

Discovering Iran

through Journeys in Film

Educating for Global Understanding www.journeysinfilm.org



Children of Heaven

An Interdisciplinary Guide for Teachers



JOURNEYS IN FILM
educating for global understanding

What people are saying about *Journeys in Film*:

“*Journeys in Film* has the potential for revolutionizing the way middle school children see the world. By introducing them to different cultures, religions and civilizations through easily assessable media, this project will make it natural for these students to be more accepting of differences throughout their lives. It promises to have a positive effect on students who are likely to confront an increasingly diverse America and an increasingly global world economy. Attitudes toward tolerance once formed at an early age tend to remain fixed. College, even for those who attend it, is often too late to influence deeply seeded attitudes. This program is not propagandistic. It has no specific political agenda in mind. Its goal is simply to open minds at an early age so that students can decide important life issues for themselves based on a fuller perspective and more global information. This is one of the most important educational initiatives I have ever encountered.”

ALAN DERSHOWITZ, Felix Frankfurter Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, Best-selling author and a distinguished defender of civil liberties

“These are the first foreign language films many of the students in our classes had ever seen. The themes, cultural content, social-political context and pacing are totally unlike the media they are very familiar with. We are all looking forward to more *Journeys in Film*!”

6th Grade Teacher, New York, NY

“*Journeys in Film* offers a unique opportunity for our students to immerse themselves in another culture with a meaningful context supplied by the supporting curriculum. Currently implemented in a number of our schools, *Journeys in Film* teaches about both culture and the interpretation of culture. The students are guided to approach the films as an academic challenge. They take notes and tackle the symbolism, characterization and the narrative. At the same time, the students are introduced to film as a literary media and begin to explore the role of the film producer and the choices he or she makes.”

ARNE DUNCAN, Chief Executive Officer, Chicago Public Schools

“In today's ever-changing, ever-surprising global economy, everything flows so easily across borders – ideas, capital, products, people, and even problems. This brings international issues to Americans' doorsteps and makes cultural understanding a necessity for young people, just to navigate their neighborhoods let alone compete for the jobs of the future. “Knowledge work” is growing in importance, and there are millions of increasingly-well-educated English-speaking graduates from other countries – India, China, Europe – seeking the best jobs anywhere. Schools must rise to the challenge of improving basic skills while enlarging horizons, broadening perspectives, and teaching about the whole world. *Journeys in Film* provides the means to explore other cultures virtually, to gain the knowledge and skills for effective relationship-building, at home or abroad.”

ROSABETH MOSS KANTER, Arbuckle Professor of Business Administration, Harvard Business School and best-selling author.

“This is a long overdue tool! It is necessary to educate our children about their own culture as well as that of others. The message of *Journeys in Film* is THE message that American schools need to teach.”

Educator-Workshop Participant, Tulsa, OK

“We are extremely pleased with the films used in the *Journeys in Film* program and the cultural sensitivity development explicit in the curriculum.”

7th Grade Social Studies Teacher, Albuquerque, NM

“The students are quite interested about learning about other students in their exact age group from around the world. This is truly an international learning experience.”

7th Grade Social Studies Teacher, Chicago, IL

“After four years of surviving the Khmer Rouge genocidal regime, I was plucked out of that war zone and placed in Vermont to start my new life. I was ten years old, didn’t speak a word of English, and knew nothing about America. Although I was excited to learn as much as I could about my new country, this cultural exchange was rarely mutual among my new friends and neighbors. But I am grateful that there were people and groups out there who went out of their way to find me, reach out to me, and extend a helping hand. In doing so, they taught me to replace fear with friendship, hate with love, and ignorance with understanding. *Journeys in Film* is that helping hand for many young Americans today. Using international films, they bring the global world to local arenas and reach out to war-affected children living in our midst, letting them know they are not a lone. With their thought provoking educational materials, *Journeys in Film* opens up hearts and minds of those who have been cloistered in their sheltered environments, and show them the importance to learning about our global world. But *Journeys in Film* is more than educational tool; it is a process that fosters compassion, kindness, and knowledge so that we all may live together in peace.”

LOUNG UNG, Spokesperson for The Cambodia Fund, best-selling author of *First They Killed My Father*, and *Lucky Child*

“I think the *Journeys in Film* program is wonderful! I feel confident that I can present these goals and ideas to colleagues, and they will be welcomed and accepted.”

Educator-Workshop Participant, Tulsa, OK

“It is a fascinating and valuable program that is opening up the eyes of our students to different cultures and different ways of life.”

6th Grade Teacher, Chicago, IL

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Prologue

In January of 2002, while attending the Palm Springs International Film Festival, I experienced an eye-opening epiphany. After spending the week completely immersed in other cultures through film, I felt that I had traveled the world. Each film, itself a complete cultural learning package, presented a character or two who captivated my interest and evoked intense empathy. The films invited Hungarian orphans, tired Afghani workers struggling in Iran, sweet children living in Tehran, spunky Tokyo teenagers, savvy young Tibetan monks living in exile in India, a young boy in China and a group of coming-of-age French teenagers as welcome guests into my heart. Their stories opened my mind, and I realized how little information or insight most young Americans have about people from other nations. I imagined how students would benefit from seeing these movies, especially when taught the history, geography and culture of the country where each film was made.

Children seldom need to be coaxed into watching films, one of today's most popular forms of media, particularly if the story is good. Young students are visually attuned to cinematic images, and enthusiastically respond to stories that expand an awareness of their world and teach them about cultures different from their own. With this in mind, I decided to establish *Journeys in Film* and began to search for dynamic foreign films and the expert educators and specialists who could design a substantial, comprehensive international education curriculum around them.

As a first generation American, I was always aware of the differences and similarities between myself and other kids in my neighborhood. My parents, both Holocaust survivors, brought to the United States their Eastern European traditions and values, and I grew up crossing cultures daily. To understand my parents and their personal stories better, I read voraciously and visualized the land, the people, and the culture my parents came

from. Eventually, films became an important source of my understanding about the vast diversity in our world. It was rather exciting for me to discover the world beyond my small provincial hometown. I could reach out in my imagination and connect to countries so far beyond my own mental and physical boundaries, inspired by people so unlike me.

I believe students will experience this sense of living in another world, however temporarily, once offered the opportunity to study films and cultures of other children living in societies beyond their own neighborhoods. My hope is that the impressions and lessons from the films selected by *Journeys in Film* will continue to echo in their hearts and minds for years to come, encouraging greater understanding, and inspiring today's students to become cross-culturally competent, productive and compassionate adults.

I dedicate the *Journeys in Film* program to my brave parents, Maurice and Julia Strahl. They taught me that education is the greatest tool we have towards understanding and accepting people of all cultures and traditions and that no one should ever be persecuted for being different.

Sincerely,



Joanne Strahl Ashe
Founder & Executive Director
Journeys in Film



A Letter from Liam Neeson

Nine years ago I played Oscar Schindler in Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List*. That experience deepened my perception not only of the Holocaust, but of the importance of understanding the issues of intolerance and hatred. Being in the public eye has afforded me many opportunities to become involved with various organizations dedicated to teaching tolerance.

Occasionally something comes along that captures my attention and that speaks to my innermost values as a human being. In 2002, I met Joanne Strahl Ashe, who acquainted me with a new educational concept involving film. I was so impressed with the program, *Journeys in Film – An Odyssey in Global Education* that I eagerly consented to serve as its national spokesperson.

Journeys in Film is a non-profit organization dedicated to teaching cross-cultural understanding and media literacy to middle school students through quality foreign film, using the disciplines of social studies, geography, math, science, language arts and fine arts.

Journeys chooses films that speak to adolescent students and impart a relevant message. Through the shared experience of film viewing, an increased awareness and appreciation of different cultures can be achieved, and from this new understanding and familiarity, compassion among school-aged children for their peers in other cultures may be born. That, I believe, is a worthy objective.

Through this educational initiative, we are encouraging a new generation of documentary, independent, and world cinema lovers. As most of us can remember, we identified with certain films we saw as children. Film had a definite effect during our formative years. Most teenagers today will have similar experiences. *Journeys* can help make those experiences better and the effects more positive by providing quality films and dedicated educational material.

If we are committed to the dream of world peace, we must first educate our children and teach them understanding and compassion for other people, races, and cultures. I can't help but consider how wonderful it would be, if through our efforts at *Journeys*, we help change attitudes about people who are different from us.

I want to help make teaching through films an institution in our children's education. Please share my vision of a more harmonious world where understanding and dialogue are key to a healthy and peaceful present and future.

Sincerely,



National Spokesperson
Journeys in Film



National Advisory Board

The *Journeys in Film* curriculum project is the work of many hands, minds, and hearts. We are very grateful to the members of our National Advisory Board, who volunteer their efforts on our behalf.

Liam Neeson
National Spokesperson

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Loung Ung

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Elizabeth Clark Zoia

Introducing *Children of Heaven*

Children of Heaven is a contemporary Iranian film about families, compassion, moral responsibilities and issues of limited resources. This film, shot in and around Tehran, follows the lives of two siblings, nine-year-old Ali and his younger sister Zahra, who are forced to share one pair of shoes after an unfortunate accident. After picking up his sister's shoes from the cobbler, Ali stops to do another errand for the family, sets the shoes down in the market, and loses them when a street vendor takes them. Not wanting to burden their struggling parents, the children must work together and find a solution to deal with this significant loss. The film shows the inner strength we have when faced with adversity.

Children of Heaven, a simple story with minimal dialogue, relies heavily on visual story telling and cinematography to carry it through. The two children (Mir Farrokh Hashemian who played Ali and Bahareh Siddiqi who played Zahra) were selected from thousands of school-children who sought to play these roles. Although *Children of Heaven* was the first movie role for both of the leading child actors, Majid Majidi's talent as a director is evident as the children seem to be completely natural and believable onscreen. In order to best capture these genuine performances, Majidi chose to make the camera less intrusive during filming with the use of hidden cameras. The result was a more authentic and natural feel to the entire movie.

It is interesting to note the similarities and differences between film ratings and censorship in Iran and ratings in North America. Many Iranian films seem to occupy a space somewhere between documentary and fiction with limited production budgets resulting in no frills, straightforward filmmaking, much of which is suitable for a "G" general audience rating.

In Iran, the government supervises the production of all movies. It supplies the film stock and equipment and has the right to make final approval on script, choice of director and actors before filming can begin. Since the revolution in 1979, Islamic moral codes have restricted the content of Iranian films. Violence, obscenity, and sex are forbidden in film. Women must observe Islamic dress codes, and there are social taboos about men and woman touching in any way on the screen.

There are not the same restrictions on the actions of children in film. As a result we are seeing more films from Iran that focus on everyday life through the eyes of children who can tell their story in a believable way without a strict behavior code that may be misunderstood. This has led Iranian filmmakers to become more resourceful and skilled storytellers as they work within the confines of these restrictions. The result is a revitalization of Iranian cinema and films that can be appreciated by family audiences worldwide.

The production budget for *Children of Heaven* was small and yet the overall quality of this film is a testimony to its outstanding production, direction and cinematography.

IRAN, 1997 – RUNNING LENGTH: 1 hour and 28 minutes

DIRECTOR: Majid Majidi

PRODUCERS: Amir Esfandiari, Mohammad Esfandiari

SCREENPLAY: Majid Majidi

Cinematography: Parviz Malekzaade

AWARDS: Academy Award nomination as Best Foreign Film in 1999, Best Film at the Montreal 21st Montreal Festival for World Films and awards from the Fajr International Film Festival in Tehran 1997 for best film, best director, screenplay, editor and makeup.

To the Teacher...

What is *Journeys in Film*?

Journeys in Film is a non-profit organization dedicated to broadening global learning, fostering cross-cultural understanding and improving secondary students' academic performance by harnessing one of the most powerful forms of media - film. Members of *Journeys in Film* include a filmmaker, a cross-cultural specialist, and a team of U.S. and Canadian teachers with a common goal of preparing secondary school students to participate effectively in an increasingly interdependent world.

The *Journeys in Film* model strengthens existing school curricular framework by marrying artful examples of a popular entertainment form with rigorous, standards-based lesson plans for core subjects including social studies, language arts, math, geography, science, the arts and media literacy. Through the use of engaging feature foreign films, *Journeys in Film* impacts today's media-centric youth and creates a dynamic learning opportunity in global education. The universal messages in the films combined with dedicated supporting curricula enable students to transcend regional, economic, ethnic, cultural and religious distinctions that often separate people from their fellow citizens. Moreover, foreign film has the ability to transport students mentally to locations and remote regions that they may never otherwise have the opportunity to experience.

The foreign films are selected based on age and content appropriateness of the subject matter as well as the captivating storytelling. Prominent educators, filmmakers and cultural specialists are consulted in the creation of the curricula, each one dedicated to an in-depth exploration of the culture depicted in a specific film.

Why use this program?

To prepare to participate in tomorrow's global arena, your students need to gain a deeper understanding of the world beyond their own borders. *Journeys in Film* offers innovative and engaging tools to explore other cultures, beyond the often biased images seen on print, television and other media.

For today's media-centric youth, film is a very appropriate and effective teaching tool. *Journeys in Film* has carefully selected quality films telling the stories of young people around the world. North American students travel through these characters and their stories. In this first collection of films, they drink tea with an Iranian family, play soccer in a Tibetan monastery, find themselves in the conflict between urban grandson and rural grandmother in South Korea, and watch modern ways challenge Maori traditions in New Zealand.

Through each film in this program, North American students gain a perspective on daily life. By identifying with the appealing (and occasionally not so appealing) protagonists, your students understand another culture far beyond the limitations of a textbook. These lessons not only bring the world into the classroom, but also allow students to explore the diversity of their own family, classroom and community.

Who can benefit from this curriculum?

The curriculum was written expressly for students in grades 6 to 9. However, older and younger students may be intrigued by the films as well, and the curriculum can be adapted for them.

How are the films selected?

Members of *Journeys in Film* have viewed dozens of films, both individually and at film festivals, in search of quality foreign films with storylines captivating enough to engage secondary students. The films must be rated G, PG or PG-13. All films must be set within the last 15 years in order to offer a ‘present-day’ connection for the student, as opposed to period pieces with cultural traditions that may not seem ‘real’ in today’s youth culture.

But I’m supposed to be using the standards in my classroom....

Of course you are—any good teacher is meeting standards. Because this is a curriculum meant for a national audience, we chose to use the McRel standards rather than the standards for any particular state. Since 1990, the Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McRel) has been systematically collecting, reviewing, and analyzing state curriculum documents in all subject areas. McRel publishes a report on this work, called *Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education*, and also has these standards and benchmarks available on their website at <http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>. In the standards for each lesson plan, you will be able to recognize the corresponding subject-area standards for your state, even if the language is slightly different.

Will my students be able to read the subtitles?

There is an ancient Iranian proverb that says, “**He who wants a rose must respect the thorn.**” Students are sometimes hesitant to watch a film with subtitles, but once they are hooked by the storyline of the film, reading

the subtitles may become automatic and they may not even be conscious of doing so. We have a few suggestions to ease this transition.

Begin by asking the students how many have seen a subtitled film. Explain to them that we watch a subtitled film (as we do any film, for that matter) using not only the words, but also the sounds, the music, the actors’ gestures, the locations and more. The whole film helps to tell the story; dialogue is just one of the many ways the story is told. Suggest that students don’t need to worry about following every single word. They should just skim the words for a general meaning and watch the film as a whole.

You can also help your students by using the following tips from our pilot teachers:

- Whenever possible, use a large screen format, for better viewing of subtitles. If there is an LCD projector available at your school, by all means use it.
- Auditorium-style seating to simulate the film-going experience is ideal, but not necessary.
- As your school schedule permits, running the film in its entirety is preferable to breaking it into one-period chunks, unless the needs of your specific student group require viewing the film in smaller sequences. Offer a break to coincide with recess to stretch and possibly have a refreshment or go outside. See our suggestions below under **Suggestions for Implementation**.
- Bring in one or more older students to read subtitles aloud if your student group requires assistance in reading comprehension. This model also offers an

opportunity for mentoring. Be sure to give the older students the opportunity to view the film in advance and become familiar with the subtitles.

- For TESL students, use subtitles with all films including the English-language films like *Whale Rider* to offer the students an opportunity to follow along. Set the mode to English subtitles rather than hearing-impaired unless there is a student with this disability in the class.
- A DVD is preferable to a VCR for later lessons that call for showing particular scenes. Be sure that if you buy a used DVD over the Internet, it is formatted for North American DVD viewing.

Suggestions for Implementation

As a general rule of thumb, we believe that the teacher can best decide what methods of film viewing and lesson implementation are appropriate for each specific class. However, we recommend an inter-disciplinary approach in order to make the greatest impact on the student; this curriculum guide makes this easy to facilitate. (It's much easier to bring other teachers on board if you can hand them a fully-articulated, standards-based lesson plan to work with!) This also allows a group of teachers to share their efforts and class time for a truly comprehensive, immersive experience, instead of one or two teachers giving up 1-2 weeks of class time in this current climate of reaching benchmarks and quotas. *Journeys in Film* encourages you to share this curriculum with your colleagues to create a team approach to engage your entire school community. Your school's gym teacher might be a foreign film aficionado who could create culturally relevant athletic activities to join the fun!

Consider devoting an entire day or even several days to one film and its respective curriculum. Cancel all classes, prepare students by having already implemented the pre-film lesson plan(s), view the film together as one entire student body or in large groups, and design a round-robin rotational method for the remaining lesson plans that are deemed as 'core' or essential by your school community. This full-impact, immersive method has proven to result in very thoughtful dialogue between students, staff and faculty members.

Please note:

You do not have to follow these lesson plans in order, nor do you have to complete all of them. However, please notice that some lesson plans have been designed for use *before* viewing the film, as a means for engaging the students about the country and culture, and offering a context from which to connect with the film. The bulk of the lesson plans have been designed for use *after* viewing the film.

Here are some of our favorite suggestions from our pilot teachers:

- Collaborate with other schools in your district. Bring the skits, role-plays, art projects and other *Journeys in Film* lessons into elementary classrooms, offering older students the opportunity to act as 'teachers' by presenting a culture they've learned about.
- Create an after-school foreign film club, either as a means to use this program if it doesn't fit into the regular class schedule or as an opportunity for interested students to further explore film from other countries.

- Create a quarterly ‘film night’ or on-going ‘film festival,’ schedule the viewing in the evening or during the weekend, and invite parents to participate! This model will acquaint parents with the innovative programs being used in your school and encourage dialogue between parents and children. Serve popcorn!
- Designate a hallway or display case to *Journeys in Film*. Enlist the assistance of parents, business leaders, and/or community members who may have some connection to the culture represented in the highlighted film in decorating the space.
- Invite parents, business leaders and/or community members from the culture of a given film to visit with students, share their stories, share traditional foods, etc.
- On a larger scale, your school can plan an annual ‘Global Village Day’ as the kick-off or finale to the *Journeys in Film* program series.

Where can I get the films used in this program?

All of the films chosen for this first set of four *Journeys in Film* curricula can be purchased by you or your school by visiting our website – www.journeysinfilm.org

Most national chain rental and retail outlets carry all four films in their foreign film section. You can also check the Internet for other purchase options.

What else can I use to promote cross-cultural understanding in my classroom?

There is an almost limitless supply of cross-cultural materials available to teachers from organizations and the Internet. The one we have found that fits very well with the *Journeys in Film* approach is a free resource from the Peace Corps’ Coverdell World Wise Schools. *Building Bridges: A Peace Corps Classroom Guide to Cross-Cultural Understanding* is designed for grades 6-12. Its thirteen lively, interactive lessons were created for the classroom from Peace Corps training materials, to help American students learn about culture, stereotyping, and the resolution of cross-cultural misunderstanding. If you wish, you can use this as a supplement to or in place of the general cross-cultural understanding lessons from *Journeys in Film*. You can obtain this book for free by calling the Peace Corps at 1-800-424-8580, ext.1450, or by downloading it from

<http://peacecorps.gov/wws/bridges/index.html>.

So welcome to Journeys in Film!

And above all, no matter which specific implementation methods you use as you begin your own *Journeys in Film*, have fun with your students and colleagues while you’re doing it!

Additional Suggestions for Assessment

Modern assessment methods have moved beyond the objective test given at the end of a chapter or unit; instead teachers look for ways to measure students' deeper understanding of ideas. We have included assessment techniques in each lesson in this unit. Here are some additional possibilities for you to consider as you plan your unit on this film. Be sure to brief students on what kinds of assessment you will do before you begin the unit.

1. Have students keep a journal throughout the unit. Based on the standards that you are working with in each lesson, create a series of open-ended questions for students to choose from. Depending on the ability of your class, determine and make clear the number of questions that they must answer, when each journal entry must be completed, and the length of each journal entry. Create a rubric on which to judge the journal as a whole and be sure to share the rubric with the students before they begin.
2. Have students create a class newspaper based on the film. Review the various parts of a newspaper with them (news report, news analysis, editorial, letters to the editor, obituaries, advice columns, sports, fashion, even comics and crosswords). Appoint student editors and then allow students time to brainstorm how to produce a newspaper based on the film. (For example, a report on Ali's cross-country race from a sports reporter, a letter to the editor from one of Zahra's teachers, a food column about Iranian food, an advice column with a question from the children's mother, etc.) If you have desktop publishing software, students can design the newspaper on computer, or they can do paste-ups on large sheets of heavy paper.
3. Conduct face-to-face interviews with individual students or student pairs. This can be done during study halls or lunch, as well as during class time. Make sure students know that the burden of the interview is on them to

convey how well they understand the film and the lessons you have used to introduce and follow the film. Help them understand that they should prepare for the interview by reviewing what they have learned. Give them a rubric ahead of time to show how you will judge them on familiarity with the film, learning accomplished during the lessons, poise during the interview, respect for others' opinions (if conducting a joint interview), etc. You can use the standards in this unit as a starting place for your questions. And be sure you don't ask the same questions of each student or group, or the later interviewees will start limiting their preparation!

