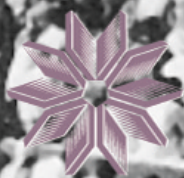
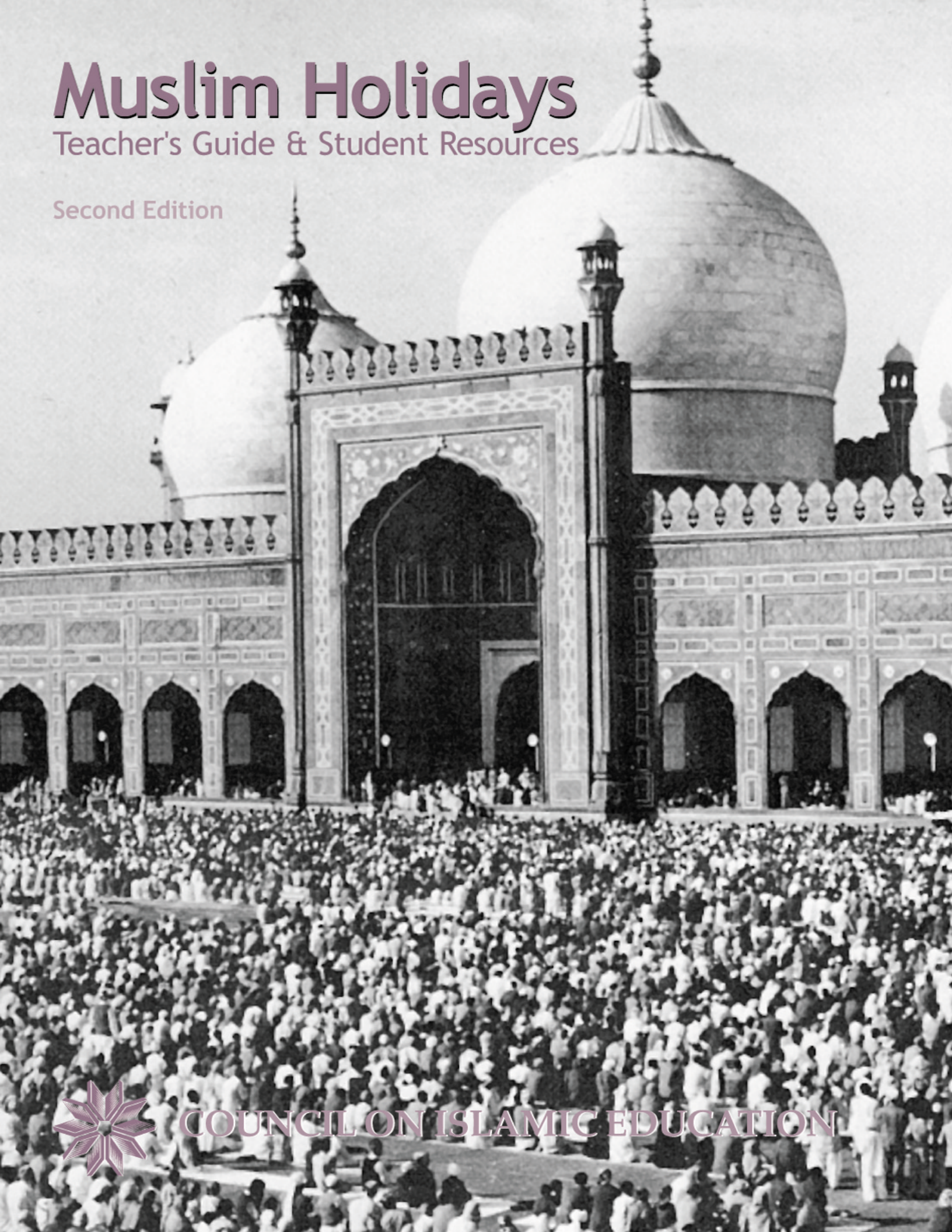


Muslim Holidays

Teacher's Guide & Student Resources

Second Edition



COUNCIL ON ISLAMIC EDUCATION



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ISLAMIC EDUCATION

Muslim Holidays

Teacher's Guide and Student Resources

Second Edition

by Susan L. Douglass

Cover image:

Badshahi Masjid, Lahore, Pakistan (built by Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in 1674).

This 20th-century image indicates that far from being mere historic monuments, structures such as these in Muslim lands continue to be utilized, thus symbolizing the continuity of Islam as a living tradition in classical and modern times.

MUSLIM HOLIDAYS (Second Edition)

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To the reader:

Arabic terms, with the exception of names of people and places and a few other words, have been set in *italic* type the first time they appear in the text. Most of the terms may be found in the Glossary.

Dates are given in terms of the common era (CE), a neutral, academic convention referring to the common human experience, in which the dating scheme derives from the Christian BC/AD framework.

Teachers may be interested to note that Muslims pronounce a blessing upon the Prophet Muhammad whenever they mention him by name. The Arabic blessing **صلى الله عليه وسلم** means "may the blessings and peace of God be upon him." Although this formula is not printed within the text of this book, it is commonplace for Muslims to vocalize the blessing in Arabic or in English translation.

This publication is included on the State of California's *Instructional Materials Approved for Legal Compliance* list. This designation enables California teachers to use designated state funds for the purchase of this resource. Other states may have a similar means to assist teachers who wish to acquire qualifying materials.

COUNCIL ON ISLAMIC EDUCATION

The Council on Islamic Education (CIE), founded in 1990, is a national, non-profit research institute and resource organization. CIE is comprised of academic scholars of history, religion, political science, communications, education and other disciplines. Our mission is to support and strengthen American public education as the foundation for a vibrant democracy, a healthy civil society, and a nationally and globally literate citizenry. CIE's approach is based on U.S. constitutional principles and is aimed at contributing to American institutional mechanisms that preserve and enhance American society.

CIE conducts intensive research and publishes reports for policymakers on developments in the education field related to teaching about the world and world religions; provides consulting services to K-12 textbook publishers and content producers; conducts teacher training on constitutional guidelines for teaching about religion and specific world historical content; and produces teaching units and online resources for educators. To learn more about CIE, please visit the "About Us" section of our website at www.cie.org.

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CIE solicits reviews from a variety of educators, content experts, and community representatives during the development of new teaching resources. This process helps ensure the materials are constitutionally appropriate, academically sound, and relevant to learners in a variety of contexts.

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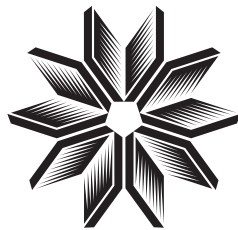
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About the Second Edition

This publication on Muslim holidays got its start in 1993 as a series of teacher’s notes in leaflet format. The materials provided brief student texts about Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr, and the Hajj and Eid al-Adha, along with a series of discussion questions and suggested activities. In 1997, CIE produced the first edition of *Muslim Holidays*, with more extensive coverage of the holidays and a section on the Friday congregational worship, and suggestions for practical religious accommodation of the needs of Muslim students in public schools.

This 2004 second edition of *Muslim Holidays* is a substantial restructuring of the information about holidays; the material on Ramadan and the Hajj and the associated holidays is now contextualized within a discussion of the significance of the “Five Pillars” or basic religious practices of Muslims. Furthermore, appropriate student readings are provided for several learning levels. Another important new feature of this edition is that the content is correlated with several national and state standards documents.

Teacher's Guide



INTRODUCTION

The study of world religions is mandated in virtually all national and state standards and district curricula.¹ It has been included because this content is considered essential for promoting global literacy, encouraging cross-cultural understanding, and giving depth to historical studies and sociological studies. “Teaching about religion” – that is, academic but not devotional study of religion – enables students to learn about the beliefs and practices of major and minor world religions, to recognize their roles in history and contemporary society, and to appreciate religious themes in art, music, and literature. We are fortunate in the United States to have a set of widely accepted guidelines for constitutionally appropriate study of religion in public school classrooms. These guidelines have been worked out by theologians, educators, and constitutional lawyers, and endorsed by a wide array of educational, professional and civic groups. As stated in *Finding Common Ground: A First Amendment Guide to Religion and Public Education*, published by the Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, “because religion plays a significant role in history and society, study about religion is essential to understanding both the nation and the world. Omission of facts about religion can give students the false impression that the spiritual life of humankind has been insignificant or unimportant.”

The study of important holidays and celebrations in various religious traditions is a way to learn about the core values emphasized in each faith community. Of course, as the First Amendment Center stresses, teaching about religions and their values is not the same as teaching values. “The former is objective, academic study; the latter involves the teaching of particular ethical viewpoints or standards of behavior.” Learning about values that may be unique to each faith tradition is facilitated by the fact that collective remembrance of important events and persons in history, giving charity, practicing neighborliness and enjoying traditional foods and entertainments lie at the root of holidays the world over.

Understanding the occasion for religious celebrations, and learning about universal and regional, ethnic or cultural traditions opens a window on the practice of belief systems. Knowing what each tradition emphasizes helps students understand the relative importance of various religious teachings within the faith. Of course, learning about diverse holidays around the world can also be fun for students, and helps bridge between cultures through their most enjoyable and colorful practices. Although it is not permissible to simulate religious worship in the classroom in any form, learning about the practices of worship in a neutral, academic manner is permissible, and sharing foods, games and dress from various cultural traditions may be encouraged both in the interest of global cultural literacy and because a range of cultures now inform the collective American experience.

ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

DESCRIPTION OF TEACHER'S GUIDE

Within all religions and many secular cultural traditions, there are a variety of important dates that are celebrated as joyous occasions, commemorated as symbols of loss or sacrifice, or observed as significant milestones in collective history. Muslims in various parts of the world observe a variety of such occasions, but only two annual celebrations are rooted in the two basic sources of Islam – the *Qur'an* (holy scripture of Islam) and the *Sunnah* (the example of Muhammad, prophet of Islam). These celebrations, known as *Eid* are enjoyed universally by Muslims everywhere. Some Muslims observe additional festivities or commemoration out of piety and established local traditions.

This resource booklet gives teachers and students a comprehensive guide to the two universally observed celebrations called *Eid al-Fitr* (Celebration of Breaking the Fast) and *Eid al-Adha* (Celebration of the Sacrifice). Information is also provided about *Jumah* (the “day of assembly” for congregational worship each Friday, informally considered a weekly holiday). This booklet provides basic information on the historical background, practices and timing of these Muslim holidays, and they are discussed in the context of what are commonly known as the “Five Pillars” of Islam, the core religious obligations that give structure to Muslims’ lives. Brief information about other occasions that are observed by Muslims is also provided. Teachers and school administrators can peruse the student readings to increase their own knowledge of the holidays.

On the following pages of this Teacher’s Guide, information is provided on how the student readings correlate to national and state standards. The guide also contains a section on how reasonable religious accommodation for the needs of Muslim students may be offered. The information is provided in the spirit that schools should extend similar accommodation to students of other faiths, and it contributes to the creation of an environment of respect for religious pluralism in American public schools.

For teachers, a multi-year chart indicates the expected date on which the major Islamic celebrations will fall in relation to the Gregorian or common calendar. This chart can help teachers better plan homework assignments, exams, classroom activities, and other events, as part of their interest in providing religious accommodation to students whenever feasible.

A glossary of relevant vocabulary words with a pronunciation key for each term is included for student and teacher reference. The Teacher’s Guide concludes with a list of recommended resources related to Muslim holidays.

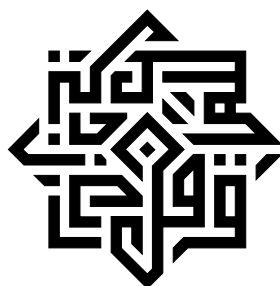
Additional Lesson Plan Guides are provided for the primary level and for the secondary level. An answer key for student discussion questions is provided for the secondary level.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT RESOURCES

The bulk of this booklet contains student resources that teachers can use as reproducible lesson material for teaching about Muslims’ religious celebrations. For each holiday, students are provided with the relevant background information about the Islamic faith, the occasion for the celebration, its history, significance and universal practices, as well as some regional or ethnic traditions associated with the celebrations. This material is an adjunct to textbook content on holidays at the primary and elementary level. It also supplements middle school and high school world history, world cultures and geography content, which seldom covers holidays. Discussion questions and extension activities supplement the student readings.

The middle school-level student readings include statements by Muslim children of various age levels, describing how they experience Islamic celebrations and observances. Teachers might use these as examples to stimulate student writing on their own experiences of family or shared traditions and celebrations.

Among the cross-curricular activities is a section on the lunar calendar describing its use in many religious and cultural traditions, and contrasting the lunar with the solar calendar, explaining why Muslims’ religious observances are not fixed, but rotate through the seasons of the year over a few decades.



CORRELATION OF LESSONS ON MUSLIM HOLIDAYS WITH NATIONAL AND STATE SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

From the *National Standards for Civics and Government* (Center for Civic Education, 1994)

Part IV

Section D.1. **Diversity in American Society.** Students should be able to describe diversity in the United States and identify its benefits. To achieve this standard, students should be able to...describe some benefits of diversity, e.g. it helps people appreciate cultural traditions and practices other than their own.

Section F.1. **Promoting Ideals.** Students should be able to identify ways people can work together to promote the values and principles of American democracy. To achieve this standard, students should be able to...explain how they can promote the values and principles of American democracy by respecting the rights of others, e.g. not discriminating unfairly against others because of their race, ethnicity, language, gender or religious beliefs.

Part V

Section C.1. **Rights of individuals.** Students should be able to explain why certain rights are important to the individual and to a democratic society. To achieve this standard, students should be able to...identify the following types of rights and explain their importance...to practice the religion of one's choice....identify contemporary issues regarding rights, e.g. school prayer...

From *Geography for Life: National Geography Standards* (Geography Education Standards Project, 1994)

Grades K-4 **Human Systems:**

A. Identify and compare the cultural characteristics of different regions and people.

Grades 5-8 **Places and Regions:**

D. Illustrate how places and regions serve as cultural symbols.

Grades 5-8 **Human Systems:**

A. Identify ways in which communities reflect the cultural background of their inhabitants.

B. Identify and describe the distinctive cultural landscapes associated with migrant populations.

C. Describe and explain the significance of patterns of cultural diffusion in the creation of Earth's varied cultural mosaics.

Grades 9-12 **Human Systems:**

B. Analyze how cultures influence the characteristics of regions.

E. Explain the spatial processes of cultural convergence and divergence.

From *National Standards for History* (National Center for History in the Schools, 1994)

- Grades K-4** **Topic 1: Living and Working Together in Families and Communities, Now and Long Ago**
Standard 1A: Demonstrate understanding of family life now and in the past by Comparing and contrasting family life now with family life in the local community or state long ago by considering such things as...religious observances, and cultural traditions;
- Topic 4: The History of Peoples of Many Cultures Around the World**
Standard 7A: Demonstrate understanding of the cultures and historical developments of selected societies in such places as Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe by...Comparing and contrasting various aspects of family life, structures, and roles in different cultures and in many eras with students' own family lives...Explaining the customs related to important holidays and ceremonies in various countries...
- Era 4** **Expanding Zones of Exchange and Encounter, 300-1000 C.E.**
Standard 2: Causes and consequences of the rise of Islamic civilization in the 7th-10th centuries.
2A: The student understands the emergence of Islam and how it spread in Southwest Asia, North Africa, and Europe.
- Era 9** **The 20th Century Since 1945: Promises and Paradoxes**
Standard 2: The search for community, stability, and peace in an interdependent world.
2F: The student understands worldwide cultural trends of the second half of the 20th century. [Grades 5-12]: Describe varieties of religious belief and practice in the contemporary world and analyze how the world's religions have responded to challenges and uncertainties of the late 20th century. [Analyze the influence of ideas]

From the *California Academic Standards for History/Social Science* (1998)

- 1.4** Students compare and contrast everyday life in different times and places around the world and recognize that some aspects of people, places, and things change over time and others stay the same, in terms of:
- similarities and differences in the work (inside and outside the home), dress, manners, stories, games, and festivals of earlier generations, drawing from biographies, oral history, and folklore
- 1.5** Students describe the human characteristics of familiar places and the varied backgrounds of American citizens and residents, in terms of:
- the ways in which they are all part of the same community, sharing principles, goals, and traditions despite their varied ancestry; the forms of diversity in their school and community and the benefits and challenges of a diverse population
 - the difficulties, successes and ways in which American Indian and immigrant populations have helped define Californian and American culture
 [comparisons of the beliefs, customs, ceremonies, traditions and social practices of the varied cultures drawing from folklore]
- 3.3** Students draw from historical and community resources to organize the sequence of events in local history and describe how each period of settlement left its mark on the land, in terms of:
- the explorers who visited here, the newcomers who settled here, and the people who continue to come to the region, including their cultural and religious traditions and contributions

- 7.2 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of civilizations of Islam in the Middle Ages, in terms of:
- the origins of Islam and the life and teachings of Muhammad, including Islamic teachings on the connection with Judaism and Christianity
 - the significance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah as the primary sources of Islamic beliefs, practice and law, and their influence in Muslims' daily life

From the *New York Social Studies Standards* (1996)

Students should discern the roles and contributions of individuals and groups to social, political, economic, cultural, and religious activities. (2-C) To demonstrate this understanding at each level, students might:

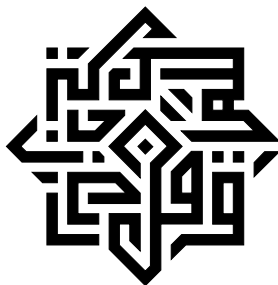
Elementary	Gather and organize information about various cultures and civilizations; examine the values, practices and traditions transmitted from one generation to the next; determine if groups living in their neighborhood and community practice these traditions; classify information by type of activity: social, political, economic, cultural, or religious.
Intermediate	Develop definitions of what is a culture; describe how cultures change and why they differ; define what it means to be a member of a culture, specifically what it means to be a member of a particular culture; explain some of the following practices as evidenced in particular cultures: social customs, child-rearing practices, government, ways of making a living and distributing goods and services, language, education, values, ideals, defined gender roles, traditions, foods, and religious beliefs.
Commencement	Examine the social, political, economic, cultural, and religious norms and values of Western culture and other world cultures; compare and contrast the norms and values; explain the dynamics of cultural change and how interaction among cultures has affected various cultural groups throughout the world.
World History	<p>Analyze important developments and turning points in world history; hypothesize what might have happened if decisions or circumstances had been different; investigate such developments and turning points as: the emergence of the world's great religions – Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Taoism.</p> <p>Identify different ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic groups throughout the world and analyze their varying perspectives on the same historic events and contemporary issues. Explain how these different perspectives developed.</p> <p>Examine documents related to significant developments in world history (e.g. excerpts from sacred texts of the world's great religions, important political statements or decrees, literary works, and historians' commentaries).</p>

From the *Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies* (1998)

- Primary Grades** (1.2) **History.** The student understands the origins of customs, holidays, and celebrations. The student is expected to: (A) describe the origins of selected customs, holidays, and celebrations of the community, state, and nation such as Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Independence Day, and Veterans' Day; (B) compare the observance of holidays and celebrations, past and present;
- Secondary Grades** (19) **Culture.** The student understands the history and relevance of major religious and philosophical traditions. The student is expected to: (A) compare the historical origins, central ideas, and the spread of major religious and philosophical traditions including Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism;
- (6.19) **Culture.** The student understands the relationships among religion, philosophy, and culture. The student is expected to: (A) explain the relationship among religious ideas, philosophical ideas, and cultures; and (B) explain the significance of religious holidays and observances such as Christmas and Easter, Ramadan, Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah in selected contemporary societies.

From the *Virginia Standards of Learning for History and Social Science* (2001)

- Civics** 1.12, 2.12: The student will recognize that communities in Virginia include people who have diverse ethnic origins, customs, and traditions, who make contributions to their communities, and who are united as Americans by common principles.
- Civics** 3.12: The student will recognize that Americans are a people of diverse ethnic origins, customs, and traditions, who are united by the basic principles of a republican form of government and respect for individual rights and freedoms.
- WHI.8** The student will demonstrate knowledge of Islamic civilization from about 600 to 1000 A.D. by a) describing the origin, beliefs, traditions, customs, and spread of Islam.
- WHII.14** The student will demonstrate knowledge of the influence of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism in the contemporary world by a) describing their beliefs, sacred writings, traditions, and customs; b) locating the geographic distribution of religions in the contemporary world.



RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION FOR MUSLIM K-12 STUDENTS

From the "Bill of Rights," First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

This section provides school administrators and educators with information and suggestions to support accommodation requests by Muslim students with regard to Muslim holidays and religious observances. For additional discussion of Islamic beliefs and practices, and of issues related to religious accommodation, see CIE's handbook for educators titled *Teaching About Islam and Muslims in the Public School Classroom*. Similar accommodation may be extended to teachers and school staff as well without adversely (and probably enhancing) the performance of their job duties and responsibilities.

Muslim children in our public school system face certain challenges in fulfilling their religious obligations. This is compounded by the fact that their faith is often unfamiliar to many of their classmates and fellow citizens, and because their daily and annual observances are not aligned with prevailing schedules and annual calendars. The fact that Christianity has been the majority faith in the United States since its inception has created general alignment of school schedules, seasonal vacations and federal holidays with Christian holidays, even though the holidays are not directly celebrated in public schools in keeping with church-state separation. For example, the weekly public school schedule is aligned with Christian and Jewish religious practices such as the Sabbath and Sunday worship services. Christmas Day is a national holiday, and spring vacations are often aligned with Easter celebrations, whereas lunar calendar-based Muslim holidays often occur while school is in session. (As a point of comparison, in many Muslim majority countries, Friday is a day off from school and work). To sum up, American Muslim students are challenged in the observance of their faith by the fact that at least one of the daily prayer times falls during school hours, their day of congregational worship is Friday, and their major celebrations shift through the seasons, being only occasionally aligned with school vacations.

Guidelines on school prayer have recently been issued by the U.S. Department of Education as part of its responsibility under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, building upon the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 regarding accommodation of individual student prayer at school.² Schools must actually certify that they have developed policies in compliance with the guidelines on this matter.³ The accommodations discussed in this Teacher's Guide are in line with practice in many school districts across the country,⁴ and none of the accommodations suggested here would place a significant burden on schools. **"It is especially important to note that schools' accommodation of formal or informal worship is not synonymous with the heated issue of school prayer. Students of all faiths have the right to perform prayer during school hours, but without imposing a requirement or attempting to influence students of their own or other faiths to join them in worship."** Schools cannot sponsor or impose the practice of religion, and teachers and staff may not direct student prayer, but they can provide facilities for students to worship when requests for accommodation are made by students and parents on their own initiative. The First Amendment Center offers detailed guidance on the legal implications of different practices regarding public schools in *Finding Common Ground* and online at www.fac.org.

Notes

1. See correlation of the resources in this booklet to national and state social studies standards from a cross-section of the U.S. on pages 13-16.
2. See "Education Department releases new school-prayer guidelines" at <http://www.fac.org/news.aspx?id=6242> on accommodation issues.
3. See editorial by Charles C. Haynes, Senior Scholar, First Amendment Center, "Schools may pay the price if they ignore new guidelines on religion," <http://www.fac.org/commentary.aspx?id=6293>.
4. For example, see Fairfax County Public Schools, VA "Guidelines for Religious Activities for Students" at <http://www.fcps.edu/DHR/oec/relguide.htm>.

Accommodating Daily Prayer

One of the most important duties for a Muslim is obligatory prayer (*salat*) performed five times throughout the day – right before dawn, at noontime, in the mid-afternoon, right after sunset and at night (only the noon prayer, and during the shorter days of the winter season, the mid-afternoon prayer, falls within the typical school hours). Religiously observant Muslim students (and teachers) may request accommodation to perform this most important duty. Experience shows that students are resourceful in making the prayer fit within a reasonable time allotment of 10-15 minutes.

School administrators are requested to: 1) provide a suitable prayer area (any clean, empty room or private corner that can be made available regularly). Since the prayer is performed in a series of movements including standing, bowing, kneeling and touching the floor with the forehead, the floor must be clean and obstacle free; 2) if the room is used daily, enable students to store prayer rugs, mats or clean sheets in the room; 3) provide students with access to a bathroom that is reasonably near the prayer room so that they can perform *wudu* (ablutions, or ritual washing of the face, hands and feet) before praying.

Students and parents can reach agreement with school officials on fitting the prayer time into the school schedule. (Monthly and yearly prayer-time calendars are readily available from local masjids (mosques), many online sources, and from the students requesting accommodation.) The prayer area would be needed during a window of time around noon, and in the mid-afternoon for those students whose school activities keep them on campus until late afternoon. During Daylight Savings Time, the noon prayer is delayed in many locations until after 1:00pm, since it is based on the position of the sun, not the clock. Similarly, in parts of North America, during the winter months sunset may come as early as 4:00pm, so students might wish to pray the mid-afternoon prayer before school is dismissed. Lunch, recess, and dismissal times may coincide with the windows of time within which the midday and afternoon prayers can take place.

For the prayer, some boys may wear a cap. Girls and women cover their heads during prayer, and some will put on a long, loose garment, even if they do not usually wear the *hijab*, or Muslim head covering. Those who supervise students should be aware that women are exempt from performing the daily prayers during menstruation, so Muslim women and teenage girls who usually pray at school will periodically decline to join other congregants for prayer. Teachers and others may assume that this is the reason if the change in their participation is temporary.

The Daily Worship (Salat)

Name	Typically Performed...
Fajr	early morning, prior to sunrise
Dhuhr	shortly after mid-day
Asr	mid-afternoon to early evening
Maghrib	immediately after sunset
Isha	night-time, after dusk has ended

Points to Remember...

- ❖ School officials may be asked by Muslim students or teachers to provide an empty classroom or other suitable location during lunchtime or breaks to perform their obligatory daily prayers. No alterations to the room are required, so long as there is sufficient room for members of the group to make the necessary movements of prayer. Students may request a space to store a sheet or small mats when they are not in use.

