



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

**Center for
Middle Eastern Studies**

Cross-Cultural Contact
A lesson Examining Influences on
Architecture in Morocco

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Materials:

Text: Southern Morocco Casa Editrice Bonechi, Florence Italy
ISBN 88-476-1656-5 (excerpts provided in PowerPoint)

La Maison de Lalla Chama by Nathalie Logie and Ahmed Taieb El Alj
ISBN 9954-21-110-1 (illustration provided in PowerPoint)

Moroccan Art Workbooks for use in elementary schools. (in PowerPoint)

PowerPoint “Cross-Cultural Contact” (includes photos, worksheets, text) – in 4 parts

Procedure:

Powerpoint 1:

Read text excerpt (slides 6–9). Whole class discussion of architecture as a product of necessity (local climate, need for protection), available building materials, and aesthetics.

Compare Berber casbah and ksar (slides 10-15) with Anasazi cliff dwellings (slides 4,5). Note that southwestern United States and Morocco share geography and climate.

Now view Berber casbah and ksar slides, and record prominent, repeated geometric shapes.

View slides 16-17 (Jerusalem’s Dome of the Rock and Tunisia’s Kairouan Mosque—7th Century). What geometric shapes are repeatedly used in the two buildings?

Compare geometric shapes in 7th Century Islam-influenced (Middle Eastern) structures with shapes in traditional Berber structures (restored and ruins) (slides 18-20). Note the pointed arches.

View modern mosques of Casablanca and Marrakesh (slides 21-23). What geometric design elements are similar to the 7th Century structures? Relate this to the spread of Islam to Morocco.

Powerpoint 2:

Examine mural painting from modern Timoulay Hotel in Agadir (slides 1-6). Record the prominent, repeated geometric shapes. Note that these shapes include traditional Berber casbah/ksar designs as well as Islam-influenced arches.

Slides 7 – 13 are taken from Elementary Art workbooks. Study the workbooks and note the shapes children are instructed to incorporate in their drawings of buildings. Distinguish between the traditional Berber and Middle Eastern shapes.

Slide 14 is from a current children's book, La Maison de Lalla Chama. How does the house show the blending of traditional Berber and Middle Eastern shapes.

Slides 15 and 16 are photos of a modern door in Morocco, and a sitting room in a modern hotel. What shapes and influences are seen in the carving on the door and design on the wall?

The Roman city of Volubilis (slides 17-20) includes mosaics dating from the 1st and 2nd Centuries.

Powerpoint 3:

Slides 1 through 12 are examples of the *zellij* and mosaic art found throughout Morocco. Slide 13 is another example from the children's workbook teaching the art of repetition and geometric design.

The French Protectorate period in Moroccan history resulted in many architectural changes. Contrast area of the Ville Nouvelle, constructed by the French, and the old city of Fes, seen in map (slide 14).

Using a Venn diagram, compare and contrast the traditional medina (15,16) with the French Ville Nouvelle (17). The same pattern can be seen in Marrakesh and Casablanca.

Powerpoint 4:

The Art Deco architecture in Sidi Ifni (slides 3-26) is a perfect example of a blending of cultural styles. The Spanish Consulate is colonial in style, while many other structures show both Islamic and Art Deco design elements. The Hispano-Berber Art Deco church (now law courts) combines religious influences with traditional Berber geometric shapes.

Evaluation:

Create your own structure, blending components of two distinct cultures.