4. Have students create a portfolio of work that they have done in this unit. Have them arrange the work from the elements that they think are the best (in front) to those they think are the least effective. Then have them write a response to these or similar questions:

Why do you think _____ is your best work?

What problems did you have to face as started this assignment?

How did you overcome those problems?

Why do you think _____ is your least effective work?

What goals do you have for yourself as a learner for the rest of the year?

5. Play a game like *Jeopardy*. Have students come up with their own questions, perhaps splitting the class into two groups. Have each group split into 5-6 smaller teams and assign them a topic. Have them create six Jeopardy-style answers, each with the appropriate question. Then trade the questions and play the game with each large group. You can give a simple reward, like allowing the winning team to leave the room first at the end of the period.



The Islamic Republic of Iran

Enduring Understandings:

- Iran is an important country in a key location in the Middle East.
- Religion is an important force in shaping modern Iran.
- Islam is one of the great world religions with a distinctive history and set of beliefs.
- Islamic principles and values are shared by many other cultures.
- The Iranian flag, like other flags, reflects the values and beliefs of the people who created it.

Essential Questions:

- Where is Iran?
- What is meant by the “Islamic Republic of Iran”?
- What are the central values of Islam?
- What are the origins of Islam?
- What do you value and how do your values compare to those of Islam?

Notes to the Teacher:

This first lesson in map-reading and human geography is an important lesson to orient students to the world they will be exploring through the film *Children of Heaven*. It should be taught before the film is shown. The lesson first explores Iran’s geography in the context of neighboring countries and gives students practice in map-making and giving directions. Students should understand that Iraq and Iran are two different countries with only one letter difference in their names. Iran is Persian-speaking and overwhelmingly Shi’ite; Iraq is Arabic-speaking with a mixture of Sunni and Shi’ite Muslims. The two countries share a geographical border. You might also make students aware that a map is a culturally-centered artifact, and that our Western coinage of the term “Middle East” implies something that lies between two other entities.

If you do not have student atlases, you will have to copy a map of Iran for your students to use. A useful one appears at <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/mapspub/maps/Iran.htm>; another good one is at <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/atlas/index.html?Parent=mideast&Rootmap=iran&Mode=d/>. If you wish to give students an outline map instead of having them sketch one, see <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/outline/irout.htm>.

The second part of the lesson focuses on why Iran is called an “Islamic Republic,” introducing students to Islam’s history and value system. This lesson seeks to help students understand the nature of this major world religion and the way it affects Iranian lives.

If your students are to understand the role of religion in the lives of children in Iran, they need background on



the 1400-year-old religion of Islam, its rules, principles, and beliefs. Muslims accept Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus as prophets, but the final prophet is Muhammad, God's messenger. Islam is monotheistic (believing in one God, called *Allah* in the Arabic language).

In Iran today modern influences coexist with traditional ones. Islamic conservatives embrace the modern oil economy. Since the Islamic revolution, Iran has been a functioning parliamentary democracy with elections which involve choices over real differences, although ultimately political power is in the hands of the *mullahs* or clerics, who set the political policies that affect cultural practices in the country. Literacy rates for women have improved and more Iranian women are being educated. A large percentage of Iranians have access to personal computers.

In Shi'ite-led Iran, 89% of the population is Shi'a Muslim, which is a minority group in the Muslim world as a whole. 10% of the Iranian population is Sunni Muslim. (Shi'ites and Sunnis split in a dispute over whether the leader of Islam had to be a descendant of the Prophet or not; Shi'ites supported rule by a descendant.) There are also smaller groups of Zoroastrians, Christians, and Jews in Iran. Iran is located in a geographic region where intra-Islamic tension exists, especially in neighboring Iraq.

If you have one or more Muslim students in your class, talk to them beforehand about the upcoming lesson and ask them if they want to explain any of the principles or the Five Pillars.

The list of "seven Islamic virtues" appears in some of the virtue literature of Islam. The number seven, like three, is popular in Islamic piety. It is obvious, however, that these represent universal concepts that may also be found in other cultures and religious traditions.

Finally, one important point to make is that the violence that racks parts of the Middle East today is not part of the teachings of Islam. History is full of examples of violence carried out in the name of religion; a cursory survey of the history of Western Europe since the Reformation or the history of Ireland in the twentieth century would certainly illustrate this point.

DURATION OF LESSON:

One or two class periods

ASSESSMENT:

Student-made map of Iran

Values chart

Participation in class discussion



GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

STANDARD 2. Knows the location of places, geographic features, and patterns of the environment

LEVEL III [GRADE: 6-8]

1. Knows the location of physical and human features on maps and globes (e.g., culture hearths such as Mesopotamia, Huang Ho, the Yucatan Peninsula, the Nile Valley; major ocean currents; wind patterns; land forms; climate regions)

STANDARD 4. Understands the physical and human characteristics of place

LEVEL III [GRADE: 6-8]

1. Knows the human characteristics of places (e.g., cultural characteristics such as religion, language, politics, technology, family structure, gender; population characteristics; land uses; levels of development)

STANDARD 5. Understands the concept of regions

LEVEL III [GRADE: 6-8]

5. Understands the influences and effects of particular regional labels and images (e.g., Twin Peaks in San Francisco, Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., the South, the rust belt, "developed" vs. "less-developed" regions)

STANDARD 15. Understands how physical systems affect human systems

LEVEL III [GRADE: 6-8]

1. Knows the ways in which human systems develop in response to conditions in the physical environment (e.g., patterns of land use, economic livelihoods, architectural styles of buildings, building materials, flows of traffic, recreation activities)

WORLD HISTORY STANDARDS

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

STANDARD 4. Understands the physical and human characteristics of place

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

1. Knows the human characteristics of places (e.g., cultural characteristics such as religion, language, politics, technology, family structure, gender; population characteristics; land uses; levels of development)
5. Understands the factors that affect the cohesiveness and integration of countries (e.g., language and religion in Belgium, the religious differences between Hindus and Moslems in India, the ethnic differences in some African countries that have been independent for only a few decades, the elongated shapes of Italy and Chile)

STANDARD 6. Understands that culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

3. Knows the ways in which culture influences the perception of places and regions (e.g., religion and other belief systems, language and tradition; perceptions of "beautiful" or "valuable").

Materials needed:

Student atlases or copies of Iran map.

Copies of Iran outline map (optional)

HANDOUT 1: THE FLAG OF IRAN: SYMBOLS AND MEANING

HANDOUT 2: VALUES TO LIVE BY

HANDOUT 3: FAQs ABOUT ISLAM

Procedure:

ACTIVITY 1: Tehran and Iran – An Atlas-Based Approach

1. Tell students that they are about to start a new unit based around a film made in Iran. Write “Iran” on the chalkboard and ask what students have heard about this country. (Responses may be mostly negative, including terrorism, the nuclear threat, or the hostage crisis.) Be sure that students understand that Iran is in the region known as the Middle East. Tell students that the name of Iran before modern times was Persia. Explain that not many Americans know about the lives of ordinary people in this country and that they are about to see a film that will teach them a great deal about Iran. But first it is important for students to learn about the country’s location.
2. Give out copies of the map of Iran or have students use a student atlas. Ask students to name:
 - a. Iran’s neighbors (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkey, Iraq, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan; Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman are across the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman)
 - b. the main bodies of water that connect Iran to the world’s ocean system. (Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman)
 - c. the large body of water closest to Tehran (Caspian Sea)
 - d. Tehran’s latitude and longitude (35° 40' N, 51° 26' E; student answers will be approximate.)
 - e. The hemispheres Iran is in (Eastern and Northern hemispheres)
3. Using the photo-copied map or an atlas, ask students to sketch an outline of Iran on a blank piece of paper. (Optional: Give them a photocopy of an outline map; see **Notes to the Teacher**.) Ask them to label key geographic areas based on the existing map, including the city of Tehran and mountainous regions, and write in the names of Iran’s neighbors.
4. Tell students that every modern nation has a flag to represent itself. Have students analyze the flag of the United States of America in the 21st century. What do the colors stand for? What do the symbols represent? (The latest version of the American flag was sanctioned in 1959. The 50 stars represent the states; many different flags have existed as the U.S. has added states. The 13 stripes have been fixed over time, representing the original 13 colonies. As for the colors, white signifies purity and innocence, red signifies valor and bravery, and blue signifies vigilance, perseverance, and justice.)
5. Distribute **HANDOUT 1: THE FLAG OF IRAN – SYMBOLS AND MEANING**. Give students a few minutes to read the information under the flag. Then ask, what does this flag tell you about the Iranian people? (The religion of Islam is extremely important to them and it is for



this reason that the Arabic inscription in the center is God’s name in Arabic: ALLAH.) Tell them that the official name of Iran is the Islamic Republic of Iran and write “Islamic Republic of” on the chalkboard in front of “Iran.” Ask if anyone can define “Islamic.” Tell students that the rest of the lesson will be spent learning what “Islamic” means.

6. Explain to students that Islam is the name of the religion and means “to submit to God’s will”; the word “Muslim” refers to a person who practices Islam.

ACTIVITY 2: Basic Values

1. Tell students that they are going to learn about Muslim beliefs, especially those principles that govern their everyday lives. Explain that the story of *Children of Heaven* takes place in Iran and all of the characters are Muslims.
2. Ask your students to name a guiding principle that we are expected to live by in our society. (For example, honesty). Ask students to explain why this principle is important and what happens when it is not practiced. What are the consequences for being honest or dishonest?
3. Put students in pairs or small groups and give each group a copy of **HANDOUT 2: VALUES TO LIVE BY**. Ask each group to come up with seven guiding values to live by. Allow time for discussion.

4. Now tell students the “Seven Islamic Rules” that some Muslim writers have set out as the model that all people should live by in order to have a peaceful world. The principles are:

Humility
Truthfulness
Tolerance
Resolve
Courage
Kindness
Wisdom

5. Compare the two lists or charts, the students’ and the ones from Islam. (You should find overlap with the responses in number 3 above.) Discuss the similarities and differences.

ACTIVITY 3: Basic Facts about Islam

1. Give each student a copy of **HANDOUT 3: FAQs ABOUT ISLAM**. Ask students to read carefully, underlining key ideas and noting questions in the margin.
2. Discuss the handout with the class. List on the board new vocabulary words that students learn from this reading and be sure that students understand their meaning. You may wish to assign students to research answers to any questions you are not able to answer.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Mapping Features

- a. Write these geographical rules on the board.
 - In global desert areas, higher levels of precipitation fall in the form of rain and snow at higher elevations. Deserts are more common in the lowlands of arid places due to increased temperatures and dew points are not as easily reached. Deserts are usually found in rain shadows, too.
 - Forests in the Middle East are found at higher elevations because there is more precipitation.
 - Arable land will be found at the base of mountains where richer soils have been deposited.
 - Oil in Iran is found mainly in the southwest near the Persian Gulf.
- b. Have students make guesses based on this information and add more information to their student-drawn map in pencil. Then have them compare their work with a real physical map of Iran.

2. Using ideas from the discussion, study of the Iranian flags, and their own ideas, have students design their own flags representing the values of their community. They may use elements from other flags that represent their heritage and their nation, as well as other symbols that are important to them. Have them describe in writing what the symbols mean.
3. Invite a Muslim parent, faculty member, or other community member to come in to speak to the class.

Consider asking the visitor or student to talk about what it means to grow up Muslim in a religiously diverse North America.

ADDITIONAL INTERNET RESOURCES:

<http://www.cie.org/>

A website from the Council on Islamic Education, with teaching units on the Silk Road, the Crusades, Ramadan, and much more

<http://www.salamiran.org/IranInfo/General/Geography/>

An excellent narrative overview of Iran's geography.

<http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/cultural/religion/islam/islam.html>

Part of a world religions website by Minnesota State University

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/features/world_religions/islam.shtml

A guide to world religions from the BBC

<http://www.worldalmanacforkids.com/explore/religion/islam.html>

The World Almanac for Kids page on Islam

<http://www.artsmia.org/world-religions/islam/>

A look at Islamic art and culture from the Minneapolis Institute of Art

http://www.askasia.org/teachers/Instructional_Resources/Materials/Readings/Middle_East/R_middleeast_1.htm

A reading on Islam by AskAsia

HANDOUT 1

The Flag of Iran: Symbols and Meaning



The Iranian flag has three horizontal bands of green, white and red. Green represents nature, growth and potential; it is the most sacred color of Islam. White symbolizes peace and honesty. Red stands for hardiness, bravery, strength, and courage.

The national emblem is centered in the white band. The two free-standing crescents are the letter Alef and the two joined crescents in the middle with a tower are the letter Lam, which together form the Islamic word for Allah. The emblem symbolizes the nation under Allah and its tulip shape symbolizes those who sacrificed their lives for the country.

ALLAH AKBAR (God is Great) is repeated 22 times in white Arabic script on the top and bottom bands of the flag. This number is significant because of the Islamic Revolution of 1979, which occurred on the 22nd day of the 11th month of the Iranian calendar. The flag was adopted on June 29, 1980.



HANDOUT 2

Values to Live By

Directions: With your partner(s), develop a list of values that you think a good person should try to live by.

What is the value?	Why is it important to practice this value?	What happens if you don't practice this value?



HANDOUT 3 ▶ P.1 FAQs about Islam

What is Islam?

The word *Islam* is the Arabic word for “submission” and means complete submission to the will of All-Powerful God. The word *Islam* has the same root as *salaam* or “peace.” One who practices this faith is called a *Muslim*. God is viewed as merciful, just, and compassionate. Arising in Makkah (Mecca), in today’s Saudi Arabia, Islam is the second largest religion in the world and is growing rapidly. Born when polytheism was common, Islam is monotheistic; the word for God in Arabic is *Allah*, which in English is “The God.” Muslims believe in a judgment day and life after death, with God’s justice seen as the moral basis of social life.

What does Islam teach?

Islam teaches that God is one and all-powerful; that Muhammad is the last and greatest prophet in a long line that includes Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and Jesus; that the Word of God was revealed to Muhammad through the angel Gabriel over a period of 23 years; that Muhammad recited these verses to his followers, who memorized, recited, and collected them in the *Qur’an* (pronounced ku-'ran), the most sacred book of Islam. The collected words, teachings and deeds of Muhammad as passed down by tradition are known as the *Hadith* and these are the second major source of Islamic teachings.

Who was Muhammad?

Born around 570 CE in Makkah, Muhammad was an orphan who was raised by his uncle. He became a caravan merchant and eventually married his employer, the businesswoman and widow Khadija. According to Muslim belief, Muhammad retreated regularly to a mountain outside Makkah to meditate about God and he was visited there by the Angel Gabriel, who told him he was chosen to be a prophet or messenger of God and began to dictate God’s word to him.

Muhammad returned to Makkah to preach. Persecuted for his beliefs, in 622 CE he fled to another city, Madinah (Medina), which welcomed him. With an army from Madinah, Muhammad returned to Makkah and converted most of its people to Islam. From the Arabian Peninsula, Islam spread to parts of Europe, Africa, and Asia during the centuries after his death.

Do Muslims worship Muhammad?

No, Muslims only worship God, although they respect Muhammad above all other humans. Islamic teachings forbid the creation of statues or icons for the purpose of worship. The worship of anything except the One God, Who is never represented in images, is the greatest sin in Islam. For this reason, the old European term for Muslims, “Mohammedans,” is inaccurate.

HANDOUT 3 ► P.2 FAQs about Islam

How do Muslims worship? Muslims follow the Five Pillars of Islam:

1. They testify that only God is worthy of worship and that Muhammad is his prophet. This monotheism (belief in one God) is the most important message of Islam.
2. They pray five times a day, facing toward Makkah.
3. They fast one month per year. During this period they only eat before dawn and after dark, not even taking water during daylight hours.
4. They pay a portion of their wealth each year for the poor and needy.
5. Once in their lives, if they can afford it and are healthy enough, they travel on a pilgrimage (*hajj*) to Makkah.

It is customary for Muslims to have religious services at their house of worship, called a mosque, on Fridays. The mosque has a niche showing the direction of Makkah, a well where Muslims wash before prayers, and usually a pulpit. However, anywhere a Muslim prays is a *masjid*, “a place of prostration,” which is one Arabic word for a mosque.

Why do some Muslim women wear head coverings?

The *Qur'an* requires both men and women to dress modestly. Each culture defines for itself how this should be done. Many Middle Eastern women wear head scarves (*hijab*) to cover their hair and neck, and sometimes their faces as well. Others, especially in Afghanistan and parts of Iran, wear a *burqa*, a long cloak that covers all but the hands and eyes. Many others do not believe that modesty requires that they cover their hair.

What is the role of Islam in Iran?

Iran is officially called the Islamic Republic of Iran. While Iran's government is democratic in form, with elected secular (non-religious) leaders, the country is also a theocracy, e.g., a country governed by religious leaders. A Guardian Council, made up of clerics, approves all candidates running for office. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was elected president in 2005, the first non-cleric to hold that office, and immediately stated his intention to make Iran "modern, advanced, powerful and Islamic."

Viewing *Children of Heaven*

Enduring Understandings:

- A well-made film is a powerful way to help one understand another culture.
- Filmmaking is dependent on cultural and economic variables.

Essential Questions:

- What does *Children of Heaven* tell us about life in Iran?
- How does Iranian culture and law affect the nature of filmmaking in Iran?

Notes to the Teacher:

If this is the first film in your *Journeys in Film* program, please refer to “To the Teacher...” (p. 11) on preparing students to watch a subtitled film.

Before showing the film, give students some background on filmmaking in Iran. To prepare for this, read interviews with the filmmaker, Majid Majidi, at his website at <http://www.cinemajidi.com/>. Also, many insightful reviews of the film may be found at <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0118849/externalreviews>.

It is important that students realize that although *Children of Heaven* is based on a true story, it is a narrative commercial feature film that tells a fictitious story. It is not a documentary, although there are scenes that have been shot on the street with everyday people, real settings etc. as a documentary might be shot.

After the race at the very end of the film, you may wish to direct the students to pay close attention to what the father buys when he goes to the market, or even pause the film at the shot of the packages on his bicycle. This is an important part of the story and easily missed.

DURATION OF LESSON:

Approximately two hours, of which 88 minutes is spent viewing the film.

ASSESSMENT:

Discussion
Journal entry

STANDARDS

Indicators addressed by this lesson

STANDARD 9. Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

1. Understands a variety of messages conveyed by visual media (e.g., main concept, details, themes or lessons, viewpoints)
6. Understands how symbols, images, sound, and other conventions are used in visual media (e.g., time lapse in films; set elements that identify a particular time period or culture; short cuts used to construct meaning, such as the scream of brakes and a thud to imply a car crash; sound and image used together; the use of close-ups to convey drama or intimacy; the use of long camera shots to establish setting; sequences or groups of images that emphasize specific meaning)

Materials needed:

DVD (preferred) or videotape of *Children of Heaven*
VCR, DVD player, or computer with LCD hookup

Procedure:

ACTIVITY 1: Before the Film

1. Remind students of your expectations for their behavior during film viewing. If you are planning to take a break in the middle, announce this in advance.
2. Give the students background information about Iranian filmmaking based on the reviews and interviews you have read. Be sure you cover the following points:
 - Censorship laws have encouraged Iranian filmmakers to produce more films that are appropriate for a family audience.
 - This is a story loosely based on a true situation in which a brother and sister find themselves having to share a pair of shoes because they have no money to buy a new pair.
 - The movie takes place in Tehran, the capital city of Iran.

- It will be easy for your students to notice many different aspects of family life in Iran, but you should also ask the students to make a point of watching for similarities to their own family situations and other universal elements of the film.
- *Children of Heaven* has received critical acclaim worldwide. There are some universal elements in this film that we can relate to no matter what culture or country we are from.
- The language spoken in this film is Farsi, sometimes called Persian. If any of your students speak Farsi, ask them to follow and see how accurate the translations really are. This would be interesting to comment on after the film.

ACTIVITY 2: After the Film

1. When the film is over, take a few minutes to invite the students to share their immediate thoughts, feelings and questions about the film. This conversation will continue in the media literacy class as students have an opportunity to explore their likes, dislikes, puzzles and patterns.
2. Ask students: Why is the ending so subtle? The father does pick up new shoes for both children at the market, but this doesn't seem to be the most important message. What is the most important message?
3. Majidi wanted to show the goldfish kissing Ali's feet as a sign that he was being rewarded on a more spiritual level for his kindness and caring towards his family. Ask students: How do you feel about this ending? Was it in keeping with the pace and mood of the film?
4. Assign students to write a journal entry: Compare the ending of *Children of Heaven* to the ending of a typical Hollywood blockbuster.







Understanding *Children of Heaven*

Enduring Understandings:

- Seemingly minor events can have many consequences.
- Family members each have distinctive roles to play in a family.
- Unique rites of passage occur in most cultures at different times and for different occasions.

Essential Questions:

- What are the key elements of the plot of the film *Children of Heaven*?
- How do members of Ali's family relate to each other?
- How might Ali's experiences be considered a rite of passage?

Notes to the Teacher:

This lesson has several sections. The first is an alphabet brainstorming to encourage your students to recall important events and characters in the film. Use this activity not only to come up with key words but also to discuss the significance of those words and where they fit in the story.

The second section looks more closely at family relationships in the story, and asks students to think about their own families and family roles. It is important to be sensitive to students' individual situations. If, for example, one of your students has suffered a recent death in the family, it might be best to skip this section.

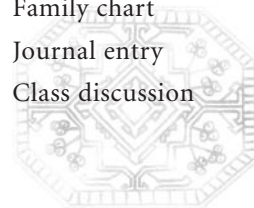
The third section teaches about the concept of rites of passage and the idea that this is a "coming-of-age" story, as Ali grows more responsible and shows initiative in dealing with the problem he faces. The "coming-of-age" theme is an appealing one for students of this age. The Fairfax, Virginia, Public Library has compiled an excellent list of "coming-of-age" novels for young adults at <http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/library/READING/YA/OFAGE.HTM> if you are looking for choices for outside reading.

