

1: Vocabulary Lesson for Cities of Light

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Overview and Purpose of the Lesson:

The video *Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain* contains a large number of possibly unfamiliar vocabulary terms that might interfere with students’ understanding of the film. This set of lessons is intended to be used prior to viewing each segment of the video to help students learn or review such terms in advance. In each section, students work alone or in a small group to determine the meaning of vocabulary terms by using context clues found in actual quotes from the video. This strategy serves two purposes. First, it familiarizes students with difficult terms before they hear them in the video, aiding comprehension. Second, it exposes students to some of the film’s key concepts in advance, making the film’s presentation their second exposure, again aiding comprehension.

Objectives:

- Define important terms found in the video, *Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain*.
- Articulate key concepts from the video.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of “Islamic Spain Preview Vocabulary” – One per student
- Class set of “Islamic Spain – Quotes From the Video” -- One per student or small group

Time: About 10-15 minutes prior to the viewing of each segment

Procedure:

1. Before showing the first segment of the video, give each student a copy of “Islamic Spain Preview Vocabulary.” Also give each student or small group of students a copy of “Islamic Spain – Quotes From the Video.”
2. Review, if necessary, the reading strategy of using context clues to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Perhaps model the strategy by doing a “think aloud” using a term from the first segment.
3. Have students use the quotes to complete the matching for the first section. [*NOTE: The numbers to the left of the quotes refer to timing cues in the film.*]
4. Go over the answers. Discuss the terms as well as the quotes in which they were found. Ask students to make predictions about the segment they are about to view based on what they have learned.
5. Show the first segment of the video. Discuss afterwards.
6. Repeat the above procedure for each segment that you choose to show.
7. Collect the class set of quotes at the end of the class period.

Assessment (optional): Include a vocabulary quiz as part of the overall assessment for the unit or give two or more smaller quizzes as warm-up or closure activities if the film is being used across more than one class period.

Student Handout 1a: Cities of Light -- Preview Vocabulary

The video *Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain* contains a number of terms that may be unfamiliar to you. One way to deal with such terms is to use context clues to figure out their meaning. This can be difficult when the term is being used in a video rather than in a reading since you can't easily go back and review what was said. In this set of activities you will be provided with a printed set of actual quotes from the video that you can use to find the context clues and determine the meaning of terms in advance. For each chapter of the video use the clues to match each term with its meaning.

Chapter 1: Migration

- | | | |
|-------|---|-----------------|
| _____ | 1. the acceptance of the differing views of other people and fairness toward them | A. vulnerable |
| _____ | 2. moving from one place to another | B. migration |
| _____ | 3. powerless; considered unimportant | C. marginalized |
| _____ | 4. to treat badly or unfairly | D. persecute |
| _____ | 5. to proclaim officially | E. tolerance |
| _____ | 6. people, animals, or plants that are native to an area | F. indigenous |
| _____ | 7. open to attack | G. promulgate |

Chapter 2: Foundation

- | | | |
|-------|---|------------------|
| _____ | 1. a group of people within a larger group that sometimes disagrees with or fights with other members of the larger group | A. beleaguered |
| _____ | 2. harassed; under severe pressure or hemmed in | B. integrated |
| _____ | 3. someone who disagrees with the government | C. faction |
| _____ | 4. to be flexible and allow others to fit in | D. accommodating |
| _____ | 5. people of the highest social class | E. aristocracy |
| _____ | 6. a line of rulers from the same family | F. dynasty |
| _____ | 7. made up of different groups of people that | G. dissident |

cooperate and work well together

Chapter 3: Unity

- | | | |
|-------|---|---------------|
| _____ | 1. a population composed of many different groups | A. diverse |
| _____ | 2. bringing water to an area that does not have enough | B. emissary |
| _____ | 3. to make something easier to do | C. facilitate |
| _____ | 4. long, bitter, and violent conflict | D. irrigation |
| _____ | 5. an ambassador or representative sent on a specific mission | E. strife |

Chapter 4: Division

- | | | |
|-------|---|------------------|
| _____ | 1. a situation that seems unlikely, but is actually true | A. taifa |
| _____ | 2. to become fully developed, reaching a highest point | B. efflorescence |
| _____ | 3. one of many small kingdoms that made up Medieval Spain | C. interfaith |
| _____ | 4. involving people of different religious faiths | D. paradox |
| _____ | 5. a high ranking government official | E. vizier |

