



## Teaching the Middle East: A Resource for High School Educators

### Rulership and Justice, Before Islam

Jennie Myers, Research Associate, University of Chicago

#### Lesson Plan 1: Images of Power

**General Description of Lesson Plan:** Students will get to analyze the use of imagery to symbolize the power of ancient kings and compare those images to those of modern famous men, either politically or culturally important figures.

**Created By:** Blake Noel, Bronzeville Scholastic Institute, Chicago, IL

**Subject Area(s):** History, US History, Political Science, Sociology

**For Grade Level(s):** 8-12

**Time Needed:** 2-5 class periods

#### Outcomes/Objectives:

Students will be able to analyze images of masculinity and power in ancient and modern contexts. Students will be able to identify the relevance of certain common symbols. Students will be able to critically examine modern symbols of masculinity and their impact on our culture.

**Materials:** Rulership and Justice, Before Islam module, poster boards, magazines, glue, markers

#### Suggested Procedure(s):

Before getting started the teacher should decide which modern men to examine, either politicians or pop icons. Depending on the intention this lesson will have varying degrees of relevance for the students.

**Part 1:** As a bell ringer activity, ask students to create a list of characteristics they believe identify masculinity in ancient times and another list for the modern era. Ask students whether these characteristics have changed over time or if they remain constant, and more important why do they change or remain. Students could also create visual depictions of the ideal men, using stick figures with lines connecting them to important characteristics. Once students have accessed their prior knowledge, they should read and take notes on the module, focusing on the Symbols of Power section, the related links, and at least three of the pictures. Students should be allowed to take notes in a variety of formats to develop familiarity and

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organization; depending on the grade-level outline notes might be good for these texts. Once they've completed the notes, ask them to create a quick image of an ancient king, could even be Hammurabi, using exaggerated versions of the symbols they've read about.

For homework ask students to find images of masculinity from mass media, either pictures, advertisements, brands, etc. If students are examining politicians, the teacher should assign small groups a particular presidential candidate from a recent race, nothing before Reagan. If using pop culture, allow students to form small groups around a certain figure, only allowing one group per class may cover a certain figure. In this case, music videos, blogs, and other media would be viable sources of information.

**Part 2:** Have students use the images they've collected to create a poster, which details ancient concepts of manhood, modern concepts of manhood, and universal or shared aspects of manhood. Essentially, they are making a board showing the various symbols of power and masculinity in the past, present, and forever. Depending on the age group, the teacher might mandate different requirements for the poster to include words, symbols, definitions, examples, etc. This project should be carried out by a small group and should take no more than two class days.

**Part 3:** The small groups will present their findings by presenting their posters to the class. After presenting, students should be allowed to hang their work around the room as a means of reinforcing the lesson and providing student ownership. As a conclusion, students should use their knowledge to create a written response to the guiding questions.

**Evaluation/Assessment Strategies:** The notes, homework, poster, presentation, and written response should be collected as an evaluation of this lesson.

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### Evaluation Rubric:

### Making A Poster: Symbols of Manhood, Then and Now

Teacher Name: Blake Noel

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
<b>Required Elements</b>	The poster includes all required elements as well as additional information.	All required elements are included on the poster.	All but 1 of the required elements is included on the poster.	Several required elements were missing.
<b>Content</b>	At least 7 accurate	5-6 accurate	3-4 accurate	Less than 3 accurate
<b>Accuracy</b>	Accurate facts are displayed on the poster.	Facts are displayed on the poster.	Facts are displayed on the poster.	Accurate facts are displayed on the poster.
<b>Graphics - Relevance</b>	All graphics are related to the topic and make it easier to understand. All borrowed graphics have a source citation.	All graphics are related to the topic and most make it easier to understand. All borrowed graphics have a source citation.	All graphics relate to the topic. Most borrowed graphics have a source citation.	Graphics do not relate to the topic OR several borrowed graphics do not have a source citation.
<b>Attractiveness</b>	The poster is exceptionally attractive in terms of design, layout, and neatness.	The poster is attractive in terms of design, layout and neatness.	The poster is acceptably attractive though it may be a bit messy.	The poster is distractingly messy or very poorly designed. It is not attractive.

### Use these guiding questions to spur discussion in your classroom:

1. What characteristics of masculinity are universal in past and present?
2. Why are so many men interested in presenting themselves as powerful?
3. Are the modern symbols of masculinity positive or negative?