Gaza Strip, Sinai Peninsula, Arab East Jerusalem, West Bank, and Golan Heights
1967	United Nations directs Israel to withdraw from territory taken during the Six Days War; Israel does not comply
1973	October War/Yom Kippur War/Ramadan War: Syria and Egypt attack Israel to reclaim territory
1974	Arab Summit in Rabat recognizes the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people; PLO is given observer status at the United Nations
1978	Camp David Agreement between Egypt and Israel; Israel pulls out of the Sinai Peninsula and declares autonomy to Palestinians in areas of Israel/Palestine, yet violence continues
1982	Israel strikes at the PLO in Lebanon; the PLO withdraws
1987	The *Intifada* [in-tuh-fah-duh] (tremor), an uprising of protests by Palestinian youth, begins
1988	Israel supports the establishment of HAMAS (Islamic Resistance Movement) to break PLO unity; the state of Palestine in West Gaza is declared by the National Palestinian Council; conditions do not change and violence continues
1992–93	Palestinian–Israeli Declaration of Principles sets up Israeli-approved autonomy in Gaza and West Bank rule by the Palestinian Authority
1994	Yasser Arafat becomes the first president of the Palestinian National Authority
1996	Sharm Al-Sheikh Agreement: Palestinians and Israelis denounce terrorist acts and take political action against them; Palestinian leaders renounce a call for the destruction of Israel
1999	Israel and Palestine agree to establish a safe passage between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip
2000	Second Intifada
2001	Ariel Sharon elected Prime Minister of Israel
2002	The United Nations recognizes the state of Palestine; suicide bombings and terrorist acts continue
2004	Yasser Arafat dies; Palestinian democratic elections begin
2005	Mahmoud Abbas elected President of Palestinian National Authority; Abbas works toward Palestinian reform and an end to violence
Sep 2005	Israeli settlers and soldiers withdraw and dismantle their military facilities in four West Bank settlements and the Gaza Strip; Israel continues to control almost all access to the Gaza Strip.
Nov 2005	The PA and Israel sign an agreement authorizing the reopening of the Rafah border crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip; the PA and Egypt share joint control of the crossing, while the UN monitors them

HOLIDAYS

The Calendar

The *Hijra* [hi-jai-ruh] calendar, the calendar used by many Muslims, consists of twelve lunar months that follow the solar year. The Hijra year is usually 354 days long, which means that it starts about eleven days earlier than the Christian calendar each year. The Islamic calendar is considered to have started at sunset on Thursday, 15 July 622 C.E. It has twelve months alternating twenty-nine and thirty days each, the last month having thirty days only in leap years.

The major holidays correlate with specific Islamic months and fall in different seasons from year to year. The beginning of a new month is commonly defined by physical observation of the new moon by religious authorities. Thus, the calculated dates may be off by a day or two and may vary from country to country. The dates are most important for the beginning and end of *Ramadan* [ram-ah-don] and for the feast of *Id al-Adha* [eed ehl-udhuh].

The names of the Islamic months and the corresponding average number of days in each month are as follows: *Muharram* [moo-hah-rum] (30), *Safar* [suh-far] (29), *Rabi I* [ruh-bee] (30), *Rabi II* (29), *Jumada I* [juh-mah-duh] (30), *Jumada II* (29), *Rajab* [ruhj-ub] (30), *Sha'ban* [shuh-bahn] (29), *Ramadan* [ram-ah-don] (30), *Shawwal* [shuh-wall] (29), *Dhu'al Qa'da* [dool kah-dah] (30), and *Dhu'al Hijja* [dool he-juh] (29, or 30 in leap years).

