



Yale-New Haven  
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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2007 Volume II: Voyages in World History Before 1500

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## **Ibn Battuta's Journey by Land and by Sea: Investigating Cultural Landscapes**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 07.02.07  
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This unit is designed to be incorporated into a World History course. The unit is written with a wide range of abilities in mind and would meet the needs of students from grades six to twelve. Some sections will need to be modified for use with middle school students. People travel for a variety of reasons. Today travel is by car, boat, or plane and we can reach our destination within a reasonable period of time. By walking in Ibn Battuta's shoes students can imagine what Muslim travelers during the 1300s encountered on their pilgrimages to Mecca. Ibn Battuta's journey, for the most part, followed important trade routes linking the continent of Africa to Eurasia. By reading his writings students can experience the hospitality, companionship, customs and the dangers of travel by land and sea during the 12th century. Investigating travelers allows our students to understand, study and analyze the expansion of Islam.

The unit can be completed in three to four weeks. The unit is designed to motivate students and provide excitement in the classroom through activities involving map skills, development of written narratives, journal entries and analyzing visual arts such as illustrations and paintings. The main goal of this unit is reading and interpreting primary sources. The most important of these is the *rihla* (travel account) written by individuals on their pilgrimages. By investigating journeys the students discover how the world of the 1300s was interconnected rather than disconnected.

(Recommended for Ancient History, grades 6-8; World History, grades 9 and up.)

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