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# i Think: Geography

## THE MIDDLE EAST



by Sharon Coletti  
and Kendra Corr

\*\* It is the goal of InspirEd Educators to create instructional materials that are interesting, engaging, and challenging. Our student-centered approach incorporates both content and skills, placing particular emphasis on reading, writing, vocabulary development, and critical and creative thinking in the content areas.

Edited by Sharon Coletti

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## Drawing the Line

### Springboard:

The student should study the “Hometown Map” and find at least one example of each geographic theme.

*(Answers will vary but could include: Location- street intersections or “next to” the city hall, etc; Place - mountains, library, school, etc; Human-Environmental Interaction - the dam, the golf course, etc; Movement - the airport, bus station, market, etc; Region - Chinatown, shopping area, government area, etc.)*

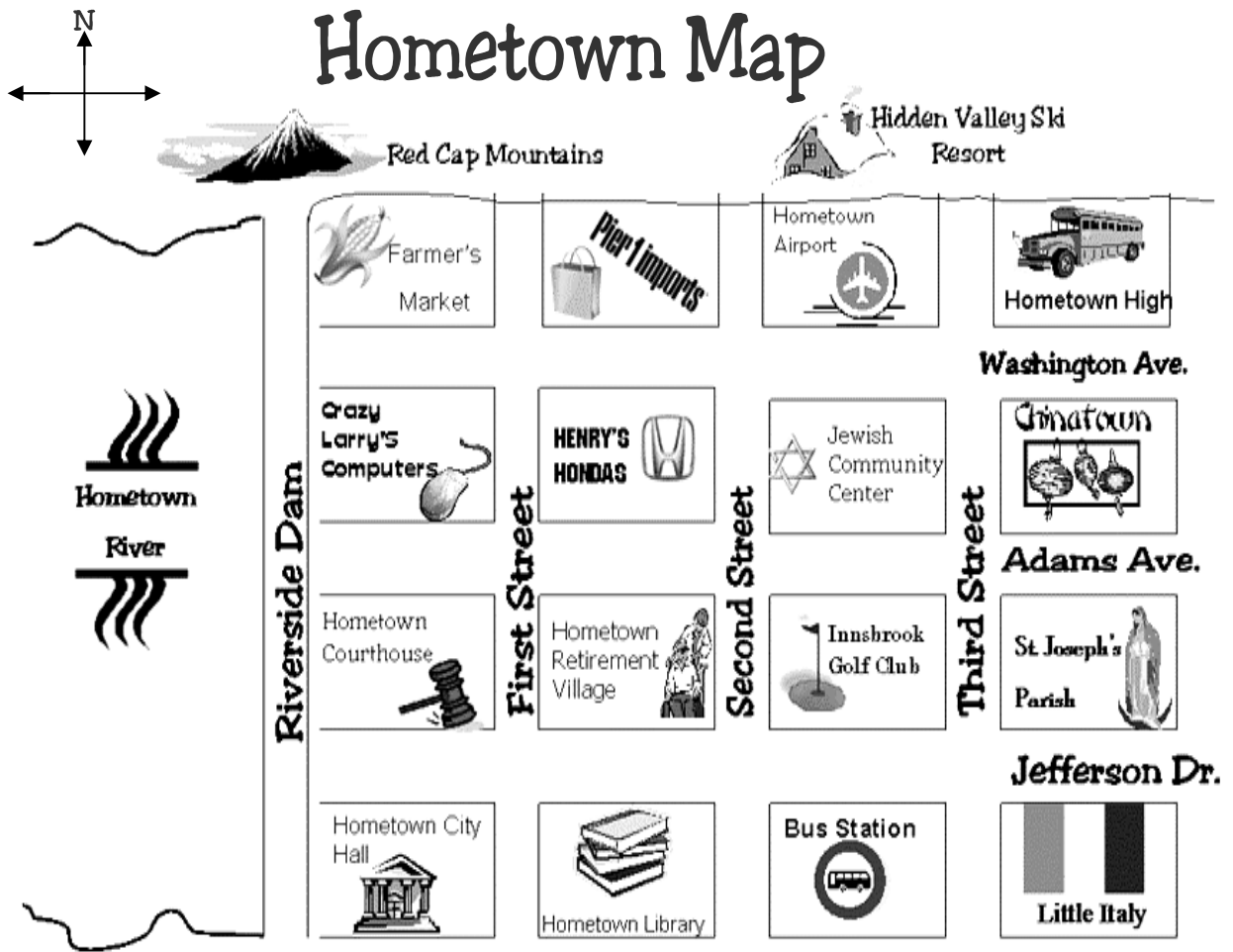
**Objective:** The student will be able to generate a definition for the Middle East in terms of region.

