

Dar al Islam Teachers Institute

Alumni Newsletter

Issue # 4 Fall 1999

Notes on Qur'an and Hadith

Allah has Beautiful Names

By Dr. Mohammad Shafi

In Islam, God is Allah, The One other than whom there is no God. He is Al Ahad, The One, absolute unity. He is Al `Ali, the Most High; Al `Aziz, The Mighty; and Al Jabbar, The Irresistible. Gai Eaton writes that "in Islam, God does not embody Himself in any human being or make Himself accessible through idols and images." "but", Gai Eaton continues, " He does make Himself Accessible through His Revealed Names. We, in our small way, can exemplify these qualities and attributes in our daily lives. Inspired and aided by The Most Merciful we can show mercy. Inspired and aided by the One Who Creates Guidance we can guide our fellow men and women. Through His Light our lives may be illuminated. ...We love those who are kind to us, and God is Kindness itself. We love generosity when it is directed toward us, and He is The Selflessly Generous One. We are irresistibly drawn towards beauty, and He is the Source Of All Beauty. Above all, we love Perfection, and we seek it in vain in this imperfect world. We find it in God, Who alone is perfect, and the Qur'an tells us that 'the believers are strong in their love of God'. At the end of the road, sign-posted by the

divine Names, the Muslim rejoices in an overwhelming love for the One who awaits us at journey's end".

The holy Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, is reported by Abou Huraira as saying "God has ninety-nine names, one hundred minus one. The one who enumerates them enters Paradise".

The Qur'an describes God by His attributes and names, and calls these The Beautiful names (Al Asma' ul Husna). This expression occurs in the Qur'an at least four times.

1. Surah Al A'raaf (number 7), Ayah 180: The most Beautiful Names belong to Allah; so call Him by them. But shun such men as distort His names; for what they do, they will soon be requited.

2. Surah Al Asraa' (number 17), Ayah 110: Say: " Call upon Allah, or call upon Rahman; by whatever name ye call Him (it is well); for Him belong the most beautiful names. Neither speak thy Prayer aloud, nor speak it in a low tone, but seek ye a middle course between."

(Continued on page 6)

What's New?

Dar la Islam architect, Hassan Fathy is focus of Aramco Magazine article

The current issue (July/Aug 99) of Aramco magazine has chosen the life and work of Hassan Fathy as its focus. As most of you may remember, it is this elegant, unassuming Egyptian architect who designed the masjid and madressa at Dar al Islam. It is Fathy's insistence that indigenous architecture can be used to bring dignity and beauty to the world's poor, which brought him fame and re-

(Continued on page 4)

Editors

Dr. Mohammad Shafi

Dar al Islam Chairman.

Karima Diane Alavi

Institute Director.

Design/Production

Abdur Ra'uf Declerck

Inside This Issue

Notes on Qur'an and Hadith	1
What's New	1
Curriculum Corner	2
Ideas that Work	3
Faculty Focus	5
Alumni News	7
Calendar of Events	7
Surfing the Web	8

Curriculum Corner
New Resources and Where to Find Them

Library

**A FOCUS ON ISLAMIC
ART AND ARCHITECTURE**



There are many books available on Islamic art and architecture. One thing I would suggest you look for is a book that discusses how Islamic art is a reflection of the faith, rather than simply discussing the observable qualities of the work. Titus Burckhardt is one of the best authors in this respect. His *Art of Islam; Language and Meaning* was written for the World of Islam Festival which took place in 1976. (ISBN 0-905035-00-3) His *Sacred Art in East and West* touches upon the architecture of all major world faiths. (Published by Perennial Books) Burckhardt's *Fez, City of Islam* is a real gem that middle and upper school students would enjoy. (ISBN 0946621)

Other books you might want to look at are "*The Splendor of Islamic Calligraphy*", (ISBN 0-500-01675-5) and Esin Atil's "*Art of the Mamluk's Renaissance of Islam*" which offers insight into the often overlooked fields of metallurgy and glass in the Islamic world.

