

# Turkish Delights: Hodja Tales

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<b>Grade Level</b>	2
<b>Duration</b>	2 class periods

## National Standards

### GEOGRAPHY

#### Element 1: The World in Spatial Terms

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information
2. How to use mental maps (a person's internalized picture of a part of Earth's surface) to organize information about people places, and environments in a spatial context

#### Element 2: Places and Regions

4. The physical and human characteristics of places

## AZ Standards

### ELA

#### Reading

##### Key Ideas and Details

- 2.RL.2 Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.

#### Writing

##### Text Types and Purposes

- 2.W.3 Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events; include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings; use temporal words to signal event order and provide a sense of closure.

## Arizona Social Science Standards

### GEOGRAPHY

#### The use of geographic representations and tools help individuals understand their world.

- 2.G1.1 Use and construct maps, graphs, and other geographic representations of familiar and unfamiliar places in the world; and locate physical and human features.

#### Global interconnections and spatial patterns are a necessary part of geographic reasoning.

- 2.G4.1 Identify different physical and cultural regions in the world.

## Overview

Learning about other places encourages students' understanding of cultures other than their own, and this helps to enlarge students' mental maps of the world. Knowing about other countries also enriches students' own self-identities as they come to appreciate similarities and differences. Folk tales can offer younger students an entry point into understanding another culture.

## Purpose

In this lesson, students will learn about the Turkish culture as they read some of the tales of the Turkish folklore philosopher and jokester, Nasreddin Hodja.

## Materials

- Image of Nasreddin Hodja
- Nasreddin Hodja Tales (Story 1-4)
- *The Hungry Coat* (10.06 min)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYKpua883bc> or Demi. (2004). *The Hungry Coat*. New York:

Margaret K. McElderry Books. ISBN 978-0-689-84680-9

- Writing Assignment and Grading Rubric
- Globe or wall map
- Mediterranean Sea Region map  
<https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/MED.pdf>
- Map Work and Answer Key
- World Map

## Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Locate countries on a map.
2. Read folktales about world cultures.
3. Retell a story in writing.

## Procedures

### SESSION ONE

1. Begin the lesson by reminding students of folktales they have already read. (Examples: Paul Bunyan, Johnny Appleseed, Davy Crockett) Give a basic definition of folk tales: stories or legends

handed down from generation to generation usually by oral retelling. These tales usually explain something that happens in nature or they tell us a certain truth about life. Countries around the world all have their own folktales, and when we read them, we can learn about another country and what is important to the people there.

2. Project a world map and ask a student to locate the United States. Then show them where Turkey is located on this map.

*A Side Note: Students might make a connection between the Thanksgiving bird and the country of Turkey. The African guinea fowl made its way to English dinner plates about four hundred years ago. Although its origins were in Africa, it had been imported to Turkey before being brought to western Europe. The English called it the turkey-cock. Later, when the English came to North America, they saw a native bird and assumed it was the same as their turkey-cock, and called the American bird a turkey.*

3. Introduce Nasreddin Hodja (often referred to simply as “Hodja,” pronounced *ho-ja*.) by projecting the image provided. Ask students what they notice about the image. Have students share their responses.

4. Explain that Hodja lived many centuries ago, and the way he is dressed is traditional for the region and the times. Hodja is always depicted wearing a huge turban and with a long white beard. Today, Turkey is a modern country. Point out to students that the men in Turkey today dress as Europeans and Americans do.

5. Continue to explain that Hodja tales are popular in many Middle Eastern, Eastern European and Asian countries. He is a popular figure in film, theater, cartoons, children’s stories, statues, and on radio and television. The word “hodja” means *teacher* or *wise man*. Most of the stories are about everyday village life over 600 years ago, so some of the elements in the tales are from long ago. The stories are usually amusing, sometimes using word play, and often have a moral or something we can learn about life by reading the tale. Hodja’s tales make us see the other side of things, and this may be the explanation why he is usually shown riding his donkey backwards.

6. Distribute the map of the Mediterranean Sea Region and the Map Work handout so students can see the names of the countries. Project the same (blank) map. Guide students on locating and numbering the countries on the map where they have Hodja tales.

7. Label Turkey and ask students to draw a star inside its boundaries. Tell students that Turkey claims Hodja as their own, and he is buried in a city

in Turkey where they have a Hodja festival every July.

8. Ask, “What do suppose happens at a festival to honor this storyteller?” (People dress up as Hodja and share Hodja stories and tales; groups present Hodja stories.)

9. Distribute the Nasreddin Hodja Tales. Have students do a partner read aloud of the four Hodja tales. For support, preview any vocabulary according to the needs of the class.

10. Call on a few students to retell their favorite Hodja tale. Ask if there was a moral to the tale or was it like a joke.

## SESSION TWO

1. Begin by reviewing the Hodja tales read during Session One. Write food, clothing, housing, sports, customs, and beliefs on the white board. Have the students think or look back at the four tales and come up with details from the readings that would fit under the categories above.

2. Tell students that in today’s session they will be learning about one of the best known of the Hodja tales called the *The Hungry Coat*. Project the cover of the book or the beginning of the YouTube video.

3. Use the following guiding questions for the read aloud:

### Prereading:

- Now that we have read some Hodja tales, what might you predict this story will be about?
- What do you think the title means?
- Remember that the way the illustrator depicts Hodja is how he might have dressed when he lived 600 years ago.

### During reading:

- Hodja helps with the goat in a *caravansary*. Let’s figure out this word based on the picture.
- Why do you think that Nasrettin’s friend was wealthy?
- Why was Nasrettin feeding his coat?
- Notice the colorful traditional Turkish clothing in the illustrations

### Post reading:

- What does it mean, “A coat does not make a man?”
4. Ask students to partner and orally retell *The Hungry Coat*. Also ask students to share with their partner what the moral to the story is. Then add details from the Hungry Coat story to the categories on the white board.
5. Distribute the Writing Assignment. Explain the directions and how it will be graded. Provide time for writing their retelling of their favorite Hodja tale.

## Assessment

## ELA and Geography

The Writing Assignment can be scored using the Grading Rubric. Mastery will be a minimum of four out of five on the grading rubric.

## Geography

Map Work can be graded for completeness and accuracy. Mastery will be considered a score of 90% or higher.

## Extensions

Ask students (individually or in a group) to write their own Hodja tale.

Students can perform Readers Theater versions of a Hodja tale found at

[https://cmes.arizona.edu/sites/cmes.arizona.edu/files/4.%20Hodja%20Borrows%20a%20Pot%20Script\\_0.pdf](https://cmes.arizona.edu/sites/cmes.arizona.edu/files/4.%20Hodja%20Borrows%20a%20Pot%20Script_0.pdf)

Encourage students to read Hodja tales from the other countries they located on their maps. Have them repeat the white board exercise on categories

of culture and see if the details differ from those in Turkey.

## Sources

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