


**Outcomes**

This Activity Guide will help you review the chronological concepts we practiced last week. Additionally, it will help you complete your model timeline.

Outcomes	Proficient	Highly Proficient	Student Mark	Final Teacher Mark
<b>2. Autonomously analyze and interpret new vocabulary words with our 3 vocabulary skills.</b>	Analyze and interpret new vocabulary words with word parts, context, and cognates with some helpful resources (dictionary, classmates).	Autonomously analyze and interpret the meaning of new vocabulary terms encountered in complex text. Student relies on all three-vocabulary skills to make meaning.		
<b>10. Analyze and interpret documents to create claims with the Short Answer Process that declare and describe the expansion of Islam and the influence of cultural diffusion.</b>	Create thoughtful claims with the Short Answer Process to declare and describe the expansion of Islam as a result of cultural diffusion.	Autonomously create insightful claims with the Short Answer Process to declare and describe the expansion of Islam as a result of cultural diffusion.		
<b>11. Declare, describe and discuss the influence of Islamic values on economic, political and social structures.</b>	Develop a DDDT paragraph to demonstrate the influence of Islamic values in the economic, political and social systems of the Dar al-Islam.	Autonomously develop insightful, analytical DDDT paragraph to demonstrate the influence of Islamic values in the economic, political and social systems of the Dar al-Islam.		
<b>12. Use the Task Analysis Process to synthesize and explain the combined effects of cultural diffusion on social, political, economic, and belief systems in a DBQ essay.</b>	Student uses the TAP to synthesize and explain the combined effects of cultural diffusion on social, political, economic and belief systems in a DBQ essay.	Student autonomously uses the TAP to synthesize and explain the combined effects of cultural diffusion on social, political, economic and belief systems in a DBQ essay.		
<b>13. Apply the Multiple Choice Process to interpret and respond to Regents based multiple-choice questions.</b>	Student applies the MCP with at least 3/5 accuracy to meet our Regents MC benchmark of 30/50 (60%).	Exceed our Regents benchmark by applying our MCP to achieve scores greater than 4/5 (90%).		

**1. Vocabulary Skills**

Image	Context	Definition
 <p><b>The Hagia Sofia - Constantinople</b></p>	<p>“The Hagia Sofia was once a grand Catholic Church in Constantinople, the capital of the eastern Roman Empire. Now it’s a grand mosque in Turkey’s capital, Istanbul. This image shows great examples of <b>Cultural Diffusion</b> – here cultures combine to form something new. Can you see cultural diffusion here?”</p>	<p>Cultural Diffusion is..</p>

2. Listening with a purpose – *How did Islam expand? What were the effects?*

Geography	Political	Economic	Belief Systems	Social Structure

3. Claim Writing & Predictions

- a. Make a prediction for what we might see. How might Islam influence the political, economic, and social systems of the *dar al-Islam*? Create claims for each lens.

**4. Extended Anticipatory Guide**

- a. Respond to the Extended Anticipatory Guide prompts below by marking your opinion based on the statements. We will then use this task to help us take note of our reading passage.

Claim	Your Opinion		Finding in the Text		Text Evidence
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	
					Provide text evidence that indicates whether or not the author agrees or disagrees with each statement.

5. Reading with a Purpose – *How did Islam begin? How did it expand? How did Islamic values influence the economic, political and social systems of the dar al-Islam?*

a. Use your annotation strategies to analyze the text below.

In 632 C.E. the prophet Muhammad traveled to his home in Mecca. His journey was called the hajj. It set an example for Muslim people. The **hajj** brings hundreds of thousands Muslims to Saudi Arabia each year. Muslims travel to Mecca to make the **pilgrimage** and visit the holy sites of Islam.

During the hajj, Muslim rulers and rich **pilgrims** made gifts to **caravan** companions. For example, the Mesopotamian princess Jamila bint Nasir al-Dawla provided food and fresh green vegetables for her fellow pilgrims and provide camels for handicapped travelers. She also purchased freedom for many slaves.

*How do Princess Jamila's actions reflect the 5 Pillars of Islam?*

*What do historians call this?*

Most pilgrims do not have resources like Jamila. The hajj became a special occasion for most travelers. Merchants and craftsmen arranged business deals with pilgrims from other lands. Students and scholars exchanged ideas during their travels. Participation in traditional activities gave new meaning and significance to their faith.

The word **Islam** means “submission.” By submitting to God, a person must show obedience to the rule and will of Allah. Islam is strictly **monotheistic** because it worships only

one **deity**. An individual who accepts the Islamic faith is a **Muslim**, meaning “one who has submitted.”

