

Emir Abd el-Kader: A Muslim Hero for Our Time



LESSON FIVE: Abd El-Kader's Legacy

Presentation Content, Post-Presentation Questions and Activities

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Introduction

This lesson discusses some of the different ways in which Abd el-Kader has been recognized and honored, and the continuing legacy of his life for our world today. In addition to having a Midwestern American town named after him and multiple monuments built to honor him, he was recognized in his lifetime by a variety of world leaders. This lesson not only enumerates examples of that recognition but more importantly invites students to consider the relevance of Abd el-Kader’s life for their lives today from what they have learned in previous lessons.

Content Themes

World History, American History, Intercultural Relationships, Religious Pluralism

Guiding Questions

- How and why was Abd el-Kader recognized and honored both during his lifetime and beyond?
- What is the importance of Abd el-Kader’s ideas and example for the world today?

Learning Objectives

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Discuss some of the ways in which Abd el-Kader was honored or memorialized.
- Explain how Abd el-Kader remains relevant and an example for people today.

Common Core State Standards

This lesson helps students meet the following Common Core Standards in the sections specified.

Analysis Questions

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9 Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3 Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.8 Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9 Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Response questions

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history / social science.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

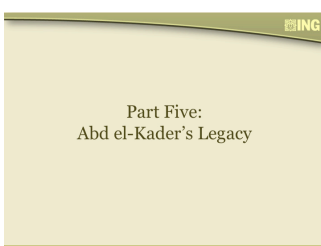
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9 Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Lesson Five Presentation Content: Abd el-Kader's Legacy

The following presentation notes are designed to explain the subject matter on each respective slide when delivering the digital presentation that accompanies this curriculum. When relevant to the topic discussed with each slide, we provide references to corresponding pages in *Commander of the Faithful: The Life and Times of Emir Abd el-Kader* by John W. Kiser.

“Great men are not so abundant that we can afford to lose them without a word. If to be an ardent patriot, a soldier whose genius is unquestioned, whose honor is stainless; a statesman who could weld the wild tribes of Africa into a formidable enemy, a hero who could accept defeat and disaster without a murmur — if all this constitutes a great man, Abd-El-Kader deserves to be ranked among the foremost of the few great men of the century.”

~ *New York Times* shortly before his death

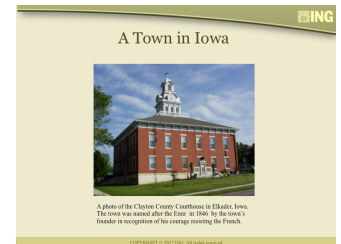


Slide #50: Part Five: Abd el-Kader's Legacy

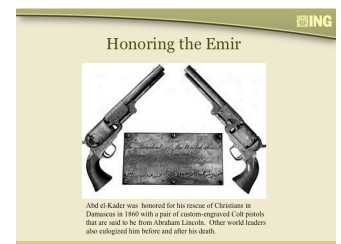
- It is a rare person who is admired by both friends and foes; yet even before Abdel-Kader's courageous stand in Damascus, he had many supporters in France who respected him for his military prowess, intellect, ethics and fortitude.
- But ultimately it was his ability to stand for what was right in a critical moment that gained him world-wide acclaim, and why his legacy continues to be important and relevant today.

Slide #51: A Town in Iowa

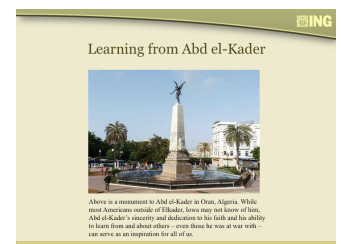
- In 1846, an American lawyer named Timothy Davis was following the Emir's exploits from afar—specifically, from Iowa—where he was developing a plot of land (John W. Kiser, *Commander of the Faithful: The Life and Times of Emir Abd el-Kader*, xiv).
- Davis read of Abd el-Kader's resistance against the French occupation in American newspapers and became so enamored of the freedom fighter's exploits that he named the future town after the Emir.
- And so Elkader, Iowa, became the first, and thus far the only, town in the U.S. named after an Arab, although there are a few towns with Arabic names.

