

## The Impact of the Silk Road and Islam on World History

### Overview

Students will use technology to explore the social, cultural, religious, and economic impact of the Silk Road and other transcontinental trade routes between the Classical Era and Gunpowder Empires of World History. Students will focus on the great achievements of empires and kingdoms, the great scholars, and Islamic explorers during the time of great social, cultural, and economic expansion in Europe, Asia, and Africa. At the conclusion of the lesson, students will create an interactive travel journal to highlight the different experiences that travelers along the Silk Road and other transcontinental trade routes would have encountered. The lesson encompasses many key concepts and objectives of the NC Essential Standards in World History, while addressing common core literacy standards for Social Studies students.

### Grade

9-12

### Subject

World History

### Essential Standards

- WH.H.1.3 - Use historical analysis and interpretation to consider multiple perspectives of various peoples in the past; and, analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causations.
- WH.H.2.6 - Analyze the interact between the Islamic World, Europe, and Asia in terms of increased trade, enhanced technology innovation, and an impact on scientific thought and the arts.
- WH.H.2.7 - Analyze the relationship between trade routes and the development and decline of major empires.
- WH.H.3.1 - Explain how religion influenced political power and cultural unity in various regions of the Europe, Asia, and Africa.

### Common Core Literacy Standards: History/Social Studies

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1 - Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2 - Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3 - Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.7 - Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9 - Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

### Essential Questions

- How did trade interactions with Islamic Empires and Kingdoms expand social, cultural, and technological advances in Europe, Asia, and Africa?
- What does transcontinental trade reveal about the political, economic, and cultural strengths and weaknesses of empires and kingdoms?
- How did Islam and Islamic civilizations affect political, economic, cultural, and technological advances during the height of the transcontinental trade route, the Silk Road?

- What factors are necessary for effective transcontinental trade and interaction?
- What are the lasting political, economic, cultural, and technological impacts of transcontinental trade between Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East?

### Materials

- Technology: computer lab or mobile laptops for each student
- Teacher access to computer and projector
- Image Analysis Document (attached)
- Eastern Hemisphere Map (attached)
- Websites
  - <http://en.unesco.org/silkroad/network-silk-road-cities-map-app/en>
  - <http://web.stanford.edu/group/spice/SilkRoad/SilkRoad.html>
  - <https://www.thinglink.com/scene/756150749720739841>
  - <http://en.unesco.org/silkroad/about-silk-road>
- Great Empires of the Silk road (attached)
- Video: “Islam, the Quran, and the Five Pillars All without a Flamewar” - <https://youtu.be/TpcbfxtdoI8>
- Primary Source Documents-Ibn Battuta (attached)
- Project- Journaling the Silk Road and Other Transcontinental Trade Routes (attached)
- Poster Paper or Large Charting Paper
- Heavy or Thick Construction Paper - Various Colors
- String or Brown Yarn
- Beige or Yellow Stationary

### Duration

Five 90-minute classes or five to six 45-minute classes

### Students Preparation

Students should have covered the following concepts prior to this lesson: Basic World Geography (map skills, key geographical places, physical landscapes); Key Characteristics of Civilizations; Major River Civilizations: Neolithic and Bronze Age; and Global Religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

### Procedure

#### Day One: Introduction of the Silk Road and Transcontinental Trade Routes

1. Project the image “The Silk Road.” Distribute the picture analysis handout to students. Have students answer the analysis questions and discuss as a class: what does this image say about the impact of the Silk Road and other transcontinental trade routes in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East prior to the 17th century? Image can be found at <https://www.tes.com/lessons/K6k4skK4TxHUNA/silk-road-project>.
2. Distribute the Eastern Hemisphere map. Have students define the terms: Silk Road and transcontinental trade on the map.
3. Next, have the students label the following major trade cities on the map: Quanzhou, Xi’an, Dunhuang, Umruqi, Kashgar, Balkh, Shahrisabz, Samarkand, Herat, Antioch, Madras, Zanzibar, Alleppo, Venice, Constantinople, Valenica, Tripoli, Alexandria, Marrakesh, Jenne, Gao, Lisbon, Madrid, London, Fez, and Genoa. Students can use the website: <http://en.unesco.org/silkroad/network-silk-road-cities-map-app/en> (note: make sure to click the link “begin your journey” to see the major trade cities) to locate these cities, or they may use a map in their textbooks.

