

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Mezquita of Cordoba

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1. The Mezquita of Córdoba is the perfect example of a palimpsest. This term is derived from the study of ancient documents, where it was discovered that a single sheet of paper might be reused over and over again. This resulted in layers of text still being visible to the trained eye. In the same way, the Mezquita has layers of history and use. Four cultures utilized this site and structure. Identify and put them in their correct chronological order:

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2. Courtyards are a critical design feature of many Mediterranean cultures, primarily because they provide an enclosed space that is more protected from the hot climate of the region. Explore the courtyard of the Mezquita and think of other courtyards you may have visited. Besides cooling, what features of a courtyard do you find to be most attractive or useful?

3. Based on your conclusions in the previous question, do you think a courtyard be useful where you lived? Why or why not?



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4. Both the Muslim and Christian designers created very ornate decorations on the portions of the Mezquita that they built, however they are very different in style and the themes that they used. Contrast the Christian chapel in the middle of the Mezquita to the mihrab on the southern wall. What differences do you notice? Are there any similarities?

## FASCINATING FACT

The design of the Mezquita courtyard is the oldest existing garden design in the world. It is over 900 years old!



5. Look at the orange trees in the courtyard. How do you think that they are watered? How does this method compare to other ways that we water plants in our landscapes? Do you think the method in the Court of the Oranges uses more or less water?

6. One of the most amazing things about the Mezquita is the number of patterns found there. Draw two of the patterns you find most interesting in the boxes below. Pay attention to how the pattern is created and try to think about how the original designers figured out how to create it.

