



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
GHANA ASSOCIATION OF  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATORS**



# Islamic Religious Studies

for Senior High Schools

Year 2



Suleiman Alhassan

Kabiru Soumana

Muhammed-Muniru Abdulai

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
GHANA ASSOCIATION OF  
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# **ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**for Senior High Schools**

**Year 2**

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Ghana Education  
Service (GES)





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# FOREWORD

Ghana's new Senior High School Curriculum aims to ensure that all learners achieve their potential by equipping them with 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills, knowledge, character qualities and shared Ghanaian values. This will prepare learners to live a responsible adult life, progress to further studies and enter the world of work. This is the first time that Ghana has developed a Senior High School Curriculum which focuses on national values, attempting to educate a generation of Ghanaian youth who are proud of our country and can contribute effectively to its development.

The Ministry of Education is proud to have overseen the production of these Learner Materials which can be used in class and for self-study and revision. These materials have been developed through a partnership between the Ghana Education Service, teacher unions (Ghana National Association of Teachers- GNAT, National Association of Graduate Teacher -NAGRAT and the Pre-Tertiary Teachers Association of Ghana- PRETAG) and National Subject Associations. These materials are informative and of high quality because they have been written by teachers for teachers with the expert backing of each subject association.

I believe that, if used appropriately, these materials will go a long way to transforming our Senior High Schools and developing Ghana so that we become a proud, prosperous and values-driven nation where our people are our greatest national asset.

**Haruna Iddrisu MP**

*Minister for Education*

SECTION

1

# ISLAMIC GROUPINGS IN GHANA



# STUDY OF RELIGION, GOD'S CREATION AND HUMANKIND

## Background to the Study of Religion and Islam

### INTRODUCTION

---

In Year 1, you studied how Islam entered Ghana and the main teachings that guide Muslim life. In this section, you will build on that knowledge by learning about the different Islamic groups in Ghana and how they emerged. You will identify and categorise groups such as Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah, Tijaniyya, Shia, Ghana Muslim Mission and Ahmadiyya. You will also explore how these groups developed in Ghana through trade, migration and missionary activities. In addition, you will examine how they sometimes differ in interpretation, emphasis and practice, while still sharing the same faith in Allah and His Messenger (SAW). Finally, you will study how African Indigenous Religion (AIR) influenced the growth and diversity of Islam in Ghana. This section will help you understand the unity and diversity of Muslims in Ghana and encourage you to respect differences among Islamic groups.



**The National Chief Imam, Ghana**

## KEY IDEAS

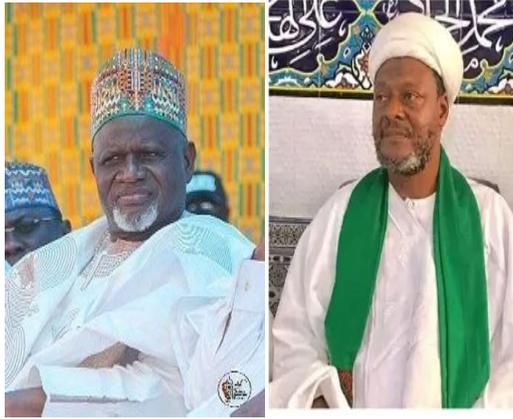
- Muslims in Ghana belong to different groups such as **Sunni, Shia, Ahmadiyya and Sufi orders**.
- These groups **emerged through trade, migration and missionary activities**.
- Groups may differ in **interpretations, emphases and practices**, but they all share the belief in Allah and His Messenger (SAW).
- **African Indigenous Religion (AIR)** influenced the growth and diversity of Islam in Ghana.
- Respecting differences among Muslims promotes **unity, peace and community development**.
- Learning about Islamic groups in Ghana builds on your **Year 1 study of how Islam entered Ghana**.

## ISLAMIC GROUPINGS IN GHANA

Islam in Ghana is one of the fastest-growing religions. Muslims across the country believe in Allah (God) and follow the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). However, Muslims do not all belong to one single grouping. Over the years, different Islamic groupings have developed. These groups share the same basic faith but differ in how they organise leadership, perform worship or express their culture.

In Ghana, you will find various groupings, including Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah, Tijaniyya, Shia, Ghana Muslim Mission, and Ahmadiyya. Learning about these groups will help you appreciate the unity of Islam as well as the diversity within the Muslim community. It will also help you build respect and peaceful coexistence with others.





**Figure 1.1:** Leaders of the five major Muslim groupings in Ghana

## Major Islamic Groupings in Ghana

This section introduces the main Muslim groupings you are likely to meet in Ghana. Each group has its own history, style of leadership, and focus. Knowing these groupings helps us understand how Muslims live their faith in different ways while still being united in Islam.

### Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah

1. Focuses strictly on the **Qur'an** and the **Sunnah** of the Prophet (SAW).
2. Strongly reject practices considered *bid'ah* (religious innovations).
3. Local mosques are led by **traditional Imams**.
4. Found everywhere in Ghana, both rural and urban.  
*Note:* This grouping represents what many consider the “mainstream” form of Islam.
5. The current leader of the ASWAJ in Ghana is **Shaikh Umar Ibrahim**. Can you identify him from **Figure 1.1** above?



### Tijaniyya

1. One of the largest Muslim groupings in Ghana.
2. Place great importance on **dhikr** (remembrance of Allah) and **spiritual purification**.
3. Followers are loyal to their **Shaikhs** (spiritual leaders).
4. Blends Islamic rituals with cultural expressions, which sometimes may attract criticism.
5. **Sheikh Abdul-Faidi Ahmed Abdulai Maikano** is the current Supreme Leader of the Tijaniyya in Ghana. Can you identify him from the above?

**Note:** Their spiritual gatherings are very popular in many Ghanaian communities.



## Shia

1. Believe **Imam Ali (RA)** and his descendants were the rightful leaders after Prophet Muhammad (SAW).
2. Honour the Prophet's family, known as *Ahl al-Bayt*.
3. Remember the **martyrdom of Karbala** during *Ashura*.
4. Smaller in number but have a strong presence in Ghana's urban areas.
5. The Shia Muslim Community in Ghana is led by its National Imam, **Imam Abubakar Ahmad Kamaludeen**. Can you identify him from the above?

**Note:** Shia identity is closely linked to loyalty to the Prophet's family.



## Ghana Muslim Mission

1. A local Islamic organisation founded in Ghana.
2. It is the oldest Islamic organisation existing today
3. The Ghana Muslim Mission, established in 1957, is a non-political, non-tribal Islamic organisation promoting Quranic and Sunnah practices for Ghanaian Muslims.
4. Promotes **education, da'wah (outreach), health and community development**.
5. Runs schools, clinics and social programmes.
6. Operates independently of foreign influence.
7. It has **Dr Sheikh Amin Mohammed Osei Bonsu** as the National Chairman. Can you identify him from the above?

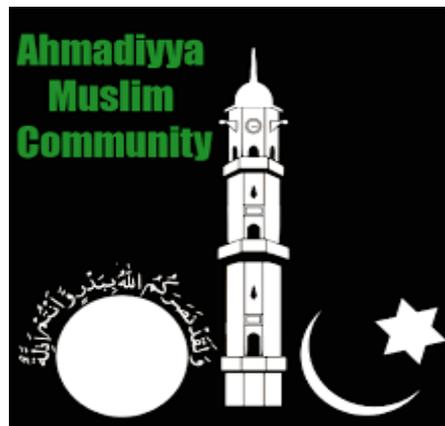
**Note:** They are known for being practical and community-focused in their activities.



## Ahmadiyya

1. Originated in the late 19th century and was introduced in Ghana in **1921**.
2. Believe **Mirza Ghulam Ahmad** was a messianic figure, which makes them different from mainstream Muslims.
3. Very strong in **education and health services** across Ghana.
4. Organised under a **central global leadership (Khilafah)**.
5. **Maulvi Mohammed Bin Sahi** is the current Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission in Ghana. Can you identify him from the above?

**Note:** Ahmadiyya schools and hospitals are found in many regions of Ghana.



### Activity 1.1 Exploring Islamic Groupings

1. First, write down the names of any Islamic groups in Ghana that you already know.
2. Now, look at the content provided in this lesson and check if your list is complete. Add missing groups until you have all five.
3. In pairs, compare your lists. Which groups appear on both lists? Which ones are new to you?
4. Share your ideas with the class. Together, we will make a master list on the board/chart.

Lead-in prompt: “Which Islamic groups do you often hear about in your community?”

## Distinctive Features of Islamic Groupings

This section looks at how the groups differ in their beliefs, leadership, dress, worship and other characteristics. These differences are important for understanding diversity, but they should not lead to division among Muslims.

### Beliefs and Practices

Each group believes in Allah and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), but they focus on different ways of practising Islam.

1. **Ahlu-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah:** Qur'an and Sunnah only; reject *bid'ah*.
2. **Tijaniyya:** Dhikr and following Shaikhs.
3. **Shia:** Loyalty to Imam Ali and Ahl al-Bayt; Karbala remembrance.
4. **Ghana Muslim Mission:** Service through education and da'wah.
5. **Ahmadiyya:** Missionary work; belief in Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.



Figure 1.2: Muslims are united by Allah's Oneness and Muhammad (SAW)'s Prophethood

### Leadership Structures

Leadership shows how authority is organised within each group.

1. **Ahlu-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah:** Local Imams in mosques.
2. **Tijaniyya:** Guided by Shaikhs (spiritual leaders).
3. **Shia:** Scholars and clerics interpret teachings.
4. **Ghana Muslim Mission:** Organised as a structured local body.
5. **Ahmadiyya:** Centralised under a global Khilafah.



## Dress Codes

All groups promote modest dressing, but with some differences.

1. **Ahlu-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah:** Simple Islamic dress (jalabiya, hijab, niqab).
2. **Tijaniyya:** Similar dress; some wear turbans or special caps.
3. **Shia:** Leaders may wear black or black turbans.
4. **Ghana Muslim Mission:** No unique dress beyond modesty.
5. **Ahmadiyya:** Sometimes wear formal or modern styles, especially for outreach.

*Note: Dress alone cannot be used to identify groupings. This is because culture and local tradition influence clothing in Ghana.*



**Figure 1.3:** Dress codes with differences

## Worship Styles

How Muslims pray and worship can differ in small but noticeable ways.

1. **Ahlu-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah:** Qur'an recitation, regular prayers, and avoiding religious unfounded innovations.
2. **Tijaniyya:** Group dhikr, chants and spiritual recitations.
3. **Shia:** Rituals such as Ashura; prayer style may differ slightly in posture and wording.
4. **Ghana Muslim Mission:** Combine worship with education and community preaching.
5. **Ahmadiyya:** Emphasise missionary preaching and organised religious meetings.



## Some other features

Other factors show how the groups are recognised in society.

1. **Ahlu-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah:** Strong Mosque presence everywhere.
2. **Tijaniyya:** Mosque presence everywhere across the country and rooted in a related West African Islamic culture.
3. **Shia:** Loyal to Ahl al-Bayt, though smaller in number.
4. **Ghana Muslim Mission:** Known for schools and social services.
5. **Ahmadiyya:** Built many schools and hospitals across Ghana. Huge presence in the Central Region.

Comparison Table of Major Islamic Groupings in Ghana

| Group                   | Beliefs & Practices  | Leadership  | Dress   | Worship Style                                   | Other Features                                       |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|
| Ahlu-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah | Qur'an and Sunnah only; reject religious innovations ( <i>bid'ah</i> ) | Traditional Imams in local mosques                    | Modest Islamic dress (jalabiya, hijab, niqab)             | Focus on Qur'an recitation, avoid innovations   | Spread widely across Ghana                           |
| Tijaniyya               | Dhikr (remembrance), spiritual purification, respect for Shaikhs       | Shaikhs (spiritual leaders)                           | Modest dress; some caps/ turbans/ jalabiya                | Collective dhikr, chants                        | Deeply rooted in West African culture, widely spread |
| Shia                    | Loyalty to Imam Ali and Ahl al-Bayt; remember Karbala                  | Loyalty to Imam Ali and Ahl al-Bayt; remember Karbala | Modest dress; leaders may wear black/ white/green turbans | Ashura remembrance; slight prayer differences   | Minority but deeply loyal                            |
| Ghana Muslim Mission    | Focus on da'wah, education, health, social development                 | Structured administration                             | Simple modest dress                                       | Worship with strong link to education/ outreach | Runs schools, clinics, projects                      |
| Ahmadiyya               | Believe Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a messianic figure; missionary work      | Centralised global Khilafah                           | Modest, sometimes modern/ formal                          | Organised religious meetings, missionary focus  | Many schools, hospitals, social services             |

## Activity 1.2 Features Matching Task

In your group, look carefully at the comparison table.

1. Choose **two Islamic groupings** (e.g., Shia, Ahmadiyya).
2. Identify at least **one belief, one leadership feature, one dress code and one worship style** for each group.
3. Record your findings in a simple chart or short list.
4. Prepare to share with the class — you can make a small poster, a chart or even act out a short skit showing the group’s worship style.

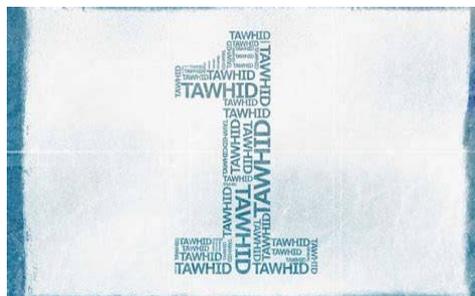
**Lead-in prompt:** “If you had to explain your group to a friend, what four things would you tell them first?”

## Areas of Convergence and Divergence

This section explains what unites all Muslims and what makes the groups different.

### Convergence (What They Share)

- a. Belief in **Allah (Tawhīd)** as the one God.
- b. Acceptance of **Prophet Muhammad (SAW)** as the final messenger.
- c. Practice of the **five daily prayers**.
- d. Use of the **Qur’an** as guidance.
- e. Upholding **morals and ethics**.
- f. Using the **mosque** for prayer and learning.



**Figure 1.4:** The Mosque is always a converging place for all Muslim groupings and their activities

### Divergence (Where They Differ)

- a. **Leadership:** Different sources of authority (Imams, Sheikhs, Ahl al-Bayt, Khilafah).
- b. **Practices:** Tijaniyya dhikr, Shia Ashura, Ahlus-Sunnah rejection of such practices.
- c. **Beliefs:** Ahmadiyya belief in Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.
- d. **Dress:** Some wear turbans, others prefer modern or simple styles.
- e. **Community Role:** Some focus more on worship and/or on education and health.

### Activity 1.3 Concept Map on Diversity

Draw a big circle in the middle of your page and write “**Islamic Groupings in Ghana.**”

1. Draw **five branches** from the circle, one for each grouping.
2. Under each branch, write at least **two features** (beliefs, leadership, or worship).
3. Use arrows to connect groups that share similarities (e.g., all perform five daily prayers).
4. Use a different colour or dashed line to show differences (e.g., special rituals like Ashura).

**Lead-in prompt:** “How can you show that Muslims are united in some ways but different in others?”

### Respect and Peaceful Coexistence

Muslims in Ghana may belong to different groups, but they all share the same core faith. What matters most is not the dress or small differences in practice but the shared belief in Allah and His Messenger (SAW).

Islam teaches justice, kindness and unity. Respect means valuing others even if we disagree with them. When Muslims respect each other, they prevent conflict and build stronger communities. Working together in da‘wah, education and national development strengthen the Ummah and benefits the whole country.

### Activity 1.4 Unity in Diversity Reflection

#### Steps

1. On your own, write a short note (4–5 sentences) answering:
  - a. Why is tolerance important among Muslims in Ghana?
  - b. What may happen if Muslims do not respect each other?
2. Share your answer in a small group.

3. As a group, agree on one main point that shows why unity is necessary.
4. (Optional extension: interview a local Imam or elder to find out how different groups in your community cooperate.)

**Lead-in prompt:** “Think about what happens when neighbours quarrel. How does it affect peace in the home? Now apply that idea to Muslims in Ghana.”

## HISTORICAL EMERGENCE OF ISLAMIC GROUPS IN GHANA

### The Emergence of Islamic Groupings in Ghana

Islam came to Ghana many centuries ago through trade, travel and missionary work. Traders and scholars from across the Sahara brought with them not only goods like salt and cloth, but also the message of the Qur’an. Over time, Islam became part of many Ghanaian communities, but different Islamic groupings appeared at different points in history. Each group developed because of the needs of the people, the influence of travelling scholars, or the work of missionaries. By studying their history, we see how Islam in Ghana grew in diversity, but also how all Muslims remain united in their belief in Allah and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW).



**Figure 1.5:** The Larabanga Mosque is the oldest in Ghana

### Historical Context of Islam in Ghana

The entry of Islam into Ghana can be traced as far back as the 11th century. Muslim traders, especially those crossing the Sahara Desert, settled in the northern parts of the country. They introduced Qur’anic teachings, and gradually small communities of Muslims began to form. These communities later developed into Zongo settlements, which became recognised centres for Islamic practice and learning. Over time, the Zongo communities grew to accommodate different groups within Islam. This early presence of Islam laid the foundation for the later spread of the major Islamic groupings in Ghana.

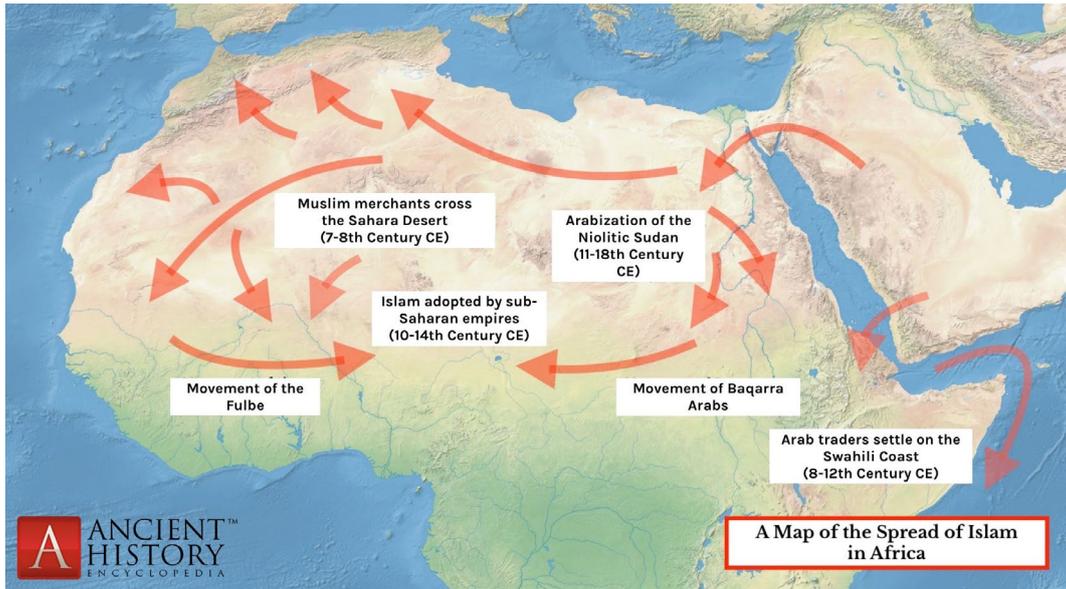


Figure 1.6: The spread of Islam in Africa. Credit: pinterest.com

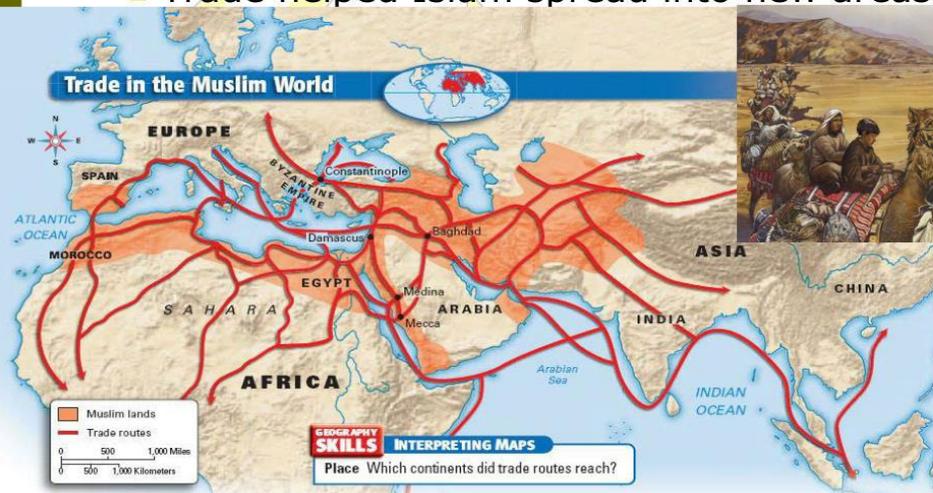
## Role of Trade and Migration

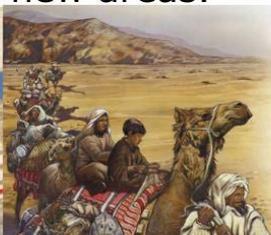
Trade and migration played a very important role in the spread of Islam across Ghana. The Hausa traders from present-day Nigeria, as well as the Dyula or Wangara traders from West Africa, travelled widely for commerce and established settlements in different parts of the north and middle belt. Wherever these traders went, they built mosques and Qur’anic schools, making it possible for Islam to take firm roots in the new areas. Migration also brought clerics and scholars into Ghana, and they passed on Islamic knowledge to their followers. As a result, different Islamic traditions and groupings were established and passed on through generations.



## Trade Helps Spread Islam

- ▣ Main Idea 2:
  - Trade helped Islam spread into new areas.





**GEOGRAPHY SKILLS INTERPRETING MAPS**

Place Which continents did trade routes reach?

Figure 1.7: Trade routes that spread Islam to Ghana. Credit: slideserve.com

### Activity 1.5 Trade Brought Islam Here

1. Read this short story aloud (or silently if you can):  
“A Hausa trader came with salt and cloth. He built a mosque in the village. A Dyula trader taught Qur’an lessons. Soon, a small Muslim community grew.”
2. Answer these questions:
  - a. What did the Hausa trader bring apart from goods?
  - b. What did the Dyula trader teach?
  - c. What grew in the village after they came?
3. Write a short sentence: Trade helped Islam spread because...

## Islamic Education and Missionary Work

Apart from trade and migration, Islamic education and missionary activities also contributed to the emergence of Islamic groupings in Ghana. The Tijaniyya and other Sufi orders spread mainly through the influence of West African scholars and clerics who travelled across borders, holding gatherings for prayer and remembrance of Allah. In 1921, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission arrived in Ghana. They introduced a more structured system of schools, hospitals and publications. Their work went beyond religious rituals into education and health, and they influenced both Muslims and non-Muslims in Ghana. In later years, Shia Muslims also established themselves in Ghana, mainly through the efforts of Ghanaian students who studied abroad and returned with new teachings.



Figure 1.8: Some Islamic S.H.S. Institutions by Muslim groupings



**Figure 1.9:** Some Tertiary educational Institutions by Muslim groupings

## Timeline of Emergence

Looking at the timeline of emergence helps us see clearly when each Islamic grouping became active in Ghana. Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah are the oldest and most widespread.

### 11th Century onwards

Islam first entered Ghana through trans-Saharan trade routes. Muslim traders and clerics from the north introduced Qur'anic teachings to northern communities. This laid the foundation for the later spread of Islam.

*Early Period (linked to Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah):* The earliest Muslim traders and Hausa clerics who settled in Ghana followed the Qur'an and Sunnah strictly. Their teachings formed the basis of the Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah, which has remained the most widespread grouping in Ghana.

### 18th–19th Century (Rise of Sufi Orders such as Tijaniyya)

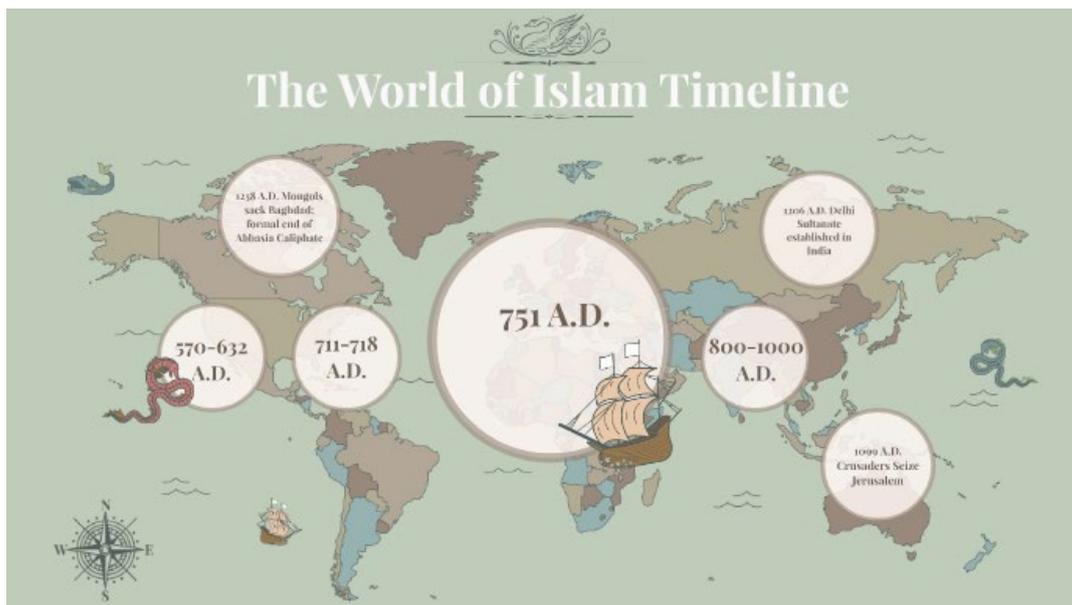
With increased West African trade and scholarship, Tijaniyya and other Sufi orders became popular. Their spread came through travelling clerics who taught dhikr (remembrance of Allah), spiritual purification and close ties to Shaikhs.

### 1921 (Arrival of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission)

The Ahmadiyya movement formally arrived in Ghana in 1921. They quickly grew because of their organised schools, hospitals and missionary outreach. Their structured administration made them very visible in Ghanaian society.

### Mid–Late 20th Century (Growth of Shia Islam)

The Shia community emerged later in the 20th century. Their presence grew mainly through international connections, especially Ghanaian students who studied abroad and returned with Shia teachings. They also received support from foreign Shia organisations.



**Figure 1.10:** Islamic timeline

### Activity 1.6 Group Emergence Cards

1. Cut or copy these cards into your notebook:
  - a. **11th Century:** Traders + Qur'an teaching → Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah
  - b. **18th–19th Century:** Travelling clerics → Tijaniyya dhikr & Sufi orders
  - c. **1921:** Schools & hospitals → Ahmadiyya Mission
  - d. **20th Century:** Foreign study returnees → Shia Muslims
2. Arrange the cards in the correct timeline.
3. In pairs, share one contribution of each group.

## Need for Understanding History

Knowing how Islamic groupings came into Ghana helps us to understand the rich history of Islam in the country. It also reminds us that while Muslims may differ in their groupings, they share the same foundations of faith. By appreciating this history, learners can develop respect for diversity within Islam and value the peaceful coexistence that Ghana enjoys today.

### Activity 1.7 My Family's Islam Story

1. Ask an elder in your home or community: When did Islam first come here, and who brought it?
2. Write down three short points you learned. For example:

- a. Islam came with Hausa traders.
  - b. A mosque was built.
  - c. Qur'anic studies began.
3. Share your answers with a classmate.

## DIFFERENCES IN INTERPRETATION, EMPHASIS AND PRACTICES WITHIN GHANAIAN ISLAM

### Muslim groupings within Ghanaian Islam

Muslims in Ghana all believe in Allah, the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad (SAW). However, they are not all the same in how they interpret certain teachings or in how they practise their faith. These differences appeared over time through history, trade, migration, education and missionary work. For example, some groups place more emphasis on spiritual purification, while others focus on leadership or outreach. By studying these differences, we can see that Islam in Ghana is both united and diverse. This understanding helps us to respect one another and live peacefully, even when Muslims practise their religion in slightly different ways.



**Figure 1.11:** A section of Muslim leadership in Ghana.

### Differences in Interpretation of Leadership

One main area where Muslims in Ghana differ is leadership. Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah believe that Muslims should follow the Qur'an and Sunnah directly. Leadership is normally in the hands of imams and community scholars who guide worship and teach Islamic law. On the other hand, Shia Muslims emphasise the role of the Prophet's family, known as Ahl al-Bayt. They believe leadership should be traced to Imam Ali and his descendants. The Ahmadiyya have a different form of leadership altogether. They recognise a Khalifa who leads Muslims worldwide, and their belief is rooted in the teachings of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, whom they believe was the promised Messiah. These different interpretations of leadership are part of what makes each grouping distinct.



Figure 1.12: Muslim leadership at a conference. Credit: mynewsgh.com

### Activity 1.8 Who Leads Us?

Read this short sketch below and answer the questions that follow.

- *Ahlu-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah*: Leaders are imams and scholars who guide communities.
- *Shia*: Leaders are traced to the Prophet's family, especially Imam Ali and his descendants.
- *Ahmadiyya*: Leadership is under a Khalifa, a worldwide spiritual head.

#### Questions

1. Who leads Ahlu-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah?
2. Who do Shia Muslims emphasise as leaders?
3. Who leads the Ahmadiyya worldwide?
4. What is one difference you notice among them?

## Differences in Spiritual Emphasis

Muslims in Ghana also differ in the way they place emphasis on spiritual life. The Tijaniyya, for example, strongly focus on spiritual purification and remembrance of Allah, known as *dhikr*. They usually follow a Sheikh who provides spiritual guidance to members. Ahlu-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah, on the other hand, emphasise regular prayer, fasting and following Shari'a closely. They focus more on the legal and ritual aspects of worship rather than on mystical practices.



Figure 1.13: Muslim spirituality

### Activity 1.9 Silent or Loud?

Work with a partner. One person reads about loud dhikr, the other reads about quiet dhikr. Together, discuss the following points

1. What is dhikr?
2. Why do some Muslims practise it loudly while others do it quietly?
3. What do both groups have in common?

Write your answers in three short sentences.

Example: “Dhikr means remembrance of Allah. Tijaniyya do it loudly. Other groups do it quietly. Both remember Allah.”

## Differences in Practices and Rituals

In addition to leadership and spirituality, Muslims also differ in their practices. Some groups, such as Tijaniyya, practise dhikr loudly in groups, while others do it quietly. There are also variations in how festivals are celebrated. For example, some groups mark the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), known as Maulid, with public gatherings, while others do not. Dress codes may also vary; some groups adopt specific styles of attire that reflect their traditions or cultural influences. The Ahmadiyya are especially noted for combining religious practice with strong attention to social services such as running schools, hospitals and community projects.



**Figure 1.14:** A Maulid procession



**Figure 1.15:** Singing at a Jalsa in Ghana



**Figure 1.16:** A Maulid of Sayyida Fatima



**Figure 1.17:** An Ahmadiyya Mission Hospital

### Activity 1.10 How Did Differences Begin?

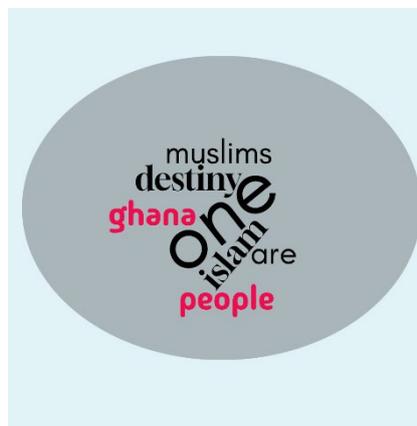
1. Draw a simple circle in your notebook and write: “Why differences in Islam?”
2. Draw four arrows pointing out of the circle and write:
  - a. Trade and migration
  - b. Missionary movements
  - c. Education abroad
  - d. Cultural adaptation
3. Under each arrow, add one example.  
Example: Trade and migration → Traders brought different practices.

## Factors Leading to Differences

These differences did not appear by chance. Several factors explain why groups in Ghana practise Islam differently. Trade and migration brought different traditions into the country, as traders and clerics from different regions introduced new practices. Missionary movements also played a part. The Ahmadiyya, for example, introduced a more modern and structured form of Islamic practice through education and administration. Education abroad has also influenced differences. Some Ghanaian students who studied in Iran or Arab countries returned with new teachings, especially those connected to Shia Islam. Finally, cultural adaptation also shaped these differences. Local customs influenced the way mosques were designed, how leaders were chosen and even styles of dress.

## Need for Understanding Differences

By understanding why Muslims in Ghana practise Islam differently, we gain a better picture of how diverse yet united the Muslim community is. All groups agree on the basics of Islam—belief in Allah, the Qur’an and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The differences simply show the rich ways Islam has developed in Ghana through history and culture. Instead of causing conflict, this diversity should be seen as a source of strength. It encourages tolerance, respect and peaceful coexistence in Ghana’s Muslim communities.



# INFLUENCE OF AFRICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION ON ISLAM IN GHANA

## Islam Meets Local Traditions

Islam in Ghana did not develop in isolation. As it spread through trade, migration and missionary work, it encountered communities that already practised deeply rooted African Indigenous Religion (AIR). Some Islamic groups incorporated elements of AIR into their daily lives, rituals and community symbols, while others focused strictly on Qur'anic teachings. Understanding this interaction helps learners see how religions adapt to cultural settings and highlights both the diversity and unity of Muslim identity in Ghana.



Figure 1.18: c

### Activity 1.11 Understanding How Differences Begin

#### Read the short passage below.

"When Islam came to Ghana, it met communities practising traditional beliefs. Some Muslims used charms and healing practices familiar to local people, while others focused strictly on Qur'an and Sunnah. Over time, different Islamic groups responded differently to these cultural practices."

1. Answer the following questions
  - a. Which practices did early Muslims adopt from AIR?
  - b. Which groups avoided AIR practices?
  - c. How did these interactions influence the Muslim community?
2. Draw a simple 3-frame storyboard showing:
  - a. Frame 1: Early encounter between Islam and AIR

- b. Frame 2: A group adapting some local practices
- c. Frame 3: A group strictly following Qur'an and Sunnah

## Early Encounters: Islam and Local Beliefs

When Islam first arrived, Ghanaian communities already had systems of chieftaincy, ancestor reverence and spiritual protection. Early Muslim clerics often became integrated into these communities by offering services familiar to AIR practitioners, such as healing, charms and divination. These interactions created mutual understanding and allowed Islam to gain acceptance while respecting local traditions.

## Adapting Cultural Practices

Some Muslims and/or groups may have adapted AIR-influenced cultural practices to their religious framework. For example, rhythmic movement of the body during dhikr, communal healing sessions, open and mixed gender drumming and dancing during Islamic Eids and other social events, the use of water or Qur'anic verses for protection with indigenous rituals or practices. Naming ceremonies in some Muslim families retain symbolic AIR elements, like water or herbs, reinterpreted in an Islamic context; the choosing of certain names; some marriage rites and processes or procedures, etc. These adaptations demonstrate how some Muslims in Ghana blended Islamic spiritual heritage with local culture.

