

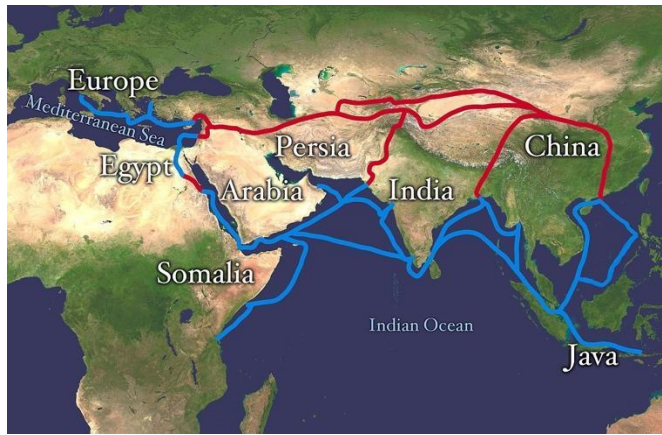


THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

## Center for Middle Eastern Studies

**Jamison Shuck**  
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University of Arizona Center for Middle Eastern Studies

### Travel Log to Ancient Petra

Unit Overview	
Grade/Subject	9 <sup>th</sup> grade World History/Geography (can also be adapted for middle school social studies)
Guiding Questions	How did different cultures interact and trade at the peak of Petra's influence?
Assessments	
Summative Assessments	Students will assume the identity of a travelling merchant from a neighboring civilization and create a travel journal that documents their imaginary voyage to Petra and their interactions with the Nabataean people.
Instructional Resources	
Maps	 <p>(Public Domain)</p>
Websites	Google Maps Streetview – Tour of Petra: <a href="https://www.google.co.uk/maps/about/behind-the-scenes/streetview/treks/petra/?scrlybrkr=6bf3c109">https://www.google.co.uk/maps/about/behind-the-scenes/streetview/treks/petra/?scrlybrkr=6bf3c109</a>  Other student resources: <a href="https://www.amnh.org/explore/ology/archaeology/the-ancient-city-of-petra2">https://www.amnh.org/explore/ology/archaeology/the-ancient-city-of-petra2</a> <a href="https://www.amnh.org/explore/ology/archaeology/a-walk-through-the-ruins-of-petra">https://www.amnh.org/explore/ology/archaeology/a-walk-through-the-ruins-of-petra</a>
Images	Images of Petra can be used according to teacher preferences. If the teacher has actually visited Petra, personal photos are recommended.
Videos	Short video for introduction to Petra:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezDiSkOU0wc&t=84s&ab\\_channel=NationalGeographic](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezDiSkOU0wc&t=84s&ab_channel=NationalGeographic)

Materials needed

- Computer with projector for introduction
- Copies of introduction reading sheet
- Journal/Scrapbook paper for student project
- Scissors/glue sticks/colored pencils

*Lesson Procedures*

*Note: This lesson is designed to be used in conjunction with a class simulation on trade in the ancient world. There are many Silk Road related classroom simulations available online (both kinesthetic classroom activities and online simulations). The teacher should use the activity that works best for their particular classroom.*

Procedures:

- In order to re-introduce the theme of international trade, students will talk with a partner and together will make a list of everything that they physically have (in their backpack, pockets, clothes, etc...) that comes from another country. (5 minutes)
- - Teacher will then prompt students to share some of their international items and their country of origin. (5 minutes)
- - Teacher will introduce the theme of the Silk Roads and international trade in the ancient world by projected a map showing the different trade routes between Europe, Africa, East Asia, and India, pointing out that many of these routes converge in the Middle East (Petra).
- Teacher will play a very short video (2 minutes) from National Geographic to introduce Petra to the students.
- In pairs students will read a short introduction to the Nabataean people and Petra (See appendix 1). When finished students will “turn and talk” and discuss the following questions.
  - o How did the Nabateans build such an important kingdom in the desert?
  - o What do you think it would have been like to live at Petra? Why?
  - o How do you think travelling to Petra is different today? Would you like to visit? Why?
- After 5 minutes to read and 2-3 minutes to turn-and-talk, some students will share their ideas/opinions with the class.
- After a short class discussion, the teacher will introduce the unit project. Reflecting on the previous trading simulation and by using the Google Streetview Walking Tour of Petra website, students will create a travel journal/scrapbook based on their imagined voyage to Petra. The travel journals should include multiple entries (at least five), as well as drawn maps or illustrations. The journal will be relatively open-ended, giving students a lot of choice and ability to be creative. See Appendix Two for student instructions and prompts for journal/scrapbook topics.
- The amount of class time dedicated to the project will depend on the specific classroom and the teacher’s needs and availability, however three 45-minute periods or 1 ½ 90-minute blocks should provide a starting framework.

Following pages:

*Appendix 1: Short introductory reading for pair turn-and-talk.*

***The Nabataeans and the Ancient City of Petra***

*Appendix 2: Student instructions (can be posted online or physically printed)*

***Petra: A Travel Journal***

**The Nabataeans and the Ancient City of Petra**

Petra was founded over 2000 years ago along the ancient trade routes between Arabia, Egypt, and the Mediterranean Sea. As a center for trade, the capital became very wealthy and powerful. The busy city was bustling with life, full of lush gardens, ornate houses, and markets loaded with exotic goods from India, Arabia, and Egypt.