DURATION OF LESSON:

One-two periods

ASSESSMENT:

- Alphabet brainstorming chart
- Family chart
- Journal entry
- Class discussion



STANDARDS

Indicators addressed by this lesson

STANDARD 9. Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

Level III (Grades 6-8)

1. Understands a variety of messages conveyed by visual media (e.g., main concept, details, themes or lessons, viewpoints)

the A-Z brick. Tell the students that if they absolutely cannot think of a word that begins with a given letter, they may draw in a pink shoe or a sneaker in that spot, up to four times. They are going to work in groups and may not get every word, but for the class as a whole to “win,” all bricks must be completed with at least one word by the time class is over.

3. Give students approximately 10 minutes to brainstorm words and phrases from the film that begin with each letter of the alphabet. While they are working, draw large bricks on the chalkboard in a pattern similar to the handout.
4. Debrief students in whole-class discussion, filling in suggested words on the blackboard and letting them fill in missing or extra words on their handouts. Be sure that each student explains clearly why the word is important to the story before you put it on the board. Be sure to add your own insights as well. By the time the activity is finished, students will have reviewed the film’s plot and the relationship of characters to one another.

Materials needed:

HANDOUT 1: From A to Z

HANDOUT 2: Families

Procedure:

ACTIVITY 1: From A to Z

1. Tell students that, now that they have seen the film, they are going to do an activity to help them remember important parts of the film. Put the students into groups of four and distribute copies of **HANDOUT 1: FROM A TO Z** to each student.
2. Explain that you want students to think of one key word or phrase from the film or from the previewing lessons for each letter of the alphabet. Ask the students if they remember the name of the main character (Ali). Have them fill in his name in the first “brick.” Do the same for his sister’s name (Zahra) and fill in



Suggested responses:

A	Ali	Protagonist, sets off plot by losing shoes, races to win new ones
	Alleys	Old city of Tehran has narrow alleys; children race through to trade shoes
	Accident	Old bicycle breaks, Ali and his father are injured after day of gardening
B	Blind man	Gives Zahra's shoes to his daughter
	Blisters	Running the race was very difficult for Ali and caused feet to blister
	Bicycle	See "accident"
	Baby	Zahra often takes care of their younger brother, a baby who is sometimes sick
C	Cobbler	Film opens with a cobbler repairing Zahra's pink shoes
	Cart	Zahra's shoes are picked-up by a man with a cart, the local trash collector
	Canal	Zahra loses one sneaker in a canal, but is helped to recover it.
	Cheat	A competitor pushes Ali during the race, causing him to stumble
	Courtyard	Ali's house is built on a courtyard, which they share with other families
D	Ditch	See "Canal"
	Diligence	Ali's hard work in school earns him recognition and a gold pen
E	Exercise	Racing every day to trade shoes makes Ali a fast runner with good wind
F	Father	Ali's father is poor but has a great sense of honor. He expects obedience.
	Fast	See "Exercise"
	Fountain	See "Courtyard." Ali's mother does laundry in the fountain.
	Farsi	Ali's family spoke this language and screen titles were written in it.
G	Goldfish	Goldfish in the pool at Ali's house seemed to kiss his blistered feet.
	Gardening	Ali's father earned extra money to support his family by gardening.
	Guilty	Ali felt very guilty about losing Zahra's shoes.
	Generosity	The family, though poor themselves, showed generosity to their sick neighbor.
H	Hijab, head-covering	Zahra and other female characters wear traditional Muslim head-covering, called hijab.
I	Islam	The official religion of Iran. Ali's family members are Muslim.
	Iran	The Middle-Eastern country in which the film takes place.
	Intercom	Ali has a much easier time talking over the intercom than his shy father.
J	Jump	Because she is wearing her brother's sneakers, Zahra jumps well in gym class.
K	Kids	The film is centered on children and titled "Children of Heaven"
L	Lost	The loss of the pink shoes starts the action of the film.
	Landlord	He badgers Ali's mother for overdue rent, showing the family's poverty.
	Late	Ali is late for school several times because of having to change shoes.
	Mother	Ali's mother needs an operation and her bad back limits her ability to work
M	Muslim	Followers of Islam are called Muslims.
	Mosque	The sacred building where Muslims worship.
	Notebook	Ali and Zahra communicate secretly using their notebooks.
N	Neighborhoods	There is a huge difference between Ali's neighborhood and modern Tehran.

O	Opportunity	Ali sees the race as an opportunity to win new sneakers for Zahra
	Obey	Ali's father expects his wife and children to obey him.
	Old City	See "Neighborhoods"
	Operation	See "Mother"
P	Prize	Ali runs to win third prize in the race, a pair of shoes, but wins first instead
	Potatoes	Ali's having to take tiny potatoes in the grocery shows the family's poverty
	Pink	The pink shoes taken by the trash collector were the only shoes Zahra owned
	Pen	Ali gave Zahra the gold pen he won to make her feel better.
	Poverty	While the family has a home and even a television, they have limited means.
Q	Qu'ran	The sacred book of Islam
R	Run	Ali and Zahra must run every day between school breaks to trade shoes
	Race	Ali gets to participate in the race because he persists with his gym teacher
	Rich	The little boy in modern Tehran is rich but lonely; he is glad of Ali's company
S	Shoes, sneakers	Loss of Zahra's shoes and sharing of sneakers constitutes much of plot
	Sugar	Ali's father breaks sugar for mosque ceremony, but won't use any himself
	School	The children like their respective schools, which are segregated by gender;
	Secret	The children keep the secret because they don't want to worry their parents
	Soccer	Ali cannot play with his friends because of the lack of shoes.
T	Tehran	The capital of Iran and the location of the film
	Teacher	A number of teachers are helpful to the children, but some are very strict.
U	Unhappy	Zahra is very unhappy over the loss of her shoes, and Ali feels sorry and guilty.
V	Victory	Ali wins the race in spite of his desire to come in third, because it is so close
	Voices	While running, Ali hears Zahra's voice and is encouraged to keep running
W	Water	See "Canal"
X	????	Good place for students to use a shoe sketch!
Y	Young	Although the children are young, they have many family responsibilities
Z	Zahra	Ali's sister and the second major character in the film

ACTIVITY 2: Families

1. Ask students to recall the scene in the film when Ali's father's showed anger at him for not helping his mother; if you wish, show the clip from the film again. Ask students for their reaction. Why was the father so angry? Lead discussion to move students away from "He's just mean" to an understanding of the father's frustration at not being able to provide better for his wife and children.
2. Ask: What did he expect Ali to do? What was your reaction to his comment that Ali was not a child anymore?
3. Distribute **HANDOUT 2: FAMILIES**. Read directions aloud and stress that American families do not always take the form of a nuclear family of mother, father, and children; you don't want children with non-nuclear families to feel uncomfortable. Ask students to work individually to analyze the roles of members of Ali's family and of their own, and to answer the questions at the bottom of the handout.

**4.** Conduct a class discussion:

- a. Do you think you or Ali or Zahra have the greatest responsibilities? Why?
- b. How does the father fulfill his responsibility to support the family? (Remind students of the shoes that are on his bicycle rack and his trip to pay his bill to the grocer at the end of the film.) How do you think he feels?
- c. Do you think the father shows affection to Ali? Why or why not?
- d. Do you think Ali would like to grow up to be like his father? In what ways is the father a role model for Ali?
- e. Do you think Zahra will grow up to live like her mother? What are the limitations on a woman living in Iran right now?
- f. Conclusion: When you look at Ali's family and your own, do you see more similarities or differences?

ACTIVITY 3: Rites-of-Passage

1. Write the phrase "rites-of-passage" on the chalkboard and ask your students what it means. If no one comes up with the right answer, define it as a ceremony that marks an important change in one's life. Explain that all cultures define significant moments in people's lives and mark them with ceremonies.
2. Have students brainstorm all the things they can think of that would be considered a rite-of-passage in their lives. (Baptism, bar mitzvah and bat mitzvah, graduation, wedding, etc.) Write their responses on the board.
3. Ask students what a *bar mitzvah* recognizes (the passage from child to man). Explain that many cultures mark the passage from childhood to adulthood by ceremonies in which the community participates: for example, initiation rituals and circumcision in some African tribes, the four-day *Kinaalda* ceremony when a Navajo girl reaches puberty, the Latin American tradition of celebrating the *Quinceanera* (a girl's fifteenth birthday), etc.
4. Explain that not all life changes are recognized by a formal ceremony, but they are still important. There have been many novels written about the passage from child to adult, called "coming-of-age" novels. Ask students if they recall any other books or stories they have read or films they have seen which have this theme. How do the main characters come of age?
5. Ask students to write a journal entry or other response to this question: in what ways is this a "coming-of-age" story for Ali?

HANDOUT 1

From A to Z

DIRECTIONS: There are many elements in a plot that must work together to make the story successful. Think about the film *Children of Heaven* and the lessons you have already had about Iran. Then work with your group to brainstorm a key word from the film or lessons beginning with each letter of the alphabet. Write your words in the “brick wall” below.

When you finish, you will share your words with other groups. If your class can find a word for each “brick,” you really show you remember the film well!

A	B	C	D	E
F		G	H	I
J	K	L	M	N
O		P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W
X	Y	Z		

Of all the words above, which three are most important to understanding the film *Children of Heaven*? Why?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

HANDOUT 2

Families

DIRECTIONS: Ali’s family is called a *nuclear family*: it consists of a father, mother, and children. Families in North America are sometimes nuclear, but often take on other configurations as well (single parent, extended, blended, etc.) In fact, the latest census showed that only 23.5% of all households in the United States are nuclear families.

You probably know your own family very well. Think about how family members work together and how they relate to one another. Then think about Ali’s family as they appeared in the film *Children of Heaven*. Compare the family in the movie with your family by using the chart below.

Question	Your family	Ali’s family
Who is the head of the family?		
What are the responsibilities of the father in the family?		
What are the responsibilities of the mother in the family?		
What are the responsibilities of the children in the family?		
If other people live in your family, what roles do they play?		

In what ways is your family similar to Ali’s?

In what ways is your family different from Ali’s?



Perspectives on Iranian Culture

Enduring Understandings:

- Culture influences the food one eats, the clothing one wears, the environment one lives in, and even how one greets other people.
- One country may have wide variations in the economic status of its people.
- For many countries, tradition and modernization exist side by side.

Essential Questions:

- What are traditions and values depicted in the film *Children of Heaven*? What do these traditions symbolize?
- Do equivalent traditions exist in my own culture?
- How does a traditional culture survive and experience change?

Notes to the Teacher:

The lesson gives the students the opportunity to explore some of the cultural customs and economic differences they may have noticed while watching the film. The individual handouts cover food, housing, greetings, gender roles, clothing and economics. You may wish to have the DVD or video available for students to use as a resource during their research, as well as print resources and access to the Internet.

You will need to divide the class into six groups for this lesson. Each group will “wear a different hat,” that is, look at the subject from the perspective of a different career.

Be sure to make enough photocopies of each handout so that each student in the group has a copy of the appropriate one.

N.B. Since this lesson includes information about the head coverings worn by Muslim women, be sure to be sensitive to students in your class and others who wear religious or ethnic clothing. You may wish to discuss the lesson with them in advance.

DURATION OF LESSON:

Two-three periods

ASSESSMENT:

A research-based presentation to the class on one aspect of Iranian culture.



GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

STANDARD 10. Understands the nature and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

2. Knows ways in which communities reflect the cultural background of their inhabitants (e.g., distinctive building styles, billboards in Spanish, foreign-language advertisements in newspapers)

STANDARD 11. Understands the patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth's surface

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

2. Understands issues related to the spatial distribution of economic activities (e.g., the impact of economic activities in a community on the surrounding areas, the effects of the gradual disappearance of small-scale retail facilities such as corner general stores and gas stations, the economic and social impacts on a community when a large factory or other economic activity leaves and moves to another place)

STANDARD 12. Understands the patterns of human settlement and their causes

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

1. Knows the causes and consequences of urbanization (e.g., industrial development; cultural activities such as entertainment, religious facilities, higher education; economic attractions such as business and entrepreneurial opportunities; access to information and other resources)

2. Knows the similarities and differences in various settlement patterns of the world (e.g., agricultural settlement types such as plantations, subsistence farming, truck-farming communities; urban settlement types such as port cities, governmental centers, single-industry cities, planned cities)

3. Knows ways in which both the landscape and society change as a consequence of shifting from a dispersed to a concentrated settlement form (e.g., a larger marketplace, the need for an agricultural surplus to provide for the urban population, the loss of some rural workers as people decide to move into the city, changes in the transportation system)

4. Knows the factors involved in the development of cities (e.g., geographic factors for location such as transportation and food supply; the need for a marketplace, religious needs, or for military protection)

5. Knows the internal spatial structures of cities (e.g., the concentric zone model and the sector model of cities; the impact of different transportation systems on the spatial arrangement of business, industry, and residence in a city)

STANDARD 14. Understands how human actions modify the physical environment

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

3. Understands the ways in which technology influences the human capacity to modify the physical environment (e.g., effects of the introduction of fire, steam power, diesel machinery, electricity, work animals, explosives, chemical fertilizers and pesticides, hybridization of crops)



Materials needed:

HANDOUTS 1-6 on various aspects of Iranian life and culture.

Procedure:

1. Explain to the class that films can often help us to learn about other cultures. Ask students to brainstorm things that they learned about how people lived in Tehran as a result of watching *Children of Heaven*.
2. Tell students that there are many different careers which give people the opportunity to study aspects of other cultures. Explain the concept of “wearing a different hat,” i.e., imagining themselves in a possible future career field.
3. Have students briefly describe what someone in each of the following careers might want to know about Iran: chef, city planner, travel agent, teacher, clothing designer, economist
4. Divide the class in six groups. Give each student in Group 1 a copy of **HANDOUT 1**; give each student in Group 2 a copy of **HANDOUT 2**, etc.
5. Give students time to read the handout and answer the questions as best they can from their recollection of the film.
6. Give students time to research the topic they are investigating. This may be by Internet or using print materials, either at home or in the classroom or school library.
7. Have each group do a five-minute presentation to the class on what they have discovered. Optional: You might require that they use at least one audio-visual aid if you give them sufficient time to prepare the presentation.
8. Conclusion: Ask students which of the cultural aspects they have observed are a result of tradition? Which reflect modernization? What happens to traditions when a country tries to modernize?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Have students investigate a career field of their choice to see how global education could be useful to their futures.
2. A number of states and universities have Iranian cultural heritage societies. See if there is one in your area and invite a speaker to come to talk about Iranian traditional culture. The website at <http://www.farsinet.com/ipco/> provides a partial listing of Iranian organizations.
3. If you are interested in a student service learning project, a Maryland organization called Children of Persia has been providing food, medical care, clothing and education assistance to Iran. Their website is at <http://www.childrenofpersia.org/> and has a number of photos of children in school. UNICEF also works in Iran; you can read about their projects there at <http://www.unicef.org/emerg/iran/>.
4. Consider setting aside a few days or a week for your students to wear very conservative clothing, resembling the traditional Middle Eastern style. Girls should wear



head scarves, long skirts, and long sleeves. Boys should wear button-down shirts buttoned to the top, long sleeves, and long pants. Have them keep a journal about the experience – how they feel, how people react to them, how they feel walking down the street, how this clothing changes the way they move, etc.

ADDITIONAL INTERNET RESOURCES:

<http://tehran.stanford.edu/>

A website on culture, including cuisine, from Stanford University's Iranian Cultural and Information Center.

<http://www.cultureofiran.com/index.php>

A website to preserve Iranian culture for emigrants. Covers a wide variety of topics, including food, tea drinking, and the segregation of women.

<http://tehran.stanford.edu/imagemap/tehran.html>

Provides information about the city of Tehran, "a modern city in the heart of ancient Iran."

<http://www.tehran24.com/#>

An ongoing daily collection of photos from Iran.



HANDOUT 1 ▶ TOPIC ONE: Food

DIRECTIONS: Imagine that you and the members of your group are chefs who are touring in Iran to learn about Iranian food in preparation for opening a new Middle Eastern restaurant. Try to answer the following questions:

1. What kind of foods and beverages did you notice in the film?
2. How did breads and the bread-baking method differ from typical breads and baking methods in North America?
3. Does your family drink the same beverage at each meal and throughout the day?
4. Do we have a “national” drink that is consumed by almost all North Americans at every meal?

Now use the Internet to research Iranian foods and eating customs and prepare a report to give to your class. Here is some information to get you started:

Iranians use a variety of breads, mostly flat, many of which are baked in special ovens that are partially buried under the ground. The bakers sit cross-legged at the mouth of the oven, prepare the dough into rectangular pieces and attach each piece to the walls of the oven with long metal sticks. In Iran bread is baked throughout the day at small bakeries scattered throughout each neighborhood, sometimes one for each type of bread. It is bought fresh every day, a tradition that still exists, although not so much as in the past as fewer people go home for lunch. Most Iranians use utensils when eating, although in more traditional families the use of bread to scoop up other food is very commonplace.

Some of the most typical breads eaten in Iran are:

Lavash – a round thin flat bread that is baked in an underground oven.

Sangak – a two-foot-long bread that is baked over hot stones in an oven similar to wood-burning ovens used by some restaurants in North America.

Barbari – a thicker flat bread, usually round or oval in shape, typically eaten at breakfast.

Iranians typically drink tea with each meal and serve the beverage at all special occasions as well. It is served with sugar cut into cubes at home from larger blocks, as this is less expensive than buying the already cubed kind. Tea is grown in Iran and is also imported from other countries.

**HANDOUT 2 ▶ TOPIC TWO: Housing/Environment**

DIRECTIONS: Imagine that you and the members of your group are city planners who are touring in Iran to learn about traditional and modern Iranian housing in preparation for renovating a housing development in Tehran. Try to answer the following questions:

1. How is Ali's home different from or similar to your home and typical homes in North America?
2. How does the family use the space?
3. Where do they eat and sleep?
4. Describe the gutter system that ran through the town in the film. What was it used for?

Now use the Internet to research Iranian housing and the environment in Iran and prepare a report to give to your class. Here is some information to get you started:

Housing in Iran is very expensive. Many families cannot afford to rent more than one or two rooms with a shared yard, kitchen and bathroom. A pool in the middle is used for most washing. It is quite common for the entire family to live, eat and sleep together in the same room. There is little space for bulky furniture, and many items serve more than one purpose. For example: bed sheets and blankets folded neatly and placed against the wall serve as a cushion to rest against during the daytime hours. Also, poor families avoid accumulating too many household items as they are forced to move often due to economic hardship.

The kind of home seen in the film may have belonged to a larger, extended family in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. During that period, parents and their married children shared the yard and other common spaces for group festivities, but each separate room functioned as a one-room apartment for different family members. Iranians pride themselves in sharing what they have with others, especially when family is involved.

A labyrinth of small gutters runs through Ali and Zahra's neighborhood, as well as a larger one where Zahra accidentally drops one shoe. The small gutters are part of the 'jub' water system that was used a long time ago when Tehran lacked plumbing for running water. At that time, the 'jub' system served as a means for distributing water. Once the modern convenience of indoor plumbing was developed, 'jubs' lost their utility but remain a fixture throughout the country.



HANDOUT 3 ► TOPIC THREE: Greetings

DIRECTIONS: Imagine that you and the members of your group are travel agents who are writing a book about the many ways that people greet each other around the world. Now you are touring in Iran. Try to answer the following questions:

1. What was the most common greeting used in the film?
2. Did you observe any specific way that children addressed or spoke to adults (parents and teachers)?
3. Think about any non-verbal greetings or behaviors demonstrated in the film. How are they similar to or different from the way typical North American teens greet adults? What might these differences or similarities represent?

Now use the Internet to research Iranian social customs and prepare a report to give to your class. Here is some information to get you started:

The word ‘Salaam’ was heard many times during the film. ‘Salaam’ means ‘peace’ and is used throughout the Middle Eastern region; it’s similar to ‘Shalom’ in Hebrew. This word is used as to greet everyone including children and adults, from all economic levels, as ‘Hello’ is in North America. A handshake is the customary greeting in Iran; however, a man does not shake a woman’s hand unless she offers it first. Iranians of the same sex will often kiss each other on the cheek as a sign of affection. Asking about the family and the health of the other is considered proper etiquette as well.

Showing respect and using reverential language with others, specifically authority figures and elders, is very important in Persian culture. Children are taught to stand up when someone older enters the room, and to listen to and to follow all rules made by parents. Ali often lifts his finger up to his cheek when posing a question to a person of authority, using the words, “With permission, sir?” at the same time. This is a typical gesture used by children when addressing an elder. Persian children are taught to ask permission in a variety of circumstances such as before asking a question, taking food, leaving the room and turning on the television. Raising your hand and asking permission to speak in school is also the norm.



HANDOUT 4 ► TOPIC FOUR: Gender Roles

DIRECTIONS: Imagine that you and the members of your group are teachers who are studying about girls' lives in the Middle East. Now you are touring in Iran. Try to answer the following questions:

1. What did you notice about the different worlds of boys and girls in the film?
2. How does the typical school day in Iran differ from your typical school day?
3. Did the parents have different expectations for their children based on gender? Does this occur in North America? Does this occur in your family?

Now use the Internet to research the Iranian education system and prepare a report to give to your class. Here is some information to get you started:

Since the 1979 Revolution, schools have been segregated for two reasons: 1) the desire of the government to impose Islamic values on the general population; and 2) the shortage of schools caused by population growth in bigger cities. So many children and not enough schools have resulted in splitting the school day into two shifts. As part of the institutionalization of Islamic values, male teachers teach only boys and female teachers teach only girls. Mixed classrooms in lower grades still exist in one-room village schools as there are not enough teachers to separate young children by sex. Throughout the country, students are required to do more homework at home and some subjects such as art have been eliminated in public schools.

