

# Moroccan Movers: Donkeys & Mules

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/Where-Donkeys-Deliver-Morocco.html#>

# **PASS Objectives**

## **Grade 6 World Studies**

**3.2 – Compare and contrast common characteristics of culture, such as language, customs, shelter, diet, traditional occupations, belief systems and folk traditions.**

## **Grade 7 World Geography**

**4.1 – Compare and contrast common characteristics of world cultures, (e.g., language heritage, religion, political philosophy, shared history, social systems, and economic systems.)**

**4.2 – Explain patterns and processes of global economic interdependence (e.g., developed and developing countries, economic activities, and world trade.)**

## **Objectives**

**Students will learn which developing countries and regions use pack animals in today's advanced technological age.**

**Students will realize the important role pack animals continue to play in certain cultures today.**

**Students will gain an insight into the blending of past and present in developing countries and cultures today.**

**Behind the walled section of Fez known as the medina, donkeys and mules deliver all goods that are brought to merchants crammed into stalls on countless narrow alleys.**



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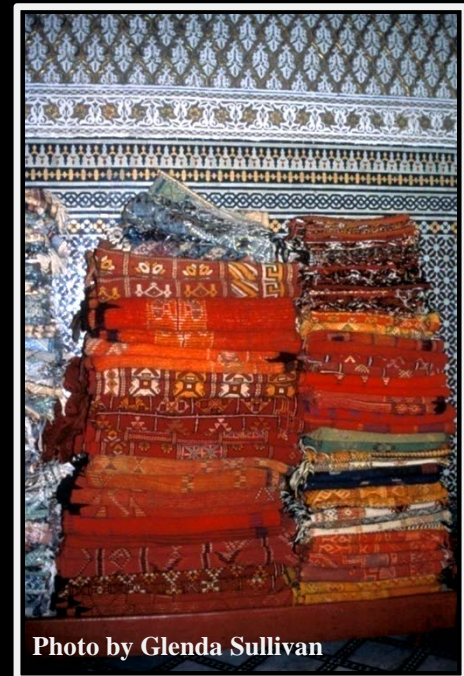


Photo by Glenda Sullivan



Photo by Glenda Sullivan

**Donkeys and mules keep the medina humming. In these crowded, narrow, twisting pathways, you will hear “*Balak, balak*” (make way, make way) ringing out as these weary animals plod along with their staggering loads.**





**The streets of Fez were laid out in the eighth century. The medina is a large urbanized area, impassable to cars and trucks. Most motorbikes cannot make it up the steep slippery alleys. Its roads can never be widened or changed. Even in this age of technology, donkeys will never be replaced!**

**This donkey is delivering gas bottles to stores in the Fez medina.**



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Photo by Glenda Sullivan

**All types of goods are carried into the medina by donkeys or mules. Anything that humans can't carry or push in a handcart is conveyed by donkey or mule.**