1 Muharram	Hijra (the Islamic New Year)
10 Muharram	Ashura' (Shi'a holiday commemorating the martyrdom of Muhammad's grandson, Imam Hussein; devout Shi'a beat themselves with chains and even barbed wire to mourn the martyrdom)
12 Rabi I	Mawlid an Nabi (birthday of the prophet Muhammad)
27 Rajab	Lailat al Miraj (the ascent of Muhammad into heaven)
15 Sha'ban	Lailat al Bara'a (traditionally, on this night, Allah decides the fate of all people)
1 Ramadan	Month of Fasting (Muslims take no food, drink, or tobacco from sunrise to sunset and abstain from sexual relations during the day. In many cities, the start of the fast is marked each day by a drummer in each district, and the end of the fast is marked by firing a cannon; technically, the fast begins each day at dawn, nearly two hours before sunrise. Sunrise marks the end of the first period of prayer. Traditionally, the fast is broken with a date, some milk and water, and then a bowl of soup and a special salad called *fattoush* [fet-toosh]; the evening breakfast (*'iftar* [if-tar]) is often an opportunity for reveling, which may go late into the night)
27 Ramadan	Lailat al-Qadr (Evening of Destiny—Revelation of the Qur'an; on this day Muslims pray that God will grant good destiny)
30 Ramadan	Quds Day (Jerusalem Day—a recent addition to the calendar, a day of remembrance)
1 Shawwal	'Id al-Fitr (feast marking the end of Ramadan that lasts three days)
9 Dhu'al Hijja	Arafat Day (observed during annual pilgrimage to Mecca; pilgrims gather to the Plain of Arafat where Muhammad gave his farewell sermon
10 Dhu'al Hijja	Id al-Adha (Festival of Sacrifice, the culmination of the *Hajj* [hadge], or holy pilgrimage; usually four days)

Holiday Dates

Because the Muslim day begins at sunset, holidays begin at sunset on the evening before the given date. Since the Islamic calendar starts eleven days earlier each year, the various Islamic holidays are never on the same day from year to year. The following list of holidays has the date each holiday occurs on for the next several years.

Hijra New Year
10 Jan 2008
29 Dec 2008
18 Dec 2009
18 Dec 2010
27 Nov 2011
15 Nov 2012

Ashura'
19 Jan 2008
07 Jan 2009
27 Dec 2009
27 Dec 2010
06 Dec 2011
24 Nov 2012

Mawlid an-Nabi
20 Mar 2008
09 Mar 2009
26 Feb 2010
16 Feb 2011
05 Feb 2012
24 Jan 2013

Lailat al-Miraj
31 Jul 2008
20 Jul 2009
09 Jul 2010
09 Jun 2011
17 Jun 2012
06 Jun 2013

Lailat al-Bara'a
18 Aug 2008
07 Aug 2009
27 Jul 2010
27 Jun 2011
05 Jul 2012
24 Jun 2013

Ramadan starts
02 Sep 2008
22 Aug 2009
11 Aug 2010
01 Aug 2011
20 Jul 2012
09 Jul 2013

Nuzul al-Qur'an
18 Sep 2008
07 Sep 2009
27 Aug 2010
17 Aug 2011
05 Aug 2012
25 Jul 2013

Lailat al-Kadr
28 Sep 2008
17 Sep 2009
06 Sep 2010
07 Aug 2011
15 Aug 2012
04 Aug 2013

Quds Day
26 Sep 2008
18 Sep 2009
03 Sep 2010
05 Aug 2011
17 Aug 2012
02 Aug 2013

'Id al-Fitr
02 Oct 2008
21 Sep 2009
10 Sep 2010
11 Aug 2011
19 Aug 2012
08 Aug 2013

Waqf al-Arafa
18 Dec 2007
07 Dec 2008
26 Nov 2009
15 Nov 2010
16 Oct 2011
24 Oct 2012

'Id al-Adha
09 Dec 2008
28 Nov 2009
17 Nov 2010
18 Oct 2011
26 Oct 2012

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

PALESTINE EMBASSY TO THE UNITED STATES
Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations
115 East 65th Street
New York, NY 10021
Phone: (212) 288-8500, Fax: (212) 517-2377
E-mail: mission@palestine-un.org

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM
Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities
P.O. Box 534
Manger Street
Bethlehem, Palestine
Bethlehem office—Phone: 02-2741581/2/3, Fax: 02-2743753
Ramallah office—Phone: 02-2402533, Fax: 02-2402531
Nablus office—Phone: 09-2385042, Fax: 09-2385043
Hebron office—Phone: 02-2229633
Jericho office—Phone: 02-2321229, Fax: 02-2322935
Gaza office—Fax: 207-824856
E-mail: mota@visit-palestine.com
Web site: http://www.visit-palestine.com/index.html

CULTURAL CENTER
Palestinian Association for Cultural Exchange (PACE) Office
P.O. Box 841
Ramallah, Palestine
Phone: 972-2-2407610, Fax: 972-2-2407611
E-mail: pace@planet.edu

