



*Lesson: Iago On Trial*  
Grade 7

**STANDARDS: California**

7.2 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the civilizations of [Islam in the Middle Ages](#).

1. Identify the [physical features](#) and describe the climate of the [Arabian peninsula](#), its relationship to surrounding bodies of [land and water](#), and [nomadic](#) and [sedentary](#) ways of life.
2. Trace the origins of Islam and the life and teachings of [Muhammad](#), including Islamic teachings on the connection with [Judaism](#) and [Christianity](#).
3. Explain the significance of the [Qur'an](#) and the [Sunnah](#) as the primary sources of Islamic beliefs, practice, and law, and their influence in Muslims' daily life.
4. Discuss the expansion of Muslim rule through military conquests and treaties, emphasizing the cultural blending within Muslim civilization and the spread and acceptance of Islam and the [Arabic language](#).
5. Describe the growth of cities and the establishment of trade routes among Asia, Africa, and Europe, the products and inventions that traveled along these routes (e.g., spices, textiles, paper, steel, new crops), and the role of merchants in Arab society.
6. Understand the intellectual exchanges among Muslim scholars of [Eurasia](#) and [Africa](#) and the contributions Muslim scholars made to later civilizations in the areas of [science](#), geography, [mathematics](#), [philosophy](#), [medicine](#), [art](#), and [literature](#).

7.6 Students analyze the [geographic](#), political, economic, [religious](#), and social structures of the civilizations of [Medieval Europe](#).

1. Study the geography of the Europe and the [Eurasian land mass](#), including its location, topography, waterways, vegetation, and climate and their relationship to ways of life in Medieval Europe.
2. Describe the spread of Christianity north of the Alps and the roles played by the early church and by monasteries in its diffusion after the fall of the western half of the [Roman Empire](#).
3. Understand the development of feudalism, its role in the medieval European economy, the way in which it was influenced by physical geography (the role of the manor and the growth of towns), and how feudal relationships provided the foundation of political order.



4. Demonstrate an understanding of the conflict and cooperation between the [Papacy](#) and [European monarchs](#) (e.g., [Charlemagne](#), [Gregory VII](#), [Emperor Henry IV](#)).
5. Know the significance of developments in medieval English legal and constitutional practices and their importance in the rise of modern democratic thought and representative institutions (e.g., [Magna Carta](#), [parliament](#), development of [habeas corpus](#), an independent judiciary in England).
6. Discuss the causes and course of the religious [Crusades](#) and their effects on the Christian, Muslim, and Jewish populations in Europe, with emphasis on the increasing contact by Europeans with cultures of the [Eastern Mediterranean](#) world.
7. Map the spread of the bubonic plague from [Central Asia](#) to [China](#), the [Middle East](#), and Europe and describe its impact on global population.
8. Understand the importance of the Catholic church as a political, intellectual, and aesthetic institution (e.g., founding of universities, political and spiritual roles of the clergy, creation of monastic and mendicant religious orders, preservation of the Latin language and religious texts, [St. Thomas Aquinas](#)'s synthesis of classical philosophy with Christian theology, and the concept of “[natural law](#)”).
9. Know the history of the decline of Muslim rule in the [Iberian Peninsula](#) that culminated in the [Reconquista](#) and the rise of [Spanish](#) and [Portuguese kingdoms](#).

## Social Studies: Social Context of the Medieval Times

**Motivation:** Discuss the [Moors](#). How did they influence European art and culture? Ask students to infer how other Europeans felt about Moors, especially in terms of power relations. Ask them to relate this to the minority experience in the [United States](#) today.

**Group Activity:** Watch *the Story in Othello* in “*Theater*” with *Hector Elizondo* without the sound. Have students focus on the images. Ask them to predict what the play is going to be about. Then watch *The Story* and *Hector’s Performance* with the sound. Ask students to compare their predictions with the actual story. How does this story show a Moorish influence? How is it a universal story without Islamic influences? Then ask them if they feel this is a complete story. Do relations between Muslims and non-Muslims need to be a part of the story to make it more real? Or is it okay to have a story that does not take race into account? If the latter is true, why did Shakespeare specify that Othello had to be Moorish?

**Independent Activity:** Find examples of ways in which Muslim culture influenced European culture. Ask students to bring in images, music, and other examples of these traditions. Encourage students to find examples of things we take for granted that are actually Muslim in their origins. Then ask students to use these objects to talk about relations between Muslim and non-Muslim Europeans. How were these Muslim cultural



artifacts incorporated into our culture? Why were they considered useful or attractive?  
Have students present reports to the class.