The family unit is strong in Iran and provides its members with identity, security and social organization. The father is the undisputed head of household. Large families with many children, especially boys, are preferred. Children in poor families are expected to assist with chores as all family members are responsible for the welfare of the greater family. In the film, the mother is ill, which puts an additional burden on the children to pitch in. In Iranian culture, the division of chores is very much determined by the sex of the child. At eight years of age, Zahra was expected to care for her infant sibling while also helping to cook and serving tea to her father. Ali was assigned chores more typical of men such as assisting his father at the mosque and cleaning the carpets.



HANDOUT 5 ► TOPIC FIVE: Clothing

DIRECTIONS: Imagine that you and the members of your group are clothing designers who are studying local dress in many countries of the world. Now you are touring in Iran. Try to answer the following questions:

1. How did Ali's and Zahra's clothes differ? Did both wear a school uniform?
2. What did all female characters have in common?
3. Do you think that wearing a school uniform every day is a good idea? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

Now use the Internet to research how people in Iran dress and prepare a report to give to your class. Here is some information to get you started:

Iranians dress formally and conservatively in public. By law, since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, women must be covered from head to foot in public starting at age nine. The traditional black head covering, while still worn, is being replaced by more colorful scarves. Younger women may even let a little hair show on the forehead, and some women are also using make-up. A school uniform for girls is mandatory, and wearing a scarf or veil is part of it. Male students do not wear school uniforms, but some guidelines are followed such as no short sleeves or short pants. Men and boys are not required to cover their heads; however, some older men may chose to wear a small cap as part of their traditional village dress.

HANDOUT 6 ▶ TOPIC SIX: **Economics**

DIRECTIONS: Imagine that you and the members of your group are economists who are studying the distribution of wealth in several countries. Now you are touring in Iran. Try to answer the following questions:

1. What are the differences between Ali's home in the city and the little boy's home in the suburbs?
2. Do you see such contrasts in your city or elsewhere in your country?
3. How do these differences affect the kind of life the boys live and how they interact with the world around them?
4. What are the benefits and disadvantages of each of these family economic situations?

Now use the Internet to research issues of wealth and poverty in Iran and prepare a report to give to your class. Here is some information to get you started:

Iran is often called "the land of contrast," and in the film we see the comparisons between the rich and poor, modern ways and old-fashioned traditions, etc. In Tehran, the country's capital city, this contrast is much more vivid than other parts of Iran. The majority of the inhabitants in the northern part of town are wealthy, and the majority of the inhabitants in the southern part of town are poor. Very little interaction occurs between these two socio-economic groups with the exception of paid laborers or household help who travel from southern Tehran to the northern neighborhoods. Think about the scene when Ali and his father travel from their neighborhood via the modern highway on an old bicycle. The economic and political system in Iran helps perpetuate these contrasts. Ali's family survives with less material wealth, and they support each other in ways that can not be measured with money, while the little boy in northern Tehran has everything material but misses human contact.



Social Studies (Geography)

Enduring Understandings:

- Large cities such as Tehran are complex and provide in different ways for different people at different socio-economic levels.
- A huge city such as Tehran has dramatic similarities to and differences from cities in the North America.

Essential Questions:

- What would it be like to live in Tehran? What do you think you might like or dislike about living there?
- What adjustments do you think you would have to make to live in Tehran?



Notes to the Teacher:

Regardless of the location of your school, contrasting the lives of your students with those of the family in the film *Children of Heaven* is a valuable process and can be done in many ways. The family in this film is small, and the father is looking for more work to support it. The neighborhood where they live is a place where people have lived for centuries. Tehran itself was a very small pomegranate-growing village at the base of the Elburz (Alborz) Mountains until 1220 CE, when it suddenly became a refuge for people who survived the Mongol conquest. Not until the 20th century did its population begin to climb to the 14 million who live there today.

There is much more to Tehran than meets the eye in the film. For example, the film focuses on one poor neighborhood and one rich one. Many important features are barely shown: mosques, bazaars, middle class residential areas, high-rises, the Metro, sports facilities, museums, and restaurants. Additional research would be useful; use travel guidebooks or their websites such as Lonely Planet, or electronic encyclopedias such as Wikipedia.

Many well-illustrated middle school books are available on Iran and its people.

This lesson contains two activities. The first teaches students that cities are really made of neighborhoods, often with great differences in architecture, lifestyle, and socio-economic status between them. This idea is brought home to the students as they watch selected scenes from the film.

The second activity teaches students about the architecture of Tehran and its post-modern revival of ancient forms. The film makes clear that Ali's neighborhood in Tehran

is very old; in scenes when Ali and his father go on their bicycle trip, you will see new buildings. Across the super-highways and out of the old neighborhoods are modern buildings like those in North American cities. Under the Shah's regime, modern Western architecture came into Iran from America and Europe. Prior to that time and once again today, older designs command attention. Age-old traditions are being revived: stone carving, stucco carving and plaster work, painting, tile work, brick work, mirror glasswork, honey comb work, mosaic work, and several other ornamental arts. These traditional Islamic styles have been used for over 1400 years.

On the edge of deserts and arid regions, Iranian cities typically have hot summers and cold, dry winters. Iran's traditional architecture was a response to these climactic conditions. Persian artistic traditions created hundreds of traditional houses with handsome designs. The design of a traditional house reflected not only the climate but also the necessity of defense against foreign invasion. Houses were built with high outer walls to protect the residents' privacy and an enclosed courtyard and garden to allow tranquility and privacy.

Koocheh, the narrow winding streets that Ali and Zahra raced along, have high walls of adobe and brick and occasionally roofs; they provide relief from dust storms and intense sunlight.

DURATION OF LESSON:

One class period

ASSESSMENT:

Letter about Tehran
Class discussion


GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

STANDARD 6. Understands that culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions

LEVEL III [GRADE: 6-8]

1. Knows how places and regions serve as cultural symbols (e.g. Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco; Opera House in Sydney, Australia; the Gateway Arch in St. Louis; Tower Bridge in London)
2. Knows how technology affects the ways in which culture groups perceive and use places and regions (e.g., impact of technology such as air conditioning and irrigation on the human use of arid lands; changes in perception of environment by culture groups, such as the snowmobile's impact on the lives of Inuit people or the swamp buggy's impact on tourist travel in the Everglades)
3. Knows the ways in which culture influences the perception of places and regions (e.g., religion and other belief systems, language and tradition; perceptions of "beautiful" or "valuable")

STANDARD 10. Understands the nature and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics

LEVEL III [GRADE: 6-8]

2. Knows ways in which communities reflect the cultural background of their inhabitants (e.g., distinctive building styles, billboards in Spanish, foreign-language advertisements in newspapers)

STANDARD 11. Understands the patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth's surface

LEVEL III [GRADE: 6-8]

7. Knows primary, secondary, and tertiary activities in a geographic context (e.g., primary economic activities such as coal mining and salmon fishing; secondary economic activities such as the manufacture of shoes and the associated worldwide trade in raw materials; tertiary economic activity such as restaurants)

Standard 12. Understands the patterns of human settlement and their causes.

LEVEL III [GRADE: 6-8]

4. Knows the factors involved in the development of cities (e.g., geographic factors for location such as transportation and food supply; the need for a marketplace, religious needs, or for military protection)
5. Knows the internal spatial structures of cities (e.g., the concentric zone model and the sector model of cities; the impact of different transportation systems on the spatial arrangement of business, industry, and residence in a city)

STANDARD 15. Understands how physical systems affect human systems

LEVEL III [GRADE: 6-8]

1. Knows the ways in which human systems develop in response to conditions in the physical environment (e.g., patterns of land use, economic livelihoods, architectural styles of buildings, building materials, flows of traffic, recreation activities)

Materials needed:

HANDOUT 1: TWO VIEWS OF TEHRAN

DVD of *Children of Heaven*

HANDOUT 2: A TALE OF “TWO CITIES”

Procedure:

ACTIVITY 1: The “Two Cities” of Tehran

1. Give students copies of **HANDOUT 1: TWO VIEWS OF TEHRAN**. Explain to them that “point of view” means how the writer sees the city and how the writer may want you to see it. Tell students to read the two passages about Tehran, and have them summarize the writer’s point of view in one sentence for each reading. Discuss the results. (The second passage is more positive than the first.) Ask students if the purpose of each reading is to provide the facts or to give the writer’s opinion about the city or both? What reason might a writer have that would create bias in an article? (Opinions may vary.)
2. Distribute **HANDOUT 2: A TALE OF “TWO CITIES.”** Tell your students that you are going to show them parts of two scenes from the film so that they can pay attention to the basic elements of the neighborhoods shown. (These are Scene 2 and Scene 9 on the DVD. If you are using a VCR, Scene 2 comes immediately after the opening credits; Scene 9 is the trip to the wealthy neighborhood to do gardening.) Ask your students to pay careful attention to the physical environment for clues about what Tehran is like. Ask students to focus on architecture, traffic patterns,

sounds, and other aspects of city life. Have them take notes as they watch for the coming discussion.

3. Show Scene 2 of the film, pausing it occasionally to let students write.
4. When they have enough information, stop the film and lead a class discussion of student observations. Encourage students to describe what they saw and heard. How is Ali’s neighborhood similar to your own? How is it different?
5. Now repeat the note-taking exercise, using Scene 9, when Ali and his father ride a bicycle into a wealthy neighborhood to find gardening work. What are the characteristics of this neighborhood? Ask students to describe their observations about the differences between the neighborhood where Ali lived and the one where he and his father went to be gardeners.
6. Encourage students to think about why two neighborhoods in the same city are so different? What would happen if you moved from one neighborhood to the other? How would you feel? How would your life be different?

ACTIVITY 2: The Buildings of Tehran

1. Summarize student observations about the differences in buildings, streets, courtyards and gardens between the old Tehran and the new.
2. Explain to them that the Persians (the ancient name for Iranians) had a long tradition of architecture, gardens and decoration. [See **Notes to the Teacher**, above, for additional background information on traditional Iranian architecture to share with students.]



3. If possible, give students the opportunity to research this architecture by using print materials or the Internet. A useful site for them to visit is <http://www.answers.com/topic/iranian-architecture>, which discusses both monumental and residential architecture.
4. If it is relevant to your location and if you can do so without making any of your students uncomfortable, discuss characteristics of some of the interesting neighborhoods in your nearest city.
5. Assignment: Have students write a letter to a friend, pretending that they have been living in Tehran during the last week. The letter should weave facts about the city and an evaluation of a particular aspect of Tehran life that interests the writer. The student should be able to describe street scenes and the people. An interesting approach would be to ask the students to take a position at some point in the film and recall the imagery and action of that place and time. For example, “I saw a shoe floating down a little ditch in the city and this kid chasing it. I ran to help, but an old man had already scooped it out. It reminded me of the time when it rained in Dallas and my baseball cap was washed down the street. I found it later in a pile of green leaves and hail.” This is a good opportunity to review how to address and stamp an envelope as well.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. **Model Neighborhood:** In pairs or small groups, have students design three-dimensional buildings like the neighborhood shown in the film, using poster board or cardboard. Adding human stick figures to the streetscape would add interest. They should decide on the scale and shapes, and make templates. Color the buildings, adding architectural details like tiles, and assemble. The more proper cuts the student can make to join the structure together, the less tape will be needed and the cleaner the model will look. You could also have students make an architectural drawing.
2. **A Study of Water and Canals.** Remind students about the runoff ditches on the city streets in old Tehran. They can research about the Tehran water supply at <http://69.1911encyclopedia.org/T/TE/TEHERAN.htm>. After doing this, have them research the water sources for your own town or city. What is the source of the water? How it is stored and delivered? Tehran relies on mountain runoff from snow and rain. What is the freshwater situation where you live in terms of supply, usage, and quality?

ADDITIONAL INTERNET RESOURCES

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tehran>

An electronic encyclopedia article on Tehran.

http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/middle_east/tehran/index.htm#orientation

Useful if you are planning a virtual trip and want to know the ins and outs of Tehran. It gives an evaluation of the city and tourist tips.



HANDOUT 1 ▶ P.1 Two Views of Tehran

DIRECTIONS: Read the two passages below about Tehran, the setting for *Children of Heaven*. Then summarize the writer's point of view in one sentence for each reading.

READING ONE:

Iran is not blessed with one of the world's loveliest capitals. Pollution, traffic snarls, chronic overcrowding and a lack of responsible planning have all helped to make Tehran a metropolis that even the most effusive travel agent would have difficulty praising.

If you're expecting an exotic crossroads steeped in oriental splendor, you'll be sadly disappointed. The main sights are spread out, but the hotels are good, the variety of restaurants is impressive, the facilities are far ahead of those anywhere in the provinces, and the Tehranis are friendly.

[Source: http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/middle_east/tehran/]

SUMMARY:



HANDOUT 1 ► P.2 Two Views of Tehran

READING TWO:

Tehran: Covering an area of 1500 sq. kms, Tehran is situated in the north-central part of Iran, at the base of the Alborz Mountains. As the national capital it is the most populated city in Iran and the center of cultural, economical, political and social activities. It is about 1200 meters above sea level and has hot summers and mild winters. Although the word Tehran can be found even in some books dating back to the 10th century, it was but a village containing numerous gardens in the distant past. Shah Tehmasp, the king of Iran from 1524 to 1576, was fascinated by the climate of Tehran... He also built many towers around the city. In the reign of Mohammad Khan, the founder of the Qajar dynasty (1776-1925), when Tehran was chosen as the capital of Iran, it enjoyed a boom. The building founded by Naser od-Din, shah of Iran (1848-1896) gave it a high position among the other cities. A ditch was dug around the city to repel attacks on it, twelve gates were built as the approaches to the city, and a large square, now called Tupkhneh and the buildings around were founded. After the Qajar period, two architectural trends developed: an imitation of Western styles that had little relevance to Tehran's climate and an attempt to revive indigenous designs. The latter trend has been reinforced after the Islamic Revolution. The population of Tehran has had a boom in the last decades, as a result of which urban development has not been smooth. In the recent years the municipality of Tehran has taken great measures to increase the number of recreational facilities, including park, stadiums, theaters ,etc.

[Source: <http://www.farsinet.com/tehran/>]

SUMMARY:

Lesson 5

SOCIAL STUDIES (GEOGRAPHY/WORLD HISTORY)



JOURNEYS IN FILM™
educating for global understanding

HANDOUT 2

A Tale of “Two Cities”

DIRECTIONS: While you are watching two clips from the film *Children of Heaven*, observe the neighborhoods of Tehran carefully.

- What do you notice about the:
- Houses
 - Streets
 - Transportation
 - Stores
 - Street sounds

Think not only about what is *there*, but also about what is *missing*.

Old part of Tehran (Scene 2)	New part of Tehran (Scene 9)
What I saw	What I saw
What I heard	What I heard

My conclusions

Film as Storytelling:

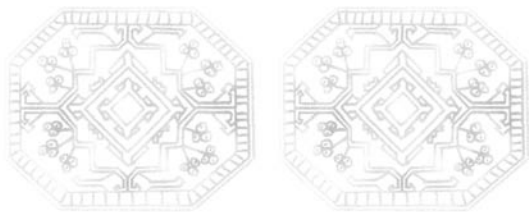
How Filmmakers Use Technology to Tell Their Tales

Enduring Understandings:

- All media are constructions.
- Each medium has its own codes, convention and esthetic sensibility.
- The filmmaker’s particular style and interpretation of the text into a visual medium will affect the actual mood and story conveyed to the audience.

Essential Questions:

- How do filmmakers use cinematography to tell their stories?
- How do their choices affect the viewer’s response to the film?



Notes to Teacher:

Films from another culture offer a rich opportunity for the exploration of similarities and differences in the meaning we make from a text. The **Enduring Understandings** listed above are key concepts which form the backbone of sound media literacy practice.

In **ACTIVITY 1**, students learn that films are carefully constructed, using visual and sound technology, to tell stories which have emotional power and esthetic qualities specific to the medium. This is an important introductory activity as it helps students make meaning from a film text and it helps the teacher assess student understanding of the story. Students should be encouraged to engage in a creative brainstorming session with the class.

ACTIVITY 2 teaches students about analyzing cinematography and the way it affects the production value of a film. The cinematographer is the official name for the cameraperson who is responsible for filming the movie. A film is always a collaboration. The scriptwriters, director, art director, actors and producers all contribute in their own way to the cinematographer’s final choice of camera shots, angles, distance, lighting and camera movement.

Now that your students have already seen *Children of Heaven* as a whole, they are ready to look at it as a work of art, examining how the creators of this film used the camera to tell the story. **ACTIVITY 3** lets them look at the race sequence in the film and analyze the cinematographer’s decisions. Learning how to make a storyboard is the focus of **ACTIVITY 4** and extension activities allow

students to use their creativity in their own projects. You may wish to make extra copies of **HANDOUT 2** for students who would like to expand their storyboard beyond one page.

DURATION OF LESSON:

Two-three periods

ASSESSMENT

After this lesson, student should demonstrate that they are able to define and list uses for the following camera shots: close up, medium shot and long shot. They should be able to identify an example of each of the three types of shots in the film (e.g., close up of Ali’s face when he begs the teacher to let him into the race, medium shot of the father weeping in the mosque, long shot of the children running down the street on their way to and from school). Finally, they should be able to explain why a particular shot was used to advance the story (e.g., close up of Ali’s face allows viewer to feel the emotion, long shots establish a sense of place.)

On **HANDOUT 3** you will find a rubric that may assist you in assessing student understanding.

STANDARDS

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

STANDARD 9. Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

1. Understands a variety of messages conveyed by visual media (e.g., main concept, details, themes or lessons, viewpoints)
6. Understands how symbols, images, sound, and other conventions are used in visual media (e.g., time lapse in films; set elements that identify a particular time period or culture; short cuts used to construct meaning, such as the scream of brakes and a thud to imply a car crash; sound and image used together; the use of close-ups to convey drama or intimacy; the use of long camera shots to establish setting; sequences or groups of images that emphasize specific meaning)
7. Understands reasons for varied interpretations of visual media (e.g., different purposes or circumstances while viewing, influence of personal knowledge and experiences, focusing on different stylistic features)
9. Understands techniques used in visual media to influence or appeal to a particular audience (e.g., production techniques, such as designing a news program as entertainment; persuasive techniques, such as exaggerated claims, portrayal of appealing lifestyles, bandwagon, glittering generalities; subliminal messages; narrative style)



STANDARD 10. Understands the characteristics and components of the media

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

2. Understands the different purposes of various media (e.g., to provide entertainment or information, to persuade, to transmit culture, to focus attention on an issue)
5. Understands aspects of media production and distribution (e.g., different steps and choices involved in planning and producing various media; various professionals who produce media, such as news writers, photographers, camera operators, film directors, graphic artists, political cartoonists)
6. Understands the ways in which image-makers carefully construct meaning (e.g., idea and word choice by authors, images created by photographers, television programs created by groups of people, photos or cutlines chosen in newspapers)
7. Understands influences on the construction of media messages and images (e.g., the historical period or place in which they were made; laws that govern mass media, such as truth in advertising; the socio-cultural background of the target audience; financial factors such as sponsorship; cause-and-effect relationships between mass media coverage and public opinion trends)

Materials needed:

DVD player

Chalkboard or chart paper for Likes / Dislikes /
Puzzle and Patterns brainstorming

HANDOUT 1: SHOT BY SHOT

HANDOUT 2: STORYBOARD TEMPLATE

HANDOUT 3: MEDIA LITERACY RUBRIC

Procedure

ACTIVITY 1: Likes, Dislikes, Puzzles and Patterns...

A Deconstruction Exercise

1. Place the words LIKES, DISLIKES, PUZZLES and PATTERNS across the top of the chalkboard or on separate pieces of chart paper
2. Explain to the students that PUZZLES refer to things that a student didn't understand or had a question about.
3. Explain to the students that PATTERNS refers to things that are repeated in the film. This repetition could occur in the visual elements, with a character, setting, audio, text, acting, mood, lighting etc. For example: the shoes, running down the street, sound effects and seeing the gutter over and over.
4. Have a brainstorming session with the class and classify their thoughts about the film into the four categories.
5. If a point appears in more than one column, have students discuss their different points of view. (For example, one student may like the fact that we can't

easily tell what happens with the dad getting the shoes at the end of the movie, while another may find that completely annoying.)

6. If *Children of Heaven* is the first film you are using from the *Journeys in Film* program, you should expect to hear comments about subtitles. Ask how many students have seen a subtitled film before. Ask the students what strategies they used to view this new style of film.
7. Conclusion: Ask students how this film would have been different if it had been shot in North America with North American sets, actors and props.

ACTIVITY 2: Cinematography – Close-Ups, Medium Shots and Long Shots

1. Discuss with students the fact that a film reflects collaboration by many different people, such as script writers, the director, the art director, actors and producers, and that the cameraperson makes decisions about shots based on their work.
2. Define and explain the various types of camera shots: close-up, medium shot and long shot. For a more advanced class, you can also explain the use of extreme close ups and extreme long shots, usually used to make an “extreme” statement either way.
3. Ask two students to come to the front of the classroom to demonstrate the various camera shots. If space allows, have all students perform Steps 4 through 7 below in pairs.

4. Introduce the CLOSE-UP SHOT.

- a. Have two students stand approximately two steps away from each other.
- b. Ask the students to observe each other as if though they are looking through the lens of a movie camera.
- c. Ask/discuss:
 - What is the main thing that you notice about the other person? (Eyes, sweat, lips, etc.) What are you focusing on?
 - At this distance we are “up close and personal” with our subject. How do you think that would affect the viewer who sees this picture on a screen?
 - Think of a shot in the film that was very close. How did it make you feel? Why do you think that the filmmaker chose to use the shot?

5. Now ask the students to put four or five steps between themselves and their partners, and explain that the way they see each other is equivalent to a MEDIUM SHOT. Ask the students:

- What do you see?
- How connected or close do you feel to the subject from this distance?
- What types of information can we get with this medium shot?



