

Created by: Michelle Crane, 2014

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Grade Level: 6

Time Frame: Two or three 50 minute periods

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this lesson, students should be able to:

1. Identify the major factors which constitute the region of the Middle East,
2. Describe the different types of regions, and
3. Apply the types of regions to the Middle East.

Connection to the Curriculum:

This lesson is intended to be used to introduce students to the different types of regions. It may be used during an introductory unit on Geography and Geographic Skills for a 6th grade World Cultures course, or it may be used during a unit on the Geography of the Middle East.

TEKS Strand(s) Objective(s):

(3) Geography. The student uses geographic tools to answer geographic questions. The student is expected to:

(A) pose and answer geographic questions, including: Where is it located? Why is it there? What is significant about its location? How is its location related to the location of other people, places, and environments?;

(4) Geography. The student understands the factors that influence the locations and characteristics of locations of various contemporary societies on maps and globes and uses latitude and longitude to determine absolute locations. The student is expected to:

(B) identify and explain the geographic factors responsible for patterns of population in places and regions

(C) explain ways in which human migration influences the character of places and regions;

(E) draw sketch maps that illustrate various places and regions;

(15) Culture. The student understands the similarities and differences within and among cultures in various world societies. The student is expected to:

(A) define culture and the common traits that unify a culture region;

(21) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired through established research methodologies from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to:

(A) differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as computer software; interviews; biographies; oral, print, and visual material; and artifacts to acquire information about various world cultures;

Materials:

For Student Use:	
Blank outline map of the World or the Eastern Hemisphere	Two per student - See resources below for a suggested outline map to use in class. You may wish to use a map which includes political boundaries.
Map pencils	
Maps of the Middle East	See the resource list below. If students will be using online maps, they should have access to a computer lab with an internet connection. Select a variety of maps, including maps depicting religion, language, physical features, etc.
Optional: Source evaluation handout	You may post the questions for students to use while looking at their sources. If desired, you can handout these out to students and have them write the answers to each question for each source.
Optional: Computer lab with internet access	Online maps are not required for completion of the lesson.
For Teacher Use:	
Large blank outline map of the World or the Eastern Hemisphere	You can choose to display the exact same map the students are using onto a dry erase board or a sheet of paper taped to the wall. The students will be marking on this, so make sure to use the appropriate marking devices for your medium.
Dry erase or other types of markers – several different colors	This depends upon which surface you are projecting the map onto. Make sure to have as many different colors as you can obtain, so each student’s sketch can be drawn in a different color.
Computer with a projection device and internet connection and speakers	Required for Warm Up and introduction of the concept of regions activities. If teacher would like to use the electronic maps, but a computer lab is not available, the maps can be projected.
Where is the Middle East? Power Point	If students have previously been exposed to these concepts and terms, the Power Point is not necessary. It may be viewed briefly as a review before continuing the lesson.

References:

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Islam in Africa, 1987. (2014, July 12). Retrieved from Perry Castaneda Library Map Collection:
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Strategies:

Students will use the inquiry method to investigate the components of the Middle East region using a variety of sources and determine where the regional boundaries should be drawn. The inquiry method is based upon the Geographic Skills as outlined by the National Geography Standards. It is a student-centered lesson strategy designed to assist students with problem-solving. The steps are:

1. Asking Geographic Questions,
2. Acquiring Geographic Information,
3. Organizing Geographic Information
4. Analyzing Geographic Information
5. Answer Geographic Questions

For a more complete description of the Geographic Skills and the inquiry method, visit National Geographic Education's webpage [Geographic Skills Index](#).

Questions: Below are some examples of higher order thinking questions which can be used with this lesson. They can be used per teacher discretion at various times in the lesson – as pre and post checks or as formative assessment during the lesson.

Explain why you chose some features to define your region and not others.

Answers will vary. Some students may choose to draw their region based upon physical features. Some may choose to use cultural features such as religion.

Explain how your boundary changed from your initial drawing.

Answers will vary. Some students may not change the boundary from their original map, at all. This is fine as long as they can explain why they chose not to change their boundary. Other students may draw their boundary based upon a specific feature and will find that their boundary changes depending upon the feature they choose.

Describe how your understanding of this region changed over the lesson.

Answers will vary. This is intended to be a self-reflection question – asking the student to describe how their learning and understanding changed during the lesson. This question forces them to evaluate what they knew and what they know now in order to describe how this has changed over the course of the lesson.

Procedures to conduct the lesson:

Starting the Lesson/Warm Up: Day One: 5 minutes

Distribute an outline map to each student as they enter the room. Ask the students to draw a ring on the map indicating the region known as the “Middle East”. Ask the students to write 2 to 3 sentences explaining why they drew the boundaries where they did and explaining the key features which make up the region known as the “Middle East”. As the students complete their written answer, move about the room and look at their maps. You will want to make note of any maps you find particularly interesting – ones that are substantially different from the others.