4. Next, have students label key geographic features on the map such as major rivers, deserts, mountain ranges, and large bodies of water in Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. Students may use their textbooks or world maps. Give a list of geographic features that you would like students to identify on the map, such as: Arabian Peninsula, Black Sea, Caspian Sea, Euphrates River, Eurasian Steppe, Gobi Desert, Himalayan Mountains, Hindu Kush Mountains, Mediterranean Sea, Persian Gulf, Plateau of Tibet, Tigris River, Zagros Mountains, etc.
  - Students may use the maps located at the following websites to label geographic features: <https://www.thinglink.com/scene/756150749720739841> and <http://en.unesco.org/silkroad/about-silk-road> which show deserts, mountain ranges, and bodies of water.
5. Have students to create a possible trade route on the map. Students should take in consideration the geographical obstacles and needs of travelers along the route. Then have students explain their possible routes to the class. Project a completed model map so that students can show to their classmates their route. Students can use sticky notes or a laser pointer to demonstrate their course.
6. Finally, have students complete a quick write answering the following questions:
  - What things are necessary for transcontinental trade (political, economic, technology, and cultural/social elements)?
  - What obstacles have travelers faced during transcontinental trade?
  - Where were a majority of the trade cities located? Why?

### **Day Two and Three: Major Empires**

7. Direct students to the website: <http://web.stanford.edu/group/spice/SilkRoad/SilkRoad.html>. Have students click the Explore the Silk Road Maps. Students should explore the elements of the map (languages, beliefs, politics, climate, trade routes), and use it to either revise or add to their quick write from day one.
8. Distribute the document *“Great Empires of the Silk Road.”* Divide students into groups of 4 or 5. Assign each group a major empire that was impacted by transcontinental trade. Each person within the group will be assigned either one or two key elements that they will become experts on and will be responsible for gathering information. Students will complete the row for their assigned nation based on the directions from the handout. Students can use the internet and/or the textbook to find the pertinent information. Advise students of using reputable sources on the internet. (*Note: You can modify the assignment by assigning fewer empires or all depending on class sizes.*)
9. Give student groups a large piece of chart paper or poster paper. Students should create an anchor chart with all the key information from their table. Anchor chart should include all of the information necessary for their classmates to understand that particular empire, kingdom, or city-state. The anchor chart can be creative (graphic organizer). Once complete, students will post their anchor charts around the class for a gallery walk.
10. Gallery Walk: Have students regroup based on their area of expertise (*i.e. all students responsible for political systems will be in one group*). In this way, a member from the major empires will be represented in the new gallery walk groups. Students will complete the document *“Great Empires of the Silk Road”* as they walk around the room. At each anchor chart, the students who were responsible for creating the chart will act as the guide and instructor. This gallery guide will assist students with completing their charts by highlighting the key information and answering questions. Make sure that students are not copying information from student papers but are listening and writing key information.

11. As a culminating activity, have students choose two of the major empires, kingdoms, or city-states to compare and contrast in a quick write. Students may first organize their thoughts in a Venn diagram before writing.
12. As a class, discuss the lasting impact of each of the major empires, kingdoms, or city-states. Discuss:
  - Why these things are lasting impacts and the similarities between them.
  - The importance of transfer through culture, politics, and trade on human development.
  - The overall factors that link large civilizations together and the factors that differentiate these civilizations.

**Day Four: Exploring the Impact of Islam in the Expansion of Culture, Technology, and the Economy**

13. Begin the class with a review of the religious tenets of Islam. You can show the Crash Course in World History video, “Islam, the Quran, and the Five Pillars All without a Flamewar,” to spark discussion at <https://youtu.be/TpcbfxtdoI8>. If you are pressed for time, stopping at 4:50 covers the basic information. As a class, discuss how these tenets may have affected the development of Islamic civilizations and empires:
  - Why do you think that people know so little about Islamic history?
  - What was the society like in the Arabian Peninsula during the time of Muhammad?
  - What two major themes in the Qur’an that the narrator mentions?
  - Describe the 5 pillars of Islam.If you watch the entire video, also discuss:
  - What was the relationship between Islam and politics at the beginning of the religion?
  - What factors led to the spread of Islam?
  - Speculate how the expansion of Islam may have influenced global trade and the transfer of goods, ideas, and culture.
14. Tell students that they will now research important cities, institutions, or individuals in the Islamic world during the Silk Road. Make sure to remind students that these Islamic figures and places were extremely important in the spread of culture, technology, and the economy. Students may work individually, pairs, or small groups, as per the discretion of the teacher. Have students choose one of the following topics: Timbuktu, Baghdad (Abbasid Empire), Mansa Musa, House of Wisdom, Zheng He, or Abbas Ibn Firnas. Make sure that all of the choices are represented in the class. You may want to do a random drawing if students favor one topic.
15. Make sure students each have access to a computer or laptop. Tell students that they must find the following information for their topic through online research, or classroom books:
  - Location or place of origin
  - Time period/ Empire Era
  - Accomplishments/ Important Events/ Contributions (culture, technology, and the economy)
  - Lasting Impact (culture, technology, and the economy)After students have completed their research, have students with the same topic meet together. Students should share the information they had found with their classmates with the same topic.
16. As a class, discuss how learning about the accomplishments of Islamic societies and Muslim scholars can help dispel the simplified portrayal of these groups in the media.
17. Students then will use one of the following electronic resources [Powtoons](#), [Make Beliefs Comix](#), [Pixton](#), or [ToonDoo](#) to create a digital media presentation of their chosen topic. Each presentation should address all of the key points of the research. These websites are free or give free trial periods. Make sure to go over