Islam began as one man’s expression of absolute faith in Allah. It quickly attracted followers and took on political, economic, social and religious significance. During the first century of the new faith’s existence, Islam reached far beyond the Arabian Peninsula. By the 700s C.E., the *dar al-Islam* stood next to the Byzantine Empire as *a political and economic anchor of the postclassical world*.

Islamic society was built on the **nomadic** and **mercantile** values of Arabian society. Muslims drew deep inspiration from other societies as well. After conquering the Sasanid **dynasty**, Muslim conquerors adopted Persian techniques of government and finance to rule their lands. Persian literature, science, and religious values also found a place in Islamic society. Their society was also inspired by Greek and Indian tradition. Muslims did not invent a new Islamic society. They created a new society by *mixing elements from Arab, Persian, Greek, and Indian societies*.

## A Prophet and his World (Economy and Geography)

- *How values and systems diffuse between cultures to create a new society?*

Base your answer to question 18 on the map below and on your knowledge of social studies.



Source: Peter N. Stearns et al., *World Civilizations: The Global Experience*, Pearson (adapted)

18 Which generalization is best supported by the information on this map?

- (1) No trade occurred between East Africa and the Persian Gulf region.
- (2) The monsoon winds influenced trade between East Africa and India.
- (3) Trading states developed primarily in the interior of East Africa.
- (4) Trade encouraged the spread of Islam from East Africa to Arabia.

**Islam** began in the Arabian **Peninsula**. The new belief system was influenced by Arabia's culture, society and geography. Desert covers most of the peninsula. As a result, agriculture is possible only in the fertile areas in Yemen as well as Mecca. Despite the dry conditions, human communities have occupied Arabia for millennia. **Nomadic** peoples known as Bedouin keep herds of sheep, goats, and camels. They **migrate** through the deserts to find grass and water for their animals. The Bedouin organized themselves in family and clan groups. Bedouin families depend heavily on their **kinship** networks for support in times of need. In an environment as harsh as the Arabian Desert, cooperation with kin makes the difference between death and survival. **Clan** identities are still important to Bedouin people.

Arabia was important in the long distance trade networks of the post-classical era.

**Commodities** arrived at ports on the Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea, and the Red Sea. They then traveled overland by camel caravan to access the Mediterranean basin. Arabia became an important link in trade between China and India in the east, and Persia and Byzantium in the west. Trade routes across central Asia became insecure as the Roman Empire declined. Merchants gave up the overland routes and used maritime trade to connect with land routes in the Arabian Peninsula. Trade passing across the peninsula was especially important for the city of Mecca. Mecca became a major trade center between Asia and Europe.

### **Muhammad and His Message**

The **prophet** Muhammad was born into a family of Bedouin merchants in Mecca. He became an orphan when both his parents died before he was six years old. His grandfather and uncle cared for him and provided him with an education. Muhammad's early life was difficult. As a young man, he worked for a woman named Khadjia. She was a rich widow whom he eventually married. Through this marriage he gained a position of importance in Mecca's society.

By age thirty, Muhammad had established himself as a **merchant**. Mecca was a trade center where people of different religions and cultural traditions interacted. Most Arabs were **polytheistic**. They worshiped many gods and made ritual sacrifices. Large communities of Jewish merchants also worked throughout Arabia. Many Arabs had **converted** to Christianity by Muhammad's time. He traveled by caravan to Syria, where he would have interacted with

Jewish and Christian merchants. As a result, Muhammad had a basic understanding of both Christianity and Judaism.

When he was nearly 40 years old, Muhammad experienced revelations that changed his life. He learned through these experiences that there was only one true deity, Allah. He also learned that Allah ruled the universe, worship of other gods was evil, and that Allah would return to judge the good from the bad. Muhammad saw messages delivered by the archangel Gabriel. Gabriel is also recognized as a messenger of god in Jewish and Christian scripture. Gabriel instructed Muhammad to explain his faith to others. Muhammad did not intend to create a new religion. However, he began to explain his faith to his friends and family. Gradually, his message interested others. An excited minority of Mecca's society had joined Muhammad's circle.

At first, Muhammad recited what he learned in his revelations. As the Islamic community grew, his followers began to write down his teachings. Muslims compiled these written versions of Muhammad's revelations. Then they put them in a sacred book as the **Quran** - the holy book of Islam. The Quran communicates Muhammad's understanding of Allah in powerful terms. It also serves as the authority for Islamic religious values and social organization.



## Muhammad's Migration to Medina

Muhammad's teachings created conflict with powerful merchants in Mecca. He offended **polytheistic** Arabs by insisting that Allah was the one true God. Muhammad's teachings rejected the polytheistic deities and spirits.

