

CURRICULUM GUIDE: **MUSLIM: FACT AND STEREOTYPE**



IN THIS ISSUE

2

Muslim: Fact and Stereotype

6

Stereotypes That Hurt

8

Content Standards

5

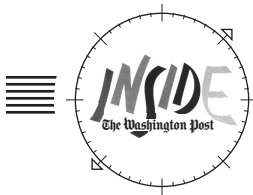
Enrichment

Learning how to understand other people, cultures

7

Word Study

A look at mosque



Muslim: Fact and Stereotype

KidsPost Article: "Muslim and American: Kids Worry About Anti-Arab Reaction"

Lesson: How stereotypes can influence individuals and a community

Level: Beginning to Advanced

Subjects: History, Social Studies, Religion, Current Events

Procedure

Read and Summarize

Read *"Muslim and American: Kids Worry About Anti-Arab Reaction."* Ask students to summarize the main idea of the article.

Examine and Discuss

1. After reading the KidsPost article, ask students to answer these questions.

- a. "The trouble started soon after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon that killed thousands of people." This is a statement of fact. Let's look at it more carefully.
 - "Trouble." Give three examples of actions that have frightened students who attend the Muslim Community School in Potomac.
 - "Terrorist." What is the definition of "terrorist"?
 - "Attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon." We will remember Sept. 11, 2001. What makes this day one that should never be forgotten?
- b. Although the students who were interviewed go to a Muslim school, what do they have in common with you?
- c. What are some of the different subjects studied at the Muslim Community School?
- d. What is a hijab? Why do girls wear a hijab?
- e. Since these students go to a private school, their school day includes prayer in a mosque. Why do public schools in America not have a designated time for prayer and places to worship in the school building?

What Islam Is—and Isn't

On the Web

ON THE WEB

<http://islamicity.com>

IslamiCity: Islam and the Global e-Community

A comprehensive site providing an online bazaar, news and business center, and education. Topics range from the Holy Quran to Islam explained.

Includes current and archived informal polls of viewers and information on ordering The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam.

<http://www.unn.ac.uk/societies/islamic/>

About Islam and Muslims

The goal of this site is to provide Muslims and non-Muslims with information about Islamic history, beliefs and civilization. Muslim practices, celebrations and names are presented in easy to understand format.

<http://www.freep.com/jobs/page/arabs.htm>

100 Questions and Answers About Arab Americans

Detroit, has the nation's most concentrated Arab-American population. The Detroit Free Press prepared this guide "as a step toward more accurate journalistic portrayals of Arab Americans." A concise, easy to read reference.

<http://www.al-islam.com/>

Al-Islam

Verse of the day, events of the

month and Islamic city and personality vary each day. Faith, jurisprudence and daily life are addressed. Do use the Islamic Dictionary. Information on this comprehensive site is presented in English, French, Dutch, Arabic and three other languages.

<http://www.islam-guide.com/>

A Brief Illustrated Guide to Understanding Islam

Quick and easy to understand entries explain Islam, Muslims and the Koran to non-Muslims.

<http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/islam>

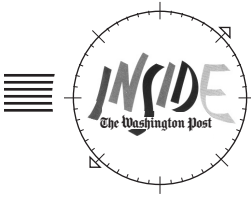
Islam in the United States

United States State Department official publications and news releases on Islam and religious diversity in the United States.

<http://www.pluralism.org>

The Pluralism Project

A study of the changing religious landscape in America—Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Jain and many other beliefs reside in our neighborhoods. An introduction to the site states: "How Americans of all faiths begin to engage with one another in shaping a positive pluralism is one of the most important questions American society faces in the years ahead."



f. Why are Muslim and Arab American children and adults worried and afraid?

2. Introduce or review Islam. See “Beliefs” (page 7) for basic tenets of Islam and “What Is Islam?” in KidsPost.

- What does “Islam” mean?
- What is monotheism? God, Yahweh and Allah are names given to the one God by Christians, Jews and Muslims. Explain the common heritage of these three faiths.
- The three religions share such individuals as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Moses, David and Solomon. Jews and Christians accept these men as ancestors and leaders. Muslims believe they were all prophets. What are prophets? Muslims add John the Baptist and Jesus to the list of prophets. They believe Muhammad was the last of the prophets.
- Among other things, Muslims are united by a devotion to the five pillars of Islam. Discuss the five pillars. What do they mean? The five pillars also guide the daily life and values of each individual. What is the value of a shared set of beliefs for a community and for an individual within that community? Is there a comparable set of beliefs or principles in our culture and our communities?
- The students in the KidsPost article were glad that President Bush visited a mosque in Washington, D.C. Why did President Bush go to the Islamic Center of Washington? President Bush said at the mosque that bigotry against Arab Americans and Muslims “will not stand in America.” What did President Bush want Americans and other nations to understand?

