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MAGAZINE

2024-2025 | 6th Edition



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Jannah!

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LETTER FROM OUR **EDITOR**

Assalam o Alaikum Wa Rehmatullahe Wa Barakatuhu

Dear readers,

It is with great honor and responsibility that we present the 6th edition of our school magazine “The Mark”. Alhamdulillah, this platform allows us to reflect on the beauty of our Deen, celebrate our students’ accomplishments, and nurture the bonds that unite our society.

As we compile this issue, we are reminded of the importance of standing for justice and compassion, values deeply rooted in Islam. The ongoing plight of our brothers and sisters in Palestine weighs heavily on our hearts. Their steadfastness in the face of immense hardship is a testament to their unshakable faith and resilience. As we witness their struggle, let us remember the Quranic injunction to always support the oppressed and work for peace and justice.

Our responsibility extends beyond dua (supplication), though that remains a powerful tool. Let us educate ourselves and our children about the historical and spiritual significance of Palestine, and engage in meaningful actions—whether through raising awareness, charitable efforts, or advocating for their rights in lawful and constructive ways.

This edition of the magazine reflects the theme of unity, knowledge, and hope. You will find thought-provoking articles, creative expressions by our talented students, and reminders of how we can align our lives with the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah.

We pray this magazine not only inspires but also strengthens our resolve to contribute positively to the Ummah and the wider world. May Allah grant us the ability to be a source of benefit and guidance, and may He bring peace and justice to Palestine and all oppressed communities.

Jazakum Allahu Khairan for your continued support.
Wassalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah,



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

MESSAGE FROM **HEAD** OF CAMPUS

Assalam o Alaikum Wa Rehmatullahe Wa Barakatuhu

I am delighted to introduce another edition of “The Mark Magazine” for the Session 2024-2025, Alhamdulillah!

We are profoundly devoted to the core values of The Benchmark which is ‘Tarbiah’ along with the Academics & other activities. We intensely try to integrate the same values in our curriculum to prepare these young minds today & the future leaders tomorrow by providing valuable learning experience for our students. Helping students to prepare themselves as per Allah’s will & assume this world a temporary destination to stay. Our pursuit of excellence embraces Islamic values aligned with the mental and physical development of the child.

Being an integral stakeholder of the school, I feel there is a great responsibility on our shoulder to shape these young minds and so they could prepare themselves for the eternal world.

In the Magazine, you will find thoughtful analysis, perspective, stories of achievement, perseverance, and dedication from our students. The Benchmark’s success in providing exceptional Islamic education is a testament to the dedication and perseverance of our students, teachers, and staff.

May Allah Bless these young students with Faith, righteous deed, advising each other for Truth; and advising each other for patience. This is the only path to salvation in this world, as well as in the next world as endorsed in Quran verses 103:1 to 103:3.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our parents, teachers, and students for their ongoing support and cooperation. May Allah reward you all for your efforts.

Jazak’Allah o Khairah!



HEAD OF CAMPUS
(GIRLS CAMPUS)





My Love for the Qur'an

Written by: **Faryal Khan**

Grade: IV Ayesha Siddiqi

The Quran's profound verses have a transformative impact on my life, illuminating my path and guiding me through life's complexities. Its divine guidance instills resilience, reminding me of Allah's infinite mercy and wisdom. With each recitation, my heart finds solace, and my soul experiences profound peace.

The Quran's timeless message resonates deeply, offering comfort and strength in times of turmoil. Its sacred words inspire me to embody compassion, gratitude, and humility, cultivating a virtuous life. Through the Quran's wisdom, I experience spiritual growth deepening my connection with Allah and fostering a sense of purpose. In the Quran, I find solace and strength, a refuge from life's turmoil. Its timeless message reminds me of Allah's love and forgiveness inspiring me to live a virtuous life, cultivated with compassion, gratitude, and humility.



The Best Surah I like in the Quran

Written by: **Fatima Siddiqui**

Grade: IV Fatima tuz Zohra

Surah Al Rehman is in Para no. 27 chapter no 55. It has 78 verses. This Surah is my favourite because it is all about Allah's most significant attributes (Rahman) and the blessings He has bestowed upon us. Allah is the best creator and sustainer of the universe. He has all the rights to pride. In the beginning, Allah tells us about the creation of men and mentions the worldly blessings He has given us. He has decorated the universe by revolving the Sun and the moon by precise calculations. He has described many miracles in this Surah: The stars and trees prostrate. He created man from hard clay, created Jinn from fire, how He merged the two seas, one with salty water and one with clean water. There is a barrier between them so they don't over-run.

In the middle of the Surah, the scene of the doomsday is narrated. How the sky will split apart. On this day, sinners will be identified by their faces and if they try to enter heaven, they will be bombarded with flames of fire. When a man gets scared by this horrific narration of punishment then Allah consoles the Muslims by mentioning His blessings in Jannah. There will be gardens of flowers and flowing springs. There will be jewels and expensive stones, fruits of every kind in pairs.

Allah ends this Surah with His blessed name full of majesty and splendour. One Ayah is so important for Muslims to pay gratitude to Him.

"So which of the blessings of your Lord will you deny?"

My Favourite Surah

Written by: **Afraa Ahmar**

Grade: IV Khadiija tul Kubra

One of my favourite Surahs in the Quran is Surah e Duha. It is very special because Allah comforted the Prophet Mohammad PBUH in it when he was feeling sad and worried. This Surah teaches us that Allah is always there for us, especially in hard times. In verse 3 Allah says:

"Your Lord has not forsaken you nor is He displeased."

This means that Allah did not leave the Prophet and was not upset with him. It reminds us that no matter how difficult life gets, Allah is always near and cares for us. Allah also promises in verse 5:

"And your Lord will give you and you will be satisfied."

This means Allah will take care of us and make us happy again just like He promised the prophet. Surah e Duha shows us that even when things seem tough, better days are coming. We should always trust in Allah and remember that He will help us, just like he helped the Prophet (PBUH).

How can I connect myself with the Quran?

Written by: **Manha Qureshi**

Grade: IV Fatima tuz Zohra

The Quran is a very special book for Muslims. I want to connect with it because it helps us know about Allah and how to live a good life. Here are some ways I think I can do that.

- **Reading every day:** I try to read the Quran a little bit every day. Even if it's just a few lines, it helps me feel closer to Allah. My parents help me in reading, and I like to read the translation to understand it better.
- **Learning what it means:** The Quran teaches us many things, like being kind and honest. When I don't understand something, I ask my parents or my teachers to explain it to me. This way I can know how to be a good person.
- **Memorizing Surahs:** I have started memorizing short Surahs. It makes me happy because I can recite them in my prayers.
- **Do what the Quran says:** The Quran tells us to be nice to others, help people, and listen to our parents. I try to follow these lessons in my life. When I do good things, I feel like I am connected with the Quran.
- **Listening to the Quran:** Sometimes, when I am not reading, I like to listen to the recitation of the Quran. It sounds beautiful and makes me calm.

By doing these things, I feel like I am getting closer to the Quran. I hope to learn more and more as I grow up! Allah says in the Quran:

"The 'true' believers are only those whose hearts tremble at the remembrance of Allah, whose faith increases when His revelations are recited to them, and who put their trust in their Lord."

(Sura e Al Anfal: 2)





My Inspiration with Hazrat Hafsa R.A

Written by: **Hafsa Hasan**

Grade: V Ayesha Siddiqa

Hazrat Hafsa (RA) was the fourth wife of the Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (P.B.U.H) and the daughter of the second Caliph Umar (R-A). She is known as Ummul Momineen "Mother of the believers: The wives of Muhammad (S.A-W) have been given the honorific title of Ummul Momineen by Allah the Almighty Himself. It is stated in the Quran:

النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ

“The Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves, and his wives are [in the position of] their mothers.”
(Surah-Al-Ahzab, Verse 6)

She was married to Khunayas Ibn Hudhafa but became a widow. Her father Umar (R.A) offered her hand to first Hazrat Uthman Ibn Affan and hereafter to Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA), but they both refused him. Then our last Prophet Muhammad (SAW) married Hafsa (RA) in Shaban. This marriage gave the Prophet the chance to ally himself with his faithful follower, i.e. Umar (RA) who now became his father-in-law. When Uthman (R.A), became caliph used Suhuf ul Hafsa* when he standardized the text of the Quran.