Chapter 5: Purification

- | | | |
|-------|---|------------------|
| _____ | 1. somebody who practices the same religion as another person | A. interaction |
| _____ | 2. merging together into a single group | B. coalescing |
| _____ | 3. to gradually intrude and take away somebody's property | C. fructify |
| _____ | 4. to cause to become productive or fruitful | D. coreligionist |
| _____ | 5. getting rid of something harmful or unwanted | E. purification |
| _____ | 6. communication and cooperation between two or more groups of people | F. encroach |
| _____ | 7. shocked by something awful | G. appalled |

Chapter 6: Crossroads

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|-------|--|------------------|
| _____ | 1. Spain and Portugal | A. ironic |
| _____ | 2. something that makes a change happen or brings about an event | B. Iberia |
| _____ | 3. causing strong disagreement or disapproval | C. controversial |
| _____ | 4. something that happens that is not what one would expect and may have a funny twist | D. catalyst |

Chapter 7: Survival

- | | | |
|-------|---|-----------------|
| _____ | 1. someone who is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about something | A. Mudejar |
| _____ | 2. living together in the same place | B. aficionado |
| _____ | 3. the front face of a building | C. cohabitation |
| _____ | 4. a small remaining part of something that has largely disappeared | D. puritanical |
| _____ | 5. A Muslim who lived under Christian rule | E. vestige |
| _____ | 6. believing in very strict religious rules and principles | F. façade |

Chapter 8: Loss

- | | | |
|-------|---|----------------|
| _____ | 1. an investigation that is harsh or unfair | A. succumb |
| _____ | 2. a Muslim who converted or pretended to convert to Christianity | B. Inquisition |
| _____ | 3. no longer committed to something | C. Morisco |
| _____ | 4. to give in to something powerful; collapse | D. renege |
| _____ | 5. to go back on a promise or commitment | E. lapsed |

Student Handout 1b: “Cities of Light” Vocabulary Quotes

Migrate/Migration:

2:42 They [the barbarian tribes] migrate across Europe searching the Roman provinces for a land of their own.

3:10 The migrations bring a great movement and mixture of cultures into the remains of the broken Empire.

9:12 So in that sense, we should think of the Muslims, in some way, as a migratory wave just like the Visigoths, except 200 years later.

Iberia:

3:20 In 476 the Visigoth tribes reach westward to the isolated Roman peninsula of Iberia, what we now call Spain and Portugal.

10:27 The bulk of the people who invaded Iberia, which is Portugal and Spain, were Berbers, or Imazighen.

10:37 (continued from above) A young, newly converted Berber warrior named Tariq ibn Ziyad leads 7,000 men in an invasion of the Iberian Peninsula.

1:18:31 It was not only the Christians in Iberia that were fighting the Almohads. It was some sort of Crusade. People had come from France, from Germany. All the crusaders came to defeat the Muslims, especially after the Crusades failed in the East.

Marginalized:

5:18 For the first hundred years of Visigoth rule, the Jews enjoy relative freedom, but are never in a position of power. ...They were a marginalized minority within a culture which didn't necessarily understand the Jewish practices or Jewish religion.

Persecute/persecution:

5:57 In the late 6th century, this growing religious tension erupts in violence as the Visigoths convert to Catholicism and begin to actively persecute the Jews of Spain.

6:22 Jews have this very long history in Spain, but are always a tiny minority and are, at the worst of times, very badly persecuted.

13:33 The Muslim armies find allies among the persecuted Jews in the conquered cities of Spain.

15:32 Jews and Christians may worship freely without fear of persecution, but they must submit to Islamic authority and pay a tax in exchange for this protection.

47:44 The Muslim Ibn Hazm is rewarded not with trust, but with persecution, in the taifa kingdom of Seville.

1:02:43 Under the North African Almohads, many Jews and Christians are forced to flee Al-Andalus. Entire families must abandon their ancestral homes, or face humiliating persecution.

1:50:29 When the Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492 they already had a hundred years of intensive persecution behind them.