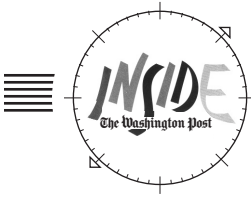
3. Discuss the following terms with students: Terrorism and terrorist (see Word Study in “Media in the Time of Tragedy”), stereotype, backlash and racial profiling.

Have students discuss stereotypes. Have they ever been stereotyped? What American values, way of life and laws are important to remember when discussing and evaluating the recent reaction by some Americans to Muslim and Arab Americans?



ANDREA BRUCE WOODALL—THE WASHINGTON POST

Sheikh Anwar Al-Awlaki, the Imam of the Dar Al Hijrah mosque in Falls Church, prays during a community press conference/prayer service. The mosque closed at one point after the terrorist attacks because mosque officials feared the congregation might be threatened or even harmed.



Muslim: Fact and Stereotype

KidsPost Article: "Muslim and American: Kids Worry About Anti-Arab Reaction"

Washington Post staff writer Shankar Vedantam told the story of Amrik Singh in "For Some in U.S., Grief Over Attacks Is Followed by Fear." Singh arrived at the World Trade Center just as a jet slammed into the South Tower. He immediately worried about friends and colleagues in the buildings. As debris and smoke filled the air he started to flee.

"Two young men wearing T-shirts and jeans picked him out of the crowd," writes Vedantam. "Singh was wearing a turban to cover the hair he has never cut, in accordance with his Sikh faith." They called Singh a terrorist and chased him.

The Post and other media have carried stories of verbal and physical assaults and some deaths of people who appear to be or are Arab American or Muslim. Why are these happening? Should they be happening?

With older students you may share this anecdote included in Vedantam's article:

Moukhtar Kocache, 31, a curator at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, was searching for a missing colleague the day after the attacks when he overheard a well-dressed man on a cell phone say, "We should go bomb the [expletive] Arabs for screwing up the phone lines."

Kocache, who was born in Lebanon, told the man he thought the comment was racist. The man, he said, unleashed a five-minute barrage that included, "Why don't you go back to your own country?" and "We're going to bomb the [expletive] out of you."

A nearby police officer, said Kocache, watched and did nothing.

Kocache's account of being harassed by the man with the cell phone ended with a particularly New York twist. He said that the police officer later shook his hand. As the officer was speaking, a woman came up to comfort Kocache.

She and the officer began speaking to each other in Hebrew. Later, when she talked to Kocache in fluent

Arabic, she turned out to be from Yemen.

"So the Arab turns out to be a New Yorker," said Kocache, referring to himself. "The Israeli [the woman] turns out to be an Arab, and the New Yorker [the police officer] turns out to be an Israeli."

"The reason I'm a New Yorker is I can practice a number of identities," he said. "I am an Arab American. I'm a curator, I have made a home here. I am British by passport. I'm French, because I lived most of my life in France. I'm a vegetarian by choice. Our identities are hybrid. I will defend all of them."

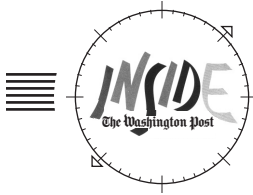
4. Divide the class into four groups. Give each group an assignment sheet the reproducible, ("Stereotypes That Hurt"). Give each group the correct feature article, editorial or commentary to read. Tell students that they are going to be the experts for that particular article, editorial and commentary. They are to know the facts, the point of view and main idea of each.

Provide students with time to define their vocabulary words, read and answer the questions. Have students in the group discuss the answers so they

will be talking about terrorism, stereotypes and the different perspectives given. Ask each group to give the class a summary of what they read and what they think the authors wanted the readers to consider.

If you have more time, instead, you could recreate new groups made up of students from each of the four original groups. In these four groups, they could summarize what they read and discuss the ideas. Have these groups decide what are the important principles that they would want Americans to practice.

5. Have each student write a letter. The letter can be addressed to their parents, to their classmates, to the principal of their school or to the KidsPost editor. Ask students to express their view of stereotyping, attacks on Arab Americans and Muslims in America, the fear that schoolchildren are experiencing or another topic that was included in the Post articles that were read. Ask older students to include a quotation from what they read. It can be used as an example or an idea with which they agree or disagree.