**Slide #52: Honoring the Emir**

- Timothy Davis wasn't the only American to admire Abd el-Kader. Reports of the Emir's valor even reached America, where he was presented by President of the United States with a gift of a pair of custom-engraved Colt pistols in honor of his rescue of Christians in Damascus.¹
- Additionally, world leaders such as Queen Victoria, Pope Pius IX, and Sir Richard Burton all sang his praises.
- Three months before his death, the *New York Times* wrote about him: "One of the ablest rulers and most brilliant captains of the century, if the estimates made of him by his enemies is correct, is now, in all probability, approaching the end of his stormy career. Abd-El-Kader is dangerously ill, and his advanced age and hardships of sixteen years of campaign life leave little room for believing he will long survive The nobility of his character, no less than the brilliancy of his exploits in the field, long ago won him the admiration of the world. . . . Great men are not so abundant that we can afford to lose them without a word. If to be an ardent patriot, a soldier whose genius is unquestioned, whose honor is stainless; a statesman who could weld the wild tribes of Africa into a formidable enemy, a hero who could accept defeat and disaster without a murmur—if all this constitutes a great man, Abd-El-Kader deserves to be ranked among the foremost of the few great men of the century" (Kiser, 323).

**Slide 53: Learning from Abd el-Kader**

- Today, outside of Elkader, Iowa, most people in this country, and indeed in most of the West, have probably never heard of the Emir, famous though he was in his own time.
- That is unfortunate, because there is much that Abd el-Kader can teach us today, in a world where intercultural and interreligious understanding and respect are more needed than ever.
- His sincerity and dedication to his own faith was demonstrated at every turn in his life, from his decision to submit to God's will and surrender to the French, to his daily application of his faith through prayer and learning, and finally through his willingness to put his own life at risk to follow his religious principles.




¹ While many sources cite Abraham Lincoln as the American president that honored him, Lincoln did not take office until 1861, so it may have been President Buchanan who sent the pistols.

- Abd el-Kader is also important in demonstrating a willingness to learn about and from people of other cultures—even from those who made themselves his enemies. His growth in understanding the French is a model here.
- He went from regarding them as invaders who were trying to occupy his country to genuine admiration for French achievements and deep friendship with many of them.
- We might do well to learn from him how to see what positive values and accomplishments we can discover from those who seem most remote from us culturally, even—perhaps especially—those with whom we are in conflict.

Abd el-Kader's Leadership and Humanity

- From an early age, Abd el-Kader demonstrated leadership and high moral character.
- He showed humanity even towards his enemies.
- He insisted on humane treatment of war prisoners.
- His actions in Damascus showed his willingness to risk his own life to defend others, regardless of their faith.




Memorial to Abd el-Kader in Algiers.

Slide 54: Abd el-Kader's Leadership and Humanity

- From an early age, Abd el-Kader demonstrated a leadership that was guided not by a love of power, but by high moral character and integrity—the true makings of a good leader.
- First and foremost, Abd el-Kader modeled tolerance and humanity, even towards his enemies.
- Obviously, he was no pacifist. However, he followed strict rules in dealing with the enemy, even in war, and especially with prisoners. His insistence on the humane treatment of prisoners of war anticipated, and may have helped pave the way for the Geneva Conventions that govern the treatment of prisoners of war to this day.²
- His later actions in Damascus demonstrated that he was willing to risk his own life in order to defend his brothers and sisters in humanity, regardless of their faith.

Abd el-Kader's Interreligious Understanding



- Abd el-Kader was devoted to his own faith, but also to learning about and engaging with people of other faiths.
- He believed that people of different faiths should cooperate to build a better world.
- This reflected his understanding of pluralism in the Qur'an.
- His beliefs were demonstrated through real actions defending Christians in Damascus.