Promulgated:

6:05 Most of the evidence that we have comes from a series of law codes which were promulgated by Visigothic kings and which typically restricted the actions of Jews, forced them to convert, and ultimately enslaved them.

Indigenous:

10:34 In North Africa, the growing Islamic Empire gathers strength, converting large numbers of indigenous tribesmen called Imazighen, or as the Greeks named them, Berbers.

Vulnerable (and taifa):

11:12 The Berber warriors prove useful in Islam's expansion as Arab leaders set their sights on the now vulnerable Visigoth kingdom of Spain.

54:11 So in some ways these taifa kingdoms were very interesting places in the sense that because they were vulnerable, they opened a new phase in interaction between Christians and Muslims.

Faction(s) (and coreligionist):

15:05 Once the dynasty had arrived and conquered the Christian enemy, it quickly began to splinter, and there were Arab factions, and there were Berber North African factions.

17:16 The Muslim society he [Abd al-Rahman] found in Al-Andalus was also highly conflicted. And I don't mean between Muslims and Christians. I mean between rival Muslim factions.

17:36 As the son of a Berber and an Arab he [Abd al-Rahman] is able to quell the tensions between these Muslim factions.

47:56 One of the aspects of the taifa kingdoms at this point in time was that along with each political faction, you often get different, divergent, religious beliefs.

54:36 In Granada a Muslim religious leader, Abu Ishaq, mobilizes a faction of Muslims against the city's Jewish community, preaching that a Jew or a Christian should not have authority over a Muslim.

1:00:03 The North African factions are appalled to see that their coreligionists appear to be drinking alcohol.

Beleaguered:

17:25 But Abd al-Rahman finds support among the beleaguered townsfolk longing for a strong leader.

Dissidents:

17:40 Abd al-Rahman is able to pull together dissidents and take control of Muslim Spain.

Accommodating:

21:52 Because the political elite in Al-Andalus did not feel threatened by their minorities – they didn't feel threatened by the Christians – they didn't feel threatened by the Jews – they were accommodating.

Aristocracy:

15:17 The Berbers, long treated as lower-class citizens, begin to revolt against the Arab aristocracy.

23:16 He (Ziryab) revolutionized cooking, he revolutionized hairstyles, music, the way the aristocracy acted.

Dynasty/Consolidated:

20:59 Abd al-Rahman's reign begins a new dynasty that will forever shape the future of Al-Andalus. His dynasty brings to Spain a consolidated (single) rule that lasts for centuries.

Integrated:

21:35 Over the next century, Cordoba's own glory continues to grow, as not only Muslims but also Christians and Jews begin to develop an integrated culture that is unique to Al-Andalus.

21:59 The Jews and Christians, especially the Jews, are pretty well integrated into the economic life and the social life. They do business with Muslims. They interact with Muslims. So space is made for them.

Tolerance/Intolerance (and purification):

22:55 But this world too quickly vanished. Greed, fear, and intolerance swept it away. Puritanical judgments and absolutism snuffed out the light of learning. Within a few centuries the fragile union of these peoples dissipated like smoke. The time of tolerance was lost forever.

25:30 So the background to this cultural sharing, this cultural creation, is a lot of tension... this leads to a series of civil wars which drag out through the 800's. These civil

wars divide the communities of Al-Anadlus threatening to tip the fragile balance between tolerance and violence. (Foundation segment)

1:03:02 The Almohads certainly represent an authoritarian, an absolutist perspective. They came and swept away the tolerant traditions of the caliphate. Judaism and Christianity were simply outlawed.

1:05:19 In a frenzy of purification and intolerance, the Christian crusaders intend to cleanse the Holy Land of Muslims.

1:49:04 After 1492 tolerance has disappeared. That's gone. That official doctrine of tolerance is gone. You do find people being forced to convert...

Diverse/Diversity:

25:21 By 900, the Islamic Empire has taken root in Spain. But the dynasty of Prince Abd al-Rahman still struggles for peace and unity among the diverse peoples of Al-Andalus. (Unity segment)

29:42 If we look at the court of Abd al-Rahman the third, it reflects in many ways all of these trends of diversity that had been developing in Al-Andalus up to that time.

47:32 Granada is a kingdom, which has a large percentage of Jews in its population, and is also characterized by a diverse Muslim population. So it was really a complex situation, much like the Caliphate had been.

