

Religion in Malaysia: Worship in a Diverse Society

Background: This lesson is intended to introduce students to the country of Malaysia and its religiously diverse culture. Roughly sixty percent of Malaysians are Muslim, and the remaining forty percent practice religions such as Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, Christianity, Sikhism, and Shamanism. Students will learn about the open nature of Malaysian society regarding religion, and in particular, they will learn basic information about Islam and the unique way it is practiced in Malaysia. Students will go on to learn about the role Islam plays in women's lives and the intersection between Islam, other religions, and Malaysian society.

Objectives:

Students will

- Discuss the concept of identity and analyze the ways in which they are labeled by others.
- Learn basic information about the country of Malaysia.
- Learn about the ways in which various religions have arrived in Malaysia and their points of intersection.
- Explore the origins of Islam and its relationship to other major world religions.
- Identify the major principles and practices of Islam.
- Recognize the ways in which Islam affects daily life in Malaysia, particularly regarding gender issues.

Day One: Malaysia and Its Myriad Religions

1. As students enter the classroom, have a map of the Muslim world either on their desks or on an overhead projector (*See Appendix 1*).
2. (10 minutes) Have students write down any word they can think of that *others* would use to describe them. Emphasize that this list should be words or descriptions that other people, whether from the United States or not, would use to label them. They might start by listing terms other students have named them and then branch out to think of ways others in the world might characterize Americans. Have each student share her list with a partner.
3. (5 minutes) Referencing the map, explain to students that although many Middle Eastern states have many Muslims, Islam is practiced worldwide. In fact, the largest population of Muslims is in Indonesia, and Islam is the majority religion in Malaysia. Explain that this lesson will be about Malaysia and the various religions within it, particularly Islam. First, explain the following to students:

Malaysia is a richly diverse body of more than 25 million people. All of the world's major religions have substantial representation there, the main adherents of each largely reflecting the multi-ethnic character of the population.

The variety of religions found in Malaysia is a direct reflection of the diversity of races living there. Although Islam is the state religion of Malaysia, freedom of religion is guaranteed. The Malays are almost all Muslims. The Chinese embrace an eclectic brew of Taoism, Buddhism and ancestor worship, though some are Christians. Although Christianity has made no great inroads into Peninsular Malaysia it has had a much greater impact upon East Malaysia, where many indigenous people have converted to Christianity, although others still follow their animist traditions.

4. (10 minutes) Share with students some basic information about Malaysia (*See Appendix 2*).
5. (20 minutes) Divide students into five groups and explain that each will be responsible for learning a bit about a different major religion in Malaysia. Give each group a different religion and provide it with a handout that briefly describes how that religion is practiced in Malaysia (*See Appendix 3*). After giving each group about 10 minutes to study its assigned religion, have a spokesperson for each group share some of the basic facts about that religion and how it came to be practiced in Malaysia. (Optional extension: If you have time, have students conduct research on the Internet to explore each religion in more depth and then share their findings with the class.)

6. (10-15 minutes – may be continued on Day Two) Now explain to the class that you will explore Islam in more depth, as it is practiced by the largest group of Malaysians. Share with students a brief background of how Islam came into existence (*See Appendix 4*). Tell students that the word “Islam” translates to “peace.” Ask students how Islam relates to other religions. Be sure that students understand that Muslims believe Jesus was a prophet, and thus, many believe Islam to be an extension of other religions that came before (Judaism and Christianity). Explain that Muslims believe Mohammed was the last prophet to impart God’s teachings and helped clarify and solidify the religion for his followers.

Day Two: Islam in Practice

1. (10 minutes) Finish any hanging discussion from the previous lesson on the history of Islam, and then continue this class with a discussion on practicing religion. Ask students the following questions: What are the ways in which people practice religion? What do people *do* to show their faith? Make a list on the board of ways in which people show their faith. (For example, students might mention praying, attending services, creating altars, reading holy books, etc.)
2. (15 minutes) Now give students the handout on the Basic Tenets of Islam (*See Appendix 5*). Read it as a class and ask students the following questions:
 - What elements of these beliefs are familiar to you from other religions?
 - From what you know, in what ways does Islam diverge from Christianity and Judaism?
 - Make sure students understand the following terms (all are included in the reading):
 - Allah
 - Koran
 - Islam
 - Muslim
 - Muhammad
 - Five Pillars
 - Jihad
4. (25 minutes) Share the handout “Important Aspects of Islam” with students (*See Appendix 6*). Have them read this individually and then discuss in small groups. In small groups, students should come up with a list of important aspects of their own religion. They can use the list of Islamic aspects as a springboard. For example, what does their religion say about suicide? What kinds of beliefs are central to upholding their religion? If students are not religious, ask them to come up with a list of rules or principles they generally try to follow. Students’ lists will vary greatly, and encourage discussion in the groups. As an entire class, then, have groups present some of their ideas.
 - How much does religion influence your everyday life?
 - In what ways does religion influence culture, in general? In this country? In other countries?