Thames and Hudson recently came out with "*The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*", edited by M. Frishman and H. Khan. (ISBN 0-500-34133-8). This book weaves together the arts of calligraphy, geometry and architecture. If you're seeking a deeper examination of the sacred architecture of Islam, then you need to see *The Sense of Unity: The Sufi Tradition in Persian Architecture*. This is a real treasure, with photos, drawings and commentary by Laleh Bakhtiar and Nader Ardalan, two scholars who are often quoted by "our own" art and architecture teachers, Robert Armon and Philip Tabb. (see 'Faculty Focus' on page 5) (ISBN 1-226-02560-8)

Did you think there was no painting in the Islamic world? Think again, - and then start digging through the great photos in the Skira books on *Persian Painting* (ISBN 0-8478-0080-6) and *Arab Painting* (Library of Congress # 62-10990)

Media Room

Are you ready to do some art projects in your classroom? Lots of design ideas are available in the following books:

Geometric Concepts in Islamic Art
by Issam El-Said and Ayse Parman
(ISBN 0-86651-421-X)

Introductions to Tessellations
by Dale Seymore and Jill Britton
(ISBN 0-86651-461-9)

Islamic Designs for Artists and Craftspeople
by Eva Wilson
(ISBN 0-486-25819-X)

**VIDEOS AND SLIDES ON
ISLAMIC ART AND ARCHITECTURE**

The University of North Carolina rents a 12 minute video titled "*Word Power in Islamic Art*". The elements of calligraphy are displayed while being supported by 'Oud music in the background. (919) 962-2559.

"*Art and the Islamic World*" is an excellent video survey of the diverse artistic efforts that reflect the Islamic faith and culture. You can purchase it from the Middle East Institute. (202) 785-1141.



One of the best Islamic art curriculum guides is Sylvia Godlas' "*Doorways to Islamic Art*" (ISBN 1-889993-02-6) which includes a slide show and lecture notes for the teacher.

For slides and lecture notes that review the Islamic influence on European painting, see the Council on Islamic Education's "Emergence of Renaissance." (714) 839-2929.

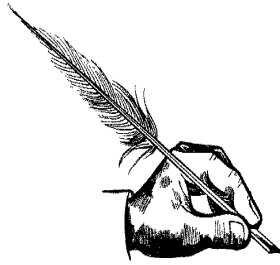
Using the 99 Names of Allah to Begin a Religion Class

I teach a one semester course called Worship to eleventh graders in a Catholic High School in Rochester, New York. An effective and enjoyable unit that I use to introduce the course utilizes some of what I learned and experienced at Dar al Islam during the summer of 1996.

The course begins with a short reading from Michael Pennock's text "The Sacraments, Celebrating the Signs of God's Love" (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1993, p 9). I then use a video, "The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World" to supplement the information from the text (Questar Video, 1990). As the students read, watch and listen, the class is instructed to take notes on what each of the Seven Wonders has to say about the Divine--both in the context of the times and for us today. We then move to listing "Natural Wonders of the World" and discussion follows--leading to what each says about our Creator God.

Individuals are then asked to draw up a list of characteristics of God. Each is told to have at least seven, in keeping with the aforementioned lists, but are encouraged to list more. The students are then paired with a friend; they combine lists, brainstorm, and the list grows to fourteen or more. Pairs are then put into larger groups of six to eight individuals and the procedure is the same--combine, brainstorm, and add as many attributes to the list as their group can. The groups often enjoy this and treat it as competition to see which groups can come up with the most characteristics. Each group is given newsprint and markers to write the entire list down; once this is complete the lists are put away for later.

A prepared handout, "The Most Beautiful Names of Allah", (courtesy of the Dar al Islam Institute) is then distributed to each student. Immediately, the students express an interest in the number of names, the Arabic equivalents, and what qualities match those on their own recently completed lists. Students then use dictionaries to look up approximately 25 names that each group is assigned. While the students work with the dictionaries and definitions, I like to play an audiotape of Islamic music which the students really enjoy hearing. I have varied the next step from semester to semester in getting each individual to ultimately end up with all 99 Names defined. It has worked with individuals reporting to the class verbally, we have circulated written definitions from group to group, worked as pairs and even put to-



Ideas That Work **Alumni share their ideas and experiences**

By Patrick Connelly
The Aquinas Institute of Rochester

gether two groups of eight--success depends upon the chemistry of the class and what works best.

Once every student has all 99 definitions, each group is given back its own list on the newsprint. They are then asked to circle any characteristics on the newsprint that are exactly the same as a name from the 99 Names. Then they identify any which are similar to their own, using the definitions; these they underline and write which one(s) from the 99 Names of Allah they've identified as a match. The end product often results in well over 95% of their list's characteristics have some counterpart from the list of 99 Names.

