

# Summer 2 - Week 8 RE

## Lesson 3

Can I understand myths and misconceptions about Islam?

This lesson we are looking at the misconceptions people have about Islam as a religion.

Islam itself is the second largest of the main religions in the world with 1.9 billion followers it is second in size after Christianity and 130 times bigger than Judaism.



The Crescent moon and Star of Islam.

# Misconception - Muslim women have no rights.

This is a difficult and complicated topic to discuss. It's important to realise the difference between cultural influences and what is religious policy.



Muslim girls studying in school.

# **This is not true.**

Many countries across the world, including Muslim countries, have cultures where men are automatically assumed to lead.

Islam as a religion, however, preaches equality of the sexes. There are many Muslim women who have made great accomplishments in the fields of science, entertainment, academia, art, and politics. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, a professor of biology, became president of Muslim majority African country Mauritius.

# Misconception - Muslims worship a different god.

The language of Islamic religion has created a misconception about the worship of the Muslim God.

The image shows the word 'Allah' written in a stylized, bold Arabic calligraphic font. The letters are black and set against a white background. The word is composed of the letters 'Al', 'L', and 'H' with a 'W' sound, which is characteristic of the Arabic word for God.

The word Allah, which means God, written in Arabic script.

# **This is not true.**

Lots of people think Allah is a specific Islamic deity (god), but really it just means 'god' in the Arabic language. Christian Arabs even use the word Allah when referring or praying to God. Since Islam is branched from the same religion as Christianity and Judaism, Muslims believe Allah is the same God.

# **Misconception – Islam doesn't mix with other religions**

As with the misconception of women having no rights, it is important to be aware of differences in behaviour of various cultures and politics of countries compared to actual religious beliefs.

# **This is not true.**

Islam is in the same family of religions as Judaism and Christianity. All three of the religions share many similarities, including important religious figures, historical events, and spiritual beliefs. In fact, Muslims are religiously required to believe in Jesus as a divine prophet. There have been numerous periods of history throughout the Middle East where Muslims, Jews, and Christians lived together for centuries.



# Misconception – Muslims starve for an entire month every year

This is more of a misunderstanding than a misconception and is based around people not understanding a religious festival celebrated by Muslims in Islam.



# **This is not true.**

Ramadan is a month in which Muslims partake in various charitable and religious activities, most prominent of which is fasting from sunrise to sunset in order to learn humility and appreciate their blessings.

Abstaining from food and drink only takes place during daylight hours, which usually ends with a big feast at sunset – not total starvation.



A Muslim family waiting to start their feast on one of the evenings of Ramadan. Once the sun has set families often join together to celebrate with large meals.

Your task. Over this unit we are going to make our own folio style project for myths and misconceptions in religion.

Carrying on from the work of Lesson 2.

In the final third of the page we will write about Islam.