

The House of Wisdom



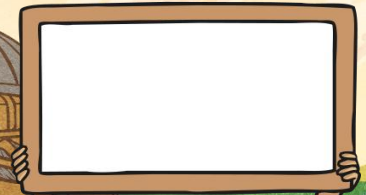
Aim

- I can find out about the House of Wisdom and how it became a centre for learning.

Success Criteria

- I can explain what the House of Wisdom was, and what happened there.
- I can create a 2 minute advert for the House of Wisdom, explaining reasons why people should study there.
- I can write a 1 page prospectus for the House of Wisdom based on the ideas in my advert.

Question Time

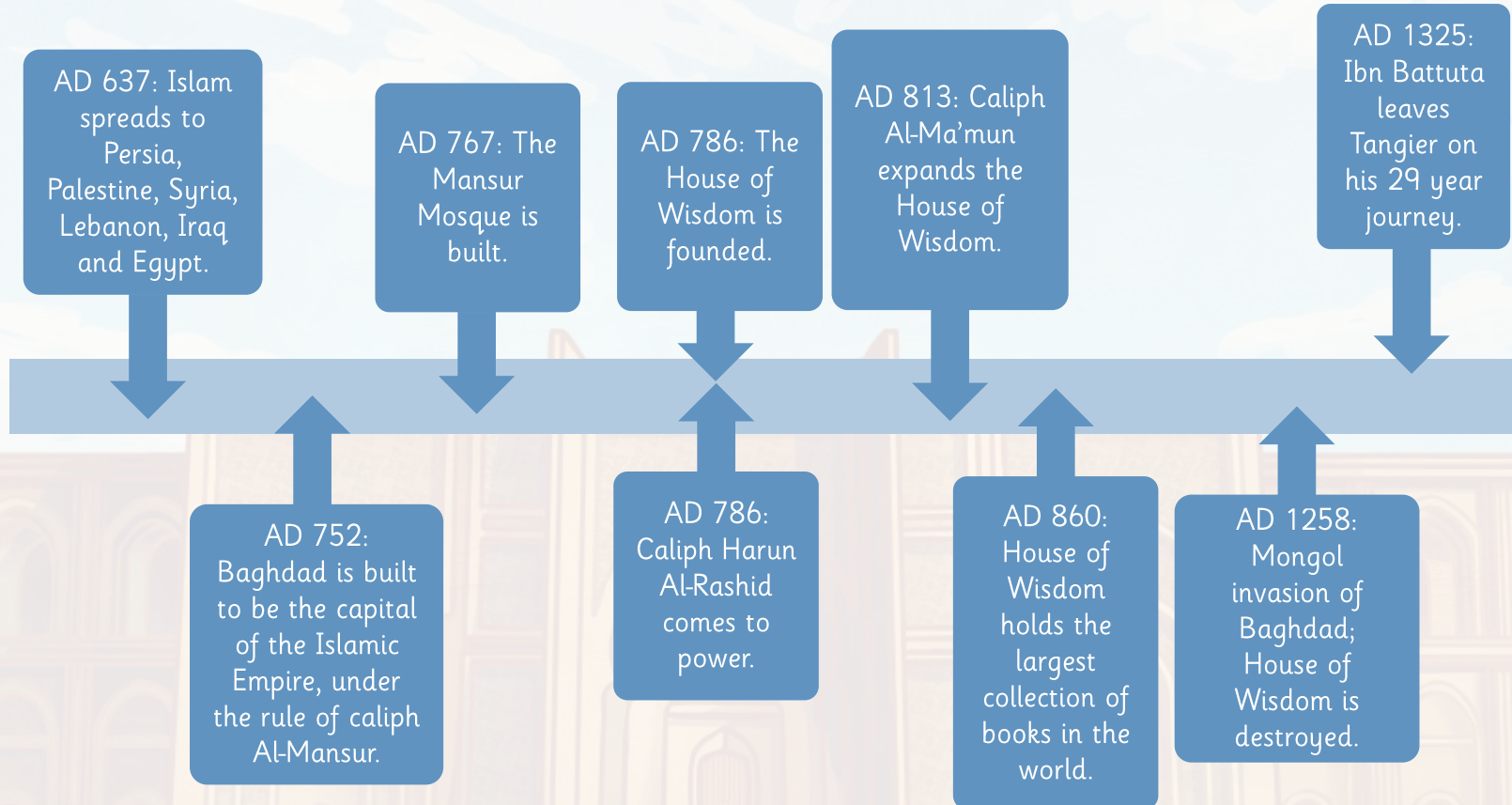


Think of some questions that might have been asked if the answer is 'Baghdad'.

Write these questions down on your whiteboard.

Are they different to your questions in the previous lesson?

Baghdad Timeline



The House of Wisdom

Bayt Al-Hikma, or 'The House of Wisdom', was built in AD 830 in Baghdad. It was founded by Caliph Harun Al-Rashid. He encouraged learning and invited scholars of different faiths to his court and treated them with great respect.



The House of Wisdom was a library and research facility which collected and translated scientific writing from many languages including Persian, Indian, Ancient Greek and Roman texts. Let's find out more [here](#).

