

Introduction to Islam

Lesson 8: Our Muslim Neighbor as Guest

12.3.2023

Objectives: Share time in interfaith conversation and learning with visiting Muslim guest(s).

Materials: Reserved room for time with guests.

Time allotments suggested for 50 minute class, followed by 25 minute closing service.

1. Nametags and Graffiti Wall (5 minutes before class begins)

- Make nametags using blank paper, markers, and holders. Youth can create their own unique but LEGIBLE nametag. Make it a regular practice to wear nametags.
- “Graffiti Wall” questions: Write the following on whiteboard. Invite youth as they arrive to grab a marker and weigh in with their responses:
 - ▶ What’s the most interesting thing you’ve learned about Islam so far?
 - ▶ What’s one question you have for our guest speaker(s) today?
- Teachers complete attendance sheets.

2. Silly Fun: Never Have I Ever (5 minutes max)

Youth play one round of “Never Have I Ever” (aka Five Fingers) to see how well they know one another:

- a) Ask everyone to hold up five fingers and keep that hand up throughout the game.
- b) The goal is to think of things YOU (not others) have **never** done or experienced that others will likely have experienced, thus making you unique. Go around the room, taking turns, each person sharing ONE “Never Ever,” hoping that others will have done it. Whoever HAS experienced that thing must put one finger down.
- c) After you go around the entire room, see who has the most fingers still up. That person is quite unique!

3. Chalice Lighting: Light the chalice, saying these words together: *“We light this chalice as a symbol of our faith; the light of truth and the warmth of love.”*

Teacher reads: (from Sufi mystic, Rumi)

“Whatever lifts the corners of your mouth, trust that.”

4. Introductions and time with our wonderful guest(s)! (45 minutes)

Some questions for conversation will be provided (see below). But teachers are encouraged to reflect on course, noting questions that have been generative and important for youth and classroom learning.

5. Say goodbye until next time: Extinguish the chalice, saying together:

“May the light of truth and the warmth of love go with us in our hearts.”

6. Help clean up classroom before leaving: Please keep regular practice of readying classroom for the next class.

- leave lesson plan and all materials organized
- wipe the whiteboard clean
- tables and chairs neatly returned
- nametags collected in Ziploc bag
- leave any comments for RE staff on attendance sheets

Some Questions to Consider with Guests:

- In contemporary American culture, we tend to differentiate religion from culture. Culture and religion seem much more entwined in Islam. How do you understand that distinction in Islam? (e.g. Are gender roles, dietary rules, etc. cultural and/or religious?)
- How is it like to live within the culture here in the Twin Cities?
- What constitutes someone being a Muslim?
- We know that the Muslim community is not homogeneous. What are examples of diversity within and among Muslims in your community? Differences/similarities among nationalities?
- What stereotypes and misrepresentations have you had to face? (e.g. tenuous but stubborn association with terrorism)
- What are some ways to resist and overcome such misrepresentations?
- Do you work with other religions and faith traditions? How do you go about interfaith work?
- What do you wish for our children to most understand or know about Islam?