Slide 55: Abd el-Kader's Interreligious Understanding

- Abd el-Kader was also deeply devoted to bridging differences, especially differences of religion and culture.
- This did not stem from any indifference to the particularities of his own culture or the teachings of his own faith; on the contrary, he was a committed Muslim, holding fast to his beliefs.
- He nonetheless insisted that it was possible and necessary for people of different religious convictions and cultures to meet and learn from each other and to cooperate in building a more just and peaceful world together.
- With an openness that many in his time—and even, sadly, some in our own time—would not have shared, he affirmed: “Our God and the God of all the communities different from ours are in reality all one God...He reveals himself to Muslims as beyond all form, to Christians in the person of Jesus Christ and monks...he reveals himself even to pagans who worship objects. For no worshipper of something finite worships the thing for itself. What he worships through this object is the Epiphany of God.” (Kiser, 273)

² His contributions in this area were the subject of an international conference in Geneva sponsored by the U.N. in April, 2006 titled Emir Abdelkader, forerunner of human rights and champion of interreligious dialogue. (Kiser, 322).

- In this, he was actually following the teachings of the Qur'an, which insist on the validity of the earlier revelations on which Judaism and Christianity are founded,³ and lay down the rule that there is to be “no compulsion in religion.”⁴ In fact, the Qur'an asserts that a plurality of religions is God's will⁵ and that people of different faiths should compete in good works.”⁶
- Finally, and most importantly of all, he demonstrated that these convictions were not merely beliefs, but that he was ready and willing, as the events in Damascus showed, to defend those of other faiths who were under attack, even when some of the attackers might share his religion.


Slide 56: Abd el-Kader's Love of Knowledge

- Abd el-Kader's thirst for knowledge and his interest in learning about and from other cultures can also inspire us.
- Beginning in his youth he was encouraged by his father to learn about other peoples and excel in many fields, learning both Greek as well as Islamic philosophy.
- In France, he was curious about new ideas and practices, and eager to exchange thoughts with others.
- Unlike some people in his day and even today, Abd el-Kader saw no conflict between religion and science. When he visited the World Exposition in Paris in 1855, he showed a keen interest in the advances in science and technology on display there.
- His *Letter to the French* describes a fundamental harmony between the teachings of religion, philosophy, and science (Kiser, 265-267).

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Abd el-Kader's Love of Knowledge

- Abd el-Kader's thirst for knowledge and interest in learning from others is also inspirational.
- In France he was curious about new ideas and practices.
- He saw no conflict between religion and science, and rather saw a harmony between them.



Abd el-Kader


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Slide 57: Lessons for Today

- These lessons of religious pluralism, understanding, and standing up for what is right regardless of who is being oppressed, are as—or even more important—today as at the time these events took place. We need such an example of interreligious and intercultural respect now more than ever.
- Abd el-Kader not only modeled those values in his own life but did what he could to spread them. Whatever we may think of the significance of the Suez Canal today, it was for him a major project in connecting not only commerce but hearts and minds in the East and West.
- His example should challenge us to ask ourselves what we are doing to connect and reconcile different ethnicities, religions, and cultures today, and to inspire us to do more.
- We hope that by learning about his life and example, you will be inspired to do just that.

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Lessons for Today



- Abd el-Kader's life story and example is still relevant today.
- More than ever we need such an exemplar of interreligious and intercultural respect.
- Abd el-Kader not only modeled those values in his own life but did what he could to spread them.
- His example should both inspire and motivate us.

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³ See, for example, Qur'an 2:62, 22:40, and 29:46.

⁴ Qur'an 2: 256

⁵ Qur'an 10:99 and 5:51

⁶ Qur'an 2:148

Slide #58: Additional Resources

 Additional Resources


Books
 Al-Karnabi, Sumbul. *The Muslim Next Door: The Qur'an, the Media, and Their First Thing*. Ashland: White Cloud Press, 2008.
 Esposito, John. *What Everyone Needs to Know about Islam*. New York: Oxford Press, 2002.
 Kiser, John W. *Commander of the Faithful: The Life and Times of Emir Abd el-Kader*. New York: Knopf, 2008.
 Martin, Elia. *The Compassionate Warrior: Abd El-Kader of Algeria*. Bloomington, Indiana: Western Table, 2013.

