



Living Together:

Muslims in a changing world



Age 7-8: Food, Geography & Belief Systems

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Introduction to Islamic food



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Islam began in the Middle East.

Much of the food eaten by Muslims was that of the desert **nomads**. Food had to be simple and **portable**. There was no **refrigeration**.



Agata Dorobek/Shutterstock Images LLC

Muslims would stop at **oases** as well as in farming areas to get fruits, vegetables, spices and flour for making bread.

As Islam spread, Muslims were able to trade and **exchange** foods. Muslims began **settling** in villages, towns, and larger cities.

Activity:

Select the best definition for the bolded word in the text.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1. nomads | A. to give in return for something received |
| 2. portable | B. a fertile area in a desert |
| 3. refrigeration | C. to take up residence in a new place |
| 4. oases | D. the ability to keep food cool |
| 5. exchange | E. easily carried |
| 6. settling | F. people who have no permanent home |

Meat

Traditionally, Muslims have rules about what types of meat can be eaten. All meat has to be prepared in a certain way according to Islamic law. When this happens, a halal symbol is placed on the package.

The halal symbol guarantees to the person buying the meat, that all the Islamic rules were followed in preparing the meat.

Muslims are not allowed to eat pork. There are many food items that contain gelatin which is usually made from pork. Gelatin makes food thicker. Jelly, yogurt, sour cream, candies like jubes and gummi bears are some foods which often contain gelatin.

Activity:

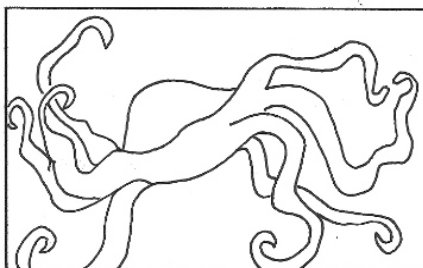
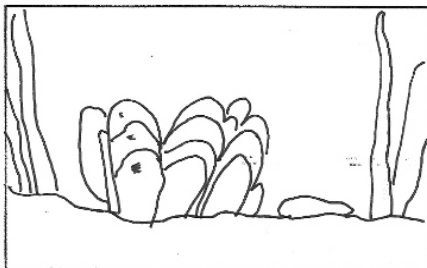
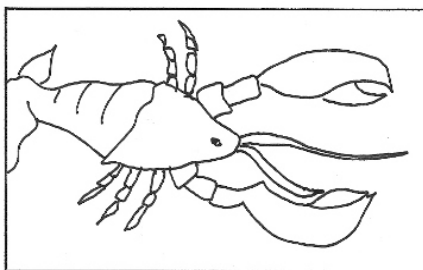
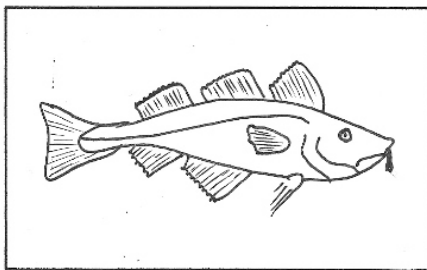
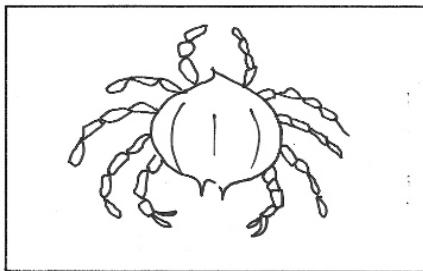
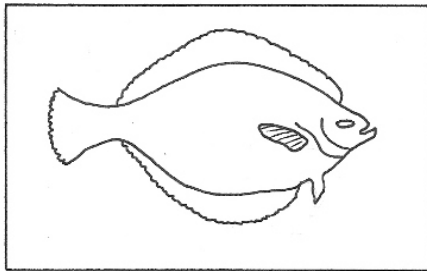
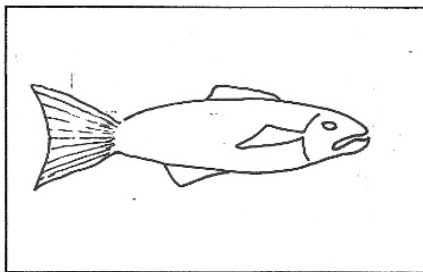
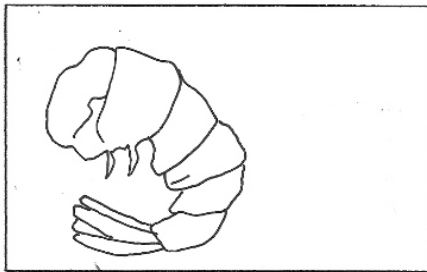
If you have yogurt at home, look at the label - can you find gelatin listed?

Seafood

Muslims eat all seafood. For example, Muslims eat crab, mussels, lobster, octopus and scallops. Muslims also eat shrimp and some kinds of fish.

Activity:

Colour the seafood eaten by Muslims.



Activity:

a) Are there any foods your family does not eat?

Circle one: Yes No

d) What are these foods?

b) Do you know why your family does not eat these foods?

Activity:

Carnivores, herbivores and omnivores

Muslims do not eat animals that are carnivorous.

