

1 A Muslim person is somebody who follows the religion of Islam. Muslim people live in many different countries around the world. They also speak many different languages. But, whenever one Muslim person greets another Muslim, they say “**As-salamu alaykum**”. This is an Arabic phrase that means “Peace be upon you”.



2 Did you know some **current music artists** are also Muslim? The list includes Lupe Fiasco, Mos Def, T-Pain, Busta Rhymes, Akon, Cat Stevens, Yuna and Zayn Malik. Can you think of some other Muslim musicians?



3 Tim Hortons, or Starbucks? Do you like to start your day, like millions of humans around the globe, with a cup of coffee? The word **coffee** has its roots in different languages, including Arabic. For example, “qahwah” was a popular drink made by the Arab people of Yemen around the 10th century. Coffee was discovered and used by Muslims, as an aid to stay up at night to pray. Through trade, Europeans were introduced to coffee and started using it around the 16th century.¹



4 You may have already heard about the the famous explorer Marco Polo, but did you know that **Ibn Battuta**, another famous explorer from the Arab world, actually travelled longer distances than Marco? He left his home at the age of 21 to perform the Hajj pilgrimage in Mecca and didn’t return for 30 years! His travels, which he wrote about, took him all over the world: from the Middle East to South Asia, all the way to China - and this was all done before cars and planes!²



5 The **first mosque** in Canada was built in Edmonton, Alberta in 1938, and is now seen as a historical building. The mosque has been replaced by a new one, which currently serves a Muslim community of 60,000.³



6 **Malcolm X**, also known as El-Hajj al-Malik el-Shabaaz, was an African-American Muslim who was one of the greatest champions for American civil rights in the 1960s. He encouraged Black Americans to be proud of who they are.



7

Did you know that you can visit a mosque in Canada? Currently, every province and territory has a notable Muslim community, with the largest existing in Toronto, with over 250,000 Muslims residing in the city and over 20 mosques! Many mosques participate in the **Doors Open** event, inviting the public to visit their community's place of worship, and learn more about Islam in general. Even though these events are scheduled, visits are welcome any time of year.



8

Nazem Kadri is a Canadian professional ice hockey player. Currently, he plays centre for the Toronto Maple Leafs of the National Hockey League. He is the third Muslim to ever play in the NHL.



9

Many of you have heard of the schoolgirl, **Malala Yousafzai**. From the young age of 11, she was involved in the struggle for girls' education in Northern Pakistan. This brave young girl survived an attack by those who didn't support education of girls. Malala used this difficult experience to champion education rights for all girls around the world. She won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 at the age of 17. She is now the youngest Nobel Prize laureate, and has been named one of Time magazine's "100 Most Influential People in the World" - for three years in a row (2013, 2014 and 2015).⁴



10

Timbuktu is not a make-believe place. It is a city located in the West African country of Mali, and is home to one of the world's oldest universities, established in the 13th century! This centre of Islamic learning educated about 25 000 students! Institutions like this encourage their students to pursue knowledge without limits. Students were told to "travel to seek knowledge even if it is in China", which in those days was pretty far from the Muslim world.⁵



11

"Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee," famous words of the world famous heavyweight boxing champion and Olympic champion - Muhammad Ali. He was born Cassius Clay, and converted to Islam in 1965. **Muhammad Ali** opposed the United States' war in Vietnam. He opposed the war and the killing of innocent people, and for these beliefs he was stripped of his titles and lost millions of dollars and his reputation. However, after this setback, he eventually regained the title stripped from him.



12

Did you know that Muslims lived in Canada even before **Confederation**, in 1867? The first Muslims recorded were immigrants, but not from a traditionally Muslim country. Agnes and James Love were of Scottish origin. James Jr., born in 1854, was the first Muslim born in Ontario. John and Martha Simon, another Muslim couple, migrated to Canada from the United States around 1871. The first Canadian Census in 1871 recorded the presence of 13 Muslims.



13

The concept of gardens in cities came from Muslim architects and designers who had made it central to city design. The **Alhambra**, a palace in Granada, Spain, is a great example of how architectural beauty and water irrigation systems were brought into cities. We enjoy gardens in most cities today.



14

Muslims fast for 30 days every year in the month of Ramadan. It is one of the five pillars of Islam. Muslims don't eat or drink from sunrise to sunset to experience what it feels like to be poor and hungry, and to focus on self-control in order to be a better person. Once the month is over Muslims celebrate with family and friends for up to three days. This celebration is called **Eid-al-Fitr**.



15

Did you know that there are over **1 billion Muslims** in the world? This means that at least one in every six people in the world is a Muslim person. Although Muslims speak all different languages, the language of the Qur'an is Arabic and the daily prayers are offered in Arabic.



16

Did you know that our green thumb has roots in Islamic culture from India to Spain? In the early 8th century, the art of planting ornate **gardens** with flowers such as irises, carnations and tulips spread to Europe and beyond.



17

Did you know that **Ibtihaj Muhammad** was the first American Olympian to compete in an event wearing hijab, a scarf covering her hair? She won a bronze medal in fencing in the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics.



18

The Aga Khan Museum in Toronto is a great architectural addition to the Toronto art scene. It holds stunning Islamic artifacts from around the world. The Aga Khan, leader of 15 million Ismaili Muslims worldwide, became an honorary Canadian citizen in 2009. The Aga Khan is involved in humanitarian and development projects in Asia and Africa.



19

Do you think that books are a precious part of our day-to-day life? Well, **Alia Muhammad Baker**, a librarian in Basra, Iraq sure thought so. During the American war in Iraq in the 1990s, Alia was scared that precious library books would be destroyed if the library was attacked. So, she moved thousands of books and hid them in people's homes. Sadly, her instincts were right and the library was destroyed. However, this brave librarian showed the world that the love of literature and the respect for knowledge has no bounds.⁶



20

Muslims live in many parts of the world, including countries such as Argentina, Canada, Ethiopia, China, Russia and the U.S.A.



21

In 1492, the King of Spain issued a decree banning all Jews from Spain. The **Ottomans**, who were Muslims, sent their navy to Spain to rescue many Jews from being persecuted in Spain.



22

One of the most interesting and influential explorers of all time was a Muslim from China whose name was **Zheng He**. Zheng He became one of China's greatest admirals, explorers, and diplomats. Back in 1433, he commanded thousands of ships, and is credited with being the first to sail from China to Africa and then on to Europe. There are many cities and buildings in South-East Asia named after this great explorer.⁷



23

It is estimated that at least 89,000 Muslim soldiers died fighting for the **British Army** during World War I. These soldiers are also part of the honoured dead that we remember on November 11th.⁸



24

During WW1, in addition to Indian Muslims that fought for the British, there were also 280,000 soldiers that fought for the other Allied forces. Many of these WW1 soldiers were from Algeria and Tunisia and fought for France.⁹



25

Remembrance Day is around the corner. India sent 1.3 million soldiers to fight for the British Empire and part of the Allied Forces during World War 1. Out of 1.3 million Indian soldiers, 400,000 were Muslims.¹⁰

