

MAHMOUD SAÏD

MIDDLE EASTERN PAINTER

MIDDLE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

WHAT WE LEARNED:

- **Mahmoud Saïd** was the Father of Modern Egyptian Painting. We defined each of those terms.
- We were introduced to his family and modern Egyptian history.
- We identified places important to Mahmoud's life and work.
- We discussed the artist's oeuvre, style and reflection of Egyptian nationalism.

ART ACTIVITY: LOCAL-FLAIR PAINTING



It was important to Mahmoud Saïd to show everyday life in Egypt. He chose scenes that reflected the working-class people's view of their surroundings. The students chose a local place to illustrate by capturing what is important to them.

FOR PARENTS

Mahmoud Saïd lived at an important time spanning the bridge between the village life of Egypt ruled by a king and the modern Egyptian Republic. He is a particularly interesting figure connecting the two worlds. Growing up in Alexandria, becoming a judge, retiring to paint and reacting against the "Degenerate Art" label from Nazi Germany, Saïd's life was varied and pivotal. **While much of Saïd's artwork is instructive for your children, there are many works that would not be appropriate for young people. Please take care to supervise their research about this artist.**



ANALYZE TREE OF LIFE BY SAAD SHAKER, IRAQ, 1996

According to an interview with Ramzi Dalloul, a premier collector of Palestinian art, Saddam Hussein commissioned ceramicist Saad Shaker to make a work for one of his palaces—a ceramic piece with 24-karat gold accents. (Click [HERE](#) to see it more clearly.)

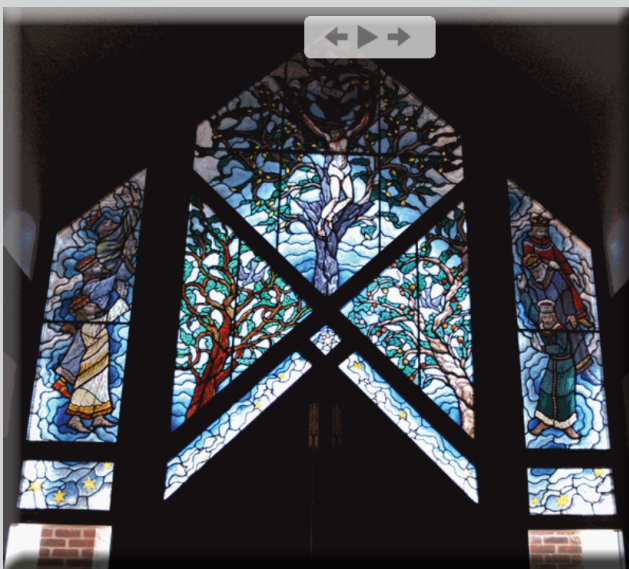
According to ancient Sumerian and Assyrian legend, eating the fruit from the tree of life made one immortal. Does this sound like anything you have heard before? A tree of life promising immortality?

Read Genesis chapter 3 and especially note verse 22. Read Revelation 2:7; and 22: 2, 14, 19. See possible answers at the bottom of the page.



1. What does the word immortal mean? _____
2. Other cultures and peoples have longed for immortality. Can you think of another example?

3. Is immortality a reality or just an idea people have? _____
4. Look closely at the stained-glass window. What additional idea does the imagery suggest about the concept of a tree of life? _____



Detail of Tree of Life by GK Chesterton at St. Teresa's Catholic Church, Beaconsfield, UK by Frshanadu

1. Never dying
2. Ancient Egyptians believed that the Pharaoh would go on a journey after death, so they buried the ruler with all kinds of things to help him on this journey. Ponce de Leon searched for the Fountain of Youth hoping to stay young forever.
3. John 11:25-26 are Jesus' words, "everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die." A relationship with Jesus brings a new kind of life. According to the Bible for those in Christ, our bodies will be changed to an immortal, imperishable body (1 Corinthians 15:50ff).
4. Jesus is hanging on the tree instead of the cross. The artist may be suggesting that the cross (known sometimes as "a tree") brings true (or eternal) life through Jesus Christ's sacrificial death. Our souls will live somewhere forever based on what we believe about Jesus' sacrifice (John 3:16).

