

## **From Jerusalem to Elkader:**

An exploration of three Abrahamic faiths coming together (and colliding), an examination of Islam in particular, and a spotlight on the Algerian hero Abd el-Kader

A unit in three parts:

- Lesson One: Jerusalem
- Lesson Two: Islam
- Lesson Three: Abd el-Kader to Elkader

### LESSON ONE: Jerusalem



#### **Lesson Objectives**

This lesson shows how Judaism, Christianity, and Islam come together (and collide) in one small area. Researching the sacred sites of the city and comparing the fundamental beliefs of the three religions will help students understand the source of much of the world's conflict. At the same time, Jerusalem is a magical place of historic, geographic, and cultural/architectural interest. Understanding the significance of Jerusalem will contribute to an understanding of the entire Middle East.

#### **Essential Question (compelling question)**

Why do over half the people on Earth cherish the Old City of Jerusalem?

## Supporting Questions

1. What does Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif contain, and why is it sacred to Jews, Christians, and Muslims?
2. What is the significance of six sacred sites in Jerusalem?
3. What are fundamental characteristics of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam?

## Iowa Social Studies Standards

- **Content**
  - SS.6.13: Identify what makes up a culture and examine how people acquire their cultural beliefs and value systems.
  - SS.6.21: Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed throughout different historical eras.
- **Inquiry**
  - SS.6.4: With teacher direction, evaluate the credibility of primary and secondary sources by determining their relevance and intended use.
  - SS.6.9: Present original arguments based on credible sources using a variety of media to authentic audiences.
- **Literacy**
  - RH.6-8.7: Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
  - WHST.6-8.2: Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.

## Lesson Materials

- [Viewing/Reflection Guide: Jerusalem](#): Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif
- [Slides: Lesson One](#)
- [Map of the Middle East](#), one/student (optional)
- [Sacred Sites of Jerusalem: Notes](#)
- [Sacred Sites of Jerusalem: Notes \(teacher copy\)](#)
- Sample research presentation: [Temple Mount](#)
- [Jerusalem Timeline](#)
- [World Religions Comparison Chart](#), one/student
- [World Religions Comparison Chart \(teacher copy\)](#)
- [Formative Assessment 3](#)
- [Jerusalem: Sacred and Contentious--Background Reading](#) (PBS), one/student
- [Jerusalem: Sacred and Contentious](#) (video, PBS)
- [Summative Assessment](#)
- DVD: *National Geographic Presents Jerusalem or Secrets of Jerusalem's Holiest Sites*

Teacher background information: Temple Mount is the Jewish and Christian name for the elevated plaza supported by retaining walls created by King Herod the Great (Roman-appointed king of the region of Judea) for the expansion of the Second Jewish Temple in 20 BCE. The temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE. Haram al-Sharif, which means Noble Sanctuary in English, is the Muslim name for the same space. A neutral name does not exist, so that in referring to the place, language forces us to “take a side.”

Unless you have already taught about world religions, you’ll want to stop at some point to address four important points:

1. We can learn about religions in a public school. What is *not* OK is for a public school teacher to promote a religion. We’ll be learning about different beliefs and addressing each of them with the same high degree of respect.
2. When we refer to *Christianity* in social studies class, we’re talking about Christianity as a term for all religions/denominations that view Jesus as divine (i.e., God/son of God). Have students volunteer several, and list them on the board. Students from communities that have evangelical Christian churches may find the concept confusing. Include “Christian” in your list of Christian denominations.

If students ask questions about the differences between the denominations, tell them that the denominations have developed over time. For example, the Puritans and Separatists (Pilgrims) that came to North America from England were groups that broke away from the Church of England to form new religions with slightly different beliefs.

3. Jesus was Jewish. The people who followed Jesus during his lifetime were Jewish. Christianity sprang from Judaism.
4. When we talk about religions in social studies class, we’ll often need to make a distinction between what can be proven historically and what followers of the religion believe to be true. For example, historians agree that Jesus existed. On the other hand, we don’t have *historical* evidence that he rose from the dead. When we study religions, we need to be comfortable going back and forth between history and belief.

# Lesson Plan

## **Day 1: Introduction to Jerusalem and Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif**

1. Distribute [Viewing/Reflection Guide: Jerusalem](#).
2. Use Slides 2-11 ([Slides: Lesson One](#)), to introduce the topic of Jerusalem, pose the essential (compelling) question (Slide 4), define the region of the Middle East, and to introduce Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif. *Use Presenter View to see Speaker Notes on slides for suggested teacher script. (Instructions on first slide of PowerPoint.)*

After each “Stop and Reflect,” provide time for pair-share or small-group discussion. Allow volunteers to share ideas with the entire class. If possible, provide individual [maps](#) for Stop and Reflect #2 (Slide 6).

By Stop and Reflect #4 (Slide 12), students should be able to identify Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif as an elevated area in Jerusalem, defined by very old retaining walls and containing several buildings, one being Dome of the Rock.

3. Remind students of our essential question (Why do half the people on Earth cherish the Old City of Jerusalem?) In working toward answering our essential question, tomorrow we’ll address this question: What does Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif contain, and why is it sacred to Jews, Christians, and Muslims? (Slide 13)
4. Use Slide 14 to introduce important terms. Students should record these on the viewing/reflection guide.