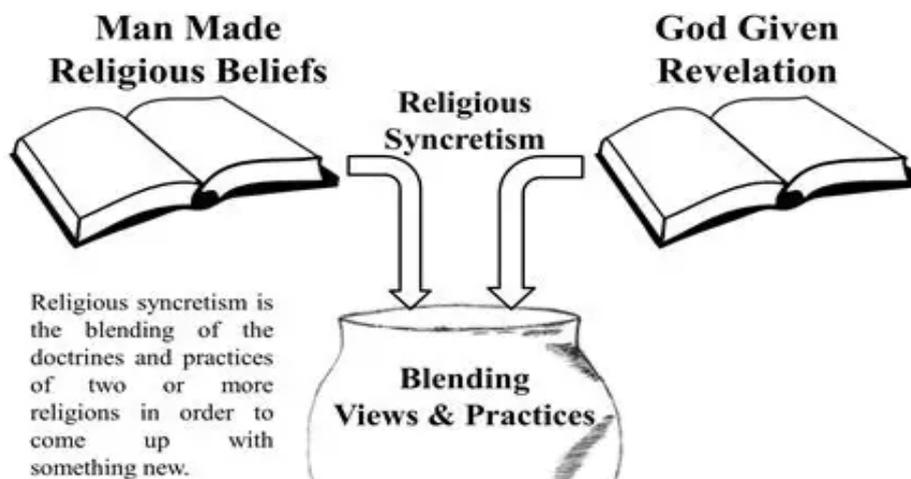


Figure 1.19: A section of Ghanaian Muslim women

## AIR in Rituals and Community Life

AIR influence is evident in certain rituals by some Muslim and community structures. **Amulets (tama)** with Qur'anic verses reflect the AIR tradition of protective charms. Some Muslims consult herbalists for healing, echoing AIR's emphasis on herbal medicine and spiritual cleansing. Community leadership in Zongo areas often combines Islamic authority (Imams and Sheikhs) with AIR-style elder roles, creating a hybrid governance system that respects both religious and cultural norms.

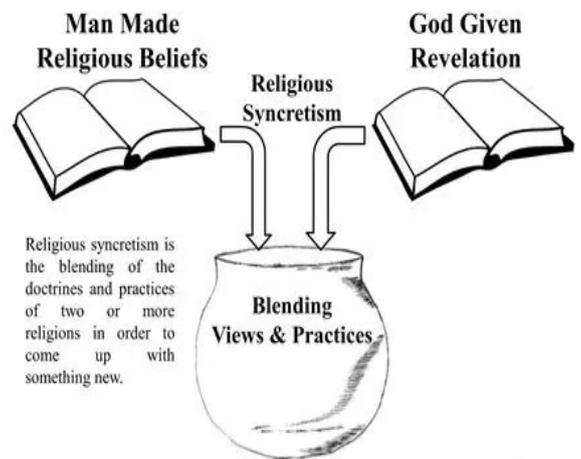
### Activity 1.12 Map the Cultural Spread

Draw a simple outline map of Ghana (or use a provided map).

1. Mark where Islamic groups first settled.
2. Add arrows and labels to show:
  - a. Tijaniyya incorporating AIR practices
  - b. Ahlus-Sunnah Reformist groups rejecting AIR practices
  - c. Ahmadiyya focusing on schools and social reform
  - d. Shia is maintaining some AIR-related symbolism
3. Add 1–2 words describing each adaptation, e.g., “drumming,” “amulets,” “education.”

## Blended Practices: Syncretism

Certain Islamic groups blend Qur’anic recitation with AIR-inspired rituals, such as drumming and dancing at weddings, funerals and naming ceremonies. This blending or syncretism shows how religious practice “blends cultural traditions to compromise core Islamic beliefs. Some groupings often embrace this approach, claiming “tolerance” and “communal harmony” but conflicting spiritual focus. Can you give instances of syncretism at home, in your community or school or during Islamic religious occasions?



## Dangers of Syncretism in Islam

Syncretism, the blending of Islamic beliefs with local customs or other faiths, poses significant threats to the purity and integrity of Islam. Some dangers include:

1. Dilution of Tawhid: Syncretism can lead to the compromise of Islam's fundamental principle of monotheism.
2. Innovations and Bid'ah: Mixing Islamic practices with cultural or foreign influences can introduce innovations and bid'ah (unacceptable innovations).

3. **Loss of Islamic Identity:** Syncretism can erode the distinctiveness of Islamic values and practices.
4. **Misguidance and Shirk:** Blending Islam with other beliefs can lead to misguidance and, ultimately, shirk (polytheism).

### Preserving Islamic purity requires

- a. Adherence to the Quran and Sunnah (the Traditions of the Prophet).
- b. Avoiding cultural and foreign influences that compromise Islamic values.
- c. Seeking knowledge from authentic Islamic sources.

By being vigilant and committed to Islamic principles, Muslims can safeguard their faith against the dangers of syncretism.

### Activity 1.13 Observe and Reflect on Local Practices

Identify one Muslim ceremony in your community (e.g., wedding, naming ceremony, funeral).

1. Note practices that seem to be influenced by AIR, for example:
  - a. Drumming or dancing
  - b. Herbal rituals
  - c. Use of charms or symbolic items
2. Write a short reflection (3–6 sentences) answering:
  - a. Which parts are more cultural than religious?
  - b. Which parts are clearly Islamic?
  - c. How do these practices show respect for culture while following Islam?

### How Different Groups Respond

Different Islamic groups in Ghana respond to AIR influences in various ways:

1. **Tijaniyya:** Integrate AIR elements into spiritual and community life, emphasising tolerance.
2. **Ahlu-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah Reformists:** Reject AIR influences, adhering strictly to Qur'an and Sunnah.
3. **Ahmadiyya:** Focus on education and social reform, distancing themselves from AIR practices.
4. **Shia:** Retain some spiritual symbols that resonate with AIR, within Shia ritual frameworks.

These responses show how theological emphasis, historical experience and cultural engagement shape community practices.

### Activity 1.14 Compare AIR Responses Chart

Choose **two** Islamic groupings: Tijaniyya, Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah Reformists, Ahmadiyya or Shia.

1. Fill in a simple chart like the one below

| S/N | Group | AIR Practices Adopted | AIR Practices Rejected | Reason / Outcome |
|-----|-------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 1.  |       |                       |                        |                  |
| 2.  |       |                       |                        |                  |
|     |       |                       |                        |                  |
|     |       |                       |                        |                  |

2. Share your completed chart with a friend or small group. Discuss similarities and differences.

## EXTENDED READING

- **Islam in Ghana: Historical Overview**

This article provides a comprehensive history of Islam in Ghana, detailing its introduction through trade and migration and its subsequent spread across the country. It discusses the various Islamic sects present in Ghana, including Sunni, Shia and Ahmadiyya and highlights the interactions between these groups and indigenous religious practices.

Source: [Islam in Ghana - Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_Ghana?utm_source=chatgpt.com) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion\\_in\\_Ghana?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_Ghana?utm_source=chatgpt.com)



- **Planting Islam in Ghana: A Critical Review of the Approaches**

This paper critically examines the approaches to Islam's integration into Ghanaian society, focusing on the influence of indigenous beliefs and practices. It discusses the efforts of reformists to purify Islam from local customs and the resistance to such reforms by traditionalist groups.

Source: [Planting Islam in Ghana: A Critical Review of the Approaches](#)



- **The Spread of Islam in West Africa: Containment, Mixing and Reform**

This article explores the historical spread of Islam in West Africa, including Ghana. It outlines the stages of Islam's introduction, adaptation to local cultures and the subsequent reform movements that sought to purify Islamic practices. The paper provides context for understanding the syncretic practices observed in Ghanaian Islam.

Source: [The Spread of Islam in West Africa: Containment, Mixing and Reform](#)



- **Ghanaian Muslims - Insamer**

This article provides an overview of the Muslim population in Ghana, discussing their distribution, religious practices and the influence of indigenous beliefs. It offers insights into how AIR has shaped Islamic practices in different regions of Ghana.

Source: [Ghanaian Muslims - Insamer](#)



- **Traditional African Religions - An Overview**

This resource offers a general overview of traditional African religions, including their beliefs, practices and cultural significance. It provides background information that can help learners understand the indigenous religious context in which Islam was introduced to Ghana.

Source: [Traditional African Religions - An Overview](#)



# REVIEW QUESTIONS 1

## Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. Which of the following is the most widespread Islamic grouping in Ghana?
  - A. Ahmadiyya
  - B. Shia
  - C. Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah
  - D. Tijaniyya
2. What is the main feature distinguishing Islamic groupings in Ghana?
  - A. Geographical location only
  - B. Differences in beliefs, leadership and practices
  - C. Language spoken in prayers
  - D. Number of followers
3. Which Islamic group in Ghana focuses strongly on modernist education and social reform?
  - A. Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah
  - B. Shia
  - C. Ahmadiyya
  - D. Tijaniyya
4. Zongo communities in Ghana are known for:
  - A. Being centres of trade only
  - B. Practising only African Indigenous Religion
  - C. Islamic learning and community settlements
  - D. Exclusive Ahmadiyya population
5. A distinguishing feature of Tijaniyya in Ghana is:
  - A. Emphasis on daily rituals and Fiqh
  - B. Focus on spiritual purification and dhikr
  - C. Leadership under worldwide Khalipha
  - D. Following Shia Imams
6. Islam first entered Ghana mainly through:
  - A. European missionaries
  - B. West African traders and Saharan merchants
  - C. Colonial governments
  - D. Arab conquest
7. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission arrived in Ghana in:
  - A. 11th century
  - B. 18th century
  - C. 1921
  - D. 1960
8. Which group gave prominence to the leadership of the Prophet's family?

- A. Ahmadiyya
  - B. Shia
  - C. Tijaniyya
  - D. Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah
- 9.** Which factor contributed most to the spread of Tijaniyya in Ghana?
- A. Government policies
  - B. Trade and travelling clerics
  - C. European education systems
  - D. Urbanization
- 10.** The early Hausa clerics in Ghana influenced the development of:
- A. Shia communities
  - B. Ahmadiyya hospitals
  - C. Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah mainstream
  - D. Tijaniyya dhikr practices
- 11.** Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah leadership is vested in:
- A. Imams and community scholars
  - B. Worldwide Khalipha
  - C. Descendants of Prophet Muhammad
  - D. Colonial administrators
- 12.** Tijaniyya in Ghana emphasises:
- A. Military conquest
  - B. Spiritual purification and guidance of a Sheikh
  - C. Secular education only
  - D. Strict Sharia enforcement
- 13.** The Ahmadiyya believe in leadership under:
- A. Local Imams
  - B. Sheikh of Tijaniyya
  - C. Worldwide Khalipha
  - D. Prophet's descendants
- 14.** Which practice shows diversity among Islamic groups in Ghana?
- A. Observing prayer five times a day
  - B. Dhikr, dress codes and celebration of Maulid
  - C. Belief in Allah
  - D. Reading the Qur'an
- 15.** One reason for differences in Islamic practices in Ghana is:
- A. Air pollution
  - B. Trade, migration and education abroad
  - C. Colonial laws
  - D. Climate change
- 16.** The term "syncretism" in Islam refers to:
- A. Strict Qur'anic adherence
  - B. Blending Islamic practices with local cultural beliefs

- C. Following the worldwide Khalipha
  - D. Missionary work
- 17.** Which Islamic group in Ghana integrates some African Indigenous Religion practices?
- A. Ahmadiyya
  - B. Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah reformists
  - C. Tijaniyya
  - D. None of the above
- 18.** The use of **tama (amulets)** reflects:
- A. Pure Islamic law
  - B. AIR heritage in protective charms
  - C. Colonial education influence
  - D. Secular law
- 19.** Naming ceremonies in some Muslim families show:
- A. Complete rejection of AIR
  - B. Adoption of only Western rituals
  - C. Cultural adaptation of AIR within Islamic frameworks
  - D. Exclusive Shia practices
- 20.** Which group largely distances itself from AIR influences?
- A. Tijaniyya
  - B. Ahmadiyya
  - C. Shia
  - D. Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah Reformists

### Short Answer Questions

1. Name four major Islamic groupings in Ghana.
2. Explain one unique feature of Ahmadiyya in Ghana.
3. State two factors that contributed to the spread of Islam in Ghana.
4. Describe one way Tijaniyya spread through West Africa into Ghana.
5. Compare the leadership structures of Shia and Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah.
6. Identify one spiritual practice emphasised by Tijaniyya.
7. Give one example of an AIR-influenced practice in Ghanaian Islam.
8. Explain how Ahmadiyya responds to AIR influences.
9. Outline the timeline of Ahmadiyya's arrival in Ghana.
10. Describe one syncretic practice found in a Muslim community in Ghana.

### Fill in the Blanks

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is the oldest and most widespread Islamic grouping in Ghana.
2. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission formally arrived in Ghana in the year \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ traders introduced Islam into northern Ghana through trade and settlement.

4. Tijaniyya emphasises \_\_\_\_\_ and guidance under a Sheikh.
5. Leadership in Shia Islam is vested in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Prophet.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ refers to blending Islamic and local cultural practices.
7. The use of \_\_\_\_\_ (amulets) in some Muslim communities reflects AIR influence.
8. Some Islamic groups retain rhythmic drumming during \_\_\_\_\_ as part of cultural adaptation.
9. Zongo communities became recognised centres for \_\_\_\_\_ and Islamic learning.
10. The \_\_\_\_\_ spread mainly through the efforts of travelling clerics and scholars.

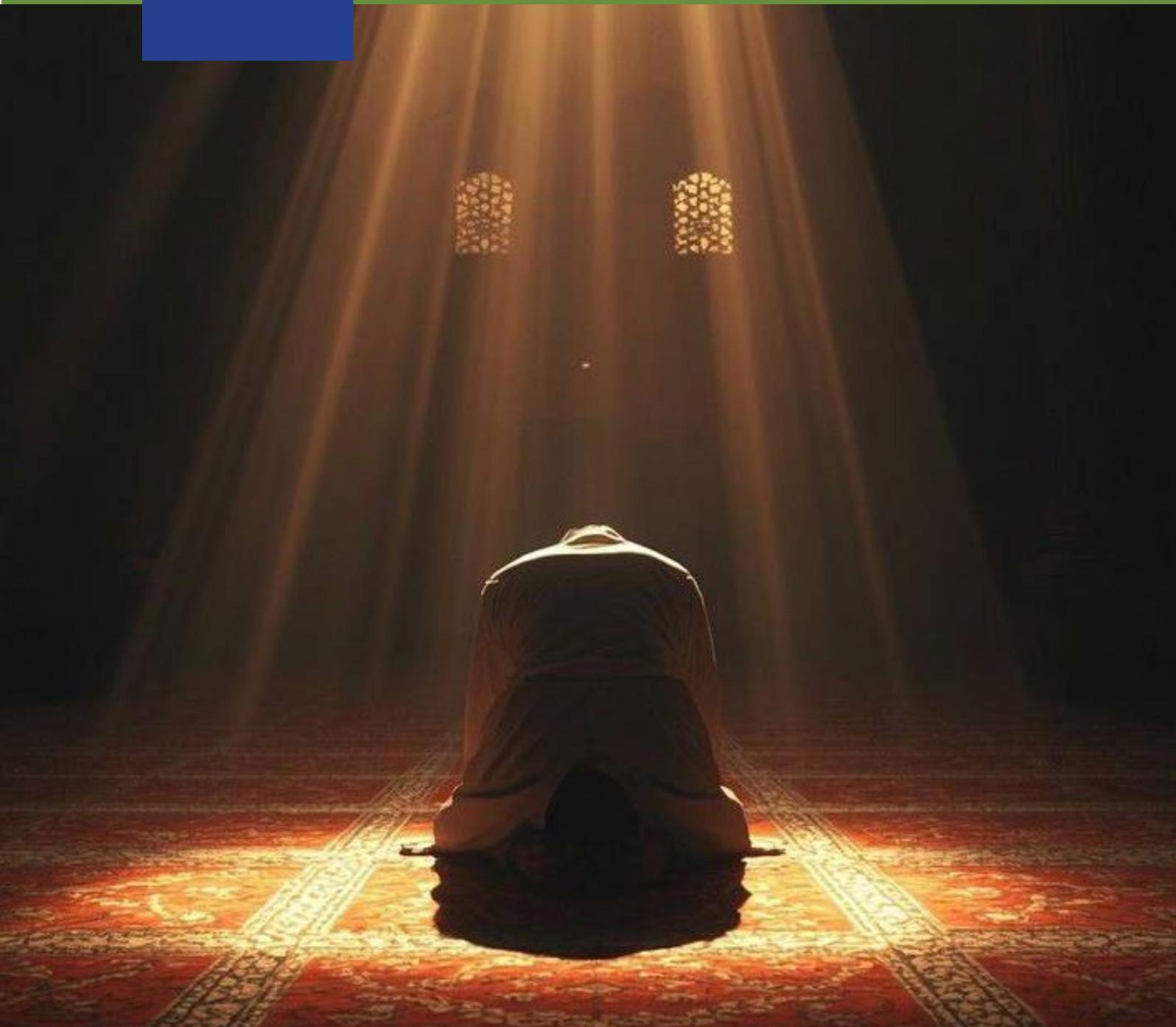
### Essay Questions

1. Analyse the distinguishing features of the major Islamic groupings in Ghana and discuss how they maintain unity despite differences.
2. Reflect on how knowledge of Islamic groupings in Ghana can promote peaceful coexistence and tolerance among students.
3. Explain the role of trade, migration and missionary activities in the emergence of Islamic groupings in Ghana.
4. Using a timeline, discuss how the Ahmadiyya, Tijaniyya and Shia emerged in Ghana and the factors influencing their spread.
5. Compare the spiritual emphases and leadership structures of Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah, Tijaniyya and Shia Muslims in Ghana.
6. Evaluate how differences in interpretation and practices among Islamic groupings can be both a source of misunderstanding and strength.
7. Analyse the influence of African Indigenous Religion on Islamic practices in Ghana, citing examples of adaptation and resistance.
8. Discuss the importance of balancing cultural heritage and religious purity when integrating local traditions into Islamic practice.

SECTION

# 2

## ALLAH AND HIS CREATION



# STUDY OF RELIGION, GOD'S CREATION AND HUMANKIND

## The Nature of God and His Creation

### INTRODUCTION

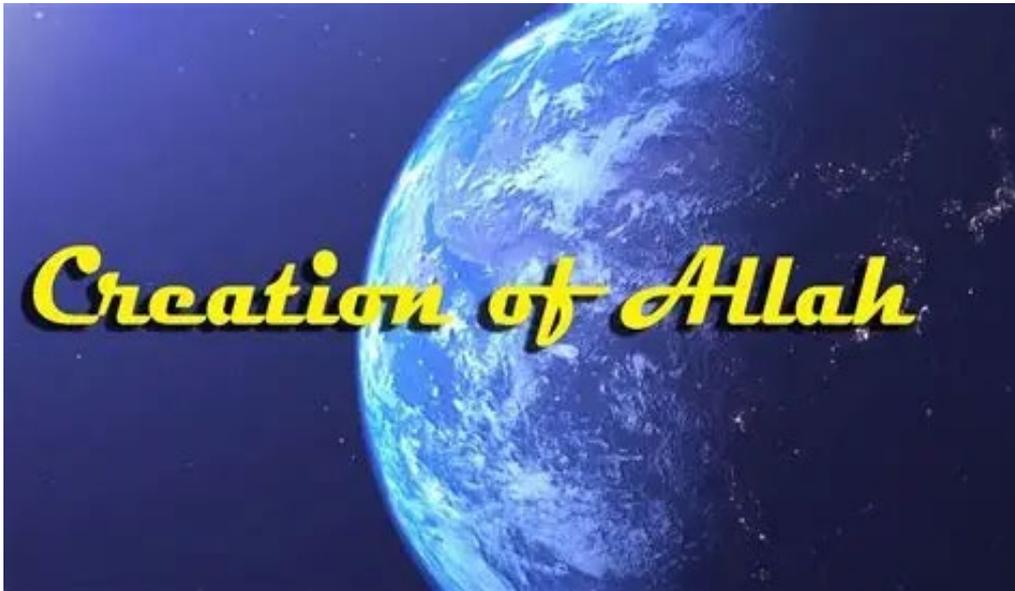
This section explores the Islamic understanding of God and compares it with African Indigenous Religion (AIR). You will study the nature of Allah through the natural environment, His Beautiful Names (Asma'ul Husna) and divine attributes such as justice, mercy and patience. You will examine key Islamic theological schools and debates, understanding literal and metaphorical interpretations of Allah's nature. The concept of **Tawhid**, the absolute Oneness of Allah, is emphasised as the foundation of Muslim belief and practice.

Also, you will compare Islam and AIR, noting similarities and differences in beliefs about a Supreme Being, worship and moral guidance. Finally, the section links divine attributes to practical moral values, showing you how reflecting on Allah's nature shapes ethical behaviour, personal conduct and communal life. By engaging with these concepts, you develop theological literacy, critical thinking and moral awareness.

#### KEY IDEAS

- **Attributes of Allah:** Allah's Beautiful Names (Asma'ul Husna) reveal His qualities such as mercy, justice, forgiveness and patience, guiding human behaviour.
- **Comparative Theology:** Islam and African Indigenous Religion (AIR) both affirm a Supreme Being, but differ in worship practices, accessibility and use of intermediaries.
- **Natural Environment as Sign:** The natural world reflects Allah's power, wisdom, beauty and mercy; observing it strengthens faith and spiritual reflection (Tadabbur).
- **Tawhid:** The Oneness of Allah is central to Islamic belief, encompassing His essence, attributes and actions, shaping ethics, worship and daily life.
- **Theological Schools and Debates:** Islamic scholars (Ash'ariyyah, Mu'tazilah, Maturidiyyah, Salafiyyah) differ on interpreting Allah's attributes through reason and revelation.
- **Moral Application:** Understanding Allah's attributes encourages practical moral behaviour, including justice, compassion, forgiveness, patience and accountability in daily life.

## THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE NATURE OF ALLAH



**Figure 2.1:** Creation of Allah. Credit: youtube.com

### Discovering Allah through the World Around Us

The natural world is full of **signs (Ayat)** that point to the existence, power, mercy and wisdom of Allah. The Qur'an invites believers to look at the sky, earth, mountains, rivers, plants and animals — not just to admire their beauty but to **reflect** and grow in faith.

Observing creation reminds us that nothing is random. Everything has a purpose in Allah's divine plan. Even without a teacher, nature itself becomes a classroom, teaching you about Allah and our roles as humans.



**Figure 2.2:** Signs of Allah

## Qur’anic and Hadith Guidance on Nature

The Qur’an and Hadith highlight creation as a reflection of Allah’s greatness. These references remind us that the natural environment is more than just scenery — it is a book of lessons for those who observe and reflect.

1. **Surah Adh-Dhariyat (51:20–21):** “And on the earth are signs for the certain [in faith] and in yourselves. Then will you not see?”  
Explanation: This verse teaches that both the external world (earth, mountains, seas) and the internal world (human body and soul) reveal Allah’s power. Believers are encouraged to look carefully because reflection strengthens faith.
2. **Surah Al-Baqarah (2:164):** “Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, the alternation of the night and the day, the [ships] that sail the sea with benefit for people and what Allah has sent down from the sky of rain... are signs for a people who use reason.”  
Explanation: Here, the Qur’an lists examples like the sky, the sea and rainfall to show how everyday natural events guide humans to recognise Allah’s wisdom. It also stresses the use of reason (aql), showing that Islam values both faith and thinking.
3. **Surah As-Sajdah (32:4):** “It is Allah who created the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them in six days; then He established Himself above the Throne. You have not besides Him any protector or any intercessor; so, will you not be reminded?”  
Explanation: This verse underlines Allah’s complete authority and control over creation. It reminds humans not to rely on anyone except Allah, since He alone is the Protector and Sustainer.
4. **Hadith reminder (Sahih Muslim):** The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: “The world is green and beautiful, and Allah has appointed you as His stewards over it.”  
Explanation: This Hadith links the beauty of the world with human responsibility. Believers are reminded that enjoying nature must go hand in hand with caring for it, because stewardship (khilafah) is part of faith.

### Wonders Of Allah’s Creation



Figure 2.3: Signs of Allah.

## Nature as a Mirror of Divine Qualities

Every part of creation reflects Allah’s qualities

**Power (Quwwah):** Storms, mountains and vast oceans show Allah’s might.

Verse (Qur’an 24:43): “Do you not see that Allah drives clouds? Then He brings them together, then He makes them into a mass, and you see the rain emerge from within it.”

*Explanation:* The verse shows how even rain clouds are under Allah’s command, reminding us of His strength and control.

**Mercy (Rahmah):** Rain, fertile soil and animals that provide food reveal Allah’s compassion.

Verse (Qur’an 43:11): “And We send down from the sky rain in measured amounts, and We give life to a dead land. Thus is the resurrection.”

*Explanation:* Just as Allah revives dead land with rain, He will revive humans after death. Rain is both mercy in this life and a sign of the Hereafter.

**Beauty (Jamal):** Flowers, sunsets and the night sky reveal Allah’s artistry.

Hadith (Sahih Muslim): The Prophet (SAW) said: “Allah is beautiful and loves beauty.”

*Explanation:* Beauty in creation reflects Allah’s own perfection. Muslims are encouraged to admire beauty as part of recognising Allah.

**Wisdom and Order (Hikmah):** Seasons, gravity and balanced ecosystems show divine planning.

**Verse (Qur’an 54:49):** “He has created everything with proportion and measure.”

*Explanation:* This verse highlights balance in creation. Nothing is by chance — everything follows Allah’s wise plan.

Table 2.1: Linking natural elements to some of the attributes

| Natural Element | Symbolic Attribute | Name of Allah (Arabic)        | Meaning & Link  |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Rain            | Mercy              | <b>Ar-Rahman</b><br>(نم رحل)  | <b>The Most Merciful — Rain nourishes life, just as Allah’s mercy sustains creation.</b>                    |
| Mountains       | Power              | <b>Al-Qawiyy</b><br>(يوقل)    | <b>The All-Strong — Mountains symbolize divine strength and stability.</b>                                  |
| Flowers         | Beauty             | <b>Al-Jameel</b><br>(ليمجل)   | <b>The Beautiful — Allah is the source of all beauty, reflected in delicate creation.</b>                   |
| Sun             | Guidance           | <b>An-Nur</b> (رونل)          | <b>The Light — Just as the sun guides and illuminates, Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth.</b> |
| Moon            | Reflection         | <b>Al-Hadi</b> (يدادل)        | <b>The Guide — The moon reflects light, symbolizing Allah’s guidance through revelation.</b>                |
| Fire            | Purification       | <b>Al-Muntaqim</b><br>(مقنتم) | <b>The Avenger — Fire purifies, reminding of divine justice and accountability.</b>                         |
| Ocean           | Vastness           | <b>Al-Azim</b> (ميظعل)        | <b>The Magnificent — Oceans evoke awe, reflecting Allah’s infinite majesty.</b>                             |

| Natural Element | Symbolic Attribute | Name of Allah (Arabic)    | Meaning & Link   |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Tree            | Growth             | <b>Al-Bari</b> (إِبراهيم) | <b>The Evolver — Trees grow and flourish, showing Allah’s power to shape and sustain life.</b> |
| Wind            | Spirit             | <b>Al-Qadir</b> (رِداق)   | <b>Wind is unseen yet powerful — a metaphor for divine will and capability.</b>                |
| Sand            | Transience         | <b>Al-Hayy</b> (يحيى)     | <b>Sand reminds us of life’s impermanence; Allah alone is Ever-Living.</b>                     |

### Activity 2.1 Observing Nature’s Signs

Explore the environment to discover the evidence of Allah’s attributes. Identify Allah’s attributes reflected in nature.

#### Instructions

1. Step outside (school compound, garden, or nearby field).
2. Look closely at three natural features (e.g., trees, sky, river, animals).
3. Write what each one teaches about Allah’s power, mercy, beauty, or wisdom.
4. Share your notes with a partner or small group.

You can use the table below as a sample.

| Natural Feature | Attribute of Allah Seen | My Explanation |
|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------|
|                 |                         |                |
|                 |                         |                |
|                 |                         |                |

## Purpose and Interconnectedness in Creation

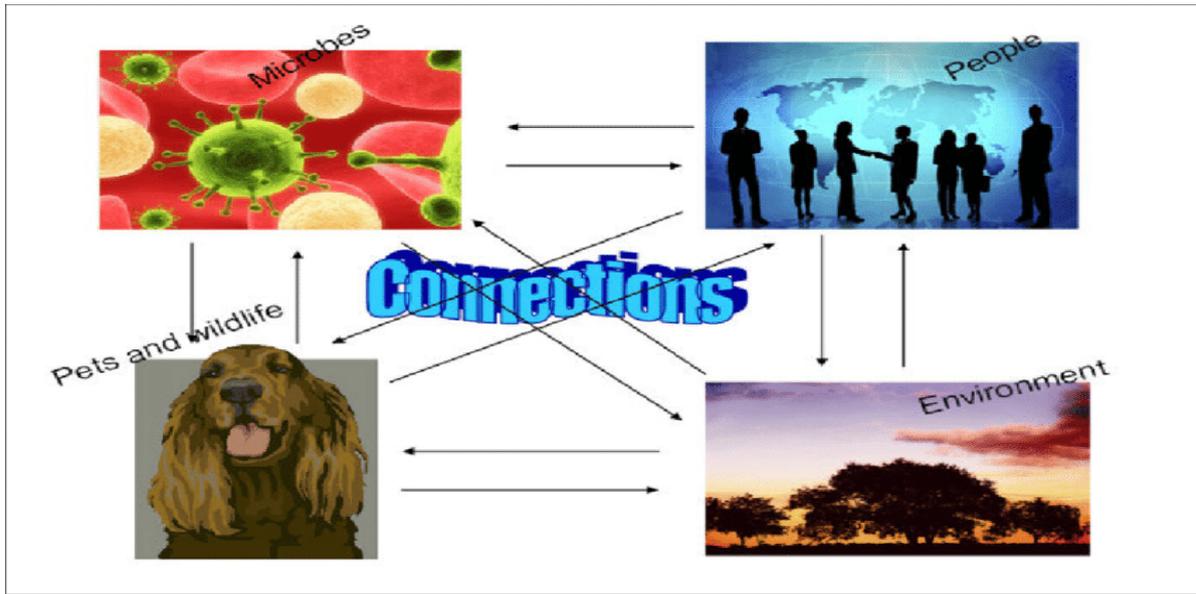
Islam teaches that creation is not random but carefully designed. Observing the world strengthens Tawhid (Oneness of Allah).

**Verse (Qur’an 2:22):** “It is He who made for you the earth a bed and the sky a canopy; and sent down from the sky rain and brought forth thereby fruits as provision for you.”

*Explanation:* This verse shows that Allah created nature to serve human needs. The earth, sky and rain are gifts meant to guide us to gratitude.

**Hadith (Daraqutni):** The Prophet (SAW) said: “The best of people are those who are most beneficial to others.”

*Explanation:* Caring for creation and helping others are linked. Benefiting others is part of living in harmony with Allah’s plan.



**Figure 2.4:** Interconnectedness of creation.

## Reflection (Tadabbur) as Worship

Deep thinking about nature, called Tadabbur, is a form of worship. Small reflections — a seed growing, stars shining, or the breeze blowing — help believers feel gratitude and closeness to Allah.

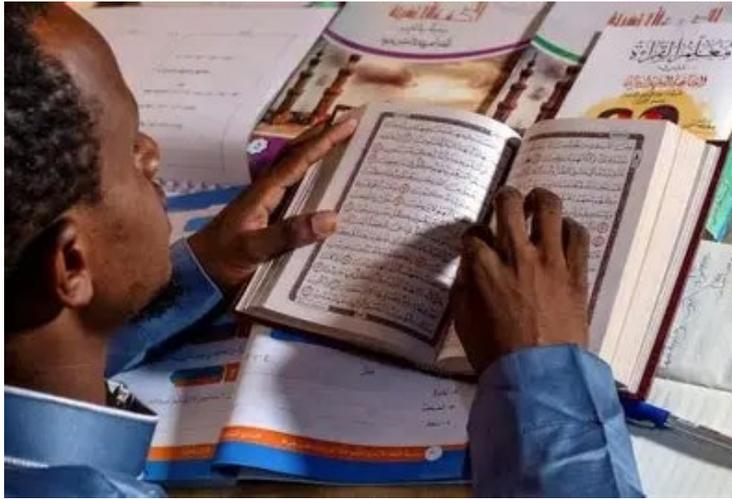
### Verse (Qur’an 88:17)

“Do they not look at the camels, how they are created?”

*Explanation:* Even common animals are signs. The camel, with its unique body, shows Allah’s wisdom in creating creatures suited to their environments.

Tadabbur encourages mindfulness, respect for creation and stronger faith.





**Figure 2.5:** A reflection hour: “Tadabbur.” Credit: freepik.com & straitstime.com

## Activity 2.2 Nature Reflection Journal

Practise **Tadabbur** (reflection) through writing.

### Instructions

1. Choose one natural object (leaf, flower, cloud, stone).
2. Observe it silently for 5–10 minutes.
3. Write 3–5 sentences about what it teaches you about Allah’s wisdom, mercy, or beauty.

### Example of starters

- a. “I notice that ...”
- b. “This shows Allah’s ... because ...”
- c. “I feel ... when I see this because ...”

## Life Lessons from the Environment

Nature is a teacher. It offers lessons for living responsibly and spiritually:

Hadith (Sahih al-Bukhari):

“If a Muslim plants a tree or sows seeds and then a bird, or a person, or an animal eats from it, it is regarded as a charitable gift.”

Explanation: Caring for the environment and planting are seen as acts of charity in Islam. Even small actions bring reward if they benefit others.



**Figure 2.6:** Stewardship in Action. Credit: agfundersnews.com

### Activity 2.3 Human Stewardship Role-Play

Explore our duty as **khalifah** (stewards).

#### Instructions

Form a group with 3–4 of your classmates.

1. Act out a short scene showing:
  - a. Humans protecting the environment and
  - b. Humans misusing the environment.
2. Show the consequences of both actions.
3. Discuss together: “*Which behaviour pleases Allah?*”

#### Prompts

- a. Examples: planting trees, saving water, avoiding litter, protecting animals.
- b. Contrast: pollution, wasting food, destroying forests.

## Spiritual Growth Through Nature

Studying nature builds inner qualities that strengthen faith:

**Verse (Qur’an 3:190):** “Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of night and day are signs for those of understanding.”

*Explanation:* This verse encourages deep reflection on both the heavens and daily cycles. Understanding nature leads to greater spiritual maturity.



**Figure 2.7:** The harmony between: Spiritual Lessons from Creation. Credit: tripadvisor.com

### Activity 2.4 Qur’an and Hadith Scavenger Hunt

**Link natural signs with the Qur’an and Hadith.**

**Instructions**

1. Use the verses and Hadith provided in the lesson.
2. Match each text to something in your environment.  
 Example: *Qur’an 16:10 – Allah sends rain from the sky* → Rainwater nourishes crops in our farms.
3. Write your answers in a table. See an example of the table below.

