

The incursion and spread of the Arabs in Medieval Europe



This scenario works best, if the lessons are delivered in a computer lab and, it goes without saying, that it is ideal for online teaching as well. However, apart from the second teaching period, we offer suggestions on how it can be taught in a regular classroom.

1st Teaching period

Activity 1

Time: 5'

Type of activity: Brainstorming based on visual and auditory input

Class organisation: Classwork, individual, classwork

Actions/Tasks: The teacher projects on the whiteboard a mind map that she has created with [EdrawMind](#). In the [mind map](#) the teacher has already inserted, as starting nodes, a picture of a manuscript written in Islamic calligraphy and link of a youtube video presenting ancient arabic music, from which she has removed ads and possible inappropriate content using [viewpure](#). The original link for this video is [here](#) and the new one is [here](#). The teacher has also created and inserted in the mind map a QR code leading to the song so that the students later have easy access to it through their phones or tablets. The students look at the picture and at the same time listen to the music. The teacher asks them if they know the name of this civilization and tells them to write down as many words related to the arabian culture, as they can think of. If they are not sure of a word they can note it down in their native language and the teacher will help them translate it, or they can look it up. Finally, the teacher places the words that the students have found to the mindmap and draws associations among the words.

Activity 2

Time: 15' for the presentation and 8' for the activities

Type of activity: Presentation of new input and consolidation

Class organisation: classwork

Actions/Tasks: The teacher presents the new material (establishment and principles of Islam, reasons and consequences of the Islamic spread) with an [H5p course presentation](#).

After the end of the presentation, the teacher checks if the students have comprehended the new input by asking the students to complete activities of various types (True/False, Drag text, Mark the words, Fill in the blanks) that she has integrated in the **H5p course presentation**. In a classroom with an interactive whiteboard, the teacher can ask the students to provide the answers and fill them in the whiteboard. If a computer lab is available or in case of online teaching, the teacher gives the students time to do the activities individually or in pairs.

Activity 3

Time: 10'

Type of activity: Timeline creation

Class organisation: Pairs and then whole class

Actions/Tasks: Using padlet, the students create a [timeline](#), placing all of the important events from the establishment of Islam (622 C.E) to the conquest of Crete and Sicily in the 9th century. (The first event has already been placed on the timeline as an example.

Activity 4

Time: 5'

Type of activity: Label the map

Class organisation: Pairs

Actions/Tasks: The teacher explains to the students that while she was searching in a library to find information about the Arabs, she came across an old map, showing the expansion of the Arabs. Unfortunately, the map was in Arabic, a language unknown to her, and she needs the students' help in order to note down where the

events took place. She leads them to an activity (labelled diagram) she has created with the use of [wordwall](#) and tells them to match the names of the places where the events they put in the timeline took place with their location on the map. The activity can be found [here](#).

Homework

Time: 2' (for the instructions) and about 15' to 20' (homework)

Type of activity: Instructions

Class organisation: Individually (homework)

Actions/Tasks: The teacher tells the students to visit the website: "[1001 inventions](#)" and watch the outstanding short film: "[1001 inventions and the library of secrets](#)", (or <https://youtu.be/JZDe9DCx7Wk>), starring Ben Kingsley, which proves in a few minutes that the Middle Ages were not so dark. Then she asks them to think about *the invention that impressed them most* from the ones they saw in the video and *write a paragraph* explaining why. They should refer to its inventor, give a few details about the way it used to work and explain how this invention developed through time and how it is used today.

2nd Teaching period

This teaching period should take place in the school's computer lab.

Activity 1

Time: 5'

Type of activity: Instructions and division in groups

Class organisation: Classwork

Actions/Tasks: The teacher explains the task and divides the students in **8 groups** using the "[Scroll group generator](#)". Each group takes a different role (generals, architects, linguists etc) and they have a different "mission".