Tell students that there is a difference between Islam and Muslim culture. Explain that Muslims in various countries have their own cultural traditions, which determine such things as the forms of dress. Show students pictures of various types of Islamic dress, each of which have examples in Malaysia (*Appendix 7*).

Day Three: Islam in Malaysia

1. Remind students that 60% of Malaysians practice Islam. Explain that this class period will be spent talking about identity, women, and Islam.
2. (5-10 minutes) Read the following excerpt from a Malaysian scholar on Islam and tell students that this is one point of view (You may want to stress this point, indicating that students are free to disagree). You will follow the reading with discussion.

How has the practice of Islam changed or the influence on Islam changed over the last 20, 30 years in Malaysia?

As in a number of other post-colonial societies, Muslims in Malaysia have become very conscious of their Islamic identity. And they have sought and expressed that identity in certain ways. In the case of Muslims in Malaysia, and to some extent, Indonesia, the urbanization process that had taken place over the last two or three decades has been a very important factor.

If you look at Kuala Lumpur, say, 30 or 40 years ago, it was a largely non-Muslim city. When Malays began to arrive in large numbers as the result of urbanization and the new economic policy and so on, they needed to establish their identity in what was seen as a largely non-Muslim environment.

And they chose those aspects of identity that best expressed their distinctive character, which is what happens very often when you want to assert your identity. Now, this has meant that Muslims tend to emphasize – some would even say overemphasize – those elements which make them different from the others, distinguishes them from their fellow citizens. This is not very healthy. But at the same time, Islamic resurgence of this sort has led to a search for a more authentic expression of the self: What they are, who they are, what all this is leading to. These are questions that have to be addressed in any society, especially in a society that is confronted with the challenge of modernization and globalization. You want to know what your place is in the scheme of things. ...

3. (10-15 minutes) Ask students the following questions:
 - What reasons can you identify for Muslims to want to emphasize their distinguishing characteristics in Malaysia?
 - In what ways is this particularly relevant considering the religious pluralism in Malaysia?
 - Have you ever been in a position where you accentuated your differences, whether cultural, religious, ethnic, or anything else? Why did you do this?
 - In what ways is identity connected to the idea of “otherness”? In other words, how do differences help us define ourselves?

- What kinds of groups in the United States have experienced resurgence in history or are doing so currently? What were/are the reasons? What does this achieve?
 - Do you agree with this scholar that emphasizing difference in an effort to distinguish one's self is "unhealthy"? Explain.
4. Introduce the group Sisters in Islam as a group of Muslim women, based in Malaysia, who fight legal battles on behalf of women and who advocate women's rights through a contextual interpretation of the Koran and other holy scriptures. Explain that because of this group, Malaysia is known to have some of the most progressive Muslim women in the world. These are the organization's objectives (For more information, follow this link: <http://www.sistersinislam.org.my/>):
- To promote and develop a framework of women's rights in Islam, which takes into consideration women's experiences and realities;
 - To eliminate injustice and discrimination against women by changing practices and values that regard women as inferior to men;
 - To create public awareness, and reform laws and policies, on issues of equality, justice, freedom, dignity and democracy in Islam.

5. (35-40 minutes) Now show the first video clip shown on the PBS Frontline page, "Portraits of Ordinary Muslims: Malaysia." This clip will give students insight into some of the issues women in Malaysia are dealing with under the Sharia law, a judicial arm of the Malaysian government that follows Islamic principles. Explain that men are allowed to have up to four wives under the Sharia law in Malaysia, and the following video shows how one woman is taking to try to change this.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/muslims/portraits/malaysia.html>

6. Lead the class in a discussion based on the first video clip:
- What kinds of challenges are Muslim women facing in Malaysia?
 - What kinds of challenges do women face in other cultures?
 - What kinds of challenges do men face in other cultures?
 - Aida is waging a legal battle to change the way the court interprets the Koran. What are some ways in which people interpret other holy works differently?
7. Show the second clip, which gives more information about the Sisters in Islam. Follow the video with more discussion:
- How central to religion do you think are certain old texts like the Bible, the Torah, the Koran, etc.?
 - What other religions struggle with striking a balance between preserving traditions and changing with modern movements?
 - What do you think is the best way for religious groups to reconcile following traditional holy writings with modern changes and the way many societies are evolving?

