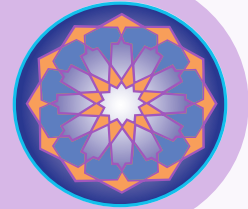


Teacher support materials: Understanding Muslim identity in Aotearoa Y7–8

This teacher support material (years 7–8) unpacks the Know context **Ngā ahurea me ngā tuakiri kiritōpū | Culture and collective identity** in relation to two videos – *Anzar’s Story* and *Hamza and Nurah’s Story* – that tell about their experiences of growing up as Muslims in Aotearoa New Zealand.



The suggested activities are intended as examples to support students to understand important ideas about the cultures and collective identities of Muslim people in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Students will use the skills they have developed through these learning experiences to find out about the stories of Muslim groups in their own communities and promote social cohesion.

Revisiting the same concepts and skills in different contexts supports students to develop their abilities in the Do practices in more complex and critical ways, which in turn deepens their understanding of the big ideas.



Creating a safe space for students

Using this resource requires careful consideration of the emotional wellbeing of students, teachers, and the wider whānau and school community.

Teachers will need to have a strong understanding of the needs of their students to ensure difficult conversations and topics are managed in a way that respects the diversity of the class, including the knowledge, beliefs, and cultural capital of each child.

Particular care needs to be taken when discussing the Christchurch terror attacks to safeguard all children.

Some resources that can support with this are:

- [The Mental Health Foundation](#)
- [The Supporting People’s Wellbeing section of the Leading Local Curriculum Guide – part 2](#)
- [Unteach Racism](#)

- **Ata and Oho Resource collections:**
 - **Ata** is a collection of cards and activities for teaching and learning social and emotional skills, knowledge and strategies. Using these resources will help students build awareness of themselves and others as they practise skills and develop strategies that help them live and learn together better.
 - **Oho** is a collection of cards and activities for teaching and learning that supports social and emotional learning. By exploring the connections between ourselves, and the world, students can develop skills, strategies and knowledge that help them be culturally and socially located as unique and connected individuals.

Teacher support material

Muslim people in Aotearoa New Zealand have different ways they sustain and evolve their identity as Muslims.

Muslim people and communities in Aotearoa New Zealand have experienced both inclusion and exclusion with varying consequences.

Other relevant reading:

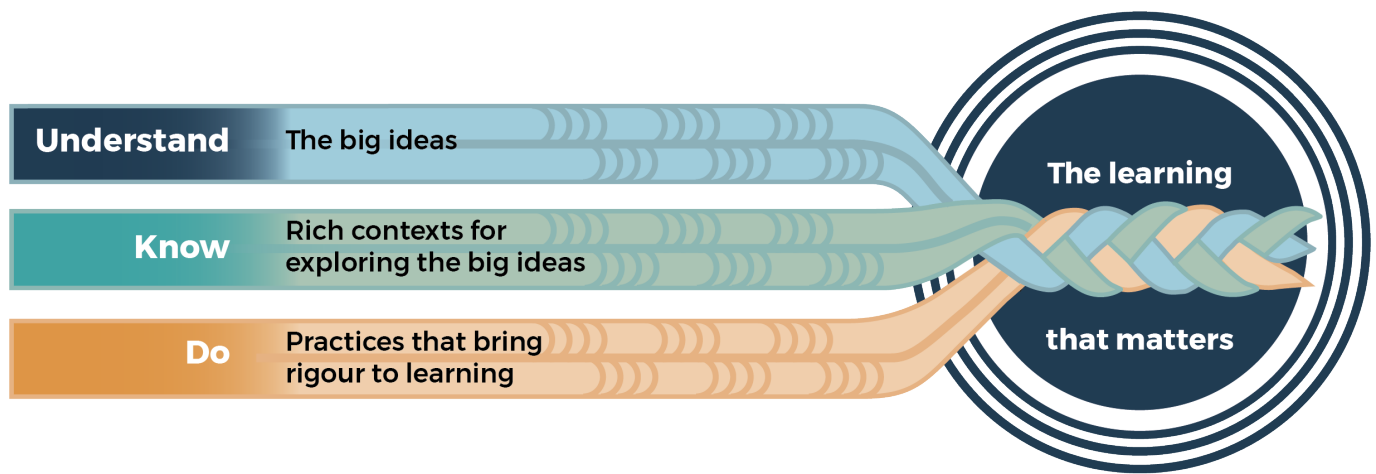
- [Life in New Zealand as a Muslim](#)

To support teacher learning

It is important that teachers have a sound understanding of Islam and the general history of Muslims in Aotearoa New Zealand before beginning these activities.

