

From Mecca to Musselburgh

Islam in the Scottish Context

Teacher's Pack



AMINA
The Muslim Woman's
Resource Centre



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
The Alwaleed Centre

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Foreword

This resource is a collaboration between the Al Waleed Centre, University of Edinburgh and Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre, funded by the City of Edinburgh Council and the Scottish Government.

This is hopefully one edition of many interactive and easily accessible resources for teachers aimed at providing our educators with the tools they need.

The voices of those practicing religions that are being taught in schools have been long absent but, as we understand it, sorely missed. This toolkit has been conceived and written from the perspectives of Muslims in Scotland to reflect their personal experiences with regards to key aspects of their lives. We hope that this will positively contribute to the education of generations of young people by linking our communities together in a meaningful way and allowing them to explore their own beliefs and values in relation to others.

We'd like to take this opportunity to give thanks to the City of Edinburgh Council for providing us with the means to develop the toolkit and to the Al Waleed Centre for their help and contribution of the first chapter on the history of Islam in Scotland and resource recommendations.

We'd also like to thank Shaykh Hasan Rabbani, our staff and volunteers here at Amina MWRC, for sharing their knowledge and experiences of Islam and to the teachers we have consulted to keep the toolkit relevant for use in schools.

The Alwaleed Centre for the Study of Islam in the Contemporary World at the University of Edinburgh
www.alwaleed.ed.ac.uk

Who are we?

Amina is an award-winning organisation, recognised by Muslim and Minority Ethnic communities in Scotland for its pioneering and responsive approach to addressing the issues and needs of Muslim and ME women. We are a national hub for gaining access to, and consulting with Muslim and ME women across Scotland.

We offer a range of tailored support services such as a national signposting and 'listening ear' helpline service, employability guidance, befriending, peer group support through 'self-care' workshops under the Violence Against Women programme and refugee support work to facilitate the integration of people new to the country. Amina is currently the only organisation in Scotland to develop campaigns to challenge attitudes and stereotypes about Muslim women.

As part of this work we have been running a schools project for the past 5 years to facilitate community cohesion and increase understanding of Islam from our volunteers own experiences. As of 2017, we have reached over 20 schools 100 classrooms and approximately 3500 pupils across Scotland. This has included Stirlingshire, Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, Argyll and Bute and Ayrshire. We have visited schools as far West as the Ardnamurchan Peninsula, past Fort William and have also delivered in primary schools on request.

Who are our funders and collaborators?

This toolkit was put together by development workers at Amina MWRC and the Al Waleed Centre, University of Edinburgh for secondary school teachers nationwide. We conducted focus groups with teachers in order to guide us on how best to present the material and created content based on questions and input from students as part of our ongoing schools project.

The research and design of the resource was funded by City of Edinburgh Council as part of their Shared Vision - Your Decision scheme, 2017/18.

The Alwaleed Centre at the University of Edinburgh is delighted to have partnered with AMINA to produce this creative and important toolkit for teachers in Scotland. As a research and outreach centre focused on promoting a better understanding of Islam and Islamic culture, we have spent a lot of time in classrooms working with teachers and pupils across Scotland to help support high quality teaching on Islam. Since the centre began its schools outreach work back in 2010, the one concern we have heard more than any other from the teachers we have worked with is the lack of quality teaching resources on Islam that reflect the realities and experiences of Muslims in contemporary Scotland. This is why we are very happy to have partnered with AMINA to produce this valuable and timely toolkit that not only provides a wealth of information about Muslim belief and practice, but also sheds light on the lived experiences of Scottish Muslims as they apply their faith to their daily lives. Having worked closely with AMINA on a number of projects and witnessed the transformative work they do in schools across the country, we had no doubt that this toolkit would add significant value to the teaching of Islam in Scottish classrooms. We hope teachers find this toolkit useful as they navigate their pupils through the many fascinating dimensions of Islamic history, belief and practice, and we look forward to supporting the development of further resources in the years to come.

Tom Lea

Outreach and Projects Manager

“Islam was humanised in an accessible and clear manner for pupils. All staff involved have also greatly benefitted by hearing how belief and practice are put into real world action.” – **Teacher, Duncanrig Secondary**

What is the purpose of this toolkit?

The purpose of this toolkit is to equip teachers with relevant and assessable material with which to engage pupils in critical thought and to create units of study for Religious and Moral Education (RME).

This resource is aimed at teachers supporting classes from S2 - S4 (ages 12-16) but can be used for a range of age groups.

There is scope to create full lesson plans using the content provided or to use individual elements to complement existing units.

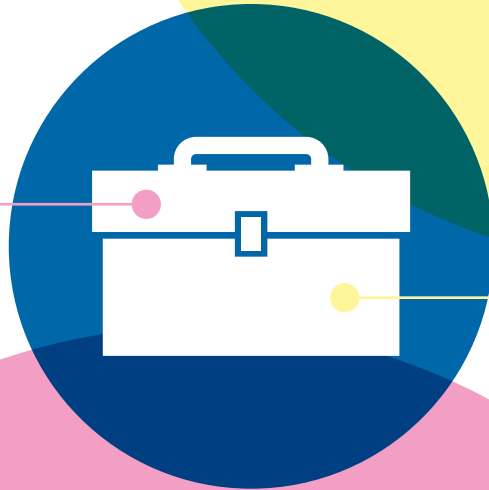
What does this toolkit contain?

We have sought to include visual, interactive and personal learning elements that help students relate to the idea of practicing a religion like Islam and where their own values come from. Each section is cross-referenced with activities that can be found at the back of the toolkit. Suggestions for further reading and resources can be found at the end of every chapter.

This toolkit contains 5 chapters based around specific areas of study:

- 1. From Mecca to Musselburgh: a short summary of Islam and its journey to Scotland.**
- 2. Living as a religious minority (Higher objectives - the Shariah)**
- 3. Articles of faith - 6 Beliefs**
- 4. Foundations of practice - 5 Pillars**

Each chapter is prefaced with intended learning objectives and activities relating to RME benchmarks as stipulated by the SQA and Education Scotland.



Additional resources include:

- A historical timeline for the growth of Islam;
- Answers to FAQs from pupils presented by our own volunteers;
- An insider's look at Shariah from our own Shaykh (scholar) Hasan Rabbani;
- Personal blogs about the lives of practicing Muslims
- Video links and more

From Mecca to Musselburgh

Islam's journey to Scotland



Islam's journey to Scotland

Islam is the world's second-largest religious tradition with nearly a quarter of the human beings alive today considering themselves to be Muslim. Although Islam emerged in 7th Century Arabia, it quickly spread beyond its Arabian homeland to establish itself as a global religion. Today, Muslim communities can be found in almost every country of the world, with the numbers of Muslims in many western countries like Scotland growing consistently year-on-year.

The First 100 Years

The Islamic tradition dates the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) death to the year 632CE. During the final years of his life, Muhammad's (pbuh) religion of Islam established itself as a major force throughout large parts of central Arabia. Although there is evidence of Muslims settling in East Africa during the Prophet's own lifetime, it was the century immediately following his death that witnessed the spread of Islam far beyond the borders of the Arabian Peninsula. Despite three civil wars which tore the early Muslim community apart, by 750CE the Umayyad Caliphate ruled over an area spanning nearly 6 million square miles, stretching from modern day Spain in the west to the borders of modern day Pakistan in the east.

Over the centuries that followed, the message of Islam spread even further. Through conquest, trade, migration, missionary work, scientific collaboration and cultural transmission, Islam was introduced to an ever-widening diversity of peoples, places and cultures.

Today, Islam is the second largest religious tradition in the world, second only to Christianity in terms of numbers of adherents worldwide. Although Islam traces its origins to the Middle East, it is important to remember that the majority of the world's Muslims do not live in Middle Eastern countries.

Exercise: Top Ten Muslim Populations
(Please see activity card 1)

Learning Outcome: This exercise emphasises the often unrecognised diversity of the Muslim world by asking learners to consider which countries they think might be home to the world's largest Muslim populations.

Islam in Scotland

Evidence suggests that British traders, including many Scots, came into contact with North African Muslims as early as the 8th Century. Indeed, a gold coin minted by the Anglo Saxon King Offa and dating to around 776 CE was discovered which appeared to be modelled on the North African Dinar. It even featured the Muslim Shahadah written in Arabic!

The first recorded mention of Muslims in Scotland comes from a 16th Century account written by the Lord High Treasurer describing North African (probably Moroccan) musicians performing at the court of King James IV. This record does not actually state the religion of the musicians it describes but historians have deduced that they must have been Muslim based on their description in the sources.

The first officially recorded Muslim in Scotland was Ishmael Bashaw, a Turkish man who found his way to Scotland in the late 18th Century via Spain, and who later married an Englishwoman and settled south of the border.

The British Empire's expansion into India played a key role in deepening the relationship between Scotland and the Muslim world. India was, and still is, home to one of the world's largest Muslim populations and, from the late 18th Century onward, a significant number of Indian Muslims travelled to Scotland for both temporary and permanent employment, as well as to take advantage of Scotland's highly regarded universities. Glasgow and Edinburgh attracted the lion's share of early Muslim migrants from the Subcontinent and elsewhere throughout the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries, but small Muslim populations were also recorded in Dundee, Dumbarton, Clydebank and Aberdeen.

Post-War Migration

Although Scotland can trace its connection to the Islamic world back over a millennium, it was not until the second half of the 20th Century that significant numbers of Muslims began to settle in Scotland. Britain was rebuilding after the Second World War and relied heavily on migrant workers, the majority of whom came from the Indian Subcontinent. 1947 witnessed the partition of India and the birth of Pakistan, and it is from Pakistan that the majority of Scotland's first generation of post-war Muslim immigrants came. However, by the early 1960s, the numbers were still very modest, with the Scottish Muslim population totalling just 4000.

