

Tab 1

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October is Islamic Heritage Month. A Muslim person is somebody who follows the religion of Islam. Muslim people live in almost every country and speak nearly every language of the world. Whenever one Muslim person greets another Muslim, they say “As-salamu alaykum”. This is an Arabic phrase that means “Peace be upon you.” ¹
October is Islamic Heritage Month. Many Muslims who came to this land that we now call Canada are newcomers. But did you know that Muslims have had a long history here? The first Muslim documented to be born in Canada was James Jr. Love, born to immigrant Scottish parents in 1871. ²
October is Islamic Heritage Month. Arshad Nadeem is a Muslim athlete from Pakistan who competed in the 2024 Olympics and won a gold medal for javelin throwing. He overcame a major elbow surgery just before the Olympics. ³
October is Islamic Heritage Month. Being kind and respectful to neighbours is an important teaching in Islam. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) said that a true Muslim is not someone who fills their stomach while their neighbour is hungry. ⁴ It's important for Muslims to be grateful for the food they have, not to waste food, and to share food.
October is Islamic Heritage Month. Do you like to start your day, like millions of humans around the globe, with a cup of coffee? The word coffee has its roots in different languages, including Arabic. For example, “qahwah” was a popular drink made by the Arab people of Yemen around the 10th century. Coffee was discovered and used by Muslims as an aid to stay up at night to pray. Through trade, Europeans were introduced to coffee and started using it around the 16th century. ¹
October is Islamic Heritage Month. Fadi Aldeeb, the sole Paralympian and flag bearer for Palestine, competed in shot put in the 2024 Paris Olympics. His journey is one of immense amal or hope as he survived a traumatic event resulting in his paralysis and navigated through limited resources and facilities in his homeland of Gaza, Palestine. He is a sign of strength and resilience to Muslims around the world. ⁵
October is Islamic Heritage Month. Did you know that Ibn Battuta was a Muslim explorer from the 1300s who travelled longer distances than one of the most famous explorers known in the world, named Marco Polo? Ibn Battuta left his home at the age of 21 to perform the Hajj pilgrimage in Makkah and didn't return for 30 years! He wrote about his travels, which took him all over the world: from the Middle East to South Asia, all the way to China - and this was all done before cars and planes! ¹
October is Islamic Heritage Month. Imane Khelif won a gold medal in the 2024 Paris Olympics for women's boxing. She overcame misgendering and biased societal expectations while rising in her sport. Imane's journey has inspired future generations of female athletes in Algeria and around the world. ⁶
October is Islamic Heritage Month. Have you heard about a special genre of music called nasheeds? Popular among Muslims, nasheeds are devotional songs with lyrics that focus on faith, good morals, and the teachings of Islam. Some nasheeds are performed <i>a cappella</i> , others are performed with vocal sounds that mimic instruments, and some are performed with the use of actual instruments. Popular Canadian nasheed artists include Dawud Wharnsby Ali, Mustaqeem, Irfan Makki, and Ilyas Mao. ¹
October is Islamic Heritage Month. Julyana AlSadeq is a Muslim athlete from Jordan who participated in the 2024 Olympics in taekwondo. She had many years of intense training and has spoken of the importance of staying grounded in the face of challenges throughout her career. ⁷



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October is Islamic Heritage Month. Did you know that there are over 1 billion Muslims in the world? This means that at least one in every six people in the world is a Muslim. Although Muslims speak all different languages, the language of the Qur'an is Arabic, and the daily prayers are offered in Arabic.¹

October is Islamic Heritage Month. When you get sick, have you ever had a warm drink with honey in it? Bees are a very important insect to our environment as they pollinate most flowering plants, which produce many fruits and vegetables that we eat. Chapter 16 of the Quran is called Bees or "Nahl" in Arabic. The Quran is Islam's sacred text and mentions what incredible creation the bee is, as it not only helps pollinate but also produces honey that can be used for many healing purposes.⁸

October is Islamic Heritage Month. Malcolm X, also known as El-Hajj Malik Shabazz, was an African-American Muslim who was one of the greatest champions for American civil rights in the 1960s. He encouraged Black Americans to be proud of who they are.¹

