

# **DISCOVERING MOROCCO**

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## **USING THE FIVE FUNDAMENTAL THEMES OF GEOGRAPHY IN ORDER TO DISCOVER MOROCCO**

Introduction to the five themes and selected activities:

The five fundamental themes help organize our thinking about an area under study.

Children learn more and can use their understanding to write effectively when their thoughts are organized. Teach the five fundamental themes to students. This is one way to help them become better students of the social studies. In addition to reading a fact based text, there is also a literature component of this unit. The main character, a child named Ali, has an adventure in the desert!

1. The first fundamental theme is LOCATION. Whenever we give or receive directions, we use the theme of location. This theme can be introduced to students as part of literature based reading. In the story "Lyle, the Crocodile" the author purposely gives an exact location, East 88th St., New York City, as the setting of the story.

2. The second theme is that of PLACE. The author in a text creates a sense of mood by describing a place so vividly that the reader feels as if he/she were there. At an elementary level, "The Secret Garden" is an excellent example of how the theme of place sets the mood for the story.

3. The third geographical theme is one of MOVEMENT. Ideas, concepts, languages, and

vocabulary move. English has borrowed many words from other languages. "Mike Mulligan and His Steam shovel" are a good book to use when introducing the concept of movement to students.

4. The ENVIRONMENT places an increasingly important part of the change man has wrought on the environment and the ways man has adapted to his environment are important parts of geography. "The Great Kapok Tree" is a good book to introduce children to the concept of human environmental interaction.

5. The last theme is that of REGION. "The Story about Ping", written over fifty years ago, is a good literature based text to introduce this concept to children. There are many examples of location, place, environment, and movement in this book, which teach children about life in China.

**ACTIVITY:** Children complete a web for the five fundamental themes as they read through the text. The web becomes an outline for writing articles (reports) or personal narratives. The web is also useful when constructing travel posters, or travel maps. The web is important in itself in that children organize specific social studies vocabulary, which assists in retention of concepts.

Cutting pictures from the National Geographic Magazine and pasting them onto the web can also be done. The photographs in the magazine better show the themes of geography to the children.

#### OBJECTIVES:

Children will read information about Morocco in order to make comparisons between Morocco and their own neighborhood.

#### STRATEGIES:

The unit uses a variety of strategies. Children read and respond to a variety of writing prompts. There are different kinds of data to compare.

#### MATERIALS:

- \*The unit includes a text to read about Morocco followed by questions for discussion.
- \*There are activities for incorporating the text with the five fundamental themes of geography which teachers can use for individual assessment or for group projects.
- \*There are suggestions for small group projects.

#### EVALUATION:

Activities for written responses are included after the text.

## NATIONAL SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS:

I Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity so that the learner can:

a. Explore and describe similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures address similar human needs and concerns

III Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for study of people, places, and environments so that the learner can:

g. Describe how people create places that reflect ideas, personality, culture, and want and needs as they design homes, playgrounds, classrooms, and the like

## NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS:

3. How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on the earth's surface

12. The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement

13. How the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence science curriculum.

FUN THINGS STUDENTS CAN DO WITH  
THE FUNDAMENTAL THEMES OF GEOGRAPHY

LOCATION:

1. Before beginning the unit, ask children to draw a free-hand map of Morocco and our community. Ask children to locate and label as much information as they know. This is an example of MENTAL MAPPING. It allows the teacher to assess what children already know and what misconceptions they might have.
2. After completing the unit, again ask students to draw a free-hand map of each country. You can use the two sets of maps to assess how much information the children have learned during the unit. Learning to draw free hand maps is an important skill. Remember to introduce the elements (attributes) of a map so that children construct maps correctly.
3. Locate Maryland (or your own point of reference) and Morocco on class maps. Relate geography as to differences in points of references.
4. Children encode/decode physical data and political/cultural maps for Morocco and Morocco. The grade/ability level of each group determines the amount of information. Always reinforce the attributes of a map. Use words like encode, decode, or construct when working with students.

PLACE:

1. Children make Moroccan post cards to send to a friend. Post cards represent physical or cultural landmarks. Children address the back of the post card and write a one or two sentence note about the landmark on the front. This is a language arts/social studies integrated project.
2. Children construct commemorative postage stamps for each region. A cultural landmark, a physical landmark, an emblem, icon, mascot of a country is suitable. Show children real life examples of domestic or Morocco or Morocco postage stamps. Children can design their own currency, too.

