

# Part I:

Introduction for the Teacher





## INTRODUCTION

This unit is Part 1 (kindergarten) of a 13-part series of units for use in Muslim school Social Studies programs. The underlying assumption is that most such schools will use mainstream curricula as a starting point. While it is certainly desirable and necessary to produce a complete Islamic Social Studies curriculum, it is a task which is best taken on step by step. In the meantime, it seems most productive to design supplements which are integrated into topics typically studied at a given grade level, while introducing content vital to the development of Muslim identity, values and world view. At the same time, it is hoped that the issues covered in these units are of such importance that they might in turn become integrated into a complete Islamic curriculum.

An important requirement in the design of this supplementary series is that each unit features skills and concepts typical for the scope and sequence of the social studies curriculum in its grade level. In this way, the teacher can introduce information about the Islamic heritage using material that is well integrated into the existing social studies program. This feature of the design also makes it possible to substitute this material for unsatisfactory or unnecessary material from standard textbooks, thus avoiding overburdening the students.

## UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit is built around a set of paired stories, one from the Qur'an or authentic traditions, and one related modern story. The overall objectives are: (1) to awaken the children's awareness of their identity and worth as Muslims, (2) to model Islamic behavior patterns, and (3) to cultivate a sense of identification and community with Muslims of long ago and in other parts of the modern world. While the unit is designed for kindergarten, its stories and activities may be useful for values instruction throughout the primary grades in a variety of instructional settings, including full-time, weekend and home schools. This unit, emphasizing values education, may also be useful in Muslim parenting classes.

Each lesson consists of the story pair, to be presented to the children orally or dramatically, and suggested discussion guidelines and activities through which the values and related behaviors are developed and reinforced in the children's understanding.

The 15 lessons are intended to implement teaching objectives in various units taught in a typical Islamic kindergarten social studies curriculum, on a selective or exhaustive basis, throughout the year.



### 1. Allah

The child will understand that:

- Allah created all things (i.e., all things come from Allah).
- Allah loves those who believe in Him.
- Allah rewards and punishes people based on their behavior.
- Allah sees us wherever we are, whatever we do.

### 2. Worship

The child will learn that:

- Muslims worship Allah in several ways (five pillars).
- Children can participate in Islamic worship.
- Worshipping Allah is positive and rewarded.

### 3. Self-identity as a Muslim

The child will learn that:

In actions by oneself, toward oneself:

- Muslims obey Allah's commands.
- Muslims practice many good deeds.
- Muslims try to be patient.
- Muslims love to learn.
- Muslims keep themselves clean.
- Muslims eat healthy food and avoid forbidden foods.
- Muslims protect themselves from danger.

In interpersonal relations (family, friends, environment).

- Muslims obey parents and treat them with respect.
- All Muslims are like brothers and sisters.

- Muslims are kind and generous to others.
- Muslims share what they have with others.
- Muslims treat older people with special respect.
- Muslims help and serve others.
- Muslims tell the truth.
- Muslims speak kindly and politely so others feel good.
- Muslims are brave and pray to Allah for strength.
- Muslims are kind to animals.
- Muslims keep their environment clean and safe.

### 4. Developing a sense of history and tradition:

The child will learn that:

- The Prophets lived long ago.
- Prophets and Sahaba are models for our behavior.
- People long ago lived differently from us now (houses, clothing, transportation, things they used in everyday life).
- People long ago had the same feelings as we do now.
- Muslims long ago practiced Islam just as we do.
- People in different countries speak different languages.
- Now and long ago, some people believe in Allah, and some do not.
- Muslims then and now celebrate 'Id festivals together.



Each story in this *Modern Storybook* is one of a pair. Each pair, together with the teaching suggestions, constitutes a lesson for implementation of a curriculum of Islamic values education. The overall objective of the unit is that the child identify him- or herself as a Muslim in conjunction with identifying the values and behaviors appropriate to Muslim social life.

For use in full-time schools, it is essential to emphasize that the lessons in this unit are not to be completed in one piece. They are intended for use from time to time throughout the kindergarten year. The lessons may be used in groups or individually as a resource for implementing other units in the curriculum, such as "Personal Social Development," "Family" and "My Community."<sup>1</sup> [See Index for typical kindergarten study topics covered in the stories.] It is also not essential that the lessons be completed in the sequence presented here, except where specifically noted in the teaching suggestions. The same applies to use in weekend schools, where the stories may complement Islamic studies or other programs.

