

The Award Winning

Jimmy Carter Library & Museum

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Curriculum Guide: The President's Travels



Unit 11 of 19:

Two White Houses – The Iran Hostage Crisis

Two White Houses



Shiite Islam

Where is Shia Islam concentrated and how does that affect the region?

The Iran Hostage Crisis

How did the US involvement in Iran and treatment of the Shah lead to difficulties? What was the response of President Carter and the United States to the Hostage crisis?

Background information for understanding the Iranian Revolution

Essential Question: What is the difference between Sunni and Shia Islam?

1. Have students research the religion of Islam and the two major branches of Islam: Sunni and Shiite.

2. Students should work with a partner to create a Venn diagram noting the similarities and differences between the two branches of the religion.

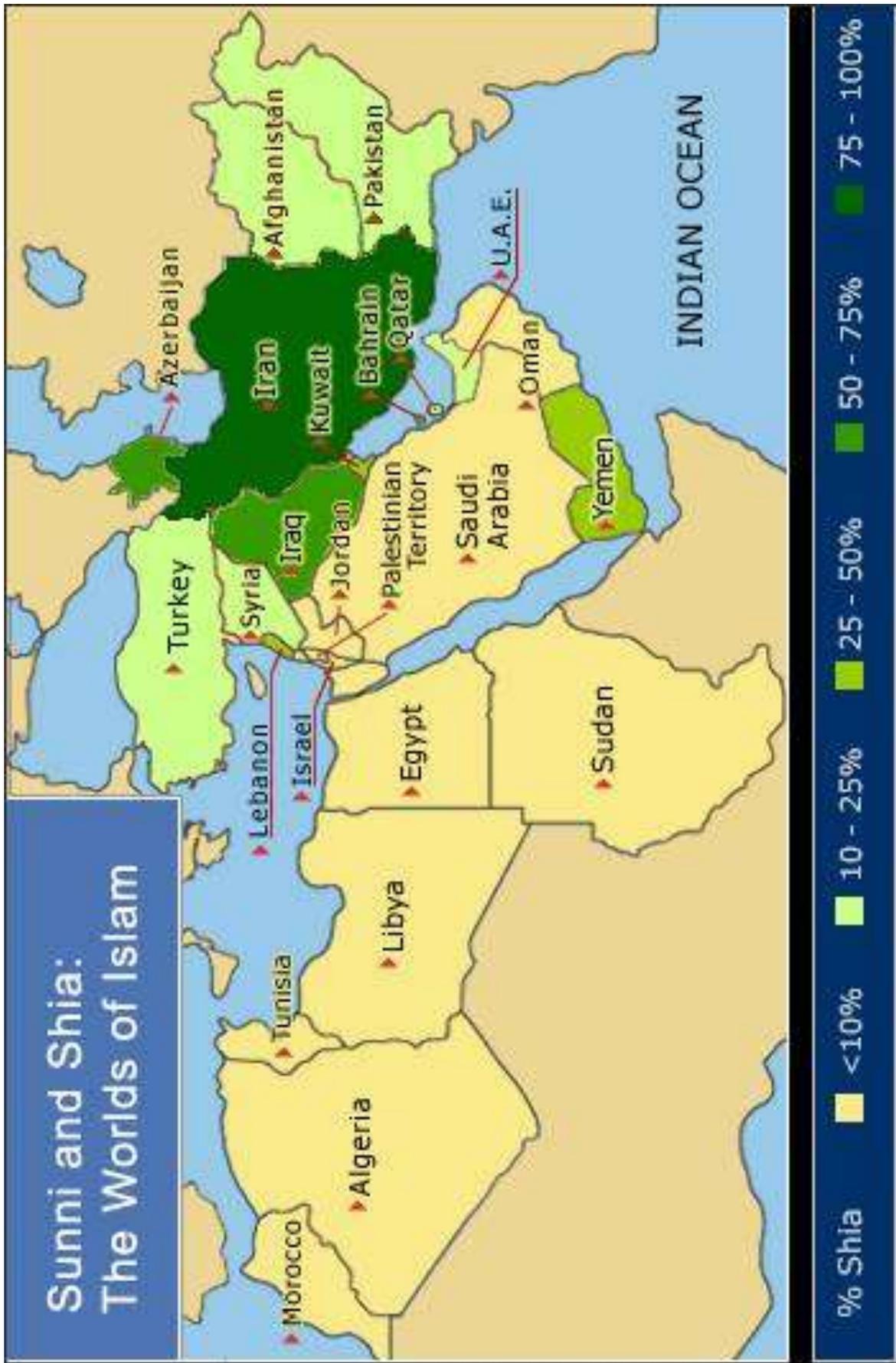
3. Finally, the teacher can lead a class discussion about the similarities and differences between the two branches.