Websites
 A Story of True Jihad: www.ing.org
 Abd el-Kader Education Project: abdelkaderproject.org

Articles
 "Basis of Emir Abdelkader and Henry Dunant to be unveiled at ICRC in Geneva," *ICRC News Release*, September 17, 2013.
 "How a 19th Century Staff Inspires Algerian Youth to Write about Human Rights," *Pathos*, July 4, 2013.
 "New Town Named for Muslim Hero Exalts Tolerance," Samuel G. Freedman, *New York Times*, May 9, 2013.
 "Jihadist doesn't equal psychopath," John Kiser, *USA Today*, September 10, 2013.
 "Prince of Brotherhood," Louis Warner, *South African World*, July/August, 2010.

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Slide #60: Acknowledgements

 Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the contributions and support of John Kiser, whose book, *Commander of the Faithful: The Life and Times of Emir Abd el-Kader* provided the basis for this presentation.

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Slide #61: ING

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Post-Presentation Questions

Comprehension Questions

Questions about the text associated with each slide specified.

A Town in Iowa

1. What small town in Iowa was named after the Emir?
2. What inspired the town's founder to name the town after a person in a distant land?

Honoring the Emir

3. What did an American president give Abd el-Kader in honor of his actions?
4. What American newspaper eulogized him before his death?

Learning from Abd el-Kader

5. What are some of the lessons that we can learn from Abd el-Kader?

Abd el-Kader's Leadership and Humanity

6. What are some examples from Abd el-Kader's life that demonstrate his humanity?

Abd el-Kader's Interreligious Understanding

7. What did Abd el-Kader believe about how different religions perceive God?

Abd el-Kader's Love of Knowledge

8. How did Abd el-Kader view the relationship between religion and knowledge?

Lessons for Today

9. What project represented for Abd el-Kader a real-life example of connecting East and West?
10. What lesson from his life is most powerful?

Analysis Questions

1. The text for Slide 50 states, "Today, outside of Elkader, Iowa, most people in this country, and indeed in most of the West, have probably never heard of the Emir, famous though he was in his own time."
 - a. Had you previously heard of Abd el-Kader or the town of Elkader?
 - b. Were you surprised to learn that a small town in Iowa was named after Abd el-Kader?
 - c. Why do you think it is that most people have probably never heard of the Emir?
 - d. What is the value in learning about his life and example?
 - e. What inspired you most from his life?
2. The text for Slide 50 states, "He went from regarding them as invaders trying to occupy his country to genuine admiration for French achievements and deep friendship with many French people and other Europeans."
 - a. What characteristics did Abd el-Kader demonstrate that allowed him to see the positive values and accomplishments of even his enemies?
 - b. Some might view a person who embraced the former occupier of his country as a traitor, yet he is recognized worldwide for his contributions. Why do you think that is the case?
 - c. Do you think you could learn to admire those whom you viewed as the enemy?

3. Abd el-Kader remained firmly a Muslim, committed to his beliefs, throughout his life. At the same time, he had great respect for people of other faiths.
 - a. How did he manage to combine adherence to his beliefs with respect for people of other faiths?
 - b. What importance does that ability have for the world today?
4. Compare and contrast the various articles that have been written about Abd el-Kader recently (see Additional Teacher Resources.)
 - a. What are the common themes in all the articles?
 - b. What are some major differences either in the events described or the way he is characterized?
 - c. Are there unique aspects emphasized in some articles that are not found in the others?
 - d. Why do you think the topic of Abd el-Kader has recently been of interest in the West?

Discussion Questions

1. While followers of the three great Abrahamic faiths make up more than half of the world's population, and have a shared heritage that all three faiths can look towards, they are often in conflict with one another. How can we work to create greater unity amongst Jews, Christians and Muslims?
2. At times interfaith dialogues can become difficult conversations. How do you think religious people and other people with shared values can come together to work for a better and more just world?
3. Do you think that Abd el-Kader's ideas about pluralism are important for today? Why or why not? What is the most valuable thing that you have learned from his life that you would like to share with the others?