The 1960s witnessed a major increase in the number of Muslims arriving in Scotland. This had much to do with the 1962 Commonwealth Act which, for the first time, regulated unrestricted migration to the UK from Commonwealth nations like India and Pakistan. Large volumes of people moved to Scotland in advance of the Act, and many people who were already Scotland-based brought their families over to join them from countries like Pakistan and India.

Many of the first generation of post-war Muslim settlers in Scotland did not expect to stay in Scotland for very long. Many planned to work for a few years, sending money back to their country of origin before eventually moving back themselves. Yet the majority did stay and the next generation of Scottish Muslims was born and bred here in Scotland.

Exercise: Stories of the First Generation

Learning Outcome: By engaging with videos from "<http://www.colourfulheritage.com/splash/index.html>" Colourful Heritage Project website, learners will be encouraged to consider why Scotland's first generation of Muslims travelled to Scotland and what they experienced when they arrived.

Islam in Contemporary Scotland

Since the 1960s, the Muslim population of Scotland has increased dramatically. The first generation raised their families in Scotland and subsequent generations did likewise. Muslims have become an integral part of Scotland's multicultural, multi-religious identity, and a genuinely "Scottish" Islam has emerged. The 2011 Census revealed that there were roughly 77,000 Muslim living all across Scotland, accounting for around 1.5% of the total population. Although two thirds of Scotland's Muslims trace their heritage back to the Indian subcontinent (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh), the Scottish Muslim population is very diverse, with connections to a wide variety of Muslim majority countries near and far.



Further Reading and Resources

*FAQs by Amina staff/volunteers and Shaykh Hassan Rabbani

- Stefano Bonino, *Muslims in Scotland, 2017: The Making of Community in a Post 9/11 World*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Bashir Maan, *The Thistle and the Crescent*, Argyll, 2009: Argyll Publishing.
- Khadijah Elshayyal, *Scottish Muslims in Numbers, 2017: Understanding Scotland's Muslim population through the 2011 Census*, Edinburgh: the Alwaleed Centre, (report available to download at: www.alwaleed.ed.ac.uk/scottishmuslims).
- The Colourful Heritage Project (oral history video project capturing the experiences of Scotland's first generation of Muslims): www.colourfulheritage.com.
- Islamic Tartan website: www.islamictartan.com (includes an excellent overview of the history of Islam in Scotland).
- More information on King Offa's dinar coin: www.muslimmuseum.org.uk/king-offas-dinar/
- Amal Kassir, *TedXMileHighWomen 2016*
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIAm1g_Vgn0 – "Muslim on a plane" spoken word.

Islam in Scotland

Life as a minority



photo credit: @ Jamie Mitchell

Objectives:

RME 3-05c – I can describe how the values of world religions contribute to, as well as challenge, Scottish and other societies

RME 3-07/4-07a – I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values

RME 3-09b – I am developing my own understanding of values such as honesty, respect and compassion and am able to identify how these values might be applied in relation to moral issues.

RME 4-09c – I can explain my own responses to the benefits and challenges presented by the increasing diversity of belief to modern Scotland.

Islam in Scotland

According to the last census, approximately 1.45% of Scotland's population defined themselves as Muslim in 2011. The Muslim population increased by over 34,000 between the 2001 and 2011 Censuses, and Muslims remain the largest minority faith population in Scotland – larger than all the other minority faiths combined.

Nonetheless, the Muslim population is very small in proportion to the overall population. Muslims are about 1 in 70 of the Scottish population. For comparison, Muslims are just under 1 in 20 of the population of the UK as a whole.

In this chapter we will cover topics in Islam that are commonly brought up in relation to Muslim life:

1. Hijab

2. Examples of Shariah in Practice

- Jihad
- Halal Food

Discussion:

What do you think of when you hear the words Islam or Muslim?

My identity :

What are you trying to give up or do more of now?

Learning Outcomes :

This quick exercise gives pupils a chance to relate to the extent to which religious minorities feel free to express themselves and the impact this can have on one's life.

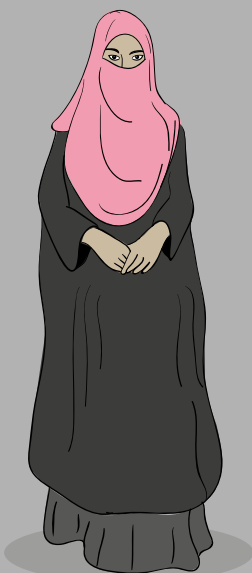
Hijab

Hijab is a highly recognised term. It is commonly understood as the piece of cloth that Muslim women wear to cover their heads. Hijab and its sisters – niqab and burka – are often used interchangeably. In reality, these are all levels of covering that are chosen by Muslim women according to preference or their perception of what is required of them by God.

Hijab is often worn with cultural and stylistic modifications. Niqab and burka are more or less set features as shown below (they do not have to be any certain colour):

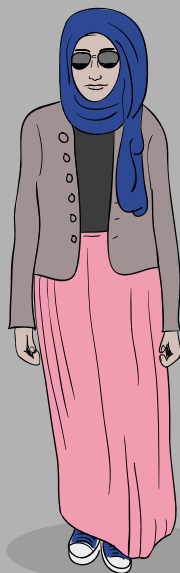
Niqab

A veil covering the head and face, but not the eyes, usually worn with a loose black garment (abaya) that covers from head to feet.



Hijab

A general term meaning 'to cover' or 'veil', most commonly refers to a headscarf that covers the hair and neck, but not the face.



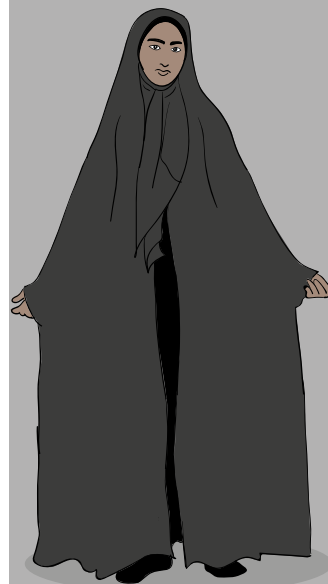
Burka

A veil that covers the entire body and face, with a mesh window or grille across the eyes for a woman to see out of.



Chador

A full-length cloak worn by many Iranian women, typically held closed at the front by the wearers hands or under their arms.



Although hijab is exemplified through head covering, it is in fact viewed as an entire concept concerning modesty and submission to God. Hijab, like any other part of faith starts from the inside. Forcing someone to wear hijab is like forcing them to embrace religion, it does not mean the same unless done willingly. All Muslims are to challenge oppression as we will see in the following section on Jihad.

Activity:

Stereotyping Exercise

Learning Outcome:

This exercise can be used to explore stereotypes associated with Muslim women.

It also leaves space for discussion around hijab. Relevant to units on media and representation as well as religious tradition.



Further Reading and Resources

*FAQs by Amina staff/volunteers and Shaykh Hassan Rabbani

- Amina MWRC, Does Islam enable women to work/ be independent, 2017*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdynULLUXK8>
- How do you feel about hijab? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCvvVnB5P8c>*
- Are feminism and Islam compatible? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FDcfTcM1pWs>*
- Forced marriage <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OdGPix9hQf8>*
- Do you discriminated for what you do, wear or just being Muslim?*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPPy7PUvD5w>

What is the Shariah?

The literal meaning for Shariah is path to water.

This is an important metaphor for the way

Muslims are meant to perceive the lifestyle

outlined for them in the Qur'an and the Sunnah

(ways of the Prophet).

A path to something pure and vital to life.

Finding the Shariah

The Shariah is another name for an ideal way a Muslim can live. It is a concept that takes into account aspects of culture, time and circumstances to allow Muslims to adapt to the changing world. It can inspire how Islamic law (fiqh) can be created and interpreted. The Shariah, a term that originally denoted a path to water in the desert and came to mean the path of good conduct that is pleasing to God, frames how a Muslim can live their life in the best way to achieve success and inspire people to the same, in this life and in the next.

Islamic law (fiqh) is meticulously crafted through careful research of the Qur'an and hadith (narrations describing events in the life of the Prophet or of his followers) and by generations of scholarly consensus. Islamic law changes in accordance with time, place, and context and is related to the higher objectives of the Shariah: the preservation of life, religion, intellect, family and property."

Hadith Text

The hadith are narrations of what the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, did, and approved of, along with the actions of some of his most important companions. The hadith represent the second most important source of moral guidance after the Qur'an, and consequently are a key part of the Shariah. They number in their thousands, and range across all aspects of the Prophet's life: from his relations with his family, to his political leadership, to his personal hygiene, which to many Muslims represent a sublime example to be followed in their own lives. Given their importance, the hadith have been carefully passed down over the centuries by Muslim scholars, who developed a highly sophisticated system to preserve them from distortion and forgery. To this end, an individual hadith comprises two parts: the text of the narration itself, and its chain of transmission. This chain takes the form of a long list of names: beginning with the original circumstances of the hadith and who was present at the time. This initial narrator is then the first link in the chain, with the person they related it to becoming the second link, and so on. Given that many of the hadith concern intimate details of the Prophet's life, a great number of them are narrated by his wives, foremost among them Aisha

Shariah

Jihad

Jihad in Islam means to strive or struggle in the way of God with determination. Its literal meaning comes from the root word "juhd"/"effort". Another related word is "ijtihad" which means "working hard or diligently."

There are different forms to Jihad as understood by scholars but it is an integral part of a Muslim's faith. It can cover a range of personal and community struggles such as speaking out for or against something, controlling your anger, how you spend your money and military action to name a few.

"The believers are those only who believe in God and His Messenger and strive with their wealth and their lives for the cause of God. Such are the sincere." (Qur'an: 49:15)

The highest form of Jihad is against one's own ego and desires. It is known as "Jihad al-akbar" literally "the greatest jihad".

Discussion:

What are you trying to give up or do more of now?

Learning Outcome:

Pupils are encouraged to explore their own values. Can be paired with further discussion questions below on military jihad to reflect on Islamic principles with regards to morality.

