**Title of Lesson**: Karbala and the Sunni-Shia Split

*(OH SSG7 Standard #5)*

**Grade Level**: 7

**Origins Article:** Tradition vs. Charisma: The Sunni Shi’i Divide in the Muslim World,

by Stephen Dale

<https://origins.osu.edu/article/tradition-vs-charisma-sunni-shii-divide-muslim-world>

**Author of Lesson:** Thomas Nitz

**Description:**

This lesson plan covers the split between Shia and Sunni Islam, focusing on the initial causes of the divide. The Origins article on this topic covers the topic in light of events in the early 21st century, and is written at a level which is not easily comprehensible to 7th graders. I decided to create this lesson plan in order to help students learn the core content of the article, especially as it pertains to the content area of 7th grade social studies. In this grade, students learn about the transition from antiquity to the medieval period. As the article mentions, few Americans understand the roots of sectarian violence in the Middle East. In order to correct this, as well as to present a less binary view of the Crusades which would shake the region in the Middle Ages, I decided to bring this topic into focus. To do this, students first watch a video about the Battle of Karbala. Students briefly discuss the events portrayed, and consider how the perspective of those who made the video informs its content. After, the students complete a short session defining the key vocabulary terms of the lesson. These are put to use in the main activity of the lesson, a Gallery Walk. In this activity, students view a variety of documents which explain the split in different ways – as a political, religious, cultural, and semantic one. Students fill in a worksheet which asks them questions about those differences as they move through the gallery. Students then discuss the day’s compelling question: “Why did the religious difference between Sunni and Shia Muslims turn into a political difference?” Before departing, they write down one difference they learned between Shia and Sunni Islam.

**Instructional Strategies:**

* Gallery Walk

**Key Words:**

*(Islam, Religion, Middle East, Middle Ages)*

**Materials:**

* Muharram 2019: History of The Battle of Karbala & 5 Lessons by Imam Hussain

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7gim2tWgK0

* Video Worksheet
* Vocabulary Sheet
* Gallery Walk Sources
  + Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol. 1, Book 2, Hadith 48
  + “Ancillaries of the Faith”

(http://en.wikishia.net/view/Furu'\_al-Din)

* + Map of Sunni and Shia Countries (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Madhhab\_Map3.png)
  + Mawla Wiktionary Entry

(https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/مولى#Arabic)

* + “The Hadith of the Wilayah, Ghadir Khum Part 1”

https://www.al-islam.org/shiite-encyclopedia/ghadir-khum-part-1

* + Battle of Karbala

https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=79802133

* Differentiated Gallery Walk Worksheets
* Extension Worksheet