3. Use pictures of landmarks from National Geographic Magazines to help children identify man-made or natural landmarks from Morocco. You can use these pictures for a bulletin board.

#### ENVIRONMENT:

1. Write reports on any of the indigenous plant or animal life found in Morocco. This is a good integrated activity for science units.

2. Children investigate an environmental concern and how Morocco has worked to solve the problem. Some concerns are: lack of water, sewage treatment, over grazing, desertification.

#### MOVEMENT:

1. Children make a list of types of transportation in Morocco. They list the people, goods, and services, which use each method of transport. Intercity and intra-city transport can be studied.

2. Children locate and label countries from around the world for immigration and emigration. This can be made into a pictograph for an integrated math activity.

4. Children locate and label places throughout the world, which receive imports from Morocco, or countries from which Morocco imports goods or services.

#### REGION:

1. Children construct mobiles for Morocco with coat hangers (ala Calder) or hang the pictures on one single string. Each picture should reflect a fundamental theme. Picture from Travel

brochures is a good size for this kind of project.

2. Children watch a video of Morocco. As they watch they fill in a web using the five themes.

They become active viewers of a primary source.

3. Children construct a travel poster for Morocco with 3 parts: country name, large illustration, and a descriptive sentence telling why tourists should visit Morocco.

4. Children develop a travel poster using one item from each of the five themes. Prior experience using travel brochures is helpful. Travel agencies will give these to you, especially in November

when prior editions become obsolete.

## DISCOVERING MOROCCO

### RESOURCE SHEET 1: LOCATION

Flying from Baltimore to Morocco is a distance of almost 4,000 miles. You will fly almost due east. Morocco is a large country about the size of California. It is located on a coastal plain in north-west Africa. There are many geographical features, which help us locate Morocco on the map. The Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean wash the shores of Morocco. Two deep harbor ports are on these bodies of water: Casablanca and Tangier. Two African countries border Morocco: Algeria and Mauritania. When you locate Morocco on the map, look in the Western Hemisphere, the Northern Hemisphere, and look for the latitude 34N and longitude 7W. Most atlas pages have all of Africa in the Eastern Hemisphere. Morocco isn't!

As we will see, Morocco and our community have several similarities and differences. Morocco is a varied country. It can be divided into three regions: the Coastal Plains, the Central Mountains, and the southern desert. The landscape and climate are similar to California. Many of the same plants grow here, too. The architecture is different, however. Buildings are constructed differently, usually from concrete and cement. In this climate there are few trees for construction. The coastal plain is densely populated with gently rolling hills and soil that is good for farming. The central mountains are famous for scenic valleys, rivers, and hills which many Moroccan enjoy hiking through. The mountains are high enough to be snow covered in winter. Farming is still important here, too. The desert in the south and east is largely unpopulated.

## RESOURCE SHEET 2: PLACE

There is so much that tourists visiting Morocco enjoy! There are many natural and man-made landmarks which people think of when they remember their visits to Morocco. Natural landmarks were created by nature. The Strait of Gibraltar near Tangier is world famous. Essouria on the west coast is famous for its beaches, cool breezes, and annual music festival. Traveling by train is one way to enjoy the scenery of almost every part of Morocco. From the train you can see how much farming is done even though Morocco has a dry climate.

Cultural landmarks are man-made. Morocco has been the scene of many important historical and cultural events which people find interesting. People want to come to Morocco to learn more about these events. Rabat is the capital of Morocco. Morocco is a kingdom. The king has palaces in each large city. Many cities have a Kasbah. The Kasbah is a fortified citadel with a palace and mosque. Both Fez and Casablanca have kasbahs. Most cities in Morocco also have a medina. Medina means city in Arabic. A medina, in Morocco, is the old, traditional section of town. Streets are narrow. Many people live in the medina. Shopping both for local citizens and tourists is an important economic activity. Both Fez and Rabat have planned cities. Washington, DC, in our country is also a planned city. Roman ruins at Volubis, near Meknez, are world famous.

### RESOURCE SHEET 3: HUMAN-ENVIRONMENTAL INTERACTION

The Moroccan climate is noted for hot summers and mild winters. The climate of Morocco is very good for tourism. The climate has been very good for farming also. Generally the soil of the coastal plain is fertile and well drained. Moroccan farmers grow enough food to feed Morocco's population. Rainfall is scarce. Irrigation provides enough rainfall to grow crops. Farming is done by hand and with modern machinery. Due to overgrazing by animals like sheep and goats, desertification is a problem. This means the desert becomes larger each year. Fishermen use the extensive ocean waters along the coast to catch fish which are often exported.