1:01:41 The North Africans see the root of this failing state in the unfamiliar, open, and diverse society of Islamic Spain.

1:03:48 Over the next century, these North African armies flood into Al-Andalus. First the Almoravids, then a new, more puritanical Muslim group, the Almohads, seeking to transform the diverse kingdom into a purely Muslim state.

1:03:50 In the dust of the refugees, the light of Al-Andalus, the land once known for its diversity, prosperity and scholarship, is lost.

1:39:33 Granada was a really diverse community. They were eating the same food. They were wearing the same kind of clothes. They were probably singing the same songs – speaking the same languages. It's really one culture.

1:53:31 When there is diversity there is, by definition, friction. But of course if you eliminate diversity, everyone would be the same and there would be no friction, but there would be no creativity that results from that tension.

Green Revolution:

37:32 With this new knowledge, agriculture booms. Cordoba blossoms like never before during what's called the Green Revolution.

Irrigation:

37:53 Using the existing Roman aqueducts, the Muslims develop advanced techniques such as the water wheel to bring water from the mountains into the cities and growing

fields. Sophisticated irrigation has practical uses in Al-Andalus, but it also allows the fostering of exquisite gardens.

Facilitate:

33:03 There is this text of our Caliph Abd al-Rahman the third who had contacts with the Byzantine Emperor in Byzantium who sent him a lot of books and a lot of people to translate them who knew Arabic. It is the Jewish scholar Ibn Shaprut who facilitates the translations of these great classical works of science brought to Abd al-Rahman III's court from the Christian Byzantines.

1:54:00 Cultural transmission in Islamic Spain was facilitated by the fact that Islam did not erect barriers to knowledge. In other words, there was no knowledge that was considered sacrilegious – that was wrong. All knowledge was all right.

Paradox/Paradoxically:

44:45 But paradoxically, this is also the period of time which offers perhaps some of the greatest cultural splendor. And the reason for this is that each one of these petty kings wanted to have the most brilliant court possible. (Division segment)

Strife (and vulnerable):

43:07 This was a time of great upheaval when native Spanish Muslims turned against Berbers, when Jews and Christians became more vulnerable. It was – and really the best expression for this is an Arabic one – it was the time of fitna – of strife. (end of Unity segment)

1:06:21 Appeals to absolutes on both sides led to hardening of positions – led to great strife within those governments and then you see kind of a downward slide.

1:46:16 By 1487 internal strife in Granada's royal family allows the Christian armies to conquer the final Muslim cities surrounding Granada, leaving the capital city itself vulnerable to attack.

Efflorescence

40:53 By the beginning of the 11th Century, the unified Al-Andalus has enjoyed a cultural efflorescence. (Division segment, beginning)

Taifa (and dynasty, vulnerable):

41:00 But without the authority of its great leader, Caliph Abd al-Rahman III, Al-Andalus now begins to break apart, dividing into separate, smaller kingdoms called taifas.

44:28 With the fall of Cordoba and the rise of the many smaller taifa kingdoms, each local ruler must compete for power, setting the Muslim leaders at odds with each other.

47:18 As the years pass, word of the Jewish scholar ha-Nagid's reputation for scholarship spreads and soon he is invited to serve in the court of one of the most powerful taifa kingdoms, Granada.

51:39 Indeed, with no central authority in Cordoba to unite its people, the rise of the taifa kingdoms turns Muslim against Muslim, beginning a period of division and war. As the powerful taifa kingdoms of Seville and Granada compete with each other for supremacy, they turn on the more vulnerable taifa kingdoms to the north.

53:23 The rise of the taifa kingdoms forever changes Al-Andalus, shifting the landscape of Muslim power in Spain. (End of Division segment)

Emissary, tribute/tributary and taifa:

29:57 In 955, he [Abd al-Rahman III] sends his secretary, the Christian Recemund of Granada, as his diplomatic emissary to Otto the first, the king of Germany.

31:36 Also in Abd al-Rahman III's court is the Jewish scholar and poet Hasdai ibn Shaprut, who acts as a diplomatic emissary as well, and is the Caliph's personal physician.

