Harem Scare 'Em

About the Show

When Jodie, Sam, and Fred warp to the Topkapi Palace in the Ottoman Empire during the 16th century, they meet Selim, Suleiman the Magnificent's son, and his wily monkey, Dimples! The kids find themselves in a race through the palace and up to the top of a minaret with a crazed Dimples, who suddenly starts wielding a scimitar and looking and sounding an awful lot like Mad Jack!

Introduction

Suleiman the Magnificent, ruler of the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century, conquered many lands and allowed diverse cultures to exist within his empire. Comparing and contrasting his accomplishments with those of Alexander the Great or other famous conquerors can give students a new perspective on world history.

Historical Background

At its height, the Ottoman Empire's lands stretched as far as Yemen to the south, Hungary to the west, Persia to the east, and Russia to the north. This large empire was ruled by a single family that produced an unbroken line of sultans (rulers) from the 1300s until the early 1900s. Under Suleiman—a sultan renowned for his sense of justice, his dedication to his people, his skills as a warrior, his understanding of Islam, and his artistic achievements—the Ottoman Empire experienced a golden age from 1520 to 1566.

Europeans called Suleiman "the Magnificent," but the Ottomans called Suleiman *Kanuni*, or "The Lawgiver," because he established Ottoman law codes in order to create a unified system of justice, with Suleiman as the supreme authority.

Curriculum Connections

- conquerors
- Islam
- mosques
- Ottoman Empire
- Suleiman

Subject Areas

- architecture
- government
- history
- language arts
- social studies



Historical Background *continued*

The Ottoman Empire was known for its ruthless pursuit of new land, its great prosperity, its support for the arts and architecture, and the education of its citizens. Suleiman could afford all of these things because of the wealth he acquired through trade and taxation. During his reign, the sultan's chief architect, Mimar Sinan, built over 300 structures throughout the empire. Sinan's greatest architectural achievement was Suleiman's Mosque (called *Suleymaniye* in Turkish and Arabic)—a rectangular prayer hall covered by an eighty-six-foot-wide dome—that remains Istanbul's largest mosque. Suleiman was also a prolific poet, writing more than 3,000 poems during his lifetime.

Islam was the main religion in the Ottoman Empire, but Suleiman allowed freedom of religion. Non-Muslims were allowed to create their own communities, live in their own neighborhoods, and run their own schools. However, Suleiman did charge Christians and Jews a personal tax as payment for being allowed to practice their religion.

Sultans who came after Suleiman, including his son Selim, were less capable rulers. By 1922, the office of sultan had been abolished and by 1923 the Republic of Turkey was born. However, influences from the time of Suleiman continue to flourish in Turkey today, particularly in the skill of the artisans and rug makers who work and live there.



Want students to get even more excited about history?

Check out the Ottoman Empire adventure for kids at

www.timewarptrio.com/adventures/ottoman/

Put It Back, Jack! and other interactive games to play.

Plentifax 487—the ultimate time traveler's guide—gives facts about life during the Ottoman Empire and more!

Cool Books that kids will love.

Activity 1



The Ottoman Oracle

Creating a newspaper about the Ottoman Empire will enhance students' writing skills while increasing their knowledge of the culture.

Instructions

1. Tell students they will be creating a newspaper about life in the Ottoman Empire during Suleiman's reign.
2. Ask students to bring in copies of the daily and/or Sunday newspaper. As students browse through the sections of the newspaper, point out examples of the different types of articles. Allow each student to select the type of article he or she wishes to write (travel, food, advertisement, news article, etc.).
3. Organize students into small groups according to the type of article they selected. List the types of articles the students want to write on the board. Try to make sure that many different types of articles will appear in your class newspaper.
4. As a group, ask students to make a list of the things that characterize their type of article (e.g., advertisements have short, catchy sentences that draw your attention).
5. Have students choose a topic about the Ottoman Empire (see "Topics about the Ottoman Empire" handout). Each student should find 8–10 facts about their topic for their article.
6. Once students have written their articles, lay out the newspaper either by hand or on the computer. Include visuals (such as student drawings) if possible.
7. Have students take turns sharing their writing with the class. If two or more students have chosen the same topic, compare and contrast the information they've presented.

