

XIII Islam's contributions to civilization

❖ Find out objects or names that come from the Muslims. Here are a few examples:

SILK PAPER...

Arabic civilization brought several innovations and improvements to Europe via Spain.

For example, Arab scientists used "Arabic" **numbers**, which came from India, in the 7th century AD. Arab scientists developed **algebra** in the 9th century AD. In approximately 1000 AD, West Asian blacksmiths also learned how to make **steel** from India, and then they developed the idea further to produce the very high quality Damascus steel that was used in fighting the Crusades.

Another example from the East is the use of **paper**, which the Arabs learned from the Chinese in about 750 AD. The **astrolabe**, highly developed in the Islamic world, also came to Europe from Islamic Spain, about 1100 AD.

Arabic scholars **translated** books of the Ancient World into Arabic, such as Plato, Aristotle and Plini the Elder. They produced new **studies** of their own; they described many new species of plants and animals and they made advances in medicine. All through the Middle Ages, the best **doctors**, such as Avicenna and Maimonides, lived in the Islamic kingdoms.

Astrolabe: a medieval instrument used to determine the altitude of the sun or the stars. Astrolabes came into wide use in Europe and the Islamic world in the early Middle Ages and were adopted by mariners by the mid-15th century

1. Make a list with the main innovations brought by the Islamic kingdoms.

2. Write the Arabic numbers.

3. Fill in the grid with the Islamic contributions¹ to the world:

Islam's contributions	The civilization they learned it	The century

¹ To know more visit this site: <http://www2.ignatius.edu/faculty/turner/arabic/anumbers.htm>

4. Read (Skim) these words.

Arabic words in English

acequia admiral adobe **Aladdin** albatross alcalde alcazar
 alchemy alcove alembic alfalfa alforja algebra algorithm
Alhambra Ali Baba amber anil apricot arroba arsenal artichoke
 azure barbary bedouin bonito calibre camel candy carafe carat
 cipher coffee cotton damascene elixir fakir gazelle Gibraltar
 giraffe guitar harem hazard henna jar jasmine jennet kebab kohl
 lemon lilac lime macramé magazine marzipan mastaba mattress
 mihrab minaret mohair monsoon mosque mozarab mummy
 muezzin muslin noria ogive orange ramadan razzia rook safari
 saffron Sahara satin scarlet sesame sheikh sherbet soda sofa
 souk spinach sugar syrup Taj Mahal talisman tariff tarragon
 Trafalgar vizier zenith zero

4.1. Copy the words in bold (12) and translate them into your language. Use a dictionary.

Arabic words in English	Mother tongue	Arabic words in English	Mother tongue
<i>Adobe</i>			

4.2. Choose 6 words and define them. You can use a dictionary or the Internet.²

² You can visit this site <http://www.1001inventions.com/words/>

4.3. To know about “Islamic Spain for breakfast” search in the Internet.³

5. Write 4 words related on the topics listed in the chart.

	English	translation	English	Translation
food/spices				
animals				
colours				
places				
objects				
science				
people				
buildings				
materials				
other				

³ This site may be useful <http://www.islamicspain.tv/sitemap.htm>. It contains maps and lots of information.

1.1. Islam's contributions Word Search

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

RELIGION

❖ Read the texts and solve the matching exercises.

MUHAMMAD (570 – 632)

Islam is a monotheist religion which was developed in Arabia in the sixth century AD. The founder of this religion was [Muhammad](#), who was born in [Mecca](#) (Arabia) in 570. He revealed himself to be the last and most important [prophet](#) of [Islam](#). The name of the God he worshipped is [Allah](#). In 622, Muhammad escaped from Mecca and went to Medina. In this city he gained popularity and followers. In 630 he returned to Mecca and he died in 632. The Islam faith spread quickly in Arabia and the nearby areas.

Islam didn't set out a hierarchical organization but the [Koran](#), the sacred book of [Muslims](#), became the guide of all daily activities.

The Muslim calendar dates from Muhammad's flight to Medina ([hegira](#)) when he escaped from his birthplace, Mecca in 622 A.D.

THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

The [Five Pillars](#) of Islam are the main duties for all Muslims.

1st. The profession of faith: every Muslim must recite the creed: "There is no god but Allah; Muhammad is the prophet of Allah."

2nd. The daily prayer after ritual washing and facing the direction of Mecca. Muslims must pray five times a day and in the mosque on Fridays.

3rd. Complete abstinence of food and drink (fasting) during daylight in Ramadan month.

4th. Muslims have the duty of almsgiving, a compulsory tax.

5th. Every Muslim must go on a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca (Saudi Arabia) at least once in his or her lifetime.