**Sample Table**

| Verse / Hadith | Verse / Hadith | Verse / Hadith |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                |                |                |
|                |                |                |
|                |                |                |

**What You Have Learned**

1. Nature is full of signs (ayat) pointing to Allah's existence and wisdom.
2. Creation reflects Allah's attributes — power, mercy, beauty and wisdom.
3. Humans are khalifah (stewards) with the responsibility to care for the earth.
4. Reflection on nature (Tadabbur) is worship that strengthens faith.
5. Lessons from nature teach patience, gratitude, humility and responsibility.
6. Observing creation deepens belief in Allah's order and interconnectedness.

**Self-Assessment**

1. Can I give examples of how nature reflects Allah's attributes?
2. Can I explain in my own words what Tadabbur means?
3. Can I describe why humans are considered stewards of the environment?
4. Can I identify lessons from observing natural cycles like rain, plants, or animals?
5. Can I mention a Qur'anic verse or Hadith that encourages reflection on creation?

**Tip:** Write down your reflections. Compare them later with new ideas as you continue learning.

**THE ATTRIBUTES OF ALLAH (ASMA'UL HUSNA)****Understanding Allah Through His Beautiful Names**

The nature of Allah can be understood by reflecting on His **Beautiful Names (Asma'ul Husna)**. These names describe His essence, actions and relationship with creation. Each name reveals a unique quality of Allah, such as mercy, justice, knowledge, or power. Learning and reflecting on these attributes helps Muslims strengthen their faith, live morally and act responsibly in daily life. Allah is unlike any human; His attributes are perfect, infinite and beyond comparison.

Use this link to browse the 99 Names of Allah with embedded audio on pronouncing them correctly: <https://myislam.org/99-names-of-allah/>





Figure 2.8: Asma'ul Husna.

## Key Attributes of Allah

### Mercy and Compassion

Allah's mercy is unlimited and encompasses all creatures. Reflecting on His mercy helps believers show kindness in their own lives.

1. **Example Names:** Ar-Rahman (Most Merciful), Ar-Raheem (Most Compassionate)
2. **Qur'an Reference:** "And My Mercy encompasses all things." (Surah Al-A'raaf 7:156)
3. **Hadith:** The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: "Allah's mercy prevails over His wrath." (Sahih Muslim)



Figure 2.9: Allah's Mercy & Compassion is everywhere

## Justice and Wisdom

Allah is perfectly just and never wrongs anyone. His wisdom ensures that all creation functions in balance. Understanding His justice guides Muslims to be fair and truthful.

1. **Example Names:** Al-'Adl (The Just), Al-Hakeem (The All-Wise)
2. **Qur'an Reference:** "Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice." (Surah An-Nisa 4:58)



**Figure 2.10:** Justice and Wisdom are on Allah's.

## Power and Creation

Allah is the Creator of everything and sustains all life. His power is absolute, unlike human strength.

1. **Example Names:** Al-Khaliq (The Creator), Al-Mutakabbir (The Supreme in Greatness)
2. **Qur'an Reference:** "Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is, over all things, Disposer of affairs." (Surah Az-Zumar 39:62)



**Figure 2.11:** Mountains, oceans and skies demonstrating the Grandeur of Allah

## Provision and Care

Allah provides for all creatures and ensures that nothing is wasted. Believers learn to trust in His provision and avoid greed or anxiety.

1. **Example Names:** Ar-Razzaq (The Provider), Al-Ghafoor (The Forgiving)
2. **Qur'an Reference:** "And He is the Sustainer of the heavens and the earth." (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:255)



**Figure 2.12:** Allah's Provision and Care.

### Activity 2.5 Mapping Allah's Attributes

You are going to map Allah's Attributes beautifully. You may use colour. Ready?

#### Instructions

1. Draw a large circle in the centre of a page and write "**Attributes of Allah**" inside it.
2. Around the circle, create branches for four categories:
  - a. Mercy & Compassion
  - b. Justice & Wisdom
  - c. Power & Majesty
  - d. Provision & Care
3. Under each branch, write **2–3 names of Allah** (Asma'ul Husna) that fit the category.
4. Add **Qur'anic verses or Hadith references** under each name.
5. Include a short note on **how each attribute can guide your daily actions**.

## Uniqueness of Allah (Tanzih)

Allah's attributes are unique and incomparable to human qualities. Human understanding is limited, but reflection helps believers appreciate His transcendence.

1. **Qur'an Reference:** "And there is none comparable to Him." (Surah Al-Ikhlās 112:4)
2. **Hadith:** The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) encouraged learning the names of Allah to strengthen faith.



Figure 2.13: Allah is Unique

### Activity 2.6 Reflecting on Divine Qualities

Write a short journal entry on the Attributes of ALLAH you are connected to.

#### Instructions

1. Choose **one or two attributes of Allah** that you feel most connected to (e.g., Ar-Rahman, Al-'Adl).
2. Write a short journal entry answering these prompts:
  - a. How does this attribute help me understand Allah better?
  - b. How can I reflect this attribute in my daily life?
3. Form small groups (3–4 learners). Share reflections and discuss:
  - a. Similarities in your understanding
  - b. Practical actions inspired by the attributes

## Reflection and Worship

Thinking deeply about Allah's attributes is a form of **Tadabbur (reflection)**. Observing the signs of His mercy, justice and power in the world helps believers:

1. Strengthen faith
2. Apply moral principles in daily life
3. Practice gratitude and humility



Figure 2.14: The 99 Names of Allah in Arabic

### Activity 2.7 Creative Presentation of Allah's Names

Prepare a creative presentation using an attribute of Allah. Bring your creative skills. Let's see what you get.

#### Instructions

1. In small groups of 4, select **one attribute of Allah** to focus on.
2. Prepare a **creative presentation**:
  - a. Digital poster, short video, or voice note
  - b. Include: Name of Allah, **meaning**, Qur'anic verse reference and a **real-life application**
3. Present to the class or submit digitally.
4. Discuss how the selected attribute can guide **youth values in Ghana** today.

#### What You Have Learned So Far

1. Allah's Beautiful Names (Asma'ul Husna) describe His essence and actions.
2. Attributes such as mercy, justice, power and knowledge guide human behaviour.
3. Allah's attributes are perfect, infinite and unique (Tanzih).
  - a. Reflecting on these names strengthens faith and encourages moral responsibility.
4. Qur'an and Hadith provide guidance on understanding and internalising these attributes.
5. Knowing Allah's names inspires practical behaviour like fairness, compassion and gratitude.

### Self-Assessment

1. Can I explain the meaning of five of Allah’s Beautiful Names?
2. Can I describe how one attribute affects my daily life?
3. Can I explain why Allah’s attributes are different from human qualities?

**Tip:** Keep your notes safe. You will compare them with others as you learn more in future lessons.

## ISLAMIC CONCEPTIONS OF THE NATURE OF ALLAH

Muslims are united in their belief in the Oneness of Allah (Tawhid). However, throughout Islamic history, scholars have engaged in deep discussions about how to best understand Allah’s attributes as described in the Qur’an and Hadith. Should verses be taken literally as they appear, or should they be interpreted metaphorically? Should human reason (‘aql) or divine revelation (naql) take the lead when interpreting texts? Can you personally reflect on these, too? These questions gave rise to different theological schools, each contributing to the richness of Islamic thought. Understanding these differences does not weaken faith but rather shows the depth of Muslim scholarship and the importance of balancing reverence for revelation with careful reflection.



**Figure 2.15:** Scholars in discussion

### Major Theological Schools

Islamic scholarship produced several schools that explained Allah’s attributes in distinct ways.

1. **Ash’ariyyah:** Founded by Imam Abu al-Hasan al-Ash’ari (d. 936 CE). They held that Muslims should affirm Allah’s attributes as mentioned in the revelation “**without asking how**” (**bi la kayf**). For example, if the Qur’an says Allah has a “hand,” they accept it but stress it is unlike human hands.

This approach avoids denying the text while preventing anthropomorphism. Qur’anic anchor: “There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.” (Qur’an 42:11).

2. **Mu’tazilah:** Known as the rationalists, active around the 8th–10th centuries. They prioritised human reason in explaining religious matters. For them, anthropomorphic verses must be interpreted metaphorically to preserve God’s absolute unity. For instance, “hand” means power or support. They also emphasised Allah’s justice (al-‘Adl) and rejected any idea that might suggest unfairness. Hadith support: The Prophet (SAW) said: “Allah does not wrong anyone by even an atom’s weight.” (Sahih Muslim).
3. **Maturidiyyah:** Associated with Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (d. 944 CE). They are close to the Ash’ari school but give greater room to reason. They argue that both revelation and intellect guide faith, though revelation is supreme. For example, they stress that reason alone can lead a person to acknowledge Allah’s existence and oneness.
4. **Salafiyyah/Athariyyah:** Rooted in the early generations (Salaf al-Salih). They insist on a literal acceptance of attributes without explanation, interpretation, or rational analysis. They caution against delving too deeply into “how” Allah’s attributes work, emphasising submission to revelation. Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855 CE) is often associated with this approach.

### Activity 2.8 Comparing Schools of Thought

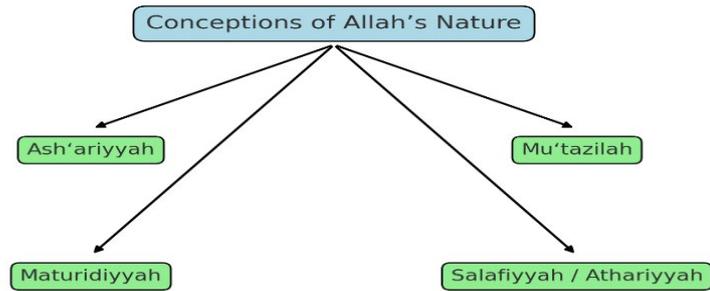
Distinguish the four theological schools and their approaches to Allah’s attributes.

#### Instructions

In groups of four, each assigned to a school:

1. Read the notes on **Ash’ariyyah, Mu’tazilah, Maturidiyyah** and **Salafiyyah/Athariyyah**.
2. Complete the comparison table below by filling in key differences.

| School                    | How Allah’s Attributes are Interpreted | Role of Reason (‘Aql) | Key Example |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------------|-------------|
| Ash’ariyyah               | ...                                    | ...                   | ...         |
| Mu’tazilah                | ...                                    | ...                   | ...         |
| Maturidiyyah              | ...                                    | ...                   | ...         |
| Salafiyyah/<br>Athariyyah | ...                                    | ...                   | ...         |



**Figure 2.16:** A chart showing the four schools branching from the central concept, “Conceptions of Allah’s Nature”

## Literal vs. Metaphorical Interpretation

The Qur’an contains verses that describe Allah in terms humans can understand. For example, Qur’an 5:64 says: “The Hand of Allah is above their hands.”

1. Literalists (Salafi, some Athari): accept the wording as it is, affirming Allah has a “hand” befitting His majesty, without likening it to human hands.
2. Metaphorical interpreters (Mu’tazilah, some Ash’aris): explain “hand” as a symbol of Allah’s **power, authority, or support**, to avoid tashbih (anthropomorphism).

This shows how the same verse can be approached differently yet with the same intention: to preserve Allah’s perfection.

### Activity 2.9 Qur’anic Interpretation Debate

Practise literal vs metaphorical interpretation of Allah’s attributes.

#### Instructions

1. Read **Qur’an 5:64** (“The Hand of Allah is tied up”).
2. Imagine two groups of Muslims: one interprets it **literally**, the other **metaphorically**.
3. Write **two short arguments** (5–6 sentences each) for how each group might explain the verse.
4. End by writing **your reflection**: Which approach helps you better understand Allah’s nature and why?



**Figure 2.17:** Learners in a discussion/debate.

## Tanzih and Tashbih

Two central principles guide these debates

1. **Tanzih (Incomparability):** Allah is unlike anything in creation. “There is nothing like unto Him.” (Qur’an 42:11). This protects against imagining Allah in human form.
2. **Tashbih (Anthropomorphism):** Attributing human qualities to Allah, which scholars warn against. For example, imagining Allah’s “hand” as physically like a human hand.

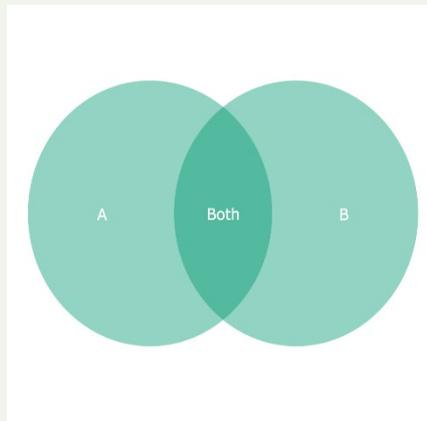
Balancing affirmation of attributes with avoidance of tashbih has been the task of theologians for centuries.

### Activity 2.10 Mapping Tanzih and Tashbih (Structuring Theological Approaches)

Explore the balance between God’s transcendence (Tanzih) and likeness (Tashbih).

#### Instructions

1. Write the meaning of **Tanzih** and **Tashbih** in your own words.
2. Match each verse to the correct concept:
  - a. “There is nothing like unto Him” (Qur’an 42:11) → \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. “The Hand of Allah is above their hands” (Qur’an 48:10) → \_\_\_\_\_
3. Draw two circles (like a **Venn diagram**) and place examples of Tanzih in one circle, Tashbih in the other. If an idea fits both, put it in the overlapping space.



Sample Venn diagram

## Reason (‘Aql) and Revelation (Naql)

Debates also revolve around whether **reason** or **revelation** should be given more weight.

1. The **Mu’tazilah** prioritised reason, arguing that Allah’s justice and unity must always align with rational thought.
2. The **Ash’aris and Maturidis** used reason but gave revelation the final word, ensuring intellect does not override divine guidance.

3. The **Salafi/Athari** approach gave little room to reason in matters of attributes, relying strictly on the Qur'an and Sunnah.

This tension between reason and revelation reflects Islam's intellectual richness and its balance of faith with critical thinking.

## Qur'anic and Hadith References

Theological debates draw directly from scripture.

1. **Surah Al-Ikhlās (112):** A clear declaration of Allah's uniqueness and transcendence. "Say: He is Allah, the One; Allah, the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor is born, nor is there to Him any equivalent."
2. **Surah Al-Hashr (59:22–24):** Lists Allah's names — Al-Malik (The Sovereign), Al-Quddus (The Pure), Al-Aziz (The Mighty).
3. Prophetic Hadith: "Allah has ninety-nine names, one hundred minus one; whoever memorises and internalises them will enter Paradise." (Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim).

Different schools highlight different aspects of these verses, yet all affirm Allah's majesty, uniqueness and perfection.

### **Summary: What You Have Learned So Far**

1. Muslims agree on Allah's Oneness but differ in how to interpret His attributes.
2. Four theological schools offer diverse approaches: **Ash'ariyyah, Mu'tazilah, Maturidiyyah and Salafiyyah/Athariyyah.**
3. Some scholars affirm attributes literally, others explain them metaphorically, while some balance reason and revelation.
4. The principles of **tanzih** (incomparability) and **tashbih** (avoiding anthropomorphism) guide these debates.
5. Qur'anic verses like Surah Al-Ikhlās and Surah Al-Hashr provide the foundation for understanding Allah's attributes.
6. These debates enrich Islamic thought, showing unity in faith despite diversity of interpretation.

### Self-Assessment

1. Who founded the Ash'ari and Maturidi schools, and what was their main difference?
2. What does the Mu'tazilah school emphasise when interpreting Allah's attributes?
3. How do Salafi/Athari scholars approach verses such as "Allah's hand"?
4. Explain the meanings of tanzih and tashbih. Why are they important?
5. Which Surah of the Qur'an clearly affirms Allah's uniqueness in just four verses?

- How does learning about theological debates help Muslims strengthen both faith and tolerance?

**Tip:** True belief in Allah connects what we see in nature with His Oneness.

## TAWHID – THE CORE OF ISLAMIC THEOLOGY

### Foundation of Islam

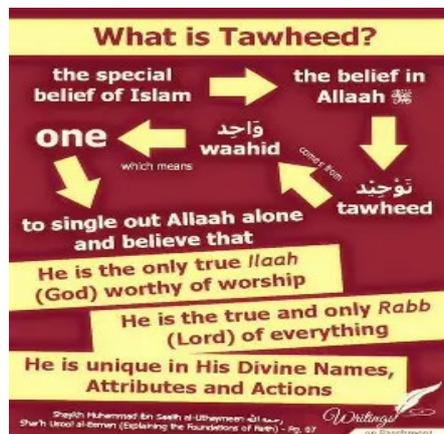
The most important belief in Islam is **Tawhid**—the absolute Oneness of Allah. This means that Allah is one, eternal and unlike anything in creation. He has no partners, no children and no equals. The Qur’an repeatedly stresses this truth, especially in **Surah Al-Ikhlās (112:1–4)**. Tawhid is the heart of Islamic faith, shaping how Muslims worship, how they behave and how they see the world. It reminds believers that only Allah deserves worship and that life should be lived in submission to Him.



**Figure 2.18:** Calligraphy of “Allah” showing Tawhid as the centre of Islamic faith

### Definition of Tawhid

- Tawhid means **affirming Allah’s Oneness in His essence, attributes and actions.**
- It is expressed in the **Shahadah**: “There is no god, but Allah and Muhammad are His messenger.”
- Belief in Tawhid makes a Muslim’s faith pure, guarding them against worshipping idols, spirits, or human beings.



## Qur'anic Basis of Tawhid

1. **Surah Al-Ikhlās (112:1–4):** Affirms that Allah is One, Eternal, not born and has no equal.
2. **Surah Al-Baqarah (2:163):** “And your God is one God. There is no deity except Him, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.”
3. Other verses: Qur’an 6:102, Qur’an 16:36—remind humans that Allah alone is the Lord of creation.

### Activity 2.11 Exploring Surah Al-Ikhlās

How does your understanding of Surah Al-Ikhlās explain the Oneness and Uniqueness of Allah?

#### Steps

1. Recite Surah Al-Ikhlās together (whole class or in small groups).
2. Provide learners with a **worksheet** showing each verse in Arabic and English.
3. Learners highlight words showing Allah’s Oneness.
4. Teacher/peer-led discussion: What do these verses tell us about Allah?

#### Prompt

- a. Verse 1 teaches me that Allah is \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Verse 2 shows that Allah is \_\_\_\_\_.

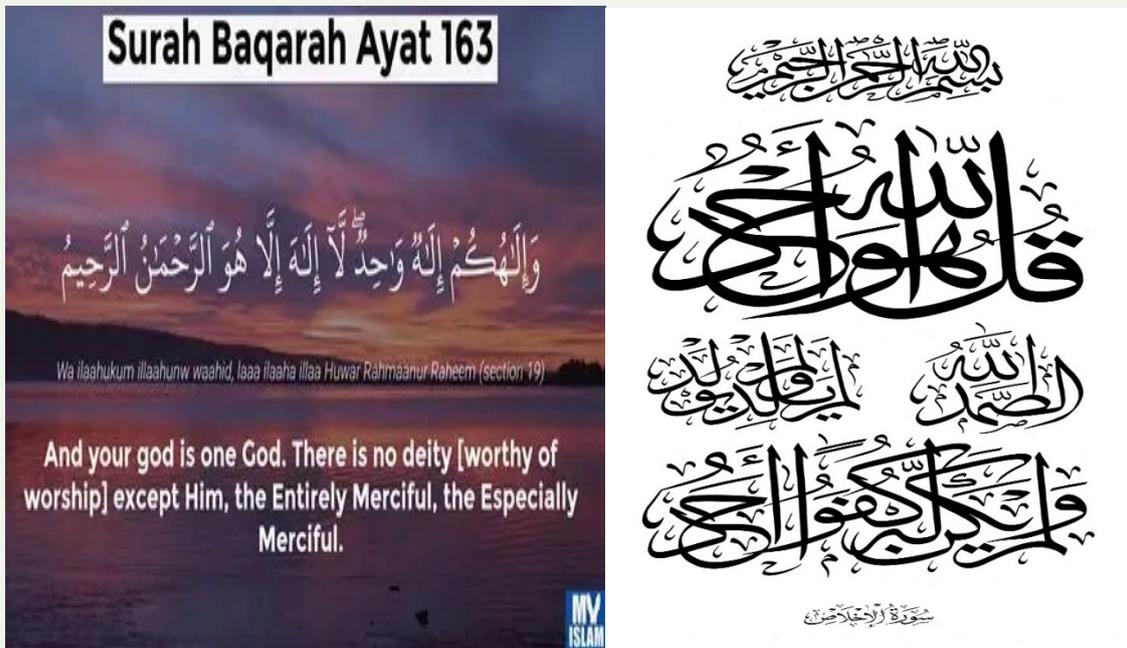
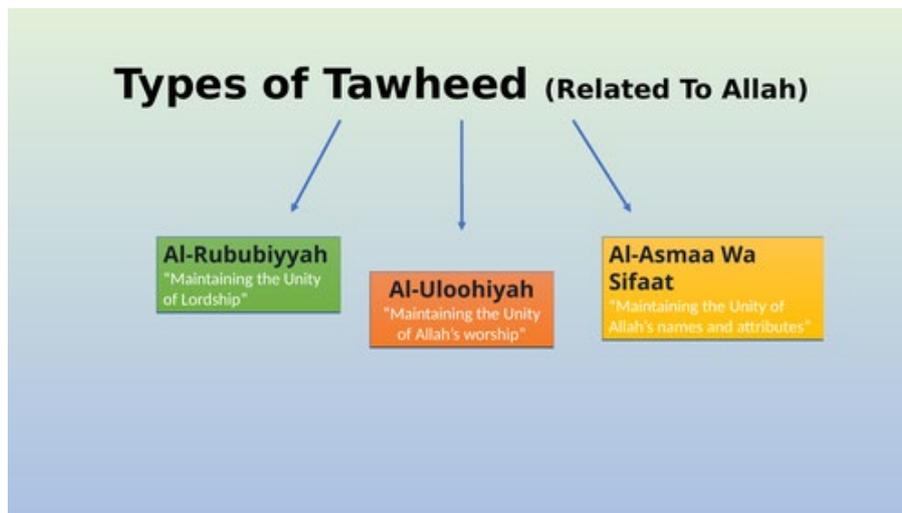


Figure 2.19: Qur'anic calligraphy of Surah Al-Ikhlās and Surah 2:163

## Aspects of Tawhid

- Tawhid al-Rububiyah (Oneness of Lordship):** Allah alone created and controls everything. Nothing happens without His will.
- Tawhid al-Uluhiyyah (Oneness of Worship):** Worship, prayer, sacrifice and devotion are directed only to Allah.
- Tawhid al-Asma wa al-Sifat (Oneness of Names and Attributes):** Allah's names, like The Merciful, The Just, The All-Knowing, are perfect and cannot be compared to human qualities.
- These three aspects make faith complete and guide Muslims to live sincerely for Allah alone.



**Figure 2.20:** The three aspects of Tawheed

### Activity 2.12 Mapping the Three Aspects of Tawhid

Identify and classify the three aspects of Tawhid (Lordship, Worship, Attributes)

#### In groups of 4-6

- With a **triangle template** (Tawhid in the centre).
- Label three sides: **Lordship – Worship – Attributes.**
- Groups fill in examples under each (Qur'anic verses, acts of worship, Names of Allah).
- Share answers and compare.

#### Ask yourself the following questions

- Who controls life and death? (Lordship)
- Who alone deserves prayer? (Worship)
- What is one Name of Allah? (Attributes)

## Significance of Tawhid

- It is the **foundation of Islamic faith and practice**.
- It protects against **shirk** (associating partners with Allah).
- It gives meaning to Muslim ethics—believing Allah is **All-Seeing and Just** motivates honesty, fairness and humility.
- It promotes **unity in the Ummah (Muslim community)**, since all believers are bound by worship of one God.

## Practical Implications for Believers

- Direct all forms of worship to Allah alone.
- Trust Allah’s wisdom and mercy in daily struggles.
- Show humility, knowing all success comes from Allah.
- Uphold honesty, fairness and kindness, since Allah is aware of all actions.
- Strengthen Muslim unity in schools, mosques and communities by recognising one shared faith in Tawhid.

### Activity 2.13 My Tawhid Reflection Journal

Reflect personally on the meaning of Tawhid. How can it guide your daily life?

#### Steps

- Open your notebook or exercise book page, title it “**My Tawhid Journal.**”
- Write short personal reflections guided by prompts.
- Volunteers share with the class (optional).

#### Prompts

- One thing I now understand about Allah’s Oneness is \_\_\_\_\_.
- One daily action I will improve because of Tawhid is \_\_\_\_\_.
- One way I can teach Tawhid to others is \_\_\_\_\_.



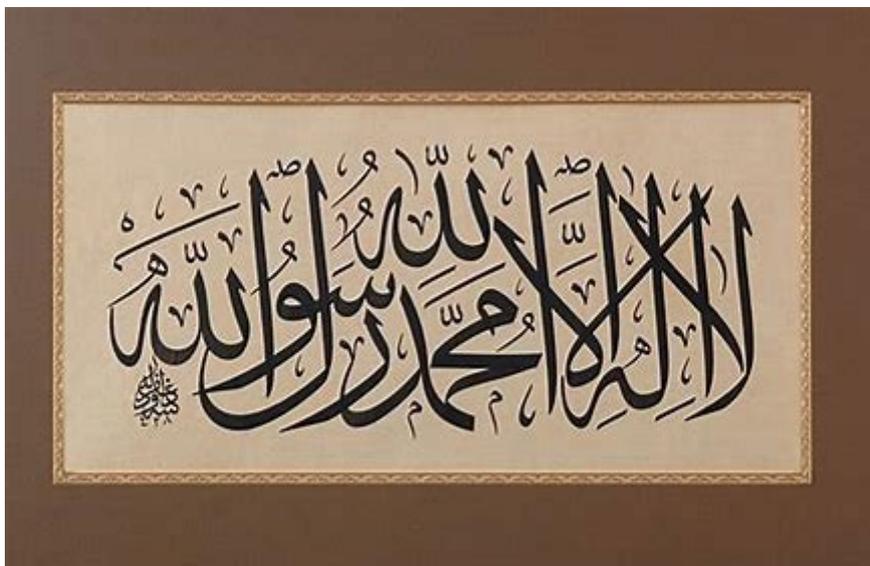
Figure 2.21: Students journaling quietly.

## Hadith and Tawhid

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) constantly reminded Muslims to live by Tawhid.

1. **Hadith (Bukhari & Muslim):** “Whoever dies knowing that there is no god, but Allah will enter Paradise.”
2. **Hadith (Tirmidhi):** “The most excellent remembrance is ‘La ilaha illallah’ (There is no god but Allah).”
3. **Hadith (Musnad Ahmad):** The Prophet (SAW) said to Mu’adh ibn Jabal when sending him to Yemen: “Let the first thing you call them to, be the Oneness of Allah (Tawhid).”

These narrations show that Tawhid is not just a belief, but the **starting point of all Islamic teaching** and the key to salvation.



**Figure 2.22:** A simple poster showing “La ilaha illallah” in Arabic calligraphy

### Activity 2.14 Hadith and Tawhid in Daily Life

Apply the message of a Hadith about Tawhid to your real-life situations. Let’s do this for Ghana.

#### Steps

1. Use the Hadith: “The most excellent remembrance is ‘La ilaha illallah’.”
2. In groups of 4 or 5, discuss: How does this Hadith guide us as Ghanaian Muslim youth?
3. Groups list **3 practical actions** (e.g., avoiding charms, relying on prayer, honesty in schoolwork).
4. Create a **role-play or poster** showing Tawhid’s influence in Ghanaian life.

#### Template (Poster Option)

- a. Title: Living Tawhid in Ghana
- b. Box 1: Qur'an/Hadith message
- c. Box 2: Wrong practice to avoid
- d. Box 3: Correct Tawhid-based action



**Figure 2.23:** Upholding Tawheed through Salat avoids the use of amulets, charms, etc.

### Summary: What have you learned about Tawhid?

1. **Tawhid** means belief in the absolute **oneness of Allah**.
2. It teaches that Allah alone is the **Creator, Sustainer and Protector**.
3. Tawhid rejects any form of **shirk** (associating partners with Allah).
4. It has three main aspects:
  - a. **Tawhid al-Rububiyah** – Allah's Lordship (He alone created and controls the universe).
  - b. **Tawhid al-Uluhiyyah** – Allah's right to be worshipped (all acts of worship must be directed to Him alone).
  - c. **Tawhid al-Asma' wa al-Sifat** – Allah's Names and Attributes (we affirm them without comparing Him to creation).
5. Belief in Tawhid shapes a Muslim's **faith, worship and daily behaviour**.
6. Tawhid strengthens trust in Allah and keeps believers away from false beliefs and practices.

### Self-Assessment

1. Can I explain the meaning of Tawhid in my own words?
2. Can I name the three aspects of Tawhid and clearly explain at least one?
3. Can I describe why shirk is the opposite of Tawhid?
4. Can I show how Tawhid influences the way Muslims worship Allah?
5. Can I give an example of how Tawhid guides my daily life choices?

**Tip:** Tawhid reminds us to direct all our worship, trust and hopes to Allah alone.

# ISLAMIC AND AIR PERSPECTIVES ON THE NATURE OF GOD

## Foundation of the Lesson

Both Islam and African Indigenous Religion (AIR) believe in a Supreme Being who created and sustains the universe. In Islam, this belief is called **Tawhid**—the absolute Oneness of Allah. He is eternal, transcendent, incomparable and without intermediaries. Muslims worship Him directly and describe His nature through the Qur’an and Hadith.

In AIR, people also believe in one Supreme Being. Different ethnic groups in Ghana use different names, such as **Nyame** (Akan), **Mawu** (Ewe), **Odomankoma** (Fante) and **Naawuni** (Dagbani/Mampruli). However, worship often involves **intermediaries** like ancestors and minor deities who serve as go-betweens.

This lesson will help you see both **similarities** and **differences** between Islam and AIR. It also shows how appreciating both systems can help us live peacefully together in Ghana’s multi-religious society.

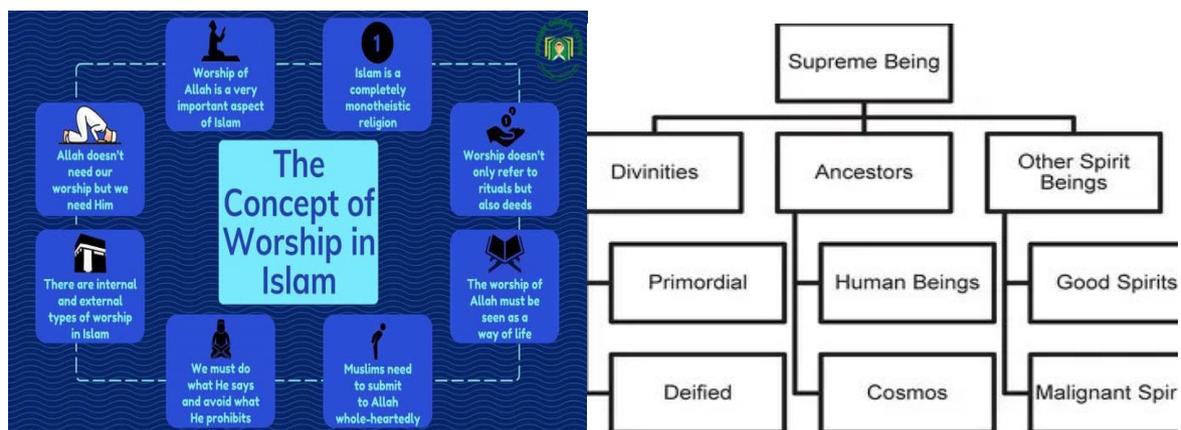


Figure 2.24: Worship in Islam and AIR

## Islamic Concept of God (Tawhid)

1. Allah is **One, eternal, transcendent and incomparable**.
2. Qur’an 112:1–4 (Surah Al-Ikhlās) is the foundation: “Say: He is Allah, One...”
3. Muslims worship Allah **without partners or intermediaries**.
4. His attributes include **All-Knowing (Al-‘Aleem), All-Just (Al-‘Adl), Merciful (Ar-Rahman) and Creator (Al-Khaliq)**.

## AIR Concept of God

1. All Ghanaian AIR traditions affirm a **Supreme Being**, though names differ (Nyame, Mawu, Odomankoma, Naawuni).
2. God is **Creator, Sustainer and moral Judge**.
3. Worship usually includes **intermediaries**—ancestors, lesser deities, or spirits.
4. God’s attributes are often taught through **proverbs, stories and cultural practices**.

Example: Akan proverb – “Nyame nwu na mawu” (God never dies, so I will not die).

## Similarities

- Both Islam and AIR believe in **one Supreme Being** as Creator and Sustainer.
- Both describe God as **just, merciful and powerful**.
- Both stress that humans are **morally accountable** to God.

## Differences

- Worship:** Islam teaches **direct worship**, AIR uses **intermediaries**.
- Accessibility:** Islam stresses Allah is **near** (Qur’an 2:186), AIR often sees the Supreme Being as **distant**.
- Attributes:** Islam → Qur’an and Hadith; AIR → **proverbs, oral traditions, cultural symbols**.

## Social and Religious Implications

- Knowing both traditions helps avoid **misunderstandings**.
- Learners can see how **religion shapes morality and community life** in Ghana.
- Respecting diversity encourages **tolerance and peaceful coexistence**.



Figure 2.26: Religion shapes our lives and societies

## Activity 2.15 Qur'an and Proverbs in Dialogue

Compare a Qur'anic verse (Surah Al-Ikhlās) with an AIR proverb about God.

### Steps

1. Recite Surah Al-Ikhlās together.
2. Read aloud the Akan proverb: “Nyame nwu na mawu.”
3. Learners discuss: How do both texts describe God’s eternal nature?
4. Record similarities and differences on the board.



Wisdom is like a baobab tree; no one individual can embrace it. — Ewe proverb

Africa.com

Figure 2.25: Qur'an text and an Ewe proverb in English

### Activity 2.16 Venn Diagram of Beliefs

Create a Venn diagram showing similarities and differences between the Islamic and the AIR concepts of God.

#### Steps

1. Draw two overlapping circles (Islam & AIR).
2. Learners fill in shared beliefs (Creator, moral Judge) and unique features (direct worship vs intermediaries).
3. Compare diagrams in pairs.

### Activity 2.17 Community Voices on God

Gather perspectives from elders, imams, or traditional leaders on God's nature in Islam and AIR.

#### Steps

1. In pairs, design 3–4 respectful interview questions (e.g., “How do you describe God in your tradition?”).
2. Interview an elder, imam, or local traditionalist.
3. Bring findings to class and compare answers.
4. Discuss how real-life beliefs align with what was studied.
  - a. **Fix after:** Key Concepts 5 (Social and Religious Implications).
  - b. **Scaffold:** Provide a question template for shy or SEN learners.
  - c. **Image suggestion:** Photo of learners interviewing a community elder.

