

Leading a Discussion from the Powerpoint Slides

1. Introduction

A. **(Slide 1)**: How do you think money tells a story? What can you learn from looking at it?

B. **(Slide 2)**: Where is the Middle East located? On which continents? (a little bit of Europe, western/southwestern Asia, and northern Africa) Point out that Afghanistan isn't on this map, but it's the country just east of Iran.

2. What can you learn about culture from looking at currency?

A. Language.

1. Arabic countries.

a. Look back at the map in slide 2. Which countries use Arabic as the major language? (There are many of them, but be sure they identify Iraq (NOT IRAN), Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco.

b. **(Slide 3)** What do you notice about the writing? (It's different from the Latin alphabet that we use in English. They write from right to left, the opposite of us. They sometimes use their writing as art: calligraphy.)

2. **(Slide 4)** Israel

a. What are the major languages spoken in Israel? (Hebrew and Arabic.

b. Hebrew is on the front; both languages – and English – on the back. Hebrew and Arabic LOOK very different, but their words and grammar are similar. Both are in the same family, the Semitic family.)

3. **(Slide 5)** Turkey

a. What do you notice about the first money printed by the Turkish republic? (Arabic alphabet)

b. How is modern Turkish different? (It is written in the Latin alphabet. The language was CHANGED in the 1920s, so that it would be written in the Latin alphabet because it works better with Turkish vowels AND because Turkey wanted to be more like the West.)

3. **(Slide 6)** What are the major languages of Afghanistan? (Pashtu, Dari, and others) What do you notice about the alphabet? (It is similar to the Arabic alphabet – though the languages are NOT similar. They write from right to left.)

4. **(Slide 7)** What is the major of Iran? (Persian or Farsi) What do you notice about that alphabet? (Again, it is similar to Arabic even though the languages are very different.)

B. Religion.

1. What is the major religion in the Middle East? (Islam – the people are called Muslims)
2. What other religions are there? (Christianity and Judaism)
3. **(Slide 8)** Mosques are Muslim places of worship.
4. Why are there not pictures of synagogues (Jewish places of worship) on Israeli money? (The government tries to keep religion separate, like in the U.S.)

C. **(Slide 9)** History

3. What can we learn about government from looking at currency?

A. **(Slide 10)** Some countries have a king (or ‘sultan’ or ‘emir’) or another ruler who rules for life (not elected).

B. **(Slide 11)** Some countries show both a king and a parliament on their money.

C. Iran

1. **(Slide 12)** When a government changes, the pictures on the money change too. These are pictures of older Iranian money (before 1979) with pictures of the king (shah).
2. **(Slide 13)** Iran is now an “Islamic Republic” with an elected president. There is no more king – and no pictures of the old kings on Iranian money. But today there is a religious (Muslim) leader, who holds a lot of power and sometimes tells the elected president what to do. Looking at the large number of bills with pictures of Khomeini (the first religious leader after the revolution in 1979), how powerful do you think that leader is?

D. **(Slides 14 and 15)** When a dictator is kicked out, the money is changed too. (the example of Saddam Hussein of Iraq)

4. Conclusion: While we are spending money, we can learn a lot from looking at it!