

Muslim Hajj ends (Monday, January 24, 2005)

WARM UPS

CHAT: Talk in pairs or groups about Islam / Mecca / Hajj / pilgrimage / Saudi Arabia / most important religious holiday / Abraham ...

MY COUNTRY: Talk about the religious holidays and festivals in your own country.

PILGRIMAGE: The three-day journey to Mecca is one of the world's great pilgrimages, and the ultimate for Muslims. Talk about the greatest journey you have undertaken.

ISLAM: Islam is the fastest-growing religion in the world. Compare the beliefs of Islam with other religions. As a class, how many similarities can you find / think of between Islam and other faiths?

PRE-READING

WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries, or type the words into a search engine field such as Google, to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... of the words 'Muslim', and 'pilgrim'.

TRUE / FALSE: Predict from the headline whether these statements are true or false:

- (a) Three Muslim pilgrims died at the final day of the Muslim ceremony of Hajj. T / F
- (b) The Hajj takes place every year in Iraq. T / F
- (c) A record two and a half million plus worshippers took part in this year's Hajj. T / F
- (d) The Hajj is the second most important event in the Muslim calendar. T / F
- (e) Last year 251 people were killed in a stampede. T / F
- (f) New safety measures by Saudi authorities prevented a similar disaster this year. T / F
- (g) Thousands of people enter a square enclosure to throw money at three pillars, which represent the devil. T / F
- (h) The Feast of the Sacrifice is a holiday which symbolizes Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son for God.. T / F

SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | | |
|-----|------------|--------------|
| (a) | pilgrim | columns |
| (b) | ceremony | holy |
| (c) | worshipper | obligation |
| (d) | took part | stand for |
| (e) | sacred | traveler |
| (f) | disaster | believer |
| (g) | pillars | celebration |
| (h) | symbolize | participated |
| (i) | duty | kiss goodbye |
| (j) | sacrifice | catastrophe |

DEFINITIONS: Match the following words with the most likely definitions:

(a) **pilgrims** (n)

- (i) people who cannot stop taking medicine for imaginary illnesses
- (ii) religious devotee who makes a long journey to a shrine or sacred place

(b) **worshippers** (n)

- (i) people who have religious faith and prays every day and regularly goes to church / mosque / synagogue / temple...
- (ii) people who like to go sailing every weekend

(c) **sacred** (adj)

- (i) dedicated to or a highly something highly important in a religion
- (ii) very afraid of something

(d) **stampede** (n)

- (i) a sudden and often dangerous rush of a crowd of people all running together
- (ii) a huge market where stamp-collectors gather to buy and sell stamps

(e) **enclosure** (n)

- (i) a square space that has walls on all four sides, used for some purpose
- (ii) the act of taking away someone's freedom

(f) **symbolize** (v)

- (i) to want to be closer to God
- (ii) to represent or identify by a symbol

(g) **perilous** (adj)

- (i) free from danger
- (ii) full of danger

(h) **ritual** (n)

- (i) the understood order of ceremonies in a religious ceremony
- (ii) having so much money you never need to work again

(i) **duty** (n)

- (i) something that is unclean and unpleasant
- (ii) an act or action that is necessary because of your position, social custom, law, or religion

(j) **sacrifice** (n)

- (i) the act of giving away something you love to a God
- (ii) a special and holy bag that people put their religious books in

PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases based on the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | | |
|-----|---------------|---------------------|
| (a) | 500 others | measures |
| (b) | sacred | duty |
| (c) | killed in | pilgrimage to Mecca |
| (d) | safety | to death |
| (e) | Saudi | were wounded |
| (f) | three-day | event |
| (g) | crushed | authorities |
| (h) | religious | pilgrimage |
| (i) | make the | a stampede |
| (j) | at least once | in their life |

GAP-FILL: Put the missing words under each paragraph into the gaps.

bNE: Three Muslim _____ died and 500 others were wounded earlier today as the final day of the Muslim ceremony of Hajj ended in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. A _____ two and a half million plus worshippers took part in the most important and _____ event in the Muslim calendar. Last year 251 people were killed in a stampede, but new safety _____ by Saudi authorities prevented a similar disaster this year. The three deaths happened at the end of the three-day pilgrimage, at the “Jamarat”, in which thousands of people enter a square enclosure to throw stones at three pillars, which _____ the devil. The crowds have to _____ the pillars seven times, which can be a perilous ritual with the possibility of stampedes and being crushed to death. It is the _____ duty of all Muslims to make the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their life, if they can afford it. The end of the pilgrimage means the beginning of Eid al-Adha, or the Feast of the Sacrifice. This holiday, the most important in Islam, symbolizes Abraham's _____ to sacrifice his son for God.

measures pilgrims circle sacred willingness record symbolize religious

DISCUSSION:

- (a) What do you think of the Hajj?
- (b) Would you like to go to Mecca?
- (c) Have you ever been on a pilgrimage?
- (d) Do you perform any religious duties?
- (e) Do you believe there is a devil?
- (f) In your culture is there a ritual or custom to make the devil go away?
- (g) What is the biggest religious holiday in your country, and how is it celebrated?
- (h) Do you have any beliefs, or any things, that are sacred to you?
- (i) Have you ever made a big sacrifice?
- (j) What small sacrifices do you make every day / week?
- (k) Islam also believes in the existence of Abraham, and Jesus but is seen as being so different, Why do you think that is?
- (l) What is your image of Saudi Arabia?
- (m) Teacher's / Students' additional questions.

INTERNET / WEB LINKS:

Facts about Hajj:

<http://www.ummah.net/hajj/>

<http://hajj.al-islam.com/>

About Mecca:

<http://i-cias.com/e.o/mecca.htm>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mecca>

About Mecca-Cola

<http://www.mecca-cola.com/>

Saudi Arabia newspapers:

http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/sgazette/common/SGazette/HomePage.asp?ArtFile=Data/2005/1/23/Section_0.xml

<http://www.arabnews.com/>

About Islam:

<http://www.islamworld.net/>

HOMEWORK

MECCA POSTER: Create a poster explaining the importance of Mecca.

LETTER HOME: You are on the pilgrimage in the desert to Mecca with 2,500,000 other people from all around the world. Write a letter home to describe your experiences.

FULL TEXT

Muslim Hajj ends (Mon 24 Jan)

bNE: Three Muslim **pilgrims** died and 500 others were wounded earlier today as the final day of the Muslim ceremony of Hajj ended in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. A **record** two and a half million plus worshippers took part in the most important and **sacred** event in the Muslim calendar. Last year 251 people were killed in a stampede, but new safety **measures** by Saudi authorities prevented a similar disaster this year. The three deaths happened at the end of the three-day pilgrimage, at the “Jamarat”, in which thousands of people enter a square enclosure to throw stones at three pillars, which **symbolize** the devil. The crowds have to **circle** the pillars seven times, which can be a perilous ritual with the possibility of stampedes and being crushed to death. It is the **religious** duty of all Muslims to make the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their life, if they can afford it. The end of the pilgrimage means the beginning of Eid al-Adha, or the Feast of the Sacrifice. This holiday, the most important in Islam, symbolizes Abraham's **willingness** to sacrifice his son for God.