

THE MARK

MAGAZINE

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Issue 5

How the verse

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ثُمَّ
إِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ

**Strengthen Muslim
Faith in Qayamah**

**Repentance & seeking
Divine forgiveness
bring rewards**

Present day Challenges for Mothers

**The Advancement in
technology &
Importance of
Parental Control**

**Jihad is necessary for
self-improvement**

**Are Machines
controlling Human
Mind and Activities?**

**Is Artificial Intelligence
a threat to Human
capabilities?**

**This world is only
delusion & nothing else**



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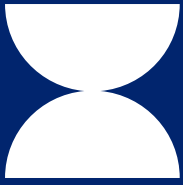
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LETTER FROM OUR EDITOR

Assalam o Alaikum Wa Rehmatullahe Wa Barakatuhu

Dear readers,

As we embark on another enlightening journey through the pages of The Mark magazine's fifth edition, it is with great joy and gratitude that I extend a warm welcome to each one of you. In the spirit of unity and learning, this edition is a testament to the collective efforts of our dedicated students, teachers, and staff who have poured their hearts into creating a tapestry of knowledge, creativity, and inspiration.

Within these pages, you will find a mosaic of thoughts, ideas, and expressions that reflect the essence of our Islamic values. Our aim is not only to impart knowledge but also to instil a deep understanding of the principles that guide our lives. It is a platform to showcase the diverse talents that thrive within our school. May this compilation inspire you to explore, question, and grow in both faith and understanding. In this magazine, readers will find the topic of the current issue of Palestine. As we all can feel the pain of our brothers and sisters from Palestine.

Al-Nu'man ibn Bashir reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "The parable of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each other is that of a body. When any limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever."

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 6011, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2586

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the contributors who have dedicated their time and energy to make this magazine a reality.

May this magazine serve as a source of inspiration, fostering a sense of connection and shared purpose.

Wishing you an enlightening and enjoyable reading experience.
Wassalamu Alaikum,

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF CAMPUS

Assalam o Alaikum Wa Rehmatullahe Wa Barakatuhu

Dear readers,

It's been an immense pleasure for me to announce the third magazine of the Benchmark (Girls Campus) for the session 2023-2024. The contribution of each stakeholder in the magazine has manifested their clear thoughts about life and hereafter discerning the world around them. The seeds that were planted continue to grow reflecting great Tarbiah values & the fruit will be rewarded in the hereafter.

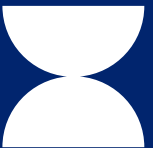
May we all keep growing in a conducive environment, learning Deen and acquiring knowledge of Allah's commandment spending lives as per Allah's will & rectifying oneself each day.

May these young journalists use the power of words to change people's thoughts, minds and hearts with their kind words and reflective approach depicted in their writing.

وَأَخِرُ دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Shabzeen Khan

HEAD OF CAMPUS (GIRLS)



How the verse

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ
ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ

Strengthen Muslim faith in Qayamah

Written by: **Suha Munawwar**

Grade: O-III Fatima Tuz Zohra

When someone asks, “What are you studying for?” “of course, for my exams!” Isn’t that the most common answer to the question we give? Surprisingly, that is such a fallacy! it is, in fact, the results for which we prepare, and not the exams themselves. The phase of preparation itself is a test as that is when we struggle to overcome procrastination. We keep trying to motivate ourselves and scan through reports written by examiners for our guidance. Moreover, we are aware of the deadline for preparing, which is mostly a couple of minutes before the paper. The major phase of emotions then begins and continues till the ‘Result Day’.

If you realize, this entire situation is quite relatable to the reminder given to us by Allah in Surah al Ankabut verse 57. Allah says,

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ

‘Every soul will taste death then, to Us you will (all) be returned.’

This verse acts as a guide by our ultimate examiner. It motivates us to strive to do good as the only currency of the Akhirah is deeds. It reminds us of death,





remembering which cures the weakness of Iman. It rather strengthens Muslims' belief that the day of accountability is yet to come. However, the part to dread is that we are totally unaware of the time destined for us to depart.

Imagine! Allah himself is reminding us through this verse that, life is not guaranteed at all, but death is guaranteed upon all. There are numerous precautions we take in life to avoid things that scare us. Nevertheless, due to our love for this world, our love for money and fame, death seems to be the scariest of all, yet there is no way we can escape it. Once we die, is it the end? We have completed the journey in which we were tested. Then, won't there be a day for results to be announced? This verse reassures us Muslims that indeed that Day will arrive.

We won't be sitting idle in the grave waiting for it. In fact, we will experience the life between death and the Resurrection, the life of Al Barzakh, which

will give us a sneak peek of what we are to face individually on the day of Judgment. Whenever we attend someone's funeral the first thought we must have been, 'One day this will be me.' Before that day comes, let's not waste time running behind this world. Let's stop thinking that owning loads of money and being excessively praised by people is a success. If we forget Allah because of this, Allah will forget us on the Day when we will be begging him for a second chance but it will be too late.



Repentance and seeking Divine forgiveness bring rewards



Written by: **Noorisma Omer**
Grade: VIII Khadija tul Kubra

Repentance holds great significance for the believers. It is the process of turning back to Allah after committing a sin or a mistake and seeking His forgiveness and mercy. Repentance is not only a way of erasing our past wrongdoings, but also a means of improving our present and future actions. It is a source of moral growth and spiritual development that Allah has bestowed upon us as a blessing.

One of the benefits of repentance is that it allows us to acknowledge our faults and errors, and rectify our ways accordingly. Allah has given us the faculty of reason and the privilege of introspection which enables us to examine ourselves and become aware of our flaws and shortcomings. Through self-awareness, we realize the need for repentance and the importance of amending our past transgressions and setting ourselves on a path of virtue. Allah says in Quran

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

“Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves.” (Quran 2:222)

Repentance leads us to a deeper understanding of ourselves and our relationship with Allah.

True repentance goes beyond mere regret or remorse, it requires sincere introspection and a profound comprehension of our actions and deeds. It also requires submission to Allah and recognition of our limitations and weaknesses, for He is the almighty and we are His slaves. True repentance is a humble acknowledgement that we have indeed strayed from the path of virtue and goodness established by Allah, hence we submit ourselves to his guidance and will. Allah says in the Quran,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تَوْبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ
أَن يُكَفِّرَ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُم جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِي اللَّهُ النَّبِيَّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ

“O you who have believed, repent to Allah with sincere repentance. Perhaps your Lord will remove from you your misdeeds and admit you into gardens beneath which rivers flow [on] the Day when Allah will not disgrace the Prophet and those who believed with him (Quran 66:8)

Repentance opens the door of mercy and blessings from Allah. Allah is the most forgiving the most merciful, who accepts repentance of His servants and rewards them generously. He does not hold grudges or punish them for their mistakes, but rather

He pardons them and showers them with His grace. He also elevates their ranks and increases their good deeds, as He says in the Quran:

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ
حَسَنَاتٍ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

**“Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work.
For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And
ever is Allah forgiving and merciful.” (Quran 25:70)**

The process of reflection and transformation through repentance is a remarkable gift from Allah that we should cherish and utilize. Without it, the opportunity for growth and progression ceases, and we become stagnant and complacent in our sins. We should also remember that repentance is only possible in this life, not in the hereafter. The dead are not burdened by the struggles and temptations of the mortal plane, but they are also devoid of the chance to redeem themselves. Therefore, we should seize the opportunity of repentance while we are alive before it is too late. The Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) said:

**“The one who repents sin is like one who did not sin.”
(Ibn Majah)**

Present Day Challenges for Mothers

The Advancement in Technology & Importance of Parental Control

Parenting has never been an easy job but in today's modern world when parents are more career-oriented, they are busy and unable to give quality time to their kids. Parenting has become more challenging than ever.