Military jihad

"Fight in the cause of God those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for God does not love the transgressors" (Qur'an: 2:190)

Military jihad is, in essence, only allowed as an act of defense of Islam and Muslims.

Muslims cannot fight or harm women, children, the sick, the elderly, farmers and civilians or the innocent. They are also prevented from harming plants, homes, property or animals as mentioned in narrations pertaining to periods of war in Islamic history*.

Discussion:

i) What is the purpose of war ii) do you agree with the rules for Jihad or would you add/take away any of them?

Halal food

Actions and behaviours which are approved or valid in the Shariah are termed as halal, the opposite – actions that are prohibited- are termed haraam. Actions and behaviours of all types can be halal or haraam. This covers from how you earn and spend your money to how you treat people. One apparent example of how this impacts the life of a Muslim in the Scottish context would be the food we consume.

Halal food in its complete form should cover:

- An ethical method of farming
- Ethical business: Sustainability, pricing
- Pronouncing God's name over the animal to be slaughtered
- The method of slaughter: quick, clean death; all blood should be drained from the animal

Each component of the supply chain should be handled in an ethical manner befitting the principles of fairness, justice, guardianship over the planet and what lives on it and sincere gratitude for what we have been provided by God.

For Muslims, the consumption of wholesome and ethically produced goods is preferred where possible.

Meats which are not halal regardless of how they're produced are:

- Any meat from a pig
- Animals who have died without being slaughtered
- Meals which have been created using products from animals considered as impure
- Alcohol (to a greater or lesser degree dependent on school of thought but largely considered a mainstream opinion)

If there was no opportunity to procure halal meat, then a Muslim would revert to the higher objectives of the Shariah – protecting life – and they would be allowed to consume whatever was available (dependent on the degree of need).

Discussion point:

Is it important to consider what you eat?

Learning Outcome:

What it means to consider ethical consumption of natural resources, using Islam as a starting point to develop students' own beliefs and values.



Further Reading and Resources

*FAQs by Amina staff/volunteers and Shaykh Hassan Rabbani

- Is murder permitted in Islam? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pc7_YHxCB2g*
- Is there still a death penalty in Islam? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6WlwluovdQ>*
- Association of Islam with ISIS <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grxAr1f7i1g>*
- What do you think about ISIS? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcvDU9bjln4>*
- Daniel Brown, A New Introduction to Islam, Chapter 18 "Islam in the 21st Century", pp. 335- 351, 2017: Wiley-Blackwell
- Karen Armstrong, Islam: A Short History, 2002: Modern Library
- John Esposito and Natana DeLong-Bas, Shariah: What Everyone Needs to Know, 2018, USA: Oxford University Press

6 Beliefs

Articles of faith



Objectives:

RME 3-09d – I am developing my understanding of the nature of belief and morality.

RME 3-04a – having reflected upon sources from world religions, I can explain some key beliefs about deity, the human condition and the natural world, and how these beliefs lead to actions for followers of those religions

RME 4-09d – I am able to offer a basic analysis of the origins and development of beliefs and morality.

ALLAH

The name for God in Arabic is Allah. Muslims believe that God is One, He has no partner nor children, He is the Creator of all and there is none like Him. He has many qualities and attributes. Some of the most frequently mentioned names are the Most Merciful and Most Kind.

His qualities and attributes are referred to as his names and he has 99 of them. People memorise and recite his names to remember who they are worshipping and why.

The most common of his names is Akbar which means 'Greatest' or 'Greater'

Resource link: 99 names of God



PROPHETS

The figures in Islamic history who we call the prophets were messengers of God. Even though Muslims believe miracles were performed through these people, it is very important that they are only believed to be human as all power belongs to God.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is considered the last messenger that has come to humankind with any kind of revelation for us. He is very special to the Muslims and his life has been very carefully remembered so that they can live by his example.¹

He is considered as the best of creation, this is one of the reasons why we say peace be upon him – pbuh- after mentioning him, written, spoken or in our thoughts. He was a tradesman and an illiterate man but he went on to lead the Muslims and founded the religion on the strength of the faith he inspired in other people by the will of God.

Muslims do not make sculptures and pictures of the Prophet (pbuh) as they believe no creation should be worshipped except for Allah. The reverence Muslims have for the Prophet (pbuh) because of his closeness with Allah and his own character could lead to actions such as commemorating statues and/or pictures of his likeness which is considered like worship. The Prophet's grave (pbuh) in Madinah is carefully monitored to prevent anyone from increasing its importance to equal that of the Ka'bah.

One of the most inspiring women in the history of Islam is the Prophet's (pbuh) first wife Khadijah. They were married before he became a Messenger.

She was a wealthy business owner and approached him to suggest marriage when she was 40 years old and he was 23.

The first revelation that came to the Prophet was a terrifying encounter where Angel Gabriel came to him as he was meditating on Mount Hira and held him so tight he couldn't breathe while telling him to "Read! In the name of your Lord". But of course he couldn't read. He was asked again and again and on the 3rd time he was told to repeat after the angel. He received the first message of a divine creator and went home shaken to his wife, who held him and said she believed every word.

Discussion points:

There are many prophets you may have heard of; can the class guess who they are from the clues below?

- 1. He received the 10 commandments and split the Red Sea in two to escape the Pharaoh.**
- 2. He built a massive boat and filled it with two of every animal**
- 3. He is popularly known as the "Prince of Dreams"**
- 4. He was the first man**
- 5. His mother's name was Mariam in Arabic**

Contrary to popular belief, Muslims believe that Jesus, Moses and Abraham (peace be upon them all) were all Prophets of Allah. They were all sent with the same message: to promote the Oneness of Allah.

1. See page on Shariah for further information of how his life was captured through narrations known as Hadith

ANGELS

The word angel is used as a translation for the Arabic word Malak. Muslims are asked to believe in Malaika (pl.) and God's word was passed down to the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) through one of these beings. God can give them the ability to take different forms, but they are generally unseen and are genderless. They are described as pure beings, made to worship God and do his bidding.

Discussion points:

- How do you imagine an angel?
- What have you heard about what they do?

Fallen Angels: Where did the devil come from?

Muslims don't typically believe that the devil was an angel. This is different to the idea of a fallen angel, Lucifer, in Christian traditions. According to the Qur'an, he was another type of being, a jinn, made of the essence of a smokeless fire. In the story of Adam, Iblees (the devil) refuses to bow down to Adam when the angels are all commanded to prostrate to God's new creation. From this we can infer that he was at a level of piety where he would stand amongst the ranks of the angels in worship.

He was told that he was condemned for his insubordination and arrogance. It is said that he asked his Lord to hold off on his punishment until the end of time until he could try and show Him that his creation was weak.

Activity:

- Comparing traditions - Angels

Learning Outcome:

Comparison of different religious traditions using a popular symbol of the supernatural.



BOOKS

Muslims believe God revealed books to Prophets as guidance.

Muslims believe the Torah was revealed to Moses, the Bible to Jesus, the Scrolls to Abraham and the Psalms to David (peace be upon them all). However, over time, Muslims believe these texts were altered by people and reformed.

The Qur'an is considered the final revelation, consolidating all the books/scriptures that came before it. It is the word of God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) over 1400 years ago and has never been changed

What is Qur'an

The word 'Qur'an' means 'a recitation' in Arabic.

Muslims believe the Qur'an is directly from God, delivered to the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in sections over 23 years through Angel Gabriel in the Arabic language. These words have been recorded in one book and have been preserved by memorisation, constant repetition and careful practice and study ever since the words were first spoken, therefore it would be very difficult to add to or take away from.

Many Muslims are taught how to read the Qur'an in Arabic as children and some go on to memorise the book.

There are translations of the Qur'an in almost every language so that Muslims can read the Qur'an in their native tongue. However, reading the Qur'an out loud in Arabic is an act of worship as Muslims believe they are reading words directly from God. It's both a celebration and remembrance of Him.



What is the Qur'an for?

In summary, the Qur'an tells Muslims what they should have faith in and guidance on how to live their lives. Faith is a strong belief in something that you can't produce concrete proof for.

The Qur'an contains stories from history, lessons from prophets before Muhammad (pbuh) and guidelines for what should be important in your life.

Showing respect for the Qur'an:

Different cultures may have different ways of treating the Qur'an with respect but we have outlined a few here.

- People can prepare for reading the Qur'an through ritual washing
- People give the Qur'an an elevated status. This can be expressed physically by not putting things on top of the Qur'an or placing it on a higher shelf
- When the Qur'an is being recited, keep quiet
- It is better to recite it slowly and rhythmically
- It is important to reflect on what you're reading or hearing

Resource: Audio link - Recitation of Qur'an

The importance of Language

The Qur'an was written and preserved in an old version of Arabic. It is read from right to left. Many people worked hard to collect sayings of the Prophet that helped to understand the best ways of interpreting the meanings of the Qur'an.

Even now, scholars all over the world study these sciences of preserving and applying these teachings. Alternative interpretations of the meanings of the Qur'an do arise amongst the scholarship but are regulated to make sure the essence of the message is not lost. Scholars have to take permission to teach and must be competent in several skills before being allowed to do so.

As new converts came to Islam and people's understanding of Quranic Arabic was not learned as strictly as at the time of the Prophet (pbuh), the number of experienced scholars was far less, relative to the growth of the Muslims. Therefore, differences emerged in the interpretation of the meanings of the scriptural texts and recorded narrations. This led to sects and divisions in the Muslim community which are still evident today. Islamic tradition would suggest that the Shi'a emerged as a result of the succession debate rather than scriptural interpretation. Who should lead the community? Abu Bakr or 'Ali? Interpretation of Qur'an certainly played a part in this but I think this sentence might over-simplify things a bit.

Activity:

Communication

Learning Outcome:

Pupils are encouraged to critically evaluate the process of revelation and passing down knowledge.

Can also be used at the start of the unit to demonstrate the need to establish a safe space when talking about religious beliefs in mixed classes.