Response Questions

In groups of two or more discuss and respond to the following questions.

1. The [website of the Embassy of Algeria](#) features a description of Algeria-U.S. relations that includes a tribute to Abd el-Kader as follows:

“Algeria and the United States of America share a long history of friendly ties that dates back to September 5, 1795, when the two countries signed the Treaty of Amity and Peace, a few years after the official recognition of the independence of the young American Republic by the State of Algeria (1783). Algeria was among the first countries that recognized the independence of the United States.

In 1860 in Damascus, the Algerian resistance leader El Emir Abdelkader saved from pogroms the lives of ten thousand Christians including the staff of the American consulate. President Lincoln honored El Emir Abdelkader as a great humanitarian for this achievement.

The city El Kader in Iowa which was named after him is the only town in the United States named after an Arab. The oldest permanent settlement established by Europeans in the United States was named after another great figure of the Algerian history: Saint Augustine. Santa Monica in California was named after the mother of Saint Augustine.

The two countries also share a love of justice and freedom and both their peoples have stood up to defend their sovereignty and liberty whenever they were threatened. Algeria and the United States have also supported each other in the name of the very principles that guided their revolutions.

Senator John F. Kennedy spoke passionately in support of Algeria's independence when the country was under French colonialism and Algeria lent the full force of its diplomacy and political influence to secure the freedom of 52 Americans held hostage by Iran in 1979.”

- a. Aside from Abd el-Kader, how does Algeria play a role in American history?
 - b. In addition to saving the lives of Christians, who else does this article state that Abd el-Kader saved in Damascus? Why is this particularly significant for Americans?
 - c. What common values does this article emphasize that both the countries share?
 - d. How did each country stand up for the other when each was threatened?
2. In October, 1860, the *New York Times* published an article called "[ABD-EL-KADER AND THE UNITED STATES](#)" The article was a tribute to Abd el-Kader as follows:

"The President has followed good examples in forwarding to the gallant and magnanimous ABD-EL-KADER a public token of the respect which he has won from all right-minded Christian men by his heroic and successful interference to mitigate the horrors of the Moslem massacres in Syria. The Sacred Crosses of the Legion of Honor and of St. Manuel and St. Lazarus already sparkle on the breast of the bold Emir, to bear witness to the esteem in which NAPOLEON and VICTOR EMANUEL hold the fearless protector of defenceless men and women in the streets of Damascus. America owes even a more absolute debt to this illustrious son of the desert. For the Americans in Syria owe all that they have saved from the storm which so lately swept with fiery breath from the Lebanon to the Levant, not to the terror of the American name or the vigor of American policy, but to just such humane and fearless action as that of the exiled chieftain of Algiers.

For ABD-EL-KADER this is indeed a chapter of glory, and of the truest glory, too. It is no light thing for history to record, that the most uncompromising soldier of Mohammedan independence, when that independence kept the mountains, sword in hand, became the most intrepid guardian of Christian lives and Christian honor in the days of his political downfall, and in the decline alike of his people and of his faith. The defeats which surrendered Algiers to the Frank have been strangely and nobly avenged.

Twenty years ago the Arab Emir was an enemy of Christendom, hunted through the ranges of his native hills by the then foremost soldier of young France, and his final capture made the name of LAMORICIERE famous throughout Europe. To-day the Christian world unites to honor in the dethroned Prince of Islam, the most unselfish of knightly warriors, risking limb and life to rescue his ancient foes, his conquerors and the conquerors of his race and his religion, from outrage and from death. To-day, too, the Christian world, with scarce a dissenting voice, pours forth its scorn upon the Christian General for his shameless and venal prostitution of a brilliant name and a proud experience to perpetuate oppression in a Christian land, and to fasten the opprobrium of tyranny upon the great body of the Christian Church. Truly the "whirligig of Time brings in his revenges!" But if ABD-EL-KADER deserves all the honor we can pay him, what are we to say of our own Government, which has never yet found the time, the thought or the money to send so much as a single efficient national vessel to the protection of our own citizens in the cradle-land of Christendom?"