The groups are then asked to discuss "How did you know that God is _____." (Fill-in-the-blank with the characteristics). "How do you suppose that Muslims know that God is _____." (Fill in the blank with the 99 names). Students share stories of personal experience, formal/informal education and other forms of divine revelation,(and also leads to later study of the origins of Islam and the story of Muhammad.)

A spokesperson for each group then reports to the class on their work. The class is invited to critique each group's results and often are able to add to the number of those attributes that are underlined as similar to the 99 names. Each time the exercise has been done in class, one person, unsolicited, comments how similar the Judeo-Christian view of God is to the Muslim concept of Allah. Productive discussion always follows from this type of conclusion offered by one of their peers in class.

Finally, a day is devoted to showing the students a videotape that I was graciously given permission by Hakim to take during the Institute which I attended. It shows the 99 names being prayed in the mosque in Abiquiu. This has proven to be a highlight of these opening two weeks of the course as many in my classes, see and hear for the first time an example of a worship practice from a tradition other than their own. It stresses the fact that beliefs are expressed through prayer and in doing so, with others, results in a deepening of one's faith. Students are always fascinated with this worship ritual as well as other footage featuring Muslims at prayer.

The entire unit has been instrumental for me in setting a tone for the course. It has been effective in gaining students' attention,
(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 1)

spect. It was also this philosophy that brought him up against those who held the purse strings for funding public housing in Egypt. One of Fathy's first lessons was to learn that his enthusiasm for low cost housing for the rural poor was not shared by those who had interests in industrial building materials, banking, and large scale construction.

It was a trip in the 1940s to a remote farming area of the Delta region that changed



Hassan Fathy visits the new Dar al Islam mosque with A.R. Walter Declerck

Fathy's life forever. As a young, budding architect, one of his first jobs was to construct a school for villagers who lived on land which Fathy was shocked to learn, belonged to his father. He was struck by the misery of the peasants which he felt could easily be alleviated by learning to construct housing from the natural materials which surrounded them; in a word, - adobe. The young architect commented, "I suddenly felt terribly responsible. We had been content to live in ignorance of the peasant's sickening misery. I decided I must do something."

That "something" was the con-

struction of the village of New Gurna, a village which sadly sits almost totally abandoned today. It is a monument to Fathy's signature style of dignified simplicity, but it also represents a lesson to be learned about governments trying to force resettlement on people who aren't prepared for it. The villagers who were moved to New Gurna had no farming experience. They soon moved back to their old village and resumed the other works they knew how to do, leaving Fathy's architectural triumph literally, "in the dust".

There are other, successful Hassan Fathy projects which created low-cost, energy efficient houses for those who couldn't afford the high-rise, concrete structures that were so much in demand in modern Egypt. Ironically, it's the traditional, earthen-ware structures that are best suited for Egypt's hot, dry climate. Adobe remains cool during daylight hours, and then releases its heat during the night; just the opposite of what a concrete structure will do.

By the early 1940s, Fathy was constructing adobe dwellings that worked with, instead of against the local scenery, culture, and spiritual tradition of Islam which calls for architecture to reflect the natural world which surrounds it. By adding a courtyard to the dwellings, Hassan Fathy brought

to completion, the idea of a dwelling as a reflection of the Divine. According to Fathy, the Arabs have applied cosmological metaphors to their architecture, - viewing the home as a microcosm of the universe, with the dome representing the sky. The eight sides of the octagonal base that supports the dome are seen as symbols of the eight archangels, holding up the sky.

It wasn't until later in his life that Fathy received the international recognition that he so deserved. His mission is being continued now by two centers in France that were inspired by Fathy's work and philosophy. Both are producing low cost dwellings in West Africa and the Middle East. Although this is encouraging, the large-scale, government patronage that Fathy sought for his architecture for the poor never really materialized. Yet he remained an optimist, believing that humans would eventually reach the stage where the distinction between sacred architecture and secular architecture would no longer exist, - the point where "The whole city will become the temple, designed and built with the same reverence as the cathedrals of the past."

Dar al Islam is the only Fathy structure in the United States. While built mainly by Nubian masons and local New Mexican residents, Fathy himself came to New Mexico in 1981 to over-see the start-up and to give builder workshops. Since 1994 the Swan Group has been building adobe structures for low-income families in Texas and Mexico. Based on Fathy's designs, these projects are providing homes, construction training and jobs to those who could otherwise not afford to live within a place of such dignified beauty.

"Straight is the line of duty, curve is the line of beauty."

