**What can we learn from Islam?**

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| **Lesson Theme** | **Challenges** |
| 1. **Inventions and Learning**   **If possible watch these clips:**  [**https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zx9xsbk/revision/8**](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zx9xsbk/revision/8)    [**https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zx9xsbk/video**](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zx9xsbk/video)  **A very good summary of the positive influence of the Islamic culture.**  [**https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/history-ks2-baghdad-in-900ad/zjfxpg8**](https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/history-ks2-baghdad-in-900ad/zjfxpg8)  **A brilliant clip about ancient Baghdad**  [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6SIcHMF9Y0**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6SIcHMF9Y0)  **A top ten of Muslim inventions** | The Islamic empire had a huge impact on the development of Western Europe. It is possible to argue that the Islamic world provided the foundations for developments in western civilisation.  There have been 6 key areas that Islamic culture have influenced:  Mathematics  Astronomy  Geography  Science and Technology  Philosophy and Literature  Medicine.  **Science and Medicine**  • Muslim scholars knew of many books written, not only by ancient Greek and Roman writers, but by Persian, Indian and Chinese writers too. A famous caliph, al-Mamun, set up a translating house in Baghdad which translated the books from all these countries into Arabic. Later on, in the 11th century, in Toledo, Spain; these Arabic editions were translated into Latin and circulated all over Christian Europe.  • Al-Khwarazmi discovered the number zero. The numerals (1, 2, 3, 4) used in the Arab world were much easier to use than Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV).  • The Muslims developed knowledge of astronomy. Over a hundred stars in the sky have Arabic names. They improved instruments of navigation, in particular the astrolabe. A primary motivation was to find the direction of the kaaba in Mecca in order to pray facing in its direction.  • The Islamic world housed some of the first and most advanced hospitals from the 8th century, notably in Baghdad and Cairo. Built in 805, the Baghdad hospital housed a medical school and a library. Unlike medieval Christian hospitals, its aim was to treat patients, not just to care for them.  • Muslim doctors were skilled and knowledgeable; they had to pass an examination.  • There were female doctors and nurses.  • Wounded crusaders preferred to go to a Muslim doctor than a Christian one because they were more knowledgeable.  • Muslim doctors translated the texts of Greek and Roman doctors at a time when these ideas had been forgotten in Western Europe. Ibn Sina (also known as Avicenna) wrote a huge medical encyclopaedia known as the “Canon of Medicine”. It collected the knowledge of ancient Greek and the Islamic world, and was used as the standard medical textbook for European doctors until the seventeenth century.  • Islamic doctors also added important new ideas. For example Al-Razi (Rhazes), who ran the Baghdad hospital in the late 800s and early 900s, was the first author known to have written a book about children’s diseases. He also explained the difference between smallpox and measles: this helped doctors diagnose the diseases.  • Ibn Nafis wrote about the circulation of blood round the body in the thirteenth century, 300 years before this was known in the West.  • Muslims made important advances in surgery. They anaesthetised patients, used mercury and alcohol as antiseptics, and had rules about hygiene. Al-Zaharwi (Albucasis) wrote an encyclopedia called “al-Tasirif” including a volume called “On surgery”, which was the first medical book to contain pictures of surgical tools, providing clear information on how they were to be used. His book also gave practical guidance. It was widely translated and used across Europe until modern times.  **Key Challenge:**  Baghdad was at the centre of the Muslim culture.  Look at the location of Baghdad on a map and talk about where traders might have come from. Explain that the city was the capital of an empire (the Abbasid Caliphate) so many people wanted to visit.  Think about how the trade routes would also help ideas about science, medicine etc. to spread.  **Astronomy and navigation**  Make your own astrolabe – instructions can be found here…  <http://cse.ssl.berkeley.edu/AtHomeAstronomy/activity_07.html>  Why would this be so important for travel? Without maps and ideas for directions we wouldn’t know where we were going and Satnavs would not have been invented.  Look at the night sky see if you can spot these star constellations - |
| 1. **Arts and Architecture**   **If possible take a look at:**  <https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/art/art_1.shtml>  <https://kidworldcitizen.org/islamic-art-lesson-for-kids/> A website with ideas for children based on Islamic art.   * Including Islamic tile colouring sheets. * Creating Islamic stamps * Tessellation * Instructions for designing your own tile   <https://patterninislamicart.com/> Islamic art website | **Introduction to Islamic art**  Islamic art is often vibrant and easy to recognise. Contrary to what many might think Islamic art isn't restricted to religious work, but includes all the artistic traditions in Muslim culture. The common features in all Islamic art give it a wide appeal, regardless of the country or the time in which it was created.  