

Ancient Voices

Worksheet for Arabic Classes and
Other Languages of the Muslim World



Historical Figures of the Islamic Golden Age

Select one of the characters below and on the back of this handout draw your design for a mask, incorporating into the mask design a few of the symbols and emblems pertaining to your chosen character.

Name	Symbols and Emblems, Identifying Characteristics
SALAH AD-DIN YUSUF IBN AYYUB	A Kurdish Muslim better known in the Western world as Saladin, he became the first Sultan of Egypt and Syria and founder of the Ayyubid dynasty. During the Crusades he led the Muslim and Arab opposition, winning the respect of many European leaders, including Richard the Lionheart. The sterling reputation he maintained throughout the conflict led Saladin to become a potent symbol of the principles of knightly chivalry.
ABU ABDALLAH MUHAMMAD IBN MUSA AL- KHWARIZMI	12th Century mathematician, astronomer and geographer extraordinaire, he was a scholar in the House of Wisdom in Baghdad. His work on the Indian numerals introduced the positional decimal system to the Western world. "Algebra" is derived from <i>al-jabr</i> , one of the two operations he used to solve quadratic equations. <i>Algorism</i> and <i>algorithm</i> stem from <i>Algoritmi</i> , the Latin form of his name. His symbols include the mathematical equations for which he is famous.
ABU MUHAMMAD JABIR IBN AFLAH	12th century Muslim mathematician and astronomer from Seville who was widely known by his Latinized name, Geber. His work, <i>Islah al-Magisti</i> , profoundly influenced early Islamic, Jewish and Christian astronomers. Jabir inspired the trigonometry of Nicholas Copernicus, which was widely adopted in 16th century Europe. He invented an observational instrument called the torquetum, a mechanical device to transform between spherical coordinate systems, closely resembling an analogue computer.
ABU ALI AL- HUSAYN IBN ABD ALLAH IBN SINA	Known by his Latin name, Avicenna, he wrote almost 450 treatises on a variety of subjects, including <i>The Book of Healing</i> and <i>The Canon of Medicine</i> , which was a standard medical text at many medieval universities. He is regarded as the most famous and influential polymath of the Islamic Golden Age.
FATIMA AL-FIHRIS XVI	Powdered wig with tight curls at side of head, triangular hat with feathers decorated with fleur de lis, a four-pointed, pommel-pointed star medallion; crown, scepter; the Phrygian "red cap" or "bonnet rouge," potent symbol of the French Revolution—when the king was forced to sign the constitution, popular prints were doctored to show Louis wearing it.
NANA ASMA'U	Princess, poet, teacher and daughter of the founder of the Sokoto Caliphate, Usman dan Fodio. She was an exceptionally prolific writer and leading scholar in Western Africa. Though born in the 18th century, she benefited greatly from the legacy of educational opportunity afforded women during the Islamic Golden Age.