



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Center for Middle Eastern Studies

Lesson Plan

(for use in secondary English Composition or Geography classes)

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Rationale for the lesson: Nowruz, the Persian New Year, is an important SECULAR holiday celebrated throughout western and central Asia. It is a great way for students to learn about the geography and culture of that region of the world and also to develop their critical thinking and writing skills by comparing and contrasting that holiday with the Western holidays of Christmas, New Year's, and Easter.

Background (1-2 class periods):

1. Students can read the background handout (included in this lesson) and/or look at the website: <https://surfiran.com/nowruz-2020-iranian-new-year-2020/> OR show the included PowerPoint overview.

2. View and discuss Nowruz traditions in different countries through watching some or all of the following, very-short YouTube videos. (Note: They are in the PowerPoint as well, allowing you to click on the link directly to open the videos.)

BBC intro to Nowruz (2 min., 19 sec.):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=on9KQ5UTq4U>

Silk Road Dance Company (3 min., 14 sec.):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uq40CGTB1eg>

Nowruz in Iran (2 min., 11 sec.): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSIjMxxBKO8>

Nowruz in Azerbaijan (4 minutes, 22 sec.):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSIjMxxBKO8>

Nowruz in Iraqi Kurdistan (2 minute, 8 sec.):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGsCx1nx9-Q>

and (1 min., 34 sec.): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyakC8mJKEM>

Nowruz in Uzbekistan (4 min., 53 sec.):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnoxzyy0D_M

Nowruz in Tajikistan (3 min., 27 sec.): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-KF-Cmpz1-c>

Nowruz in Afghanistan (3 min., 16 sec.):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRqKBDYHL3Y>

3. Writing Assignment – see the attachment included with this lesson.