

World Religions in Greater Indianapolis Teaching Module

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Humanities Discipline: American History

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World Religion: History of Islam—Part 1

Teaching Module Goals

1. Students will gain basic understanding of Islamic religion and culture
2. Student will explore Islamic cultures through art, literature, and science
3. Student will develop an awareness of symbols and the beauty of mosques as a way of understanding Muslim communities

Assignments:

Read pages 176-195 in Bowker's *World Religions*

Pick one of the following two short essay questions and bring your essay to class for the purposes of discussion. Your essay should be at least 500 words.

1. What is the meaning and function of the mosque in Islamic religious tradition? Based on your reading, discuss how mosques can look different but share some common architectural features.
2. Analyze the symbols and images on the prayer mat included on p. 177. Be sure to use the rest of your chapter in explaining the meaning and functions of these symbols and images.

In Class Discussion/Instructor Led Questions

Divide the class into groups based on which essay they have brought to class. Ask them to read each other's essays and add astute observations from their partner's papers to their own papers.

Then, reconvene the whole class and direct the remaining class discussion time toward what they learned from reading each other's papers. Be sure to devote equal time to the two essay topics. Add any information that students leave out, such as the centrality of science in determining the direction of the prayer (the qibla) and the geometric designs of mosque spaces.