

Activity 2: 'The Venice Mission'

Setting the scene

By the eleventh century Islamic culture has spread far and wide to the east and west. Muslim scholars have made great achievements in many fields of knowledge including science and technology.

At the same time Venice has become a powerful independent city state with thriving trade links with the Far East. It is keen to extend its influence and learn from other cultures.

Your task

You have been asked to research one of the following fields of Muslim culture from the medieval period and to give a presentation to the ruling council of Venice as part of a visiting group of Muslim scholars. You will need to impress your listeners with the achievements of Islam in order to create new opportunities for trade with the West.

You will be divided into small groups. You will be assigned to one of the following fields of science/technology:

- Astronomy
- Pharmacy
- Chemistry
- Geography
- Agriculture
- Mathematics
- Optics
- Astrology

Useful websites

An excellent starting point is the [1001 Inventions](http://www.1001inventions.com/) web site which is linked to a web site on [Muslim Heritage](http://www.muslimheritage.com/) which includes a timeline:

<http://www.1001inventions.com/>

<http://www.muslimheritage.com/Default.aspx>

<http://www.muslimheritage.com/timeline/default.cfm>

Other useful web sites:

http://www.sfusd.k12.ca.us/schwww/sch618/Islam_New_Main.html

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_Age_of_Islam