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COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Center for Middle Eastern Studies

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Title: Indigo in the Modern Arab World

Fulbright Hays Oman and Zanzibar Program June-July 2016

Author: Victoria Vicente

School: West Las Vegas Middle School, New Mexico

Grade Level: 7-10 World History, United States History

Purpose:

This lesson is an overview of the geography of Oman and to find out more about the Burqa in Oman. There are examples provided, artwork examples, a photo analysis, an indigo dyeing activity, and readings from, "Language of Dress in the Middle East."

Activate knowledge of the region by asking students questions, for example:

What is the color of the ocean? The sky? What does the color blue represent?

Have you ever heard the word Burqa? Can you find the Indian Ocean on a Map? Oman?

Are you wearing blue jeans?

Time: 150 minutes for the lesson

Extension Activity: Three days for the indigo dyeing process.

Required Materials:

Map of the Indian Ocean Region, Map of Oman, including Nizwa, Bahla, and Ibri, Internet, Elmo, Projector, Timeline of Indigo in Oman, show the video clips about dyeing indigo, have the students fill out the photo analysis sheets, and then for the extension activity, spend at least three days or 15 minutes per class for a week, dyeing the material.

Resources:

1. Map of Oman and the Indian Ocean region
<http://geoalliance.asu.edu/maps/world>
<http://cmes.arizona.edu>
2. Video clips for background information:
[Http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pG1zd3b7q34](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pG1zd3b7q34)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7z6B7ismg3k>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ay9g6ymhysA&feature=related>
3. National Archives Photo Analysis Form or create your own.
4. Photos from Nizwa Fort, by Victoria Vicente, 2016.

5. Images E-G, Unesco. Org
6. Book, Languages of Dress in the Middle East, Tapper and Ingham, 1997.
Pages 137-143
can be used in class for readings about the Burqa, and various regions in Oman that utilize indigo Burqas.
<https://books.google.com/books?id=Lo63AwAAQBAJ&lpg=PP1&dq=languages%20of%20dress%20in%20the%20middle%20east&pg=PA10#v=onepage&q=languages%20of%20dress%20in%20the%20middle%20east&f=true>
7. Indigo in the 19th Century
<http://www.qdl.qa/en/indigo-trade-gulf-nineteenth-century>
8. Indigo in Nizwa and Ibri, Oman today
<http://www.artiststrong.com/seeing-blue/>
9. Blogs about Indigo in the Middle East
<http://blogs.ubc.ca/barber/files/2016/01/Indigo-A-magical-dye.pdf>
<http://howtolivelikeanomaniprin#81FA40>
10. Indigo instructions/materials for extension project, with pictures of results.

Procedures:

- a. Map the Indian Ocean Region
- b. Map of Oman (find a map with Nizwa and Ibri)
- c. Students ask questions about the region
- d. Historical Significance of Indigo, related to your class
- e. Readings from pages 137-143
https://books.google.com/books?id=51QWcY07KXwC&lpg=PA3&ots=qZ_71mi6iw&dq=indigo%20plant%20from%20the%20middle%20east&pg=PA3#v=onepage&q=indigo%20plant%20from%20the%20middle%20east&f=false
- f. Show the following video to the students about traditional indigo dyeing:
<Http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pG1zd3b7q34>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7z6B7ismg3k>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ay9g6ymhysA&feature=related>
- g. National Archives Photo Analysis sheet, Photo analysis with photos A-G
- h. Indigo dyeing activity

Photo Analysis Worksheet

Step 1. Observation

A. Study the photograph for 2 minutes. Form an overall impression of the photograph and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photo into quadrants and study each section to see what new details become visible.

B. Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

People	Objects	Activities

Step 2. Inference

Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.

Step 3. Questions

A. What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

B. Where could you find answers to them?

Extension Activity:

Three class periods, depending upon the size of your classes.

H. Indigo dyeing activity: indigo dye I recommend: Indigo Tie Dye Kit, purchase from a Amazon for around \$10.00, a 5 gallon bucket with a lid, rubber gloves for everyone, cotton fabric for dyeing, I recommend Kona brand, can provide one sheet and cut up into pieces for the students or have students bring in a cotton t-shirt. This is an amazing activity for students to be able to watch their fabric turn from green to blue. PVC pipes to wrap the fabric around or doll rods. Dip dye the fabric. Hang to dry, repeat to achieve various shades of blue.

