

Unit Guide

Christian Capitals and Islamic Pillars: Islamic Identity in Spanish Architecture

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Spain's architectural history is just as layered as its cultural history. This unit aims to discuss the evolving representation of Islamic Spain through its architecture. This discussion begins with the exploration of Islamic culture generally, its presence in Spain, and inevitably expands to question the way student lives and their communities are represented in their buildings. This unit will utilize architecture in one of Spain's most significant edifices, the Great Mosque of Córdoba (La Gran Mezquita de Córdoba), as a means of exemplifying what this cultural evolution looks like. Students will develop an understanding of how building design and ornamentation reflect the perspectives and practical needs of the community that utilizes each building. Patterning how buildings evolve in relation to the changing people who utilize them, students will analyze the cultural evolution of the buildings in their own towns and cities.