Suggested Print Resources


Internet Resources

Virtual Religion Index — Maintained by Rutgers University, this site offers an academic approach to the study of the world religions with emphasis on archeology and anthropology. This site is also a great starting point for quick overviews, journal articles and links to other sites.

Islamic Studies, Islam, Arabic, and Religion — This Islamic Studies web site covers the areas of Islam, Arabic and religion. Created by Dr. A. Godlas, Associate Professor at the University of Georgia, this site is intended for students and teachers at all levels.

About Islam and Muslims — Provides a wealth of information about Islamic beliefs, history and civilization for Muslims and non-Muslims.

Islamic & Arabic Arts & Architecture — This site explains in detail the historical and cultural significance of hundreds of Islamic and Arabic artifacts. It contains photos and descriptions of architecture, calligraphy and decorative arts as well as time line pages for historical events and figures.

Internet Islamic History Sourcebook — Extensive information about Islamic history provided by documents and direct links.

The study of world religion is the examination of the specific beliefs, customs and traditions of a particular religion as well as its impact on world culture and history. The Religions of the World video series and its accompanying Teacher’s Guides are designed to supplement World Cultures and History curriculum. These teaching aids are meant to invite classroom study and dialogue and challenge students to make connections between the past and the present. Questions and insights are likely to develop and will reveal striking similarities and vast differences among the world’s major religions as well as the unique perspective of its many individual cultures.
Islam is one of the three great monotheistic faiths and the second largest religion in the world. Its emergence can be directly traced to the divine interactions of the Prophet Muhammad with Allah in the 7th century C.E. In the 9th-12th centuries, Islam rose to great world prominence with a profound influence on art, history, politics and science. Today, Islam is commonly practiced in countries spreading from western North Africa into Europe through southeast Asia to the United States. Islam continues to be a vital and growing religion not only in number but also world importance.

Abu Bakr — The first adult to convert to Islam, he was the chosen successor to Muhammad and the first leader of the Sunni Muslims.

Khulafa — Successors to Muhammad, they led Muslims through the 7th-century C.E. and collectively published the sacred texts known as the Qur'an.

Qur'an — The sacred scriptures revealing Allah's will for the conduct of people; also the Arabic word for something to be recited.

Shar'ah — The moral code and rules of etiquette Muslims adhere to in daily life.

Vocabulary

Abdul — The Arabic word for peace, soundness or security. It also means submission or surrender to the will of Allah.

Islam — The Arabian peninsula, located east of modern Egypt and south of Israel, is mainly Saudi Arabia today; the homeland to Muhammad and the birthplace of Islam.

Allah — The prophet of Allah, born approximately 570 C.E.

Mecca — The birthplace of Muhammad and one of the most sacred cities to Islam.

Gabriel — The angel who brought Allah's revelation to Muhammad.

Ka'bah — The most sacred shrine of Islam, originally built by Abraham and located in the center square in Mecca.

Time Line

570 C.E. — Muhammad is born in Mecca, Arabia.

610 C.E. — Islam begins as an organized religion when Muhammad returns to his tribe with the announcement that he has spoken to Allah through the angel, Gabriel, and has received the divine revelation.

622 C.E. — The beginning of the Islamic calendar marked by the Hijrah, or flight of Muhammad's followers to the town of Yathrib to escape persecution from the people of Mecca.

630 C.E. — Muhammad and his followers take control of Mecca and purge the Ka'bah of all idols. Islam is established as the religion of the heart.

632 C.E. — Muhammad dies at age 62.

800–1100 C.E. — The age of cultural brilliance for the Islamic world and the start of Sufism.

1400–1600 C.E. — Persia, Turkey and India emerge as militarily powerful, culturally rich and economically strong Muslim nations.

1700–1940 C.E. — Islamic countries are colonized by Western civilizations. Islamic countries go into decline.

1948 C.E. — Islamic countries from the coast of western North Africa to Indonesia adapt to Western culture and gain prominence using oil and other natural resources, beginning a resurgence in power and influence.

Pre-viewing Discussion

• Engage students in a conversation about what they already know, or think they know, about Islam and Muslim culture. Generate lists of concepts as well as questions students hope will be addressed in the show. It will be helpful to return to these after viewing the video.

• In which countries would students expect to find the majority of Muslims? Where are most Muslims actually located? Have the students locate the major Islamic nations on a world map.

Focus Questions

1. Who is the founder of Islam?
2. What does the word Islam mean?
3. Approximately how much of the world's current population is Muslim?
4. Whom do the Muslims worship?

(Continued)