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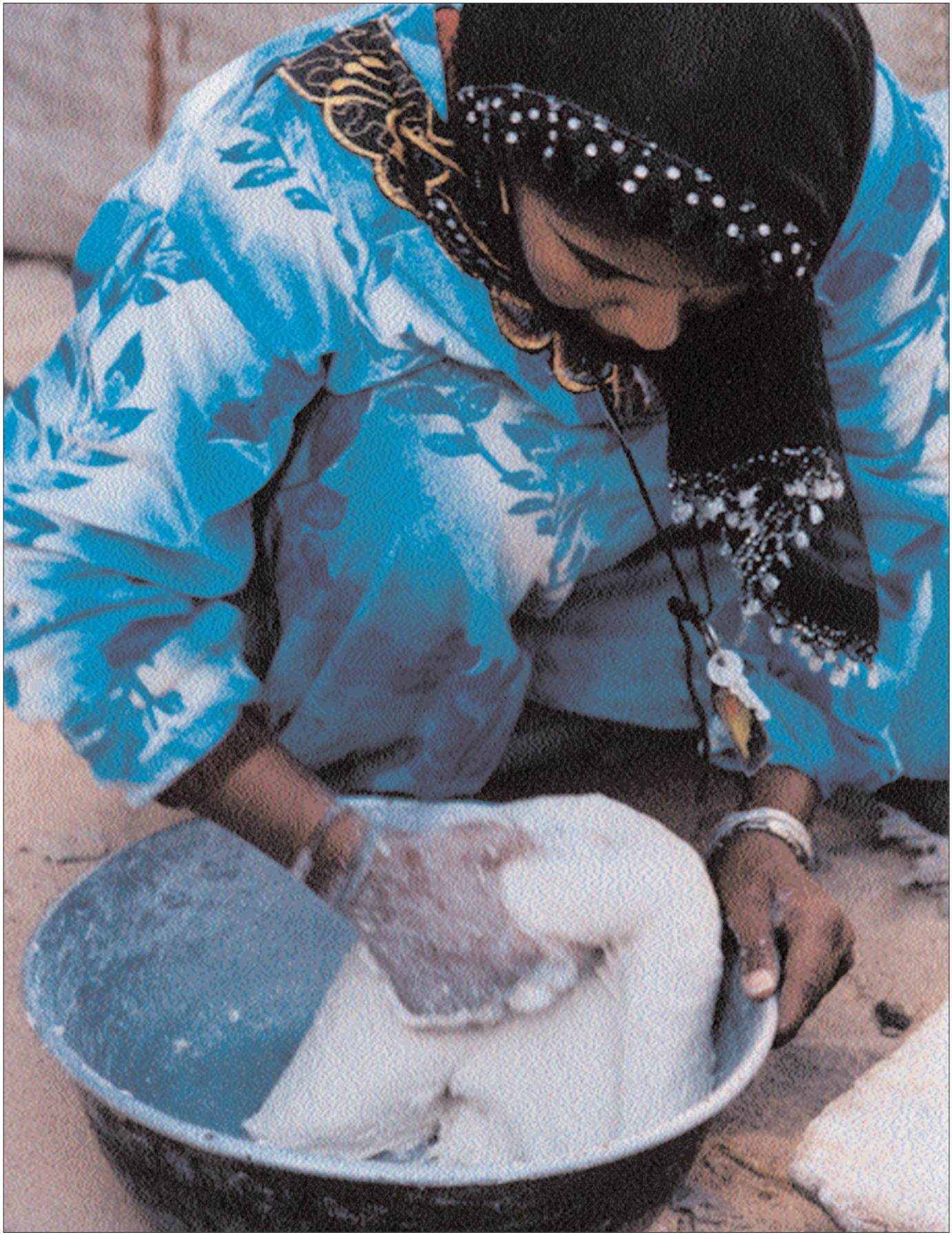
