Unit 8: Islamic Civilization

Standard(s) of Learning:

**WHI.8** – The student will demonstrate knowledge of the Islamic civilization from about 600 to 1000 AD by

a) Describing the origin, beliefs, traditions, customs, and spread of Islam

b) Assessing the influence of geography on Islamic economic, social, and political development, including the impact of conquest and trade

c) Identifying historical turning points that affected the spread and influence of Islamic civilization, with emphasis on the Sunni-Shi’a division and the Battle of Tours

d) Citing cultural and scientific contributions and achievements of Islamic civilization

Locate the Arabian Peninsula where Islam originated – Color it RED
**WHI.8a – Islam**

- The revelations of **Muhammad** form the basis of the Islamic religion, a **monotheistic** faith.
- Islamic traditions and customs developed over centuries and created a distinctive Muslim culture.

**Early Arabia**
- Early Arabs were known as **Bedouins** – nomads who lived in small tribes or clans
- The Bedouins were **polytheistic** and worshipped many tribal gods
- **Mecca** was an important trading and religious center in western Arabia
- Many Arabs traveled to Mecca to worship at the **Ka’aba**, an ancient shrine

**Emergence of a Leader**
- **Muhammad** was a trader and business manager from **Mecca**
- At the age of 40, Muhammad had a vision of the **Angel Gabriel** who told him to “Recite the name of the Lord!”
- Muhammad was convinced that he was a **prophet** – holy messenger – who was chosen to spread a **monotheistic** religion to the Arab people and reject tribal gods
- Muhammad became a **Muslim** – “one who submits to the will of God” – and began to preach publicly in Mecca

**The Hijrah**
- Muhammad and his followers spread Islam, which conflicted with the **polytheistic** people of Mecca
- Muhammad and his followers were forced to flee to **Yathrib** – renamed **Medina**
- The migration of Muhammad from **Mecca** to **Medina** is known as the **Hijrah** and marks year one in the Muslim **calendar**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who founded the religion?</th>
<th>• Muhammad</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where was the religion founded?</td>
<td>• Arabian Peninsula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify the sacred writings and holy books</td>
<td>• Qur’an (Koran) – contains the word of God as revealed to the prophet Mohammad. It should not be questioned or changed (translations are discouraged) • Written in Arabic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monotheistic or Polytheistic?</td>
<td>• Monotheistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Beliefs, Customs, and Traditions</td>
<td>• Islam completes the teachings of Judaism and Christianity • Mohammad is the last and greatest prophet. Other prophets included: Abraham, Moses, and Jesus • Allah (Arabic word for God) is the creator of heaven and Earth • Priests are unnecessary – Muslims communicate with God directly through prayer • Imams are men who are trained in the Qur’an that help lead prayers in a mosque • Follow a very strict moral code: o No eating pork o No gambling o No drinking o No marriage to nonbelievers</td>
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</tbody>
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### Five Pillars of Islam:
- **Creed**: “There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet”
- **Prayer**: Five times a day facing Mecca
- **Alms**: Given to the poor
- **Fasting**: During Ramadan
- **Pilgrimage**: To Mecca for those financially and physically able

### Important Cities
- **Mecca**: Ka’aba and destination of pilgrimage
- **Medina**: Hijrah
- **Jerusalem**: Dome of the Rock

### Based on this religion, is there a heaven and, if so, how do you get there?
- **Yes – following the Qur’an, moral code, and Five Pillars**

### How and where did this religion spread?
- Spread by **Muhammad** and his followers, and through **trade** and **conquest**
- Spread into **Africa, Southeast Asia**, and parts of **India**
• In the first three centuries after Muhammad’s death, Muslim rule expanded rapidly, overcoming geographic barriers, and facilitated by weakened political empires.