The mode of implementation involves three phases. First, each story is intended to be read or told to children in the home setting, or in group settings such as classrooms or weekend schools. Second, discussion of the story by the children is essential, so it is strongly recommended that adequate time and preparation be allowed for comprehension and development of the concepts and ideas contained in each story pair. Third, followup activities may also accompany each pair of stories to complete the learning experience.

The following paragraphs describe the lesson materials, define their goals and objectives and discuss their use in the home or classroom.

### **STORY A: THE HISTORICAL, AUTHENTIC STORY**

The first story in each pair consists of an incident mentioned in the Qur'an or in one of the major collections of Hadith. The feature which they all have in common is that young children are the actors in these stories. Either the story in these important Islamic sources is told about a young child, or the narrator is the child in the story. Thus we are not explaining to the child how children were treated or how they were acted upon, but we are giving children a direct link to the excellent example of young children as Muslims.

The authentic stories have several objectives. First, they are to illustrate important Islamic beliefs and values through the actions of some Prophets and Sahaba when they were children. As an introduction to thinking about history and tradition, modern children are given a taste of the way these early Muslims lived long ago. They are given a sense of the achievements of children, and a model of excellent behavior. They are shown how children contributed to the community of believers in important ways.

These authentic stories have been retold in simple vocabulary and syntax. Since children respond well to direct dialog, it has been employed extensively, but it is important to note that these are not direct translations of the Arabic dialog, even where such is quoted in the Qur'an or Hadith. This diversion has been necessary in order to make the language in these stories accessible to young children. In spite of this compromise, every attempt has been made to adhere to the original ideas, and in each case, the original source has been cited exactly for reference by the adult reader. The English translations upon which the stories are based on Yusuf Ali's rendering of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an and M. Khan's

<sup>1</sup> These unit titles are taken from the *Iqra Curriculum: Kindergarten*, Iqra International Education Foundation, Chicago, 1991.

translation of Sahih Al-Bukhari, unless another source has been specifically cited. The author has also referred to the original Arabic in preparing the stories. The teacher or parent should prepare for the lesson by reading the original passage in the Qur'an or Hadith whenever possible. And the truth resides with Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala.

### **STORY B: THE MODERN STORY**

The second story in each pair presents a story featuring modern children in familiar situations. The story's central idea is drawn from one or more of the beliefs or values contained in the authentic vignette. Some present a direct parallel, while others illustrate only one or more aspects of the first story. Some are more loosely associated with the first story.

The purpose of the modern story is to relate the ideas and values in the first, historical incident to the lives and situations of modern children in various parts of the world. It is intended to help the children appreciate the lives of the Prophets and their companions by creating parallels and connections with familiar situations in their own lives. It is intended to help the children learn to apply Islamic beliefs and values to their own understanding and behavior by framing them in familiar terms. The children may compare and contrast their own lives with those of earlier people by way of developing a sense of history and tradition.



To help teachers with preparation, pre-reading activities, discussion guidelines and supplementary activities have been described in detail for each story. The lesson plans are printed after each story pair.

These lesson plans and teaching ideas are organized for ease of use. The following features will aid in determining when and how to implement the stories in the course of a busy year:

1. Activities, listed separately for each story, are printed after each story pair. They constitute one lesson featuring an authentic and a modern story. Lesson concepts are crossreferenced when appropriate, together with associated children's literature selections.
2. An index of lesson topics covered and unit titles with which the stories may be used is provided at the end of the teacher's notes. This information is repeated at the beginning of each lesson.
3. Lesson plans are divided into four levels of discussion and activities, as described below.

### USING THE TEACHING SUGGESTIONS WITH THE STORIES

The stories are to be read to the children, told to them with interaction by the teacher, or presented dramatically. Following each story, the storyteller should engage the child or children in talking about it. The discussion guidelines and activities which are suggested for use with the *Modern Storybook* envision three levels of discussion/activity for each pair of stories.

- **Pre-reading Activity** is intended to familiarize the children with new vocabulary, to set the scene for the story and arouse their curiosity and anticipation.
- **Level I (Comprehension)** is intended to help clarify and expand the ideas contained in the stories, some of which may be new to the children.
- **Level II (Analysis and Value Building)** is intended to help identify and develop the values portrayed in the stories and help the children learn to apply them in their lives.
- **Level III (Reinforcement, Enrichment and Evaluation Activities)** is intended to help reinforce specific behaviors discussed in the stories and develop the skills associated with these behaviors. Some activities are intended as bridge or springboard activities to other disciplines, or as knowledge enhancement. Others serve as evaluation tools.