#### Summary: What You Have Learned So Far

1. *Both Islam and AIR affirm belief in a **Supreme Being**.*
2. *Islam emphasises **Tawhid**: Allah is One, eternal and worshipped directly without intermediaries.*
3. *AIR traditions give different names to God and often approach Him through **ancestors or spirits**.*
4. *Both describe God as **merciful, just and powerful**.*
5. *The key difference is **direct access** (Islam) versus **intermediaries** (AIR).*
6. *Understanding both traditions builds **tolerance and harmony** in Ghana's diverse society.*

## Activity 2.18 Personal Reflection Journal

Write a reflection: “What do Islam and AIR teach me about God’s justice and mercy, and how can this shape my behaviour as a Ghanaian Muslim learner?”

### Steps

1. Brainstorm moral values linked to God’s attributes (honesty, fairness, kindness).
2. Write 1–2 paragraphs connecting these values to daily life (school, family, community).
3. Share voluntarily in class for peer learning.

## Self-Assessment

1. Can I explain the meaning of **Tawhid** and how it differs from AIR’s belief in intermediaries?
2. Can I give **one Qur’anic verse** (Islam) and **one proverb** (AIR) that describe God?
3. Can I describe at least **two similarities** and **two differences** between Islam and AIR beliefs about God?
4. Can I explain why **religious tolerance** is important in Ghana?

**Tip:** Both Islam and AIR recognise unseen beings, but their roles and beliefs differ.

# APPLICATION OF THE ISLAMIC MORAL VALUES IN THE ATTRIBUTES OF ALLAH IN OUR LIVES

## Beautiful Names of Allah

In Islam, Allah’s Beautiful Names (Asma’ul Husna) are not only titles but also lessons for Muslims. These names reveal Allah’s nature and serve as models for human conduct. the **attributes of Allah** (Asma’ul Husna – the Beautiful Names of Allah) help believers to know, understand and reflect on who Allah is. These attributes are not just for memorisation but should guide Muslims in how they live their daily lives. For example:

- a. **Al-‘Adl (The Just):** Allah treats all His creations with fairness and without bias. Allah is perfectly just and never wrongs anyone. For Muslims, this calls for fairness, honesty and integrity in dealing with others, whether in exams, leadership, business, or politics.
- b. **Al-Baseer (The All-Seeing):** Allah sees everything, whether in secret or in the open. This means no act, whether good or bad, escapes His sight. Learners should be mindful that even when human beings do not notice what happens in schools, homes, or communities, Allah sees.

- c. **Ar-Rahman (The Most Merciful):** His mercy reaches all beings, regardless of status or worth.
- d. **Al-Ghaffar (The Forgiving):** Allah forgives sins when people repent sincerely.
- e. **Al-Halim / As-Sabur (The Forbearing/Patient):** Allah gives people time, showing patience even when they disobey.
- f. **Al-Haseeb (The Reckoner):** Allah will hold every individual accountable for their actions. This attribute reminds learners that accountability starts now – in the classroom, at home and later in their roles as leaders in Ghana.

By reflecting on these beautiful qualities, Muslims are encouraged to practise **justice, compassion, forgiveness and patience** in everyday life.



Figure 2.26: Learning and teaching the Beautiful Names of Allah

## Key Moral Attributes of Allah

1. **Al-'Adl (The Just):** Inspires Muslims to practise honesty, fairness and equity in their dealings.
2. **Ar-Rahman (The Compassionate):** Motivates believers to show kindness to the weak, vulnerable and those in need.
3. **Al-Ghaffar (The Forgiving):** Teaches Muslims to forgive others just as Allah forgives sins.
4. **Al-Halim / As-Sabur (The Forbearing/Patient):** Encourages endurance, self-control and tolerance.

## Moral Guidance for Human Conduct

1. **Justice:** Being fair in resolving conflicts, for example, among classmates.
2. **Compassion:** Showing care to the sick, needy, or vulnerable.
3. **Forgiveness:** Letting go of grudges with family, friends, or peers.
4. **Patience:** Controlling anger, waiting calmly during hardship, or focusing during exams.

## Application in Real-Life Situations

- a. **Conflict Resolution:** Acting fairly and forgiving wrongs reflects Allah's justice and mercy.

- b. **Charity and Kindness:** Helping neighbours or needy classmates mirrors Allah's compassion.
- c. **Honesty and Accountability:** Being truthful in schoolwork, business, or leadership echoes Allah's justice.
- d. **Perseverance:** Facing difficulties with patience shows Allah's forbearance.

### Activity 2.19 Talking About Moral Values

Discuss how knowing Allah is Just and Merciful should influence Muslim behaviour. In your groups

1. Begin with the guiding question: *"How should knowing that Allah is Al-'Adl (The Just) and Ar-Rahman (The Compassionate) affect the way a Muslim behaves?"*
2. Learners brainstorm examples: being fair in sharing, forgiving a friend, helping someone in need.
3. Groups share ideas and connect them to Allah's attributes.

#### Prompt

Fill in the sentence starter:

- a. *If Allah is Al-'Adl, then I should ...*
- b. *If Allah is Ar-Rahman, then I should ...*

### Activity 2.20 Mapping Allah's Attributes

1. Create a concept map linking each attribute to real-life moral actions. Draw four circles and write one attribute in each.
2. Connect each attribute with at least one action.
  - a. Al-'Adl → Fairness in sharing food.
  - b. Ar-Rahman → Helping an elderly person.
  - c. Al-Ghaffar → Forgiving a classmate.
  - d. As-Sabur → Studying patiently for exams.
3. Share maps in groups.

### Activity 2.21 Practising Allah's Names

Plan and role-play how to apply an attribute of Allah in daily life.

1. Small groups choose one attribute of Allah.
2. Create a short skit showing how to practise it (e.g., a prefect resolving conflict fairly, a student forgiving another, showing patience in a queue).
3. After the role-play, groups explain which attribute they demonstrated and why.

### You may reflect on the questions below.

#### Reflection questions

- Which attribute did your group role-play?
- How does this action reflect Allah's moral value?
- What lesson can others learn from it?

#### Summary: What You Have Learned So Far

- Allah's Beautiful Names guide Muslims to practise good morals.
- Al-'Adl inspires fairness and honesty.
- Ar-Rahman motivates compassion and kindness.
- Al-Ghaffar teaches forgiveness.
- Al-Halim/As-Sabur encourages patience and self-control.
- Living by Allah's attributes builds peaceful communities, prevents corruption and prepares upright leaders for Ghana.

#### Case Study: From Small Wrongs to National Corruption

In a Senior High School in Ghana, some students decided to cheat on their examinations. They whispered answers, passed small notes, and some even sneaked in prepared sheets. Teachers noticed some signs but ignored them, thinking, "It is only a small thing."

Later, these same students, now grown, found themselves in positions of responsibility in government and institutions. Some manipulated figures in accounts, inflated prices in contracts, or took bribes. What started as "small" malpractice in the classroom grew into a national problem of corruption.

This situation reflects how ignoring little wrongs can become the seed of greater harm to the whole society.

- Al-Baseer (The All-Seeing)** reminds us that Allah saw the cheating in the exam hall and the later corruption in public offices. Nothing escapes His sight, even when no one is seeing us.
- Al-'Adl (The Just)** teaches that injustice, whether in exams or governance, brings harm to others. Fairness must guide us from school life to national leadership.
- Al-Haseeb (The Reckoner)** shows that everyone will be held accountable. Cheating or corruption may seem to succeed for a time, but Allah will call every person to account.

This case teaches learners that honesty at the school level is the foundation for integrity at the national level. If learners practise fairness and accountability now, Ghana's future can be free from corruption.



**It can all start in the exam hall, right?.** Image Credit: ghpage.com

## Self-Assessment

1. Can I name three attributes of Allah and say what they mean?
2. Can I explain how Allah’s mercy, justice, patience, or forgiveness guide my behaviour?
3. Can I give one example where I can practise kindness, fairness, patience, or forgiveness?
4. Do I understand that Allah sees and holds us accountable for our actions?
5. Can I connect small wrongs in school or at home to bigger problems like corruption in the nation?

**Tip:** Living by Allah’s attributes is both worship and a way to build a just and peaceful community. Corruption often begins with “small wrongs” in classrooms, markets, or homes, but practising fairness, compassion, forgiveness and patience helps stop it from growing. By seeing Allah as All-Seeing, Just and the Reckoner, you develop the discipline and integrity Ghana needs for the future.

## EXTENDED READING

### The Ninety-Nine Attributes of Allah

*Al-Islam.org* — A detailed exploration of the 99 Beautiful Names of Allah, showing how each attribute helps believers understand Allah’s nature. ([Al-Islam.org](https://al-islam.org))

<https://al-islam.org/allah-yasin-t-al-jibouri/ninety-nine-attributes-allah?>



### Tawhid of Allah’s Most Beautiful Names and Lofty Attributes

*Kalamullah.com* — PDF text elaborating belief in Allah’s Names and Attributes, with clear discussion of correct belief, avoiding misinterpretations. ([Kalamullah](https://www.kalamullah.com))

<https://www.kalamullah.com/Books/Tawhid%20of%20Allahs%20Most%20Beautiful%20Names%20and%20Lofty%20Attributes.pdf>



### The Concept of Tawhid in Islam: An Overview of the Perspectives of Some Prominent Muslim Scholars

*Academia.edu* — Scholarly article examining how different Muslim scholars understand Tawhid

(Oneness), its components and implications for moral behaviour. ([Academia](#)) <https://doi.org/10.32350/JITC.62.06>



### **Attributes of Allah**

*FitrahTawheed.com* — A resource that classifies and explains Allah’s attributes (essential, appearance, deeds), helpful for learners to grasp how attributes are described in Islam. ([fitrahtawheed.com](#)) <https://fitrahtawheed.com/Attributes-of-Allah>



### **A Comparative Survey of Islam and African Indigenous Religions: Faith in God and Implications for Believers**

*ResearchGate* — A comparative essay that discusses the understanding of God in both Islam and African Traditional Religions, including similarities/differences in worship, attributes and religious responsibility. ([ResearchGate](#)) DOI:[10.15408/ref.v23i1.32031](https://doi.org/10.15408/ref.v23i1.32031)



# REVIEW QUESTIONS

## Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. Observing the stars at night reminds Muslims of Allah's:
  - A. Mercy
  - B. Power
  - C. Forgiveness
  - D. Compassion
2. Planting trees to protect the environment reflects:
  - A. Justice
  - B. Stewardship (Khilafah)
  - C. Patience
  - D. Forgiveness
3. Which Islamic source encourages caring for nature?
  - A. The Constitution
  - B. The Qur'an
  - C. Science
  - D. Tradition only
4. The Sunnah teaches Muslims to:
  - A. Destroy forests
  - B. Waste water
  - C. Conserve resources
  - D. Pollute rivers
5. Which attribute of Allah means "The Just"?
  - A. Ar-Rahman
  - B. Al- 'Adl
  - C. Al-Haseeb
  - D. Al-Baseer
6. Showing kindness to the poor best reflects:
  - A. Al-Ghaffar
  - B. Ar-Rahman
  - C. As-Sabur
  - D. Al-'Adl
7. The attribute that encourages forgiveness is\_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. Al-Halim
  - B. Al-Ghaffar
  - C. Al-Baseer
  - D. Ar-Rahman
8. Forgiving a classmate who insulted you reflects:
  - A. Justice
  - B. Compassion

- F. Forgiveness
  - G. Accountability
8. Which of these means “truthfulness”?
    - A. Sidq
    - B. Amanah
    - C. Zakah
    - D. Sabr
  9. Returning lost property to its owner shows:
    - A. Patience
    - B. Compassion
    - C. Honesty and Trustworthiness
    - D. Forgiveness
  10. Corruption often begins with:\_\_\_\_\_
    - A. Small dishonest acts.
    - B. National elections.
    - C. Punishments.
    - D. Religious leadership.
  11. The attribute that reminds Muslims that Allah sees everything is:
    - A. Al-Haseeb
    - B. Al-‘Adl
    - C. Al-Baseer
    - D. Ar-Rahman

### True/False Questions

1. The Qur’an encourages wasting natural resources.
2. Al-‘Adl means The Just.
3. Al-Ghaffar encourages Muslims to forgive.
4. Sidq means patience in Islam.

### Fill-in-the-Blanks

1. Muslims are \_\_\_\_\_ (caretakers) of the earth.
2. Planting trees is an act of \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The Qur’an and \_\_\_\_\_ guide Muslims on caring for the environment.
4. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) taught not to waste \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ means The Just.
6. Ar-Rahman inspires Muslims to show \_\_\_\_\_.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ means The Forgiving.
8. Forgiveness helps to build \_\_\_\_\_ communities.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ is the Islamic term for truthfulness.

10. \_\_\_\_\_ means trustworthiness in Islam.
11. Small wrongs can grow into \_\_\_\_\_ at national level.
12. Allah is \_\_\_\_\_, meaning He sees all actions.

### Short Answer Questions

1. How does observing nature increase faith in Allah?
2. Mention one way Muslims can protect the environment.
3. How does the Qur'an encourage conservation?
4. Give one environmental practice taught in the Sunnah.
5. Explain how Al-'Adl guides fairness in your school.
6. Give one way Ar-Rahman can shape your treatment of classmates.
7. Describe a situation where forgiveness is needed in your school.
8. How does Al-Ghaffar encourage reconciliation?
9. Why is honesty important in daily life?
10. Mention one example of Amanah in Ghanaian society.
11. How can dishonesty in school lead to national corruption?
12. Which attributes of Allah can help prevent corruption?

### Essay Questions

1. Discuss how protecting nature reflects belief in Allah.
2. Explain how stewardship (Khilafah) applies to environmental care.
3. How do the Qur'an and Sunnah guide Muslims in protecting water?
4. Explain the importance of conserving resources in Islam.
5. Discuss how practising Al-'Adl promotes fairness in your community.
6. Explain how Ar-Rahman can reduce conflicts among friends.
7. Describe how forgiveness strengthens unity in schools.
8. How does Al-Ghaffar guide Muslims in dealing with offences?
9. "Honesty is the best policy." Discuss this statement in light of Sidq.
10. How does Amanah guide Muslims in their responsibilities?
11. Discuss how small, dishonest acts can lead to national corruption.
12. Explain how Allah's attributes (Al-Baseer, Al-'Adl, Al-Haseeb) can fight corruption.

SECTION

# 3

## WORSHIP, VALUES AND DEVELOPMENT



# RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, PRACTICES, MORAL VALUES AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

## Worship and Moral Values for Development

### INTRODUCTION

This section explores how **worship in Islam** goes beyond rituals to shape character and community life. You will study the **Five Pillars of Islam**, which guide faith and practice, and see how every act of worship — prayer, fasting, giving charity and pilgrimage — is grounded in the **Qur'an and Hadith**. The section also examines how **African Indigenous Religion (AIR)** has influenced certain Muslim worship in Ghana, identifying practices that complement Islam and others that risk syncretism. Finally, it highlights the **moral values of worship**, such as honesty, patience, generosity, and fairness, and how these values can guide daily behaviour in schools, families and communities. By linking worship to real-life situations, you will understand that Islam trains believers not only to perform rituals but also to live responsibly and peacefully in society.

#### KEY IDEAS

- The Five Pillars of Islam are essential acts of worship that express submission to Allah and build community.
- Acts of worship like du‘ā’, dhikr, Qur’ān recitation, and sujūd are grounded in the Qur’ān and Hadith, not human invention.
- Some Islamic worship practices in Ghana are influenced by AIR (charms, protective prayers, water rituals, roles of mallams).
- Syncretic practices may complement Islam culturally, but what contradicts Tawḥīd and orthodoxy must be evaluated critically.
- Worship embodies moral values: patience, humility, gratitude, generosity, honesty, and social responsibility.
- Applying these values in school, home, and community life makes worship expressive and morally transformative.

# THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM AS ACTS OF WORSHIP (‘IBĀDAH)



## The Foundation of Worship in Islam

In Islam, worship — called *‘ibādah* — is more than performing religious rituals. It is a way of life that reflects obedience, devotion and sincerity towards Allah (God). Worship includes both spiritual acts and everyday behaviour: speaking truthfully, treating others with kindness and showing discipline in one’s actions. For Muslims, living with integrity and compassion is considered a form of worship.

The Qur’an says;

“And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.” (*Qur’an 51:56*)

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also explained:

“The most beloved of deeds to Allah are those most consistent, even if they are small.” (*Hadith – Sahih al-Bukhari*)

This broad understanding helps you to appreciate that Islam encourages moral conduct and social responsibility as part of religious life.

Central to Islamic worship are five essential duties known as the Five Pillars of Islam. These pillars form the foundation of a Muslim’s faith and practice. Just as pillars support a building, these acts support the spiritual and ethical structure of a Muslim’s life. Learning about these pillars offers insight into how Islam shapes personal character and community values.

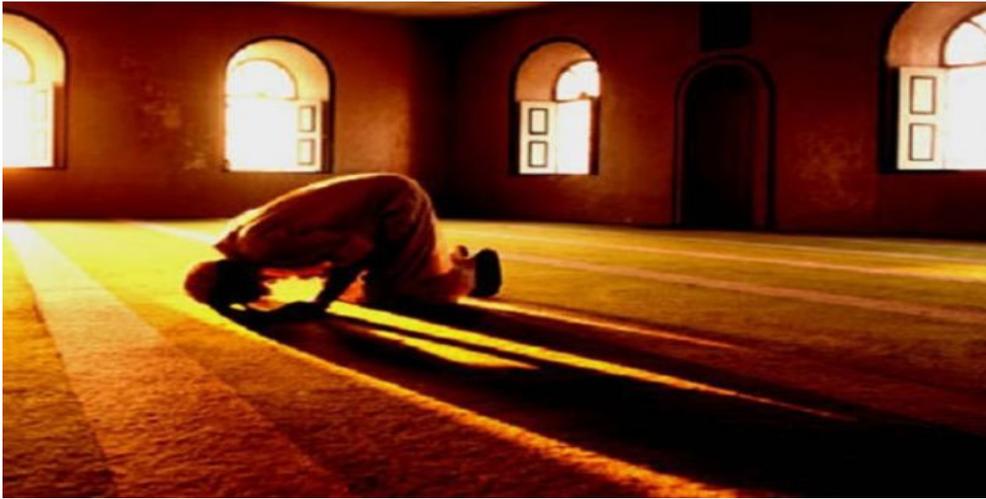


Figure 3.1: A Muslim in *Sujud* position during *Salah*

### Activity 3.1 Pillars Talk Circle

#### Instructions

1. Sit in a circle. Teacher begins: “Why are the Five Pillars called acts of worship?”
2. List the Five Pillars and describe briefly how each is performed.
3. Using Qur’anic verses and Hadiths (e.g., Qur’an 2:43 on Salat, Qur’an 9:60 on Zakat), discuss how each pillar links to submission to Allah.
4. Reflect as a group: “Which pillar strengthens your daily discipline the most?”

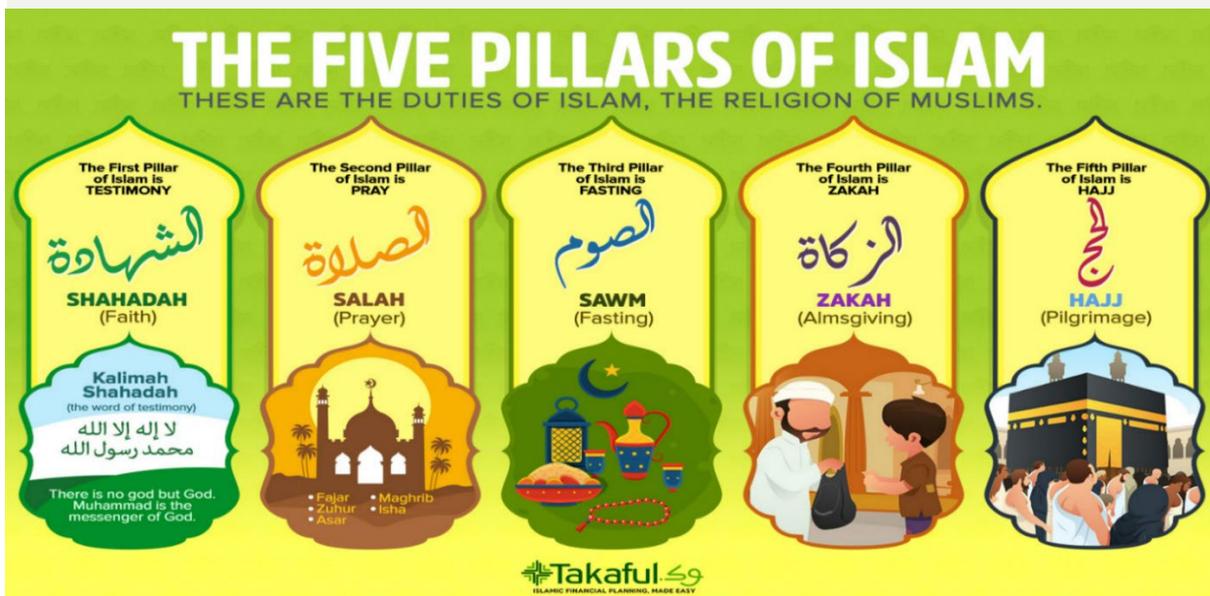
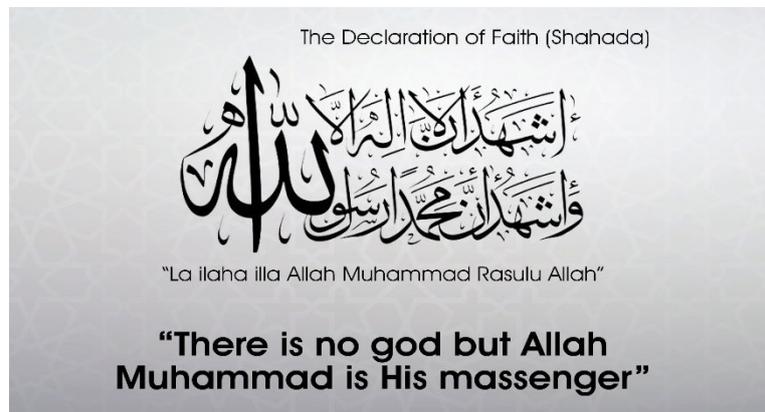


Figure 3.2: The 5 Pillars of Islam.

## The Five Pillars of Islam

### Shahadah – Declaration of Faith



The first pillar is the *Shahadah*, a simple but powerful statement: “*There is no god, but Allah and Muhammad are His Messenger.*” This declaration affirms belief in one God (Tawhid) and acceptance of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the final messenger.

### The Qur’an affirms

“So, know that there is no deity except Allah...” (*Qur’an 47:19*)

It is spoken with sincerity and believed in the heart – and also reflected in the performance of everyday activities. For Muslims, saying the Shahadah marks entry into the Islamic faith and serves as a daily reminder of their spiritual purpose.

Even for non-Muslim learners, understanding the Shahadah offers a window into the central belief of Islam — that life has meaning through devotion to one Creator and following His guidance. It highlights the importance of faith as a source of identity and direction.

### Salat – Daily Prayers

*Salat* refers to the five compulsory prayers that Muslims perform each day. These prayers are listed below.

1. Fajr – dawn before sunrise
2. Zuhr – midday
3. Asr – afternoon before sunset
4. Maghrib – just after sunset
5. Isha – night

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught: “The first matter that the servant will be brought to account for on the Day of Judgment is the prayer.” (*Hadith – Sunan al-Tirmidhi*)



**Figure 3.3:** Congregants after a *Salat* section in the Masjid with the Imam. Credit: ghanaiantimes.com

Each prayer includes specific physical movements (standing, bowing, prostrating) and recitations that express humility and gratitude to Allah. These prayers are performed facing the Kaaba in Mecca and help structure the day around moments of reflection and discipline.

For example, a student who pauses during break time to perform the Zuhr prayer demonstrates commitment and effective time management. *Salat* teaches consistency, mindfulness, and a sense of connection to something greater than oneself. Non-Muslim learners can appreciate how regular prayer fosters inner peace and moral focus.

### Activity 3.2 Pillars Concept Map

List the five pillars of Islam and explain them briefly.

#### Instructions

1. Draw a large circle in the centre: *“Five Pillars as Worship.”*
2. Create branches for each pillar:
  - a. Shahadah → belief
  - b. Salat → prayer
  - c. Zakat → generosity
  - d. Sawm → self-discipline
  - e. Hajj → unity and equality
3. Add explanations under each branch: how it is performed + its moral/spiritual lesson.

## Zakat – Almsgiving

*Zakat* is the practice of giving a portion of one’s wealth — typically 2.5% — to those in need.

The Qur'an instructs:

“Establish prayer and give Zakat...” (*Qur'an 2:110*)

It is calculated annually and distributed to groups such as orphans, widows, and the poor. Zakat is not just charity; it is a religious obligation that promotes fairness and compassion in society.

In Ghana, this might look like a family donating part of their income to help children afford school supplies or uniforms. Zakat encourages generosity and reduces inequality, reminding all learners that caring for others is a shared human value. It teaches that wealth is a trust and should be used to uplift the community.



**Figure 3.4:** Zakat as a responsibility is an easy way to bring relief

## Sawm – Fasting in Ramadan

*Sawm* refers to fasting during the month of Ramadan, where Muslims abstain from food, drink, and immoral behaviour from dawn to sunset.

The Qur'an states:

“O you who have believed, fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become righteous.” (*Qur'an 2:183*)

The fast begins with a pre-dawn meal (*suhoor*) and ends with an evening meal (*iftar*). But fasting is not only physical — it is also spiritual. Muslims are encouraged to avoid lying, gossiping, and other harmful actions during this time.

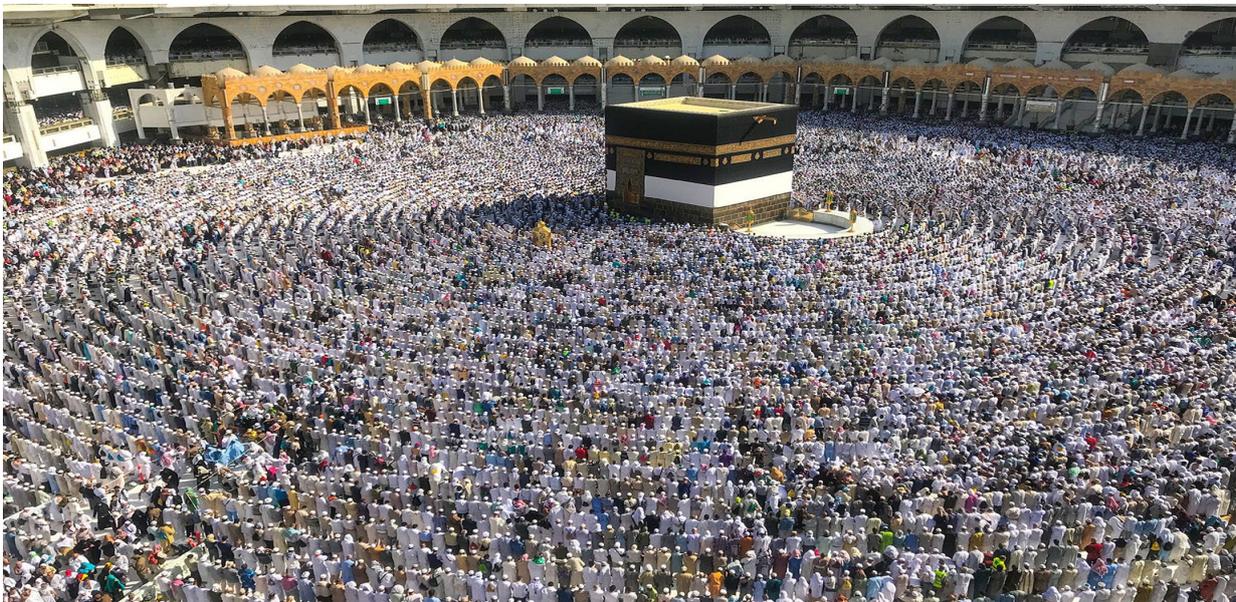
There are different types of Sawm in Islam:

- a. Obligatory Sawm – such as fasting during Ramadan
- b. Voluntary Sawm – like fasting on Mondays and Thursdays or on special days such as the Day of Arafat
- c. Compensatory Sawm – performed to make up for missed fasts due to illness or travel
- d. Expiatory Sawm – required to atone for certain violations, such as breaking an oath

For instance, a learner who avoids cheating during Ramadan shows that fasting strengthens moral character. Sawm teaches patience, self-control, and empathy for those who struggle with hunger daily. Non-Muslim learners can relate to the idea of self-discipline and reflection as tools for personal growth.



**Figure 3.5:** Fasting cultivates patience and self-discipline. Credit: Islamic-relief.org.uk



**Figure 3.6:** Hajj unites and renews Muslims' spirituality. Credit: traveltoharam.co.uk

### Activity 3.3 Pillars in Practice

#### Task Instructions

1. Divide yourselves into 5 groups — each group researches one pillar.
2. Record: what it is, how it is performed, its meaning, and spiritual impact (e.g., Zakat fosters generosity, Sawm builds patience).
3. Present findings creatively: poster, role-play, or short slide.

### Summary Table: The Five Pillars of Islam

| Pillar   | Description  | Purpose and Values                                      |
|----------|--|---|
| Shahadah | Declaration of belief in one God and His Messenger | Affirms faith, identity, and spiritual purpose          |
| Salat    | Five daily prayers: Fajr, Zuhr, Asr, Maghrib, Isha | Builds discipline, mindfulness, and connection to God   |
| Zakat    | Giving 2.5% of wealth to the needy                 | Promotes justice, compassion, and social responsibility |
| Sawm     | Fasting during Ramadan and other types             | Teaches patience, empathy, and moral self-control       |
| Hajj     | Pilgrimage to Mecca                                | Symbolises unity, equality, and devotion                |

### Activity 3.4 Faith-in-Action Exhibit

Explore and creatively present one of the Five Pillars of Islam through a group-designed artefact and explanatory label, demonstrating understanding of its significance in Muslim worship.

#### Instructions

1. As a class, prepare an exhibition: “*Worship in Islam: The Pillars We Stand On.*”
2. Put yourselves into groups of 4 or 5
3. Each group creates one artefact or display: Shahadah scroll, prayer timetable, Zakat donation box, fasting journal, or Hajj model.
4. Write a short label for the display: “*This shows \_\_\_ and teaches \_\_\_.*” This will help you to express your creativity and show how the Five Pillars connect faith to real life.

#### Summary: What You Have Learned

By now, you should understand the following.

1. *The Five Pillars of Islam are the foundation of Muslim faith and practice. They guide how Muslims worship, live morally, and contribute to society.*
2. *Shahadah is the declaration of belief in one God and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). It marks entry into Islam and affirms spiritual purpose.*
3. *Salat, the five daily prayers — Fajr, Zuhr, Asr, Maghrib, and Isha — help build discipline and keep Muslims connected to Allah throughout the day.*
4. *Zakat involves giving a portion of wealth to those in need. It promotes fairness, generosity, and community care.*

5. *Sawm, especially during Ramadan, teaches patience, self-control, and empathy. It includes different types of fasting, such as obligatory, voluntary, and compensatory.*

6. *Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca, is a symbol of unity, equality, and submission to Allah. It brings Muslims from all backgrounds together in worship.*

*Together, these pillars shape both personal character and community life. They show how faith can influence behaviour, relationships, and social responsibility.*

## Self-Assessment

Ask yourself these questions.

1. Can I name and describe the Five Pillars of Islam?
2. Can I explain how each pillar is performed, including the names of the daily prayers and types of fasting?
3. Do I understand the spiritual and social importance of each pillar?
4. Can I give a real-life example of how one or more pillars guide behaviour in my school, home, or community?

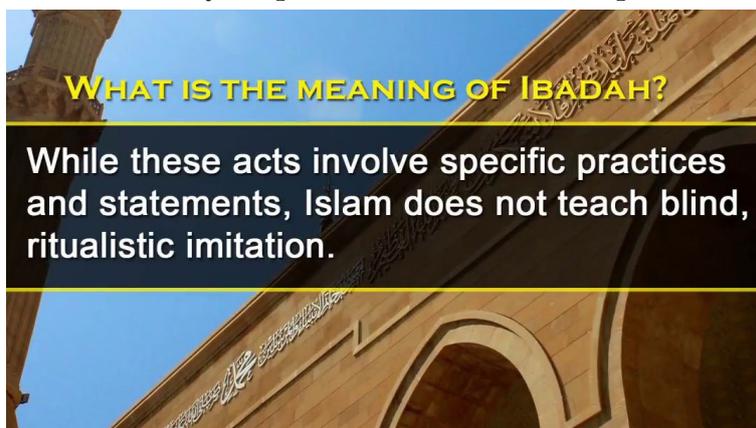
**Tip for Practice:** Whether you are Muslim or simply learning about Islam, you can reflect on how values like discipline, kindness, and generosity shape good character. For Muslims, strengthening faith can begin with small steps — like praying on time or helping someone in need. Choose one pillar this week and practise it better. Start small, stay consistent.

## ELEMENTS OF WORSHIP IN ISLAM

### ‘Ibādah is a Way of Life

Worship in Islam, known as **‘ibādah**, is not just a set of rituals. It is a way of life that connects Muslims to Allah through guidance revealed in the **Qur’an** and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Every form of worship—prayer, fasting, giving charity, performing pilgrimage, reciting the Qur’an, or even remembering Allah—is supported by clear scriptural references.

In this lesson, you will explore the **Qur’anic verses** and **Hadiths** that guide each act of worship and reflect on how they shape a Muslim’s relationship with Allah.



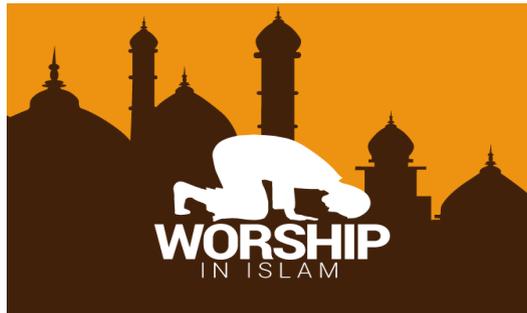
## Salat (Prayer)

### 1. Scriptural References

- a. Qur'an 2:43 – “Establish prayer and give Zakat and bow with those who bow.”
- b. Qur'an 29:45 – “Indeed, prayer restrains from immorality and wrongdoing.”
- c. Hadith: The Prophet (SAW) prescribed **five daily prayers** at set times.

### 2. Purpose

- a. Builds discipline and time management.
- b. Keeps believers connected with Allah throughout the day.
- c. Prevents immoral behaviour.



### Activity 3.5 Scriptural evidence

Connect Salat, Zakat and Sawm with their scriptural basis and meaning.

#### Instructions

1. Teacher/peer facilitator asks: “Where in the Qur’an or Hadith do we find guidance for worship?”
2. Read aloud Qur’an 2:43 (Salat), Qur’an 2:183 (Sawm), and Qur’an 9:60 (Zakat).
3. With a partner, discuss the questions below.
  - a. What does the verse say?
  - b. What act of worship does it prescribe?
  - c. Why is this important for Muslims?
4. Share one insight with the whole class.