52:02 In a bid for survival, these northern Muslim kingdoms send emissaries to the Christian kings with an appeal for help. In exchange for a payment of tribute – a financial payment – the Christian monarch would offer a modicum of protection against enemies.

1:40:00 Christian monarchs over the decades left Granada as a tributary that would pay a certain amount of money, but would never be invaded. And from 1250 or so all the way to 1492 there's this prolonged twilight of Muslim rule in Spain, no longer a meaningful threat.

Coalescing and encroachment:

59:21 One of the first great advances of these now coalescing Christian kingdoms – one of their first great advances or encroachments into Muslim territory – is the taking of Toledo, one of the great cultural cities of the Islamic part of Spain.

59:31 Threatened by the encroaching Christian forces, the Muslim ruler of Seville enlists armies from North Africa to help defend his kingdom with disastrous results.

1:23:35 Because Granada successfully maintains its independence under the surrounding Christian encroachments it provides a safe refuge for Muslims who must flee their homes and search for a new life.

Fructify:

1:03:57 The Jews who find new homes in the Christian North, carry with them not only their ancient Jewish traditions, but also the knowledge fostered in Al-Andalus. They planted...the products of Arabic and Islamic scholarship in Christian territories and really helped to fructify these European territories.

Interfaith:

49:50 His [ibn Hazm's] religious work [comparing religions] establishes no interfaith dialogue, no sympathy, only criticism of Christianity and Judaism.

1:13:49 So we have these wonderful little laboratories that are interfaith experiments in a sense. And to me one of the important lessons they give us is that in the end the society is richest when each individual civilization and culture is bringing something to the table as opposed to thinking 'my society, my culture, my religion alone knows everything worth knowing.' (Crossroads segment)

Aficionado, Diversity and Cohabitation:

1:32:11 Alfonso the Tenth, because he was an aficionado of Arabic culture and Islamic culture, he translated books on chess and other games that had come from the Islamic world – on falconry, so he's very visible as a figure of cultural diversity and cohabitation.

Interaction:

1:37:54 And I believe that Alhambra the Kingdom of Granada at that time reflected Islam when it was open – open to influences, open to interactions with other cultures, whether it is Christian, Jewish, or whatever...before Islam basically fell back on itself and closed doors and said we don't want to deal with the rest of the world. So Alhambra is a very good example of what happens when people open up.

Façade:

1:39:12 On the façade as you enter into the Alcazar of Seville, you see sort of polylobed arches and inscriptions that are both Latin and also Arabic. And also one sees in the small detail one sees shields – the shields of Castile.

Multiculturalism:

1:38:51 It [the Sinagoga del Transito] roughly dates from the same time as the Alcazar of Seville, and you have the same kind of multiculturalism going on there in a very overt way. If you look at the walls, you can see Arabic and Hebrew inscriptions and you can see the shield of Castile. This is one culture that has different languages, different religious practices.

Catalyst:

1:16:40 To the Christians this Muslim victory (at Alarcos in 1195) is devastating and serves as a catalyst to unite the Christian kingdoms in one cause.

Inquisition:

1:43:01 With a strong Catholic monarchy ruling over Christian Spain, the Pope authorizes the Spanish Inquisition – a bloody investigation into the private religious lives of their people.

1:44:29 The Inquisition is often held up as the single greatest sign of the horrors of this Christian society that emerged in medieval and early modern Spain.

1:45:00 (continued from above) The Spanish Inquisition is one of the last tragic chapters in the history of Al-Andalus. Soon, Isabel and Ferdinand's dream of a unified Christian Spain becomes a reality.

Vestige/Vestigial and Moriscos:

1:39:13 The kingdom of Granada enjoys relative peace and prosperity even after the plague subsides in Europe. In that last vestige of Al-Andalus, Muslims and Jews live together and thrive.

1:52:01 In the centuries following the fall of Grenada, Muslims were given the same choice as Jews in 1492 – convert to Christianity or leave Spain. Some converted Muslims, called Moriscos, continue to worship in secret, trying desperately to hold on to their traditions. During the 16th century there were Muslims in Spain, kind of cut off from the rest of the Islamic world and leading a vestigial Islamic life.

