

Tawhid and Shahada - Supplementary Notes for Teachers

Slide 2 of 16 – Think. Pair. Share.

(A) Knowledge and understanding

- Understand that Muslims, as well as followers of many other faiths, believe in God.
- Islam is a monotheistic faith which means that Muslims believe in One God, ‘Allah’ who has no partner.

(B) Ideas and insights

- Invite Students to share their thoughts about God - When they hear the word ‘God’ what do they think?

Slides 3, 4 and 5 of 16 – Aims and Objectives/Key Vocabulary

(A) Knowledge and understanding

- Outline the key aims and objectives of this topic, as set out on Slide 3.
- Whilst Students may have come across the term ‘Shahada’ when learning about the 5 Pillars of Islam, the term ‘Tawhid’ may be unfamiliar to them. Explain that Tawhid is the Islamic belief that there is only one God, Allah.
- The term ‘shirk’ may also be unfamiliar to Students. Muslims believe that associating partners with Allah is a sin (known as ‘shirk’). It is important to note that shirk goes beyond just the worshipping of idols. Muslims are taught that every object, word or deed, which is given the same grandeur as is the due right of God, is an ‘idol’ in the sight of God. With this expanded understanding of shirk we can see that there are many forms of shirk that are prevalent around us such as an overemphasis on wealth, political philosophies, children, and even one’s own self.

(B) Ideas and insights

- Islam is a monotheistic religion which means that Muslims believe in one God. Can Students identify any other monotheistic faiths?
- Some of the world’s largest religions believe in one supreme God, including Christianity and Judaism.

Slide 6 of 16 – Tawhid in the Holy Qur’an

(A) Knowledge and understanding

- The verses shown on this Slide are taken from Chapter 112 of the Holy Qur’an. This Chapter or ‘Surah’ is known as Al- Ikhlas. It is one of the last Chapters of the Holy Qur’an.
- Note that Arabic is written and read from left to right.
- The circles at the end of each verse signify its completion.

- This Surah is often the first chapter taught to Muslim children.
- Students can listen to the recitation of this Surah by clicking the link on the slide.
- This Surah makes it clear that Allah is One, without any partner. He is Independent and there is no other like Him.
- The Divine attribute 'He begets not, nor is He begotten' is mentioned in verse 4 to show that Allah is above need. Allah has succeeded no one and will be succeeded by no one. He is complete in all His Attributes and is Eternal, Everlasting and Absolute.
- For more information and a brief commentary on this Surah, Teachers can refer to the following resource: <https://www.alislam.org/Qur'an/Holy-Qur'an-Short-Commentary.pdf>

(B) Ideas and insights

- How does Chapter 112 of the Holy Qur'an explain Allah using the concept of Tawhid?
-It states that He is One, Independent and Besought of all.
- What do the words 'He begets not nor is He begotten' mean?
-'He begets not nor is he begotten' means He is not a Son nor a father.
- Can Students recall any religions which believe in multiple gods (polytheistic)?
Answer: Hinduism

Slide 7 of 16 – Practical ways Muslims show Tawhid – Oneness of God

(A) Knowledge and understanding

- Oneness of God is repeatedly mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. Regular recitation of the Holy Qur'an allows Muslims to reinforce their belief in Tawhid. The Holy Qur'an also repeatedly mentions the avoidance of shirk (associating partners with Allah).
- The Attributes of Allah can be found in the calligraphic designs in Mosques. The Attributes also form part of the 5 daily prayers. For example, Chapter 1 (Surah *Al Fatiha*) is recited in every prayer and mentions the following Attributes of Allah:
 - Lord of All the Worlds
 - The Gracious
 - The Merciful
 - Master of the Day of Judgment
- Adhan (Call to prayer). This is delivered before every prayer, calling people to assemble and join in the prayer. The Adhan refers to the Oneness of God (see Slide 9).

(B) Ideas and insights

- GROUP DISCUSSION: What impact does Tawhid have on a Muslim's belief and understanding?

- Tawhid helps Muslims to develop a strong sense of submission and surrender to Allah which leads to inner peace and contentment.
- It also serves as a guiding principle for how Muslims should live their lives as they are encouraged to align their thoughts, words, and actions with the Will of Allah.
- Tawhid is reinforced in the Shahadah and reminds Muslims constantly of the Oneness of Allah. Belief in Tawhid explains Allah as the Creator and the One to Whom is the ultimate return at death. It therefore gives Muslims a higher purpose in life which is to serve and please Allah.