Accommodating Friday Congregational Prayer

Friday, called *Yawm al-Jumah* (Day of Gathering) in Arabic, is the day of weekly assembly and congregational worship for Muslims. The Friday midday prayer is known as *Salat al-Jumah*. An *imam* (prayer leader) stands before the congregation and gives a short talk called a *khutbah* (sermon) and then leads the congregation in formal worship. Because the Friday worship includes the sermon, and the fact that it involves assembling with other Muslims, additional time is needed compared to the regular midday prayer. *Jumah* worship requires approximately 45 minutes.

Muslim students who wish to perform the *Jumah* prayer will either request permission to leave school on Fridays to go to a local masjid (mosque) or gathering place where *Jumah* prayer is held. Parents may legally request release time for students to perform this religious obligation, and students may be released for approximately one hour. High school students may, alternatively, request time and space to conduct the worship on school grounds, during their lunch break if possible. (This option is within the bounds of constitutionally acceptable accommodation by school officials, as long as they afford all students similar access to such accommodations if they request it).

Where there is accommodation for *Jumah* prayer at school, many students will be able to meet their obligation without leaving the school grounds, unless their parents request otherwise. In many public and private schools across North America, Muslim students successfully carry out these religious obligations without any disruption to the school schedule and facilities, or their academic achievement. To the contrary, many school administrators have found that creating an atmosphere of respect and pluralism has benefits in discipline and achievement, as well as reinforcing important bonds between school and community. Of course, as stated previously, prayer accommodations must come from student or parent initiative in schools, without participation or encouragement by administration or faculty, and with due regard for fairness and equal access by all religious groups to such privileges.

Points to Remember...

- ↪ School officials can provide an empty classroom or other suitable location during lunchtime for Muslim students to perform their obligatory Friday prayers on campus.
- ↪ Muslim students who wish to attend a local *masjid* or place of worship can legally be excused for the time required, and students should be allowed to make up any missed school work.

Accommodating the Observance of Ramadan

During the month of *Ramadan*, the ninth month in the Islamic lunar calendar, Muslims abstain from all food and drink from dawn to sunset. This religious duty of fasting is known as *sawm* in Arabic, and is considered one of the "Five Pillars," or essential acts of worship in Islam. During this month, many older Muslim students observe the fast, and younger children may fast during part of the month, if they are willing and able and if their parents allow them to do so.

The most common way that school administrators show sensitivity to fasting students is by providing alternate locations during lunchtime so that they need not be around peers who are eating. Note that during Ramadan Muslim students are likely to decline to participate in parties or other events where foods and beverages are prominent. Some Muslim students or their parents may ask that they be exempted from rigorous activity in their Physical Education classes during Ramadan. P.E. teachers are encouraged to allow fasting Muslim students to participate in alternative activities during Ramadan in order to avoid the possibility of dehydration or hypoglycemia resulting from strenuous exercise. Grading practices should be adjusted accordingly so that students are not penalized for striving to fulfill this religious obligation.

Ramadan is a very important spiritual observance for Muslims. While parents try to minimize the changes to their children's sleeping schedules, some alteration is inevitable during Ramadan. The daily fast is preceded by a pre-dawn meal, and it is broken at sunset. Because of the changes in meal patterns, teachers may notice some of their Muslim students to be subdued in their behavior, especially by the afternoon. In addition, many Muslim families attend evening worship services at a local masjid each night, lasting sometimes until 10pm.

Near the end of Ramadan, Muslims commemorate a special event called *Laylat al-Qadr* ("The Night of Determination"). It is believed that on this night in Ramadan, 610 CE, Muhammad first received revelation from God. In honor of this event, many Muslim families engage in extra prayers at the masjid for several nights toward the end of the month, especially on the 27th night. Parents may request an excused absence for their children on the following day if the 27th of Ramadan falls on a weeknight and students have been up very late.

Points to Remember...

- ↪ Physical Education teachers should be aware that some elementary school students and many middle school and high school Muslim students fast during daylight hours in the month of Ramadan. These teachers can provide alternative activities that do not require rigorous physical activity to those students who request such accommodation, and they can monitor students who choose to participate in the normal P.E. activity and/or team athletics.
- ↪ During Ramadan, fasting Muslim students should be provided a location to rest or study during lunchtime, away from the cafeteria or dining areas. Muslim students may choose to abstain from parties or other events during Ramadan.
- ↪ Parents may request an excused absence for Muslim students on one or more days during the last week of Ramadan.

Accommodating the Performance of the Hajj

The *Hajj* is the pilgrimage to the city of Makkah (in modern-day Saudi Arabia) required of every Muslim once in a lifetime. Making this journey is an important aspiration for many Muslims, and it is considered a major achievement that is accorded honor and respect. The Hajj takes place each year during the first ten days of *Dhu al-Hijjah*, the twelfth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, three months after Ramadan. The Hajj is considered the "Greater Pilgrimage," but Muslims may visit Makkah at other times throughout the year, and this is known as *Umrah*, or the "Lesser Pilgrimage." The Hajj consists of a series of rituals and prayers, and some of the rites of the Umrah are similar. The Hajj brings over two million Muslim pilgrims from all over the world together at one time.

If a family plans on performing a pilgrimage (either hajj or umrah) they may request a leave from school of about two to three weeks for their children. Teachers are encouraged to work with parents to ensure that their student completes assignments ahead of time, or makes up missed work upon returning.

Points to Remember...

- ↪ Muslim families may travel during the school year to perform a pilgrimage to Makkah. Parents may request a leave of absence from school of about two to three weeks. Teachers can arrange for the student to complete assignments in advance or make up missed work after returning.

Accommodating Major Annual Islamic Celebrations (The Two Eids)

In Islam, there are two major days of celebration (*Eid* in Arabic) that are universally observed by Muslims. The first of these is *Eid al-Fitr* ("Feast of Breaking the Fast"), celebrating the end of Ramadan. It takes place on the first day of Shawwal, the month that follows Ramadan. The second celebration is *Eid al-Adha* ("Feast of the Sacrifice"), which commemorates the patriarch Abraham's commitment to God. It takes place on the 10th of the month Dhu al-Hijjah, and signifies the completion of the Hajj.

If either of the two Eid days falls on a school day, Muslim parents will typically request that their children be provided an excused absence from school. On the morning of the Eid, Muslim families attend worship services at a local masjid or at large community gathering places. They then spend the day visiting with relatives and friends, sharing special meals, and enjoying various entertainments.

Points to Remember...

- ↪ Muslim students may request the day off from school if either of the two Eid celebrations falls on a school day. Schools are encouraged to grant an excused absence for students, and teachers can show sensitivity by not scheduling important exams, project due dates, or major events on those days.
- ↪ It is important for school officials to note that there may be some discrepancy about the date of each Eid celebration among various segments of the Muslim community. This stems from variations in the method of determining the Gregorian calendar date of the first day of a new lunar month (Muslims weigh scientific criteria for visibility of the new moon's crescent with reports of actual moon-sighting in various parts of the world). The variation is typically no more than one or two days. Within the student body, some students may observe an Eid on one day, while others observe it on the following day.

The Islamic Lunar Calendar

Name of Month	Meaning...
Muharram	"The sacred month."
Safar	"The month which is void."
Rabi al-Awwal	"The first spring."
Rabi al-Thani	"The second spring."
Jumada al-Awwal	"The first month of dryness."
Jumada al-Thani	"The second month of dryness."
Rajab	"The revered month."
Shaban	"The month of division."
Ramadan	"The month of great heat."
Shawwal	"The month of hunting."
Dhu al-Qadah	"The month of rest."
Dhu al-Hijjah	"The month of pilgrimage."

Accommodating Other Important Dates

School officials and teachers should be aware of other important dates in the Muslim calendar. The dates are associated with events that have varying degrees of importance and sanctity to different groups of Muslims. The events are therefore commemorated in a range of ways throughout the world. Several particularly important holidays or occasions are listed below.

Islamic New Year

Muslims use a lunar calendar to mark time, fulfill religious obligations, and observe various holidays and occasions. The Islamic calendar incorporates twelve lunar months that have Arabic names (see chart on previous page) and that were known in pre-Islamic times, with the month of Muharram designated as the first month of the year. The Islamic calendar was instituted in 638 CE by Umar ibn al-Khattab, the second successor, or caliph (*khalifah*), to the Prophet Muhammad. The *hijrah*, or migration of Muhammad from Makkah to Madinah in 622 CE, was chosen as the zero point of the calendar, and years are designated with the notation AH (*Anno Hegirae* in Latin, or simply “after hijrah”).

The lunar year is approximately 354 days in length, about 11 days shorter than the solar year upon which the common Gregorian calendar was developed. As a result, the Islamic calendar shifts earlier by about 11 days each year with respect to the Gregorian calendar. In historical texts produced by Muslims, dates are given according to the Islamic hijri calendar, and a mathematical formula must be used to convert the hijri dates to corresponding Gregorian dates. For example, Arabic sources tell us the famous traveler Ibn Battuta died in 770 AH, which corresponds to 1368 CE. In modern times, Muslims often use calendars that show both dating systems together for any given day. Accordingly, February 22, 2004 corresponded to Muharram 1, the start of the Islamic year 1425.

Muslims annually note the start of the new Islamic year, but they do not celebrate it per se. **Parents are unlikely to request accommodations for their children.**

Ashurah [AA-shoo-rah]

This day falls on the 10th of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic year. Traditionally, Ashurah is known to Muslims as the day when Moses, whom they consider a prophet, led the Hebrew tribes out of Egyptian bondage in ancient times. Ashurah also has great significance among Muslims as a day to recall the tragic death of Muhammad’s grandson Husayn and his family during a time of civil strife in 680 CE. For many Shi’i Muslims in particular, who comprise about 10-15% of Muslims worldwide, the first days of Muharram leading up to and including Ashurah day comprise a period of intense mourning and of recounting the valiant example of Husayn in the face of tyranny. **Some Muslim students participate in late evening observances during the first nine days of Muharram. They may request an excused absence on the tenth day, Ashurah, for daytime commemorations, if it falls during the school week.**

Milad al-Nabi [mee-LAAD-an-na-BEE]

The birth (“milad”) of the Prophet Muhammad is commemorated on the 12th of Rabi al-Awwal, the third month of the Islamic calendar. Muslims often gather for special evening programs or weekend conferences during which reflections, poems and songs about the Prophet Muhammad are shared. **Students are unlikely to request accommodation.**

Isra’ wa al-Mi’raj [ISS-ra wa al-mi-RAAJ]

According to the Qur’an and recorded traditions about the Prophet Muhammad’s life, this event was Muhammad’s miraculous “Night Journey” (*isra’*) from Makkah to Jerusalem, and his “Ascension” (*mi’raj*) to heaven where he was in direct communication with God, and his return to earth. These events are believed to have occurred within a short span of time on a single night in 621 CE. This event is commemorated on the 27th of Rajab, the seventh month of the Islamic calendar. Muslim families often attend services at the masjid. **Parents are unlikely to request accommodations for their children.**

MUSLIM HOLIDAYS CALENDAR

Modern astronomical calculations about the moon's phases and the sightability of each new lunar month's crescent provide a reliable indication of when Muslim holidays will occur in the common solar calendar. In practice, the start of each Islamic lunar month is confirmed by the physical sighting of the crescent moon by Muslims at sunset time around the world. Because sightability of the new moon is affected by a variety of astronomical, geographic and atmospheric factors, along with the earth's rotation and the international dateline, the determination of the beginning of a new Islamic month may vary slightly among Muslim communities worldwide. Although Muslims aspire to observe their celebrations on the same Gregorian calendar date, this is not always possible. A new hijri "day" on the Islamic calendar begins each evening at sunset.

Important Dates in the Islamic Lunar Calendar

Islamic Holiday or Event	Islamic Calendar Date (Month, Day)	Islamic Year (AH – After Hijra)			
		1430	1431	1432	1433
		Gregorian Years (CE – Common Era)			
		2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
New Year begins...	Muharram 1	December 29 2008	December 18 2009	December 07 2010	November 26 2011
Ashura	Muharram 10	January 07 2009	December 27 2009	December 16 2010	December 05 2011
Milad al-Nabi	Rabi al-Awwal 12	March 09 2009	February 26 2010	February 15 2011	February 04 2012
Isra & Mi'raj	Rajab 26	July 19 2009	July 08 2010	June 28 2011	June 16 2012
Ramadan begins...	Ramadan 1	August 22 2009	August 10 2010	August 01 2011	July 20 2012
Eid al-Fitr	Shawwal 1	September 20 2009	September 10 2010	August 30 2011	August 19 2012
Eid al-Adha	Dhu al-Hijjah 10	November 27 2009	November 16 2010	November 06 2011	October 26 2012

The dates provided are based on calculations that estimate when the new moon's crescent can first be sighted.
Source: Dr. Khalid Shaukat, Astronomer (www.moonsighting.com)

Converting Dates

Converting dates between the Islamic Hijri calendar and the Gregorian calendar is not simply a matter of adding or subtracting years, since one has to account for the difference of about 11 days between lunar and solar years, as well as the extra day of leap years in the solar calendar. A mathematical formula must be used to arrive at proper dates between the two systems.

To find out which Islamic year a Gregorian dates fall within, use the following formula:

Let H = the Islamic Hijri lunar year, and let G = the Gregorian solar year:

If the day is before July 16 in the Gregorian year: $H = G - 621 + (G - 621) / 33$

If the day is after July 16 in the Gregorian year: $H = G - 622 + (G - 622) / 33$

Quick Activity: Have students try this out with their birthday dates or some other date.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following vocabulary terms are found in the student readings and resources. A basic definition and pronunciation guide are provided.

PERSONS

Abraham	Revered by Muslims, Jews, and Christians alike as a patriarch (father-figure); Arabic geneological sources identify him as Muhammad's ancestor. Respected as an important prophet in Islam because of his dedication to God. He is credited with building the Ka'bah. In Arabic, <i>Ibrahim</i> .
Gabriel	Muslims believe that Gabriel is one of the most important angels that serve God. In Islam, Gabriel is believed to have transmitted God's revelations to all of the prophets, including Muhammad. In Arabic, <i>Jibreel</i> .
Hajar [HAA-jar]	Abraham's second wife, who was originally the maidservant of Sarah, Abraham's first wife. According to Islamic teachings, at the command of God, Abraham brought Hajar (Hagar) and their infant son Ishmael to the valley of Makkah in the Arabian Peninsula, where they settled.
Imam [EE-maam]	A general term for a leader of congregational prayer. It is also a title of honor given to a Muslim respected for his knowledge and leadership.
Ishmael [ish-maa-EEL]	According to Islamic teachings, Abraham's firstborn son who was raised in Makkah and who helped build the Ka'bah. In Arabic, <i>Isma'il</i> .
Muhammad [moo-HUM-mud]	A prophet of Islam who lived from about 570 to 632 CE, whom Muslims believe was God's final messenger. Muslims believe his predecessors include Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus, and other figures honored by Jews and Christians as well.

PLACES

Arafat [a-ra-FAAT]	The plain outside Makkah to which pilgrims travel as part of the Hajj. The pilgrims offer prayers there throughout the day.
Ka'bah [KAA-ba]	A cube-shaped stone structure built as a house of worship at Makkah. According to Islamic teachings, it was built by Abraham and Ishmael and dedicated to the worship of the One God. It is the <i>qiblah</i> , or direction towards which all Muslims, wherever they may be located, turn in order to perform the daily prayers.
Makkah (Mecca) [MAK-ka]	Located in modern-day Saudi Arabia, it is the most sacred of three cities in Islam because of the presence of the Ka'bah, which provides the direction of prayer and plays a central role in the Hajj rituals. The other two religiously important cities to Muslims are Madinah and Jerusalem.

Masjid [MUS-jid]	A Muslim house of worship that provides space for congregational prayers and other activities. The Arabic word “masjid” connotes the posture of prayer known as <i>sujud</i> (bowing with forehead touching the ground). However, the French word “mosque” is commonly used, and it is derived from the Spanish “mesquita” (which comes from the original Arabic word).
Mina [MEE-na]	A place on the outskirts of Makkah that is a destination of pilgrims during the Hajj.
Safa and Marwa [SA-fa / MUR-wa]	Two hills near the Ka’bah which are stations for the rites of the Hajj.
Muzdalifa [MOOZ-da-lee-fa]	A place that is a destination of pilgrims during the Hajj.

WORSHIP

Adhan [a-DHAAN]	The Muslim call to prayer, recited in Arabic, that announces the five daily prayer times.
Jumah [JOOM-ah]	Literally “assembly,” referring to the Friday noon congregational worship.
Salat [sa-LAAT]	Muslim obligatory prayer performed five times a day as a specified set of words and movements of the body. Also written as <i>salah</i> .
Sujud [soo-JOOD]	A posture of kneeling and bowing with the hands and forehead touching the ground, as one of the positions of worship (<i>salat</i>).
Eid al-Fitr [EED al-FIT-UR]	Feast at the end of Ramadan, in celebration of completing the month of fasting. This takes place on the 1st day of the next month, Shawwal.
Eid al-Adha [EED al-AD-ha]	Feast at the end of the Hajj, in commemoration of events in the lives of the Prophet Abraham and his family. This takes place on the 10th day of the month Dhu al-Hijjah.
Hajj [huj]	The annual pilgrimage to Makkah, performed by several million Muslims from around the world every year. The gathering commemorates through a series of rituals the dedication to God of Abraham and Hajar, and symbolizes the oneness of humanity.

EXPRESSIONS

"Eid Mubarak" [EED moo-BAR-ak]	A greeting used by Muslims during the Eid holidays. It means "Holiday Blessings to you!" and is like saying "Happy Holidays!"
"Labbayka Allahumma Labbayk" [LUB-bay-ka al-LAAH hum-ma LUB-bayk]	A call made by pilgrims while performing the Hajj, meaning "Here I am, O God, at Thy Command!" It commemorates Abraham's reply to God's call, as recorded in the Old Testament (Genesis: 22).
Salaam [sa-LAAM]	The Muslim greeting pronounced "as-salaam alaykum," meaning "peace be with you."
Takbir [tak-BEER]	Saying "Allahu Akbar" ("God is the Most Great"). The phrase is most commonly used during formal worship. It is also used in a variety of circumstances to express feelings ranging from joy, accomplishment, solidarity, and humility. This expression is similar to the Christian expression "Hallelujah."

GENERAL TERMS

Allah [al-LAAH]	The Arabic name or word for God, composed of "al"+"lah" ("the"+"God"). According to Muslim belief, God is transcendent, All-powerful, All-knowing, Merciful, and Just. Many other attributes mentioned in the Qur'an describe God's nature.
Iftar [if-TAAR]	The evening meal eaten at sunset to break the daily fast in Ramadan.
Ihram [ih-RAAM]	A state of consecration (dedication) in which Muslims leave aside their day-to-day clothing and put on the simple, white attire of pilgrims. This clothing symbolizes a state of purity and equality among all humans before God.
Monotheism	Religion characterized by belief in One God.
Polytheism	Religion characterized by belief in many gods and/or goddesses.
Qur'an (Koran) [cur-AAN]	The holy book of Islam, which Muslims believe contains the literal speech of God as revealed to Muhammad by the angel Gabriel over a period of about 23 years ending in 632 CE.
Ramadan [ra-ma-DAAN]	The ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, during which Muslims fast from dawn to sunset as a religious obligation. It is the month during which the Qur'an's first passages were revealed to Muhammad.
Sa'i [SAA-ee]	A rite of the Hajj, in which pilgrims hurry between the hills of Safa and Marwa, reenacting Hajar's desperate search for water for her child Ishmael.
Sawm [SO-um]	Arabic word meaning "fasting." During the month of Ramadan, Muslims fast by abstaining from food and drink during the daylight hours. Fasting is believed to stimulate spiritual growth and compassion for others.

Suhoor [soo-HOOR]	The predawn meal eaten before beginning the daily fast of Ramadan.
Tarawih [ta-ra-WEEH]	Lengthy communal prayers offered nightly at the masjid during Ramadan, in which a portion of the Qur'an is recited each night, so that the entire Qur'an is completed during the month.
Tawaf [ta-WAAF]	A key rite of the Hajj in which pilgrims move in a circular, counterclockwise procession around the Ka'bah, reciting "Here I am, O God, at Thy Command!"
Ummah [OOM-ma]	A term used to refer to the world Muslim community, comprised of over 1.2 billion people of diverse racial, linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It is a concept that helps Muslims feel connected to each other regardless of their differences.
Wudu [woo-DOO]	The ritual purification (ablution) performed with water in preparation for formal worship or reading from the Qur'an. The ritual consists of washing the face, head, arms and feet in a prescribed manner, and reflects the desire to be clean in the presence of God.



Lesson Plan Guide

Primary School

PURPOSE

The student reading for primary grades, "Eid Mubarak! Islamic Celebration Around the World," describes the two Islamic holidays, their origin, background and the major features of their observance. It shows what, when, why and how Muslims celebrate on these two occasions, and introduces the values that they emphasize. The reading provides insight about the unity and diversity of Muslims around the world, and an introduction to the geography and culture of selected countries where Muslims live.

OVERVIEW

The student text and corresponding teaching suggestions are arranged into several sections: **Section 1** introduces the Arabic word "eid," defines its celebration and explains its origin in the Islamic faith. **Section 2** tells when Eid celebrations occur. A simple description of the lunar calendar is given. **Section 3** names the two Eids, describes the occasions for their observance, explains the background and some of the inherent values of each celebration. **Section 4** describes universal practices of Muslim families in preparation for and observance of Eid. **Section 5** describes Eid customs in ten countries, and gives brief information on the geography of those countries.

OBJECTIVES

The student will:

- ✿ appreciate the universality of celebration among people everywhere
- ✿ list some common occasions and features of celebrations
- ✿ identify Islam as a religion, and its followers as Muslims
- ✿ define *eid* as an Islamic celebration observed by Muslims
- ✿ name the two annual Islamic celebrations
- ✿ discuss how the moon is used to tell time
- ✿ describe the occasion commemorated by each of the Eids
- ✿ describe some preparations for Eid celebrations
- ✿ describe how Muslims celebrate on Eid days
- ✿ name each featured country and locate it on an outline map by shape and size
- ✿ name the continent on which each country is located
- ✿ describe the customs of the countries named
- ✿ describe some customs unique to the students' own families, or the religious or ethnic group to which they belong, and compare their own celebrations with Muslim holidays

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS AND ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

PRE-READING: 1. Discuss various words for occasions such as *holiday*, *festival*, *celebration*, *feast*.
2. Gather ideas from the students about what people do on special days. Explain that the class will study about when Muslims have these special days, and what they do on such days.

SECTION 1: WHAT DO MUSLIMS CELEBRATE?

1. Introduce and explain the terms “Islam” and “Muslims.” Explain that in the Arabic language, a day of celebration is called “eid.” Reinforce vocabulary (holy book, Qur’an, prophet, Muhammad) and explain that the origin of Muslims’ observation of Eid is related to core practices in Islam.
2. *Celebration* is the central concept in this section. By eliciting the students’ experiences, develop a definition of the term, to include how people celebrate (being together, visiting, sharing special foods and gifts, etc.), kinds of celebration (weddings, births, deaths, special events, anniversaries, etc.), why people celebrate (to have a break from everyday life and work, to be happy and have fun, to remember important things together, to share friendship and things they have like food and gifts).
3. In discussing the source of Islamic holidays, emphasize that they are mentioned in the Qur’an, Muslims’ holy book. The celebration is part of Muslims’ history. In many cultures, people remember important things and values together, and share money and food with others who are less fortunate.

SECTION 2: WHEN DO MUSLIMS CELEBRATE EID?

1. Ask students why we need to know the date, days of the week and months of the year. The class should agree that they need to know when to do things, especially things that people do together, like going to school in September, having summer vacation in June, planting gardens in the spring, etc.
2. Discuss what the reading says about the times of the two Eid days. Building on students’ prior knowledge of the calendar and the seasons, have them name the seasons, identify their dates of birth, and find some holidays on a calendar. Explain that the calendar seasons change with the earth’s movement around the sun during the year. Long ago, people watched and noticed changes in the position of sun and moon, and the shape of the moon. They noticed patterns that repeat. They used these patterns to make calendars – using the sun’s pattern, and the moon’s pattern. (See below, “Extension,” for a demonstration of the science behind the calendar.) Muslims use both solar and lunar calendars, but the Islamic holidays are set by the lunar calendar. Explain that people got the idea of calendar months by watching the moon change shape each 28-29 days. To make each year the same (and aligned with the solar year), they added a day or two to some months, making them 30 or 31 days long. Which months have more days? Which have fewer days? Explain that Muslims holidays are based on the lunar calendar.
3. **EXTENSION:** *Science lesson on the motion of the sun and moon.* Using a calendar, identify by month and day some holidays familiar to the students (like Labor Day, Columbus Day, etc.), and state the seasons in which they fall. Find out when the two Islamic holidays, *Eid al-Fitr* and *Eid al-Adha* occurred last year. An Islamic center, masjid (mosque) or printed calendar can provide information on when they will occur this year. Compare the dates. Students should be familiar with the varying lengths of a month from 28 days (February) to 31 days (January, May, etc.). Explain that moon months are typically 29-30 days. That way, 12 moon months are shorter than 12 months on the sun calendar. So the Eid days seem to move earlier through the seasons, occurring on earlier dates of each solar year.

Explain that Muslims eventually fast throughout all the seasons. The lunar calendar makes the fasting fairer for people all over the world, since they take turns fasting in the long, hot summer days and the short, cool winter days, depending on where they live.

SECTION 3: WHAT IS THE STORY OF EID?

