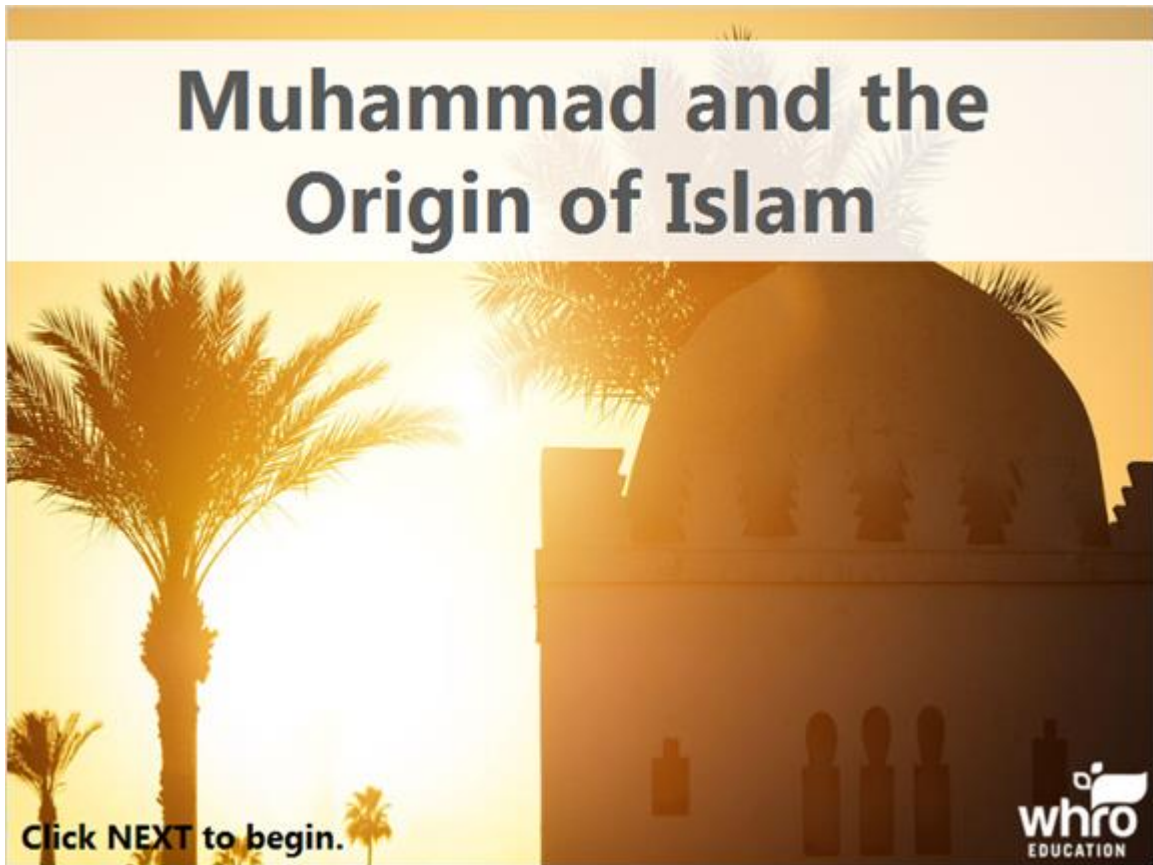


Module 7: The Islamic Civilization
Topic 1 Content: Muhammad and the Origin of Islam

Introduction



Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in the world. In fact, it is the second largest religion in the world. Click NEXT to explore how Islam originated and spread.

Module 7: The Islamic Civilization

Topic 1 Content: Muhammad and the Origin of Islam

The Arabian Peninsula



During the sixth century, people who lived on the Arabian Peninsula were organized into various pastoral or nomadic tribes led by sheiks, or leaders chosen by elders of the tribes. Commonly the tribes moved from place to place, searching for food and water sources for their animals. The Arabian Peninsula was also developing into a major crossroads of trade where traders traveled through the Arabian Desert and Red Sea between Europe, Africa, and Asia. The city of Mecca, which is now located in western Saudi Arabia, was a large city of trade for caravans crossing the Arabian Desert. In 570 A.D. (C.E.), a man named Mohammed was born in Mecca.

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The Angel Gabriel



The slide features a title "The Angel Gabriel" at the top. Below the title is a photograph of a palm tree against a sunset sky. In the center is a photograph of a 7th-century manuscript of the Qur'an. To the right of the manuscript is a grey box containing the following text:

- Message
- Angel Gabriel
- Qur'an (Koran)
- "Recite the name of the Lord"
- Prophet

Below the manuscript is the caption: "7th century manuscript of the Qur'an (Koran)".

In 610 A.D. (C.E.), when Muhammad was forty-years-old, he began receiving messages from God through the Angel Gabriel. Over the next twenty-three years, Muhammad recorded God's messages, which he put in an Islamic book of holy writings called the Qur'an (Koran). Muslims believe the Qur'an is the word of God as told to the Prophet Muhammad through the Angel Gabriel. These messages encouraged Muhammad to "Recite in the name of the Lord," or spread the message of Islam. From that point forward, Muhammad was known as the Prophet, and Islam was born.