She also narrated 60 Ahadiths from Muhammad (SAW). Even before her conversion to Islam, she was known as Umm-ul-Masakeen (Mother of the Needy) due to her benevolence. She died in Shaban AH 45, i.e. October or November 665 at the age of 59 or 60. She was the first Ummul Momineen to be buried in Jannt-ul-Baqi.

*Suhuf ul Hafsa: The authentic copy of Quran compiled by Zaid Bin Thabit during the caliphate of Hazrat Umer R.A & was kept in the custody of Hazrat Hafsa R.A after his death.

Allah's attributes in Surah e Fatiha

Written by: **Eshal Arsalan**

Grade: V Ayesha Siddiqa

Surah Al Fatiha, the opening chapter of the Quran beautifully encapsulates some of the most essential attributes of Allah. The chapter begins by acknowledging Allah as Ar Rehman (The most merciful) and Ar Raheem (the most compassionate), emphasizing His boundless mercy and care for all his creations. These attributes remind believers that Allah's mercy encompasses every aspect of their lives, offering hope and solace in times of difficulty.

Another profound attribute mentioned is Malik e yau mid deen (the master of the day of judgment), Allah's ultimate authority over the final accountability. This reminds us of the inevitability of justice and the need to live a life of righteousness. The surah also highlights Allah as Rabb ul Alameen (lord of all worlds), illustrating His role as the sustainer and nurturer of everything that exists. It reassures believers of Allah's active involvement in their daily lives and His constant care over the universe.

سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

Through these attributes, surah al Fatiha offers a complete understanding of Allah's mercy, authority, and guardianship, fostering a deep connection between the believers and their creator.

We are Allah's servant

Written by: **Areesha Sarfaraz**

Grade: V Ayesha Siddiqa

As we all know we are Allah's servant, we are here in this world to worship only one and only God which is Allah the Almighty and to believe in "Kalma Shahadat"

“There is no title deity worthy of worship except Allah SWT and Mohammad is the messenger of Allah SWT.”

Allah is our creator. He is the true Lord of the world. Therefore, He (SWT) should be worshipped alone. Allah SWT says in the Holy Quran:

“Say He is Allah the one, Allah S.W.T the self-sufficient master. He begets not nor was He begotten. And there is no co-equal or comparable to Him” (Surah Ikhlas verse 1-4)

Now the question is why are we the servants of Allah and why do we have to worship Him? This is because He is our creator. He gave us only the right to show gratitude towards him alone. He made this world, made us as Ashraf ul Makhlooqat, and the most important thing is that: He neither slumbers nor sleeps overtakes Him.

Now it is our duty and obligation that we should pray and worship Him and also remember Him. The remembrance of Allah softens our Hearts and brings us closer to Him (SWT). As He says

“Therefore, remember me (by praying to glorify) I will remember you.”
(Surah e Baqrah verse 152)

Allah (SWT) has also prepared punishment for the non-believers. The Holy Quran says

“And the men and the women who remember Allah much with their hearts and tongues. Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward (i.e paradise)”
(Sura -Al-Ahzaab verse 35)

But Allah (SWT) has also prepared Jahanum (Hell) so get scared of the punishments of Allah the Almighty and only do the things for which Allah the Almighty has made us because all the things are temporary in this world and we have to go back to Allah (SWT) and answer Him for each and everything we have done in our lives on the day of Judgement.



ARE WE HEADING TOWARD AN ERA OF DARK AGE?

Written by: Zunairah Rafiq Lakhani

Grade: VI Fast Track

In an era where technology has unlocked the mysteries of the universe, are we still heading towards a new dark age? In an age where truth is neglected, justice is scarce, and spiritual emptiness prevails, we should be aware of this crisis. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said,

"Islam began as something strange, and it will return to being strange just as it began. So, give glad tidings to the strangers." (Sahih Muslim 145)

With such a beautiful Deen like Islam, why are we still heading towards the era of darkness, adopting and leaving its values? We are neglecting Islamic activities that are far from our Islamic culture. First of all, we are forgetting to follow the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Allah says, "And whatever the Messenger has given you, take it, and whatever he has forbidden you, refrain from it. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in punishment." (Surah Al-Hujurat 59:7)

We all know very well what the five pillars of Islam are: Shahada, Salah, Sawm, Zakat, and Hajj. We call ourselves Muslims, but many of us are not fulfilling these pillars properly. Even for obligatory prayers like Salah, we have excuses and are not accountable for our Salah.

We are leaving behind our social and moral values of mercy, justice, honesty, equality, brotherhood, respect for elders, generosity, forgiveness, discipline, and modesty. These are the beauties of Islam, but we are neglecting or minimizing them.

The negative use of social media has led us to neglect Islamic principles. Social media can be both a source of connection and a distraction. It has the potential to spread knowledge about Islam, but excessive or inappropriate use of social media can lead to behaviors that conflict with Islamic values.

The Islamic tradition is rich with guidance for dealing with difficult times. If we follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and hold on to the rope of Allah, we can save ourselves from this era of darkness. No one can protect us except Allah.

Here are some key ways to avoid this era of darkness:

- Hold firm to the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah.
- Perform regular prayers (Salah).
- Seek knowledge from the Quran.
- Stay united with the Muslim community.
- Make dua for protection.
- Remain patient and trust in Allah.
- Prepare for the Day of Judgment.

The future of Islam depends on how we respond to today's challenges. Whether our era becomes dark or transformative depends on our commitment to justice and unity.

"The wound is where the light enters."

Allah (SWT) is the Most Merciful and compassionate of all beings. We observe this and witness the blessings, He showers upon us throughout our lives. Allah (SWT) provides us with food, water, shelter, parents, and countless other blessings. Allah (SWT) protects us from harm and evil. Allah (SWT) is so merciful that He loves us more than our mothers. When we make mistakes, feel guilty, and repent, Allah (SWT) forgives us. He is so kind, and His mercy encompasses everything in the universe.

Written by: **Ayesha Mehmood**

Grade: VI Fast Track

Allah's Mercy Upon Us

Written by: **Kashmala Asif**

Grade: VI Khadija tul Kubra

I begin with the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

This is a phrase that we repeat every day, several times per day, however, sometimes we forget how mighty a phrase it is, and we forget that mercy is one of Allah's attributes that we, as imperfect human beings, constantly rely upon the blessings of Allah. Allah says in the Quran, (Az-Zumar:53)

"O My servants who have transgressed against themselves (by sinning) do not despair of the mercy of Allah indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the forgiving, the Merciful."

Allah is the most gracious and the most merciful, His mercy encompasses all things and is the source of all the compassion and mercy that exists. In English, the word mercy has several meanings including compassion, forgiveness, Kindness, and tenderness. It means in Arabic Rahma, Ar-Rahman, and Ar-Raheem, two of the most important names of Allah derived from this root word. In the Quran, Allah says:

"Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good." (Surah Al-A'raf:56)

Never hesitate to raise your repentance and seek Allah's mercy.

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكَ تَكْفُرُونَ

Which of your Lord's blessings would you deny?

Written by: Aemal Khan

Grade: VI Fast Track

The Blessings of Surah Ar-Rahman

Have you ever reflected on the verse "Which of your Lord's blessings will you deny?" throughout your day? Whether while eating, working, or lying in bed, this verse from Surah Ar-Rahman (Chapter 55 of the Qur'an) invites us to ponder Allah's countless blessings.