## Zakat (Almsgiving)

### 1. Scriptural References

- a. Qur’an 9:60 – Lists rightful recipients of Zakat (poor, needy, travellers, etc.).
- b. Qur’an 2:267 – Encourages giving from lawful and good earnings.

### 2. Purpose

- a. Purifies wealth.
- b. Helps reduce poverty and inequality.
- c. Strengthens community bonds.



Figure 3.7: Zakat giving

### Activity 3.6 Rooted in Scripture: Concept Mapping – Elements of Worship

Visualise the connections between acts of worship and their scriptural references.

#### Instructions

1. Draw a circle in the centre of your notebook and write: “*Elements of Worship in Islam.*”
2. Create branches for **Salat, Zakat, Sawm, Hajj, Du‘ā’, Dhikr, Qur’an Recitation, and Sujūd.**
3. Under each branch, write one Qur’anic verse or Hadith and one purpose.

You can now see how all acts of worship are **rooted in scripture** and serve to build faith.

## Sawm (Fasting in Ramadan)

### 1. Scriptural References

Qur’an 2:183 – “O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may attain taqwa (piety).”

### 2. Purpose

- a. Develops self-control and patience.
- b. Promotes empathy for the poor and hungry.
- c. Strengthens spiritual awareness (taqwa).

## Hajj (Pilgrimage)

### 1. Scriptural References

- a. Qur’an 3:97 – Obligation to perform Hajj for those who can afford it.
- b. Hadiths explain rites such as **Tawaf** (circumambulation) and **standing at Arafat**.

### 2. Purpose

- a. Demonstrates unity and equality of all Muslims.
- b. Reminds believers of life’s spiritual purpose.
- c. Acts as a form of renewal and forgiveness.



**Figure 3.8:** Dates are fruits mostly used for fasting

### Activity 3.7 The worship we desire: Exploring Worship in Depth

Let's do some analysis now. This activity will help you develop teamwork and tafsir-like analysis skills by linking practices with texts. You will soon become an expert in text analysis.

#### Instructions

1. Form groups of 4–5. Each group takes one element of worship (e.g., Salat, Zakat, Sawm, Hajj, Du‘ā’, Dhikr, Sujūd, Qur’an Recitation).
2. Tasks.
  - a. Find and read at least **one Qur’anic verse/Hadith** about it.
  - b. Describe how the worship is performed.
  - c. Explain its meaning and impact on daily life.
3. Present your findings using a **short skit, poster, or oral recitation**.

#### Sample Group Task Sheet

- Act of worship: \_\_\_\_\_
- Verse/Hadith: \_\_\_\_\_
- How performed: \_\_\_\_\_
- Meaning/impact: \_\_\_\_\_

### Du‘ā’ (Supplication)

1. **Scriptural References:** Qur’an 40:60 – “Call upon Me; I will respond to you.”
2. **Purpose**
  - a. Direct and personal communication with Allah.
  - b. Helps express gratitude and seek help in times of need.

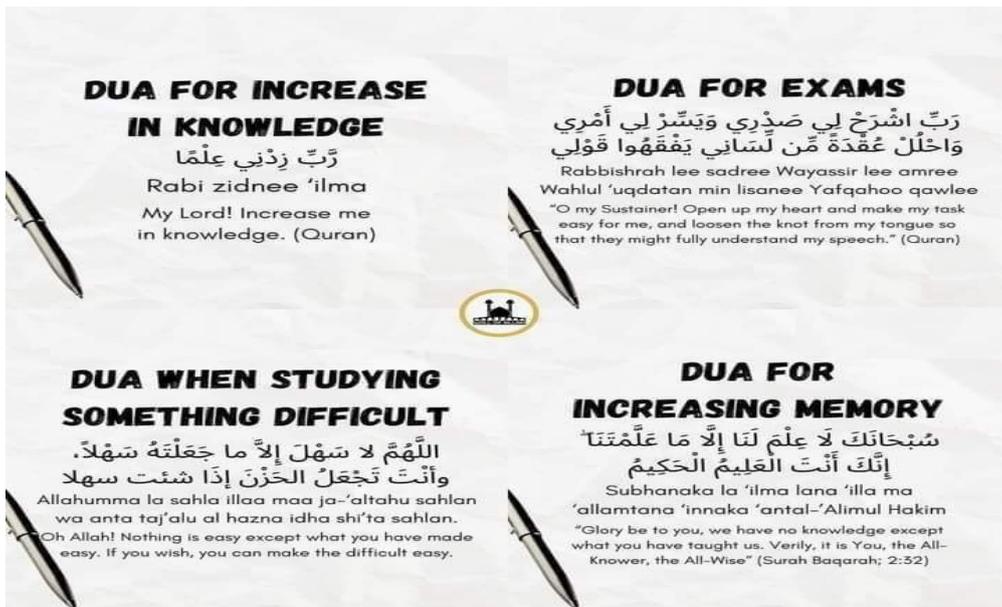


Figure 3.9: Some examples of Du 'ā' (Supplications)

## Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah)

### 1. Scriptural References

- a. Qur'an 13:28 – “Indeed, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest.”
- b. Qur'an 33:41 – “O you who believe, remember Allah often.”

### 2. Purpose:

- a. Brings peace of mind.
- b. Encourages mindfulness of Allah in everyday life.

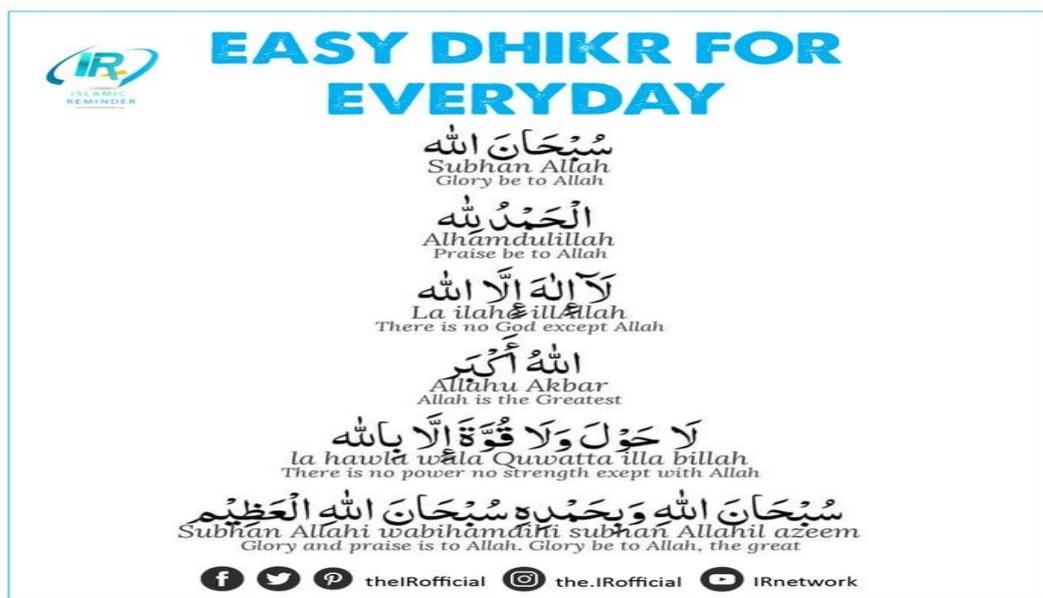


Figure 3.9: Examples of Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah)

### Activity 3.8 Scriptural reasoning

You are going to analyse scriptural texts and draw meaning for worship. Put yourselves into groups of 3-5. This activity is helping you link Qur’anic text to lived practice.

#### Instructions

1. Each group will have a verse (e.g., Qur’an 2:183 on fasting, Qur’an 3:97 on Hajj, Qur’an 40:60 on Du‘ā’).
2. Read the verse carefully (peer/teacher helps with difficult Arabic/English words).
3. Discuss the questions below in your group.
  - a. What practice does this verse prescribe?
  - b. Why is this important for Muslims?
  - c. How does it help build faith?
4. Share one key point with the class.

#### Sample Verse Analysis Table

| Verse | Act of Worship | What It Prescribes | Why It Matters |
|-------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
|       |                |                    |                |

This activity is helping you link Qur’anic text to lived practice.

### Qur’an Recitation

1. **Scriptural Reference:** Qur’an 73:4 – “Recite the Qur’an with measured recitation.”
2. **Purpose**
  - a. Deepens knowledge of Islam.
  - b. Strengthens spirituality.



Figure 3.11: Mr. Abass Alhassan Mohammed representing Ghana at the 2023 International Qur’an Competition in Dubai (Credit: ghanaianminaret.com)

## Sujūd (Prostration)

1. **Scriptural Reference:** Qur'an 96:19 – "...prostrate and draw near to Allah."
2. **Purpose**
  - a. Shows humility and submission to Allah.
  - b. Symbolises closeness to Allah.



**Figure 3.12:** NSMQ Contestants in Sujūd (Prostration) to thank Allah (Credit: geshub.org)

### **Summary: What You Have Learned**

1. *Worship in Islam is always guided by the **Qur'an and Hadith**.*
2. *Each act of worship—Salat, Zakat, Sawm, Hajj, Du 'ā', Dhikr, Qur'an recitation, Sujūd—has a clear **scriptural basis**.*
3. *Worship shapes the believer's life by encouraging **discipline, generosity, empathy, unity, humility, and spirituality**.*

### **Self-Assessment**

Can I now...

1. Identify at least **three Qur'anic verses** that prescribe worship.
2. Explain how **Salat and Zakat** are linked to scripture?
3. Match acts of worship with their **scriptural references**.
4. Reflect on how **Dhikr and Du 'ā'** bring peace of mind?

**Tip:** When you perform any act of worship, **recall its Qur'anic reference**. This will help you understand not just the ritual, but the meaning behind it.

## AFRICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION (AIR) INFLUENCES ON GHANAIAN ISLAMIC WORSHIP

Islam in Ghana has not grown in isolation. As it spread into communities with strong African Indigenous Religious (AIR) traditions, some cultural expressions and practices shaped the way Muslims lived and practised their faith. These influences appear in **healing rituals, protective prayers, communal worship, music, and the roles of religious leaders.**

Some of these practices **complement Islam**, making it easier for people to connect faith with their culture. Others, however, raise questions about **orthodoxy** (whether they are truly Islamic) and **syncretism** (mixing religions).

This lesson will help you:

- Identify AIR influences in Ghanaian Islamic worship.
- Explain their meaning and effects.
- Evaluate whether they align with the principle of **Tawhid** (Oneness of Allah)

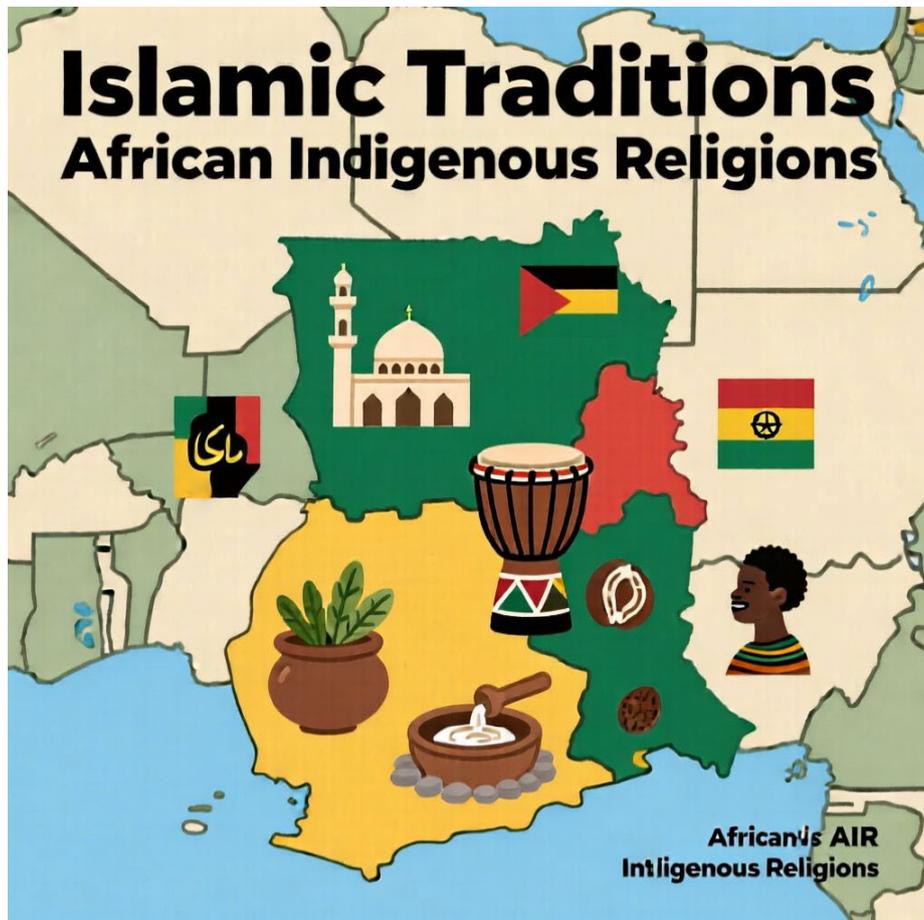


Figure 3.13: The meeting of Islam and AIR traditions

## Superficial Similarities vs. Theological Foundations

Some Islamic practices may *look* like AIR rituals, but their **meaning and foundation are different**. These are called **superficial similarities**.

1. **Communal prayers:** Call-and-response style and rhythmic recitations may seem like AIR gatherings, but in Islam, they are rooted in Qur’an and Sunnah.
2. **Herbal baths and water rituals:** Used in both traditions, but in Islam, purification is based on **wuḍū’** (ablution) and **ghusl** (bath after major impurity).
3. **Ruqyah water:** Mallams recite Qur’anic verses over water for healing. This may look like AIR “spiritual water,” but the basis is **divine revelation**, not ancestral forces.

**Table 3.1: Summary**

| Practice          | AIR Meaning                 | Islamic Meaning             |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Spiritual water   | Linked to ancestors/spirits | Qur’anic verses for healing |
| Call-and-response | Community spirit rituals    | Qur’an recitation in prayer |



**Figure 3.14:** Muslim male doing ablution



**Figure 3.15:** An indigenous traditional bath for a baby

### Activity 3.9 Spot the Similarities

Distinguish between superficial similarities and actual theological foundations in Islamic and AIR practices.

**Instructions**

1. Read/listen to short descriptions of practices (e.g., communal prayers, herbal baths, ruqyah, charms).
2. Use the table below to classify each as:
  - a. **Superficial similarity** (looks alike but is Islamic in foundation), or
  - b. **AIR-influenced practice** (may risk syncretism).

**Sample: Template/Table**

| Practice                              | Looks Like AIR | Rooted in Islam? | Comment              |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Communal prayers with response</b> | Yes            | Yes              | Based on Sunnah      |
| <b>Herbal baths</b>                   | Yes            | No               | AIR cleansing ritual |

## Discrepancies and Risk of Syncretism

Some practices go **beyond similarity** and risk becoming **un-Islamic** innovations (bid'ah) or even shirk.

1. **Charms/amulets:** If believed to work independently of Allah, they contradict Tawhid.
2. **Burning incense and spirit invocations:** Common in AIR, but when inserted into zikr, it goes against Sunnah.
3. **Healing rites** that combine Qur'anic recitations with AIR rituals mix revelation with cultural superstition.

These need to be **corrected** to keep worship pure.



### Activity 3.10 Debate Circle

Analyse the risks of syncretism and evaluate cultural expressions in Ghanaian Islamic worship.

**Instructions**

1. In your debating groups, prepare arguments for/against the following statement: *“Charms and amulets with Qur’anic verses are acceptable in Islam as long as they remind us of Allah.”*

2. Group A defends; Group B opposes; etc.
3. After debate, write a reflection: “*One thing I learned about syncretism is...*”

**Example:** Sentence starters

- a. “I agree/disagree because...”
- b. “This practice might be dangerous since...”

## Implications of Theological Overlap

When AIR practices are mixed into Islamic worship without clear limits.

1. Muslims may become **confused about Tawhid**, relying on objects or spirits instead of Allah.
2. The authenticity of Islamic worship is weakened.
3. Communities may split between traditionalists (who accept the blend) and reformists (who reject it).
4. Islam clearly forbids syncretism: Worship must be **based on Qur’an and Sunnah only**.

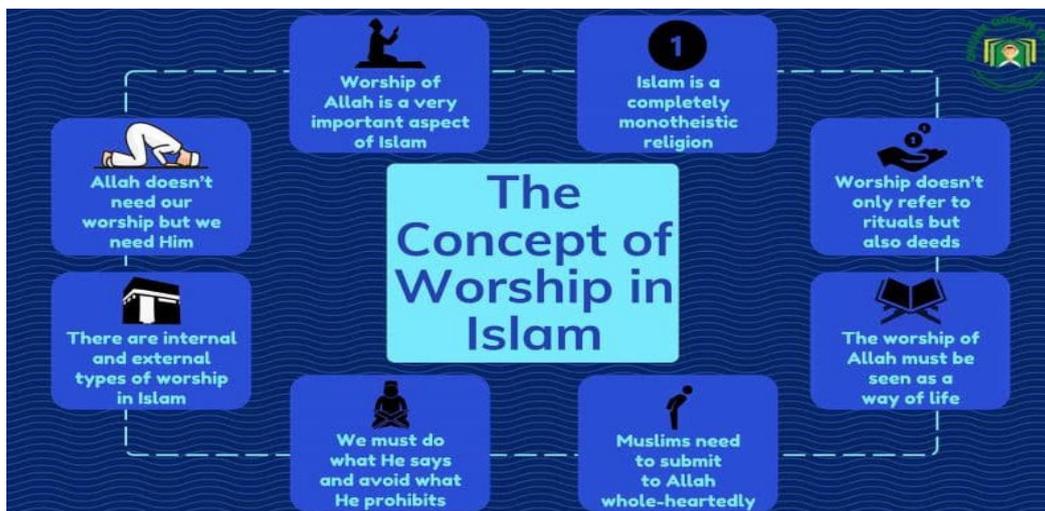


Figure 3.6: Islam clearly forbids syncretism

## Cultural Expressions: Permissible and Prohibited

Islam allows **culture** as long as it does not go against Tawhid or Sunnah.

### 1. Permissible

- a. Using local languages in prayer.
- b. Wearing modest traditional dress.
- c. Adding culturally appropriate styles to community worship.

### 2. Prohibited

- a. Invoking spirits or ancestors.
- b. Rituals that imitate AIR worship (e.g., trance dances).
- c. Using music or attire that distracts from remembering Allah.



Figure 3.17: Islam and culture often intertwine, and sometimes clash

### Activity 3.11 Map It Out

Visualise how AIR and Islamic practices overlap, complement or contradict.

#### Instructions

1. Draw a **two-column concept map**.
  - a. Column A: AIR practices (libation, trance, ancestor veneration, charms).
  - b. Column B: Islamic parallels (du‘ā’, ruqyah, ziyārah, tawakkul).
2. Use arrows to show whether each practice is:
  - a. A superficial similarity,
  - b. A contradiction, or
  - c. A permissible cultural expression.

#### Sample Template

| AIR Practice | Islamic Parallels | Relation (similarity/contradiction/permissible) |
|--------------|-------------------|---|
|              |                   |   |
|              |                   |   |

## The Way Forward: Preserving Orthodoxy with Cultural Sensitivity

Muslims in Ghana must do the following.

1. **Distinguish** between faith and culture.
2. Promote **education** to guide authentic worship.
3. Encourage **dialogue** to reduce confusion.
4. Always uphold **Tawhid** as the foundation.
5. Value culture, but never at the cost of religion.

### Activity 3.12 Case Study Reflection

Apply learning by evaluating the AIR influence in a real or imagined Ghanaian community.

#### Instructions

1. Read the short case below  
*In a community, a mallam uses ruqyah water but also asks clients to bring eggs and cola nuts to “feed” the spirits during healing.*
2. Respond to these guiding questions
  - a. Which part of the practice is Islamic?
  - b. Which part reflects AIR?
  - c. What is the risk to Tawhid?
  - d. Suggest a way forward for the community.

#### Example: Answer template

- Islamic aspect:
- AIR aspect:
- Risk to Tawhid:
- Way forward:

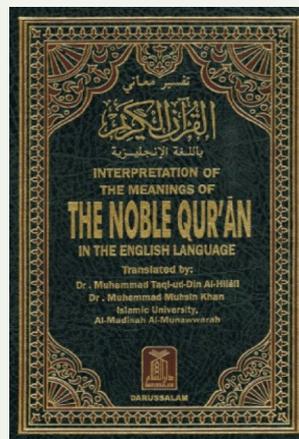


Figure 3.18: Faith, practice and culture in balance

**Summary:** What You Have Learned

1. *Islam in Ghana has been influenced by AIR practices.*
2. *Some similarities are **superficial** and harmless when grounded in the Qur'an and Sunnah.*
3. *Other practices risk **syncretism** and must be avoided.*
4. *Islam permits cultural expressions, but **never those that conflict with Tawhid.***
5. *Muslims must balance **cultural identity** with **religious purity.***

**Self-Assessment**

Before moving on, ask yourself these questions to help you assess your understanding.

1. Can I explain what **superficial similarities** are?
2. Can I give one example of an AIR practice that complements Islam?
3. Can I give one example of an AIR practice that conflicts with Islam?
4. Do I understand why **syncretism is dangerous**?
5. Can I explain how Muslims can balance culture and faith?

**Tip:** Whenever you see a practice that seems to mix culture with religion, ask yourself: “Does this practice come from Qur'an and Sunnah or from something else?” If it does not come from Islamic sources, it should not be considered worship.

## MORAL VALUES IN WORSHIP AND THEIR APPLICATION



## Worship is a School

Islamic worship (*‘ibādah*) is more than rituals. It is a **school of character** that trains Muslims to live morally upright lives. Each of the Five Pillars of Islam — *Shahādah*, *Ṣalāh*, *Zakāh*, *Ṣawm*, and *Ḥajj* — builds values such as honesty, patience, humility, generosity, and unity. These values guide Muslims to live peacefully with others and to serve society responsibly.

For example:

- a. Prayer (*Ṣalāh*) teaches punctuality and humility.
- b. Fasting (*Ṣawm*) trains patience and empathy.
- c. Almsgiving (*Zakāh*) promotes generosity and fairness.
- d. Pilgrimage (*Ḥajj*) develops equality and perseverance.
- e. Declaration of faith (*Shahādah*) nurtures sincerity and loyalty to Allah.

By understanding these values, learners can apply them daily, both in and outside of school, at home, and in the wider community.

## Moral Values in the Five Pillars

1. **Ṣalāh (Prayer):** Builds punctuality, honesty, humility, and mindfulness.
2. **Ṣawm (Fasting):** Cultivates patience, self-control, empathy for the needy.
3. **Zakāh (Almsgiving):** Fosters generosity, fairness, and care for the vulnerable.
4. **Ḥajj (Pilgrimage):** Teaches equality, unity, tolerance, perseverance.
5. **Shahādah (Declaration of Faith):** Nurtures sincerity, devotion, loyalty to Allah.



**Figure 3.19:** The 5 Pillars of Islam

### Activity 3.13 Moral Dialogue Circle

Connect the Five Pillars to moral values and everyday behaviour.

1. Teacher opens with: *“How does worship in Islam make someone a better person?”*
2. Learners discuss in pairs, then share examples:
  - a. Ṣalāh → honesty in exams
  - b. Ṣawm → patience with friends
  - c. Zakāh → generosity to needy classmates
3. SEN scaffold: Provide sentence starters → *“Ṣalāh teaches me to...”*, *“When I fast, I learn to...”*

### Moral Intentions Behind Worship

1. Worship is designed to **purify the heart** and character.
2. Qur’an 29:45: *“Indeed, prayer restrains from immorality and wrongdoing.”*
3. **Fasting** strengthens resilience against temptation.
4. **Almsgiving** removes selfishness and creates justice.



### Activity 3.14 Worship-to-Character Group Chart

Identify, record, and present the moral values associated with each Pillar.

1. Groups are assigned one Pillar each (Ṣalāh, Ṣawm, Zakāh, Ḥajj, Shahādah).
2. Task: Identify (a) the main moral value, (b) Qur’anic/Hadith support, and (c) a real-life example.
3. Create a “Worship-to-Character” chart.  
Example: **Ṣalāh** → Discipline → Qur’an 29:45 → “I submit homework on time.”
4. Groups present their charts.

## Character and Social Responsibility

1. Worship shapes inner virtues: honesty, patience, and gratitude.
2. These virtues guide outward behaviour: respect, fairness, kindness.
3. A worshipper becomes a **responsible citizen** who contributes to society.



### Activity 3.15 Role-Play: Worship in Real Life

Demonstrate how values from worship guide real decisions.

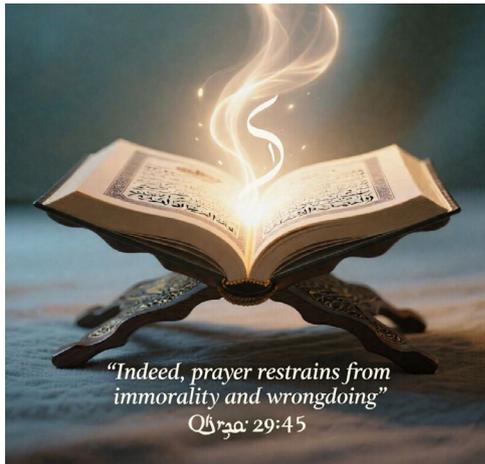
1. Groups prepare short dramas
  - a. Scenario 1: A student tempted to cheat but recalls honesty from Ṣalāh.
  - b. Scenario 2: A quarrel resolved through patience from Ṣawm.
  - c. Scenario 3: A family shares food with a needy neighbour, inspired by Zakāh.
2. Class reflects: “Which value did each role-play show? How can we practise this?”

### Application in Daily Life

1. **At School:** Honesty in exams, punctuality, kindness to classmates.
2. **At Home:** Gratitude to parents, patience in chores, helping siblings.
3. **In Community:** Fairness in trade, helping the needy, promoting peace.

| Pillar   | Moral Value          | Application Example       |
|----------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Shahādah | Sincerity            | Being truthful always     |
| Ṣalāh    | Discipline, humility | Being punctual at school  |
| Zakāh    | Generosity, justice  | Helping a needy classmate |

| Pillar | Moral Value       | Application Example                        |
|--------|-------------------|--|
| Ṣawm   | Patience, empathy | Controlling anger, forgiving others        |
| Hajj   | Equality, unity   | Respecting all people regardless of status |



**Is cheating in exam justified?**

من غشنا فليس منا  
 رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

who cheats us is not one of us

"And never think that those who rejoice in what they have perpetrated and like to be praised for what they did not do - never think them [to be] in safety from the punishment, and for them is a painful punishment." (Al 'Imran: 188).

لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا آتَوْا وَيُجِبُونَ أَنَّ يُحْمَدُوا بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّهُمْ بِمَفَازَةٍ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

Figure 3.20: Some Qur'an verses to apply in daily life



Figure 3.21: We need to be fair in our trade



Figure 3.22: Helping the needy and poor in the community

### Activity 3.16 Personal Reflection Journal

Apply worship values in your personal lives.

1. Individually, write in your journals for one week. Focus on the topic: "How worship helped me make a better choice."

You can use the sentence starters below as examples.

- a. “I controlled anger today because...” (Ṣawm)
  - b. “I helped a friend because...” (Zakāh spirit)
  - c. “I told the truth in class because...” (Ṣalāh honesty)
2. End with a sharing session (voluntary) with a partner or in a group with a few classmates.

### Summary

Islamic worship is not only about rituals but also about **building character**. Each of the Five Pillars develops values such as honesty, patience, humility, generosity, and unity. These values are meant to guide Muslims in real-life situations at school, home, and in society. A believer shows the effect of worship in his or her behaviour.

### Self-Assessment

1. Can I explain how each pillar of Islam builds a specific moral value?
2. Can I give at least two examples of how worship improves my school or community life?
3. Do I practise one moral value I learn from worship each day?

### Tips

- a. Link every act of worship to a **value** in your life.
- b. Keep a personal reflection journal for a week. Note how prayer, fasting, or kindness changed your behaviour.
- c. Practise small acts of generosity, patience, or humility daily.

## EXTENDED READING

“Islam’s Moral Code: A Guide to Self-Development” — WhyIslam.org

A clear explanation of how Islamic moral values is grounded in the Qur’an and Hadith, especially virtues like honesty, generosity, and humility. ([whyislam.org](https://www.whyislam.org/morality-ethics-in-islam/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)) [https://www.whyislam.org/morality-ethics-in-islam/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.whyislam.org/morality-ethics-in-islam/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)



“The Ethical Worldview of the Qur’an” — Yaqeen Institute

Discusses justice, benevolence, sincerity, intention, etc., and how the Qur’an’s ethical framework shapes Islamic worship and life. ([Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research](https://yaqeeninstitute.org/read/paper/the-ethical-worldview-of-the-quran?utm_source=chatgpt.com))

[https://yaqeeninstitute.org/read/paper/the-ethical-worldview-of-the-quran?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://yaqeeninstitute.org/read/paper/the-ethical-worldview-of-the-quran?utm_source=chatgpt.com)



**“Planting Islam in Ghana: A Critical Review of the Approaches”** — C. E. Sarbah, 2023

Examines how Islam spread in Ghana, the interactions with Indigenous culture, and how indigenous religion helped shape local Islamic practices. (SciELO) [https://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?pid=S1011-76012023000200004&script=sci\\_arttext&utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?pid=S1011-76012023000200004&script=sci_arttext&utm_source=chatgpt.com)



**“Akhlq – The Value of Values”** — Spiritual Perception

Explores how moral values in Islam stem from theological conviction, how virtues like humility, gratitude, and mercy are developed through worship. ([spiritualperception.org](https://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?pid=S1011-76012023000200004&script=sci_arttext&utm_source=chatgpt.com)) [https://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?pid=S1011-76012023000200004&script=sci\\_arttext&utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?pid=S1011-76012023000200004&script=sci_arttext&utm_source=chatgpt.com)



**“The Moral System of Islam”** — International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)

Provides an overview of morality in Islam: its sources, how worship purifies character, social responsibility, etc. Good for consolidating Week 14 themes. (IIUM) [https://www.iium.edu.my/deed/articles/themoralsystem.html?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.iium.edu.my/deed/articles/themoralsystem.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com)



# REVIEW QUESTIONS 3

## Multiple Choice Questions

1. Which of the following is the declaration of faith in Islam?
  - A. Ṣalāh
  - B. Shahādah
  - C. Zakāh
  - D. Sawm
2. Which Pillar of Islam most directly promotes social equality?
  - A. Zakāh
  - B. Shahādah
  - C. Ṣawm
  - D. Ṣalāh
3. The Qur'an is primarily regarded as: \_\_\_\_\_
  - A. Collection of Hadith
  - B. Revealed word of Allah
  - C. Biography of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)
  - D. Historical record of Islam
4. Which of the following best explains the role of Hadith?
  - A. Explains, supports, and details Qur'anic teachings
  - B. Replaces the Qur'an in worship
  - C. Originates from local culture
  - D. Contains only historical events
5. Which practice may lead to syncretism in Ghanaian Islam?
  - A. Ruqyah with Qur'anic verses
  - B. Use of charms as independent power
  - C. Ṣalāh in congregation
  - D. Reading Qur'an in the local language
6. Which of these is a *superficial similarity* between AIR and Islamic worship?
  - A. Ancestral mediation
  - B. Communal rhythmic recitation in prayers
  - C. Spirit invocation
  - D. Libation rituals
7. Which value is most linked to Ṣawm (fasting)?
  - A. Patience
  - B. Gratitude
  - C. Unity
  - D. Sincerity
8. Zakāh as a moral act primarily cultivates:
  - A. Humility
  - B. Generosity

- C. Punctuality
  - D. Gratitude
9. Which of the following is a moral intention of Ṣalāh according to Qur'an 29:45?
    - A. To seek wealth
    - B. To refrain from immorality
    - C. To increase social status
    - D. To promote entertainment
  10. The Hajj strengthens which of the following moral values most clearly?
    - A. Perseverance and equality
    - B. Obedience and fear
    - C. Ambition and wealth
    - D. Isolation and silence

### True/False Questions

1. Ṣalāh is performed once a week on Friday.
2. The Shahādah is the foundation of all other pillars.
3. The Qur'an and Hadith together guide authentic Islamic worship.
4. Hadith are the direct revelations given to Prophet Muhammad (SAW).
5. Using charms as protective objects is fully acceptable in Islam.
6. Cultural expressions like using local languages in prayer are permissible in Islam.
7. Fasting helps a Muslim cultivate empathy for the poor.
8. Zakāh encourages selfishness among Muslims.
9. Worship in Islam aims at purifying the heart and character.
10. Practising humility in Ṣalāh does not affect personal relationships.

### Fill-in-the-Blanks

1. The pilgrimage to Makkah once in a lifetime is called \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Zakāh teaches the value of \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ is the revealed word of Allah to Prophet Muhammad (SAW).
4. The sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) are recorded in the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The mixing of AIR practices with Islamic rituals is called \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Ruqyah water is prayed over using \_\_\_\_\_ verses.
7. Ṣawm cultivates the moral values of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Worship values can be applied at \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

## Short Answer Questions

1. List the Five Pillars of Islam.
2. Explain how Ṣalāh disciplines a Muslim's daily life.
3. State one way the Qur'an guides worship.
4. Why are Hadith necessary for understanding the Qur'an in practice?
5. Identify two AIR practices that influenced Ghanaian Islamic worship.
6. Why is the use of charms considered a threat to Tawḥīd?
7. Give two examples of applying worship values at school.
8. How can humility from Ṣalāh improve relationships with others?