Muhammad's attack represented an economic threat to those who owned and **profited** from the many shrines that attracted merchants and pilgrims to Mecca. The best known of these shrines was a large black rock. The Ka'ba attracted worshippers from all over Arabia. This brought great profits to Mecca's merchants. Muhammad condemned the polytheistic worship at the Ka'ba and other shrines because they did not follow Allah's messages. The leaders of Mecca **persecuted** the prophet and his followers. The persecution became so great that Muhammad and his followers had to leave Mecca. Muslims called their new home Medina "City of the Prophet." Known as the hijra ("migration"), Muhammad's move to Medina is the starting point of the Islamic calendar.

Muhammad's understanding of his religious mission expanded during his years in Medina. He began to refer to himself as a **prophet**. Muhammad accepted the authority of earlier Jewish and Christian prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus. He greatly respected the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian New Testament. He also accepted the monotheistic ideas of Christianity and Judaism: *Allah was the same **omnipotent**, **omniscient**, **omnipresent**, deity as the Jew's Yahweh and the Christians' God.* Muhammad was the messenger who communicated Allah's wishes and his plan for the world to all humankind.

**Please use this Double Entry Journal to determine what we have learned about Muhammad. How did he change? What did he learn? Is he a God?**

<b>Muhammad saw...</b>	<b>Muhammad did...</b>
<b>Muhammad thought...</b>	<b>Muhammad's actions... (list at least 3)</b>
<b>Text quote that reveals Muhammad's thoughts...</b>	<b>This quote reminds me of...</b>
<b>Rainbow Claim – How did Muhammad develop and spread his faith in Allah?</b>	
<b>Symbol that represents ....</b>	<b>Image that represents ...</b>

## The Establishment of Islam in Arabia

While in Medina, Muhammad and his followers planned their return to Mecca. In 630 C.E. they attacked Mecca and conquered the city. They forced the merchants to adopt Muhammad's faith, and they created a government dedicated to Allah. They also destroyed the polytheistic shrines and replaced them with mosques. Only the Ka'ba remained.

Muhammad and his followers denied that the Ka'ba was the home of a **deity**, but they preserved the black rock as a symbol of Mecca's greatness. They allowed only the faithful to approach the shrine. In 632 Muhammad led the first Islamic pilgrimage to the Ka'ba.

Muhammad and his followers launched campaigns against other towns and Bedouin clans.

When the prophet Muhammad died in 632 C.E. most of Arabia was under his control.

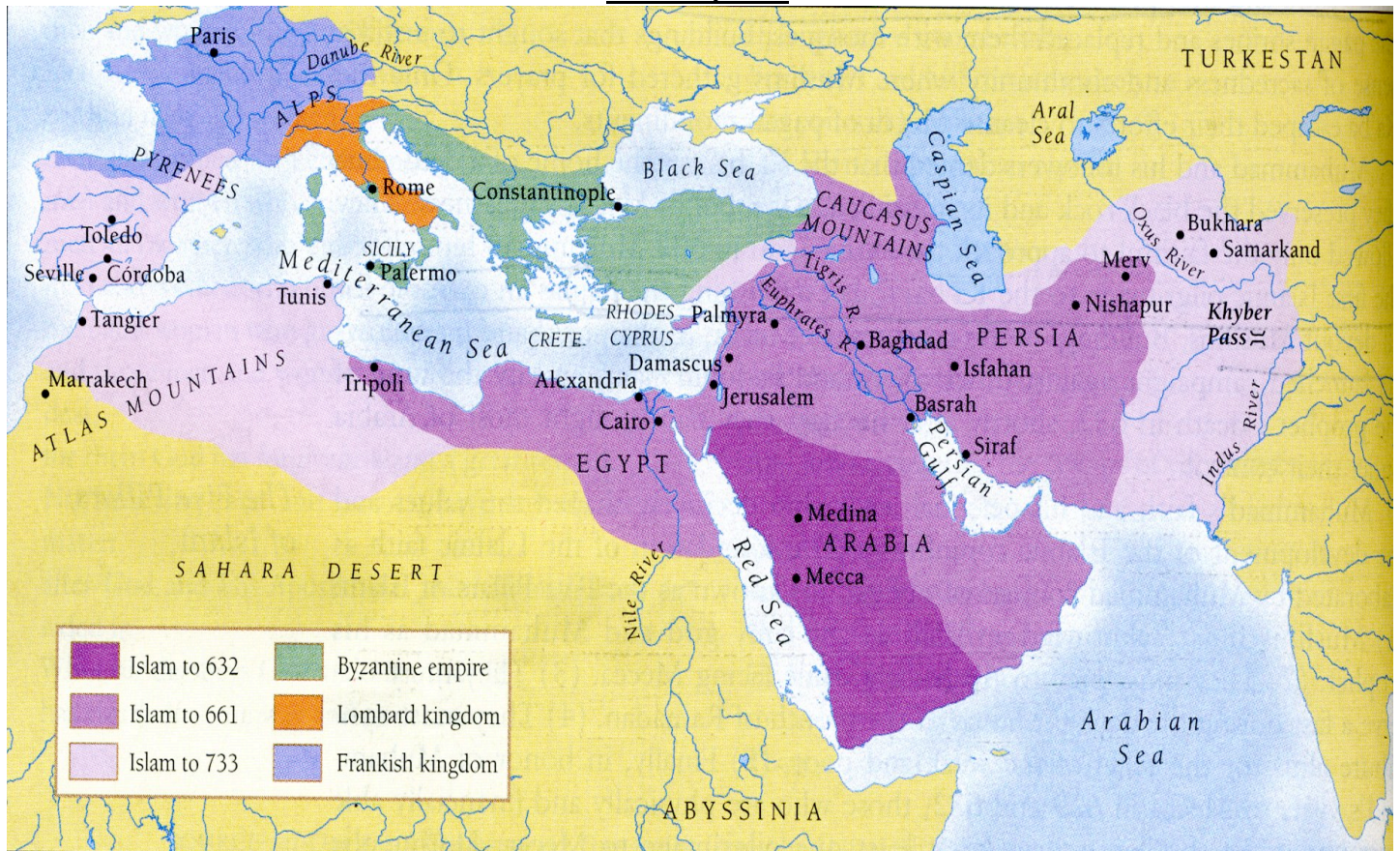
Muhammad's faith and leadership shaped the values and the development of the Islamic community. the Islamic faith consists of obligations known as the **Five Pillars of Islam**:

1. Muslims must acknowledge Allah as the only god and Muhammad as his prophet.
2. They must pray to Allah daily while facing Mecca.
3. They must observe a fast during the daylight hours of the month of Ramadan
4. They must contribute alms for the relief of the weak and poor.
5. Finally, in honor of Muhammad's visits to Mecca in 629 and 632, those that are physically and financially able must undertake the hajj and make at least one pilgrimage to Mecca.

**Perspective Write**

***How do you interact with other people that do not share your same beliefs?***

### Islam Expands



Use your Map Analysis Process (MAP) to analyze and interpret the map above.  
*How did Islam expand? What do you notice about how quickly it grew?*

Cause		Effect	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As a result of ...</li> <li>Caused</li> <li>_____ was influenced by...</li> <li>From</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>_____ resulted in...</li> <li>Affect</li> <li>Influence</li> <li>To</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Because</li> <li>So</li> <li>Due to</li> <li>Then</li> <li>Since</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effect</li> <li>This led to</li> <li>Therefore</li> <li>Consequently,</li> <li>Impact</li> </ul>
What	How	Effect	Enduring Impact
<p><u>Rainbow Claim Construction</u></p>			

## The Expansion of Islam

After Muhammad's death the Islamic community led a successful round of **military** expansion that extended its political and cultural influence far beyond the boundaries of Arabia. These conquests established the foundation for the rapid growth of Islamic society.

### *Political Systems*

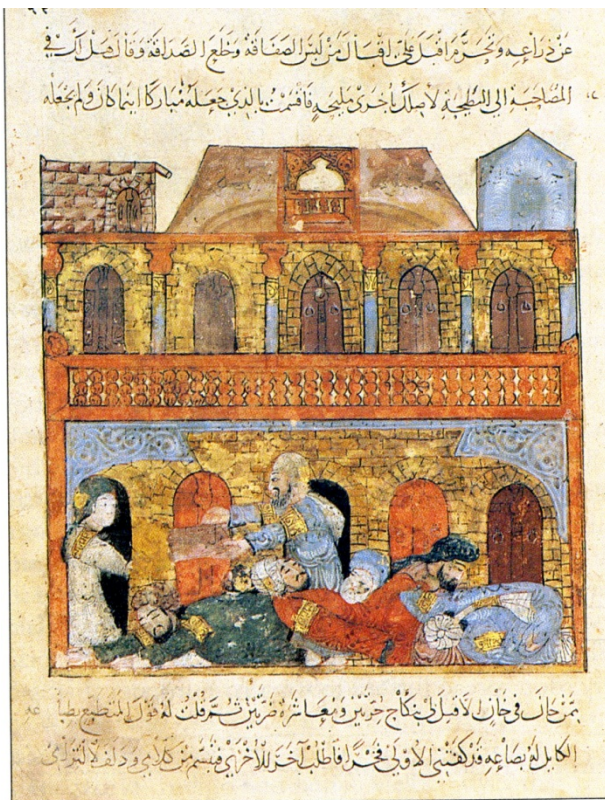
Muhammad was the only prophet because he was chosen by Allah. His followers knew that he could not be replaced. After Muhammad's death, Abu Bakar served as **caliph** ("deputy") to guide the Islamic Empire as it expanded.