Surah Ar-Rahman is a beautiful chapter that reminds us of Allah's mercy and the many gifts He has bestowed upon humanity. Each verse carries a simple yet powerful message, urging us to think deeply about the world around us and the blessings we often take for granted.

The Message of Surah Ar-Rahman

In this Surah, Allah highlighted His mercy and all the ways He takes care of us. The verse "Which of your Lord's blessings will you deny?" is repeated multiple times throughout the chapter. This repetition encourages us to pause and think: Have we truly thanked Allah for the air we breathe, the food we eat, and the health we enjoy? Often, we are busy with our daily lives and forget to be grateful for even the simplest things, like recovering from an illness or finding peace in our hearts.

In addition to highlighting the physical world, Surah Ar Rahman also describes the spiritual blessings Allah has prepared for the righteous in the hereafter. It mentions the gardens of paradise, filled with rivers, fruits, and luxurious surroundings for those who fear Allah. The Surah tells us that paradise is a place of unimaginable beauty and comfort, where the righteous will find peace and joy, enjoying rewards far beyond what we experience in this life.

Allah's Creation and Human Abilities

One of the greatest blessings Allah has given us is the ability to think, feel, and express ourselves. Our bodies are created with such complexity – the heart pumps blood, the lungs allow us to breathe, and the brain helps us think and understand the world. These systems work perfectly together, allowing us to move, speak, and interact with others. No other creature has been given the same level of intelligence and ability to communicate as humans. This gift alone is enough to remind us of Allah's mercy and power.

In Surah Ar-Rahman, Allah also tells us to observe the world around us. The sun and the moon move in perfect harmony, and the sky sometimes brings clouds and sometimes remains clear. Every part of the universe follows a perfect balance that Allah has set, showing us how everything in creation is under His control.

Conclusion

Surah Ar-Rahman is a reminder of Allah's endless mercy and the countless blessings He has given us. It encourages us to reflect on these blessings, both big and small, and to live a life of gratitude, balance, and justice. By recognizing Allah's mercy, we can find peace in our hearts and strive to live according to His guidance. The Surah also contrasts the rewards of paradise with the punishment of hell, reminding us of the importance of living righteously and fearing Allah. In the end, Surah Ar-Rahman teaches us that every part of our life is touched by Allah's mercy, and we should never forget to thank Him for it. **"Which of your Lord's blessings will you deny?"**



The Miracle of the Quran:

Exploring the scientific and linguistic miracles mentioned in the Quran

Written by: **Abiha Adnan**

Grade: VII Khadija tul Kubra

Today, I will be writing about the scientific miracles that have been mentioned in the Quran which is an interesting topic to go through. There have been many scientific miracles revealed to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W) and we are going to go through many of them. First of all, we should know that Islam has been the fastest-growing religion in recent decades out of all the religions in the world. The reason is that we live in a time where our modern technology can prove scientific claims of the Quran that were impossible to know 1400 years ago.

Now it's time to go through the miracles and the first one is about The Big Bang. In 1931, scientists made a discovery that changed how people view the world. This was the year when the Big Bang was discovered by George Lemaitre when he explained how the universe was actually created and that everything was a singular point at first and then expanded out, but Allah (SWT) has already explained to us how the universe was created and nowadays it is called the Bing Bang. Allah has mentioned in the Quran:

‘Do the disbelievers not realize that the Heavens and the Earth were once mass then We split them apart? And We created from water every living thing.
(Surah-AL-Anbiya, verse 30)

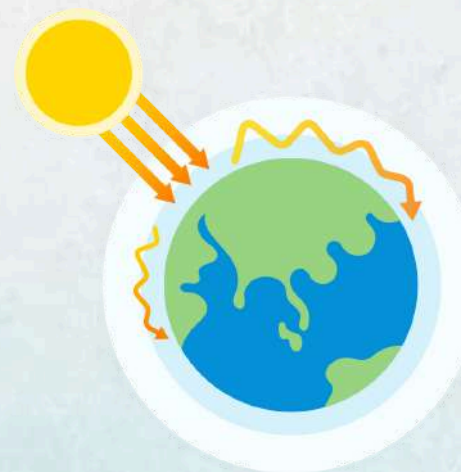


This verse brings us to our next miracle that is every living thing is created from water. After the invention of the microscope, scientists were able to discover that all living things are made out of cells, and the cells contain a substance called cytoplasm, which is made of 80% water. Most organisms consist of 50% to 90% water. Allah (SWT) has already revealed this truth in this verse but now science has proven it.

Moving on to the third miracle which is another one in Surah Al-Anbia it is about mountains. It is mentioned in the Quran

“And we have placed firm mountains upon the Earth so it does not shake with them and made in it broad pathways so they may find their ways.”
(Surah – Al Anbia verse 31)

Geological research proves that the mountains are fixed firmly in the earth and that they stabilize the earth. The roots of the mountains beneath the surface of the earth are several times deeper than the height of that which appears above the surface, which makes mountains play a crucial role in stabilizing the earth's crust

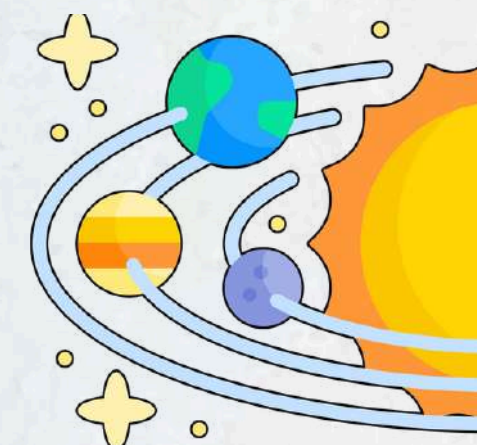


The next miracle is about the sky. In 1913 scientists discovered the ozone layer, and they found that It plays a crucial role in the earth's protection. It Shields us from the sun's deadly radiations, while it also protects us from the freezing cold of space. Without the ozone layer, life on Earth wouldn't be possible as the Quran States:

“And we have made the sky a protective ceiling. And yet they are turning away from its signs!”
(Surah e AlAnbiya: Verse 32)

The fifth miracle is about the Sun and the planet's Orbit. Before science, it was so confusing and hard for people to understand what was happening in space. However, modern astronomy has discovered that everything in space moves in orbits with the help of gravitational forces. As mentioned in the Quran:

“ It is He who created night and day, the Sun and the Moon, each floating in its orbit.” (Surah e Al Anbiya, Verse 33)



Furthermore, the Quran refers to the meeting of two seas, one fresh and sweet, the other salty and bitter, without intermingling. This phenomenon, observed in the Gulf of Oman. The Quran has revealed this phenomenon 1400 years back which now scientists have discovered.

“And He is the one who merges the two bodies of water: one fresh and palatable and the other salty and bitter, placing between them a barrier they cannot cross.” (Surah Al Furqan, Verse: 53)

Considering that the Quran was revealed over 1400 years ago, long before these scientific discoveries, it's truly remarkable how it aligns with modern scientific knowledge. This evidence strengthens the belief that the Quran is indeed a divine revelation from God.



Our Connection with the Quran

Written by: Areeba Fatima

Grade: VII Khadija tul Kubra

What is the Quran?

Quran is a word derived from the Arabic root "Qara'a", which means to read. In addition, the definition of the Quran in Uloom ul Quran is given as the word of Allah (SWT) as it is a sign and guidance by the grace of Allah (SWT) in the form of divine books. As Allah (SWT) promised to prophet Adam (A.S) and his descendants:

"We said, 'Get down all of you from this place (Paradise), then whenever Guidance comes to you from Me, and whoever follows My Guidance, there shall be no fear on them, nor shall they grieve.'" (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 38)

It was revealed to our beloved Prophet PBUH in the period of 23 years. The message of the Quran is the same as all the previous books and scriptures have, that is the oneness of Allah (Tawheed).

