

Europeana Learning Scenario

(Teachers)

Title

The true Islamic Heritage in Sicily: The Arabian Gardens

Author

Emanuela Leto

Abstract

In a multicultural world, which we are living, it is mandatory for younger generations to trace back their roots as history witnesses the fact that we are the outcome of several cultural dominations. In particular Sicily and especially my home town Palermo has been experiencing two centuries of Arabian dominations whose culture and religion as well has deeply influenced our lifestyle until nowadays. Palermo is the seat of an Arabian Norman Architectural path with its buildings dated X –XI century but as most of them are actually of Norman manufacture, the most genuine heritage of Arabian culture are the Arabian Gardens and the introduction of fruit tree crops such as lemons and oranges which today are the icon of Sicily. The aim of this scenario, carried on in a CLIL mode by history and foreign language teachers for students of the first year of low secondary school, is to make young generations acquire awareness of the real impact different cultural dominations had on what we assume today as autochthone heritage. This allows them to see as part of a wider cultural horizon in which they are more similar to what now it may seem different or stranger.

Keywords

Cultural awareness and expression, Citizenship, CLIL

Table of summary

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Subject	History, Citizenship, English as a Foreign Language
Topic	Arabian domination in Sicily and the actual heritage in garden architectures
Age of students	11
Preparation time	2h
Teaching time	4h
Online teaching material	Learning apps Google Maps Thinglink Adobe Spark I giardini Arabo Normanni della Conca D'oro Islam e Medioevo a Palermo
Offline teaching material	-
Europeana resources used	Dissertazioni sui popoli che abitarono in Sicilia L'Havre de Palermo

[Zisa Castle Interiors](#)
[San Giovanni degli Eremiti Church Cloister](#)

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Integration into the curriculum

The Scenario is integrated in the curriculum of History of first year of low secondary school with reference to National Indications on the study of Islam and its expansion discovering medieval roots in local and regional aspects. The choice of English as a foreign language is integrated in the acquisition of specific vocabulary related to citizenship regarding the awareness of the peculiar natural environment and biodiversity in first year of secondary school.

Aim of the lesson

At the end of the lesson the students will acquire awareness of their own cultural heritage in a more detailed way and will be able to see the actualization of ancient techniques and lifestyles common to their ordinary local life. Moreover, they will have the chance to reflect upon the origin of some local words and will convey most of this info in a foreign language they are currently studying, a competence which really matters in a deeply touristic region.

Outcome of the lesson

As outcome the students will produce a short clip using ADOBE Spark on the main receipts belonging to Sicilian Traditions using fruits or other vegetables introduced by Arabian Domination in Sicily.

Trends

Visual Search & Learning, Open Source Learning.

Key competences

Citizenship: through exploring the past heritage in what is left in our common life through research on Google Maps, on the ancient structure of the town, of the historical buildings belonging to the Arabian era, on etymology of Sicilian terms to be traced back to the Arabian dominations, on the heritage of receipts made up with crop introduced in ancient times

Cultural awareness: reflecting about the fact that our culture is the product of different others which followed one to another in the history of our country.

Digital competences: through the use of digital tools creating the interactive map on a suggested pattern and the short clip as final outcome.

Activities

Name of activity	Procedure	Time
Warm up	The History teacher introduces the theme of Arabian dominations in Sicily locating it in the timeline. She focuses the attention on Palermo town and its ancient structure which is still visible nowadays using Google maps .	20 min

Name of activity	Procedure	Time
	The Language teacher focuses her attention on the Arabian etymology of the name of the main streets of the Historical center of the town which are the witness of our cultural heritage. On the Maps the students trace all the buildings which are included in the so-called Arabian-Norman Cultural Path in Palermo town which is part of UNESCO heritage. Some examples of Arabian architecture are shown in this thinglink by the Language teacher .	20 min
The Arabian Garden	Using the resources found in Europeana and in the teachers, both History and English ones, show the students the most loyal example of Arabian Garden which is nowadays left in Palermo town, the garden surrounding the Castello di Mareddolce located in Palermo suburb.	30 min
	Using thinglink the teachers show the students its structure and its peculiarity. The students are solicited to make comparisons to other similar gardens located in Palermo or in the surrounding territory in particular focusing the attention on the use of water in a pond, which is called Gebbia (from Arabian jabh) and is really widespread in Sicilian countryside.	35 min
	Moreover they have to recall the etymology of some words of common use related to the garden and its structure using an app like learningapps .	15 min
The structure of the Arabian Garden and its peculiarity in Sicily	On the example of the thinglink made up for Mareddolce's Garden the students have to build up with the help of both teachers' visual structure using thinglink of another garden located in Palermo. the Zisa castle one and stress up the structure with their etymology, the types of plants, focusing their attention on the climatic and cultural reason which are evident nowadays for the building of such structures within Sicilian territory.	60 min
Fruits and plants in Sicilian coking traditions	The students will have to do research using Google on the main receipts which are actual nowadays as part of our heritage and in groups of 4 will have to produce a short clip using Adobe Spark on the making of with reference to Arabian and Sicilian terminology both in Italian Language then in English language	60 min

Assessment

Evaluation will be made through the final products, the receipts will be evaluated in style, content and language (L1 Italian L2 English) and in the proper use and the level of creativity of the videoclip.

***** AFTER IMPLEMENTATION *****

Student feedback

The students will be provided a survey using www.surveymonkey.com in which they will express their level of interest in the topic, how much they knew before this lesson about the Arabian influence on Sicilian lifestyle and what they learnt

Teacher's remarks

This scenario can be applied to the exploitation of cultural heritage left by dominations which have been followed in any country through an approach that can be focused on retrieving what is left in language, traditions, arts, architecture. European countries have gone through several dominations due to persistent immigrational waves that are typical of human history whose traces are still visible nowadays. They have only to be searched for and showed to our younger generations in order to never lose the memory of the past because on that memory they will build the Europe of the Future.

About the Europeana DSI-4 project

[Europeana](#) is Europe's digital platform for cultural heritage, providing free online access to over 53 million digitised items drawn from Europe's museums, archives, libraries and galleries. The Europeana DSI-4 project continues the work of the previous three Europeana Digital Service Infrastructures (DSIs). It is the fourth iteration with a proven record of accomplishment in creating access, interoperability, visibility and use of European cultural heritage in the five target markets outlined: European Citizens, Education, Research, Creative Industries and Cultural Heritage Institutions.

[European Schoolnet](#) (EUN) is the network of 32 European Ministries of Education, based in Brussels. As a not-for-profit organisation, EUN aims to bring innovation in teaching and learning to its key stakeholders: Ministries of Education, schools, teachers, researchers, and industry partners. European Schoolnet's task in the Europeana DSI-4 project is to continue and expand the Europeana Education Community.