each site with students and model using each one so that they have an understanding of what each website has to offer. (Note: Students can send you a copy of their presentation via email or share the presentation through Google Docs.)

18. When the presentations are complete, have each student choose another student's presentation to review that had a different subject than their own. As a homework assignment, students will write an essay comparing their topics and the lasting impact of these figures or places in the Islamic world during the height of the Silk Road. The essay should also connect the individual and/or place to the context of transcontinental trade. Use a rubric to grade for thesis, use of historical evidence, grammar and punctuation, and connections to transcontinental trade.

#### Day Five: Putting It Together

1. Direct students to the website: <http://web.stanford.edu/group/spice/SilkRoad/SilkRoad.html>. Have students click the Silk Road Trading Game. Students can play the game and use it to either revise or add to the quick write from day one.
2. Divide students into 5 groups of 3 to 4 students. Introduce the Muslim explorer Ibn Battuta. Ibn Battuta was a Moroccan Muslim scholar and traveler who traveled over 75,000 miles throughout the Islamic World in the 14th century. Upon returning home to Morocco, Ibn Battuta dictated his story to a scribe, who wrote the account in a classical narrative style, published as *The Rihla* (journey). He is considered to be one of the greatest world travelers. Distribute the primary source document and reading chart to each group. Assign each group a section of the primary source document and have them complete the reading chart. Next, have each group share the information they have learned from each of their readings.
3. Instruct students to answer the reading questions on the back of the reading chart. Finally, distribute the secondary source from Ross Dunn. Instruct students to read the document and answer the questions. Have students discuss the importance of primary source documents and the importance of reading sources critically:
  - What can a primary source reveal about a period of history or historical figure?
  - Why do historians need to read or hear the voice of a person from a certain period of history or individual?
  - What do primary sources not reveal about a period of history or individual?
  - How can a historian use a primary source to make inferences about a historical period or person?
  - What could be the intentions of a person writing about a period of history or a historical figure? Why should this matter?
4. Introduce the culminating project and pass out the instructions- *5,000 miles: Journaling the Silk Road and Other Transcontinental Trade Routes*. Tell students that they will use what they have learned through the unit to create a Silk Road journal. Students will use historical evidence, accurate cultural portrayals, understanding of the environment and economy, and creativity to highlight the experience along the Silk Road. Using the handout, go over the directions with students.
  - Students will describe a complete journey along the Silk Road from Europe to Asia.
  - Students will create a historically accurate traveler figure and highlight the good and bad cultural, political, social, and economic experiences along the Silk Road.
  - Differentiation Suggestion: Students can choose to make a paper journal or a digital journal. Students can create a PowerPoint, Prezi, or digital media presentation to meet the requirements of the project.Note: This final project can be completed as a homework assignment and with flexible submission dates.

## Image Analysis: Silk Road



(Image retrieved from <https://schoolworkhelper.net/trade-on-the-silk-road/>)

Identify four figures that stand out in the image. Explain your choices.