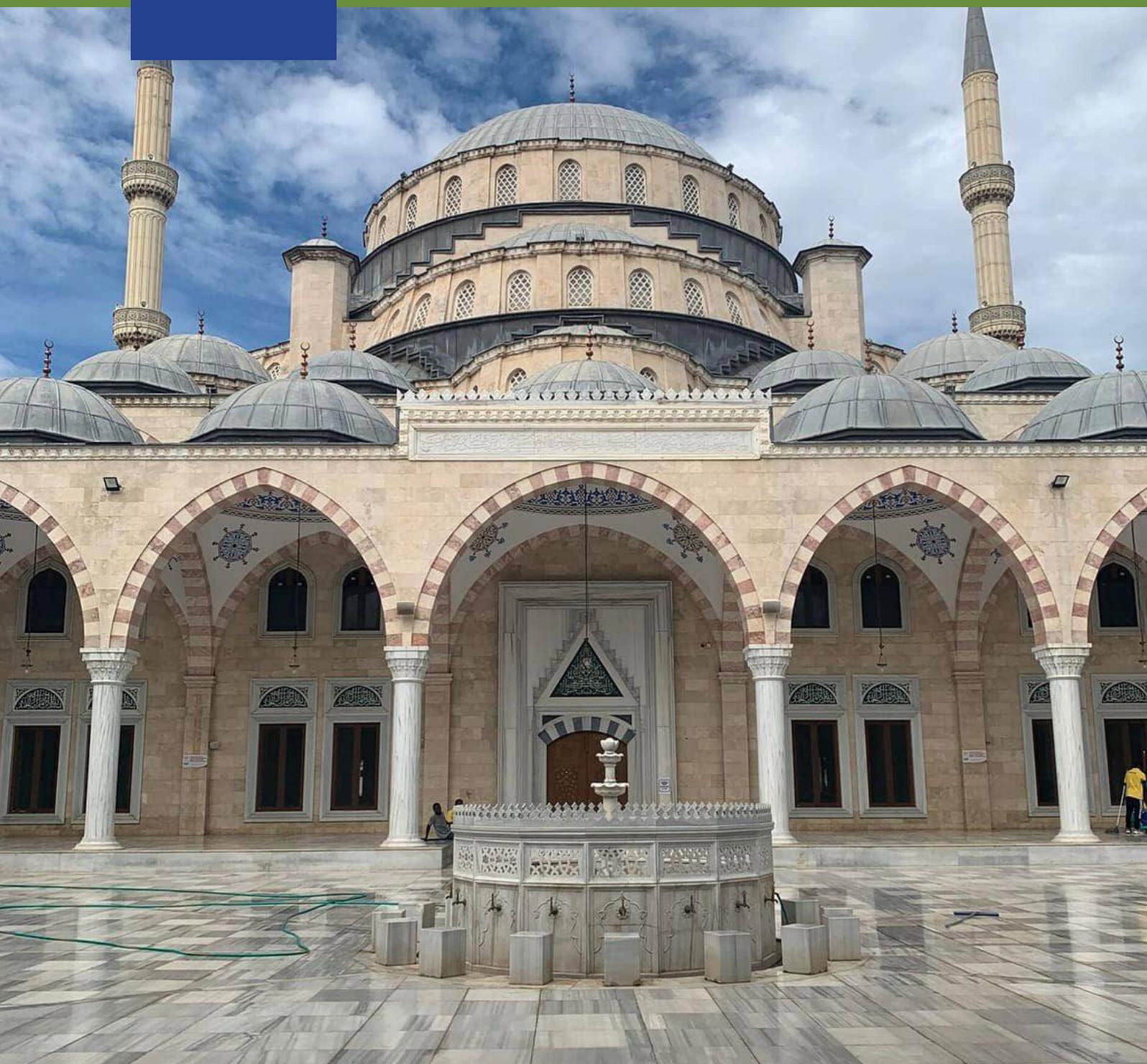
## Essay Questions

1. Analyse how each of the Five Pillars strengthens a Muslim's faith and character.
2. Discuss with examples how the Five Pillars can be applied in daily school life.
3. Explain the relationship between the Qur'an and Hadith in guiding authentic worship.
4. Evaluate the dangers of ignoring Hadith in practising Islamic worship.
5. Discuss two AIR influences on Ghanaian Islamic worship and explain whether they complement or conflict with Islamic principles.
6. Analyse the theological risks of syncretism in Ghanaian Islamic practice.
7. Explain with examples how Ṣawm and Zakāh develop social responsibility.
8. Design a personal or group project showing how Islamic worship can solve a moral problem in your community.

SECTION

# 4

## ISLAM AND NATION BUILDING



# RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES AND NATION BUILDING

## Religious Communities, Gender and Nation Building

### INTRODUCTION

This section explores how Islam addresses contemporary moral, social and cultural issues in Ghana and beyond. You will examine Islamic perspectives on **marriage and family life**, highlighting values of love, responsibility and mutual respect. In this section, you will also study **dress and adornment in Islam**, focusing on modesty, dignity and cultural expression. Attention is given to **Islam and contemporary social vices**, such as drug abuse, dishonesty and corruption, encouraging you to apply Qur'anic and Prophetic guidance to everyday challenges. The Section further considers **Islam and gender roles**, helping you reflect on equality, justice and the responsibilities of men and women in family and society.

Finally, you will discuss **Islam and culture**, showing how faith interacts with Ghanaian traditions while maintaining Tawhīd and Islamic principles. Together, these lessons strengthen your ability as an IRS learner to connect Islamic worship with ethical living and responsible citizenship.

My Islam



I  
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A  
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Ideal  
System of  
Living for  
All of  
Mankind

#### KEY IDEAS

- **Culture and Faith** – Islam engages positively with Ghanaian traditions where they do not conflict with Tawhīd and core teachings.
- **Dress and Modesty** – Clothing in Islam reflects dignity, humility, and identity while discouraging extravagance and immorality.
- **Family and Marriage** – Marriage is based on mutual love, respect, and responsibility, forming the foundation of a stable society.

- **Gender and Roles** – Islam recognises the complementary responsibilities of men and women, grounded in justice and equality.
- **Moral Guidance** – Qur’an and Sunnah provide ethical direction to resist vices such as corruption, dishonesty, and drug abuse.
- **Social Responsibility** – Muslims are called to live responsibly, respecting others’ rights and contributing to community well-being.

## RELIGIOUS PLURALISM



**Figure 4.1:** Religious pluralism in Ghana

Religious pluralism means recognising and living peacefully with people of different religions. It is more than **tolerance** (just “allowing” others). Pluralism values diversity encourages **respect** and promotes cooperation.

Islam teaches that religious diversity is part of **Allah’s plan**. The Qur’an says:

- “*There is no compulsion in religion*” (2:256) – nobody should be forced to follow a religion.
- “*We created you into nations and tribes that you may know one another*” (49:13) – differences are for learning and understanding.
- “*To each of you, We prescribed a law and a way*” (5:48) – every group has its own path as a test.

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) showed pluralism in practice. In **Madinah**, he created the **Constitution of Madinah**, which allowed Muslims, Jews and Christians to live together fairly.

In Ghana today, where Muslims, Christians and African Indigenous Religion (AIR) followers live side by side, pluralism helps promote **peace, unity and development**.

## Definition and Distinction

1. **Religious Pluralism** – Accepting and positively engaging with many religions in society.

*Note: You can respect others while staying true to your own religion.*

2. **Tolerance** – Letting others practise their religion without disturbing them but not necessarily valuing it.

3. **Exclusivism** – Believing only one religion has the truth and rejecting others completely.



Figure 4.2: Ghanaians enjoy an enviable religious tolerance

Table 4.1: A Comparison Table

| Concept            | Meaning  | Ghanaian Example                                |
|--------------------|--|---|
| <b>Pluralism</b>   | Respecting and valuing diversity; working together | Muslims and Christians on Peace Council         |
| <b>Tolerance</b>   | Allowing but not fully engaging                    | A neighbour ignores another’s church service    |
| <b>Exclusivism</b> | Rejecting other religions                          | Someone saying only their religion should exist |

### Activity 4.1 Defining and Differentiating Pluralism

With a partner, define *religious pluralism*, *tolerance* and *exclusivism*.

- Use the sentence starters:
  - “Religious pluralism is...”
  - “Tolerance means...”
  - “Exclusivism is...”
- Share your definitions with the class. Discuss similarities and differences.

This helps you develop **conceptual clarity** and distinguish pluralism from mere tolerance.

## Qur'anic Foundations of Pluralism

The Qur'an encourages peaceful coexistence and respect.

1. **Qur'an 49:13** – Diversity is for **learning and knowing one another**, not conflict.
2. **Qur'an 2:256** – Religion must be a **choice**, not forced.
3. **Qur'an 5:48** – Allah gave different laws and ways to different groups to **test them**.

These verses show that Islam does not fear diversity but sees it as part of Allah's wisdom. Pluralism does not mean giving up your beliefs. It means respecting others while staying faithful.

**Example:** Christians and Muslims often join in community clean-up exercises and health campaigns.

## Prophetic Example of Pluralism

1. **Constitution of Madinah** – Made Muslims, Jews, and Christians one community (ummah) with shared responsibilities.
2. **Dialogue with Christians of Najran** – The Prophet (SAW) welcomed them and spoke respectfully.
3. **Fair relations with Jews in Madinah** – He made just agreements and ensured peace.

The Prophet (SAW) taught that peace and fairness are key to society. This model can be applied today in Ghana, where people of different faiths must share resources.

**Example:** National prayers during Independence Day feature Muslim, Christian and Traditional leaders side by side.

### Activity 4.2 Qur'anic Verse Exploration

Divide yourselves into 3 groups; assign to each group a Qur'anic verse: 49:13, 2:256, 5:48.

#### Instructions

1. Read the verse.
2. Explain how it supports religious pluralism.
3. Prepare a short poster or oral presentation summarising key points.

This helps connect scripture to pluralism in historical and contemporary contexts.

### Activity 4.3 Prophetic Example Role-Play

The following activity will help you understand Prophetic pluralism and develop empathy and civic skills. Try to participate actively.

1. Form suitable groups of not more than 10 members in each group.

2. Role-play the **Constitution of Madinah** scenario or Prophet Muhammad's interaction with Christians of Najran.

### Instruction

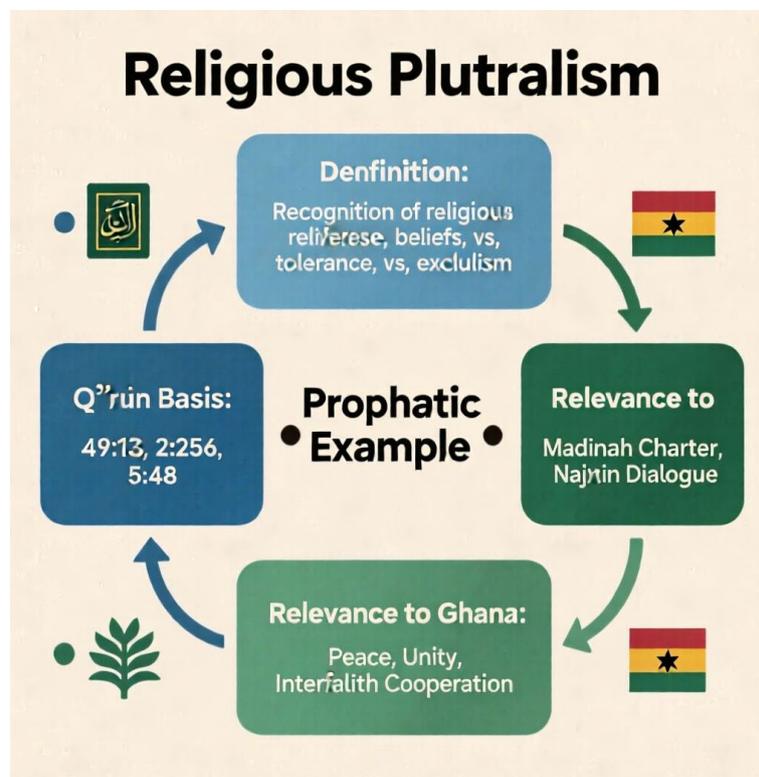
- a. Assign roles: Muslims, Jews, Christians, local leaders.
  - b. Act out a short dialogue showing **fairness, dialogue and mutual respect**.
    - If you feel shy, try to narrate or draw the scenes.
3. Discuss lessons learned on pluralism with the class.

## Pluralism in Ghana Today

Ghana is religiously diverse, and pluralism is seen in many ways.

1. **Interfaith marriages** – A Muslim marrying a Christian, with both families respecting each other.
2. **Shared national events** – Leaders of all faiths praying together at events like Independence Day.
3. **Community peace committees** – Especially in Northern Ghana, where chiefs, imams, and pastors work together.
4. **Everyday school life** – Students of different faiths studying and eating together.

Pluralism reduces conflict and encourages development. When people of different religions cooperate, communities grow stronger.



**Figure 4.3:** Prophetic example of religious pluralism

### Activity 4.4 Pluralism in Ghana: Our Pride

You are going to connect Islamic pluralism principles to real-life Ghanaian contexts.

1. List examples of religious pluralism in Ghana (e.g., interfaith marriages, shared festivals, joint prayers at national events, etc.).

#### Instructions

- a. Work in small groups of 3-5.
- b. Create a **simple table or mind map** of examples.
- c. Present findings to the class.
- d. Some of you may be provided with 1–2 starter examples by your teacher for support.

#### Summary: What you have learned so far.

*Religious pluralism means **valuing and respecting diversity** in religion, beyond just tolerance. The Qur'an supports diversity and freedom of belief. The Prophet (SAW) practised pluralism in Madinah by working fairly with Jews and Christians. In Ghana today, pluralism is important for **peace, unity, and development** in schools, homes, and communities.*

**Tip:** Pluralism begins with **respect**. Next time you are with classmates or neighbours of a different religion, try to learn one good thing from their practice. This will help you appreciate diversity while remaining strong in your own faith.

## ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

Islam emphasises respect for religious diversity and peaceful coexistence with people of other faiths. The Qur'an provides clear guidance, highlighting principles such as those listed below.

1. **No compulsion in religion** (Qur'an 2:256), meaning everyone has the right to choose their faith freely.
2. **Recognition of humanity's diversity** (Qur'an 49:13), showing that God created different nations and tribes to know and appreciate one another.
3. **Affirmation of distinct communities** (Qur'an 5:48), where each community has its own law and path.

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) demonstrated pluralism in practice through treaties, dialogue, and cooperation with Jews, Christians and other groups in Madinah. Key Islamic values that support pluralism include:

- a. **Tasamuh (tolerance):** Respecting other religions without forcing Islamic belief.
- b. **'Adl (justice):** Treating all people fairly regardless of faith.
- c. **La ikrah fi al-din (no compulsion in religion):** Ensuring freedom of belief.

In modern Ghana, Muslims live alongside Christians and practitioners of African Indigenous Religions (AIR). Applying these teachings helps to maintain peace, unity and social development in schools, communities and national life.



**Figure 4.4:** Islamic teachings emphasise the diversity of human experiences and the unity of humanity

## Qur’anic Principles on Religious Diversity

1. **Qur’an 2:256:** “There is no compulsion in religion.” This teaches that faith is a personal choice; no one should be forced to convert.
2. **Qur’an 49:13:** God created humans in different nations and tribes to recognise and respect one another, not for conflict or prejudice.
3. **Qur’an 5:48:** Each community has its own law, giving people freedom to follow their faith while being accountable to God.
4. **Qur’an 109:6:** “To you your religion, and to me mine,” emphasising mutual respect between different faith communities.

These verses encourage Muslims to interact positively with people of other religions, fostering dialogue and understanding.

### Activity 4.5 Qur’anic Verse Exploration

1. Identify and interpret one Qur’anic (verse) guidance on religious pluralism.

#### Instructions

- a. Form small groups of 3–4 learners.
- b. Each group is assigned **one Qur’anic verse:** 2:256, 49:13, 5:48, or 109:6.

- c. Discuss the verse and answer:
  - i. What does it teach about pluralism?
  - ii. How can it guide Muslims living alongside Christians and AIR followers in Ghana?

2. Present findings using a poster or by giving a short oral presentation.

You can use the sentence below as an example of how to frame your sentences for the oral presentation

“This verse shows that Islam teaches \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.”

This activity, thus, encourages you to connect the verses to practical examples in your school, home or community (e.g., respecting classmates’ religious practices).

## Prophet Muhammad’s Interactions with Other Faiths

1. **Christians of Najran:** The Prophet invited them to Madinah, welcomed them into his mosque, and engaged in peaceful dialogue.
2. **Jews of Madinah:** They shared citizenship and responsibilities under the Medina Constitution, ensuring fairness and cooperation.
3. **Treaties:** Agreements with other groups protected rights, established justice, and prevented conflict.

These examples show that pluralism is practical and not just a theoretical concept.

### Activity 4.6 Medina Constitution Role Play

You will role-play to demonstrate your understanding of how the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) practised pluralism.

#### Instructions

1. Role-play the **Medina Constitution scenario** with classmates as Muslims, Jews, and Christians.
2. Discuss:
  - a. Rights and duties of each group
  - b. How disputes could be resolved fairly
3. Perform a **short simulation dialogue** demonstrating cooperation and respect.

Use prompts such as: “As a member of your group, I will \_\_\_\_\_ to show fairness and respect.”

This activity helps you visualise interfaith interactions and understand practical applications of justice ('adl) and tolerance (tasamuh) in Ghanaian society for nation-building.

## Islamic Concepts of Tolerance and Justice

1. **Tasamuh (Tolerance):** Recognising and respecting other religions without trying to impose Islam.
2. **'Adl (Justice):** Acting fairly toward everyone, regardless of faith, as taught in Qur'an 60:8.
3. **La ikrah fi al-din:** Protects freedom of belief and prevents coercion in matters of faith.

**Note:** *In Ghanaian schools, this could mean allowing students of different religions, especially religious minority students, to observe their practices and have the choice to participate in school events that do not reflect their beliefs without discrimination of any kind.*

### Activity 4.7 Ghanaian Pluralism Case Study

Connect Islamic pluralism to local contexts.

#### Instructions

1. Work individually or in pairs to identify two examples of religious pluralism in Ghana (e.g., interfaith school programs, shared festivals, community peace committees).
2. Describe
  - a. The activity or event
  - b. How it promotes **tolerance and cooperation**
  - c. Islamic principles reflected (**tasamuh, 'adl, la ikrah fi al-din**)
3. Share examples in a **class discussion** or **gallery walk**.

#### Sample Template

| Example | How does it show pluralism | Islamic principle illustrated |
|---------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
|         |                            |                               |
|         |                            |                               |

**Note:** *Include examples from your own community, making the connection between scripture and real-life practice.*

## Islam and Cooperation for the Common Good

1. **Qur'an 60:8:** Muslims are encouraged to act kindly and justly toward those who do not fight them.
2. Shared values such as charity, justice, and peace are common ground for collaboration across religious communities.

**Example:** Muslim and Christian students working together in community clean-ups or charity events demonstrate practical pluralism.

### Correcting Misconceptions

- a. Islam does **not** promote hostility toward non-Muslims.
- b. Extremist interpretations misrepresent Islam's principles of pluralism.
- c. Genuine Islamic teachings encourage dialogue, fairness, and peaceful coexistence.

### Activity 4.8 Reflection and Dialogue

In this activity, you will apply Islamic teachings to promote peace in local contexts.

#### Instructions

1. Write a short reflection on: "How can Islamic teachings on pluralism help reduce conflicts in my school or community?"
2. Discuss in pairs or small groups and suggest practical actions for promoting pluralism locally (e.g., interfaith clubs, community service, dialogue sessions).
3. Summarise ideas on one A4 sheet to display in class.

Start your reflection with: "I can promote religious pluralism by \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_."

*Encourage yourself to think creatively about small actions that foster tolerance and cooperation in your immediate environment.*

#### Summary

*Islamic teachings support pluralism through scripture, prophetic practice, and core values like tolerance and justice. These principles help Muslims respect diversity, live peacefully with others, and cooperate for the common good. Ghana's religious diversity makes these teachings highly relevant for promoting unity and civic responsibility.*

### Self-Assessment – Am I Learning?

1. Can I explain what religious pluralism is in Islam?
2. Can I identify Qur'anic verses that support pluralism?
3. Can I describe how the Prophet interacted with Christians and Jews?
4. Can I differentiate tolerance from exclusivism?
5. Can I give examples of religious pluralism in Ghana today?

**Tip:** Think of pluralism as **active respect and cooperation**, not just “putting up with” others. Observe how Muslims and non-Muslims work together in your school or community and see these principles in action.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM



**Figure 4.5:** Opportunities in Ghana’s religious pluralism

Religious pluralism is the coexistence of people from different religious backgrounds in one society. In Ghana, this includes Islam, Christianity and African Indigenous Religion (AIR). Pluralism presents opportunities such as peaceful cohabitation, collaboration, and mutual learning, but it also brings challenges, including doctrinal conflict, stereotyping, and politicisation of religion.

Islam encourages harmony in diversity through core values like justice (‘adl), tolerance (tasamuh), and peaceful dialogue, which can guide Muslims in Ghana to live respectfully alongside other faiths. Understanding these opportunities and challenges helps learners appreciate pluralism, promote cooperation, and prevent conflict in schools, communities, and national life.

### Meaning and Significance

1. Religious pluralism is the **recognition and valuing of multiple religions** in society.
2. It is essential for **peace, civic unity, and social harmony**.
3. A society that respects pluralism encourages **mutual respect and understanding among its citizens**.

**Note:** Try to relate this to your school or communities by observing how your classmates or neighbours with different beliefs interact.

### Activity 4.9 Defining Pluralism in Ghana

Define religious pluralism in the Ghanaian context.

#### Instructions

1. Individually or in pairs, write a **definition of religious pluralism** as it applies to Ghana.
2. Include at least **two examples** of how different religions coexist in your community (e.g., Muslim-Christian school clubs, shared festivals).
3. Share your definition with the class and discuss similarities and differences.

You may use as a sample: “In Ghana, religious pluralism means \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.”

### Opportunities of Religious Pluralism

1. **Peaceful coexistence** – Ghana is globally recognised for its relative religious harmony, where people practise different faiths side by side without major conflict.
2. **Interfaith collaboration** – Muslims and Christians often collaborate in charity, education, health, and peace initiatives.
3. **Mutual learning** – People learn from the beliefs, practices, and experiences of others, building respect and empathy.
4. **Civic tolerance** – Encourages citizens to **live peacefully** despite doctrinal differences, strengthening democracy and social cohesion.

**Example:** Muslim and Christian students organising joint community clean-up days or charity drives.



**Figure 4.6:** Religious pluralism offers opportunities to learn together and solve national problems. (Credit: gna.org.gh)

## Challenges of Religious Pluralism

1. **Doctrinal conflict** – Differences in beliefs may create tension or misunderstandings.
2. **Religious extremism** – Radical individuals or groups may exploit diversity to **create division**.
3. **Stereotyping and discrimination** – Minority faiths may face **prejudice or exclusion**.
4. **Politicisation of religion** – Using religion for political gain can **inflame tensions and divide communities**.

*Note: Think of examples in your local schools or neighbourhoods and discuss how to avoid or resolve such challenges.*



**Figure 4.7:** Ghanaians, solving their differences together

### Activity 4.10 Opportunities and Challenges Chart

Identify opportunities and challenges of religious pluralism in Ghana.

#### Instructions

1. In groups of 4, create a **two-column chart**:
  - a. Column 1: Opportunities (e.g., peace, interfaith collaboration)
  - b. Column 2: Challenges (e.g., stereotyping, doctrinal conflict)
2. Add **real-life Ghanaian examples** under each column.
3. Present the chart via a **poster, skit, or short report**.

#### Sample Template

| Opportunities | Ghanaian Example | Challenges | Ghanaian Example |
|---------------|------------------|------------|------------------|
|               |                  |            |                  |
|               |                  |            |                  |
|               |                  |            |                  |

You may use sample prompts like those listed below.

- a. Discuss: “How do these opportunities benefit society?”
- b. Discuss: “What causes these challenges and how can they be reduced?”

## Islamic Teachings Promoting Harmony

1. **Qur’an 2:256:** “There is no compulsion in religion” – respect freedom of belief.
2. **Qur’an 49:13:** Humanity’s diversity is for mutual understanding, not conflict.
3. **Prophet Muhammad’s Constitution of Madinah:** Established coexistence with Jews and Christians, ensuring rights and responsibilities for all.
4. **Core Values**
  - a. **Justice (‘adl)** – fairness to all regardless of faith.
  - b. **Tolerance (tasamuh)** – respecting the beliefs and practices of others.
  - c. **Peaceful dialogue** – resolving disagreements through discussion and cooperation.

*Note: Link these values to daily life in Ghanaian schools and communities.*

### Activity 4.11 Qur’anic Guidance Exploration

In your groups of 4–6, identify Qur’anic teachings that promote peaceful coexistence.

#### Instructions

1. Assign each group **one Qur’anic verse** related to pluralism (e.g., 2:256, 49:13).
2. Discuss the following questions.
  - a. What does this verse teach about tolerance and coexistence?
  - b. How can it guide Muslims living alongside Christians and AIR followers in Ghana?
3. Prepare a short oral presentation or poster for the class.

## Ghanaian Examples

### Opportunities

1. Interfaith prayers at national events.
2. Collaboration in schools or community projects.
3. Muslim-Christian marriages fostering family and community harmony.

### Challenges

1. Tensions over religious instruction in schools.
2. Disagreements about public use of religious symbols.

## Institutions Promoting Harmony

1. **National Peace Council:** mediates conflicts and promotes dialogue.
2. **FAITH in Ghana Alliance:** a multi-faith network of both Christian and Muslim faith traditions.
3. **West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP):** a regional civil society organisation in the areas of conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
4. **There are several Interfaith Councils** that also provide platforms for cooperation and mutual understanding.

**Note:** Observe real-life examples in your communities and identify both opportunities and challenges of religious pluralism.

### Activity 4.12 Reflection on Learner Role

Reflect on your personal role in promoting tolerance in schools.

#### Instructions

1. Individually, write a short reflection: “What role can I play in promoting tolerance in my school?”
2. In pairs or small groups, discuss practical actions (e.g., interfaith clubs, joint community service).
3. Summarise ideas on one A4 sheet for a gallery walk or classroom display.

**Sample Prompt to use:** “I can promote tolerance by \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.”

#### Summary

*Religious pluralism in Ghana brings both opportunities for cooperation and learning and challenges like conflict and extremism. Islam provides guidance through justice, tolerance, and dialogue, helping Muslims live peacefully alongside other faiths. Understanding and practising these principles contributes to national peace, social cohesion, and development.*

### Self-Assessment

Can I...

1. Explain what religious pluralism means?
2. Identify at least two opportunities for pluralism in Ghana?
3. Identify at least two challenges of pluralism in Ghana?
4. Explain Islamic teachings that promote harmony among religions?
5. Give examples of how pluralism is practised in Ghana?

**Tip:** Observe your school or community: notice instances of cooperation or conflict between different religious groups. Reflect on how **tasamuh**, **‘adl and dialogue** could improve understanding and peace.

## RELIGIOUS PLURALISM AND NATION-BUILDING

Religious pluralism occurs when people from different faiths live together in the same society. In Ghana, Muslims, Christians, and followers of African Indigenous Religion (AIR) form a multi-faith population. While differences in beliefs can sometimes cause tension, they also create opportunities for cooperation, dialogue, and shared national values.

Nation-building is the process of creating a unified, stable and prosperous nation. When citizens transform the challenges of religious diversity into avenues for understanding, collaboration, and civic participation, pluralism becomes a key resource for national development. Islam encourages principles such as **justice ('adl)**, **compassion (rahmah)**, **consultation (shūrā)** and **service to humanity**, which can guide you to use religious diversity positively for Ghana's peace and democratic governance.

*Note: Pluralism is not merely “tolerating” others but actively engaging in building relationships, understanding, and cooperation across faiths.*



**Figure 4.8:** Religious pluralism is a tool for nation-building. (Credit: gna.org.gh)

### Unity and Tension in Diversity

Religious pluralism can create **unity** when people cooperate in festivals, charity work, and dialogue. For example, Muslims and Christians sometimes organise joint peace marches or community clean-up exercises. These activities promote **mutual respect** and understanding.

However, diversity can also lead to **tension**, especially when doctrinal differences are misunderstood, stereotypes are reinforced, or extremist groups try to manipulate religious identities for conflict. Recognising both unity and tension is crucial for using pluralism constructively in nation-building.



**Figure 4.9:** Religious pluralism promotes peace and social cohesion in Ghana. (Credit: undp.org)

## Pluralism as a Tool for Social Cohesion

Social cohesion means citizens feel connected and trust one another, regardless of religion. Pluralism strengthens this through shared values such as **peace, honesty, and compassion**.

1. **Interfaith collaboration:** Muslims and Christians often work together in schools, disaster relief, and healthcare campaigns, showing that cooperation benefits all.
2. **National identity:** Respecting diversity reinforces Ghana's image as a peaceful, multi-faith society and fosters inclusion.

*Note: Activities like the celebrations of Eid and Christmas demonstrate social cohesion in action.*

## Managing Challenges for Nation-Building

Challenges such as **religious extremism, prejudice, and discrimination** can undermine national unity. Managing these requires:

- a. **Interfaith dialogue:** Encourages understanding, reduces stereotypes, and builds trust.
- b. **Legal protection:** Ghana's Constitution ensures **freedom of religion**, helping citizens respect diversity.
- c. **Civic education:** Schools and communities teach citizens how to live peacefully with different faiths.

**Example:** The **National Peace Council** mediates disputes and promotes collaboration during elections to maintain national stability.



**Figure 4.10:** Early engagement in open debates prepares young people to harness religious pluralism for building the nation.

### Ghanaian Examples

- a. **National Peace Council:** Organises interfaith discussions during sensitive times like elections.
- b. **Interfaith collaboration:** Muslims and Christians participate in joint humanitarian campaigns, national prayers, and peace marches.
- c. **Shared celebrations:** Joint observances of festivals like Eid and Christmas foster a sense of inclusion and unity.

*Note: These examples show how religious pluralism can directly support nation-building when diversity is respected and harnessed for the common good.*

| Opportunities | Challenges | How it affects nation-building |
|---------------|------------|--------------------------------|
|               |            |                                |
|               |            |                                |
|               |            |                                |
|               |            |                                |
|               |            |                                |
|               |            |                                |

### Activity 4.13 Opportunities vs. Challenges Mapping

In this activity, you will analyse the opportunities and challenges of religious pluralism in Ghana. By carrying out this activity, you will develop analytical and visual thinking skills while understanding practical implications for Ghana. You are a hero making Ghana better!

#### Instructions

1. Draw a two-column table on A4 paper or in your notebook.
2. Label one column **Opportunities** and the other **Challenges**.
3. Add at least four examples under each column. Examples can include:
  - a. Opportunities → interfaith collaborations, national prayers, school programs.
  - b. Challenges → stereotyping, religious extremism, doctrinal conflict.
4. Use arrows or notes to show how opportunities contribute to **nation-building**.

### Activity 4.14 Islamic Teachings Reflection

In this activity, we want to see how you connect religious principles to practical nation-building strategies. This will help you to understand how Islamic principles promote unity and civic responsibility.

#### Instructions

1. Individually, write down one Qur’anic teaching (e.g., 2:256, 49:13) that encourages peaceful coexistence.
2. Reflect on how **justice (‘adl)**, **compassion (rahmah)**, or **consultation (shūrā)** can address tensions in a multi-faith Ghanaian community.
3. Discuss your reflections in pairs or small groups.
4. Share one key idea with the whole class.

## Islamic Contributions

Islam provides a framework for turning pluralism into a nation-building tool.

- a. **Qur’an 49:13:** “O mankind, We created you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another.” Diversity is meant for mutual recognition, not division.
- b. **Qur’an 2:256:** “There is no compulsion in religion.” Freedom of belief promotes peaceful coexistence.
- c. **Prophetic practice:** The **Constitution of Madinah** shows Muslims, Jews, and Christians living together with rights and responsibilities.
- d. **Core values: Justice (‘adl), compassion (rahmah), and consultation (shūrā)** guide civic responsibility and cooperative nation-building.

**Tip:** Applying these Islamic principles today helps Ghanaian citizens work together across faiths to strengthen democracy, peace, and social development.

### Activity 4.15 Ghanaian Case Study Investigation

Explore real-life examples of interfaith collaboration in Ghana.

**Instructions**

1. In pairs or small groups, select one example of interfaith collaboration in Ghana (e.g., National Peace Council initiatives, school interfaith clubs, joint festivals).
2. Conduct research by doing the following.
  - a. Interviewing a religious leader, teacher, or elder
  - b. Watching short news clips
  - c. Observing community events
3. Prepare a short report or poster describing the items listed below.
  - a. The activity or initiative
  - b. How it promotes tolerance, peace, and social cohesion
  - c. How Islamic teachings support such collaboration

**Sample / Template**

| Example / Event | How it promotes pluralism | Islamic principle illustrated |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                 |                           |                               |
|                 |                           |                               |
|                 |                           |                               |
|                 |                           |                               |

This activity will help you apply classroom knowledge to real-world Ghanaian contexts and practice teamwork.

### Activity 4.16 Personal Action Plan

You will take practical steps in promoting religious tolerance in this activity. We know you are ready. Right?

### Instructions

1. Individually, write a short action plan for promoting tolerance in your school or community.
2. Include **at least three actions** you can take (e.g., joining interfaith clubs, organising dialogue sessions, volunteering in joint community projects).
3. Share your action plan in small groups and discuss feasibility.
4. Summarise the ideas on an A4 sheet to display in class or on a notice board.

You may use this prompt to start: “I can promote unity by \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.”

This activity has helped you identify concrete ways to use religious pluralism for nation-building. Isn't it?

### Summary of what you have learned so far

1. Pluralism can create **unity** but may also generate **tension**.
2. Shared values and **interfaith collaboration** promote social cohesion.
3. Challenges such as extremism or discrimination must be **managed** to protect national stability.
4. Ghanaian examples show practical ways pluralism contributes to **nation-building**.
5. Islamic teachings on justice, consultation, and compassion provide **moral guidance** for using diversity constructively.

### Self-Assessment

1. Can I define religious pluralism and nation-building?
2. Can I identify opportunities and challenges of pluralism in Ghana?
3. Can I give examples of interfaith collaboration?
4. Can I explain how Islamic teachings support peaceful coexistence?
5. Can I reflect on my role in promoting unity and tolerance?

### Tips

- a. Observe religious diversity in your community and note examples of cooperation and conflict resolution.
- b. Discuss with peers or elders how pluralism contributes to Ghana's peace and development.

## RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN PRACTICE: LOCAL AND GLOBAL



**Figure 4.11:** Religious pluralism must be reflected in our daily lives.

Religious pluralism is more than a concept; it is a lived reality. In Ghana, people of different faiths — Muslims, Christians, and practitioners of African Indigenous Religion (AIR) — often coexist peacefully in families, schools, markets, and communities. This peaceful coexistence is seen in interfaith marriages, shared festivals, and joint participation in community events such as funerals and naming ceremonies.

Globally, religious pluralism also presents opportunities and challenges. Countries like Indonesia and the United States have laws and institutions supporting religious freedom and interfaith dialogue. In contrast, some areas, such as parts of Nigeria and India, experience tension due to doctrinal differences or extremist actions. By studying these local and global examples, you will understand how leadership, law, education and religious teachings — both Islamic and AIR — shape peaceful coexistence and promote social harmony.

### Local Ghanaian Examples of Pluralism

1. **Communities:** Areas such as **Nima (Accra)**, **Kumasi Zongo**, and **Hohoe** are known for multi-faith living, where Muslims, Christians and AIR followers share neighbourhoods.
2. **Social Institutions:** Interfaith marriages shared burial grounds, joint celebrations of festivals, funerals and naming ceremonies help maintain unity and cooperation.
3. **National Institutions:** The **Ghana Peace Council** and local **Interfaith Councils** work to resolve disputes and promote dialogue.



**Figure 4.12:** A section of Madina Zongo Junction



**Figure 4.13:** A Zongo festival

## West African and African Context

**Senegal & Sierra Leone:** Long histories of Muslim-Christian harmony and interfaith collaboration.

**Nigeria:** Provides contrasting examples—peaceful interfaith initiatives exist, but tensions and conflicts, including those caused by Boko Haram, illustrate challenges of pluralism.



**Figure 4.14:** Different religious leaders in West Africa working together. (Credit: nannews.ng)

## Global Context

**India:** Examples of both Hindu-Muslim coexistence and conflicts highlight the importance of law and leadership in managing pluralism.