❖ Match the words on the left with the clues on the right

WORDS

CLUES

1. Koran ___ a) Muhammad's departure from Mecca to Medina in A.D. 622.
2. Mecca ___ b) follower of Islamic religion.
3. Muhammad ___ c) the holy book of Islam.
4. Hegira ___ d) the city that Muhammad escaped to in 622 AD.
5. Allah ___ e) Arab prophet and founder of Islam.
6. Medina ___ f) the holy city and centre of pilgrimage of Islam.
7. Muslim ___ g) abstain from food or drink as a religion observance.
8. Fasting ___ h) the only God of Muslims.

❖ Match the words on the left with the synonyms on the right

Write the meaning

- | | | |
|------------|---------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Flight | ___ a) deity | _____ |
| 2. Faith | ___ b) escape | _____ |
| 3. Duty | ___ c) belief | _____ |
| 4. God | ___ d) obligations | _____ |
| 5. Holy | ___ e) person who explains the future | _____ |
| 6. Alms | ___ f) sacred | _____ |
| 7. Prophet | ___ g) donations | _____ |



THE MOSQUE

The **mosque** is the Islamic public place of prayer. There are different kinds of mosques. Medieval mosques had an open courtyard, a prayer room and a minaret – a tall tower- which was sometimes attached. Statues and pictures are not permitted as decoration.

There are several kinds of mosques.

- a) The **main mosque**, a large mosque that is the centre of community worship and the site of Friday prayer services.
- b) The smaller and **local mosque** can be rich but it can't be compared to the main mosque.
- c) **Private mosques** in houses and palaces.

These are the main parts of a mosque.

- a) **Minbar**, a seat at the top of steps placed at the right of the mirhab. It is used by the preacher as a pulpit.
- b) **Mihrab**, an alcove in the mosque indicating direction of prayer.
- c) **Maqsurah**, a wooden screen originally used to shield a worshiping ruler or caliph from assassins.
- d) **Minaret**, the tower is used by the **muezzin** call the Muslims to worship five times each day.

1. Internet search. Answer the questions.

a) Write the parts of a mosque.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

b) Name the 3 kinds of mosques.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

2. Define the following words.

Mosque _____

Minbar _____

Minaret _____

Mirhab _____

Maqsurah _____

Other uses of the mosque

The mosque has traditionally been the centre of social, political, and educational life in Islamic societies. Social functions that have often been connected to mosques include schools, law courts, hospitals and lodging for travelers.

3. Fill in the blanks.

Muhammad's life

Muhammad (c.570-632) is an _____ (1) _____ (2) and founder of Islam. he was born in _____ (3), where in 610 he received the first of a series of revelations which became doctrinal and legislative basis of Islam, his sayings and the accounts of his daily practice constitute the other major _____ (4) of guidance for most _____ (5).

In the face of opposition to his preaching, he and his small group supporters were forced to flee to _____ (6) in 622 (Hegira). After consolidating of the community there,

_____ (7) led his followers into a series of _____ (8) which resulted in the _____ (9) of Mecca in 630. He died two years later, having united tribal factions into a force which would expand the _____ (10) of

_____ (11). He was _____ (12) in Medina.

Work bank

Muhammad	Mecca	frontiers	Medina	capitulation	Islam
prophet	buried	sources	Muslims	Arab	battles

4. Answer the following questions about Islam religion.

- a. Who was Muhammad? _____
- b. Who was his God? _____
- c. Where was Muhammad born? _____
- d. When did he escape from Mecca? _____
- e. What is the Hegira? _____
- f. When did Muhammad die? _____
- g. Where was he buried? _____



5. Write 5 lines describing Muhammad.

6. Answer the questions about religion:

a) What are the five pillars of Islam? _____

b) Summarize the five pillars of Islam.

LITERATURE

An **Islamic poem** from *The Tarjuman al-Ashwaq*.

Wonder,
A garden among the flames!
My heart can take on any form:
A pasture for gazelles,
A cloister for monks,
For the idols, sacred ground,
Ka'ba for the circling pilgrim,
The tables of the Torah,
The scrolls of the Koran.
My creed is Love;
Wherever its caravan turns along the way,
That is my belief,
My faith.

Muhyeddin Ibn Arabi (1165-1240)

1. Answer the questions about the poem.

a) What is the poem about? Underline the correct answer.

- Daily life
- Historical events
- Religious ideas
- About people
- Love poem

b) What man-made objects are mentioned in the poem? _____

c) What is this poem trying to do? Underline the correct answer.

- Describe a scene.
- Tell a story.
- Bring out feelings in the audience.
- Give advice.

d) What religions are mentioned in the poem? _____

2. Write a 10-line poem on a topic of your choice. When you have finished, share your poem with the class.

