

# **The Month of Muharram/Day of Ashura**

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Learning Unit and Lapbook Starter kit  
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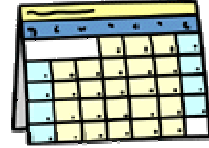
Covers:

Grammar, Vocabulary, Reading, Handwriting, Composition, Math, History,  
Geography, Islamic Studies (of course)

# THE MONTH OF MUHARRAM

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## What/When is Muharram?



### Learn

There are twelve Islamic months. Muharram is the first month in the Islamic Calendar. Like all Islamic months, it can be 29 or 30 days, depending upon when the hilaal (crescent moon) is sighted.

### Activity

Can you name any other Islamic months?

What month do we fast a whole month? \_\_\_\_\_

What month is the hajj performed? \_\_\_\_\_

## Activity

Make a calendar for Muharram for this year.

Label the month, the days, and the year. The Islamic month has 29 or 30 days and the length of the month is based upon the sighting of the crescent moon.


**Activity**

محرم

This is Muharram written in Arabic.  
Can you name the letters?

Write each letter in its standalone form:

\_\_\_\_\_

Practice writing the word Muharram in Arabic below.

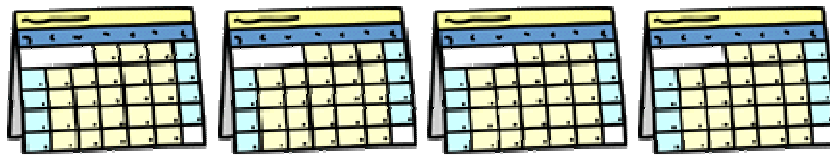
A large outline of the Arabic word 'Muharram' is provided for writing practice. The outline is filled with horizontal lines, allowing the student to write the word in Arabic script within the shape.

## Why is Muharram important?

### Learn

Muharram is an important month for a few reasons.

Muharram is one of the Four **Sacred** Months



Sacred means holy or blessed.

Allah tells us in the Quraan:

“Verily, the number of months with Allah is twelve months (in a year), so was it ordained by Allah on the Day when He created the heavens and the earth; of them four are sacred.....” 9:36

The year is of twelve months, out of which four months are sacred: Three are in succession **Dhul-Qa`dah, Dhul-Hijjah and Muharram**, and (the fourth is) **Rajab** of (the tribe of) Mudar which comes between Jumada (Ath-Thaniyah) and Sha`ban

(Tafsir Ibn Kathir)

?

What does succession mean?

## Activity

All of the Islamic months are listed below in order.  
Locate the names of the 4 sacred months and circle them.

محرم	1.
صفر	2.
ربيع الأول	3.
ربيع الثاني	4.
جمادى الأول	5.
جمادى الثاني	6.
رجب	7.
شعبان	8.
رمضان	9.
شوّال	10.
ذو القعدة	11.
ذو الحجة	12.

## **Why is Muharram (and the other three months) sacred?**

The four Sacred Months were made four, three in succession and one alone, so that the Hajj and `Umrah are performed with ease. Dhul-Qa`dah, the month before the Hajj month, was made sacred because they refrained from fighting during that month. Dhul-Hijjah, the next month, was made sacred because it is the month of Hajj, during which they performed Hajj rituals. Muharram, which comes next, was made sacred so that they are able to go back to their areas in safety )after performing Hajj(. Rajab, in the middle of the lunar year, was made sacred so that those coming from the farthest areas of Arabia are able to perform `Umrah and visit the House and then go back to their areas safely. (Tafsir Ibn Kathir)

<b>Activity</b> Why is it sacred? Draw a lines to match each month with the reason it was made sacred.		
Dhul Qadah		To travel back safely from Hajj
Dhul Hijjah		To enable those who lived in the far areas of Arabic to perform umrah
Muharram		It is the month of Hajj
Rajab		The month before Hajj, fighting was not allowed.

