



## City Coat of Arms

**Grade Level:** Grades 7–12

**Objective:** To become familiar with the ABC World Culture database while learning more about the iconography of coats of arms.

**Duration:** 1 – 2 hours

**Materials:** City Coat of Arms instructions, individual access to ABC World Culture for all participating students, craft materials

**Instructions:** Review the coats of arms or seals of the administrative divisions of 5 different countries. Then use their iconography to create a coat of arms for your own city or town.

**Assignment 1:** Review coats of arms:

- Select 5 countries and navigate to the Administrative Divisions submodule for each (found under Government). If one or more of your chosen countries does not depict coats of arms or seals with their administrative divisions, choose another country or countries until you have 5.
- Review each country's various coats of arms or seals, making note of design motifs that appeal to you, either visually (for the way they look) or symbolically (for what you imagine they might mean).

**Assignment 2:** Plan your city's coat of arms:

- Look at your list of design motifs. What do you think each image is intended to signify? For example, common symbols include a lion, which you might decide represents power, a crown which might represent rule, or an oak tree which might represent stability and longevity. Write the meaning you imagine each symbol has beside the name.
- Then think about your city or town. What makes it special? Make a list of the qualities it has that you think should be represented on its coat of arms.
- Match symbols and likely meanings from the countries you reviewed on ABC World Culture with the list of your city's qualities. Choose 5 to work into a coat of arms.

**Assignment 3:** Create and share your coat of arms:

- A coat of arms is typically shaped like a shield. Look at your list of 5 design motifs and decide how to arrange them in a shield space. Which motifs should be dominant? Which should be smaller and placed off to the side?
- Draw your city's coat of arms based on your plan, or print out images from ABC World Culture that feature your motifs and cut and paste them onto a shield-shaped piece of paper.
- Show your coat of arms to a classmate or parent, explaining the meaning behind each of the symbols you've chosen and how each represents your city.