



ISLAM

Islam, like Christianity and Judaism, is an Abrahamic religion. The Prophet Muhammad founded Islam in seventh-century Arabia. Islamic faith teaches its followers to find peace through submission to Allah's (almighty God's) law. This monotheistic faith is currently the second largest and fastest growing religion, with over a billion followers throughout the world. The highest proportions of Muslims reside in Asia (69.1%) and Africa (27.4%). Like other religions, there are different sects or branches within the Islamic faith, with the two core branches being the Sunni and Shi'ites. The teachings of Islam are found in the Qur'an (Koran), which reveals the sacred word of God. Hadith is the other important text in Islam, and comprises a collection of sayings by Muhammad and his companions.

The five tenants of Islam, referred to as the five pillars, include:

1. Bearing witness in public at least once in one's lifetime that "There is no god but God and Muhammad is his prophet."
2. Praying five times daily (before sunrise, early afternoon, late afternoon, immediately after sunset, and before retiring), while facing the Ka'bah at Mecca.
3. Paying zakāt (similar to tithing, giving a fixed percentage of your surplus wealth).
4. Fasting during Ramadān (the ninth month of the Islamic lunar year), with no eating, drinking, smoking, or sexual intercourse from dawn until sunset, when the daily fast is broken.
5. Performing the annual pilgrimage to the Ka'bah at least once in one's adult lifetime, provided one can afford the journey and leave enough provisions for one's family.

ESSENTIAL NON-FICTION

DUDLEY, William. (2004). *Islam* (Opposing Viewpoints Series). Greenhaven. ISBN 0-7377-2238-X.
Grades 9 and up.

This collection of articles debates controversial and timely topics, such as “Does Islam promote terrorism and violence?” The articles are written in a pro/con format and include bibliographic references. The book also contains discussion questions, a map, and a small glossary.

HAFIZ, Dilara, Imran HAFIZ & Yasmine HAFIZ. (2007). *The American Muslim Teenager's Handbook*. Acacia.
ISBN 9-7809-7925312-6. Grades 7 and up.

Written by a Muslim mother and her teenage children, this handbook uses humour to talk about issues and choices faced by North American Muslim teenagers. Widely praised by reviewers, the book bridges a cultural divide and helps to dispel stereotypes. It includes colour photos and a even quiz to test your Muslim IQ.

SIDDIQUI, Haroon. (2006). *Being Muslim*. Greenwood. (Greenwood Guides Series).
ISBN 9-78088899785-2. Grades 9 and up.

Moving beyond the basic tenants of the Islamic faith, this title examines the political and secular aspects of being Muslim. Siddiqui, a Canadian author, does not shy away from difficult subject matters, paying particular attention to the issue of Islamophobia and the treatment of Muslims in a post-9/11 world.

THOMPSON, Jan. (2005). *Islam*. Walrus Books. (World Religions Series). ISBN 9-78155285654-3.
Grades 8 to 10.

Designed for young teens, this book introduces the beliefs and practices of Islam in a question/answer format. The books covers the history, practices, and values of Islam, and also includes an account of a fifteen-year-old Muslim boy's daily life in London.