Objectives

- to understand the achievements of the Ottoman Empire
- to experiment with different writing styles

Materials

- writing materials
- daily and/or Sunday newspapers
- "Topics about the Ottoman Empire" handout

Curriculum Standards

- **NCSS**
  Individual Development & Identity: Identify and describe the ways regional, ethnic, and national cultures influence individuals' daily lives.
- **NCTE/IRA**
  Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

Topics about the Ottoman Empire

- Architecture and art
- Daily life
- Economy (especially taxation)
- Education
- Entertainment (poetry, music, etc.)
- History of the sultans
  (especially Mehmet II and Suleiman I)
- Islam
- Janissaries
- Law
- Marriage and family
- Military strength
- Religious freedom
- Roxelana and the royal family
- Women

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Activity 2

Turkish Delight

Students learn about the history of Turkish rugs as they design one of their own.

Instructions

1. As Jodie finds out in the show "Harem Scare 'Em," Turkish women have been weaving rugs for centuries. Tell students they will be learning about Turkish rug makers. They will also create their own rug design using traditional colors and symbols.
2. Using the "Create Your Own Turkish Rug" handout, review the history of Turkish rugs. You may want students to research Turkish rugs themselves.
3. Explain the way the Turkish rugs are usually laid out (a rectangular rug with a border that goes all the way around and a pattern made up of symbolic shapes in the middle). Ask students to select the colors they want to use and then color the first rug design on the handout. Next, ask students to design and color their own rugs using the outline on the handout.
4. Give students time to share their rugs and explain why they used the colors and shapes they chose. Post them in a class display.



Objectives

- to learn about Turkish rugs
- to design a rug

Materials

- "Create Your Own Turkish Rug" handout
- research materials
- art and writing supplies

Curriculum Standards

- **NCSS**
  Culture: Explain and give examples of how language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development and transmission of culture.
- **NCTE/IRA**
  Students use a variety of technological and informational resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

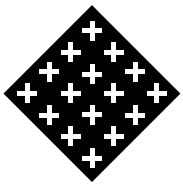
Create Your Own Turkish Rug

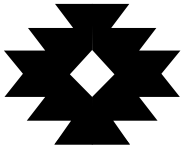
Turkish handwoven rugs are works of art that continue a tradition developed over hundreds of years. Weavers were primarily women and archeological evidence has shown that weavers were part of society as far back as 7000 B.C.E. Rugs were first woven out of wool. Around 552 C.E. silkworms were smuggled into Turkey by two Byzantine priests. After that, many rugs were made of silk.

Rugs were used by nomads and city dwellers as blankets, wall coverings, doorway hangings, and floor rugs. The most important function of a Turkish rug is as a prayer rug on which Muslims kneel and pray daily. Each handwoven rug is a work of art that expresses something personal about the weaver. Usually each rug has a border that goes all the way around it. The middle is made up of a pattern of geometric shapes. Each geometric pattern is a symbol and each color that is woven into the rug has significance.

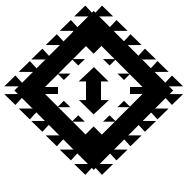
Use the following colors and symbols to create your own rug designs.

Symbols


eye


star


fertility


dragon


ramshorn

Colors

Green is the color of hope, renewal, and life. It is used sparingly because it is the holy color of the Prophet.

Red is the color of fire, joy, enthusiasm, and faith, but it can also symbolize sorrow.

Blue is the color of strength and power.

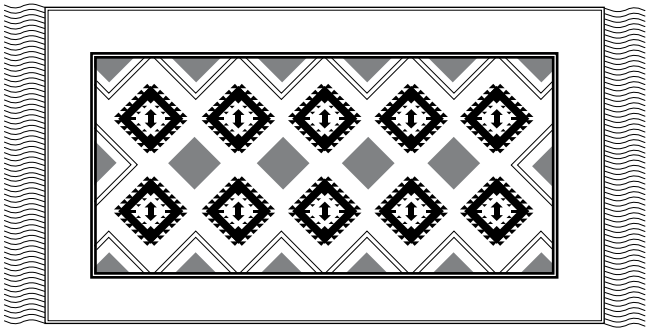
Orange is the color of humility.