1. Have the students name some holidays or celebrations such as Columbus Day, Christmas, Yom Kippur, Martin Luther King holiday, Independence Day, Presidents' Day, etc. Discuss what these holidays mean, and what stories are behind them.
2. Practice saying the name of each Eid day. Identify Ramadan as the name of a month in the Islamic lunar calendar. Write the name on the board.
3. **Eid al-Fitr** is the holiday that follows Ramadan, the fasting month. It means "Celebration of Breaking the Fast." If Muslims see the new crescent moon on the eve of the 30th day of Ramadan, then it is understood that Ramadan is 29 days long and the next day is Eid al-Fitr, which falls on the first of the month of Shawwal; if no crescent is sighted, then Ramadan is 30 days long and Muslims fast one more day before Eid al-Fitr occurs. The sighting is accompanied by much excitement by young and old alike. The custom of watching for the moon extends to all countries, but for those who cannot observe the skies directly, waiting for news on the radio, television, or internet, or by calling the local masjid is just as suspenseful. Explain that the new crescent becomes visible at a certain point in time based on the earth's rotation, so Muslims in different parts of the world may or may not see the crescent on the same night. This sometimes results in variations of the day of observation. Also, some Muslims choose to follow a local sighting in North America to determine the end of Ramadan, while others follow reports of sightings in other locations (ex. Makkah, or the country where their relatives live). As a result, Eid al-Fitr may be celebrated on the same day or one day apart within local Muslim communities.
4. Use the text's definition of fasting as a basis for discussion. Poll the students for any who may have known someone who fasted or tried it themselves. Is fasting difficult or easy? Ask questions such as: **HOW:** What do Muslims not do when fasting? Eat or drink. Islam also teaches that a fasting person does not argue, use bad language or do bad things. Fasting persons try to pray more, do good deeds, and share with others. Fasting in Ramadan is done with others in the family and community. **WHEN:** Do Muslims fast for a long time? How many days? During what part of the day? Reminding students of the Islamic calendar, tell them that Ramadan is the name of a month. *Iftar* is the sundown meal to break the fast. The feast at the end of the month is called Eid al-Fitr. The F-T-R root is common to both words, "to break fast." For comparison, the English word "breakfast" means eating after the fast of sleeping since dinner. **WHY:** Using clues in the text, discuss the source of Islamic fasting in the Qur'an (Islam's holy book) and Muhammad's teaching. Fasting during Ramadan is one of the most important duties for a Muslim. Note that Muslim children may try to fast for part of the day, or a few days during Ramadan, but fasting is only required for teenagers and adults. People who are traveling or are ill can make up the fast at a later time. Women who are expecting or nursing a baby do not have to fast. List reasons for fasting given in the text. Students may draw pictures or symbols illustrating these reasons.
5. **Eid al-Adha**, or the "Celebration of the Sacrifice" is known as the "Greater Eid," and occurs on the tenth day of the lunar month Dhu al-Hijjah ("month of pilgrimage"). The celebration takes its meaning from the story of Abraham's prophetic dream that he must sacrifice his son to demonstrate selflessness and dedication to God. The important value celebrated in Eid al-Adha is Abraham's love of God, faith, and obedience, and God's mercy to Abraham in accepting his sacrifice and sending a ram to ransom or replace him. This is complex material for young students, but many may be familiar with the person, and the ideas in the reading are kept simple.

6. According to Islamic teachings, Abraham and Ishmael built the Ka'bah as a house of worshipping one God. The city of Makkah, with the Ka'bah (now located within the great Masjid al-Haram) is the birthplace of Muhammad. The Hajj is one of the "Five Pillars," or basic duties for Muslims. It is a once-in-a-lifetime performance of pilgrimage rites commemorating Abraham and his family. The Hajj involves a sacrifice of time and money out of obedience to God. It has been as an important source of unity and exchange among Muslims of many lands.
7. Define the word *sacrifice* as "giving up something of value." It is linked to the story of Abraham and his son by explaining how parents place a very high value on their children. Sacrificing the child they love is the hardest thing any parent could possibly be asked to do. At the time of Eid al-Adha, each Muslim family sacrifices an animal as a symbolic reenactment of Abraham's dedication.

Explain that one way people give thanks is by sharing with others from what they have. At the time of Eid al-Adha, some of the meat from the sacrificed animals is distributed to relatives and the poor. Such an act was especially significant long ago, when eating meat was considered a luxury for most people. This remains true in some parts of the world today.

EXTENSIONS: Discuss meanings of the word *sacrifice* as giving up something a person likes or wants. A related idea is *sharing*. Ask the students to name some things that they like very much. In a 5-minute exercise, have each child write or draw three important things they own. Have each child name those things and tell how they could be shared, and with whom (i.e., could the thing be divided up to share, could it be given away to someone else, or could someone else borrow it? Whom could they share it with? (parent, brother or sister, friend, or someone who is needy).

ACTIVITY: Make a list of different kinds of things that can be sacrificed/shared, such as **OBJECTS**, such as toys, clothing (especially when it is outgrown or when you have a lot), **FOOD** (with guests, friends, or hungry people), **MONEY** (parents spend on their children, people give some of their money for **charity**), and finally **TIME** (Ask how people can give up, or sacrifice time – helping someone, saying a kind word or giving hugs and love, and doing what people ask us to do, like when parents ask us to do chores at home, etc.).

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: sacrifice can mean putting aside what we want sometimes, being unselfish (ex. sharing toys). Talk about whether it is easy or difficult to let the other child have it. Putting aside anger can be an example of sacrifice. Ask why this kind of sacrifice is sometimes very difficult, and needs practice.

ROLE-PLAY/CHARADES: Have the children act out scenes of giving up things, and let their classmates guess what they are acting out.

8. **Hajj:** The lesson should be built around the idea that the Hajj journey expresses the importance of remembering events in the past, a common feature of holidays in many cultures. These events may be happy or sad. By remembering historical events, people recall the important ideas and values associated with them and try to demonstrate them in their own lives.
- a. **Making a Keyword Chart:** Ask the students what the text says about Hajj. Make a chart of keywords on the board which should add up to a description of the journey. Make five columns, each headed by a question word (WHO?, WHAT?, WHERE?, WHEN?, WHY?) Ask the students to arrange their responses (keyword clues from the text) in the appropriate column to build a definition of the Hajj. The completed chart might look something like this:

WHO ?	WHAT?	WHERE?	WHEN?	WHY?
Muslims	trip	Makkah	once in lifetime	to worship God
adult	visit	Kabah	during special month for hajj	to remember important events
healthy	hajj rituals	places Abraham went	before Eid Al-Adha	to remember people in history
whoever can save enough money	sacrifice animals	at home	on Eid al-Adha	to share food

- b. **Describing Hajj:** The teacher may add information about the Hajj journey, using other sources, such as *National Geographic* and *Aramco World Magazine*, "Journey of a Lifetime" (July/August 1992) to show the locations and rites of Hajj. Discuss the appearance of the pilgrims and explain that all of them are dressed the same, in very simple clothing. No one can tell who is rich or poor, reminding Muslims that people are equal.

EXTENSIONS: 1. Find out from TV, radio, an internet weather report, or the newspaper what time sunrise and sunset occur. 2. Demonstrate the difference between *dawn* and *sunrise*, using a globe and a flashlight to show how the sun lights up the sky before the sun comes up. Explain that Muslims fast starting with the first light, not at sunrise. 3. Locate Makkah and Madinah on the globe or world map.

SECTION 4: HOW DO MUSLIMS CELEBRATE EID?

1. **Celebration demonstrates Islamic values:** Explain that preparations for a celebration are things people do all the time, but they are done especially well or they are especially important and done in certain, special ways for a holiday. Ask the students why it is important to do each of these things anytime, but especially for a celebration. Tell the students that if you look at what people do for a celebration, you can tell what is important to them. Explain that peoples' activities often reflect the **values**, ideas and beliefs they consider important. Ask the students to name the preparations and activities for Eid, and make a list on the board. After each item, place an arrow. Ask the students what is important about doing these things, or why are they done.

ACTIVITY

cleaning house, taking baths, new clothes
 cooking and cleaning
 making special food for guests, sharing food
 giving gifts to friends and poor people
 going to Eid prayer all together
 greeting and visiting
 listening to a speech

→
 →
 →
 →
 →
 →
 →

VALUES

cleanliness and neatness
 working together
 enjoying and sharing blessings
 being generous
 joining together to worship
 keeping good relations with people
 remembering important things together

SECTION 5: WHAT ARE SOME EID CUSTOMS AROUND THE WORLD?

1. Show the students a globe or map of the world. Point out that the land is divided into many countries. Find the United States, and discuss how people came from many countries to live here, including Muslims. Explain that Muslims live in nearly every country in the world, and that some countries have many Muslims. There are about 6-7 million Muslims in the United States.
2. Review the idea that Muslims around the world do many similar things to celebrate Eid. Give examples based on the student reading and background research. Explain that Muslims in each country also have special things that they do which are different from Muslims in other countries. This student reading describes some of these traditions.

Holland: Ramadan box

1. Locate Holland on a map or globe. Identify the continent of Europe.
2. Explain the idea of the Ramadan box by having everyone put a different object in a box and taking one out. The students might find this an interesting idea for use in other classroom activities, such as spelling drills, math problems, sharing artwork, etc.

Malaysia: Making rice over an open fire

1. Point to Malaysia on a map or globe. Identify the continent of Asia and the region of Southeast Asia. Using the text, have students help to define the word *peninsula*. Contrast with *island*.
2. In Malaysia, almost everyone celebrates Eid in the villages. As in many Muslim countries, the cities are emptied just before Eid. People visit their grandparents or other relatives in the countryside. This is very exciting for children from the city, because they get to see farm animals, run in the fresh air, and meet their relatives. For the village children, it means seeing their cousins, aunts and uncles, and having lots of friends to play with. Hosting visitors also means receiving toys, clothes and treats from the city. For everyone, it means good food and lots of fun! All the relatives work together to cook and prepare special food, and serve all the guests.
3. **City/ Village (rural-urban):** Review differences between a village and a city. Discuss the following:
 - how the two places differ in the way they look (amount of trees, kind of streets and buildings)
 - how they differ in the way people get their food (farm vs. store)
 - how jobs and activities are different in each place (many jobs vs. limited jobs)
 - how people communicate (basically the same nowadays)

The last point can be used to discuss the links between city and village, such as bringing food from village to city in trucks, bringing supplies from city to village, city people going to villages to visit, calls on the telephone, watching TV and listening to the radio for news, etc. The class can make a chart of links from village to city, from city to village, and both ways. The chart below is only one example of how this might be done:

<u>CITY</u>		<u>VILLAGE</u>
canned food from factory	↔	fresh food from farm
people need food	↔	farmers need tools
people call on telephone	↔	people call on telephone
stations send TV/radio	↔	people use TV/radio
people visit	↔	people visit

4. **Resources from near and far:** Identify the items needed to make the traditional Malaysian Eid dish (coconuts, rice and bamboo). Ask the students where the Malaysians get these items (the text states that they grow in Malaysia). Tell the students that the things that grow or are found in a place are called *resources*. Tell or ask students what resources are used for: food, clothes, houses, transportation and other things we use. Use the illustration in the reading to name some of the resources found in Malaysia (palm trees, rice, bamboo, wood for houses and firewood, etc.). For enrichment and practice, you may use some of the other illustrations to name resources in other places mentioned in the reading. Explain that every day, we use resources from near where we live, and from far away. Ask the students: Could we get the ingredients for this Malaysian dish where we live? How would we get them? Could we find some items (coconut and rice) in the store, but maybe not others (bamboo sticks)? How do these things come to us from far away? (in airplanes, ships and trucks). Reinforce the idea of resources and transportation using other examples.

Egypt: Ramadan lanterns



1. Point to Egypt on a map or globe. Identify the continent of Africa.
2. Identify the Nile River mentioned in the text. Have students trace it with their finger on a map, and name the countries it flows through. Ask the students how the text describes Egypt (hot and dry, and having many people). Explain that the river is very important for Egypt because of the weather, and to help grow food and to have water for all the people.
3. **Having fun:** Explain that many countries have customs which are fun for children. Have the class name some holiday customs they know about from various cultures and countries that are fun. Some examples include May poles, parades, making ornaments for Christmas trees, decorating eggs, spinning dreidels, origami toys and decorations for holidays in China and Japan, paper cutouts all over the world, dances and puppet shows in Indonesia, etc. Talk about the meaning behind some of these customs, like eggs in spring celebrations to remember new growth, origami birds as symbols for hope, peace and happiness, etc. Introduce and discuss the meaning of the Ramadan lanterns, and how they symbolize the concept of light in Islam, as in Muslims' belief in the "light" of the Qur'an, and the general idea of truth as light and ignorance as darkness. The lanterns can also be said to reflect the love that Muslim parents have for their children, since the children bring light and beauty and song and happiness into the houses of their families and their communities.
4. **CRAFT ACTIVITY:** There are several ways to make lanterns similar to the ones used in Egypt, both 2- and 3-dimensional. The simplest method is to cut out a frame of cardboard or construction paper in the shape of a lantern, decorate it with crayons, glitter, silver paper or paint, then add colored tissue paper or colored cellophane glued into the frame. The finished lantern can be hung in a window as a suncatcher. A second method is to fold a piece of construction paper crosswise into four sections, cutting a rectangular or fancy-shaped hole in each panel. Glue a piece of tissue paper or acetate on the back, fold into a square tube, and attach a strip of paper at the top for a handle. A third method is to use paper milk cartons, oatmeal boxes, or other types of cartons, making a design for the light to shine through by cutting out shapes, carefully piercing the carton with a pencil or scissor point to make a design. Glue colored cellophane or tissue paper behind the cut-outs and attach a string or cardboard strip for a handle. Put a small flashlight or penlight inside the finished lantern. (Do not use candles, as they are a fire hazard!).

USA: Picnics in the park

1. Point to the United States on a map or globe. Identify the continent of North America. Using the map, discuss what is meant in the text by the description “large country.” Compare the size of the United States with that of other countries. Ask the students to relate in their own words the American custom of having picnics or barbeques in the park.
2. **Muslims from many lands share a good time:** Ask for a show of hands on what languages are spoken in the students’ homes (English, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Vietnamese, Urdu, Farsi, Polish, etc.). Explain to the students that people from many different countries, including Muslims in the U.S., speak many different languages and have many different customs. Sometimes they come together and invent a new custom that everyone can enjoy. Muslims in the U.S. often meet in parks on Eid for a good time that everyone can understand and enjoy as an American experience. As the text suggests, they have picnics where everyone brings a variety of foods, including favorites such as hamburgers, pizza, grilled chicken, potato salad, corn on the cob, and other items. Furthermore, masjids often organize carnivals and pony rides for the children. Discuss how this new custom is like the other customs they have read about, and how it is different.

China: Special bread

1. Point to China on a map or globe. Identify the continent of Asia. Discuss the meaning of the description of China as “a very large country” with “more people than any other country.” You may wish to quantify the figure by looking up China’s exact population in an Atlas, or by comparing China’s population with that of the total world population using beans of different colors, or colored counters from math skills manipulative kits. Show a ratio of 4 parts to 1 part, for a total of 5 parts, each representing 1 billion people. (depending on the group, the teacher may choose to discuss or omit the concept of a billion). Finally, explain that most Chinese people are not Muslims, but there are many millions of Muslims in China.
2. Explain that a special bread is always made at the time of Eid, and the Chinese recognize this as a Muslim specialty. Explain the illustration by telling the class that the people who make this bread are poor people who have no other houses, so they live in the masjid. Muslim families buy oil and flour, or give the money to buy oil and flour, and sometimes sugar, to these people in the masjid. They make the bread in the courtyard, or paved space behind the masjid, cooking it in lots of oil in big, round frying pans sitting on a little stand. They then put the bread in bags for families to take home. They often put small pieces of paper in the bag with the bread. Written on the paper is the name of a relative who has died, so people remember that person on the day of Eid.
3. **Stories tell about important things like values:** To help the students understand the story behind the bread, tell them that it is from *Hadith*, or stories told about the Prophet Muhammad by his companions. What does the story in the reading tell about the people’s values (being generous; making an effort even when you don’t have much; accepting presents, even if they are not big and expensive; being happy with simple things; giving gifts with love; saying “thank you;” remembering the poor. Discuss why special days are a good time to remember and tell stories.

EXTENSION: Read other stories that have important meanings, such as *Aesop’s Fables* or similar selections from other cultures past and present.

Pakistan: Watching for the moon

1. Point to Pakistan on a map or globe. Identify the continent of Asia. Show pictures of hills, mountains and valleys, high land and low land from library books or scenic calendars (you can make a bulletin board display). Identify Pakistan as a land with hills, valleys and very high mountains. A relief map or globe will show that Pakistan has very high land and very low land, and a large river.
2. Review the lesson from Section 2 on the Islamic calendar and phases of the moon. Tell the students that people wait for the end of the month of Ramadan by watching the moon. Explain that Muslims stop fasting and celebrate Eid when the new moon arrives. When the last sliver of the old moon disappears, they know the time is near. Then, they watch on the roofs for the new crescent to appear. People also use telescopes and other modern instruments, and make calculations on computers to predict when the new moon will be visible.
3. **Different lands, different conditions, different ways to get information:** Ask the students if they have ever seen the moon and stars from where they live. Have them observe the sky at night as a homework project and report on what they saw (they may be encouraged to write a sentence or two or draw a picture of what they saw). Discuss the findings, and why the moon can't be seen everywhere by the eye alone (due to clouds, city lights, trees, etc.). Ask how people might find out about the moon if they can't see it where they live. Explain that in the desert and the mountains, far from city lights, people can best see the moon and stars in the night sky. Also, scientists with big telescopes look for the new moon and record the information. When someone sees it, they quickly tell people around the world by telephone, radio, or TV, or the internet.
4. **CRAFT ACTIVITY:** Use black construction paper, glue and silver or gold glitter to make stars and a crescent moon. Using white school glue in an applicator, or with a brush, make a large crescent in the middle of the paper. Then make a number of stars on the rest of the paper. Shake glitter over the wet glue, then shake off the excess onto a newspaper. Hang the picture to dry thoroughly before handling. **Alternate method:** Outline a crescent moon and stars on a piece of black construction paper. Cut or punch out the shapes carefully. Mount the black sky over a piece of silver or gold wrapping paper or aluminum foil. Yellow or white tissue paper can be used as well, if it is hung in a window for the light to come through.

Turkey: Suhur drummer

1. Point to Turkey on a map or globe. Identify the continents of Europe and Asia. Identify Turkey on a relief globe or map, letting students trace the seacoast and feel the mountains with their finger.
2. Discuss why the drummer is important during Ramadan, when he comes, and why the people want to wake up early, eat and pray. Review the text from Sections 1 and 2 if needed.
3. **Kinds of communication:** Ask how Muslims get up to pray the dawn prayer when it is not Ramadan. Explain that they hear the *adhan* (call to prayer) from a nearby masjid or on the radio. Discuss with the class how the *adhan* and the drummer represents a special kind of communication. Ask the students how far away they think the drum could be heard. Ask what other kinds of local communication can be used to carry messages a short distance. Contrast the kinds of communication that need many people (person-to-person talking and telephoning), and the kinds that can be heard by many people at once (a microphone, a person with a loud voice, whistles, horns, and drums, radio and TV). Consider which kinds work for both near and far. Tell which kinds need a long time (books and newspapers, letters), and which ones are very fast (voice, drum, caller, electronic media).

4. **Communicating without words:** Ask students to think of other ways people communicate without words, and discuss when these kinds of communication are used. Some examples are hand and light signals and horn honking in traffic, sign language for hearing impaired, whistles for sports coaches, buzzers and bells in school and for telephones, appliances and fire alarms. The teacher may add some examples from science (light and mirror signaling, morse code) and history/culture (town criers, gongs, trumpets, smoke signals, and African and Native American drums). As an activity, invent and practice using aural signs to communicate in the classroom.

EXTENSION: Find out other ways drums have been used around the world to communicate. Get books on drums and their uses from the library, or invite a guest speaker to demonstrate different types of drums and their uses. **SCIENCE:** Find out why different sized/shaped drums make different sounds.

Iran: Putting new shoes under their pillow

1. Point to Iran on a map or globe. Identify the continent of Asia.
2. Point out the masjid shown in the window of the illustration. Explain that if you lived in Iran, you might have such a building in your neighborhood. Explain that in countries where many Muslims live, every neighborhood has one or more masjids. Ask students, "Are there any masjids in your local area? What houses of worship (churches, temples, synagogues) are found in your town or neighborhood?"
3. Review Section 4, "Getting Ready," for universal Eid customs. Remind students that Muslim parents everywhere try to get new clothes and shoes for their children for Eid. Ask for students' ideas on why the Iranian children might put their shoes under their pillows.
4. Explain that in every society, certain customs show how parents love children and try to give them many things. Think of some customs that are fun for children, in the U.S. and in other countries. (ex. amusement parks, gifts and new clothes for Eid, playgrounds, birthday parties, trick or treat, puppet shows, songs, holiday games, fiestas, etc.). The class may enjoy doing some research on children's customs.
5. **ART APPRECIATION:** Show the class photographs of some masjids in Iran. Discuss the colored tiles used to make the beautiful designs inside and out.
6. **CRAFT ACTIVITY:** Make paper mosaics using glue and small bits of colored paper. Download Islamic art coloring pages from various websites and have the students color them as they choose.

Gambia: Big families celebrate together

1. Point to Gambia on a map or globe. Identify the continent of Africa. Ask students to describe the shape of Gambia, and find the river in the middle of it. Identify Senegal. Locate the Atlantic Ocean.
2. Using the illustration and descriptions in the reading, have students compare and contrast the Eid dinner in Gambia with customs in other lands, such as the United States and Malaysia, as well as with a special dinner observed by their own family. Students should note the way the family sits (on the ground, on low stools, at chairs and table), the type of pots and dishes used, and what kind of utensils are used for eating (fingers, gourd spoons, chopsticks, metal spoons, knives and forks). Explain that the way people eat is also a custom. The Prophet Muhammad liked to sit on the floor, and eat with his right hand. Many Muslims follow his example, so it is a common way of eating among Muslims.
3. **Trying out different ways of eating:** Make a tray of different types of food, and experiment with different ways of eating, using a selection of utensils, including silverware and camping gear. Also try different ways of sitting.

“EID MUBARAK!”

ISLAMIC CELEBRATIONS AROUND THE WORLD

People everywhere have special days. They celebrate many different things.

People celebrate seasons of the year. They celebrate births and weddings. They celebrate important events and people.

On special days, people join together. They stop working and have fun together. They visit and share special foods. They wear their best clothes.

Muslims have special days, too. Families celebrate important events. All Muslims celebrate twice each year. They enjoy Islamic celebrations. Islam is the name of Muslims' religion. Read about Muslim celebrations on the next pages.



1: What Do Muslims Celebrate?

Muslims celebrate twice each year.

A day of celebration in Arabic language is *eid*.

Muslims everywhere celebrate *eid*.

Muslims learn about *eid* from their holy book, the *Qur'an*, and their prophet, or teacher, Muhammad.

The first *eid* is called *Eid al-Fitr**.

The second *eid* is called *Eid al-Adha***.

* *Eid al-Fitr* means the "Celebration of Breaking the Fast"

** *Eid al-Adha* means the "Celebration of the Sacrifice"

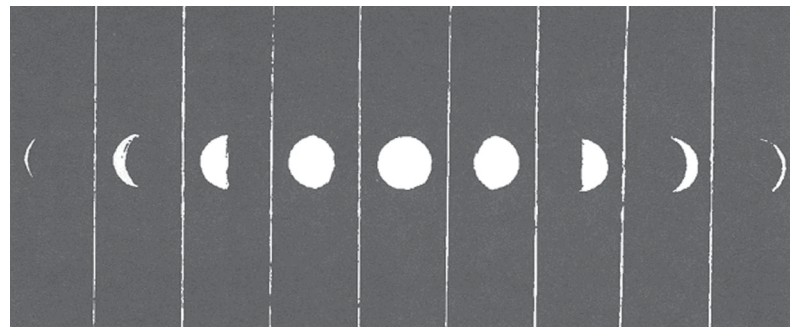
2: When do Muslims Celebrate *Eid*?

The *Eid* celebration comes each year.

It comes in different seasons.

Sometimes *Eid* comes in summer.

It comes in spring, autumn or winter.



Shapes of the moon.

The Islamic calendar changes with the moon.

The moon's shape changes each month.

Look how the moon changes!

3: What is the story of *Eid*?

EID AL-FITR

The first celebration is Eid Al-Fitr. It comes just after the month called Ramadan.

During Ramadan, Muslims fast. They do not eat anything. They do not drink anything. They fast from dawn to sundown. At sundown they share break-fast. Then they pray together.

When they fast, Muslims follow Islamic teachings. Muslims learn to control themselves better, and to remember their faith. Fasting helps them think about poor people.

Muslims fast together for one month. Then they celebrate Eid al-Fitr.



EID AL-ADHA

The second celebration is Eid Al-Adha.

Muslims celebrate the life of a famous person, Abraham.* They celebrate events in his life. A story tells that God told Abraham to give up his son. When Abraham obeyed, God let his son live. Abraham sacrificed an animal instead.



Muslims sacrifice animals on Eid al-Adha. They keep some of the meat. They give some to friends, family, and poor people.

Eid al-Adha comes at the end of the Hajj. Hajj is a trip to Makkah. Muslims try to go on Hajj once in their lives.

They visit a building in Makkah called the Ka'bah. They visit a visit places where Abraham walked. Muslims in Makkah celebrate the end of hajj.

Muslims celebrate Eid al-Adha at home.

4: How Do Muslims Celebrate Eid?

GETTING READY

Before Eid, families make their homes sparkling clean. They make sweets. They cook delicious food.

On the day of Eid, everyone takes a bath. They put on their best clothes and new shoes.

EID PRAYERS

Families go to the Eid prayer.

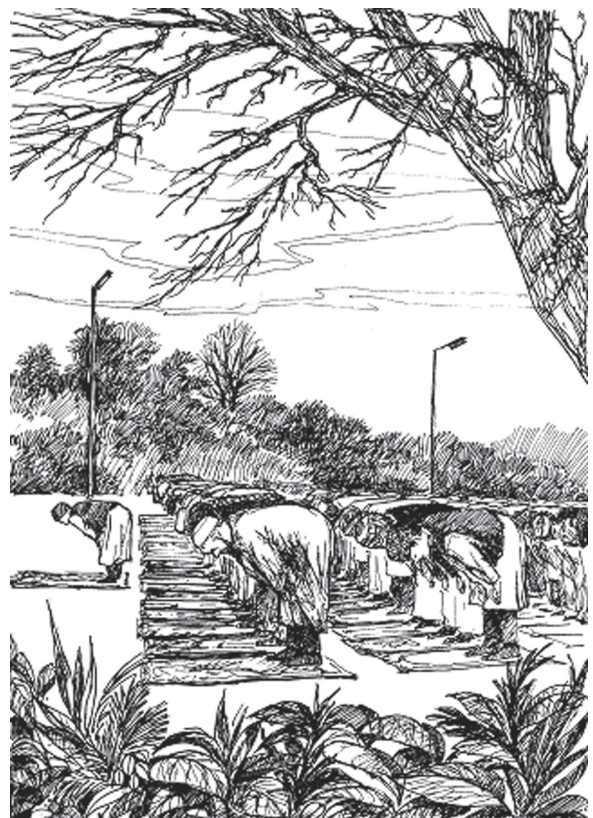
The prayer is outdoors or in the masjid. The place is very crowded.