You can make this into a lapbook activity, by cutting out the table, laminating it and using a dry erase marker to match.



## Sinning and Reward of Good Deeds in the Sacred Months are Greater

Allah said:

﴿ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ﴾

(That is the right religion), that is the Straight Law, requiring implementing Allah's order concerning the months that He made sacred and their true count as it was originally written by Allah. Allah said,

﴿فَلَا تَظْلِمُوا فِيهِنَّ أَنْفُسَكُمْ﴾

(so wrong not yourselves therein) during these Sacred Months, for sin in them is worse than sin in other months.

"In all (twelve) months. Allah then chose four out of these months and made them sacred, emphasizing their sanctity, making sinning in them greater, in addition to, multiplying rewards of righteous deeds during them."

(Tafsir Ibn Kathir)

## Another Reason Why Muharram is Special

Musa and Bani Israel escaped Firaun during Muharram

1. Read about this Prophet Musa's (alayhi sallam) escape in "Stories of the Prophets: Musa"

You can find a copy of this online at:

[www.angelfire.com/on/ummiby1/musa.html](http://www.angelfire.com/on/ummiby1/musa.html)

(You may want to break up into several sittings.)

OR

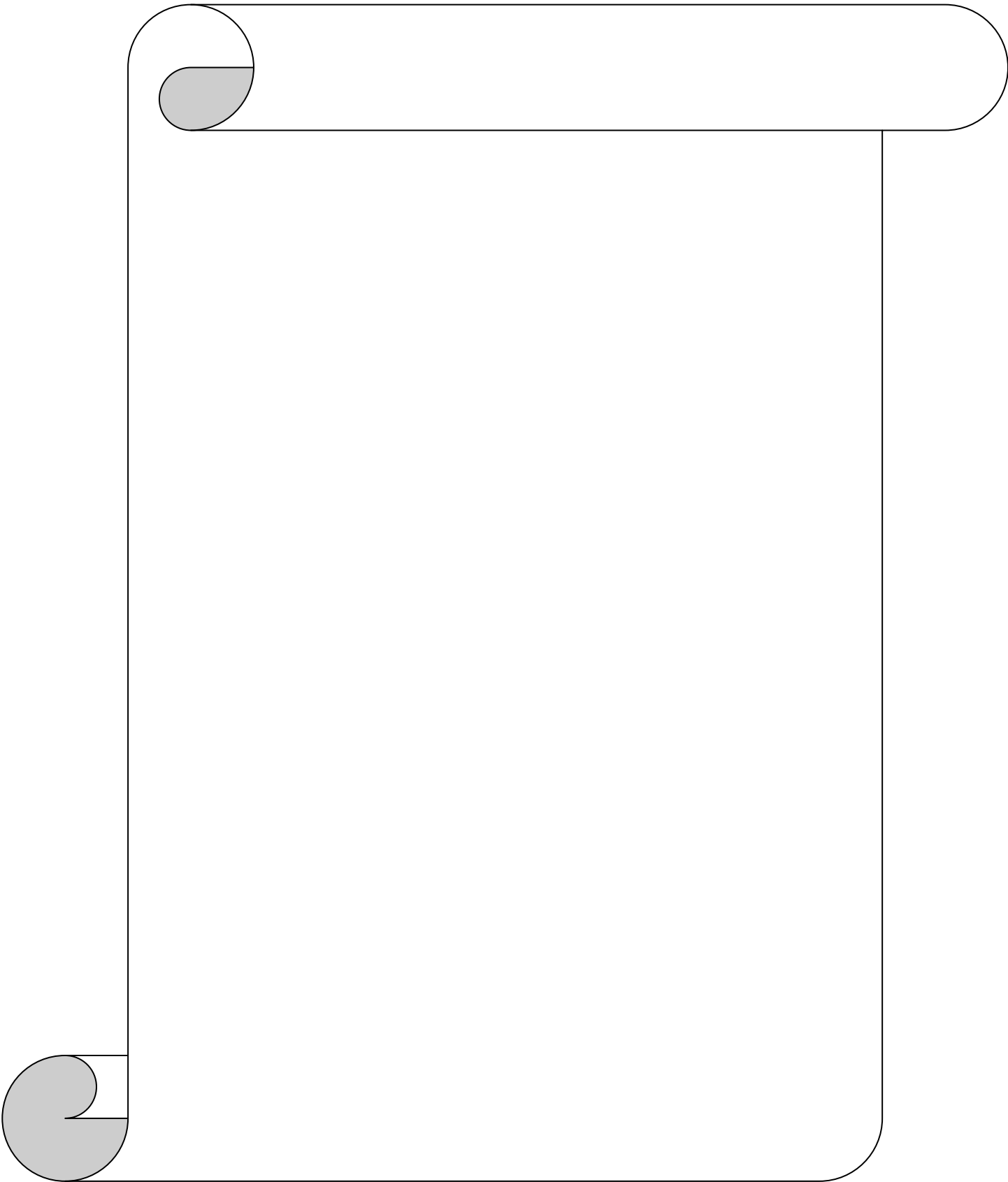
You can read about him/the escape in the Quraan: **Surah 28 (Al Qisas) ayaat 1-43**. You may also want to read the tafsir for these ayaat.

