World History 1, Quarter 2, Unit 1 of 3
An Era of Expansion: Islam, China, and Europe, 600–1000 CE

Overview

Overall days: 11 (1 day = 50-55 minutes)

Purpose

This unit asks students to investigate large-scale developments that took place in Afroeurasia in the period from approximately 600 to 1000 CE. In these 400 years, societies experienced a period of increasingly complex commercial and cultural interchange after three centuries of upheaval and breakdown.

The first part of the unit introduces students to the rise of Islam, the youngest of the major world religions to appear on the world stage, and to the forging of an empire led by Arabic-speaking peoples. For a time, this empire spanned the entire region from Spain to northwest India. Students will consider how the Muslim empire of the Abbasid dynasty became the main intermediary for the exchange of goods, ideas, and technologies across the hemisphere.

Students then look east to China, which in the sixth century became politically reunified after several centuries of fragmentation. From this period, China emerged under the Sui and Tang dynasties as an economic powerhouse, sending out manufactured goods like silk and porcelain across the hemisphere and importing commodities from the Middle East, India, and Southeast Asia.

Paralleling China and the Muslim world, Europe at the western end of Afroeurasia recovered from several centuries of trouble to lay the foundations for political and social order and greater economic prosperity.

Content to be learned

- Analyze factors leading to the appearance of Islam as a new monotheistic religion and the rise of the Arab-led empire in the 7th and 8th centuries.
- Describe the basic teachings of Islam in comparative perspective with Christianity and Judaism.
- Explain the importance of the Muslim Abbasid Empire as a center of intellectual and cultural innovation.
- Investigate the relationship between Chinese political unification under the Sui and Tang dynasties and China’s growing economic power.
- Explain how Europeans reestablished political and social order after 500 CE on the foundations of the Christian church, feudalism, and new agricultural technology.

Processes to be used

- Analyze cause–effect relationships to hypothesize how and why Islam emerged as a religious and political force in the 7th and 8th centuries.
- Consider multiple perspectives of peoples in the past to compare the basic beliefs and practices of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.
- Obtain historical data from records of historic sites, museums, and primary source texts to elucidate cultural innovations and advances in the Abbasid empire between the 8th and 10th centuries.
- Formulate historical questions related to the emergence of China as an economic powerhouse beginning in the 7th century.
- Identify and explain the origins and basic functions of the Christian church and feudalism in Europe from the 6th century.
Essential questions students should be able to answer by end of unit

- How did Islam become established as an important new religion beginning in the 7th century CE?
- What evidence shows that the Muslim Abbasid Empire became a center of scientific, technological, and philosophical innovation between 750 and 1000 CE?
- What evidence argues that China had a powerful economy in the era of the Tang Dynasty?
- What are the major indications that a new civilization was emerging in Western Europe in the 600–1000 CE period?

Written Curriculum

Grade-Span Expectations

HP 1: History is an account of human activities that is interpretive in nature.

HP 1 (9-12) – 2 Students interpret history as a series of connected events with multiple cause-effect relationships, by…

a. explaining cause and effect relationships in order to sequence and summarize events, make connections between a series of events, or compare/contrast events

HP 2: History is a chronicle of human activities, diverse people, and the societies they form.

HP 2 (9-12) – 2 Students chronicle events and conditions by…

a. creating narratives based on a particular historical point of view (e.g., unemployed WWII vet, home front in WWII, oil refinery promoter, environmental activist in Rhode Island; slave or free black in Newport, slave holder, trader or investor)

b. synthesizing information from multiple sources to formulate an historical interpretation (e.g., document-based questions, quantitative data, material artifacts of RI)

HP 3: The study of history helps us understand the present and shape the future.