All the Muslims pray together. They listen quietly to the leader's talk.

After prayer, Muslims greet each other. Children get presents, candy and money.

Friends, relatives and neighbors visit. They eat good food together. They give food and money to poor people.

* A *masjid* (mosque) is a building where Muslims pray.



5: What are some Eid customs around the world?

You have read how all Muslims celebrate Eid.

Now, you will read about special ways to celebrate.

Muslims from each country have different customs.

They have fun in different ways.

There are many more countries and customs.

The ones in this book are only a few.

Muslims live all over the world.




This greeting is written in Arabic language. Color or trace it!

Blessed celebration!
Eid mubarak!

Pakistan

.....
Pakistan is a country in Asia.
It has very high mountains.
The sky is clear in the
mountains. The stars sparkle
at night.

It is the end of Ramadan.
Families watch for the new
moon. They watch on the
roofs of their houses. Singers
go through the
neighborhoods. People hug
each other. The children get
to stay up late. They help to
get ready for Eid.



On the day of Eid, people wear fancy clothes. Women and girls paint henna^{*} on hands and feet. Children get money and gifts. They enjoy swings and rides.

* *Henna* is a red-brown body paint made from a plant.
Women and girls paint designs on hands and feet with henna.

Iran

.....

Iran is a country in Asia. It has many beautiful, old buildings.

It is the night before *Eid*. The children have shiny, new shoes. They are very excited.

They put the new shoes under their pillow and dream about Eid tomorrow.



Egypt

.....

Egypt is country in Africa. The world's longest river is in Egypt. Many people live in Egypt.

In Ramadan, children get colored lanterns. The children have a parade. They hold the lanterns high.

They sing songs. Neighbors give them gifts.

On Eid, colored lights decorate houses and shops. Children wear clothes in bright colors.

Families go to parks. They play and eat together. They ride horses and swings, laugh and have fun. Everyone enjoys Eid.



Turkey

.....

Turkey is a country between Europe and Asia. Turkey has mountains and coasts. It has farms and big cities.

In Ramadan, Muslims eat a meal before dawn. It is still dark outside. A drummer walks through the streets.

Sleeping people hear his drum. Boom! Ba-ba-boom! Wake up to eat! Wake up to pray!

On Eid, the drummer comes again. People give him sweets and money.

Holland

.....

Holland is a small country in Europe. Few Muslims live there.

Muslims in Holland have an Islamic school. The children in the class make an Eid Box.

Everyone puts in a gift. On Eid, they open the box. Everyone gets a different gift. They greet and thank each other.



United States

.....

The United States is in North America. It is a large country. Muslims from many countries live there.

On Eid, Muslims meet in parks or masjid (mosque). They pray the Eid prayer.

After prayer, children get balloons. They ride ponies. They have fun on carnival rides. Families have picnics and visit together.



Trinidad

.....

Trinidad is near South America. Trinidad is a beautiful island.

Muslims came to Trinidad long ago. Their grandfathers came from Africa. Their grandfathers came from India.

Christians and Hindus live there, too.



On Eid, everyone has the day off. Schools close. Offices close. Muslim families celebrate Eid. They go to prayer. They buy sweets. They visit friends and neighbors.

Muslim families send sweets to neighbors. The television shows Eid programs all day.

Malaysia

.....

Malaysia is a country in Asia. Part of Malaysia is on a peninsula. A peninsula has water on three sides. Part of Malaysia is on an island.

Malaysia is a warm, rainy country. Rice, bamboo and coconuts grow there.

It is the day before Eid.

Families cook sweet sticky rice. They cook it inside hollow bamboo stalks. They mix the rice with coconut milk and sugar. They hang the bamboo over a big fire. The rice cooks a long time.

The children play and laugh. They like to watch the fire.



China

.....
China is in Asia. China is a very large country. Many Muslims live in certain parts of China.

Muslims share special bread on Eid. They make dough from flour. They fry the dough in hot oil.

Chinese Muslims know a story about this bread.

A poor woman made bread as a gift for her prophet, Muhammad. She had only a little flour. She had only a little oil. Muhammad ate the woman's bread. The bread tasted very good. He knew she wanted to share what she had. Muhammad thanked her warmly.



Gambia

.....
Gambia is a small country in Africa. It is on a river. Gambia is near the ocean.

Outside the city, families live in villages. Large families live close together. They share water from a well. They grow food and plant fruit trees.

Before Eid Al-Adha, the families buy sheep. The children are very happy. They bring grass and water for the sheep.

Children help their fathers with the sheep. They give meat to other families. Each child carries a dish to a different house.

In each house, families cook pots of food. Women carry the food to the center of the village. The whole family shares the food under a big tree.



Words to Know

Islam [iss-LAAM]	a world religion
Islamic [iss-LAAM-ik]	describes something about Islam
Muslims [MOOS-lims]	people who follow Islam
Qur'an [cur-AAN]	the holy book of Islam
Muhammad [moo-HUM-mud]	the person who taught about Islam. A prophet is a messenger (teacher) sent by God.
Eid al-Fitr [EED al-FIT-UR]	the Islamic "Celebration of Breaking the Fast" of Ramadan
Eid al-Adha [EED al-AD-HA]	the Islamic "Celebration of the Sacrifice"
Ramadan [ra-ma-DAAN]	a month when Muslims fast
fast	to stop eating and drinking for a time
dawn	the first light of morning
Abraham	a prophet who lived long ago. He taught about believing in one God. He is loved by Jews, Christians and Muslims.
sacrifice	to give up something you love
Makkah [MAK-ka]	city where the Ka'bah is, and Muhammad was born
Hajj [huj]	a trip to Makkah that Muslims take once in their lives
Ka'bah [KAA-bah]	a building in Makkah, a place for Islamic prayer
masjid [MUS-jid]	a building where Muslims pray (also called a mosque)
Eid Mubarak! [EED moo-BAR-ak]	a greeting in Arabic language, it means "blessed celebration"
henna	a red-brown body paint made from a plant. Women and girls paint designs on hands and feet with henna.
bamboo	a kind of tall, hollow tree

Places to Know

Pakistan	United States
Iran	Trinidad
Egypt	Malaysia
Turkey	China
Holland	Gambia

Lesson Plan Guide

Upper Elementary School / Middle School / High School

PURPOSE

These lessons for upper elementary, middle and high school grades describe the basic acts of worship in Islam called the Five Pillars, their meaning, dimensions and cultural influences. They describe major and minor celebrations observed by Muslims, giving background and explanation of the two Islamic holidays, their origin, background and major features of their observance. The student readings tell what, when, why and how Muslims celebrate on these two occasions, and introduce the values behind the celebrations. The questions and activities engage other topics in the world studies curriculum and other subject areas. These lessons may be used near the date of an Islamic holiday or as an addition to standard units on holidays around the world, or in conjunction with basic units on Islam in world cultures and geography or world history classes.

OVERVIEW

There are two versions of the student text, one full version for middle school and high school or general readers, and one simplified version for upper elementary grades (4-6), students learning English, or mixed ability students. Both readings begin with an overview of basic information about Islam, and continue with a description of the five pillars, which covers beliefs and practices of the faith. The next topic is the three major observances that are universal among Muslim societies—weekly congregational prayer, and the two annual celebrations (at the end of the month of fasting and at the end of the hajj season). The full text also describes some lesser annual observances that are not universally practiced by all Muslims.

OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to:

- ✿ identify Islam as a world religion, and its followers as Muslims
- ✿ list some basic beliefs of Islam
- ✿ describe the “Five Pillars of Islam” and explain their basic meaning
- ✿ explain how the five pillars have influenced Muslim culture historically and in contemporary times
- ✿ describe the two annual Islamic celebrations, their background and customs involved in their celebration
- ✿ (middle & high school) describe lesser observances that are practiced by some Muslim groups or as regional traditions

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS AND ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

NOTE: Lesson activities are organized by sections of the student texts. Teachers may build lesson plans for their individualized Muslim holiday unit by selecting from the following menu of activities, according to their target student population, grade level and instructional goals.

FIVE PILLARS

1. **ARTIFACT STUDY:** *Prayer Times Chart Handout*. This chart is accompanied by a short observation lesson that goes with the Graphic Organizer activity (see below). Students look at the prayer time chart and analyze the type of information it contains. They first find out the meaning of the terms on the chart from the reading, then list branches of knowledge that are required to make such a chart (i.e. geography, cartography, astronomy, mathematics, religious studies, Arabic, etc). Then they are asked to find out what were the early branches of knowledge pursued by Muslims, and what were some of the fields in which lasting achievements of Muslim civilization were made. Later, students will be able to use this information in “The Five Pillars Have Many Dimensions” graphic organizer activity. For further enrichment on the topic of Muslim sciences, see *Beyond A Thousand and One Nights: A Sampler of Literature from Muslim Civilization* (CIE, 1999), “Science” section, especially the reading on al-Biruni’s medieval study of shadows.
2. **FIELD TRIP/ IN-HOUSE FIELD TRIP:** Have students visit a *masjid* and observe congregational worship, or ask Muslim students at your school to allow observation of their prayer at the masjid during the fieldtrip. Many masjids hold open houses and encourage educational visits that are arranged in advance. Alternatively, a Muslim classmate might agree to demonstrate the prayer while other students to observe.
3. **MATH/SOCIOLOGY/ECONOMICS:** Research the percentage of income spent on charity by the population of the industrialized countries. Is the average greater or less than the 2.5% minimum payment of *zakat*?
4. **COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS:** Find out what other religions call for fasting on certain days or periods of time during the year, and compare the reasons and occasions given for fasting, as well as the way fasting is done during the day. Interview a classmate who has fasted as part of their religion. Ask whether the person finds fasting easy or difficult, and how they feel it helps them in their lives.
5. **LANGUAGE ARTS:** Read the selections written by Muslim students on pages 83-86. After reading, discuss what motivates them to fast, even though they don’t have to. What feelings do the children show about themselves, their families and their community? What challenges do the children face in fasting during school time?
6. **INTERVIEW/GUEST SPEAKER:** Interview a Muslim who has been to Hajj, or invite a representative from a *masjid* (mosque) to speak about the experience of Hajj and Eid al-Adha. Prepare questions in advance of the visit.
7. **GRAPHIC ORGANIZER:** Using the student reading and other sources on the five pillars and Muslim history, fill in the blocks on the graphic organizer in the Handout “The Five Pillars Have Many Dimensions,” showing what students have learned about the many aspects of the five pillars of Islam. The activity is designed to bridge between content on the beliefs and practices of Islam, and the culture, civilization and history of Muslims. Answers will vary but should include some of the points listed on the Answer Key.

11. What is the Hajj, and how many Muslims participate every year? How often must a Muslim perform the Hajj? What might prevent a person from being able to go on the hajj? *Hajj is a spiritual journey to perform certain rites at Makkah. Over 2 million Muslims per year perform the hajj. It is performed at least once in a person's lifetime. Not having enough money, or poor health, or lack of safety on the ways or transport would prevent people from going.*
12. Why do you think the number of pilgrims traveling to Makkah has increased over the past 50 years? *Mass transportation and speedier transport have increased the numbers greatly.*
13. What is the meaning of Muslim pilgrims' white clothing? What types of clothing are typical of other religious traditions? *White clothing symbolizes simplicity, purity and equality. Many pilgrim journeys feature simple clothing and humble attitudes.*

Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha

1. What are the two major yearly religious celebrations in Islam, and what important events do they celebrate? How are the two Eids linked to the five pillars of Islam? *Eid al-Fitr celebrates the end of Ramadan fasting, and Eid al-Adha celebrates Prophet Abraham's obedience to God, and God's mercy in releasing him from the command to sacrifice his son. Eid al-Fitr is related to sawm, and Eid al-Adha is related to the Hajj, since it comes at the end of the Hajj rites.*
2. How does the lunar calendar measure time? Why is the lunar year shorter than the solar year? Why do Ramadan and the two Eids occur at different times each year? *It measures time by the phases of the moon. A lunar month is 29-30 days, but the solar calendar has some months with 30 or 31 days. Because the lunar year is shorter, the lunar calendar months move slowly through the seasons.*
3. Who is Abraham? What faith traditions honor him, and why? What Islamic source mentions Abraham? How is Abraham related to Eid al-Adha? How are he and his family related to the Hajj? *Abraham is the patriarch, or ancestor of a line of prophets recognized by Jews, Christians and Muslims. The Qur'an and the hadith mention Abraham. The hajj rites celebrate events in the lives of Abraham, Hajar (his wife) and Ishmael (their son), and their faith.*
4. What is the significance of the Kabah in Islam, and what historical person is related to its original construction? *The Kabah is honored by Muslims as the original house of worship, built by Abraham at the command of God. Muslims pray in the direction of the Kabah.*
5. When does Eid al-Adha take place? How do Muslims celebrate Eid al-Adha? *Eid al-Adha happens at the end of the Hajj, about 3 months after Ramadan. Muslims celebrate with prayer, visits, and by sharing the meat of an animal (sheep, goat, cow) with family, friends and neighbors, and the poor.*
6. Compare passages of scripture telling about Abraham from the Jewish, Christian and Islamic holy books. What elements are common to the three faiths? What differences can be found? *(answers vary)*
7. Discuss the concept of sacrifice in world history, and analyze its meaning in relation to the story of Abraham. Did he actually sacrifice his child? Discuss the idea of sacrifice as a modern term. Discuss what people might sacrifice, and why. Compare different types of sacrifice. *(answers vary)*

PRAYER TIMES • October 2004

Los Angeles, California, USA

Latitude : 34 5 'N' • Longitude : 118 22 'W' • Time Zone : -8 H

Qibla : 23 degrees 43 min. 40 sec. / E (From N)

Date	Day	Fajr (Dawn)	Shorook (Sunrise)	Zuhr (Noon)	Asr (Afternoon)	Maghrib (Sunset)	Isha (Night)
1	Fri	5:25	6:48	12:43	4:04	6:37	8:00
2	Sat	5:26	6:49	12:43	4:03	6:36	7:59
3	Sun	5:27	6:50	12:42	4:03	6:34	7:57
4	Mon	5:27	6:51	12:42	4:02	6:33	7:56
5	Tue	5:28	6:51	12:42	4:01	6:32	7:55
6	Wed	5:29	6:52	12:41	4:00	6:30	7:53
7	Thu	5:30	6:53	12:41	3:59	6:29	7:52
8	Fri	5:30	6:54	12:41	3:58	6:28	7:51
9	Sat	5:31	6:54	12:41	3:57	6:26	7:49
10	Sun	5:32	6:55	12:40	3:56	6:25	7:48
11	Mon	5:33	6:56	12:40	3:55	6:24	7:47
12	Tue	5:33	6:57	12:40	3:54	6:22	7:46
13	Wed	5:34	6:57	12:40	3:53	6:21	7:44
14	Thu	5:35	6:58	12:39	3:52	6:20	7:43
15	Fri	5:36	6:59	12:39	3:51	6:19	7:42
16	Sat	5:36	7:00	12:39	3:50	6:17	7:41
17	Sun	5:37	7:01	12:39	3:50	6:16	7:40
18	Mon	5:38	7:01	12:38	3:49	6:15	7:38
19	Tue	5:39	7:02	12:38	3:48	6:14	7:37
20	Wed	5:39	7:03	12:38	3:47	6:13	7:36
21	Thu	5:40	7:04	12:38	3:46	6:12	7:35
22	Fri	5:41	7:05	12:38	3:45	6:10	7:34
23	Sat	5:42	7:06	12:38	3:44	6:09	7:33
24	Sun	5:43	7:07	12:38	3:43	6:08	7:32
25	Mon	5:43	7:07	12:37	3:43	6:07	7:31
26	Tue	5:44	7:08	12:37	3:42	6:06	7:30
27	Wed	5:45	7:09	12:37	3:41	6:05	7:29
28	Thu	5:46	7:10	12:37	3:40	6:04	7:28
29	Fri	5:46	7:11	12:37	3:39	6:03	7:27
30	Sat	5:47	7:12	12:37	3:39	6:02	7:26
31	Sun	5:48	7:13	12:37	3:38	6:01	7:26

Study Questions for Prayer Times Chart

1. Look carefully at the chart and try to list all the different types of information you find on it.
2. Why do you think there might be a different prayer chart for each city?
3. What do the numbers under the city name represent?
4. The qibla means the direction of Makkah on the globe. How is it calculated?
5. What do the headings at the top of the chart tell, and what do the numbers in each column represent?
6. How much does the prayer time change each day, and why does it change? What determines the time of the prayer?
7. How would the time for the prayer change if this were a chart for July? Which prayer times would change the most?
8. What fields of science are needed to determine the information for this prayer chart?
9. How do you think people calculated the prayer times accurately 1400 or 1000 years ago?
10. How did the practice of the five daily prayers and the spread of Islam affect the kinds of learning Muslims sought out?
11. What other religious traditions had a similar effect on the sciences due to the need to calculate daily worship, holidays, and other dates and times? Give examples of specific civilizations and eras. (Research the topic of timekeeping technology, religion and civilization.)

Answer Key

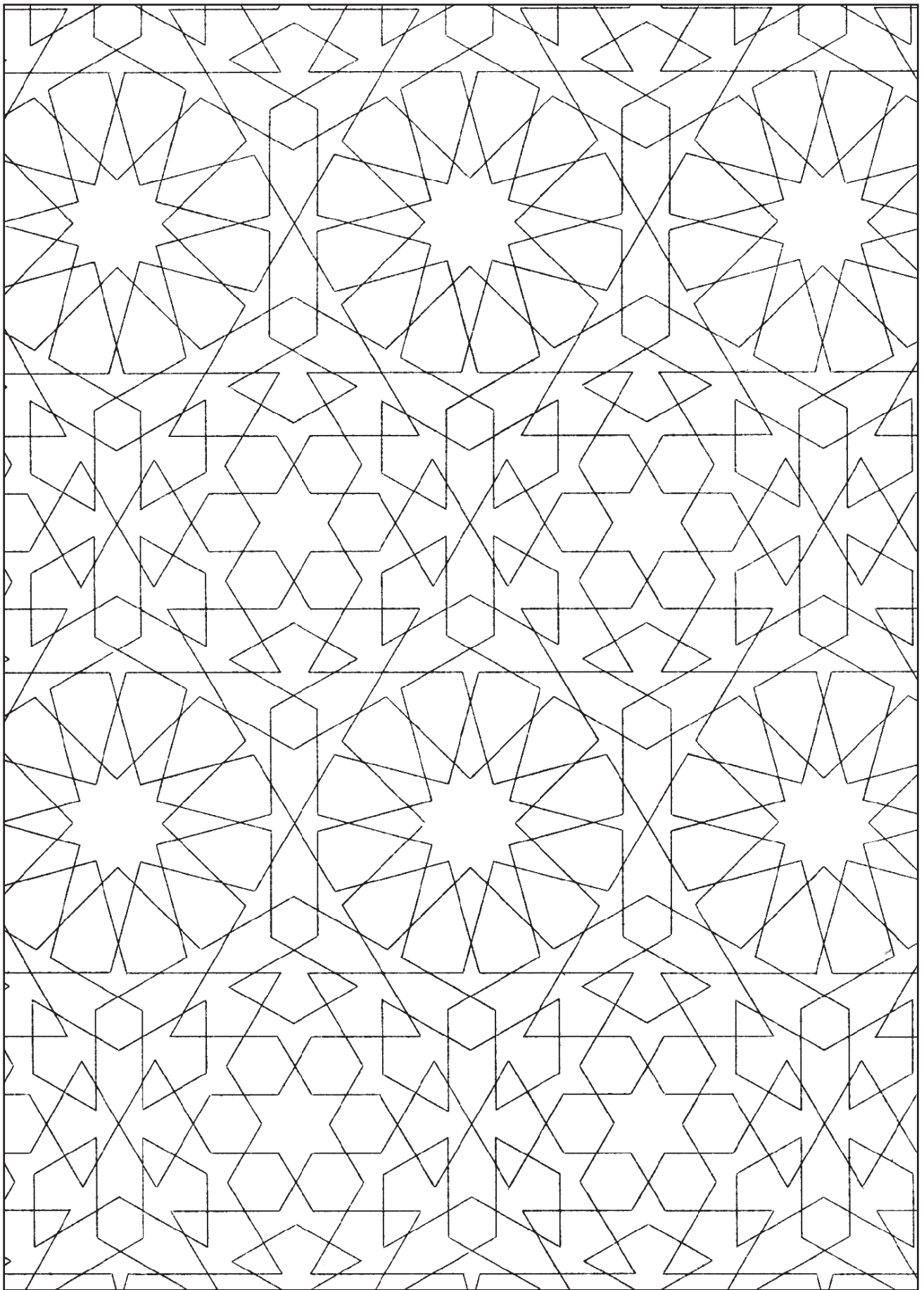
1. city name, longitude & latitude, time zone, direction from North of qibla, month, year, name of prayers and five times for each date of the month.
2. time zones and latitude differ for each city, so the timing of the five prayers differs around the world
3. They indicate the city's exact geographic location, such as what Global Positioning Systems use.
4. The qibla, or direction to face Makkah, is calculated using Great Circle Routes, just as airline routes. Flat map directions would be SE.
5. The headings are the names of the five daily prayers in Islam, and the numbers are the prayer times for each day of the month.
6. The prayer time changes a minute or so each day. Prayer is determined by the position of the sun.
7. The days are longer in July, so the daytime prayers are spaced farther apart. The dawn and sunset prayers change most with the lengthening and shortening of the days with the seasons of the calendar year.
8. Astronomy, various types of mathematics, geometry, cartography and geography.
9. People reckoned long ago by observing the sun and its position relative to the horizon, or the length of shadows on the ground. They also used sundials, water clocks, and by 1000 years ago, also mechanical clocks of various kinds.
10. The five daily prayers, the hajj, zakat and the need to determine the dates for celebrations encouraged learning in various branches of science, mathematics, geography and cartography. The spread of Islam brought Muslims into contact with advanced learning from the earliest centuries, and brought new areas into contact with advanced Muslim learning over the centuries as Islam spread to new areas of Asia, Europe and Africa.
11. Most of the world's major religions require worship and calculation of annual cycles such as calendars. This has given rise to advanced mathematics and science, as authorities often commissioned scientists and sought out knowledge wherever it was found. The Maya of Central America, the ancient Mesopotamians, Egyptians, and Chinese; during the medieval period science advanced and was exchanged across Afroeurasia at least partly for the purpose of supporting religious needs.

