



اللوفا أبو ظبي  
LOUVRE ABU DHABI

EDUCATORS' GUIDE



# فروسية Furuṣīyya

The Art of Chivalry between East and West  
19 February 2020 - 30 May 2020

Graphica / calligraphy Sandie Lechaix  
Graphica / calligraphy Montasser Drissi

MUSÉE DE CLUNY  
le monde médiéval

*This Educators' Guide helps teachers conduct a self-led tour of the Special Exhibition as part of their school visit to Louvre Abu Dhabi. Its purpose is to foster learning through students' observational, analytical, communication and critical thinking abilities. The in-gallery activities are intended for different age groups and curricula. We encourage you to adapt and build upon them to suit your classroom needs.*

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION | FURŪSIYYA: THE ART OF CHIVALRY BETWEEN EAST AND WEST

This Special Exhibition displays objects from the chivalric culture of the Islamic and Christian worlds. It encompasses over 150 artefacts, from medieval armours, objects related to riding and battle, as well as manuscripts depicting chivalric scenes.

Presented in three sections, the artefacts on display originate from across the Middle East, including Iraq, Egypt and Syria, to the French and Germanic states in Europe, from around 500-1000 years ago.

The exhibition allows students to discover similarities between knightly traditions in these different parts of the medieval world and highlights the extraordinary cultural exchanges in key meeting points such as Southern Spain, Sicily and Syria.

The objects and works reflect the historical changes within these cultures and their attention to the values of medieval knights. Courage, faith, loyalty and honour can thus be seen as the cornerstone of a common culture, present in the Islamic East and the Christian West.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

What is Chivalry?  
When do you think it started in the West?

What is Furūsiyya?  
When do you think it started in the East?

What are the values of a medieval knight or a faris?  
What would he look like?

How do you think some of the objects you will discover are connected to both the East and the West?



**EXPLORE** the general questions with your students.



**ENCOURAGE** them to observe closely and read the artwork labels to help them answer questions.



**REMIND** your students that there are no wrong or right answers, but to think about what they see and recognise in the artworks.



ACTIVITIES

- The activities in this guide are based on a selection of artefacts and objects that are suitable for a range of age groups and subjects.
- You may modify the activities to suit your curriculum and learning objectives.
- The artefacts and objects introduce common aspects of chivalry in the East and the West, and a number of activities that you can conduct in the exhibition galleries and back in your classroom.

# Piece of fabric with *fleurs-de-lis*, known as *Shroud of Guy de Lusignan*

Syria or Egypt, 14<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> century

Figured double silk cloth  
Musée de Cluny

Suitable for Cycles 1 and 2

Possible subject connections: Visual Arts, History, Language Arts

## ARTWORK #1



Piece of fabric with fleurs-de-lis, known as "Shroud of Guy de Lusignan," Syria or Egypt, 14th–15th century, Paris, Musée de Cluny, formerly collection Claudius Côté, gift of David David-Weill 1933, inv. Cl. 2185. Photo © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée de Cluny) / Musée National du Moyen Âge / Michel Urtado



### ABOUT THE ARTWORK

The repetitive representation of the *fleur-de-lis* on this cloth indicates its association with the Kingdom of France. Yes several sultans in the East used it around 600 years ago and it was given an Arabic name: *faransīsiyya*.

The beige chevrons are lined on the inside with a repeated mirroring *naskhi* inscription. The inscription could be the nickname of a Mamluk officer in Turkish. The Mamluks ruled Egypt and Syria between 1250 and 1517.

There are only eight pieces of this cloth left in the world. The cloth is known as the *Shroud of Guy de Lusignan*, named after a powerful 12<sup>th</sup> century lord. However stylistically, it refers to the 14<sup>th</sup> century silks woven in Mamluk Syria or Egypt.

The alternation of *fleurs-de-lis* is an example of the decorative use of a Western *coat of arms* that was used in the East.



### OBJECTIVES

Students learn about **western influences in the East**.

Students think about **symbolism** in design.