Enrichment

1. Students may enjoy seeing what their birthdays would be in the Hijri calendar. At <http://prayer.al-islam.com/convert.asp?l=eng>, they can convert a Gregorian calendar date to a Hijri date. Use this as an opportunity to discuss the different calendars that have been used through the centuries. This activity may also be done during Ramadan.

2. Have students create posters to tell about the Islamic faith. Discover Islam (<http://www.discoverislam.com/>) will give you some ideas for topics. Or, if your budget would allow it, you could order the posters advertised to decorate your classroom during a study of Islam.

3. "We are heading into an expansion of the American relationship with that complex of religion, culture and geography known as Islam," said Meg Greenfield, the late Newsweek columnist, at the height of U.S.-Iran 1979 crisis. "There are two things to be said about this. One is that no part of the world is more important to our own well-being at the moment—and probably for the foreseeable future. The other is that no part of the world is more hopelessly and systematically and stubbornly misunderstood by us."

More than 20 years after Greenfield's commentary was published, we are seeking to understand Islam. Assign students a country that is predominantly Islamic to research and introduce to their classmates. A good starting point is <http://dictionary.al-islam.com/ENG/Dicts/SelDict.asp?Lang=Eng&DI=73&Theme=29>. All Islamic countries, from Afghanistan through Yemen, are listed with information about population, language, economy and natural resources. You could

download the three pages, cut each country into a strip and have students draw their countries from a box.

Ask students to create a flag of the country researched. Here are two ways it could be done. After students have selected a country to research, have students research the design of the flag of that country. Draw the flag, then tell the story behind the flag's design. OR The story of the flag could be included in the country report. At the end of each country's oral presentation, the flag of the country could be added to a display of nations.

At the end of research, students will make an oral presentation to their classmates. Each presentation should include a map of the country that includes the capital city, main products and natural resources, a brief history and current events, culture, art and education, place of women and children in the society, current leadership and form of government.

If teachers have a large map of the world to use on a bulletin board, they may wish to create a puzzle. Trace an outline of the countries that the children are researching. Make two blank copies of the country. Place one over the country on the map. Give the other to the student who is researching that country. Students will add capital city, geographic features and name of country. At the beginning of the oral presentation, each student will place his or her map in the right location on the world map.

"Muslim and American" can be found at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A19869-2001Sep24.html>.

"What Is Islam?" can be found at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A19870-2001Sep24.html>.

UNDERSTANDING OTHERS

<http://www.freep.com/jobs/page/arabs.htm>

100 Questions and Answers About Arab Americans

Detroit, has the nation's most concentrated Arab-American population. The Detroit Free Press prepared this guide "as a step toward more accurate journalistic portrayals of Arab Americans." A concise, easy-to-read reference.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac3/ContentServer?pagename=article&articleid=A13980-2001Sep23&node=nation/specials/attacked/archive>

Sikhs Campaign Against Hate

Sikhs are not Muslim and they have no connection to Osama bin Laden. A baptized Sikh male does not cut his hair and wears a turban. Read how mistaken identity, a form of stereotyping, has created fear in the Sikh community.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac3/ContentServer?pagename=article&articleid=A59305-2001Sep19&node=nation/specials/attacked/archive>

Japanese Americans Recall '40s Bias, Understand Arab Counterparts' Fear

Japanese American citizens who were placed in internment camps after the attack on Pearl Harbor relate to Arab Americans who are now subjects of suspicion and fear by other Americans.

NAME _____

Stereotypes That Hurt

GROUP ONE

Define the following words before reading the article: retaliate, global, psychopaths, mitigate, systemic, bigotry, inadvertently, rue.

Post Metro columnist Courtland Milloy wrote an open letter to his 11-year-old son. Read *"To Understand Terrorism, Children Must Learn of the Suffering It Thrives On"*

(<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac3/ContentServer?pageName=article&articleid=A52675-2001Sep18&node=nation/specials/attacked/archive>).

A columnist gets to write his or her personal views. What does Milloy want his son to understand about terrorism? About suffering? What does Milloy think is important?

GROUP TWO

Define the following words before reading the article: assumption, cadet, compassionate, eclectic, fanatic, ululate, derogatory.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac3/ContentServer?packageName=article&articleid=A46859-2001Sep17&node=nation/specials/attacked/archive>

A Muslim Family in N.Y. Fears For a Son Who Loved America 23-Year-Old Among Hundreds of That Faith Missing in Attack

You will meet the family of 23-year-old Sal, Mohammad Salman Hamdani, an American Muslim. Sal is one of as many as 700 Muslims who may be missing following the World Trade Center attacks.

