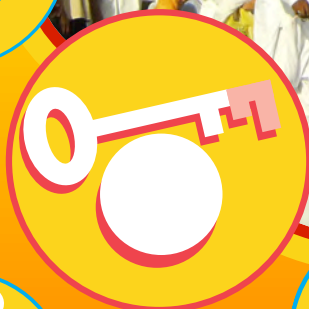


Comprehension Workbook 9

Pilgrimage (Hajj)



Find out about the meaning of stories and articles

CurriculumVisions

VisionMasters

Comprehension Workbook 9

Pilgrimage (Hajj)

Islam's holiest site, the Holy Ka'aba, Mecca.



Find out about the meaning of stories and articles

understand • key words • summarise • sequencing • AF2-3 • AF4-5 • AF6-7 • discuss • create

Muslim faith

Matches the requirements of the Literacy Strategy and designed to integrate with the study of world religions. (This material is independent of any specific text book and can be used alongside any publisher's books including our Muslim Faith, Mosque, Muslim art and writing and Muslim holy days books.)

Contents

Unit 9: Making pilgrimage

	Making pilgrimage	2
	Understanding words	4
	Finding key words	5
	Summarising	6
	Sequencing	7
	Get to the facts (AF 2-3)	8
	Whys and wherefores (AF 4-5)	9
	Opinions matter (AFs 6-7)	10
	Talking it through	11
	Make a story...	12
	Print the story (from PDF)	13

Making pilgrimage

The Hajj, or pilgrimage, is one of the pillars of Islam – every Muslim who can afford it must try to make a pilgrimage to Mecca once in their lives. Every year, millions of Muslims go on the pilgrimage, and most of them feel that it is the journey of a lifetime. During the pilgrimage, each pilgrim must complete many different actions and prayers. Here is a diary describing a part of one person's pilgrimage.

Saturday 29 October

I am travelling on a package deal that I arranged with a special Hajj travel agent. Yesterday I bought my ihram – this is made up of two unstitched white sheets and must be worn throughout the Hajj.

Sunday 30 October

Up at 4am to start the journey of a lifetime. At the airport, I am in a group with 200 other pilgrims. When the plane touches down in Medina I feel like I am in a very special place that is different from my every day life.



Thursday 3 November

We arrive at the mosque surrounding the Ka'ba at 3am. The mosque is huge and seems to go on for miles. Everywhere there are people. Everyone moves forward slowly, until we are in the centre, circling the Ka'ba with tens of thousands of other people, all focused on God. After circling the Ka'ba, I drank some water from the well of Zam Zam, and felt instantly refreshed.

Saturday 5 November

Today we travelled to Arafat, a dry and barren valley. I spent the day in prayer, asking God for forgiveness of my sins. In the afternoon I set out for the Mount of Mercy, a rocky hilltop where the Prophet Mohammed gave his last sermon. Here, looking up at the mountain, I stood and prayed. Even though there were millions of people with me, it felt like I was alone with God. I began to cry from happiness.

After prayers, some people boarded buses to Muzdalifah. I decided to walk the seven kilometres. There is a wide walkway, as wide as the M25 motorway, and hundreds of thousands of people all walking together. When I arrived, it was so crowded that I could not find my camp, so I spent the night sleeping on the pavement with thousands of others. I lay on my prayer mat and used my shoes as a pillow.

Monday 9 November

Today I completed the Hajj rituals. In the afternoon I walked to the Jamaraat. These are three pillars that stand for the devil. Each pilgrim must throw seven stones at the pillars to banish the devil. The pillars are inside a modern building with ramps and traffic lights to signal when to move forward. After the stoning I went back to Mecca to circle the Ka'ba for the last time. Then I boarded a bus for the return to Medina. There, I had my hair shaved off, showered and changed into my every day clothes. My last duty was to sacrifice a goat. This was done for me in a modern abattoir. The meat would be frozen, packaged and shipped around the world to be given to the poor. My pilgrimage was over.



Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write a sentence in which you found the word 'pilgrimage'.

b From that sentence, write what you think 'pilgrimage' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'pilgrimage'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'pilgrimage'.

e Give an example of a type of 'pilgrimage'.



Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: modern	recent

3

Summarising

(the gist of the story)

To summarise means to rewrite the story in a shorter version using as many of our key words from Task 2 as needed.

1 Write a heading for your summary.

2 Now write the main idea in one sentence.
e.g. "This story tells us..."

3 Now add some detail to the main idea by writing more sentences after it.

**Finally,
can you rewrite your
summary to make it better?**

1. Look out for errors such as using the same word too often – use alternatives.
2. Make sure you have summarised the author's purpose in your OWN words.
3. Make sure your summary is in a logical order.
4. Is your summary informative AND interesting to others?

**There is
nothing wrong
with rewriting; even
the best authors
rewrite their
work.**

123
4

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.



Pilgrims' camp, Medina.

I spent the day in prayer, asking God for forgiveness of my sins.

Everyone moves forward slowly, until we are in the centre, circling the Ka'ba with tens of thousands of other people, all focused on God.

All the pilgrims are staying in a giant tent city in Medina.

There, I had my hair shaved off, showered and changed into my every day clothes.

After the stoning I went back to Mecca to circle the Ka'ba for the last time.

At the airport, I am in a group with 200 other pilgrims.



Get to the facts

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the facts of the story.

Mt. Arafat.



Write a sentence to answer each of these questions:

- (a) What is the ihram made of?
- (b) What is the name of the well where the narrator has a drink of water on Thursday?
- (c) How long is the walk from Arafat to Muzdalifah?
- (d) Why is the Mount of Mercy important to Muslims?
- (e) Why do pilgrims throw stones at the pillars of Jamaraat?



Whys and wherefores

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the meanings in the story and how it was written.

1 Why did the narrator cry on November 5?

2 How does the narrator describe the mosque surrounding the Ka'ba?

3 Why does the narrator sleep on the pavement in Muzdalifah?

4 What is the last step in the Hajj?



Opinions matter

Answer these questions to give your views and to develop the story.

1 How do you think the narrator feels about going on the Hajj?

2 The Jamaraat are inside a modern building in order to keep people from being trampled during the stoning. What other safety precautions do you think the government in Saudi Arabia might take in order to make sure the pilgrims stay safe during the Hajj?

3 How do you think the narrator feels at the end of the Hajj?

4 The narrator does not write about things like what he ate, what the toilets were like or where he slept – why do you think he doesn't mention these things?

5 Every male pilgrim must shave their hair or cut it short at the end of the Hajj. Why do you think this is done?



Talking it through

It often helps if a group of people get together and discuss a problem.



Discussion topic: The Hajj

Discuss the different parts of the Hajj. If you have already studied the Hajj, you can also discuss any parts of the Hajj that are not given in this reading. Why do Muslims go on the Hajj?



Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.



An important journey

Write a story about a time you did something that was difficult but made you feel good afterward. For example, you may write about a sports competition that you were in, a time you studied hard for an exam and were happy with the result or any other thing you did. How did you feel when you were finished with the task or journey? What did you learn?

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