Hassan Fathy, 1900-1989

**Dr. Phillip Tabb
and Robert Armon**

Faculty Focus

Since 1996, Institute participants have been enjoying the slide presentations, lectures and hands-on activities led by Phillip Tabb and Robert Armon.

Affectionately referred to by the teachers as “The Phil and Bob Show”, these two professor-architects have brought to the Institutes just the right combination of light-hearted fun and serious contemplation of the relationship between religious traditions and sacred architecture.

These men have impressive and fascinating backgrounds, both educationally, and in their professions; reflecting a strong interest throughout their careers in how the structures we design can be seen as a reflection of the Divine.

Phil received his PhD from the Architectural Association in London. He has studied with Dr. Keith Critchlow, who is presently co-director of the Prince of Wales Institute of Architecture in London. Phil has also served as a faculty member of the KAIROS School of Sacred Architecture, a London – based school which refers to itself as “A Foundation for the Recovery of Traditional Values in Art and Science”. One of the aims of KAIROS is to present workshops in which participants gain an understanding of how the quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy) serves as a reflection of the Unity of Being.

In fact, it was at a KAIROS workshop in Crestone, Colorado that Phil and Bob formed a friendship that, according to Bob “is like brotherhood.”

Phil’s PhD dissertation, titled “The

Solar Village Archetype” gained him a place amongst the early leaders of the solar energy movement in the U.S. He is the author of several books: *Solar Energy Planning*, *Sacred Places*, *First Principles—The Hidden Meaning in Architecture*, and with Bob, *Angels and Angles in Architecture*.

After practicing architecture and teaching at the University of Colorado for years, in 1998 Phil accepted a position as Professor and Director of the School of Architecture at Washington State University.



Phil and Bob at the ‘99 Teachers’ Institute

Bob Armon holds a Masters degree from Cranbrook Academy of Art, and has been working with sacred architecture and geometry for nearly twenty years. He has extensively studied the Platonic solids since writing his Master’s Thesis on “The Geometry of Divinity: Applications of Sacred Geometry and the Platonic Solids to Architecture”. Bob has been a professor at the Rocky Mountain College of Art, and like Phil, has extensive connections with KAIROS and the Prince of Wales Institute of Architecture in London.

Interestingly, Bob visited Abiquiu to see Dar al Islam when it was just beginning construction. He returned in 1986 with some of the

people who are well known in the field of sacred architecture. According to Bob, they were treated to a feast upon their visit. Little did he know that he and Phil would be presenting workshops at that same site in the 1990s.

It was in 1996 that Phil and Bob created their own non-profit teaching organization, “The Academy for Sacred Architectural Studies”, based in Golden, Colorado. Since then, Phil has moved to Washington, and Bob has moved to Denver, but they still continue to collaborate on architectural and educational projects under the auspices of their Academy. And an interesting list of projects it is! Between the two of them they’ve worked on an entire community that used sacred planning principles, a Tibetan stupa, a native American sweat lodge, the Krishnamurti Study Center, the Unity Church of Bolder, a Jewish Community Center, the Savriti Solar Village and the “Star House” which is a community ceremonial building.

Due to their common interests, the paths of these two men have been crossing for decades now, with Dar al Islam entering that path at several intervals.

“Dar al Islam and friends have always been part of our spiritual family tree.”

Bob Armon

(Continued from page 1)

3. Surah Taha (number 20), Ayah 8: Allah, there is no god but He! To Him belong The Most Beautiful Names.

4. Surah Al Hashr (number 59), Ayah 24: He is Allah, The Creator, The Originator, The Fashioner; to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names; whatever is in the heavens and on earth, doth declare His Praises and Glory; and He is Exalted In Might, The Wise.

Ayahs 22 and 23 of Surah 59 contain the following additional names: The Sovereign, The Holy One, The Source Of Peace, The Guardian Of Faith, The Preserver Of Safety, The Irresistible, The Justly Proud.

Based on a tradition of the Prophet Mohammad, upon whom be peace, ninety nine (99) names and attributes mentioned in the Qur'an have been selected and are in common use by the world Muslim community.

It might be of interest to mention that the personal name of God in Arabic, Allah, is mentioned in the Qur'an some 2317 times. The name Rabb (The Nourisher and Sustainer) in its various conjugations appears about 978 times. Raheem (The Merciful) occurs 97 times, Rahman (The Most Gracious) appears 58 times. Other words related to Mercy and Compassion are used about 157 times. The generic "god" (Ilaah) and its various conjugations occur 147 times (only

once does it occur in the form of "our god" and that in Surah 29, Ayah 46, where it says that "our god and your god are one and the same").

