

**YOUTH FOR UNDERSTANDING USA**

**MUSLIM STUDENT CONSIDERATIONS**

**PARTICIPANT PACKET**

Adapted from Connecting Cultures  
[www.Connecting-Cultures.net](http://www.Connecting-Cultures.net)

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## Introduction to Islam: Ten Basic Points

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1. Islam is a Monotheistic religion, like Christianity and Judaism.
  2. Among all Muslims, only 20% are Arab.
  3. Mohammed is not the focus of the religion, or even its “founder.”
  4. The focus of the religion is God, not a god named Allah. Allah is simply the Arabic word for God. Literally, “The God”--a shortened form of “The God of Abraham.”
  5. For Muslims, God is not a being; God has no gender and no personality.
  6. Islam’s Holy Book is called the Qur’an, or Koran. It means “The Recitations.” It is a collection of the revelations that Mohammed received from God during the period of his mission, which lasted from age 40 to 63. Some of the revelations address universal principles, some address particular situations facing the first Muslim community, some are retellings of familiar Biblical stories, sometimes with a slightly different twist. Some stories are metaphors, others are literal, but there is nothing to say which are which; it is up to each believer to decide. The book is arranged with the longest revelations and then the shortest.
  7. The second written source of guidance is called Hadith (Ha-deeth), the “report” of the deeds and sayings of Muhammad. The Hadiths constitute an important guide to Muslims, but they do not have the status of the Qur’an.
  8. The other two sources of guidance are 1) the consensus of the community, and 2) independent reason. There is no central ecclesiastical authority in Islam. Islam asks all believers to use their own minds, to learn, to “Read.” The first Muslim community stressed literacy.
  9. Islam is a religion, not a political ideology.
  10. Islam is a religion of practice, of outwardly visible acts, such as dress, prayer, and social conduct.
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## Islamic Practices

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1. Public declaration of belief that there is only one God, the God of Abraham, and that Mohammed is one of God’s messengers.
2. Ritual Prayer, 5 times each day.
3. Month of Fasting.
4. Annual Payment of 2.5% of total wealth for the benefit of the poor.
5. Pilgrimage to Mecca once in your life, if physically and financially able.

<b><u>The Prayer</u></b>	<b><u>Want to Learn More?</u></b>
1. Raising of hands to proclaim “God is greater.”	1. About Islam: <a href="http://www.islam.about.com">www.islam.about.com</a>
2. Stand to say the Muslim’s “Lord’s Prayer” called the Fatihah, the first chapter in Qur’an.	2. Islamic History: <a href="http://www.cie.org">www.cie.org</a> 3. Muhammad: <a href="http://www.pbs.org/muhammad">www.pbs.org/muhammad</a>
3. Bow to repeat the phrase “Glory be to God the Mighty” three times.	4. Religious Diversity: <a href="http://www.pluralism.org">www.pluralism.org</a> 5. About all Religions: <a href="http://www.beliefnet.com">www.beliefnet.com</a> 6. About Arabs: <a href="http://www.aaiusa.org">www.aaiusa.org</a> or <a href="http://www.amideast.org">www.amideast.org</a> 8. For More Information: <a href="http://www.connecting-cultures.net">www.connecting-cultures.net</a>
4. Prostrate to say “Glory to My Lord the Most High.”	
5. Sit on heels to testify faith.	
<i>Times of prayer:</i> at first light, just past midday, when shadow is equal to length, at twilight, after darkness.	

## **Building Relations Between Muslim Students and American Host Families**

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Your understanding of Islam will help you support Muslim students, but remember that the level of religious understanding and practice varies from family to family and from region to region. And issues with our Muslim students will also be affected by ... adolescence.

**Food:** Student will not have a “help-yourself” attitude about the refrigerator; especially in the beginning and at Ramadan. On the contrary, the student will need the host family to provide food. Muslims generally do not drink any alcohol, they do not eat any pork, including gelatin, jello, marshmallows, etc. Anything kosher or halel (“lawful”) food is ok for Muslims. Some students may require halel meat while others may say a prayer over chicken, beef or lamb (the same prayer that’s said when halel meat is slaughtered). Students may prefer to be vegetarian, which helps them avoid the issue entirely. Keeping a plate and utensils separate, and thus not in contact with any port products will help a student feel comfortable about food issues.