October is Islamic Heritage Month. Layla Almasri participated in the 2024 Olympics as a distance runner for Palestine. She feels strongly about giving a voice to the voiceless and never giving up. Her iman or faith is rooted in the love and support of her family.⁹

October is Islamic Heritage Month. Did you know that there are thousands of children's books that have Muslim characters, or are written by Muslim authors? These stories help us learn about Muslim cultures and experiences while enjoying exciting adventures. Some popular children's books with Muslim characters include "Salat in Secret" by Jamilah Thomkins Bigelow and "Lailah's Lunchbox" by Reem Faruqi. Check out your school library, or the TDSB professional library, to find more books that feature Muslim characters!¹

October is Islamic Heritage Month. Every morning at school, we begin with a Land Acknowledgement. A core Muslim value is "amanah", which means trust or responsibility. The Muslim sacred text, the Qur'an, teaches that humans are caretakers of the Earth, and that we must treat the land, animals, and each other with care and respect.¹⁰

October is Islamic Heritage Month. Muslim professional athletes are not only changing the way the sport is played, but have also changed how their faith and culture are viewed throughout the world. Some of the most famous Muslim athletes of all time are the boxer Muhammad Ali, basketball player Kareem Abdul Jabbar, Soccer player Mohamed Salah, and fencer Ibtihaj Muhammad.¹

October is Islamic Heritage Month. Egyptian fencer Nada Hafez is a Muslim athlete who represented Egypt in the 2024 Olympics. Competing at seven months pregnant, Nada embodies the strength and resilience of Muslim women. Nadia also gives back by mentoring young athletes.¹¹

October is Islamic Heritage Month. Did you know that the concept of gardens in cities came from Muslim architects and designers who had made it central to city design. The Alhambra, a palace in Granada, Spain, is a great example of how architectural beauty and water irrigation systems were brought into cities. We enjoy gardens in most cities today.¹

October is Islamic Heritage Month. At the 2024 Olympics, Muslim athlete Sifan Hassan, who was born in Ethiopia and represents the Netherlands, overcame many challenges, including being a refugee, to win one gold and two bronze medals. She made a powerful statement by wearing a hijab proudly during the closing ceremony—in Paris, France, where hijabs were banned in sports. Her story inspires strength and pride.¹²

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October is Islamic Heritage Month. Learning and knowledge are very important in Islam. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) said that seeking knowledge is something that all Muslims should try to do.¹³ So no matter what age or gender or ethnicity a Muslim is, they should always try to learn new things.

October is Islamic Heritage Month. At the 2024 Olympics, Muslim-Turkish athlete Yusuf Dikeç became a fan favourite—not just for winning an Olympic medal in marksmanship at age 51, but for how calm and focused he looked the whole time! Memes showed him relaxed, steady, and smiling. Yusuf teaches us that sometimes, staying calm and believing in yourself is the strongest move of all.¹⁴

October is Islamic Heritage Month. The Aga Khan Museum in Toronto is a great architectural addition to the Toronto art scene. It holds stunning Islamic artifacts from around the world. The late Aga Khan, leader of 15 million Ismaili Muslims worldwide, became an honorary Canadian citizen in 2009 and passed away in 2025. The present Aga Khan continues to be involved in humanitarian and development projects across the world.¹

October is Islamic Heritage Month. Alia Muhammad Baker, a librarian in Basra, Iraq, knew the value of books and the knowledge they hold. During the American war in Iraq in the 1990s, the library was destroyed, but Alia moved thousands of books and hid them in people's homes. This brave librarian showed the world that love and respect for knowledge have no bounds.¹

October is Islamic Heritage Month. One of the most interesting and influential explorers of all time was a Muslim from China whose name was Zheng He. He became one of China's greatest admirals, explorers, and diplomats. Back in 1433, he commanded thousands of ships and was the first to sail from China to Africa and then on to Europe. There are many cities and buildings in South-East Asia named after this great explorer.¹⁵