The daunting task for the parents is to balance their personal life and career. Moreover, technology has made the situation even worse. Due to the negligence of parents, kids are getting addicted to modern technology, mobile phones, tablets and laptops. These have provided access to kids to the content of their choice. Their innocent brains may fall into the trap of unethical content. Besides video games cartoons and other uses of the Internet are time-wasting as well.

Another challenge for parents, especially for mothers, is that we are living in post COVID era. Due to the hybrid education system, parents are compelled to provide gadgets to their kids. So, the role of parental control has become more important that is in the form of Tarbiah.

First of all, parents should give quality time to their kids they should provide alternate activities so that kids can get rid of gadgets. These could include gardening, inculcating healthy reading habits, and taking them to the parks, grounds and swimming pools. These physical activities will surely improve their physical and mental health. Parents can also take them to meet relatives so they would realize the importance of relationships. They could involve them in some charitable work as well.

Written by: **Mother of Jaweria Aman Syed**

Grade: O-I Fatima Tuz Zohra

It is very important to give them religious education like translation of the Holy Quran and Sahih Ahadith. Seerah of the Holy Prophet peace be upon him and the life of Sahaba will play a pivotal role in the process of tarbiyah so that kids would recognize the difference between right and wrong.

Whenever we give them gadgets, we should keep an eye on them and never leave them alone along with gadgets. The early teenage years are the time when kids learn basic moral values from their parents. It is evident from the studies that the failure to mend moral life is the reason kids get involved in unethical activities and develop inappropriate behaviour.

Along with these practical steps, being Muslim parents, we should keep praying for our kids from Allah SWT. A very powerful supplication from the holy Quran is from Sura e Furqan verse: 74

رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

“Our Lord! Make our wives and our children to be the comfort of our eyes, and make us leaders of the righteous.”

To conclude, I must say that there is a need to create an emotional bond between a parent and a kid to meet the challenges created by the advancement of technology. The old idiom is more relevant today that is,

“To feed lavishly and keep an eagle's eye.”



Present Day Challenges for Mothers

The Advancement in technology & Importance of Parental Control

Written by: **Mother of Maryam Murtaza**

Grade: VII Fatima Tuz Zohra

Advancement in science and technology has rapidly changed our way of living in terms of awareness, communication, education, career selection as well as entertainment. Certainly, we can take advantage of the present technology to increase the opportunities for a better life, but we would have to be aware of the upcoming challenges which may affect our lives badly. Especially our children, who have been extremely influenced by modern science and technology in recent years.

Not only adults in the current era but also children are surrounded by Android phones, laptops and the internet. But here it is important for us to understand the needs and limits of this technology, especially for the sake of our children's social, ethical and spiritual lives.

Technology has enabled our children to obtain different educational information but for safety reasons, we should monitor their activities and make sure that they are accessing only the productive content.

We need to set the screen time for our children. Excessive screen time may harm their health, such as their eyesight etc. So, we have to encourage our children to get involved in physical activities and we should try to facilitate them by providing sports themes, both indoors and outdoors.

Most of the children follow the footprint of their parents so we need to become role models for them. We should also avoid spending our time listening to music, watching movies and other useless time-consuming activities on our smartphones in front of our children.

There are online hidden risks that children may encounter such as online harassment, threats, cyberbullying predators and videos which destroy our souls. So, we as responsible parents, may take the help of filtering and blocking the contents which are not suitable for our children. At the same time, we should educate them on the harmful effects of this murky world.

In conclusion, it is an undeniable fact that we're living in an age of science and technology and it has become a crucial part of our daily life but there are both, crystal clear and potential risks in the usage of these digital technologies. So, we have to recognize the need for digital parenting by playing a responsible role.

Setting boundaries, open and healthy communication with our children, spending more time with them in physical activities, teaching them to recognize the harmful effects of the Internet and some positive tips which may help our children to shape their present as well future in a bright way.

Jihad is necessary for Self-Improvement

Written by: **Jaweria Burki**

Grade: VIII Khadija tul Kubra

This essay lights on a term that often sparks curiosity and sometimes, misunderstanding – “jihad.” The word ‘jihad’ has many interpretations, and it is often associated with images of conflict and strife. However, it is important to note that ‘jihad’ compasses a broader and more nuanced spectrum of meaning. Today's discussion will focus on one of these interpretations- “inner jihad”- and explore its role in promoting peace, self-improvement, and personal development.

Our goal is to unravel this concept and to understand how it is not just a call to action but also a path to inner peace and self-betterment. Let us embark on our journey to explore the profound significance of ‘inner jihad’ in the realm of self-improvement and peaceful personal development in an Islamic context.

The meaning of jihad

To comprehend the concept of ‘jihad,’ it’s crucial to grasp its traditional understanding as a struggle. Jihad in Arabic translates to struggle or striving. This struggle, however, can take different forms, both external and internal. External jihad, often portrayed in the media, refers to the physical or military struggle against perceived threats. It has its place in history, primarily as a response to external aggression but it is essential to recognize that this form of jihad is subject to strict rules of engagement



in Islam. It is not a carte blanche for violence, rather it is a defensive measure under specific conditions.

On the other hand, inner jihad is the focus of our discussion today. It is related to the personal and spiritual struggle that occurs within oneself. This inner struggle is all about self-improvement, self-discipline and the pursuit of better character. It is a peaceful journey that aims to conquer one’s inner weakness vices, and shortcomings. While external jihad may involve confrontation, inner jihad seeks self-reflection, growth, and transformation.

By distinguishing between these two forms of jihad. We can better appreciate the peaceful and constructive aspect of inner jihad. Inner jihad is a personal and spiritual struggle within oneself, promoting self-improvement self-discipline and character development it entails the battle against inner weaknesses and the pursuit of higher moral and ethical standards.

The Peaceful aspects of inner jihad are centred on fostering peace, self-control, and harmony within an Individual. This inner struggle encourages individuals



to cultivate inner tranquillity, exercise self-control over their desires and impulses, and ultimately find harmony within themselves which can extend to others to their relationship and interaction with others.

Individuals employ inner jihad to conquer personal challenges such as overcoming negative habits like anger or greed, managing stress, improving patients, and enhancing their moral character.

Engaging in inner jihad propels self-improvement by fostering self-awareness, discipline, and resilience. This, in turn, positively influences one's character leading to better behavior and nurturing healthier relationships with others.

Jihad has indeed been a subject of misunderstanding and controversy. Common misconception includes its association with violence, but it's essential to clarify that inner jihad primarily concerns personal development and peaceful self-improvement, not aggression.