The following websites have more information that could be useful for teacher learning:

- [The New Zealand Muslim Association | About Islam](#)
- [The International Muslim Association of New Zealand](#)
- [The Islamic Women's Council of New Zealand](#)



Understand

Big ideas

‘Ka whawhai tonu mātou mo te āke, āke, āke!’ (Kiingi Tāwhiao)

Colonisation and settlement have been central to Aotearoa New Zealand’s histories for the past 200 years.

‘Kaua e uhia Te Tiriti o Waitangi ki te kara o Ingarangi. Engari me uhi anō ki tōu kahu Māori, ki te kahu o tēnei motu ake.’ (Aperahama Taonui, 1840)

People’s lived experiences have been shaped by the use and misuse of power.

E koekoe te tūi, e ketekete te kākā, e kūkū te kererū.

People hold different perspectives about the world depending on their values, traditions, and experiences.

Haumi e, hui e, tāiki e!

People participate in communities by acting on their beliefs and through the roles they hold.

Tuia i runga, tuia i raro, tuia i roto, tuia i waho, tuia te muka tāngata.

Interactions change societies and environments.

Know

Contexts

Ngā ahurea me te tuakiri kiritōpū | Culture and collective identity

People use different ways to sustain and evolve their culture and identity.

People can experience inclusion or exclusion in different situations, which has consequences for them and for society.

Do

Practices

Te ui pātai whaihua hei ārahi tūhuratanga waitake | Asking rich questions to guide worthy investigations

Te whakaaro huatau | Thinking conceptually

Te tautohu uara me ngā tirohanga | Identifying values and perspectives

Te tātari whakatau me te whakahaere mahi koringa pāpori | Analysing decisions and taking social action

In this resource, consider:

Meaningful topic guidance:

The following statements expand on how this resource relates to the big ideas.

There are both tangata whenua and tangata tiriti of Aotearoa who follow Islam. There is a growing Māori Muslim community in Aotearoa New Zealand who may have different experiences and stories than non-Muslim Māori with some underlying cultural similarities.

Muslim migrants come from a wide variety of countries. Muslim settlement in Aotearoa New Zealand has contributed to the diversity of our population.

Religious discrimination has resulted in exclusion, injustice and conflict with various religious groups over time. Individuals, groups, and organisations can act to improve the lives of people and communities.

Muslim communities are characterised by great diversity in age, ethnicity, culture, citizen status, abilities and disabilities, family composition, and gender and sexual identity. These aspects all contribute to different perspectives held by Muslims with some underlying similarities.

People participate in Muslim groups including mosque, families, ethnic communities, and community events such as festivals and sports tournaments, based on their shared faith. They have various roles depending on their identity and the groups they belong to.

Relationships and connections between groups have been shaped by a variety of factors including migration, and specific events such as the Christchurch terrorist attacks.

Suggested learning experiences:

People participate in communities by acting on their beliefs and through the roles they hold.

People participate in Muslim groups including mosques, families, ethnic communities and community events such as festivals and sports tournaments, based on their shared faith. They have various roles depending on their identity and the groups they belong to.

People hold different perspectives about the world depending on their values, traditions, and experiences.

Muslim communities are characterised by great diversity in age, ethnicity, culture, citizen status, abilities and disabilities, family composition, and gender and sexual identity. These aspects all contribute to different perspectives held by Muslims with some underlying similarities.

Teacher guidance:

Rich question

- How can we ensure all people in our community feel safe and included in their identity?
-

People's identities are made up of lots of different elements and influences.

What is identity?