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Conversion to Islam

Conversion to Islam



Major tribes during Muhammad's life at the start of Islam

- Preaching
- Mecca
- Polytheistic - early Arabs
- Allah
- Convert
- Monotheistic - Islam

In 613 A.D. (C.E.), after the beginning of his revelations, Muhammad began preaching in the city of Mecca. At that time, most Arabs were polytheistic, and believed in many tribal gods, along with a supreme god known as Allah. Muhammad wanted to get people to give up their polytheistic beliefs, and convert them to Islam, a monotheistic religion with one God, Allah, who Muslims believe created the heaven and Earth.

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Travels to Medina



In Mecca, Muhammad was met with resistance, and his few followers faced persecution. In 622 A.D. (C.E.), fearing for his life, Muhammad traveled north from Mecca to the city of Medina. This migration, or Hijrah, is important to Muslims. In fact, 622 A.D. (C.E.) represents the first year in the Muslim calendar.

Muhammad had more success converting people to Islam in Medina. The city is located closer to the Arabian Desert than Mecca, and Muhammad gained many of his new converts from desert regions, helping him unite a true Muslim community.

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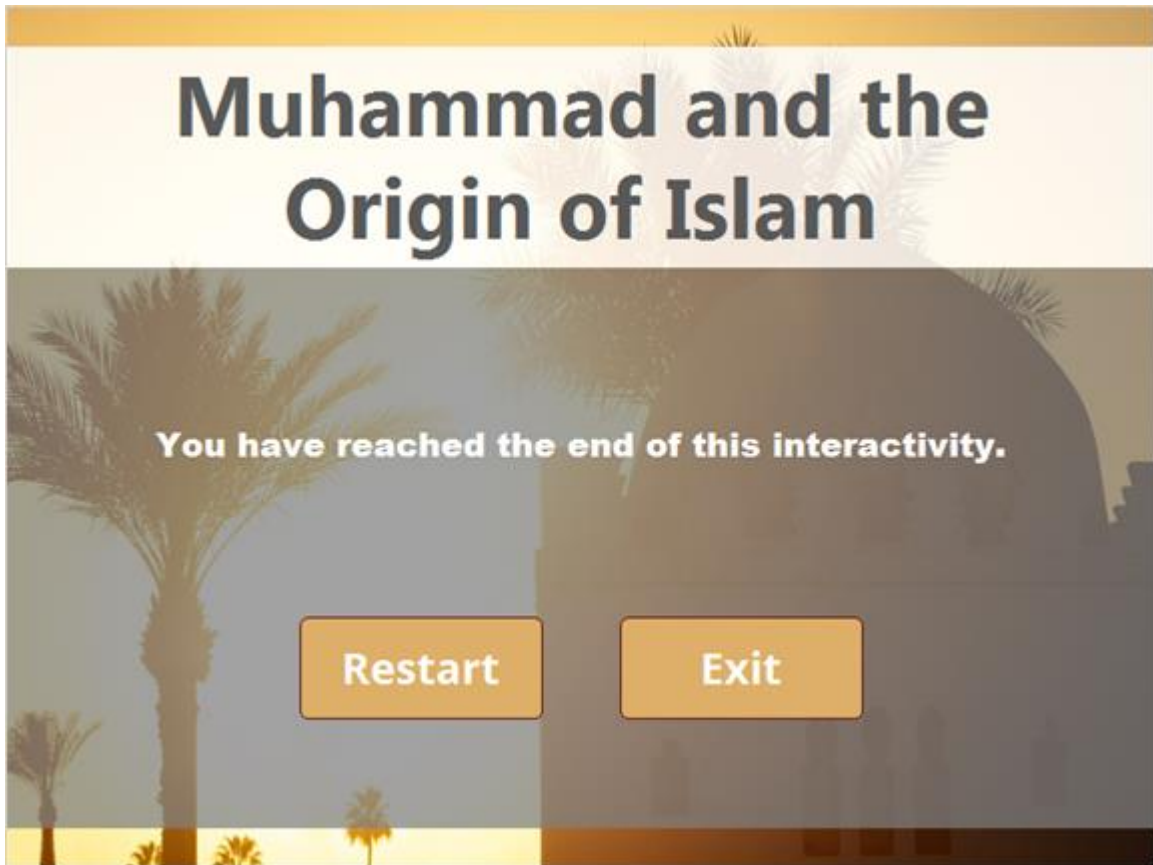
Return to Mecca

The graphic is titled "Return to Mecca" in a large, bold, dark font at the top. Below the title is a map of the Arabian Peninsula. The map shows the Red Sea to the west, the Persian Gulf to the east, and the Arabian Sea to the south. The cities of Medina and Mecca are marked with dots and connected by a dashed line. The word "Arabian Peninsula" is written in a large, bold, red font across the map. To the right of the map is a grey vertical panel with white text listing key events: "Battles", "Spread Islam", "632 A.D. (C.E.): Muhammad died", "Religious", "Political", and "Expansion". The background of the graphic is a warm, golden-brown color with silhouettes of palm trees.

In 630 A.D. (C.E.), Muhammad and other Muslim followers returned to Mecca. Through a series of battles, they forced the city to surrender; they then spread the Islamic faith to others living in Mecca. In 632 A.D. (C.E.), Muhammad died in Mecca. Because followers see Islam as a religion and a way of life, Muhammad became accepted as a religious and political leader. Through the battles and Muhammad's pilgrimages, he successfully united Arab Muslims, providing people with a sense of purpose and a distinct Islamic culture. Later followers of Muhammad would seek to expand Islam across Asia and Africa, and into Spain.

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Conclusion



You have reached the end of this interactivity.