

YEAR 6: SPRING 1 – WHAT IS THE BEST WAY FOR A MUSLIM TO SHOW COMMITMENT TO GOD?

RE: LEARNING TO UNDERSTAND SOME OF THE WAYS MUSLIMS SHOW COMMITMENT TO GOD AND EVALUATE WHETHER THERE IS A BEST WAY.

TO RECALL, UNDERSTAND, DESCRIBE AND EXPLAIN

Recall/Vocabulary:	<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Islam</i>	<i>Muslim</i>	<i>Prophet Muhammad.</i>	<i>Allah</i>	<i>Day of Judgement</i>	<i>Predestination</i>	<i>Peace</i>
	<i>Qur'an</i>	<i>Mosque/Masjid</i>	<i>Minaret</i>	<i>Wudu</i>	<i>Mecca</i>	<i>5 Pillars of Islam</i>	<i>Shahadah</i>	<i>Salah</i>
	<i>Zakat/Zakah</i>	<i>Saum</i>	<i>Hajj</i>	<i>Ramadan</i>	<i>Edi-ul-Fitr</i>	<i>Eid-ul-Adha</i>	<i>Dhu Al-Hijja</i>	<i>Duty</i>

Understand/Describe/ Explain:

Commitment

Commitment = the state or quality of being dedicated to a cause, activity, etc.

You can show commitment by doing something on a regular basis and by demonstrating loyalty, hard work and belief. It can be difficult to stick to a commitment as life can often get in the way. You need many characteristics to stay committed to something such as perseverance, patience, determination, focus, courage etc.



THINKING POINT:

What does it mean to make a commitment? Is it always easy to stick to a commitment? How do you show commitment in your own lives?

Muslim Beliefs

- **Islam** is the second most popular religion in the world with over a thousand million followers. It is more often thought of as a complete way of life rather than a religion. Islam is mainly followed in the Middle East, Asia, and the north of Africa.
- Islam began in Arabia and was revealed to humanity by the **Prophet Muhammad**.
- Those who follow Islam are called **Muslims**.
- Muslims believe that there is only one God, called **Allah**.
- Muslims have 6 main beliefs:
 - Belief in Allah as the one and only God.
 - Belief in angels
 - Belief in the holy books
 - Belief in the prophets (special messengers)
 - Belief in the **Day of Judgement** (day when the life of every human being will be assessed to decide if they go to heaven or hell)
 - Belief in **Predestination** (Allah has already decided what will happen)
- The Arabic word 'Islam' means **submission** and **obedience**, and derives from a word meaning '**peace**'.



Muslim Practices

- The Muslim scripture is the Holy **Qur'an**. Muslims believe it is 'the word of God'. Muslim beliefs and practices are rooted in the Qur'an. Muslims treat the Qur'an with great respect because they believe that the Qur'an is from Allah, and every word and every letter is sacred. It is usually placed on a special wooden stand to be read.
- The Muslim building for communal worship is called a **mosque**. Muslims often refer to the mosque by its Arabic name, **masjid**.
- Very often Mosques have a domed roof and a tall tower called a **minaret**. Muslims are called to prayer from the minaret.
- There are no pictures or statues in a mosque. They are decorated with patterns and words from the Qur'an. There is also very little furniture inside because Muslims use prayer mats for prayer.
- When people go into the mosque they take off their shoes. This is to keep it clean for prayer. There is often a fountain or pool, or at least an area with water where people can wash (**wudu**). Muslim wash their hands, mouth, throat, nose, ears, arms up to the elbow and feet. This is a sacred wash that symbolises spiritual cleansing and purity in readiness for coming before God.
- There is always a quibla wall in a Mosque which is the one facing Makkah (**Mecca**), it has an empty arch to signify the direction. It is important that Muslims always know the direction of Mecca.
- Women do not pray in the same place as men, there is usually a screened off area for them.
- All Muslims go to the mosque on Friday. It is a special day for prayer.
- There are 5 duties that every Muslim is obliged to perform. These are called the **5 Pillars of Islam**:
 - **Shahadah**: declaration of faith (Muslims recite this to enter the faith)
 - **Salah**: prayer (Muslims are required to pray 5 times a day, washing themselves before and facing Mecca while praying)
 - **Zakat/Zakah**: giving a fixed proportion to charity (Muslims are required to give a percentage of their earnings to those less fortunate)
 - **Saum**: fasting during **Ramadan** (Muslims fast for one lunar month each year. During this time they reflect on their behaviour)
 - **Hajj**: pilgrimage to Mecca (If it is financially possible, Muslims are required to travel to Mecca, Saudi Arabia once in their lifetime)
- There are a few main Muslim festivals which are based on the Lunar calendar:
 - **Ramadan**
Ninth month of the Islamic calendar. Muslims do not eat during the hours of daylight. During Ramadan, Muslims get up early before dawn and have a light meal.
 - **Eid-ul-Fitr**
Eid-ul-Fitr marks the breaking of Ramadan. Lasting three days, it is a time for family and friends to get together, celebrating with good food and presents for children.