The example of halal food

There are groups of people who take a very literal view of what's written and people who take it to be fundamentally abstract. Mainstream Sunni Islam consciously attempts to detail a middle path and has consistently maintained a majority following in the religion.

This is widely evidenced by interpretations of what counts as halal food.

In chapter 5, verse 3 of the Quran we are told the boundaries of what we can eat:

"Prohibited to you are dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah, and [those animals] killed by strangling or by a violent blow or by a head-long fall or by the goring of horns, and those from which a wild animal has eaten, except what you [are able to] slaughter [before its death], and those which are sacrificed on stone altars, and [prohibited is] that you seek decision through divining arrows. That is grave disobedience. This day those who disbelieve have despaired of [defeating] your religion; so fear them not, but fear Me. This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion. But whoever is forced by severe hunger with no inclination to sin - then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful."

To the majority of Muslims in Scotland, this means that apart from avoiding the meat specifically mentioned it is also necessary to only slaughter animals while saying "Bismillah"/ "In the name of God".

However, people interpret the phrase "that which has been dedicated to other than Allah" as an older idea that only applies to meat that hasn't been sacrificed to other idols or Gods with no other meaning. Therefore, there are cultures where people will eat any meat after saying Bismillah over the food before consumption only; It does not matter whether God's name was pronounced over the animal at the time of its death. For others, slaughter in the name of God only applies to when killing goats, sheep and other meats because of the additional rules around doing this form of sacrifice as outlined in Hajj guidelines. This means they can eat chicken anywhere without worrying about whether or not it is halal.

What might affect how you understand and process something?

- How something is described
- How it is explained
- Who is relaying the information
- When it's given to you
- How you feel when it's said to you
- Your past experience
- Your culture
- Personal preference

DESTINY

Muslims believe God is the planner of all and has knowledge of everything. At the same time, humans have been given free choice.

Muslims are taught to have a positive attitude towards life, when life doesn't work out the way it was hoped, it is understood that it wasn't meant for us and have faith that God's plans are ultimately the best.

If our destiny
has been
written already,

how do we
have a choice?

Think of your life as a film being played in real time. God has watched the film already in its raw form, unedited. He knows how it goes and knows the reasons behind all the plot twists. The film can still be edited, the "final version" will be presented to you on the day of judgement.

You don't know what will come up in life, so at each junction you have to choose. You can choose to ask God for help and you can choose how to deal with situations that happen to you or that happen as consequence of your actions. This is you editing your film. In Islam, it is the intentions behind our choices that Muslims believe they are judged on.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

Muslims believe that they will be held to account on the Day of Judgement for all their actions. It can be imagined as two books, one containing all the good actions, words and thoughts of someone, the other containing the bad and these two books being weighed. Depending on the outcome, that person will be rewarded (paradise) or punished (hell) accordingly.

One of the most important values Muslims are taught is to value mercy. God is Most Merciful and if humans love mercy for themselves then we should love it for others. Muslims also believe God alone is Just and they will not know who has done something that would ultimately result in punishment. God alone knows our hearts.





Further Reading and Resources

*FAQs by Amina staff/volunteers and Shaykh Hassan Rabbani

- Have you always been a Muslim? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4lo62qo4YQ>*
- How seriously do you have to take the teachings of Islam?*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xuauNOzoNqA>
- Peace <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlFZxaW3Tas>*
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a1O7HEs7ER4> – Hijab story, spoken word
- <http://hadithoftheday.com> - Hadith of the Day is an online platform for sharing teachings, Hadith and answers to queries from people interested in understanding Islam. It is endorsed by several of the world's most well-known Islamic scholars. Unless otherwise referenced, the hadith (narrations) quoted in this resource were found using this site.
- Female Qur'an recitation - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJSjj6oHRVU>
Also, can we make these links live once it's uploaded as a digital source?

5 Pillars

A way to consolidate our faith

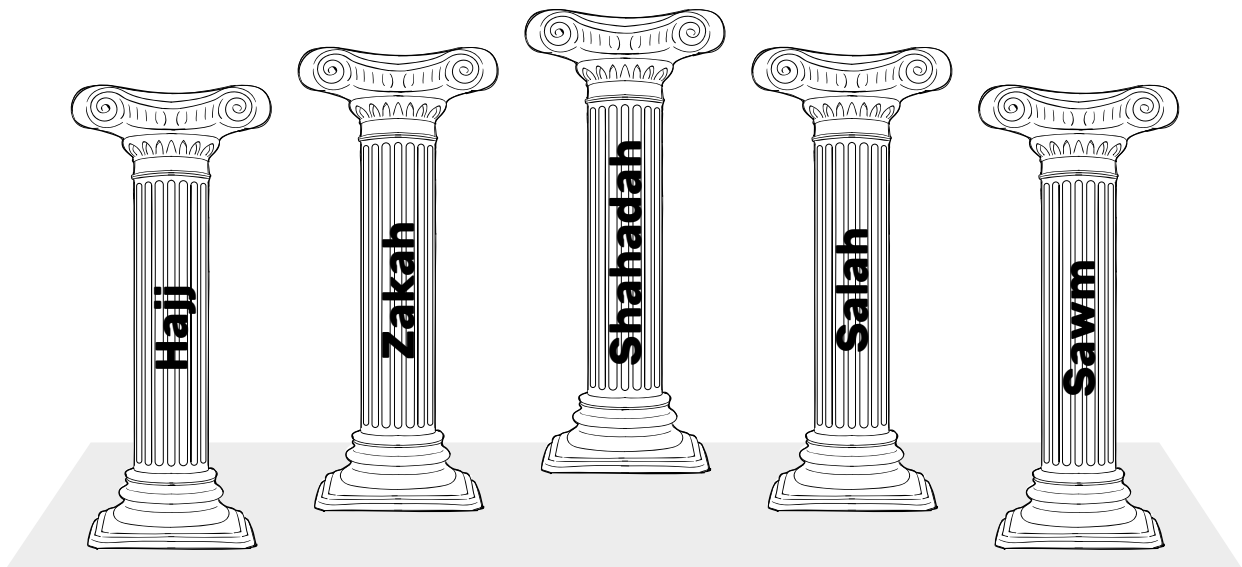


Objectives:

RME 3-05c – I can describe how the values of world religions contribute to as well as challenge Scottish and other societies

RME 4-06a – through researching a range of traditions, practices and customs of world religions, I can consider the place of these in contemporary life.

The Five Pillars of Islam



Islam is built upon 5 pillars: Shahada (to testify faith), Salah (prayer), Zakat (obligatory charity), Sawm (fasting) and Hajj (pilgrimage).

Imagine a building that has 5 pillars, if you take one or two pillars away, what would happen to that building?

SHAHADAH

The first and most important pillar of Islam is Shahadah which means 'to testify' that 'there is no god but God, and Muhammad is His messenger'. This can be written in Arabic as:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

Muslims recite the Arabic declaration in their five daily prayers. It is also recited in the call to prayer, when a baby is born and it is recited in the moments before death.

When a person converts to Islam, they are required to recite with sincerity and understanding the full declaration 'I bear witness there is no God but God and I bear witness that Muhammad is His messenger'.

Resource: Blog (Anon)

SALAH

Muslims are obligated to pray 5 times a day. The prayers are at set times and spread across the day. Before a Muslim prays, they wash certain part of their body in a ritual ablution (wudhu). All around the world Muslims pray in the direction (Qiblah) of the Kabah in the city of Mecca, Saudi Arabia. In the early days of Islam everyone prayed towards Jerusalem but this was changed after a revelation from God.

In countries where there are a lot of Muslims, it is common to hear the call to prayer coming from the mosques to remind people to gather and to let them know to form congregations, like church bells on a Sunday.

With each prayer, there is a window of time in which we can pray. This usually lasts up until the next time of prayer. It is better to try to do it on time but it is flexible so that we can accommodate daily life.

Resource: (Audio) Call to prayer (adhan)

Muslims pray because.....

- Prayer is a commandment in the Qur'an
- Prayer is a conversation with Allah and is a means to get closer to Allah.
- After prayer, many Muslims feel at peace, ready to take on the stresses of the day and incline towards good action and behaviour.

On a Friday it is compulsory for men, if they are able, to attend mosque for congregational prayer known as Jumm'ah.

Both women and men go to the mosque but when inside they usually have separate sections. Muslims largely copy this example from the time of the Prophet and it serves to cater to the needs of women and men individually.

Resource: (Video) How Muslims pray

It is advisable for Muslims to shorten or postpone the prayer when:

- There is food present and they are hungry
- They are drowsy
- There are things in the room to distract them from prayer
- There are different rules during periods of travel
- If they haven't performed their ritual washing
- If they are ill

Women do not pray when they are on their period

Activity:

Fitting it all in

Learning Outcomes:

pupils evaluate the structure in their own daily lives and compare establishment of prayer to prioritising important activities.

Activity:

Making the Rules

Learning Outcome:

Pupils will have to consider different texts and information to put religious principles and heritage into practice in today's society.

ZAKAT

Every Muslim is required, if they can afford to do so, to give 2.5% of their wealth to the poor and needy.

Muslims are told that they are not doing anyone a 'favour' by giving; it is a right that the poor have over the wealthy, a duty that they must fulfill – they are "those in whose wealth there is a known right for the petitioner and the deprived." (Qur'an 70:24-25)

The word Zakat translates as 'purity' and 'growth'. Giving charity is seen as a means for purifying wealth from excessive desire for it and is a means for curing greed.

On top of that, Muslims are encouraged to give regular charity which is referred to as 'Sadaqah'. This can be monetary or good action. For example, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said 'a smile is charity'.