Islamic armies continued to conquer territories outside Arabia. They brought their religion and their authority to Byzantine and Sasanid territories. They were not as powerful as the Byzantine or the Sasanid empires, but they attacked at a perfect moment. The larger empires were exhausted because of conflicts with each other. Use the map on page 8 to track how much the Islamic Empire grew in just 100 years. ***By the mid-eighth century an immense Islamic empire ruled lands from India and the central Asian steppe lands in the east to northwest Africa and Iberia in the west.***

The Islamic Empire was built of many regions with diverse **ethnic** groups. These regions included Indians, Persians, Mesopotamians, Greeks, Egyptians, and nomadic north African Berbers. The Arab conquerors allowed conquered peoples to worship their own religions, but they placed a special tax on those who did not convert to Islam. However, people that did not convert could not access wealth and positions of authority. These policies caused tension with conquered people and created conflict with Arab rule.

After years of **instability**, the Islamic Empire gained **stability** under the Abbasid Dynasty.

The Abbasids focused on maintaining their very large empire. They created a government with very diverse linguistic, ethnic and cultural groups. **Central authority** came from their **capital** in Baghdad. It was a magnificent round city protected by three walls. At the heart of the city the caliph's green-domed palace sent instructions to the distant reaches of the Abbasid realm. Outside of Baghdad, governors represented the caliph and enforced his political and financial policies. They also maintained the magnificent network of roads that the Islamic Empire inherited to sustain their economy.



### Economy and Society of the Early Islamic World

The *dar al-Islam* was similar to other agricultural societies. Peasants **tilled** the land as their ancestors had done for centuries before them. Manufacturers and merchants supported a thriving urban economy. Like many other places we have studied, the creation of large empires had dramatic economic effects. The Umayyad and Abbasid empires created a region of trade, exchange, and

communication stretching from India to Iberia. Commerce throughout this zone served as an economic stimulus for both the countryside and the cities of the early Islamic world.

### *New Crops, Agricultural Experimentation and Urban Growth*



Cultural Diffusion in the *dar al-Islam* led to the exchange of new crops, techniques and ideas. The most important of the transplants were **staple crops** such as sugarcanes, rice, and wheat. Vegetables such as spinach, artichokes and eggplant, fruits such as oranges, lemons, limes, bananas, coconuts, watermelons, and mangoes; and **industrial crops** such as cotton, indigo, and henna.

The introduction of these crops into the western regions of the Islamic world had wide-ranging effects. New food crops led to a richer, more diverse diet. They also increased food supply because farmers could grow food in hot weather. In much of the Islamic world, summers are so hot and dry that farmers could not grow food. However, most of these new crops grew well in high heat. Cultivators in southwest Asia, North Africa, and other hot zones could produce food all year. The result was a dramatic increase in food supply.

Some new crops had industrial uses. The most important of these was cotton, which became the basis for a textile industry throughout much of the Islamic world. Indigo and henna produced dyes that textile manufacturers used in large quantities.

Cultural diffusion in the *dar al-Islam* resulted in experimentation with agricultural methods. Cultivators paid close attention to methods of **irrigation, fertilization**, and crop rotation. They explained their findings in hundreds of agricultural manuals. Copies of these works were circulated widely throughout the Islamic world. The combined effect of new crops and improved techniques was a far more productive agricultural economy. This resulted in rapid economic growth.

Increased agricultural production contributed to the growth of cities in all parts of the Islamic world from India to Spain. From Delhi to Toledo, cities were busy centers of **commerce** and **exchange**. All these cities had flourishing markets supporting thousands of artisans, craftsmen, and merchants. Most of the markets were also centers of industrial production, particularly of textiles, pottery, glassware, leather, iron, and steel.

*How does this differ from Europe's experience during the Dark Ages?*

Paper manufacture was a major new industry to transform the economy of the *dar al-Islam*. Chinese craftsmen made paper since the first century C.E., but their technology did not spread far beyond China. Arab forces defeated a Chinese army in 751 C.E. and took prisoners skilled in paper production. Paper was cheaper and easier to use than other writing materials. As a result, paper soon became popular throughout the Islamic world. Paper facilitated record keeping and helped spread information quickly. By the tenth century mills produced paper in Persia Mesopotamia, Arabia, Egypt and Spain, and the industry soon spread further to Western Europe.