**Indonesia:** The world's largest Muslim-majority democracy; pluralistic laws promote religious freedom and interfaith cooperation.

**United States:** Interfaith councils, freedom of religion enshrined in law, and civic engagement show the impact of democratic principles on pluralism.

**United Arab Emirates:** Government initiatives promote interfaith tolerance, demonstrating the role of leadership and policy in supporting pluralism.



**Figure 4.15:** Different world religious leaders working together at the UN. (Credit: un.int)

## Role of Leadership, Law and Education

1. **Leadership:** Religious and political leaders encourage tolerance, dialogue and cooperation.
2. **Law:** Legal frameworks protect freedom of religion, helping manage diversity constructively.
3. **Education:** Schools provide spaces for interfaith friendships, shared projects and collaborative learning experiences.

### Activity 4.17 Local Pluralism Mapping

Identify and visualise examples of pluralism in Ghana.

#### Instructions

1. Draw a central circle labelled “Local Religious Pluralism.”
2. Branch out with examples: communities, schools, festivals, and interfaith families.
3. Note the positive outcomes of each example (peace, cooperation, mutual respect).

#### Sample/ Template

| Example | Outcome / Contribution to Harmony |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
|         |                                   |
|         |                                   |
|         |                                   |
|         |                                   |

Now you can visually connect pluralism with social harmony in Ghana with ease. Get going. Ghana needs you!

### Activity 4.18 Comparative Analysis of West Africa

Compare positive and negative experiences of pluralism in West Africa.

#### Instructions

1. Organise yourselves (or your teacher will help you) into four groups, with each group choosing one of the themes listed below.
  - a. Group 1: Positive West African examples (Senegal, Sierra Leone).
  - b. Group 2: Negative West African examples (Nigeria conflicts).
  - c. Group 3: Ghanaian examples.
  - d. Group 4: Islamic and AIR teachings supporting pluralism.
2. Discuss and prepare a poster or short report comparing the examples.

*You may use this example as a guide on how to report on the poster: "In [country/ community], pluralism leads to \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_."*

This activity helps you develop comparative and analytical skills.

### Activity 4.19 Interfaith Institution Case Study

Explore the role of institutions in promoting pluralism.

This should actively help you understand the practical applications of pluralism in Ghana and globally.

#### Instructions

1. Research or interview about one interfaith institution (e.g., Ghana Peace Council, KAICIID). You can search on the internet with the help of your phone or computer for more interfaith institutions or organisations.
2. Identify the following;
  - a. Its activities
  - b. How it promotes dialogue and cooperation
  - c. Impact on communities

#### Sample / Template you may use

| Institution | Activities | Outcomes / Impact |
|-------------|------------|-------------------|
|             |            |                   |
|             |            |                   |
|             |            |                   |

## Teachings Supporting Pluralism

1. **Islam:** Qur'an 49:13 emphasises diversity for mutual recognition; Qur'an 2:256 upholds “no compulsion in religion.”
2. **AIR:** Promotes community solidarity, hospitality, and tolerance of diverse spiritual practices.
3. These teachings guide individuals and communities to respect differences and work collaboratively for social harmony.

### Activity 4.20 Reflection on Global Lessons

In this activity, you will relate local learning to global citizenship.

#### Instructions

1. Write a reflection answering: “What can Ghana learn from global examples of pluralism?”
2. Discuss in pairs or small groups and identify **three practical lessons**.
3. Share summaries with the class for display.

This activity is assisting you in connecting local observations to global experiences so that you develop actionable ideas now and in the future.

#### Summary

*Religious pluralism is essential for peace, social cohesion, and nation-building. Ghana offers many positive examples at local and national levels, supported by Islamic and AIR teachings. Globally, pluralism requires effective leadership, laws protecting religious freedom, and educational initiatives to foster understanding. Studying these examples encourages learners to see pluralism as a practical tool for coexistence and civic responsibility.*

### Self-Assessment

1. Can I identify local Ghanaian examples of religious pluralism?
2. Can I explain how interfaith families contribute to peace?
3. Can I compare positive and negative pluralism cases in West Africa?
4. Can I describe one interfaith institution that promotes harmony?
5. Can I reflect on lessons from global examples for Ghana?

**Tip:** Observe your community for real-life examples of cooperation among people of different faiths. Notice small actions—helping neighbours, shared celebrations, school projects—that contribute to social harmony. Think about how you can participate in or promote these activities to strengthen pluralism locally.

## EXTENDED READING

- *Understanding of Religious Pluralism and Its Implications in Ghana* — Frederick Adjei  
Explores historical, social and cultural factors shaping religious pluralism in Ghana.

([ResearchGate](#)) DOI:[10.13140/RG.2.2.19483.44328](https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.19483.44328)

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/374952104\\_UNDERSTANDING\\_OF\\_RELIGIOUS\\_PLURALISM\\_AND\\_ITS\\_IMPLICATION\\_IN\\_GHANA](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/374952104_UNDERSTANDING_OF_RELIGIOUS_PLURALISM_AND_ITS_IMPLICATION_IN_GHANA)



- *Religious Pluralism in Ghana: Using the Accommodative Nature of African Indigenous Religion (AIR) as a Source for Religious Tolerance and Peaceful Coexistence* — S.K.B. Nkrumah-Pobi

Discusses how AIR supports religious tolerance and peace in Ghana. ([ResearchGate](#))

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342122726\\_Religious\\_Pluralism\\_in\\_Ghana\\_Using\\_the\\_Accommodative\\_Nature\\_of\\_African\\_Indigenous\\_Religion\\_AIR\\_as\\_a\\_Source\\_for\\_Religious\\_Tolerance\\_and\\_Peaceful\\_Coexistence](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342122726_Religious_Pluralism_in_Ghana_Using_the_Accommodative_Nature_of_African_Indigenous_Religion_AIR_as_a_Source_for_Religious_Tolerance_and_Peaceful_Coexistence)



- *Muslim Women's Marital and Citizenship Rights in Ghana* — Fulera Issaka-Toure  
Examines legal pluralism in Ghana and how it affects Muslim women's rights in marriage and citizenship. ([Kujenga Amani](#))

[https://kujenga-amani.ssrc.org/2022/10/05/muslim-womens-marital-and-citizenship-rights-in-ghana/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://kujenga-amani.ssrc.org/2022/10/05/muslim-womens-marital-and-citizenship-rights-in-ghana/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)



- *The Challenges of Interfaith Relations in Ghana* — Nora Kofognotera Nonterah  
Focuses on interfaith relations, their difficulties, and implications for peace-building in Ghana. ([SpringerLink](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137507303_15)) [https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137507303\\_15](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137507303_15)



- *A Review of the Cultural Gender Norms Contributing to Gender Inequalities in Ghana* — P. Nartey et al. (2023)  
Studies how cultural norms affect gender roles and status of women in Ghanaian society. ([PMC](#)) Nartey P, Bahar OS, Nabunya P. A Review of the Cultural Gender Norms Contributing to Gender Inequality in Ghana: An Ecological Systems Perspective. *J Int Womens Stud.* 2023 Oct;25(7):14. PMID: 38736590; PMCID: PMC11086636.

# REVIEW QUESTIONS 4

## Multiple Choice Questions

1. Religious pluralism means:
  - A. Ignoring other faiths
  - B. Valuing and engaging religious diversity
  - C. Forcing others to accept your faith
  - D. Isolating from society
2. Which of the following is NOT a type of religious attitude?
  - A. Exclusivism
3.
  - B. Pluralism
  - C. Inclusivism
  - D. Secularism
4. Qur'an 49:13 emphasises:
  - A. Human equality and diversity
  - B. Religious coercion
  - C. Economic development
  - D. Military defence
5. Which verse states: "*There is no compulsion in religion*"?
  - A. Qur'an 24:30
  - B. Qur'an 2:256
  - C. Qur'an 49:13
  - D. Qur'an 5:3
6. The Constitution of Madinah recognised:
  - A. Jews and Muslims as one community with rights and duties
  - B. Only Muslims as the ummah
  - C. Only Christians as allies
  - D. No freedom of religion
7. The Prophet's dialogue with the Christians of Najran is an example of:
  - A. Conflict and hostility
  - B. Peaceful interfaith engagement
  - C. Political manipulation
  - D. Religious coercion
8. An opportunity for pluralism in Ghana is\_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. religious stereotyping
  - B. extremism
  - C. peaceful coexistence
  - D. intolerance
9. Which of the following is a challenge of pluralism in Ghana?
  - A. National Peace Council

- B. Religious tolerance
  - C. Politicisation of religion
  - D. Interfaith marriages
10. Which institution in Ghana promotes peace and pluralism?
    - A. Electoral Commission
    - B. National Peace Council
    - C. Ministry of Health
    - D. ECOWAS
  11. Religious pluralism contributes to nation-building mainly by:
    - A. Fuelling divisions
    - B. Encouraging mutual respect and social harmony
    - C. Weakening unity
    - D. Removing religion from politics

### True / False

1. Religious pluralism rejects the value of other religions.
2. Exclusivism is the belief that only one religion is true.
3. Qur'an 5:48 teaches that Allah willed diversity among people
4. Qur'an 49:13 discourages human interaction across tribes.
5. The Madinah Charter was only for Muslims.
6. The Prophet (SAW) showed tolerance to Christians of Najran.
7. Religious stereotyping is a positive effect of pluralism.
8. Extremism is a challenge to religious pluralism.
9. Pluralism can promote social trust and unity in Ghana.
10. Nation-building in Ghana ignores the role of religion.

### Fill in the Blanks

1. Religious pluralism is different from \_\_\_\_\_, which only means tolerating others.
2. The opposite of pluralism is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Qur'an \_\_\_\_\_ says: "*There is no compulsion in religion.*"
4. Qur'an 49:13 teaches that Allah created people into \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The \_\_\_\_\_ Charter established peaceful coexistence in Madinah.
6. The Prophet welcomed the Christians of \_\_\_\_\_ to dialogue in his mosque.
7. A major challenge of pluralism in Ghana is religious \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Peaceful coexistence and \_\_\_\_\_ are opportunities of pluralism. (*unity*)
9. In Ghana, the \_\_\_\_\_ Peace Council fosters dialogue among religions.
10. Religious pluralism helps strengthen Ghana's \_\_\_\_\_ system.

## Essay Questions

1. Define religious pluralism and explain how it differs from tolerance.
2. Discuss two benefits of practising pluralism in a multi-religious society.
3. Analyse the message of Qur'an 49:13 in relation to religious diversity.
4. Explain how Qur'an 2:256 guides Muslims in dealing with other faiths.
5. Describe the main features of the Madinah Charter and its relevance today.
6. Evaluate the Prophet's (SAW) dialogue with the Christians of Najran as a model for Ghana.
7. Discuss two opportunities and two challenges of pluralism in Ghana.
8. How does stereotyping threaten unity in a pluralistic society?
9. Assess the role of the National Peace Council in promoting religious pluralism.
10. Write an essay on how pluralism can contribute to nation-building in Ghana.

SECTION

# 5

## ISLAM AND SEXUAL MORALITY



# RELIGION AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

## Religion and Sexual Morality

### INTRODUCTION

This section explores Islamic teachings on sexual morality and their relevance in contemporary life. You will examine the meaning of sexual morality, guided by the Qur'an and Hadith, with emphasis on chastity (‘iffah), modesty (ḥayā’), lawful marriage (nikāh), self-restraint, and faithfulness. You will identify contemporary forms of sexual immorality, such as premarital sex, cohabitation, pornography, sexting and LGBTQ+ behaviours, analysing their impact on individuals, families and society. The section also highlights moral values embedded in Islam—responsibility, dignity, repentance, and God-consciousness (taqwā)—and shows how these guide youth in public and private life.

You will also explore in this section local cultural practices, global debates, and media influence, applying Islamic principles to contemporary challenges. By the end of this section, you are equipped to make ethical decisions, uphold sexual morality and develop strategies to promote dignity, respect, and moral integrity in yourselves and your communities while upholding true Islamic teachings.

#### KEY IDEAS

- **Adultery and fornication** are strongly condemned in Islam, and believers are guided to avoid any action that may lead to them.
- **Chastity and self-control** are central virtues that protect individuals and communities from moral and social harm.
- **Gender responsibility** in sexual morality applies equally to males and females, with each accountable before Allah.
- **Marriage** is the only lawful context for sexual relations in Islam, serving as a means of companionship, protection, and family building.
- **Modesty in behaviour and dress** safeguards believers from temptation and maintains dignity in society.
- **Punishments for sexual misconduct** in Shariah serve as both deterrent and corrective measures to preserve social order.

# SEXUAL MORALITY IN ISLAM, CULTURE AND GLOBAL SOCIETY



Sexual morality is a guide for how people should behave in matters of love, relationships and marriage. It is shaped by religion, culture and wider society. It answers questions like: *Who should we marry? When should sexual relations begin? How should men and women relate respectfully?*

In Islam, sexual morality is based on the **Qur'an and Sunnah**. These sources give clear teachings on avoiding *zina* (fornication/adultery), practising modesty and choosing lawful marriage. In Ghanaian culture, sexual morality is linked to traditions such as virginity rites, the importance of chastity and respect for the family name. Globally, many societies now focus more on personal freedom, gender identity and individual rights, which sometimes clash with religious views.

## The Concept of Sexual Morality



**Figure 5.1:** Marriage provides the avenue to nurture responsibility for life

Sexual morality means the *rules, values and behaviours that guide human sexuality*. It sets the boundaries of what is acceptable or unacceptable.

## Purpose of sexual morality

1. To protect human dignity by preventing shameful acts.
2. To preserve the family system so that children are born and raised in stable homes.
3. To encourage responsibility in sexual relationships and prevent misuse of freedom.

**Example:** In Ghanaian culture, sex is typically reserved for marriage. As a result, premarital sex is generally frowned upon, as it can bring shame to the family and jeopardise future marriage opportunities.

## Secular, Cultural and Religious Perspectives

### Secular (modern/global) views

Secular societies often separate morality from religion. Their focus is on *personal choice, freedom and consent*. For example, many young people in Western countries may live together before marriage. While such behaviour may be accepted in their society, it clashes with Islamic and many Ghanaian cultural values.

### Ghanaian cultural views

Ghanaian traditions emphasise chastity and family honour. Some communities hold virginity rites for girls, symbolising purity before marriage. Fidelity in marriage is highly valued, and breaking these expectations may bring shame not only to the individual but to the entire family.

### Christian and AIR perspectives in Ghana

Like Islam, Christianity and African Indigenous Religion (AIR) also teach sexual morality. They forbid adultery and encourage chastity. In AIR, taboos often protect against sexual immorality, while Christianity stresses purity and faithfulness as central to a moral life.



**Figure 5.2:** The intersection of religion, culture and secularism

## Islamic Perspective

Islam places strong emphasis on protecting chastity and honour.



1. **Qur'an 17:32:** warns believers against approaching zina, describing it as “an abomination and an evil way.” This verse shows that Islam does not only forbid zina but also commands Muslims to avoid anything that could lead to it.
2. **Qur'an 24:30–31:** instructs both men and women to lower their gaze and guard their modesty. Modesty is not just in dressing but also in how one speaks, acts, and interacts with others.
3. **Hadith:** The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) encouraged marriage for those who are able, as marriage protects one’s dignity and purity.

### Key values in Islam

- a. **Chastity:** Remaining pure before marriage and faithful afterwards.
- b. **Marriage:** The proper and lawful way to satisfy sexual needs.
- c. **Modesty:** Dressing decently, speaking respectfully, and behaving honourably.
- d. **Avoiding zina:** Staying away from fornication, adultery, and all actions that may lead to them.

**Note:** *In Ghanaian Muslim communities, these teachings guide family expectations and influence decisions about marriage, relationships, and social behaviour.*

## Local and Global Contexts

### Local (Ghana)

- a. *Virginity rites* were traditional practices to ensure girls were pure before marriage. While controversial today, they showed the high value placed on chastity (Note: though these cultural rites may contradict certain Islamic values, you may find these out and identify them).
- b. *Marriage ceremonies* often include advice to couples on fidelity and responsibility.
- c. *Taboos* still exist in many communities against premarital sex, adultery, and other immoral practices.

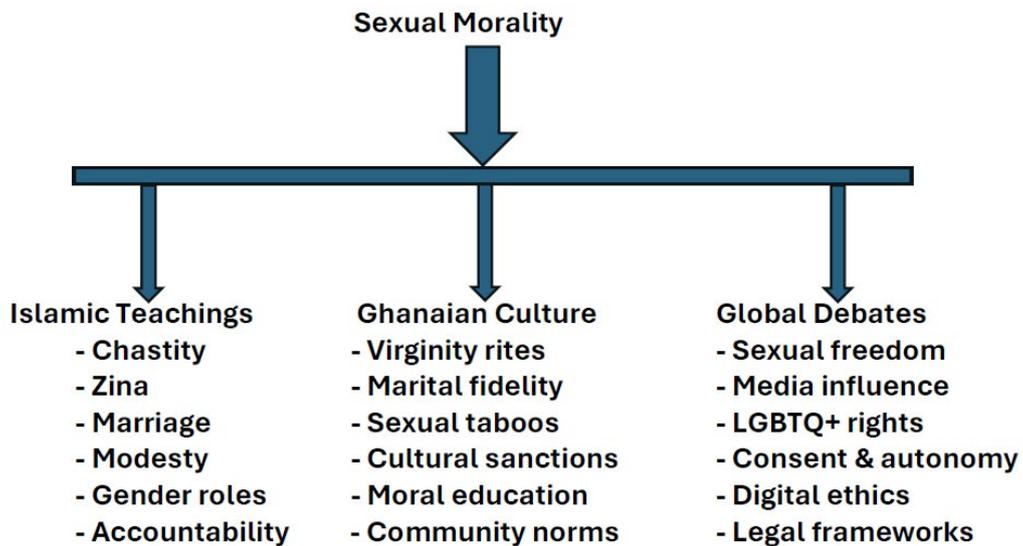
### Global

- a. Some countries strongly promote *sexual freedom*, allowing individuals to choose partners and lifestyles freely.
- b. There are global debates about *gender identity* and the rights of LGBTQ+ persons, which differ from Islamic teachings.
- c. The *media and internet* spread messages that often encourage casual relationships, immodesty in dress and sexual experimentation among youth.

### Comparison

While global trends often promote freedom of choice, Islamic morality provides a protective framework to maintain dignity and purity. For Ghanaian Muslim youth, the challenge is to remain firm in Islamic values despite exposure to different lifestyles through media and peers.

### Concept Map



### Comparison Table

| Perspective             | Key Values / Practices                             |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Islam</b>            | Chastity, lawful marriage, modesty, avoiding zina  |
| <b>Ghana Culture</b>    | Virginity rites, fidelity, marriage taboos         |
| <b>Global (Secular)</b> | Consent, freedom, personal choice, media influence |

## Practical Ghanaian Examples

1. In some rural Ghanaian communities, girls are prepared for adulthood through virginity rites, teaching them to value chastity.
2. A Muslim SHS student may face pressure from peers to engage in sexual relationships, but Islamic values help them resist.
3. Adverts and social media in Ghana increasingly display Western ideas of romance, which can clash with both Islamic and cultural expectations.

### Summary of what you have learned so far

1. *Sexual morality refers to rules guiding sexual behaviour.*
2. *Islam promotes chastity, modesty, and marriage while forbidding zina.*
3. *Ghanaian culture also values purity, family honour, and fidelity.*
4. *Globally, morality is often based on freedom and consent rather than religious law.*
5. *Muslim youth must learn to manage global influences while living by Islamic teachings.*

## Activity 5.1 Understanding Sexual Morality

### Instructions

1. Read aloud **Qur'an 17:32** and **Qur'an 24:30–31**.
2. In pairs, discuss: *What does it mean to be sexually moral in Islam?*
3. Compare with one Ghanaian cultural value and one global (modern) idea about sexuality. See template below.

**You may use the Prompts below as a guide.**

- a. *Islam says sexual morality is...*
- b. *In Ghanaian culture, it is seen as...*
- c. *Globally, some people believe...*

### Sample Template

| Case | Challenge | Islamic Response | Outcome |
|------|-----------|------------------|---------|
| 1    |           |                  |         |
| 2    |           |                  |         |
| 3    |           |                  |         |

The activity helped you to apply Islamic moral values to real-life issues.

## Activity 5.2 Case Study Dilemmas

### 1. Cases to Analyse

- a. A Ghanaian SHS boy is pressured by peers to engage in premarital sex.
- b. A Muslim girl receives media messages that promote sexual freedom and “exploration.”
- c. A young man decides to marry early to protect his chastity.

### 2. Task

- a. In groups of four, read the case.
- b. Identify the *challenge*, *Islamic response*, and *possible outcome*.

## Activity 5.3 Mapping Morality

1. Draw a circle in the middle of your exercise book and write “Sexual Morality in Islam.”
2. Create three branches: *Islamic Teachings*, *Ghanaian Culture*, and *Global Debates*.
3. Fill in each branch with examples.

#### Prompt Words

- a. *Islam*: chastity, modesty, marriage, zina.
- b. *Culture*: virginity rites, fidelity, taboos.
- c. *Global*: sexual liberty, media, gender identity.

The activity helped you integrate ideas visually and connect concepts.

## Activity 5.4 My Code of Morality

### Instructions

1. Write a short personal “Code of Sexual Morality” (6–8 sentences).
2. Use three headings: *Islamic Values I Will Keep*, *Cultural Values I Respect*, *Global Influences I Must Guard Against*.
3. Share with a partner and discuss.

### Scaffold/Template

| Aspect                             | My Notes/Decisions |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Islamic Values I Will Keep         |                    |
| Cultural Values I Respect          |                    |
| Global Influences on Guard Against |                    |

This helps you to personalise values and apply them to your daily life.

### Self-Assessment

1. Can I explain what sexual morality means and why it is important?
2. Can I quote or recall at least one Qur'anic verse on sexual morality?
3. Can I describe one Ghanaian cultural practice that reflects sexual morality?
4. Can I compare Islamic teachings with global (secular) views on sexuality?
5. Can I apply Islamic sexual morality to deal with peer pressure and media influence?

**Tip:** Whenever you face difficult choices about relationships, *pause and reflect*:

- a. Does this action protect my dignity?
- b. Does it honour my family?
- c. Does it align with the Qur'an and Sunnah?

If the answer is “no” to any of these, then it is safer and wiser to avoid it. Remember, *short-term peer pressure should not destroy your long-term dignity and faith*.

## CONTEMPORARY FORMS OF SEXUAL IMMORALITY

Sexual immorality refers to behaviours that go against the standards of Islam, Ghanaian culture and general moral values. Islam strongly forbids acts such as zina (fornication and adultery), homosexuality, indecent exposure, prostitution, pornography and sexual harassment.

In today's world, new forms of sexual immorality have spread due to global media, technology and shifting cultural values. Examples include premarital sex, cohabitation without marriage, sexting and LGBTQ+ relations.

While some global societies argue these are part of “sexual rights” or “freedom,” Islam and Ghanaian traditions view them as harmful to individuals, families and the community. Islam strongly forbids these acts of sexual immorality.



**Figure 5.3:** Learn to say NO to contemporary sexual immorality and orientations that are opposite to Islam

### Activity 5.5 Spotting Immorality Today

You will link in this activity Islamic teachings to present-day realities.

#### Instructions

1. Begin with this question: *“What are some examples of sexual immorality among youth today in Ghana?”*
2. Learners share examples (premarital sex, sexting, pornography, cohabitation, prostitution).
3. Read together Qur’an 17:32: *“Do not come near zina, for it is an abomination and an evil way.”*
4. Teacher/Learner leader asks: *“Why do you think Allah forbids these?”*

You may use the template below as an example.

- Example of immorality: \_\_\_\_\_
- How Islam views it: \_\_\_\_\_
- Why it is harmful: \_\_\_\_\_

## Contemporary Forms of Sexual Immorality

Contemporary sexual immorality includes both **traditional sins (zina, prostitution, adultery)** and **new challenges** caused by media, the internet, and global debates on rights.

1. **Premarital sex and pregnancy outside marriage**
  - a. Increasing among youth, often normalised by peers, movies, and music.
  - b. Leads to teenage pregnancy, dropping out of school, and broken futures.
2. **Cohabitation**
  - a. Common in urban Ghana, where couples live together without proper marriage rites.
  - b. Weakens respect for family values and Islamic teachings.
3. **Pornography and sexting**
  - a. The internet and smartphones make indecent content easy to access.
  - b. Erodes modesty and influences negative behaviour.
4. **Prostitution and transactional sex**
  - a. Sometimes driven by poverty or the search for quick wealth.
  - b. Normalised in some urban areas but condemned in Islam and Ghanaian law.
5. **LGBTQ+ relations**
  - a. Promoted in global debates on human rights.
  - b. Strongly rejected by Islam and by all Ghanaian communities.
6. **Sexual harassment and exploitation**
  - a. Misuse of power, authority, or technology to exploit others sexually.
  - b. Common in workplaces, schools and online spaces.

## Cultural and Legal Perspectives

1. Ghanaian traditions condemn **premarital sex, adultery, and prostitution** as shameful.
2. Ghanaian laws
  - a. Criminalise prostitution.
  - b. Protect children and adults from sexual abuse, harassment, and exploitation.
3. However, global exposure (movies, the internet, foreign debates) has created moral tensions between traditional values and modern lifestyles.

## Impact of Sexual Immorality

Contemporary immorality not only affects individuals but also **families and communities**.

1. **Weakens family structures** – causes mistrust, broken homes, and loss of respect for marriage.
2. **Increases health risks** – spreads STDs, HIV/AIDS, and increases teenage pregnancy.
3. **Promotes moral decline** – weakens honesty, modesty, and self-respect.
4. **Erodes cultural and religious values** – makes people abandon traditional and Islamic teachings.

**Chart: Contemporary Forms of Sexual Immorality**

| Form                            | Example in Ghana  | Islamic View | Impact                       |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------|------------------------------|
| Premarital sex                  | Teen relationships in SHS or before marriage  | Prohibited   | Teenage pregnancy, dropouts  |
| Cohabitation                    | Adult male and female living together without having performed the (societally and legally) accepted marriage rites and procedures/ processes | Prohibited   | Weakens family values        |
| Pornography & sexting           | Phone/internet sharing  | Prohibited   | Loss of modesty, addiction   |
| Prostitution/ transactional sex | Streets, nightlife  | Prohibited   | STDs, moral decline          |
| LGBTQ+ relations                | Global rights debates   | Prohibited   | Social and religious tension |
| Sexual harassment               | Schools, workplaces   | Prohibited   | Trauma, abuse of rights      |

### Activity 5.6 Team Posters on Immorality

#### Instructions

- Your teacher will help you organise the class into 4 groups. Each group will select a theme from the list below.
  - Group 1: Premarital sex & cohabitation
  - Group 2: Pornography & sexting
  - Group 3: Prostitution & transactional sex
  - Group 4: LGBTQ+ & sexual harassment
- Each group creates either:
  - A **poster** showing the harms of their assigned practice, OR
  - A **short role-play** acting out its consequences.
- Use Qur'an and Hadith references where possible.
 

You may use the questions below as a guide in doing steps 1 and 2 above.

  - What is the practice?
  - Why does Islam condemn it?
  - What is the impact on youth/families?

## Activity 5.7 Solving Real-Life Cases

The following activity assists you in building ethical reasoning and empathy. Let's begin it!

### 1. Cases to Discuss

- a. A student addicted to pornography struggles with concentration in school.
- b. A young couple cohabiting without marriage faces family rejection.
- c. A girl pressured into “sugar daddy” relationships.

### 2. Guiding Questions

- a. What Islamic values can guide this situation?
- b. What advice would you give as a Muslim peer?
- c. What can the person do to avoid future harm?

#### Template for Response

- **Case chosen:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Problem in the case:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Islamic guidance (Qur'an/Hadith):** \_\_\_\_\_
- **My advice:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Activity 5.8 Mapping Immorality

### Instructions

1. Draw a big circle in the middle of your book and label it: “**Contemporary Sexual Immorality.**”
2. Create branches to: premarital sex, cohabitation, pornography, sexting, prostitution, LGBTQ+, harassment.
3. For each branch, add:
  - a. **Causes** (e.g., poverty, peer pressure, internet).
  - b. **Impacts** (e.g., STDs, broken homes, loss of modesty).
  - c. **Islamic view** (e.g., Qur'an 17:32, Hadith against zina). See the template below as an example of how to organise your responses.

#### Sample

**Immorality:** Pornography

- Cause: \_\_\_\_\_
- Impact: \_\_\_\_\_
- Islamic view: \_\_\_\_\_

## Summary

1. Contemporary sexual immorality includes **premarital sex, cohabitation, pornography, prostitution, LGBTQ+, and harassment**.
2. Ghanaian traditions and Islam reject these practices, though global influences normalise them.
3. These behaviours **damage health, family, and moral values**.
4. Islam provides guidance through the **Qur'an and Sunnah** to help Muslims live modestly and avoid immorality.

## Self-Assessment

| Question  | Yes<br>(✓) | Maybe<br>(...) |
|---|------------|----------------|
| Can I identify at least five forms of contemporary sexual immorality (e.g., premarital sex, cohabitation, pornography, prostitution, LGBTQ+, harassment)? |            |                |
| Can I explain why Islam strongly forbids these acts, using Qur'anic or Hadith references (e.g., Qur'an 17:32)?  |            |                |
| Can I describe how Ghanaian culture and laws view practices like prostitution, harassment, and cohabitation?  |            |                |
| Can I analyse the negative impacts of immorality on individuals, families, and communities (e.g., STDs, broken homes, loss of modesty)?                   |            |                |
| Can I link causes of immorality (e.g., peer pressure, poverty, global media) to their harmful outcomes?   |            |                |
| Can I suggest Islamic values and practical strategies that young Muslims can use to resist pressures of immorality?                                       |            |                |

**Tip:** When faced with pressure from peers, media, or social trends, **ask yourself:** “Will this action strengthen my dignity and my family values, or will it harm my community and me? How will I fare before Allah? Will Allah be pleased with me? Will the Prophet (SAW) allow this or be pleased with me? Does the Qur'an and Sunnah allow this?”

These reflections help you make wiser choices, fear Allah and remember you will be accountable before Him for any action.

## SEXUAL MORALITY IN ISLAM, LOCAL CULTURES AND GLOBAL TRENDS

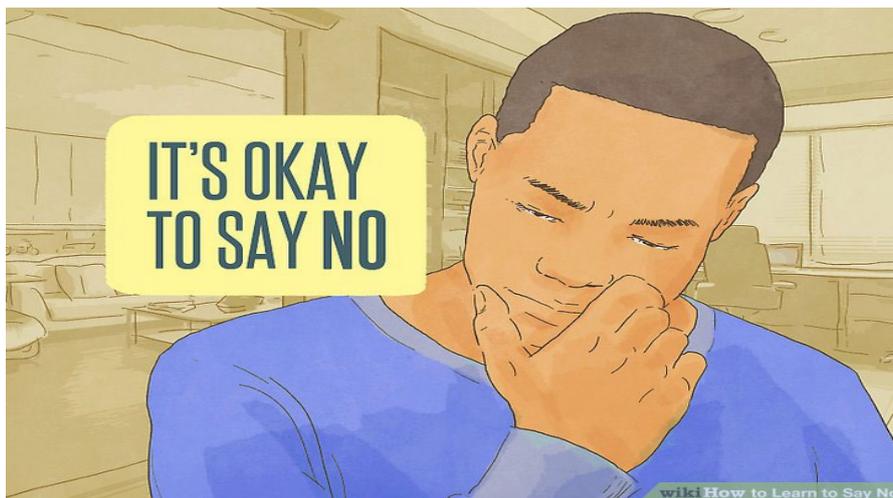
Sexual morality refers to the values, rules and behaviours that guide how people express their sexuality. These values come from religion, culture and society.

In **Islam**, sexual morality is based on the **Qur'an and Hadith**, which stress:

- a. Chastity (staying pure)
- b. Modesty (covering oneself and avoiding indecency)
- c. Lawful marriage (as the proper setting for sexual relations)
- d. Avoidance of zina (fornication/adultery).

In **Ghanaian culture**, traditions like virginity rites, marriage ceremonies and communal expectations protect sexual morality.

In the **global context**, issues such as sexual rights, LGBTQ+ debates, cohabitation and premarital sex are having consequences on sexual ethics, family and social development in many societies. This lesson will help you critically examine how Islamic teachings, local Ghanaian values and global perspectives shape sexual morality today.



**Figure 5.4:** Saying NO to sexual immorality helps Ghanaian Muslims maintain their identity and uphold Islamic values.

### Activity 5.9 Guided Ethical Discussion

1. Define sexual morality in Islam; cite Qur'anic verse and Hadith; discuss Ghanaian practice. You will then link Qur'an, Hadith and Ghanaian culture to a clear concept of sexual morality.

#### Instructions

- a. Begin by asking: "What does it mean to be sexually moral in Islam?"
- b. Learners brainstorm personal understandings of morality.
- c. Read aloud Qur'an 17:32 and 24:30–31. The teacher introduces a Hadith on modesty.

- d. Compare with Ghanaian cultural examples like virginity rites or traditional marriage customs.
2. Open discussion on whether these practices support or challenge Islamic values.

## Islamic Perspective on Sexual Morality

1. **Qur'an 17:32:** "Do not go near zina, for it is an abomination and an evil way."
2. **Qur'an 24:30–31:** Instructs men and women to lower their gaze, guard chastity, and dress modestly.
3. **Hadith:** Marriage is recommended as a way to protect one's chastity.

## Core Values in Islam

- a. Chastity – Staying pure until marriage.
- b. Modesty – In dress, words, and actions.
- c. Responsibility – Being accountable for one's actions.
- d. Lawful marriage – As a safe, moral, and religious framework.
- e. Family stability – The family is the foundation of society.

## Cultural and Religious Context (Local)

1. **Ghanaian cultures:** Stress virginity, fidelity, and marriage rites. Virginity rites (though controversial today) used to celebrate girls who remained pure until marriage.
2. **Christianity and African Indigenous Religion (AIR):** Both encourage sexual restraint, though practices differ. For example, Christian youth fellowships stress abstinence, while AIR may use taboos and rituals.

*Example in Ghana:* In many rural areas, families still organise premarital counselling and ceremonies to guide the couple into responsible sexual conduct.



**Figure 5.5:** Muslim students at training events for counselling and capacity building

### Activity 5.10 Identifying Qur'an/Hadith, Ghanaian practice and global trends

This activity will help you gain a comparative and holistic view of sexual morality across Islamic, cultural and global contexts.

#### Instructions

1. Put yourselves as a class into 4 groups. Each group should select one of the themes below, discuss and research it.
  - a. **Group 1:** Islamic teachings on sexual morality.
  - b. **Group 2:** Ghanaian cultural perspectives (rites, taboos, values).
  - c. **Group 3:** Global perspectives (sexual rights, gender identity, cohabitation).
  - d. **Group 4:** Role of media and schools in shaping morality.
2. Groups create posters, short skits, or digital slides to present their findings.

### Activity 5.11 Case-Based Experiential Learning

You are going to practise applying Islamic teachings to real-life peer and media challenges.