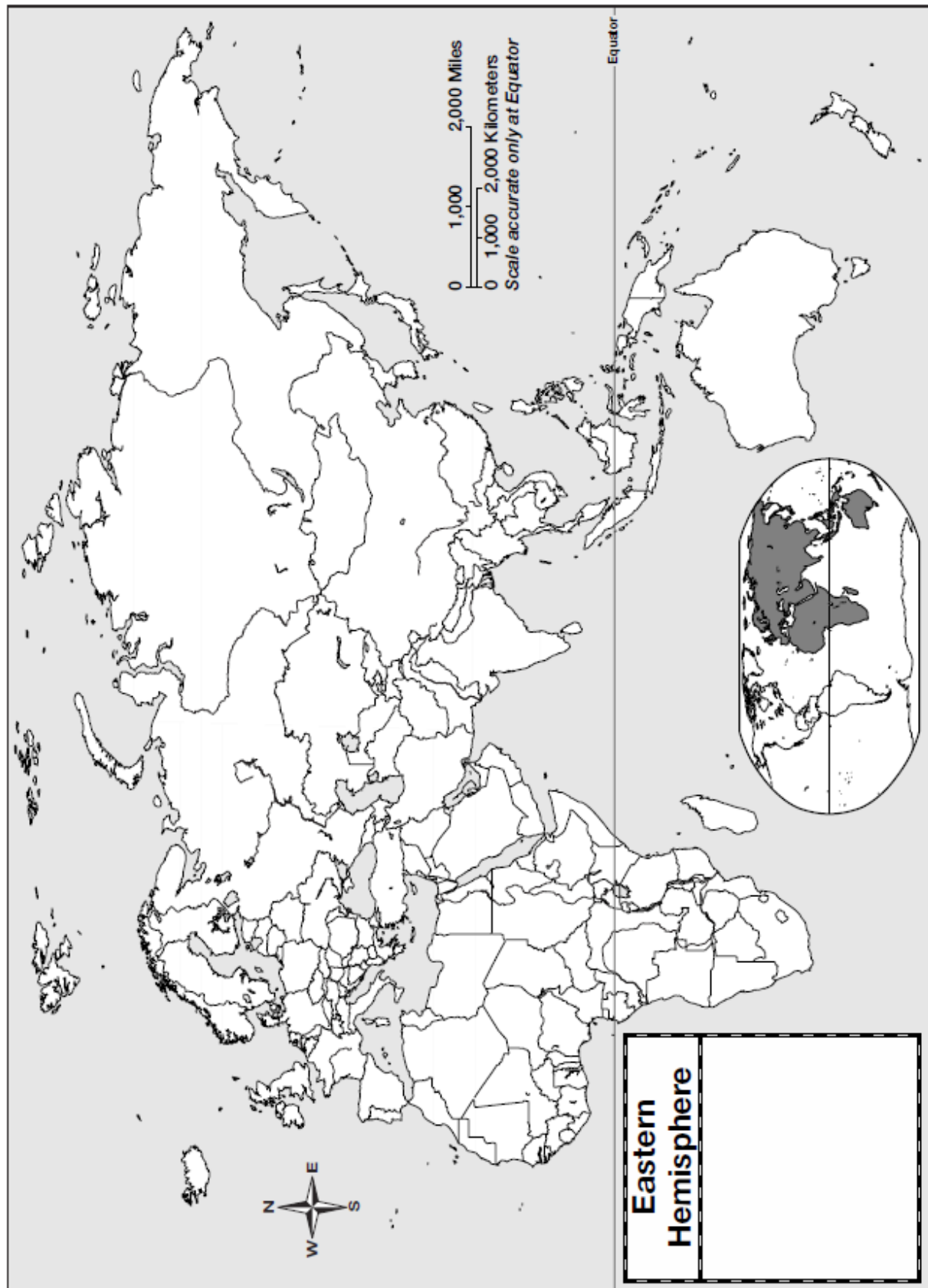
What images in the picture reflect the following elements?

- Culture
- Technology/ Innovation
- Political/Government
- Economic
- Social Structure

Explain your choices.

What does this image say about the impact of the Silk Road and other transcontinental trade routes in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> century?

# Eastern Hemisphere



This lesson was created by Tinisha R. Shaw as part of the Global Islam and the Arts Teacher Fellows program. For more information about the program, please visit [ncmideast.org](http://ncmideast.org).

### Great Empires of the Silk Road

Describe the political systems, economic systems, religious structure, social structure, and technological innovations for each of the major kingdoms, city-states, and empires impacted by the transcontinental trade along the Silk Road.

	<b>Political Systems</b>	<b>Economic Systems/ Goods</b>	<b>Religion</b>	<b>Social Structure</b>	<b>Technology/ Innovations</b>
<b>Roman Empire</b>					
<b>Han Dynasty</b>					
<b>Abbasid Empire</b>					
<b>Axum/Ethiopia</b>					
<b>Mauryan-Gupta Empires</b>					
<b>Byzantine Empire</b>					
<b>Italian City-States: Milan, Venice, and Florence</b>					



<b>Mali/ Songhai Empires</b>					
<b>Ottoman Empire</b>					
<b>Mughal Empire</b>					
<b>Ming Dynasty</b>					
<b>Qing Dynasty</b>					

## **Tripoli**

I left Tangier, my birthplace, on Thursday, 2nd Rajab 725 [June 14, 1325], being at that time twenty-two years of age [22 lunar years; 21 and 4 months by solar reckoning], with the intention of making the Pilgrimage to the Holy House [at Mecca] and the Tomb of the Prophet [at Medina].

I set out alone, finding no companion to cheer the way with friendly intercourse, and no party of travellers with whom to associate myself. Swayed by an overmastering impulse within me, and a long-cherished desire to visit those glorious sanctuaries, I resolved to quit all my friends and tear myself away from my home. As my parents were still alive, it weighed grievously upon me to part from them, and both they and I were afflicted with sorrow.

