ISLAM

Ritual

Muslims may eat all foods except those haram, or specifically forbidden, by the Qur'an. Foods that are haram include pork, blood, and the meat of animals found dead, animals of prey, and animals slaughtered in the name of any god but Allah. When slaughtering meat, a Muslim butcher pronounces the name of Allah. This tradition arose to recognize God's generosity and his work as the Creator, and meat so blessed is said to be halal. Since both Jews and Christians worship the same God as Muslims, many Muslims believe Islamic law allows them to eat meat slaughtered by Jews or Christians.

Celebration

The end of Ramadan fasting is celebrated by a major Islamic holiday called Id al-Fitr. The celebration begins with a worship service that may be held in a mosque or a public place. Later, the site of the celebration moves to the home. There, many festive foods that were not eaten during Ramadan, including sweets, are shared with family members and friends.

The other great Islamic religious holiday, called Eid al-Adha, takes place in the last month of the Islamic calendar. Eid al-Adha commemorates the faithfulness of the prophet Abraham, who was willing to sacrifice his own son to obey God's command.

CONNECTIONS TO SCIENCE

The Muslim Calendar

Class Time 30 minutes
Task Applying the Muslim calendar to U.S. dates
Purpose To understand the differences between the Gregorian and the Muslim calendar
Instructions Tell students that unlike the Gregorian, or solar calendar used in the West, the Muslim calendar is lunar—that is, based on the phases of the moon. The lunar year is about 11 days shorter than the solar year. As a result, Muslim dates move backward 11 days each year to correspond with the dates of the Gregorian calendar. Thus, during a period of 32.5 solar years, a Muslim date moves through all four seasons.

Have pairs of students apply Muslim calendar dates to U.S. holidays. Pairs will need this year's Gregorian calendar to answer the following questions:

- On what day would New Year's Day be celebrated according to the Muslim calendar? (December 21)
- On what day would the Fourth of July be celebrated? (June 23)

Have students discuss what would happen if U.S. holidays moved through the seasons. How might celebrations of a holiday like the Fourth of July be different in different seasons?
Paraphrasing a Primary Source

**Class Time**  30 minutes  
**Task**  Rephrasing and explaining a primary source  
**Purpose**  To improve student understanding of the primary source  
**Instructions**  Students may have difficulty understanding the long, one-sentence excerpt from the Qur’an. Tell students that it may help to break the sentence up into several phrases and to restate their meaning. For example, “Do you not see that God has subjected to your use ...” could be rewritten as “Do not you see that God has given you...” 

Divide students into groups of three or four. Assign each group part of the primary source excerpt and ask them to paraphrase it. When groups are finished, combine their work into a chart like the one here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Paraphrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>all things in the heavens and on earth</td>
<td>everything the physical and spiritual world has to offer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and has made His bounties flow to you</td>
<td>and has given all of this to you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in exceeding measure</td>
<td>generously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>both seen and unseen</td>
<td>in ways that you can both see and feel spiritually</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, invite students to put the phrases together and paraphrase the entire excerpt.