In conclusion, comprehending inner jihad's significance for personal development is pivotal. It offers a path to self-improvement, fostering inner peace, and character enhancement, embarrassing this constructive approach in an Islamic context not only promotes individual growth but also contributes to a more harmonious and peaceful society.





Are Machines controlling the Human Mind and Activities?

Written by: **Emaan Asif**
Grade: O-II Fatima Tuz Zohra

In the age of ever-advancing technology, the question of whether machines are influencing, if not controlling human minds and activities has become increasingly pertinent.

One of the most prominent ways machines can control the human mind is through our smartphones. These devices have become essential in our daily lives, but they also play a significant role in shaping our online experiences. Algorithms also known as the features used by social media platforms and new websites create content that is likely to engage or provoke us. As a result, they often present information, stories or images, that may not be good for our mental health.

In addition to our addictive online experiences, machines also control our physical activities and affect our lifestyle. For example, the rise of smart machines and automation has made it much easier and more convenient to outsource everyday tasks that people would traditionally perform. From robotic vacuum cleaners to smart home systems that

control temperature and lighting, these gadgets encourage no physical activity.

The convenience offered by machines can undoubtedly contribute to human laziness. This is evident in various aspects of modern life. Such as; integrating technology into transportation. For example; self-driving cars might reduce physical efforts. As devices impact our online experience and fitness, they also raise significant privacy concerns; particularly data tracking. For example, cameras have become ubiquitous in public places often for security reasons. This violates individual privacy. The presence of these cameras can lead to a feeling of being constantly watched and monitored.

In conclusion, machines undeniably exert significant influence on the human mind and activities in various ways this balance is essential to ensure that people remain in control of their lives and minds in the era of ever-improving technology.

Is Artificial Intelligence a threat to Human capabilities?

Written by: **Ayesha Amir**
Grade: O-I Fatima Tuz Zohra

Artificial intelligence can be a double-edged sword when it comes to its impact on human capabilities. There is no doubt that it can assist in complex tasks and increase productivity, giving us time to focus on creative and higher-level thinking, but there are concerns as well. AI's ability to outperform humans in a specific task can lead to worries about job displacement and misuse of technology raising issues of trust and privacy.

The threat to human capabilities may appear in the form of replacing their jobs as it owns the potential to automate jobs, involving repetitive rule-based tasks. It can analyze data and generate financial reports, affecting roles in the financial sector. Its system can assist in medical image scrutiny and diagnostics as well, but it certainly doesn't mean that human touch is not needed. It's essential in the development of artificial intelligence itself. Surah al Momen quotes the unique qualities of humans in Surah 23 Ayah 115 as

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ

“Did you think that we had created you in play without any purpose and that you would not be brought back to Us.”

This verse emphasizes the profound purpose and responsibility associated with human creations,

which includes our unique capabilities, moral choices and the accountability of our actions. It underscores the idea that humans have a special role and a higher purpose that distinguishes them from other creations.

Therefore, our focal points should be the tasks which involve complex human interactions, creativity, empathy, and nuanced decisions which may include the creative progressions of artists, writers, and designers. This is because they rely on creativity, imagination, and emotional experience. Another field can be senior caregivers who provide care for elderly people which involves emotional support, companionship and attentiveness to unique individual's needs.

AI can be a threat to human capabilities if they program it to do so. It's significant to use it as per our feasibility to an extent only it may outshine us. The key is to make sure we're responsible for how we develop and use AI. It should complement and support human capabilities, not overshadow them and ensure the essential human elements remain crucial in professions.

This world is only delusion and nothing else

Written by: **Emaan Jabeen**

Grade: VII Fatima tuz Zohra

In a world filled with varying perceptions and beliefs, it becomes imperative to contemplate the essence of our existence. Islam, being a comprehensive religion, sheds light on the true nature of this world and its transient delusions. Through the lens of the Holy Quran, this essay will explore the concept of this world as an illusion, emphasizing its ephemeral nature and guiding individuals towards a higher reality.

The Holy Quran reminds us that the materialistic attractions of this world are temporary, easily fading away as time progresses. Allah states:

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ
وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ

"Know that the life of this world is but amusement, diversion, adornment, boasting to one another, and competition in increase of wealth and children"
(Quran 57:20)

Hence, this world is inherently deceptive, leading individuals astray from the ultimate purpose of their existence.

According to Islamic belief, this world serves as a test, preparing individuals for the eternal hereafter. The Quran states:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ

"We have certainly created man into hardship"
(Quran 90:4)

Life's challenges and trials are meant to purify our souls, ultimately determining our eternal abode. Recognizing the temporary nature of this world helps individuals maintain perspective and focus on their spiritual journey.

Islam teaches believers to detach themselves from worldly distractions and invest in actions that will benefit their hereafter. The Quran asserts:

مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا
أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

"What is with you must vanish: what is with Allah will endure and We will certainly reward the steadfast according to the best of their deeds." (Quran 16:96)

This verse encourages individuals to prioritize the pursuit of eternal virtues and righteousness over accumulating temporary possessions.

The Quran invites individuals to acquire knowledge beyond the realm of material appearances. Allah states: "Say, 'Are those who know equal to those who do not know?' Only they will remember who are people of understanding" (Quran 39:9). This verse encourages individuals to embark on a profound inward reflection, seeking knowledge beyond the deceptive facade of this world.

The concept of this world being a mere delusion and transient phase is central to Islamic teachings. By understanding the true nature of this worldly existence, individuals can successfully navigate life's challenges and focus on the ultimate goal of attaining eternal bliss. The Quran offers profound guidance, reminding individuals to detach from this delusion and dedicate their lives to spiritual enlightenment and connection with the divine. Embracing these teachings can bring true fulfilment and purpose to one's life.



How to abstain oneself from Fitnas

Written by: **Hoorain Abdullah**

Grade: VII Fatima tuz Zohra

One of the supplications of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) was:

"O Allah, set right for me my religious commitment, which is the safeguard of my affairs. Set right for me my worldly affairs in which is my living. Set right for me my Hereafter in which will be my final abode. Make this life a means of increase in all that is good, and make death a relief for me from all evil." (Narrated by Muslim 2720)

We are living in a time of great fitnah. So, we need to seek ways to ensure that we don't fall into such trials. We need to ensure that our faiths and religious commitments are safeguarded so that we prosper and succeed.

Here are a few tips to take to help us preserve and strengthen our faiths.

1. Keep away from corrupted environments. Avoid being in places and around those who will corrupt your religious commitments and morals. Don't mix with evildoers and those who will pressure you into sin. Be around the righteous Muslims who will encourage you to perform good deeds and warn you of the bad.