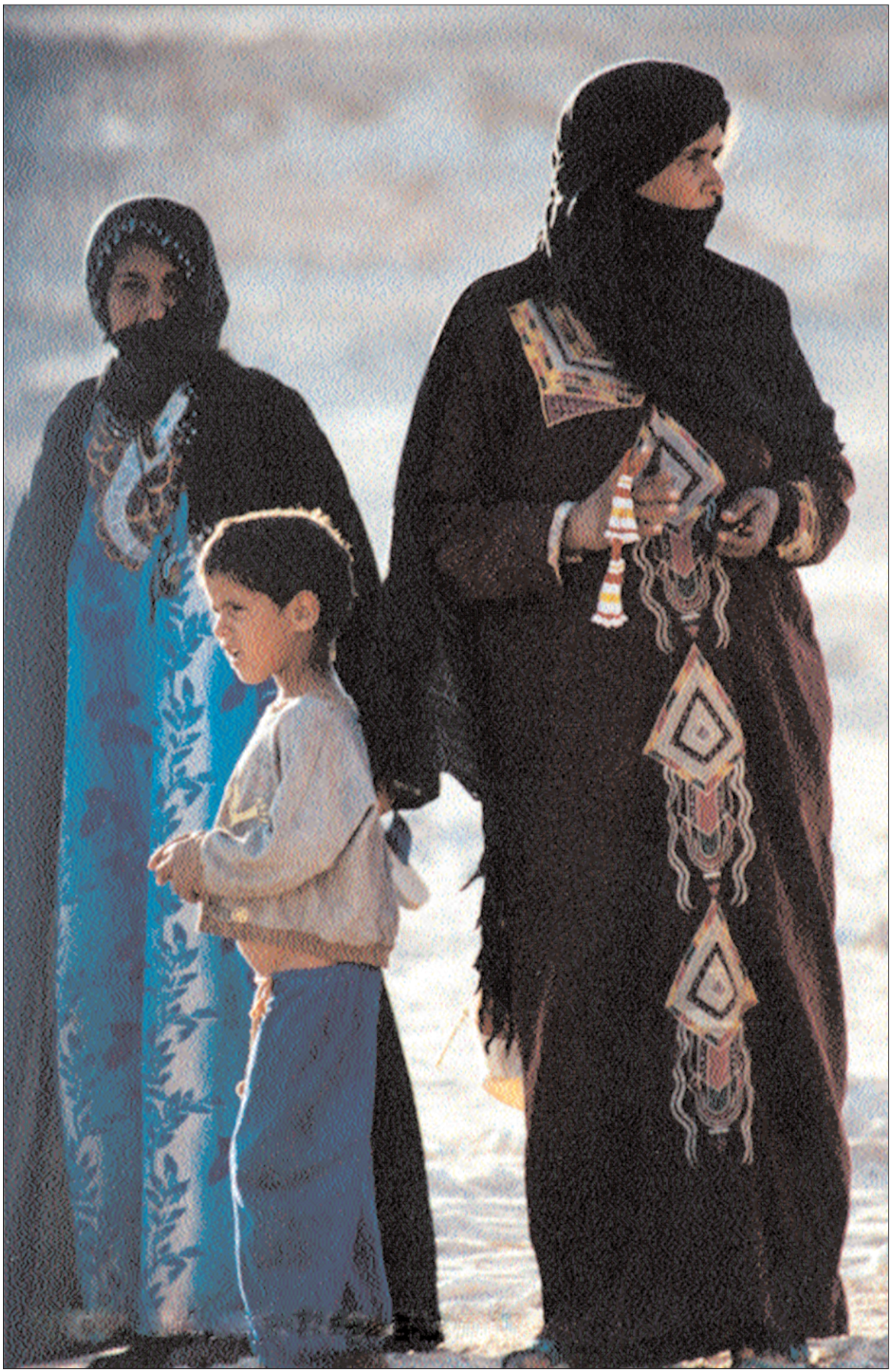
INTERNET SITES