On reaching the city of Tilimsan [Tlemsen], whose sultan at that time was Abu Tashifin, I found there two ambassadors of the Sultan of Tunis, who left the city on the same day that I arrived. One of the brethren having advised me to accompany them, I consulted the will of God in this matter, and after a stay of three days in the city to procure all that I needed, I rode after them with all speed. I overtook them at the town of Miliana, where we stayed ten days, as both ambassadors fell sick on account of the summer heats. When we set out again, one of them grew worse, and died after we had stopped for three nights by a stream four miles from Miliana. I left their party there and pursued my journey, with a company of merchants from Tunis.

On reaching al-Jaza'ir [Algiers] we halted outside the town for a few days, until the former party rejoined us, when we went on together through the Mitija [the fertile plain behind Algiers] to the mountain of Oaks [Jurjura] and so reached Bijaya [Bougiel].

The commander of Bijaya at this time was the chamberlain Ibn Sayyid an-Nas. Now one of the Tunisian merchants of our party had died leaving three thousand dinars of gold, which he had entrusted to a certain man of Algiers to deliver to his heirs at Tunis. Ibn Sayyid an-Nas came to hear of this and forcibly seized the money. This was the first instance I witnessed of the tyranny of the agents of the Tunisian government.

At Bijaya I fell ill of a fever, and one of my friends advised me to stay there till I recovered. But I refused, saying, "If God decrees my death, it shall be on the road with my face set toward Mecca." "If that is your resolve," he replied, "sell your ass and your heavy baggage, and I shall lend you what you require. In this way you will travel light, for we must make haste on our journey, for fear of meeting roving Arabs on the way." I followed his advice and he did as he had promised--may God reward him! . . .

From Damietta I travelled to Fariskur, which is a town on the bank of the Nile, and halted outside it. Here I was overtaken by a horseman who had been sent after me by the governor of Damietta. He handed me a number of coins saying to me "The Governor asked for you, and on being informed about you, he sent you this gift"--may God reward him! Thence I travelled to Ashmun, a large and ancient town on a canal derived from the Nile. It possesses a wooden bridge at which all vessels anchor, and in the afternoon the baulks are lifted and the vessels pass up and down. From here I went to Samannud, whence I journeyed

upstream to Cairo, between a continuous succession of towns and villages. The traveller on the Nile need take no provision with him because whenever he desires to descend on the bank he may do so, for ablutions, prayers, provisioning, or any other purpose. There is an uninterrupted chain of bazaars from Alexandria to Cairo, and from Cairo to Assuan [Aswan] in Upper Egypt.

## Cairo

I arrived at length at Cairo, mother of cities and seat of Pharaoh the tyrant, mistress of broad regions and fruitful lands, boundless in multitude of buildings, peerless in beauty and splendour, the meeting-place of comer and goer, the halting-place of feeble and mighty, whose throngs surge as the waves of the sea, and can scarce be contained in her for all her size and capacity. It is said that in Cairo there are twelve thousand water-carriers who transport water on camels, and thirty thousand hirers of mules and donkeys, and that on the Nile there are thirty-six thousand boats belonging to the Sultan and his subjects which sail upstream to Upper Egypt and downstream to Alexandria and Damietta, laden with goods and profitable merchandise of all kinds.

On the bank of the Nile opposite Old Cairo is the place known as The Garden, which is a pleasure park and promenade, containing many beautiful gardens, for the people of Cairo are given to pleasure and amusements. I witnessed a fete once in Cairo for the sultan's recovery from a fractured hand; all the merchants decorated their bazaars and had rich stuffs, ornaments and silken fabrics hanging in their shops for several days.

The mosque of 'Amr is highly venerated and widely celebrated. The Friday service is held in it and the road runs through it from east to west. The madrasas [college mosques] of Cairo cannot be counted for multitude. As for the Maristan [hospital], which lies "between the two castles" near the mausoleum of Sultan Qala'un, no description is adequate to its beauties. It contains an innumerable quantity of appliances and medicaments, and its daily revenue is put as high as a thousand dinars.

There are a large number of religious establishments ["convents "] which they call khanqahs, and the nobles vie with one another in building them. Each of these is set apart for a separate school of darwishes, mostly Persians, who are men of good education and adepts in the mystical doctrines. Each has a superior and a doorkeeper and their affairs are admirably organized. They have many special customs one of which has to do with their food. The steward of the house comes in the morning to the darwishes, each of whom indicates what food he desires, and when they assemble for meals, each person is given his bread and soup in a separate dish, none sharing with another. They eat twice a day. They are each given winter clothes and summer clothes, and a monthly allowance of from twenty to thirty dirhams. Every Thursday night they receive sugar cakes, soap to wash their clothes, the price of a bath, and oil for their lamps. These men are celibate; the married men have separate convents.

