# **Disposition:** Caring for others, animals, and the environment

## **Lesson:** Two

### **Question/LO:** How can marriage create an environment for caring? How does a Muslim wedding encourage the couple to care for each other?

| **Dimension of learning** | **Activities** | **Resources** |
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| Learning about religious traditions and non-religious worldviews | *There are two aspects of marriage between believers of any faith tradition:*  *a) the civil contract*  *b) the spiritual union*  *In the UK it is only Christian weddings in recognised Christian places of worship where the two elements of marriage happen simultaneously. In other religious traditions the religious ceremony is either preceded or followed by a civil ceremony. In non-religious traditions there is only a civil contract and ceremony.*  God wants followers to create a caring world. One way of doing this is by creating small, caring environments, which together create a sharing world.  Ask pupils to suggest ways in which caring environments can be produced or created.  Marriage can create a caring environment.  In a Muslim marriage, two people agree to get married without any form of pressure. This agreement is declared in front of witnesses. This process is called Nikkah (Islamic Marriage Ceremony). The process leading up to the Nikkah ceremony is:   1. Bride and Groom are ready to give consent for marriage and understand that marriage is a covenant or pledge to Allah. It is about rights and responsibilities towards each other. It is about love and mercy and coming together to be happy and content. 2. Parents have given their blessing. 3. An Imam, Muslim scholar or similar has given their blessing. 4. The legal guardian or nominated representative of the bride is available to be present at Nikkah. 5. Witnesses are available to be present at Nikkah. 6. Mahr arrangements have been finalised between the Bride and Groom. *Mahr are the conditions included in the marriage contract by the bride and agreed by the groom. These could be material gifts: as little as a small sum of money or piece of jewellery; or as large as a house. In addition, or instead, the gift may be confirmation of a lifestyle choice (e.g. freedom to work or follow a profession). Anything given to the bride in the Mahr is 100% hers to keep even if the marriage should end in divorce.* 7. Marriage officials are available to conduct the Nikkah (an Imam or religious scholar etc).   Show pupils the photos/pictures of an actual Nikkah (Islamic marriage ceremony).  The Imam or a learned person starts the ceremony starts in the name of Allah (God). The bride is asked three times whether she agrees to marry the groom with his proposed Mahr. The bride must answer for herself. The Imam or the learned person then asks the groom if he agrees to marry the bride with the Mahr he has proposed in the presence of the same three witnesses. This completes the Muslim marriage ceremony.  A Marriage Khutbah (sermon, address) is then read. It varies depending on what the Bride and Groom might want the Imam to include in the marriage Khutbah. However, the following three verses of the Qur’an are normally included.  First  “And one of His signs is that He created mates for you from yourself that you may find rest in them, and He put between you love and compassion; most surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect”  (Qur’an 30:31)  Ask the pupils to discuss what this means to them.  Then read the following to the pupils.  Second  “And we created you in pairs” (Qur’an 78:8)  Ask the pupils, do pairs only exist in humans?  Third  “O people, be careful of (your duty) your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mates of the same (kind) and spread from these two, many men and women; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, by Whom you demand of another (your rights) and (to) ties of relationship. Surely Allah ever watches over you. (Qur’an 4:1)  Ask the pupils what this means to them.  These three readings from the Qur’an aim for the couple to understand that marriage means caring for each other.  Ask the pupils to discuss what is the purpose of the Nikkah Khutbah which includes the three readings from the Qur’an.  Remind everyone - the significance of marriage is for the Bride and Groom to care for each other. It is hoped that a caring couple will be the foundation of a caring family and a caring family is the foundation of a caring community.  Muslims believe that the Bride and Groom form a family and families form communities. | Pictures/photos of Muslim  marriage ceremonies. There are many on-line or members of the class may be able to bring some into school.  Henna for hand decorations.  (Ensure that this is a reputable, traditional orange/red/brown henna. Black henna contains powerful chemicals and should not be used in school. More information at nhs.uk.)  Pupils can source a good range of images from the internet, or bring some in from home (with permission) to make a display showing the diversity. |
| Learning from faith and non-religious worldviews | Ask the pupils if they agree/ disagree with the following statement.  “The fundamental basis for a caring society is often found within family units. The family unit is highly valued in the Muslim community” | n/a |
| Learning to discern | Ask the pupils what they think are the good things about families.  Ask the pupils what can the difficulties be? | n/a |