Where should Sal have been on Sept. 11? What do his parents assume may have happened after he left home that morning? What do Sal's parents want you to know about their son and about Muslims?

GROUP THREE

Define the following words before reading the article: bigotry, prosecution, ethnic, politically correct, toll, Sikh, blockhead

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A1249-2001Sep20.html>

Fueling Bigotry

You will read a Sept. 21 Washington Post editorial that responds to President Bush's visit to the Islamic Center of Washington and incidents against Arab Americans.

An editorial gives the official position of the newspaper's publisher and owner. Before the Post editorial writer states the Post's position, three individuals make statements. Make a list of the different individuals, the offices they hold and the points of view they express. With which of the three individuals does the Post disagree? What three ideas are part of the Post editorial position? Do you agree or disagree with the Post's position?

GROUP FOUR

Define the following words before reading the article: demure, garb, attire, customary, descent, noncombatant, emirate, precarious

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/metro/columns/brittdonna/A1224-2001Sep20.html>

Disguised Against Distrust

Washington Post columnist Donna Britt tells the stories of how Muslims and people of Middle Eastern descent are reacting to suspicion and fear.

A columnist gets to write his or her personal views. In this column, Britt shares interviews with several different people. Do you think the young woman and others who have begun wearing more Western style dress are doing the right thing? What does Britt add to your understanding of how Americans, all Americans, have reacted after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11? Britt includes her interview with Ron Hughes. What different perspective does Hughes add? What does Tony Lynch, who lives with his family in Dubai add? Then we are introduced to Dan Bloom. Why is the e-mail he received included by Britt?

Word Study: A look at mosque

Have you ever gone to a bird or animal sanctuary? It is a place of safety where hunting will not take place. It is a place of peace.

A sanctuary is also a sacred place. It can be a church, a temple or a mosque. Muslims go to a mosque to worship, to pray and to learn more about living good lives.

“Mosque” comes from masjid, an Arabic word that means “to worship” or “the place where one prostrates oneself in worship.” When Muslims pray, they prostrate their bodies. This means they bow or kneel low with their faces close to the ground. They are showing humility and adoration.

Islam's three holiest places are Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem. (Look at a map of Saudi Arabia to locate Mecca and Medina. Northwest of there find Israel where Jerusalem is located.) Mecca is where Muhammad was born. The Koran instructs believers to “turn thy face toward the masjid al-haram” (or Mecca) when they are praying. The other two holy places are associated with mosques.

The very first mosque was in Medina. It was the home of the Prophet Muhammad. The rectangular house had

a shaded area on the south side. Here, facing in the direction of Mecca, Mohammad and others would pray. This home became the model for mosques.

When Muhammad was 40 years old, he was selected by God as a prophet to bring God's message of Islam, or peace, to humans. Muslims accept Muhammad

as the very last Prophet of God. The revelations, or messages, were collected into a book called the Qur'an, or Koran.

The al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem is the place where Muslims believe Muhammad ascended to heaven.

A distinguishing feature outside a mosque is its minaret, or tower. From the minaret, muezzins, or criers, call the faithful to prayer. When you

enter a mosque, you should remove your shoes. Look for a place to leave your shoes. Mosques have a minbar, or pulpit. The leader of prayer at a mosque and the leader who gives sermons on Fridays, the holiest day in the typical Islamic week, is the imam. Each mosque has a qibla (direction of prayer) wall. In it is a mihrab, prayer niche.

A mosque is a place of worship. Women should cover their heads. Men should wear long pants and shirts. Men and women usually pray in different areas.



The Dome of the Rock Mosque (Qubbat Al-Sakhrah): The Dome of the Rock Mosque was founded by the Umayyad Caliph Abdul-Malik Ibn Marwan in Jerusalem in the period (65-86 A.H./684-705 A.D.) It was built in memoriam of the rock from which the Prophet began his ascent to heaven (Al-Mi'raj). The mosque has been renovated several times. It was decorated with fine mosaics and Turkish faience in 1554 A.H.

— “Mosque” entry, online Islamic Dictionary

Beliefs of Islam

Islam has more than one billion believers around the world. Muslims live in Indonesia, India, Iran, sub-Sahara Africa and the United States as well as in Arab countries. Only about 12 percent of Arabs are Muslim. Most Arab Americans are Christian.