HP 3 (9-12) – 2 Students make personal connections in an historical context (e.g., source-to-source, source-to-self, source-to-world) by…

b. analyzing how an historical development (e.g. cycle of poverty or prosperity, low educational attainment, “Independent Man”) has contributed to current social, economic, or political patterns

National Standards for History (World History, Grades 5–12)

Era 4: Expanding Zones of Exchange and Encounter, 300-1000 CE

Standard 2: Causes and consequences of the rise of Islamic civilization in the 7th-10th centuries.

2A The student understands the emergence of Islam and how it spread in Southwest Asia, North Africa, and Europe. Therefore, the student is able to

- Describe the life of Muhammad, the development of the early Muslim community, and the basic teachings and practices of Islam. [Assess the importance of the individual]
- Explain how Muslim forces overthrew the Byzantines in Syria and Egypt and the Sassanids in Persia and Iraq. [Interrogate historical data]
An Era of Expansion: Islam, China, and Europe, 600–1000 CE (11 days)

- Analyze how Islam spread in Southwest Asia and the Mediterranean region. [Analyze the influence of ideas]
- Analyze how the Arab Caliphate became transformed into a Southwest Asian and Mediterranean empire under the Umayyad dynasty and explain how the Muslim community became divided into Sunnis and Shi’ites. [Reconstruct patterns of historical succession and duration]

2B The student understands the significance of the Abbasid Caliphate as a center of cultural innovation and hub of interregional trade in the 8th-10th centuries.
- Analyze why the Abbasid state became a center of Afroeurasian commercial and cultural exchange. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]
- Describe the cultural and social contributions of various ethnic and religious communities, particularly the Christian and Jewish, in the Abbasid lands and Iberia. [Appreciate historical perspectives]
- Evaluate Abbasid contributions to mathematics, science, medicine, literature, and the preservation of Greek learning. [Interrogate historical data]

Standard 3: Major developments in East Asia and Southeast Asia in the era of the Tang dynasty, 600-900 CE.

3A The student understands China’s sustained political and cultural expansion in the Tang period.
- Describe political centralization and economic reforms that marked China’s reunification under the Sui and Tang dynasties. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]

Standard 4: The search for political, social, and cultural redefinition in Europe, 500-1000 CE.

4A The student understands the foundations of a new civilization in Western Christendom in the 500 years following the breakup of the western Roman Empire.
- Assess the importance of monasteries, convents, the Latin Church, and missionaries from Britain and Ireland in the Christianizing of western and central Europe. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]
- Explain the development of the Merovingian and Carolingian states and assess their success at maintaining public order and local defense in western Europe. [Reconstruct patterns of historical succession and duration]
- Analyze how the preservation of Greco-Roman and early Christian learning in monasteries and convents and in Charlemagne’s royal court contributed to the emergence of European civilization. [Reconstruct patterns of historical succession and duration]

Common Core State Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies

Writing

Range of Writing

WHST.9-10.10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Notes, Clarifications, and Prerequisites

New to this content may be the practice of creating a narrative to better understand historical point of view. Instruction should model how to create a story from a particular point of view.

These units include Common Core Literacy standards in reading and literacy and Historical Thinking Standards. The impact on instruction of these new and additional standards is noted in the Planning and Instructional Delivery Considerations and Assessment sections.
Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Analyze factors leading to the emergence of Islam as a new monotheistic religion and the creation of the Arab-led empire extending from Spain and North Africa to India. (3 days)
- Describe the basic teachings and practices of Islam and put them in comparative perspective with Christianity and Judaism. (2 days)
- Evaluate major scientific, technological, and artistic achievements of Muslim, Jewish, and Christian scholars and artists in the age of the Abbasid Empire. (1 day)
- Describe the rise of China as an economic powerhouse in the era of the Tang dynasty. (2 days)
- Investigate the influence of the Christian church and feudal kingship on the formation of a new civilization in Europe between 600 and 1000 CE. (3 days)

Resources


World History for Us All, http://worldhistoryforusall.sdsu.edu

- Big Era 5, Introductory Essay
- Big Era 5, Panorama Teaching Unit
- Big Era 5, Landscape Teaching Unit 5.2, Afroeurasia and the Rise of Islam