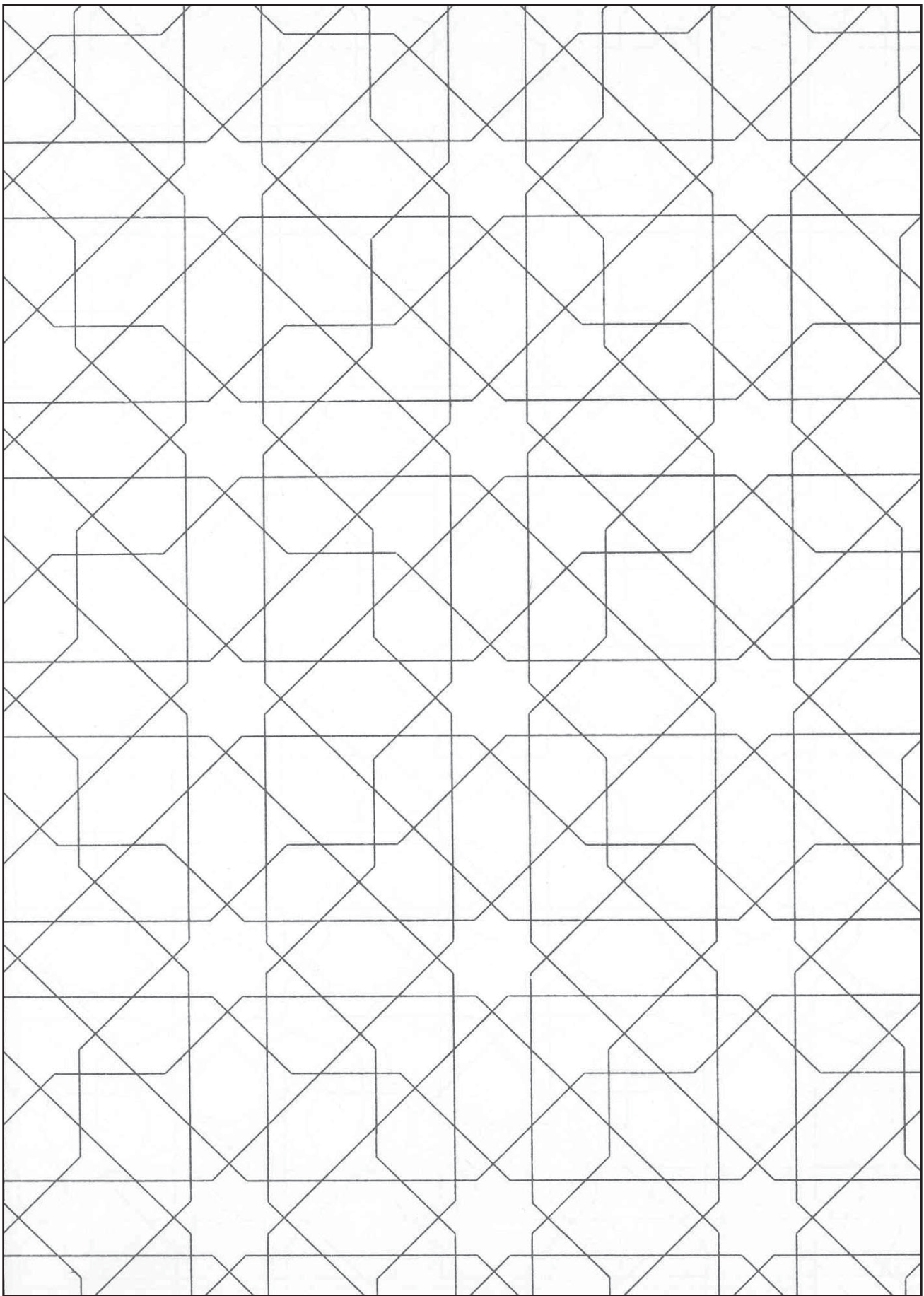
THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM HAVE MANY DIMENSIONS
ANSWER KEY

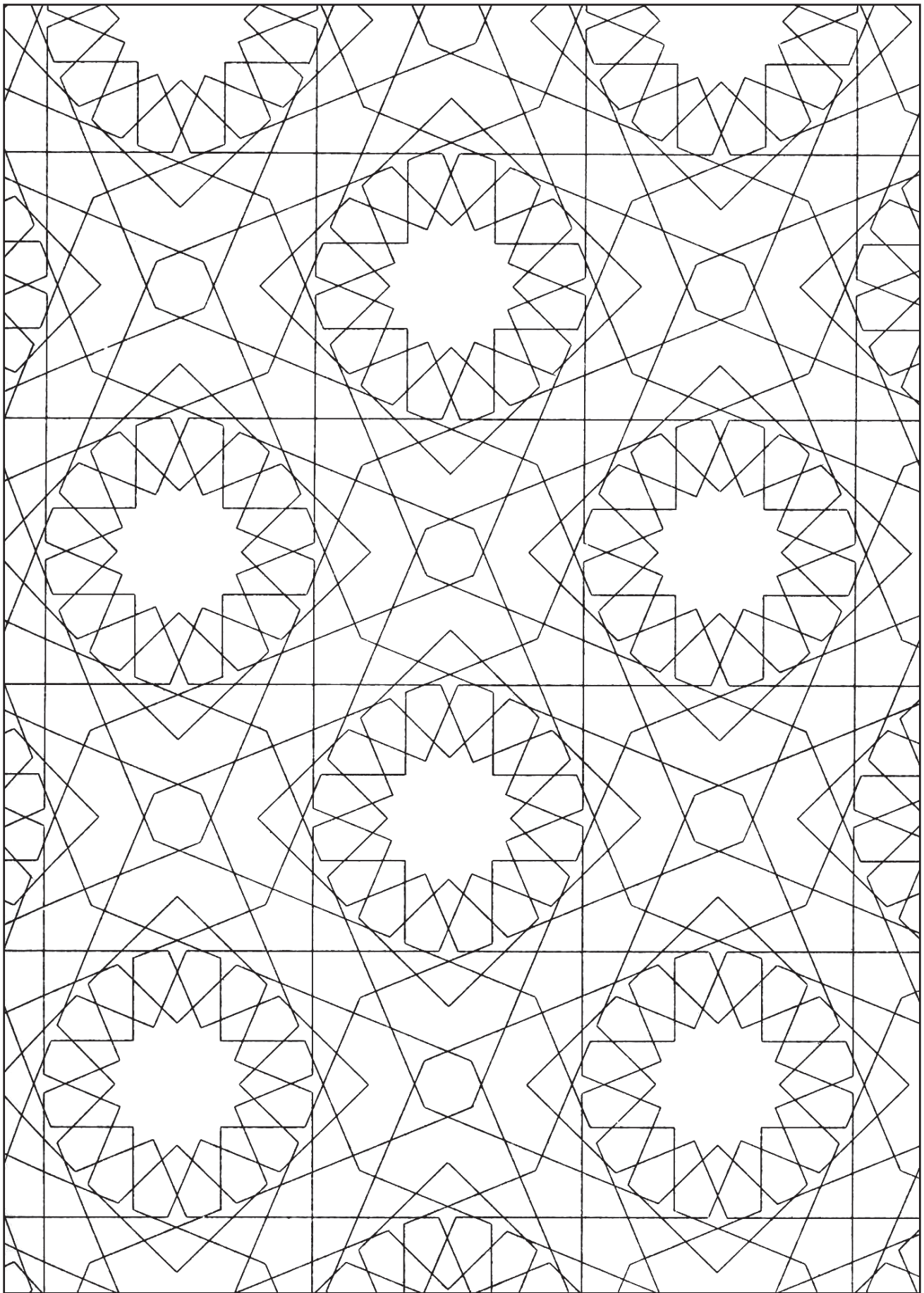
Pillar	Meaning	Spiritual	Worldly	Individual	Communal	Cultural Influences
SHAHADAH	Profession of the creed: There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the messenger of God (Allah)	Acknowledges that there is One Creator, and that He has sent messengers and revelation to humankind	Islam forbids worship of idols or images, which also means bowing to false gods or humans; places limits on materialism	Focuses on the individual's direct relationship with God, without any intermediaries	One simple message universal to time and place; reverence for the prophets and earlier scriptures like Bible & Torah; acceptance of earlier religions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -There is no central religious authority in Islam, no theocracy since no one can claim knowledge of God over others -Limitation on the power of worldly authority over Muslim societies; Islamic jurisprudence = Islamic law system developed -Arabic language of Qur'an spread
SALAT	Five obligatory prayers at the time and in the way taught by Muhammad	Obedience to God's command to worship; Regular purification during each day	Physical act and spiritual act joined; healthful exercise and mental relaxation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Self-discipline and self-renewal woven into life pattern -Opportunity to seek forgiveness and ask God for help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Binds society together in regular worship and contact -Established regular pattern to daily and weekly social life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Establishment of masjids (mosques) everywhere groups of Muslims went; architecture, decoration and sacred art -need to set prayer times led to study of astronomy, math, geography to set prayer times and direction—rise of colleges & universities for science and religion
ZAKAT	Giving to the poor and those in need a percentage of wealth beyond basic needs	Purification of wealth by giving a portion away—"a loan to God"	Constant and dependable stream of charity available to Muslim society	Limitation on greed and accumulation of wealth Stimulated both required and voluntary additional charity	Early development of charitable institutions and foundations; collective public works free from state control; tax exempt	(WAAQF) charitable foundations developed as permanent source of funding for mosques, schools & colleges; universities, hospitals, wells and travelers' accommodations; institutionalized help for the poor
SAWM	Fasting from dawn to sunset during the month of Ramadan (9 th lunar month)	Fasting is a tradition of prophets; purpose is coming near to God; annual renewal of spirit	Fasting is said to contribute to health, rid the body of poisons	Self-discipline & sense of achievement; breaking up bad eating habits; God-consciousness	Whole community participates, visits, shares food, renews contact --Additional prayers & Quran readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ramadan is an international celebration all over Muslim world -Stimulated math & astronomy for setting lunar calendar
HAJJ	Making the journey to Makkah to perform the rites during the pilgrimage season	"Dress rehearsal for Judgment Day" Standing before God; recalls obedience of Abraham	Orients Muslims even in remote places toward a world community; encourages travel and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Developed sense of individual being accountable to God -Gave people the desire to travel, think beyond own backyard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Brought people together to trade and exchange knowledge -Organized huge pilgrim caravans from each city; established roads, wells, ports for better travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Contributed to the mobility & connectedness of Muslim society over 1400 years -Renewed common beliefs and practices, overcoming local traditions -Increased trade & scholarship

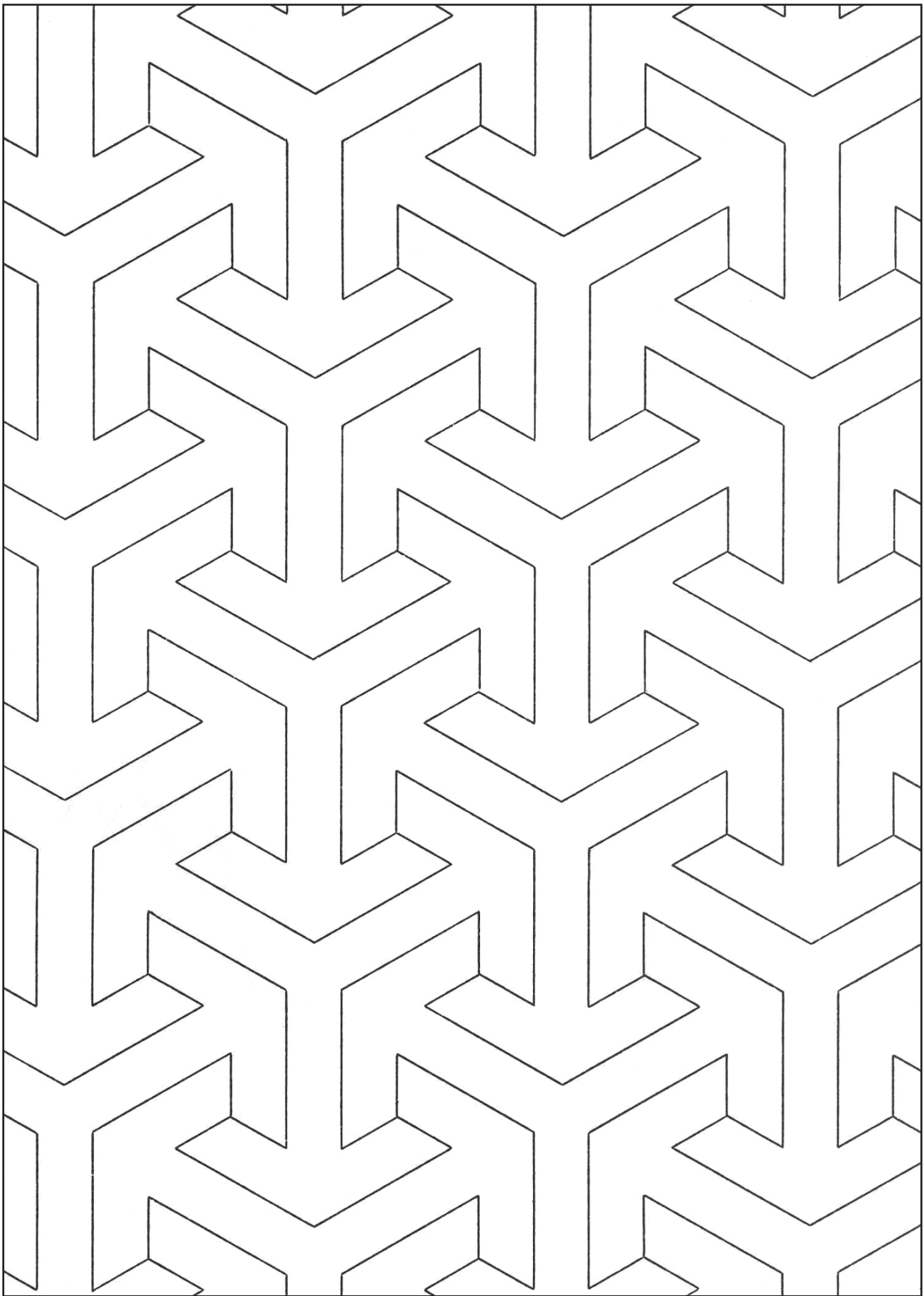
THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM HAVE MANY DIMENSIONS

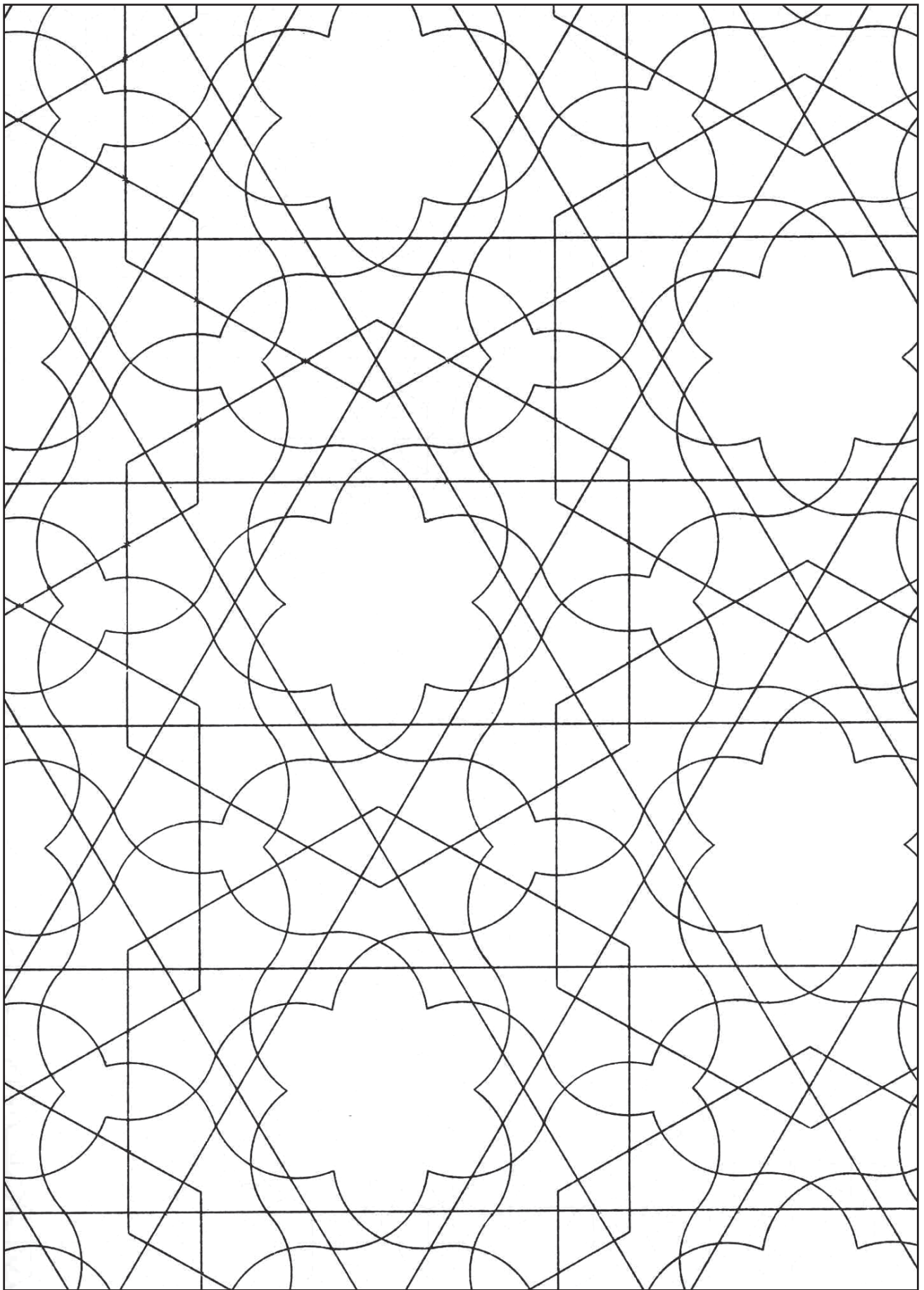
Pillar	Meaning	Spiritual	Worldly	Individual	Communal	Cultural Influences
SHAHADAH						
SALAT						
ZAKAT						
SAWM						
HAJJ						



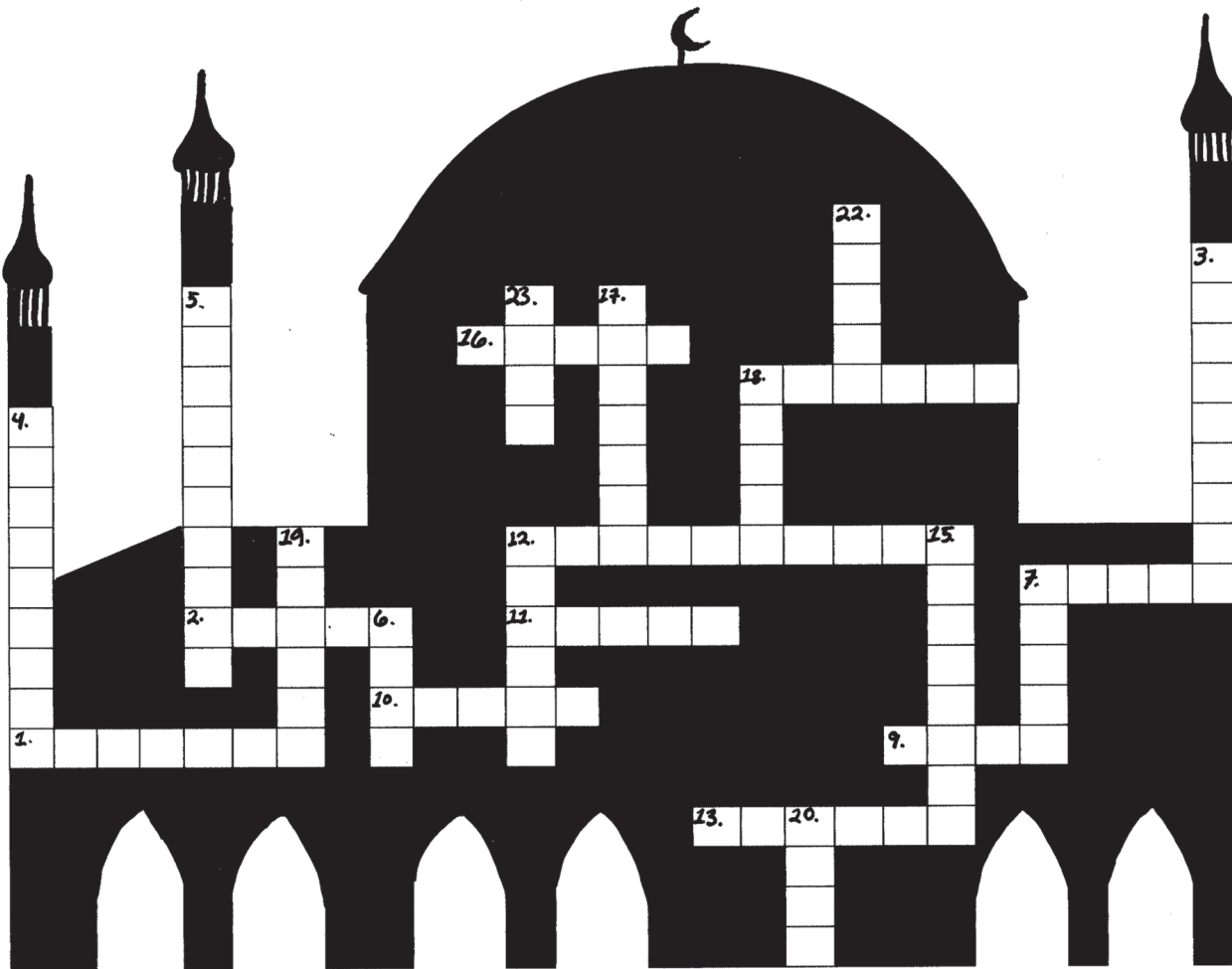








Muslim Holidays - Crossword Puzzle



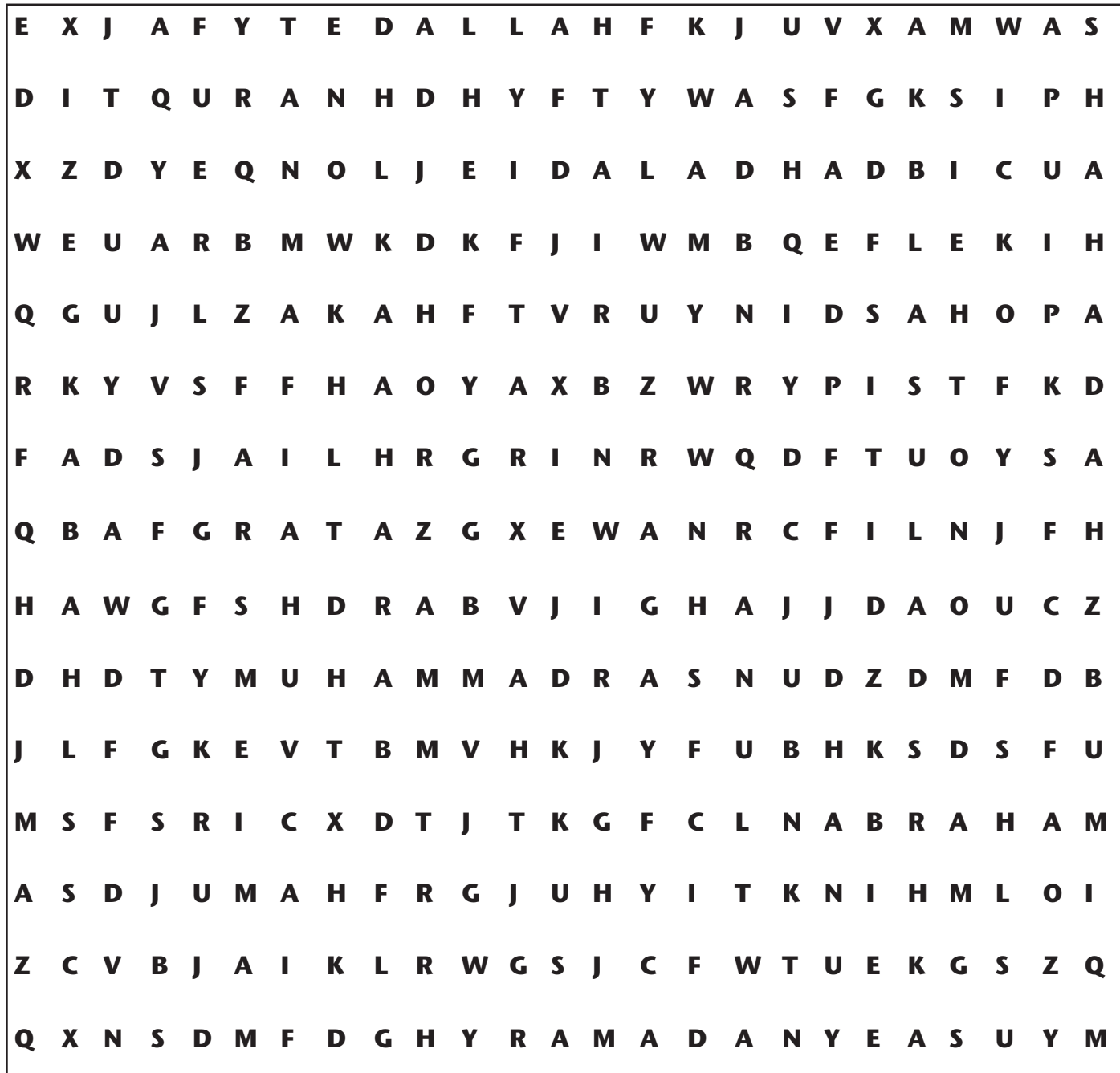
Across

1. A figure revered by Muslims, Jews, and Christians alike as the patriarch (father) of monotheism.
2. Arabic name for the One God.
7. The evening meal eaten after sunset to break the daily fast in Ramadan.
9. leader of congregational prayer
10. Islamic "day of assembly," referring to the congregational prayer each Friday at noontime at the *masjid*.
11. cube-shaped stone structure built as a house of worship at Makkah.
12. Religion of belief in One God.
13. Muslim place of worship.
16. holy book of Islam.
18. predawn meal eaten before beginning the daily fast of Ramadan.

