



Activity One



THE KURDS

The **Kurdish** people live in the northeastern part of Iraq. This area is part of a region which is often referred to as **Kurdistan**, and comprises parts of Iraq, Turkey, Iran and Syria. Between four and six million Kurds live in Iraq.

During the presidency of Saddam Hussein the Kurds in Iraq were severely persecuted. Thousands were killed by Iraqi troops and many more were forced to leave the country and settle in other areas of the world. Now that Saddam Hussein is no longer in power the Kurds do have it much better in Iraq.

Your task is to prepare an **information sheet** on these fascinating people. You may wish to include information about things like:

- Language
- History
- Culture
- Music
- Religion
- Clothing
- Recreation
- Occupations



(You do not have to include information on all of these subtopics – only on those in which you are interested or about which you may have found some really interesting facts.)

Your information sheet should be one page in length. It should have a professional appearance and contain at least one appropriate picture.



Activity Two

Historical Sites of Iraq

The Middle East has many historical sites dating back thousands of years – sites that would delight the heart of any historian, archeologist, or relic hunter.

You are to select one historical site from this region and create a brochure designed to fascinate others interested in searching for lost treasures and artifacts.

You might consider one of the following sites:

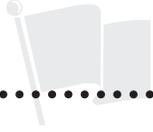


- The ancient city of **Arbil**
- The minaret in **Samarra**
- **Karbala** (i.e. The tomb of Imam al-Hussein Bnu Ali Bnu Abi Talib)
- The Abbasid Fortress of **al-Ukhaidar**
- The Mosque of **Abu Dalaf**
- The ancient city of **Babylon**
- The ancient city of **Ninevah**

You may choose one of the sites above or another appropriate historical site for investigation (historians estimate that there are more than 25,000 such sites in Iraq).

Your brochure should be helpful to any traveler going to Iraq on an historical quest or an archaeological dig. The brochure should include a summary of the historical importance of the site, what the site presently features, how accessible it is to tourists, admission charges, where it is located in Iraq, etc.

It might be helpful to examine a sampling of brochures before beginning this project. Be sure to make your final product professional-looking and attractive, and to include relevant pictures.



Activity Three



The Iraq-Iran War

You can no more win a war than you can win an earthquake.
Jeannette Rankin (1880 - 1973)

The Iran-Iraq War was one of the bloodiest, most costly wars of the last century. It lasted for eight years, longer than the Second World War. Estimates of those killed in the war range from 500,000 to more than 1 million. Whole cities were destroyed and thousands of civilians were killed as well. The financial cost is estimated at a minimum of \$200 billion. Still, most Americans know little about this war.

What caused these two neighboring countries to hate each other so much that they would go to war year after year, with the goal of wiping the other country off the face of the earth?

Your task is to prepare a one page report summarizing this conflict. You may wish to look into the following research subtopics:



Part of the Hands of Victory monument Saddam Hussein ordered built following the Iran-Iraq War

- Background and causes of the war
- Timeline (main events)
- Foreign support given to Iran and Iraq
- Military strength of both sides
- Casualties
- The peace process

You might conclude your report by summarizing your own reaction to this conflict.

NAME: _____



Activity Four



Iraqi Folktales

This activity can be done individually or in small groups.

Stories and folktales have been a part of the culture of the people living in this part of the world for countless generations. Folktales were an important source of entertainment for the people, as well as a way of bonding the community of a region together around a common image of life that they all shared. Folktales reinforced the values of society, reminding people of what was important to their ancestors.



Your task is to research an Iraqi folktale (in your school library or on the internet) and to represent it in a project of about a page in length. An accompanying drawing or other visual instrument could be very effective to your presentation. As an extension to this activity you might read your folktale to the class or even act it out as a Readers' Theater exercise. If you are unable to find an Iraqi folktale, try to find one from elsewhere in the Middle East.

Here are a few Iraqi folktales:

- "The Enchanted Storks"
- "The Prince's Carpet"
- "Alexander the Great and the Jewish Barber"
- "The Little Red Fish and the Clog of Gold" (aka "The Golden Sandal")
- "Seven Sons and Seven Daughters"
- "The Sparrow and His Wife"
- "The Fish That Laughed"



Activity Five

Searching for Peace

Although the war in Iraq which began in 2003 is “officially” over, men and women – both Iraqis and coalition troops – continue to suffer and die. The peace process has been a real struggle in this troubled, war-torn nation.

The presence of the United States and other coalition nations in Iraq has become an increasingly sore point among many people at home in the US and in other countries around the world. Demonstrations and protests have been mounted on a regular basis to bring troops home and in hopes of bringing stability to Iraq.

A number of peace organizations and humanitarian agencies exist to promote peace and to help people in distress. Several have been operating in Iraq, trying to ease the burden of suffering for the people there.

Some of these organizations include:

- Coalition for World Peace
- Physicians for Peace
- Mennonite Central Committee
- American Red Cross

Investigate one of the peace or humanitarian organizations listed above, or one of your own choosing. What role has it played in helping to bring peace and stability to Iraq during the last few years?

Write a one-page report on the activities of this organization, their goals and accomplishments, especially with regard to Iraq. Your conclusion should state your own opinion about the effectiveness of this organization in Iraq.

Alternative Activity: After researching one or more peace or humanitarian organizations involved in Iraq, create your own organization to be used for this purpose. What would be its goals and specific strategies to bring peace and stability to Iraq? Be sure to include enough detail so that the reader can get a clear picture of your plans.





Activity Six

Be A Movie Critic

This activity can be done individually or in small groups.

Many great movies and television programs have been made over the years which are set in times of war – from classics like **Ben Hur** (which takes place 2,000 years ago) to ones which are set during the recent wars in the Middle East.

The best of these movies are perhaps those that force the viewer to take a closer look at his/her own self, or at how conflict and war are commonly viewed. Some really good movies can even make you see the point of view of people on the other side. A good movie, like a good book, draws you right into the lives of the people in the story.

This is your opportunity to be a movie critic. View one of the war movies listed below (or one approved by your teacher). While watching the movie consider the following:

- The emotions of the main character during the movie – do his/her war experiences change him/her. If so, how?
- What experiences had the biggest impact on the character? Why?
- Does the main character grow/mature through his/her experiences?
- What does the main character come to realize about him/herself that he/she didn't realize before?

Your review should be about a page in length. It should review the basic plot of the movie (without giving away the ending), and it should include your own opinion of the movie (good, bad, or mixed).

WAR MOVIES

- Lawrence of Arabia
- Sergeant York
- All Quiet on the Western Front
- Red Badge of Courage
- Paths of Glory