Assessment Rubrics (p. 10)

Facing History and Ourselves


Instructional Considerations

Key Vocabulary

Bedouin               mosque
feudalism            prophet
hajj                  Qur’an
medieval            scholar
kingship

Planning and Instructional Delivery Considerations

Teaching activities in this unit invite students to investigate large-scale developments in Afroeurasia from 600 to 1000 CE, emphasizing the origins and spread of Islam, the economic dynamism of Tang China, and formation of a new Christian civilization in Europe. Emphasis is also placed on developing students’ analysis of cause and effect and change over time.

The strategies listed below represent a menu of choices and possibilities to support each learning objective. The following teaching strategies are aligned to the order of the learning objectives. Select from the activities and readings in the Pearson text and from World History for Us All Big Era 5 to
provide students with background information and critical thinking opportunities that align to the learning objectives.

- **To ensure that students will be able to analyze factors leading to the emergence of Islam as a new monotheistic religion and the creation of the Arab-led empire extending from Spain and North Africa to India (3 days):**

  Have students, working in groups and using information from class discussion and the textbook, create a map with a corresponding timeline that charts the spread of Islam and an Arab-led empire from the Arabian Peninsula westward to Spain and North Africa and eastward to India. With a graphic organizer, have students list the main reasons why Islam was so attractive to those living in the Arabian Peninsula. On the same organizer, have them identify the main reasons why the Ummayid Empire stretched from Spain and North Africa to India. Have a reporter from each group share one of his or her group’s findings. **Historical Thinking Standard 1: Chronological thinking**

- **To ensure that students will be able to describe the basic teachings and practices of Islam and put them in comparative perspective with Christianity and Judaism (2 days):**

  Have students refer to the following pages from the textbook as they work through the activities: Judaism (pp. 58-60), Christianity (pp. 168-170), and Islam (pp. 306-309). Students will fill in a graphic organizer that compares the basic tenets of Islam with those of Judaism and Christianity. After volunteers share the comparisons they made, discuss any differences among their comparisons.

- **To ensure that students will be able to evaluate major scientific, technological, and artistic achievements of Muslim, Jewish, and Christian scholars and artists in the age of the Abbasid Empire (1 day):**

  Divide the class into groups. Have the students refer to readings in the textbook and information from class discussion as they fill in a graphic organizer designed as a matrix that charts science, technology, and art among the three communities.

- **To ensure that students will be able to describe the rise of China as an economic powerhouse in the era of the Tang dynasty (2 days):**

  Divide the class into groups. Have students refer to information in the textbook and from class discussion as they work in groups to create posters that demonstrate the economic and technological achievements of the Tang dynasty. Have members from each group present the posters, while others from the group answer any questions you or the class may have.

- **To ensure that students will be able to investigate the influence of the Christian church and feudal kingship on the formation of a new civilization in Europe between 600 and 1000 CE (3 days):**

  Have students refer to the textbook as they identify on a graphic organizer the structures of the Christian church and feudal kingship by 1000 CE. Lead a class discussion around the Essential Question: What are the major indications that a new civilization was emerging in Western Europe in the 600–1000 CE period?

**Additional Teaching Strategies**

The following pages contain strategies for the concepts being studied and are listed in the order of the learning objectives:

Factors leading to the emergence of Islam and the creation of the Arab-led empire (pp. 302-305)

The basic teachings and practices of Islam in comparative perspective with Christianity and Judaism (pp. 306-309)
Scientific, technological, and artistic achievements of Muslim, Jewish, and Christian scholars and artists (pp. 317-323)
The Abbasid’s role in commercial and cultural interchange among peoples of Afroeurasia (pp. 310-315)
The rise of China as an economic power in the era of the Tang dynasty (pp. 368-373)
The rise of the empire of Charlemagne in Western and Central Europe (pp. 214-218)
The effects of the migrations and conquests of Vikings and Magyars on European society in the 9th and 10th centuries (p. 218)
The influence of the Christian church and of Christian monasteries on the formation of a new civilization in Europe after 500 CE (pp. 325-330)