Carnivores are animals that eat _____.

Herbivores are animals that eat _____.

Omnivores are animals that eat _____.

Fill in the chart by putting a checkmark (✓) showing which group the animals belong.

Animal	Carnivore	Herbivore	Omnivore
deer			
camel			
bears			
dogs			
tigers			
moose			
chickens			
wolves			
goats			
zebras			

Fruits and vegetables

Many fruits and vegetables that are now common in Canada had their origin in the Islamic world.

dates

mangoes

figs

lemons

apricots

oranges

carrots

onions

egg plant

Activity:

Using the internet, the encyclopedia and the school library, choose one fruit and one vegetable that originated in the Islamic world.

- Draw a picture of the ripened fruit and vegetable as it appears just before it is picked.

Fruit:	Vegetable:
Picture	Picture

- ii) Discover one recipe for each in which the fruit/vegetable is the main ingredient.

<p>Recipe</p>	<p>Recipe</p>
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Activity:

Try this: Baba Ganush

1. Wash and pierce an eggplant with a fork.
2. Oil a tray and bake the eggplant in an oven at 350 degrees F for 30 to 40 minutes until soft.
3. Remove and peel the eggplant. Put the peeled eggplant in a bowl. Throw away the skin and the stem end.
4. Add the following ingredients to the eggplant and mix/blend until smooth.
 - ¼ c tahini (sesame seed paste)
 - 3 cloves peeled and crushed garlic
 - 1 tsp salt
 - 2 tsp finely chopped parsley

Eat with pita bread.

Grains and breads

Muslim families use wheat flour in different ways to make bread. Pita bread, naan bread, chapattis, and roti are examples of bread. Pita bread and naan bread use yeast. Chapattis and roti do not use yeast. All the breads can be cooked in an oven or on a grill over a fire.



Naan Bread

Patricia
Hofmeester/Shutterstock
Images LLC



Pita Bread

Olga Utlyakova
Shutterstock Images
LLC

Activity:

a) Try this: Make your own flour

With a mortar and pestle, crush the grains of wheat in the mortar until flour like. Sift the flour to get rid of all the bits. The flour can then be used.

b) Try this: Make your own pita bread

- 2 cups flour
- 1/4 teaspoons quick-rising yeast
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/4 cups hot water (but not boiling)
- 1-1 1/2 cup flour

1. Mix the first four ingredients together.
2. Add the rest of the flour until the dough is soft and sticky.
3. Knead on a floured board for 5 minutes. .
4. Divide into 8 balls.
5. Roll out each one to about 1/4 inch thick and 6 inches in diameter.

6. Place each round on very lightly greased cookie Cover with a tea towel. Let rise in warm place for 25-35 minutes. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F.
7. Bake at 450 for 4 min, and then turn over for 4 more minutes or until lightly browned.
8. Wrap immediately in a dishtowel for 3 or 4 minutes.

Activity:

Instructions: Put these pictures in the correct order showing how to make pita bread.



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Why do you think pita bread is popular in the Middle East as well as in other parts of the world?

Rice is also popular in Muslim countries where the climate allows it to grow easily. Basmati rice is known as the best rice in the world. It is grown in Muslim countries like Bangladesh where the climate and soil are suitable.



Couscous is eaten in many African countries. It is wheat pasta that looks like rice. It is available in many Canadian grocery stores.

Freddy Eliasson/Shutterstock Images LLC

Activity:

Can you find 10 differences in the two pictures?



Dairy, Sweets & Spices

Dairy

Cheese has been made in the Islamic world for hundreds of years. Wherever there is animal milk, cheese and yogurt can be made. Goats and camels provided milk when people were more nomadic. Currently, in addition to goats and camels, sheep and cows also provide milk that can be made into cheese and yogurt. Yogurt is eaten in many hot countries because it helps cool people.



Feta cheese
Gordana/Shutterstock Images LLC

Sweet foods

Sugar was introduced to Europeans by the Muslims. In Islamic culture, the day a baby is born, the parents put a little honey on the baby's tongue so the first thing a baby tastes is sweet. Many Islamic countries create their own candies and deserts. Baklava is a popular food that combines pastry, honey, and walnuts into an extremely sweet desert.



Nicolas McComber/Shutterstock Images LLC

Spices



Efka/Shutterstock Images LLC

Saffron is the most expensive spice in the world. Each thread is hand picked from the flower of the crocus that blooms in autumn.



Ton Vols/Shutterstock Images LLC

Salt has been so rare in some countries that it is sometimes traded for an equal weight in gold.

Activity:

Many spices originated in Islamic countries. Use the chart as a way of recording what you find out about the following spices.

Spice	Country of origin	Available in Canada?	Uses
saffron			
cinnamon			
pepper			
salt			
nutmeg			
cardamom			
cumin			
tumeric			
mint			
cloves			
mustard			

Activity:

What spices do you use the most?

What do you use the spices for?

What would the food be like without the spices?

Final activity

Locate and colour the different food groups in this collage.

Meat: red

Fruit: light green

Vegetables: dark green

Sweets: blue

Spices & nuts: purple

Dairy, grains & breads: brown

