

## Meet the United Arab Emirates Unit Plan

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May 1, 2023

This is a Unit plan introducing the geography, history, culture, government and economics of the United Arab Emirates. The unit was created as a result of the Teacher Study Abroad trip sponsored by the World Affairs Council of DFW and the Embassy of the UAE in Washington, D.C. in March 2023.



Topic/Theme Duration	Meet the United Arab Emirates 5-10 50-60 minute classes
Essential Question/s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*What is the location and geography of the UAE?</li> <li>*Describe the history and important founding members of the UAE.</li> <li>*What cultural values are important to the people of the UAE?</li> <li>*Describe the demographics, economy and education in the UAE.</li> <li>*Explain the government structure of the UAE.</li> <li>* How do the citizens of the UAE view their future?</li> </ul>
Standards	Align these lessons to your specific state or curriculum standards based on the objective of the lesson.
Key Student Learning Objectives	Each lesson will have specific objectives, but overall the objective is to introduce students to the geography, culture, economics, and government of the United Arab Emirates.
Sequence of Key Learning Activities	Each lesson will be a stand alone lesson that may be used in any sequence, but it is suggested that you cover the geography and history first in order to establish an understanding of the country basics before you dig in deeper to the finer points.
Key Texts/websites to be Used	<a href="https://www.countryreports.org/country/UnitedArabEmirates/geography.htm">https://www.countryreports.org/country/UnitedArabEmirates/geography.htm</a> <a href="#">Geography Now! UNITED ARAB EMIRATES</a> <a href="https://mcy.gov.ae/en/home/intangible-heritage/">https://mcy.gov.ae/en/home/intangible-heritage/</a> <a href="https://mcy.gov.ae/en/home/tangible-heritage/">https://mcy.gov.ae/en/home/tangible-heritage/</a> <a href="https://www.uae-embassy.org/discover-uae/history">https://www.uae-embassy.org/discover-uae/history</a> <a href="https://u.ae/en/more/history-of-the-uae">https://u.ae/en/more/history-of-the-uae</a>

	<a href="https://stepfeed.com/10-poets-in-the-uae-you-should-know-about-9967">https://stepfeed.com/10-poets-in-the-uae-you-should-know-about-9967</a> <a href="https://teachmideast.org/country-profiles/united-arab-emirates/">https://teachmideast.org/country-profiles/united-arab-emirates/</a> <a href="https://abudhabiculture.ae/en">https://abudhabiculture.ae/en</a> <a href="https://www.khaleejtimes.com/article/preserving-tribal-customs-that-define-being-an-emirati">https://www.khaleejtimes.com/article/preserving-tribal-customs-that-define-being-an-emirati</a> <a href="https://hctuaehistory.weebly.com/suood-alsharhan-h00278728.html">https://hctuaehistory.weebly.com/suood-alsharhan-h00278728.html</a> <a href="https://festival.si.edu/blog/coffee-culture-in-the-uae">https://festival.si.edu/blog/coffee-culture-in-the-uae</a>
Assessments	<p>Included are :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Map quiz</li> <li>● Discussion questions</li> <li>● Comparison activity</li> <li>● Reading quizzes</li> <li>● Presentations</li> <li>● Essay questions</li> </ul>

### **Part I: Mapping** (1 class period)

Begin the lesson by asking what the students know about the United Arab Emirates. For example; have they ever heard of it? Where is it located? What is it known for? And other basic questions like that. Many may have heard of Dubai, but may not know that it is part of the UAE.

Pull up on the screen or give the students a blank paper copy and see if they can locate the UAE on a world map. Use this [blank world map](#) . Once you have completed that and have determined where it is located, provide them with a more detailed map of the region and ask them to again locate it. *This is an important part of the lesson because it allows the students to see who the neighbors of the UAE are and why it is important to get along with them.* Use this [map of the Middle East](#). Upon completion of identifying the UAE, have students label the map of the Middle East with all the countries and bodies of water.

Discuss the fact that the UAE is made up of 7 Emirates similar to our states in that each one has some autonomy and independence, but with an overarching federal monarchical government. Next, provide a blank map of the Emirates and have the students label each Emirate along with its most important (capital) city. Use this [map of the UAE](#).

To assist the students, have them use the following links:

<http://www.maphill.com/united-arab-emirates/simple-maps/blank-map/> This site provides many different

maps that will allow students to look at several different maps of the UAE.

## **Part II: Geography of UAE** (1-2 class periods depending on reading abilities)

After completing all the maps involving the UAE, it is time to discuss the geography of the country. Ask students:

- What they think the terrain of the country may mostly consist of and why ?
- Ask the students how this might affect the way people there live?
- What industries may be of importance there?

Record their responses for future review later on.

Provide students with the following readings and have them provide written descriptions of the varying landscapes found throughout the Emirates. The thought is to use the written descriptions prior to seeing too many images to see if what they read matches up with the pictures and videos they will see in the following video.

[Readings about the geography of the UAE.](#)

Alternative: Ask the students to research on their own the different landscapes found within the Emirates.

- Beaches
- Desert
- Mountains
- Oasis
- Ruins/historical sites

- 1) Have students provide a written description and the location of these landscapes.
- 2) Have them complete a physical map depicting where they might find examples of specifically named landscapes that fit these descriptions.

