



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2002 Volume II: Exploring the Middle East: Hands-On Approaches

Islamic Art: Exploring the Visual Arts of the Middle East

Guide for Curriculum Unit 02.02.03
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This unit is intended to be an interactive and a meaningful area of study for new arrival students in English as a Second Language program. These students arrive with various degrees of proficiency in English, but need continuing support in order to succeed in the classroom. This unit allows the students to acquire English skills by using art, which is a cross-cultural experience. This unit shows how some of the traditional arts of the Middle Eastern region can be brought to life for students through hands-on projects that can readily be done in the classroom. This unit explores the background of Islamic art- what it is, how it developed and was shaped by the Islamic faith and the Arab expansion. Its defining features are delineated. Five characteristic media are specifically discussed: Calligraphy, miniature, painting, carpets, and metalwork. This unit is also appropriate for use by all students, including native English speakers, as we become increasingly aware of other cultures. Attention is given to the development of English language skills. The unit is aligned with the New Haven Language Arts Standards.

(Recommended for Social Studies and ESOL, grades 5-8.)

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