6. Lastly, ask the students to put another five or six steps between themselves and their partner, and explain that this view could represent what the camera would see in a **LONG SHOT**. Ask the students:

- Now what do you see? (Background, not so much detail and expression)
- How connected do you feel to the actor now?
- Ask the class: What would be the purpose of this kind of shot? (Establishing a location, putting the story in context, following action, etc.)
- Can you remember a scene in the movie with a long shot? (School yard stretching, traveling to the city)
- How would this shot have had a different effect on you if you were seeing it from one step away?

ACTIVITY 3: Shot by Shot

1. Cue the film up to the very first scene in *Children of Heaven*, where there is an extreme close-up of the cobbler's hand mending the shoes. Run the scene.
2. Ask the students to use their new knowledge of cinematography to identify different camera shots and the effect these shots have on the viewer. As they watch the scene, have them pay close attention to the amount of information on the screen based on the distance of the camera to the subject.
3. Distribute **HANDOUT 1: SHOT BY SHOT** to record the shots in the race sequence (Scene 11).

4. Tell the students that they are going to observe and record the various camera shots used in this scene.

5. Play the scene and help the students identify the shots as they are seen and record them on their **HANDOUT 1: SHOT BY SHOT**. You may wish to pause the film each time the camera shot changes, especially at first, so that the students become aware of changing shots and have time to write.
6. After the scene is over, ask students to share their interpretations of the choice of camera shots. Have them record this information on their **HANDOUT 1: SHOT BY SHOT**.

ACTIVITY 4: Create a Storyboard

1. Ask students: "The dialogue of a film is recorded on a *script* so that everyone knows the order of the words spoken. How do you think the camera shots are written down for everyone to see?" (Some students may say *storyboard*.)
2. Introduce students to the idea of a storyboard: a shot-by-shot plan of a film that is based on the visual aspects of the film. It may help to have them think of a storyboard as a "comic strip" of the story, where each frame shows one key idea/emotion. In this introduction, you should discuss these ideas:
 - a. Movies are a series of moving pictures, and it is just as important to plan for the visual aspect of a film as it is to plan the dialogue (script).
 - b. Accordingly, a movie is so much more than just the words that are said. (Ask students to recall

Children of Heaven – what did they remember most: specific dialogue or visual images? Think about their favorite movies – how did visual effects enhance their enjoyment of the films?)

- c. Although a film script is written in words only, there are suggestions in the script for the location, how a camera should interpret the scene, and what props and other visuals will be used.
 - d. Similarly, although the storyboard focuses on visual aspects, there may be mention of particular lines spoken if the filmmakers want to emphasize the lines with visual effects.
 - e. Once the director and producer begin to plan the actual making of a film, the storyboard is created to determine how the moving pictures will tell the story.
3. Ask students to brainstorm different kinds of *visual* details of a film scene (e.g., camera shots, lighting, color, clear or “fuzzy” shots, framing of objects, props, background, setting, etc.)
 4. Distribute **HANDOUT 2: STORYBOARD TEMPLATE** so that students can see how scenes are “blocked” into different frames. Remind them that, as in a comic strip (if you use that analogy), not all motion and actions are shown. Yet the reader is still able to understand how the story progresses.
 5. To help students understand the level of detail required for a storyboard, draw two frames on the board to tell the film’s story.
 6. In the first frame, sketch a close up of the cobbler’s hands. In the second frame, sketch the father buying shoes at the end of the film. Ask the students if this is enough “detail” to understand the film. (They should say no). Then, erase these frames and draw three frames. In each frame, draw a different close up of the cobbler fixing the shoes. Ask the students what they think about this level of detail, and what they would suggest instead. (They should say that this represents *too much* detail, and that one frame to represent the close up of the cobbler fixing the shoe is probably enough.)
 7. Use **HANDOUT 1** from the previous activity to remind the students of the visual information (type and purpose of each camera shot) they recorded in the previous activity. Ask the students to describe how this type of information could be transferred to a storyboard. What is important is that these pictures begin to show us the action in the scene and how the story is unfolding.
 8. How could the use of cinematography have changed the ending of *Children of Heaven*? Tell the students: “Now its time to design your own storyboard as we add one more scene to the end of this story: Ali discovers new shoes on the back of his dad’s bike.”
 9. Using knowledge of close up shots, medium shots and long shots, students will create a storyboard for this new final scene.
 - Encourage them to add depth to their storyboard with a brief explanation of the action and/or dialogue being represented.



- The storyboard should make the general progression of the plot and the visual effects clear, but does not need to focus on specific dialogue.
- The illustrations do not need to be detailed as long as they represent the characters in the scene in some way and establish the action.
- Location, lighting, sounds, music and details about action can be added in note form under the pictures.

10. Have students complete storyboards for homework.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Once these storyboards are completed, they can be scanned and converted into PowerPoint presentations or slide shows to see how the action tells a story.
2. Students can take a small scene based on their storyboard, write dialogue, stage it and shoot it with a still digital camera, turning it into a slide show.
3. Create storyboards for a short personal movie incorporating your knowledge of the use of a variety of camera shots and sound effects (e.g., the preparation of a delicious Iranian snack).

ADDITIONAL INTERNET RESOURCES

<http://pblmm.k12.ca.us/TechHelp/Storyboarding.html>

Project-Based-Learning with Multimedia
(sample storyboard)

<http://www.bfi.org.uk/>

British Film Institute (BFI)

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/>

Media Awareness Network

<http://www.aml.ca/>

Association for Media Literacy



HANDOUT 1

Shot By Shot

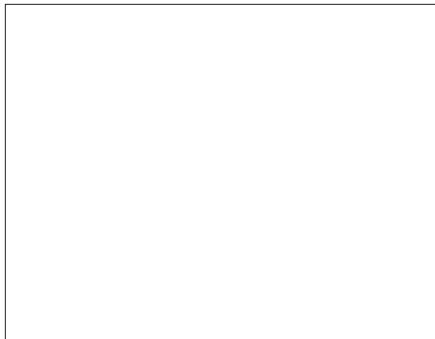
Scene Description

SHOT NUMBER	SHOT Close-up Medium shot Long shot	IMAGE Main focus or subject of shot	WHAT DID THE SHOT ACHIEVE?

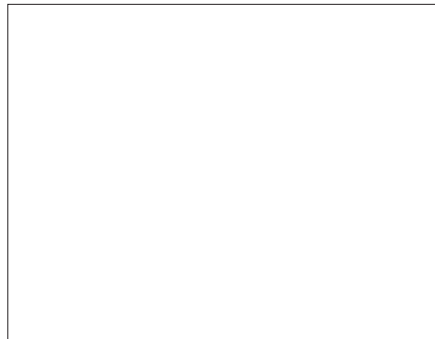
HANDOUT 2

Storyboard Template

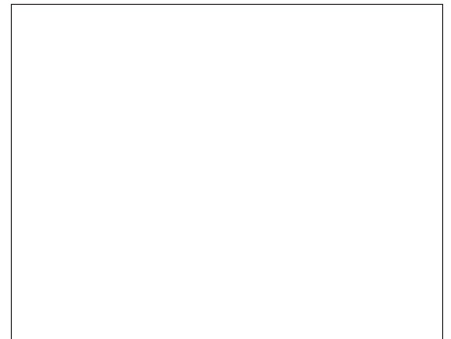
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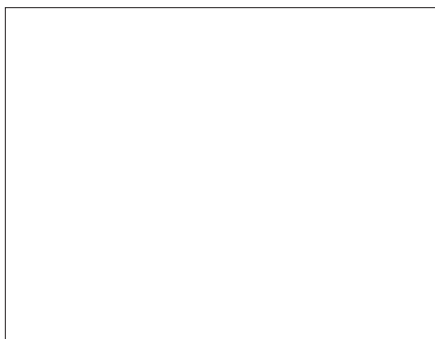
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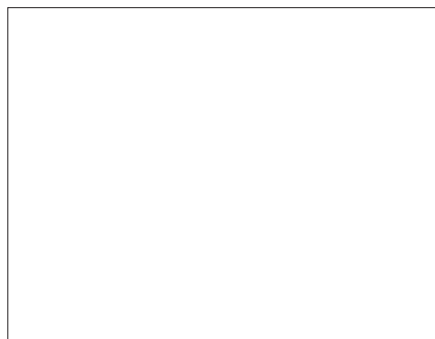
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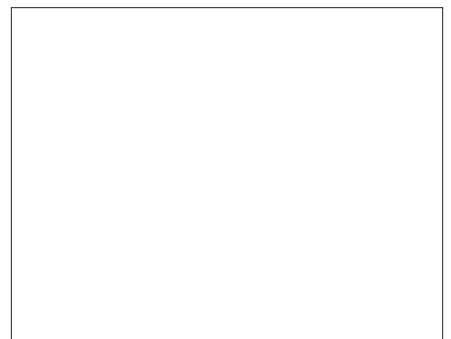
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HANDOUT 3

Media Literacy Rubric

NAME:		DATE:	
Assessment task:	Self-evaluation	Peer evaluation	Teacher evaluation
Defines, lists uses for close up, medium and long shots			
Identifies examples of each type of shot from <i>Children of Heaven</i>			
Explains how shot is used to advance story line			

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Put Yourself in Someone Else's Shoes: The Issue of Limited Resources

Enduring Understandings:

- All humans have basic needs in order to live healthy, productive lives.
- When resources are limited, people will use creative and critical thinking and problem solving skills to get what they need.
- The role of family is to take care of each other and help all members get what they need.

Essential Questions:

- How do people behave when resources are limited?
- How do we classify people into groups, and how do we feel when we are categorized according to our appearance?
- How do family members help one another?



Notes to the Teacher:

This lesson helps students to recognize that everyone has a right to basic necessities. They will use problem-solving skills to find solutions to challenges posed in a dramatic context, and will come to appreciate that the concept of “need” is relative to socio-economic status, culture, and geographic location.

ACTIVITY 1: ISLANDS is a warm-up activity similar to “musical chairs” to engage the students kinaesthetically. In this game, students will have an opportunity to experience what happens when there are diminishing resources. They will make choices about looking out for themselves or working for the common good. This game should be played twice. The first time that you play the game, eliminate all students who do not get themselves on an island. The second time, inform the students that they must help all students to get onto an island in order to win the game.

ACTIVITY 2: SAME AND DIFFERENT will get the students thinking about shoes, and what they mean practically and socially. In this activity the students will move around the space, get to know each other a little better, and appreciate that, even in groups based on similarities, there are individual differences. One caution: If any students in your classroom have poor-quality shoes because of poverty, be very careful to be sensitive to this as you give directions; you do not want to embarrass a student.

For the first two activities, it is important to have a large open space, with desks pushed back against the walls. If that is impossible in your classroom, you may wish to find another large open area in the school.

In **ACTIVITY 3: SHOEVILLE**, students will apply their problem-solving and critical thinking skills to invent their own cultural specific “shoes” and the historical/geographic reason for them. Students may create their shoes out of shoeboxes and decorate them with found objects, markers etc. Literally and figuratively they will have a chance “walk in someone else’s shoes and see how it feels.” For this activity, you will need a variety of materials; it would be a good idea to start gathering them several weeks before the lesson.

DURATION OF LESSON:

Three-four periods

ASSESSMENT:

Class discussion

Gaming activities

Role-plays

Creative-response project: essay or artwork

BEHAVIORAL STUDIES STANDARDS

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

STANDARD 2. Understands various meanings of social group, general implications of group membership, and different ways that groups function

Level III (Grades 6-8)

1. Understands that affiliation with a group can increase the power of members through pooled resources and concerted action
2. Understands that joining a group often has personal advantages (e.g., companionship, sense of identity, recognition by others inside and outside the group)
7. Understands that there are similarities and differences within groups as well as among groups
8. Understands that a large society may be made up of many groups, and these groups may contain many distinctly different subcultures (e.g., associated with region, ethnic origin, social class, interests, values)

STANDARD 4. Understands conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among individuals, groups, and institutions

LEVEL IV (GRADES 9-12)

1. Understands that conflict between people or groups may arise from competition over ideas, resources, power, and/or status
7. Understands that even when the majority of people in a society agree on a social decision, the minority who disagree must be protected from oppression, just as the majority may need protection against unfair retaliation from the minority



Materials needed:

ACTIVITY 1: Large hoops or large pieces of recycled newspapers

ACTIVITY 2: No additional materials needed

ACTIVITY 3: Empty shoeboxes, and/or any other material that could be worn as a substitute for shoes: boxes, large plastic cups, plastic/paper bags, gloves/mittens etc. Optional but recommended: Various art supplies to “decorate” shoes and/or hold shoes to feet, such as ribbons, string, elastic bands, glue, paper, markers, glitter, scissors, etc.

Procedure:

ACTIVITY 1: Islands

1. Before the activity, place the hoops or newspapers at intervals around the room. These materials will indicate “islands” while the rest of the classroom will be an “ocean.” For a class of 20-30 students, start the game with approximately 4-6 islands.
2. Direct students that they will move about the room, as if swimming in an ocean, while keeping open space between themselves and other players. Instruct them that, upon a signal from you (e.g., turning off the light, blowing a whistle, saying “NOW!”), students must get themselves on an island (paper or hoops). Explain that students who find themselves with both feet on the island are safe, as in the game “musical chairs.” No pushing or shoving is allowed.

3. Start the game and allow students to “swim” for a minute, and then give your signal. Any student who is not safe is eliminated, and stands off to the side while the others repeat the activity. On a signal, everyone resumes swimming through the ocean
4. After a few repetitions, take away one or two of the islands.
5. When the signal to stop swimming is repeated, the students must again attempt to get on the reduced number of islands. Students who do not get on an island are eliminated, and must sit out the game on the sidelines.
6. Continue removing islands, until there is only one island left, and only a few students remain in the game.
7. Now play the game again and change the rules: Explain to the class that now students are also safe if they are touching a student who is safely on an island. Any student who is touching a safe student is also safe. Define “touching,” both for the purposes of the activity and to avoid uncomfortable situations among the students. To encourage the idea of long chains of interrelated people, define touching as “holding hands” or “linking pinkie fingers” so that each safe person is forced to use one hand to make himself safe, and the second hand to make only one other person safe. Alternatively, to emphasize the concept of limited resources, define touching as “touching the shoes of the person on the island.” In this case, each “safe” student will be directly linked to an island student. On the signal, all students must be connected to the final island in some way, in order for the group to win the game.

8. Play the game again according to the new rules.

9. Discuss with the students:

- How they approached the task in the first game, when they knew they were on their own, and were in danger of being eliminated.
- For those eliminated: How did it feel to be eliminated? How did they feel towards the “survivors”? What behaviors showed that they were upset about losing? (Calling out, trying to trip those still in the game, etc.)
- For those who stayed longest in the game: How did it feel to keep winning? What was their attitude towards those who had been eliminated? What behaviors showed these attitudes? (Calling names, cheering for themselves, etc.)
- How the game changed when they knew that they had to help everyone else, in order to win the game.

ACTIVITY 2: Same and Different

1. Have students walk about the open area, moving in different directions, making sure not to bump into one another.
2. Give a signal to freeze, followed by an instruction to the students to subdivide into groups using different principles of division, such as:
 - a. Get into groups according to the one main color you are wearing
 - b. Everyone wearing short sleeves in one group, everyone with long sleeves in another
 - c. Everyone with long hair in one group, short hair in another
3. On the blackboard or chart paper write a name for each group, such as “Blue” or “Long Hair.” Encourage each group to cheer or “high five” when their group name is read out so that the students feel an association to that group. (Having the group names written on the blackboard will help students remember the various groups they have belonged to over the course of the activity.)
4. Have the students return to walking around the classroom as individuals again. Repeat the process of having students form groups, each time using a different principle of division; once again, write the names of the groups on the board and allow them to cheer briefly as a team, and then return to being individuals. This can be repeated 3 – 6 times, if desired.
5. The very last instruction should be: “Everyone with running shoes get together. Those with other kinds of shoes get together.”
6. Have each of the two shoe groups stand in a circle and look around at the footwear of the group. Tell them to think of different ways of subdividing the group even further: color, method of fastening, one or two-tone, etc., and then break into smaller and smaller groups according to those classifications. Allow them to keep moving and changing groups until each group contains only 2 – 3 students.
7. Within these smaller groups, have students try to find something unique about their shoes. Even if two



students are wearing the exact same model of shoe, one pair may be a different size, have different laces, etc.

8. Have the students sit down in place or return to their seats. Have them make a quick list of all the groups that they have belonged to today. Then discuss with the students the following ideas:
 - a. The many ways we can be identified as belonging to a group, based on external appearance.
 - b. The concept that people can belong to more than one group at one time. (Ask them how many different groups they belonged to during the course of the activity.)
 - c. The concept that we are all more than just the groups we belong to, and even if we belong to a very small, selective group, there is still something unique about each of us.

Activity 3: Shoeville

1. Have the students recall how the children in the film had to solve the problem of the lost shoes. List the ways that the brother tries to solve the problem and evaluate his solutions.
2. Talk about Zahra's role in supporting her brother Ali, in spite of his losing her shoes.
3. Divide students into pairs or small groups.
4. Explain to the students that they are going to be going to a place called Shoeville, where everyone must wear shoes. The problem is that only one of them has shoes. Instruct each group to invent a reason for going barefoot that will persuade the Gatekeeper (the teacher or another student) to let them in. They should be ready to explain their choice in terms of history, tradition, and/or geographic elements like terrain, climate etc.
5. Give students 5 – 15 minutes to brainstorm in pairs/groups to figure out how they will get the Gatekeeper to allow the shoeless person into Shoeville. Note: The Gatekeeper is not swayed by bribes and/or threats!
6. (Optional) In addition to or instead of inventing reasons for going barefoot, your students could design and create "shoes" from various materials around the classroom. (See materials list.) If you choose to include this portion of the Activity, then inform students that you will have to try and persuade the Gatekeeper that the self-created "shoes" should qualify as shoes.
7. Have each pair or group approach the Gatekeeper in turn to attempt to enter the kingdom with the shoeless (or "self-shoed") person. Have the person wearing the required shoes speak on behalf of the "offender," thus giving the students a chance to speak up for someone who is perceived as different or socially unacceptable. (Note: if your class is very large, you may wish to split the class in half and have two activities going on at once.)
8. After each group has attempted to "enter," have students discuss:
 - a. how they went about solving the problem;

- b. what it was like to try to persuade the Gatekeeper to let them in;
 - c. and what it would be like to lack necessities on a daily basis.
9. Discuss how Ali in *Children of Heaven* tried to solve his problem without the help of adults. Have students decide whether he was right to do this, or whether he should have told his parents immediately.
 10. List the reasons why his particular circumstances might have led him to these actions. (e.g. poverty, parental expectations, concern for his sister, etc.)

ACTIVITY 4: Taking Care of Each Other in a Family

1. Ask students to compare the jobs and responsibilities of Ali and Zahra, the brother and sister in the film *Children of Heaven*, with their own chores around the house. What similarities and differences do they observe between themselves and the Iranian children?
2. Discuss situations in your students' lives that might be similar to the problem that Ali and Zahra have to face in the movie.
3. In pairs or trios, role-play one of the following scenes:
 - a. One person tells his/her brother or sister, that he/she has lost something valuable, and tries to convince the sibling not to tell the parents.
 - b. A child tells his/her parents about losing something valuable belonging to a sibling.
 - c. A child tries to persuade parents to buy something that the family can't afford.

ACTIVITY 5: Creative Response

1. Tell students that a creative reflection or creative response is an expression of one's own interpretation of a particular idea. It can take the form of an essay, a poem, or a journal entry; students may wish to create a piece of art to accompany their written work.
2. Give students the following themes to work with in their creative response projects:
 - a. There is a difference between what we need and what we want.
 - b. Everyone deserves what he/she needs to be happy and to live a productive life.
 - c. Families should help and support each other in times of need.
 - d. Put yourself in someone else's shoes and see how it feels.
3. Plan an opportunity for students to share their work with the class.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Independent study project on footwear as an expression of culture, history and tradition
 - a. With students, recall (or re-show) the scenes from the film in which we see clothing worn by Ali and Zahra. Observe their clothing at home and at school. What are the similarities to and differences from North American students' clothing?



- b. Make a list of the items that the Iranian students wear. (Sneakers, sandals, robes, head scarves, school uniforms, etc.)
 - c. Ask students to bring in pictures of footwear and other articles of clothing worn in different cultures. They may bring in the actual garments, if they have them at home. Supplement this collection with books, pictures, and resources from the internet.
 - d. Have each student select an example from the actual footwear provided or choose an example from books or the internet. Have each student select a different item and try to have a wide diversity of countries or regions represented.
 - e. Group students by general geographic area of the article of clothing they are researching (Middle East, West Africa, East Asia, etc.) Give them **HANDOUT 1: WHAT ARE THEY WEARING?** Have students research particular footwear or another article of clothing worn in a specific culture or geographic region.
 - f. Schedule presentations on student research.
2. Discuss what other customs of specific cultures have historical and geographic origins. (e.g., modes of transportation, cooking methods, etc.)
 3. Visit a museum (in person or virtually on their websites), to learn more about the historical significance of shoes and other clothing (see **Additional Internet Resources**).

ADDITIONAL INTERNET RESOURCES:

<http://www.textilemuseum.ca/>

The Textile Museum of Canada

<http://www.costumes.org/history/100pages/MUSEELNX.HTM>

<http://www.costumes.org/ethnic/1PAGES/ETHNOLNK.HTM>

The Costumer's Manifesto's list of costume and textile museum links and their list of traditional ethnic dress links, arranged by region

<http://www.batashoemuseum.ca/>

Bata Shoe Museum

http://www.northampton.gov.uk/museums/collections/boot_and_shoe/shoes_from_around_the_world.htm

A collection of shoes from around the world:

<http://www.palestinecostumearchive.org/>

The Palestine Costume Archive (includes other areas of Middle East)



HANDOUT 1 ▶ P.1

What Are They Wearing?