## **Days 2-3: Sacred Sites of Jerusalem**

1. Ask students to get out the viewing/reflection guide they were working with yesterday. Project Slide 15, and ask for a volunteer to remind the class why this space has two names. Review essential and supporting questions on Slide 16.
2. Hand out [Sacred Sites of Jerusalem: Notes](#). Show students that the names of sites on the notes sheet are the same sites mentioned with Slide 17 and marked with arrows on Slide 18.
3. Explain that students will be working in small groups, each group learning about--and teaching the class about--one of the sacred sites.
4. Use your favorite method for dividing students into groups of 2-3. (Keep the groups small to discourage non-engagement; it’s fine to have multiple groups working with each site.) Assign sites. Do not assign Temple Mount, as you’ll be using it for a sample presentation.
5. Present the assignment (Slide 20). Two good sites for information gathering are Wikipedia and <https://www.jerusalem-insiders-guide.com>. A good source for images is <https://expertvagabond.com>.

Note: This is a perfect place to teach--or reinforce--how to evaluate the credibility of online sources.

6. Once students have their site assignment and are seated in groups, give a sample presentation on [Temple Mount](#).
7. Take a few moments to emphasize that you have modeled the type of presentation you'd like students to do: you know your material--notes are fine!--but you're not reading off the slides.
8. Bring student attention back to Sacred Sites of Jerusalem: Notes. Ask students what they heard in the sample presentation that might address the presentation requirements. Help students enter these details in the Temple Mount section of the notes sheet. ([Teacher copy here.](#)) Return to Slide 16 and show students that they have just answered Supporting Question 1: What does Temple Mount contain, and why is it sacred to Jews, Christians, and Muslims?
9. **Formative Assessment 1:** Students respond to Supporting Question 1 on Slide 16.
10. Give students ample time to learn about their sites and prepare presentations. As they work, circulate among groups, checking for misinformation and making sure that groups are including significant details.
11. PRESENTATIONS: Begin with Dome of the Rock. Have each group assigned to this site give their presentation. Following each site, discuss what details should be included as notes. Have students enter these details in the Dome of the Rock section of the notes sheet. Continue in this manner until all sites have been covered.
12. Return to Slide 19 and show students that they have now answered Supporting Question 2.
13. **Formative Assessment 2:** Collect Sacred Sites of Jerusalem: Notes; check for accuracy.

#### **Day 4: Comparison of the three Abrahamic religions**

1. Use Slides 21 and 22 to introduce the final part of this lesson. *Use Presenter View to see Speaker Notes on slides for suggested teacher script. (Instructions on first slide of PowerPoint.)*
2. Hand out [World Religions Comparison Chart](#) and "[Jerusalem: Sacred and Contentious--Background Reading.](#)"
3. Slides 23 and 24 explain the distinction between monotheistic and polytheistic religions. (This is an opportunity to demonstrate how word parts help us understand the meanings of words.)
4. Now that students have a solid understanding of Jerusalem and some of its sacred sites, it's time to take a quick look at how the three religions represented by the sites are similar and different.
5. Ask students to read the PBS article for content, either independently or with partners, marking important details as they go. When finished, they should read it a second time,

looking for details to record on the comparison chart. They will not be able to fill in all of the boxes.

6. When students have finished, discuss their chart responses, allowing them to add/correct as needed. Have them record, as well, the extra information on the chart that was not in the article. (Extra information found on [teacher copy of chart](#).)
7. For additional context, ask students to examine Slides 25 and 26: distribution of world religions.
8. Extension (optional): ask each student to pose a question based on the information in the chart. (Examples: What are Kosher rules? What is a Protestant religion? What is the significance of the River Jordan to Christians? What is the significance of Yom Kippur? What is the significance of Eid al-Fitr?) Have them report back tomorrow--either orally or in writing--on what they have learned.
9. Show class this video: [Jerusalem: Sacred and Contentious](#). It's very short (3:27) and will help bring together what students have learned about Jerusalem and the three Abrahamic religions.
10. **Formative Assessment 3** (Slide 27): Hand out the assessment, and ask students to complete the Venn diagram. They may use their World Religions Comparison Chart, but not the PBS article.

If time permits, two longer videos on Jerusalem are readily available and suitable for middle school students:

- [National Geographic Presents Jerusalem, 2013, 43 minutes](#)
- [National Geographic: Secrets of Jerusalem's Holiest Sites, 2006, 52 minutes](#)

#### 11. **Summative assessment**

The summative assessment asks students to create TED Talks. If students aren't familiar with the format--of if they need inspiration--show them a sample or two. (If you'd prefer a summative assessment in essay form, I've provided one on Slide 28.)

## **Sources**

Barrat, James, director. *Secrets of Jerusalem's Holiest Sites*. National Geographic, 2006.

Ferguson, Daniel, director. *Discover the Heart of the World: Jerusalem*. Cosmic Pictures, National Geographic, 2013.

"Jerusalem: Sacred and Contentious: Background Reading." *PBS LearningMedia*, [iowa.pbslearningmedia.org/](http://iowa.pbslearningmedia.org/).