For more information, see links to other sources (*Appendix 8*).

THE WORLD OF ISLAM
DISTRIBUTION OF WORLD POPULATION

Muslim percentage of state population

- 86-100
- 66-85
- 36-65
- 16-35
- 5-15

THE WORLD OF ISLAM

Appendix 2:

Quick Guide to Malaysia

Overview:

Malaysia is a majority Muslim country, though under the constitution the 40% of the population who are non-Muslims have the right to worship as they will.

Malaysia is a traditionally conformist society where political debate is not encouraged. The country has been criticized for continuing to use colonial era security laws which allow for indefinite detention without trial or charge.

Malaysia was ruled for over two decades by the authoritarian but pragmatic Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, under whom Malaysia became the world's most industrialized Muslim country. Mahathir's successor, Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi, has started to make government more open.

Badawi has also promoted "Islam Hadhari" ("Civilisational Islam"), which stresses the importance of education and science harking back to the great Islamic civilizations of a thousand years ago.

Malaysia is also home to one of the most radical reforming groups in the Muslim world, "Sisters in Islam", who are calling for an end to polygamy and for women to be allowed to become Sharia judges.

Country profile:

Malaysia boasts one of south-east Asia's most vibrant economies, the fruit of decades of industrial growth and political stability.

Its multi-ethnic, multi-religious society encompasses a majority Muslim population in most of its states and an economically-powerful Chinese community.

Consisting of two regions separated by some 640 miles of the South China Sea, Malaysia is a federation of 13 states and three federal territories. It is one of the region's key tourist destinations, offering excellent beaches and brilliant scenery. Dense rainforests in the eastern states of Sarawak and Sabah, on the island of Borneo, are a refuge for wildlife and tribal traditions.

Ethnic Malays comprise some 60% of the population. Chinese constitute around 26%; Indians and indigenous peoples make up the rest. The communities coexist in relative harmony, although there is little racial interaction.



Although since 1971 Malays have benefited from positive discrimination in business, education and the civil service, ethnic Chinese continue to hold economic power and are the wealthiest community. The Malays remain the dominant group in politics while the Indians are among the poorest.

Malaysia's economic prospects remain healthy, although it faces fierce competition from its neighbours, and from China and India. Free trade talks with the US are under way.

The country is among the world's biggest producers of computer disk drives, palm oil, rubber and timber. It has a state-owned car maker, Proton, and tourism has considerable room for expansion.

But it also faces serious challenges - politically, in the form of sustaining stability in the face of religious differences and the ethnic wealth gap, and, environmentally, in preserving its valuable forests.

Malaysia's human rights record has come in for international criticism. Internal security laws allow suspects to be detained without charge or trial.



Malaysia made the transformation from a farm-based economy

- **Full name:** Federation of Malaysia
- **Population:** 25.3 million (UN, 2005)
- **Capital:** Kuala Lumpur
- **Area:** 329,847 sq km (127,355 sq miles)
- **Major languages:** Malay (official), English, Chinese dialects, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam
- **Major religions:** Islam, Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, Christianity, Sikhism
- **Life expectancy:** 71 years (men), 75 years (women)
- **Monetary unit:** 1 ringgit = 100 sen
- **Main exports:** Electronic equipment, petroleum and liquefied natural gas, chemicals, palm oil, wood and wood products, rubber, textiles
- **GNI per capita:** US \$4,960 (World Bank, 2006)
- **Internet domain:** .my

Appendix 3:

Buddhism in Malaysia

Indian influence spread well beyond the sub-continent to include South East Asia. That trade was the motivating force in this is clear from the Sanskrit names given to South East Asian ports such as Takkolo (market of cardamom), Karpuradvipa (island of camphor) and Suvarnabhumi (land of gold).

Colonists from India established a number of independent States in the Malay Peninsula during the first five centuries CE. Buddhism (along with Hinduism) may therefore have entered the Malay Peninsula at a very early period, in association with Indian trading and colonising activities in the region. There is evidence for this early contact in the mention of several place names from the peninsula in Pali canonical works such as the Niddesa and the Milindapanha.