2. Seek Allah's Help. Make lots of du'a (supplication). Ask Allah to guide you and protect you from every type of fitnah (hidden and apparent).
3. Seek Knowledge and Devote Yourself to the Quran. Keep yourself busy with learning Islamic knowledge from trustworthy sources and scholars. Keep yourself busy with reading, memorizing and studying the Quran.
4. Adhere to the Quran and Sunnah. As much as you can, commit yourself to performing obligatory acts of worship and refrain from that which Allah has prohibited you from. Hold strong to your prayers while fulfilling its necessary conditions with the proper concentration and humility.
5. One of the greatest means by which a Muslim may ward off trials and confusion about his religious commitment is Islamic knowledge. Therefore, the ignorant person is more prone to drifting away from the right path of Islam. Muslims should learn Islamic knowledge consult trustworthy scholars and find gathering of Ulama so that he can gain proper knowledge of Islam.

that are righteous in Allah's eyes. In hadith, it is beautifully emphasized the importance of surrounding oneself with virtuous companions. Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him said:

"A person is likely to follow the faith of his friend, so look whom you befriend." (Abu Dawood)

This hadith stresses that our friends can greatly influence our beliefs and actions. Therefore, associating with those who encourage the righteous way of life following Allah's guidance is essential for spiritual growth.

A true friend helps you to stay away from bad influences and supports you in doing good deeds. If you ever feel tempted to do something wrong, they will remind you of Allah's teaching and steer you back onto the right path. They also help you to learn from your mistakes, always reminding you that Allah is merciful and forgive us when we sincerely repent.

True friend is the one who helps you to spend your life as Allah wants

Written by: **Arwa Ahmer**

Grade: VI Fast-Track

A true friend is someone who supports and encourages you to live your life per the principles and teachings of Allah. They help you stay on the right path, and remind you of your duties and responsibilities as a believer. They are loyal, and supportive and encourage you to make choices

The power of positive thinking and its impact on Success

Written by: **Marium Ahsan (late)**

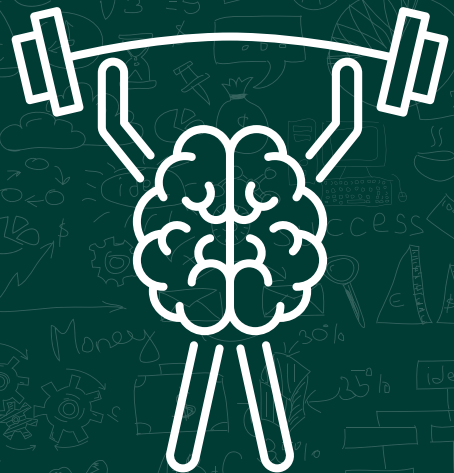
Grade: VI Fast-Track

Positive thinking refers to the practice of focusing on good and being optimistic in any situation because it is a powerful force that can significantly impact success in various aspects of life. When individuals with a positive mindset, tend to approach challenges and resilience with optimism allowing them to overcome the obstacles more effectively.

People are unhappy because of over and negative thinking. If we think positively, we will have stress stress-free life which ultimately affects our behaviors and attitudes. Mind with positive thinking encourages, creative problem-solving and enhances

self-confidence. Positive thinkers are often more motivated and persistent making them more likely to achieve their goals.

In essence, the power of positive thinking can be a key driver of success, helping individuals to navigate their journeys with greater enthusiasm and determination.





We, social media and being a Muslim our role

Written by: **Areeba Fatima**

Grade: VI Fast Track

Social media has completely changed interactions among humans. Now people mostly communicate, connect and share information through social media. Social media has become a powerful tool for meeting and greeting during festivals. The current era therefore also known as the age of digitalization. Social media gives us the liberty to talk about what we know and what we want to be known for.

Social media on the one hand brings revolutions in humans across the globe, can share our expertise, educate ourselves and get the solution of many problems in no time. On the other hand, unrestricted and unlimited use of social media has devastating effects on the lives of Muslim teens. It is therefore essential to understand the challenges Muslim teens are facing while using social media.

1. The challenge of conforming to non-Islamic standards: Muslim teens often face the pressure of conforming to non-Islamic standards while using social media. As a Muslim however, it is our duty to always strive to maintain our identity. Our beloved prophet Hazrat Muhammad (P.B.U.H) said, "Whoever seeks to be like the people of other than his faith, he becomes one of them." (Sunan-Abu Dawood 4031)

2. Inappropriate content: The presence of inappropriate content that conflicts with Islamic values is another challenge for Muslim teens. It is therefore essential that the use of social media be monitored by the parents. Our beloved Prophet (P.B.U.H) said, "A good friend and a bad friend are a perfume seller and a blacksmith. You might get perfume as a gift or its fragrance as for the blacksmith, he might singe your cloth."

3. Authenticity of content: This is another big concern for social media users. Getting into personal life without permission is another major challenge, that Islam forbids us to do so. This could be a picture sharing or sending a message. In the Holy Quran, Allah the Almighty says, "Oh you who have believed, do not enter houses other than your own houses." (Quran 24.27)

4. Negativity, hate speech and cyberbullying: Social media can also be a breeding ground for negativity. As Muslims, we are commanded to be kind and respectful towards others. Social media has become a powerful tool that can impact Muslim teens. Parents and teachers play a vital role in guiding children towards using social media in a way that aligns with Islamic values. May Allah guide us all towards the right path and protect us from the negative effects of social media. Ameen.

Importance of education in the light of Deen

Written by: **Rimsha Khawar**

Grade: V Fatima tuz Zohra



Education is exploring the unknown, discovering new ideas, and communicating with the world around us. It is finding own self, recognizing human needs and communicating that recognition to others. Moreover, it is an effective instrument for bringing about changes in a man, a society and people to the direction determined by a state's authority.

To acquire knowledge by human beings is predominantly addressed in Islam. Islam has its distinct attitude towards education. It is the instrument by which people can be trained in the Islamic way of life. Islam teaches every aspect of human life which is essentially important for the daily life of a person.

Education in Islam has been emphasized repeatedly in the Quran, the ultimate source of guidance for Muslims. The first revelation on the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) at the cave of Hira demonstrates the importance of education in Islam, the verse began with the word "Iqra", which means "read" in Arabic, which implies the concept of learning and seeking knowledge.

The Quran says,

هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

"Are those who have knowledge equal to those who do not have knowledge?" (39:9)

The Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) has also emphasized the importance of seeking knowledge in different ways:

"Seeking of knowledge is a duty of every Muslim."

"Wisdom is the lost property of the believer, he should take it even if finds it in the mouth of a Mushrik."

Allah says in the Quran,

"He grants wisdom to whom He pleases; and he to whom wisdom is granted indeed receives a benefit overflowing; but none will grasp the Message but people of understanding." (Surah al Baqarah:269)

This verse highlights that wisdom and understanding come from Allah and those who receive it are recipients of a great benefit. It reinforces the idea that true understanding of the Quran comes to those who actively seek it.

Knowledge provides advancement in life. When a person is self-aware, he begins to understand his purpose. He understands that the world is not just about life and death. Thus, he tries to live according to the principles of Islam. He keeps good behaviour, respects others and shows kindness to others. Islam is a disciplined code of life. In Islam, there is equality, tranquillity, generosity, love and friendship. Everything is from Islamic moral values. Islam encourages the acquisition of knowledge and its use for the benefit of humanity. Education should take guidance from religion for the achievement of the ultimate goal of human beings which is Allah's satisfaction.

So, education in Islam is a comprehensive matter, which brings about harmonious development of the mind, body and soul. Because the focus of education in Islam is both on morals as well as on knowledge and wisdom. Morality purifies the human mind and creates the relationship between the mind and body.