- a. According to the article, what are some of the ways in which Abd el-Kader was honored by Westerners?
- b. Who were some of the people who honored him?
- c. Who does this article chastise for their treatment of the Emir?
- d. How does this author view the fact that someone who had once fought the French would risk his life to protect Christians?
- e. What does the author mean when he says, "The defeats which surrendered Algiers to the Frank have been strangely and nobly avenged."
- f. What do you think of his general characterization of the conflict between the Emir and "Christendom" in the last paragraph? Is that an accurate description of the Algerian fight of freedom? How does that compare to the description of the conflict on the Algerian Embassy website in the entry above? How does this compare to the way conflicts between the West and Muslim countries are characterized today?

3. Three months before his death, the *New York Times* wrote about him: “One of the ablest rulers and most brilliant captains of the century, if the estimates made of him by his enemies is correct, is now, in all probability approaching the end of his stormy career. Abd-El-Kader is dangerously ill, and his advanced age and hardships of sixteen years of campaign life leave little room for believing he will long survive The nobility of his character, no less than the brilliancy of his exploits in the field, long ago won him the admiration of the world Great men are not so abundant that we can afford to lose them without a word. If to be an ardent patriot, a soldier whose genius is unquestioned, whose honor is stainless; a statesman who could weld the wild tribes of Africa into a formidable enemy, a hero who could accept defeat and disaster without a murmur—if all this constitutes a great man, Abd-El-Kader deserves to be ranked among the foremost of the few great men of the century.”
- According to this eulogy, what are some of Abd el-Kader’s accomplishments?
 - Do you think it was common for an American newspaper in the 19th century to eulogize an Arab leader?
 - Do you think such a eulogy would be written today? Why or why not?
 - Had Abd el-Kader not intervened to save Christian lives do you think he would have been as widely honored?
 - What is it that makes a person a universal hero?
4. The struggle for freedom from French rule that Abd el-Kader began in 1832 was finally won more than a century later in 1962 when Algeria gained its independence. Hailing those fighting for their independence, President John F. Kennedy called them “freedom fighters” and opined, “The most powerful force in the world today is neither capitalism nor communism nor the guided missile, but man’s eternal desire to be free and independent” (Kiser, 328).
- How does one decide who is a “freedom fighter” and who is not?
 - What are some other words that have been used for those who fight to overthrow a foreign occupation?
 - Why are these terms so important?
 - Does colonialism/imperialism still exist today? If so, in what form?
5. Before and increasingly after 9/11, many have subscribed to a theory of a “clash of civilizations” between the West and the Muslim world. Muslims in the United States and Europe have been impacted by this “clash” and resultant prejudice and Islamophobia.
- How does this story and life example of this Muslim leader challenge that paradigm?
 - What lessons can we take from his life and approach to bridge building that we can apply to our own?
 - Is his story still relevant today and how?
 - Do we need a new Abd el-Kader to show us the way?
 - What characteristics would such a Muslim leader need to take on that role?

Test Questions

(Answers below)

1. Elkader, Iowa was named after:
 - a. A famous Algerian human rights proponent
 - b. A famous Algerian freedom fighter
 - c. A famous Algerian religious leader
 - d. All of the above
2. What important American newspaper published a tribute to Abd el-Kader?
 - a. The Denver Post
 - b. The New York Times
 - c. The Wall Street Journal
 - d. The Washington Post
3. There is little we can learn from Abd el-Kader's example today. True or false?
4. Abd el-Kader believed in:
 - a. Humane treatment of prisoners
 - b. Building bridges between different peoples.
 - c. Defending the rights of all people
 - d. All of the above
5. For Abd el-Kader, the Suez Canal was a way to connect not only commerce, but also hearts and minds. True or false?
6. Name an accomplishment from the life of Abd el-Kader that is still important today: _____

Activities

1. Research other towns in the United States that have Arabic or Islamic names. Create a map that shows their locations.
2. Research other monuments or tributes to Abd el-Kader, including postage stamps. Create a collage of those tributes with labels and locations for each.
3. In a group or individually pretend that you are a reporter for a 19th-century newspaper and that your job is to interview Abd el-Kader about his life and accomplishments. Write a series of questions and answers about the major events in his life. Turn the interview into a series of article with pictures and other illustrations.
4. When Abd el-Kader died, he was memorialized across the world. Review some of the eulogies to him in this lesson and research other tributes by world leaders. Then write your own tribute to him including his important achievements and characteristics. Illustrate with his photos.