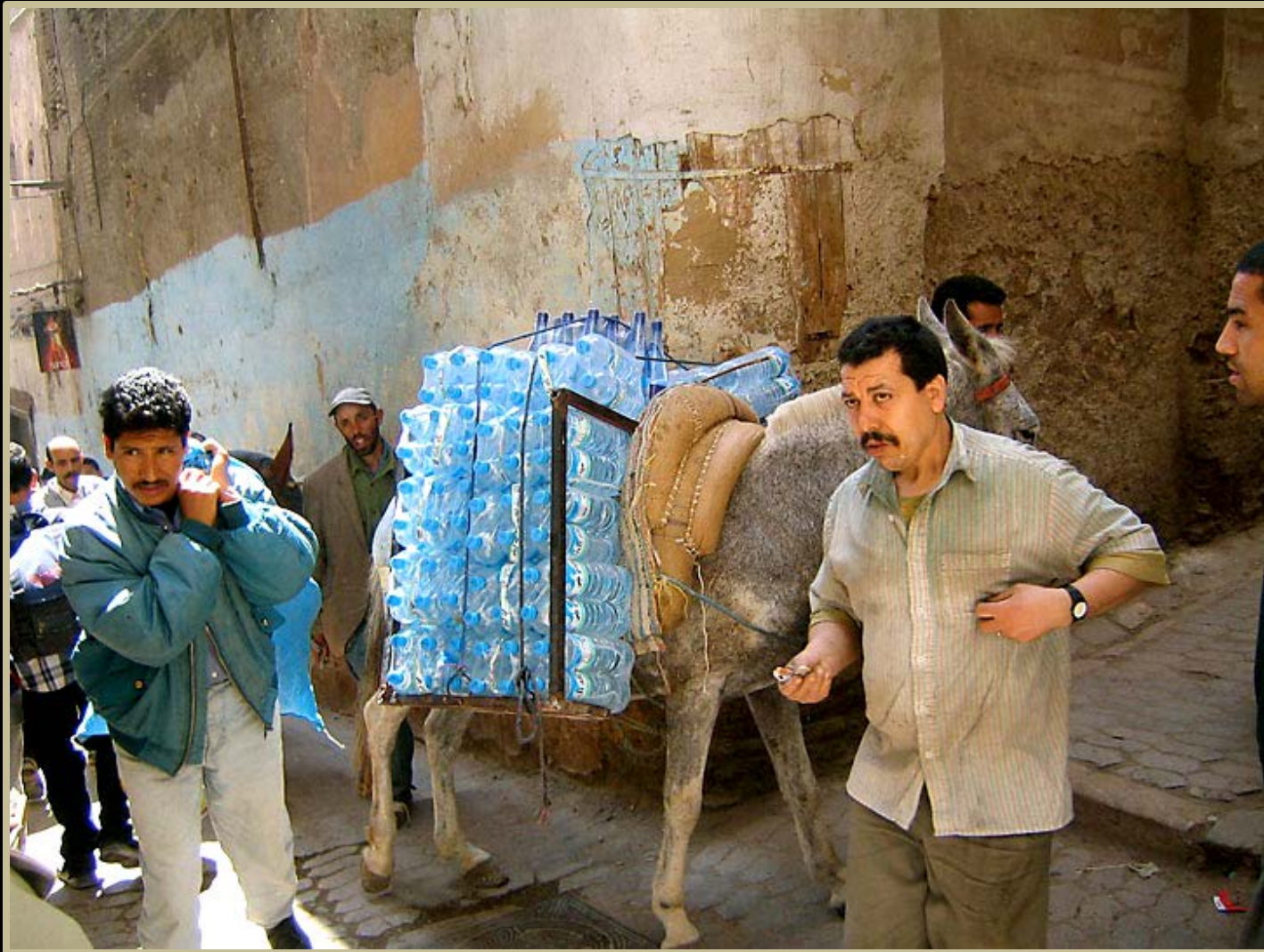




<http://www.informatik.uni-bremen.de/~net/photos/morocco/fez/>

**Coca Cola delivery mules transport cokes to restaurants throughout the medina.**





<http://www.informatik.uni-bremen.de/~net/photos/morocco/fez/>

**This water delivery donkey treads wearily through the crowded, narrow medina pathways.**



**Donkeys deliver leather to the medina tanneries.**

**The various smells mix together and become overwhelming as one wanders through the maze of alleyways. The odors of tanning leather, vats of dye, woven woolen rugs, sweet pastries, and spicy Moroccan food are not soon forgotten.**





Photo by Glenda Sullivan

**If lumber is needed to add a new room to a house in the medina, a donkey or mule carries it. If a family moves, guess who the mover is? If someone becomes ill, one of these timeless little animals serves as an ambulance.**





<http://www.informatik.uni-bremen.de/~net/photos/morocco/fez/>

**These donkeys wear muzzles as they bring materials to a medina construction site. Donkeys will bite! Can you blame them?**



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**To many Moroccans, donkeys are considered tools—good useful tools, but nothing more.**