Growing cities spread out on more and more farm fields each year. With increasing urbanization, there are pollution problems. Cities are connected by a rail system which is fast and efficient. These trains run on electricity. Oil must be imported. Oil is used to produce electricity. Wind power is also used to make electricity. Morocco is rich in a natural resource called phosphate which is mined and exported as a fertilizer. Moroccan cities are very clean. Litter is not a problem.

## RESOURCE SHEET 4: MOVEMENT

Movement includes many different concepts. People, animals, plants, goods and services, ideas, transportation and communication networks are all examples of movement evident in Morocco. Animals and plants move. Transportation networks are important to the economy of any region. Morocco is served by an extensive rail system although a network of superhighways is not as well developed. Travel by bus, both within cities and between cities is common. Bus travel is inexpensive. Both Casablanca and Tangier have deep water ports. Casablanca is the largest harbor in Africa. Imports and exports leave these two cities for distribution throughout the world.

Morocco has an education system which is being improved. Formerly, few children completed a high school education. The literacy rate is at about 51%. Now, children must stay in school longer. Both French and Arabic are widely understood. Morocco needs well-educated people for industry. Due to high unemployment, many workers have left Morocco. They have left to be “guest workers” in European countries like Spain or France. Some of the money they earn is sent home to Morocco to help their families.

Throughout its long history borders have often changed. The latest change occurred when the former colony of Spanish Morocco became part of Morocco.

## RESOURCE SHEET 5: REGION

There are many ways to think of Morocco as a unique region in itself. Morocco is a political unit. The Morocco has a parliamentary government and the current monarch is King Mohammed VI. The king belongs to the Alawite family. The Alawite family has ruled Morocco for over 800 years. Each administrative region (or state) has a uniqueness all its own.

Morocco is an economic region. The money tourists spend is of great importance to the economy of Morocco. Cities like Rabat, Casablanca, Marrakech, Fez, and Tangier have over a half-million people. Cities have many of the goods and services, which we are used to. Morocco has industrial regions. Over 75 percent of Morocco's exports go to neighboring European countries. It exports agricultural products like citrus fruits, olives, and livestock. Moroccan leather goods are famous throughout the world. The United States and Morocco recently signed a trade treaty which will increase Moroccan exports to the US and will encourage more people to invest their money in Moroccan businesses. Morocco was the first country, in 1777, to recognize the independence of the United States.

Morocco is a cultural region. Moroccans speak both French and Arabic. There are about 10 million Berbers in Morocco. Berber is the old term. The Berbers, themselves, encourage others to call them the Imazighen. They have a language of their own. Most of the people in Morocco are Muslims. They follow a religion called Islam.

RESOURCE SHEET 6: QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR USE AS WRITING PROMPTS  
FOR USE WITH "DISCOVERING MOROCCO"

1. Using a world map and the text, compare the location of Morocco and our community.
2. List three kinds of physical landmarks and three kinds of cultural landmarks found in Morocco. List some of landmarks for our community. How are these landmarks similar? How are these landmarks different?
3. Describe the weather conditions in Morocco. How are they the same or different from weather patterns found in our community?
4. Describe farming practices found in Morocco. Describe a rural community near your school. How is farming the same or different in your community?
5. List farm products from Morocco. List farm products grown on a farm near our school. In what ways are these products similar or different?
6. Explain transportation networks in Morocco. Which of these are found in our community? How has transportation helped make Morocco a better place to live?
7. List the ways Morocco is an important region. Next to each way list an example.

## RESOURCE SHEET 7:

### FIVE FUNDAMENTAL THEMES OF GEOGRAPHY FOR MOROCCO

#### 1. LOCATION:

Relative:

Absolute:

#### 2. PLACE:

Man-made landmarks

Natural landmarks

#### 3. MOVEMENT:

Ideas

Immigration

Import/Export

Transportation

#### 4. HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL INTERACTION:

Climate

Resources

Pollution

#### 5. REGION:

Language

Culture

Industry

Religion

## RESOURCE SHEET 8

### COMPARING GEOGRAPHY

Morocco:

Our Community:

1. Land features:

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2. Water features

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3. Temperature:

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4. Rainfall:

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5. Farming:

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6. Industry:

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RESOURCE SHEET 9: COMPARING GEOGRAPHY:

1. Contrast Morocco and our community use the data from your chart. Include two ways they are different. Include two ways they are alike. Choose data from different categories.