1. Your **task is to link** Global trends, peer/media pressure, and moral reasoning.

#### Instructions

- a. Present cases on the topics below.
    - i. A youth pressured into premarital sex.
    - ii. A TV show glorifying cohabitation.
    - iii. A debate on modesty or LGBTQ+ issues.
  - b. In pairs or small groups, learners role-play Islamic responses to these cases.
2. Each group shares their response with the class.

## Influence of Social Systems

Sexual morality is also shaped by different systems in society:

- **Family:** Provides the first moral training. Parents set rules about relationships and modesty.
- **School:** Formal and informal teaching about sex and morality. Some schools promote abstinence, while global influences may bring liberal sex education.
- **Traditional Media and Social Media:** Can encourage immorality (through movies, music videos, online pornography) or promote positive values (educational programmes, Islamic lectures online).

- **Community and Law:** Ghanaian law prohibits prostitution and child exploitation, while communities enforce moral discipline.

*Example in Ghana:* Social media apps often expose youth to sexting and indecent images, but they can also be used to share Islamic reminders and educational content.



**Figure 5.6:** Morality is influenced by different systems in society

### Activity 5.12 Concept Mapping

This activity is to help you visually organise and integrate Islamic, cultural and global perspectives. Integrate all tasks into structured knowledge.

#### Instructions

1. Draw a central node on the board: “Sexual Morality in Islam.”
2. Learners add branches:
  - a. Islamic teachings (Qur’an, Hadith, chastity, marriage).
  - b. Ghanaian cultural expectations (rites, taboos).
  - c. Global debates (sexual rights, cohabitation, gender identity).
  - d. Influences (family, school, media, community).
3. In pairs, learners design their own simplified maps in notebooks.

## Islam’s Role in Navigating Challenges

Islam equips Muslims to remain morally strong despite global pressures.

1. Encourages **modesty and self-control** in daily life.
2. Stresses **lawful marriage** as the right framework.
3. Promotes the **family unit** as the base for strong morals.
4. Offers **faith-based resilience** – Muslims can rely on prayer, Qur’an, and community support to stay pure.

*Example in Ghana:* Muslim youth groups organise Qur’an study circles and seminars to help members resist media influences and remain steadfast in chastity.



**Figure 5.7:** Qur’an study circles and competitions are means to resist the negative influences of the media and stay chaste

**Comparison Table**

| Dimension       | Islamic Teaching                              | Ghanaian Culture                   | Global Trends                             |
|-----------------|---|------------------------------------|---|
| Premarital sex  | Forbidden (zina)                              | Discouraged, shameful              | Increasingly accepted as normal           |
| Marriage        | Encouraged, lawful way to satisfy desires     | Central to family and social life  | Often delayed or replaced by cohabitation |
| Modesty         | Strictly required in dress, speech, behaviour | Valued, especially for women       | Liberal dress and expression are common   |
| Family role     | Foundation of morality                        | Central in raising children        | Weakening family structures               |
| Media influence | To be used for good, avoid immorality         | Mixed – both good and bad messages | Strong influence promoting freedom        |

**Summary**

1. Islam strongly forbids zina and promotes chastity, modesty, and marriage.
2. Ghanaian culture values virginity, fidelity, and family stability.
3. Schools, families, media, and communities shape sexual behaviour.
4. Global trends sometimes conflict with religious and cultural values.
5. Islam provides guidance for resisting negative influences and upholding morality.

### Self-Assessment (Reflective Questions)

Ask yourself the questions to assess your understanding of the points mentioned

1. Can I explain how the Qur'an teaches chastity and modesty?
2. Can I describe one Ghanaian cultural practice that promotes sexual morality?
3. Can I identify one positive and one negative effect of media on sexual behaviour?
4. Can I explain how Islam helps Muslims navigate global moral pressures?

**Tip:** When you face peer pressure or confusing global messages, **pause and ask:** “*What does my faith teach me about this?*” Using the Qur'an and Hadith as your reference point helps you make choices that protect your dignity and future.

## MORAL VALUES IN ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON SEXUALITY

We shall begin this session with the question: “**Why do moral values matter in Islamic sexual teachings?**” After you are done reading, quickly do Activity 5.13.



**And indeed, you are of a  
great moral character.**

( QURAN 68:4 )

Islam not only warns against sexual immorality; it also promotes **positive values** that guide Muslims to live with dignity, discipline and respect. These values protect individuals from harm, help families to stay strong, and preserve peace in society. Important values include **chastity (‘iffah), modesty (ḥayā’), faithfulness, self-restraint, dignity, responsibility, privacy and repentance.**

When Muslims practise these values, they show obedience to Allah, protect themselves from zina (fornication and adultery), and build good character. These values are also useful in modern life, where young people face pressures from social media, peer influence, and global trends. For example, modesty helps a student avoid indecent dressing, while self-restraint helps resist pornography or premarital relationships.

Indeed, Allah orders justice and good  
conduct and giving to relatives  
and forbids immorality  
and bad conduct and oppression.  
( QURAN 16:90 )

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### Activity 5.13 Exploring Moral Values

You are going to try to link Qur’anic teachings with real-life moral decisions.

1. Brainstorm moral values such as chastity, modesty, faithfulness or responsibility.
2. Read together **Qur’an 17:32** and **Qur’an 24:30–31** and discuss how they protect dignity.
3. Share examples of how you can practise these values in school, at home or online.
4. You may use a sentence starter like this — “One way I can show modesty is by ...”

## Guidance in Public and Private Life

1. **In public spaces:** Dress modestly, speak politely, and avoid indecent talk or behaviour.
2. **In private spaces:** Show discipline, respect marital boundaries, and remain faithful.



Figure 5.8: A modest dressing in public

## Connection with Broader Islamic Ethics

- Sexual morality is connected to **taqwā** (God-consciousness).
- Every action should be guided by awareness of Allah.
- Practising sexual morality also supports justice, compassion and responsibility, which are wider Islamic values.

### Dua For Guidance (TAQWA)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالتُّبَىٰ وَالْعَفَافَ وَالْغِنَىٰ

O Allah! I ask You (to bestow me with) guidance,  
God consciousness purity, and independence.

[Sahih Muslim Book 17, Hadith 1468]

## Contemporary Applications

- Online interaction:** Use social media responsibly, avoid indecent pictures, videos, and chats.
- Premarital relationships:** Follow the value of chastity; avoid all actions that may lead to zina, such as pre-marital relationships – boyfriend/girlfriend relationship, dating, etc.
- Media consumption:** Choose programmes and music that promote morality. Avoid pornography and immoral films.
- Dressing:** Dress modestly according to Islamic teaching and respect for culture.

Online Safety / Social Media Responsibility: Use social media responsibly! Learn safety features to protect yourself and others from online predators

## Role in Individual and Community Well-being

- Individual level:** Protects from shame, regret and sexually transmitted diseases.
- Family level:** Builds stable marriages and reduces family conflicts.
- Community level:** Promotes trust, unity, and moral strength in society.
- Spiritual level:** Strengthens one's faith and identity as a Muslim.



**Figure 5.9:** Taking precautions and performing your role as an individual helps build stable families and communities

### Activity 5.14 Values in Practice

1. Your teacher will assist in dividing the class into 4 groups. Each group will be assigned a word/theme.
    - a. **Group 1:** Chastity (‘iffah)
    - b. **Group 2:** Modesty (ḥayā’)
    - c. **Group 3:** Responsibility
    - d. **Group 4:** Repentance (tawbah)
  2. Each group will do the following.
    - a. Find a Qur’anic verse or Hadith about their value.
    - b. Give **one real-life example** of how Muslim youth can practise it.
    - c. Share **one benefit** for the individual and one for society.
  3. Groups present through a short skit, poster, or role-play.
- You can now connect scriptural values with practical applications in Ghanaian society.

### Activity 5.15 Choosing the Right Path

1. Present on the following scenarios as a group. Each group should have at most 5 members.
    - a. A youth pressured to share indecent images online.
    - b. A friend is secretly in a premarital relationship.
    - c. A student who wants to repent after a moral mistake.
  2. In pairs or small groups, learners role-play the scenario, showing both the **challenge** and the **Islamic response** (e.g., practising self-restraint, seeking tawbah, or offering advice).
  3. After role-play, discuss: “What value guided the decision in this situation?”
- This lesson has helped you develop empathy, problem-solving skills, and ethical decision-making.

### Activity 5.16 Mapping Moral Connections

1. On the board, draw a central circle with the theme: “**Moral Values in Islamic Sexual Teachings.**”

Branches to focus on during the activity include;

- a. **Chastity** → no premarital sex, purity.
- b. **Modesty** → decent dressing, respectful speech.
- c. **Responsibility** → family care, lawful marriage.

d. **Repentance** → forgiveness, restoring dignity.

2. Learners copy the map in their books and add **examples** from their own lives under each branch.

Try to remember how the values are linked.

### Summary: What You Have Learned

1. *Islam emphasises not only avoiding immorality but also cultivating positive values such as chastity, modesty, responsibility, faithfulness, privacy, repentance, and dignity.*
2. *These values protect individuals from zina, strengthen family bonds, and build stable and moral communities.*
3. *Public life requires modest dressing, polite speech, and respect for others, while private life requires discipline, faithfulness, and self-restraint.*
4. *Practising these values connects to wider Islamic ethics like taqwā, justice, compassion, and accountability.*
5. *Young Muslims today face peer pressure, social media influences, and global cultural trends, but moral values provide a foundation for resilience.*
6. *Applying these values benefits individuals (protection from harm), families (stable marriages), communities (trust and unity), and spiritual life (stronger faith in Allah).*

### Self-Assessment

Can I...

1. Identify and explain key moral values in Islamic sexual teachings?
2. Link Qur'anic verses and Hadith to values like chastity, modesty, and repentance?
3. Show how these values apply in public life (dressing, speech) and private life (faithfulness, discipline)?
4. Apply values to modern challenges such as social media, pornography, and premarital relationships?
5. Explain how practising these values benefits individuals, families, communities, and spiritual life?
6. Reflect on how taqwā connects sexual morality to broader Islamic ethics?

**Tip:** Whenever you face pressure from peers, media, or society, ask yourself: “Does this action reflect chastity, modesty, and taqwā?” If the answer is no, then it is best to avoid it.

# APPLICATION OF ISLAMIC SEXUAL ETHICS TO CONTEMPORARY LIFE

**Islam provides solution to modern era issues**

The world today is changing quickly. Technology, media and new cultural trends have introduced behaviours that challenge Islamic teachings on sexuality. Examples include online dating, sexting, pornography, cohabitation, homosexuality and public displays of affection (PDA).

Islam offers timeless guidance through the Qur'an and Sunnah to help Muslims remain faithful to Allah's commands while living in modern times. The core values of chastity ('iffah), modesty (ḥayā'), lawful marriage (nikāh), self-restraint, and taqwā (God-consciousness) provide a strong foundation for resisting harmful practices and promoting dignity in personal and social life.

This lesson shows how learners can apply Islamic principles to everyday issues they may face at school, online, or in their communities.

## Activity 5.17 Scenario Analysis

### Scenarios

1. A student receives indecent images on WhatsApp.
2. A peer pressures another into premarital sex.
3. A youth struggles with romantic feelings in school.

### Instructions

1. In groups with 3–4 members, discuss the following questions and note down the main points. See an example of how to note points down below.
  - a. What Islamic values are relevant?
  - b. What are the moral and social consequences of wrong choices?
  - c. What spiritual remedies (e.g., repentance, prayer, fasting, taqwā) apply?

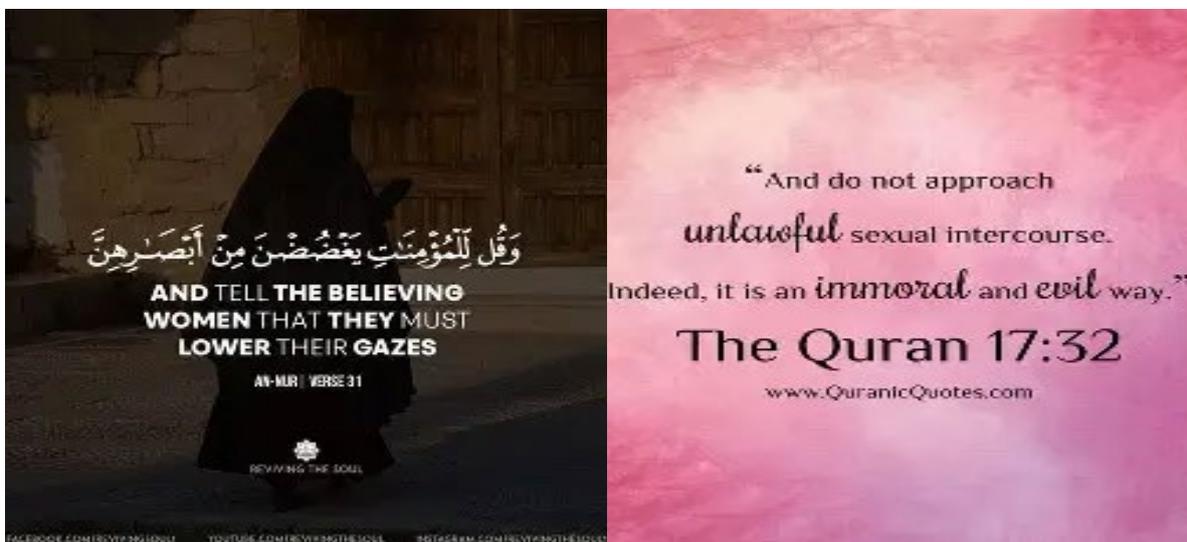
- Each group should share a 2–3 minute role-play or short reflection after their discussion.

#### Sample Template

- Scenario: ...
- Islamic principle: ...
- Right action: ...
- Spiritual remedy: ...
- The activity helps you build empathy, moral accountability and decision-making skills.

## Overview of Islamic Teachings on Sexual Morality

- Qur'an 17:32:** “Do not approach fornication. Indeed, it is ever an abomination and an evil way.”
- Qur'an 24:30–31:** Both men and women are commanded to lower their gaze and guard modesty.
- Hadith:** The Prophet (SAW) encouraged marriage as a protection for chastity and recommended fasting for those unable to marry.
- Main principles:** Chastity, modesty, lawful marriage (nikāh), prohibition of zina, respect for privacy, and repentance after mistakes.



## Contemporary Sexual Behaviours

As learners, you must understand what behaviours are common today and why they challenge Islamic morality.

- Online dating & sexting:** Often lead to immorality or zina.
- Pornography:** Destroys modesty, increases addiction, and damages concentration.

3. **Cohabitation & premarital sex:** Undermine family stability and Islamic marriage.
4. **LGBTQ+ advocacy:** Promoted globally as “rights,” but it is better to know Islam prohibits same-sex acts, etc., while urging respect for all people.
5. **Public displays of affection (PDA):** Against modesty and Ghanaian cultural values.  
Public Display of Affection (PDA) refers to the open display of romantic or intimate affection between two people who are non-mahram in a public setting. Examples of PDA include:
  - a. Holding hands
  - b. Kissing
  - c. Hugging
  - d. Cuddling
  - e. Whispering/intimate conversations
6. Cultural norms and comfort levels around PDA vary greatly. Some societies or individuals may view PDA as:
  - a. A natural expression of love and affection
  - b. Inappropriate or disrespectful
  - c. Threatening or uncomfortable
 Respecting others' boundaries and religious or cultural norms is essential when expressing affection in public.
7. **Global fashion trends:** Encourage immodest dressing.

## Applying Islamic Guidance to Modern Issues

1. **Sexting & pornography:** Muslims are guided to **guard their eyes**, avoid explicit content, and seek **tawbah (repentance)** if they fall into error.
2. **Cohabitation & premarital sex:** Islam promotes **nikāh (lawful marriage)** as the safe and moral way.
3. **LGBTQ+ practices:** Islam prohibits the acts on no uncertain terms and does not allow any form of its encouragement, promotion, advocacy or whatsoever. Islam requires Muslims to uphold their faith always, which includes adhering to Islamic teachings on morality and behaviour. Read Quran 7:80-81, 11:77-83, 26:165-166 and Hadiths (Prophetic traditions) and Islamic scholarly consensus.
4. **Dress codes:** Islam sets **modesty (ḥayā')** as the standard for both genders.
5. **PDA:** Islam encourages dignity and keeping affection between non-mahram private within marriage.

In Islam, public displays of affection (PDA) are generally discouraged. Islamic teachings emphasise modesty and humility, and excessive PDA is considered:

- a. Immodest and inappropriate (Quran 24:30-31, 33:35)
- b. A potential source of fitnah (temptation or social discord)

- c. Contrary to the values of hayaa' (shyness or modesty)

Islam encourages Muslims to maintain a balance between expressing love and affection within the bounds of modesty and decency.



**Figure 5.10:** What does Islam say about contemporary sexual behaviours? Self-restraint is a key.

## Role of Self-Restraint and Taqwā

- a. Self-restraint means controlling desires and not giving in to temptations.
- b. Taqwā reminds Muslims that **Allah is watching everywhere** — in private and public.
- c. Practising taqwā protects a person's dignity and helps maintain moral order in society.

## Strategies for Upholding Sexual Ethics

1. **Strengthen self-control:** through fasting, prayer, and dhikr (remembrance of Allah).
2. **Choose good company:** avoid friends who encourage immorality.
3. **Use technology wisely:** avoid indecent content online, follow beneficial sites.
4. **Seek repentance (tawbah):** when mistakes happen, return to Allah with sincerity.
5. **Be accountable:** seek advice from parents, imams, or trusted mentors.



## Contemporary Relevance (Ghanaian Context)

In Ghana, many young people are exposed to media influences that normalise premarital sex, pornography and indecent dressing. Peer pressure in schools and universities also pushes youth into cohabitation or sexting. By applying Islamic principles, as a learner, you can resist these pressures, uphold your faith and become **positive role models** in your communities.



**Figure 5.11:** Attending GMSA meetings, events, and community programmes helps you keep in good company. Credit: National GMSA on Facebook

### **Summary: What You Have Learned**

1. *Islam provides clear guidance on sexual morality through the Qur'an and Sunnah, emphasising chastity, modesty, nikāh, and taqwā.*
2. *Contemporary behaviours like sexting, pornography, cohabitation, homosexuality, and indecent dressing challenge Islamic values.*
3. *Muslims are encouraged to apply Islamic principles by resisting temptations, choosing lawful marriage, and avoiding immoral acts.*
4. *Taqwā and self-restraint help believers maintain dignity and avoid sinful practices.*
5. *Strategies such as fasting, prayer, repentance, good companionship, and wise use of technology strengthen moral discipline.*
6. *In Ghanaian society, peer pressure, media, and global culture influence young people, but Islamic teachings equip them to stand firm as role models.*

## Self-Assessment

Can I...

1. Explain the main Qur'anic and Hadith teachings on sexual morality?
2. Identify modern sexual behaviours that challenge Islamic values?
3. Apply Islamic guidance to issues like sexting, pornography, cohabitation, and dress codes?
4. Show how self-restraint and taqwā guide Muslims in daily life?
5. Suggest practical strategies to uphold Islamic sexual ethics in school, online, and community life?
6. Reflect on how these teachings apply to Ghanaian youth today?

**Tip:** Whenever you face pressure from peers, media, or society, ask yourself: **“Would this action please Allah or bring me closer to Him?”**

If the answer is no, then it is better avoided.

## Activity 5.17 Guided Ethical Dialogue

### Instructions

1. Begin with the guiding question: *“How can young Muslims live morally in today’s world of changing sexual norms?”*
  2. In pairs, learners brainstorm two Qur’anic teachings on sexual morality (e.g., Qur’an 17:32, Qur’an 24:30–31).
  3. Whole-class discussion: Compare cultural/global influences (online dating, dress codes, cohabitation) with Islamic values of chastity and modesty.
  4. Teacher facilitates by probing: *“What makes these values timeless even today?”*
- Practise moral reasoning and scriptural application to daily choices.

## Activity 5.18 Collaborative Values Project

### Instructions

1. Organise yourselves into groups, or your teacher will assist you in forming 4 groups, with each assigned a theme.
  - a. Group 1: Sexting → Islamic guidance.
  - b. Group 2: Pornography → Islamic response.
  - c. Group 3: Dressing → modesty principles.
  - d. Group 4: Public displays of affection → dignity and privacy.
2. Each group should do the following

- a. Finds a Qur’anic verse or Hadith relevant to their issue.
- b. States how Islam responds.
- c. Creates a **poster, skit, or case study** to present to peers.

As you connect Qur’anic teachings to modern contexts, you also practise teamwork and communicate creatively.

### Activity 5.19 Linking Sexual Challenges and Islamic Guidance.

#### Instructions

1. Your teacher will draw a central circle on the board: “*Applying Islamic Morality to Modern Sexual Behaviours.*”
2. With a partner or in small groups, create concept maps which should include the following:
  - a. **Branch 1:** Problem/Behaviour.
  - b. **Branch 2:** Islamic Principle.
  - c. **Branch 3:** Action/Response. Example: *Pornography* → *Guarding gaze (Qur’an 24:30)* → *Avoid explicit content, seek repentance.* **See the table below as a template on how to organise your responses.**
3. Each group shares their concept map.

#### Example Table

| Behaviour    | Islamic Principle       | Right Response                    |
|--------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Sexting      | Modesty (ḥayā’)         | Avoid, block, seek forgiveness    |
| Cohabitation | Nikāh (lawful marriage) | Wait for marriage, self-restraint |
| Pornography  | Guard gaze (Q. 24:30)   | Avoid content, repentance         |

### Activity 5.20 Reflection Journaling

#### Instructions

1. Individually, write a short, **anonymous journal entry** on the topics below.
  - a. A sexual behaviour challenge they see (in school, media, or community).
  - b. Which Islamic value (chastity, modesty, taqwā, nikāh, repentance) can help address it?

- c. Three strategies they can suggest for upholding Islamic sexual ethics among peers.

**You may refer to these sentence starters as examples.**

- i. *One challenge I notice is...*
- ii. *Islam teaches...*
- iii. *This value can guide me/my friends by...*
- iv. *Three strategies are...*

**You will realise that the activity helped**

- You to **personalise** the lesson, linking content to their lived reality.
- You have to build **socio-emotional resilience**, responsibility and private reflection without fear of judgment.
- Your teacher may collect entries (anonymously) to understand your perspectives as learners and guide future discussions.

## EXTENDED READING

**“O young men, whoever among you can afford it, let him get married...”**

A Hadith from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* in which the Prophet encourages marriage for those who have means, saying it helps lower the gaze and guard chastity; for others who are unable, fasting is prescribed. ([Abuamina Elias](#))



### Surah An-Nūr, Verse 30

“Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and guard their chastity...” This Qur’an verse is foundational for teachings on modesty, chastity, and guarding behaviour in the presence of temptation. ([Quran.com](#))



### Surah An-Nūr, Verse 31

Guides believing women: lowering gaze, guarding modesty, drawing veils, etc. This ties directly to understanding modesty, dress, and behaviour. ([Quran.com](#))



**Hadith: “There are three who are promised the help of Allah...”**

Narrated by Abū Hurairah, this Hadith includes “the one who gets married seeking to keep himself/chastity” among those promised Allah’s assistance. It supports the value of marriage and chastity. ([IslamiCity](#))



**Article: “Ḥayā’: More Than Just Modesty in Islam” (Yaqeen Institute)**

A paper that explores the trait of ḥayā’ (modesty, shame, bashfulness), showing how it is central in Islamic ethics, how it informs behaviour, and how it relates to other virtues. Good for deepening understanding of modesty beyond dress or appearances. ([Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research](#))



**Qur’an Verses on Chastity — MyIslam (“13 Ayat”)**

A collection of verses from the Qur’an that mention chastity, which learners can read to see many scriptural foundations. Useful for reflection and memorisation. ([My Islam](#))



# REVIEW QUESTIONS 5

## Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

*(Circle the correct answer)*

1. The Qur'an describes fornication as what?
  - A. A minor mistake
  - B. A shameful act and evil path
  - C. An act without consequences
  - D. A lawful pleasure
2. Which of the following best prevents fornication in Islam?
  - A. Wealth
  - B. Modesty and self-control
  - C. Friendship
  - D. Anger control
3. Adultery is forbidden in Islam because,\_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. It increases the population
  - D. It destroys trust and family bonds
  - C. It shows independence
  - D. It brings happiness
4. The prescribed punishment for adultery in Shariah is intended to:
  - A. Encourage more sin
  - B. Preserve social order
  - C. Reward the guilty
  - D. Humiliate families
5. The lawful framework for sexual relations in Islam is:
  - A. Cohabitation
  - B. Friendship
  - C. Marriage
  - D. Temporary contract
6. One purpose of marriage in Islam is:
  - A. To compete with neighbours
  - B. To establish companionship and family
  - C. To gain wealth
  - D. To avoid responsibility
7. Chastity means:\_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. Avoiding food and drink
  - B. Restraining sexual desires from unlawful acts
  - C. Obeying only parents
  - D. Living in poverty

8. Both males and females are expected in Islam to:\_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. Blame each other for temptation  
 B. Uphold chastity and modesty  
 C. Only women should be modest  
 D. Only men should be modest
9. Modesty in behaviour and dress helps Muslims to:  
 A. Avoid suspicion and temptation  
 B. Gain wealth  
 C. Copy foreign culture  
 D. Show pride
10. The punishment for sexual misconduct in Islam mainly serves as:  
 A. Revenge  
 B. Deterrent and corrective measures  
 C. Family tradition  
 D. Private choice

### True / False

1. Fornication is considered a sin in Islam.
2. Islam encourages youth to freely engage in premarital sex.
3. Adultery weakens family life and community trust.
4. Punishment for adultery in Islam is meant only to harm the guilty person.
5. Marriage is a Sunnah and protection against immoral behaviour.
6. Islam allows sexual relations outside marriage if there is love.
7. Chastity applies only to women, not men.
8. Islam commands both genders to lower their gaze.
9. Modesty helps preserve human dignity in society.
10. Punishments for sexual misconduct in Islam are both deterrent and corrective.

### Fill in the Blanks

1. The Qur'an refers to fornication as a \_\_\_\_\_ act. (*shameful*)
2. Islam advises believers to lower their \_\_\_\_\_ to avoid temptation. (*gaze*)
3. Adultery destroys \_\_\_\_\_ bonds in families. (*trust/family*)
4. The punishment for adultery in Shariah serves as a \_\_\_\_\_ to society. (*deterrent*)
5. The only lawful framework for sexual relations in Islam is \_\_\_\_\_. (*marriage*)
6. Marriage provides companionship, love, and \_\_\_\_\_ building. (*family*)
7. \_\_\_\_\_ means restraining sexual desires from unlawful actions. (*Chastity*)
8. Islam requires both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to practise chastity. (*males, females*)
9. Modesty in dress prevents unnecessary \_\_\_\_\_ and temptation. (*attention*)
10. Punishment for sexual misconduct in Islam is \_\_\_\_\_ and corrective. (*deterrent*)

## Short Answer Questions

1. Define fornication according to Islam.
2. Mention two ways youth can avoid fornication.
3. What is adultery in Islam?
4. State one reason why adultery is forbidden.
5. Why is marriage important in Islam?
6. Mention two benefits of marriage.
7. Explain what chastity means.
8. How can a Muslim youth show chastity in daily life?
9. State one benefit of modesty in behaviour.
10. What is the purpose of punishments for sexual misconduct in Islam?

## Essay Questions

1. Discuss the Islamic teachings on fornication and how they protect youth.
2. Explain three strategies a Muslim can use to avoid fornication.
3. Analyse the social effects of adultery on families and communities.
4. “Punishments for adultery are necessary for social order.” Discuss.
5. Examine the role of marriage as a lawful framework for sexual relations in Islam.
6. Explain how marriage helps in building a stable Muslim society.
7. What is chastity, and why is it important for both men and women in Islam?
8. Describe how chastity can be practised by Muslim students in Ghanaian SHSs.
9. Evaluate the importance of modesty in protecting human dignity.
10. Discuss how Islamic punishments for sexual misconduct can reduce immorality in society.

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## GLOSSARY

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Adultery</b>                          | Sexual relation between a married person and someone other than their spouse.      |
| <b>Ahmadiyya</b>                         | Islamic group believing in Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as the Promised Messiah.             |
| <b>Ahlus-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah</b>          | Mainstream Sunni Muslims following Qur'an, Sunnah and community scholars.          |
| <b>AIR (African Indigenous Religion)</b> | Traditional African belief systems and practices recognising a Supreme Being.      |
| <b>Al-'Adl</b>                           | The Just; Allah's fairness guiding humans to honesty and equity.                   |
| <b>Al-Ghaffar</b>                        | The Forgiving; Allah forgives sins and teaches humans to forgive others.           |
| <b>Al-Halim / As-Sabur</b>               | The Forbearing / The Patient; Allah shows patience with humanity.                  |
| <b>Amulet/Charm (Tama)</b>               | Objects inscribed with Qur'anic verses for protection or power, sometimes misused. |
| <b>Ancestor reverence/veneration</b>     | Respect and veneration for deceased family members as intermediaries in AIR.       |
| <b>'Aql (Reason)</b>                     | Human reasoning used to understand God's attributes and guidance.                  |
| <b>Ar-Rahman</b>                         | The Most Merciful; Allah shows compassion and care to all creation.                |
| <b>Asma'ul Husna</b>                     | The 99 Beautiful Names of Allah describing His nature and actions.                 |
| <b>Attributes of God</b>                 | Qualities of Allah revealed in the Qur'an and Hadith.                              |
| <b>Ayat</b>                              | Signs; indications of Allah's existence and attributes in creation.                |
| <b>Chastity</b>                          | Self-control and avoidance of unlawful sexual activity.                            |
| <b>Citizenship</b>                       | The state of being a recognised member of a country with rights and duties.        |
| <b>Coexistence</b>                       | Living peacefully with people of different beliefs, cultures, or backgrounds.      |
| <b>Concept Mapping</b>                   | Visual representation linking ideas like Allah's attributes to examples.           |
| <b>Cultural adaptation</b>               | Modifying religious practices to fit local cultural contexts.                      |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Deterrent</b>             | Something that discourages people from committing wrong actions.                           |
| <b>Dhikr (Zikir)</b>         | Remembrance of Allah through repeated recitations, prayer, or meditation.                  |
| <b>Discrimination</b>        | Unfair treatment of people based on religion, gender, ethnicity, or other differences.     |
| <b>Diversity</b>             | The presence of different cultures, religions, or identities within one community.         |
| <b>Equality</b>              | The state of being treated fairly and having the same rights and opportunities.            |
| <b>Fornication</b>           | Sexual relation between unmarried persons.   |
| <b>Gender</b>                | Social roles, behaviours, and expectations linked to being male or female.                 |
| <b>Gender responsibility</b> | Equal duty of males and females to uphold Islamic moral teachings.                         |
| <b>Generosity</b>            | Willingness to give freely, especially to those in need.                                   |
| <b>Hajj</b>                  | Pilgrimage to Mecca, required once in a lifetime if able.                                  |
| <b>Humility</b>              | Modesty and respect, lowering oneself before Allah and others.                             |
| <b>‘Ibādah</b>               | Acts of worship in Islam performed to obey Allah.  |
| <b>Inequality</b>            | Lack of fairness or equal opportunities between groups, often based on gender or religion. |
| <b>Intermediaries</b>        | Beings mediating between humans and the Supreme Being in AIR.                              |
| <b>Leadership</b>            | Individuals guiding religious or community practices, e.g., Imams, Sheikhs.                |
| <b>Marriage</b>              | Lawful union between a man and woman in Islam.   |
| <b>Missionary activities</b> | Efforts to spread religious beliefs and establish communities.                             |
| <b>Modesty</b>               | Humility in dress, behaviour, and speech, avoiding indecency.                              |
| <b>Moral Values</b>          | Principles guiding good behaviour, such as honesty, patience, and kindness.                |
| <b>Naming ceremonies</b>     | Rituals celebrating the naming of a child in an Islamic or cultural context.               |
| <b>Naql (Revelation)</b>     | Divine guidance through scripture, Qur’an, or Hadith.                                      |

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Nation-building</b> | The process of creating unity and development in a country among its citizens.    |
| <b>Pluralism</b>       | The acceptance of different religious or cultural groups within one society.      |
| <b>Practices</b>       | Religious or cultural actions performed by believers.                             |
| <b>Punishment</b>      | Legal consequence for wrongdoing, meant to correct and deter.                     |
| <b>Qur'an</b>          | Holy book of Islam, revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAW).                           |
| <b>Reformist Islam</b> | Islamic approach emphasising strict adherence to Qur'an and Sunnah.               |
| <b>Respect</b>         | Showing consideration and honour to the beliefs, rights, and feelings of others.  |
| <b>Rituals</b>         | Set religious acts performed regularly or on special occasions.                   |
| <b>Ruqyah</b>          | Healing method using Qur'anic recitations and prayers.                            |
| <b>Salat</b>           | Five daily prayers performed by Muslims.  |
| <b>Sawm</b>            | Fasting during Ramadan, abstaining from food, drink, and sins.                    |
| <b>Self-control</b>    | Ability to manage desires and avoid sinful behaviour.                             |
| <b>Shahadah</b>        | Declaration of faith: "No god but Allah, Muhammad is His Messenger."              |
| <b>Shariah</b>         | Islamic law based on Qur'an and Hadith.   |
| <b>Shia</b>            | Muslim group emphasising leadership from Prophet Muhammad's family (Ahl al-Bayt). |
| <b>Shirk</b>           | Associating partners with Allah, forbidden in Islam.                              |
| <b>Supreme Being</b>   | The highest deity in Islam or AIR responsible for creation.                       |
| <b>Syncretism</b>      | Blending or mixing elements from different religions or cultures in practice.     |
| <b>Tadabbur</b>        | Reflection on Allah's signs in nature to increase faith.                          |
| <b>Tanzih</b>          | Incomparability; Allah is beyond human qualities and comparisons.                 |
| <b>Tashbih</b>         | Anthropomorphism; wrongly likening Allah to human characteristics.                |
| <b>Tawhid</b>          | Oneness of God in essence, attributes and actions.                                |

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>Tijaniyya</b>     | Sufi Islamic order emphasising spiritual purification and guidance of a Sheikh.     |
| <b>Tolerance</b>     | Willingness to accept differences in beliefs, practices, and lifestyles peacefully. |
| <b>Transcendence</b> | Allah's nature being beyond and above all creation.                                 |
| <b>Unity</b>         | A state of harmony and togetherness among people despite differences.               |
| <b>Values</b>        | Principles or standards that guide moral behaviour and decision-making.             |
| <b>Zakat</b>         | Compulsory giving of wealth to help the poor and                                    |

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Service (GES)



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This book is intended to be used for the Year Two Islamic Religious Studies Senior High School (SHS) Curriculum. It contains information and activities to support teachers to deliver the curriculum in the classroom as well as additional exercises to support learners' self-study and revision. Learners can use the review questions to assess their understanding and explore concepts and additional content in their own time using the extended reading list provided.

All materials can be accessed electronically from the Ministry of Education's Curriculum Microsite.



[Scan the QR Code to visit the website]