**Prayer** There is a direct link between the worshiper and God, with no intermediary needed. Muslims are called to prayer by the words “God is greater.”

**Frequency:** Muslims pray for 5-15 minutes, 5 times a day, at sunset (the beginning of a new day), nighttime, dawn, noon and mid-afternoon, thus determining the rhythm of the entire day.

**Purpose:** Each prayer is meant to remind Muslims of the right path and to reduce arrogance.

**Location:** Muslims can pray most anywhere, anytime. Typically they need a semi-private, not totally private, space that is clean, meaning they have a prayer rug to kneel on, they have taken off shoes and there are never any pets in the area.

**Preparation:** Before praying, Muslims complete a ritual washing of their bodies, which often entails liberal splashing of water. Host families may want to provide a towel to stand on while washing and to use to dry the sink and toilet seat after washing. Also helpful is a squirt bottle for the student to use when cleaning the genital area.

The Qur’an is not just a book with holy words; it is the Word of God and is thus sacred. The Qur’an must be treated respectfully, which means that it should not be put on the floor, nothing should be put on top of it and it should be handled with care.

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## MUSLIM STUDENT CONSIDERATIONS

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**Pets:** In most Muslim countries, animals are not pets, specifically dogs. For many historical and public health reasons, dogs are considered dirty and thus it is very important that dogs are not allowed in the prayer area. Additionally, dogs' saliva is considered unclean. If a Muslim is licked by a dog he or she must wash themselves and their clothes entirely. With all of this said, it is important not to expect students to want to touch dogs.

**Dress:** Students will have different ideas of what is appropriate dress and levels of modesty. It is critical not to make assumptions based on dress. Many students who wear head dresses will be very eager to participate in physical activities and sports teams. However, in school, the gym uniform and showering will need special consideration because exposure of bare skin may be considered inappropriate. Everyone in the host family should try to remember to always knock before entering bedrooms, regardless of gender and age. Keep in mind that a girl with a covered head can mean many different things - modesty, piety, liberating, tradition, country law, etc. Ask your student what the significance of her head dress is.

**Interactions:** Muslim students and thus the host families may find a different idea of public space and distance. In the US we stay at arm's length apart when in a conversation. In Arab countries this distance is shorter yet the physical distance is maintained.

**Greetings:** Students may vary in their acceptance of handshakes or hugs. In the Middle East men and women kiss on the cheeks (same gender only). Our students will be trying to find their comfort zone regarding modesty when it comes to hugging, and all other common physical contact in America.

**Independence:** Students may be used to their mothers doing everything for them, including cooking, cleaning up, laundry, etc. Don't be surprised if this is their expectation upon arrival – it is simply what they know to be normal life. Don't assume they are being rude or demanding. It just needs a simple explanation.

**The opposite sex and authority:** In most Muslim countries dating does not exist and all physical contact with the opposite sex is avoided. Female Muslim exchange students may not talk as much with the host father. This is not a sign of disrespect, but simply a cultural norm between men and women. It will be easiest if the host mother provides the warm welcome and engages in any physical contact with the female Muslim students.

We must be sure that Muslim boys understand that normal American friendliness is NOT a come-on.

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**Eye contact:** It is disrespectful to use direct, consistent eye contact with older people and people of authority. This should not be interpreted as rude or dismissive. Additionally, students may remain more formal and “respectful” than we’re accustomed to – including names for host parents such as Mr. Bill.

**Shyness:** Students may need encouragement to speak their minds and share their opinions. BUT students may also over-react in unfamiliar situations, seeming too aggressive to Americans. This could include their means of arguing, questioning, close physical presence and use of hands.