Buddhist missionary activities in Malaysia might have occurred as early as the 3rd century CE. After the kingdom of Sri Vijaya fell, Buddhist ideas and practice continued to enter the Malay Peninsula as the northern Malayan States fell under the influence of the Thais, and the southern Malayan States fell under the control of the Javanese empire of Majapahit.

Archaeologists have found evidence of this early Buddhist influence in finds of Buddhist sculptures from the Amaravati School (2nd to 4th century CE) in the present day Malaysian State of Kedah, in the north west of the peninsula. Unfortunately, these finds have not so far included any written evidence, such as inscriptions on stone, from this very early period.

Hinduism in Malaysia

Around nine percent of the population of Malaysia are Tamil Indians, of whom nearly 90 percent are practising Hindus. Hinduism spread to Malaysia very early, and was important until Islam arrived in the 15th century. Traces remain in the Malay language, literature and art.

Indian settlers came to Malaysia from Tamil Nadu in the late 19th and early 20th centuries: labourers to work on rubber plantations and a few English-educated Indians, forerunners of today's professional middle class. There is also a minority from Northern India.

Malaysian Hinduism is diverse, with large urban temples dedicated to specific deities, and smaller temples on estates. The estate temples generally follow the tradition of the Indian region from which the workers originate. Many people follow the Shaivite, or Saivite, tradition (worship of Shiva), of Southern India.

Shaivism is a devotionalist grace-based concept and emphasises love for the deity, rather than fear. Folk Hinduism is most common, including spiritualism, animal sacrifice and worship of local gods.

Since the Second World War a revival of Hinduism has occurred among Indian Malaysians, with the foundation of organisations and councils to bring unity or to promote reform.

Most Hindus do recognise one God, or supreme deity. However, often God is seen as an impersonal force, or one of many gods. Jesus is also likely to be identified as one of many deities.

There are many paths to God. To be 'born again' implies reincarnation.

Sikhism in Malaysia

The Sikh community in Malaysia owes its beginnings in the country to the British connection and in particular with the recruitment of Sikhs for the paramilitary and police units which formed the nucleus from which the modern police and military forces of the nation derived. The first of these units was the Perak Sikhs.

The Sikhs believe and worship the one and only God who is formless. Hence, idol worship is denounced by the Sikh scriptures. The Sikhs' place of worship is known as a 'Gurdwara' which is open to all irrespective of race, religion, color or sex.

The Sikhs celebrate the principal festival which is also the Sikh New Year that is called Vasakhi, each April and the birthdays and martyrdom of Sikh Gurus and the installation of the Holy Guru Granth Sahib as the 'living Guru of the Sikhs for all times', amongst others.

Christianity in Malaysia

Francis Xavier set foot in Malaya in 1545, and in 1814 Robert Morrison began work in Melaka, where his Chinese translation of the New Testament was later printed. During the 1800s other churches were planted among the British settlers and government servants but, because of an understanding between the British government and the sultans, evangelistic work was not permitted among Muslims.

Meanwhile, in East Malaysia, Anglicans and Methodists were at work among the animist tribal peoples.

With the withdrawal of outside mission help, Malaysian Christians were forced to stand on their own feet. Increasing numbers of well-qualified Christians have sensed God's call to reach out to their own people and lead the church.

In East Malaysia there has been significant church growth among the ethnic peoples. The Evangelical Church of Borneo [SIB] has been very active in local Christians cause and it has learned to stand on its own.

Islam in Malaysia

Islam came into this part of the world in C.E. 674 (42 years after the death of Prophet Muhammad, pbuh) when the Umayyad ruler Muawiyah was in power at Damascus. Two hundred years later in C.E. 878 Islam was embraced by people along the coast of Peninsular Malaysia including the port of Klang, which was a well-known trading centre.

Before the arrival of Islam, the local Malays embraced an ancient religion with various forms of belief with some of the population belonging to the Hindu/Buddha religion. Life was structured and arranged in ways that showed the influence of more than one religion.

At the political level, the royal ruler and the head of state in most communities in the Malay world embraced the Islamic religion. The people were impressed and attracted by the provision in the Qur'an and the Hadith that mankind should be ranked on a basis of interpersonal equality.

