

Key Stage 2: Islam: art and belief

The final page of these notes can be copied and given to students who you think may need additional support during the workshop or to adult helpers.

Before your visit: preparing for your workshop

- Key themes for the session are religious faith and practice, decoration, pattern, representation, patronage and evidence. Please discuss Islam, especially the Qur'an, the importance of Arabic and the purpose and features of a mosque before coming to the Museum.
- Key vocabulary includes Islam, belief, Arabic, calligraphy, geometric, symmetry, motif, arabesque. You might like to discuss these words before the session.
- Use the Explore function to search the Museum's collections on-line for objects from the Islamic world at www.britishmuseum.org

During your visit

- During the educator-led session in Room 34, the students will learn how religious belief from the early 7th century AD has influenced the development of art and design in the Islamic world. Through group discussion and pair-work in the gallery, the students will investigate and learn how to identify the key design characteristics of the work of Muslim artists, from Arabic calligraphy and geometric patterns to the use of floral imagery. The issues around the depiction of people and animals will be discussed.
- Rooms with objects relating to the session include:
 - Room 25: Some objects with geometric patterns or Arabic inscriptions from Islamic Africa
 - Room 34: Mosque lamps, religious inscriptions, tiles with plant motifs from the Islamic world
 - Room 68: Coins with religious inscriptions from the Islamic world

Islam: art and belief continued ...

After your visit: follow-up activities

- Art - reinforce the experience by arranging a visit to a local mosque and ask students to identify characteristic patterns and design without prompting. Collate all information from Museum session booklets to create whole class portfolio on Islamic art and belief. Put up large map of the Islamic world on classroom wall and ask students to add pictures of objects to correct modern location.
- RE - When completing QCA Unit 6F, students could draw on their new knowledge of Islamic art and design to create an individual piece of artwork suitable for a mosque.

Curriculum links

- **National Curriculum for Art and Design at KS2**
Knowledge and understanding: Pupils should be taught about: (a) visual and tactile elements, including colour, pattern and texture, line and tone, shape, form and space, and how these elements can be combined and organized for different purposes; (b) materials and processes used in art, craft and design and how these can be matched to ideas and intentions; (c) the roles and purposes of artists, craftspeople and designers working in different times and cultures.
- **QCA Schemes of work for Art and Design at KS2**
 Unit 3B: Investigating pattern
- **QCA Schemes of work for RE at KS2**
 Unit 5B: How do Muslims express their beliefs through practices?
 Unit 6D: What is the Qur'an and why is it important to Muslims?
 Unit 6F: How do people express their faith through the arts?

In this workshop you will learn about:

- how belief has shaped the work that Muslim artists do
- how to identify key features of art from the Islamic world

Key words

Islam

belief

Arabic

calligraphy - writing beautifully

geometric - to do with or made up of shapes

symmetry - when the two halves of a pattern or picture match perfectly

motif - part of a pattern or picture

arabesque - a pattern made with plants

What is Islamic art?

- You will identify and discuss different examples of religious art.
- You will discuss what people think Islamic art is.

How have Muslim artists shaped art?

- You will discuss the range of features of Islamic art, like geometric patterns, Arabic writing and plant motifs.
- You will find out about how Islam has affected art and design.

Investigating objects

- You will explore the gallery in small groups to investigate objects from the Islamic world.
- You will select your own examples, investigate them and feed your discoveries back to the class.