**Language gap:** It will be important not to expect more Westernized or Americanized attitudes because a student speaks good English. Repetition connotes sincerity, so be sure to ask more than once if possible. And of course, always consider your tone, emotion, and body language.

Ramadan will likely be a time of culture shock and homesickness, much like a Christian being in a country that doesn’t celebrate Christmas. During Ramadan Muslims will fast between sun rise and sun set. While there is no expectation that a host family fast, a family member might consider joining the Muslim student in the fast for one day to see what the experience is like. Some things that a host family can do to make this month easier for their exchange student are to delay the family dinner until the student can break fast. This means waiting until sundown, at which point the family can celebrate the break fast with the student. Likewise, providing a substantial meal for student before the dawn prayer is a very kind gesture. Perhaps the host family could prepare a meal that is left in the refrigerator for the student, so that nobody else needs to get up at dawn to cook. And a host parent may need to talk to the school if the student needs special permissions to avoid the lunch room during Ramadan. Perhaps the student can go to the library during lunch. Also sports practices and games should be given special considerations, if the student hasn’t eaten all day. At the end of Ramadan there is a special meal for Eid, which is similar to Christmas with gifts and special sweets. It is a day that students might like to go to a mosque.

**Names:** Show respect for the students’ names by learning how to pronounce them properly. Also, do not assume nicknames (don’t call Ali “Al”), but rather show respect for the whole name.

**Curiosity:** You will likely have many questions for your student about his/her home culture, religion, customs, dress, etc. Having a few ways of asking respectful questions will make communication between the host family and student smoother. Here are a few ideas:

“Help me understand...”

What does your faith say about...”

“What is your experience...”

“What do you think/feel about...”

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Some less friendly and more aggressive questioning techniques are:

“Why do you ...”

“Why do you people...”

## Answers to True False Quiz on Islam And Muslims

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### **1. Saudi Arabia is the largest Muslim country in the world.**

Saudi Arabia has approximately 18 million citizens, having one of the smaller Muslim populations in the world. Indonesia is the largest Muslim country with an estimated 203 million Muslims out of a total population of 231 million, followed by Pakistan with 150 million Muslims. In fact, only about 1 in every 5 Muslims in the world is Arab. Total number of Muslims in the world is estimated at over 1.3 billion, and includes all ethnic, cultural, racial & national groups.

### **2. Most American Muslims are of Arab descent.**

Exact figures for the number or origin of Muslims living in America are difficult to determine as the U.S. does not conduct a religious census. However, most estimates put the Muslim population somewhere between 4 to 7 million. Further estimates, suggest that the two largest segments of the American Muslim community are African Americans and people of S. Central Asian (Pakistan and Indian) descent, together making up approximately 60% of the total American Muslim population. Approximately 25% of American Muslims are of Arab descent. California and New York are home to the largest Muslim communities in the U.S.

### **3. Other names for referring to Muslims are Islams, Islamics, and Muhammadins.**

*Islam* is the name of the religion. The word, *Islam*, derives from the root word “Salaam,” which means “peace” in Arabic. In the religious context, Islam means “submission” or “peace” with the will of God in all things. *Muslim* is the name for a person who practices Islam. Literally, the word *Muslim* means one who submits to and is at peace with the will of God. The correct English spelling and pronunciation is Muslim (with ‘s’ sound) and not Moslem (with ‘z’ sound). *Islamic* is an adjective used to describe things related to the faith, as in Islamic countries, Islamic theology, or Islamic art.

### **4. Muhammad is the focus of Muslim worship and wrote the Qur’an, holy text.**

One of the key beliefs in Islam is that Muhammad was a prophet or messenger of God, and in no way divine or an object of worship. He is believed to be a man and lived as a man. He married, was a father, worked for a living, and died of natural causes at age 63. However, because Muslims consider his life to be the best example of a total submission to the will of God, his words and examples are often cited as guides to proper Islamic behavior.