An excellent work on this subject is The Attributes of Divine Perfection, a exceptionally beautiful work of art sponsored and published in a limited edition by Xenel Ltd, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. This work translates the ninety-nine names from the Arabic words into English as given below.

1. God, The One other than whom there is no God. 2. The Most Merciful. 3. The Most Compassionate. 4. The Sovereign Supreme. 5. The Most Holy One. 6. The Sound One with whom all salvation rests. 7. The Giver of Faith, Safety and Security. 8. The Protector and Guardian. 9. The Incomparable and Unparalleled One. 10. The One Who Compels His Creatures to Do as He Wills. 11. The One Supreme in Pride and Greatness. 12. The Creator. 13. The Executive and Maker. 14. The Fashioner. 15. The Very Forgiving One. 16. The Dominating One. 17. The One Who Gives Freely, without Thoughts of Compensation. 18. The One Who Provides All Sustenance. 19. He Who Opens All Truth 20. The Omniscient One. 21. The One Who Takes Away. 22. The One Who Gives Abundantly. 23. The Abaser. 24. The Exalter. 25. The One Who Raises to Honor. 26. The One Who Humiliates. 27. The All-Hearing One. 28. The All-Seeing One. 29. The Arbitrator Supreme. 30. The Just One. 31. The One Who is Extremely Subtle and Unfathomable. 32. The All-Cognizant. 33. The Non-Precipitate and Forbearing One. 34. The Greatest in all Realms. 35. The Utterly Forgiving One. 36. The One Who Expresses Thankfulness by Rewarding Bounteously. 37. The Most High One 38. The Truly Grand 39. The Preserver. 40. The Nourisher and The Watcher. 41. The

Sole Reliance. 42. The Sublime One. 43. The Selflessly Generous One. 44. The Ever Watchful over everything. 45. The Responder. 46. The One Whose Capacity is Limitless in All Realms. 47. The Ultimately Wise One. 48. The Objectively Loving One. 49. The Most Glorious One. 50. The Resurrector. 51. The Witness. 52. The Ultimate Truth. 53. The Ultimate Trustee. 54. The Perfectly Strong. 55. The Firm One. 56. The Patron. 57. The Ultimately Praiseworthy One. 58. The Absolute Reckoner. 59. The Originator. 60. The Restorer. 61. He Who Grants Life. 62. He Who Brings Death. 63. The Ever-Living. 64. The Self-Subsisting One. 65. The Founder Who Has No Needs. 66. The Glorified One. 67. He Who is Uniquely One. 68. The Eternally Besought in Every Exigency. 69. The All-Powerful. 70. The Bestower of Power upon Things. 71. The One Who Causes Advancement. 72. The One Who Causes Retardation. 73. The First, before Whom there is Nothing. 74. The Last, after Whom there is Nothing. 75. The Manifest. 76. The Hidden One. 77. He Who has Charge Over All. 78. The Highly Exalted One. 79. The Beneficent One. 80. He Who Accepts Repentance. 81. The Avenger. 82. The One Who Erases Sin. 83. The Most Compassionate. 84. Lord of All Dominion. 85. Lord of Majesty and Bounty. 86. The Upholder of Equity. 87. The Gatherer of Whatever He Wishes, Wherever He Wishes. 88. The Independently Rich. 89. The Enriching One. 90. The Unconquerable One. 91. The Creator of Harmful. 92. The Creator of the Good and Beneficial. 93. The Light of the Heavens and the Earth. 94. The One Who Creates Guidance. 95. The Originator of Creation. 96. The Everlasting One. 97. The Ultimate Inheritor. 98. The Absolutely Judicious Guide Who ordains rationally. 99. He Who Times All Things Perfectly.

For more on this subject please refer to your copy of the Qur'an and other materials distributed during the Institute. Should you need help, please contact Karima or Shafi.

(Continued from page 3: Using the 99 Names of Allah to Begin a Religion Class)

and in promoting an understanding of the connection between religious beliefs and practices. It has prodded them to think more about who God is and what God is like. They get to share and learn from each other and prove that they have much more in common with people of other faiths than they might have considered before. Perhaps the clearest endorsement of the unit came this year when, while playing the music in class, a senior roaming the halls popped his head in my room and said, "Hey I remember this, it was really cool!"

