

Lesson Plan

Middle East & North Africa

Length

Two 45-minute periods

Grade Level

High School

Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to describe the political, societal, economic, and geopolitical systems that characterize the Middle East and North Africa.
- Students will understand how global powers wield influence on countries in the region.

[Middle East and North Africa: The Essentials](#)



[Worksheets](#)



Class One

1. **(10 minutes) Warm Up:** Give students the attached blank map of the Middle East and North Africa. Have students work in small groups to label as many countries, cities, geographical landmarks, etc., as possible. When students have finished, show this [map](#) labeled with Middle East and North Africa country names and ask students the following questions to activate prior knowledge.
 - What differences do you notice between your group's map and the completed map? How would you explain the difference between the two?
 - Referencing the map, what comes to mind when you think of the Middle East and North Africa? What do you associate with the region in terms of language, food, religion, climate, government, etc.?
 - What major historical events have taken place in the region?
 - What major current events are currently taking place in the region?
 - What questions do you have about the Middle East and North Africa?
2. **(25 minutes) Group Work:** Have students use their assigned section from *Regions of the World: Middle East & North Africa* to complete the corresponding section of the attached worksheet. When finished, students will share and write down other students' takeaways to complete their worksheets. Assign students to the following groups:
 - National Politics
 - Regional Politics
 - Economics
 - People and Society
3. **(10 minutes) Discussion:** Lead a discussion that highlights positive trends in the region as well as some of the challenges that the region faces. Use the following questions as guidance.
 - *What are some positive trends seen in countries in the Middle East and North Africa?*
 - *How are countries in the Middle East and North Africa working to improve the quality of life of their citizens?*
 - *What are the greatest challenges faced by countries in the Middle East and North Africa?*
 - *How are governments responding to these challenges?*
 - Transition the class to tomorrow's topic by asking students to consider how the United States has played a historical role in shaping the countries of the Middle East and North Africa.

Homework

- Have students briefly respond to the following: *Why might the United States show an interest in the Middle East and North Africa? How might United States involvement either limit or intensify the challenges the region faces?*

Class Two

1. **(5 minutes) Debrief Homework:** Have students share their reflections from last night's homework with a partner.
2. **(20 minutes) Worksheet:** Group students based on the following three goals that drive U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and North Africa. Have students read through Modern History and U.S. Foreign Policy: Middle East and North Africa and complete the attached worksheet with information relating to their assigned foreign policy goal.
 1. Goal 1: Ensuring the free flow of oil from the Gulf
 2. Goal 2: Guaranteeing the security and survival of Israel
 3. Goal 3: Limiting the influence of the Soviet Union—and later Russia
3. **(10 minutes) Debrief:** As a class, share out each goal and the policies that the U.S. has used to pursue that goal. Students will write down takeaways about each goal on their worksheets.
4. **(10 minutes) Homework Prep:** With a partner reflect on the merits of U.S. interventionism in the Middle East and North Africa using the worksheet below. Students can use the following questions to support their reflections:
 1. Why have U.S. relations with the Middle East changed in recent years?
 2. How might a change in United States foreign policy towards the Middle East influence the region?
 3. In what ways is the United States still involved in the Middle East?

Homework

- Have students complete a written reflection about United States involvement in the Middle East and North Africa using the following prompt from the worksheet below: *Overall, how effective has the United States been in pursuing its foreign policy goals in the Middle East and North Africa? Based on what you know about the region, do you think the United States should change its level of involvement?*