Significance & link of the Quran with us in the mode of life & religion:

Quran, despite being a Holy book, serves the description of numerous topics such as our daily life, religion, warnings for disbelievers, etc. Additionally, the Quran is one of the blessings of Allah SWT that serves as:

- **Al-Kitab:** It is a book that assists Muslims in their universal and religious acts. It is a holy book, the guidance for mankind that differentiates the good from the bad. Moreover, it further explains the two worlds, resurrection, and worldly lives.
"This is the book (the Quran), whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are Al Muttaqun [the pious and righteous who fear Allah much]." (Surah Al Baqarah: 2)
- **Adh-Dhikr (Reminder):** A book that reminds us of Allah (SWT), His commandments, and promises.
- **Al-Bashir (Announcer):** Discusses past and future events, such as the stories of Musa (AS) and Khidr (AS), and the arrival of Isa (AS).
- **An-Nadhir (Warner):** Warns disbelievers who reject Allah's signs.

"And indeed, we destroyed generations before you, when they did wrong while their messengers came to them with clear proofs, but they were not such as to believe! Thus, do we recompense the people who are Mujrimun?" (Surah-Al-Yunus, Verse: 13)

The Holy Quran teaches us religious, moral, spiritual, legal, political, and social ethics of life. However, we as Muslims need to understand the Quran to implement its laws and teachings in our lives. As the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) said,

"The most superior among you are those who learn the Quran and teach it." (Sahih Bukhari)

The Most Important Book in Our Life

Written by: Arwa Ahmer

Grade: VII Fatima tuz Zohra

As a Muslim, I believe that the Quran is the most important book in our lives. It is a gift from Allah, full of guidance and wisdom. The Quran teaches us how to live, behave, and understand our purpose in this world. For me, the Quran is even more special because I am a Hafiza, I have memorized the entire Quran. Allah says in the Quran:

"This is the book (the Quran) about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those who are mindful of Allah."
(Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:2)

This means the Quran is the perfect guide for everyone who wants to live a good and righteous life. It's not just a book of rules - it's full of stories, lessons, and advice that help us in all aspects of life. Our connection with the Quran doesn't stop when we read or memorize it. The Quran is with us every day, guiding us in how we live. Allah says in the Quran:

"Indeed in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find peace." (Surah Ar-Ra'd, 13:28)

This means that when we remember Allah and recite the Quran, we feel calm and peaceful, even when life is tough. The Quran is like a friend that is always there to help us feel better and stay on the right path. Here are some simple ways you can get closer to the Quran:

- **Read a little bit each day.** Even reading a few verses daily can make a big difference.
- **Try to understand its meaning.** This helps you apply its teachings in your life.
- **Recite with love.** Reciting the Quran is a beautiful act of worship and it brings us closer to Allah.

Whether you memorize it, read it, or simply reflect on its teachings, the Quran will always guide us. My journey as a Hafiza has helped me realize that the Quran is a blessing. I hope it becomes a close companion in your life too. Let's make a promise to keep the Quran close to our hearts and always remember the beautiful lessons it teaches us.



West's Strategy to Outdate the Veil

Written by: **Eman Jabeen**

Grade: VIII Fatima tuz Zohra

The veil, or hijab, has been an important symbol of modesty, faith, and identity for Muslim women for a long time. For many, it is a personal and religious choice, deeply rooted in Islamic teachings. However, in recent years, Western societies have started to challenge the practice, thinking that it doesn't fit with modern life or their way of living. This has led to efforts to discourage or even ban the use of the veil, which raises questions about whether these actions truly respect people's right to follow their religion. In Islam, the importance of the veil is clear in the Quran. In Surah An-Nur (24:31) Allah says:

"And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof and to wrap (a portion of) their headcovers over their chests..."

This verse talks about modesty and tells women to cover themselves to protect their dignity. It is one of the main teachings about wearing the hijab, showing how important it is to dress modestly in Islam. Another key verse is in Surah Al-Ahzaab (33:59):

"O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to bring down over themselves part of their outer garments. That is more suitable that they will be known and not be abused. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful."

This verse adds that covering oneself is meant for protection, allowing women to be recognized as believers and preventing harm or harassment.

In addition to the Quran, the Hadith also talks about modesty. In Sahih Al-Bukhari (8:347), Aisha (RA) shared how, when the verse about veiling was revealed, the women of the Ansar immediately covered their heads and faces with parts of their garments. This shows how early Muslim women quickly responded to the command for modesty.

Despite the religious significance of the veil in Islam, many people in the West view it as a sign of oppression. For example, countries like France have passed laws banning full-face veils in public, using reasons like security and the need to protect women's rights. They argue that the veil goes against modern values, even though many Muslim women see it as an important part of their faith and identity.

The problem with this strategy is that it ignores the fact that many women wear the veil by choice, not because they are forced. While some think the veil is a form of oppression, for many Muslim women, it is a way to express their faith and take control of how they are seen by others. By focusing only on negative views of the veil, the West overlooks the voices of those who feel empowered by wearing it.

Furthermore, trying to ban the veil brings up questions about the West's commitment to religious freedom. If people are truly free to choose how they want to live, this should include the right to wear the veil if they choose. Western efforts to stop the use of the veil, whether through laws or social pressure, can be seen as going against the values of personal freedom and the right to follow one's religion.

In conclusion, the veil is more than just a piece of clothing. It is a symbol of faith, modesty, and empowerment for many Muslim women. While the West might view it as something outdated or incompatible with modern life, it is important to recognize and respect the religious and personal meaning it holds for those who choose to wear it. True freedom and respect for diversity include allowing people to express their beliefs openly, without fear of judgment or repression.

My Success is in Obtaining JANNAH!

Written by: **Hania Rashid**
 Grade: VIII Khadija tul Kubra

For me, true success means getting to Jannah one day. As a Muslim, I believe that this is the ultimate goal of life. No matter what we achieve here, whether it's good grades, a nice house, or a great job, the real success is earning a place in Jannah, where everything is perfect and we get to be close to Allah forever.

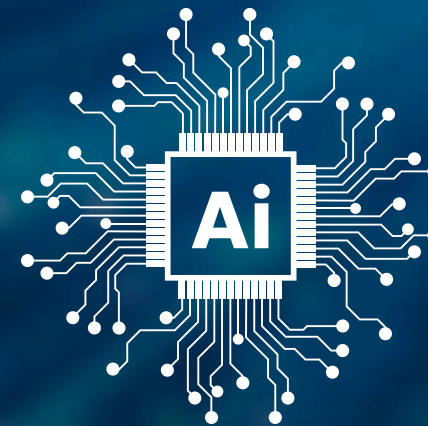
Jannah is described as a place of eternal peace, happiness, and reward. There's no pain, no suffering, and no worries. Everything in Jannah is better than anything we can imagine in this world. All the hard work, sacrifices, and struggles we face in this world are worth it if they help us reach Jannah. But more than just comfort, the best thing about Jannah is being near to Allah. In this world, we worship Him and trust Him, but in Jannah, we will experience Allah's love and mercy we've never felt before. That thought gives me so much hope and motivation.

Getting to Jannah isn't easy, it requires dedication and effort. One of the first things I know I need to do is to live my life according to the teachings of Islam. That means praying regularly, being kind to others, and following the example of the Prophet. It's not always easy, especially when distractions and temptations come up, but I remind myself that this life is temporary and the reward is worth it. I also believe that doing good deeds is a way to work toward Jannah. Whether it's helping someone in need, being honest, or showing respect to elders, every small act counts. Even smiling at someone is considered a good deed in Islam. Another important thing is asking for forgiveness. I know I'm not perfect and sometimes I make mistakes but the great thing is that Allah is always ready to forgive if we sincerely ask for it. I make an effort to seek forgiveness and improve myself every day.