The holy book for Muslims is called The Qur’an, meaning “recitations,” and is believed by Muslims to be the collection of revelations received by Muhammad from God, therefore believed to be God’s literal words. Particularly when the Qur’an is in Arabic, the language of the Revelations, it is considered itself to be holy and, therefore, the book is treated and handled with respect.

### **5. Jews and Christians worship the God of Abraham, Muslims worship a different God, “Allah.”**

“Allah” simply means in Arabic “the God,” a shortened form for “the God of Abraham.” Muslims are required to pray in Arabic, so they call God “Allah”, however, Allah is not considered a separate God from Christians and Jews or a “Muslim God.” Arab Christians during their services worship and sing hymns in Arabic saying “Allah.” In Spanish the word for God is “Dios,” in French “Dieu,” and in German “Gott.” In Arabic it is “Allah.”

### **6. Islam rejects Moses, Jesus, and Mary as religious figures; Muhammad is the only religious figure that counts.**

Islam teaches that it is a continuation of the same religious tradition practiced by Jews and Christians. For example, Muslims consider Muhammad to be the last in a long line of messengers that included Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, John the Baptist, and Jesus. Islam also regards the Torah and Gospels as

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holy books. Islamic teachings assert, like Christian teachings, that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary and that there will be a Second Coming. However, Muslims do not believe that Jesus was divine; he is regarded as a perfect man whose ethical behavior was itself the message of God.

Traditional mainstream Islamic theology, therefore, has always urged tolerance and respect for Jews and Christians, and historically it has been considered an Islamic duty to protect Jewish and Christian minorities living within a Muslim majority country.

### **7. Muslims do not believe in angels, the Second Coming of Christ or the Day of Judgment.**

Muslims do believe in angels, the Second Coming of Jesus and the Day of Judgment. Muslims believe they will be judged by their deeds and God will determine if one's good deeds outweigh the bad deeds they did on Earth to determine entrance into Heaven.

### **8. Islam teaches that women should not be educated nor own any property.**

The Qur'an states that men and women are equal before God and in society, though they are given different roles, primarily in marriage. Women are permitted to work and education is encouraged for all. Islam also encourages men and women to be act modestly. Separate entrances, covering one's hair or not touching an unrelated member of the opposite gender is tied to this value, and is meant as much for men as women. Covering is not universally observed by Muslim women and varies by region, family, class and individual. Some Muslim states *restrict the wearing of the head scarf* (e.g. Turkey, Tunisia), while others require it (e.g. Saudi Arabia, Iran.). However, all Muslim women are required to cover their hair while in prayer or when entering a mosque.

### **9. Islam was spread by the sword with Arab armies converting people in Central Asia, Southeast Asia, West Africa, and Asia Minor.**

After the death of Muhammad, Muslim armies swept out of Arabia and conquered the part of the Byzantine Empire and all the Persian Empire, both of which had been weakened by years of warfare. These were wars of economic, not religious, expansion, and initially some Muslim leaders resisted the idea of non-Arabs becoming Muslims. The Arabs were later invaded by the Mongols, who as conquerors became Muslim and spread Islam through Central Asia. Contact with Islam through economic trade brought the populations of Indonesia and Malaysia to Islam, and in West Africa, Islam spread primarily through missionary activity and through economic trade.

### **10. There are no democracies in the Muslim world.**

While some Muslims argue that democracy is incompatible with Islam (saying that democracy elevates the will of the people over the will of God), most Muslims around the world appear to be seeking some form of democracy in their countries. Others have achieved it. Indeed, some of the largest democracies in the world, such as Malaysia and Bangladesh, are in Muslim majority countries. Turkey and Indonesia are also democratic. In addition, nearly 200 million Muslims live in democratic India. Those Muslims who support democracy point to the Qur'anic concept of "shura," the idea that leaders must consult representatives of the people in decision making as the divine sanction for democracy.

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## Answers to 13 Tough Questions

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In general, the behavior of individual Muslims does not always reflect the religion. Culture, ignorance, history, economics, politics and a variety of individual reasons can lead Muslims to do things against the spirit or law of Islam, just as once many Christians justified slavery and Jim Crow on religious grounds. In fact, the KKK itself has always regarded itself as a “Christian” organization, though few Christians would agree.