**Thematic Essay Practice:**

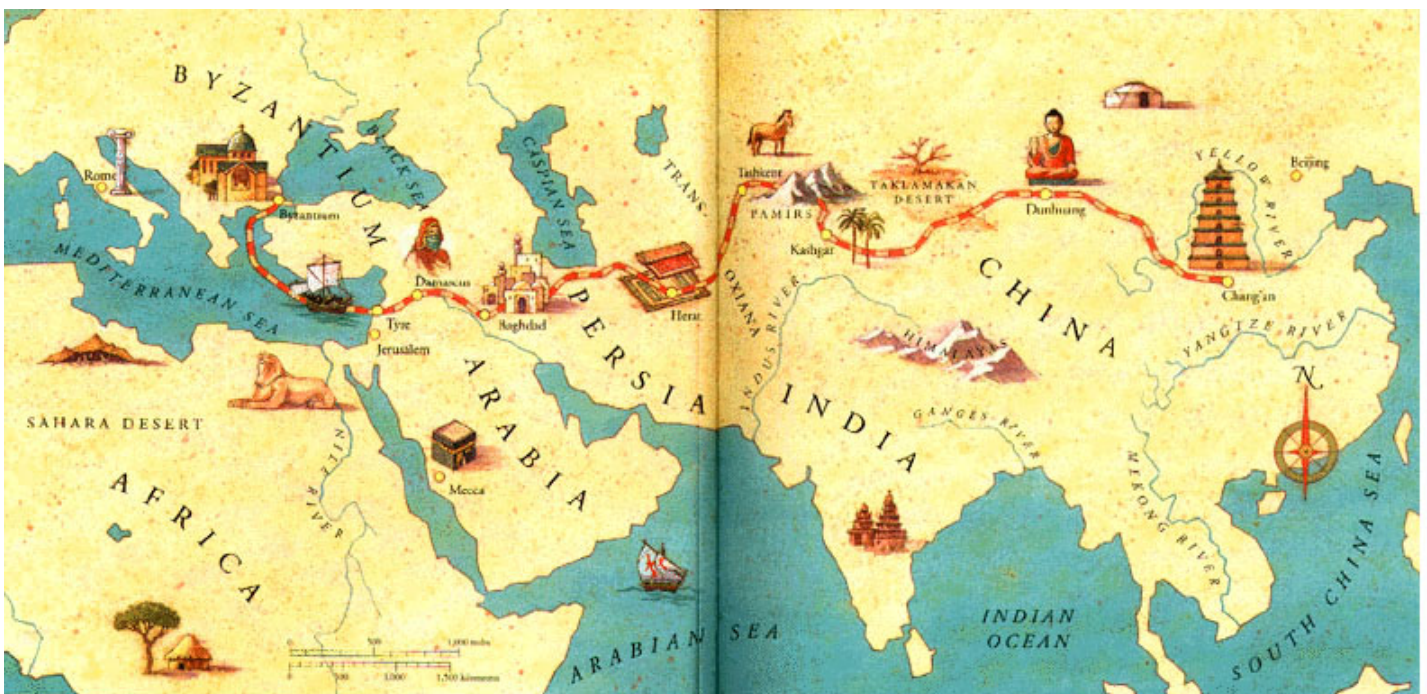
Create a claim and DDDT paragraph to support the theme below. Use your Task Analysis and Short Answer processes to help you! Please complete this task on a separate sheet of paper and submit to your teacher.

**Technology:**

Describe and explain the influence of agricultural and industrial technologies on the economic and political expansion of the Islamic Empire.

## The Formation of a Hemispheric Trading Zone

Islamic society prospered from commerce. Muhammad was a merchant, and he held merchants in high esteem. According to early accounts of his life, Muhammad once said that honest merchants would stand next to **martyrs** to the faith on judgment day. By the time of the Abbasid caliphate, trade networks linked all the regions of the Islamic world and joined it to a larger **hemispheric** economy.

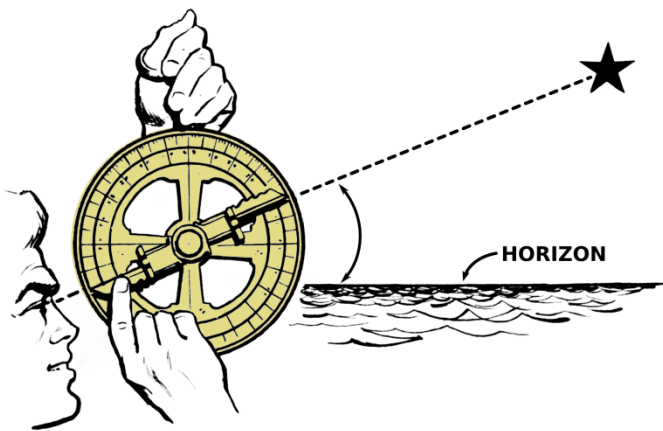


Muslim conquerors brought the trading cities of central Asia under control of the expanding *dar al-Islam* when they conquered the Sasanid Empire. Commercial centers made it possible for Muslim merchants to trade over the **Silk Road**. This gave them control of trade from China in the east and the Mediterranean in the west. Muslim merchants were able to take advantage of the extensive road networks originally built during the classical era by imperial authorities in India, Persia, and the Mediterranean basin. Umayyad and Abbasid