Reported by Abu Musa Al-Ashari (RA): The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Giving in charity is an obligation upon every Muslim". It was said (to him): "What about one who does not find (the means) to do so?" He (peace be upon him) said, "Let him work with his hands, thus doing benefit to himself and give in charity." It was said to him: "What if he does not have (the means) to do so?" He (peace be upon him) said, "Then let him assist the needy, the aggrieved." It was said: "What about if he cannot even do this?" He (peace be upon him) said, "Then he should enjoin good." He was asked: "What if he cannot do that?" He (the Prophet (peace be upon him)) said, "He should then abstain from evil, for verily, that is a charity from him"

(Bukhari and Muslim: narrators of hadith)

However, by focusing only on what you gain, it is all too easy to donate and feel that we have 'done our bit', without thinking about the positive or negative effects on those who receive our charity.



Pause for reflection...

What would be the impact on poverty if every single person, Muslim and non-Muslim, was required to give 2.5% in their wealth in charity if they could afford to so?

Discussion:

1. How can we try and make sure our money is making a positive difference?
2. What kinds of things could we use our money to help with?

Activity:

Zakat - Growth and Purity

Learning Outcomes:

Pupils will have compared the impact money has on their lives and the morality behind giving from an Islamic perspective.

SAWM

Muslims are required to fast during Ramadhan (the 9th month of the Islamic calendar). Muslims do not eat or drink from sunrise to sunset every day for the whole month.

Some people are exempt from fasting, for example, young children and pregnant women.

The month of Ramadan is the 9th month in the Islamic calendar. The Islamic calendar is a lunar calendar and is dictated by the sighting of the moon. Following a moon cycle, the position of the month of Ramadan changes year by year. In the year 2018, Ramadan will fall between May and June.

During Ramadan the days are often turned upside down because some people spend a part of the night in longer prayers called Taraweeh at the mosque. This is specific prayer in which portions of the Quran will be recited until, by the end of the month, the whole of the book has been recited in prayer.

Discussion:

Can you think of people who maybe shouldn't fast?

Does it match with our list?

- Young children
- Pregnant women
- Elderly
- Sick
- People on medication
- People who are travelling
- Women who are menstruating

Fact...

In 2017, the month of Ramadhan fell in June/July and so Muslims in Scotland fasted for almost 21 hours of the day!

There are many reasons Muslims fast in Ramadhan:

- Commandment from Allah
- Understand the suffering of people around the world who are less fortunate
- The month itself is understood to be special and spiritual.
Many Muslims use this month to give up bad habits and improve their character and behaviour.

Project - What can fasting do for us?

Aim: to get pupils to research the various health benefits and risks of fasting

Learning Outcome:

A deeper understanding of the experience of removing something that is considered essential for day to day life,

HAJJ

Muslims, who are physically and financially able, are required to perform the Hajj (pilgrimage) at least once in their lifetime. The pilgrimage involves travelling to Makkah (and surrounding areas) in Saudi Arabia to perform rituals that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) performed in honour of Prophet Abraham (pbuh). Below are only some of the rituals of Hajj:

Ihram

It is a requirement for all men to wear the Ihram and modest simple clothing for women. This is to promote equality and unity.

Tawaf

Walking around the Ka'bah (the black cube, see picture on the left) seven times

Arafat

Pilgrims are required to go to the plain of Arafat to seek forgiveness. After leaving Hajj, pilgrims are referred to as 'new borns' as if they have re-entered the world sin free.

After the pilgrimage everyone cuts off some of their hair, and men typically shave their heads for this ritual to follow what the Prophet (pbuh) used to do.

Resource: Al Jazeera Interactive – Hajj 2017 in Real Time

Resource: Hajj experiences – Surrender; British Museum - Hajj Stories





Further Reading and Resources

*FAQs by Amina staff/volunteers and Shaykh Hassan Rabbani

- What is it like to pray 5 times a day? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KISN70nBp80>*
- Have you ever performed Hajj? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJ4YYPS9Zu0>*
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kScrL8m1qMs> – prayer demonstration
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/galleries/salah/> - explanation of the steps in prayer
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_LN0hznp-A – call to prayer
- <https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/hajj360/index.html>- follow hajj 2017 in real time with an Al Jazeera journalist. Interactive map and pictures.
- http://www.britishmuseum.org/whats_on/exhibitions/hajj/hajj_stories.aspx - Short video clips on people's experiences of Hajj
- Do you strongly believe in life after death?* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EC1UliWJD8I>

Activities

Top Ten Muslim Populations

My Identity

Stereotyping Exercise - Hijab

Comparing traditions - Angels

Communication

Fitting it all in

Making the rules

Zakat

You can't use blue

Blogs

Safa - On prayer

Fariha - Ramadan

Anon - My Shahadah

Hajj experiences - Surrender

Top Ten Muslim Populations



TIME
10-15 MINS

See page 8 of toolkit, 1st edition (2018) for context

AIM

This very quick exercise aims to emphasise the ethnic and cultural diversity of the world's 1.7 billion Muslims.

STAGE 1

In groups, ask your pupils to brainstorm a few countries that they feel might feature in a list of the world's top ten largest Muslim populations. It will be interesting to see which parts of the world your pupils tend to associate with Islam. Given Islam's Middle Eastern origins, and the current emphasis on the Middle East in the media, it is likely that countries like Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq etc will feature in many of your pupils' lists.

However, when we look at the actual top ten list of the world's largest Muslim populations, a very different picture emerges...

STAGE 2

Time to reveal the top ten list.

You may wish to use the following Prezi presentation to reveal the list to your pupils: <https://tinyurl.com/toptenmuslimpopulations>

The presentation moves around a map of the world, zooming in on each country in the top ten (from 1st – 10th), providing the Muslim population along with a relevant image.

TOP TEN MUSLIM POPULATIONS

1. Indonesia (roughly 225 million Muslims)
2. Pakistan (roughly 195 million Muslims)
3. India (roughly 185 million Muslims)
4. Bangladesh (roughly 152 million Muslims)
5. Egypt (roughly 85 million Muslims)
6. Turkey (roughly 80 million Muslims)
7. Iran (roughly 79 million Muslims)
8. Nigeria (roughly 75 million Muslims)
9. Algeria (roughly 42 million Muslims)
10. Sudan (roughly 40 million Muslim)

NOTE

These are population estimates based on research undertaken by the Pew Foundation in 2010. They are not precise and are subject to change over time.

LEARNING OUTCOME

Hopefully this exercise will help your pupils understand that the world's Muslim population is inherently diverse. A Muslim in Indonesia may have a very different approach to their faith than a Muslim in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia or Scotland, and this is often driven by the particular cultural context that surrounds them. Islam is not a "one size fits all" religion and it is important that pupils remember this when exploring Islamic belief and practice. In addition, although Islam emerged in the Middle East and all Middle Eastern countries have majority Muslim populations, the majority of the world's Muslims actually live beyond the Middle East, with Africa, South Asia and South East Asia accounting for the lion's share of the world's Muslims.

[See page 11 of toolkit, 1st edition \(2018\) for context](#)

SUMMARY

The aim of this exercise is to get pupils to think about the different layers of who they are and what is important to them about their identity.

OBJECTIVES

- To encourage young people to consider their identity
- To understand what it feels like for oppressed groups in society being to be denied their identity.
- To explore what we can do to make all people feel involved and welcomed.

RME benchmarks:

Category - Values and Issues

- Expresses and opinion with supporting reasons on the relationship between own values and actions.

SET UP

- Each student will need pen and paper
- The first instructions will be for each individual
- They will be expected to work in pairs for the second half
- Return to full class discussion to conclude.

INSTRUCTIONS

- In their own words, ask students to write down 5 things that describe who they are (5 MINS)
(TIP: if they are finding this difficult perhaps offer one or 2 examples e.g. student, footballer, daughter, Scottish)
- Instruct them to choose 1 identity to score out
- Discuss in pairs what they wrote and why they scored out that specific identity trait (5 MINS)
- Ask them to swap their list with a partner
- Choose one trait to score out from the other person's list
- In pairs discuss how this experience made them feel. Feedback to the class (5 MINS)

Stereotyping exercise



TIME
20-25 MINS

[See page 11/12 of toolkit, 1st edition \(2018\) for context](#)

SUMMARY

This exercise aims to develop young people's understanding of stereotyping and identity.

SET UP

- Students are divided into teams (max 4 people)
- The teams are given three pieces of paper. Each piece of paper should have a copy of the pictures as below, separated into these three groups.

OBJECTIVES

- The pupils can recognise that clothing is part of how people identify themselves
- The pupils can describe what they understand as "Muslim" dress
- The pupils understand that culture and religion can both contribute to personal preference
- The pupils understand that you can't tell what someone really believes based on how they are dressed.

RME benchmarks:

Category - Practices and traditions

- Investigates, compares and evaluates the importance of at least two from a tradition, a practice, a ceremony, a custom, a way of marking a major life event in Christianity, a World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion.

INSTRUCTIONS

- As a group, the teams should decide which of the women on each page are Muslim. (15 MINS)
- The pupils are asked to explain their choices
- Discuss answers together as a class once the activity is complete (10 MINS)

VARIATIONS

- If the facilitator does not want to provide each team with the photos, copy and paste the images below onto three power point slides and get the pupils to confer and write down their answers per slide.
- This activity can also be done individually

Things to consider during discussion:

1. What is religion and what is culture?
2. How do they choose the clothes they wear on the weekend?
3. Why do you dress differently for occasions e.g. weddings, parties, interviews?
4. Do you know if the person next to you believes in God or that something happens when we die?

Answers as to which women identify as Muslim or not are under the pictures below



- **Anousheh Ansari**, Millionaire Businesswoman: Iranian American woman, has a degree in engineering and is the first self-funded woman to go into space
- **Bade İşçil** = Turkish Actress, Muslim [middle]
- **Aishwarya Rai Bhachan** – Indian Actress (Hindu) [right]



- **Jewish – religious teacher**. Orthodox Jewish women choose to cover hair as a sign of modesty, common in Israel
- **Dina Tokio** – fashion blog/Youtube channel, recognised as one of Britain's most influential Muslims [middle]
- **Dana Al Taji** - Muslim fashion designer Al Taji took to Facebook and started her own line, called LAYAL, and now has her own boutique in Cairo. She first earned a degree in political economy and spent some time as a teacher. She then decided to stay at home with her first child, enrolling in fashion and tailoring courses. [right]



- **Queen Rania of Jordan** – of Palestinian descent, married into the Jordanian royal family and became queen. Also an advocate for women's rights
- **2 Sikh girls** (anon) [middle]
- **African woman** wearing a gele (head tie). It is not known if she is wearing it from religious or cultural reasons. The head scarf is used as an ornamental head covering or fashion accessory, or for functionality in different settings. Its uses or meaning can vary depending on the country and/or religion of those who wear it.