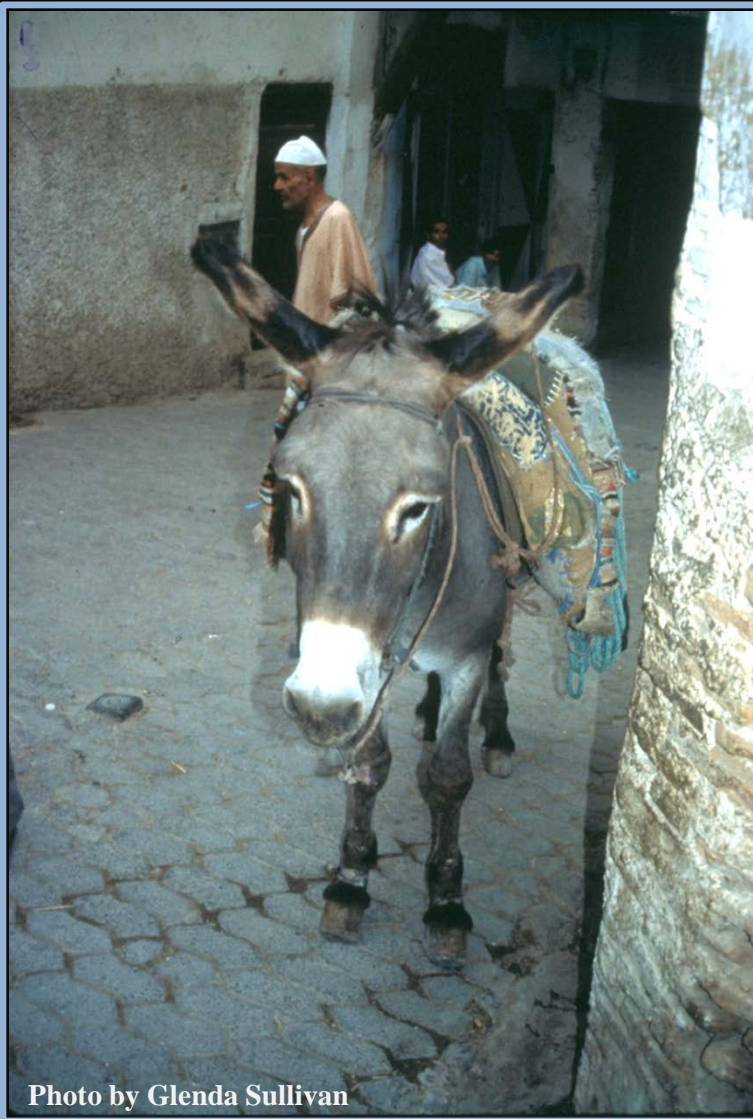


Photo by Glenda Sullivan



<http://goafrica.about.com/od/moroccotopattractions/ig/Fes--Fez--Photo-Gallery/Donkey-resting-in-the-medina-o.htm>

**The sad eyes and bleak looks of fatigue and despair tell the story of long, hard workdays in this medieval city of Fez.**





**Donkeys and mules are valued but worked hard. When a Moroccan man was asked why he didn't name his donkey, he laughed and said, "He doesn't need a name. He is a taxi."**

**It is said that the Muslim Koran actually specifies the ideal width of road as the width of three donkeys.**

## Where do the donkeys live?



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**Some donkeys live on farms near Fez & are brought into work each day.**



Photo by Glenda Sullivan

**Others live in houses behind the walls, as many as 10 in one house.**





**Souk el Khemis-des Zemamra, a large Moroccan donkey market, is held every Thursday a few miles southwest of Casablanca.**

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**Shoppers converge on this souk every Thursday hoping to find a donkey bargain.**







**Moroccans travel to the donkey market where thousands of donkeys are bought, sold or traded.**

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Photo by Glenda Sullivan



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**An estimated 100,000 people in the Fez area depend on donkeys and mules for their livelihood.**

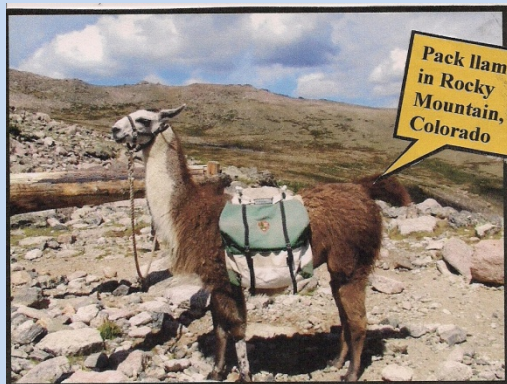


Photo by Glenda Sullivan

**The contrast between past and present is seen here with the mule drawn wagon and the modern Shell gas station.**



# Student Examples of Pack Animal Posters



Pack llama in Rocky Mountain, Colorado

Llamas are classified as camelids. They are thought to be related to the Bactrian and Dromedary camels of Asia. Their ancestors probably came across the Bering Strait land bridge.



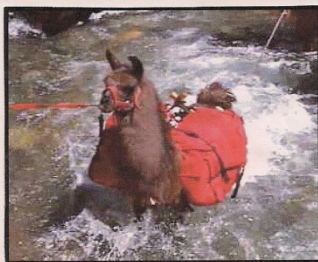
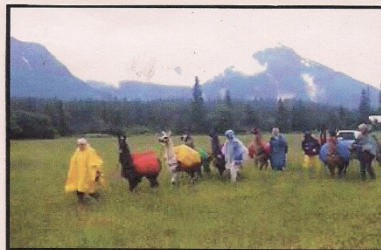
When using a pack, llamas can carry about 25% to 30% of their body weight for several miles.

During the Spanish conquest, the llama was mainly used to bring down ore from mines in the Andes

Llamas were widely used as pack animals by the Incas in the Andes Mountains of South America. Llamas are still used as pack animals, mainly for wilderness packing in South America and in the western mountainous regions of the United States.

Llama wool is used for rugs, wall hangings and lead ropes.

Quechua girl with pet llama in Cuzco, Peru



YAKS

It is hard to use yaks for long journeys in barren regions because they only eat grass.

Yaks can climb as high as 20,000 ft. They have long shaggy hair to insulate them from the cold.

Yaks transport goods across mountain passes for local farmers and traders as well as for climbing and trekking expeditions.

Woman in Central China with yak at Qinghai Lake



Yaks are black, brown or white.



Yaks are found in Himalayan region of south Central Asia & Tibetan Plateau and as far north as Mongolia.



Yampa Valley Yaks is located south of Steamboat Springs in the heart of Colorado's Northern Rockies. We breed, raise, and train Tibetan Yaks to pack and trek. We sell fully-trained pack yaks, weaned yearlings, and breeding stock.