

Year Group 3	Worldview: Islam
Strand:	Beliefs and Questions (Theology)
Key Question:	What do Muslims believe about God and where did Islam start?
Focus of study:	Tawhid, Muhammad, Night of Power, monotheism in a polytheistic culture, 99 names of Allah
Background information for teachers:	
<p>Monotheism in a polytheistic culture</p> <p>Islam emerged in a polytheistic environment in Mecca, in modern-day Saudi Arabia, in the 7th century making it the youngest of the major world religions. Although there were notable Jewish and Christian communities, most people living on the Arabian Peninsula believed in multiple gods. In contrast, the fundamental tenet of Islam was monotheism—the belief in one God alone.</p> <p>Monotheism, belief in one God, is the most important and foundational concept in Islam. Muslims believe in one God who created the universe and has power over everything within it. He is unique and exalted above everything He creates, and His greatness cannot be compared to His creation. Furthermore, He is the only one deserving of any worship and the ultimate purpose of all creation is to submit to Him.</p> <p>Muslims often refer to God as <i>Allah</i>. This is a universal name for God and does not refer to an exclusively 'Islamic' God. God is the Creator and the Sustainer of the universe who created everything for a reason. Muslims believe that He created humankind with a simple purpose – to worship Him. He sent messengers to guide people in fulfilling this purpose. Some of these messengers include Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. They all taught a consistent message about God by affirming His greatness as the Creator and guiding people to worship Him alone. When the final prophet, Muhammad, was asked about God, the answer came directly from God in the Quran (also spelled 'Koran'): <i>“Say, ‘He is God the One, God the eternal. He begot no one nor was He begotten. No one is comparable to Him.’”</i> [112:1-4] This is a clear statement by God describing Himself to humanity without any room for confusion. God is One and is exalted above everything He creates and He is capable over all things.</p> <p><i>“He is God: there is no god other than Him. It is He who knows what is hidden as well as what is in the open, He is the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy. He is God: there is no god other than Him, the Controller, the Holy One, Source of Peace, Granter of Security, Guardian over all, the Almighty, the Compeller, the Truly Great; God is far above anything they consider to be His partner. He is God: the Creator, the Originator, the Shaper. The best names belong to Him. Everything in the heavens and earth glorifies Him: He is the Almighty, the Wise.”</i> [Quran, 59:22-24]</p> <p>Tawhid, in Arabic, means attributing Oneness to Allah and describing Him as being One and Unique, with no partner or peer in His Essence and Attributes. The Arabs say wahid, ahad and wahid, all meaning one. So, Tawhid means knowing Allah is One, with none like Him.</p> <p>Laylat al-Qadr, or the Night of Power, is the name given to the night that the Angel Jibril first appeared to Muhammad and began revealing the Qur'an. It is celebrated during the last 10 days of Ramadan as it is seen as a time of thanksgiving for the Qur'an. Laylat al-Qadr is the holiest night of the year and is described as better than a thousand months (Qur'an 97:3). Muslims try to stay awake for the whole night praying and studying the Qur'an. Muslims come together to celebrate in the mosque and it is believed that it is a time when Allah will forgive their sins.</p> <p>During the month of Ramadan, the whole of the Qur'an is read from beginning to end.</p> <p>Prophet Muhammad was born in 570 A.D. in Mecca, Arabia. His parents were Abdullah ibn Abd al-Muttalib and Amina bint Wahb. He had 13 wives, two of whom bore him children. Prophet Muhammad is considered to be the last of the 25 prophets Allah selected to spread His teachings.</p> <p>In 610 A.D., Muhammad and his first wife, Khadija, lived in Mecca which was ruled by the Quraysh. Khadija was a wealthy widow who held a considerable amount of influence in the city of Mecca, which was a very successful trading area. The city was in control of major trade routes that stretched from Arabia to Syria and</p>	

Yemen. At the time, it was common for people living across the Arabian Peninsula to be polytheistic and to believe in several different Gods who they thought protected their prosperous trade. Muhammad frequented a cave in Mount Hira to meditate in an attempt to seek clarity after he started hearing voices and having visions.

On one occasion, when Muhammad was in his cave meditating, the Angel Jibril descended upon Muhammad and told him that there was in fact only one God and His name was Allah. Muhammad was a merchant and could not read or write, but the Angel Jibril instructed him to recite the words of Allah. Muhammad was able to recite what the Angel Jibril was relaying to him, and after reciting the first passages of what would later go on to be the Qur'an, Muhammad found the teachings to be profound. He confided in his wife following the encounter and she supported him unwaveringly.