October is Islamic Heritage Month. Muslim women have had the right to vote since the beginning of Islam in the 7th century. Female politicians have been heads of state in several Muslim-majority countries, including Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Turkey.¹

October is Islamic Heritage Month. Being kind and merciful to others is encouraged in the religion of Islam. The root word of mercy in Arabic is “Raham,” and it occurs 339 times in the Quran!¹⁶ One of the most popular names of God is Ar-Rahman, which means the Most Compassionate and the Most Gracious. Muslims are encouraged to be merciful by giving charity, forgiving others, and taking care of newcomers, elders, orphans, and travellers.¹⁶

October is Islamic Heritage Month. Being connected to the earth and taking care of it is encouraged in Islam. The Quran emphasizes that humans are responsible for caring for the earth. Many verses in the Quran mention the natural world like trees, sky, birds, water, and flowers. Muslims are encouraged to reflect deeply on the signs of nature as a means of connecting to the earth and God.¹⁷

October is Islamic Heritage Month. Zarqa Nawaz is a Canadian Muslim producer for film and television, a published author, public speaker, journalist, and former broadcaster. She created the popular comedy show, “Little Mosque on the Prairie,” which you can still watch online. Zarqa wants to show that Muslims can be funny and that humour is a powerful tool to think about serious topics.¹⁸

October is Islamic Heritage Month. In the Qur'an, Islam's sacred text, the olive tree is called a *blessed tree*. It's a symbol of light, peace, and goodness. Muslims are encouraged to notice the signs of nature — like trees, stars, water, and animals — and think deeply about how they connect us to the Earth and each other. Let's take a moment today to appreciate something in nature — and remember to care for it with kindness.¹⁹

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October is Islamic Heritage Month. Sadaqah Jariah is an Arabic phrase that means “charity that is flowing or running”. It is a special kind of charity in Islam that keeps helping people for a long time.²⁰ There are many ways that Muslims can give charity that keeps flowing for a long time. Some examples are planting trees, building wells that provide clean drinking water, building a school, sharing knowledge that benefits others, and raising children who will help their parents and the community.¹

October is Islamic Heritage Month. Ginella Massa is a Canadian, black, Muslim journalist, media consultant, public speaker, and business owner. Ginella Massa made history as the first Muslim woman in hijab to anchor a major Canadian newscast.²¹ Ginella shows us that you can be yourself and still lead, inspiring others to see there’s a place for everyone’s voice.

October is Islamic Heritage Month. Did you ever wonder where the term “Chair” (as in the person in charge) comes from when talking about colleges or universities? In the Islamic tradition, the teacher would sit on a chair, and the students would sit on the ground. This act of having the teacher on a chair, and the students in a lower position, is a way of honouring those who possess and transmit knowledge.¹

October is Islamic Heritage Month. October is Islamic Heritage Month. “Besa” is a cultural Muslim Albanian concept, which means “faith”, “hospitable”, or “word of honour”. During World War II, Albanians saved 800 to 2000 Jews from Nazi persecution. Albanians gave Jewish people their clothes, Albanian names, and treated them as part of the family so they could live in the open rather than in hiding. This concept of “Besa” is an important part of Albanian-Muslim culture.¹

October is Islamic Heritage Month. October is Islamic Heritage Month. Noor-un-Nisa Inayat Khan was a World War II hero. She was one of the most wanted British Agents during the French Resistance in Nazi-controlled Paris. She was eventually captured for bravely transmitting secret messages by radio to the Allied Forces and executed at Dachau Concentration Camp. Her life story is the subject of the film *Enemy of the Reich: The Noor Inayat Khan Story*.¹

October is Islamic Heritage Month. October is Islamic Heritage Month. With Remembrance Day memorials coming up, it’s important to note that Muslims in Canada have a complex relationship with it. Many Muslims fought with the Allied Powers in both world wars. However, the impact of these two wars left what was known as the “Muslim World” shattered and heavily controlled by European colonial powers throughout the 20th century. Despite this, the diverse Muslim communities in Canada, which continue to grow and thrive, are a testament to resilience and strength.²²

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