At Cairo too is the great cemetery of al-Qarafa, which is a place of peculiar sanctity and contains the graves of innumerable scholars and pious believers. In the Qarafa the people build beautiful pavilions surrounded by walls, so that they look like houses. They also build chambers and hire Koran-readers who recite night and day in agreeable voices. Some of them build religious houses and madrasas beside the mausoleums and on Thursday nights they go out to spend the night there with their children and women-folk, and make a circuit of

the famous tombs. They go out to spend the night there also on the "Night of midSha'ban," and the market-people take out all kinds of eatables. Among the many celebrated sanctuaries [in the city] is the holy shrine where there reposes the head of alHusayn. Beside it is a vast monastery of striking construction, on the doors of which there are silver rings and plates of the same metal.

The Egyptian Nile surpasses all rivers of the earth in sweetness of taste, length of course, and utility. No other river in the world can show such a continuous series of towns and villages along its banks, or a basin so intensely cultivated. Its course is from South to North, contrary to all the other great rivers. One extraordinary thing about it is that it begins to rise in the extreme hot weather at the time when rivers generally diminish and dry up, and begins to subside just when rivers begin to increase and overflow. The river Indus resembles it in this feature. The Nile is one of the five great rivers of the world, which are the Nile, Euphrates, Tigris, Syr Darya and Amu Darya; five other rivers resemble these, the Indus, which is called Panj Ab [i.e. Five Rivers], the river of India which is called Gang [Ganges]--it is to it that the Hindus go on pilgrimage, and when they burn their dead they throw the ashes into it, and they say that it comes from Paradise--the river Jun [Jumna or perhaps Brahmaputra] in India, the river Itil [Volga] in the Qipchaq steppes, on the banks of which is the city of Sara, and the river Saru [Hoang-Ho] in the land of Cathay. All these will be mentioned in their proper places, if God will. Some distance below Cairo the Nile divides into three streams, none of which can be crossed except by boat, winter or summer. The inhabitants of every township have canals led off the Nile; these are filled when the river is in flood and carry the water over the fields. . . .

- 1. Why did Ibn Battuta decide to travel?**
- 2. What time of year did he leave? What challenge did he face?**
- 3. How safe was the North African coast road? Cite a specific piece of evidence from the document.**
- 4. Why does Battuta describe Cairo as the “mother of all cities”?**

## **Syria**

At the station of Qatya customs-dues are collected from the merchants, and their goods and baggage are thoroughly examined and searched. There are offices here, with officers, clerks, and notaries, and the daily revenue is a thousand gold dinars. No one is allowed to pass into Syria without a passport from Egypt, nor into Egypt without a passport from Syria, for the protection of the property of the subjects and as a measure of precaution against spies from Iraq. The responsibility of guarding this road has been entrusted to the Badawin [Bedouin]. At nightfall they smooth down the sand so that no track is left on it, then in the morning the

governor comes and looks at the sand. If he finds any track on it he commands the Arabs to bring the person who made it, and they set out in pursuit and never fail to catch him. He is then brought to the governor, who punishes him as he sees fit. The governor at the time of my passage treated me as a guest and showed me great kindness, and allowed all those who were with me to pass. From here we went on to Gaza, which is the first city of Syria on the side next the Egyptian frontier. . . .

### **Damascus**

I entered Damascus on Thursday 9th Ramadan 726 [9th August, 1326], and lodged at the Malikite college called ash-Sharabishiya. Damascus surpasses all other cities in beauty, and no description, however full, can do justice to its charms.

The Cathedral Mosque, known as the Umayyad Mosque, is the most magnificent mosque in the world, the finest in construction and noblest in beauty, grace and perfection; it is matchless and unequalled. The person who undertook its construction was the Caliph Walid I [AD 705-715]. He applied to the Roman Emperor at Constantinople, ordering him to send craftsmen to him, and the Emperor sent him twelve thousand of them. The site of the mosque was a church, and when the Muslims captured Damascus, one of their commanders entered from one side by the sword and reached as far as the middle of the church, while the other entered peaceably from the eastern side and reached the middle also. So the Muslims made the half of the church which they had entered by force into a mosque and the half which they had entered by peaceful agreement remained as a church. When Walid decided to extend the mosque over the entire church he asked the Greeks to sell him their church for whatsoever equivalent they desired, but they refused, so he seized it. The Christians used to say that whoever destroyed the church would be stricken with madness and they told that to Walid. But he replied "I shall be the first to be stricken by madness in the service of God," and seizing an axe, he set to work to knock it down with his own hands. The Muslims on seeing that followed his example, and God proved false the assertion of the Christians. . . .