- **Eid-ul-Adha**

This festival of sacrifice occurs 70 days after Eid-ul-Fitr. It is to remember the time when Abraham was going to sacrifice his own son to prove his obedience to God.

- **Dhu Al-Hijja**

The month of pilgrimage during which all Muslims, at least once in their life, should try to make the pilgrimage to Mecca.



THINKING POINT:

In which ways or through which practices do Muslims show commitment to God? What is the best way for a Muslim to show commitment to God?

The Third Pillar of Islam: Zakat/Zakah

Zakah is the third of the Five Pillars of Islam. It is giving money to the poor. Muslims believe that it is their **duty** to ensure Allah's wealth has been distributed equally as everyone is the same - Allah created everyone equally. If a Muslim decides not to follow the pillar of Zakah, it may affect how they are judged in the **afterlife**. This could make it more likely that they will be sent to Hell (**Jahannam**) rather than Paradise (**Jannah**).

Zakah means 'that which purifies'. By giving money to charity, Muslims can cleanse their wealth. It is important that Muslims do not get attached to unnecessary things such as money and possessions. Islam teaches that focusing on wealth and material possessions does not make a good Muslim.

Zakah refers to a Muslim giving **2.5% of their earnings to charity**, after they have paid for what is necessary to support themselves and their family. This means that people who are too poor are not required to suffer hardship in order to give Zakah. Muslims see wealth as ultimately belonging to Allah, and giving Zakah helps to make people more equal. Helping one another is also seen as helping Allah. Zakah donations help Muslims to purify their souls by not being greedy. It is said that the giver of the money will receive a 'hundred-fold' back in the afterlife. This means that the giver of the money will receive back a hundred times what they gave as Zakah during their life.



THINKING POINT:

Does giving money to others mean a Muslim is showing their commitment to God? Should this be a duty or should Muslims have a choice whether or not to give to charity? Would someone still be a good Muslim if they didn't give to charity?

The Fourth Pillar of Islam: Saum/Sawn

Sawn is the fourth of the Five Pillars of Islam. It happens during the ninth month of the lunar calendar, during **Ramadan**. Ramadan is special because it is believed to be the month in which the Prophet Muhammad began to receive revelations of the Qur'an.

During Ramadan, Muslims give up food, liquid, smoking and sexual activity during daylight hours. Ramadan lasts for 29 or 30 days each year. Because Islam uses a lunar calendar, the month of Ramadan comes around 11 days earlier each year, so there is no Western season associated with Ramadan. Many Muslims do this because the Qur'an says:

'O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that you may [learn] self-restraint.' Qur'an 2:183

Muslims are also expected to do their best to avoid evil thoughts and deeds. The break from the routine of preparing and eating meals leaves time for extra prayer, contemplation of God and reading the Qur'an.

The following Muslims are not expected to fast:

- Children who have not reached puberty
- Women who are menstruating
- Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding
- People who are physically unwell
- The elderly



During **Ramadan**, if a Muslim misses a day of fasting then they are expected to make this up at the end of Ramadan or donate some extra money to charity. At the end of Ramadan, Muslims often spend time with family and friends.



THINKING POINT:

Do you think fasting is necessary for Muslims to show commitment to God? If a Muslim was really hungry and ate something, would this mean he/she is not a good Muslim?

Commitment in our own lives

Following a religion is a really clear way of showing your commitment to a God/Gods and to a way of life. But even if someone does not have a religion, they can show commitment in their everyday lives.

Some examples could be:

- Children have to show commitment to their school work to help their future
- Adults have to show commitment to their work in order to provide for themselves and their families
- People show commitment to their family and friends by checking they are ok, seeing them regularly
- People may belong to a club/group which they show commitment to by showing up, participating in events, being a team player
- People can show commitment to a cause they are passionate about e.g. re-cycling, animal rights etc.



THINKING POINT:

How can you ensure you show commitment to something? Why are you so commitment to this thing/person? Are there some things you are committed to than other things? Is it sometimes difficult to show commitment all the time?

EXIT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS:

EXS:

- What does it mean to make a commitment?
- Is it always easy to stick to a commitment?
- How might showing commitment to God affect a Muslims' daily life?

GDS:

- Do you think it's necessary for Muslims to strictly follow the 5 pillars of Islam?
- Should these commitments be a duty or a choice?