The art of the Islamic world reflects its cultural values, and reveals the way Muslims view the Allah and the universe. For the Muslim, reality begins with and centres on Allah and their art reflects this. Allah is at the heart of worship and aspirations for Muslims, and is the focus of their lives and their art.  **Geometry**  A common feature of Islamic art is the covering of surfaces covered with geometric patterns.  This use of geometry is thought to reflect the language of the universe and help the believer to reflect on life and the greatness of creation**.**  **Key Challenge:**  Look at some designs of mosques – look at the amazing art work that appears in many of them.  Create a tile (this could be on card or paper or out of clay if you have it) that could be part of the decoration in a Mosque – think of the colours as well as the geometry found within Islam art.  **Design an Islamic garden**  (See additional sheet below)  The urge to make your surroundings beautiful is a common human characteristic but, in many cases it is also a reflection of religious beliefs. Islamic tradition includes historic gardens built as a result of the Koran’s teachings and as a reaction to the arid conditions in which these people lived. The Islamic garden design of ancient civilizations such as Persia, Turkey, Asia, India, Egypt and Morocco to name but a few, is still in evidence as archeological sites and, occasionally, continued gardens.  Design a model of a Islamic garden – thinking of the symbolism, patterns, plants, colours, shadows etc. |
| 1. **Stories with a message.**   **If possible watch some more stories about Mullah Nasruddin**  [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFWGjmx0ck8**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFWGjmx0ck8)  [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-hYdihOEqI**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-hYdihOEqI) | This is a Muslim story about a very clever man called Mullah Nasruddin:  Mullah Nasruddin had been working in the fields all day long. He was tired and sweaty and his clothes and shoes were covered with mud and stains. Because he had been fasting all day long, for Ramadan, he was also quite hungry. But finally, it was almost sundown and Nasruddin knew that he would soon be able to eat.  The wealthiest man in town had invited everyone to come break their fasts in his home that evening with a huge feast. Nasruddin knew that he would be late if he went home to change his clothes before heading into town. He decided it was better to arrive in dirty clothes than to be late. Oh, what a party it would be! What a feast! As he walked to the wealthy man's home, Nasruddin imagined the delicious foods that he would soon be eating: dates, lentils and chickpeas, olives and bread, hummus, falafel, chicken and beef — and best of all — the desserts — halvah, date rolls, figs and baklava!  When Nasruddin arrived, the wealthy man opened the door and looked Nasruddin up and down scornfully, from his worn, ragged clothes down to his muddy shoes. Without a word of welcome, he gestured for Nasruddin to come in and walked abruptly away.  Nasruddin joined the throngs of people, who were all dressed in their finest clothing. The tables were laden with all sorts of delicious foods: dates, lentils and chickpeas, olives and bread, hummus, falafel, chicken and beef — and best of all — the desserts — halvah, date rolls, figs and baklava!  Despite his efforts to hurry, the seats were all taken and nobody tried to move over or make a space for Nasruddin. In fact, nobody offered him food. He had to reach over and around people to get any food for his plate. Nobody spoke to him. It was as if he wasn't even there. The other guests ignored him so completely that Nasruddin could not enjoy the food on his plate, no matter how finely prepared and how tasty it was. In fact, after only a few bites, Nasruddin was so uncomfortable that he decided to leave.  He hurried home and changed into his finest clothing, including a beautiful coat. Nasruddin returned to the feast and this time the host welcomed him with a huge smile. "Come in, come in," greeted the host. As Nasruddin entered, people waved and called to him from all corners of the room as they invited him to sit near them and offered him food.  Nasruddin sat down quietly. Picking up a plump fig, he carefully placed it into a coat pocket, saying, "Eat, coat, eat.” Next he took a handful of nuts and put them into the pocket, saying, "Eat, coat, eat." Now he began to feed his coat in earnest, grabbing all sorts of foods.  He fed the coat lentils and chickpeas, olives and bread, hummus, falafel, chicken and beef — and best of all — the desserts — halvah, date rolls, figs and baklava!  Nasruddin became silent as they watched this strange behavior. Soon everyone in the room was staring at Nasruddin, wondering what he was doing. The host hurried over. "Nasruddin, whatever are you doing? Why are you feeding your coat in this manner?"  "Well," replied Nasruddin, "when I first came to this feast in my old farming clothes, I was not welcome. No one would speak with me. But when I changed into this coat, suddenly I was greeted warmly. So I realised it was not me that was welcome at this party, but my clothing. And so I am feeding my coat."  **Key Challenge:**  Nasruddin was a very man wasn’t he? He realised that people were judging him because of the way he looked and he wanted to show them how wrong it was to do that.  Have you ever heard the saying ‘Don’t judge a book by its cover?’ well it has the same meaning as this story. We should be very careful how we treat others. We should not judge people on what we see on the outside – we should always try to get to know people on the inside.  Create a cartoon strip of this story – use the last square to explain what we can learn from the story. |

