

Diversity within Islam

Key Stage 3

Suggested Duration: 60 minutes

Learning Objectives

- ▶ To understand that there is diversity within Islam
- ▶ To learn that good Muslims do not look down on other Muslims, regardless of the groups they belong to
- ▶ To understand that Islam encourages us to celebrate similarities and respect differences

Key Words

- ▶ Differences, similarities, diversity, ummah, Muhajirun, Ansar

Islamic Values

Islam teaches us to respect all Muslims, regardless of the groups they belong to. It also teaches us that these diverse groups make up the ummah.

Citizenship Values

Citizenship teaches us to value diversity and to respect the values and opinions of other people.



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M (B)



Resources

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1601:
Lesson Objectives

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1602:
Identify Similarities

Activities

Ask some quick questions to recap the last lesson.

Share the lesson objectives.

A Starter Activity

This is a very sensitive lesson, trying to encourage an area of work that as Muslims generally we find difficult – intra-faith dialogue (dialogue between Muslims).

It is important that as teachers/volunteers we model good practice in terms of showing that we respect **all** Muslims, regardless of our differences.

Ask pupils to list the various groups (schools of thought) of Muslims that they know of.

Take feedback in the form of a group discussion around the word 'Muslims'.

B Development

Activity 1: Identify Similarities

Take time to discuss feedback from the Starter Activity in as much detail as you are comfortable with.

Ask pupils to work in pairs and list what they think the similarities are between their own group and other Muslim groups.

Take feedback from pupils and emphasise the fact that there are more similarities than differences and stress that:

- ▶ The differences of these groups all make up the Muslim ummah.
- ▶ Diversity is about appreciating and respecting differences, and Islam teaches us to respect these differences.

Use any cultural/linguistic differences in the class to illustrate the point that in our difference is our strength.

In your class there may be pupils who speak English, Urdu, Arabic, Punjabi, Persian, Turkish, and so on.

Stress that as individuals we can speak one or two languages, but collectively in this class we can speak maybe more than twenty languages (replace the number with the number of languages spoken in your class).

Emphasise that this is just one meaning of diversity.



Activity 2: Islamic Guidance

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

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوِيكُمْ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

'Indeed the believers are brothers (and sisters). Therefore, maintain good relations with your brothers (and sisters) and be aware of God. So that you may be shown mercy (by God).'
[Surat al-Hujurat 49:10]

Question: What do we learn from this verse?

Suggested answer: Here the Qur`an clearly tells us that all Muslims are brothers and sisters and it is our duty to maintain good relations between ourselves.

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا
وَأذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً
فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا

'...And hold on strong to the rope of God all together and do not be divided. And remember God's favour upon you, how you were enemies and He brought your hearts together in love so that you became brothers (and sisters) through His grace...' (Surat Alee Imran 3:103)

Question: What does 'hold on strong to the rope of God' mean?

Suggested answer: In this verse 'rope of God' means the message of God and we all should hold on to God's message and live together in harmony, regardless of our differences.

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ
صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

'And who is better in speech than the one who invites towards God and does good and says indeed I am from amongst the Muslims.' (Surat al-Fussilat 41:33)

'Do not envy each other, do not raise prices against each other, do not hate each other, do not turn away from each other, and do not undercut each other. Rather be servants of God as brothers. A Muslim is a Muslim's brother (and sister). He neither wrongs him, nor cheats him, nor does he tell him lies, nor does he have contempt for him. Piety is here (and He pointed to his chest). It is sufficient evil for a person to look down on his Muslim brother (and sister). The whole of a Muslim is sacred to another Muslim: his blood, his wealth and his honour.' (Bukhari, Muslim)

Explain a few messages from this hadith and stress that we are not allowed to look down on other Muslims.

'The improvement of people's affairs is in co-existence and close co-operation according to a set measure; two-thirds of which is to have awareness (about each other) and a third of which is to pretend ignorance of each other's faults.'
(Kanz al-`Ummal)

Resources

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1603:
Islamic Guidance

Resources

A Story from the Sirah

Read out the story below (you may wish to use other similar stories).

'The Muslims of Makkah were being persecuted by the non-Muslims and so to protect their lives and their faith, the Prophet ﷺ instructed them to leave and flee to Madinah, where they would find protection. They had to leave their homes and their belongings behind. They became refugees in Madinah and were known as the Muhajirun.

'In Madinah, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ gathered the Muslims in the house of Anas. He explained the terrible situation that the Muslims from Makkah, the Muhajirun, were in. He suggested to the Muslims of Madinah that they take the Muhajirun as their brothers and sisters and look after them. They happily agreed and shared everything with them equally. They were now known as the Ansar, the helpers.

'By doing so the Prophet ﷺ created a relationship of brotherhood and sisterhood between the Muslims of Makkah and the Muslims of Madinah.'

Question: What do we learn from this story?

Suggested answer: This story tells us that people from different backgrounds and tribes became brothers and sisters in the name of God. Today, we must not forget this wonderful story and should follow this tradition started by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. We should respect and treat all Muslims as our brothers and sisters.

C Plenary

Recap the lesson by emphasising the following points:

- ▶ There are various groups in Islam, as in many other religions.
- ▶ The Qur`an and hadith tell us that we are all part of one Muslim ummah.
- ▶ It is our duty to respect Muslims who are different to us.
- ▶ All masajid are houses of God and we should respect them and those who attend them.

Emphasise that all Muslims belong to one ummah and Muslims from various schools of thought, backgrounds, nations and countries are equally part of the ummah.

Invite pupils to complete Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1604.

Suggested Follow-up Work

Give instructions for follow-up work:

Work together with your teacher and try to get someone from a different Muslim group to come into your madrasah/school and give a short introductory talk.

Speak to three people (friends/family) who are from a different Muslim group, and identify seven similarities between your group and their group.

Use Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1605 to report back.

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1604:
Feedback

Pupils' Activity Sheet 3.1605:
Follow-up Worksheet

Lesson Objectives

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Identify Similarities

List the similarities between your group (school of thought) and other Muslim groups.

▶

▶

▶

▶

▶

▶

▶

Islamic Guidance

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوِيكُمْ
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'By doing so the Prophet ﷺ created a relationship of brotherhood and sisterhood between the Muslims of Makkah and the Muslims of Madinah.'

Feedback

Lesson Title: Diversity in Islam

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: Diversity in Islam

Name:

Madrasah/Organisation:

Task:

Work together with your teacher to try and get someone from a different Muslim group to come into your madrasah/school and give a short introductory talk.

Speak to three people (friends/family) who are from a different Muslim group, and identify seven similarities between your group and their group.

Person 1	Person 2	Person 3