Applied Research Institute of Jerusalem:
http://www.arij.org
Arabian Business and Cultural Guide:
http://www.traderscity.com/abcg/culture.htm
Arabic Alphabet:
http://www.arabic2000.com/arabic/alphabet.html
http://www.sakkal.com/ArtArabicCalligraphy.html
Arabic Calligraphy:
http://www.sakkal.com/ArtArabicCalligraphy.html
http://members.tripod.com/~theone01/Calligraphy/calligraphy.htm
Arabic Proverbs:
http://www.deproverbio.com/DPjournal/DP,6,2,00/ARABICPROVERBS.html
CIA World Factbook:
http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook
English words derived from Arabic:
http://www.al-bab.com/arab/language/lang.htm
International Recipes—Middle East:
http://www.deliciousindia.com/Recipes/InternationalRecipes/Middle%20East/index.htm
Islamic Arts & Architecture Organization:
http://www.islamicart.com/main/calligraphy/
Palestine Ministry of Information:
http://www.minfo.gov.ps/
Palestinian Maps:
http://www.palestinehistory.com/map.htm

Traditions Visual 1: Arab Woman in Traditional Dress Making Bread



Traditions Visual 2: A Woman in Traditional Dress Selling Crafts



Traditions Visual 3: Palestinian Children Ready for School in Jerusalem

Traditions Visual 4: Modern Palestinian Professor with Her Husband and Student

Gender Roles Survey

1. Briefly describe the typical American perception of a man's role in a family.

2. In actual practice, what is most often a man's role in a family?

3. Briefly describe the typical American perception of a woman's role in a family.

4. In actual practice, what is most often a woman's role in a family?

5. Briefly describe the typical American perception of a woman who works full-time.

6. Name a few characteristics (good or bad) that accurately describe a woman who works full-time.

7. Briefly describe the typical American perception of a man who is not the breadwinner in his family so he can stay home and raise his children.

8. Name a few characteristics (good or bad) that accurately describe a man who is not the breadwinner in his family so he can stay home and raise his children.

9. Briefly describe the difference between the culturally acceptable roles of women in American society and the culturally acceptable roles of women in Middle-Eastern society.

10. Do you feel that Americans are generally accepted by their neighbors when they do not conform to a typical gender role?

11. Do you feel that people in the Middle East are generally accepted by their neighbors when they do not conform to a typical gender role?

RESPONDENT'S INFORMATION

Gender: M F

Nationality: _____

Marital status: _____

Age: _____

Occupation: _____

Common Arabic Proverbs

1. Support your brother, whether he is a tyrant or the tyrannized. (The most important relationships are those with your family.
2. One hand alone does not clasp. (Cooperation is essential.)
3. Older than you by a day, wiser than you by a year. (Respect older people and their advice.)
4. The eye cannot rise above the eyebrow. (Be satisfied with your station in life.)
5. The dogs bark, but the caravans move on. (A person should rise above petty criticism)
6. The slave does the thinking, and the Lord carries it out. (Man proposes and God disposes.)
7. The monkey in the eyes of her mother is a gazelle. (There is nothing quite like a mother's love.)
8. Like a deaf man at a wedding. (Said about someone who is unaware of what is going on.)
9. An hour for your heart and an hour for your Lord. (There's a time for fun and a time for religious duty.)
10. It's all with God. (God will reward. Said when others do not show gratitude.)
11. Enter houses from their doors. (Do things in a proper way.)
12. May your house be destroyed. (Used both as a curse and to express amazement or surprise.)
13. Every year and you are fine. (Greeting for Christian and Muslim holidays.)
14. If God wills. (Said in place of or with the response "yes" to show that ultimately God is in control.)
15. We are all the children of nine. (We are all born after nine months; ultimately, we are all the same.)
16. The hungry man dreams of the bread market. (Our ambitions are determined by our life situation.)
17. I ate his brain. (I fooled him.)
18. The Lord of here is the Lord of there. (One place is as good as another.)

Name: _____

It's water under the bridge

and other proverbs...

Below is a list of American sayings on the left with corresponding Arabic sayings on the right. Read each Arabic saying and find the phrase that best matches an American saying. Once you find a pair, write the letter on the line of the corresponding phrase. As a class, discuss the meaning of each phrase.

American

____ 1) Like father, like son.

____ 2) Every good thing must have an end.

____ 3) Jack of all trades.

____ 4) Make yourself at home.

____ 5) If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again.

____ 6) It's water under the bridge.

____ 7) Mind your own business.

____ 8) We're tight.

____ 9) We are all in the same boat.

Arabic

a. My house is your house.

b. I ate bread and salt with him.

c. Everything is hard at first.

d. We are all in the air together.

e. Every sun has to set.

f. Look to your work.

g. Seven trades, but no luck.

h. The young goose is a good swimmer.

i. That which passed, died.

Name: _____

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American

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__a__ 4) Make yourself at home.

__c__ 5) If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again.

__i__ 6) It's water under the bridge.

__f__ 7) Mind your own business.

__b__ 8) We're tight.

__d__ 9) We are all in the same boat.

Arabic

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f. Look to your work.

g. Seven trades, but no luck.

h. The young goose is a good swimmer.

i. That which passed, died.

Name: _____

Proverbial Word Search

Find the fifteen words about Arabic proverbs in the word search below.