2. What are some special land forms and water bodies that make Morocco special? Use the atlas to help.


3. What are three natural landmarks and three cultural landmarks a visitor (tourist) might like to see? Choose one of each and explain why a tourist would want to see them.


RESOURCE SHEET 10: COMPARING CLIMATES OF TWO REGIONS

CATEGORY	BALTIMORE	RABAT
Latitude	35N	
Climate type	humid subtropical	Mediterranean
January average temp.	41 F	63 F
July average temp.	79 F	82 F
Average rainfall	45 inches	18 inches
% Winter rainfall	50%	50%

Answer these questions about 2 climates.

1. List three ways climates are similar.

1
2.
3.

2. List 2 ways climates are different.


3. Which region probably needs irrigation for farming? Why?


## RESOURCE SHEET 11: COMPARING AVERAGE MONTHLY WEATHER

	Daily high temperature		number of rainy days	
	Degrees centigrade			
	Baltimore	/Rabat	Baltimore	/Rabat
January	6	17	11	2
February	7	18	10	2
March	12	20	12	2
April	18	22	11	2
May	24	23	12	1
June	28	26	11	1
July	31	28	11	0
August	29	28	11	0
September	25	27	8	1
October	19	25	8	2
November	13	21	9	3
December	7	18	10	3

1. Make a bar graph for each weather category.

2. Compare daily temperature within Baltimore and Rabat

Describe seasonal weather in Baltimore and Rabat.

3. Compare daily temperature between Baltimore and Rabat. How is seasonal temperature alike?

How is it different? How are patterns the same?

4. Repeat questions 2 and 3. This time compare rainy days instead of temperatures.

## MENTAL MAPPING

In this activity each group is asked to write down what they already know about the Morocco. This is a kind of mental mapping, sometimes called brainstorming. Brain storming encourages divergent thinking. Accessing prior knowledge is concept most elementary teachers of reading are familiar with. The children brain storm (mentally map) and make a group list. The teacher gives each group an outline map of Morocco or Morocco to focus their thinking processes. Older students can draw their own freehand outline map to focus their thinking. After brainstorming, each group then takes turns reporting their map of ideas to the whole class. Sometimes, the teacher acts as recorder and writes the entire class's ideas on a chart paper. Mental mapping is important in vocabulary and concept development. It's also important to discover misconception children have and correct these misconceptions during instruction. Mental mapping can also be used as a post-test to see what the children have learned about Morocco during the unit.

## USING GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS:

### WEB

After reading the text and making notes about their reading, children use a Graphic organizer to display their data. A web is convenient and each group needs to decide which categories will be included in their web. Suggest that the students use the five fundamental themes of geography: location, place, movement, environment, and regions as categories. Or, the social studies concept chart (the ABC's for Morocco) hanging in the room will offer many other categories for students to use. Students need to make a group decision concerning the use of categories for their web.

Some examples of web categories are: food, clothing, shelter, adornment, tools, weapons, housing/shelter, transportation, personal possessions, household articles, play, recreation, folk art, fine arts, Language and nonverbal communication, social organization: societies, families, and kinship systems social control: systems and governments institutions, rewards, and punishment economic organizations, trade, exchange, manufacturing, property, division of labor, standards of living, education, religions (From what are Universals of Culture? (Cleveland, Craven, and Danfelter, 1979).

### VENN DIAGRAM

Use a Venn diagram to compare what we have learned about Morocco or Morocco with what we already know about the Chesapeake Bay region of Maryland. We use our own region as a springboard to learn more about other regions. It helps students understand new regions when they have their own community/ neighborhood/ region as a reference point. Each group will present their findings to the class. Classmates are encouraged to listen politely and ask questions.

## LITERATURE CONNECTION

Lewin, T. (1997). Ali Child of the Desert. New York: Lothrop, Lee, and Shepard Books.

This is an exceptionally well illustrated book about a Bedouin boy who becomes lost during a Saharan sand storm. Although it does not take place in either Israel or Jordan, it presents a picture of desert life among nomadic peoples. It is a truly noteworthy book for elementary students and one of the best books I have ever read! Be sure to discuss the art work in this book.