Answer Key for Analyze Tree of Life

FURTHER EXPLORATION (VIDEOS AND MORE)

Explore these resources to increase your understanding:

- [*The Art of Islam at The Met and The Louvre: Foreign Yet Familiar*](#)
- [*Why Was the Islamic Golden Age of Science. . . Golden?*](#)
- [*TedED Lesson by Eric Broug: The Complex Geometry of Islamic Design*](#)
- [*Make a fresh Pakistani Fruit Salad for your family.*](#)
- [*What Makes the Geography of the Middle East so Special? By Fact Smart*](#)
- [*Egypt's Geography Explained in under 3 Minutes by Fact Smart*](#)

Due to the changing nature of web resources, M&G strongly urges you as the parent to preview these sites before your child accesses them. The fact that these sites are available on this handout does not imply that M&G endorses their content from the standpoint of morals, philosophy, theology, or scientific hypotheses.

FURTHER READING

The Arab World Thought of It: Inventions, Innovations and Amazing Facts by Saima S. Hussain

Suez Canal: Modern Wonders of the World by Valerie Bodden

Cultures of the World: Yemen Mosque by David Macaulay

The Tale of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves: A Story from the Arabian Nights by Eric Kimmel

Iqbal : A Brave Boy from Pakistan and Malala: A Brave Girl from Pakistan by Jeanette Winter

Tales Told in Tents: Stories from Central Asia by Sally Pomme Clayton (excellent book covering Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan)

The King's Chessboard by David Birch (very good, just about India)

Twenty-Two Cents: Muhammad Yunus and the Village Bank by Paula Yoo

Malala Yousafzai by Robin Doak

The Middle East, Kingfisher Knowledge Book by Philip Steele

Two Pairs of Shoes Retold by P. L. Travers

Nasreen's Secret School: A True Story from Afghanistan by Jeanette Winter

Usborne Children's World Cookbook by Angela Wilkes and Sarah Khan

The Patience Stone: A Persian Love Story by Wolfson and Clavero



STRING ART STARS

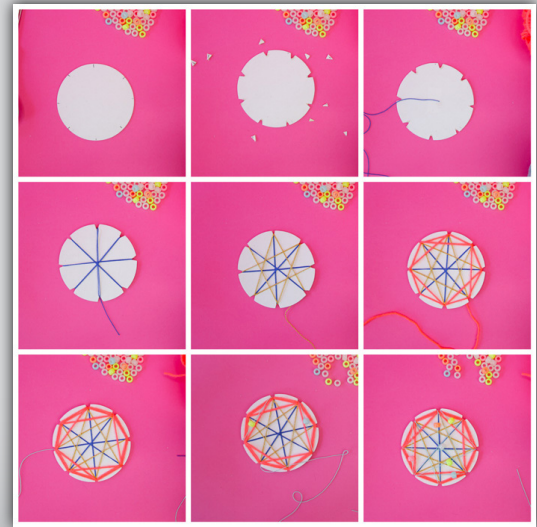
As is mentioned in the Ted Ed lesson: *Complex Geometry of Islamic Art* video, pointed stars (4, 5, and 6) play a major role in Arabic art. The easy-to-follow [VIDEO](#) shows you how to make your own version.

Materials:

- Paper coaster circles
- Embroidery Floss in different colors, at least 3
- Pencil
- Scissors

Directions:

Follow the 5 simple steps: prepare, cut, string, embellish, and finish. Visit this [LINK](#) for full details.



M&G EDUCATIONAL MISSION

Through tours, events, and publications, the Museum & Gallery seeks to partner with educators in fulfilling all of the National Visual Arts Content Standards. By integrating art into the core curriculum, M&G's goals are to teach children to value the arts, to communicate through the arts, to become creative problem solvers through the inclusion of STEAM-related concepts and fully-developed STEAM units, to understand history and culture in light of the arts, to improve literary interest and understanding through visual storytelling, to critique the arts, and to develop an aesthetic awareness of the arts. Through fulfilling the mission, M&G is able to help develop citizens who have the ability to think, feel, and understand the world in which they live.



www.bjumg.org