

Constitution of Madinah – Key Stage 2

A Multi-faith Society

Suggested Duration: 60 minutes

Learning Objectives

- ▶ To learn about the world's first successful attempt to lay down the principles for a multi-faith society
- ▶ To appreciate that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ encouraged all people living in Madinah to exercise their rights and fulfil their responsibilities

Key Words

- ▶ Sahifah (page/document), constitution, rights and responsibilities, ummah, hijrah, ansar (Muslim residents of Madinah who helped the refugees from Makkah), muhajirun (Muslim refugees who fled from Makkah to Madinah)

Islamic Values

Islam teaches us to obey the law and to encourage people of other faiths to practise their religion in the way they want.

Citizenship Values

A British citizen must obey the law and be free to practise their religion.



ams:uk
association of muslim schools



BRITISH CITIZENSHIP FOUNDATION

continyou
Changing lives through learning



M (B)



Activities

Ask some quick questions to recap the last lesson.

Share the lesson objectives.

A Starter Activity

Recap:

In the previous lesson we looked at 'community cohesion'.

What did that term mean?

What was the name of the country in which people of different faiths lived and worked closely and well together?

(Andalusia/Spain)

Why is it rather like Britain today? (Because all the people lived and worked harmoniously, they obeyed the laws, they enjoyed their cultural heritages and practised their religions freely.)

In Lesson 1 we looked at the rights and responsibilities of individuals and the government. Do you remember what those terms meant? (Refer back to the first lesson and explain the term BIRR.)

Each country has a set of principles and rules, known as a constitution, which helps its government to run the country. Do you know who devised the first multi-faith and multi-cultural constitution in the world that gave people their rights and outlined their responsibilities? (Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in Madinah.)

B Development

Activity 1: Freedoms List

Using Pupils' Activity Sheet 2.1101, ask the class to work in small groups and list the freedoms they would want British citizens to have, for instance:

- ▶ We would like the freedom to worship.
- ▶ We would like the freedom to ...
- ▶ We would like the freedom to ...

Take feedback and emphasise that in our country we want the freedom to worship, learn, speak, travel, work, and so on.

Activity 2: The Constitution of Madinah – the Sahifah

Remind the class of the story of Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ migration from Makkah to Madinah (the Hijrah).

Madinah was originally called Yathrib and there were Jews, Arabs and others already living there. Some of the people there had also accepted Islam. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had the difficult task of bringing together the Jews, Ansar and Muhajirun so that they could live together in peace and harmony.

In order to do this he laid down several principles and rules over a period of time, which later became known as the 'sahifah', which is Arabic for page or document. This document is said to be the first written constitution ever that gave rights and responsibilities to all those living in Madinah.

The key points of the sahifah/constitution of Madinah were:

- ▶ The three groups living there (Jews, Ansar and Muhajirun) were described by the Prophet ﷺ as one community.
- ▶ Everybody living in Madinah agreed to accept the final authority of God and His Messenger ﷺ.
- ▶ Everybody agreed with the choice of the twelve people who would organise the community.
- ▶ Everybody agreed to co-operate to ensure law and order.
- ▶ Everybody was entitled to protection and support.

- ▶ Everybody was entitled to pray as they wished.
- ▶ Everybody was expected to defend Madinah.
- ▶ Everybody was expected to pay their taxes.

Activity 3: Islamic Guidance

Here are several passages taken from the sahfah.

The ICE project has taken this text from the book *Constitutional Analysis of the Constitution of Madinah*, written by Dr Muhammad Tahir ul-Qadri. This book relates the Madinah Constitution to the modern terminology and context. You can download the complete document from the ICE website.

Ask a few pupils to read the following articles (they may also visit the website for more examples).

Article No 30: Guarantee of freedom of religion for both the Muslims and non-Muslim minorities (the Jews)

'The Jews of Banu Awf (non-Muslim minorities) shall be considered a community along with the believers. They shall be guaranteed the right of religious freedom along with the Muslims. The right shall be conferred on their associates as well as themselves except those who are guilty of oppression or the violators of treaties. They will bring evil only on themselves and their family.'