This night is now called Laylat al-Qadr, or the Night of Power, Over time, Muhammad started receiving more messages from Allah through the Angel Jibril. He began sharing some of the teachings he was being told and attracted a small following, but Arabia was still predominantly polytheistic and many people became angry at Muhammad, because they thought pagan gods protected their trade and were afraid of what might happen to their livelihoods should they believe in Muhammad's monotheistic teachings.

HEGIRA

For the most part, although many people did not agree with Muhammad, his wife's societal standing protected him from persecution. When she died in 619 A.D. and his uncle, Banu Hashim clan chief Abu Talib, died that same year (the year of sorrow), he became vulnerable to attacks. He and his followers faced physical assaults and, as a consequence, had no choice but to move to Medina. The move is known as Hegera and happened in 622 A.D.

Muhammad was invited to Medina by city leaders in an attempt to bridge the differences between different clans living in Medina, mainly the Arab and Jewish. Muhammad was brought in to offer advice as a neutral outsider. In exchange for his adjudication duties, Muhammad and his followers were afforded the freedom to practice their religion and be protected.

RETURN TO MECCA

In 628 A.D., Muhammad returned to Mecca. On his way, he was intercepted by the Quraysh, but they agreed to a treaty called the Hudaibiyyah treaty. This meant the Quraysh recognised and respected Muhammad and the religion of Islam, and as such agreed that followers of Islam would not face persecution and would be treated as equals.

THE EVOLUTION OF ISLAM

Up until his death in 632 A.D., Muhammad continued to be visited by the Angel Jibril who shared more of Allah's teachings.

Five core practices make up the basis of the religion of Islam, and they are:

- Shahada – the act of declaring your devotion and belief in Allah and the Prophet Muhammad
- Salat – the act of praying five times a day
- Zakat – the act of giving charity
- Sawm – the act of fasting during the sacred month of Ramadan
- Hajj – the act of undertaking the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once

There are now various different sects within the religion of Islam that follow different trains of thought, but all of them are based on the five pillars set out by Prophet Muhammad, and the teachings he and the other 24 prophets shared. The Qur'an is believed to be the actual words of God and his teachings. Hadith is the collection of narratives about the life and teachings of Muhammad.

Prior learning:

Year 1 and 2 - Pupils will have learned about Christian and Jewish understandings of God and have encountered the concept of God as Creator and Father.

	<p>They will have seen that many people believe that God interacts with and communicates with humans.</p> <p>They will have seen that people demonstrate their beliefs by the things that they do.</p> <p>They will have learned that not everyone believes in a God and that people do not all believe the same things about God, even when they do believe.</p>
Building Blocks:	<p>Muslims believe in one God, and they call him Allah.</p> <p>Allah called Muhammad to teach people to follow him.</p> <p>Muhammad lived in a place where people believed in many gods.</p> <p>Muslims believe that the Bible and the Torah teach about Allah as well.</p>
Outcomes:	<p>Pupils will know that Islam was started in 610AD when Angel Jibril gave Muhammad the words of God which were later recorded in the Qur'an.</p> <p>Pupils will know that Tawhid means belief in one God which is fundamental to Islam belief.</p> <p>Pupils will know that there are 99 names in the Qur'an which describe Allah (God) and help believers to know what Allah (God) is like and how he affects people's lives.</p> <p>Pupils will know that the Night of Power commemorates Muhammad receiving the words of Allah (God) from the Angel Gabriel and is remembered during Ramadan.</p> <p>Pupils will be able explain how the belief in Tawhid, Qur'an and 99 words and Night of Power effect how people live their lives.</p>
Resources:	<p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDxKxnVZtgo Youtube video which shows how Islam was born</p>

Engagement:

Make a mind map with pupils or get them to complete an initial questionnaire to see what they already know.

Ask questions to find out what they would like to know.

Get pupils to list different religions and what they know about them.

Discuss how some religions began e.g., Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism

Match symbols names etc. with religion.

Ask pupils to list words to describe each other, how many can they come up with? Then list words to describe God? Compare lists then look at an English version of 99 words to describe Allah.

Ask what God is like.

Get pupils to write down words that describe God. Then ask how do they know and move onto show how Muslims believe they know what God is like because of 99 words.

Show images of Islamic writing of the 99 words of God and ask pupils what they think they are? Why are there so many? 99 words describe what Allah (God) is like. They are found in the Qur'an so were given to Muhammad by Angel Jibril.

How is Allah represented in Art?