In Islam there was no discrimination, or division on the basis of color, class tribal affiliation, race, homeland and birthplace, all of which gave rise to problems. Equal rights seemed the right human solution, which in practice meant the acceptance of rights and obligation as a member of the Muslim Ummah (community).

The local population saw that Islam could extricate them from this bondage and provide the means for the extirpation of social evils. The new religion gave the small man a sense of this individual worth - the dignity of man - as a member of the Ummah.

The efforts of the ulama' in implementing Islamic teachings gradually reached rulers, officials, community leaders and the ordinary people. Their efforts left its mark in such places as Banten (formerly Bantam), East Java, Macassar, Kalimantan, the Southern Philippines, Southern Thailand, Melaka, Trengganu and elsewhere. The ulama' also played a part in the administration, and some of the powerful sultans held firmly to the teachings of Islam.

Appendix 4:

Quick Guide to Islam and Its Origins

Origin of Islam:

The name of this religion, Islam, is derived from the Arabic word "*salam*," which is often interpreted as meaning "peace." However "submission" would be a better translation. A Muslim is a follower of Islam. "*Muslim*" is an Arabic word that refers to a person who submits themselves to the will of God. Many Muslims are offended by the phrases "[*Islamic terrorist*](#)" or "[*Muslim terrorist*](#)," which have been observed so often in the media; they are viewed as oxymorons.

Most religious historians view Islam as having been founded in 622 CE by Muhammad the Prophet (peace be upon him).^{*} He lived from about 570 to 632 [CE](#). The religion started in Mecca, when the angel Jibril (a.k.a. Jibreel; Gabriel in English) read the first revelation to Muhammad (pbuh). (Mohammed and Muhammed (pbuh) are alternative spellings for his name.) Islam is the youngest of the world's very large religions -- those with over 300 million members -- which include Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism.

Believers are currently concentrated from the West coast of Africa to the Philippines. In Africa, in particular, they are increasing in numbers, largely at the expense of Christianity.

Many do not look upon Islam as a new religion. They feel that it is in reality the faith taught by the ancient Prophets, Abraham, David, Moses and Jesus (Peace be upon them). Muhammad's (pbuh) role as the last of the Prophets was to formalize and clarify the faith and to purify it by removing foreign ideas that had been added in error.

Appendix 5:

The Basic Tenets of Islam

Islam considers six fundamental beliefs to be the foundation of their faith:

1. **A single, indivisible God.** (God, the creator, is just, omnipotent and merciful. "Allah" is often used to refer to God; it is the Arabic word for God.)
2. **The angels.**
3. **The divine scriptures,** which include the Torah, the Psalms, the rest of the Bible, (as they were originally revealed) and the Qur'an (or Koran, which is composed of God's words, dictated by the Archangel Gabriel to Muhammad).
4. **The Messengers of God,** including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus and Muhammad – the last prophet; (peace be upon them). Muhammad's message is considered the final, universal message for all of humanity.
5. **The Day of Judgment** when people will be judged on the basis of their deeds while on earth, and will either attain reward of Heaven or punishment in Hell. They do not believe that Jesus or any other individual can atone for another person's sin. Hell is where unbelievers and sinners spend eternity. One translation of the Qur'an, 98:1-8, states: *"The unbelievers among the People of the Book and the pagans shall burn for ever in the fire of Hell. They are the vilest of all creatures."* ("People of the Book" refers to Christians, Jews and Muslims). Paradise is a place of physical and spiritual pleasure where the sinless go after death.
6. **The supremacy of God's will.**

Practices:

A Muslim's duties as described in the Five Pillars of Islam are:

1. To recite at least once during their lifetime the **shahadah** (the creed: *"There is no God but God and Muhammad is his Prophet"*). Most Muslims repeat it at least daily.
2. To perform the **salat** (prayer) 5 times a day, if possible. This is recited while orienting one's body with qibla (the shorter of the two great circle routes towards the Kaaba at Mecca) This is generally North East in the U.S. 4 The five prayers are:
 - Fajr (Morning Prayer) which is performed some time between the break of dawn and just before sunrise
 - Zuhr (Noon Prayer) offered from just after midday to afternoon

- 'Asr (Afternoon Prayer) offered from late afternoon until just before sunset
 - Maghrib (Sunset Prayer) offered between sunset and darkness
 - Isha (Night Prayer) offered at night time, often just before sleeping. 1
3. To donate regularly to charity through **zakat**. This is a 2.5% charity tax on the income and property of middle and upper class Muslims. Believers are urged to make additional donations to the needy as they feel moved.
 4. To fast during the lunar month of Ramadan. This is believed to be the month that Muhammad (pbuh) received the first revelation of the Qur'an from God.
 5. If economically and physically able, to make at least [one hajj \(pilgrimage\) to Mecca](#).