Editor's Note: If you want to do this with your class, you can get a listing of the 99 Names of Allah off the web at several sites. Many web sites list the names in English and in Arabic, and offer you a chance to hear the names being recited. (<http://members.home.net/ybernier/99a.htm>). If you would like to hear the names recited in three different styles, try (<http://www/alahazrat.net>). Short explanations of what each name means can be found at (http://www.aicp.org/html/the_perfect_names_of_Allah.htm).

Astrolabe Pictures sells both a CD (\$14.95) and a cassette (\$9.95) of these recitations. The title of the recording is "The Most Beautiful Names of God" and can be ordered by calling 1-800-392-7876 or at (www.astrolabepictures.com).

Alumni News

The Washington Interfaith Council held a workshop earlier this year on teaching about other religions. One of their panels included **Lori Mannino** (98) who shared her experience of teaching a new course on comparative religions.

Patrick Connelly (96) was one of three educators selected to travel to Israel for a five week Inter-faith program. He visited the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa Mosque

A trip to see the Whirling Dervishes from Turkey was part of **Barbara Hatch's** (95) academic unit on Islam and the Middle East. She had seen them in Turkey and wanted to share the experience with her students.

Congratulations to **Herb Brodsky** (97) who is now the K-12 District Coordinator of Social Studies for the Freeport, NY school district.

Kim Barbieri (98) has also moved into a new position as Education Specialist for the Eisenhower Foundation Oklahoma. She's busy developing a Learning Center for the new presidential gallery, as well as an educational web site and k-12 curriculum materials.

Dianne Chidester (98) published an article on her experience at Dar al Islam. She has also moved to a new position at Jefferson Community College in Louisville, Kentucky, where she's teaching sociology and anthropology.

It was off to Africa for five weeks for **Patricia Andus** (96) who attended an NEH Program on Islam in West Africa. In October she shared what she learned at Dar al Islam and in West Africa by doing three presentations at the State of Oklahoma Geography Teachers Training Institutes.

Congratulations to **Steve Tamari** (99) and his wife Sandra. Their daughter Amal Victoria arrived on October 4. Mom, Dad and baby are all doing fine.

Calendar of Events

Annual conference of the National Council for the Social Studies
"Defining the Common Good:
A Challenge for the 21st Century"

Orlando, Florida
(November 18 -21 , 1999)

** Come visit the Dar al Islam booth (# 448)
and the
Council on Islamic Education booth (# 446)



Annual conference of the National Council of Geography Educators
"Advancing the Geographic Revolution"

Boston, Massachusetts
(November 3 -6, 1999)

For more info, contact the NCGE at
NCGE-ORG@grove.iup.edu



Middle East Studies Association
Annual meeting

Washington, DC
(November 18-21, 1999)

(the Middle East Outreach Council will be
hosting a workshop for secondary schools in
coordination with the MESA meeting.)

For more information, contact
Zeina Seikaly at (202) 687-6176



Dar al Islam 2000 Teachers' Institutes
(July 9 -22, and July 30 -August 12)



Non Profit Org
US Postage
Paid
Permit No. 6
Abiquiu, NM

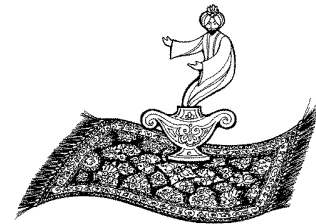
Dar al Islam
Teachers Institute
PO Box 180
Abiquiu, NM 87510



Surfing the Web

Discovering Sites to visit in the Classroom

Art, Architecture, and Virtual Tours



At (<http://www.islamicart.com>) your students can find information on Islamic coins, calligraphy, architecture and carpets. A virtual tour of Isfahan, Iran (a city famous for its architecture) can be found at (<http://isfahan.anglia.ac.uk:8200/virtualtour>). The tour begins at the famed central square, and at the click of a mouse, students can head in any direction from there.

If they're more interested in touring the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul, send them to (<http://www.ee.bilkent.edu.tr/~history/topkapi.html>). Pictures and historical information on al-Aqsa mosque can be found at (<http://www.al-aqsa.com/index.html>).

At (<http://www.islamicity.org/Culture/default.htm>) students can find links to other sites under headings such as Calligraphy, History, Mosques Around the World (where they can hear a recording of the Adhan/Call to Prayer), Art of the Mamluks, Islamic Architecture Resources at MIT, and The Dome of the Rock.