Mudejar:

1:30:24 Muslims living under Christian rule in Medieval Spain were called in Arabic *Mudajjan*, or in English, Mudejars. These are Muslims who lived under Christian rule and who were basically artists, laborers, builders.

Appalled:

1:00:09 The North African factions are appalled to see that their **coreligionists** appear to be drinking alcohol. They're appalled to see that their fellow Muslims are mingling with Christians and Jews so readily because they are people who have a much stricter, much more by-the-book, much more rigid concept of how Muslims should live and work."

Vizier:

45:36 Samuel ibn Negrala is asked to compose letters on behalf of the Berber vizier, or prime minister of Grenada, who finds the scholar's work so impressive that he is eventually promoted into the court of the king himself.

54:49 It [an attack on the Jews of Granada] was instigated by a Muslim preacher who was also a poet. And he wrote a very scurrilous (nasty) poem in which he attacked the ruler, Badis, for having a Jewish Vizier.

1:36:00 ...the poets who wrote those poems (on the walls of the Alhambra) were the viziers of the ruler.

Lapsed:

1:43:20 Originally the Inquisition was meant to deal with Christians who were lapsed – not with Jews or with Muslims. But over time, it began to concern itself with converted Jews who lapsed back to Judaism. And then of course once we have masses of Muslims who have converted to Christianity, it began to concern itself with converted Muslims, we call them Moriscos, who had lapsed back into Islam.

Purify/Purification/Puritanical:

53:36 By 1060, the Muslim-Christian alliances may have granted the smaller Muslim taifa kingdoms a temporary reprieve from the aggression of the larger taifas, but they also contribute to a growing demand among many Muslim and Christian leaders for a purification of their religion and of their land.

53:59 In Rome, Pope Alexander II sees the intimate relationships between Christians and Muslims as immoral and he seeks to purify Spain of all Muslims.

56:55 In northern Spain Christian armies begin their form of purification as well, marching against Muslim cities taking them by force, one by one in their reconquista, or reconquest of Spain.

1:05:56 So the Crusades bring, for example, a harshening of the rhetoric on the Christian side and conversely, on the Muslim side we're getting these more puritanical dynasties from North Africa launching Jihads into southern Spain to kind of shore up their beleaguered coreligionists.

1:32:04 Almost half the population of Europe succumbs to the disease [the plague]. The countless deaths only feed the puritanical fervor in Christian territories. Hatred and violence erupts as Jews become the first scapegoats.

Expert quotes: Ending Summary Quotes on Muslim Spain:

Expert 1: "The reconquest of Spain by the Catholics – by the Christians – created very much a sense of loss. And even until today Muslims who visit Andalusia, who visit Cordoba and Granada and Seville, feel this nostalgia – feel this sense of loss."

Expert 2: "When there is diversity there is, by definition, friction. But of course if you eliminate diversity, everyone would be the same and there would be no friction, but there would be no creativity that results from that tension."

Expert 3: "Just think of what Medieval Spain gave to Europe. We have this technology for making paper. We have this irrigation technology." (Paper technology has not been mentioned previously, irrigation only briefly.)

Expert 4: "Cultural transmission in Islamic Spain was facilitated by the fact that Islam did not erect barriers to knowledge. In other words, there was no knowledge that was considered sacrilegious – that was wrong. All knowledge was all right. So that's right there a form of cultural diversity, that they are consuming with no barriers to knowledge."

Expert 5: "So, kind of a rough and ready togetherness came about. Not an ideological tolerance, but a practical kind of tolerance."

Expert 4: "I think that we're fascinated by Islamic Spain because we project into it our own desires for a world where Jews, Christians, and Muslims all kind of got along – I mean more or less got along. And I think we look at that and wish – it's wishful thinking – wish that in the modern world relationships were easier."

Expert 3: "And we see that to a greater or lesser extent people have to find a way to live together – find a way forward despite some of the contradictions they feel. Despite the fact that you know, 'your belief is heretical in my eyes but we're still here together in this city and we may have shared values and we're going to find a way to make this work for the good of our own children and families.'"

Narrator: “The history of Muslim Spain reveals the immense potential that lies in our shared values. Its triumph and tragedy compels us to embrace again a culture of tolerance and to heed the wisdom most sacred to all Christians, Muslims, and Jews – to love God above all things and to love your neighbor as yourself.”