

## **Title of the Lesson: Lessons from the Qur'an**

*Timothy Curtis, Avon High School, Social Studies/History, Grades 9-12 . This lesson is designed for a 45 minute period.*

**Introduction:** This is an inquiry lesson designed to teach students about the fact that different religious groups emerge because of different interpretations of scripture.

### **Geographic Connections:**

D2.Geo.5.6-8. Analyze the combinations of cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar to and different from other places.

D2.Geo.4.9-12. Analyze relationships and interactions within and between human and physical systems to explain reciprocal influences that occur among them.

**Vocabulary:** Qur'an, Sura, jihad, fundamentalism, literal interpretation, figurative interpretation

### **Content Standards:**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9. Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources

### **Essential Question:**

Why do different Muslim groups have different beliefs and practices?

### **Placement of Lesson within Broader Curriculum/Context:**

In a unit on the Origins of Islam, this lesson would follow an examination of the life of Muhammad and the Revelations that were the basis of the Qur'an. The pre-assignment would be the reading and questions for *In the Name of Allah* which illustrates some of the stories that Muslims, Jews, and Christians have in common.

### **Learner Background:**

Students in grades 9-12 social studies classes could all participate in this lesson. It is specifically designed for World History and Modern Middle East courses, but could be used in all courses that require the students to understand the importance of the Qur'an in Islam.

**Objectives for Lesson:**

Students will analyze 8 passages from the Qur'an dealing with four issues in Muslim life, and then draw conclusions about how the passages could affect the Muslim community.

**Integration of 21st century skills:**

Students will work collaboratively to analyze the text of the Qur'an and develop conclusions about how the text impacts Muslim culture. They will be utilizing higher level thinking skills while reading and interpreting the text and also forming conclusions about the text.

**Assessment:**

During this collaborative learning activity, students will be working with their classmates to complete a study guide in which they have to interpret the meaning of different passages of the Qur'an. While debriefing the study guide, I will randomly ask two students from each of the four groups share their group's interpretation of the passages. At the end of the lesson, the students will respond to the essential question on their study guide which will be handed in and assessed.

**Materials/Resources:**

PowerPoint Slide: Muslim Dress

Reading: *In the Name of Allah*

Study Guide: *Passages from the Qur'an*

**Lesson Development/Instructional Strategies**

1. Divide the class into four even groups.
2. Show students the power point slide that illustrates different styles of female Muslim dress, and introduce the Essential Question "Why do different Muslim groups have different beliefs and practices?"
3. Explain that the first place to look for an answer to the question would be the Qur'an. Ask the students to take out their homework reading and questions to begin the lesson.
4. Debrief the reading by going over the questions:
  - a. Islam is often connected to Western religions because it has so much in common with Judaism and Christianity.
  - b. Answers should include Adam and Eve, Noah, Moses, Mary, Jesus, etc.
  - c. Student answers should focus on ethnocentrism and political conflicts that often become entwined with religion.
5. Finish the activity by focusing on the similarities that exist between the Torah, Bible, and Qur'an

6. Introduce the next activity by asking the questions:
  - a. “Are there different groups in the Jewish community?” Conservative, Orthodox, Reformed, Hassidic
  - b. “Are there different groups in the Christian community?” Protestants, Catholics, Orthodox
  - c. “Do you think the same is true for Islam” Yes, there are Shia, Sunni, Sufi, Wahabi, Alewites, Taliban
  - d. Now say: “Part of the reason there are different groups in Islam is because of the nature of the Qur’an and that is what will explore next.”
7. Handout the Study Guide *Passages of the Qur’an*
8. Tell the students they will have 16 minutes to work together to read and write an explanation of the eight passages, but don’t complete the final question until prompted to do so.
9. Students will work collaboratively while the teacher circulates to answer questions about the passages.
10. When the students are done begin debriefing the paired passages by asking two students in each group to explain one of the paired passages on the study guide. Because the passages are contradictory in nature, ask a third student in each group to explain what that would mean for Muslims—The answer should be that they the Qur’an offers them a choice to follow one way or another. Continue with each group until each pair of passages has been examined.
11. Now ask the students to respond to the final (essential) Question in writing on their study guide:
12. Close the lesson by having students share their responses and focusing on the fact that virtually all religions have different sects that emerge because of different interpretations of scripture, Jews, Christians and Muslims included. Collect study guides and assess student work.

**How will you differentiate instruction in this lesson for students you may anticipate struggling with the content/learning objectives?**

The collaborative nature of this activity will help some of the students who may have difficulty. Since some students will struggle with the vocabulary in the Qur’an, I will target those students while the groups are working and help them decode the passages using context clues.

**How will you provide opportunities for enrichment/higher level of challenge for students?**

Some students may want to explore the Qur’an more so I will offer to let them use my Qur’an and also show them how to get a free copy online.