

Critical Enquiry and Research

Suggested Duration: 60 minutes

Learning Objectives

- ▶ To provide students with research and enquiry skills
- ▶ To establish that Islam encourages research and enquiry

Key Words

- ▶ Research, enquiry, following blindly, reflection and understanding, fiqh (understanding/enquiry), reliable

Islamic Values

Islam teaches us that we must reason, observe and reflect on people and things around us before coming to any conclusions, and that we must not follow blindly.

Citizenship Values

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



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M (B)



Resources

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.0301:
Lesson Objectives

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.0302:
Showroom Robbery – 1

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.0303:
Showroom Robbery – 2

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.0304:
Research Skills

Activities

Ask some quick questions to recap the last lesson:

- ▶ What ground rules do you remember about engaging in dialogue?
- ▶ What does Islam teach us about engaging in dialogue?

Take feedback and share the lesson objectives.

A Starter Activity

Ask pupils: When you want to find out about something, where do you go and who do you talk to?

Take feedback. Suggestions may include friends, family, teachers, internet and books. List all suggestions.

Ask pupils how they would know whether the source of information is reliable and how they would verify that.

They might say that it is from a reliable source because it comes from a teacher, an `alim, an `alimah or a person of knowledge.

B Development

Activity 1: Asking Questions

You have suggested how you would establish the reliability of the source of information. There are a number of other questions that might help you to find the truth or accuracy about something.

Tell pupils that the local car showroom has been robbed and the police have arrived. What questions would they ask to investigate the robbery? They should use Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.0302 to record their answers in groups.

Explain that the exercise they have done is an example of 'research' and asking questions is a way of gathering information. This is called 'enquiry' and is something that you would do in order to find out new information that would help you to understand a subject or issue. Sometimes you are searching for factual information. At other times you might be finding out about people's opinions and views. Research is based upon a spirit of enquiry, of asking key questions.

Take feedback and then introduce the 'six best friends of Charles Dickens': what, why, how, when, where and who. Explain: You will have heard of Charles Dickens – the famous Victorian writer who wrote books such as *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations*. He called 'what, why, how, when, where and who' his 'six best friends'.

Now give pupils a copy of Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.0303, which gives some examples of how they can use what, why, how, when, where and who to find out more about the robbery.

Activity 2: Research and Enquiry

Ask pupils, in groups, to research the method used to establish the beginning times of the five daily prayers. Who would you ask? What would you ask? Where would you go to find this information? How would you know if it was accurate? Ask pupils to use Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.0304.

The pupils might say imam, parents, teachers, madrasah teacher; they might also say they would undertake some research in an Islamic textbook on fiqh.

Take feedback.

Introduce the concept of 'fiqh', which literally means understanding and enquiry. Through the concept of fiqh, Islam encourages us to research and enquire.

Activity 3: 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?

هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

'...Can those who have knowledge and those who do not have knowledge be equal?...'
(Surat al-Zumar 39:9)

This demonstrates that people of knowledge can contribute to the betterment of humanity much more than people without 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.

It was this kind of encouragement that led early Muslims to observe nature keenly and understand more about it. In fact, Muslims were thus able to lay the foundations of modern science.

Question: Do you know:

- ▶ who founded modern surgery? (A Muslim called Al-Zahrawi)
- ▶ who started the first hospital? (Muslims in Cairo)
- ▶ who founded one of the earliest universities in Morocco? (Fatimah al-Fihri, in 859 CE)

Ask pupils if they know any contemporary Muslims who have made contributions to modern advancements.

'Knowledge is treasure, the key to which is questioning. So ask and God will have mercy on you. Indeed four people are rewarded: the questioner, the speaker, the listener and the one who admires them.'
(Tuhaf al-'Uqul)

'Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim.'
(Bukhari)
'The cure for ignorance is to question.'
(Abu Dawud)

Resources

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.0305:
Islamic Guidance

Resources

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.0306:
Feedback

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.0307:
Follow-up Worksheet

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 reflect upon it and to ask questions.
- ▶ There is a clear message in Islam: do not follow blindly, but seek the truth and seek knowledge.

Ask pupils to complete Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.0306.

Suggested Follow-up Work

Give instructions for follow-up work:

Read and reflect upon Surat al-Nahl 16:75–76. What did you learn from these verses? Write down your answer.

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

Use Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.0307.

Lesson Objectives

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Showroom Robbery – 1

What questions would you ask to find out more about the showroom robbery?

1

2

3

4

5

6

Showroom Robbery – 2

Questions you could ask to find out about the car showroom robbery include:

Question 1: **What** was taken?

Question 2: **What** time did it happen?

Question 3: **Who** did it?

Question 4: **Who** was present in the showroom?

Question 5: **Where** is the showroom?

Question 6: **Where** was the car parked?

Question 7: **When** did it happen?

Question 8: **How** did they enter the showroom?

Question 9: **Why** did they rob this showroom?

Question 10: **Why** did they take that particular car?

Research Skills

In groups, research the method used to establish the beginning times of the five daily prayers.

▶ Who would you ask?

▶ What would you ask?

▶ Where would you go to find this information?

▶ How would you know if it was accurate?

Islamic Guidance

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

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

Feedback

Lesson Title: Critical Enquiry and Research

Name:

Madrasah/Organisation:

Today I have learnt about:

As a result of this lesson I have learnt that a good Muslim should:

I am going to follow up this topic in my home/school/community by:

Follow-up Worksheet

Lesson Title: Critical Enquiry and Research

Name:

Madrasah/Organisation:

Tasks:

Read and reflect upon Surat al-Nahl 16:75-76. What did you learn from these verses? Write down your answer. Visit the website www.muslimheritage.com to find out who invented soap, algebra and medical equipment.

Write your answer here.