### HEAD TO CHAPTER I: RIDING



### ASK YOUR STUDENTS

- 1 What different shapes do you see on the cloth?
- 2 Who do you think was the owner of this cloth?
- 3 Why do you think this cloth is an important object?
- 4 How would you describe the different patterns?
- 5 Which parts on the cloth are influenced by the West?



### IN-GALLERY ACTIVITY: COMPARE AND CONTRAST

- **ASK** your students to look around the exhibition, and locate another object with Western symbols and Arabic inscriptions.
- **DISCUSS** the similarities and differences between them and ask your students to describe the different patterns to a partner.



### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: MY COAT OF ARMS

- **INFORM** your students that they will be creating their own coat of arms.
- **ASK** them to draw different symbols that represent their personality, where they come from and their family.
- **EXPLAIN** that they can take inspiration from the symbols seen on the objects in the exhibition.
- **INVITE** students to present their finished work, explaining its personal representation of themselves.



### SUGGESTED RESEARCH TOPICS

- Mamluk dynasty
- Fleur-de-lis
- Western coat of arms
- Arabic inscription styles

# Basin of the amir cupbearer Shihab al-Din Bakhtimur

Egypt or Syria, 1330

Copper alloy inlaid with silver and red copper  
Musée du Louvre

Suitable for Cycles 1, 2 & 3

Possible subject connections:

History, Language Arts, Visual Arts



## ABOUT THE ARTWORK

Coat of arms were first created and used in the west as identifying signs on battlefields. Heraldic practice then developed in the East mainly under the Mamluk dynasty. It was one of the few practices that made its way to the East from the West.

The coat of arms was also used for social distinction between amirs who occupied major ranks and positions in the state. The emblems were stylised representations of objects and were displayed in a circle most of the time. For instance, the coat of arms we see here includes a cup which reflects the position of amir Bakhtimur as sultan al-Nasir Muhammad's cupbearer (*saqi*). Other examples include a sabre for the sabre-bearer (*silahdār*), a diamond-shaped towel for the master of robes (*jamdār*) and two mallets for the polo master (*jūkandār*).



## OBJECTIVES

Students learn about **eastern coats of arms**, and **cultural influences** between the East and the West.



## CONTINUE IN CHAPTER 1: RIDING



## ASK YOUR STUDENTS

- 1 What kind of object is this?
- 2 Describe the patterns on the basin.
- 3 Try to identify the written language on it.
- 4 Which materials were used in making this basin?

## ARTWORK #2



Basin of the amir cupbearer Shihab al-Din Bakhtimur, Egypt or Syria, c. 1330, Copper alloy inlaid with silver and red copper, Musée du Louvre  
Photo ©



## IN-GALLERY ACTIVITY: DESIGN AND SHARE

- **PROVIDE** a number of paper plates and pencils and ask your students to draw a personalized coat of arms in the centre of the dish.
- **INSTRUCT** your students to write a description of what the coat of arms symbolizes around it.
- **ASK** your students to share what inspired their designs with a friend.



## CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: THE OLD VS. THE NEW

- **DIVIDE** the class equally into 4 groups.
- **PROVIDE** your groups with different materials of your choice to design different coats of arms.
- **GIVE** each group an honorific position.
- **INSTRUCT** your students to work in their groups and design a coat of arms for each position.
- **ASK** them also to list a number of tasks that their rank would be responsible of in court.
- **PRESENT** the designs of all the different ranks created by your students.
- **DISCUSS** the importance of the creation of the ranks together.



## SUGGESTED RESEARCH TOPICS

- Eastern coats of arms
- Sultan Al-Nasir Muhammad and Amir Bakhtimur
- Social positions in Mamluk dynasty

# Lamellar armour in the name of the Sultan Qāitbāy

## Egypt, 1468-1496

Steel, iron, copper alloy, gold  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Suitable for Cycles 1, 2, 3

Possible subject connections: History,  
Visual Arts, Language Arts

### ARTWORK #3



Shirt of mail and plate of the sultan Qāitbāy, Egypt, 1468-96, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Arms and Armor, Department, former collection of A. F. Vidal de Lery, purchase, gift of Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, and Rogers, Acquisitions and Fletcher Funds 2016, inv. 2016.99  
Photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais/Image of the MMA



#### ABOUT THE ARTWORK

This rare armour is one of only four Mamluk examples known to have survived. It was seized by the *Ottoman* Turks following a conquest of Egypt in 1517 and kept as a trophy of war in the Ottoman collection in Istanbul.