Down

3. feast at the end of Ramadan, in celebration of completing the month of fasting
4. feast at the end of the Hajj
5. greeting meaning "Blessed Celebration!"
6. the annual pilgrimage to Makkah
7. state of being for a person making hajj; simple, white clothes
12. city of Muhammad's birth, city of the Kabah
15. Prophet of Islam, according to Islamic belief, the last prophet
17. ninth month of the Islamic calendar when Muslims fast
18. Islamic prayer five times a day
19. greeting meaning "peace"
20. fasting
22. Arabic word for the Muslim world community
23. washing face, head, hands and feet before performing Islamic prayer or reading from the Qur'an

Muslim Holidays - Word Search

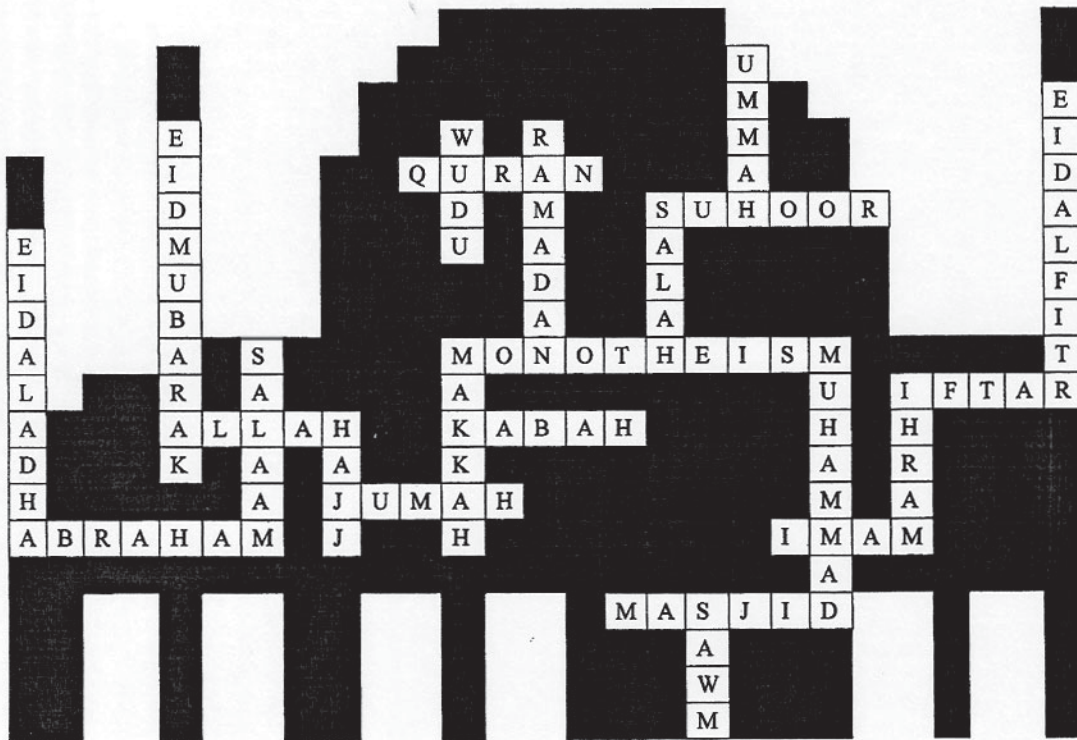


Find the words below in the word search puzzle:

ZAKAH
SALAH
SHAHADAH
SAWM
HAJJ
MONOTHEISM
EID AL FITR
IFTAR
EID AL ADHA

LUNAR
RAMADAN
ALLAH
JUMAH
IMAM
KABAH
MUHAMMAD
ABRAHAM
QURAN

Key - Crossword Puzzle



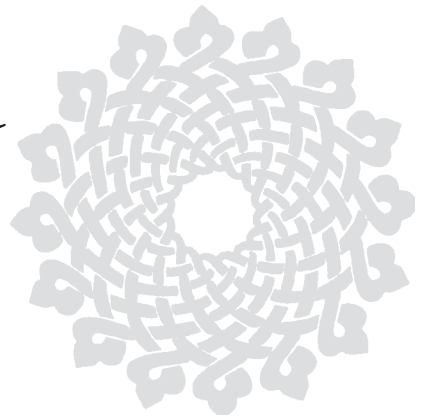
(Word search by Maryam and Sarah Amer, age 11)

Key - Word Search

E	X	J	A	F	Y	T	E	D	<u>A</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>H</u>	F	K	J	U	V	X	A	M	W	A	S
S	I	T	<u>Q</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>N</u>	H	D	H	Y	F	T	Y	W	A	S	F	G	K	S	I	P	H
A	Z	D	Y	E	Q	N	O	L	J	<u>E</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>D</u>	B	I	C	U	A
W	E	U	A	R	B	M	W	K	D	<u>K</u>	F	J	I	W	M	B	Q	E	F	L	E	K	I	H
M	G	U	J	<u>L</u>	<u>Z</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>H</u>	F	T	V	R	U	Y	N	I	D	S	A	H	O	P	A
R	K	Y	V	S	F	F	H	A	O	Y	A	X	B	Z	W	R	Y	P	I	S	T	F	K	D
F	A	D	S	J	A	I	L	H	R	G	R	I	N	R	W	Q	D	F	T	U	O	Y	S	A
Q	B	A	F	G	R	A	T	A	Z	G	X	E	W	A	N	R	C	F	I	L	N	J	F	H
H	A	W	G	F	S	H	D	R	A	B	V	J	I	G	<u>H</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>J</u>	<u>J</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	O	U	C	Z
D	H	D	T	Y	<u>M</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>S</u>	N	U	D	Z	D	M	F	D	B
J	L	F	G	K	E	V	T	B	M	V	H	K	J	Y	F	U	B	H	K	S	D	S	F	U
M	S	F	<u>S</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>T</u>	J	T	K	G	F	C	L	N	A	B	R	A	H	A	M
A	S	D	J	U	M	A	H	F	R	G	J	U	H	Y	I	T	K	N	I	H	M	L	O	I
Z	C	V	B	J	A	I	K	L	R	W	G	S	J	C	F	W	T	U	E	K	G	S	Z	Q
Q	X	N	S	D	M	F	D	G	H	Y	<u>R</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>M</u>

[NOTE: The words are marked by a line over, under, or beside the letters in the word, which are diagonal, horizontal or vertical.]

The Five Pillars of Islam & the Muslim Holidays



THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

Islam is a monotheistic religion, because its followers, Muslims, believe in one God. The word “Islam” means “being in peace by committing oneself to God.” Followers of Islam practice their faith by following teachings found in the *Qur’an* (a holy scripture) and the *Sunnah*, or example set by Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam. The *Hadith* are a record of Muhammad’s words and deeds, and provide information about the *Sunnah*.

Islam is a “universal” religion, meaning that a person from any background may practice the faith, assuming they believe in the basic creed of Islam. Muslims, like people of other faiths, try to live a moral life and please God by worshipping him alone and abiding by his commands. Muslims carry out certain religious duties to show their commitment to God. These basic acts are often called the “Five Pillars” of Islam, five basic acts or duties required of every observant Muslim. The Five Pillars of Islam are:

- (1) *shahadah* – to state belief in One God and the prophethood of Muhammad
- (2) *salat* – to pray five prayers each day
- (3) *sawm* – to fast from dawn to sunset during the month of Ramadan each year
- (4) *zakat* - to pay charity each year
- (5) *hajj* – to make the pilgrimage to Makkah once in a lifetime

1. SHAHADAH (THE ISLAMIC CREED)

The Islamic declaration of faith is a simple statement that begins “*I witness that there is no god but God.*” The second part states that Muhammad is the messenger of God. Practicing Muslims strive throughout their life to please God, a goal that affects behavior towards self, family and community, towards all humankind, and towards the natural environment. It underlines a Muslim’s direct relationship with God as a witness and as a servant of God. The second part of the creed declares belief that God sent prophets to humankind, as told in the holy books of earlier faiths such as Judaism and Christianity. It affirms that Muhammad was a prophet, or messenger who received revelation (the *Qur’an*) and guidance from God. Among the earlier revelations mentioned in the *Qur’an* are the Torah (given to Moses), the Psalms (given to David) and the Gospel (given to Jesus). The series of prophets Muslims believe in includes Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, and Jesus, and ends with Muhammad, considered the last prophet. **The *Qur’an* states that what was revealed to Muhammad confirmed the basic message of God’s and the earlier prophets and their scriptures.**

2. SALAT (MUSLIMS' DAILY PRAYER)

Salat is the five daily prayers that are the duty of every Muslim. Muslims perform the prayer as they learned it from their prophet Muhammad, and passed it down through generations of Muslims. Each of the five prayers can be performed within a certain time-frame: (1) between dawn and sunrise, (2) noon to mid-afternoon, (3) between mid-afternoon and just before sunset, (4) at sunset, and (5) after twilight until nighttime. Prayer time is determined by the sun's position, which Muslims today calculate by clock time, using charts that change with the longer and shorter days of each season.

Before praying, Muslims wash their hands, face, arms and feet, and rinse their mouths and nose. This purification, called *wudu*, prepares them to enter the prayer, standing before God.

No matter what language they speak, all Muslims pray in the Arabic language. In the *salat*, Muslims recite specific words and selected verses from the Qur'an while standing, bowing, kneeling with the hands and forehead touching the ground, and sitting. Each cycle of movements is one *rak'at*, or unit of prayer, and each of the five prayers has between two and four units. Besides the five prayers, Muslims ask God for guidance and help in their own words at any time. They also recite special prayers passed down as the words of the prophets. If two or more Muslims pray together, one of them will be the *imam* (prayer leader), and the others form rows behind the *imam*.

Masjid is the Arabic name for an Islamic house of worship. The masjid is named after the position of prayer called *sujud*, which means kneeling with the hands and forehead touching the ground. The masjid is a simple, enclosed space. One wall faces towards the city of Makkah (on the Arabian Peninsula) where Islam's holiest place—the *Ka'bah*—is located. Worshippers stand in rows behind the imam, facing Makkah. There is no furniture except mats or rugs, and Muslims stand shoulder to shoulder in rows, following the movements of the prayer leader all together. Because of these movements and the closeness of the worshippers, women typically pray together in rows behind the men.

PRAYER TIMES • October 2004							
Los Angeles, California, USA							
Latitude : 34 5 'N' • Longitude : 118 22 'W' • Time Zone : -8 H							
Qibla : 23 degrees 43 min. 40 sec. / E (From N)							
Date	Day	Fajr (Dawn)	Shorook (Sunrise)	Zuhr (Noon)	Asr (Afternoon)	Maghrib (Sunset)	Isha (Night)
1	Fri	5:25	6:48	12:43	4:04	6:37	8:00
2	Sat	5:26	6:49	12:43	4:03	6:36	7:59
3	Sun	5:27	6:50	12:42	4:03	6:34	7:57
4	Mon	5:27	6:51	12:42	4:02	6:33	7:56
5	Tue	5:28	6:51	12:42	4:01	6:32	7:55
6	Wed	5:29	6:52	12:41	4:00	6:30	7:53
7	Thu	5:30	6:53	12:41	3:59	6:29	7:52
8	Fri	5:30	6:54	12:41	3:58	6:28	7:51
9	Sat	5:31	6:54	12:41	3:57	6:26	7:49
10	Sun	5:32	6:55	12:40	3:56	6:25	7:48
11	Mon	5:33	6:56	12:40	3:55	6:24	7:47
12	Tue	5:33	6:57	12:40	3:54	6:22	7:46
13	Wed	5:34	6:57	12:40	3:53	6:21	7:44
14	Thu	5:35	6:58	12:39	3:52	6:20	7:43
15	Fri	5:36	6:59	12:39	3:51	6:19	7:42
16	Sat	5:36	7:00	12:39	3:50	6:17	7:41
17	Sun	5:37	7:01	12:39	3:50	6:16	7:40
18	Mon	5:38	7:01	12:38	3:49	6:15	7:38
19	Tue	5:39	7:02	12:38	3:48	6:14	7:37
20	Wed	5:39	7:03	12:38	3:47	6:13	7:36
21	Thu	5:40	7:04	12:38	3:46	6:12	7:35
22	Fri	5:41	7:05	12:38	3:45	6:10	7:34
23	Sat	5:42	7:06	12:38	3:44	6:09	7:33
24	Sun	5:43	7:07	12:38	3:43	6:08	7:32
25	Mon	5:43	7:07	12:37	3:43	6:07	7:31
26	Tue	5:44	7:08	12:37	3:42	6:06	7:30
27	Wed	5:45	7:09	12:37	3:41	6:05	7:29
28	Thu	5:46	7:10	12:37	3:40	6:04	7:28
29	Fri	5:46	7:11	12:37	3:39	6:03	7:27
30	Sat	5:47	7:12	12:37	3:39	6:02	7:26
31	Sun	5:48	7:13	12:37	3:38	6:01	7:26

3. SAWM (FASTING)

During Ramadan, the tenth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, Muslims fast. Fasting means that they do not eat or drink anything for a period of time. Muslims fast during the whole month of Ramadan every day between dawn and sunset.

Fasting is a duty for adult Muslims, but many children like to practice fasting before they are adults, for at least part of the day, or only a few days. By the time they reach the age of 11 or 12 years old, many Muslim children can fast the whole month. Some do it earlier.

The fast begins with a pre-dawn meal called *suhoor*. While fasting, Muslims perform the dawn, noon and afternoon prayers, and go about their normal duties of work and school. At sunset, Muslims break their fast with a few dates, fruits and water. After this *iftar* (a light meal that breaks the fast), Muslims make the sunset prayer, then gather for dinner. The *iftar* and dinner are usually eaten with family and friends. At the masjid, community members donate meals that anyone can join. After the evening prayer, there are special prayers at the masjid during Ramadan. Each night, the prayer leader reads one thirtieth part of the Qur'an. By the end of the month, they finish reading the whole Qur'an.

The Qur'an links fasting with the practice of earlier prophets and religions: "*You who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you that you may learn self-restraint.*" (Qur'an 2:183). According to Islamic teachings, the first verses of the Qur'an were revealed by the Angel Gabriel to Muhammad during the month of Ramadan. On one of the last nights of Ramadan each year, people stay all night at the masjid to celebrate that most holy night.

Fasting affects people and their communities in many ways. Muslims may fast individually during the year, but doing it as a community adds a lot to the experience. The rhythm of life changes, and people try to be nicer to one another. Daily schedules change, and some workplaces and schools adjust their schedules. Gathering with others in homes or in masjids and community centers is an important part of experiencing Ramadan.

When fasting, each individual experiences hunger and its discomforts. After a few days, most people get used to it, and it becomes easier. Muslims are supposed to fast in spirit as well, and make extra effort to avoid arguments, conflicts and bad words, thoughts, and deeds. Muslims believe fasting builds will power against temptation, helps people feel sympathy for those in need, and encourages generosity toward others. Fasting causes physical and psychological changes, and many claim that it is healthy for the body as well. Fasting helps people to think about the spiritual side of their lives. Many religions include fasting as a form of worship, and a way to draw closer to God.

4. ZAKAT (CHARITY AS A DUTY)

Zakat is a way in which Muslims give regular charity. Each year, Muslims who have wealth and possessions beyond their basic needs must give some of it as charity. The word *zakat* means "purification," meaning that a person and his or her wealth is purified from greed by giving some to others. If a person has cash savings for a year, they give 2.5% of it as *zakat*. *Zakat* is calculated on other forms of wealth, such as land, natural resources, and livestock at different rates. Paying the *zakat* reminds Muslims of the duty to help those less fortunate. It reminds them that wealth is a gift from God rather than a right or a possession to be selfishly kept. *Zakat* money is intended to help several groups of people, such as the poor and needy, travelers, people in debt and others.

Muslims may distribute *zakat* to needy and deserving people and groups on their own, and each person is responsible for figuring out how much they owe. The required 2.5% is a minimum amount, and more may be given.

There are many other forms of charity that a Muslim can give throughout the year. One hadith, or saying of the Prophet, is that every joint of the body should participate in an act of charity (kindness) each day. A hadith of the Prophet said: "*Charity is a necessity for every Muslim.*" He was asked: "*What if a person has nothing?*" The Prophet replied: "*He should work with his own hands for his benefit and then give something*

out of such earnings in charity.’ The Companions asked: ‘What if he is not able to work?’ The Prophet said: ‘He should help poor and needy persons.’ The Companions further asked: ‘What if he cannot do even that?’ The Prophet said: ‘He should urge others to do good.’ The Companions said: ‘What if he lacks that also?’ The Prophet said: ‘He should check himself from doing evil. That is also charity.’”

5. HAJJ (JOURNEY TO MAKKAH)

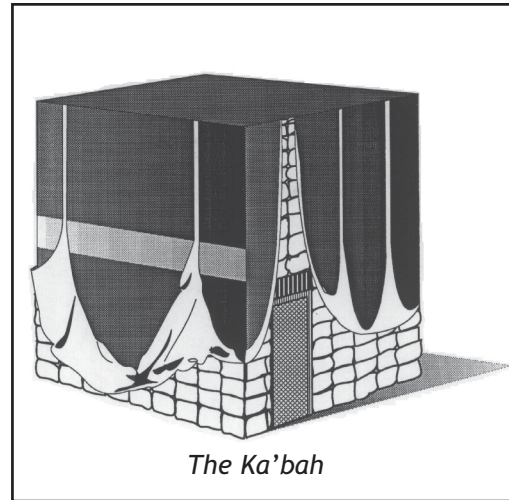
The fifth basic act of worship in Islam is the pilgrimage (journey) to the city of Makkah during a certain time of year. The *Hajj* rites recall the life of Prophet Abraham, his wife Hajar, and their son Ishmael over 4,000 years ago. Muslims must perform the *Hajj* at least once in their lives, provided their health and finances permit. Today, over 2 million Muslim perform the *Hajj* each year, during the twelfth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, *Dhul-Hijjah*.

Muslims from all over the world, including the United States, travel to Makkah (in today’s Saudi Arabia). Before arriving in the holy city, Muslims enter a special state of being called *ihram*. They bathe and remove their ordinary clothes to put on the simple dress of pilgrims—two seamless white sheets for men, and typically, white dresses and head covering for women. They will also avoid other ordinary ways of life during this time of *ihram*. The pilgrims are all dressed in the same simple clothes. No one can tell who is rich, famous or powerful and who is not. White clothes are a symbol of purity, unity, and equality before God. The gathering of millions of pilgrims at Makkah is a reminder of the gathering of all humans before God at the Judgment Day. It is a symbol of the Muslim *ummah* (worldwide community), because pilgrims gather from all corners of the earth. It is a symbol of the past, because the pilgrims visit places where Abraham and his family faced challenges to their faith, and where Muhammad was born and preached.

According to Islamic teachings, it was the first house of worship for one God on earth. Pilgrims go around the Kabah, also walk seven times between two hills named Safa and Marwah, and drink from a spring of water called Zam-zam.

Other stations of the pilgrimage are nearby Makkah, where pilgrims perform prayers, camp overnight, and stand all together on the plain of Arafat asking for God’s forgiveness and guidance. Pilgrims complete the hajj by sacrificing a sheep or other animal, whose meat is shared with family, friends, and those in need. Nowadays, a meat processing plant near the place of sacrifice helps distribute the meat around the world. The sacrifice reminds of the Biblical and Qur’anic story telling how Abraham was willing to sacrifice even his son for God, but he sacrificed a ram instead.

Pilgrims leave the state of *ihram* by trimming or cutting their hair and returning to Makkah for a final visit to the Kabah. The pilgrimage brings Muslims from all around the world, of different nationalities, languages, races, and regions, to come together in a spirit of universal humanity to worship God together.



The Ka'bah

The Qur'an

Chapter 2 (“The Cow”), Verses 124-126

“And remember when his Lord tried Abraham with His commands, and he fulfilled them. He said: Lo! I have appointed you as a leader for humankind. He [Abraham] said: “And of my offspring will there be leaders?” He [God] said: “My covenant does not include wrongdoers.”

And when We made the House at Makkah a place of assembly and a place of safety for humankind, saying: “Take as your place of worship the place where Abraham stood to pray.” And We laid a duty upon Abraham and Ishmael: “Purify My house for those who go around and those who meditate therein and those who bow down in worship.” ”

THE FIVE PILLARS' MANY DIMENSIONS

The Five Pillars of Islam are acts of worship—basic practices for every Muslim. Islamic teachings also require a person to live according to moral values and to work for justice in the family, community, and the world. Simply put, Muslims are supposed to live in knowledge that every act happens in the sight of God.

The Five Pillars have influenced Muslim societies around the world in many ways. The Five Pillars are individual acts, but they have social effects. Each has a spiritual meaning, but they also have worldly effects. During more than 1400 years of Muslim history, practice of the Five Pillars has shaped the places where Muslims live, the form of Muslim homes and cities, their buildings and cultures. They have also forged links among regions of the world where Muslims live and travel.

The belief in one God expressed in the first pillar of Islam was a simple message that attracted many people over time. Early Muslims spread the message to new territories and began practicing Islam's teachings. In many ways, the spread of Islam opened up new branches of learning like law and the sciences. Muslims curious to know God and His Creation built libraries, developed science and technology, and traveled and traded across much of the world.

The second pillar, salat (the daily prayer), resulted in building masjids (mosques) everywhere Muslims lived. From the simplest mud-brick structures to huge, decorated masjids of stone, brick and tile, with domes, towers and fountains, a wide variety of styles developed in different Muslim regions. To have a clean place to pray, Muslims often use a mat or carpet when they pray at home or elsewhere. Local design traditions and techniques produced wonderful designs for these rugs. The sciences of mathematics, astronomy and geography were encouraged by the need for Muslims to know the exact time for prayer, and the direction of Makkah from any place. The prayer times gave a regular rhythm to daily life in Muslim societies everywhere. If one Muslim said to another, "I will meet you after the noon prayer," both of them know exactly what time is meant.

The third pillar, zakat, gave Muslim society a steady source of charity. It was required of every Muslim with enough money, and additional giving was also encouraged. Some wealthy people donated the income from something they owned. For example, the fruits of a certain orchard or tree would be donated to a school or hospital. The goods or money were put into a fund that would last as long as the source of income lasted. Today in the U.S., wealthy people and organizations of many faiths have charitable foundations that give money for hospitals, education, the arts, and other purposes.

The fourth pillar, sawm (Ramadan fasting), has been a special time of year for Muslims for more than 1400 years. Changes in the rhythm of daily life, extra charity, community gatherings, and festive celebrations affect everyone in the society. Like the winter holiday season in the U.S. and Europe, the month-long celebration brings an economic boost to merchants and producers. Families host guests during the month, and those who are able provide prepared food for anyone who attends the masjid in time for the iftar (evening meal to break the fast). At the end of the month, gift-giving, celebrations and charity help the economy and create jobs. At the end of the fast, each household gives food to the poor, helping society's well-being. The fast also has health benefits, and is a quieter time for the whole community.

The hajj, or pilgrimage to Makkah each year, has had an huge effect on Muslim societies and on the world. Muslims from Asia, Africa, the Americas and Europe make their way to the city of Makkah for the annual pilgrimage. Even for those who couldn't go, the idea of the pilgrimage gave people in the smallest villages an outward view to the world. People who returned from the hajj earned their community's respect. The journey brought regular contact in the world community of Muslims, so it helped unify beliefs, practices and knowledge. Many inventions, goods, and ideas spread through the hajj. Muslim rulers throughout history have built roads, wells, ports and places for travelers to stay, doing their part to help pilgrims achieve the goal of the hajj.

When Muslims today carry out the Five Pillars, these basic acts of worship continue the traditions of unity in diversity among Muslims. These simple, regular practices have influenced many areas of Muslim life and culture.

MUSLIM HOLIDAYS & CELEBRATIONS

Muslims everywhere have three major celebrations. They are (1) the weekly Friday prayer of assembly called *Jumah*, (2) Eid al-Fitr, the celebration after Ramadan, and (3) Eid al-Adha, the celebration that ends the Hajj (pilgrimage). These celebrations are universal among Muslims everywhere. Several other celebrations and observances mark dates that are important to some or all groups of Muslims, but they are not universally practiced. They are described after sections on the major holidays.

NOTE TO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS: For more background on each of the major Muslim celebrations, read about each of the Five Pillars related to that celebration. For *Jumah*, read about the second pillar, *salat*, or prayer in Islam. For Eid al-Fitr, read about the third pillar, *sawm*, or fasting in Ramadan. For Eid al-Adha, read about the fifth pillar, *hajj*, or pilgrimage to Makkah.

WEEKLY DAY OF ASSEMBLY: JUMAH PRAYER

Worshipping together on *Jumah* is a religious duty for Muslims. The word means “gathering” or “assembly” and is the weekday name for “Friday” in Arabic. *Salat al-Jumah* (congregational prayer) takes the place of the midday prayer, but it must be performed together with other worshippers, not alone. According to some Muslim scholars, *Jumah* prayer must take place at a large centrally located masjid, rather than a small neighborhood masjid. Many large, beautiful masjids known around the world were built for the crowds that come for *Jumah* prayer.

In the hour before *Jumah* prayer in Muslim countries and in many major cities where Muslims live in the U.S., the masjids fill up with men and women. Men and women have separate prayer areas. Overflow crowds may even pray in the surrounding squares and streets. Before the prayer starts, readings from the Qur’an can be heard around the masjid.

As the masjid fills, people form seated rows, facing in the direction of the *qiblah* at Makkah. Then the *adhan* (prayer call) sounds from the loudspeaker, rooftop or minaret, or even from the floor of the prayer hall. The worshippers prepare for the imam, or prayer leader, to come. He climbs a small set of stairs to a platform, the only furniture in the masjid except for some bookshelves. From the platform or pulpit, the imam begins with an invocation, and then begins to deliver the sermon. It may last between fifteen minutes to an hour in length. Although some parts of the sermon are given in Arabic, the imam may also speak in the language understood by the majority of the people. In the U.S., many sermons are given in English, because people attending the mosque may speak many different languages every day. At the end of his speech, the imam makes prayers asking God for help and guidance.

Then a call to stand for prayer is heard, and the worshippers stand and straighten their rows. The imam leads a short prayer, reciting from the Qur’an, bowing, and touching his forehead to the ground. Afterwards, worshippers perform additional private prayers, and then rise and greet each other. Leaving the masjid, most Muslims return to business, school or other activities. In many Muslim countries, Friday is a day off, so they spend the rest of the day visiting friends and relaxing with family.

Questions

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1. What happens on the Muslim day of assembly called *Jumah*?
2. What is the special day of worship for some other religious traditions? How are their worship services similar and different from *Jumah*?

THE TWO EID CELEBRATIONS

Eid al-Fitr

The first of the two major celebrations in Islam marks the end of **Ramadan**, the month when Muslims fast daily from dawn to sunset. This celebration is called *Eid al-Fitr* (Feast of Breaking the Fast). Eid al-Fitr is a very festive and joyous holiday that lasts several days. Colored lights decorate homes, streets and places of celebration, as people clean and decorate their houses to get ready. For days before Eid, family members help bake sweets and prepare special foods. Before the prayer, each household donates a food to the poor, such as bags of rice, raisins, flour or an equal amount of money.

On the day of Eid, Muslims attend large indoor or outdoor gatherings for prayers. In the early morning, families go to the gathering wearing their nicest clothes and perfumes. Children in bright colored clothes and new shoes are seen in the large crowds. Muslims in the U.S. wear the traditional dress of many world regions, including American styles. As worshippers arrive at the prayer place and wait for the prayer to begin, they chant in rhythm "Allahu Akbar" (God is Great!). Eid prayer is followed by a sermon, or speech by the prayer leader. People then rise to greet and hug one another, saying "*Eid Mubarak*," which means "Blessed Celebration." After the prayer, children play on swings and enjoy animal rides, carousels, races and games, and get gifts, money, and sweets from family and friends. Muslim families visit each other's homes, and share treats and congratulations.



This stamp was issued in 2001 by the US Postal Service as part of its holiday series that includes major faiths and secular holidays celebrated in the US. The design of the stamp, by American Muslim calligrapher Muhammad Zakariyah, shows the Arabic Eid greeting, "Eid Mubarak!" (Blessed Celebration!)

Why Is Ramadan Important to Muslims?

Ramadan is important for Muslims as the month when the first verses of their holy book, the **Qur'an**, were given by God to their Prophet **Muhammad**, who lived more than 1400 years ago in an Arabian town named Makkah. He was a quiet person who used to go out from Makkah, where he was born and where he worked as a trader, to sit alone, think and pray.

On one such night in a cave, Muhammad reported that God called to him to be a prophet of God, when he was about forty years old. Muhammad heard a powerful voice call out, "Read!" Muhammad said he did not know how to read. The voice told him again, and again, and then Muhammad found himself speaking these words:

*"Read, in the name of your Lord, Who created;
Created man, from a clot.
Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful,
He Who taught how to use the pen—
Taught man what he knew not. (Qur'an, ch. 96, verses 1-5)*

These five verses were the first of many messages he recited and taught. Muhammad reported that it was the Angel **Gabriel** who spoke to him in the cave, and the words were the first words of the Qur'an. During the next 23 years of his life, he heard messages that became the Qur'an, which Muslims believe to be the words of God. The Qur'an teaches that many prophets came to humankind before, all teaching, and some receiving holy books. Some of these prophets mentioned in the Qur'an are Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and Jesus.