4. Looking at a map of Islam, students will observe the spatial distribution of the different branches of Islam on a map. Students can complete the Map Analysis worksheet found on page X for further understanding.



Map Data Sources: CIA World Factbook; Adherents.com

5. Have students discuss as a class the possible implications of the religious concentrations around the world and in Southwest Asia. Also, discuss the impact of religion on culture and the political structure of the regions.



The map and more information about the Sunni and Shia percentages for countries in the map can be found at this website, <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/pilgrimage-to-karbala/sunni-and-shia-the-worlds-of-islam/1737/>



The Iranian Revolution and Hostage Crisis

On November 4, 1979, Iranian militants stormed the United States Embassy in Tehran and took approximately seventy Americans captive. This terrorist act triggered the most profound crisis of the Carter presidency and began a personal ordeal for Jimmy Carter and the American people that lasted 444 days.

President Carter committed himself to the safe return of the hostages while protecting America's interests and prestige. He pursued a policy of restraint that put a higher value on the lives of the hostages than on American retaliatory power or protecting his own political future.

The toll of patient diplomacy was great, but President Carter's actions brought freedom for the hostages with America's honor preserved.

Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, Shah of Iran, began his reign in 1941, succeeding his father, Reza Khan, to the throne. In a 1953 power struggle with his prime minister, the Shah gained American support to prevent nationalization of Iran's oil industry. In return for assuring the U.S. a steady supply of oil, the Shah received economic and military aid from eight American presidents.

Early in the 1960s, the Shah announced social and economic reforms but refused to grant broad political freedom. Iranian nationalists condemned his U.S. supported regime and his "westernizing" of Iran. During rioting in 1963, the Shah cracked down, suppressing his opposition. Among those arrested and exiled was a popular religious nationalist and bitter foe of the United States, the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

Between 1963 and 1979, the Shah spent billions of oil dollars on military weapons. The real price of military strength was the loss of popular support. Unable to sustain economic progress and unwilling to expand democratic freedoms, the Shah's regime collapsed in revolution. On January 16, 1979, the Shah fled Iran, never to return.

The exiled Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Tehran in February 1979 and whipped popular discontent into rabid anti-Americanism. When the Shah came to America for cancer treatment in October, the Ayatollah incited Iranian militants to attack the U.S. On November 4, the American Embassy in Tehran was overrun and its employees taken captive. The hostage crisis had begun.



Examining Primary Documents

How does President Carter respond to the Iranian Revolution and Hostage Crisis in the early days?

Student Activities

Students will interact with primary documents to learn the response of the Carter Administration during the early days of the Iranian Hostage Crisis. The following documents should be printed and given to students in addition to a written document analysis worksheet for each document.

Students will individually or in pairs complete the written document analysis worksheet for each primary document. Then, the teacher should lead a class discussion of the issues that President Carter faced and the responses he took or could have taken. After the class discussion, students will write an essay response describing President

Carter's early response to the Iranian Revolution and Hostage Crisis and how the primary documents give insight into the workings of the Executive office during a crisis?

1. Memo to President from David Aaron
2. Letter to President from American Foreign Service President Kenneth Bleakley
3. Letter to Ayatollah Khomeini from President Carter
4. Memo from Bob Beckel to Ham Jordan
5. An Executive Order from President Carter blocking Iranian Government property

Written Document Analysis Worksheet

1.	<p>TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Check one):</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/> Newspaper</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Map</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Advertisement</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/> Letter</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Telegram</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Congressional Record</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/> Patent</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Press Release</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Census Report</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/> Memorandum</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Report</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Other</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="radio"/> Newspaper	<input type="radio"/> Map	<input type="radio"/> Advertisement	<input type="radio"/> Letter	<input type="radio"/> Telegram	<input type="radio"/> Congressional Record	<input type="radio"/> Patent	<input type="radio"/> Press Release	<input type="radio"/> Census Report	<input type="radio"/> Memorandum	<input type="radio"/> Report	<input type="radio"/> Other
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3.	DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT:												
4.	<p>AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT:</p> <p>POSITION (TITLE):</p>												
5.	FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN?												
6.	<p>DOCUMENT INFORMATION (There are many possible ways to answer A-E.)</p> <p>A. List three things the author said that you think are important:</p> <p>B. Why do you think this document was written?</p> <p>C. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? Quote from the document.</p> <p>D. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written.</p> <p>E. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document:</p>												

