

# A Journey Through Time: The Story of Spain

## Materials Needed:

- Large roll of paper or several pieces of paper taped together (for the timeline)
- Colored markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- String or yarn
- Tape or clothespins
- Index cards or small pieces of colored paper
- Access to the internet for short, age-appropriate videos and images (with supervision)
- A few sheets of plain or construction paper for the final project
- Optional: Stickers, glue, scissors, and other craft supplies

## Learning Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Create a physical timeline of Spain's major historical periods, from the Romans to Modern Spain.
- Identify and explain at least one significant achievement for four different ruling kingdoms or eras.
- Describe the cultural and scientific advancements of Al-Andalus (The Golden Age) by creating a mini "museum exhibit."
- Design a creative travel brochure that connects Spain's history to its modern-day culture.

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## Lesson Activities

### Part 1: The Timeline Adventure (45 minutes)

**Goal:** To create a visual and physical representation of Spain's long and varied history.

1. **Set Up:** Unroll your large paper on the floor or a long table. Alternatively, hang a piece of string across a wall to serve as your timeline base. Draw a long line down the middle of the paper.
2. **Introduction - The Romans Arrive:** Begin by saying, "Our story of Spain starts a very long time ago. Imagine a place called 'Hispania.' This was the name the powerful Romans gave to the land we now call Spain. They built amazing things!"
  - On an index card, write "**Roman Rule (c. 218 BC - 476 AD).**"
  - **Achievement:** Write "Built aqueducts to carry water, straight roads, and big theaters." Draw a simple picture of an aqueduct or a Roman coin.
  - Place this card at the very beginning of your timeline.
3. **The Visigoths:** "After the Romans, a Germanic tribe called the Visigoths took over. They were the ones who truly united the area into a single kingdom for the first time."
  - Create a card for "**Visigothic Kingdom (c. 476 - 711 AD).**"
  - **Achievement:** "Combined Roman and Germanic laws into one code for everyone." Draw a crown or a scroll.
  - Add it to the timeline.
4. **Al-Andalus:** "Next comes one of the most fascinating periods in history! Moors from North Africa established a kingdom called Al-Andalus. This was a time of incredible learning and beauty." (We will come back to this in detail!)

- Create a card for "**Al-Andalus (711 - 1492).**"
  - **Achievement:** "Centers of learning, advances in medicine, mathematics, and beautiful architecture like the Alhambra." Draw a geometric tile pattern or an arch.
  - Place this long-lasting period on the timeline.
5. **The Reconquista & The Catholic Monarchs:** "For hundreds of years, Christian kingdoms in the north fought to retake the land. This period is called the Reconquista. It ended with two very famous rulers, Queen Isabella I and King Ferdinand II."
- Create a card for "**Rule of Isabella & Ferdinand (1492).**" This is a key year!
  - **Achievement:** "Funded Christopher Columbus's voyage, which connected Europe to the Americas." Draw a ship or a compass.
  - Add this pivotal moment to the timeline. This marks the end of Al-Andalus.
6. **The Spanish Empire:** "Thanks to the voyages they funded, Spain became a massive global empire, one of the most powerful in the world."
- Create a card for "**Spanish Empire (c. 1500s - 1800s).**"
  - **Achievement:** "A 'Golden Age' of art with famous painters like Velázquez and writers like Cervantes (who wrote Don Quixote)." Draw a painter's palette or a book.
  - Add this era to the timeline.
7. **Modern Spain:** "After many changes, including wars and different types of government, we arrive at the Spain we know today—a vibrant, democratic country."
- Create a card for "**Modern Spain (20th Century - Today).**"
  - **Achievement:** "A world leader in tourism, famous for its food, festivals (like La Tomatina), and unique culture." Draw a flamenco dancer or a soccer ball.
  - Place this card at the very end of the timeline.

**Teacher's Tip:** As you place each card, leave space between them. The length of the space should roughly represent how long the period lasted. For example, the space for Al-Andalus should be much longer than the space for Isabella & Ferdinand. This gives a great visual sense of time!