Slide 8 of 16 – Holy Qur’an Recitation

(A) Knowledge and understanding

- Muslims encourage regular recitation of the Holy Qur’an in Arabic to remind them Allah is the Supreme Being and Originator.
- Study of the meaning of the text (translation and commentary in their native language) is also common.
- There are 30 Parts and 114 Chapters in the Holy Qur’an.
- The Arabic text remains the same in every Holy Qur’an.
- You will find some Holy Qur’ans with simple Arabic to English translation. The Arabic text of the Holy Qur’an has been translated into over 70 different languages so that people from all over the world can benefit from its teachings.
- You will also find some copies of the Holy Qur’an with commentaries written by various scholars. The commentary will expand on a verse, and maybe even a letter. The Arabic language is such that a letter, when pronounced in a particular way can have different meanings. The commentary therefore may help us understand various interpretations of a verse.

(B) Ideas and insights

- Embedded in this slide under the image of the Qur’an, is a video of an Imam showing a Holy Qur’an. Click on the link to watch the video.

Slide 9 of 16 – Adhan (Call to prayer)

(A) Knowledge and understanding

- The original words of the Shahada can be traced back to the time of the Holy Prophet^{pbuh}. They are also included in the Adhan, the Muslim call to prayer. This call is made five times a day before the congregational prayers, alerting believers that prayer in congregation is to begin shortly. It advises them that prayer is the path to success and well-being, and that the path to such a prayer is through the declaration of faith.
- Many major religions have a form of the call to prayer. On a daily basis, Church bells are rung in major Christian denominations at the canonical hours prayed at fixed prayer times, as well as at the start of a church service.
- The relevant words from the call to prayer are:

I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah.
I bear witness that Muhammad^{pbuh} is the Messenger of Allah.

(B) Ideas and insights

- Embedded in this slide is a link to hear what the Adhan (call to prayer) sounds like.
- Have Students visited any Muslim countries (e.g. Dubai in the UAE) where they have heard the Adhan being recited from Mosques?

Slide 10 of 16 – Attributes of Allah

(A) Knowledge and understanding

- The picture on the slide shows the main prayer hall in the Mubarak Mosque in Tiford, Surrey, UK (<https://mubarakmosque.uk/>). It has the Attributes of Allah on the ceiling using the art of Islamic calligraphy.
- Some Attributes of Allah include:
Ar Rahman – The Most Gracious
Ar Rahim – The Most Merciful
Al Malik – The Master
Ashaafi – The Healer
- By using Allah’s specific names, a Muslim can focus in prayer. For example, if one is praying for someone who is sick, they would call upon Allah as The Healer.

(B) Ideas and insights

- More information on the Attributes of Allah can be found here:
<https://www.reviewofreligions.org/29917/the-attributes-of-allah-14/>
- Calligraphy Task – Print some of the Attributes of Allah in Arabic from the link above. Students can choose one Attribute and copy the Arabic text, writing the meaning underneath.

Slide 11 of 16 – Task Slide – This can be set as a Class based/Homework task. Students should be mindful of not using any images to depict God

Slide 12, 13 and 14 of 16 – Why is the Shahada important to Muslims?

(A) Knowledge and understanding

- The Shahada can be seen on the picture of the Mubarak Mosque in Slide 12. The Shahada is inscribed/ painted on many Mosques around the world.
- Students should understand that the Shahada, or ‘declaration of faith’ affirms a Muslim’s belief that there is only One God, Allah, without any partner. It also affirms a Muslim’s belief that the Holy Prophet Muhammad pbuh is the messenger of Allah.

- Belief in the Oneness of Allah comes before all other beliefs. It is the first pillar of Islam.
- We read in the Holy Qur’an: ‘Surely, Allah will not forgive that any partner be associated with Him; but He will forgive whatever is short of that to whomsoever He pleases. And whoso associates partners with Allah has indeed devised a very great sin. (Holy Qur’an Chapter 4 Verse 49) This means that every sin is forgivable except associating partners with Allah.

(B) Ideas and insights

- Students should read the extract on Slide 14 and highlight the words and phrases that explain the concept of the Shahada. Source: <https://www.reviewofreligions.org/22408/the-first-pillar-of-islam-declaration-of-faith-kalima/>

Slide 15 of 16 - Challenge

- 30 SECOND CHALLENGE
- Come to the front of the room and describe one of your best friends/family member/teachers - someone you know well.
- EXPLAIN WHAT MAKES THEM SPECIAL
- This demonstrates why Muslims learn about Allah’s qualities/ attributes: in order to gain a better understanding of God.

Slide 16 of 16 – Topic Recap – Test Your Knowledge Quiz

Notes - After saying the name Prophet Muhammad^{pbuh}, as a sign of respect, Muslims say or write ‘peace and blessings be upon him’, throughout the presentations ‘pbuh’ is used to represent this phrase.