E	A	C	F	H	M	N	H	W	V	P	L	S	V	K	P	I	A
Z	U	J	E	T	X	A	S	A	V	E	Z	I	N	I	R	C	R
R	A	P	X	G	R	C	Y	T	T	C	N	Z	H	S	Y	O	T
E	Z	K	H	A	S	P	D	K	A	S	Z	C	O	P	S	N	I
A	O	P	M	E	O	U	J	I	H	B	D	R	P	R	X	V	C
M	O	N	J	W	M	J	R	A	S	N	O	I	O	O	X	E	E
J	P	H	E	R	P	I	A	V	E	A	O	O	L	V	T	R	V
W	L	R	C	K	I	L	S	I	S	U	S	S	Y	E	I	S	I
E	N	V	Y	K	L	F	R	M	Y	L	C	T	G	R	P	A	L
A	L	G	E	A	R	A	C	B	T	J	A	N	E	B	X	T	E
X	E	K	H	E	L	L	E	Z	A	G	N	N	M	R	G	I	Y
S	O	I	F	C	R	O	N	O	H	O	Q	O	G	W	C	O	E
D	O	A	V	D	N	E	W	Z	Q	E	S	O	Z	D	O	N	L
R	S	P	N	O	I	T	A	C	I	N	U	M	M	O	C	C	O
O	Y	G	P	T	E	W	W	W	U	N	B	C	P	X	K	E	M
W	C	B	E	L	S	N	O	I	T	I	T	S	R	E	P	U	S
K	W	I	Z	Y	J	U	E	T	H	C	F	C	A	T	P	W	W
X	L	Y	K	C	H	I	L	D	R	E	H	C	A	N	I	P	S

Communication
Conversation
Disaster
Envy
Euphemism
Evil eye
Haram
Honor
Inshaallah
Power
Proverb
Slang
Superstitions
Taboo
Words

Name: _____

Proverbial Word Search Key

Find the fifteen words about Arabic proverbs in the word search below.

E	+	+	+	+	+	+	H	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
+	U	+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	I	+	+	+	C	+
+	+	P	+	+	R	+	+	T	+	+	N	+	+	+	+	O	+
+	+	+	H	A	+	P	D	+	A	S	+	+	+	P	+	N	+
+	+	+	M	E	O	+	+	I	H	B	+	+	+	R	+	V	+
+	+	+	+	W	M	+	+	A	S	+	O	+	+	O	+	E	E
+	+	+	E	+	+	I	A	+	+	A	+	O	+	V	+	R	V
+	+	R	+	+	+	L	S	+	S	+	S	+	+	E	+	S	I
E	N	V	Y	+	L	+	+	M	+	L	+	T	+	R	+	A	L
+	+	+	+	A	+	+	+	+	+	+	A	+	E	B	+	T	E
+	+	+	H	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	N	+	R	+	I	Y
S	+	+	+	+	R	O	N	O	H	+	+	+	G	+	+	O	E
D	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	N	+
R	+	+	N	O	I	T	A	C	I	N	U	M	M	O	C	+	+
O	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
W	+	+	+	+	S	N	O	I	T	I	T	S	R	E	P	U	S
+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Communication
Conversation
Disaster
Envy
Euphemism
Evil eye
Haram
Honor
Inshaallah
Power
Proverb
Slang
Superstitions
Taboo
Words

Eight rhymes to help you remember Palestinian etiquette:

1.
Never slouch in your chair,
a Palestinian will think
that you don't care.

2.
Letting a Palestinian see
the bottom of your shoe
is a big taboo.

3.
Leaning against a wall
isn't considered nice at all

4.
If you're a man with a man,
you always shake hands.
If you're a man with a woman,
wait to see if you can.

5.
Even if it's late,
a good host will walk their guests
to the gate.

6.
If you're a girl,
wear your curls.

7.
You'll be a dork
if you eat pork.

8.
If you're really deft,
you'll know not to use
your left.

Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 1: A Mosque in Jordan Decorated with Calligraphy

Arabic Alphabet

th ث	t ت	b ب	’ ا
d د	kh خ	h* ح	j ج
s س	z ز	r ر	dh ذ
t* ط	d* ض	s* ص	sh ش
f ف	gh غ	‘ ع	z* ظ
m م	l ل	k ك	q ق
y ي	w و	h هـ	n ن

