



The Extraordinary Gertrude Bell

Classroom activity 6

KS2



6

EXPLORE HOUSING AROUND THE WORLD



The fascination of Gertrude Bell for Middle Eastern art and architecture lasted for all her life and is documented in all her works. She spent many years in the Middle East, publishing important archaeological work on the Byzantine churches at Binbirkilise in Turkey ([The Thousand and one Churches](#)) and on the Islamic palace at Ukhaidir ([Palace and Mosque at Ukhaidir](#)). During her numerous travels, Gertrude Bell pictured payed special attention to people's housing, often taking numerous pictures of the buildings she visited.

RESEARCH TOOLS:

- Discover Gertrude Bell Research website: [click here](#).
- Read Gertrude Bell Comics: [click here](#).
- Watch the introductory video: [click here](#).
- Learn about geometric patterns in Islamic architecture: [click here](#).
- Look at Gertrude Bell's pictures of the diverse houses and buildings she discovered during her travels
 - The beehive houses near Aleppo, in Syria. Search the Gertrude Bell Archive here: <http://www.gerty.ncl.ac.uk/> → Click on Pictures → Search pictures → Enter: **Beehive houses**.

- The buildings at Hail, in Saudi Arabia. Search the Gertrude Bell Archive here: <http://www.gerty.ncl.ac.uk/> → Click on Click on Pictures → Search pictures → Enter: **Hail**.
- The tents in Saudi Arabia, Syria, Jordan and Turkey. Search the Gertrude Bell Archive here: <http://www.gerty.ncl.ac.uk/> → Click on Click on Pictures → Search pictures → Enter: **Tents**.

FURTHER READING:

- Jackson M. P. and Parkin A. (eds.), 2015, *The Extraordinary Gertrude Bell*, Tyne Bridge Publishing (opens a pdf file): [click here](#).

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

- Ask your children to look at some of the houses pictured by Gertrude Bell during her travels. Discuss with them why they believe houses in different parts of the world have different shapes and are made with different materials.
- Now ask them to get inspired from Gertrude Bell's pictures and to design their own house. How would it look like? Which materials would they use to build it and why?
- Cut out all the drawings and create the skyline of your classroom city.

LINKS TO THE CURRICULUM:

Architecture and design, Geography, History

KEYWORDS:

Designing, drawing, colouring, cutting, exploring new formats to draw on, exploring different buildings in the world, heritage.