Palestine & the Role of Muslim Ummah

Written by: **Jaweria Aman**
Grade: O-1 Fatima tuz Zohra

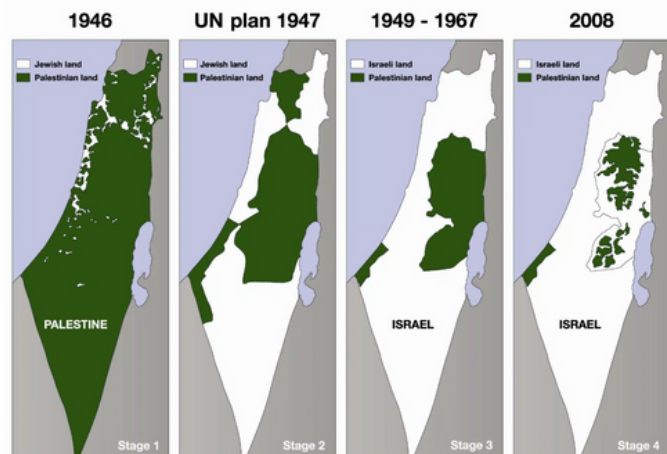
The Palestine-Israel issues are deep-rooted and have been going on for years. To have an unbiased opinion about this conflict we are to know the history of both sides. The origin of the Jews can be traced back many years ago when they were run out of the Roman empire due to their planned persecutions. Moving on to the rule of the Ottoman Empire, the Jews were the majority in Jerusalem. Moving forward, in 1897, Theodore Herzl went against the Zionist Ideology and proposed the idea of a separate Jewish state. After the Holocaust of WW2, the Jews immigrated to Palestine as refugees and from that day started their evil and insidious plan of taking over the land solely owned by Palestinians. The Israel-Palestine conflict, which began in 1947 with the UN proposing a partition plan for Palestine, has been a contentious issue since then. The 1948 Arab-Israeli War led to Israel expanding beyond UN borders, causing a Palestinian refugee crisis. The 1967 Six-Day War further complicated the situation. The 1978 Camp David Accords recognized Israel, while the 1987 intifada and 1993 Oslo Accords aimed for peace. The ongoing conflict, including the 2021 Gaza conflict, has led to civilian casualties. The conflict remains complex and historical.

One can go on and on about the various points of view of different regions and states on this conflict, however, the main topic of discussion and understanding should be what the Muslim community has done for the Palestinians who are suffering at every passing second.



Israel has been on a mission to take over Palestine for many years, and when this began, the Arabs were already against them. When Hamas stood against the Israeli forces the situation worsened and it was high time for the Muslim world to respond to the barbaric Israeli policies.

Many Muslim-majority countries, including Iran, Turkey, and Qatar, have been vocal supporters of the Palestinian cause. They often condemn Israeli actions and advocate for the recognition of Palestinian statehood on international platforms. Countries like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have provided financial aid to



Palestinians to address economic challenges resulting from the conflict. Organizations like the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) receive contributions from multiple countries, including those with significant Muslim populations.

Muslim communities globally participate in grassroots movements and activism. These efforts involve individuals, scholars, and organizations advocating for justice through protests, rallies and social media campaigns. Countries such as Iran have been accused of providing support to groups like Hamas. Egypt came forward as a Muslim ally. Cairo has aimed to balance its support for the people of Gaza with the security concerns of allowing a large number of Gaza residents to enter Egypt. Following the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel, Egypt also facilitated the departure of foreign nationals from Ghaza through that border posts after a period of delay and uncertainty. The quantity of humanitarian aid entering Gaza gives Egypt a significant position in the negotiations, particularly regarding the issue of hostages. In regards to our own country supporting, Ghaza, there was and still is a massive boycott against his regular businesses.

There are many organizations which are collecting funds for Palestinian aid, and the government too declared itself as anti-Israel a lost time ago.

The Jewish and Israeli supporters are spread worldwide and many Arab countries, even the home to all Muslims, Saudi Arabia, are well under Jewish powers. The present rulers are too busy in their lavish lifestyles to care about the gut-wrenching situation of Palestinian Muslims. Instead of lifting a finger to stop the genocide in Gaza, especially Saudi Arabia, has been fixated on boosting its tourism, hosting concerts and opening the forest liquor store in the country. Even when the Quran calls it directly, why won't you go help your Muslim people when they cry out for your help in our oppressed? Sadly, the Muslims had ignored this saying of Allah (SWT). We as Ummah have failed to save the innocent children of Gaza in the whole of Palestine.

We can however try to take action, even beginning from our homes. Boycotting and hating on the Israelis might not appear very fruitful but it sure is a jihad. The Islamic system is a powerful force that can remove the Zionist system. To become powerful, we must study and implement the Islamic order in our homes. To achieve financial gain, it is essential to leave Ribba and be a good listener. Having political gain and acquiring mental and moral capabilities is also crucial. The next decade's goal is to work on ourselves and the coming generation, focusing on politics to bring the system of Islam over all worldly constitutions. Allah helps only Islam and does not condone favouritism. To bring change, Muslims should raise their ambitions and intellect, not be hopeless, and seek help from Allah. This is because we can be weak or helpless, but Allah is not!.....



Palestine Bleeds while Muslim Ummah Sleeps

Written by: **Misha Alam**
Grade: O-1 Fatima tuz Zohra

On 7th October 2023, the genocide that Palestine has been facing for 75 years marked its brutality when Israel launched air strikes on Gaza, killing thousands of Palestinians including men, women, ageing people and innocent children. Israel has gone to the extent that they are raining down white phosphorus gas, which burns humans and infrastructure and is globally banned, on Gaza. But where did this suffering mark its origin??

It started when the Jewish PM declared the establishment of the state of Israel and this sparked a war in 1949 which caused the Arab refugee crisis. Then in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Israel captured the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the old city of Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. Next, in 1978, a peace treaty called the 'Camp David Accords' ended with a disgusting result i.e. Egypt recognized the state of Israel. Afterwards, in 2020, the peace agreement between Israel, UAE, and Bahrain led to another upsetting result i.e. Israel established formal relations with these Arab states. Subsequently, 2022 and 2023 saw continued violence which extends till today.

The severe and cruel ruthlessness resulted in various human tragedies like a father having to carry his children's remains in a bag, people desperately crying searching for their loved ones under the



rubble, a surgeon had to perform an amputation on his child without anaesthesia and the excruciating pain killed the child, a family in North Gaza had to eat a donkey due to the extreme starvation, 10,000 children lost their lives, 3 out of 5 people are those who have a missing leg or arm, some daughters saw their father burning in the blazing flame in front of them. This is not even a quarter of what people went through. Even after these inhuman sufferings, Palestinians are still regarded as 'terrorists'. Videos of Israeli hostages being released look like people finishing their vacations and saying goodbye to the resort staff. They are smiling, laughing, hugging, blowing kisses and waving goodbye to their captives. Multiple Israeli hostages have been interviewed and said that they were treated with kindness and respect while being well-fed. Meanwhile, Palestinian hostages, mostly kids and women, come back with burn marks, broken bones and permanent mental anguish. Who are the real terrorists here??!!