It is expected that the teacher will select those discussion points and activities which are feasible for the particular group size and composition, and adapt them based on his or her knowledge of the children. Particular emphasis should be placed at the outset of discussion upon comprehension of possibly unfamiliar words or concepts. Let the children lead in asking, or anticipate their questions.

After discussing for comprehension, the discussion may move to second level-questions, such as "why," "how," "what if," etc. For each story, a number of values have been identi-

fied in the teacher's notes which proceed from the characters' actions and the situation. The goal of the discussion is to analyze in simple terms the character's motivation and actions to determine why he or she acted in a certain way, and what is important about those actions for us as Muslims.

The stories may admit of varied interpretations which will develop from group discussion. This is very desirable, since it stimulates individual contributions and cooperative thought by the group. The teacher must balance the roles of leader, guide and facilitator. Allowing the students to draw their own conclusions supports retention of the ideas and values.

The third stage of discussion and activity involves modeling and reinforcing the values and behaviors identified in the stories. Role-play and constructive and functional activities are suggested to accompany each pair of stories, as well as enrichment activities to broaden and integrate the learning experience. Some of the activities are useful evaluation tools.



This index will help in selecting lessons from this unit to supplement objectives from regular Kindergarten teaching units and lessons across the curriculum, and aid in coordinating Islamic values lessons from this unit with lesson plans in a variety of disciplines throughout the year. The categories refer to concepts covered in the stories and/or teaching suggestions.

## **TOPIC: LESSON NUMBERS (#)**

- Animals: #1, #13
- Assertiveness: #11, #12
- Belief in Allah: #1, #2, #3, #5
- Body Parts: #10
- Celebration of 'Id: #4b, #8b
- Charity: #2, #6, #8b, #13(to animals), #14b, #15
- Cleanliness: #2b, #9, #10b, #11b
- Community Helpers: #6, #13, #11b, #14
- Courage: #2, #4 (on Hajj), #12, #14
- Creation: #1
- Defending Islam: #14
- Environment: #1, #8b (recycling), #11, #13
- Family: #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #8, #12, #14
- Fear and Bravery: #2, #3, #4b, #11, #14
- Food and Nutrition: #7, #9, #10
- Gifts and Giving: #8, #15
- Guests: #6, #10, #15
- Hajj (Pilgrimage): #4
- Halal and Haram: #2, #3, #7, #8 (toys)
- Health: #7, #10
- Helping at Home: #2b, #3, #5, #6
- History (life long ago): #1, #2, #4, #5, #8, #9, #11, #14, #15
- Honesty: #2b, #11
- Kindness: #2, #3, #5B, #6, #8b, #9, #10, #11b, #13, #15
- Learning (Qur'an and other subjects): #1, #4, #5, #6, #12
- Manners: #3, #6, #9, #10, #12, #15

Money and Trade: #8  
Nature: #1, #13  
Neighbors: #11, #15  
Obeying: #2, #3, #6, #7, #9, #10, #11, #13  
Parents: #2, #3, #5b, #10, #12  
Politeness: #2, #3, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10, #12, #15  
Prayers: #2, #3 (for parents), #4, #5, #14 (for others)  
Problem-Solving: #12  
Reciting Qur'an: #4, #5  
Respect for Elders: #2, #3, #5, #6, #10, #11, #12, #13  
Right (use of hand): #9, #10  
Rural/Urban Communities (Village/City): #5  
Safety: #6, #8 (toys), #11  
Science: #1, #2b, #5a, #12b, #13  
Serving Others: #2b, #5, #6, #8b, #9, #10, #11, #15  
Sharing: #2, #6, #8, #9, #10, #15  
Stealing: #2, #11  
Tawhid (Oneness of Allah): #1, #2, #3, #14 (unity of Muslims)  
Telling the Truth: #2, #11  
Toys: #2b, #8  
Worship: #1, #2, #3, #4, #5

# I AM A MUSLIM

## A MODERN STORYBOOK

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وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ ۗ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ  
عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ ۗ مِلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۗ هُوَ سَمَّاكُمُ  
المُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَفِي هَذَا لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ  
وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ  
وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ



*And strive for Allah with the endeavor which is His right.  
He has chosen you and has not laid upon you any hardship in religion.  
The faith of your father Abraham is yours.  
He has named you Muslims of old times and in this (Scripture),  
That the messenger may be a witness against you,  
And that you may be a witness against mankind.  
So establish worship, pay the poor-due, and hold fast to Allah.  
He is your Protecting Friend. A blessed Patron and a blessed Helper!  
(Qur'an 22:78)*