Of course, many of the issues Muslims are asked about are complicated and difficult to answer briefly. We are indeed at an important juncture in world history though, and these are among some of the most important questions of the day. And thus these questions and answers are meant to increase cultural understanding.

### **1. Does the Koran say that in the “end times” Muslims will need to kill Jews and Christians?**

No. Jews and Christians are considered people of the book in Islam and according to the Qur’an have nothing to fear on Judgment Day: “Surely they that believe, and those who are Jews, Christians, and Sabians, who believe in God and the Last Day, and who work righteousness, a reward awaits them with their Lord, and they have nothing to fear and nothing to sorrow.” 2:58 and 5:69 (It is not known for sure who the “Sabians” are.)

Of course, it is almost too much to ask that one person hold another’s religion as equal to his own, so many Muslims would say that Christians and Jews are merely tolerated in heaven, while others concede that they can achieve salvation based on how good a Christian or Jew they were.

It is part of accepted Islamic history that Muhammad’s mission was first recognized by a Christian monk, that the Christian King of (now) Ethiopia gave the early Muslims protection when they were being killed by their pagan enemies, and that one of Muhammad’s wives was a Coptic Christian and never converted to Islam.

It is a religious duty for Muslims to protect Christian and Jewish minorities and are forbidden to forcibly convert them to Islam.

### **2. Do Muslims consider the following “infidels”: Americans? Jews? Christians? And who are infidels?**

Originally, the term “infidel” which in Arabic means “the ungrateful ones” was applied to the pagans, who opposed Muhammad’s message of monotheism and belief in the God of Abraham. More than passively disbelieving in God, the word implies one who is actively striving to oppose God. More specifically, it referred to the Meccans, who fought Muhammad on several occasions, and who are the people referred to in some of the verses that tells Muhammad to fight the “infidels.”

The word has become politicized beginning in the early 1900’s and was applied by the Arabs of (now) Saudi Arabia against the Turks, who occupied them. The Turks were fellow Muslims who it was unlawful under Islamic Law to rebel against. The people we know refer to as Wahabi’s argued that the Turks had actually abandoned Islam and were like the “infidels” of Mecca. In other words, they were really pagans and could be overthrown, which is exactly what happened, in part through help by the British in WWI (popularized in the movie Lawrence of Arabia).

Because the word carries a political cache and refers back to a period of history when a group of people sought to destroy the early Muslim community, it is used as a rallying cry some Muslim groups who see the West as trying to destroy the Muslim community today.

### **3. Are Jew and Christians classified as “non Believers”?**

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No. As addressed in Question 1. Non-believers are defined as those who actively deny God and have a lack of gratitude for life and revelation.

**4. During a “holy jihad”, if Muslims kill infidels...do they get 75 virgin brides and an honored place with Allah?**

Holy Jihad’s are defensive wars (cannot be fought offensively) and have rarely been declared in Islam’s long history in part because they require adherence to very stringent rules of engagement.

Muslims do not receive special rewards for anyone they might have killed in battle, though there is believed to be special treatment for those who are killed. They are called Martyrs, and refer to those who die in defense of faith as well as those who are persecuted for it. Like Christian martyrs, those who die for the faith are thought to be assured Heaven. Martyrs are not the only ones guaranteed heaven. For example, women who die in childbirth are also considered to be guaranteed heaven.

The idea of 72 virgins has been mostly thought of in Islam as a metaphor (72 being a number in ancient Arabia that signified eternity). It joins other descriptions of heaven as a place where you can drink alcohol and not get drunk, and where the cool water flows and trees are heavy with date palms, that were meant to describe a place in terms that a Nomadic Arab would understand as a place of eternal rest and pleasure. Some (primarily in parts of the Arab world) consider these descriptions as literal, but the majority of the world’s Muslims likely do not.