### **Medina and Mecca**

We then set out from Medina towards Mecca, and halted near the mosque of Dhu'l-Hulayfa, five miles away. It was at this point that the Prophet assumed the pilgrim garb and obligations, and here too I divested myself of my tailored clothes, bathed, and putting on the pilgrim's garment I prayed and dedicated myself to the pilgrimage. Our fourth halt from here was at Badr, where God aided His Prophet and performed His promise. It is a village containing a series of palm-gardens and a bubbling spring with a stream flowing from it. Our way lay thence through a frightful desert called the Vale of Bazwa for three days to the valley of Rabigh where the rainwater forms pools which lie stagnant for a long time. From this point (which is just before Juhfa) the pilgrims from Egypt and Northwest Africa put on the pilgrim garment. Three days after leaving Rabigh we reached the pool of Khulays which lies in a plain and has many palm-gardens. The Bedouin of that neighbourhood hold a market there, to which they bring sheep, fruits, and condiments. Thence we travelled through 'Usfan to the Bottom of Marr, a fertile valley with numerous palms and a spring supplying a stream from which the district is irrigated. From this valley fruit and vegetables are transported to Mecca. We set out at night from this blessed valley, with hearts full of joy at reaching the goal of our hopes, and in the morning arrived at the City of Surety, Mecca (may God ennoble her!), where we immediately entered the holy sanctuary and began the rites of pilgrimage.

The inhabitants of Mecca are distinguished by many excellent and noble activities and qualities, by their beneficence to the humble and weak, and by their kindness to strangers. When any of them makes a feast, he begins by giving food to the religious devotees who are poor and without resources, inviting them first with kindness and delicacy. The majority of these unfortunates are to be found by the public bakehouses, and when anyone has his bread baked and takes it away to his house, they follow him and he gives each one of them some share of it, sending away none disappointed. Even if he has but a single loaf, he gives away a third or a half of it, cheerfully and without any grudgingness.

Another good habit of theirs is this. The orphan children sit in the bazaar, each with two baskets, one large and one small. When one of the townspeople comes to the bazaar and buys cereals, meat and vegetables, he hands them to one of these boys, who puts the cereals in one basket and the meat and vegetables in the other and takes them to the man's house, so that his meal may be prepared. Meanwhile the man goes about his devotions and his business. There is no instance of any of the boys having ever abused their trust in this matter, and they are given a fixed fee of a few coppers.

The Meccans are very elegant and clean in their dress, and most of them wear white garments, which you always see fresh and snowy. They use a great deal of perfume and kohl and make free use of toothpicks of green arak-wood. The Meccan women are extraordinarily beautiful and very pious and modest. They too make great use of perfumes to such a degree that they will spend the night hungry in order to buy perfumes with the price of their food. They visit the mosque every Thursday night, wearing their finest apparel; and the whole sanctuary is saturated with the smell of their perfume. When one of these women goes away the odour of the perfume clings to the place after she has gone.

**Source:** *Excerpts from "Ibn Battuta: Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354."*

- 1. Why does Battuta stop at the Syrian border?**
- 2. What geographical challenge does Battuta face in traveling from Damascus to Mecca?**
- 3. How does Ibn Battuta describe the people of Mecca? Do you think this is trustworthy description? Why or why not?**

Retrieved from website: Reading Like a Historian- <https://sheg.stanford.edu/world>

## **Document: Ross Dunn (Original)**

At this point in the narrative IB claims to have made a journey, all within the month of Ramadan, from Ozbeg's camp to the middle Volga city of Bulghar and back again, a total distance of more than 800 miles. Stephen Janicsek has argued convincingly that the trip never took place. "Ibn Battuta's Journey to Bulghar: Is it a Fabrication?" *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (October 1929), pp. 791-800. Janicsek shows that IB's cursory description of both Bulghar and the Land of Darkness beyond (to which he does not claim to have gone but only heard about) are based on earlier geographical writings in Arabic. He also points out that IB could not possibly have made the journey in anywhere near the time he allots to it and that he says virtually nothing about his route, his companions, his personal experiences, or the sights he would have seen along the way. The Bulghar trip is the only section of the *Rihla* whose falsity has been proven beyond almost any doubt, though the veracity of some other journeys may be suspected, such as the trip to San`a in the Yemen. We must remember, however, that the *Rihla* was composed as a literary survey of the Islamic world in the fourteenth century. It was well known among literate Muslims that Bulghar was the most northerly of Muslim communities. Moreover, several medieval geographers wrote in fascination about the frigid Land of Darkness, that is, Siberia. If IB did not go to Bulghar, he might nonetheless satisfy his readers' expectations of a book about travels through the Dar al-Islam by saying that he did. Scholars of the *Rihla* are generally in agreement that the Bulghar detour is a fiction. Also, because of IB's rich and detailed description of life in Ozbeg's *ordu*, we may suppose that he remained there throughout Ramadan 1332 (1334).

