

Suggested Duration: 60 minutes

Learning Objectives

- ▶ To reinforce the idea that conflicts should be resolved peacefully
- ▶ To understand that the term 'jihad' means struggle
- ▶ To understand that the greater jihad is the struggle to do good and to stay away from bad
- ▶ To know that Islam condemns suicide absolutely

Key Words

- ▶ Haram, jihad, struggle, good, evil

Islamic Values

Islam encourages the peaceful resolution of all conflicts. There are no circumstances in Islam where suicide or the killing of innocent people is allowed. It is totally haram.

Citizenship Values

Citizens are expected to abide by the law. There are legal forms of protest when you oppose something.



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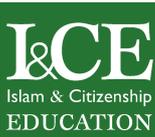


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M (B)



Activities

Recap the previous lessons on conflict and resolving conflict.
Ask: What did we decide were the main reasons for causing conflict? What was the Islamic method of conflict resolution?

A Starter Activity

Explain that, as good Muslims, we should abide by the law of the land and behave peacefully. Ask the class if there are any occasions when we can decide to take the law into our own hands in order to achieve what we want. Ask the class if they can think of any recent events where people have acted outside the law. Was this the right thing to do? What would happen if we all decided to ignore the law of the land?

This is a whole-class discussion and might lead to examples such as the Danish cartoon incidents, burning of books or, even more likely, terror attacks and suicide bombings. Emphasise that the law of the land allows you to demonstrate on the street peacefully to protest against something you do not agree with.

B Development

Activity 1: Discussion

In small groups, discuss the following questions:

Can you think of a time when you were tempted to do something really bad? Describe it to your friend. Why did you want to do it? What action did you take, if any, or did you resist the temptation?

Ask the whole class to feed back. You might want to give a few examples of your own.

Explain that the struggle between good and bad that goes on inside our head is the greater jihad. It is the struggle against evil for the sake of good. Throughout our lives the great struggle is that which we undergo as individuals, trying to resist the temptations of Shaytan and live life as good Muslims.

It is likely that some pupils will have a limited view of the term 'jihad' and they may well think that it is only a holy war, a war conducted by Muslims against non-Muslims. They may think it means a struggle. They may think it is about getting to Jannah. They may also refer back to the earlier debate. If they think it only means war, explain that Islam has very strict rules for conducting warfare, rules which include not killing innocent men, women and children. Also explain that there is no concept of 'holy war' in Islam.

Activity 2: Group Discussion

Read the following true story to your pupils and then ask pupils to discuss it in small groups:

'It was recently reported in a newspaper that an 11 year old boy came home and told his father that he would blow up some boys at his school. His father was shocked and asked him why.

The son said he was very angry with this group of boys, who had been bullying him every day on his way home from school.'

Ask the class if there have ever been occasions when they have been so angry with someone that it made them feel like doing something similar. If so, what caused them to be so angry? What action did they eventually take?

Is it ever right for people to threaten or harm other people while harming themselves in the process, for instance, suicide bombing?

Explain that Islam does not allow suicide and, therefore, suicide bombing is also not allowed.

Activity 3: Islamic Guidance

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

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا

'...And do not kill yourselves, indeed God is merciful to you.'
(Surat al-Nisa' 4:29)

Question: What does 'do not kill yourselves' mean?

Suggested answer: Islam teaches us not to commit suicide whatever the circumstances.

وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

'...And do not throw yourselves by your own hands to destruction, but do good, indeed God loves those who do good.'
(Surat al-Baqarah 2:195)

Question: What does 'do not throw yourselves by your own hands to destruction' mean?

'He who killed himself with a thing would be punished on the Day of Resurrection by that very thing.' (Muslim)

'There is no strength like being able to control one's anger.'
(Tuhaf al-'Uqul)

'Whoever strangles himself will be strangling himself in the fire and whoever stabs himself will be stabbing himself in the fire.'
(Bukhari)

'He who has no control over his anger has no control over his mind.'
(Al-Kafi)

Emphasise that Islam absolutely forbids suicide and that there is a severe punishment for this act. The community of scholars have also pointed out that this equally applies to 'suicide bombers' because they have committed two haram acts: they have killed themselves, and they may have killed innocent people.

C Plenary

To recap, ask the following questions:

- ▶ Is suicide permitted in Islam?
- ▶ Is the killing of innocent people permitted in Islam?
- ▶ Should you use phrases such as 'I will blow them up'?
- ▶ How can you resolve conflicts?
- ▶ What is jihad?

Suggested Follow-up Work

Give instructions for follow-up work:

Talk to your parents/family about why it is important to respect the law.