Answers to test questions:

1) d; 2) b; 3) false; 4) d; 5) true; 6) humane treatment of prisoners; building bridges; saving innocent lives.

Supplemental Film Content

In this section of the curriculum we provide recommendations or links to films that relate to the topics or themes discussed in this lesson. These films vary from full length documentaries, to short form documentaries or clips taken from full length documentaries. Each of the film names or links is accompanied by a brief description of the film. Select films also include discussion questions.

Topics and Related Films

Religious Pluralism

[With One Voice](#) (2009),
Trailer.

According to the website for the film, “*With One Voice* brings together mystics from fourteen different spiritual traditions to share their perspectives on the unifying truth that transcends all religions. In this seventy-eight minute documentary, these awakened teachers address profound questions about life and love, the existence of God, the path to spiritual awakening and the way to true peace in the world. Through their words and compelling presence, they ask us to look within our own hearts and listen deeply, so we too can join the conversation and speak *With One Voice*.”

Questions about the film:

1. What does the trailer say is the best way to look at other religions?
2. What does the trailer say are some ways to help us use religion to unite us?
3. How does focusing on the spiritual essence of religions help us to look past differences and disagreements between faiths?

Further Resources: For more information about this film, visit the [With One Voice website](#).

Fremont U.S.A. (2009),
The Pluralism Project
at Harvard University.
Clip run time 11:25 to
16:27. Clip is available
on the [Pluralism
Project website](#).

Fremont, California, a suburb between San Jose and Oakland, is the most diverse mid-size city in the United States. In the documentary *Fremont U.S.A.* the filmmakers take an in-depth look at the different faith communities in Fremont and the interfaith interactions that are taking place there. One unique segment of the film is about a religious community called Peace Terrace. When the city of Fremont was zoning this land to make it more appealing to developers they decided to make two plots of land right next to each other open for development by religious groups. Ultimately it was a Methodist Christian church and a Muslim mosque which were built on the land. This clip shows how these two different faith groups have worked together in a number of ways since becoming neighbors on their shared piece of land which they have named “Peace Terrace.” According to the film’s website, “This film offers a glimpse of religious diversity on the local level: Fremont, California is a city transformed by new immigration. A rajagopuram rises in a tidy suburban neighborhood, announcing the vital presence of the Hindu community. The diversity of the global Buddhist community is also in evidence, as Thai, Chinese, and Burmese temples - and a women’s monastic retreat center - dot the landscape. Fremont is home to Peace Terrace, where Muslims and Christians have built side by side, and Gurdwara Road, where a large Sikh community engages in creative forms of outreach. Through civic engagement and interfaith action, strangers have become neighbors in this American city. Yet Fremont has

also faced real challenges, especially after 9/11. When Alia Ansari, a Muslim woman, is murdered, some wonder if it was a hate crime: Was she killed because of her headscarf? How will the wider community respond?"

Questions about the film:

1. How has having a mosque community as neighbors to a church community allowed these two congregations to grow closer together?
2. In what different ways have the church and the mosque worked together?
3. How do strong interfaith alliances strengthen our communities?

Further Resources: For more information see the Harvard University [Pluralism Project website](#).

Additional Teacher Resources

Books

- Ali-Karamali, Sumbul. *The Muslim Next Door: The Qur'an, the Media, and That Veil Thing*. Ashland: White Cloud Press, 2008.
- Esposito, John. *What Everyone Needs to Know about Islam*. New York: Oxford Press, 2002.
- Kiser, John W. *Commander of the Faithful: The Life and Times of Emir Abd el-Kader*. New York: Monkfish, 2008.
- Marston, Elsa. *The Compassionate Warrior: Abd El-Kader of Algeria*. Bloomington, Indiana: Wisdom Tales, 2013.