Study Questions



1. What important event in the rise of Islam took place during Ramadan.
2. Name some prophets common to Islam, Christianity and Judaism.
3. What is the holy book of Islam, and how did it come to be, according to Islamic teachings?

Eid al-Adha

Eid al-Adha is the most important celebration in the Islamic calendar. It is celebrated at the time when pilgrims at Makkah complete the rites of the hajj. Muslims around the world join with pilgrims in Makkah by celebrating *Eid al-Adha* [eed al-UD-ha], or the Feast of Sacrifice. The celebration takes place during the 10th of the month of the Islamic lunar calendar, which means month of the pilgrimage. The sacrifice is a reminder of the Biblical and Qur'anic story of Abraham's strong faith. Like the pilgrims at Makkah completing the hajj, Muslims share meat (usually lamb or beef) with family, friends, and to the poor and needy.

On Eid al-Adha, Muslims around the world wear their nicest clothing and attend a special prayer gathering in the morning. This is followed by a short sermon, and everyone stands up to hug and greet one another. The traditional Eid greeting is "*Eid Mubarak*," which means "*Blessed Celebration*." People visit each other's homes and enjoy special meals and treats. Communities often celebrate this occasion over a period of several days.

Questions



1. What are the two major yearly religious celebrations in Islam, and what important events do they celebrate? How are the two Eids linked to the Five Pillars of Islam?
2. How does the lunar calendar measure time? Why is the lunar year shorter than the solar year? Why do Ramadan and the two Eids occur at different times each year?
3. Who is Abraham? How is Abraham related to Eid al-Adha? How are he and his family related to the Hajj?
4. What is the Kabah in Islam, and what historical person is related to its original construction?
5. When does Eid al-Adha take place? How do Muslims celebrate Eid al-Adha?

A Story of Abraham and His Family

Abraham, often called "the Friend of God," was the ancestor of the line of prophets in the monotheistic tradition (belief in one God). He holds a central place in Islam, and is mentioned in the Qur'an more often than Muhammad himself, or any other prophet. It is impossible to understand the Hajj or Eid al-Adha without understanding Abraham's importance as a prophet in Islam.

Abraham is a figure revered by Muslims, Jews, and Christians alike as a righteous person who lived over four thousand years ago in Mesopotamia. He left his native city of Ur after opposing his people's idol worship. He migrated to many places in Southwest Asia, on the Arabian Peninsula, and Egypt. According to Islamic teachings in the Qur'an, Abraham took Hajar, one of his wives and their baby son Ishmael, to a desolate valley in Arabia and left them there at God's command, trusting Him to provide for them.

Hajar, concerned about feeding her young baby, began searching the surrounding area for food and water. According to the Qur'an, in response to Hajar's prayers and desperate running up and down the hills, a spring miraculously gushed forth at Ishmael's feet to quench their thirst.

Passing traders stopped in the valley and asked Hajar's permission to water their camels. In time, Arab tribes settled in the little valley, and the settlement grew into the city of Makkah. Abraham returned to visit, and when Ishmael was a young boy, he and Ishmael constructed the **Kabah**, an empty cube-shaped building, as a place dedicated to the worship of the One God. Makkah became an important trading post and pilgrimage site by the time of the Prophet Muhammad, many centuries later.

The Five Pillars of Islam & the Muslim Holidays



THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

The word “Islam” is the name of a world religion, and means “being in peace by committing oneself to God.” Followers of Islam, called “Muslims,” practice their faith by following teachings found in the *Qur’an* (a holy scripture) and the *Sunnah*, or example set by Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam. The *Hadith* are a record of Muhammad’s words and deeds, and provide information about the Sunnah.

Islam is a “universal” religion, meaning that anyone may practice the faith, regardless of their ethnic, cultural, national or hereditary background. Anyone who accepts the creed and beliefs of Islam is considered a Muslim, “one who seeks peace through submission to God.”

Muslims, like people of other faiths, strive to live a moral life and please God. “Seeking the face of God” is an expression often used to describe this lifetime goal. In order to fulfill this aspiration, Muslims carry out certain religious duties and acts that demonstrate commitment to God.

These basic acts required of a Muslim are often called the “Five Pillars” of Islam. The basic creed of Islam is that “There is no god but God” and “Muhammad is the messenger of God.” This statement of belief is the first of the five basic acts or duties. The Five Pillars of Islam are:

- (1) *shahadah* – to state belief in One God and the prophethood of Muhammad
- (2) *salat* – to pray five obligatory prayers each day
- (3) *sawm* – to fast from dawn to sunset during the month of Ramadan each year
- (4) *zakat* - to pay obligatory charity each year
- (5) *hajj* – to make the pilgrimage to Makkah once in a lifetime

1. SHAHADAH (THE ISLAMIC CREED)

The declaration of faith in Islam is a simple statement that begins *Ash-adu anna* (“I witness that”), and continues with the statement *La illaha illa Allah* (“There is no god but God”), and ends with the affirmation *wa Muhammad rasul Allah* (“and Muhammad is the messenger of God”). The shahadah defines the role of a Muslim as a continuous striving throughout life. This striving extends to behavior toward self, family and community, and finally toward all humankind and the natural environment. The second part affirms the existence of one God by negating the existence of any other creature that people might worship, or any partner with God. It underlines the Muslim’s direct relationship with God as a witness and as a servant of God. No central authority nor privileged persons stand between God and the individual. The third part of the creed witnesses that God sent prophets to humankind, as stated in the scriptures revealed before the Qur’an. Then, it affirms that Muhammad was a prophet, or messenger who received revelation (the Qur’an) and guidance

from God. Among the earlier revelations mentioned in the Qur'an are the Torah (given to Moses), the Psalms (given to David) and the Gospel (given to Jesus). This series of prophets and revelation includes—among others—Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Joseph, Moses, David, Solomon, and Jesus, ending with Muhammad, according to the universally accepted teachings of Islam. The Qur'an states that what was revealed to Muhammad confirmed the basic message of the earlier prophets and their scriptures.

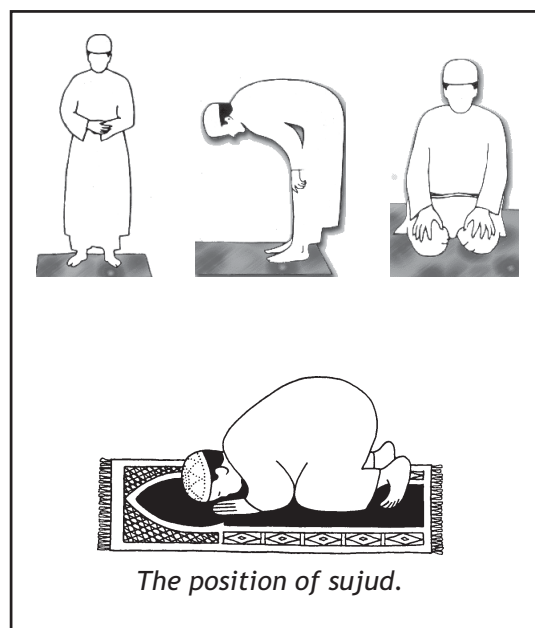
2. SALAT (MUSLIMS' DAILY PRAYER)

Salat is the five daily prayers that are the duty of every Muslim. Muslims perform the recitations and physical movements of *salat* as taught by their prophet Muhammad, according to Islamic sources. Each of the five prayers can be performed within a window of time. (1) between dawn and sunrise, (2) noon to mid-afternoon, (3) between mid-afternoon and just before sunset, (4) at sunset, and (5) after twilight until nighttime. Prayer time is determined by the sun's position, which Muslims today calculate by clock time, using charts that change with the longer and shorter days of each season.

Before praying, Muslims perform a brief ritual washing called *wudu*. This purification prepares the worshipper for entering the state of prayer, of standing before God. It is a symbol of the cleansing effect of prayer.

No matter what language they speak, all Muslims pray in the Arabic language. In the *salat*, Muslims recite specific words and selected verses from the Qur'an while standing, bowing, kneeling with the hands and forehead touching the ground, and sitting. Each cycle of movements is one *rak'at*, or unit of prayer, and each of the five prayers has between two and four units. At the end of the prayer, and throughout their lives, Muslims pray informally, asking for guidance and help in their own words. They also recite special prayers passed down as the words of the prophets. If two or more Muslims pray together, one of them will be the *imam* (prayer leader), and the others form rows behind the *imam*.

Masjid is the Arabic name for an Islamic house of worship. The common English term *mosque* is a French version of the Spanish word *mezquita*. The masjid is named after the position of prayer called *sujud*, which means kneeling with the hands and forehead touching the ground. The masjid is a simple, enclosed space oriented towards the city of Makkah (on the Arabian Peninsula) where Islam's holiest place—the *Ka'bah*—is located. There is no furniture except mats or rugs, and Muslims stand shoulder to shoulder in rows, following the movements of the prayer leader all together. Because of these movements and the closeness of the worshippers, women typically pray together in rows behind the men.



3. SAWM (FASTING)

During Ramadan, the tenth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, Muslims fast, meaning that they do not eat or drink anything between dawn and sunset. Fasting is a duty for adult Muslims, but many children participate voluntarily, for at least part of the day, or only a few days. The fast begins with a pre-dawn meal called *suhoor*. While fasting, Muslims perform the dawn, noon and afternoon prayers, and go about their normal duties. At sunset, Muslims break their fast with a few dates, fruits and water. After this *iftar* (a light meal that breaks the fast), Muslims make the sunset prayer, then gather for dinner. The *iftar* and dinner are usually eaten with family and friends, or at the masjid, which hosts meals donated by community members for all. After the evening prayer, many Muslims go to the masjid for congregational prayers that feature a reading of one thirtieth of the Qur'an each night. They complete the whole Qur'an by the end of the month.

The Qur'an links fasting with the practice of earlier prophets and religions: *"You who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you that you may learn self-restraint."* (Qur'an 2:183).

Fasting affects people and their communities in many ways. Muslims may fast individually during the year, but doing it as a community magnifies the experience. The rhythm of life changes, and people try to be nicer to one another. Daily schedules change, and some work places and schools adjust their schedules. Muslims living outside majority Muslim countries find ways to adjust and make the most of Ramadan. Gathering with others, whether in homes or in masjids and community centers, is an important means to experience the richness of Ramadan.

When fasting, each individual experiences hunger and its discomforts, but after a few days, the body gets used to it. Muslims are supposed to fast in the spirit as well, and make extra effort to avoid

arguments, conflicts and bad words, thoughts, and deeds. Muslims believe fasting builds will-power against temptation, helps people feel sympathy for those in need, and encourages generosity toward others. Fasting causes physical and psychological changes, and many claim that it is a healthy way to purify the body. Fasting helps people to reevaluate their lives spiritually, and draw closer to God.

4. ZAKAT (CHARITY AS A DUTY)

Zakat is the annual giving of a percentage of a Muslim's wealth and possessions beyond basic needs. The word means "purification," meaning that a person is purified from greed by giving wealth to others. If a person has cash savings for a year, they give 2.5% of it as zakat. Zakat on other forms of wealth, such as land, natural resources, and livestock is calculated at different rates. Paying the *zakat* reminds Muslims of the duty to help those less fortunate, and that wealth is a gift entrusted to a person by God rather than a possession to be hoarded selfishly. Prophet Muhammad set the precedent that zakat was collected and distributed locally, and what remained after meeting local needs was distributed to the larger Muslim community through the general treasury. Zakat money belongs to several categories of persons: *"The alms are only for the poor and the needy, and those [public servants] who collect them, and those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and to free the captives and the debtors, and for the cause of Allah, and for the wayfarers; a duty imposed by Allah. Allah is knower, Wise."* (Qur'an 9:60).

Muslims may distribute zakat to needy and deserving people and groups on their own, and each person is responsible for figuring out the amount owed. The required 2.5% is a minimum amount, and more may be given.

PRAYER TIMES • October 2004

Los Angeles, California, USA

Latitude : 34 5 'N' • Longitude : 118 22 'W' • Time Zone : -8 H
Qibla : 23 degrees 43 min. 40 sec. / E (From N)

Date	Day	Fajr (Dawn)	Shorook (Sunrise)	Zuhr (Noon)	Asr (Afternoon)	Maghrib (Sunset)	Isha (Night)
1	Fri	5:25	6:48	12:43	4:04	6:37	8:00
2	Sat	5:26	6:49	12:43	4:03	6:36	7:59
3	Sun	5:27	6:50	12:42	4:03	6:34	7:57
4	Mon	5:27	6:51	12:42	4:02	6:33	7:56
5	Tue	5:28	6:51	12:42	4:01	6:32	7:55
6	Wed	5:29	6:52	12:41	4:00	6:30	7:53
7	Thu	5:30	6:53	12:41	3:59	6:29	7:52
8	Fri	5:30	6:54	12:41	3:58	6:28	7:51
9	Sat	5:31	6:54	12:41	3:57	6:26	7:49
10	Sun	5:32	6:55	12:40	3:56	6:25	7:48
11	Mon	5:33	6:56	12:40	3:55	6:24	7:47
12	Tue	5:33	6:57	12:40	3:54	6:22	7:46
13	Wed	5:34	6:57	12:40	3:53	6:21	7:44
14	Thu	5:35	6:58	12:39	3:52	6:20	7:43
15	Fri	5:36	6:59	12:39	3:51	6:19	7:42
16	Sat	5:36	7:00	12:39	3:50	6:17	7:41
17	Sun	5:37	7:01	12:39	3:50	6:16	7:40
18	Mon	5:38	7:01	12:38	3:49	6:15	7:38
19	Tue	5:39	7:02	12:38	3:48	6:14	7:37
20	Wed	5:39	7:03	12:38	3:47	6:13	7:36
21	Thu	5:40	7:04	12:38	3:46	6:12	7:35
22	Fri	5:41	7:05	12:38	3:45	6:10	7:34
23	Sat	5:42	7:06	12:38	3:44	6:09	7:33
24	Sun	5:43	7:07	12:38	3:43	6:08	7:32
25	Mon	5:43	7:07	12:37	3:43	6:07	7:31
26	Tue	5:44	7:08	12:37	3:42	6:06	7:30
27	Wed	5:45	7:09	12:37	3:41	6:05	7:29
28	Thu	5:46	7:10	12:37	3:40	6:04	7:28
29	Fri	5:46	7:11	12:37	3:39	6:03	7:27
30	Sat	5:47	7:12	12:37	3:39	6:02	7:26
31	Sun	5:48	7:13	12:37	3:38	6:01	7:26

Islamic traditional sources mention charity often. A hadith of the Prophet said: *“Charity is a necessity for every Muslim.”* He was asked: *‘What if a person has nothing?’* The Prophet replied: *‘He should work with his own hands for his benefit and then give something out of such earnings in charity.’* The Companions asked: *‘What if he is not able to work?’* The Prophet said: *‘He should help poor and needy persons.’* The Companions further asked: *‘What if he cannot do even that?’* The Prophet said: *‘He should urge others to do good.’* The Companions said: *‘What if he lacks that also?’* The Prophet said: *‘He should check himself from doing evil. That is also charity.’”*

5. HAJJ (JOURNEY TO MAKKAH)

The fifth basic act of worship in Islam is the pilgrimage (journey) to the city of Makkah during a certain time of year. The *Hajj* rites symbolically reenact the trials and sacrifices of Prophet Abraham, his wife Hajar, and their son Ishmael over 4,000 years ago. Muslims must perform the *Hajj* at least once in their lives, provided their health and finances permit. The *Hajj* is performed annually by over 2,000,000 people during the twelfth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, *Dhul-Hijjah*.

In commemoration of the trials of Abraham and his family in Makkah, which included Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son in response to God’s command, Muslims make a pilgrimage to the sacred city at least once in their lifetime. The *Hajj* is an essential part of the faith and practice of Muslims.

Muslims from all over the world, including the United States, travel to Makkah (in today’s Saudi Arabia). Before arriving in the holy city, Muslims enter a state of being called *ihram*. They remove their ordinary clothes and put on the simple dress of pilgrims—two seamless white sheets for men, and typically, white dresses and head covering for women. The pilgrims are all dressed in the same simple clothes. No one can tell who is rich, famous or powerful and who is not. White clothes are a symbol of purity, unity, and equality before God. The gathering of millions of pilgrims at Makkah is a reminder of the gathering of all humans before God at the Judgment Day. It is a symbol of the Muslim ummah (worldwide community), because pilgrims gather from all corners of the earth. It is a symbol of the past, because the pilgrims visit places where Abraham and his family faced challenges to their faith, and where Muhammad was born and preached.

According to Islamic teachings, it was the first house of worship for one God on earth. Pilgrims go around the Kabah, calling *“Labbayka Allahumma Labbayk,”* which means *“Here I am at your service, O God, Here I am!”* This echoes the call of Abraham in the Hebrew Bible, in answer to the call of God. Pilgrims also walk seven times between the hills named Safa and Marwah, where they recall how Ishmael’s mother searched for water for him, and the spring of water called Zam-zam flowed under his foot, and still flows.

The Qur’an

Chapter 2 (“The Cow”), Verses 124-128

“And remember when his Lord tried Abraham with His commands, and he fulfilled them. He said: Lo! I have appointed you as a leader for humankind. He [Abraham] said: “And of my offspring will there be leaders?” He [God] said: “My covenant does not include wrongdoers.”

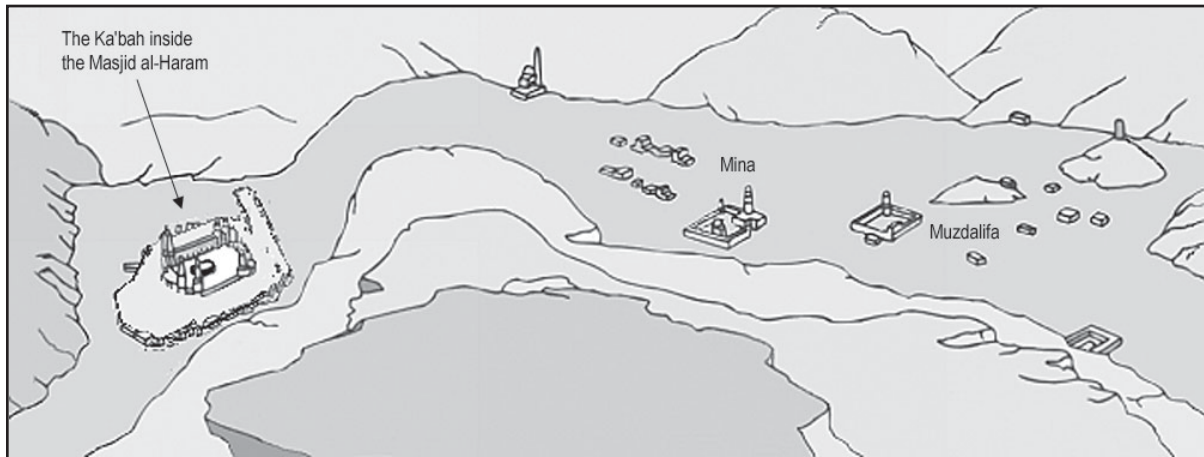
And when We made the House at Makkah a place of assembly and a place of safety for humankind, saying: “Take as your place of worship the place where Abraham stood to pray.” And We laid a duty upon Abraham and Ishmael: “Purify My house for those who go around and those who meditate therein and those who bow down in worship.”

And when Abraham prayed: “My Lord! Make this a city of peace and region of security and feed its people with fruits, such of them as believe in God and the Last Day”, He answered: “As for him who disbelieves, I shall leave him content for a while, then I shall compel him to the doom of fire — a hapless journey’s end!”

And remember when Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundations of the House, with this prayer: “Our Lord! Accept from us this service. Lo! Thou, only Thou, art the Hearer, the Knower.” ”

Other stations of the pilgrimage are near Makkah, where pilgrims perform prayers, camp overnight, and stand all together on the plain of Arafat asking for God's forgiveness and guidance. They recall Abraham's struggle with Satan by casting pebbles at three stone columns. Pilgrims complete the hajj by sacrificing a sheep or other animal, whose meat is to be shared with family, friends, and those in need. Nowadays, a meat processing plant near the place of sacrifice helps distribute the meat around the world. The sacrifice reminds of the Biblical and Qur'anic story telling how Abraham was willing to sacrifice even his son for God, and a ram appeared in the boy's place.

Pilgrims leave the state of ihram by trimming or cutting their hair and returning to Makkah for a final visit to the Ka'bah. A hadith of Prophet Muhammad says that a pilgrim "*will return as free of sin as a newborn baby.*" The pilgrimage brings Muslims from all around the world, of different nationalities, languages, races, and regions, to come together in a spirit of universal humanity to worship God together.



SUMMARY: THE FIVE PILLARS' MANY DIMENSIONS

The Five Pillars of Islam are formal acts of worship—essentials of practicing Islam. Islamic teachings also require a person to live according to moral values and to work toward just relations among people in the family, community, and the world. Simply put, Muslims are supposed to live in knowledge that every act happens in the sight of God.

Even though there is much more to living as a Muslim than the Five Pillars, these universal acts have influenced every Muslim society in many ways. The Five Pillars are individual acts, but they have social effects. Each has a spiritual meaning, but they also have worldly effects. During more than 1400 years of Muslim history, practice of the Five Pillars has shaped the places where Muslims live, the form of their homes and cities, their buildings and cultural institutions and even the links between regions of the world where Muslims live and travel.

The creed expressed in the first pillar of Islam—belief in one God, was a simple message that attracted many people over time. Early Muslims spread the message to new territories and began putting Islam's teachings into practice, opening up whole new branches of learning like law and the sciences. Muslims curious to know about the world and understand God's purpose built libraries, developed science and technology, and traveled and traded across much of the world.

The second pillar, salat (the daily prayer), resulted in the building of masjids (mosques) everywhere Muslims lived. From the simplest mud-brick structures to huge, decorated masjids of stone, brick and tile, with domes, towers and fountains, a wide variety of styles developed in different Muslim regions. To have a clean place to pray, Muslims often use a mat or carpet when they pray at home or elsewhere. Local design traditions and techniques produced wonderful designs for these rugs. The sciences of mathematics, astronomy and geography were encouraged by the need for Muslims to know the exact time for prayer, and the direction of Makkah from any place. The rhythm of the prayer times regulated schedules of life in Muslim societies everywhere.

The third pillar, zakat, provided a steady source of charity because it was required, not voluntary. Additional giving is voluntary. One way of giving is to donate the money from a business, or from the sale of fruit from an orchard each year, or some other form of permanent giving. These goods and money were put into a foundation, as a kind of contract with God, or a trust fund that would last as long as the source lasted. Today in the U.S., wealthy people and organizations of many faiths have employed a similar concept to establish charitable foundations that give money for hospitals, education, the arts, and other purposes.

The fourth pillar, sawm (Ramadan fasting), has been associated with a special time of year for Muslims for more than 1400 years. Changes in the rhythm of daily life, extra charity, community gatherings, and festive celebrations affect everyone in the society. Like the winter holiday season in the U.S. and Europe, the month-long observance brings an economic boost to merchants and producers. Families host guests during the month, and those who are able provide prepared food for anyone who attends the masjid in time for the iftar (evening meal to break the fast). At the end of the month, gift-giving, celebrations and obligatory charity in the form of foodstuffs and other necessities have a ripple effect on society's prosperity and well-being. This burst of energy is balanced by an overall slowing of the pace of life and work, with the idea of putting more time and energy into the spiritual side of life.

Finally, the hajj, or pilgrimage to Makkah each year, has had an enormous effect on Muslim societies and on the world. Muslims from Arabia, Africa, many parts of Asia, and more recently from the Americas and Europe, have made their way to the city of Makkah for the annual pilgrimage. The idea of the pilgrimage made people in the smallest villages look outward to the world. The journey renewed contact among the world community of Muslims, helping to unify beliefs and practices and knowledge. Muslim rulers throughout history have been proud to build roads, watering places, ports and places for travelers to stay, doing their part to help pilgrims achieve the goal of the hajj.

When Muslims today carry out the Five Pillars, these basic acts of worship continue the traditions of unity in diversity among Muslims. These simple, regular practices have had far-reaching effects in many areas of Muslim life and civilization.

17. **ACTIVITY:** Using the graphic organizer in the Handout “The Five Pillars Have Many Dimensions,” use the reading above, and other sources on the Five Pillars and Muslim history to fill in the blocks, showing what you know about the many dimensions, or sides, of the Five Pillars of Islam.
18. **ACTIVITY:** Compare different forms of prayer among religious traditions, in terms of the time of day, frequency, day of congregational worship, and characteristics. What words and phrases are common to prayer in several traditions? Compare physical positions of worship in several traditions. Use the Internet to get sound clips of prayer in several different traditions and look for common and contrasting elements.
19. **ACTIVITY:** Have students determine the qiblah (direction of Makkah). Keep in mind that the correct direction is determined by finding the shortest distance around the globe between the student’s location and Makkah. The students may want to use an actual globe with a length of string or a tape measure to find the shortest distance, then determine what direction a person would actually face for prayer. Note the difference between flat map directions and “great circle” routes on a globe.
20. **FIELD TRIP/ IN-HOUSE FIELD TRIP:** Have students visit a masjid and observe congregational worship, or ask Muslim students at the school to allow observation of their prayer at the masjid during the fieldtrip. Many masjids hold open houses and encourage educational visits that are arranged in advance. Alternatively, a Muslim classmate might agree to demonstrate the prayer while other students to observe.

MUSLIM HOLIDAYS & CELEBRATIONS

Muslims everywhere have three major celebrations. They are (1) the weekly Friday congregational prayer called Jumah, (2) Eid al-Fitr, the celebration after Ramadan, and (3) Eid al-Adha, the celebration that ends the Hajj (pilgrimage). These celebrations are universal because they were taught by Muhammad, and his practice has been passed down to later generations and to the regions where Islam spread. Several other celebrations and observances mark dates that are important to some or all groups of Muslims, but they are not universally practiced. They are described after sections on the major holidays.