Comparing traditions – Angels



TIME
10 MINS

See page 21 of toolkit, 1st edition (2018) for context

SUMMARY

The purpose of this activity is for the pupils to research and compare how traditions about angels have surfaced and how they have been understood across different cultures throughout time. This research can be used to explore the different ideas people can be open to through their faith or belief systems.

OBJECTIVES:

- Pupils can describe the ways in which angels have been depicted in various traditions
- Pupils compare these traditions to draw out similarities and differences in how cultures represent angels
- Pupils can evaluate the role of angels as part of religious experience

RME benchmarks:

Category - Values and Issues; Practices and Traditions

- Investigates and evaluates at least one issue of belief, drawing upon a range of sources to explain and compare responses from Christianity, at least one World Religion and at least one belief group independent of religion.
- Investigates, compares and evaluates the importance of at least 2 from a tradition, a practice, a ceremony, a custom, a way of marking a major life event in Christianity, at least one World Religion and at least one belief group independent of religion.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Students are split into 4 groups to research angels in art, literature, film and religion/belief systems
2. The focus of the research will be to find out:
 - What an angel is/can be
 - What do they look like
 - Where they are found
 - What people believe angels do
3. They should present their findings to the class with a final conclusion about why they think people believe in angels

Communication exercise



TIME
20 MINS
IN TOTAL

See page 24 of toolkit, 1st edition (2018) for context

SUMMARY

This activity demonstrates the complexity of communicating information and should thereby offer an explanation of why there are diverse opinions and understanding in religion.

OBJECTIVES

- To enable pupils to understand how information can get changed when it's passed on i.e. does not directly translate
- Pupils understand that skill and concentration is required by the giver and receiver of information to create the picture and can relate this idea to the importance of careful scholarship in Islam.
- Pupils also understand the idea of "capturing the essence" by discussing what makes the picture 'close enough' to the original.

RME benchmarks:

Category - Values and Issues

- Evaluates how at least moral viewpoint might be applied in relation to at least one moral issue.

SET UP

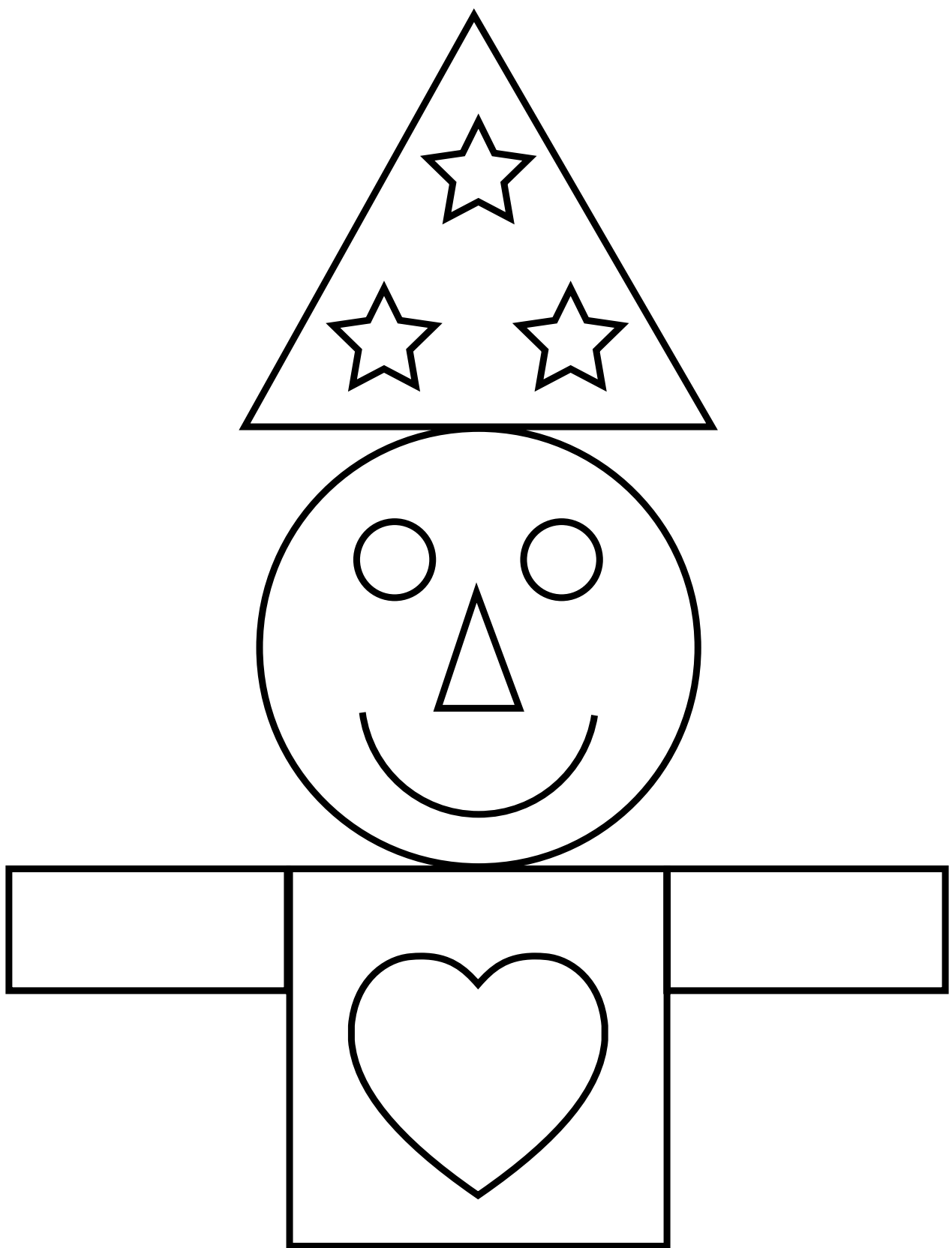
- Make enough photo copies for half of your group.
- Divide your group into pairs (or groups of three with one person as an observer) and have them sit back to back.
- Give one person a clipboard with a blank piece of paper and a pencil or pen, they are the 'drawer'.
- Give the other person the printed template of the picture to be drawn, they are the 'direction giver'.

INSTRUCTIONS

- The 'direction giver' has to get the 'drawer' to draw an exact duplicate of the picture drawn on their sheet using only verbal directions. (10/15 MINS)
- After they are done, the partners should compare the template with what was drawn. (5 MINS)

VARIATIONS

- In a large group setting, one person could be the 'direction giver' for the rest of the group. No one else is allowed to speak and everyone must try to draw the shape the 'direction giver' is describing. Afterwards, have everyone compare their drawings.
- If you don't want to print individual handouts, you can have partners sit back to back and you can put a large, clearly visible poster or projection on the wall of the picture that you would like for them to describe/draw.



See page 28/29 of toolkit, 1st edition (2018) for context

SUMMARY

Activity to look how fitting important things in a day can take organisation, effort and a structure and how this relates to the Muslims faith.

MATERIALS

White board or space to write on; pens; a glass or plastic see-through jar or large container; 5 large stones or plastic shaped objects (they should just about fit in the container together); smaller stones or mid-sized beads; even smaller stones (gravel) or smaller beads; sand and a bottle of water.

OBJECTIVES:

- Students can appreciate that by giving importance to a few things the rest of your day is given structure and shape because they reflect your goals in life.
- Students analyse for themselves what is important to them and shapes their day
- Students can relate the idea of daily prayers and the five pillars as elements that shape a Muslims day and their lives.

RME benchmarks:

Category - Values and Issues; Practices and Traditions

- Expresses a developed opinion with supporting reasons on the relationship between own values and actions.
- Investigates, compares and evaluates the importance of at least two from a tradition, a practice, a ceremony, a custom, a way of marking a major life event in Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Start by asking the students all the things they do to chill out. Include a volunteer from the class to write down what people are shouting out.
2. Ask them what they need to do in a day or week – this may include eating; drinking; studying (if exams are close); family time; spending time with friends – this should match some of the “enjoy things list” but also stuff perhaps they don’t want to do but have to.
3. Leave those 2 lists on the board or visible
4. Get the see-through container and ask one of the students to try and fit all 5 large stones/shapes in it.
5. Ask a different volunteer to pour in as much of the smaller stones/shapes in the container as they think will fit in. (Do more of these fit in than they originally thought?)
6. Continue in a similar way, putting in the gravel, sand and water.
7. Ask the class whether their expectations of how much could fit in was met, surpassed or not reached.
8. Then ask one of the pupils to remove the 5 largest pieces from the jar
9. Is it possible to fit them all back in again without emptying the whole thing again?
10. Discuss with the class their experience of trying to get important things done that they haven’t planned for e.g. doing homework last minute. Can they get it done to the same standard as if it was a priority for them? Do they learn as much?
Have they ever had to choose between two equally important things because there was no time for both?

Making the Rules



TIME
30-45 MINS

See page 29 of toolkit, 1st edition (2018) for context

SUMMARY

The aim of this exercise is to use textual evidence from Islamic sources in order to describe and explain what a mosque is and how it should be run. This should highlight the way rules of law (fiqh) may be deduced from scripture and history and the extent to which it forms part of our daily lives.

Discussion point: How does this compare to a church or synagogue?