**Diffusion of Islam**

• After the Hijrah, Muhammad declared a **jihad** – a holy war undertaken by Muslims against unbelievers – which motivated Arab armies to conquer other lands
• Muslims believed that if they died in a **jihad**, then they would be guaranteed a place in **paradise**
• In 630, Muhammad led an army to **Mecca** and conquered the city

**Spread of Islam through Conquest**

• **Byzantine** and **Persian** civilizations were growing weak, and the advance of the Muslims seemed unstoppable in the 600s
• Despite great distances, desert environments, and mountain barriers, Islam spread throughout the **Fertile Crescent**, **Iran**, and **Central Asia**
• In conquered lands, **polytheists** were forced to **convert** to Islam
• Monotheists like the **Jews** and **Christians** – “people of the book” – were given the **option** to convert or lose their **land** and pay **higher taxes**
• **Slavery** was common in conquered territories, but it was not based on race

**Spread of Islam through Trade**

• Islam also spread through **trade** and **travel**, not just conquest
• Islam spread into **Africa**, **Southeast Asia**, parts of **India**, and elsewhere through trade routes that connected to Mecca and Medina
• The **Arabic** language, needed to read the Koran, spread and made trade easier across Islamic lands by improving **communication**
WHI.8c – Historical Turning Points

- Major historical turning points marked the spread and influence of Islamic civilization

Division of Islam
- After the death of **Muhammad**, there was a dispute over who should **rule** leading to a division and a weakening of the political unity in the Islamic Empire
  - **Sunni**: believed any pious Muslim could be chosen to rule the Islamic Empire
  - **Shi’ite (Shi’a)**: believed that the ruler should be a descendant of Muhammad
  - **Sufi**: Muslim mystics (small sect)
- Under the **Abbasid Dynasty**, the empire began to crumble as Islamic rulers throughout the empire began to carve out smaller empires of their own

Battle of Tours
- The Muslim army made its way to **Spain** and settled there – known as **Moors**
- The Moors decided to cross the **Pyrenees** Mountains and invade **France**
- In 732 AD the French defeated the Moors at the **Battle of Tours** and the Moors withdrew from France
- The Battle of Tours stopped **Islam** from spreading into **Europe**

Muslim conquest of **Jerusalem** and **Damascus**
- Controlled all of the Arabian Peninsula and would lead to later conflicts

Islamic capital moved to Baghdad
- The Abbasids moved the capital to **Baghdad** in 762 which gave the caliph access to key trade routes, trade goods, gold, and information about the empire
- Baghdad became a cultural center – **House of Wisdom** – and important trading center

Fall of Baghdad to Mongols
- **Ended the Islamic Empire**
• Early Islamic civilization was characterized by achievements in science and the arts that transformed the Islamic world and contributed to world civilization

### Cultural Achievements

| Architecture | • **Mosques** – Islamic house of worship  
|              |   o **Domes**  
|              |   o **Minarets**  
|              | • **Dome of the Rock** *(Jerusalem)*: site where Muhammad ascended into heaven |
| Art          | • Muslim art does not feature **living beings**  
|              | • Art forms: **Mosaics, Calligraphy, Geometric** Designs |
| Language     | • **Arabic** alphabet and language  
|              | • Needed to read the **Qur’an**  
|              | • Helped improve **communication** |
| Literature   | • **Poetry**: *The Rubiyat* by Omar Khayyam  
|              | • Cultural Collections: **A Thousand and One Arabian Nights** |
| Universities | Located in **Cordoba**, Spain, and **Baghdad** (House of Knowledge)  
|             | Much later in **Timbuktu** and **Mali**  
|             | Preserved **Greek** and **Roman** learning while blending and improving on Persian and Indian discoveries  
|             | Linked by **trade networks** throughout the empire  
|             | Translated ancient Greek and Roman texts into **Arabic** |
| **Scientific Achievements** | |
| **Mathematics** | Arabic **numerals** and concept of **zero** (adopted from **India**)  
|             | **Al Jabr** – known today as **Algebra** |
| **Medicine** | Blended **Eastern** (Asian) and **Western** (European) knowledge  
|             | Established **hospitals** and **medical schools** |
| **Expansion of Geographic Knowledge** | Improved **ships**  
|             | Perfected the **astrolabe**  
|             | Made wide use of the **compass** (from **China**)  
|             | Made the **Age of Exploration and Discovery** possible |