



Early Islamic Civilization



Modern
Iraq
(Asia)

Timeline

571	610	630	632	692	762	810	900	950	1258
Muhammed (pbuh) born in Mecca	Revelations of the Qu'ran – Islam begins	Mecca (Saudi Arabia) becomes centre of Islam	Muhammed (pbuh) dies. Abu Bakr 1st Caliph	The Dome of the Rock completed in Jerusalem	Baghdad (The Round City) built	Baghdad is centre of education, science and maths	Paper arrives from China	The decline of the Abbasid caliphate	Baghdad destroyed by Mongols

Key Vocabulary

Caliph	The chief Muslim civil and religious leader, regarded as the successor of Muhammed.
Golden Age	From 762-1258 when art, architecture, science, philosophy and Islamic culture flourished.
House of Wisdom	A huge library attracting thinkers from around the world who translated texts into Arabic.
mosque	A place of worship for Muslims. The first mosque was considered to be built in Ka'bah, Mecca.
Qur'an	The central religious text of Islam (the recitation) believed to be the revelations from God.
rebab	A type of bowed string instrument spread via Islamic trade routes. Known as the 'spike fiddle'.
Shiite	A branch of Islam that believes Muhammad's (pbuh) son-in-law, Ali, was his rightful successor.
Sunni	A branch of Islam that believe Abu Bakr, a friend of the prophet was his rightful successor.
watermill	Hydro, tidal and wind power used to power factories and mills, including the use of dams.
zamr	A wind instrument, relative of the oboe, used as folk music and then in the military.

Literacy was highly valued with people expected to learn to read Arabic so they could understand the teachings of the Qur'an. The spread of literacy and paper making meant that new ideas could reach a wider audience. When the Mongols destroyed the city of Baghdad, they threw so many manuscripts into the Tigris that its waters were said to have run black with ink!

General Knowledge

Baghdad

'The Round City' was built as two large semicircles with a mosque at the centre and housed the caliph's palace, libraries, government and military buildings. It also contained parks, gardens, squares and wide avenues. Between the years 900-1200, the population was somewhere between 1.2-2million people! Known as 'The Golden Age' it was filled with a range ethnic and religious communities such as Christians, Jews, Gnostics and Zoroastrians.

Mathematics

Islamic scholars and inventors adopted the Hindi symbol for zero and style of numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.) which we still use today. This enabled them to explore and develop new areas of mathematics such as algebra, algorithms and the tessellation of shapes.

Trade

The bustling markets and shops around the mosque contained goods from everywhere due to Baghdad's position on the 'Silk Road' to the far-east. Connected to this was the presence of traders from all across the known world who flocked to Baghdad to sell their wares.

Famous Figures

Muhammad (pbuh) (571-632)

The founder of Islam. According to the Islamic doctrine, he was a prophet sent to present and confirm the teachings of preached previously by Adam, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and other prophets.

Abu Bakr (573-634)

Companion and father-in-law (through his daughter Aisha) of the prophet Muhammad (pbuh). He became the first Muslim Caliph after the prophet's death.

Haroun al-Rashid (766-809)

Caliph from 786-809 who defeated the Byzantines in battle (806). He made links with European Empires such as Charlemagne in France.

Al-Khwarizmi (c780-850)

A mathematician, astronomer and scientist who provided the foundations of algebra and other concepts.

Caliph Abbas (c854-902)

First Abbasid Caliph who moved Abbasid capital from Kufa to Baghdad.