

Bridging History: LEARNING PLAN/UNIT TWO, *Connections* 6 Oct – 7 Nov

Theme 5, Transmission of Traditions This theme explores the mechanisms by which traditions were transmitted and preserved in Islamic Spain, Confucian Korea, and West Africa between 500 and 1500 CE. The *identities of peoples* on the Iberian and Korean peninsulas were shaped by imported religious traditions (Islam in Spain and Buddhism in Korea). Institutions such as the Arabic translation school in Toledo and the Korean “Hall of Assembled Worthies” transmitted traditions— Greek and Arab medicines, mathematics, science, and philosophy at Toledo, and Chinese learning at the Korean court—across cultures that had profound impacts on world history. The *technologies that supported transmission*— paper and printing, in particular—had themselves been transmitted across cultures. In West Africa, oral tradition and musical performance were the primary ways that culture was transmitted over time, especially through specially trained historian/storytellers called “griots.” Whether transmitted through print or oral tradition, however, all traditions are *selectively re-created*. Moreover, the transmission of tradition is linked to the questions each generation asks about the past—questions that are considered relevant to each generation’s own times.

Big Ideas: **1.** When traditions are preserved, retold, and transmitted within cultures over time; they help integrate peoples through a sense of *shared identity*. **2.** When traditions are transmitted across cultural boundaries, they can contribute to an increased sense of difference by *introducing new religions, customs, and cultures*. **3.** Cultural traditions can be *transmitted in many ways* over time and across space. Religion, language, oral tradition, material culture, dance, and music are just some of the ways traditions can be transmitted. **4.** Technologies like *writing, printing, and the production of paper* can play critical roles in transmitting traditions to new social groups and cultures. **5.** All agents of cultural transmission *select and shape the content* of the traditions they transmit.

Questions To Consider: **1.** What are the means by which cultures preserve and transmit traditions? **2.** In what ways can *technology* aid the transmission of tradition? **3.** What kinds of *historical forces* propelled Islamic, Chinese, and Mande cultures to spread across Eurasia and Africa? **4.** How do traditions *interact with cultures* into which they are introduced?

Topic	Assignment	Objective(s)
Transmission of Tradition	Watch, study & take notes on each of the three video segments.	<p><i>Identify</i> the institutions and other means by which cultures preserve and transmit traditions.</p> <p><i>Recognize</i> the role that the audience plays in the process of preserving traditions.</p> <p><i>Investigate</i> the role that technology plays in the transmission of traditions.</p>
Transmitting Traditions Islamic Spain	Read and research the handout	<i>Analyze</i> (break down) the traditions and the ways they were transmitted from Islamic culture to Spain.
Transmitting Traditions China/Korea	Read and research the handout	<i>Analyze</i> (break down) the traditions and the ways they were transmitted from Chinese culture to Korea.