2. On the next page (scroll shape), write a newspaper article about story of Musa's escape from Firaun. You should prewrite before writing in the shape.



### **A few tips:**

- a. Include the 5Ws (Who, What, When, Where, Why) and How
- b. Give your article a catchy headline; be sure to include a byline and the date. Look over a few new stories for layout ideas and writing style.



## Excursion: The Red Sea



### Red Sea Coastline, Israel

The Red Sea divides the Arabian Peninsula from the continent of Africa, forming the Gulf of Aqaba just below the Israeli port of Eilat. The Red Sea's high salt content is a result of the region's extreme heat, which makes its waters evaporate quickly.

Red Sea, narrow, inland sea, separating the Arabian peninsula, western Asia, from northeastern Africa. It extends northwest from the strait of Bab el Mandeb to Suez, Egypt, for a distance of 1,900 km (1,200 mi). The maximum depth of the sea is 3,040 m (9,970 ft), and its maximum width is 350 km (220 mi). The northern extremity is divided by the Sinai Peninsula into the gulfs of Suez and Aqaba.

The Suez Canal connects the Red Sea with the Mediterranean Sea, and Bab el Mandeb connects it with the Gulf of Aden, an arm of the Arabian Sea. The Red Sea occupies a portion of a zone of depression and faulting called the Great Rift Valley. For more than 50 million years, the earth's crust has been tearing apart all along this zone. The Red Sea formed when the Arabian Peninsula was torn from Africa, 20 million years ago (see Plate Tectonics). Hydrothermal vents on the seafloor are evidence of ongoing tectonic activity.

The site of the safe passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea is said to be the Gulf of Suez. In the centuries following the downfall of the Roman Empire, the sea served the Muslim world as a major artery of communication and trade with eastern Africa, Persia (now Iran), and East Asia. To European nations, however, the sea was of minor commercial importance until the completion (1869) of the Suez Canal, making possible a comparatively direct sea route between Europe and East Asia. The principal Red Sea ports include Suez and Al Quşayr in Egypt, Port Sudan and Sawākin in Sudan, Massawa in Eritrea, Jiddah in Saudi Arabia, and Al Ḥudaydah and Mocha (Al Mukhā) in Yemen.

***Picture, map, and text from Microsoft Encarta.***

## **Activity**

On a blank world map, label the locations mentioned in the reading.

## What do we do during Muharram?

Fasting in the month of Muharram is highly desired, especially on the **tenth day of Ashura**. The Messenger of Allah (salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) has been reported as saying when asked which prayer is better after obligatory prayer: "Prayer in the middle of the night." He was asked again "which fast is better after Ramadan." He said: "In the month that is called Al Muharram."