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTONOctober 31, 1979 C

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: DAVID AARON *DA*
SUBJECT: Iran Demonstrations

Thursday is a religious holiday in Tehran, and the authorities have called for a massive religious/political demonstration to protest U.S. policy and the presence of the Shah in the United States. Police in Tehran anticipate up to one million demonstrators. The program calls for public prayers and a rally in the working class district in South Tehran, followed by a march into town. It appears that the rally and march will terminate at some distance from the U.S. Embassy, but the chances of demonstrations or an attack there are considerable.

We have reviewed contingency plans for protection of the embassy, and we are confident that the personnel at the Chancery building itself will be safe even in the event of a concerted attack. The security of the building has been greatly reinforced since February and is nearly impregnable short of a heavy weapons attack. The Iranian police have promised to provide security for the compound. Of possibly greater concern are American civilians in Tehran (about 700) at hotels and the like if mobs begin rioting. We will be monitoring the situation on a real-time basis from the State Department Operations Center throughout the night.

AMERICAN
FOREIGN SERVICE
ASSOCIATION



2101 E Street, Northwest

Washington, D. C. 20037 • 338-4045

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November 5, 1979

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

With respect to the events now unfolding in Iran, The American Foreign Service Association wishes to emphasize that the protection of the lives and safety of the individual Americans involved must remain the paramount concern of the United States Government. We appreciate and support the steps already taken in this regard. Mindful of the fatal events which followed Washington statements on the hostages in Khartoum in 1973, we commend the prudence with which the Administration is refraining from public statements which could imperil the precarious position in which employees in the Foreign Service find themselves.

Sincerely yours,

Kenneth W. Bleakley
President

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 6, 1979

Dear Ayatollah Khomeini:

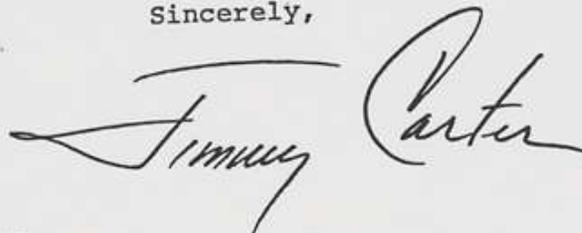
Based on the willingness of the Revolutionary Council to receive them, I am asking two distinguished Americans, Mr. Ramsey Clark and Mr. William G. Miller, to carry this letter to you and to discuss with you and your designees the situation in Tehran and the full range of current issues between the U.S. and Iran.

In the name of the American people, I ask that you release unharmed all Americans presently detained in Iran and those held with them and allow them to leave your country safely and without delay. I ask you to recognize the compelling humanitarian reasons, firmly based in international law, for doing so.

I have asked both men to meet with you and to hear from you your perspective on events in Iran and the problems which have arisen between our two countries. The people of the United States desire to have relations with Iran based upon equality, mutual respect, and friendship.

They will report to me immediately upon their return.

Sincerely,



His Excellency
Ayatollah Khomeini
Qom, Iran

DECLASSIFIED
NSC 4/22/85 re MC-84-10
BY ATE NARS. DATE 4/29/85

C

TO: HAM JORDAN
FROM: BOB BECKEL
RE: CONGRESSIONAL REACTION IRAN
DATE: NOVEMBER 8, 1979

We have just returned from briefing over 200 members of the House on the Iranian situation. The following observations are important for your attention.

1. There is an extraordinary amount of hostility running through the Congress toward the Iranian students in the United States—from left to right, Democrat to Republican. There is a demand that we do something about the students, e.g. revoke all visas, freeze all assets, put them under arrest. This probably comes more from frustration over the lack of options available to us in dealing with the situation in Iran, but it is nonetheless real and potent. Specifically, we are encouraged almost unanimously to stop all demonstrations by Iranian students and to use our influence with local governments to refuse permits across the country.
2. Tom Harkin on the left and Bob Dornan on the right have joined forces to call for the ouster of the Shah. They are suggesting that we bent to political pressure from Kissinger and Rockefeller and as a result endangered American citizens in Iran. For the most part however, moderate voices in both the Republican and Democratic ranks support our policy of not relinquishing the Shah. We can expect, however, Dornan and Harkin to be more vocal than our supporters.
3. Although the issue was not raised during the briefing, we have heard a significant amount of comment on the President's trip to Canada. These comments, unanimously from our friends, urge the President not to go to Canada until the Iranian crisis is over. I am sure we would hear a good deal more if more members were focusing on the fact that he is taking the trip at all. Should he decide to go, I am convinced that there will be an uproar on the Hill.