**Materials:** Hometown Map (Springboard handout)  
Maps (2 handouts)  
What Were They Thinking?! (handout)  
Middle East Geography (handout- see note below)

**Term to know:** **absolute location** - coordinates or address of a place  
**coordinates** - degrees of latitude and longitude of a place  
**relative location** - describes a place in terms of other places or landmarks

### Procedure:

- While reviewing the Springboard, explain that the five themes of geography will be used throughout this Middle East unit to examine a variety of topics. Go on to explain that this first lesson examines the region of the Middle East, which is difficult to define. Geographers often differ in identifying the countries included.
- Distribute the Maps and “What Were They Thinking?!”
- Have the student(s) work independently or in groups to study the maps and follow the questions on the analysis form.
- Have the student(s) share and compare their answers and discuss their definitions of the Middle East.
- **NOTE:** This lesson and the next four introduce the five themes of geography. The lessons will then deepen student understanding of the themes. Distribute “Middle East Geography” for the student(s) to use as a unit organizer to record examples of the five themes from the various lessons. In addition to the objectives sheet, it makes a wonderful review resource!



**DIRECTIONS:** Read about the five themes of geography described below. Then find at least ONE example of each on the map.

**LOCATION** (tells where something is; can be "absolute," an address or coordinates, or "relative" in terms of landmarks)

**PLACE** (describes the physical and human features of a location)

**HUMAN-ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION** (describes the ways humans and the environment affect one another)

**MOVEMENT** (how people, goods, and ideas move from place to place, along with the causes and effects of those movements)