It is made of *chainmail* and steel plates, which offered good protection and flexibility to the fighting rider. The mention of Sultan Qāitbāy appears on the armour's plates protecting the abdomen: "Glory to the Sultan, the master, the king, the scientist, the regent, the righteous, Qāitbāy, the Sultan of Islam and Muslims." In addition, the plates were also decorated with intricate *foliage* and circular medallions enclosing six pointed stars, which is believed to have a protective role.

Sultan Qāitbāy was one of the longest reigning Mamluk rulers of Egypt who ruled for nearly 30 years. He remains famous for his military campaigns against his Turkmen and Ottoman neighbours.



#### OBJECTIVES

Students learn about **15<sup>th</sup> century Mamluk metalwork and armours**.



#### HEAD TO CHAPTER II: FIGHTING



#### ASK YOUR STUDENTS

- 1 What is this object?
- 2 What are the materials used to create the armour?
- 3 What techniques do you think were used to create the object?
- 4 What were the advantages of using these techniques?
- 5 How do you think this object was useful?



#### IN-GALLERY ACTIVITY: BUILD YOUR SUIT OF ARMOUR

- **LOOK** around the exhibition and identify other armour elements in the exhibition (i.e. helmet, shields, swords, horse, etc.) to complete a suit of armour for a knight.



#### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: DESIGN YOUR OWN ARMOUR

- **DISCUSS** all the information learnt and gathered about the armour.
- **DIVIDE** your students into pairs.
- **EXPLAIN** that they will design and create an armour inspired by this Mamluk armour.
- **PROVIDE** your students with pencils, coloured and metallic markers, white A4 paper, scissors, tape, paint and empty cardboard boxes.
- **ENCOURAGE** your students to use all the information discussed to help develop ideas.
- **REMINDE** your students to focus on protection, mobility, weight as well as inscription on the plates when designing their armour.
- **ASK** each pair to share their design with you before they create their armour using the materials provided.



#### SUGGESTED RESEARCH TOPICS

- Mamluk dynasty
- Suits of armour
- Sultan Qāitbāy

# Kitāb al-makhzūn jāmi' al-funūn

(The Treasure where the Different Arts are United)

Egypt, 8 July 1470

Ink, pigment and gold on paper  
Bibliothèque Nationale de France

Suitable for Cycles 2 and 3

Possible subject connections: History, Physical Education, Drama, and Language Arts

## ARTWORK #4



Kitāb al-makhzūn jāmi' al-funūn (Treasury of the Various Arts), Egypt, 8 July 1470, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France  
Photo © Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris



### ABOUT THE ARTWORK

Furūsiyya was both a representation of values and technical knowledge relating to various martial arts, mainly but not exclusively on horseback. The skills required for the mastery of Furūsiyya were set out in *treatises*, the oldest of which was written in the 9th century by Ibn Akhī Hizām al-Khutallī, a military master as well as a stable master. The rare treatises we see today, documenting Furūsiyya skills and techniques, are in fact Mamluk copies of originals from the Abbasid period, now lost to us.

Since the Abbasid period (750–1258), the Muslim world gave young recruits training in the art of horse riding to make them accomplished riders. Many of the exercises that helped them acquire technique, endurance, strength and precision had to be perfectly executed on foot before they could be attempted on horseback. The second part of the book is a discourse on the training of the rider and the handling of the arch, lance, sword, mace and crossbow. On-foot fighting is also discussed and there are illustrations of the archery exercises that were passionately practiced by Mamluk horsemen: *Qabaq* (aiming at a hanging squash) and *Birjās* (at a wooden target).



### OBJECTIVES

Students will learn about the oldest **Furūsiyya skills** and **training of the Mamluk army** documented in old manuscripts.



### HEAD TO CHAPTER II: FIGHTING



### ASK YOUR STUDENTS

- 1 What do you see?
- 2 Who do you think the figures are?
- 3 What do think they are doing in these scenes?
- 4 Why do you think these scenes were important to document?