**5. Why do Muslims believe in having four wives?**

In practice, few Muslims live in plural marriages. The Qur’an first mentions multiple marriage at a time when a number of Muslim men had been killed in fighting against the Meccans. There were a large number of widows and orphans left behind with no social structure outside of marriage to provide for them. Following this came the Qur’anic verse: “If you fear for the widows and the orphans, then take them as wives, up to four, but only if you can treat them all equally.”

Later, the Qur’an says that “you cannot treat them all equally,” which generally is taken to mean that polygamy is only permitted in exceptional circumstances.

**6. Sex in heaven?**

Like most Christians, most Muslims believe in a bodily resurrection. I am not aware of any consensus opinion about the nature of carnal pleasures. However, also like Christians, Muslims believe that heaven is a place of celestial pleasures—primarily being close to God—that can’t be imagined and which is the chief joy of paradise.

**7. Do teachers teach “hate” in the schools in Arab lands?**

I am only aware of the various news reports that have shown some Arab schools teaching “hate”; I don’t know of any study about how widespread that is.

However, we recently met with Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian educators and shared that a commitment is being made to review curriculum and how it portrays the “other.” The UN is working closely with the Palestinian Ministry of Education to approve the curriculum. The team of educators we met with spoke of their efforts to work collectively to root out prejudice.

**8. If a woman is raped, is she killed?**

Islamic Law does not hold a woman responsible for any crime if she is raped. On the other hand, the penalty for raping a woman is fairly harsh and can include execution. However, only three Muslim countries, Saudi Arabia, Libya, and Iran, fully apply Islamic law. The other 53 Islamic countries follow other legal principles or mix Islamic Law with other principles.

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In Jordan there is a practice known as honor killing, whereby a woman who is said to shame her family by having sex outside of marriage is sometimes killed by a family member to “protect the honor” of the family. This is a cultural practice, not an Islamic one, and is condemned world wide. Typically, a man convicted of honor killing faces a fairly short jail sentence in Jordan. Jordanian feminists and other human rights advocates inside Jordan are working to change these laws.

### **9. Do Muslims believe they are supposed to rule the world?**

Mostly the Muslims of the world are preoccupied with trying to recover from the hundreds of years that they were ruled by the various European powers. The militaristic movements in the Islamic world are not about world domination, but rather directed at driving out western influence or at leadership that they perceive as being controlled by the West.

### **10. Is the Palestinian issue used as a provocation to continue terrorism?**

The Palestinian issue has been a longstanding issue of pain and anger for Muslim and Christian Arabs, and to some degree Muslims around the world. There have been many responses by Arabs and Palestinians to the Palestinian issue, including Nationalistic, Socialist, democratic, peaceful, religious, and militant responses. Often several have been going on at once, as is the case today, though we primarily only hear about the militant extremists actions. There will continue to be attempts of various kinds until the issue is resolved. Today, terrorists point to the plight of the Palestinians and the perceived role of the U.S. as contributing to that plight as a rallying cry.

### **11. Do terrorists believe that Israel has a right to exist?**

The majority of Palestinians, even today, believe in a two state solution, as do the majority of Israelis. Most of the significant issues between the two parties have been resolved. As one prominent Israeli Human Rights Lawyer said: “It’s all over, except for the killing.” Both sides seem to be caught in a spiral of violence that amplifies the most militant and uncompromising voices on both sides.

### **12. What do terrorists really want?**

There are many different terrorist organizations around the world and in the U.S. with varying agendas from the Basque separatist movement, to the radical anti-abortionist movement, to the Shining Path in Peru, to Al Queda. What they all share in common is the belief that only through violent means can they achieve their political and nationalistic agendas, chiefly by frightening and intimidating the targeted population.

### **13. Are Muslim extremists’ calls for “Jihad” legitimate?**

It is factually impossible for a Muslim or the world’s Imams and clerics to declare jihad against the “infidels” of the world, even if they wanted to. Since the fall of the Islamic Caliph when Turkey was defeated in World War I, the legal conditions under Islamic Law required for the declaration of a jihad does not exist. This fact is accepted by most Islamic scholars around the world. There hasn’t been a Jihad declared, because there can’t be. Without a Caliph (a universal Muslim leader), no one has the authority to do so. Individual Muslim clerics may call for a jihad, but it carries not legal or moral weight in the Islamic world.