OBJECTIVES

- Students are able to plan for and think about the needs of diverse communities.
- Students have a better understanding of the functions of a mosque and its importance to the Muslim community
- Students compare their final product to mosques around the world and also to other places of worship

RME benchmarks:

Category - Beliefs

Investigates and evaluates at least one issue of belief, drawing upon a range of sources to explain and compare responses from Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion

INSTRUCTIONS

Students split into groups (Max 4 students)

They are asked to discuss the textual sources provided and come up with answers to the questions below

They are encouraged to present the key elements of their designs to the class

The pupils should be given the textual evidence below. It is separated into Quranic verses and hadith (narrations) from the time of the Prophet.

The pupils should use all the information provided to address the following points:

- How accessible should mosques be for Muslims?
- Who should be in charge of leading the prayer and what skills or qualities should they have?
- What direction should Muslims be able to face and how do they know what that direction is?
- What facilities will they need at the mosque so that everyone can be prepared for prayer?
- What hours should the mosque be open?
- What types of activities would you expect to see or be able to perform/take part in, in a mosque e.g. education, community involvement, campaigning
- Who looks after the mosque?
- What should the mosque provide in terms of space and materials for prayer? (e.g. standing space, catering for disabilities.)

Discussion: From what they have learned from other religions and belief systems, what are the similarities and differences between a mosque and other places of worship/congregation (e.g. community halls, schools, parliament)

VARIATIONS

The questions can be answered as a group activity in class, but the design and creation of the mosque can be used as a project for outside of class or as homework.

Students could be asked to create a model of the mosque as a larger project

Students could be asked to compare mosques from all over the world to find out the impact of culture on communities' understanding of how prayer spaces should be.

Quran

[98:5] And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion, inclining to truth, and to establish prayer and to give in charity. And that is the correct religion.

[62:9-10] O you who have believed, when [the adhan] is called for the prayer on the day of Jumu'ah [Friday], then proceed to the remembrance of Allah and leave trade. That is better for you, if you only knew. (9) And when the prayer has been concluded, disperse within the land and seek from the bounty of Allah, and remember Allah often that you may succeed.(10)

[42:38] And those who have responded to their lord and established prayer and whose affair is [determined by] consultation among themselves, and from what We have provided them, they spend.

[9:18] The mosques of Allah are only to be maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day and establish prayer and give zakah and do not fear except Allah, for it is expected that those will be of the [rightly] guided.

[5:6] O you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles.

[2:149] So from wherever you go out [for prayer, O Muhammad] turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram, and indeed, it is the truth from your Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what you do.

Hadith

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said,

"If the Imam leads the prayer correctly then he and you will receive the rewards but if he makes a mistake (in the prayer) then you will receive the reward for the prayer and the sin will be his."

Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol. 1, Book 10, Hadith 89

Anas bin Malik narrated:

"On the Night of Isra, fifty prayers were made obligatory upon the Prophet (peace be upon him). Then it was decreased until it was made five. Then it was called out: 'O Muhammad! Indeed My Word does not change; these five prayers will be recorded for you as fifty.'"

Jami` at-Tirmidhi, Vol. 1, Book 2, Hadith 65

'Abd Allah b. Buraidah said:

'Imran b. Hussain asked the prophet (peace be upon him) about the prayer a man offers in sitting condition. He replied: his prayer in standing condition is better than his prayer in sitting condition, and his prayer in sitting condition is half the prayer he offers in standing condition, and his prayer in lying condition is half the prayer he offers in sitting condition.

Sunan Abi Dawud, Book 2, Hadith 562

Abu Huraira reported: The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

When any one of you leads the people in prayer, he should be brief for among them are the young and the aged, the weak and the sick. But when one of you prays by himself, he may (prolong) as he likes.

Sahih Muslim, Book 4, Hadith 208

It was narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "If you say to your companions: 'Be quiet' on a Friday while the Imam is delivering the sermon, you have engaged in Laghw (idle talk or behaviour)."

Zakat - Growth and Purity

TIME
10 MINS

See page 30 of toolkit, 1st edition (2018) for context

SUMMARY

Young people reflect on the meaning of Zakat and how it might apply to their lives

OBJECTIVES

- Students have a deeper understanding of what Muslims believe giving away worldly possessions can achieve
- They relate what Muslims believe about Zakat to their own beliefs on the impact of charity
- Students can compare what they have heard about other religions and belief systems on sharing of resources, and evaluate what they have learned about the power of wealth

RME benchmarks:

Category - Beliefs, Values and Issues, Traditions

- Evaluates the relationship between own beliefs and actions.
- Evaluates how at least one moral viewpoint might be applied in relation to at least one moral issue.
- Expresses a developed opinion with supporting reasons on the relationship between own values and actions.
- Investigates, compares and evaluates the importance of at least two from a tradition, a practice, a ceremony, a custom, a way of marking a major life event in Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion

It was narrated from Asma' bint Abi Bakr that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to her: "Do not count what you give, otherwise Allah, the Mighty and Sublime, will count what He gives to you."
Sunan an-Nasa'i, Vol. 3, Book 23, Hadith 0

Narrated Aisha:

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "If a woman gives in charity from her house meals without wasting (i.e. being extravagant), she will get the reward for her giving, and her husband will also get the reward for his earning and the storekeeper will also get a similar reward. The acquisition of the reward of none of them will reduce the reward of the others."
Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol.3, Book 34, Hadith 18

EXERCISE

1. Muslims believe they are purifying themselves by letting go of money because
2. An example of having too much money could be
3. In my view there is/is not a danger of having too much money. I think

Growth means an increase/decrease in wealth. Muslims believe growth in provision comes only from (God). They believe they will be rewarded for..... (good actions) and so shouldn't hold onto their wealth. because..... (they will be rewarded in the next life/ God can always give them more).

Discussion: Can you think of other religions or belief systems that involve the idea of sharing wealth or being wary of too much money?

You can't use blue

TIME
15 MINS

See page 31 of toolkit, 1st edition (2018) for context

SUMMARY

Pupils will be instructed to draw a landscape in colour but are not allowed to use blue or green.

OBJECTIVES

- To encourage pupils to consider the effect of eliminating something they might see as crucial in a given context.
- To understand how this relates to the idea of giving up food, drink and not allowing oneself to be ruled by desires such as anger (temper), fear (lying) and attraction.
- To explore what is "normal" and what it feels like to move away from the norm.

RME benchmarks:

Category - Values and Issues

- Analyses how values, for example, honesty, respect and compassion might be applied in relation to at least one moral issue, illustrating a possible impact on society.
- Evaluates how at least one moral viewpoint might be applied in relation to at least one moral issue.
- Expresses a developed opinion with supporting reasons on the relationship between own values and actions.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Each pupil is asked to draw a landscape in colour
- They cannot use the colours blue or green
- They have 10 mins and must use the whole time to create the picture

Discussion:

- Would you have drawn something different if you could use blue and green?
- How did you feel about not getting to use those colours?
- If you got told you were only going to have 2 meals – one at the beginning of the day and one when it got dark, how would you change how you approached the day?

Safa - Prayer

Prayer is something of benefit to me, not only is it a fulfilment of the command of God, but I feel closer to Him in return. It's an intimate conversation, a chance to empty my mind and focus on God alone. People often liken it to meditation. Letting go of the stresses of life for brief moments throughout the day for me is very welcome.

As a result, I pray regularly and make it part of my daily routine. That's not to say it does not come with its challenges and I think that's the point. It's meant to remind you to put God first. You can pray anywhere which makes it easier. I've prayed on the grass at parks, while climbing mountains, at the beach and even in changing rooms at clothes stores while shopping!

I remember one time I went to watch Pirates of the Caribbean at the cinema. As a fan of Johnny Depp (his acting...honestly!) I was excited. The film started, it was just getting good...Johnny Depp had just come on screen. Then it hit me, I hadn't prayed the 4th prayer of the day, Maghrib, which starts just after sunset. Each prayer has a designated time and limited time to make that prayer. Maghrib does not last very long and I knew if I waited until the film was over, I would have missed it.

There I was, munching on my popcorn, watching a bunch of pirates doing their thing and faced with a dilemma. Prayer or Johnny Depp? If I leave the film now, I'll miss some of the plot but if I don't pray then I'll feel guilty. Johnny Depp or Prayer?

Prayer. Always.

I left the screen, asked a worker for a quiet corner and prayed. It only took 5 minutes and I didn't miss much of the film. It was worth it. I knew I had made the right decision. It reminded me that as Muslim, I am meant to be in a constant state of remembrance of God, even at the cinema.

Ramadan: Trials and Blessings of the Holy Month

Fariha Saeed

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar and is one of the five pillars of Islam. It's a month where Muslims around the world fast from sunrise to sunset and this includes abstinence from all food and drink, (if I had a pound for every time someone said 'not even water? What about chewing gum?!') other physical needs such as sex and smoking, and certain behaviours like gossip or swearing during fasting hours. Certain people are exempt from fasting (such as the elderly and pregnant women) and I personally find that fasting is a great test of physical and mental endurance. It's a time to reflect on your blessings and walk in the shoes of those who don't have life's basic necessities.

Ramadan is one of my favourite times of the year as it's full of spirituality, reflection and family time – did you know the crime rate falls drastically in Muslim countries during Ramadan, sometimes by 40%! The month's end is greeted by Eid-ul-Fitr which is the religious holiday that marks the end of Ramadan and is celebrated by Muslims around the world, often within cultural traditions. It's also a time when Muslims donate lots of charity – you probably never heard that British Muslims donated £100m in charity during Ramadan in 2016!

Ramadan is likely to begin tomorrow if there is sighting of the crescent moon; if there isn't then it will begin on Saturday. On reflection, as Ramadan has moved further into the longest daylight hours over the past few years, the combination of summer holidays from university and part-time employment never made it too difficult for me to cope with. However, last year was the first time I fasted the month of Ramadan while working 9-5. It was also the longest fasts I'd ever kept, roughly 20 hours between sunrise and sunset, with the majority of the fasts opening after 10pm. Sadly, Ramadan 2016 also coincided with Glasgow's (rare) heat wave. I remember struggling with sleep; waking up in the middle of the night to close my fast then again at 7.30am for work, which left me feeling tired and sometimes low on energy.