Allah is at the heart of worship and aspirations for Muslims, and is the focus of their lives. So Islamic art focuses on the spiritual representation of objects and beings, and not their physical qualities. The Muslim artist does not attempt to replicate nature as it is, but tries to convey what it represents. Calligraphy is the most common form of Islamic art, along with symmetrical patterns and geometric shapes. Artistic representations of Allah and Muhammad are not considered acceptable by the vast majority of Muslims.

This links with the commandment given to the People of Israel in the 10 Commandments 'not to make for themselves any image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.' (Exodus 20:4-5)

<p>Enquire and Explore:</p> <p>Learn how Islam began – where and when? What was different about Islam at the time? Place the life of Muhammad in its historical and geographical context. Use a timeline sorting activity dates – 570AD Muhammad born, 610AD received Allah’s words from Angel Jibril, 622AD moved to Medina, 630AD returned to Mecca, 632AD Muhammad died. Write newspaper accounts of the day discussing the new religion. Learn about Tawhid and importance for Muslims and 99 words to describe Allah (God). 99 names – could do a treasure hunt with names & get pupils to link arms to see connections between the names. Choose words and write how they think this word helps people to know how God effects their life. Get pupils to make a poster about one God using the 99 names. Create a symbol/poster/advert to explain and represent one God. Compare how Christians and Muslims find out what God is like - explore the symbols, prayers, pictures, scriptures etc. that the two faiths use. Explore the things that are similar and the things that are different. Include other faiths’ images of God if appropriate for class members (e.g., Hindu avatars or the Sikh Mool Mantra). Include the humanist/secular view that there is no God or pantheistic views that god is in everything. Compare this with the way that the Abrahamic faiths believe that nature reveals what God is like.</p>
<p>Evaluate:</p> <p>How do Muslims respect Tawhid in practice? – Shahadah (1st pillar of Islam – statement - ‘There is no God but Allah and Mohammad is his messenger’) This statement is fundamental to becoming a Muslim. Muslims repeat the statement everyday in their prayers. Saying the Shahadah helps Muslims feel part of a community.</p> <p>How do Muslims show Muhammad respect in every-day life? - use of peace be upon him after saying his name, their art contains no representations of Allah or Muhammad and it is the custom to make deliberate mistakes in patterns e.g., carpets to demonstrate that no one is perfect apart from Allah. How do Muslims show respect for the words of God in the Qur’an? They treat the Qur’an respectfully by – stand (Rehal) for it, keeping it on a high shelf never on the floor, reading it and learn it by heart, performing wudu before touching it. What happens during Ramadan when Muslims remember Night of Power? They stay up all night and read the Qur’an.</p>
<p>Reflect and communicate:</p> <p>Why was Muhammad unpopular at the time for his teaching of the Qur’an and Tawhid? Think about the situation in Saudi Arabia at the time – lots of different religions and mainly polytheism (apart from some Jewish and Christian groups) and Muhammad teaching monotheism which challenged the existing beliefs of people.</p> <p>Why is Night of Power considered the most important night of the year? – It’s when Muhammad received the words of Allah via Angel Jibril. Look at the importance of the Qur’an and how Muhammad received the word of Allah via the Angel Jibril in the caves and how it was written down so Muslims believe that the words in the Qur’an are the words of Allah. The Qur’an is also how Muslims know about Allah. 99 words for Allah were given to Muhammad and so are found in the Qur’an.</p> <p>What have they learned about different views of God? How do they see God or do they believe that there is no God? Do they believe it is possible to know what God is like? If so why, if not why not? What difference does it make if there is/isn’t a God? If you were God, what would you do differently? If you were God, how would you let people know about you? How would you choose to communicate with the world?</p> <p>Looking at the 99 words that Muslims use to describe Allah, could any of the words be used by other religions to describe what God means to them? Why and why not? Why do you think Muslims have a list of</p>

99 names for Allah? Where do the 99 words come from? – Angel Jibril and God. Words that show how important Allah is to Muslims.	
Assessment opportunities:	<p>Mind maps to see what the pupils have learnt.</p> <p>Make a poster to teach a younger class about Islam e.g., Tawhid, 99 names for Allah.</p> <p>Get pupils to make a presentation to the class on what they know.</p> <p>Create artwork and explain it. (Remember no images of Allah or Muhammad.)</p> <p>Compare what they have learnt about Islam with what they know about Christianity. What is similar and what is different?</p> <p>Use Venn Diagrams, sorting cards, True/false statements to test knowledge.</p>
Notes	