## Part 2: Museum Curator for Al-Andalus (30 minutes)

**Goal:** To explore the "Golden Age of Al-Andalus" through a creative, hands-on activity.

1. **Introduction:** Say, "Let's go back to that amazing period on our timeline: Al-Andalus. For a long time, it was a place where Muslim, Jewish, and Christian scholars and artists lived and worked together. They made incredible discoveries! You are now the curator of a new museum exhibit called 'The Wonders of Al-Andalus.' Your job is to select three 'artifacts' for our exhibit and explain why they are so important."
2. **Research & Curation:** Using safe, supervised internet searches (e.g., "science in Al-Andalus for kids," "architecture of the Alhambra"), help the student find three key achievements.
  - **Example 1: Medicine.** They learned how to perform surgeries that had never been done before and wrote huge books about medicine that were used for centuries.
  - **Example 2: Mathematics.** They helped introduce the concept of the number zero (0) to Europe and advanced algebra.
  - **Example 3: Architecture.** They built stunning palaces like the Alhambra in Granada, famous for its intricate tilework, beautiful courtyards with fountains, and delicate arches.
3. **Create the Exhibit:** For each chosen "artifact" or idea:
  - Draw a picture of it on an index card (e.g., a surgical tool, the number '0', a decorative arch).
  - On the back of the card, write 1-2 sentences explaining what it is and why it was important. For example: "This is an astrolabe. Scholars in Al-Andalus used it to study the stars and

navigate. This knowledge helped sailors explore the world."

4. **Present the Exhibit:** Have the student present their three artifacts to you, explaining their choices just like a real museum curator would.

### Part 3: Modern Spain Travel Agency (30 minutes)

**Goal:** To connect Spain's history with its vibrant modern culture.

1. **The Task:** Say, "Now that you're an expert on Spain's history, let's jump to the present day! Your final task is to create a travel brochure to convince people to visit modern Spain. The trick is, you must include hints of its amazing history."
2. **Brainstorming:** Fold a piece of paper into thirds to make a brochure. Brainstorm what makes Spain a great place to visit today. Think about food (paella, tapas), festivals (La Tomatina, Running of the Bulls), art (Picasso, Dalí), architecture (Gaudí's Sagrada Família), and sports (soccer!).
3. **Designing the Brochure:**
  - **Front Panel:** A catchy title like "Visit Vibrant Spain!" and a colorful drawing.
  - **Inside Panel 1: See the History!** Suggest a place to visit that connects to your timeline. Example: "Visit Granada to see the incredible Alhambra palace, a treasure from the time of Al-Andalus!"
  - **Inside Panel 2: Taste the Culture!** Describe some delicious Spanish food or a fun festival.
  - **Inside Panel 3: Fun Facts!** Include a fun fact you learned. Example: "Did you know the Spanish language evolved from the Latin spoken by the Romans?"
4. **Share Your Work:** Have the student present their brochure as if they were a travel agent trying to sell a vacation package.

## Assessment (Informal & Project-Based)

Learning can be checked by observing the completion and quality of the three main projects:

- **The Timeline:** Is it in the correct chronological order? Does each card include a key achievement? Can the student briefly explain one or two of the periods in their own words?
- **The Museum Exhibit:** Did the student choose three relevant achievements from Al-Andalus? Can they explain the importance of their chosen "artifacts"?
- **The Travel Brochure:** Does the brochure creatively feature modern Spanish culture? Does it successfully link at least one modern attraction to a historical period from the timeline?

## Differentiation & Extension

- **For Extra Support:** Provide pre-printed cards with dates and events for the timeline; the student's task is to illustrate them and put them in order. Offer sentence starters for the museum exhibit descriptions, such as "This is important because..."
- **For an Extra Challenge:** Ask the student to add the "Spanish Civil War" to their timeline and research its impact on modern Spain. Have them research a specific historical figure (like El Cid, Isabella I, or Maimonides) and write a short biography to add to the timeline. They could also compare the architecture of a Roman aqueduct to a Moorish palace.