
ART SMART

6th Grade / November

THEME:

Islamic Art



Islamic Art - 6th Grade

Islamic Art - refers to those cultures which have been strongly influenced by the Islamic faith. This faith is centered on one God and its followers are called Muslims.

Islamic Art originated in a large area from Morocco and Spain in the west, to Asia and India in the east.

The Islamic era began in AD 622 - This date is important because it is the date Muhammad migrated to Medina in western Arabia. Muhammad died in 632 and his successors were known as caliphs.

It continued to be created until the 19th century when it underwent big changes as a result of contact with the west.

Islamic culture inherited a great deal from the Greco-Roman era and most of its art forms were derived from classical art.

Eventually, it did not allow any representations of any living forms, plants/animals/people. This ban arose out of fear that people would worship these figures.

Their artwork is made up of richly patterned shapes based on geometrical design.

Modern day Iraq & Kuwait
around the Tigris-Euphrates River

Islamic Art - 6th Grade

Buildings were decorated with tiles, marbles, jewels, and mosaic (e.g. Mosques - which serve religious, political and social functions).

Calligraphy was used to decorate their architecture but then spread to other works and became the greatest of all art forms

Islamic Art – 6th Grade

Islamic art originated and prospered in the huge stretch from Morocco and Spain in the west to Asia and India in the east. (Show on a map) Islamic art continued to be created until the 19th century when it underwent profound changes as a result of contact with the West. The Islamic era began in AD 622.

Do you know why this date is important in the Islamic culture?

The date of Muhammad's migration to Medina, in western Arabia.
Islamic culture inherited a great deal from what culture?

(Hint: One you just extensively studied – Greco-Roman and most of its art forms were derived from classical art. It eventually opposed representations of any living forms, plants or animals or people.)

Show Image 1 & 2 & 3 & 4

What is this Islamic art form called? A mosque, the first architectural form of Islam, which serve religious, political, and social functions. The dome of the Rock has elaborate mosaics done in the Roman Style.

How does this building differ from our church?
Buildings were decorated with tiles, marbles, jewels, and mosaics in the midst of geometric motifs. Important parts of the niches (mihrabs) which point to Mecca, a staircase (minbar), and towers for calling to prayer (minarets).

They have very little furniture in them because Muslims use prayer mats for prayer. They take their shoes off when they go in and women and men do not pray in the same place, there is usual a screened off area for them.

Show Image 5

Islamic art forms were greatly influenced by the cultural heritages of the various conquered states. Islam replaced the iconographic representations of Christian and Buddhist art with inscriptions from the Koran, the most precious source of Islamic knowledge. Calligraphy not only became an integral part of the decoration of a building but also spread to other works and became the greatest of all art forms.

Is calligraphy an art form in our culture?

Do you consider this art?

Muslims do not draw human figures or animals because they have been taught to worship only God. Their artwork is made up of richly patterned shapes based on geometrical design. One way Muslims used this beautiful patterning is to decorate their books.

Show Image 6 Alexander Fights the Hasbahi Monster (1330-1340)

In 1258 Persia was captured by the Mongols. The invaders wrought terrible destruction, so little remains in architecture or minor arts of the period. Illuminated manuscripts of the Koran and secular books were the main art that survived.

What do you notice about this picture? Calligraphy surrounding a picture. Bright colors and solid figures blends the Eastern art with the 3-d forms and motifs of the Far East.

Show Image 7 Bahram Gur Slays the Rhino-Wolf (1530-1535)

Abu al-Qasem Mansur, or Firdawsi (his pen-name) is considered one of the greatest Persian (Iranian) poets who ever lived. According to the legend, this 11th century poet, eager to earn money for his daughter's dowry, wrote the epic poem called *Shah-Nameh*, or the "Book of Kings". In this masterful text of 60,000 couplets, Firdawsi recounted the history of the kings of Persia from mythical times up to the 7th century AD. Completed in 1010, the *Shah-Nameh* manuscript has been reproduced numerous times, often with elaborate miniatures (illustrations in illuminated manuscripts).

Mongol invasion

color
line
pattern
space

The miniature *Bahram Gur Slays the Rhino-Wolf* not only documents the life of the fearless Sassanian king Bahram V, but also allows us insight into the artistic language of the period. Islam, the religion of the Persians, forbade the depiction of human beings. This ban arose out of fear that people would worship these figures. The ban on portraying the human figure did not survive in Persia after Chinese customs were brought by the Mongol invasion in the 13th century.

What do you notice in this picture? The most 3-dimensional and most natural figure is the beast.

How is shape used? All the shapes are curved, detailed, and harmonious. Dark and bright colored shapes stand out against a pale background.

Show Image 8 Zahak Is Told His Fate (16th C) painted by Sultan Muhammad

This is another example of a miniature painted for the epic poem Shah-Nameh.

What colors stand out? The colors in the miniatures are outstanding for their purity of tone and richness of the pigment. Paper for the miniatures was prepared with extreme care and could last for as long as 500 years.

What do you notice in this painting? The miniature shows Zahak having his fortune told. As was common in Persian miniatures of the time, Muhammad took great care in showing the interior as well as the exterior of the house in order to illustrate the imposing structure and lavish furnishings.

Do you notice any patterns? Many repeated decorative motifs create patterns almost everywhere in this miniature.