### IN-GALLERY ACTIVITY: ACT IT OUT

- **LOOK** at different old manuscripts in the gallery.
- **DISCUSS** the different skills and activities documented in the drawings and whether they are still being practiced today.
- **ASK** students to choose one drawing, recreate the scene depicted in it and take pictures of your groups.



### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: TIC-TAC-TOE ARCHERY

- **DIVIDE** your class into teams of 4.
- **PROVIDE** each team with a child friendly bow and arrows toy set.
- **PLACE** a Tic-Tac-Toe board away from each team as their target.
- **EXPLAIN** that students get to shoot 5 arrows in each turn and must try to get 3 arrows in a row: horizontally, vertically or diagonally.
- **MAKE** sure that students shoot one at a time, while adhering to any safety rules established together.
- A team will score a point every time someone in their group gets three arrows in a row.
- This activity ends when every student in each team has participated in the game.



### SUGGESTED RESEARCH TOPICS

- Old treatises on Furūsiyya
- Birth of Furūsiyya during the Abbasid dynasty
- Training of the Mamluk army

# Fiore dei Liberi, *De arte luctandi*

"The Seven Swords and the Virtues of the Fencer"

Northern Italy, early 15<sup>th</sup> century

Bibliothèque Nationale de France

ARTWORK #5

Suitable for Cycles 2 and 3

Possible subject connections: History, Language Arts, Visual Arts



## ABOUT THE ARTWORK

In order for mounted fighters to attain the rank of knighthood, it was necessary to master the handling of arms, riding and matters of war through training, which began at a very young age.

Although many fighters lived and fought for centuries during the *Middle Ages*, their martial practices were recorded in less than 50 works limited to the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Whether these manuscripts are collections from a single or several masters, they highlight skills such as fencing in addition to the importance of the values of a knight.

Fiore dei Liberi presented a visual representation in which seven swords surround a man's body, with four animals symbolizing different knightly virtues: strength (the elephant), celerity (the tiger holding an arrow), prudence (the lynx) and boldness (the lion).



## OBJECTIVES

Students will learn about the different **Western chivalric values and techniques** during the late middle ages.



## HEAD TO CHAPTER II: FIGHTING



## ASK YOUR STUDENTS

- 1 What do you see?
- 2 Who do you think is represented in this artwork?
- 3 What do you think the different animals symbolize?
- 4 What are the different values and techniques a knight should accomplish?



Fiore dei Liberi, *De arte luctandi*: "The Seven Swords and the Virtues of the Fencer", Northern Italy, early 15<sup>th</sup> century, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Department of Manuscripts. Photo © Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris



## IN-GALLERY ACTIVITY: I, THE KNIGHT!

- **PROVIDE** students with a blank A4 sized paper.
- **INSTRUCT** your students to draw themselves similar to the figure represented in the manuscript.
- **ASK** them to pick animals reflecting four knightly skills and values.



## CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: CHIVALRY SCROLLS

- **INVITE** your your students to create their own code of conduct based on what a medieval knight should be.
- **ASK** your students to work in groups of 4.
- **DISCUSS** as a class the different aspects of knighthood.
- **INSTRUCT** the groups to brainstorm other aspects of chivalry and compare them to expected conduct by a good citizen of the community today. Are they different or similar?
- **PROVIDE** each group with a long page of light brown paper and coloured markers.
- **ASK** them to write down their codes of chivalry onto the scroll. Students can then decorate their scrolls with a fun title and border.



## SUGGESTED RESEARCH TOPICS

- Fiore dei Liberi, *De arte luctandi*
- Knightly virtues and skills of the 15<sup>th</sup> century
- Animal representations in different cultures

# Mirror Case: The Hunting Expedition

## France, 1330-1350

Ivory  
Louvre Abu Dhabi

Suitable for Cycles 1 and 2  
Possible subject connections: History,  
Language Arts, Visual Arts

### ARTWORK #6



#### ABOUT THE ARTWORK

This mirror case is decorated with a scene from courtly life carved in ivory. Such objects were often given as presents and enjoyed great popularity with ladies of the court as a personal item in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

In this object, we see chivalry as part of aristocratic daily life away from wars and battlefields. Here we see four figures in the woods: a gentleman with a falcon on his wrist, a lady feeding a hawk, a young woman holding a lure and a servant blowing a horn. The combination of themes such as the lovers' ride and the hunting party with falcons was a common metaphor for the pursuit of love in medieval texts, and a popular theme with the ivory carvers.