12H
2mm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 14, 1979

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

EXECUTIVE ORDER

BLOCKING IRANIAN GOVERNMENT PROPERTY

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States including the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C.A. sec. 1701 et seq., the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. sec. 1601 et seq., and 3 U.S.C. sec. 301,

I, Jimmy Carter, President of the United States, find that the situation in Iran constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy and economy of the United States and hereby declare a national emergency to deal with that threat.

I hereby order blocked all property and interests in property of the Government of Iran, its instrumentalities and controlled entities and the Central Bank of Iran which are or become subject to the jurisdiction of the United States or which are in or come within the possession or control of persons subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

The Secretary of the Treasury is authorized to employ all powers granted to me by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act to carry out the provisions of this order.

This order is effective immediately and shall be transmitted to the Congress and published in the Federal Register.

JIMMY CARTER

THE WHITE HOUSE,

November 14, 1979.

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Georgia Performance Standards

For further information and research on Iran there are some great resources at the following websites:

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html>

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/indepth_coverage/middle_east/iran/structure.html

Grades Nine – Twelve | SSUSH25 (C.)

The student will describe changes in national politics since 1968.

- a. Explain the Carter administration's efforts in the Middle East; include the Camp David Accords, his response to the 1979 Iranian Revolution, and the Iranian hostage crisis.

SSWG3 The student will describe the interaction of physical and human systems that have shaped contemporary North Africa/Southwest Asia.

- e. Explain the impact of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam on the development of the region's culture.
- g. Describe the major ethnic and cultural groups in North Africa/Southwest Asia; include major customs and traditions.

SS7CG5 The student will explain the structures of the national governments of Southwest Asia (Middle East).

- a. Compare the parliamentary democracy of the State of Israel, the monarchy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the theocracy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, distinguishing the form of leadership and the role of the citizen in terms of voting rights and personal freedoms.

SS7G8 The student will describe the diverse cultures of the people who live in Southwest Asia (Middle East).

- a. Explain the differences between an ethnic group and a religious group.
- b. Explain the diversity of religions within the Arabs, Persians, and Kurds.
- c. Compare and contrast the prominent religions in Southwest Asia (Middle East): Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.
- d. Explain the reason for the division between Sunni and Shia Muslims.

SS7G5 The student will locate selected features in Southwestern Asia (Middle East).

- a. Locate on a world and regional political-physical map: Euphrates River, Jordan River, Tigris River, Suez Canal, Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, Arabian Sea, Red Sea, and Gaza Strip.
- b. Locate on a world and regional political-physical map the nations of Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.

Map Analysis Worksheet

1.	<p>TYPE OF MAP (Check one):</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <input type="radio"/> Raised Relief map <input type="radio"/> Topographic map <input type="radio"/> Political map <input type="radio"/> Contour-line map <input type="radio"/> Natural resource map <input type="radio"/> Military map </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <input type="radio"/> Bird's-eye map <input type="radio"/> Artifact map <input type="radio"/> Satellite photograph/mosaic <input type="radio"/> Pictograph <input type="radio"/> Weather map <input type="radio"/> Other </td> </tr> </table>	<input type="radio"/> Raised Relief map <input type="radio"/> Topographic map <input type="radio"/> Political map <input type="radio"/> Contour-line map <input type="radio"/> Natural resource map <input type="radio"/> Military map	<input type="radio"/> Bird's-eye map <input type="radio"/> Artifact map <input type="radio"/> Satellite photograph/mosaic <input type="radio"/> Pictograph <input type="radio"/> Weather map <input type="radio"/> Other
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3.	<p>DATE OF MAP:</p> <p>_____</p>		
4.	<p>CREATOR OF THE MAP:</p> <p>_____</p>		
5.	<p>WHERE WAS THE MAP PRODUCED?</p> <p>_____</p>		
6.	<p>MAP INFORMATION</p> <p>A. List three things in this map that you think are important.</p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>B. Why do you think this map was drawn?</p> <p>C. What evidence in the map suggests why it was drawn?</p> <p>D. What information does this map add to the textbook's account of this event?</p> <p>E. Does the information in this map support or contradict information that you have read about this event? Explain.</p> <p>F. Write a question to the mapmaker that is left unanswered by this map.</p>		