**The Middle East Today**

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| **Aim:**  | **Date:** |
| **Key words** |
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**A. Iranian Revolution and Hostage Crisis (1979)**

Shah Reza Pahlevi was the monarch of Iran from September 1941 until February 1979. While in power, he had land reform (buying land from land owners and selling it cheaper to peasants), women’s rights, and a literacy program. However, the people were not happy (you’ll see why in the video). As part of the Iranian Revolution, the U.S. embassy was stormed, and fifty-two American diplomats and citizens were held hostage for 444 days from November 4, 1979, to January 20, 1981. It stands as the longest hostage crisis in recorded history.

*What was life like before the Iranian Revolution?*

*Based on the Video – List two reasons for the Iranian Revolution.*

**B. Iran Today**

Today, the government is a theocracy (government who is regarded as divinely (religiously) guided). Iran is considered an Islamic fundamentalist country. Islamic Fundamentalism is a religious ideology to return to the fundamentals (basics) of Islam. Islamic fundamentalists believe that the problems of the world stem from secular (non-spiritual) influences. Iran requires women to wear a hijab in all public places, Muslim or not. Men and women are segregated in public schools and buses. Women’s voices are banned from the radio and female singers and actresses are no longer seen on television. Women are not allowed to study “male” professions such finance and engineering. A former leader also believes that the Holocaust was a lie and that Israel should be destroyed.

*How would you describe life in Iran after the revolution?*

*Another country we learned about where the leader tried to remove the old culture was*

 . *An action the leader took to remove the old culture was*

**C. Arab Spring**

The Arab Spring refers to the democratic uprisings that occurred and spread across the Arab world in 2011. The movement originated in Tunisia in December 2010 and quickly took hold in Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. In Egypt, in January 2011 protesters gathers in Tahir Square to protest lack of freedom of speech and police brutality and it spread throughout the country. Within a month President Hosni Mubarak stepped down. In 2018, the Saudi government was accused of killing a journalist, Jamal Khashoggi, in Turkey. Saudi Arabia denied any involvement in his disappearance. In March 2019, after weeks of mass protest against his rule and only a week after vowing he would carry on, the leader of Algeria announced he would not seek a fifth term as president.  According to experts, social media played a significant role during the [Arab Spring](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab_Spring) because it facilitated (spread) information to protesters. Protesters used social media to organize demonstrations (both pro- and anti-governmental), disseminate (spread) information about their activities, and raise local and global awareness of ongoing events.

*The events in Tahir Square can be compared to*

*People used Social Media to*

**D. Syria**

Syria is a dictatorship ruled by President Bashar al-Assad. After the Arab Spring, many students in Syria began to protest the government. The government responded with force, and demonstrations quickly spread across the country. Assad has since sent tanks into cities as security forces opened fire on demonstrators. The United Nations has condemned the crackdown and stated that the Syrian government's actions amounted to crimes against humanity.

*What role do you think uprisings in other Arab countries played in Syria's revolution?*

*Based on the video and reading, what is the Syrian government doing to protesters?*