Now the real question is what efforts did the Muslim countries put in to alleviate the sufferings of the Palestinian people...?? Close to nothing. For example, Saudia Arabia always stood out as the 'role model' for all other Muslim countries but now, instead of lifting a finger to stop the genocide in Gaza, Saudia Arabia has been financed to boost its tourism, organizing and hosting concerts and opening the first liquor store in the country. On one hand, the current Arab prince declared that Saudia Arabia wouldn't destroy its relations with Israel for the sake of Gaza, while on the other hand in 1973, King Faisal cut all oil supplies to the West because they supported Israel. When the US government threatened to bomb their oil fields, this was King Faisal's reply, "You are the one who can't live without oil. You know, we come from the desert and our ancestors lived on dates and milk. We can easily go back and live like that again." Seeing the deteriorating Muslim dominance and their ignorant behaviour, Golda Meir, an Ex-Israeli PM remarked,



When we attacked the Muslims (Palestinians) we didn't sleep that night because we were worried that Muslim countries would strike us back (due to anger). What we didn't realize is that Muslim countries have already slept before us.

Muslim countries should increase their support by providing financial assistance, food, medical, supplies and other essential resources to relieve the sufferings of the Palestinian people. They should raise awareness around the world about the plight of the Palestinians by utilizing social media, organizing events and participating in protests. Moreover, they should strengthen their cooperation and solidarity with each other to collectively support Palestine. Lastly, Muslims and Muslim countries should engage in active boycott and removal campaigns targeting companies and products that support or benefit from the Israeli occupation. This can put economic pressure on Israel and send a strong message of unity to the Palestinian people.

History will write that Egypt had the Nile River and Gaza died of thirst....

History will write that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates had oil seas, while Gaza had no fuel for an ambulance.....

History will write that Arabs had 4 million soldiers and they could not get even a single bullet into Gaza.....

History will write that Saudia Arabia paid billions of dollars for entertainment and parties, but there was no bread or water in Gaza.....

History will write that Pakistan was made in the name of Islam and had nuclear power, but did nothing to help its brother in Gaza.....

Eventually, there will be accountability for staying silent.



Excursion to Winterland

Written by: **Soha Munawwar**

Grade: O-III Fatima tuz Zohra

To: The Benchmark Family

From: Suha Munawar

Date: 3rd January 2024

Subject: The Excursion 2022 – Trip to Winterland

In the shortest month of the year came the most incredible news of the session. Our teachers handed over circulars to us that unleashed details regarding our trip to Winterland. Everyone was over the moon, exchanging plans with each other. It was tremendously difficult for students to divert their minds from the thoughts about the trip that kept popping up. Well, finally, the most awaited day had arrived.

All students were gathered at the school grounds where we started the day by listening to the breathtaking recitation of the Holy Quran. Following that, two respectable teachers gave us fine guidelines about the discipline we were expected to maintain and the rules to be implemented throughout the journey. Full of beans, we boarded the coasters and recited the supplications for travelling.

On arriving at the destination, we made queues to get the tickets. It was then time to dress in layers. Special jackets and gloves were given to us which were good enough to help us survive the mind-boggling controlled temperature of -10 degrees Celsius. While grades 4 till 6 waited on the second floor at the cafe, grades 8 till O-III were given an hour to enjoy the activities inside. As the doors opened, it seemed that we were to experience life in a freezer.

There was a profusion of activities to be immersed in. These included the Infinity Slide, Tunnel Slide, Merry Snow Round, Ice Cycling and much more. Everyone took turns to experience all the exhilarating rides. At last, when we swapped positions with the juniors at the café, each of us received a scrumptious meal from a restaurant. It comprised of crispy chicken zinger, a pocket of French fries and a bottle of chilled soft drink. We certainly had a whale of a time that day! We extend our gratitude to The Benchmark for granting us the opportunity to make unforgettable memories at Pakistan's first and biggest ice park.



Annual Function 2022

Written by: **Fareah Qazi**
Grade: O-III Fatima tuz Zohra

To: The Benchmark Family
From: Fareah Qazi
Date: 3rd January 2024

Subject: Annual Function 2022

On 18th December 2022, our school community came together under a single roof to commemorate the year 2022 filled with achievements, growth and a spirit of goodwill among the students.

When we first entered the 'Sham e Mehran Hall', we could feel the air buzzing with excitement. All the participants were wandering about the backstage, many holding their scripts or lines in their hands. Some were with their friends, getting ready for their roles.

At 8:30 am some mothers started arriving as well as the chief guest. our Associate Director, Ma'am Hira Ghazanfar. There was a bit of chaos backstage as there were many participants and the function was about to start. At exactly 9:00 am, the event started with Hadia Usmani, the Head Girl of the Students' Council, known as The Benchmark, welcoming all the parents, guests and teachers. Then, as done in most Muslim gatherings, we marked the start of the proceedings with a beautiful and mesmerizing recitation of a few verses of the Holy Quran and their translation. This was followed by a thrilling Welcome Nasheed (song) where small girls of Grade 3, 4 and 5 Hifz, dressed in beautiful maxis went on stage and presented the Nasheed. There were three Nasheed performances, one each in English, Urdu and Arabic. All three were presented

extraordinarily well, where little girls looked like little butterflies on the stage exhibiting their actions according to the lyrics.

Moving ahead, there were three skits in which the girls of the secondary level portrayed the problems of our society and gave crucial advice in a very entertaining way. They were all dressed up and delivered their dialogues with great style. Then, there were Arabic, English and Urdu speeches along with a Dars in Urdu which was rendered by a student from Grade O-I. These girls had gone to the limits trying to refine their speeches to be fluent and impactful. On the final day, they were the stars of the whole function! The speech of the Associate Director, Ma'am Hira Ghazanfar was also an impressive event in which she addressed the mothers attending the event speaking a few golden words to them.

The girls of O-I also did a talk show on an important topic, as they put forward the intensity of it and then provided an achievable solution. Lastly, the Shield Distribution Ceremony took place. The Student of The Month, Student of the Year, and Hafiza of The Month shields were awarded to respective students. Then, the House Shield Distribution ceremony was carried out and House Trophies were given to captains and deputies in six categories.

At Last, the School Representative thanked all of the guests for joining the event and making this Annual Function enjoyable and memorable. The mothers also appreciated the efforts of the pupils and congratulated them as another Annual Function ended on a positive note...

Unslept Nights shaping into the most delightful Achievement!

Written by: **Hafsa Iqbal**
Grade: O-II Fatima Tuz Zohra



The month of April 2023, was the first time our batch appeared for the CAIE examination. It was the fourth day of Eid. An unfamiliar feeling trapped me, I was surrounded by blank feeling. Part of me wanted to celebrate, but it was bound with tension. I felt extremely overwhelmed during the whole month of Ramadan as exams became a considerable source of anxiety. It was quite tough to cope with the hectic revision season during the month of Ramadan.

The silence in the examination hall shrieked with students' anxiety. My heart nearly stopped when I came across an unexpected question I never thought of. For a moment I felt my soul next to me, but I pulled myself together with a hopeless sinking feeling, turned the next page and continued to write with the least determination. Every exam day created the same feeling differently; entering the exam hall with a racing heart and writing with trembling hands.