Muslims, Christians and Jews are monotheists. They believe in one God. The Arabic word for God is *illah*. Allah is a compound word made up of “Al” which means “The” and “Illah” which means God.

The root word of “Islam” is *Silm* and *Salam* which mean peace. Muslims are to live in peace with Allah, within themselves and with other people and the environment.

The Five Pillars of Islam give the main religious duties. The five duties are:

1. There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is God's messenger.
2. Followers must say salat, formal prayers, five times every day: at dawn, midday, afternoon, sunset and late evening. Muslims are to face Kaaba (the house of God) at Mecca.
3. Followers are to give alms to the poor each year.
4. Followers must fast during the month of Ramadan.
5. At least once during a lifetime, followers must make hajj, a pilgrimage to Mecca. A man who has made the pilgrimage is given the title hajji; a woman is given the title hajjah.



Academic Content Standards

This lesson addresses academic content standards of Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. Among those that apply are:

The main lesson addresses these academic content standards of:

Maryland

Social Studies

Social Studies, World History 3.6: Students demonstrate understanding of the causes and impact of the rise of Islamic civilization. 3.6.8.1: In the context of world history through the Middle Ages, and in contemporary world geography, at the end of grade 8, students describe the major traditions, customs, and beliefs of Islam and its expansion into Southwest Asia (Middle East), North Africa, and Europe.

Social Studies, Peoples of the Nations and World 7.1: Students demonstrate understanding of the similarities and differences in the ways individuals, groups, societies, and cultures live and interact in the world. 7.1.5.3: In the context of Maryland up to contemporary times, and U.S. History through 1790, at the end of grade 5, students analyze how conflicts affect relationships among individuals and groups. 7.1.8.2: At the end of grade 8, students analyze how the United States developed into a pluralistic society consisting of diverse cultures, customs, and traditions.

Social Studies, Peoples of the Nations and World 7.2: Students understand how individuals, groups, and institutions sustain and influence cultures. 7.2.8.4: In the context of U.S. History through 1877, world history through the middle ages, and in contemporary world geography at the end of grade 8, students describe the impact of prejudice and discrimination on individuals and groups.

A complete list of State Content Standards of Maryland can be found at <http://www.mdk12.org/mspp/standards/>.

Virginia

History/Social Science

History/Social Science, Grade 8, World History to 1000 AD 8.5: The student will analyze the conflict between the Muslim world and Christendom from the 7th to the 11th century A.D., in terms of its impact on Western civilization, with emphasis on

- the origin, traditions, customs, beliefs, and spread of Islam;
- theological differences between Islam and Christianity;
- cultural differences between Muslims and Christians;
- religious, political, and economic competition in the Mediterranean region; and
- historical turning points that affected the spread and influence of both religious cultures.

History/Social Science, Grade 7, Civics and Economics 7.10: The student will interpret maps, tables, diagrams, charts, political cartoons, and basic indicators of economic performance (gross domestic product, consumer price index, productivity, index of leading economic indicators, etc.) for understanding of economic and political issues.

A complete list of Standards of Learning of Virginia can be found on the Web at <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/>.

Washington, D.C.

History

Religious, Ethical and Philosophical Forces in History, Content Standard 5: Students explain the beliefs and principles of the major religions, ethical systems, philosophies and ideologies that have guided individual lives, shaped economic, social and political institutions, and influenced the

course of history. By the end of grade 3, the student will demonstrate how people of diverse racial, religious and ethnic groups and various national origins have transmitted their beliefs and values.

A complete list of Standards for Teaching and Learning of the District of Columbia Public Schools can be found at <http://www.k12.dc.us/dcps/>.

These two national standards, found at Mid-content Research for Education and Learning (McREL), also apply to this lesson:

Behavioral Studies Standard 2- Understands various meanings of social group, general implications of group membership, and different ways that groups function. Benchmarks: Understands that while a group may act, hold beliefs, and/or present itself as a cohesive whole, individual members may hold widely varying beliefs, so the behavior of a group may not be predictable from an understanding of each of its members; Understands that social groups may have patterns of behavior, values, beliefs, and attitudes that can help or hinder cross-cultural understanding

Behavioral Studies Standard 4- Understands conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among individuals, groups, and institutions. Benchmarks: Understands that conflict within a group may be reduced by conflict between it and other groups; Understands how various institutions develop and change over time, and how they further both continuity and change in societies; Understands that mass media, migrations, and conquest affect social change by exposing one culture to another, and that extensive borrowing among cultures has led to the virtual disappearance of some cultures but only modest change in others