### **A Nomadic Beginning**

The story of Petra begins with a group of Arabian nomads called the Nabataeans (*pronounced "Nab-a-tee-ans"*). As nomads, they moved from place to place, living off the land and herding camels, sheep, and goats.

Over time, their sharp survival skills and knowledge of the desert helped the Nabataeans become successful traders. They gained control of the important trade routes that moved spices and incense from Arabia to Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea.

We know that these nomadic merchants became very rich as desert traders, and slowly gave up their goatskin tents to build the grand houses and monuments that became Petra. But it is a mystery why these people gave up their nomadic life to settle down in one place.

The Nabataeans were experts at surviving in the desert because they knew how to collect and distribute water. An impressive system of rock-cut channels and underground water pipes carried water from permanent springs and seasonal streams.

The Nabataeans also developed a way to collect and store water in watertight holes or cisterns. Hidden underground, these cisterns kept water safe from both evaporation and enemies.



*Image Credit: Aleksandra H Kossowska / Shutterstock*

### **Controlling Trade Routes**

Petra began as a main stopping point for Nabataean and foreign traders. These nomadic merchants carried textiles, incense, spices, ivory, and other precious goods grown or manufactured in Arabia, Asia, and Africa. As the trade market grew, so did Petra.

Hauling heavy loads across the vast, barren deserts was hard and risky work. For a price, the Nabataeans provided shelter and water at settlements along the trade routes. They also charged tolls to foreign traders for crossing into their territory. All the profits helped pay for the Nabataean state, including the spectacular capital of Petra.

Trade brought more than wealth and exotic goods to Petra. As traders from around the world passed through Petra, they brought new ideas and culture from places like Egypt, China, and Greece. Petra became more than a center of trade—it was also a cultural center of the ancient world.



*Image Credit: Coinweek.com*

### **A City Carved in the Cliffs**

Petra is filled with spectacular tombs, monuments, and houses that were carved into the sandstone cliffs. These elaborate structures were chiseled by hand out of the rose-red rocks, then covered with stucco and painted bright colors.

The people of Petra liked to show off their wealth and hired master builders to create these masterpieces. Starting from the top down, builders chiseled the detailed designs by hand right into the sandstone cliffs. The design of the massive columns, grand staircases, and classical statues show the influence of contact with Greece and Rome.

Winding roads, stairways, and water channels were also cut along the natural curves of cliffs and canyons. The city of Petra was a wonder for travelling merchants coming to trade from as far away as Rome, China, and East Africa.

*"The Ancient City of Petra: AMNH." American Museum of Natural History, <https://www.amnh.org/explore/ology/archaeology/the-ancient-city-of-petra2>.*

## **Petra: A Travel Journal**

Despite the difficult climate and geography, Petra has been a center for travelers for two thousand years. While today, most visitors are tourists who are interested in learning about history, taking photos, and buying souvenirs, in ancient times, people traveled to Petra to do business.

People came from all over the Roman Empire, from Han Dynasty China, from Gupta India, from Persia, from the Kingdom of Aksum in East Africa, and from hundreds of other smaller places. They all travelled to Petra to make deals, trade their goods, exchange ideas, show off their cultures, and to make money.

Travelers often keep a journal, scrapbook, or travel log to remember their journey by. Your task is to adopt the identity of one of these ancient travelers visiting Petra on business. **You will create a travel log/journal/scrapbook that tells the story of your visit to Petra.**

Use your imagination. Be creative. Choose one of the “other” civilizations as your character. Are you a Roman merchant? A Chinese traveler? An Aksumite trader? What would it have been like to visit Petra nearly two thousand years ago? You should use the Google Street View walking tour of Petra to get an idea of what the city is like. Use headphones to follow the guide and learn about the different places in Petra.

For your journal/travel log, you are free to be creative and go in your own direction. Below you will find several prompts that can help you get started. Your journal should include a minimum of five separate days

Some prompts/topics that can be written about include:

- o Who are you? What’s your name? Where do you come from? What is your home like? How old are you? Do you have a family? How do they feel about your long trips? How long have you been a traveler?
- o Why did you decide to travel to Petra? What are you hoping to experience/accomplish on this trip?
- o Include a packing list. What kinds of things did you bring from home to trade? (Research suitable/realistic goods to include). What kinds of things did you bring to help you on your journey?
- o How was your journey to Petra? What adventures/problems/interesting things did you experience on the way?
- o Include a map (drawn by hand) of your journey. How did you arrive at Petra?
- o What were your first impressions of the city of Petra? What did you see? What was the weather like? How did you feel? What were you thinking when you first arrived?
- o Who are some of the other people who you met while doing business at Petra? What was interesting about them? Where did they come from? What did you learn about their homeland? Did they tell you any interesting stories about their lives/home societies?
- o What is your opinion about the Nabateans who call Petra home? What would be the pros and cons about living in Petra?
- o What are some of the goods and ideas that you will bring back to your home city? How do you think these new things/ideas will change your society?
- o What are some specific places (include at least three) in Petra that you visited? Describe them. What was it like to visit these places? How do they compare to places back in your home?
- o Illustrations of landscapes, coins, places, buildings, people, goods for sale, etc. are encouraged.
- o Inclusion of physical mementos and artifacts (ticket stubs, receipts, stickers, photographs, selfies advertisements, etc...) glued into the journal are also encouraged (even though such items are anachronistic).

When finished, your travel journal/scrapbook should include various writings, descriptions, pictures, maps, and artifacts. It should be more than just a few pieces of paper with paragraphs. Make your classmates believe that your journal was brought back from an actual trip Petra!