Soon after, the three-month gap between the exam and the result day passed in the blink of an eye. Anticipation was written on everyone's faces; ----- and hope blended and created a multi-feeling atmosphere.

Finally, our result statements were handed over to us, and I received mine. My eyes popped out of the sockets as I couldn't believe that I was able to achieve straight As*. With a palpitating heart and sweaty palms, I was stunned at my result and all I could say was Alhamdulillah. I witnessed the acceptance of my prayers and realized that my unslept nights had given me good compensation. The all-mixed feelings stored in my heart turned into gratitude.

Conclusively, having trust in Allah SWT and blessing yourself are the keys to achieving anything.

HIGH ACHIEVERS! BATCH 2023

AQDAS	5 A*	BIO A*, CHEM A*, MATHS A*, PHY A*, AD. MATHS A*
RUMAISA AHMER	1 A*, 4 AS	BIO A, CHEM A, MATHS A, PHY A, ENG A*
NABIHA ARIF	1 A*, 3AS	BIO A*, CHEM A, MATHS A, PHY A
HADIA USMANI	4 A*	BIO A*, CHEM A*, MATHS A*, PHY A*
TAIBA SIDDIQUI	1 A*, 3AS	BIO A*, CHEM A, MATHS A, PHY A
MINAAM KHALID	3 A*	CHEM A*, PHY A*, MATHS A*
SARAH IMRAN	1 A*, 2 AS	MATHS A* CHEM A, PHY A
WANIA MUDDASIR	2 A*, 1 A	PHY A*, CHEM A*, MATHS A
MINAAM KHALID	3 A*	CHEM A*, PHY A*, MATHS A*
HAUSA IQBAL	3 A*	URDU A*, ISL A*, PST A*
FATIMA ALEEM	2 A*, 1 A	URDU A, ISL A*, PST A*
MISBAH FURQAN	3 AS	URDU A, ISL A, PST A
AMNA SAQIB FAROOQI	1 A*, 2AS	URDU A*, ISL A, PST A
MISHAAL HARIS	2A*, 1 A	URDU A*, ISL A*, PST A
FAREAH QAZI	1 A*, 1 A	COM A*, ENG A
AMINA BINTE UMAIR	1 A*, 1 A	URDU A*, PST A
HANIA HASAN	2 AS	BIO A, CHEM A
HAUSA DANISH	1 A*, 1 A	ISL A*, PST A
FARWA SALEHA SIDDIQUI	2 AS	BIO A, CHEM A
MIRHA ATIF	1A	PST A
NAWAL SIDDIQUI	2AS	BIO A, CHEM A
WARDA SHAHZAD	2AS	BIO A, CHEM A
SEEMAL ARSALAN	1 - A	URDU A
REHAB SIDDIQUI	1 - A	URDU A
MARYAM RASHID	1 - A	URDU A
SYEDA MALIHA AFZAAL	1 - A	URDU A
AYMA REHMAN	1 - A	ISLAM A
SAFIYA FAYEZ	1 - A	URDU A

100%
RESULT

92% A* & A GRADES



57% GIRLS ACHIEVED
STRAIGHT A* AND A



My Story of Observing Hijab



Story by **Arwa Faizan Chhapra**

(Grade: VIII Fatima Tuz Zohra)

The beauty of Islam is that it changes every person's personality. Islam teaches every man, woman and child the best learning related to modesty. It teaches women to cover themselves in public places, to cover their hair and body parts. Many people convert to Islam by reading and learning about it and some are born Muslims but they do not follow it truly, some have reverted to the faith and the same is my story to subjugate my will to Allah Almighty.

I used to be a social child, who was very involved in social media like Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, etc, as my grandparents used to use these frequently. Though, my parents were towards Islam but I was not very close to them. Instead, I always found refuge and fun in my grandparents, colourful and exciting company. My mother has always been a veil observer, ever since I was her. Once I asked her, 'Don't you feel suffocated wearing hijab?' By listening to her answer, my life took a 360-degree

turn. She told me that every woman should wear a hijab to maintain privacy from non-mahram and to express faith and modesty. The hijab is a sign of chastity, belief and obedience to Allah and the most important thing is that it's Allah's order. One woman with a veil is a million times better than those who are not covered well. From that day I started to wear a hijab.

I was demotivated at first by my grandparents but when I felt the signs of Allah and happiness in my life, I stood firm. Before that, I had everything like grandparents' love, money, status, fashion and fame but the thing I did not have was peace in my heart and now I am very grateful and thankful to Allah that I have become able to differentiate between right and wrong and have chosen the correct way for me.

So, in conclusion, when Allah can turn me from wrong to right then why Allah cannot gift any other person with hidayah, May Allah guide us all and make me and my other Islamic sisters to be consistent on His path. Ameen!



Story by **Hadiya Noreen**

(Grade: VIII Fatima Tuz Zohra)

Modesty is a virtue deeply rooted in many cultures and religions around the world. It is often associated with humility, decency and a sense of propriety. One of the most significant and visible symbols of modesty is the veil. It carries great importance in the life of Muslim women, to them wearing a veil is a religious obligation as outlined in the Quran. Contrary to common misconceptions, many Muslim women choose to wear the veil as an expression of their agency and personal choice.

As a little girl, I always wondered why some women wear the veil and some don't. My eyes always roam around when I am in the mall, in the park, or any other public place, wondering the same thing. While talking to my mom I, out of curiosity, asked her. She explained to me that the veil or hijab was a personal choice for many women. It was a way to express their faith and to maintain their modesty. She told me that it's like a shield that protects our

inner beauty and keep us focused on our character rather than our appearances. Her reply satisfied me for a while but it wasn't enough, so I continued asking, some said that it was a symbol of devotion to God and a way to uphold modesty, but some said it was a personal choice, some said it was a source of security, but some said it was depending on a women's faith. From then I knew I wouldn't get a proper answer ever but talking with my mom I got to know women feel safe and secure in it. When I grew up a little, I adored hijab and veil and grew fond of it so, I wore a hijab and veil and headed out. As I went out, I had a strange feeling of security and I felt that I was free. No eyes were staring or judging me. This gave me extraordinary happiness and I felt splendid. I walked through the streets, malls and parks, confidently.

Wherever I went everyone lowered their gazes in respect and it was very overwhelming and I felt modest. That's why women say "My veil my modesty"

Story by **Rumela Chhapra**

(Grade: VII Khadija tul Kubra)

I was a pampered child but I knew that I could do it. At the age of 10, I started observing the Hijab. I asked my mom why the Hijab is important for women in Islam. In answer to this question, my mom took me to the mart and bought two chocolates. First, she took the chocolate out of the wrapper and threw it on the floor. After that, she threw another chocolate with the wrapper on the floor and said to observe it for 30 minutes. I observed it and saw that flies and ants were attracted towards that chocolate which was unwrapped.