Falconry was probably introduced by people from Central Asia and it was the subject of technical treatises documented by those who respected eastern cultures. This sport is known for its aristocratic nature and was adored and practiced by both men and women.



#### OBJECTIVES

Students learn about **chivalry in aristocratic daily life** and **falconry**.



#### HEAD TO CHAPTER III: LIVING AS A KNIGHT



#### ASK YOUR STUDENTS

- 1 *What is this object?*
- 2 *Describe the scene depicted on it.*
- 3 *Who do you think these people are?*
- 4 *How was this object made?*
- 5 *Who do you think owned this object?*



Mirror case: The Hunting Expedition, France, Paris, c. 1330-50, Ivory.  
H: 10. W: 10 cm, Abu Dhabi, Louvre Abu Dhabi, inv. LAD 2013 052  
Photo © Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi  
Photo: Thierry Ollivier



#### IN-GALLERY ACTIVITY: BREAK DOWN THE ELEMENTS

- **LOOK** closely at the mirror case with your students.
- **IDENTIFY** all the figures you can see on it. Look for people, animals and objects.
- **ASK** your students to imagine who these people were and improvise the conversation that took place.



#### CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: ROLE PLAY

- **DISCUSS** falconry's role in aristocratic life during the Middle Ages.
- **REMINDE** your students of the improvised conversations they imagined as part of the in-gallery activity.
- **DIVIDE** your students in groups and provide each group with an image of the mirror case.
- **ASK** your groups to write a simple story line and a short conversation between the 4 figures in the scene.
- **PRESENT** each role play to the classroom. You may use extra theatrical properties (props) and costumes to enhance the experience.



#### SUGGESTED RESEARCH TOPICS

- Literature of courtly love
- Falconry
- Hunting during the Middle Ages





## Glossary

- **COAT OF ARMS:** A special shield pattern that is the sign of a family or place.
- **CHAINMAIL:** Small metal rings linked together to create a flexible material similar to a fabric. It was typically used in the past as part of armour to protect the body of the combatant.
- **CHEVRON:** A V-shaped mark often found in military uniforms, heraldry designs and flags to indicate a rank.
- **FOLIAGE:** The leaves of a plant or tree, or on the stems or branches used as a decorative motif.
- **FLEUR-DE-LIS:** A symbol that represents a lily with three distinct petals, which became the symbol of the Kingdom of France during the reign of Louis VII in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century.
- **HERALDIC:** An adjective used to describe armorial designs and coat of arms.
- **MIDDLE AGES:** A period in European history from about 500 to 1500 CE, also known as the medieval period.
- **NASKHI:** Islamic cursive style of handwritten alphabet developed in the 10<sup>th</sup> century CE.
- **TREASTISE:** A formal piece of writing that focuses on and examines a particular subject.

## Furūsiyya Exhibition Education Programme

Schools, Children and Families

- **GUIDED TOURS**  
AED 375 | group of up to 25 students | 60 minutes  
Morning: 9:30, 10:00, 11:00, 11:30  
Afternoon: 12:30, 13:30, 17:00, 17:30, 18:00
- **WORKSHOP WITH TOUR: CREATE YOUR OWN HEROIC ARMOUR**  
AED 625 | group of up to 25 students | 90 minutes: 45 minutes tour of the galleries and 45 minutes workshop in the art studios.  
Morning: 10:30  
Afternoon: 12:30
- **YOUTH FESTIVAL AND FAMILY WEEKEND: DISCOVER YOUR INNER WARRIOR**  
Friday 28 and Saturday 29 February 2020
  - Drop-in Family Workshop
  - The League of Furūsiyya Activity
  - Mini Tours
  - Youth Festival Parade
  - Storytellers
  - Park Workshops