Appendix 6:

Important Aspects:

1. **Jihad** (struggle) is **probably the most misunderstood religious word in existence**. It often mentioned on Western TV and radio during news about the Middle East, where it is implied to be a synonym of "holy war" - a call to fight against non-Muslims in the defense of Islam. The vast majority of Muslims have an entirely different definition of **Jihad**. It is seen as a personal, internal struggle with one's self. The goal may be achievement in a profession, self-purification, the conquering of primitive instincts or the attainment of some other noble goal. ² [More details](#).
2. **Calendar**: Muslims follow a lunar calendar which started with the **hegira**, a 300 mile trek in 622 [CE](#) when Muhammad (pbuh) relocated from Mecca to Medina. [Al-Hijra/Muharram](#) is the Muslim New Year, the beginning of the first lunar month. The beginning of the year 1434H occurred on 2002-MAR-15 of the Gregorian calendar.
3. **Separation of church and state**: Originally, in Islamic countries, there was no separation between religious and civil law, between Islam and the state. Muhammad and his successors were both religious and political leaders. Turkey became a secular state during the 20th century. This is a controversial move in conservative Islamic circles.
4. **Proselytizing**: Muslims are not required to actively recruit others to Islam. In the Qur'an, Allah told Muhammad that *"You certainly cannot guide whomever you please; It is Allah who guides whom He will. He best knows those who accept guidance."* (28:56). Muslims are expected to explain Islam to followers of other faiths, but it is up to Allah to guide those whom he wishes to.
5. **Suicide**: This is forbidden. The Qur'an clearly states: *"Do not kill yourselves as God has been to you very merciful"* (4:29). Only Allah is to take a life. Since death must be left up to Allah, [physician assisted suicide](#) is not allowed. On the other hand, Muslim physicians are not *"encouraged to artificially prolong the misery [of a person who is] in a vegetative state."* ⁵

Appendix 7:

Variations in Muslim Dress

Female Muslim Dress



Clockwise from top left: Muslim women wearing burqas in Afghanistan, Muslim Malaysians wearing a hijab and a veil, Muslim Malaysians wearing only the hijab, and another variation of the hijab in the United States.

Male Muslim Dress



Clockwise from top left: Muslim Malaysian men wearing the kufi, Muslims from Malaysia wearing the turban, a kufi worn in Saudi Arabia, and a Muslim in Saudi Arabia wearing the ghutra (also known as kuffiyah or smagh).

Appendix 8:

Works Referenced and Additional Sources

Information on Islam:

<http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/islam/>
http://www.educationworld.com/a_tsl/archives/01-1/lesson0027.shtml
<http://filebox.vt.edu/users/cecraig/portweb/islamunit/islamplans.htm>
http://www.religioustolerance.org/isl_intr.htm
<http://www.sipa.columbia.edu/REGIONAL/mei/research.shtml#muslims>
<http://www.ing.org/speakers/subpage.asp?num=15&pagenum=1>
http://www.cie.org/ItemDetail.aspx?id=N&m_id=28&item_id=105&cat_id=28
http://www7.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/data/2002/01/01/html/ft_20020101.5.html
<http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/54/091.html>

Information on Malaysia:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4232451.stm>
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/spl/hi/middle_east/03/islam_around_the_world/html/asia_malaysia.stm
<http://www.geographia.com/malaysia/cultures.html>
http://www.virtualmalaysia.com/our_malaysia/in_brief/religion.cfm

Muslim Life in America:

<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/muslimlife/homepage.htm>

Image References:

http://newsimg.bbc.co.uk/media/images/40965000/jpg/_40965091_apmalaymuslims203.jpg
http://staff.xu.edu/~tan/images/islam/map_islamic_world.jpg
http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.economist.com/images/20050604/2305AS1.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.economist.com/displayStory.cfm%3Fstory_id%3D4033968&h=300&w=400&sz=32&hl=en&start=4&tbnid=d_61vxSWyEEdIM:&tbnh=93&tbnw=124&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dislam%2Bmalaysia%2B%26gbv%3D2%26svnum%3D10%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DG