

*Ways of the World: A Global History with Sources for the AP® Course*

**AP® Skills Workshop Activity Handout: Comparison**

**Chapter 9: The Worlds of Islam**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Activity: Identifying a Comparison.** Reread the paragraph below, found on page 368 in the section titled “Conversion.” What are the key words or phrases in these sentences that tell you it is a comparison? (Note that this paragraph is showing a contrast, but that’s a part of comparison!)

*In Persia, for example, between 750 and 900, about 80 percent of the population made the transition to a Muslim religious identity. But they did so in a manner quite distinct from the people of Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and North Africa. In these regions, converts to Islam gradually abandoned their native languages, adopted Arabic, and came to see themselves as Arabs. In Iran or Persia, by contrast, Arab conquest did not involve cultural Arabization, despite some initial efforts to impose the Arabic language. By the tenth century, the vast majority of Persians had become Muslims, but the Persian language (called Farsi in Iran) flourished, enriched now by a number of Arabic loan words and written in an Arabic script.*

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**2. Activity: Identifying a Comparison.** Read the paragraph below, from the section “Divisions and Controversies” on page 369. Then, use the chart below to record which words indicate that the authors are using comparison in order to understand the two main factions of Islam:

*Out of that conflict emerged one of the deepest and most enduring rifts within the Islamic world. On one side were the Sunni (SOON-nee) Muslims, who held that the caliphs were rightful political and military leaders, selected by the Islamic community. On the other side of this sharp divide was the Shia (SHEE-ah) (an Arabic word meaning “party” or “faction”) branch of Islam. Its adherents felt strongly that leadership in the Islamic world should derive from the line of Ali and his son Husayn, blood relatives of Muhammad, both of whom died at the hands of their political or religious enemies. If the caliph was the idealized communal leader for Sunnis, imams (leaders) served this purpose for most of the Shia Muslims. They were widely thought to have some special charisma based on descent from the Prophet, giving them a religious authority that the caliphs lacked and allowing them to infallibly interpret divine revelation and law.*

Phrases indicating similarities	Phrases indicating differences

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**3. Activity: Working with Comparison.** Based on the “Divisions and Controversies” section as a whole (pages 369–373), evaluate the extent to which the sects of Islam were similar to each other. How do the words that the author uses help you know?

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**4. Activity: Creating a Comparison.** Using the information in the “Divisions and Controversies” section on pages 369–373, write a comparative paragraph in response to the following prompt:

*To what extent are Sunni and Sufi views of Islam similar?*

Make sure that you create an evaluative claim that clearly conveys both similarities and differences, while emphasizing which you believe is most significant. In addition, use evidence from the chapter to support your claim.

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