- 1. What is Ross Dunn's claim about Ibn Battuta's travels?**
- 2. What two pieces of evidence does Dunn offer to support his claim that Ibn Battuta did not actually take this trip?**
- 3. After reading the Dunn excerpt, do you think we can still use Ibn Battuta's travel accounts to learn about what life was like in the Muslim world during the 14th century? Why or Why not?**
- 4. According to Ibn Battua, what was life like in the Muslim world in the 1320s? Explain in four to five sentences.**
- 5. What are three limitations of using Ibn Battuta's account, a single source, to understand what life was like in Muslim world in the 1320s?**

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Analyzing the Document: **Ibn Battuta's *Rihla***

**Directions:** Use Ibn Battuta's accounts of his travels to Tripoli, Cairo, Syria, Damascus and Mecca to complete the following chart about the Muslim world in the 1320s. You will not find information for every category in the accounts of each city, but the five cities should provide you with a good overview.

<p><b>Political</b> <i>Relating to the government, politics, people's rights or the military.</i></p>	
<p><b>Economic</b> <i>Relating to the economy, money, business or workers.</i></p>	
<p><b>Social/Cultural/Religious</b> <i>Relating to the culture (traditions, art), beliefs (religion), values and relationships and of people in a community.</i></p>	
<p><b>Environmental</b> <i>Relating to geography or physical characteristics.</i></p>	

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## 5,000 Miles: Journaling the Silk Road and other Transcontinental Trade

**Directions:** Your task, like Ibn Battuta, is to compose a travel journey highlighting the various experiences an individual would face traveling on the Silk Road or other transcontinental trade routes. Use the following steps to complete your Silk Road travel journal:

**Step #1:** Choose a place of origin. Decide what kingdom or empire that you would like to influence your cultural and social background.

**Step #2:** Write your first post that gives a description of your life, occupation, and belief systems based on your place of origin. In this post, discuss what your hopes, goals, and fears about traveling along the various trade routes in the Silk Road. Make sure you include an accurate date that reflects the time of transcontinental trade during the era of your place of origin.

**Step #3:** Write at least five additional journal entries. Each journal entry should reflect the various experiences of a traveler along the Silk Road.

- Each entry should reflect at least one experience in Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.
- Each entry should discuss at least one of the following concepts: religion, culture, government, social structure, and economy.
  - For example, one entry could discuss your travel experience with religion in India, culture in East Africa, or economic systems in Venice.
- These additional journal entries can be creative. You have the option to use poetry, maps, or sketches/pictures to highlight all the experiences that you could face along the Silk Road. Just remember to follow the journal entry guidelines.
- Do not forget the importance of dates. Your dates should reflect the actual time that it would have taken to reach various locations along the trade route.
- All final journal entries must be handwritten on provided stationary. You will use the hole puncher and string to connect all journal entries in an authentic style handmade journal.

**Step #4:** Create a cover for your travel journal. Using construction paper, create a creative title page that includes your name, place of origin, and estimated years of traveling covered in the journal. You can also be creative on your journal cover, using pictures and/or designs.

Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Journaling the Silk Road and other Transcontinental Trade Routes Grading Rubric  
Up to 15 points will be deducted for every item that is not found.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Beginning Points: 100pts.</b>	<b>Excellent!</b> Evidence of all these things	<b>Good!</b> Evidence of most of these things - 5 points	<b>Average!</b> Some evidence of these things - 10 points	<b>Poor</b> Evidence of none of these things -15 points
<b>Project Completion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate and appealing journal cover with name and appropriate date from period.</li> <li>• At least 6 total journal entries.</li> <li>• Handwritten</li> <li>• Use of accurate Pictures/Images (<b>relevant and accurate to the era</b>)</li> <li>• Limited amount of grammatical errors. Paragraphs indented, capital letters, punctuation etc.</li> </ul>				
<b>Project Completion: Introduction Journal Entry</b> Discusses the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief explanation of origin, lifestyle, and culture of traveler.</li> <li>• Overview of what you will experience, your goals, and fears during your travels.</li> <li>• Use of accurate information of time and place.</li> </ul>				
<b>Project Completion: Journal Entry X 5 (points will be deducted per each journal entry)</b> Discusses the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addresses an experience in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.</li> <li>• Describes in detail religion, culture, government, political, or social experiences uncovered in the region.</li> <li>• Used vivid and shocking language (not offensive).</li> <li>• Use of accurate information of time and place.</li> </ul>				