Suggested learning experiences

- Students can create an extended brainstorm to show all the things that make them who they are. As they do this ensure they have categories, such as relationships with others (friend, daughter, brother, etc.), background (race, ethnicity, religion, whakapapa, places where they belong), characteristics (personality traits, behaviour, physical traits, etc.), hobbies, strengths and interests (sports, music, reading, clubs).
- Divide the class into six groups and ask students to create new categories for the things they have identified:
 - Two groups can sort the things into what stays the same and what can change over time.
 - Another two groups can consider which categories are the most central to our identity and why.
 - The final two groups can sort the items into labels that we choose for ourselves, labels that occur naturally, and labels that other people put on us.
- Ask students to pair up with another student from the group that did the same task, and compare their answers. Then ask them to reform their groups, share back and make any changes they would like to make based on the information from the other group.
- Finally, ask groups to share back and discuss as a class what they think is important about identity. Discuss if they think we should take on what other people think our identity is, whether different people or groups might think different parts of identity are more important, and whether some parts of your identity are more visible in particular places.



This activity helps students' use of tools to sort and group their findings and explore different people's perspectives.

Ensure that the groupings are varied to support multiple areas of identification, and support students to realise that these identity markers are fluid.

There are many activities in the Ata and Oho resources that support understanding of identity and appreciation and support of others' identities.

People's names are an important part of their identity.

How do our names contribute to our identity?

Suggested learning experiences

- Allow students to watch the spoken poem 'Unlearning My Name' by New Zealand poet Mohamad Hassan, 'My name' by Emily Mata, and listen to the poem 'Learning My Name' by Marjan Naderi.
- Watch both the videos and ask the students to take note of the children's names.
- Ask students to share the stories of their names, for example, where their name is from, whether they were named after someone or something, who chose their name, why they chose that name. If needed they may need to ask their families first.
- Discuss whether they have ever had people pronounce their names incorrectly and how that made them feel, or if they have ever felt like there are too many people with the same name.
- Discuss how they could ensure that they respect people's names by pronouncing them correctly.

People's identities are made up of lots of different elements and influences.

Who am I? What is my identity?

Suggested learning experiences

- Using the items from the previous activities, support students to create their own identity charts. This could be done visually by drawing a picture of themselves and drawing or writing on the following body parts:
 - Eyes: what people see when they look at you (focusing on their inherent aspects of identity, rather than what they look like)
 - Ears: what you hear from others around you
 - Mouth: what other people hear from you
 - Hands: what you do
 - Head: your thoughts
 - Heart: your relationships
 - Tummy: your feelings
 - Feet: where you belong/ background.
- Encourage students to visually show the aspects of their identity that are more important using size, colour or other techniques.

Choosing one specific aspect of a social sciences concept, in this case how names relate to identity, can help students unpack that concept in detail.

Using a visual representation can help students understand a social sciences concept in more depth. Starting with a familiar context – in this case themselves – can also help students understand social sciences concepts more deeply.

Ensure students understand that this activity is a way to celebrate differences and similarities, and that the focus is on internal identity not external features such as hair colour.

Muslims in Aotearoa are diverse and may have different ways they express their identity.

What is the identity of one person from the videos?

Suggested learning experiences

- Watch the two videos and ask students to create an identity chart for one of the people featured. They won't be able to give as much detail as they did for their own chart, but encourage them to give as much detail as possible, and to provide evidence for their ideas from the film. For example, Anzar plays handball in the video, so handball could be written on his hands.
- Encourage students to colour the aspects of their identity to show a comparison between the person they have chosen and themselves. For example, they might choose one colour to show an aspect that is different from their identity chart, another colour showing an aspect that is different to them but the same as another classmate, a third colour showing an aspect they share with another person in the videos, and a fourth colour to show an aspect they share. You could also use tone, for example, the darker the colour, the more people share that aspect.
- Share their identity charts and explore how different students may have noticed or recorded different aspects of the identity of the child they chose.
- **Extend** this activity by discussing the limitations of the videos as a source to determine someone's identity. Students could share a time someone made an assumption about them based on a limited understanding or quick snapshot, and how this made them feel. Discuss how it is important to avoid forming opinions on someone's identity based on limited information, and ask them to think about how else they could learn more about the child they chose.

Muslims in Aotearoa New Zealand are a diverse group.

Who are the Muslims in our community?

Suggested learning experiences

- Find the religion data for your local area here:
 - [Census place summaries | Stats NZ](#)
- Support students to interpret the data to work out how many people identify as Muslim in their area.
- If there is an Islamic centre in your area, check [New Zealand Islamic Centres | muslimdirectory.co.nz](#). If possible, contact them and invite a leader from the centre, or another Islamic leader such as an Islamic school principal or staff member, to come and talk to the class.

