

Teaching News Is Elementary

June 10, 2016

Each week, this lesson will share some classroom activity ideas that use the newspaper or other NIE resources. You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some classrooms may be able to use this as a worksheet and others might need to ask and answer the questions in a class discussion.

Materials you will need for this lesson: The Seattle Times e-Edition, pencil and paper, dictionary, computer access

Article: “Many Muslims begin Ramadan on Monday”

Page: Main, A4

Date: Monday, June 6, 2016

Pre- Reading Discussion Questions:

Have you heard of Ramadan before? What do you know about it? What questions do you have about it? Do you know anyone who celebrates Ramadan? If so, how do they celebrate?

Vocabulary:

Read the following quotes and determine the meaning of the word based on how it's used in the sentence:

“Millions of **Muslims** around the world will mark the start of the holy month of **Ramadan** on Monday, a time marked by intense prayer, dawn-to-dusk **fasting** and nightly feasts.”

Muslims: a follower of the religion of Islam

Ramadan: the ninth month of the Muslim year, during which strict fasting is observed from sunrise to sunset

Fasting: abstain from all or some kinds of food or drink, especially as a religious observance

“Muslims follow a **lunar** calendar and a moon-sighting **methodology** that can lead to different countries declaring the start of Ramadan a day or two apart. By Sunday evening, Pakistan and Iran had yet to officially announce Monday as the first day of Ramadan.”

Lunar: of, determined by, relating to, or resembling the moon

Methodology: a system of methods used in a particular area of study or activity.

“Each day for the month of Ramadan, Muslims **abstain** from eating and drinking from sunrise to sunset. Even a sip of water, coffee or a cigarette can **invalidate** one's fast.”

Abstain: restrain oneself from doing or enjoying something

Invalidate: to cancel something or make it void

“Non-Muslims or adult Muslims not **observing** the fast who eat in public during the day in Ramadan can be fined or even jailed in some Middle Eastern countries, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which is home to large Western **expatriate** populations in Dubai and Abu Dhabi.”

Observing: performing or taking part in

Expatriate: a person who lives outside their native country

Journal Writing Prompts:

“DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Millions of Muslims around the world will mark the start of the holy month of Ramadan on Monday, a time marked by intense prayer, dawn-to-dusk fasting and nightly feasts.”

What is your favorite holiday? Why? How do you celebrate it? Why do you celebrate?

Discussion Questions:

“The faithful spend the month of Ramadan in mosques for evening prayers known as “taraweeh,” while free time during the day is often spent reading the Quran and listening to religious lectures.

Each day for the month of Ramadan, Muslims abstain from eating and drinking from sunrise to sunset. Even a sip of water, coffee or a cigarette can invalidate one’s fast. There are exceptions to fasting for children, the elderly, the sick, women who are pregnant, nursing or menstruating, and people traveling.”

Which holidays does your family celebrate? How do you celebrate? How is Ramadan similar to holidays that your family celebrates? How is Ramadan different than holidays that your family celebrates? Can you imagine what it would be like to fast (not eat) every day for a month?

Check out this video to learn more about Ramadan from a kid’s perspective:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7kM27b-iaBg>

Small Group Discussion and Activity:

Islam is one of the world’s many, many religions. Visit <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/> to learn more about different religions and beliefs that people have around the world. You might choose to focus on just one of these religions and give a report about it to the rest of your class. Try picking a religion that you know little or nothing about. Where was this religion developed? Who practices it now? How is it practiced? What beliefs are associated with this religion? What are some key points in this religion’s history? How does this religion relate to other religions? Alternatively, you may choose to pick two religions to compare and contrast.