**REGION** (how an area is organized and the unifying characteristics of the groupings)

**Middle East Map #1:**



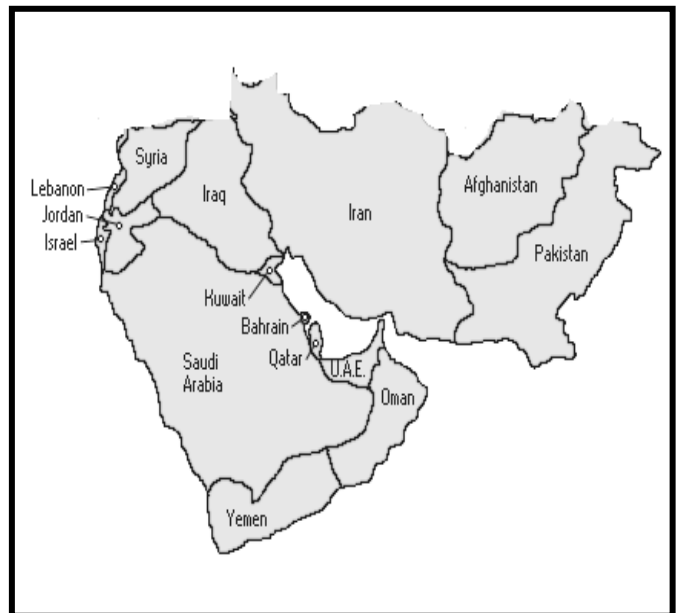
**Middle East Map #2**



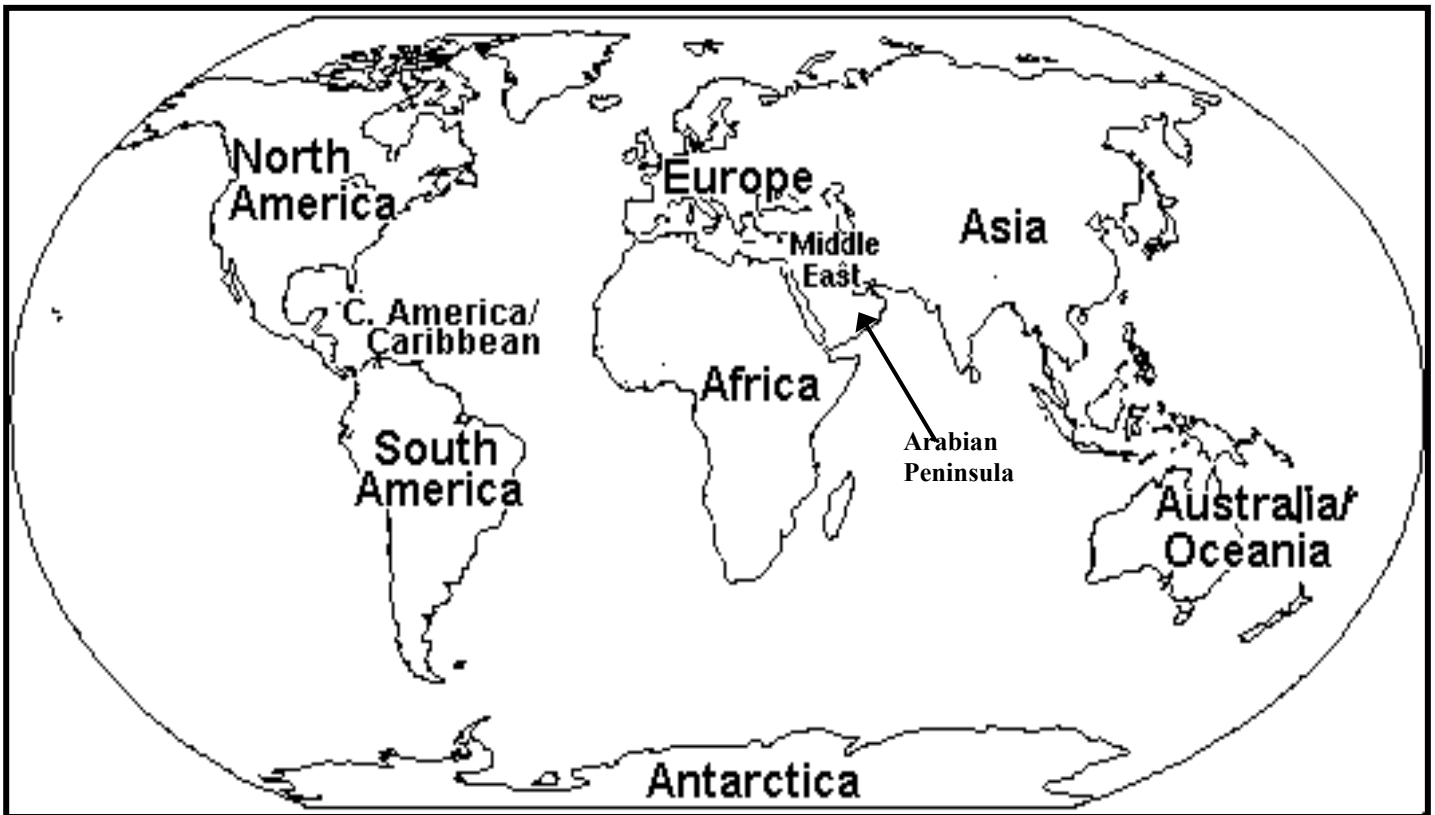
**Middle East Map #3**



**Middle East Map #4**



**World Map**







# WHAT WERE THEY THINKING?!

**DIRECTIONS:** Study each map. For maps 1-4 list the countries included in the region and one reason you think the geographer included them. Then answer the question about the world map.