Comparing an unfamiliar identity chart to one based on themselves can help students make links and understand connections between people.

Ensure students understand these charts explore people's internal diversity, and how we can share similarities with people, even if we initially think they seem very different.

This activity brings together a range of Do practices. Students are using multiple sources of information to answer their question, generating a range of questions to ask their visitor, and using an appropriate tool to organise and sort their information.

Discuss with students the limitations and benefits of each type of source to help them understand these further.

Students will need support to generate questions that will give them the answers they need. It is a good idea to practise asking the questions and recording answers so they are comfortable with these skills when the visitor is in the classroom.

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- Prepare the class for their visit by finding out what would be important to show respect, for example, serving halal food, learning how to say 'As-salaamu alaykum'.
 - Before the visit, support students to develop questions to ask the visitor about the Muslims in the area. For example, they might like to know what languages are spoken, where people were born, how long they have lived in the area, what diverse jobs, hobbies, interests they have, how many kids their age there are, what Ramadan is like, what concerns they have, etc.
 - After this visit, support students to use the Stats NZ data and the interview answers to create a representation that shows the diversity of the Muslims that live in their area, for example, a graph, mind map or graphic organiser. Students may like to each focus on one area for their representation, then the class set can be used to provide a more complete picture.
 - **Extend** this activity by giving students these links to Stats NZ and explore different data sets to find out other data relating to people who identify as Muslim:
 - [Māori descent and religious affiliation](#)
 - [Birthplace and religious affiliation](#)
 - [Ethnic group by religious affiliation](#)
 - [Religious affiliation](#).
 - Students will likely need support to navigate this site. To filter the results, click on the little arrow and line next to each description.
-

We have the power to act to build up or tear down other people's sense of identity.

How can people enhance their sense of identity?

Suggested learning experiences

- Ask students to read, [Young Kiwi-Muslims on how Eid celebrations help build identity | Re.](#), and ask them to highlight or note down any mention of the aspects of identity they notice, for example, one talks about prayer, others talk about pride in being Muslim or a sense of community.
 - Rewatch the videos to identify what things the children talk about that people do to help them feel included.
 - Discuss how these things might enhance their sense of identity as Muslims and use this to generate a set of criteria for activities that might support Muslim identity, for example, one criteria could be 'halal food', another could be celebrating their diverse ethnicities.
-

This activity starts students on a decision-making process to generate ideas for their social action, by analysing an event which supports Muslim identity and using it to generate criteria to judge their own ideas.

We have the power to change things that do not support Muslim identity.

What common activities do not support Muslim identity?

Suggested learning experiences

- Remind students of the previous activity and pose the question 'what activities do we do at school or in Aotearoa New Zealand that are not inclusive for Muslims in our community?'.
• Ask students to generate a list of ideas of common practices at school or in the community and sort them into four categories: neutral, supporting Muslim identity, not supporting Muslim identity, and easily changed to support Muslim identity. For example, they might think of things like school swimming, school lunches, singing Christmas carols at assembly, or having a sausage sizzle.

We have the power to improve people's lives.

How can we ensure all people in our community feel safe and included in their identity?

Suggested learning experiences

- As a class, choose one of the activities in the 'easily changed' category and discuss how it might be easily changed. For example, they might choose 'having a sausage sizzle at school' and say that it could be made inclusive of Muslim identity by having vegetarian or halal sausages available and making sure it doesn't happen during Ramadan. Ask students how they could make these changes happen and support them to carry this out as an example of a social action.
- Remind students of the rich question they have been exploring, and support them to choose an activity in the 'easily changed' or 'not supporting Muslim identity' and work out a way to make it more inclusive.
- Students may also like to carry out an action that supports another person or people to feel safe and included in their identities.

Often students find it easier to generate ideas that do not fit a criteria, than ones that do fit. This activity supports students to think about their ideas and sort them into categories that they can then use for taking action.

By the end of year 8, students should be able to plan, justify, carry out and evaluate a social action with others.

Ensure students are focusing on an action that promotes social cohesion, that is to enhance connections and solidarity between groups.