rulers maintained the roads that they inherited because they provided routes for military forces and officials traveling through the *dar al-Islam*. These same roads also made excellent highways for merchants as well as missionaries and pilgrims. Travel along these roads could be remarkably fast and efficient. After the 10<sup>th</sup> century the Muslim rulers of Egypt regularly **imported** ice from the mountains of Syria to their palace in Cairo. Even during the summer months, they received five camel loads of ice weekly to cool their food and drinks.

Overland trade traveled mostly by caravan. Camels endure the rigors of desert travel much better than horses or donkeys. Moreover, when fitted with a well-designed saddle, camels can carry heavy loads.

**Innovations in nautical technology** contributed to a steadily increasing volume of maritime trade in the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, Arabia Sea, and Indian Ocean. Arab and Persian



mariners borrowed the compass from its Chinese inventors and used it to guide them on the high seas. From Southeast Asian and Indian mariners, they borrowed the lateen sail, a triangular sail that increased a ship's

maneuverability. They also used the **astrolabe** to calculate latitude. (Check out the map on page 6 to see how!)

Arab and Persian mariners ventured throughout the Indian Ocean basin at ports in southern China, Southeast Asia, Arabia, and the eastern coast of Africa. Muslim traders and

entrepreneurs needed banks so that they could have access to credit and savings. The root of the modern word check comes from an Arabic word, *sakk*. With such a large network of banks, they could settle business deals with far off merchants without having to actually carry cash.

Trade also benefitted from techniques of business organization. Like banking, these techniques were based on classical Mediterranean society. Increasing volumes of trade enabled **entrepreneurs** to improve their methods of organization. Islamic merchants liked to organize as a group to ship goods. By working together, there was less risk of losing their cargo.

Improved transportation, banking services, and business organization increased long distance trade in the early Islamic world. Muslim merchants dealt in silk and ceramics from China, spices from India and Southeast Asia, and jewelry and fine textiles from the Byzantine Empire. Merchants crossed the Sahara desert by camel caravan to trade salt, and glass for gold and slaves from the kingdoms of West Africa. They visited the coastal regions of East Africa where they obtained slaves and exotic local commodities such as animal skins. The vigorous economy of the Abbasid Empire thus helped to establish networks of communication and exchange throughout much of the eastern hemisphere.

### **Islam and Women**

A **patriarchal** society had emerged in Arabia long before Muhammad's time, but Arab women enjoyed rights that women from other regions did not receive. They could legally inherit property, divorce husbands, and engage in business ventures. Khadija, the first of Muhammad's four wives, managed a successful commercial business.

The Quran improved the security of women in Arabian society. It made female

**infanticide** illegal. The Quran also states that **dowries** must go directly to brides rather than to their husbands and male guardians. The Quran treats women as honorable individuals, equal to men before Allah, with their own rights and needs. Muhammad's own kindness and generosity toward his wives served as an example that may have improved the lives of Muslim women.

The Quran provided a religious and legal foundation for a patriarchal society. It recognized descent through the male line. To guarantee proper inheritance, genealogical purity was very important. To ensure the legitimacy of heirs, they subjected the social and sexual lives of women to the strict control of male guardians. While teaching that men should treat women with sensitivity and respect, the Quran permitted men to follow Muhammad's example and to take up to four wives. However, women could have only one husband.

When Islam expanded into the Byzantine and Sassanid empires, it encountered strong patriarchal traditions. Muslims adopted customs such as the veiling of women. Upper class urban women covered their faces and ventured outside their homes only in the company of servants or chaperones to discourage the attention of men from other families. When Muslim Arabs conquered Mesopotamia, Persia, and eastern Mediterranean lands, they adopted the practice.

The Quran served as the primary source of authority, and it provided specific rights for Muslim women. Legal scholars interpreted the Quran in ways that limited women's rights and

placed women under the control of male guardians. The emphasis on male authority in Islamic law demonstrated the influence of the patriarchal societies that the Islamic Empire conquered.