In the end, my success isn't just about doing well in school or becoming wealthy. It's about living a life that pleases Allah and earning a place in Jannah. This is what keeps me motivated and focused. Everything else in this life is temporary but Jannah is forever and that's **where I want to be!**

Pros & Cons of AI (Artificial Intelligence)

Written by: **Hania Shakir**
 Grade: VIII Khadija tul Kubra



The term Artificial Intelligence (AI) was invented by John Mc Carthy in the 1950s and is commonly used nowadays. It is the ability of a computer or robot to carry out the functions that are habitually fulfilled by humans. It is the duplicated version of human intelligence in machines that are organized to think and make decisions just like humans from experience.

AI is very common among us as it is used in a number of industries which include health-care, navigation, gaming, and space exploration. In the healthcare, industry, AI can simplify the processes for doctors accurately to predict the disease and help to save money and time. Even some operations are being performed using AI.

Furthermore, AI in space can help in the exploration of galaxies, stars, black holes, and moons. In gaming, AI is used to create game characters and environments that are capable of responding to a player's action in a realistic and dynamic way.

In navigation, AI algorithms can scan a vast amount of data, such as historical traffic patterns, and road conditions, to generate personalized and efficient routes. This integration allows GPS systems to adapt and learn from user behaviour, leading to smarter navigation systems.

AI is also used in entertainment. Netflix and Amazon are AI-based applications that show recommendations of programs or shows to their viewers.

Not only AI is used in industries and entertainment, but it is also used in every home as it has become a part of our daily life. AI is highly beneficial, as, without AI, life would become burdensome for us. Thus, AI can help us in a number of ways.

However, AI has a number of downsides as well. One of the disadvantages of AI is the limitless laziness of humans. AI can fulfill the chores we do. This affects the physical and mental health of the body which is very dangerous.

Another con of AI is its negative effect on our natural environment. The risky use of AI in agriculture could result in the overuse of pesticides and fertilizers, contaminating the soil and water.

Electronic waste disposal is also a big disadvantage. The e-waste produced by AI technology poses serious environmental challenges. It contains hazardous chemicals, including lead, mercury, and cadmium, which can contaminate the soil and water supplies and endanger both human health and the environment.

The Over-reliance on this technology is also a disadvantage. The reliability of AI is leading to a decrease in human creativity. From this content, we learn that AI is both advantageous and disadvantageous. We should not overuse AI. We should use AI as a way of supporting us, not to control us. Only this method can overcome the disadvantages of AI. Stephen Hawking says:

"The development of full artificial Intelligence can spell the end of the human race."

Balancing Faith & Maintaining Modesty in this Era

Written by: **Fatima Danish**

Grade: O-I Khadija tul Kubra

The world is always in a state of transition, and now the rules regarding modesty are contradicted by norms of changing society and speedy lifestyle. It has become a challenge for those who are staunch followers of religion to maintain a balance between their faith and implement modesty in their lives. In this article, we will discuss how a person can strike such an understanding and walk on both paths at the same time without contradicting beliefs.

What is Modesty?

Modesty is a moral virtue and it constrains the desires of men and women regarding suitable clothing. Modest fashion is a phenomenon that differs between cultures and religions, for instance, in Islam, modest dress is part of piety. This becomes super important for faith adherents who are living in completely different cultural surroundings.

The Modern Landscape

Daily, the current generation is bombarded visually and encouraged through fashion and other media, such as images on Instagram and TikTok to express themselves. Of Course, beauty and self-expression are represented differently than before. Thus, revealing fashions can obviously be contrary to traditional modesty while common.

Problems Faced

The need to be accepted may make youth compromise their values. In this regard, young people don't feel well when they end up in a tug-of-war between their beliefs and what the world expects from them. Personal liberty, on which all individualism rests, is easily taken as freedom from modesty. This is problematic for people who try to honor their ideals. I think with social media, and the fact that images are virtually permanent, it is even harder to live a life of authenticity and personal values.

Balancing Faith & Modesty

For one to strike a balance between faith and modesty, there is no need to think of oneself in today's world effectively. Firstly reflect on what modesty means to you and your faith, and guide dressing and behavior choices by those values. Seek an environment from religious Islamic groups to online networks to share your values to encourage you and give you useful support and motivation.

Secondly, Be responsible for what you consume and oversee what media you take in to align with what you believe. As you present yourself you decide which aspects would you want to promote; your dress and online presence should reflect modesty all the time. Modesty is not a harsh attribute, that one does not change with time, knowledge, and cultural change. Learn to endure its multiple forms and live true to your identity and principles.

In conclusion, living images change, where conception and education must be arbitrated individually, what we consider to be true about modest faith can truly develop based on the value of our choosing. Modesty is more than clothing and outward appearance, for it involves knowing one's true identity and aligning faith with values. In the end, it is a highly personal path fueled by our own beliefs and triggers.



Islamophobia and its Effects: The World Against Islam

Written by: **Mirha Atif**

Grade: OIII Fatima tuz Zohra

Islamophobia is the irrational fear, hatred, or misconception against Islam and Muslims. It can manifest in various forms, including discrimination, verbal abuse, social exclusion, or even violence. Allah says in Surah al Imran

“You shall certainly be tried in your possessions and your lives, and you shall certainly hear among hurtful things from some of those who were given the book before you and some of the polytheists, but if you preserve patiently and guard yourselves against evil, that is a master of a strong determination.”

The philosophy behind Islamophobia is to plant seeds of fear of Muslims and Islam in the hearts of non-Muslims by portraying Muslims and Islam as an imminent danger to the world. Islamophobians are depicted as Islam, not a religion and Muslims are strangers, who do not belong to the modern world. Since, the time of the prophet Nuh A.S to Prophet Muhammad S.A.W, their contemporaries accused them of spreading dangerous ideas in the society. They launched uncompromising attacks and conspiracies on them. Some of them were tortured, persecuted, and even killed.

However, let's talk about the current world! Do we still face Islamophobia? unfortunately yes! Unsurprisingly the world still criticizes Muslims for practicing their religion. As a result, our brothers and sisters of Palestine have been suffering for a year now. 11 months of genocide is considered self-defense as they worry the maltreated Muslims will harm Israel and their children.

Moreover, our sisters living in Western countries who observe hijab are condemned and tortured. Not only this, but, even in the 21st century countries like China and Japan both refuse the idea of building mosques, and any efforts to convert to Islam are outlawed. Furthermore, attacks on Islam are steadily increasing in France and the US. Even Muslims who have long citizenship come under this siege.

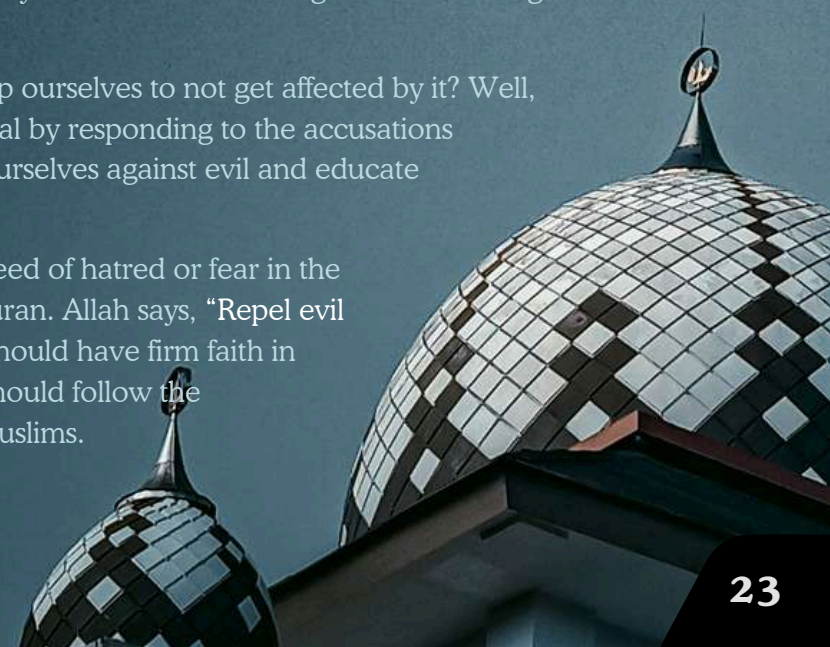
However, the question is, is there any hospital in the USA without Muslim physicians? Is there any educational institute in the USA without Muslim professors' teaching? Is there any auto industry without Muslim engineers? The non-Muslim fellows of the state entrust their lives in hospital, the mindset of children in universities and colleges, and their machines and properties in the auto industry. Did Muslims kill anybody, sabotage industries or pollute the minds of their students? No! then why the hate? Just because they cannot accept the fact that Islam is the fastest-growing religion in the world?