(Ahmed, Muslim, and Abu Dawud)

Discuss then tell or write what the following words mean:

desired:

\_\_\_\_\_

obligatory:

\_\_\_\_\_

### Extension

(Requires previous or knowledge outside of this unit)

1. How many obligatory prayers are there? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Name them in order: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is prayer in the middle of the night called?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What part of the night is this made? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What month (give the number) is Ramadan of the year? \_\_\_\_\_

While voluntary fasting in Muharram is good, the Prophet (salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) emphasized the fast of the tenth day. Ashura comes from the word that means 10. The observation of this day goes back to Prophet Musa (alayhi sallam). Ibn Abbas related a hadith that when the Prophet (salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) came to Madinah he found the Jews fasting the day of Ashura. He asked why they did this. They replied that it was a good day because it was the day that Allah delivered Prophet Musa (alayhi salaam) and Bani Israel from their enemy, Firaun. As gratitude, Prophet Musa (alayhi salaam) fasted that day.

The Prophet (salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) responded, "I have more right to Musa than you." He fasted the day and commanded the believers to fast that day too.

The companions said: "O Messenger of Allah (salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) this is the day the Jews and Christians respect and honor. The Prophet (salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) promised them that "next year, insha Allah, we shall fast the ninth (tasuu'aa) along with the tenth." But by the next Muharram, the Prophet (salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) had passed away.

It is desirable to fast the ninth and tenth to distinguish us from the Jews and Christians.

## **Activity**

Discuss the meanings of the underlined words above.

Older students: Tell the part of speech of each underlined word as used in the reading. Write the abbreviation for the part of speech above each word.

## Activity

Answer in complete sentences as applicable.

1. Fasting during Muharram is good, but what day did the Prophet (salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) emphasize to fast?

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2. What group of people did the Prophet (salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) find observing the Day of Ashura?

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3. Ashura comes from the word that means \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Why did the Prophet (salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) intend to fast the ninth as well as the tenth of Muharram?

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## Another Virtue of the Day of Ashura



Jabir Bin Abdullah, the Messenger of Allah (salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "Whoever spends on himself and his family on the day of Ashura, Allah will provide for him generously the rest of his year

(al Bayhaqi)

### **Activity: The Day of Ashura**

On your Muharram calendar, mark the day of Ashura.

## **Let's Fast on the Day of Ashura (and the ninth)**

So we see that it is good to fast on the tenth of Ashura as well as the ninth.

Is your family going to fast?

If so, now is a good time to review fasting.

### **Activity: Fasting Review**

- Suhoor (what it is, its benefits, when it's eaten).
- Leaving off bad speech and actions in addition to food and drink
- Iftar (hastening to break your fast; dua to break your fast)

### Activity: Prepare for Fasting

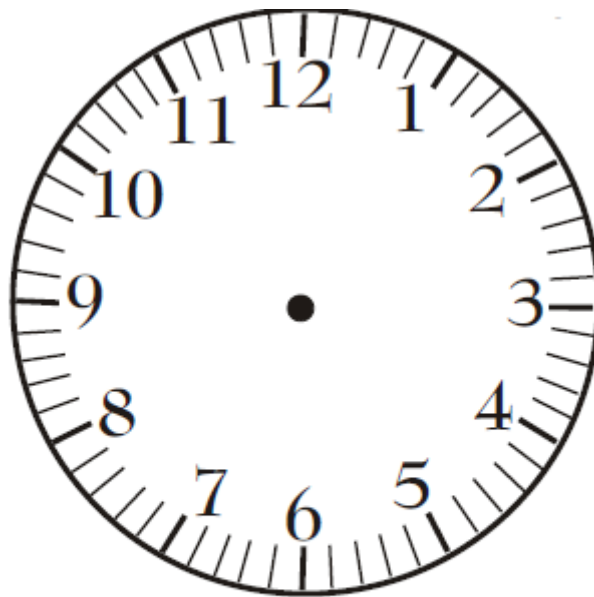
If you will be fasting, began now to prepare to fast.  
Here are some things you might do (check off each as you do it):

- Set your alarms (find out what time fajr comes in and give yourself enough time to get up and prepare/eat suhoor).

