



ISLAM

A simulation of Islamic history and culture, 610-1100

Student Guide

Introduction

You are beginning a simulation of the history and culture of Islam. It is important to study the origins of this religion and how it has affected mankind. The study of religion is one of the most important aspects of what shapes the history, culture, and contributions of a great civilization. It is impossible to study Islam without understanding the relationship between the teaching of Prophet Muhammad and the entire Mid-Eastern culture. It was the early Muslims, primarily the Arabs, who shaped the future of a wide area of Europe, Africa, and Asia. Muslim contributions are extraordinary in art, architecture, philosophy, science, mathematics, government, and, of course, religion.

From the beginning, you and your classmates will become Muslims.

You will be a member of a caravan starting from a trading center based around an Islamic city. The task of each caravan group is to be the first group to complete a pilgrimage to Makkah, the holiest of Islamic cities, with the most amount of dirhams (Arabic money). This pilgrimage or "hajj" is a requirement of all faithful Muslims once in their lifetime. During your journey, you will travel in caravans, enact generosity and hospitality, engage in trade, dress up as a desert nomad or Bedouin, eat authentic food from the Islamic

world, build Islamic structures, produce poetry, create works of art, and race to be the first caravan to reach Makkah.

Goals

Just as Muslims value education and knowledge, so should you. **Your participation in this simulation is important to your own personal enrichment, to your group, and, indeed, to your entire class' enjoyment. Your goals should be learning a great deal about Islam and its culture, striving for group success, and having a memorable time while you are experiencing the simulation.**

Length and Phases

This simulation lasts from 10 to 15 days, depending on your teacher. Your teacher, because of time constraints, may decide to do the short version, but hopefully time will permit you to enjoy this simulation over the whole 15 days. The simulation has five phases, each divided into several experiences. Your teacher may decide to do all or part, depending on the time.

Introduction (Phase 1)

First you will read a short history of Islam, be briefed on coming assignments, be placed in one of six Middle Eastern city groups, and pick an Muslim name. In addition, you will receive a specific role to play inside the group such as, **caliph** (the leader), **khazim** (the banker), **kattib** (the secretary), or **muwatin** (the citizen).

Caravan Days (Phase 2)

The caravan was an important way of life to many early Muslims. In this phase your group or city will compete with other groups to collect as many dirhams (the name of value points awarded for doing well on Quiz Cards) and Wisdom Cards as possible. You may also be attacked by a rival city or be a victim of a Bulletin Card which describes a good or bad desert experience. These dirhams and Wisdom Cards will be used later as your group tries to be the first to conclude the sacred pilgrimage to Makkah. Finally, the class will occasionally become a Bazaar (marketplace) where you can look for bargains in buying and selling Wisdom Cards from other groups.

Oasis Days (Phase 3)

These cultural days, interspersed with the Caravan Days, allow you to earn more dirhams by completing projects with other group members. One important Phase 3 activity is learning Islam's Five Pillars of Faith by imitating a requirement of each Pillar. Also, your group will work together on such projects as building a mosque, creating a map or timeline, or working on other group assignments to learn about Islamic history and the Islamic faith. You will meet, in addition, several important caliphs in Islamic history and have the opportunity to interview them in the MEET THE CALIPHS activity. Finally, during the most important event, you will listen to a compan-