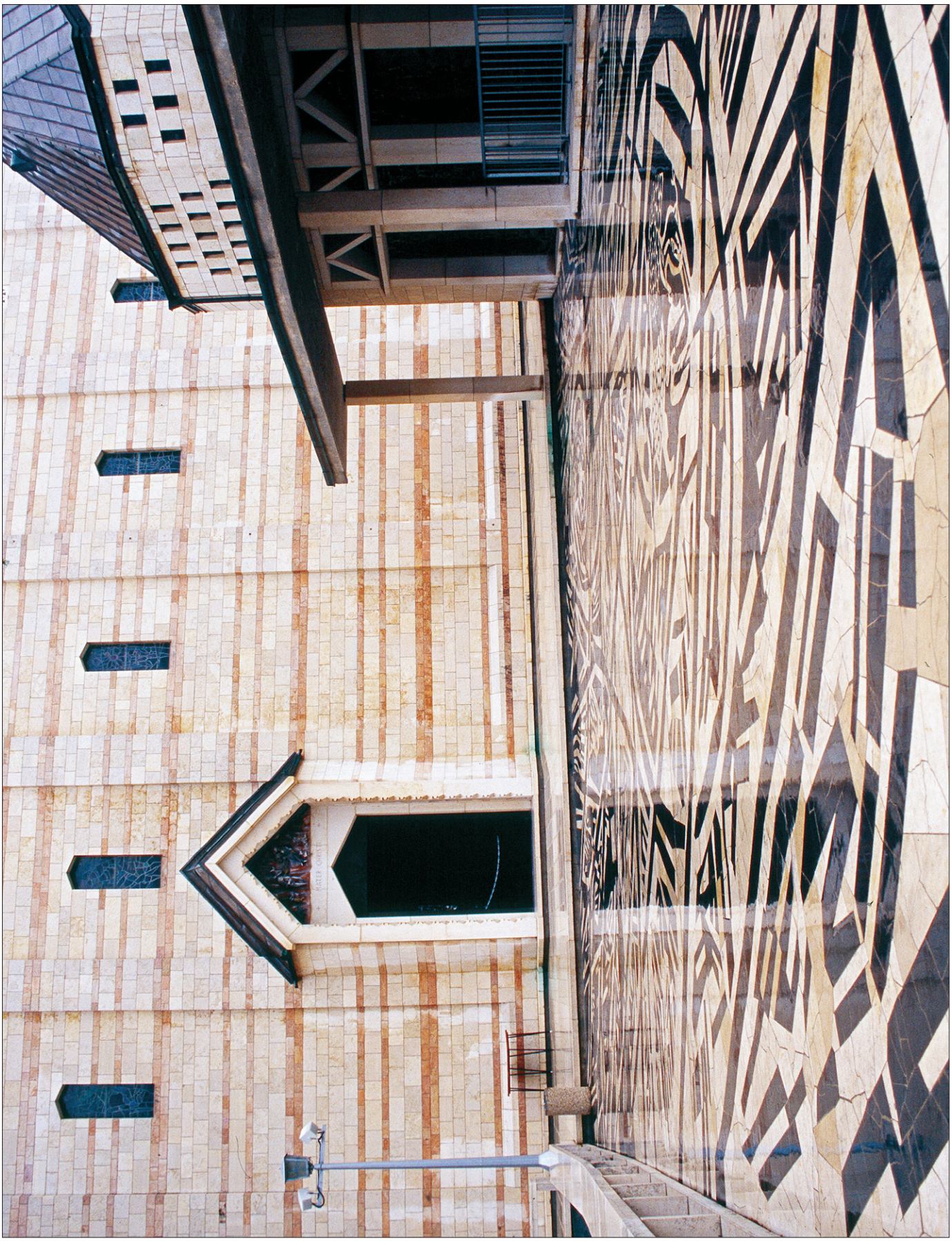
Arabic is read right to left, top to bottom. Sounds followed by * denote velarization. (Velarization is the articulation of a consonant, in which the back of the tongue is raised toward the soft palate.)

English words derived from Arabic

1. algebra
2. artichoke
3. candy
4. coffee
5. cork
6. cotton
7. crimson
8. gazelle
9. genie
10. giraffe
11. hazard
12. jar
13. massage
14. mattress
15. mocha
16. mosque
17. ream
18. safari
19. sahara
20. spinach
21. syrup
22. zero

Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 4: Decorative Pages of Two Copies of the Qu'ran

Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 5: A Christian Church in Nazareth Decorated with Geometric Designs



FLAG OF PALESTINE

The flag has three bands: black, white, and green, with a red triangle pointing in the middle of the white band. The flag is very similar to the flag of Jordan.

Map of Palestine