

Name: _____

Date: _____

MANY THINGS IN COMMON

The Middle East and North Africa are two regions that are often grouped together because they have many things in common. Islam is the dominant religion of the area and almost everyone speaks Arabic. Most of the Middle East and North Africa is composed of desert where very little rain falls. There are, however, many exceptions:



- Most Iranians speak a Persian language called Farsi. Until 1935, Iran was known as Persia, a culture that has existed for thousands of years.
- Most people in Turkey are Muslims but speak Turkish rather than Arabic. The Turks originally came from the land northwest of India.

- Lebanon includes a significant Christian minority. Lebanon once had a Christian majority, but Muslims now outnumber Christians because Muslims have tended to have more children. Until recently, most Arabs living in the United States have been Lebanese.



- Most people in Israel speak Hebrew and practice Judaism. After World War II ended, the United Nations created Israel as a homeland for Jews.
- About twenty-five million Kurds live in the mountains between Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. The Kurds are Muslims, but they have the own language and culture. Many Kurds want to keep their traditional lifestyle and resist assimilating into the population of their host nations.
- A minority of the people of Morocco and Algeria speak Berber languages. The Berbers are the descendants of the people who lived in North Africa before the Arab invasion. The Berber language and traditions are more common in the isolated places of North Africa such as mountains and deserts. Most Berbers today are Arabic-speaking Muslims.

Many of the nations of the Middle East and North Africa were once controlled by European nations. As a result, English, French and Italian are often spoken in the region.

Answer in a complete sentences

1. What do most people of the Middle East and North Africa have in common?

2. Who are the Berbers?

*3. List six languages spoken in the Middle East and North Africa. Try to put them in order from your estimate the most to the least common. (You will not need to use outside reference materials to answer this question. Your best guess is acceptable).

*4. What do the Berbers, Kurds, Iranians, and Turks all have in common beside the fact that they live in the same region?

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Fill in the Blanks

The Middle E_____ and N_____ Africa are often grouped together because the two regions, while spread across two *c_____, have many things in c_____. Most of the people of the region are *M_____ who speak A_____, and most of the land in the region is very *d_____.

There are some exceptions to this generalization, and those exceptions have led to many conflicts in the region. The people of Iran practice *I_____, but most Iranians are the descendants of the Persians, a c_____ that has existed in the region for thousands of years. Many Iranians speak *A_____ because Arabic is the l_____ of the Q_____, but in everyday life, most Iranians speak F_____. The Turks originally came from the land northwest of I_____. The Turks controlled almost all of the Middle East until World War I. Today people in the modern nation of Turkey generally speak T_____. The K_____ live in the m_____ between I_____, Iraq, S_____, and T_____. The Kurds have tried to keep their traditional *c__lt__r__, but particularly in T_____ and I_____, governments have attempted to a_____ the K_____ into the *l_____l populations. The B_____ lived in N_____ Africa before the A_____ invasion. Unlike the K_____, they slowly began to a_____ and lose their traditional c_____. Almost all of the Berbers practice *I_____. The Berber language is still spoken in isolated regions of M__r__c__ and other North A_____ nations.

Not all Muslims are A_____, and not all Arabs are M_____. Lebanon had been home to Arab C__r__s__i__ns for many years. Today more than one-t_____ of the Lebanese people are Christians, but M_____ now outnumber the Christians because Muslims have had a higher *b_____ rate than Christians for several *g__n__r__t__ns.

Many J_____ people returned to their traditional homeland on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea when the United Nations created the modern nation of I_____ in 1948. H_____ is I_____’s national language, but *A_____, English, and other language are also common in Israel. Most of the Middle East and North Africa was once controlled by outside powers, so other languages are still spoken. English, F_____, and I_____ are languages that are often heard *h_____ in the region.

Answer in a complete sentences

*5. Most of the people of the Middle East and North Africa are Muslims who speak Arabic. Write a paragraph that describes some exceptions to this generalization. Your paragraph must include a topic sentence, at least four support sentences, and a conclusion that restates, but does not repeat the topic sentence.