After reading the descriptions, use the video: [The UAE from Above](#) (26 min) for them to see the landscapes. It is a beautiful video which shows the many facets of the UAE landscape. If you need to assign questions with the video; here is the [link](#) for some. (I prefer to let them enjoy the landscapes, but I know some schools require an assignment to show a video in class)

If you prefer to jump right into a video that combines geography with an introduction to the history and governmental system of the UAE, then use this document which includes vocabulary, the video link, and questions for [Geography Now! United Arab Emirates!](#) (34 min)

### **Part III: History of the UAE** (1-3 class periods)

If you have time, this is an amazing series of 3 episodes done by National Geographics and narrated by Jeremy Irons. [History of the Emirates](#) (You must have a Nat Geo membership in order to watch it.)

#### **Readings:**

[A Short History of the UAE](#)

[Reading Quiz 1](#)

[A Complete History of the UAE](#)

[Reading Quiz 2](#)

[A timeline of the UAE](#)

To assist you in teaching the history of the UAE, I have provided you with two different readings, one is fairly simplistic, and the other is a slightly more difficult read that provides a more in depth look at the history. I have not provided reading questions, but have provided a reading quiz for each reading.

**Timeline:** I have also provided a timeline. In order to help students visualize the historical events of a country, I like to have them create an interactive timeline as a group project. This allows students to put together a clear picture of the history of the UAE.

- [www.sutori.com](http://www.sutori.com) This site is great for making a timeline. You will have to create an account and have students share theirs with you. It is free, and it provides a template and walks students through how to do each component.
- <https://www.visme.co/timeline-maker/> is another tool. I have not used this one as much, but students have used it and it seems useful and user friendly.

#### **Steps:**

- a) Assign a reading based upon your student's reading level.
- b) Complete a reading quiz to check for understanding.
- c) Discuss what they have read in a class discussion format.
- d) Divide students into pairs or small groups, have them create an interactive timeline on the history of the UAE and present their work to the class. (divide up different events to each group/pair to prevent duplication).

#### **Part IV: Culture;** (1-3 days)

Culture of the UAE is an important component of understanding life in the United Arab Emirates. It involves many different facets of life and also carries many misconceptions, which makes this an important part of this unit.

Included with this lesson is a google slide show to use; [Culture in the UAE](#). There are two ways to use this resource.

- 1) Student research- the slide show has pictures (slides 2-11) depicting the different aspects of Emirati culture. Divide students into groups and assign each group a slide. Ask each group to research the pictures on their slide and
  - a) describe what each picture is representing.
  - b) explain how that activity/picture represents part of Emirati culture. (Instructor can provide hints as to key terms if needed.)
  - c) Students then present their findings to the class.
- 2) Lecture- Use the [lecture notes](#) to provide the context and information for each slide.

Upon completion of either activity, use the remaining slides on the slideshow to discuss the [Ministry of Culture and Youth](#) and the important role it plays in the country.

- Read the description of MC & Y from the UAE website and have the students summarize what this means in their own words.
- Look at the vision and mission statement; ask the students how they can implement these two objectives?
- Do the students notice anything different about their means compared to the United States?
- Use the slide with the link to the Ministry of Culture and Youth to explore the website and learn about all of the areas in which they help to promote culture. Discuss these with the students.

**Tangible vs Intangible:** Discuss what each of these mean and how they affect Emirati culture.

Use the website to examine the [Tangible Heritage Sites](#) vs the [Intangible Heritage](#) features.

Have students complete the attached comparison [graphic organizer](#) to examine and compare the differences and similarities between the tangible and intangible cultural heritage sites/items. Once they have completed the organizers, ask students to answer the one or all of the following essay questions:

1. Which is more important to a culture, their tangible or intangible heritage? Explain your answer.
2. Which *tangible heritage site* do you believe best represents the UAE? Support your answer with evidence from what you have read and learned in this unit.
3. Which *intangible heritage* component do you believe best represents the culture of the UAE? Support your answer with evidence.

4. Which is more important to a country's culture, tangible or intangible heritage? Explain your answer.

Additional resources for culture: [Poetry](#) [Arts and Culture](#) [Customs](#) [Clothing](#) [Overview of Culture](#)

### **Part V: Political system** (1-2 days)

Material and resources for this section of the unit are easily accessible. Due to copyright issues, I was not able to find an organizer that clearly depicts the structure of the UAE political system. Instead, I would assign one of the following:

- 1) Create a graphic organizer showing the structure of the UAE political system. It must include:
  - a) President
  - b) Vice President
  - c) Supreme Court
  - d) Crown Princes for the 7 Emirates
  - e) Prime Ministers
  - f) Federal National Council
  - g) Provide a written description of each of the above segments of the political structure as well as the person currently holding the position.
- 2) Create a Prezi or a slideshow describing the political system and current position holders for the UAE. You will present this to the class (group project? )

This wraps up all the material I have for the UAE. Some additional or extension activities may include:

- a) A closer look at the economics of the UAE; oil industry, tourism, etc.
- b) Diversity in the UAE
- c) Education systems in the UAE; public, charter, private.

Additional Resources : [Teach the UAE](#)