Questions for students to answer in class based on the reading in the textbook can be found at:
Section 1 Assessment, Comprehension and Critical Thinking, Questions 3–6 (Pearson, p. 305)
Section 2 Assessment, Comprehension and Critical Thinking, Questions 3–6 (Pearson, p. 316)
Section 1 Assessment, Comprehension and Critical Thinking, Questions 3–6 (Pearson, p. 374)
Section 1 Assessment, Comprehension and Critical Thinking, Questions 3–6 (Pearson, p. 218)

Teaching strategies to support deeper understanding of the multiple religions studied in this unit include:
Use a map from the World History for Us All, Big Era 5 Panorama unit and graphic organizer on religions to help students better understand the dominant world religions. Have students answer the four questions at the top of the map on page 315 in the textbook to discuss trade implications.
When reading about the spread of Islam, it is helpful to have a reading strategy. A chunking strategy helps students access difficult text to better understand details and complex information. (See the Facing History and Ourselves website’s page on Chunking for more information.)

Students can also answer the following questions and assignments:
Students complete Writing About History in the Section Assessment (Pearson, pp. 374, 218). Scoring suggestions for each activity are given in the Teacher’s Edition on the pages listed.
Students complete Chapter Assessment, questions 11–16 and 23–24, and Document-Based Assessment, questions 1–4 (Pearson, pp. 336-337). Answers or references to rubrics for scoring are given in the Teacher’s Edition on the pages listed.

Assessed Curriculum

Formative Assessments

Provide feedback to students through daily monitoring of student understanding using a variety of methods. For example, use exit cards. Have students answer questions on paper before they leave the class. Keep the activity prompt specific and brief to check for understanding of the day’s concepts. For instance, to check students’ comprehension of the Spanish Muslims’ tolerance of other religions, ask students to respond to the following question: “What was one way that the early Muslim rulers of Córdoba showed tolerance toward Christians?”
To assess the progress of understanding:

- **how to analyze factors leading to the emergence of Islam as a new monotheistic religion and the creation of the Arab-led empire extending from Spain and North Africa to India**, have students write a diary entry from an Arab Bedouin explaining why he or she is attracted to Islam.

- **how to describe the basic teachings and practices of Islam and put them in comparative perspective with Christianity and Judaism**, in a short writing assignment, have students use their graphic organizers to write about a similarity and a difference between Islamic and Judeo-Christian traditions. Also, students should account for these similarities and differences. **Historical Thinking Standard 3: Historical analysis and interpretation**

- **how to evaluate major scientific, technological, and artistic achievements of Muslim, Jewish, and Christian scholars and artists in the age of the Abbasid Empire**, using their graphic organizers, have students in groups create a dialogue among a Muslim, a Jewish, and a Christian scholar explaining the achievements of their particular community.

- **how to describe the rise of China as an economic powerhouse in the era of the Tang dynasty**, in a short journal entry, have students identify the two most important reasons why Tang China had such strong economy. Have them justify their claims with evidence. **Historical Thinking Standard 2: Historical comprehension**

- **how to investigate the influence of the Christian church and feudal kingship on the formation of a new civilization in Europe between 600 and 1000 CE**, have students write a letter from the Pope to a medieval king in 1000 CE addressing why the Church was the most important institution in European life.

In this unit, these short writing assessments are an opportunity to employ writing routinely in a single setting using WHST.9-10.10.

**Summative Assessment**

Put students in groups and have them create posters to be scored and presented where they rank the civilizations of Europe, Islam, and China in terms of their importance in Afroeurasia in 1000. Each group must explain their ranking. Use **Assessment Rubrics** (p. 10) to assess.

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