

*Bay Area Teacher Development  
Collaborative  
and  
Town School for Boys*

**Teaching About the Arab World and Islam**

**a workshop presented by**

**Audrey Shabbas**

**Founder, Arab World and Islamic Resources**

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

Friday, February 27, 2004

8:30-3:30

Library, Town School for Boys

\$ 10.00 for Middle Eastern snacks and lunch

Please RSVP by January 25, 2004

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*"I've organized hundreds of professional development programs and none have come close to the quality, interest and professionalism that the Arab World Workshop exhibits."*

*-Mimi Stevens, Director, Teachers Center for Global Studies*

*"The handouts were wonderful! They were materials we could take back...and use immediately. I don't believe I have ever attended a conference that was as relevant and substantive."*

*"...teachers come to realize that the Western and Arab worlds are not the polar opposites they may appear, but indeed draw from many of the same historical, religious, scientific, technological, and cultural sources."*

*-Michael Fahy, Director, University of Michigan, Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies*

This workshop is underwritten by the *Middle East Policy Council* and is available to teachers groups of 30 or more at no cost.

## Workshop Description

Where is the Islamic world? Where is the Middle East? Where is the Arab world? What are the points of congruence, and where are these cultures in conflict? What are the basic beliefs and practices of Islam, and what is the shared history of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity? How are Arabs coping with the challenges of the present and the future? What stereotypes do Muslim and Middle Eastern children face in American schools? How can teachers be sensitive to students' needs and to their rich cultural and religious traditions? Finally, how can one teach about the Arab world and Islam in a way that engages minds and opens new paths of understanding between cultures?

This workshop will begin with a basic introduction to the Arab World and Islam. Through lecture, hands-on activities, audio-visual materials, and discussion Ms. Shabbas will address the cultural geography of the area, social and political dislocations, and the rich heritage and diversity, which characterize the Arab world. The religious teachings and practices of Islam, in the Middle East and America, will be given particular attention. Teachers will receive useful classroom resources for both historical and contemporary issues.

- I. Introduction
  - A. Cultural geography
  - B. Definition of terms
  - C. The three Abrahamic faiths
  
- II. Islam
  - A. Beliefs
  - B. Qur'an and Hadith
  - C. Islamic law
  
- III. Women and family in the Arab world
  - A. Discussion of the "veil"
  - B. Family values expressed through proverbs
  
- IV. Art and poetry connection
  
- V. Medieval banquet in the Alhambra Palace: Rethinking the Middle Ages
  - A. Historical and geographical overview
  - B. *Arab* civilization or *Islamic* civilization?
  - C. How to? Art/architecture, clothing, food, music, stories, games
  - D. Role-playing historic persons of the period

VI. Wrap-up: Questions and answers