

History – Year 5 – Baghdad – Early Islam

Topic Overview

In this unit, we will learn how the Islamic empire grew in the Middle East and founded its capital Baghdad. We explore the amazing Islamic Golden Age and how Baghdad impacted the world around us and still does today.

Key Knowledge

The Islamic empire grew in the Middle East and became so large that it was decided that it needed a capital. It was called Baghdad and positioned there due to its central location. It was built by river Tigris to supply fresh water and act as a moat. It was round for defence with important buildings at its centre. They had a thirst for learning, so attracted great minds from all around. They traded goods and knowledge along what we now call the Silk Road and began an enormous library called the House of Wisdom. They encouraged studying and sharing knowledge as well as problem solving.

There were many amazing discoveries and firsts such as hospital, surgery, clocks, ideas about flight, the human body and many more.

As well as being a Muslim community, people with other beliefs lived there, including Jews and Christians.

A tribe called the Mongols attacked and ransacked the city in 1258 destroying everything including all of the writings. This meant that many of the discoveries became lost and forgotten.

Important Vocabulary

Dynasty	A succession of people from the same family.
Caliphate/ Islamic Empire	An Islamic state ruled by a caliph.
Caliph	A Muslim ruler who is regarded as the successor of Muhammad.
Founded	Established or originated.
Historical source	Any kind of evidence that helps us learn about the past.
Golden Age	A time of peace, prosperity and happiness.
Mosque	A place where Muslims worship.
Scholar	A highly educated person.
Prophet Muhammad	Muslims believe that Islam is a faith that has always existed and that it was gradually revealed to them by Muhammad, who was born in Mecca in AD 570.
Islam	A religion founded by Muhammad. People who practise Islam are called Muslims.
Silk Road	The route which traders used to carry goods; it was called silk road because it was first used to carry silk.
Trade	The action of buying, selling or exchanging goods to make a profit.
Legacy	The impact someone or something has on the future.
Mongols	A tribe of nomads who rode across central and northern Asia and destroyed Baghdad.

Assessment

I know why ancient Baghdad was so great and was known as the Golden Age.

I can name three features and buildings in ancient Baghdad.

I can briefly explain what took place in the House of Wisdom.

I can say how the Silk Road was important for ancient Baghdad's rise.

I know that the Mongols destroyed and ended Baghdad and the Abbasid caliphate.