The Story Behind National and Regional Dress

DIRECTIONS: You have selected an interesting article of clothing or footwear to research. It’s time to find out as much as you can about it and enter the information in a chart. Here is an example of a completed chart:

Name of footwear or article of clothing	Country of origin	Material(s) used	Practical reasons for this garment
Black Leather King’s Sandals	Ashanti Tribe (Ghana)	Leather and wood	Keep his feet clean and dry. Materials were easily available
Historical/traditional influences	Gender of wearer	Modern or traditional	Additional Information you have discovered
King’s feet should never touch the ground. High sandals showed his status	Male royalty	Traditional	Soles sometimes carved like human figures and decorated with gold. Sandals are removed if king is deposed.

Here is a blank chart for you to use to record your answers:

Name of footwear or article of clothing	Country of origin	Material(s) used	Practical reasons for this garment
Historical/traditional influences	Gender of wearer	Modern or traditional	Additional Information you have discovered

Now turn the paper over and read about how you may present this information to the class.



Sharing Session

When you have finished your research, your group will give a presentation about local dress, including where the articles of clothing originated, whether they represent historical or current style, and an explanation of any cultural, social, historical, or geographical reasons why these garments were adopted. Be sure to note whether there are differences between men's and women's shoes or garments; whether there are different shoes or garments for different social classes; whether this is everyday wear or just for special occasions etc.

Your presentation could take one of the following forms:

- Shoe or textile museums exhibit, displaying the wearing apparel from different cultures. Write text to display with the exhibit, or record your explanation on audiotape, so that visitors to the display can listen as they view the exhibit.
- A web page or PowerPoint exhibit which could be shared with other classes or schools involved in the *Journeys in Film* project.

Keeping Secrets: Probability, Percentages and Functions for Creating and Deciphering Secret Codes

Enduring Understandings:

- Using codes to keep secrets is a complex activity involving logical and mathematical reasoning.
- Multiplying by a number less than one always reduces the original number.
- Secrets can be very hard to keep.

Essential Questions:

- When we have a numerical code, how do we decipher and decode?
- What is the effect of multiplying by a decimal less than one?
- What are the probabilities surrounding keeping a secret?

Notes to Teacher:

The purpose of this lesson is to take advantage of students' natural interest and curiosity in secrecy while learning about mathematical probability, percentages and functions.

Keeping a secret such as a surprise party is difficult work! There's always a chance that someone will let the cat out of the bag by mistake. It can also be tempting, from a child's perspective, to tell someone the news. Keeping secrets can be an expression of empathy; to keep another's secret is a statement of trust, loyalty, concern and understanding. If we don't truly understand the secret, we cannot keep it. If we do not care enough about keeping the secret, it will likely get out.

ACTIVITY 1 introduces students to the idea that mathematical codes provide great flexibility and are easy to use. Instead of remembering an entire alphabet, students need only remember one rule to convert each letter's position/rank number into a coded number. And the code can be updated or refreshed as need be, again without relearning an entire alphabet. Students will be introduced to the notion of order of operations "functions" and "inverse operations" as they encode and decode.

ACTIVITY 2 is designed to help students understand some of the rules of probability and how they affect the likelihood of being able to keep a secret.



DURATION OF LESSON:

Two periods

ASSESSMENT:

HANDOUT 1 (showing the ability to encrypt, decipher, and create multiple numerical codes.)

HANDOUT 3 (showing the ability to show changing probabilities as variable change.)

NOTE: Answer sheets for these assessments appear at the end of the lesson.

STANDARDS

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

STANDARD 1. Uses a variety of strategies in the problem-solving process

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

1. Understands how to break a complex problem into simpler parts or use a similar problem type to solve a problem
2. Uses a variety of strategies to understand problem-solving situations and processes (e.g., considers different strategies and approaches to a problem, restates problem from various perspectives)
3. Understands that there is no one right way to solve mathematical problems but that different methods (e.g., working backward from a solution, using a similar problem type, identifying a pattern) have different advantages and disadvantages
4. Formulates a problem, determines information required to solve the problem, chooses methods for obtaining this information, and sets limits for acceptable solutions
5. Represents problem situations in and translates among oral, written, concrete, pictorial, and graphical forms
6. Generalizes from a pattern of observations made in particular cases, makes conjectures, and provides supporting arguments for these conjectures (i.e., uses inductive reasoning)
7. Constructs informal logical arguments to justify reasoning processes and methods of solutions to problems (i.e., uses informal deductive methods)
8. Understands the role of written symbols in representing mathematical ideas and the use of precise language in conjunction with the special symbols of mathematics

9. Uses a variety of reasoning processes (e.g., reasoning from a counter example, using proportionality) to model and to solve problems

STANDARD 2. Understands and applies basic and advanced properties of the concepts of numbers

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

4. Uses number theory concepts (e.g., divisibility and remainders, factors, multiples, prime, relatively prime) to solve problems

STANDARD 3. Uses basic and advanced procedures while performing the processes of computation

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

1. Adds, subtracts, multiplies, and divides integers, and rational numbers

4. Selects and uses appropriate computational methods (e.g., mental, paper and pencil, calculator, computer) for a given situation

5. Understands the correct order of operations for performing arithmetic computations

7. Understands the properties of operations with rational numbers (e.g., distributive property, commutative and associative properties of addition and multiplication, inverse properties, identity properties)

9. Understands how different algorithms work for arithmetic computations and operations

STANDARD 7. Understands and applies basic and advanced concepts of probability

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

1. Determines probability using mathematical/theoretical models (e.g., table or tree diagram, area model, list, sample space)

2. Determines probability using simulations or experiments

3. Understands how predictions are based on data and probabilities (e.g., the difference between predictions based on theoretical probability and experimental probability)

STANDARD 8. Understands and applies basic and advanced properties of functions and algebra

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

1. Knows that an expression is a mathematical statement using numbers and symbols to represent relationships and real-world situations (e.g., equations and inequalities with or without variables)

2. Understands that a variable can be used in many ways (e.g., as a placeholder for a specific unknown, such as $x + 8 = 13$; as a representative of a range of values, such as $4t + 7$)

4. Understands the basic concept of a function (i.e., functions describe how changes in one quantity or variable result in changes in another)

8. Understands basic operations (e.g., combining like terms, expanding, substituting for unknowns) on algebraic expressions

STANDARD 9. Understands the general nature and uses of mathematics

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

1. Understands that mathematics has been helpful in practical ways for many centuries

2. Understands that mathematicians often represent real things using abstract ideas like numbers or lines; they then work with these abstractions to learn about the things they represent

Materials needed:

ACTIVITY 1:

Pens/pencils

Scrap paper

Handout 1: Secret Codes

ACTIVITY 2:

Pens/markers and dice (enough for one per student) Adhesive nametags

HANDOUT 2: PROBABILITY WORKSHEET

HANDOUT 3: HOW TRUSTWORTHY ARE YOU?

Procedure:

Before Class: “Don’t tell anyone . . .” Select three or four students privately, so that the other students do not see, and “let out” a secret. For example, casually say, “Don’t tell anyone, but there’s a big surprise at the end of class!” or “I baked cupcakes for last period!”

ACTIVITY 1: Codes and Coding

1. Ask students to do a two- to three-minute quick-write in their journals or notebooks on each of the questions below. Encourage them to draw on their own experiences, rather than just writing about abstractions.
 - Have you ever had a secret that you managed to keep?
 - What does it feel like to share a secret?
 - What does it feel like to be “given” a secret?
2. Use the previously-viewed film *Children of Heaven* as an introduction to the topic of keeping secrets to the classroom. Ask the class questions such as, “What was the secret being kept in the film? Who was keeping the secret from whom? Why did the children keep a secret? How did the children keep a secret? How did the children secretly communicate with each other when their parents were around?” (Remind the students, if necessary, of the scene in which the children were writing in each other’s homework books while doing homework on the floor.) Discuss “secret notes” with the class. Were the children’s notes very “secret”? What could they have done to keep their thoughts more secret? (They could have used a secret code.)
3. With children in groups of 4 – 6, let students share their own “secret codes” that they may have used in the past. Not every student will have used a code, but probably some will be familiar with a type of code. Allow students time to share codes with each other, and/or to allow students to try and create a simple code.
4. Write the words ALPHABET, SYMBOLS, NUMBERS and OTHER on the chalkboard. Ask the groups whether the codes they discussed/created were based on an alphabet, symbols, numbers or other system. Keep a tally on the chalk board to count the number of codes that fall into each category. [*Note:* Each group will probably have discussed a few different codes, so count every code discussed. This activity may take a long time if groups actually try to explain their codes, so just ask them to report the type of code and not to share the code with the class; they

will have had time to share the codes themselves within their groups.]

5. Discuss with students the different ways in which these codes work. (e.g., ALPHABET and SYMBOL codes generally involve a one-to-one correspondence – switching one letter of the alphabet for another, or using one symbol for each letter of the alphabet.) What does one need to know to read a coded message? (You need to know the entire alphabet, one letter/symbol at a time—the “key”). What happens if someone else figures out your code? How easily can you change/adjust the code? Do you need to start over from scratch?
6. Explain that many codes in history are based on NUMBERS. Distribute **HANDOUT 1: SECRET CODES** and ask students to try to “break” the codes. This activity can be done in pairs or groups.
7. Finish the lesson by referring to the pre-lesson activity. Find out how many students heard about the teacher’s “secret” by the end of the class. You may wish to have all students close their eyes and ask the class to raise their hands if they heard the secret. This way, only the teacher will see which students heard, and the teacher can simply tell the class *how many* students had heard the secret, without identifying individual students. Ask your students why they think it’s so hard to keep a secret. Have they ever been unable to keep a secret? Emphasize that it is difficult to keep a secret, and most secrets will be revealed, so if some students did tell the secret, they should not feel badly!

HANDOUT 1: Secret Codes Worksheet

	CODE #1	CODE #2	CODE #3	CODE #4	CODE #5
A	1	2	5	2	1
B	2	3	6	4	4
C	3	4	7	6	9
D	4	5	8	8	16
E	5	6	9	10	25
F	6	7	10	12	36
G	7	8	11	14	49
H	8	9	12	16	64
I	9	10	13	18	81
J	10	11	14	10	100
K	11	12	15	22	121
L	12	13	16	24	144
M	13	14	17	26	169
N	14	15	18	28	196
O	15	16	19	30	225
P	16	17	20	32	256
Q	17	18	21	34	289
R	18	19	22	36	324
S	19	20	23	38	361
T	20	21	24	40	400
U	21	22	25	42	441
V	22	23	26	44	484
W	23	24	27	46	529
X	24	25	28	48	576
Y	25	26	29	50	625
Z	26	27	30	52	676

ACTIVITY 2: Can You Keep a Secret?

1. Give each student 6 nametags, 1 6-sided die and 1 marker or pen.
2. Tell each student to choose a secret number from 1 to 6, without revealing it to the rest of the class.
3. Tell students to put one blank nametag on. On these nametags they will track how often they keep their secret.
4. Tell each student to walk around the room to other students. Each time two students meet, each one should roll his or her die.
 - a. If the die roll doesn't match that student's secret number, then that student adds a checkmark to the original (blank) nametag s/he started with. (This tracks how many times each student successfully keeps his or her secret.)
 - b. If the die roll matches that student's secret number, then that student "tells" the secret to the other student, by giving him or her a nametag with the teller's name. (Each nametag represents someone telling his or her secret.) Also, *only for the first time telling the secret*, the student should count the checkmarks on his or her own name tag and write that number on the name tag given to the other student. (This tracks how "long" the student successfully kept the secret.)
5. After 10 minutes, have students return to their desks and complete the probability worksheet, **HANDOUT 2: PROBABILITY WORKSHEET**.
6. When students have completed their own worksheets, discuss the results as a class.
7. (Optional) Play the entire game again, but this time, when a student spills a secret, they spill every secret that they know! (So, students will receive multiple name-tags from a person holding multiple secrets.) Notice how quickly the secrets spread!
8. Have students, individually or in groups, complete **HANDOUT 3: HOW TRUSTWORTHY ARE YOU?**
9. After the activity, discuss with the class how difficult it is to keep a secret, why keeping secrets is difficult. Relate this discussion to the difficult situation in which the children of the film found themselves. To whom could the children have told the secret (although they decided not to)? For example
 - a. Teacher/headmaster at school – could have explained away lateness, difficulty participating in gym class etc;
 - b. Parents – could have requested new shoes so they wouldn't have to go through all the difficulties;
 - c. Little girl who ended up with the sister's old shoes – could have said they belonged to Zahra

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

As time permits, you may choose to have the students

1. Design coded messages and practice decoding.
2. Exchange coded messages with another group and try to break their codes.
3. Make a list of the way secrets can be used to help people.

ADDITIONAL INTERNET RESOURCES:

<http://www.nutters.org/log/secret-probability>

On the probability of keeping a secret:

<http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/encyclopedia/C/Cr/Cryptography.htm>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/3804895.stm>

<http://mcpmag.com/columns/article.asp?EditorialsID=229>

On cryptography





HANDOUT 1 ▶ P.1

Secret Codes:

An Introduction to Number-based Secret Codes

1. Can you figure out the code?

CODE 1: A – 1; B – 2; C – 3; D – 4; E – 5; ETC.

Describe the code in words: _____

ENCODE the message: **CODES ARE FUN** _____

DECODE the message: 25-15-21 4-9-4 9-20 _____

Describe how to decode in words: _____

CODE 2: A – 2; B – 3; C – 4; D – 5; E – 6; ETC.

Describe the code in words: _____

ENCODE the message: **CODES ARE FUN** _____

DECODE the message: 8-16-16-5 11-16-3 _____

Describe how to decode in words: _____



HANDOUT 1 ▶ P.2

CODE 3: A – 5; B – 6; C – 7; D – 8; E – 9; ETC.

Describe the code in words: _____

ENCODE the message: **CODES ARE FUN** _____

DECODE the message: **18-13-7-9 27-19-22-15** _____

Describe how to decode in words: _____

CODE 4: A – 2; B – 4; C – 6; D – 8; E – 10; ETC.

Describe the code in words: _____

ENCODE the message: **CODES ARE FUN** _____

DECODE the message: **46-2-50 40-30 14-30** _____

Describe how to decode in words: _____

CODE 5: A – 1; B – 4; C – 9; D – 16; E – 25; ETC.

Describe the code in words: _____

ENCODE the message: **CODES ARE FUN** _____

DECODE the message: **9-225-225-144** _____

Describe how to decode in words: _____

HANDOUT 1 ► P.3

2. What is the relationship between how the message is ENCODED, and how it is DECODED?

3. If a message is ENCODED using the rule “Multiply the letter’s position in the alphabet by 3 and subtract 2,” then
 - a) which numbers represent the letters A, G, M and W? _____, _____, _____, and _____

 - b) which letters are represented by the numbers 10, 31 and 58? _____, _____, and _____

 - c) what is the rule for DECODING?

 - d) If someone figures out your code, how could you easily change the rule without creating a whole new system to memorize?

4. Design an ENCODING rule that Ali and Zahra, the brother and sister in the movie *Children of Heaven*, could have used to create a secret code. What is the DECODING rule that they would have needed to read the messages?

HANDOUT 2 **Probability Worksheet**

SECRET NUMBER (PLEASE CIRCLE): 1 2 3 4 5 6

1. How many people did you successfully keep the secret from before you let it slip? _____

2. How many people did you tell your secret to in total? _____
 (How many people are wearing a name tag with your name on it?) _____

3. How many times did you keep your secret? _____
 (How many checkmarks did you give yourself?) _____

4. How many secrets did you hear about? _____
 (How many name tags from other people are you wearing?) _____

In a class of your size, how many times *would you expect* to tell your secret? How does this compare to your answer to question #2? If it is not the same, then what could explain the difference?

In your group, find the average, highest and lowest answers for each question and fill in the table below.

Question	Average	Highest	Lowest
1			
2			
3			
4			

How do these averages compare to the highest and lowest answers for each question?

Did you notice anything interesting about your results?

HANDOUT 3 ▶ P.1 **How Trustworthy Are You?**

In this activity, you'll see that you're not as trustworthy as you think you are!

1. Decide how trustworthy you are on a scale of 0% to 99% (Nobody's perfect, right?!) This means, if someone tells you a secret, what is the percentage chance you will keep the secret and not tell someone. Write this number below:

I am _____ % trustworthy! As a decimal, I am _____ trustworthy!

2. If you meet three people, then to figure out how trustworthy you are overall, you should put your decimal trustworthiness rating to the power of three. (That means, multiply your trustworthy number times itself, then times itself again.)

My overall trustworthiness is _____ ? _____ ? _____ = _____

3. What is your overall trustworthiness rating if you meet

- a. 5 people? _____
- b. 10 people? _____
- c. 20 people? _____

4. How many people do you have to meet before your overall trustworthiness rating goes below

- a. 75% _____
- b. 50% _____
- c. 10% _____

- d. your original trustworthiness number? _____

5. As you talk to more people, what happens to your trustworthiness rating? Is this always the case?

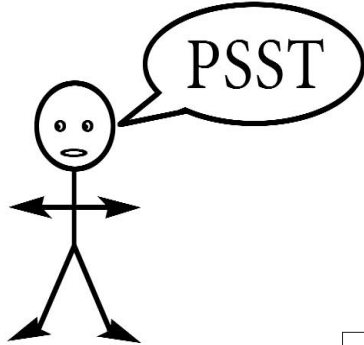
6. Pretend you were originally 99% trustworthy! Now how many people would you have to meet before your overall trustworthiness rating goes below

- a. 75% _____
- b. 50% _____
- c. 10% _____

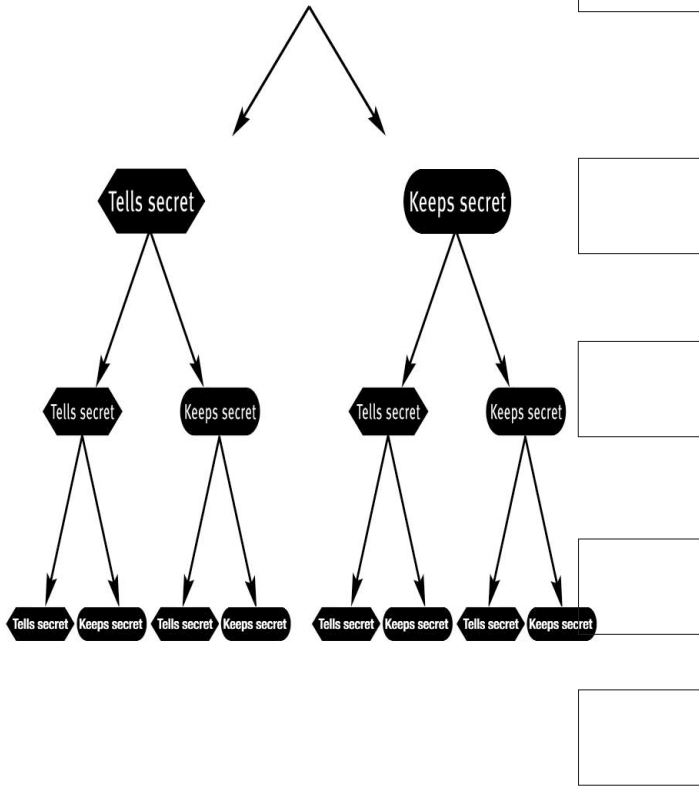
HANDOUT 3 ► P.2

7. Look at the tree diagram on the next page that shows what can happen when two people know a secret. Every time one of those people meets someone else, that person has to decide whether to keep the secret, or whether they will tell the secret. Even if that person is very trustworthy, you'd be surprised at how likely it is that the secret will come out!
8. In pencil, choose a trustworthiness rating for each of the two people and fill this decimal in the proper box.
9. Fill this decimal in the indicated spaces on the tree diagram.
10. Multiply all the decimals together to find out the probability that each person keeps the secret after talking to three people.
11. To find the overall probability that the secret is kept, multiply the two individual numbers together.
12. Try this activity a few times, changing each individual person's trustworthiness rating to see the effect it has on your final answer. Record all your observations in the table at the bottom of the page.
13. So, how trustworthy would the students in *Children of Heaven* have been to have kept their secret?

HANDOUT 3 ▶ P.3



Choose a trustworthy rating for Person A (decimal form)



Individual trustworthy ratings:

$$\square \times \square \times \square = \square$$

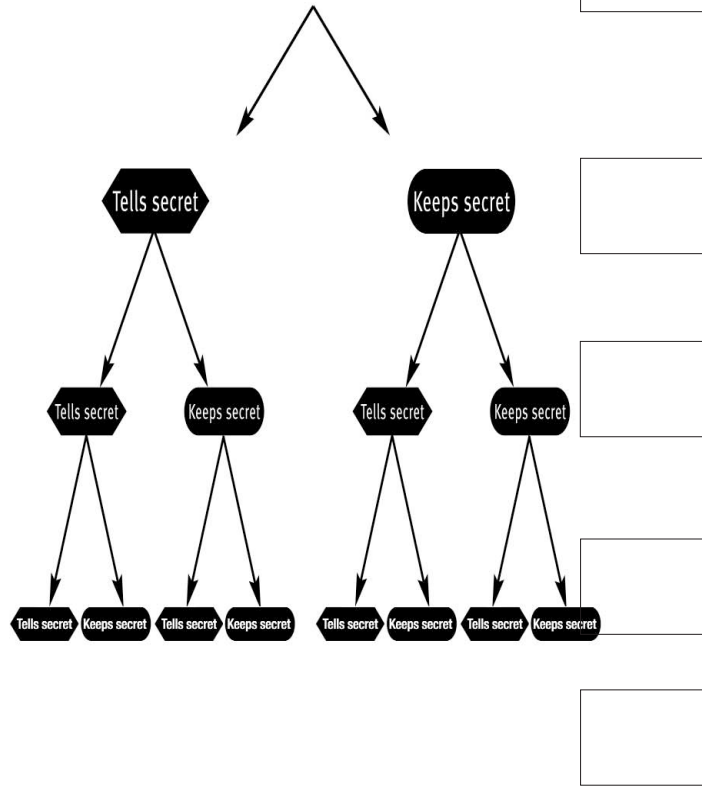
Combined trustworthy ratings:

$$\square \times \square = \square$$

Less than



Choose a trustworthy rating for Person B (decimal form)



$$\square \times \square \times \square = \square$$

HANDOUT 1 ▶ P.1 ▶ ANSWER SHEET

1. Can you figure out the code?

CODE 1: A – 1; B – 2; C – 3; D – 4; E – 5; ETC.