Dawah of Islam is considered to have a backward mentality. The institutes offering Islamic teachings are named as 'underdeveloped' or 'unsophisticated'?

The real question to all of us is Islamophobia. How to help ourselves to not get affected by it? Well, we should confront the challenge without being emotional by responding to the accusations wisely and in a convincing manner. We should protect ourselves against evil and educate our non-Muslims that Islam is not oppressive.

In short, we should pray for those who are planting the seed of hatred or fear in the hearts of the non-Muslims and those who burned the Quran. Allah says, “Repel evil with what is better.” (Surah Fussilat, verse 34) Thus, we should have firm faith in our deen and must keep practicing a religion. Also, we should follow the teachings of our prophet. May Allah make us all better Muslims.

Ameen.



Palestinian Endurance in Gaza & Silence of Muslim Ummah

Written by: **Nashmia Shakir**

Grade: Oll Fatima tuz Zohra

The relationship between Palestine and Israel has been deep-rooted since the late 19th century. This overall conflict after World War I, when Israel betrayed the German empire thus 6 million of them were murdered by the German leader, Rodalf Hitler. He left some of them alive to show why he killed them. However, Palestine gave them a place when no country was giving them.

After a couple of years, Israel started to seize the Palestinians' land thus revealing their betrayal nature for which they were killed by Hitler. But Israel didn't come to a stop instead they tortured Palestinians. In 1948, a Palestinian war was fought as Arabs launched an attack against Jews. During the war, the British withdrew from Palestine and Zionist forces took control of the territory and established the state of Israel. Israel denied the Palestinian refugees and over a half of the Palestinians fled or were expelled. These were the Palestinians who had given shelter to Israel when they were expelled, despite that they took control of their territory and expelled Palestinians from their place. The expelled Palestinians settled in the Gaza Strip as refugees, yet Israeel didn't stop torturing them, since then about 15 wars have been fought against the Gaza Strip by Israel.

However, the decade of the 1940s was repulsive as the Soviet Union was the first country to recognize Israel. as a state, but this didn't conclude here. Poland, Yugoslavia, and the United States accepted it as the state of Israel. Unexpectedly, Egypt was the first Arab State to recognize Israel which was followed by Jordan, and later UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan who recognized the land of Palestine as Israel state. Many countries even supported Israel and signed peace agreements with them. As a result, Israeel was able to be a financially strong state.

Even though, Israel didn't stop torturing Palestinians. In 2002, it was reported that over 300 Palestinians were tortured not only by beating but also by deprivation of sleep and dousing with freezing water. In 2004, the Palestinian workers in Gaza were photographed being naked and attacked by dogs. The Prisoners were treated like animals. Palestinians are tortured and ill-treated using many different tools. Israeel also didn't hesitate to torture the children as well. More than 13800 children have been killed in Ghaza and 113 in West Bank. Moreover, 12009 children have been injured due to bombardment and torture in Gaza. Similarly, women are also ill-treated. It is noted that approximately 63 women, including mothers, are being killed daily.

Day by day, Palestinians are losing their loved ones but the crucial question is where Muslims are standing. where are Muslim Countries? Where is the Muslim Ummah when then Muslim brothers and sisters are being tortured and killed cruelly, when our holy place Jerusalem is being attacked and when Palestinians are defending Jerusalem alone? Isn't this time for Muslim Ummah to be

united and leave behind - their differences to save our holy place and - Muslim brothers and sisters, including children? - Although many Muslims from different regions have started boycotting the products of Israel what about our governments?

The main reason for the silence of Muslim Ummah is the fear of Muslims towards their enemies. The Prophet PBUH said: The people will soon summon one another to attack you as people when eating invite others to share their dish. Someone asked: Will that be because of our small numbers at that time? He replied: 'No, you will be numerous

at that time: but you will be scum and rubbish like that carried down by a torrent and Allah will take fear of you from the breasts of your enemy and last enervation into your hearts.' Someone asked:

what is Wahn (enervation). The Apostle of Allah replied:

Love of the world and dislike of death. This Hadith is narrated by Thawban, a companion of Holy Prophet. This Hadith highlights the future of Muslims when Muslims will be persecuted and despite being numerous, they will be weakened like rubbish carried away by torrent.

According to this Hadith, we (Muslims) are truly in the era that Hadith explains, as Palestinians (Muslims) are being Persecuted by Israeel (enemy) and Muslims over throughout the world are numerous, but have become materialistic which led us to our weakness.

Therefore, this is our duty as Muslims to be united. Furthermore, the governments of Muslim countries should boycott the Israeel products at the international level. We should also spread awareness among people through social media about the current situation of Palestinians. Moreover, we should pray for our Muslim brothers and sisters.

'O Allah! Improve the state of Muslim ummah, take out the fear of death from our hearts, and fill our hearts with the light of the Quran:

'O Allah! rectify the affairs of Muslims in Palestine; Protect the people of Palestine from the cruel enemies of Islam, and give us strength, power, and faith to help our brothers and sisters!

AMEEN!



Resilience in Gaza & the Quietude of the Muslim World

Written by: **Emaan Asif Seja**

Grade: OIII Fatima tuz Zohra

The Israeli-Palestinian situation is one of the most enduring and complex Issues in modern history, often described by many as a genocide against the Palestinian people. The struggle centers around the issues of land, identity, and sovereignty. The establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 marked a turning point, leading to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. Since then, the situation has only escalated; Palestinians have faced unimaginable hardships, yet they continue to stand strong in their fight for dignity and justice. However, what's even more pathetic is the silence of Muslim Ummah in the face of their suffering How can we, as Muslims, turn a blind eye to the pain of our brothers and sisters?

Historically, the Palestinian people have shown incredible generosity when Jewish communities faced persecution and they migrated during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, particularly around the time of World War II, when Palestinians welcomed them. They provided space and hospitality during the time of crisis, yet this act of kindness was met with betrayal. Instead of co-existence, the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. This act was not just a political move, it was an illegal appropriation of land that stripped Palestinians of their homes and rights. Today, the ongoing genocide continues to result in loss of life and destruction of communities, especially in Gaza, which has also faced multiple military operations since 2008.

Despite the courage and determination of Palestinians, the response from Muslim Ummah has been surprisingly muted. It's disheartening to see that many countries with large Muslim populations are not taking strong actions against corporations that support Israel. For instance, companies that profit from the Israeli occupation or sell weapons used against Palestinians often go unchallenged Boycotting these businesses could be a powerful way for the Muslim community. to stand in solidarity with the Palestinians' cause, yet many seem unaware or Indifferent The silence is like a heavy blanket that dulls the cries for justice coming from Gaza. People often say there's nothing we can do for Palestinians, but we can donate, boycott, and most importantly pray to Allah for betterment in their lives.

In The Benchmark, we often discuss the saying,

The Muslim Ummah is like one body. If one part is in pain, the whole body should feel the pain"
[Sahih Muslim, 2586,]

It's a beautiful idea, but it feels like a distant reality. When I read about bombings, injuries, and families torn apart in Gaza, especially since the recent escalations from October 7, 2023; I feel a mix of sadness and frustration. It seems that the suffering of Palestinians has become just another headline, an easily forgotten trend. The ongoing violence should resonate deeply within us, yet many choose to scroll past these stories without taking any action.