Articles

- ["Busts of Emir Abdelkader and Henry Dunant to be unveiled at ICRC in Geneva."](#) ICRC News Release, September 17, 2013.
- Freedman, Samuel G. ["Iowa Town Named for Muslim Hero Extols Tolerance."](#) *New York Times*, May 5, 2013.
- ["How a 19th Century Sufi Inspires Algerian Youth to Write about Human Rights."](#) *Patheos*, July 4, 2013.
- Kiser, John. ["Jihadist doesn't equal psychopath."](#) *USA Today*, September 10, 2013.
- Obenson, Tambay A. ["Charles Burnett Heading To Algeria To Direct Biopic On Algeria's Greatest Hero, Abd El Kader."](#) *Shadow and Act*, September 9, 2013.
- Rany. ["Abd el-Kader and the Massacre of Damascus."](#) Tuesday, July 13, 2010.
- Werner, Louis. ["Prince of Brotherhood."](#) *Saudi Aramco World*, July / August, 2010.

Websites

abdelkaderproject.org: “Starting in Iowa, the project is growing a worldwide movement to revive the legacy of Emir Abd el-kader. Our goal is to restore the historical memory of a remarkable human being whose importance today is greater than ever. He was also an Arab warrior-scholar-statesman respected and admired from the Missouri Territory to Moscow to Mecca. When he died in 1883, the *New York Times* wrote, he ‘deserved to be counted among the few great men of the century.’ The Abd el-Kader project also features an annual essay contest featuring six scholarships for winning essays from students in high school and college.”

johnwkiser.com: The website of the author of the book upon which this curriculum is based states about his books, “My books have a contrarian flavor: profiles of innovative, maverick scientists in the Soviet Bloc (Communist Entrepreneurs: Unknown Innovators) when the popular view was one of technological incompetence in the communist world; Muslim-Christian harmony (Monks of Tibhirine: Faith Love and Terror in Algeria) when people were touting irreconcilable differences between Islam and the West, and now Commander of the Faithful: A Story of True Jihad. Abd el-Kader was a warrior, statesman, scholar who combined deep religious faith with chivalrous humanism and intellectual openness that made him a hero in both the East and West. Commander of the Faithful is the third book of an Abrahamic trilogy that began unwittingly with Stefan Zweig: Death of a Modern Man. . . . Thinking back, I have realized that my last three books have a common thread. Indirectly, they are about struggle and the role of faith in guiding and sustaining people in desperate times. The stories have moved me from being an agnostic to a believer in the omnipresence of divine wisdom—accessible if our antennas are tuned, and requiring ceaseless effort.”

truejihad.com: As this website about Abd el-Kader states, “History, according to the truism, is written by the victors. Yet, it was the French victors who paid homage to the moral, intellectual and spiritual qualities that made Abd el-Kader a widely recognized ‘great man’ of the mid-19th century. Emir Abd el-Kader inspired respect from Missouri to Moscow. His story is about many things, but ultimately it is about struggle: struggle against French invaders, struggle with Arabs who rejected his leadership, struggle with depression and despair in French prisons, struggle to live as a good Muslim. Today, he would be dismissed by many in the West as a ‘fundamentalist’-- a label signifying to the secularist a retrograde, narrow-minded extremist. He was indeed a fundamentalist in this sense: To be rightly guided meant only one thing for him—to do God’s will according to the teaching of the Koran and the traditions of the Prophet. He was also a man of great intellectual curiosity, marked by Greek thought, who squared his faith with a deep humanity and a progressive belief in the value of knowledge to improve lives. For him there was no contradiction between faith and reason, or between a rigid orthodoxy and acknowledging the diversity of God’s ways. Nor was there a contradiction between being a puritanical, Law-abiding Muslim and a compassionate humanitarian who respected the accomplishments of European culture.”