Describe the code in words: The n^{th} letter of the alphabet is represented by the number n [Use the letter's position in the alphabet.]

ENCODE the message: **CODES ARE FUN** 3-15-4-5-19 1-18-5 6-21-14

DECODE the message: 25-15-21 4-9-4 9-20 You did it

Describe how to decode in words: Convert a number n into the n^{th} letter of the alphabet. [Convert to the letter in that number's position]

CODE 2: A – 2; B – 3; C – 4; D – 5; E – 6; ETC.

Describe the code in words: The n^{th} letter of the alphabet is represented by the number $(n + 1)$. [Take the letter's position and add 1]

ENCODE the message: **CODES ARE FUN** 4-16-5-6-20 2-19-6 7-22-15

DECODE the message: 8-16-16-5 11-16-3 Good job

Describe how to decode in words: Convert a number n into the $(n-1)^{\text{st}}$ letter of the alphabet. [Subtract 1 to find the letter's position]

HANDOUT 1 ▶ P.2 ▶ ANSWER SHEET

CODE 3: A – 5; B – 6; C – 7; D – 8; E – 9; ETC.

Describe the code in words: The n^{th} letter of the alphabet is represented by the number $(n+4)$. [Take the letter's position and add 4.]

ENCODE the message: CODES ARE FUN 7-19-8-9-23 5-22-9 10-25-18

DECODE the message: 18-13-7-9 27-19-22-15 Nice work

Describe how to decode in words: Convert a number 'n' into the $(n-4)^{\text{th}}$ letter of the alphabet. [Subtract 4 to find the letter's position]

CODE 4: A – 2; B – 4; C – 6; D – 8; E – 10; ETC.

Describe the code in words: The n^{th} letter of the alphabet is represented by the number $(2n)$ [Take the letter's position and multiply by 2]

ENCODE the message: CODES ARE FUN 6-30-8-10-38 2-36-10 12-42-28

DECODE the message: 46-2-50 40-30 14-30 Way to go

Describe how to decode in words: Convert a number n into the $(n \div 2)^{\text{th}}$ letter of the alphabet. [Divide by 2 to find the letter's position.]

CODE 5: A – 1; B – 4; C – 9; D – 16; E – 25; ETC.

Describe the code in words: The n^{th} letter of the alphabet is represented by the number (n^2) . [Take the letter's position and square it.]

ENCODE the message: CODES ARE FUN 9-225-16-25-361 1-324-25
36-441-196

DECODE the message: 9-225-225-144 Cool

Describe how to decode in words: Convert a number n into the \sqrt{n}^{th} letter of the alphabet. [Take the square root to find the letter's position.]

HANDOUT 1 ▶ P.3 ▶ ANSWER SHEET

2. What is the relationship between how the message is ENCODED, and how it is DECODED?

Decoding a message requires doing the “opposite” (inverse) operation you did to encode.

3. If a message is ENCODED using the rule “Multiply the letter’s position in the alphabet by 3 and subtract 2” then

a) which numbers represent the letters A, G, M and W? 1, 19, 37, and 67

b) which letters are represented by the numbers 10, 31 and 58? D, K, and T

c) what is the rule for DECODING?

Add 2, then divide by 3 to get the letter’s position in the alphabet

d) If someone figures out your code, how could you easily change the rule without creating a whole new system to memorize?

Answers will vary. Examples: Change the number you multiply by; Change the number you subtract; Add instead of subtract

4. Design an ENCODING rule that Ali and Zahra, the brother and sister in the movie *Children of Heaven*, could have used to create a secret code. What is the DECODING rule that they would have needed to read the messages?

Example: Add 3 to the letter’s position, then double. To decode: Divide by 2, then subtract 3 to get the letter’s position in the alphabet.

HANDOUT 3 ▶ P.1 ▶ ANSWER SHEET – SAMPLE ONLY

In this activity, you'll see that you're not as trustworthy as you think you are!

- Decide how trustworthy you are on a scale of 0% to 99% (Nobody's perfect, right!?) This means, if someone tells you a secret, what is the percentage chance you will keep the secret and not tell someone. Write this number below:

I am 85 % trustworthy! As a decimal, I am 0.85 trustworthy!

- If you meet three people, then to figure out how trustworthy you are overall, you should put your decimal trustworthiness rating to the power of three. (That means, multiply your trustworthy number times itself, then times itself again.)

My overall trustworthiness is 85 ? .85 ? .85 = 0.614125 (approx. 61%)

- What is your overall trustworthiness rating if you meet

- 5 people? $\frac{(.85)^5}{\underline{\hspace{2cm}}} \approx 44\%$
- 10 people? $\frac{(.85)^{10}}{\underline{\hspace{2cm}}} \approx 20\%$
- 20 people? $\frac{(.85)^{20}}{\underline{\hspace{2cm}}} \approx 4\%$

- How many people do you have to meet before your overall trustworthiness rating goes below

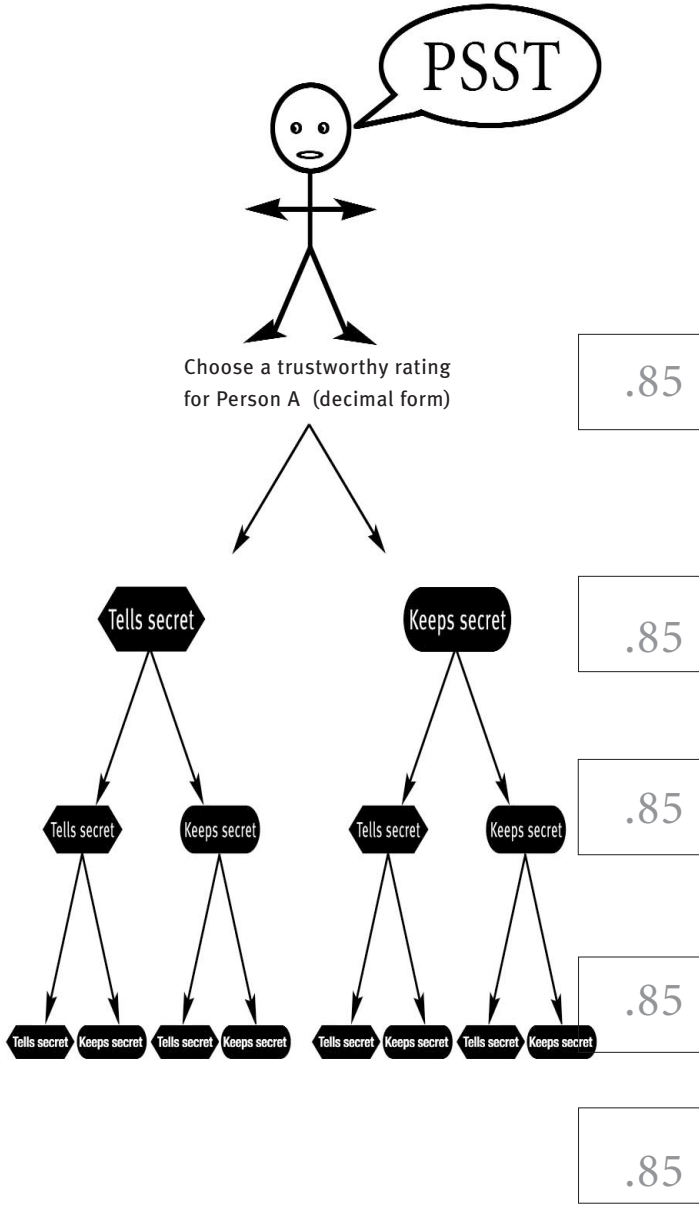
- 75% $\frac{2}{\underline{\hspace{2cm}}} (.85)^1 \approx 85\% \quad (.85)^2 \approx 72\%$
- 50% $\frac{5}{\underline{\hspace{2cm}}} (.85)^4 \approx 52\% \quad (.85)^5 \approx 44\%$
- 10% $\frac{15}{\underline{\hspace{2cm}}} (.85)^{14} \approx 10\% \quad (.85)^{15} \approx 9\%$
- your original trustworthiness number? $\frac{2}{\underline{\hspace{2cm}}}$

- As you talk to more people, what happens to your trustworthiness rating? Is this always the case? It goes down. No, for 0% or 100% it will stay the same. For any other value in between, it will always decrease.

- Pretend you were originally 99% trustworthy! Now how many people would you have to meet before your overall trustworthiness rating goes below

- 75% $\frac{29}{\underline{\hspace{2cm}}}$
- 50% $\frac{69}{\underline{\hspace{2cm}}}$
- 10% $\frac{230}{\underline{\hspace{2cm}}}$

HANDOUT 3 > P.3 – SAMPLE ONLY

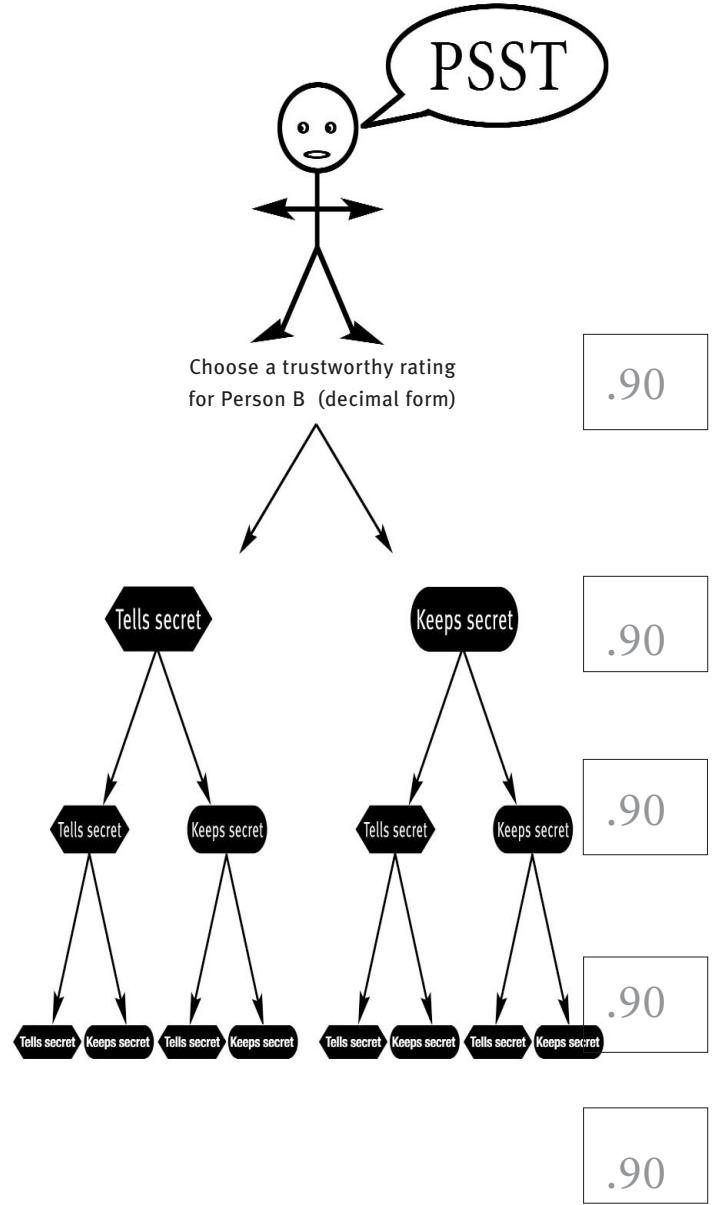


Individual trustworthy ratings:

$$.85 \times .85 \times .85 = .614125$$

Combined trustworthy ratings:

$$.614125 \times .729 = 45\%$$



$$.90 \times .90 \times .90 = .729$$

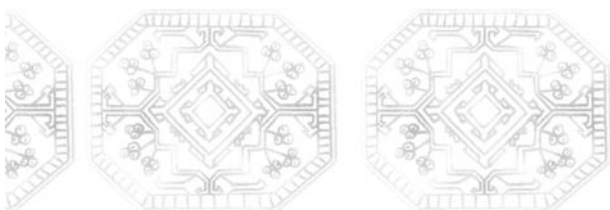
Iran: Land of Earthquakes

Enduring Understandings:

- Many people live in areas where natural forces can change their lives; therefore they need education about predictive tools and proper preventive measures.
- Regardless of where people live, from time to time, traumatic situations may occur and aid operations should be ready.
- Due to poor construction, the risk of major devastation in an earthquake in Tehran is high.

Essential Questions:

- Why do earthquakes occur and how do we know if one might happen?
- What can people do to avoid injuries and destruction of property in an earthquake?
- What is our role as global citizens in the event of a natural disaster?
- What can individuals and organizations do if an earthquake happens in another part of the world?
- If you lived in Tehran, how would you prepare for an earthquake?



Notes to the Teacher:

Earthquakes and volcanoes are fascinating to children. In areas where they are very real possibilities, people who have lived through earthquakes have various attitudes about them ranging from serious fears and poor sleep habits to fatalism to a sense of denial.

In Iran, where seismic activity is high and where the bulk of the population lives in buildings that are often old, multi-storied, and made of low-fired or adobe bricks, the threat of earthquake becomes part of the culture. Earthquake history is alive in Iran, with serious seismic activity every day and a major earthquake expected each decade. Although in recent years Iran has improved building construction and enforced building codes for new buildings, most people still live in adobe brick buildings, which provide warmth in the winter and coolness in the summer. Such buildings are very vulnerable to the horizontal shifting of ground during an earthquake.

In this activity, students will build a model of a traditional home for a family of four using dried mud bricks and then expose it to shaking to see how it behaves. No mud mortar will be used. Earth movement can be up-and-down or sideways; those are the two actions of earthquakes. Then students will use the same building bricks, but rearrange them in new designs and test for strength using the same movements. Your students can explore how the number and arrangement of bricks (smaller homes, wider homes, taller homes, etc.) affect the outcome in a simulated earthquake.

In adobe structures, the mud mix may vary according to the shape of the particles of sand and gravel and their shapes (rounded versus crushed, fewer or more edges) as well as the amount of water added to the dry material. Soupy mud will cause more cracking upon drying and a weaker brick.

(An alternative method is to use sugar cubes. The regularity of the sugar cubes' shape and their pure composition without aggregate such as small pebbles or sand granules produces a more predictable result, in much the way that concrete blocks will.)

A key variable that students may play with to change results is the addition or subtraction of foundations. These may ease or intensify movements in structures built above them.

This project can be done outdoors; if you do it indoors, be sure to cover adobe mixing areas with plastic sheeting or newspaper. Do not wash heavy clay into sinks. A five-gallon bucket is a convenient cleaning basin and students can water a schoolyard tree when you are finished.

N.B. It is essential to be sensitive to students who may have experienced an earthquake, possibly lost a loved one in an earthquake, or who live in an earthquake-prone area like California.

DURATION OF LESSON:

Two-three days

Assessment:

“Adobe” models

Oral presentation of results

Written, oral, or PowerPoint report on earthquakes

STANDARDS

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

STANDARD 2. Understands Earth's composition and structure

LEVEL III [GRADE 6-8]

2. Knows how land forms are created through a combination of constructive and destructive forces (e.g., constructive forces such as crustal deformation, volcanic eruptions, and deposition of sediment; destructive forces such as weathering and erosion)

STANDARD 12. Understands the nature of scientific inquiry

LEVEL III [GRADE 6-8]

3. Designs and conducts a scientific investigation (e.g., formulates hypotheses, designs and executes investigations, interprets data, synthesizes evidence into explanations, proposes alternative explanations for observations, critiques explanations and procedures)
8. Knows possible outcomes of scientific investigations (e.g., some may result in new ideas and phenomena for study; some may generate new methods or procedures for an investigation; some may result in the development of new technologies to improve the collection of data; some may lead to new investigations)

Materials needed:

HANDOUT 1: SEISMICITY OF IRAN. If you prefer to have this map in color you can download it from <http://neic.usgs.gov/neis/world/iran/>

FOR STRUCTURES:

Dirt with different compositions of clay, gravel, sand, water

Large spoons

Mixing bowls

Ice cube trays

Metal or wood files for filing adobes to proper dimensions. String for pulling the building foundation

Optional: straws or Popsicle sticks

FOR FOUNDATIONS:

Cardboard, poster board and spongy-based template materials such as carpet. Make each 24 square inches, the square “footage” of the planned buildings. Punch holes at each end of the cardboard or carpet bases and attach strings through holes.

Procedure:

Introduce the lesson by distributing copies of **HANDOUT 1**. Explain to students that Iran, where *Children of Heaven* was made, is a very earthquake-prone country. Ask them to explain the geographical distribution of seismic activity in Iran. Tell students that they are going to do some activities to understand what happens when an earthquake occurs, what the results of an earthquake are, and how nations and people get involved when an earthquake damages a community.

ACTIVITY 1: Making the Bricks

(To be completed two or three days before **ACTIVITY 2**)

1. Assign students to groups. This project works best with small groups since the amount of material needed will be easiest to produce with four or five students in a group. Each student should bring an ice cube tray from home.
2. Tell them that they are going to design a traditional Iranian home with an outside measurement of 6 inches by 4 inches. The height of the home will be three inches. Tell them to plan how to start, where to start, and how to make the corners. If they want to add any reinforcing materials, they should think about what materials they wish to use and how to integrate them into their structure.
3. Blocks should be made from local soil, not potting soil. You will have to test the content of your local soil. The soil must have clay content; sandy soil will not become adobe. Local soil content can be determined by half filling a glass jar with soil, filling the jar with water, putting on the top, shaking it and letting it settle. Note the parts: gravel (bottom), sand (second layer from bottom), clay (fine third layer), and organic material (fourth layer). Ideal adobe is four parts sand and one part clay mixed to a pudding consistency. If necessary, add sand or clay to the local soil to create the proper mix.
4. Once students know what the ingredients are in the soil, mix the mud by adding water to the proper soil mix. Make it thoroughly wet and pasty. Using a spoon

and a straight edge, fill the ice cube trays halfway to the top. (Adobes are thinner than they are long or wide. This allows for even drying.) Leave the mud in the ice cube trays for an hour, remove, and place mud bricks on paper bags to dry; paper bags are like the ground and absorb wetness. Turn bricks two to three times a day to dry. The bricks should be air-dried in two days.

ACTIVITY 2: Building a Model of a Traditional Iranian House

1. Guide students to understand that brick courses should alternate to increase strength or allow students to discover this construction necessity; it will be obvious once construction begins.
2. Begin by asking students to set the bricks directly on the desk. Have each student group use mud blocks for their building, an adobe box without a roof or floor, according to their designs. The first designs need to be rectangular. Bricks may be reduced in size with a file. Half bricks may be cut once the bricks are dry by scoring the whole bricks on one side and then tapping the scored bricks over a desk edge to break them.
3. Ask the students to see what happens when they shake the desks.
4. Give each student a template base of carpet or cardboard to use as a foundation on which to rebuild their design. Using the strings, have students coordinate pulling the bases as if they were sawing a board from two sides. What are the results?
5. Have students rotate different types of bases and evaluate which ones work best to preserve the building; they

may also experiment with buildings of various sizes and shapes, depending on time available.

6. Ask students to report on their findings. Which building types work best when the foundation shakes?
7. Optional: Cut additional foundation shapes or add sand or salt to a table top for students to build on.
8. Optional: Add flat roofs with straws or Popsicle sticks and cover them with poker chips or coins. The fragility of roofs becomes obvious upon shaking. Roofing materials are notorious for injuring or killing people in earthquakes.

ACTIVITY 3: Research and Report

1. Assign each student group to use print materials or the Internet to prepare a report on one of the following topics. The reports may be written or oral, but should be presented to the class. Encourage students to use PowerPoint or other audiovisual materials.

- a. What causes earthquakes?

Suggested websites:

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/faultline/earthquakescience/index.html>

<http://earthquake.usgs.gov/4kids/learning/adv.html>

<http://www.fema.gov/kids/quake.htm>

- b. What happened when an earthquake hit the Iranian city of Bam in 2003? Suggested websites:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3363125.stm#graphic

<http://www.farsinet.com/bam/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bam>

c. How did the world respond to the earthquake in Bam?

Suggested websites:

<http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/response/iran.asp>

http://www.unicef.org/media/media_19018.html

<http://www.imcworldwide.org/programs/IranEmergency.html>

<http://www.mercycorps.org/items/1726/>

d. How could Iranian houses be made safer?

Suggested websites:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3363125.stm#graphic

<http://www.usnews.com/usnews/culture/articles/040112/12earthquake2.htm>

http://www.aig.asn.au/tehran_at_risk.htm

2. Assignment: In Tehran, the danger of experiencing an earthquake is real. In the film *Children of Heaven* the family lives in an area of older construction. After doing your building experiments and if you had the chance to visit the family, what would you say about earthquakes, if anything? Explain your reasons for your ideas.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY:

Because of the threat of earthquakes, scientists have even advocated moving the capital of Iran from Tehran to an area with less seismic activity. Have students research this issue, study the fault line map of Iran at <http://www.iiees.ac.ir/seismology/ActiveFault.pdf>, and make a recommendation.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Print Materials (books, magazine articles, etc.)

