

# Life on the arabian peninsula



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The Arabian Peninsula By: Minali Prasad Due Date: December 7, 2011 Class Color: Sapphire Table Number: 5 There are four different types of environments in the Arabian Peninsula. Three-fourths of the Arabian Peninsula is desert. The desert has plains and plateaus. Temperatures can reach up to 120°F or drop down to below zero. There is 3 to 4 inches of rain per year with many droughts. Flash floods are caused by the annual rainfall. The desert has many oases. Oases result in plants, shade, and water. An oasis begins when water deep underground travels to the surface.

The soil around and oasis is very fertile, so it produces plant life like grass and shrubs. Oases range from a few acres to expansive areas. The water is beneficial for farmers as they can grow their crops there as well as trade them. The coastal plain is surrounded by the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea, and the Persian Gulf. The coastal plain varies from 5- 40 miles from the heart of Arabia. There are many cliffs along the shore. The damp, moist air is the result of regular rain. Sometimes, water fills the riverbeds that intercept the coastal plains. Farmers grow crops on the coastal plains.

Traders also benefit from the coastal plains because there are seaports. The mountain ranges line the western edge of the Arabian Peninsula. Their altitude is from 1, 000 feet to 12, 000 feet high. The mountains have 20 inches of rainfall each year because of moist winds from the Southern Ocean. The mountain ranges stay cool by rain and elevation. Winter brings frost and fills the riverbeds with water. Farmers use dams and irrigation systems to help grow their crops. | Muhammad was a prophet which meant he was a messenger of God. Muhammad was important to Islamic faith because he introduced the belief in one God, also called monotheism. Before

Muhammad, people living in the Arabian Peninsula were polytheists which means they believed in more than one God. Muhammad was born in Mecca, a town that grew wealthy off of trade. At that time, Arabia was only united by culture, mostly language. Multiple families ruled the city whereas clans could only live in the city of Mecca. Mecca was a popular destination for pilgrimages. Arabs either lived in the cities or the deserts which was ruled by tribes. Muhammad's tribe was Hashim. Hashim took notice of his birth since his father had died.

Muhammad's mother sent him to live with wandering nomads who taught him Arabic traditions. At age six, Muhammad returned to the city, but soon his mother died. After his grandfather's death, Muhammad was left in the care of his uncle, Abu Talib. During his childhood, Muhammad raised his family's sheep and goats. Later, at age twelve, Muhammad experienced place farther out than the deserts on a trading journey with his uncle. As a result of his numerous trading journeys, Muhammad became a merchant. He was described as "trustworthy". Fifteen years later, Muhammad was notified, by the angel Gabriel, that he was the messenger of God.

Khadijah, his wife, convinced him convert others to the religion of Islam. Though most people believed him, some clans rejected his faith and boycotted the Hashim clan. When it became too dangerous, Muhammad moved to Yathrib on a journey called hijrah. Yathrib was renamed Madinah. Makkans tried to siege Madinah but failed. In 632, Muhammad traveled on his last pilgrimage to Mecca and gave his Last Sermon. Muhammad was important to the Islamic faith because he united Arabia with religion, set an example for Muslims on how to live and introduced Islam into Arabia. |

The “ five pillars of Islam” are the five basic rules of worship for the Islamic faith. These ideas are faith, prayer, charity, fasting, and making pilgrimages to Mecca. Muslims today still follow the five pillars of faith. The first pillar of Islam is Shahadah. Shahadah is the declaration of faith in which Muslims identify themselves as monotheists. They also declare that Muhammad was God’s messenger. People pledge to believe in God and submit to him.

Muslims also believe in angels and other creatures like them. Angels are perceived to do God’s work. The second pillar of Islam is Salat.

Salat is daily ritual prayer. Muslims show their religious discipline, spirituality, and closeness to God through salat. Muslims five times a day and are called to prayer by a muezzin. Before entering a mosque, Muslims wash their arms, face, hands, and feet. Inside a mosque, an imam leads them in prayer. While praying, people face the direction of Mecca. A person may pray anywhere they like. The third pillar of faith is zakat which is giving to those in need. Muslims believe almsgiving discourages greed because they give 2.5% of their earnings to “ purify” themselves.

Zakat was used for construction of public property. Today zakat is used for soup kitchens, clothing, shelter, orphanages and hospitals. An individual decides what the money is used for and where it goes. The fourth pillar of Islam is siyam or fasting where you do not eat or drink from dawn to dusk. Muslims show siyam through Ramadan. Ramadan is the ninth month when Gabriel told Muhammad he was a prophet. During Ramadan, Muslims begin fasting when a white thread can be identified next to a black thread. To break a fast, Muslims eat food like dates and pray where they hear parts of the Qur’an each day.

Ramadan teaches fasting and kindness. Eid-al-Fitr is a celebration that marks the end of Ramadan. The fifth pillar of Islam is hajj where a Muslim makes a pilgrimage to Mecca on the twelfth month. A person does so once in their life. Wearing white, Muslims circle the Ka'ba seven times. Later, they visit sacred sites like the Zamzam spring, Plain of Arafat, Mount Arafat and Mina. Pilgrims end with a celebration that lasts for four days. They sacrifice sheep or goats to God. This celebration is known as Eid-al-Adha. | The Arabic language emphasized learning.

Even Muhammad himself declared that “ The ink of scholars is more precious than the blood of martyrs”. Scholars from places like Europe, North Africa and the Middle East came together and cooperated to build on their ideas. Early Muslim rulers built places of learning for the students like schools, colleges, and libraries. For example, Caliph al-Ma'mun established the House of Wisdom in the city of Baghdad. This happened in 830. Scholars translated texts there. Those texts were from Greece, India, China, and Persia. There was also a House of Wisdom in Cairo which served for the purpose of scholars.