### **Islamic Values and Cultural Exchanges**

The Quran serves as the cornerstone of Islamic society. It established Arabic as a flexible and powerful language. Arabic is still the only reliable **scripture**: translations are not acceptable. When carrying their faith to new lands during the era of Islamic expansion, Muslim **missionaries** spread the message of Allah and provided instruction in the Quran's teachings. Muslim intellectuals used the cultural traditions of Persia, India, and Greece to preach the Islamic lessons through the Quran.

#### *The Formation of an Islamic Cultural Tradition*

Muslim **theologians** looked to the Quran to create moral guidelines appropriate for their society. The Quran established a common cultural foundation. This helped people from different Islamic lands meet. Missionaries and schools diffused local traditions and Islamic values in far-off places in the *dar al-Islam*. Missionaries and courts led communities according to Islamic law to advance moral and social standards. They helped to bring the values of the Quran into the lives of peoples living far from the birthplace of Islam.

Formal education also promoted Islamic values. Many mosques maintained schools that provided elementary education and religious instruction. Wealthy Muslims sometimes established schools and provided money to support the school. Muslim rulers created *madrasas* to help educate new officials for their governments.

The symbol of Islamic cultural unity was the Ka'ba at Mecca. From an early date, the Ka'ba attracted pilgrims from all parts of the Islamic world. Inns were built along the main roads to Mecca for the convenience of travelers. Police were placed on the routes ensure the safety of pilgrims. People traveled from distant lands to Mecca to visit the holy sites and learn the traditions of Islam. These pilgrims helped spread Islamic beliefs and values to all parts of the Islamic world.

### **Islam and the Cultural Traditions of Persia, Indian and Greece**

As the Islamic community expanded, Arab Muslims interacted with people of different cultures. Persians, Greeks and Indians regularly traded with Arab merchants. Large numbers of conquered peoples converted to Islam. They brought elements of their cultural traditions into Islamic society. Muslims learned the literary, artistic, philosophical, and scientific traditions of peoples who chose not to convert. Muslims adapted new ideas for their own purposes to form a new society.

Muslim rulers built a society that made a place for those of different faiths. Muslim thinkers adapted earlier traditions to their own needs. As a result of its expansion, its extensive trade and communication networks, and its engagement with other religious and cultural traditions, the *dar al-Islam* became the most prosperous and cosmopolitan society of the postclassical world.



# Crusades



As Europe recovered in the Middle Ages the Islamic world grew. These differing belief systems would lead to conflict between European Christians and Muslims from the *dar al Islam*. The boundaries of Christian Europe expanded in the Mediterranean. Europeans came into conflict with Muslims, whose ancestors had conquered the major Mediterranean islands and most of the Iberian Peninsula between the eighth and tenth centuries. As their society became stronger, Europeans attempted to conquer those territories and reintegrate them into Christian society. The Roman Catholic Church encouraged campaigns to conquer and convert people and areas under Muslim influence.

The term **crusade** means holy war. It is based on the Latin word *crux*, meaning “cross”. Christians fought crusades against Muslims to recapture Palestine. Palestine was considered to be the home of Christianity, however Muslim authorities occupied it. Pope Urban II launched Crusades in 1095 C.E. He called Christian knights to take up arms and seize the holy land. He promised salvation for those who died in battle. The response to Pope Urban’s call was immediate and enthusiastic.

European crusaders had some success, but they were not able to maintain control over the territories that they won in battle. There were several waves of Christian crusaders to retake the holy land in the name of Christianity. By the mid-thirteenth century crusaders had launched 5 major crusades, but none succeeded in reestablishing a Christian presence in Palestine. The Fourth Crusade was a brutal attack against Constantinople. The Byzantine Empire never recovered and declined until it was conquered by the Ottoman Turks in 1453.

The crusades were wars of military and political expansion. Yet, the crusades were much more important for the social, economic and cultural consequences. Even as Europeans built armies to fight with Muslim states, Christian and Muslim merchants, philosophers and scholars exchanged ideas and goods. European Christians learned Islamic science and astronomy, “Arabic” numerals (which Muslims had borrowed from India), and techniques of paper production (which Muslims had learned from China). They also learned to appreciate new food and agricultural products such as spices, granulated sugar, coffee, and dates as well as trade goods like silk products, cotton textiles, carpets, and tapestries.

In the early days of the crusades, Europeans had little to exchange for these products. However, as a result of the Crusades, demand for new commodities increased throughout Western Europe because large numbers of people developed a taste for goods previously available only to wealthy elites. Italian merchants developed new products and marketed them in commercial centers and port cities like Constantinople, Alexandria, Cairo and Damascus. Large numbers of Italian merchants started to travel beyond the Muslim world to avoid paying Muslim merchants to deal directly with the producers of silks and spices in Asia. Although the crusades failed to reconquer the holy land, they succeeded in reuniting Europe into the larger economy of the eastern Hemisphere.