Asimov, Isaac. *About Earthquakes* (Ontario: Thomas Allen, Markham, 1978)

Levy, Matthys and Mario Salvadori. *Earthquake Games* (New York: Margaret McElderry Books, 1997)

Maslin, Mark. *Earthquakes* from the series *Restless Planet* (Austin: Steck-Vaughn, 2000)

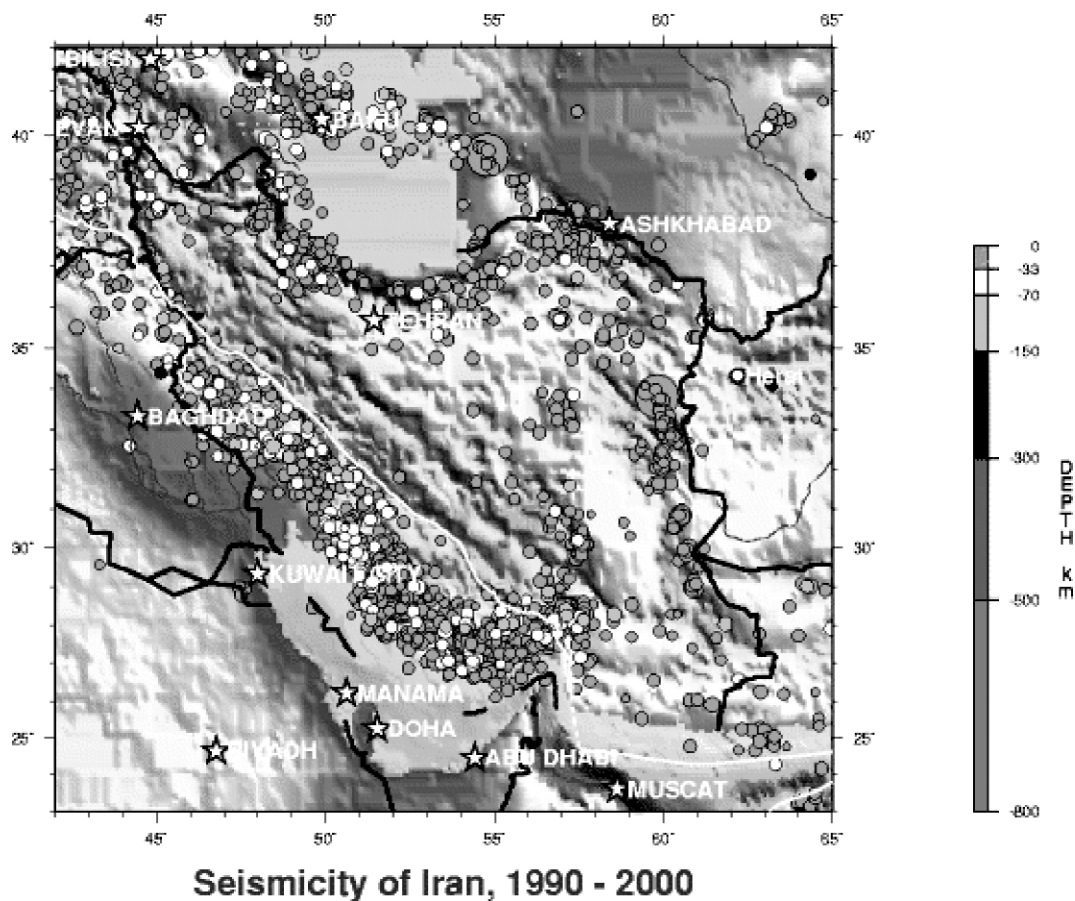
Meister, Cari. *Nature's Fury, Earthquakes* (Edina, MN: ABDO, 1999)

Moore, Eldridge. *Volcanoes and Earthquakes* (Sydney: Time-Life, Weldon-Owen, 1995)

Nicolson, Cynthia Pratt. *Earthquake* (Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2002)

HANDOUT 1 Seismic Activity in Iran

DIRECTIONS: Earthquakes occur almost every day in some part of Iran. Two of the three major faults in Iran run under Tehran. Study the following map of Iran and describe the geographical areas where seismic activity has been most frequent in the years 1990-2000. (The film *Children of Heaven* was made in 1997.) Why do you think earthquakes occur most frequently in these areas?



[Source: National Earthquake Information Center, U.S. Geological Survey.
<http://neic.usgs.gov/neis/world/iran/>]

Persian Carpets

Enduring Understandings:

- Iranian traditions and values come from centuries of life in Persia/Iran.
- Persian carpets have had many different uses and interpretations during the centuries.

Essential Questions:

- How were Persian carpets used throughout Iran's history?
- In what ways do the carpet weavers communicate through their work?
- How are Persian carpets made?
- What symbols are used in the carpets? What types of ideas/values are communicated through the carpets and their designs?
- What kinds of human relationships have been depicted in the artistic expression of carpet making?
- Why are Persian carpets so highly valued?

Notes to the Teacher:

Persian carpet-weaving tradition began over 2500 years ago. The tradition began with nomadic tribesmen, who needed the warmth of carpets to cover the floors of their tents and block the wind at the entrances. The techniques of carpet-weaving developed over the centuries, with fathers passing down their traditional methods to their sons over many generations. Soon rugs were not just functional; they were truly magnificent art works in their own right. Carpets were woven from wool yarn on looms; because looms were usually narrow, most early carpets were long and narrow.

Unlike weaving in the Western tradition, Persian carpets were knotted, sometimes with thousands of knots in a square foot of carpet. The Pazyrik rug, dated from the 5th century BCE and the oldest one yet found, has 184 knots per square inch. (You might ask your students to use square roots to calculate on how many knots per inch this means in each direction. Answer: approximately 13.5) Carpets from the 16th-century Safavid period were the most closely-woven, with 800 knots to the square inch!

Like the paradise depicted in the *Qu'ran*, Persian carpets are filled with shady trees, colorful flowers, flowing waters, fountains, fruits, and animals. Some art experts say that the carpets are actually a record of what early Persian gardens looked like. There are hundreds of photographs of Persian carpets available on the internet. Before the lesson, you may want to save some of these photos to a file on your computer to use as a slide show.



Several traditional methods of tying knots may be found at <http://www.bukhara-carpets.com/making/knots.html> or at http://www.iranchamber.com/carpet/brief_history_persian_carpet.php. It would be wise for you to practice tying these knots yourself to become comfortable with the process before you try to teach it to your students.

While in the past men wove the carpets, today women and children often work in this industry; sometimes entire families work together on a carpet. A skilled worker can tie 10,000 to 14,000 knots per day, so it can take months or years to finish one highly-detailed Persian carpet at this pace. After the knots are tied, the knot-ends are clipped short to create the soft pile. This is the largest handicraft industry in Iran today. Iran produces more carpets than anywhere else in the world; millions of dollars worth of carpets are shipped to other countries annually and many in Iran invest in carpets as a form of wealth. Carpets are such a part of the Iranian culture that most homes have them. (Notice the small carpets in the home of Ali and Zahra, for example). An ancient proverb says, “Where thy carpet lies is thy home.”

Persian carpets usually depict natural forms with symbolic meaning. Some of these symbols are the Tree of Life (eternity); camel (wealth); dove (peace); heron (long life); pomegranate (abundance); carnation (happiness); dog (protection from sickness); cock (victory); parrot (love); rose bush (reminder that life is beautiful but still has thorns).

Carpets from the cities tend to be tightly woven, with very sophisticated floral designs. Carpets from rural areas are looser and the designs are more free-flowing.

Each tribe and village may have its own distinctive border pattern.

Carpets were so beautiful that they sometimes seemed magical, and stories grew up about them. Stories tell of King Solomon, who was supposed to have had a green silk carpet large enough for all his forces to stand upon. When he commanded the wind, the carpet would fly to his destination, with a canopy of birds overhead to protect the travelers from the hot sun. Magic carpets also appear in the story of Aladdin, a story your students might be familiar with from the Disney movies or books they have read.

In the lesson below, after an introduction to the carpet, students create a loom and attempt to weave their own carpets. If time is limited, you should use the alternate method, with pieces of burlap or canvas. If you have lots of time, you may wish to have students dye yarn. You may wish to use the extension lesson on reading and writing, or you could team up with your language arts teacher to do it.

DURATION OF LESSON:

Two-three days

ASSESSMENT:

Student-made carpet

Carpet designs on computer or graph paper

Descriptive essay (optional)

VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

STANDARD 2. Knows how to use structures (e.g., sensory qualities, organizational principles, expressive features) and functions of art

LEVEL III (GRADE 5-8)

1. Knows some of the effects of various visual structures (e.g., design elements such as line, color, shape; principles such as repetition, rhythm, balance) and functions of art

STANDARD 3. Knows a range of subject matter, symbols, and potential ideas in the visual arts

LEVEL III (GRADE 5-8)

2. Knows different subjects, themes, and symbols (through context, value, and aesthetics) which convey intended meaning in artworks

STANDARD 4: Understands the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

LEVEL III (GRADE 5-8)

1. Understands similarities and differences among the characteristics of artworks from various eras and cultures (e.g., materials; visual, spatial, and temporal structures)
2. Understands the historical and cultural contexts of a variety of art objects
7. Understands how factors of time and place (e.g., climate, resources, ideas, technology) influence visual, spatial, or temporal characteristics that give meaning or function to a work of art

LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS (Extension Activity 3)

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

STANDARD 2. Uses the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing (Extension activity)

LEVEL III (GRADES 6-8)

1. Uses descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas (e.g., establishes tone and mood, uses figurative language, uses sensory images and comparisons, uses a thesaurus to choose effective wording)
2. Uses paragraph form in writing (e.g., arranges sentences in sequential order, uses supporting and follow-up sentences, establishes coherence within and among paragraphs)
3. Uses a variety of sentence structures to expand and embed ideas (e.g., simple, compound, and complex sentences; parallel structure, such as similar grammatical forms or juxtaposed items)
4. Uses explicit transitional devices

Materials needed:

Photographs or slide show of images of Persian carpets

Rectangles of sturdy cardboard the size that you would like looms to be, stiff, but light enough for students to cut with scissors

Pencils and rulers

Scissors

A tapestry needle or safety pin for each student

White or off-white all-natural cotton yarn

Yarn in different colors

making their own. Show the students pictures of Persian carpets from books or from your slide show (see notes). Explain, using information from the notes, how old the tradition of carpet-making is, who the carpet makers were, how the carpets were made, etc. Ask the students to identify the elements of design they find in them such as:

- proportion
- rhythm
- balance
- dominance
- variety
- unity
- symmetry
- color
- line

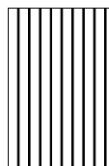
Procedure:

ACTIVITY 1: Introduction to Persian Carpets

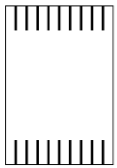
1. Write on the board, “Magic carpet.” Ask your students if they have ever heard of a magic carpet. Let them explain what they think this phrase means and tell of examples they are familiar with from films and books. Tell them about King Solomon’s carpet and other magic-carpet stories you know.
2. Show students a picture of a traditional Persian carpet from the internet. Ask students why they think a carpet might have been considered to be magical by people in earlier times. (Wishful thinking for quick travel, exceptionally detailed, “magical” symbols)
3. Explain that today they are going to learn about Persian carpets and have the opportunity to try

ACTIVITY 2: Preparing the Loom

1. Give students squares of heavy cardboard and have them mark parallel rule lines $1/4$ ” or $1/8$ ” apart as in the illustration below. Start about 1 inch in on each side. The size of the cardboard and width of the line spacing will depend on the time you have available, the skill and patience of your class, and the thickness of the yarn you have (the thicker the yarn, the wider the spacing).



2. Have students cut 1/2" in at the ends of each rule line. The loom should look like this:



3. Using the cotton yarn, have students wrap the loom, catching the yarn into the slits of the loom and keeping the yarn straight on the front, with the slight diagonal on the back.
4. Have students use a tapestry needle or safety pin to weave weft threads over and under the warp threads, creating a canvas upon which to tie knots. End of the weft threads should be left several inches long.

ACTIVITY 3: Knotting the Carpet

1. Have students use various colored yarns to tie knots in a design that they like.
2. When finished, cut the pile and cut the carpet off the loom from the back. Trim the cotton ends to 1" as a fringe.

ALTERNATIVE METHOD:

If time does not permit you to have students make a loom and tie a rug, consider these alternates:

- Use a piece of burlap, needlepoint canvas, or plastic canvas instead of a loom.
- Have students create their own personal symbols for their carpets and design carpets on the computer or using graph paper. Ask them to write about the process of creating a carpet, including an explanation of the symbolism in the carpets they designed.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

1. Research activity – Have students research Navajo rugs or carpets from other cultures and compare the symbols and weaving methods to those in Persian carpets.
2. Natural dyes activity – Have student dye their own yarns for their carpets:

Materials for optional yarn dyeing activity:

- saffron, crocuses, daffodils or yellow onion skins for YELLOW
- young grass, broccoli, spinach, escarole, moss, rhubarb or birch leaves for GREEN
- blueberries for BLUE
- plums, coffee, tea or walnut shells for BROWN

Procedure:

- a. Wash and chop up the raw material.
- b. Place in a pot (enamel is best) and cover with water. The pot should be large enough for the yarn to move freely when stirred.
- c. Boil for at least 5 minutes or longer for darker colors, stirring frequently.
- d. Strain through a colander lined with cheesecloth or a clean rag and return to the pot.
- e. Wet the yarn; place into the dye bath and heat slowly until slightly darker than desired color. Stir gently to avoid felting.

- f. Let cool and then lift out, squeeze gently to remove excess dye, and rinse.
 - g. Hang up until dry
3. Reading/Writing activity – Have students read the story on **HANDOUT 1: EXCERPT FROM "CUTTING A RUG... AT SILKEN WOOL."** Tell your students to think about a special place they might have. Have each student write a description of his or her own special place, using the description on the handout as a model.
 4. Debate activity – Help your students to research the issue of child labor in countries such as Iran. Divide the class into two groups. Ask one group to defend the idea that having children at work making Persian carpets is acceptable in a country where many families are poor, and ask the other group to come up with reasons that this is not acceptable
 5. Art and Design activity – Research Middle Eastern mosaic designs in books or on the Internet. Have students copy or create mosaic designs on paper or cloth; to further appreciate the nature of this work, they could cut mosaic “tiles” from colored paper and assemble. To adhere a design to a rounded surface, the student would have to consider how to adapt a flat shape to the curves of the surface.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

A. Print Materials (books, magazine articles, etc.)

DePaola, Tomie. *The Legend of the Persian Carpet* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1993)

Dowlatshahi, Ali. *Persian Designs and Motifs for Artists and Craftsmen* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1979)

Ford, P.R.J. *Oriental Carpet Design: A Guide to Traditional Motifs, Patterns and Symbols* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1992)

Eiland, Murray L. *Oriental Carpets: A Complete Guide – The Classic Reference* (New York: Bulfinch, 1998)

B. Internet Resources

<http://www.irib.ir/worldservice/carpet/carpet1.htm>

<http://www.persiancarpetartcentre.com.au/weaver.htm>

<http://www.superbherbs.net/design.htm>

<http://www.artarena.force9.co.uk/pcarpet.htm>

http://www.iranchamber.com/carpet/brief_history_persian_carpet.php

http://www.iranembassy.or.id/news_detail.php?idne=174&idn=1&idsn=

http://persia.org/Images/Persian_Carpet/carpet_history.html

These websites all contain information about Persian carpets.

<http://www.iranian.com/NaderDavoodi/2004/September/Golestan/19.html>

A stunning collection of photographs of Iranian art and architecture.

C. Media (film, television, etc.)

The New York Library Association has a list of outstanding Iranian films at their website at http://www.nyla.org/index.php?page_id=185 and provides useful reviews of the films. Among the film is one called *Gabbeh*, a magical story about a beautiful woman who appears to an old couple as they are washing their rug, called a *gabbeh*.

Shangoul and Mangoul is an animated film starring a family of goats and a hungry wolf, reviewed at <http://www.citypages.com/movies/detail.asp?MID=5250>.

HANDOUT 1 ► EXTENSION ACTIVITY Excerpt from "Cutting a Rug
... at Silken Wool" by Susan Piperato

DIRECTIONS: Read the following story carefully to see how Susan Piperato described a special place from her childhood. Then think of a special place that you liked when you were younger. Write a paragraph to describe this place, using clear details and complete sentences. Try to describe the place so vividly that your readers will be able to imagine it in their minds.

I first came upon the woven poetry of the Persian carpet when I was a child. There were plenty of magic carpets in the tales of the Arabian Nights—those captivating stories of luck, magic, romance, purity, and greed through which American children used to first encounter the Middle East. And then there was the Persian carpet that covered the floor of my great-grandmother’s dining room. I was as captivated by the stories of beautifully colored Persian carpets that flew as I was by the fringed carpet upon which stood my great-grandmother’s then-seemingly massive Victorian table with its heavy, claw-foot legs. When I was very young and inevitably became restless during holiday meals, I was allowed to disappear beneath the table to play on that Persian carpet while the adults finished eating. There I’d sit in the dark cavern created by all the long legs and the linen tablecloth, listening to the adult conversations overhead and tracing the carpet’s filigree patterns with my finger. The carpet was dark—blue and red, mostly—with black and white lines that interlaced and curled around each other like the barbs of peacock feathers. Whatever was going on above, it was always quiet under my great-grandmother’s table, and I was able to be transported into a state of reverie not unlike the one I’d fall into automatically when I was being read to, or later when I learned to read myself. My great-grandmother’s carpet was as mysterious, miraculous, and wonderful as the jewels that Ali Baba found in the cave of the Forty Thieves.

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Iran – Country Profile

PROFILE [Adapted from U.S. Department of State at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5314.htm>]

OFFICIAL NAME: Islamic Republic of Iran

GEOGRAPHY

Area: 1.6 million sq. km. (636,294 sq. mi.); slightly larger than Alaska.

Cities: *Capital* – Tehran. *Other cities* – Isfahan, Tabriz, Mashhad, Shiraz.

Terrain: Desert and mountains.

Climate: Semiarid; subtropical along the Caspian coast.

PEOPLE

Nationality: *Noun and adjective* – Iranian(s).

Population (2004 est.): 69 million.

Population growth rate (2004): 1.07%.

Ethnic groups: Persians 51%, Azeri 24%, Gilaki and Mazandarani 8%, Kurd 7%, Arab 3%, Lur 2%, Baloch 2%, Turkmen 2%, other 1%.

Religions: Shi'a Muslim 89%; Sunni Muslim 10%; Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian, and Baha'i 1%.

Languages: Persian and Persian dialects 58%, Turkic and Turkic dialects 26%, Kurdish 9%, Luri 2%, Balochi 1%, Arabic 1%, Turkish 1%, other 2%.

Education: Literacy (total population age 15 and over who can read and write, 2004) – 79.4%.

Health (2003 est.): *Infant mortality rate* – 44.17 deaths/1,000 live births. *Life expectancy at birth* (2003) – total population: 69.35.

Work force (2001): Agriculture 30%, industry 25%, services 45% est. There is a shortage of skilled labor.

GOVERNMENT

Type: Islamic republic.

Constitution: Ratified December 1979, revised 1989.

Branches: *Executive* – "Leader of the Islamic Revolution" (head of state), president, and Council of Ministers. *Legislative* – 290-member Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majles). *Judicial* – Supreme Court.

Political parties: The following organizations appeared to have achieved considerable success at elections to the sixth Majles in early 2000: Assembly of the Followers of the Imam's Line, Freethinkers' Front Islamic Iran Participation Front, Moderation and Development Party, Servants of Construction Party, and Society of Self-sacrificing Devotees.

Administrative subdivisions: 28 provinces.

Suffrage: Universal at 15.

ECONOMY

GDP (2004 est.): \$477.8 billion.

GDP real growth rate (2003 est.): 6%.

GDP composition by sector (2004): Agriculture 19%, industry 26%, services 55%.

Per capita income (est.2003): \$7,000.

Natural resources: Petroleum, natural gas, and some mineral deposits.

Agriculture: *Principal products* – wheat, rice, other grains, sugar beets, fruits, nuts, cotton, dairy products, wool, caviar; not self-sufficient in food.

Industry: *Types* – petroleum, petrochemicals, textiles, cement and building materials, food processing (particularly sugar refining and vegetable oil production), metal fabricating (steel and copper), armaments.

Trade (2002): *Exports* – \$24.8 billion: petroleum 85%, carpets, fruits, nuts. *Imports*—\$21.8 billion: food, machinery, and semi-finished goods. *Major markets/suppliers* – Germany, Japan, Italy, South Korea.

PEOPLE

Almost two-thirds of Iran's people are of Aryan origin—their ancestors migrated from Central Asia. The major groups in this category include Persians, Kurds, Lurs, and Baluch. The remainder are primarily Turkic but also include Arabs, Armenians, Jews, and Assyrians.

The 1979 Islamic revolution and the 1980-88 war with Iraq transformed Iran's class structure politically, socially, and economically. In general, however, Iranian society remains divided into urban, market-town, village, and tribal groups. Clerics, called *mullahs*, dominate politics and nearly all aspects of Iranian life, both urban and rural. After the fall of the Pahlavi regime in 1979, much of the urban upper class of prominent merchants, industrialists, and professionals, favored by the former Shah, lost standing and influence to the senior clergy and their supporters. Bazaar merchants, who were allied with the clergy against the

Pahlavi shahs, also have gained political and economic power since the revolution. The urban working class has enjoyed somewhat enhanced status and economic mobility, spurred in part by opportunities provided by revolutionary organizations and the government bureaucracy.

Unemployment, a major problem even before the revolution, has many causes, including population growth, the war with Iraq, and shortages of raw materials and trained managers. Farmers and peasants received a psychological boost from the attention given them by the Islamic regime but appear to be hardly better off in economic terms. The government has made progress on rural development, including electrification and road building, but has not yet made a commitment to land redistribution.

Most Iranians are Muslims; 89% belong to the Shi'a branch of Islam, the official state religion, and about 10% belong to the Sunni branch, which predominates in neighboring Muslim countries. Non-Muslim minorities include Zoroastrians, Jews, Baha'is, and Christians.