This silence is not just an issue of awareness, it reflects a lack of collective responsibility. Many young people like me want to make a difference, but the challenges feel overwhelming. We see social media campaigns and protests, yet they often don't lead to change. It makes me question the effectiveness of our efforts. If the leaders of Muslim Ummah are not standing up or taking significant actions, how can we expect to create a powerful movement?

I believe it's crucial for us, the younger generation, to raise our voices louder. We can use social media to spread awareness, share stories, and connect with those who care. Our generation is more connected than ever, and we must harness this power to advocate for justice.

In conclusion, the endurance of Palestinians in Gaza is a testament to their strength, but it should not be overlooked or forgotten by Muslims. We must remember that their pain is our pain - The time has come for us to unite, to speak out, and to take meaningful action.





PRESENT-DAY CHALLENGE FOR MOTHERS: THE RISING TREND OF WESTERN ATTIRE & ITS REPERCUSSIONS

Written by: **Mother of Dua Imran**

Grade: IV Ayesha Siddiq

We are living in an era where the world has become a global village. We are witnessing rapid changes in our day-to-day life. Electronic, print, and especially social media have brought revolutionary changes in societies. Even in our country, we have noticed a remarkable change in our culture and lifestyle. The Western culture is penetrating in our society slowly and steadily through their attire. Our youth love to dress themselves according to Western trends. They are adopting their lifestyle and attire, leaving their own identity. Hence, they are following foreign ideologies and customs. This is indeed a great challenge for the mothers.

The outward resemblance of people in their specific customs shows one's love and admiration for them which will lead them to follow their religious customs, innovative philosophies, and ideologies.

There may be grave repercussions of this rising trend of Western attire. A Muslim may begin by following their fashions in clothing, then move on to adopting their customs and traditions. The outward resemblance of people is a display of admiration for them. This leads to following the non-believers in their ideologies, philosophies, and religion in contradiction to the Quran and Sunnah. For this reason, we find many proofs in the Quran and Sunnah that call the believers who differ from the non-believers.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوٰتِ
الشَّيْطٰنِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ

'O you who have believed, enter into Islam completely (and perfectly) and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to use a clear enemy.'
[Surah e Al-Baqara Ayat:208]

The real question is why a Muslim seeks practices outside of Islam and the Sunnah except due to weak faith and a sense of inferiority in front of the unbelievers because he sees them to be better than himself, so he aspires to be one of them. It is high time that we should stick to our roots and not blindly follow the Western agenda. Unless the beauty has sufficed the Muslims and blessed them with the complete Sharia that brings to them every benefit in the religious and worldly life. We should make our children proud of our own region, its codes, our own culture and traditions and should set an example for others to follow us.

Umar Ibn ul Khattab said:

"Indeed we were the lowest people then, Allah honored us with Islam so if we seek honor from other than Islam, Allah will make us lowest and humiliated."
(Al-Hakim 1/30 (207), see As-Saheehah 1/117)





Excursion 2023: Trip to Super Space

To: The Benchmark
From: Hafsa Danish
Date: 30th September, 2024

Written by: **Hafsa Danish**
Grade: OIII Fatiima tuz Zohra

Subject: The excursion 2023- Trip to Super Space

In the month of November, came out the most exhilarating news of the session. Our teachers distributed the circulars that spilled the beans about our upcoming trip to Super Space. It was a real challenge. for the students to shake off the thoughts about the trip that kept building up in their minds. Finally, the day we had all been looking forward to, arrived.

We began our day by listening to the heartwarming recitation of the Holy Quran by one of our hafizah. Afterward, our respected coordinator gave us instructions about the discipline we had to preserve and -guided us about the rules we had to apply throughout our trip. High on ecstasy, we started our journey with the name of our lord.

On arriving at the destination, we requested to get into rows to reach the fifth floor of the Ocean Mall Clifton, where the Super Space is located. We were given provided two hours to enjoy the activities inside. As the doors opened, it seemed that we were to experience a life in space. It was fully decorated with neon lights and felt like a cosmic hole of excitement: As we stepped in, we got lost in the world of thrill.

There was a profusion of activities to be immersed in. These include the Battle Station, Ninja Obstacle, Dodging Cars, 3D motion theater, and other arcade games with VR technology. Everyone took turns to experience all the exhilarating rides. We had a whale of a time and enjoyed it to the fullest.

Tired and exhausted, we came back to our school where we received a scrumptious meal from Kababjee's. It is comprised of sizzling hot rolls, mouth-watering zinger burgers, and chilled soda cans. We made unforgettable memories at the Super Space in the city of lights.

We would like to extend our gratitude to The Benchmark for letting us make precious memories and priceless moments that can never come back but are always treasured in our hearts and minds.

My Achievement in Cambridge Exams 2024

Written by: **Inaya Nadeem**
Grade: OII Fatima tuz Zohra

The CAIE was one of the most unforgettable experiences I have ever had in my whole academic journey. Filled with raw emotions and life-changing lessons. It will always be engraved in my heart; the challenges, the setbacks, the tears of regret, and most importantly, the pressure that came with it. 26 April 2024, the day of our first-ever CAIE was approaching fast, creeping up on me in the dark and haunting my dreams. Still, I was enveloped in deep procrastination which made the whole experience feel all the more terrible.

The sinking feeling of saying to myself that I would study from tomorrow, only to end up not doing anything made me feel guilty. It wasn't until the mocks that I really started to take these very seriously. It was truly a bizarre feeling knowing the day we have always been told of, the day we are studying these subjects, is not more than two months away. I knew I didn't stand a chance now, but there was this fire in me that ignited every time. I felt like giving up, and suddenly I thought of how proud my parents would be of my achievement. A new sense of motivation and determination engulfed me and I decided to sit down and actually study.

As I was very much prone to distractions my friend and I video-called to keep each other in check and it made this exhausting study session all the more worth it. Finally, the day came and I sat in the hall exploding with tension it really felt like snakes were slithering in my stomach, eating me up. The overwhelming feeling of taking the exam, coming home, and then studying again for the next one. It all felt like a terrible nightmare that I couldn't find myself waking up from. Like this the two weeks passed and the CAIE was finally over. Those for the longest and the most horrible two weeks of my life. Even after finishing the CAIE, I was left alone with my dark thoughts of how many mistakes I've made and that I really could have done better.

In the blink of an eye, the vacations passed and 13th of August our result day was finally here. Standing nervously in the principal's office I waited for my result praying that I do not get a "B". A flashback of me praying Salah and crying my heart out to Allah appeared before me and I knew He is the best of the planners and wouldn't let me down. Taking a deep breath, I opened my results and nearly dropped in shock, I rubbed my eyes, but it was all clear as daylight, I really got 3A*. Tearing up, I hugged the teacher and the principal with only thoughts of my parent's happiness in my mind. I thanked Allah lot because it was all due to Him, I got this beautiful achievement. This whole experience will always be my reminder to never give up and always have faith in Allah. My advice for everyone reading this is to just do your best and leave the rest in the hands of Allah. Also to never stress over things you cannot control and remembering that at the end of the day, your health should be your priority and that grades do not define you as a person.





MY STORY OF OBSERVING HIJAB

Written by: **Maryam Murtaza**

Grade: VIII Fatima tuz Zohra

The veil is a Symbol of modesty for many women. Modesty is about being humble and restrained. The veil is seen as a way for women to preserve their dignity and privacy from men. The practice of veiling has a long history but its meaning can vary in different cultures and religions. It's important to understand the diverse perspectives on this tradition. In this article, I am going to tell you all about my journey to becoming a teenage hijabi girl.