## NEW VOCABULARY:

journey, joyously, bellowed, ammunition, reappear, delicate, reflecting, market, steady, dunes, thirst, complain, discomfort, suddenly, whirling, gallop, commanded, gritty, spurred, crinkled, curiosity, gratitude, pastures, dates, bandits, goatherds, echo, halt, silhouette, reins, kettle, tea, steep, murmured, blessing, transistor, static, warrior, turban, bandoliers, swords, muskets, concluded, unwound, scalp, stallion, swindled, belongings, prayer, departed, continued

## WORDS FROM ANOTHER LANGUAGE (ARABIC)

Ali, Rissani, Moroccan, Sahara, Jabad, djellaba = long loose robe with full sleeves, Asalaan-o-Aleikum = peace be with you (formal greeting), Aleikum-o-asalaam = peace be with you (polite response), Berber, Abdul, Youssef, cherqui= sandstorm, kesrah= pocket bread. Allah, Shoukran = thank you

## FIVE FUNDAMENTAL THEMES OF GEOGRAPHY

This book can be used to reinforce the five fundamental themes. A web can be generated as you read through the text with the children.

### LOCATION:

Morocco, Sahara Desert, market town of Rissani

### PLACE:

oasis, market, rippling dunes, needle-sharp sand, djellaba, swelling half sunk in the sand, adobe hut

### MOVEMENT:

three day journey to market, camels, herdsmen, transistor radio, folk tales, storytelling by the fire

### HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL INTERACTION:

hot, heat, whirling wind, cherqui, sandstorm, wild peppermint, cold night, summer pasture, vulture, camel, adders, cobras, hyenas, jackals, dates, goats

### REGION:

Sahara desert, Bedouins, Berber tribesmen, warrior tribesmen, Allah & morning prayer are part of the Islamic religion, Arabic speaking people

## COMPOUND WORDS

This text can be used to reinforce the concept of compound words.

nowhere, overhead, somewhere, onto, herdsman, fingertips, goat-hair, grandson, sandstorm, outside, everything, firewood, grandfather, grandmother, campfire, tribesmen, horsemen, sunlight

## NOISE WORDS

This text can be used to teach about sounds.

bellowed, howling, calling, roared, pounded, screamed, jangle, replied, grunt, said, echo, blast, sizzling, murmur, static, rumbling, clash, thunder, boom, ka-pow

## MOVEMENT

This text can be used to teach about words that show movement

trotted, rode, sway, whirling, jerked, kicked, headed, leaped, ducked, stepped, trembling

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR WRITING PROMPTS

1. Describe the location of the setting of this story.
2. Tell about the, theme of place. How does the author let you know where you are.
3. Describe ways people travel in the story. This is part of the theme of movement.
4. Describe ways people communicate in the story.
5. Describe the desert environment. Tell about ways people have adapted to their environment in this story.
6. Describe the region in the story. You can describe the desert, the way people live, the language they speak, their religion.
7. Make a graphic organizer in order to compare and contrast food, clothing, housing, daily activities of Ali and children in your own neighborhood. Discuss interpretations of your organizer.
8. Locate Morocco on the world map. Despite of distances between Morocco and Israel and Jordan, the desert remains an important geographical/cultural influence.

## OTHER WEBBING ACTIVITIES

You can make webs about other concepts. This is important for both vocabulary development and understanding concepts presented in the story. Each arm of the web can be used as a question for discussion or as a writing prompt. Suggestions for web arms are: warriors, hospitality, homes, customs, clothing, deserts.

## MAKING A DIORAMA

Students refer to the illustrations in the text as well as magazine pictures you have in your file. You need:

12x18 white (or sky blue) paper

6x18 brown paper

3x18 yellow paper

9x12 white paper for cut-outs

crayons or chalk

scissors paste

Procedure:

1. The background is white. Children draw and color a cloudless sky with blazing sun.
2. The brown paper is middle ground. Cut the top to look like rolling sand dunes.
3. The yellow paper is foreground. Cut the top to look like gentle sand dunes.
4. On the 9x12 paper draw: Ali, another character, a

camel, and a goat. Cut out these characters and paste them on the middle or foreground. (If you would like you can duplicate drawings of each for your students to color, cut, and paste.)

To assemble:

1. Cut 2 inches from the brown sheet.
2. Cut 4 inches from the yellow sheet.
3. Match the ends of all three sheets and staple together.
4. Match the other ends of all three sheets and staple together.
5. The three sheets will be bowed like an arc. This is what keeps the diorama standing up.

# MAP OF MOROCCO

Cut out each label. Paste each label each of these places on the map.

Bodies of water:

*ATLANTIC OCEAN*      *MEDITERRANEAN SEA*  
*STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR*

Countries:

ALGERIA      MAURETANIA  
PORTUGAL      SPAIN

Mountain Systems:

Er Rif Mountains      Atlas Mountains

Cities:

Rabat    Fes    Tangier    Casablanca    Marrakech