The Qur’an, makes the point that Muslims, Christians, and Jews share a lot more in common than many want to admit:

“Let there be no compulsion in religion. Truth stands out clearly from error; whoever rejects evil and has faith in God has grasped the most trustworthy, unfailing handhold. And God hears and knows all things. God is Protector of those who have faith: from the depths of darkness He will lead them forth into light.” 2:256-257

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## Free Resources on Islam, Muslims and Arab Cultures

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[WWW.CAIR.COM/MUHAMMAD](http://WWW.CAIR.COM/MUHAMMAD) - to order a free copy of PBS documentary, *Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet*

[WWW.UPF.TV](http://WWW.UPF.TV) - to learn about new film productions including *Prince Amongst Slaves* and *Cities of Light: the Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain*

[www.theislamproject.org](http://www.theislamproject.org) - to access discussion guides and lesson plans on *Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet* and other films. Check out most recent American Muslim Teens Talk discussing everyday life as an American Muslim.

[WWW.CIE.ORG](http://WWW.CIE.ORG)- Council for Islamic Education- free lesson plans and many other educational resources

[www.justsaygofilms.com](http://www.justsaygofilms.com) - to counter the negative Muslim stereotype in the main media and to meet the growing demand for positive Muslim content.

[www.1001Inventions.com](http://www.1001Inventions.com) - site about the Muslim contributions in history

<http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/accessislam/> - site for teaching about Islam for K -8 grade.

Free Magazine to broaden knowledge of the cultures, history and geography of the Arab and Muslim worlds and their connection to the West. Request a subscription with your address to:

ARAMCO WORLD magazine  
Box 469008  
Escondido, CA 92046-9008

[www.connecting-cultures.net](http://www.connecting-cultures.net)

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## Suggested Resources

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### ***Books***

- ✍ **What Arabs Think: Values, Beliefs and Concerns**, Zogby International, The Arab Thought Foundation, September, 2002, [www.zogby.com](http://www.zogby.com)
- ✍ **Understanding Arabs: A Guide for Westerners**, Margaret K. (Omar) Nydell, 2002, [www.interculturalpress.com](http://www.interculturalpress.com)
- ✍ **What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam**, John Esposito, Oxford University Press, 2002.
- ✍ **Idiots Guide for Understanding Islam**, Yahiya Emerick, Alpha Press, 2002.

### ***Journal***

- ✍ **Seasons**, Bi-Annual Journal of Zaytuna Institute, intellectual and scholarly exchange on Islam, Muslims and the world. [www.zaytuna.org](http://www.zaytuna.org)

### ***Videos***

- ✍ **Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet**, PBS Documentary on origins of Islam, Muhammad and American Muslims, 2002, [www.upf.tv](http://www.upf.tv)
- ✍ **Thomas Friedman Reporting on Searching for the Roots of 9/11**, Discovery Channel Video, [www.discoverychannel.com](http://www.discoverychannel.com), 2002.

### ***Websites***

#### ***Islam***

- ✍ About Islam: [www.islam.about.com](http://www.islam.about.com)
- ✍ Islamic Society of North America: [www.isna.net](http://www.isna.net)
- ✍ Islam in America: [www.usinfo.state.gov](http://www.usinfo.state.gov)
- ✍ Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding: [www.cmcu.georgetown.edu/resources](http://www.cmcu.georgetown.edu/resources)

#### ***Religious Diversity in America***

- ✍ The Pluralism Project, [www.pluralism.org](http://www.pluralism.org)
- ✍ Beliefnet [www.beliefnet.com](http://www.beliefnet.com).

#### ***Political Perspectives***

- ✍ [www.AIHewar.com](http://www.AIHewar.com) provides Arab and Muslim perspective, promotes dialogue.
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