

# Turkish Carpet Lesson Plan

## Overview:

In this lesson plan, students will travel to Turkey through an imaginative and historical journey about carpets. Through the famous Turkish handcrafted carpets and rugs, students will gain awareness of Turkey, its customs, and its traditions.

## Objectives:

Students will:

1. Learn about Turkish rugs and the traditional designs associated with the handcrafted rugs.
2. Create a Turkish rug craft project using traditional designs.

## Activity:

1. Ask students if they have ever heard of a Turkish carpet, or if any of their families own one. Explain that Turkish carpets have been a traditional occupation and cultural product for centuries. (See Turkish Carpets Information Sheet, as well as the Annotated Resources below for further information. There are a number of helpful Web sites as well, such as <http://www.about-turkey.com/carpet/language.htm>.) PSAMES has a prayer rug available on loan, which can be used as a visual aid for students to explain the practical and religious uses of rugs in Turkey.

## Additional Resources from CSAMES

- a. McCarthy, Justin and Carolyn McCarthy. *Who Are the Turks? A Manual for Teachers*. New York, NY: The American Forum for Global Education, 2003. This teacher's manual is a rich resource for teaching students about Turkey and the Turkish people. Materials include lessons, photos, illustrations, recipes, poetry and stories. In particular, there is a curriculum section on Turkish carpets. (Available on loan from the PSAMES library. Also available for free download from The American Forum for Global Education <http://www.globaled.org/announcement050227.php>.)
2. Research the traditional motifs and designs found on Turkish carpets along with their meanings. Discuss as a class what these images and meanings reveal about Turkish culture. (The curriculum text mentioned above, *Who Are the Turks? A Manual for Teachers*, has an accessible section describing the carpet motifs, which could be turned into a handout.) Focus on the following questions:
  - a. What kinds of motifs / symbols do the carpets have?
  - b. What do the symbols mean?
  - c. What do the symbols say about the values the Turkish people adhere to?
  - d. Can you think of other arts that cultures use to tell stories about themselves? (Quilting, pottery, etc.)

3. Craft Project:

Have students create their own Turkish carpet out of construction paper using traditional Turkish motifs and designs. Ask students to write a paragraph to accompany the project explaining the symbols on their carpet and why they decided to use those images. Hang the craft projects around the classroom, so that students can share their carpets with each other. (See CSAMES Turkish Carpet Craft Project for more information.)