Asking Geographic Questions: Day One: 10 minutes

Once students have completed their task, display the Guiding Question for the lesson: “How do we define the region of the Middle East?”

Call on a few students to come to the front of the room and draw their sketch of the Middle East on the projected map. Try to select students with different sketches, if possible. Make sure each student uses a different color to make it easier to see and evaluate the different answers. After students have completed their sketch, ask them to explain why they drew the area they did. What factors did they use to determine where the regional boundaries should be located? Did they mainly rely upon physical features or cultural features to select the boundaries? Once several students have completed the task, ask the class as a whole to discuss how they determined the boundaries. How close were their answers to those on the board? As a group, did the class tend to favor physical or cultural features when determining the boundaries? Try to determine why the students relied upon the features they did.

Acquiring Geographic Information: Day One: 15 minutes for Power Point, remainder of Day One for source evaluation.

Next, ask students to define a region and explain the types of features which may be used to determine regional boundaries. If students have been introduced to the concept, this will be review. If not, expect them to give numerous responses of varying accuracy. At this point, you should introduce or review with students how regions are defined using the “Where is the Middle East?” Power Point. When you reach the “What characteristics define the Middle East as a region?” slide, type in the answers the students generated from the warm-up discussion on the physical and cultural characteristics which define this region.

Provide a variety of maps for students to evaluate, including a few which you feel may not be helpful, in order to provide the students with the opportunity to practice evaluating resources. If time permits, you can ask the students to collect the maps they would like to use online, or by using textbooks, atlases or other materials. It is suggested that the students use a minimum of 3 maps for reference. Make sure students generate a source list if they obtain the maps themselves online.

While the students are reviewing their sources, post or handout the following questions for them to use in determining which sources they wish to use:

1. Does this map show any features which distinguish the Middle East from the surrounding region? If not, you should consider moving on to another source of information. If so, continue on with the remaining questions.
2. What particular features shown on this map show the Middle East as a distinct region?
3. Are these features physical or cultural?
4. In your opinion, does this map make a good source of information for determining where the Middle East is located? Continue reviewing your other sources until you have a total of 3.

Organizing Geographic Information: Day Two: 10 to 15 minutes

Once students have gathered their 3 sources, have them select a color and draw a ring around each feature on the same map they used for their Warm Up. They will use a different color for each feature, so they will have a total of 4 different colored rings on their initial map.

Analyzing Geographic Information: Day Two: 5 minutes

Once the students have completed organizing their information on their first map, have them determine where the Middle East is located. Have them draw a 5th ring, in a different color, around where they believe the Middle East is located.

Answering Geographic Questions: Day One: 25 minutes

Tell the students to write a brief analysis on the back of their map explaining:

1. Which sources they relied up to determine their boundaries and why,
2. Why they chose boundaries they did,
3. Which characteristics they used to define the region and why.

End the Lesson/Closure:

Finally, have the students answer the following question on the back of their map.

Explain how your boundary changed from your initial drawing. Describe how your

understanding of this region changed over the lesson.
Call upon a few students to share their answers. Discuss them as a class.

Evaluation/Assessment:

	Not There Yet	Satisfactory	Clearly Outstanding
Content	<p>1 Point</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maps selected are not appropriate. ▪ Maps are merely listed, no attempt at analysis is made. ▪ Written answer does not utilize appropriate vocabulary. ▪ Written answer is difficult to read due to spelling and/or grammar errors. 	<p>2 Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maps selected are appropriate, but not varied. ▪ Analysis of maps is attempted and mainly accurate. ▪ Written answer correctly utilizes appropriate vocabulary. ▪ Written answer is generally free from spelling or grammar errors. 	<p>3 Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maps selected are appropriate and depict a variety of features. ▪ Analysis of maps is thorough. ▪ Written answer demonstrates mastery of appropriate vocabulary. ▪ Written answer is largely free from spelling or grammar errors.
Appearance	<p>0.75 Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Map features are not clear and are difficult to read. ▪ Map shows minimal effort. 	<p>1.25 Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Map features are clear and legible. ▪ Map shows effort and attention to detail. 	<p>2 Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Map features are clear, legible and attractively drawn. ▪ Map shows great effort and attention to detail.

Where is the Middle East?

Michelle Crane





What is a Region?

- Basic unit of geography
- Area of land that has common features
- Features can be cultural or physical
 - Cultural: language, government, religion,
 - Physical: vegetation, climate
- Can you think of some examples of a region?



What characteristics define the Middle East as a region?

- Physical
- Cultural



How do geographers determine where to draw regional boundaries?

- You will investigate several maps in order to determine where the Middle East is.
- You can use physical and/or cultural characteristics to define the region.
- You will draw a map showing where you think the Middle East is located.
- You must explain why you chose the boundaries you did, which sources you relied up and why, and which characteristics you used and why.