**Map #1:**

**Map #2:**

**Map #3:**

**Map #4:**

**World Map:** Based on this map and other maps, define the region of the Middle East. Make sure you include what countries you think should be part of the region.



# WHAT WERE THEY THINKING?!

## SUGGESTIONS FOR ANSWERS

### **Map #1:**

*Countries include: Egypt, Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE (United Arab Emirates), Oman, Saudi Arabia and Yemen*

*Student answers will vary on what they think does not belong and what may be missing, but answers should be explained.*

### **Map #2:**

*Egypt, Afghanistan and Pakistan are missing; Cyprus is added.*

*Reasons why Afghanistan and Pakistan are missing could include that they are part of the Indian subcontinent. Egypt could be missing because it's on a different continent (Africa).*

*Cyprus could be added because of language, religion, culture, etc.*

*Student answers will vary but should be reasoned.*

### **Map #3:**

*Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Turkey are missing from Map #1, Cyprus has disappeared from Map #2. Egypt has re-appeared. Egypt could be added because of close proximity to other countries, the other countries could be missing because of cultural, language, religious reasons.*

*Student answers will vary but should be reasoned.*

### **Map #4:**

*Egypt, Turkey and Cyprus are missing. Afghanistan and Pakistan have re-appeared. Reasons why could include cultural, religious or language differences or proximity.*

*Student answers will vary but should be well-reasoned.*

### **World Map:**

*Answers will vary, but student(s) should see that the Middle East is located at the crossroads of three continents (Asia, Europe and Africa), is located on and around the Arabian Peninsula and can be defined many ways.*

*The countries that are included can vary widely, but most regional groupings include at least: Lebanon, Israel, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Iran, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.*



# MIDDLE EAST GEOGRAPHY

**DIRECTIONS:** During your study of the Middle East, record examples of each theme of geography on the organizer below:

**REGION:**

**LOCATION:**

**PLACE:**

**MOVEMENT:**

**HUMAN-ENVIRONMENTAL INTERACTION:**



## All Around Arabia

### Springboard:

Students should complete “Images of the Middle East.”  
(Answers will vary.)

**Objective:** The student will use absolute and relative location to identify and make generalizations about locations in the Middle East.

**Materials:** Images of the Middle East (Springboard handout)  
Where IS It? (handout)  
Outline Map (handout)  
Physical and political maps of the Middle East (from the Internet or atlases)

**Terms to know:** **gulf** - ocean inlet that is largely surrounded by land  
**peninsula** - land surrounded on three sides by water  
**strait** - narrow body of water joining two larger ones  
**canal** - man-made waterway used for shipping or transportation

### Procedure:

- After discussing the Springboard, explain that *in this lesson the student(s) will focus on some specific locations in the Middle East.*
- Distribute “Where IS It?” and have the student(s) work independently or in pairs to complete the handout. The student(s) should use an atlas, the Internet, or other sources of physical and political maps to complete the scavenger hunt. Suggest that *it may be easier to skip around on the handout, since one location could help find another.*
- Once they fill in the blank spots, the student(s) should label all of the features and countries on their outline maps.
- **For group instruction** the activity could be a competition; the first group to complete their handout could win a small prize.
- Have the student(s) share and compare their answers and discuss, including the following questions:
  - ? Which do you think is more helpful, absolute or relative location? (*Answers will vary, but student(s) should see that there is a need for both; absolute gives an exact location on the globe, while relative location may be easier for people to describe.*)
  - ? What are some generalizations that could be made about the Middle East based on information from the lesson? (*Answers will vary but could include: the region is very dry and covered in many deserts; there are many bodies of water that surround the Arabian Peninsula, but not many sources of water within the region; the countries vary in size from very small such as Kuwait to very large such as Saudi Arabia.*)
- For lesson closure or for homework, have the student(s) add examples from this lesson to the “Middle East Geography” organizer.