I had lots of facilities in place to support me, particularly at work. I spoke to my manager before Ramadan and asked him if there was a private room I could use for prayer. He found a great spot and I was allowed flexibility with the timing of my lunch break so I could always catch the afternoon prayer.



Fariha – Ramadan

I was also told to rest and take it easy if ever I needed a break. I found my colleagues were supportive and curious - I had lots of great chats about the purpose of Ramadan and the spiritual and health benefits of fasting.

The further we moved into Ramadan, the more my reflections took a different tone. I thought about the delicious food and clean water I would open my fast with every night, the great support system I had, peace, good health, air conditioning and all the other comforts I could ever need. I started to think about people around the world who were fasting for Ramadan – last year, the Syrian Civil War was into its 5th year, of the 65 million refugees worldwide, 54% were from three predominantly Muslim countries (Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia), Yemen was being pushed further towards the brink of famine and the Gaza strip (which is the most densely populated area on the planet) suffered from numerous power cuts in the hot weather. I couldn't even imagine how difficult it must be to fast in these conditions; I suddenly felt very privileged to know that my greatest struggles were less sleep and the occasional headache.

Despite their hardships, I've heard many stories of people being met with love and compassion when they've visited some of these countries during Ramadan. You can see pictures of people full of life celebrating Ramadan around the world [here](#).



Ramadan is about so much more than starving yourself – the experience, the energy, the awareness, the empathy and the changes to your thought process whilst you're hungry cannot be put into words. I urge you all to learn more about Ramadan; make a Muslim friend and ask them of their experience, go to an Iftar (opening of the fast) party, visit a mosque, watch a documentary or ask me if you'd like to know more. You could even try and fast if you'd like! Although I would cheekily suggest you look at the calendar beforehand to decipher which day your fast will open the earliest. You can watch a short video of this guy beautifully summing up why he found it so beneficial and some of the thoughts fasting provoked in him.

I truly believe that a common understanding of the month of Ramadan is one of the best ways to counter Islamophobia around the world. There is so much love and positivity experienced by Muslims and our neighbours during the month of Ramadan and sadly, people know so little about it. I often see people claim that it is the Muslim's responsibility to condemn terrorism – I heartily disagree – we need to disassociate ourselves entirely from diseased ideology we neither condone nor recognise and focus our energies on educating people on the true message of Islam. Hopefully small steps, such as this blog, will go a long way in promoting the positive image of Islam which is so lacking, yet equally vital, especially in light of recent events.

Anon - Shahdah

I was brought up in a Christian family but never felt in my heart that Christianity was the path for me. There were too many questions I couldn't answer with what people were telling me was true. For years, I felt that maybe religion didn't have the answers I needed.

I moved to Scotland to study at university. After I graduated, I started working with refugees and asylum seekers.

At the end of one particularly difficult day, a man came to see me. He had lost his home, his family, everything, because he did the right thing. In his home country, he had discovered criminal activity. Knowing that reporting it could have serious consequences for him, he spoke out anyway and made sure that the people involved were brought to justice. He had to leave his home country and seek asylum, going from a successful career and a comfortable home to severe poverty in temporary accommodation in a rough part of a Scottish city.

Despite that, though, he seemed... content. I couldn't understand it. How could someone who had lost so much, not be angry at the world?

I asked him. His answer was simple: he had followed the path Islam told him to take. He trusted completely that, whatever happened, this was God's plan for him and he would do his best to be at peace with that. I asked him what gave him the courage to stand up to the criminals, even knowing what could happen. He said that those people were oppressors, and he had to follow the example of The Prophet (peace be upon him) and do the right thing.

I was fascinated and wanted to know more. How did Islam give someone such strength and courage? How did it help people find peace and comfort in such difficult situations?

I started reading a translation of the Qur'an and visited a women-only class for studying it. After only a few weeks of study, I knew that this was truly the right path. I didn't know how to pray or read Arabic, or very much at all about how to practise Islam... all I knew was that this was the truth and I had to act on what I knew to be true.

I reverted to Islam five years ago. I will always remember the man who walked into my office and started my journey towards Islam. I pray that Allah rewards him for helping me find the straight path, and I pray that Allah rewards him for helping me and for his courage, in this life and the next.

Hajj experiences - Surrender

I remember the moment of panic when I felt bound by all the people around me, unable to move my arms even to salute the Kaabah as I began a new lap. My arms felt tied to my sides as if I had been bound by a strait jacket, only it was made of real people like me. I was like a log on a river being pushed here and there by the current. The current of people was moving me and I had no control over how fast I went, where I went, or even how close I could stay to my own kids. In that moment of panic, of utter loss of control, I submitted to His Will. I knew in that moment that it's not in my hands, that I had no choice but to leave it up to Him to protect me and guide me. And in that complete submission came an overwhelming sense of relief knowing that it is in His Hands and I need not worry. What will be will be, and I know for certain that it will be the best for me. For He alone knows what is best for me.

The experience of Hajj is full of unpredictability. No matter how well you plan, no matter what agency you use for your Hajj, anything can go wrong very suddenly and very quickly. The chaos and the lack of clear schedule and plans have prompted one German covert to declare that the journey of Hajj is by itself proof of divine existence. He stipulated that there must be a God in existence who would facilitate this whole journey with the inadequate human planning that usually takes place. I believe he is right. Allah's will supersedes all and His Mercy and Care trumps everything else. And our response needs to be: O Allah, I submit to your Will, protect me and guide me to what is best for me.

This article is not a call to suspend all planning for one's life. Taking initiative is a duty on each one of us. But when you are faced with what is beyond your control, know that you are enveloped in His Mercy and submit to His Will with humility and reverence. "And the last of what we pray is: alhamdulillah the Lord of all."

By Noha Alshugairi 14th Sept 2013

This was our base in Mina for three days. Things were at their bare basics – we slept on foldable cushions on the floor, 30 to a tent and had to use communal bathrooms some distance away. Men and women were in separate quarters. There is no special ritual for Mina, the time was for seclusion from the comforts of the material world, to reflect on oneself and to go back to the root of your faith. This was my biggest challenge, to live with contentment in the discomfort, to mentally block out all the clamour, laughter and chitchat of the surroundings and to establish a relationship with Allah. I was told that if I cannot learn to focus on Allah here and now, then how can I succeed in the real world where distractions are multiplied by hundreds? It was tough at first but I learnt a few valuable lessons here about who I really am and what my deficiencies are.

What Surrender Means

In Mina I learnt a valuable lesson about doubt. I was struck with a really tough calamity – one I would have willingly given everything I owned in this world to solve. I made dua but to no avail, for the situation was impossible. It was after a couple of days, when I had become as desperate as a drowning person that I realised that I harboured doubts – I was using logic instead of faith, and looking at the hopelessness of the situation instead of Allah's infinite power to change any condition. My tongue professed absolute submission but my heart held back. I still had uncertainty! At that moment I realised the true power of surrender – to trust only Allah for help and not listen to my fears or doubts. At that point of total submission, my du'a crystallised into reality, and the impossible became possible. This was the most important lesson I learnt during Hajj. Allah is the absolute Owner of all conditions, and it is not my money or intelligence that solves problems, it is Allah and no one else. Surrendering to that is so beautiful and humbling!

By Anon 9 November 2013

Glossary

**These terms may not have been covered in our explanations.
The words are in order of their appearance in the toolkit (up to
and including the blog section)**

Islam – literally submission, as in, submission to the belief in the absolute oneness of God and the acknowledgement that one will worship nothing else but God. The word Islam is derived from the root word sa-la-ma, meaning peace.

Umayyad Caliphate - The Umayyad Caliphate, also spelt Omayyad, was the second of the four major caliphates established after the death of Muhammad.

Allah – Arabic word for God. Belief in One God and in the other Abrahamic religions means that the God mentioned in all previous texts is referred to as Allah for Muslims.

Prophet – A human being of particular strength of character and qualities that enable them to pass on a divine message. Prophets have also been gifted the opportunity to observe or perform miracles from God including witnessing what is otherwise unseen e.g. angels, heaven.

Iblees/Iblis – Also known as Shaytaan or Satan, Iblis was a devout worshipper of God but fell from his graces after his arrogance prevented him from acknowledging, and bowing down to, the miracle that was Adam, the first human.

Scholar – Someone who has studied Islamic history and sciences such as (but not limited to) Arabic, Qur'an, Hadith and Islamic law (Fiqh). The knowledge that scholars hold is important for the protection of the faith and how it is taught to successive generations, as well as how it can be translated into contemporary times without losing its essence.

Convert/revert- Someone who was not born into a Muslim family but chooses to embrace Islam. Some people consider a people that comes into the fold of Islam as a 'revert', as if they are coming back to the religion rather than experiencing it for the first time. This is because there are sections in the Qur'an where we are told that we all acknowledge God as our creator when we were souls before birth.

Sect – A group that identify as Muslim but may have additional beliefs, aside from the 5 pillars and 6 articles of faith, that are specific to that community. Sunni and Shi'a are two major sects within Islam. The majority of Muslims around the world (approximately 85-90%) consider themselves Sunni Muslims. Shi'i Muslims are a minority and, in particular, hold different beliefs as to who should have been the rightful

leader of the Muslim community after the death of the Prophet (pbuh). There are differences within Sunni and Shi'i groups as there are differences within Catholic and Protestant communities which can also be observed in ritual practice.

Day of Judgement – Muslims believe in life after death and that a moment will come, which is described as a day though it is outside of time, when everyone that has ever lived will be gathered together as souls to be held to account for their actions.

Alhamdulillah – This phrase is frequently used by many Muslims to show gratitude to God. It's meaning is roughly "All praise is due to God".

Mina – A location in Saudi Arabia where pilgrims will visit during Hajj.

Du'a/dua – Supplications or prayers that are not compulsory and can be individual or in congregation.