Activity 2

Time: 25'

Type of activity: Webquest

Class organisation: Groupwork

Actions/Tasks: Each group represents a social /professional group with special interests in Medieval Europe. Each of the 8 groups has a *special mission!* There are GENERALS, ECONOMISTS, ARCHITECTS (2 different groups), PHILOLOGISTS, LINGUISTS, and ART HISTORIANS. The missions are of different types for each group. The GENERALS for example have to study a map and read two extracts from historical books in order to record the most critical battles that stopped the further expansion of the Arabs in the Western Europe and the Byzantine Empire and the ECONOMISTS, after studying several online texts have to answer a series of questions about the types of financial activity of the Arabs, the innovations they adopted, their influence on the global economy and the products that they used to trade. The missions can be found in WORKSHEET 2. The teacher acts as a facilitator.

By trying to accomplish the missions, the students delve into this civilization and understand the motivation, the attitudes and the behaviour of these people, and of course the historical context and the impact of the Arabic civilization.

Activity 3

Time: 15'

Type of activity: Presentation

Class organisation: Groups present to class

Actions/Tasks: Groups present their findings to their classmates.

3rd Teaching period

Activity 1

Time: 10'

Type of activity: Flipbook - presentation of new input

Class organisation: Classwork

Actions/Tasks: The teacher shows the students a [flipbook](#) created with [storyjumper](#) in which she presents the repulse of the Arabs in Tours (Poitiers) and Constantinople and the use of the Greek fire.

Activity 2

Time: 10'

Type of activity: Watching 2 videos to comprehend some details

Class organisation: Students divided in two large groups (or plenary)

Actions/Tasks: The teacher asks half of the students to watch a video from [youtube](#). Half of the students are going to watch a clip from the video: "[The battle of Tours \(732 AD\)](#)" (from 00:52 to 08:41) which is about the battle that happened in the region between Tours and Poitiers, and the rest of them are going to watch the video "[What was Greek fire?](#)", (from 1:52 to 10:40) so that they learn more details about the production and use of this incendiary weapon. While they are watching it they are instructed to pay particular attention to Charles' strategy and in particular on his decision to send Odo with a small group of soldiers to attack the enemy camp (Group A) and to the impact the Greek fire might have to a person living in the Middle Ages seeing it for the first time (Group B).

If there is no access to the school's computer lab, the teacher could use the interactive board to show the two videos to all the students and then distribute the role cards to the students on their desk. Half of them are going to write a dialogue based on the first video and half of them on the other. In this case more time will be needed, so the groups can present their dialogues in the following lesson.

Activity 3

Time: 15'

Type of activity: Role playing

Class organisation: Pairs

Actions/Tasks: After watching the video(s), the students are given role cards (or asked to look on the role cards on their worksheet) and are instructed to work with their partners in order to write a dialogue or a short sketch based on two situations that were presented in the videos. The pairs that belong to the first group are going to write about an aspect of Charles' strategy in the battle of Tours (Poitier) and the ones that belong to group B are going to write about a situation related to the use of Greek Fire.

Activity 4

Time: 6'

Type of activity: Acting out dialogues

Class organisation: Pairs present to their classmates

Actions/Tasks: As many groups as possible present their dialogues in front of their classmates.

Activity 5

Time: 4'

Type of activity: Lesson evaluation

Class organisation: Classwork or individually

Actions/Tasks: If it is possible, the students answer the questions their teacher has uploaded in ziplet.com/go. All that the students have to do is go to ziplet.com/go and enter this GO! PIN: **371434**. If no equipment is available, the teacher can pose a few oral questions to the students or ask them to write a thought on the lessons or an emoticon representing their general opinion of the scenario on a post-it. Then they can answer the questions prepared by the teacher via their PC, tablet or even their phone.

Extension

As an extension activity, the teacher can prepare a [kahoot](#) game that she has prepared. The students are presented with some words and try to guess if their origin is Arabic or not.

The 1001iEducation pack, which can be downloaded [here](#) offers many very interesting ideas about activities and research projects that will help the students get to know the Arab civilization better (from making their own pinhole camera or creating arabesque art)