Yellow is the color of the sun, which symbolizes the joy of life.

White is the color of cleanliness, innocence, and purity.

Black is rarely used, except for design outlines, because it is the color of mourning.

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Create Your Own Turkish Rug

Instructions

1. Pick two or three colors to use for each rug.
2. Decide where each color will go.
3. Use your plan to color your Turkish rugs.

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Resources

NOTE: There are many different ways to correctly spell the name "Suleiman." Several variations are used to be consistent with the Web site or book referenced.

Recommended Books

For Teachers

Nonfiction

A Foreshadowing of 21st Century Art: The Color and Geometry of Very Early Turkish Carpets by Christopher Alexander. (Oxford University Press, 1993) This book explores an extraordinary collection of Turkish rugs and explains the significance of many of the designs.

Istanbul: The Imperial City by John Freely. (Penguin, 1998) This book describes the history of this vibrant city, from its foundation to the present.

Ottoman Centuries by Lord Kinross. (Harper Perennial, 1979) This is a chronicle of the history of the Ottoman Empire, from its inception under Osman I to its decline after the exile of Mehmed VI.

Suleiman the Magnificent: The Man, His Life, His Epoch by Andre Clot. (Saqi Books, 2004) This book details Suleiman's campaign to extend the geographic boundaries of Islam.

The Turks in World History by Carter Vaughn Findley. (Oxford University Press, 2004) This book explores the economic, social, and political history of the Turkish people, from two thousand years ago to the present.

Tribal and Village Rugs: The Definitive Guide to Traditional Patterns and Motifs by Peter F. Stone. (Thames & Hudson, 2004) Through full-color images, this book explains the motifs, designs, and patterns in rugs from the Near East and Central Asia.

For Students

Nonfiction

Around the World in 1500 by Virginia Schomp. (Benchmark Books, 2004) Introduces important events in Europe, Asia, and the Americas in 1500.

Mosque by David Macaulay. (Houghton Mifflin, 2004) The construction of a fictional mosque circa 1595, modeled after the work of the Ottoman Empire architect Sinan, combines architectural details with insight into Islamic culture and religion.

Muhammad of Mecca: Prophet of Islam by Elsa Marston. (Franklin Watts, 2001) Information about Muhammad, as well as information about Muslim beliefs and practices, is presented in this introduction to Islam.

Muhammad by Demi. (Margaret K. McElderry, 2003) This book tells the story of Muhammad's life in words and pictures.

The Ottoman Empire by Lucile Davis. (Blackbirch Press, 2004) Life During the Great Civilizations series. This overview of the Ottoman Empire provides information on families, homes, clothing, work, and more.

The Ottoman Empire by Adriane Ruggiero. (Benchmark Books, 2003) Cultures of the Past series. Offers detailed information about all aspects of the Ottoman Empire, including an in-depth description of the reign of Suleyman.

Süleyman the Magnificent and the Ottoman Empire by Miriam Greenblatt. (Benchmark Books, 2002) Rulers and Their Times series. Provides information on Süleyman's military and personal triumphs and defeats, and the daily lives of his subjects.

Resources

Web Sites

THE OTTOMANS: SULEYMAN
www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/OTTOMAN/SULEYMAN.HTM
Offers commentary on Suleyman as a leader, builder, lawgiver, and conqueror, as well as links to information about succeeding sultans.

PALACE OF GOLD AND LIGHT: TREASURES FROM THE TOPKAPI, ISTANBUL
caron-net.com/may00files/may00gal.html
The Corcoran Gallery of Art displays photographs of Ottoman treasures online.

READWRITETHINK: PRINTING PRESS
www.readwritethink.org/student_mat/student_material.asp?id=36
This interactive tool from NCTE allows students to lay out their articles like a real newspaper. (NOTE: This site takes a minute to load.)

SULEIMAN'S MOSQUE
http://www.guideistanbul.net/suleyman.htm
A brief history of this famous mosque, as well as photographs of its interior and exterior.

Please note:
Although these sites were verified at the time of publication, Web site addresses and content are frequently subject to change.

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