This building opened in the tenth century. Another example is the famous library in Cordoba, Spain which has over 400, 000 books. Some texts studied by scholars were those of Greek philosophers like Plato and Aristotle. Muslim scholars tried to use reason and logic. An Arabic philosopher tried to combine reason with faith like Christian scholars but failed because he couldn't prove there was a possibility of someone resurrecting on judgment day. Ibn Sina was a Persian philosopher who gave evidence that the soul of a creature was immortal. This philosopher influenced other scholars in Europe.

<https://assignbuster.com/life-on-the-arabian-peninsula/>

Ibn Sina thought that God was the source of knowledge and that truth could be extracted through reason and revelation. | Muslim scholars made theories about the evolution of animals like al-Jahiz. Zoology is the scientific study of animals. Muslims started the first zoos. They were also advanced in astronomy. With astronomy, people used compasses and astrolabes to locate the direction of Mecca. Another example of Muslims using astronomy is that astronomers figured out the exact times to start and end Ramadan. Astronomers also discovered that the Earth rotated.

They inquired whether the Earth was the center of the universe. Muslim scholars were very curious about their universe. Muslims also made advancements in technology. They made dams and aqueducts like the Greeks to provide water for their cities. Remodeling the old irrigation systems, canals, and wells, they built new and sturdy ones. Muslims brought water from canals and reservoirs with water wheels. The land used by Muslims is dry so this was very beneficial. In mathematics, Muslims worked with ideas from India and Greece. In fact, algebra was created by Al-Khwarizmi “father of algebra” His texts are now one of the most important today. Arabic numerals also came from one of Al-Khwarizmi’s books. Arabic numerals were used for business and trade. Muslims also learned fractions and decimals from an Indian scholar. Muslim scholars emphasized the concept of zero. Zero means “something empty”. Algebra, Arabic numerals and “zero” are still used today. Muslims learned medicine from Greeks, Mesopotamians, and Egyptians. There were many hospitals in the Muslim communities. Doctors had many ways to cure the sick and treat the wounded patients.

The patients were treated with a balanced combination of drugs, diet, and exercise. Pharmacists made medications for the doctors to use. Pharmacists made different types of medications such as drugs for pain, antiseptics for infections and ointments for wounds. Surgeons did operations on the patients such as amputations, taking out tumors and removing cataracts. Some famous physicians were al-Razi and Ibn Sina. Al- Razi discovered that a bacterium is the cause of infections and Ibn Sina was called the “ prince of physicians” because he wrote a book about the treatment of diseases. |

Muslims had a unique style of architecture. One of the buildings that they created was the mosque. Mosques had towers called minarets which had a small platform like a deck so the muezzin could call Muslims to prayer. Outside of the mosque was a fountain in which Muslims could perform their washing of arms, face, hands, and feet. The prayer room was located inside the mosque where worshippers prayed, facing mihrab (niche to show the direction of Mecca). An imam led the prayers. There were many designs of mosques that showed the religious and artistic side of the Muslim community.

The four types of art in the Muslim community were geometric and floral design, calligraphy, textile and music in Muslim Spain. Muslims were famous for their art that was used for decorative purposes. Muslims did not have pictures of humans and animals because they thought only God had the right to create something “ alive”. Artists used shapes, patterns and geometry to make decorations. Decorations were also used on household items.

Arabesque was a type of decoration where nature like leaves, and flowers,

was painted onto many surfaces. Artists also used shapes like polygons in their art.

The next type of art was calligraphy (the art of beautiful writing). The Qur'an was copied in calligraphy because Muslims thought calligraphy was beautiful enough to write the words of God. Calligraphers used tools such as bamboo and ink to create calligraphy. Calligraphy was used on pottery, tiles and swords. The third type of art was textiles. Textiles are manufactures clothes. Textiles were important trade items. The types of textiles were wool, linen, silk, or cotton. The fabrics could be embroidered or dyed. Importance and rank was used to indicate through clothes.

The last form of art was music in Muslim Spain. Music centers were scattered all over the Islamic community but the music in Cordoba, Spain combined the cultures of Islam and Spanish to make their very own style. Ziryab started the first conservatory where musicians learned from him. Songs were important in Muslim Spain's culture. There were song about love, nature and accomplishments of the empire. Muslim Spain's music used instruments like drums, flutes and lutes. | The Crusades were a series of wars launched against Muslims by European Christians.

The reason behind the Crusade was to capture Palestine or the city of Jerusalem. Palestine was being ruled by the Seljuk Turks, which was a developing empire. Afraid that their strength may one day become too great to overcome, the emperor Byzantine asked Pope Urban II what to do, and he suggested they start a religious war to capture the Holy Land and destroy the Seljuks. Christians fought with Muslims against Jews and other Christians.



Their goal was to win the Holy Land. The Crusades took place in Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East.

Though Christians suffered through many hardships during the Crusades, they also gained from the war. Kings had to tax the people to pay for those who had fought in the Crusades. Feudalism among Christians ended because the monarchs grew powerful as the knight had to leave for war. The Crusades changed the way of life for Christians. They dressed in muslin, learned to eat new foods, and learned to use spices in their cooking. Muslims suffered more than Christians, but gained less. They lost Iberia to the other Crusaders. Muslims died and were murdered with their property destroyed.

However, they learned to use new weapons and military ideas. They began an army like the Europeans. The Crusades resulted in political changes for the Muslims. New mosques and schools were built. Jewish crusaders suffered the most. There were violent persecutions and murders. The French and German murdered many Jewish, destroyed synagogues and tortured the Jewish until they agreed to become Christians. Riots and massacres were the result of anti-Semitism. Christians took over and ran the Jews' trading businesses. France and England expelled the Jews. The Jews were finally forced to live in ghettos. |