

Enquiry and Research

Suggested Duration: 60 minutes

Learning Objective

- ▶ To understand that Islam encourages questioning and seeking correct information from a range of sources

Key Words

- ▶ Research, enquiry, findings, questioning, reliable sources

Islamic Values

Islam encourages us to find out correct information and to ask the right questions before coming to decisions. It also encourages us to seek knowledge from reliable sources.

Citizenship Values

The skills of enquiry and research are a key part of citizenship education and are necessary to make informed decisions.



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M (B)



Activities

Ask some quick questions to recap the last lesson.

The last lesson was about dialogue. What is a dialogue? Why is it important to listen to each other? What does Islam say about dialogue?

Share the lesson objectives.

A Starter Activity

Give an example of the last time you were in a situation where you were lost and needed to ask for directions. Explain how you overcame this problem.

Then ask pupils about the last time they were in a similar situation or another time when they:

- ▶ were stuck and did not know what to do
- ▶ lost their way in the street
- ▶ got stuck on some maths homework, or doing some research for a history lesson.

Ask pupils to work in pairs/groups and ask each other about situations such as these, and how they overcame their problems.

Encourage two or three pupils to share their ideas with the rest of the class.

Emphasise that whenever we are faced with a problem, asked to find out about something, or need some information to resolve an issue, we must enquire, ask questions and research.

B Development

Activity 1: Sweet Shop Robbery

Tell pupils that the local sweet shop has been robbed and the police have arrived. What questions would they ask?

Take feedback and then introduce the 'six best friends of Charles Dickens': what, why, how, when, where and who. Explain:

You will have heard about Charles Dickens – the famous Victorian writer who wrote books like *David Copperfield*, *Great Expectations* and *Oliver Twist*. He called 'what, why, how, when, where, who' his 'six best friends' and said these questions helped him to find the truth.

Stress that by following these steps you are 'researching' and finding out new information that will help you to understand a topic or theme. Sometimes you are searching for factual information. At other times you might be searching for people's opinions and views.

Explain that another word for research is 'enquiry'.

For example, scientists undertake medical research to help find a cure for diseases like cancer. In their research they will be asking all kinds of questions that will help them understand the causes of diseases and, insha'Allah, their cures.

Activity 2: Islamic Guidance

Ask a pupil to recite the following verses. Explain the meaning.

فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

'...So ask the people of knowledge if you do not know.'
(Surat al-Anbiya' 21:7)

Question: Who are the people of knowledge? How do you become a person of knowledge?

أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ وَإِلَى
السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ وَإِلَى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ
نُصِبَتْ وَإِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ

'Do they not look at the camels, how they are created? And at the sky, how it is raised? And at the mountains, how they are firmly fixed? And at the earth, how it is spread out?'
(Surat al-Ghashiyah 88:17-20)

Emphasise that the Qur`an is encouraging us to look around us and question how things were created.

'Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim.' (Bukhari)

Note: This is a duty upon both boys and girls.

'Take care of your knowledge and be careful from whom you get it.' (Bihar al-Anwar)

'The cure for ignorance is to question.' (Abu Dawud)

C Plenary

Sum up the lesson and stress that:

- ▶ Citizenship encourages the skills of research and enquiry, just as Islam does.
- ▶ To play an active part in the world you must do your best to understand it, to think about it and to ask relevant questions.
- ▶ There is a clear message in Islam: do not follow blindly, but seek truth and knowledge.

You may want to use one of the examples from the group work to reinforce these points.

Suggested Follow-up Work

Give instructions for follow-up work:

Visit www.muslimheritage.com to find who invented soap, algebra and medical equipment.

Sweet Shop Robbery

Your local sweetshop has been robbed and the police have arrived.

What questions would they ask?

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