

Crusades Primary Source Quest – Lesson Plan
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Introduction

In this lesson, students will assess the nature of Christian-Muslim interaction during the Crusades by examining multiple accounts by individuals who participated in or were observers of the Crusades. In this activity, students pretend that they are researchers who have discovered new primary sources related to the Crusades. These documents cover a range of topics from conflict to religion to everyday life. The purpose of this exercise is to have students explore the meaning of the Crusades beyond the concept of holy war. This exercise also mimics, to a certain extent, the process that historians go through when conducting archival research.

Grade Level: 11-12

Relevant Topics/Course Units: Crusades, Medieval Europe, Expansion of Islam, Byzantine Empire

Duration of activity: 2 classes of 45-55 minutes each

Content Objectives:

- To understand the origins of the Crusading movement
- To explain how the motives of the Crusaders changed over time
- To analyze Christian and Muslim perspectives on the Crusades
- To understand specific aspects of Christian-Muslim relations during the broad period of the Crusades and understand how these relationships changed over time

Skill Objectives:

- To develop proficiency in constructing questions about textual sources
- To develop proficiency in placing details of primary sources in specific historical context
- To develop proficiency in assessing bias and limitations in primary sources
- To develop proficiency in identifying intended purpose and intended audience of primary sources
- To encourage collaborative discussion

Instructions: see Crusades Primary Source Quest Student Handouts

Additional Resources for students and teachers:

- E. L. Skip Knox, "History of the Crusades,"
<http://europeanhistory.boisestate.edu/crusades/classroom.shtml>
- Richard Abels, "Timeline for the Crusades and the Christian Holy War,"
http://usna.edu/Users/history/abels/hh315/crusades_timeline.htm
- Jay Rubenstein, ed., *The First Crusade: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015).
- Jonathan Riley Smith, *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades* (Oxford 2001).
- Norman Cantor, Chapter 13 "The First Crusade and After," in *The Civilization of the Middle Ages* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1994).

Crusades Primary Source Quest Answer Key

Document A: Nicetas Choniates (1155-1215), Byzantine historian writing about the crusaders' sack of Constantinople

Text taken from <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/choniates1.asp>

Document B: Usamah ibn Munquidh, *Memoirs of an Arab-Syrian Gentleman* (his autobiography)

Text taken from <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/Usamah2.asp>

Document C: Aymeric, Patriarch of Antioch, letter to King Louis VII of France

Text taken from <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/aymeric1164.asp>

Document D: Fulcher of Chartres, "Latins in the East"

Text taken from <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/fulk3.asp>

Document E: Account of the Siege of Jerusalem (1099) by Fulcher of Chartres.

Text taken from <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/fulk2.asp>