NOTE TO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS: For more background on each of the major Muslim celebrations, read about each of the Five Pillars related to that celebration. For Jumah, read about the second pillar, salat, or prayer in Islam. For Eid al-Fitr, read about the third pillar, sawm, or fasting in Ramadan. For Eid al-Adha, read about the fifth pillar, hajj, or pilgrimage to Makkah. Student activities should not employ “role playing” Muslim prayer, fasting or the pilgrimage rites at Makkah, as doing so would violate guidelines for teaching about religion.

Muslims use a lunar calendar to time their religious celebrations. A new month in the lunar calendar is determined by the appearance of a new crescent moon. Since this occurs every 29 or 30 days, the lunar month is generally 1 or 2 days shorter than a typical month in the solar calendar used worldwide (which is based on the Roman Catholic Gregorian calendar). Thus, a lunar year is about 11 days shorter than the solar year. As a result, dates of events in the Islamic lunar year occur about 11 days earlier every year. For example, in 1997 Ramadan began on December 31, and in 1998 it began on December 20. In 2003, Ramadan began on October 27.

The days before Ramadan are full of suspense and anticipation, because Ramadan is determined by the new moon that starts the lunar month. Since the earliest centuries of Islam, knowledge of astronomy and mathematics enabled Muslims to predict the occurrence of a new moon, but Islamic law requires its actual sighting by members of the community. The sighting may vary from country to country and place to place, depending on weather conditions, the angle of the new moon relative to the horizon, and other factors. As a result, Muslims in various geographic locations could independently proclaim the start of Ramadan on the same day or within a day of each other. In modern times, electronic mass communication has enabled Muslims in different parts of the globe to share information about the moon sighting, increasing the likelihood that Muslims around the world start and end Ramadan together.

The Lunar Calendar, or,

“Will Ramadan Start Tomorrow?”

Muslims use a lunar calendar to time their religious celebrations. A new month in the lunar calendar starts with the appearance of a new crescent moon. This occurs every 29 or 30 days. A lunar year (twelve moon cycles) is about 11 days shorter than the solar year (time it takes for the earth to revolve around the sun in orbit). Because of the shorter lunar year, the time of Muslim celebrations moves through the solar seasons of winter, spring, summer and fall. Fasting sometimes comes during the hot summer months, and sometimes during the cooler winter months. The days before Ramadan are full of suspense with everyone waiting for the new moon to appear. Since the earliest centuries of Islam, knowledge of astronomy and mathematics allowed Muslims to predict the occurrence of a new moon. Islamic law requires its actual sighting by members of the community. As a result, Muslims in various places around the world could independently proclaim the start of Ramadan. In modern times, electronic mass communication has allowed Muslims in different parts of the world to share information about the moon sighting.

WEEKLY CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP: JUMAH PRAYER

Worshipping together on *Jumah* is a religious duty for Muslims. The word means “gathering” or “assembly” and is the weekday name for “Friday” in Arabic. The Qur’an states, “O ye who believe! When the call is proclaimed to prayer on Friday (The day of assembly), hasten earnestly to the remembrance of God, and leave off business and commerce. That is the best for you, if you but knew!” (Qur’an 62:9).

The observance of *Salat al-Jumah* (congregational prayer) takes the place of the midday prayer, but it must be performed together with other worshippers, not alone. According to some Muslim scholars, *Jumah* prayer must take place at a large centrally located masjid, rather than a small neighborhood masjid. Many large, architecturally beautiful masjids known around the world were built for the crowds that come for *Jumah* prayer.

In the hour before *Jumah* prayer in Muslim countries and in many major cities where Muslims live in the U.S., the masjids fill with men and women. Men and women have separate prayer areas, with women occupying a partitioned space or balcony. Overflow crowds may extend into the surrounding squares and streets. Those who arrive early make brief prayers and sit in contemplation, waiting for the sermon to begin. Reading from the Qur’an can be heard from the front of the masjid.

As the masjid fills, people form seated rows, pointing in the direction of the *qiblah*, facing Makkah. When the *adhan* (prayer call) sounds from the loudspeaker, rooftop or minaret, or even from the floor of the prayer hall, the rows straighten, preparing for the imam, or prayer leader, to come. He climbs a small set of stairs, the only furniture in the masjid except for some bookshelves and a few seats for ill or elderly people who must sit instead of following all the movements of the prayer with the others. The Qur’an reading concludes.

From the platform or pulpit, the imam begins with an invocation, and then begins to deliver the sermon. It may last between fifteen minutes to an hour in length. Although some formal parts of the sermon are given in Arabic, the imam usually shares his message in the language understood by the majority of the congregants. In the U.S., the sermon at most masjids is typically given in English. At the end of his speech, he makes supplications, or prayers asking God for help and guidance. Then a call to stand for prayer is heard, and the worshippers stand and straighten their rows. The imam leads the congregants in a short prayer that involves recitation from the Qur’an, bowing, and prostrating (touching the forehead to the ground). Afterwards, worshippers perform additional private prayers, and then rise and greet each other. Leaving the masjid, many Muslims return to business, school or other activities. In many Muslim countries, Friday is a day off, and Muslims may spend the rest of the day to visit friends and relax with family.



This stamp was issued in 2001 by the US Postal Service as part of its holiday series that includes major faiths and secular holidays celebrated in the US. The design of the stamp, by American Muslim calligrapher Muhammad Zakariyah, shows the Arabic Eid greeting, “Eid Mubarak!” (Blessed Celebration!)

Student Activities (Jumah)

1. Use the learning activity “Images of the Sacred: A Look at the Religious Architecture of Christianity and Islam” in the CIE teaching unit called *The Emergence of Renaissance: Cultural Interactions Between Europeans and Muslims*. A lesson plan for this learning activity, with associated information and images, is available on CIE’s website for teachers who do not own the unit.
2. **EXTENSION:** Explore the religious architecture of several traditions in art books, having students research their own or other traditions. Note interior and exterior features of these houses of worship, and compare architectural styles and building materials used in different regions. In many world regions, houses of worship of different faiths exist side-by-side. How are houses of worship from different faiths similar in a region? How do houses of worship from the same faith differ from region to region? Students may prepare posters, models, computer slide shows, or written research projects.

THE TWO EID CELEBRATIONS

Eid al-Fitr

The first of the two major celebrations in Islam marks the end of Ramadan, the month during which Muslims fast daily from dawn to sunset. This celebration is called *Eid al-Fitr* (Feast of Breaking the Fast). *Eid al-Fitr* is a very festive and joyous holiday that lasts several days. Lights decorate homes, streets and places of celebration, as people clean and polish their houses to get ready. For days before *Eid*, family members help bake sweets and prepare special foods. Before the prayer, each household must donate a certain amount to the poor, usually in gifts of food like rice, raisins, or money.

On the day of the *Eid*, Muslims attend congregational prayers at large gathering places, either outdoors or indoors. Services are held in the early morning, and make a colorful show with children wearing new clothes in bright colors, and everyone in their nicest clothes and perfumes. In the U.S., the diverse Muslim community turns out in the traditional dress of many world regions, including home-grown American Muslim styles. As worshippers arrive at the prayer place and wait for the prayer to begin, they join in rhythmic chanting of "Allahu Akbar" (God is Great!). *Eid* prayer is followed by a sermon, and then the Muslims rise to greet and hug one another, saying "*Eid Mubarak*," which means "Blessed Celebration." Children play on swings and enjoy animal rides, carousels, races and games, and get gifts, money, and sweets from family and friends. Muslim families visit each other's homes, and share treats and congratulations.

The Importance of Ramadan

Ramadan is important for Muslims because it is believed to be the month in which the first verses of the Holy Qur'an (the divine scripture) were revealed by Allah (God) to the Prophet Muhammad (570-632 CE). From time to time, Muhammad used to go out from Makkah, where he was born and where he worked as a caravan trader, to reflect and meditate in solitude. Like Abraham before him, he had never accepted his people's worship of many gods, and felt a need to withdraw to a quiet place to reflect and pray.

Muhammad reported the event that began his prophethood on one such retreat, when he was about forty years old. One night, while he was staying in a cave near Makkah, he heard a voice call out. "Read!" he heard. Muhammad protested that he was unable to read. The voice insisted again, and then a third time, and Muhammad found himself reciting five verses:

A Story of Abraham and His Family

Abraham, often called "the Friend of God," was the ancestor of the line of prophets in the monotheistic tradition (belief in one God). He holds a central place in Islam, and is mentioned in the Qur'an more often than Muhammad himself, or any other prophet. It is impossible to understand the Hajj or *Eid al-Adha* without understanding Abraham's importance as a prophet in Islam.

Abraham is a figure revered by Muslims, Jews, and Christians alike as a righteous person who lived over four thousand years ago in Mesopotamia. He left his native city of Ur after opposing his people's idol worship. He migrated to many places in Southwest Asia, on the Arabian Peninsula, and Egypt. According to Islamic teachings in the Qur'an, Abraham took Hajar, one of his wives and their baby son Ishmael, to a desolate valley in Arabia and left them there at God's command, trusting Him to provide for them.

Hajar, concerned about feeding her young baby, began searching the surrounding area for food and water. According to the Qur'an, in response to Hajar's prayers and desperate running up and down the hills, a spring miraculously gushed forth at Ishmael's feet to quench their thirst.

Passing traders stopped in the valley and asked Hajar's permission to water their camels. In time, Arab tribes settled in the little valley, and the settlement grew into the city of Makkah. Abraham returned to visit, and when Ishmael was a young boy, he and Ishmael constructed the Ka'bah, an empty cube-shaped building, as a place dedicated to the worship of the One God. Makkah became an important trading post and pilgrimage site by the time of the Prophet Muhammad, many centuries later.

*“Read, in the name of your Lord, Who created;
Created man, from a clot.
Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful,
He Who taught how to use the pen—
Taught man what he knew not.
Nay, but man doth transgress all bounds,
In that he looketh upon himself as self-sufficient.
Verily, to thy Lord is the return (of all).”* (Qur’an, ch. 96, verses 1-5)

These five verses were the first of many messages he recited and taught. Muhammad reported that it was the Angel Gabriel who spoke to him in the cave, and the words were the first words of the Qur’an. He reported that the angel confirmed that Muhammad was selected for an important and challenging mission—he was to be a prophet sent to his people and to all humankind. These messages continued over the next 23 years of his life, and made up the Qur’an, which Muslims believe to be the words of God. According to Islamic beliefs, this tradition of God-chosen prophets or messengers includes such figures as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and Jesus, and that the Qur’an is the continuation of revelations, like the Torah, the Psalms, and the Gospel (part of the Christian Bible).

Student Activities (Eid al-Fitr)

1. Find out where Eid celebrations are held in your community, and when Eid is expected this year. Search the Internet for media coverage of Eid celebrations around the country, especially near those dates. Clip them for a class bulletin board.
2. Compare the Eid celebration to other major holidays celebrated in diverse communities around the U.S. Answer questions about these celebrations such as who, when, where, why, how.
3. Why do some Muslim countries and communities differ on the date they celebrate Eid al-Fitr?
4. **MATH:** Make some arts and crafts activities based on tessellations (Islamic geometric designs). (See the list of recommended resources on CIE’s website for books about Islamic patterns.)
5. **GEOGRAPHY:** Share ethnic foods eaten during Ramadan and make a display of traditional costumes worn in different Muslim regions. Analyze common elements in the food and costumes, and discuss what natural resources are used to make them.

EID AL-ADHA

Eid al-Adha is the most important celebration in the Islamic calendar. It is celebrated at the time when pilgrims at Makkah complete the rites of the hajj. Although only the pilgrims in Makkah can participate in the Hajj fully, all the other Muslims in the world join with them by celebrating *Eid al-Adha* [eed al-UD-ha], or the Feast of Sacrifice. The celebration takes place on the 10th of the month *Dhu al-Hijjah*, which means month of the pilgrimage. The sacrifice is a reminder of the Biblical and Qur’anic story telling how Abraham was willing to sacrifice even his son for God, and a ram appeared in the boy’s place. Like the pilgrims at Makkah completing the hajj, Muslims who can afford it offer domestic animals, usually sheep, as a symbol of Abraham’s sacrifice. The meat is distributed for consumption to family, friends, and to the poor and needy.

On Eid al-Adha, Muslims around the world wear their nicest clothing and attend a special prayer gathering in the morning. This is followed by a short sermon, after which the Muslims stand up to hug and greet one another. The traditional Eid greeting is *“Eid Mubarak,”* which means *“Holiday Blessings.”* Throughout the day, people visit each other’s homes and partake in festive meals with special dishes, beverages, and desserts. Children receive gifts and sweets on this joyous occasion. Usually, communities celebrate this occasion over a period of several days.

Student Activities (Eid al-Adha)

1. What are the two major yearly religious celebrations in Islam, and what important events do they celebrate? How are the two Eids linked to the Five Pillars of Islam?
2. How does the lunar calendar measure time? Why is the lunar year shorter than the solar year? Why do Ramadan and the two Eids occur at different times each year?
3. Who is Abraham? What faith traditions honor him, and why? What Islamic source mentions Abraham? How is Abraham related to Eid al-Adha? How are he and his family related to the Hajj?
4. What is the significance of the Kabah in Islam, and what historical person is related to its original construction?
5. When does Eid al-Adha take place? How do Muslims celebrate Eid al-Adha?
6. Compare passages of scripture telling about Abraham from the Jewish, Christian and Islamic holy books. What elements are common to the three faiths? What differences can be found?
7. Discuss the concept of sacrifice in world history, and analyze its meaning in relation to the story of Abraham. Did he actually sacrifice his child? Discuss the idea of sacrifice as a modern term. Discuss what material and spiritual things are people might sacrifice, and their purposes and goals. Compare different types of sacrifice.

OTHER IMPORTANT OBSERVANCES

Ashurah [ah-SHOO-rah] or the 10th of *Muharram*, the first month in the Islamic calendar. The first day of *Muharram* announces the new *hijri* year, and the tenth of this month is known as *Ashurah*. According to Islamic tradition, the tenth of *Muharram* is the day when Moses led his people out of Egyptian bondage. It is also a date for sober reflection, for on this day in 680 C.E., the Prophet Muhammad’s grandson Husayn and his family were killed by the forces of Yazid, the second Umayyad ruler, who, it is widely believed, took rightful leadership of the Muslim community from Husayn. All Muslims mourn this tragic event, but Shi’i Muslims mourn in large public gatherings during the first ten days of *Muharram*. Among Shi’i Muslims, *Ashurah* is considered to be an official religious event along with *Eid al-Adha* and *Eid al-Fitr*.

Laylat al-Qadr [lay-lat-al-KADR] or the “Night of Power,” occurs on one of the last ten odd numbered nights of the month of *Ramadan*. It is significant as the night on which, in 610 C.E., the Prophet Muhammad received the first revelations of the *Qur’an* on the mountain of Hira, near Makkah. Many Muslims commemorate this night on the 27th of *Ramadan*, by offering additional prayers and supplications late into the night. Families often stay overnight in the masjid. It is said that the blessings for praying on this night are greater than those received for praying for a thousand months.

Isra’ wa al-Miraj / Laylat al-Miraj [lay-lat-al-mi-RAAJ]. The 27th of the month of *Rajab* is the date when Muslims commemorate a miraculous journey experienced by Muhammad. According to tradition, Muhammad was taken on a Night Journey (*Isra’*) and Ascension (*Mi’raj*) in 619 CE. According to hadith sources, Muhammad received instructions for the *salat*, or daily prayers on that night.

Since the 7th century CE, the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem has marked the spot where Muhammad is believed to have ascended to the Heavens and returned. *Glorified be He Who carried His servant by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque (Masjid al-Aqsa in Jerusalem) , whose neighborhood We have blessed, that We might show him some of Our signs! Lo! He, only He, is the Hearer, the Seer.*” (Qur’an 17:1).

Milad al-Nabi [mee-laad-an-na-BEE] Muhammad’s birth is commemorated on the twelfth of the month of *Rabi al-Awwal*. Some Muslims celebrate the event with festivities, decorations and special readings about his life. They reflect on his personal qualities and his deeds, since Muslims consider him to be the best role model for life. Milad al-Nabi is especially observed by Sufi Muslims, who emphasize a personal spiritual connection with the Divine (this is often described as a “mystical” tradition because sufi teachings are passed from generation to generation by popular, charismatic figures). Some Muslims avoid celebrating Milad al-Nabi because Muhammad himself is not reported to have commemorated that occasion.



FURTHER READING

*Student Essays About Ramadan***THE VERY FIRST DAY I FASTED** (BY SABRINA, AGE 11)

"Sabrina ,WAKE UP"! I woke up rubbing my eyes. "It's still dark outside so why am I up" I thought to myself. Then I remembered that I was going to try to fast a half a day or even more! So I quickly jumped out of bed forgetting that I was really tired. I went and brushed my teeth because there was no time to waste. I wanted to have as much time as possible to finish my suhoor (breakfast before the sun rises).

Even though I was only 6 or 7 years old I still wanted to see how it felt like to fast and get used to it before I actually had to. I knew that fasting meant not only trying to stay away from food and water but also from bad deeds and thoughts. I wondered which would be harder to do.

It seemed to be getting lighter outside so I quickly gobbled down my food (even though I know that I shouldn't) until I felt full . Then I prayed the morning prayer called Fajr. After I prayed I went to sleep until it was time to go to school.

During school time, the whole class talked about fasting and did lots of fun things to keep busy, like coloring pictures about Ramadan, and playing games. Time seemed to be going by pretty fast!

Then all of a sudden I heard someone crying. When I turned around I saw one of the boys in my class crying. When we asked him what was wrong he said that by accident he drank some water from the water fountain. The teacher told him that it was okay because God is very merciful and He forgives those who don't mean to eat. The boy could continue to fast.

When I came home I found out how hungry I was and realized that it was easier to fast with friends. I was so tired so I rested a little. When I got up my mom told me to break my fast since I was so young. But I asked my mom to please allow me to finish my fast, which she did thank God because it was so exciting to break my fast together with the adults.

I think the hardest part of fasting was trying to do only good things, and the best part was knowing that most of the Muslims all around the world are fasting just like me!!

Now when I fast, at the end of the day I think how lucky I am to have food. Yes, I mean all food, even food I dislike. So there you have it, my very first fast!!

FIRST TIME FASTING (BY HIBBAH, AGE 10)

My first time fasting was a great experience. The first time I fasted the whole was during Ramadhan, when I was six years old.

"Hibbah, Hibbah! Suhoor time! Suhoor time!" I started my day by waking up for suhoor, before sunrise, for eating, praying Fajr, and reading from the Qur'an. After a while I felt sleepy and went back to bed.

I went to the kitchen like I usually do every morning. As I reached for the cereal box I then remembered that I was fasting! It was a good thing I caught myself that time. Anyway, I went to get ready for school.

"This feels easy" I said to myself. But I didn't know what was to happen, in the afternoon.

"OWW My Stomach!" It was lunchtime and my stomach started to hurt. I can hear it saying, "I want food, I want food!" But I wasn't going to stop now. The teacher told us to read some Qur'an while those who weren't fasting ate their lunch.

In the afternoon not only was I hungry, I was also tired. I felt my eyes getting heavier, and heavier, and heavier, until I slowly closed my eyes. Then I heard the teacher announce class is over. Finally!

When I went home I remembered my homework. When I was done with my math, I couldn't take it anymore. I had to take a rest. Just one short rest.

Then a voice called, "Hibbah! Wake up, its time to break your fast!" I woke quickly and ran down the stairs. The sweetness of dates filled my mouth with joy.

After eating and praying maghrib, I remembered to do my homework.

At night, I went to the masjid to pray Isha and Taraweeh, additional prayers made after I'sha during Ramadan. When we came back we had coffee & sweets. [Yummy!] After that I went to sleep and that's the end of my wonderful day.

Now that I fasted a whole day, I wondered if I could fast the whole month.

Fasting made me feel and care about the poor. Poor people all around the world don't have any thing to eat, not only for a month, but maybe for their whole life.

EID AL-FITR (BY SARAH, AGE 11)

Eid al-Fitr is my favorite holiday because it is right after Ramadan. I feel like I earned the presents I will get on Eid, because I fasted as much as I could during Ramadan.

On the morning of Eid, my dad wakes me up by tickling me with the new dollar bills he is giving me. My new clothes are ready, and I get up right away. Sometimes I already have some presents waiting, and sometimes we go on the day of Eid to pick out what we want. I put the money Dad gave me in my purse, and head for the Eid fair.

When I get to the place where the fair is, I am amazed at how many Muslims are there, and I wonder, if there are that many here, how many Muslims are there in the whole world?

Before the fair, we pray the Eid prayer. People stand up after it and greet each other. There are people of many countries and colors are everywhere. Then I go to meet my friends and play on the rides. We play on the moon bounce, ferris wheel, tossing games, and do arts and crafts until our tickets are gone. Then we eat and watch our parents greet their friends. Some of my dad's friends slip some money into my hand. Finally, we go home.

In the next days, my uncles and my parents' friends come over and bring their children to play. We have a lot of fun, and I get even more presents. At the end of it, I go to bed very happily, waiting until Eid comes again.

MY FIRST TIME FASTING IN RAMADAN (BY MARYAM, AGE 11)

I can still remember the first time I fasted. I did it because my brother said I was too little, and I wanted to prove to him that I could, so I fasted and proved him wrong. That year I only fasted six days out of the whole month.

When it is time to get up for suhoor, my mom comes in the room to wake me up. I like to get up for suhoor because I feel like everyone is a part of something important and unusual, and I like to be part of it, too. I usually don't get up the first time I am called, but my twin sister comes to get me up. I walk to the kitchen table half awake, and I see most of my family at the table. I eat a big breakfast. After we eat, we wait a little and then pray the morning prayer together. Then we go back to sleep for a while.

A couple of hours later I go to school. All of my Muslim friends fast, so it isn't so hard. During some of the periods, it's hard to concentrate because I feel very hungry, but I don't eat because I think about how good it will feel when I break my fast knowing that I fasted the whole day. At lunchtime, I go to a room where I play with my friends instead of eating lunch, and then we pray the noon prayer together.

When I come home from school, it is time for the afternoon prayer. Then I play, or sleep, watch television, or help my mom cook. During Ramadan, my dad likes to cook and make sweets. When it is almost time to eat, the whole family gathers around the table waiting for the adhan (call for sunset prayer). When it finally comes, we say some special words to break the fast and eat a date with some water, then pray. At night, we all go to the mosque.

After the first day of fasting, the other days are easy. I can hardly wait until Ramadan comes so I can do it again!

EID AL-FITR (BY KARIMA, AGE 13)

"Wake up...wake up!" I call out to everyone in the house, "It's Eid!"

I run downstairs and find candy, balloons, and presents everywhere. My whole family comes down saying "Happy Eid!" I open my first present with a big smile on my face. It is the new coat that I have always wanted! I put my clothes on and get ready to go to the Eid carnival.

I finally arrive at the carnival where I meet my friends. Now we can go into the big hall to pray beside all of the people. We thank God for all we have.

When prayer is finished, we go to buy tickets for all the rides. Then we look around the bazaar to see what there is to buy with the money we have to spend. There are toys, candy, clothes and presents for people in my family. We have to be careful because it gets very crowded and we could lose each other.

After the carnival we all go to eat in a restaurant together. My parents take us to a fancy restaurant because it is Eid. The food is great! Then I go home. My friends come to visit and we give each other presents and we play with them together.

But the fun isn't over yet! Eid lasts three days of fun! The next day I visit some friends and relatives come to visit. We serve tea, coffee and sweets. On the third day, I go bowling with some friends and relatives. Of course, the worst one loses, and that would be me, but that doesn't keep me from having fun.

The time of Eid has finally ended. My mother says "Good night" while she says "I hope you had a happy eid." Eid is a very special, fun and holy time for Muslims. We should thank God for Eid.

RAMADAN (BY ALAA, AGE 10)

It was the first night of Ramadan and I was in a deep sleep. "Drip! Drop! Drip! Drop!" I felt the water dropping on my face as my dad tried to wake me up for suhoor. I woke up before dawn. I was very tired. The food I ate was exactly like my regular breakfast. After suhoor, I prayed and went back to sleep until it was time for school.

I woke up again at 7:00am to get ready for school. Now the fasting really begins! "Yes! I don't have to worry about breakfast, snack and lunch. It won't take so long to get ready for school," I said. After a few hours at school, it was lunchtime. "GGrrrrrr!" my stomach started grumbling, but I still did not eat. At my public school, only two or three people in the school fast.

"Why aren't you eating?" one girl in my class asked.

"I'm fasting. It's when you don't eat or drink until sunset so you can feel how poor people feel," I said.

"I think it is so cool that you can fast," she said. A lot of people at school asked the same questions.

The reason why I fast is to practice for when I am older and I have to fast, and to do good deeds. Sometimes I make a mistake and drink or eat a little. Then suddenly I remember that I'm fasting, but I still feel good. My mom said that if you have the intention, it doesn't break your fast if you just forget.

Finally it was time to go home. "Grrr! Grrr! Grrr!" Now my stomach was really grumbling. I took a nap after school to take my mind off of it.

Soon it was time for everyone to break their fast. I drank water and ate dates. After prayers, we ate a big dinner, or sometimes we go to the mosque to eat. In Ramadan, there are lots of foods to choose from.



"*Muslim Holidays* is a very accessible and informative addition to the K-12 curriculum that should greatly assist teachers in imparting greater knowledge and understanding of the Muslim world to their students, while fulfilling their Standards requirements. It is particularly helpful to teachers facing increasingly diverse classrooms, as a sensitive and rational guide to accommodating and respecting the needs of their Muslim students."

Kathy Spillman
Associate Director, Middle East Center
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA

"*Muslim Holidays* is also a very good basic introduction to Islam presented in an academic way and accessible to all grades from elementary to high school. The Teacher Suggestions and Enrichment Activities sections of the booklet are especially creative and helpful."

Reverend John Monestero
Educator, Author, & Ecumenist
Roman Catholic Diocese
Orange, CA

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Executive Director
Council for Spiritual and Ethical Education
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