Suggested Materials for Indigo Project:

Unit on Trade: Indigo

1 week to complete process/ 10-15 minutes per class

2 (5) gallon buckets with lids

14 yards of prepared cotton (prepared for dyeing) for approximately 95 students

Cut cotton into 15x15 squares/ for 95 students

Indigo dye 3 packets Indigo Tie Dye Jaquard Kit, Amazon

Drying rack

String/twine

Rubber bands (2000)

Plastic gloves

Aprons

Plastic tarp

Clothesline

Clothespins

Popsicle sticks

Binder clips

Willow sticks

Objects for designs: Wooden blocks 4x4

PVC Pipe

Stirring Stick

Adaptations:

Adapt lesson for a unit on trade, geography, color, or the environment. Follow all IEP's and other instructional methods mandated by law/school district. Have students work in small groups of 4 if this relates to your classroom. My students were engaged in the project on an individual learning level.

Assessment:

Students are assessed on their written responses to the history of indigo in the Indian Ocean region, geography of Oman, and their effort and responsibility in the indigo dyeing process. The students created an instruction book that highlighted the process and the historical references.

Abstract:

Indigo is a colorfast blue dye. Chances are if you are wearing blue jeans today, they have been dyed using indigo. Indigo is a plant and it originated in the Indus Valley in India and was found between the fourth and second millennium B.C.E. It has been used in production throughout the Arab World. Widespread cultivation of indigo began in the sixteenth century. Marco Polo was the first explorer to reach Asia. What he found was indigo and began trading it through the Silk Road. During the Middle Ages indigo moved from Baghdad to the west, during this time the Portuguese developed water routes to India, and indigo trade became easily accessible. Today, Oman and it's proximity to India have close ties to the Indigo trade. The Bedouin dye their burqas or facemasks with Indigo, and weavers use the plant to dye their wool. Women in Oman wear the traditional burqa and it is seen around the Mutrah Souq represented on clothing items.

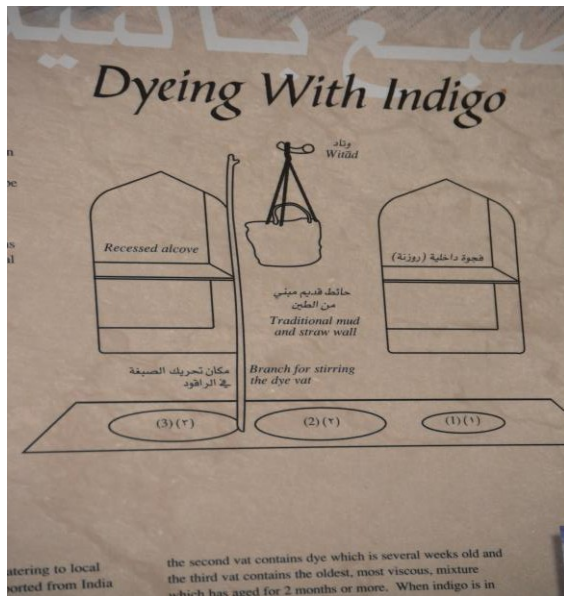
A . Photo analysis, Nizwa Fort,Oman.
Photo: Victoria Vicente



B. Photo analysis, Nizwa Fort, Oman.
Photo: Victoria Vicente



C. Referral chart from display in Nizwa Fort, Oman
Photo: Victoria Vicente



D. Mutrah Souq in Muscat, Oman
Photo, Victoria Vicente June 2016



E. Indigo Plant, Google Images



F. Dried Indigo, Google Images



G. Drying Indigo cloth, Google Images

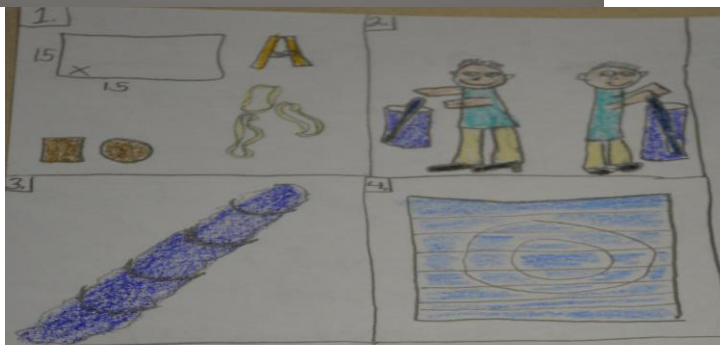


Photos from my Eighth Grade Class at West Las Vegas Middle School, Las Vegas, NM
October 2016



Indigo Dying

The middle colonies used to use indigo to dye cloth. They also used it as a cash crop. A cash crop is a crop sold for money.



Historical Synopsis:

For centuries Indigo was the world's only blue dye. It became a valuable commodity in world trade. Near the end of the 19th century, all this came to a sudden end when Synthetic Indigo was brought into the market.

Joaquin Pe



