

**SCHOOL LINKING PROJECT-ISLAMIA AND NORTH WEST
19 NOVEMBER 2009
CHILDREN'S COMMENTS**

Before meeting the children from the other school, I felt:

- Worried that they would say something negative about my religion.
- Nervous/apprehensive because I did not know if they would like me/if they were going to be rude to me.
- Scared because we had never met them and I was worried they would laugh at me.
- Scared but really excited. I did not know what it was going to be like but I just felt positive.
- Excited, because I thought it was going to be really fun.
- So happy about meeting them.
- Rather anxious but interested.
- Nervous that they would stay with their own friends.
- Excited because I really wanted to do this project/had so many things to share.
- Happy/optimistic/calm/shy.
- Worried and excited at the same time.

Something I found easy on the day

- Making new friends so quickly.
- Getting to know them.
- Communicating and talking with them because they were very friendly.
- Going into the Mosque and taking off our shoes.
- Listening to the Hajj presentation/completing the Hajj worksheet with my partner.
- Helping them learn about Muslims and the Hajj.
- Playing games together and being safe with them.
- Learning about them.
- Speaking to them, making friends, smiling and having fun.
- Playing football.
- Everything.
- Finding things we have in common with them.
- Break time, talking and playing games because they were saying 'come and play with me'.

- Working together and making new friends by asking questions.
- Making notes on my partner for the biography.

My favourite activity

- Watching the presentation on the Hajj/learning about the Hajj.
- Playing the games.
- The linking bingo activity because you got to find out what you had in common with them.
- Watching them pray.
- Playing football in mixed teams.
- Asking questions for the biography and getting to know more and more about them.
- Break was really fun because we got to mix.
- The Countdown game.
- Working with them in the classroom and in the Mosque.
- Comparing us to them.

Something I found difficult

- Walking into their school because everyone was staring at me.
- Understanding about the Hajj even though I enjoyed it.
- Explaining about the Hajj/getting them to understand more about the Hajj.
- Pronouncing some of the their names correctly.
- Filling in the worksheet.
- Doing the Linking game at the beginning of the morning.
- 'Not making friends with them' and 'not talking to them'.
- Ending break time because we were having fun.
- Communicating with the people who sometimes made it difficult to talk as they were shy.
- When it was play time and there was nothing to play with.
- I found nothing difficult.
- Seeing them go and them staying for a really short time because they seemed very nice and kind.

Something new I have learnt

- About the festival of the Hajj.
- How the festival of Hajj links with the modern world.
- That Muslims have to go to Mecca at least once in a lifetime.

- That you have to take your shoes off before entering a Mosque.
- How they pray to their god.
- That showing our religion is not an embarrassment.
- Why Muslim girls wear scarfs around their hair.
- That we can be friends even if we have different beliefs.
- That Muslim/Jewish people are not as bad as I thought.
- How people can be different from what you thought they were.
- That they are friendly and nice people and they are just like us.
- Their religion is similar to our's and we have a lot in common.
- To communicate with other children even if they are from another culture.
- If someone has a different religion, you can still be great friend with them and work with them.
- Every religion has its own good to it.
- That they are not all rude and mean like they say.
- You can have friends from other religions.
- That if somebody is from a different religion, it doesn't mean you can't make friends with them.
- Becoming friends with them was the right thing.

One question I wish I had asked

- What do you eat during the festival of Eid/during the Hajj?
- If you take off your kipa, is it disrespectful for your religion?
- How did you feel before we came here?
- How do you feel when you wear your scarf?
- What is the difference between a kipa and a top hat?
- Were you excited to meet us?
- Why do the boys wear those little strings down their trousers?
- Did you like us?
- Did you enjoy your stay? How did you feel about the visit?
- Why did we take our shoes off?
- How do you remember all the prayers and the movements that go with them?
- How many special religious occasions do you have in the year and what are they?
- Why do you say 'peace be upon him' after a prophet's name?
- Did you enjoy the day and learn something new?
- Do you want to be my friend?
- Do you feel the same about our relationship?

Something that surprised me

- How determined they were to be friends with me.
- How quickly they started talking to us when we played the Bingo game.
- How easily and quickly we made friends.
- How friendly they were to us.
- They were nicer than I thought.
- They liked the same games that we liked.
- They were friendlier/kinder than I expected.
- How well we got on with each other.
- How much they already knew about my religion.
- How much they wanted to know us.
- That they took us to their Mosque.
- How they pray, as it is nothing like we pray.
- They had small kipas. I thought they had big ones.
- That we had to take our shoes off.
- That they were all wearing head scarfs.
- When we demonstrated how we pray, I thought the Rabbi would hate it but when I looked at him, I saw him smiling.

Meeting the children from the other school made me think that

- We are going to have a great year together.
- Some of them may like us.
- I can play with people from other religions.
- We are just the same.
- Jews and Muslims can be friends even if there is conflict between them around the world.
- They are really similar to me.
- Jews and Muslims can mix and get on.
- It is not that hard to make friends with new people you meet.
- Everyone is different in their own way.
- I am happy to be meeting people from a different religion.
- You cannot judge someone by their religion.
- We can be friends even though we are different.
- Nobody is exactly the same but nobody is very different.
- It does not matter what religion you are, you are still similar in lots of ways.
- They do not hate us.
- They are kinder than I thought.
- It is a great experience.

- It is great that we do a project together.
- All people are the same.
- They are not as bad as I thought they were. They are really nice and kind.
- I can't wait to visit their school and meet them again.
- Whatever religion you are, you can be friends with everyone.

Something I would like to do differently next time we meet

- Have more time to do the activities.
- More play time/art activities and fun things.
- Play more games together.
- To work and speak more with them.
- Play the mixing game later.
- Spend more time together.
- Go to the park together.
- Being able to chose my partner.
- More sports.
- More free time.
- Have a longer visit.
- Find my partner and talk to each other.
- To be in fours rather than in pairs.
- To stay much much longer and play more activities to know more and more about them.
- Have more time just to chat.
- Make something creative.
- Stay with them longer and play more games.
- I would not want to change anything.
- I want it to be much much longer!

Collated by Valerie Davis