I told my mother; she said the woman with the veil

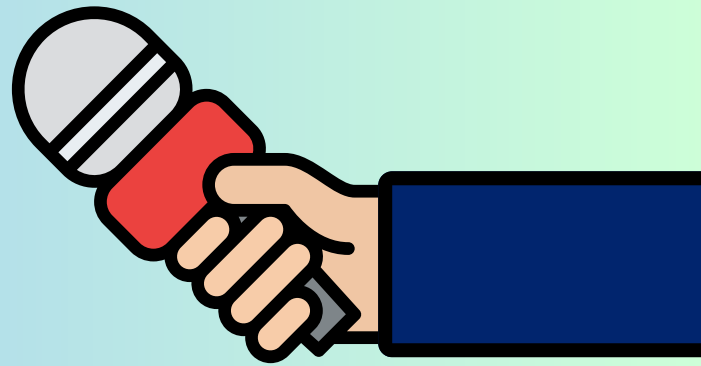
is an example of chocolate with wrappers. It means fitnas and wrong things can not harm us. That was the day I decided that I would start veil. After some time I told my mother to go to the Abaya shop. I wanted to buy something from there. She took me there and I bought a beautiful baby pink Abaya with a matching hijab and niqab. At that time my mother was shocked, and amazed and got her dewy-eyed watery. I hugged her and told her that I wanted to start Veil.

She was very contented and encouraged me. She celebrated this day by distributing Hijabs among other girls. I wish I could help each and every girl who is not on the right path. May Allah be with us and help us to differentiate between right and wrong things. Ameen!

My Journey At The Benchmark – Fareah Qazi

By: Amna Saqib

Grade: O-II Fatima tuz Zohra



Assalam o Alaikum Wr Wb! School plays a vital role in students' lives, shaping their academic and personal development, and it can be called our second home. Today, I am with the Head of the Students' Council, of The Benchmark School, Fareah Qazi, who will be sharing her experience, thoughts and life at The Benchmark.

Q1: Can you tell me a little bit about your earliest memories of starting school here? What was it like for you as a young student?

Walaikum Assalam WrWb, So, I started this school in grade 5 and the earliest memories were the foundation classes I took with four other students which included Nazra Classes as well. I had completed the Quran and it was a trend then, that the student distributed the sweets to all the students and teachers I also did that so it was a very cute practice and made

Q2: How would you describe your overall experience at The Benchmark? Did you face any difficulties when you enrolled here?

It was pretty good. My wonderful colleagues, teachers, activities and Islamic environment made the journey very enjoyable along with studies and learning. The environment has always been inclusive and friendly which helped me through the first few years and solved any problem I faced.

Q3: Were there any memorable moments and challenges that stood out for you all through your journey at The Benchmark?

Our yearly competitions like the speech and spelling bee competitions were one of the first challenges that I faced because I had never participated in something that required confidence and energy and then as I progressed, they became relatively easier. Another challenge was the O Level exams in Grades O-I which needed consistency in studies and exam concentrations. Nevertheless, there were many memorable moments which will always remain with me.

Q4: Which qualities of yours have brought you this substantial position as the School Representative?

I believe that a person should have a to be responsible, confident and contain leadership qualities to be a good representative. Some of these qualities also led me to this position along with the academic and extra-curricular records.

Q5: Do you think The Benchmark is different from other schools? If so, tell us a few things which make The Benchmark stand out among the other schools.

Yes. The Benchmark has a true Islamic environment which helps the students to stick to Islamic rulings and Principles. The Benchmark has the perfect balance of the studies which help in this world and the hereafter.



Q6: Which skills do you think a student studying O Levels should possess to be successful, according to your experience?

Success in O-level exams can only be achieved once the student is hard-working and takes her studies seriously. If a student understands the concepts and practices consistently, O Level exams will no longer be a nightmare.

Q7: As the years progressed, how did your goals and aspirations evolve? Did certain teachers or events inspire specific interests or career paths for your future?

Yes. I was inspired by different projects made by the senior classes and many teachers helped me choose a path when I was confused and sparked my interest in some subjects like Math and computer. My teacher also put forward options for my career paths and helped me a lot throughout the years.

Q8: Looking back at your entire journey as a student, how did The Benchmark play a part in teaching specific lessons and knowledge about Islam; that you believe would be particularly valuable in your future endeavors?

The Benchmark has a subject Mutalla e Quran in which we study the translation of the Quran and it is started from a very young age. This has helped me understand certain principles regarding the different aspects of life in Islam for example marriage, business dealings and inheritance. In addition to that, The Benchmark also has a Quranic Arabic subject which was taught in grades VI and VII. This helped me a lot in understanding the Quran in Arabic.

Q9: Were there any events, traditions, or extra-curricular activities that you found particularly enjoyable and meaningful?

Our school organizes a science exhibition every year which includes science and art projects from grades IV to O-III. It is very enjoyable as the masterpieces are displayed for parents. This event increases student's knowledge and gives them time to enjoy while making their project.

Q10: How would you describe the overall culture and atmosphere of The Benchmark? Were there any specific values or principles promoted that resonated with you?

Benchmark sticks to Islamic values and the rules and atmosphere portray an environment in which no Western ideologies or methods are implemented. From the style of uniform to the studies and functions, Alhamdulillah The Benchmark has kept everything within the limits of Islam. A thing which went parallel to me was that I was only comfortable in separated-gender schools and the Benchmark has that.

Q11: How did the teacher-student relationship at The Benchmark contribute to endeavours in your overall experience?

Teachers over here are very helpful and so any problems I faced, I shared them with my teachers and then advice have helped me immensely along the way.....

Q12: You will be graduating this year. What are a few last words you would like to say to those who will be filling your position next year?

When you are in the highest grade, you have to be the Benchmark and set standards for those who follow. So, my advice would be that feel the responsibilities which are on your shoulders and be the best that you can be, doing your best to be a perfect example for others

I Wonder When I Look at the Sky

Written by: **Raima Siddique**

Grade: IV-Fatima tuz Zohra

**When I see the blue sky
I feel it is beautiful and bright
The shining sun in the day
And sparking stars at night**

**I enjoy the chirping of birds at dawn
When they sing thankful songs
And the colorful patterns seen at dusk
And amazing view to see all along**

**When I look at the beauty of nature
I ask myself, who is creator?
Who made the system of day and night?
There must be someone, with great power and might**

**Allah is the one, no doubt
Who is felt in everything around
Rains, Stars, Moon or Sun,
He made everything and everyone**



My Father

**I love my father because you are my father.
But you are really much more.**

**You pay attention to me,
You listen to what I say.
You pass on words of wisdom,
Helping me along the way.**

**Whenever I am in trouble,
You always are the perfect father,
And I am your biggest fan.**

*Written by: Maryam Rehman
Grade: IV-Fatima Tuz Zohra*

My Father

**In a world of hues, my dad stands tall,
A guiding star, my confident through all.
With hands that cradle dreams so strong,
His love, a melody, in life's sweet song.**

**From bedtime tales to scrapped knee care,
Dad's warmth, a blanket beyond care,
In every triumph, he finds his pride
A hero in my heart, walking by my side.**

**A tribute to the one who lifts every curse.
His laughter, a rhythm pure and free.
A beacon of love, for all to see
I love my dad!**

*Written by: Saman Hussain
Grade: IV-Fatima Tuz Zohra*



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