Question: What did Prophet Muhammad ﷺ mean when he said: 'The Jews have their religion and the Muslims theirs'?

Suggested answer: Everybody has the freedom to practise their religion.

Article No 45: Compulsory mutual help to one another in case of war

'There shall be mutual help between one another against those engaged in war with the allies of this document.'

Question: What is 'mutual help'?

Suggested answer: To help each other.

Article No 58: The basic constituent members of this document and their associates shall possess equal constitutional status

'The Jews of Aws (one of the basic constituent members of this document) and their allies shall possess the same constitutional status as the other parties to this document, with a condition that they should thoroughly be sincere and honest in their dealing with the parties.'

Question: Did Prophet Muhammad ﷺ give equal rights to Muslims and others under the Constitution of Madinah?

Answer: Yes

Question: Why do you think that the Constitution of Madinah is so important for Muslims in Britain today?

Suggested answer: It is important because it:

- ▶ provides an Islamic model for how a state should run.
- ▶ guarantees religious freedom
- ▶ stresses that all communities have rights and responsibilities to the state and to each other
- ▶ stresses that people should respect the law
- ▶ encourages groups to consult with each other.

Pupils' Activity Sheet 2.1102:
Islamic Guidance

Pupils' Activity Sheet 2.1103:
Pick the Correct Answer

C Plenary

To recap, ask pupils to complete the following activity, using Pupils' Activity Sheet 2.1103.

Ask the class to work in small groups and match the right answer to each question. When a group gets the correct answer they should say 'Alhamdulillah' softly.

- 1 What is a constitution? (A set of laws and systems for a government)
- 2 Who devised the first written constitution in the world which gave rights to Jews and Muslims? (This was devised by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.)
- 3 It was written for the three groups living in Madinah. What were these groups? (The Ansar, the Muhajirun and the Jews)
- 4 What does the word Sahifah mean? (Page or document)
- 5 What was Madinah originally called? (Yathrib)
- 6 Who is responsible for the things you do? (You)

Suggested Follow-up Work

Give instructions for follow-up work:

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

Download *Constitution of Madinah* from the ICE website, and identify the articles which encourage Muslims and others to live together in peace.

Freedom List

List the freedoms you would like British citizens to have. For example: We would like the freedom to pray.

- ▶ We would like the freedom to ...
- ▶ We would like the freedom to ...
- ▶ We would like the freedom to ...
- ▶ We would like the freedom to ...
- ▶ We would like the freedom to ...
- ▶ We would like the freedom to ...
- ▶ We would like the freedom to ...
- ▶ We would like the freedom to ...
- ▶ We would like the freedom to ...
- ▶ We would like the freedom to ...
- ▶ We would like the freedom to ...



Islamic Guidance

Selected passages from the Constitution of Medina:

Article No 30: Guarantee of freedom of religion for both the Muslims and non-Muslim minorities (the Jews)

'The Jews of Banu Awf (non-Muslim minorities) shall be considered a community along with the believers. They shall be guaranteed the right of religious freedom along with the Muslims. The right shall be conferred on their associates as well as themselves except those who are guilty of oppression or the violators of treaties. They will bring evil only on themselves and their family.'

Article No 45: Compulsory mutual help to one another in case of war

'There shall be mutual help between one another against those engaged in war with the allies of this document.'

Article No 58: The basic constituent members of this document and their associates shall possess equal constitutional status

'The Jews of Aws (one of the basic constituent members of this document) and their allies shall possess the same constitutional status as the other parties to this document, with a condition that they should thoroughly be sincere and honest in their dealing with the parties.'

Pick the Correct Answer

<p>What is a constitution?</p>	<p>The ansar, the muhajirun and the Jews</p>
<p>Who devised the first written constitution in the world which gave rights to Jews, Muslims and others?</p>	<p>Set of laws and systems of government</p>
<p>What were the names of the three groups living in Madinah?</p>	<p>Page or document</p>
<p>What was Madinah originally called?</p>	<p>Prophet Muhammad ﷺ</p>
<p>What does the word Sahifah mean?</p>	<p>Yathrib</p>
<p>Who is responsible for the things you do?</p>	<p>You</p>