I was a little girl when my mind started pondering over the question why do women wrap their heads with a piece of cloth?," Why don't women show their beautiful hair to everyone?" Why do women cover their faces? "Is it because they look ugly, like in the story "The Ugly Duckling" or is it for some other reason? All these questions received their answer when I turned 10. I would see a variety of women in my surroundings. Some wore hijab, but some didn't. Some observed a veil, but some didn't. As I grew older, I started admiring the hijab. I was eager to observe it but at the same time, I was Confused. So one day, I mustered up some courage and I asked my mother In such hot weather, you are covering yourself! What is the reason behind this?" My mother told me that it is Allah's command. But this answer didn't satisfy me because if it is Allah's command not all women follow it. I explored through the bound pages of many books and cast around websites but was unable to convince my heart.

So made a decision. When I turned 11, I started observing hijab and soon enough all questions and doubts were erased. At first, it felt awkward and suffocating but I stayed with my goal and found wearing a hijab more pleasing as I began to see benefits soon I felt more confident while going around the streets of my society and I felt a sense of eagerness and satisfaction. Not many eyes would dare me and respect became a part of society I would pass through.

Now! I am 13, and Hijab is a part of my life. It gives me full protection and secures me from evil gazes. I never felt more satisfied in my life than I am now. And all of my troubles are now solved. The hijab is a shield for women. One should hold on to it as on the day of judgment we will be questioned about our hijab. I advise all those women who don't wear hijab, to start wearing hijab, you will see major changes in your lives. All your problems will be solved and respect will rise. May Allah guide us all on the right path.

Ameen.



My Story of Observing Hijab

Written by: **Hania Syed**

Grade: VI Fatima tuz Zohra

When I was young, I always doubted what kind of rule is that only women have to cover themselves not men. So one day, I went to my mother and asked her, "Mother! Why do women always have to cover themselves but not men?" My mother replied, "If you have a diamond and a pen, what would you take outside without hiding it?" I told her that I would take the pen outside without hiding it. So she said, "Exactly! You would take the pen because the diamond is precious likewise if you take women as diamonds then you'll be hidden because these are precious! From that day, I always wear a Hijab everywhere. Because now I understand the real importance of the Hijab.

My Journey at the Benchmark Girls Campus

Interviewer: **Misha Alam** (Grade O-II)
Interviewee: **Mishal Haris** (Grade O-III)

School plays a vital role in a student’s life, it can be called a second home. Today, I am with the head of the students’ council coming off the Benchmark school, known as the Benchmark, Mishal Haris who will be sharing her experience at the Benchmark.

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

Ans: if I am being honest, it was particularly challenging. It wasn’t easy for me to adjust to the environment of the Hifz programme socially.

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

Ans: My start here was particularly challenging. I was way behind my target in the Hifz programme. However, after switching to academics, studies weren’t as challenging for me.

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

Ans: Well, the field trip, two years back, to Winterland was particularly memorable. It was a generally peaceful experience.

Q4: Which qualities of yours have brought you this substantial position as the school representative?

Ans: I believe that my ability to speak and be heard may have paved the way. However, mostly I know it was because of my strong Tarbiah aspects & academic background.

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

Ans: Here are the things a friend of mine who came from KPS tells me that this environment is very comfortable as practicing hijab was very difficult there.

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

Ans: I believe that students need to not only be really focused but they should also be very optimistic and should have the courage to take setbacks as a challenge. Believe me when I say this, taking setbacks to heart does not help!

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

Ans: Well, I always thought I would like to be a doctor. However, one particular discussion with a history teacher made me dream bigger and explore beyond the horizon.

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 endeavours?

Ans: One thing I learned here has made me realize that whilst preaching is our responsibility, considering we are the ummah of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) the best way to do that is to quietly and effectively correct ourselves rather than forcing everybody, to be humbled when correcting anybody. Believe me, a beautiful personality can influence you in ways you never ever imagined.

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

Ans: Well, I have always enjoyed the challenge of the debate competitions, the wonders of the Annual Functions, and the exploration of the Science Exhibitions.

Q10: How did the teacher-student relationship at The Benchmark contribute to endeavours in your overall experience?

Ans: The teachers here have always been very helpful, supportive, and encouraging. At least that’s how I have always felt.

Q11: 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?

Ans: I would love to tell them to not at all be overwhelmed. Guaranteed that now the entire school looks up to you, you are here because of who you already were. There is nothing wrong with not always being perfect.



**Light of Noor**

Written by: **Maryam Hashmi**
Grade: IV Ayesha Siddiqi

Noor the brightest light,
A light that shines forever bright,
Light the sun, it warms the heart
Banishing shadows tearing apart
In Islamic teachings, Noor is found
The holy light all around
It is the Quran, the holy book
In our heart giving, a guiding look

**Oh Allah! My heart
melts on Silence of Ummah**

Written by: **Haniya Arif**
Grade: V Ayesha Siddiqi

"In the hush of the night, the Ummah's quiet plea,"
"Echoes of longing, reaching out to thee,
Oh Allah, in the stillness, our hearts do weep,
Grant us your guidance, as we struggle and seek,
In unity we find solace, in faith we find grace,
Strengthen our resolve, in the face of despair,
In the silence of the Ummah, may hope,
Illuminate our path, show us you're always there,
Through the darkness, we journey, hand in hand,
United in purpose, across the land,
O' Allah in your mercy, we find our way,
In the silence of the Ummah, we humbly pray,
As morning light of voice, a new hope sworn,
For in the quietude of the Ummah, let love resound,
In your mercy and grace, our faith is found"

The Night of Power

Written by: **Zoha Jawwad**
Grade: VI Khadija tul Kubra

The Night of Power, a blessed sight
Angel's descent, with mercy light
Destinies unfold, as the Quran's might
Guides us through the dark of night.

Prayers ascend, like fragrant incense
High supplications, that touch the sky
Forgiveness sought, with a humble heart
As the night's peace never departs.

In this night of infinite grace,
We seek Allah's loving embrace
May our deeds, may be accepted there
True In Shab-e-Qadr, our hearts renew.

HEREAFTER

Written by: **Eshal Arsalan**
Grade: V Ayesha Siddiqi

In the garden green, where rivers flow,
The faithful souls will one day go.
Life of peace, no fear, no pain,
In Allah's grace, forever reign
The day will come when the truth is made clear,
Each deed recalled, both far and near
For those who followed, hearts sincere,
The Hereafter light, forever dear
But for the lost, who turned away,
Regret will fill that fateful day
Yet mercy vast, the lord will give,
To guide the heart who chooses to live.

**Oh, my Lord!
I will meet you soon**

Written by: **Fatima Siddiqui**
Grade: V Ayesha Siddiqi

Oh, Allah I will meet you soon
Beneath the star, Beneath the moon
Each step I take, each trial I face
lead me closer to Your grace

In prayer, I find my heart's true turn,
A melody that brings me near to you
Through all the pain and all the strife,
I hold the hope of eternal life-

The world may fade,
its light may swoon,
But in your love,
I'm never alone,
Oh Allah, I will meet you soon.
And in your mercy, find my home



OUTSTANDING RESULTS

GIRLS CAMPUS IN CAIE 2024

AMNA KASHIF	5As
FAREAH QAZI	3A* & 1A
MARYAM MURSHID	4 A*
SUHA MUNAWAR	4 A*
AIENA ANWAR	2AS
Anaya Adnan	2 A* & 1 A
Misha Alam	3A*
Khansa	3A*
Shafia Saqib	2 A* & 1 A
Ayesha Amir	2 A* & 1 A

Inaaya Nadeem	3A*
Musfirah Jilani	1A* IA
Javeria Aman Syed	1A* IA
Nashmia	2AS
Hafsa Ali Khan	2AS
Abeha Furqan	2AS
Rumaisa Haris	1A
Daneya Hasan	1A*
Fatima Imran	1A
Sara Ammar Naeem	1A
Laiba Khan	1A*
Anamta Sarwar	1A
Hafsa Sohaib	1A
Maheen Sheikh	1A
Zainab Pirzada	1A