What time did your family decide to get up for suhoor?

Write it below and draw it on the clock:

**Time We Plan to Get Up for Suhoor**

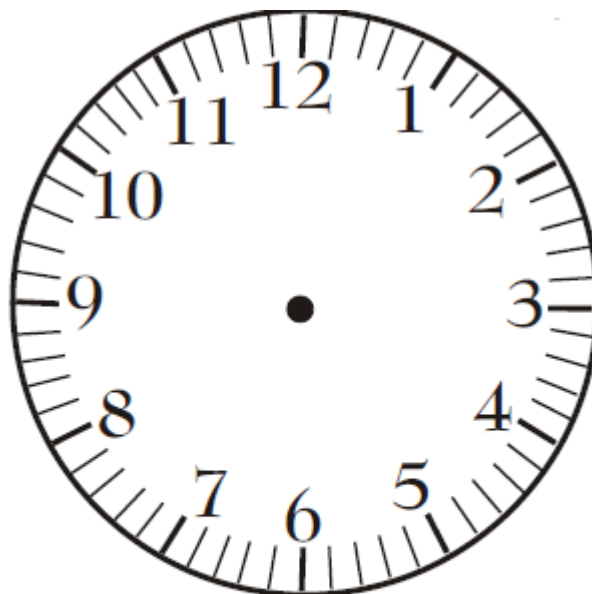


:

\_\_\_\_\_

What time does Salatul Fajr come in on the tenth of Ashura this year?  
Find out and fill in the time below.

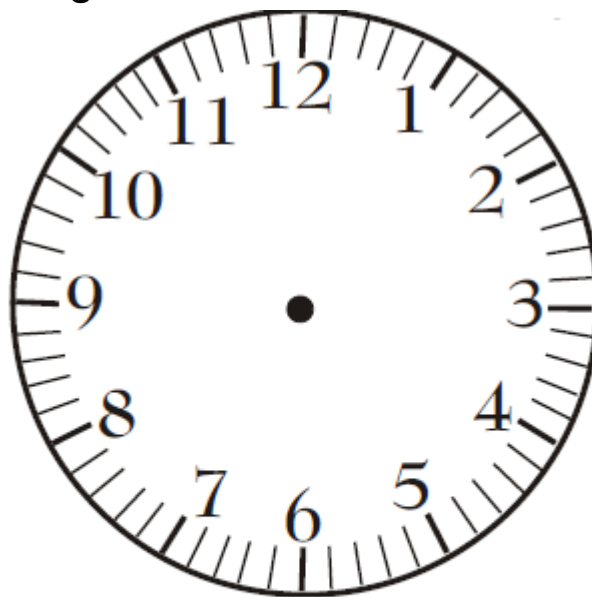
**Time Salatul Fajr Comes In  
On Yawmul Ashura**



\_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

What time does Salatul Maghrib come in on the tenth of Ashura this year?  
Find out and fill in the time below.

**Time Maghrib Comes In on Yawmul Ashura**



\_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

- Plan out your suhoor.
- Decide what you will have for iftar.

Write in your meal choices in the menu below.

## Our Day of Ashurah Menu

**Suhoor:**

**Iftar:**

**Dinner:**

## Wrap Up Activity: Shape Book

Make a “1” shape book to help you review some facts about Muharram.

Print out several copies of the 1 shape.

On each, write a question about Muharram, the Day of Ashura, etc. and answer it.

Cut out the shapes and staple together on the top. Put in your lapbook.