The House of Wisdom

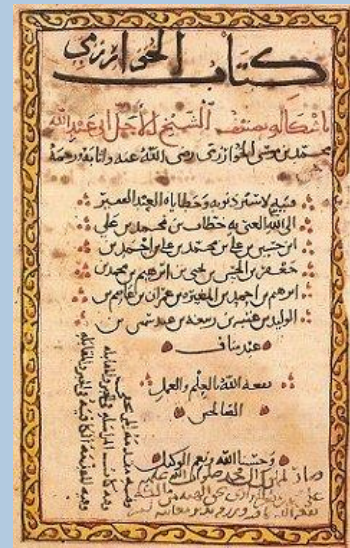
Scholars from the House of Wisdom would travel widely to collect texts from all over the world. They would bring them back to translate them into Arabic. By the second half of the 9th century, the House of Wisdom stored more books than anywhere else in the world and was attracting the most brilliant Arab and Persian minds to study there.

A lot of original research happened. For example, the famous mathematician Al-Khwarizmi worked there and is famous for his contributions to the development of algebra.



On the right is a 13th century Arabic translation of *Materia Medica*, an ancient book of medicine.

On the left is a page from Al-Khwarizmi's *al-Jabr*.



The House of Wisdom

Other famous scholars ranged from incredible engineers, such as the Banu Musa brothers, who wrote the 'Book of Ingenious Devices' which describes about 100 devices and how to use them. Ibn al-Haytham performed several experiments, mainly in optics, that are still celebrated today.

The caliph ordered research projects involving large groups of scholars. He constructed the first astronomical observatory in Baghdad, and research was carried out on the circumference of the Earth. A geographic project was commissioned that led to Al-Idrisi creating one of the most detailed and accurate maps of the time.



On the right is a drawing of a self trimming lamp in Ahmad ibn Musa and ibn Shakir's book about mechanical devices.

On the left is Al-Idrisi's map of the world (12th century).



The House of Wisdom

Muhammad al-Idrisi created this world map for Roger II of Sicily in 1154. In order to produce the work, Al-Idrisi interviewed experienced travellers.



Choose the House of Wisdom!

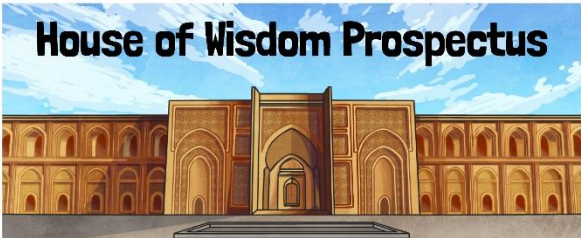



Activity

1. You have been asked by the caliph to get more people to study at the house of wisdom! Create a 2 minute advert thinking of at least 5 reasons why people should go there.
2. Can you design a prospectus using the ideas from your advert?



House of Wisdom Prospectus





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History! UKS2 | Early Islamic Civilisation | The House of Wisdom | Lesson 2

The Siege of Baghdad, 1258

Mongols from Asia attacked Islamic lands. They destroyed the House of Wisdom, burned Baghdad and killed thousands of people. They threw millions of books into the river which turned the water black with ink!



The city never recovered its former glory, but the ideas lived on...

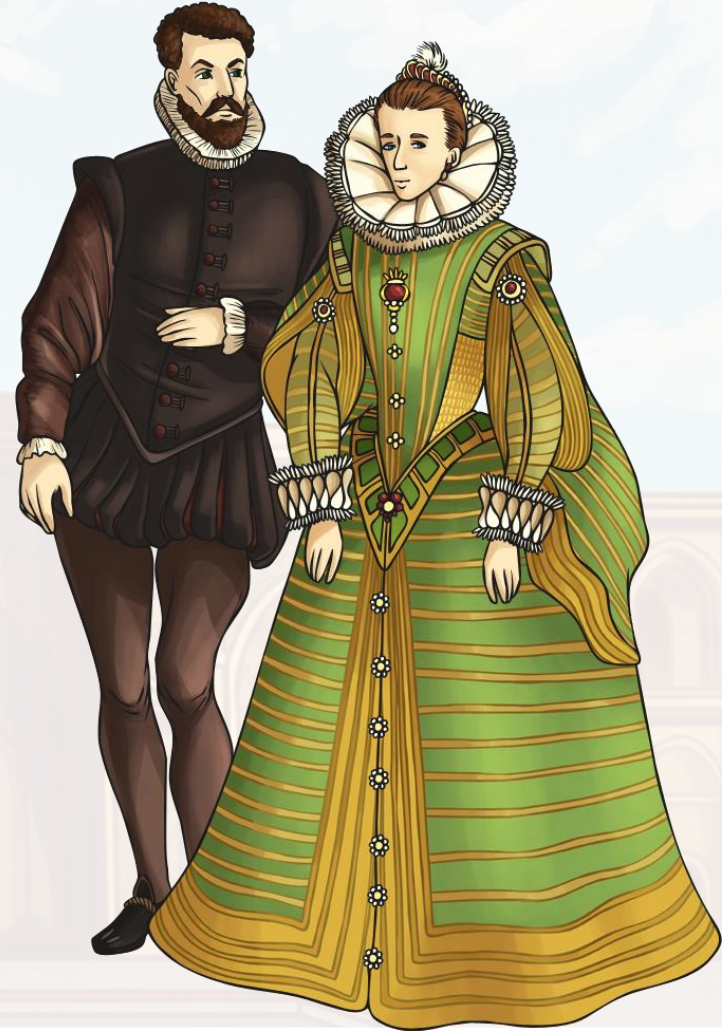
Baghdad's Legacy



Without the ideas that were created and passed on by the research and work from the House of Wisdom (such as the translated works from Ancient Greece and Rome), the renaissance that began in Europe in the 14th century would not have happened.

Questions

1. Do you think it is important that we learn about the early Islamic civilisation?
2. Does the House of Wisdom still matter?



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