



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Center for
Middle Eastern Studies

Assignment Description (For Educators)

Title: Migrations across Morocco: Community College Research/Writing Assignment

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Purpose/Connection to the Curriculum: This assignment is designed for community college/lower-division university writing, human geography, or modern World History classes. Throughout history Morocco has served as a crossroads of migration between Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. The assignment helps students examine multiple perspectives on migrations from medieval times to the present: examining the reasons for such movements (conquest, exchange of goods/ideas, colonialism, immigration), the changing directionality of the migrations, and the impact on affected populations.

Overview: This is a research paper assignment. It is presumed that students have a basic knowledge of research methods and documentation of sources. The assignment includes five short background writings on: (a) al-Andalus (medieval Muslim-controlled Spain), (b) the expulsion of Jews and Muslims from Spain and the later activities of those refugees who went to Morocco, (c) the impact of European colonialism (Spanish, Portuguese, French) on Morocco, (d) Morocco's relations with the world in early-mid-20th century (world wars and independence), and (e) migrations from and across Morocco in modern times (Jewish migration to Israel, Moroccan migration to Europe, contemporary migration of Sub-Saharan Africans through Morocco). Each written section ends with suggested topics for student research.

Objectives: Students are expected to: conduct research and write about a period of cultural interaction involving North Africa and Europe or the Middle East. Guided by the readings and research suggestions, students are expected to analyze various perspectives of the same issue/event, develop their research/writing skills, improve their understanding of cultural diffusion, and deepen their knowledge of the reasons for and effect of migrations throughout history and today.

Suggested Procedures

1. Background: Discuss Morocco's geography and culture. (You may use the included map activity – which students may do in groups or individually – as a discussion starter.)

Folder #2, Questions on Morocco. (Including questions and two outline maps)

2. Ensure that students are divided into 5 groups. You can divide them – or allow them to choose their groups (with you setting a maximum number – according to the number of research topics – for each group). Students should then read the pre-assignment reading for their group. **Folder #3, Group Briefings and Assignment Sheets.**
3. Within their groups, students should discuss the pre-assignment reading and choose research topics (with each student taking a different topic). Remind the groups that, even though each person is writing an individual research paper, they are welcome – even encouraged – to help each other find sources.
4. After writing their papers, students should report their findings to the group.