

A Muslim Holiday



photo by Meshal Obeidallah

As more types of people move around the world, we say that our communities are becoming more **diverse**. This means there is a greater variety of people living in an area. Your parents or grandparents may remember when most people living in a neighborhood or town were of the same race or practiced the same religion. But today, most communities include people from many different backgrounds.

This week, The Mini Page learns more about **Muslims**. Muslims practice a religion called **Islam**. One of their most important religious celebrations is called **Ramadan** (RAH-mah-dahn). This monthlong holiday begins this year at sundown on March 10.

About Muslims

There are about 1.8 billion Muslims around the world. As many as 3.5 million Muslims live in the United States. Muslims follow the teachings of the prophet **Muhammad** (moo-HAHM-mahd), whom they believe received direction from God, or Allah. This guidance was delivered to him through the angel Gabriel, and his friends wrote the verses and chapters of the **Quran** (koo-RAN), the Islamic religious text. Muhammad lived from about 570 to 632.



The Quran

An important holiday

The dates of Ramadan change every year because the Islamic calendar is based on the moon's cycles. During Ramadan, Muslims make an effort to stop what they are doing and pray five times a day. They also think about their lives and how to help others during Ramadan. Kids might set goals for being better people, such as being nicer to brothers and sisters.

Fasting

During the month of Ramadan, Muslims **fast**, or go without eating for long periods of time. People wake up before dawn and have breakfast. Then they don't eat or drink anything again until after sunset. Fasting helps Muslims remember that "impossible is nothing" — that they can do anything. Children may fast only a half-day or every other day. Once they reach their early teens, they must begin fasting all day, as adults do.



photo courtesy Muhamed El Filali

Eid al-Fitr

At the end of Ramadan, Muslims celebrate with a three-day festival called **Eid al-Fitr** (eed ahl-FIT-uhr). They enjoy parties with friends and have joyful prayers at the mosque.



photo courtesy Noumenon

The Mosque of the Prophet in Medina, Saudi Arabia, is where Muhammad is thought to be buried.

The Islamic faith

Muslims worship in temples called **mosques** (mosks). They pray five times a day: at dawn, at noon, during mid-afternoon, at sunset and after dark. They may go to the mosque for prayers, or they may pray wherever they are.

For the noon prayers on Friday, everyone is expected to come to the mosque. Kids who are in school may attend a special service after school on Fridays.

Beliefs

Muslims believe that Muhammad was the last of many **prophets**, or people who teach the word of God. They believe earlier teachers, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, came before Muhammad and shared many of the same teachings with their followers.

Islam also includes belief in angels, who deliver messages from God and may take care of people on Earth.

Resources

On the Web:
• bit.ly/MPRamadan

At the library:
• "Tell Me More About Ramadan" by Bachar Karroum
• "Ramadan: A Holy Month" by Malik Amin

Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of Ramadan are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:

ANGELS, CELEBRATE, DIVERSE, FASTING, FESTIVAL, HOLIDAY, ISLAM, MECCA, MONTH, MOON, MOSQUE, MUHAMMAD, MUSLIM, PRAYER, PROPHET, QURAN, RAMADAN, RELIGION.

D O Y A D I L O H F I E M G Y
R A I P E T A R B E L E C Z M
H I M Z M A L S I S K U P A I
E Q F M F T H H C T R Q R C L
S S A O A E F A Y I J S A C S
R L S N M H U U H V U O Y E U
E E T T N P U K P A V M E M M
V G I H O O L M D L N A R U Q
I N N R O R S N O I G I L E R
D A G R M P X S R A M A D A N



Mini Spy Classics

Mini Spy and her friends are celebrating Ramadan. See if you can find the hidden pictures. Then color the picture.



Mini Spy Classics appear in the first issue of each month.

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- moon and star
 - word MINI
 - ladder
 - snake
- canoe
 - letter E
 - frog
 - tooth
- bird
 - rabbit
 - letter Z
 - banana
- bell
 - pencil
 - carrot
 - fish hook
- arrow

Mini Jokes

Amir: What do you call a fake noodle?
Amna: An impasta!

Eco Note

- Puerto Rico's famed coquí frogs are croaking at a higher pitch, which scientists say is due to global heating. Comparisons of recordings made of the frog's distinctive two-note call over the past 23 years reveal the change in pitch, says researcher Peter Narins of the University of California, Los Angeles. The calls grew higher in pitch at every location studied.
- Residents across the eastern Great Lakes and Ontario endured their darkest winter in 73 years. Toronto saw weeks in December 2022 and January 2023 with scant sunshine.

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For later:

Look in your newspaper for items about Ramadan observances in your city.

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