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“Every religion has a distinctive quality, and the distinctive quality of Islam is modesty.”

-Al-Bayhaqi, Ibn Majah in Maliks Muwatta

1. What does it mean to be modest?
2. How is traditional female Muslim clothing modest?

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"Why do Muslim women have to cover their heads?"

This question is one which is asked by Muslim and non-Muslim alike. For many women it is the truest test of being a Muslim.

The answer to the question is very simple - Muslim women observe HIJAB (covering the head and the body) because Allah has told them to do so.

"O Prophet, tell your wives and daughters and the believing women to draw their outer garments around them (when they go out or are among men). That is better in order that they may be known (to be Muslims) and not annoyed..." (Qur'an 33:59)

1. Why do women observe Hijab?

2. What does the Qur'an say about observing Hijab?

Hijab



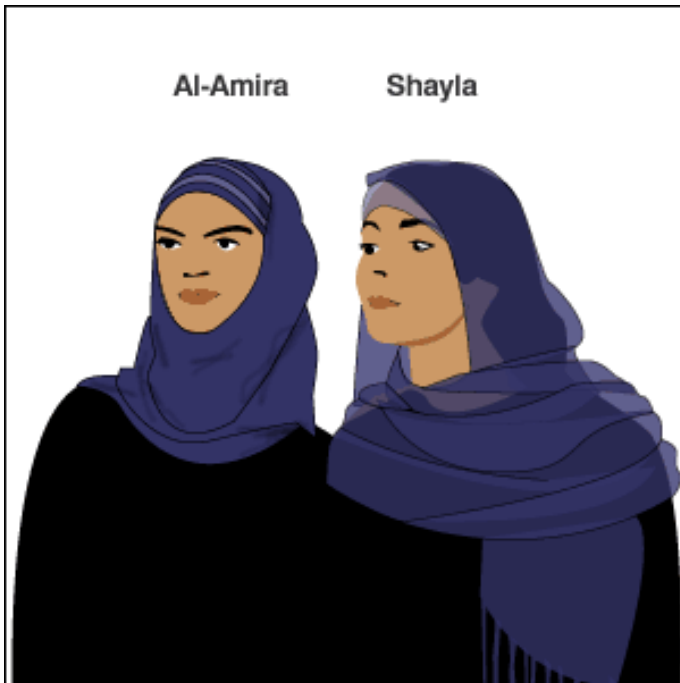
The word hijab comes from the Arabic for veil and is used to describe the headscarves worn by Muslim women. These scarves, regarded by many Muslims as a symbol of both religion and womanhood, come in a myriad of styles and colors. The type most commonly worn in the West is a square scarf that covers the head and neck but leaves the face clear.

The niqab is a veil for the face that leaves the area around the eyes clear. However, it may be worn with a separate eye veil. It is worn with an accompanying headscarf. The burka is the most concealing of all Islamic veils. It covers the entire face and body, leaving just a mesh screen to see through.

Niqab

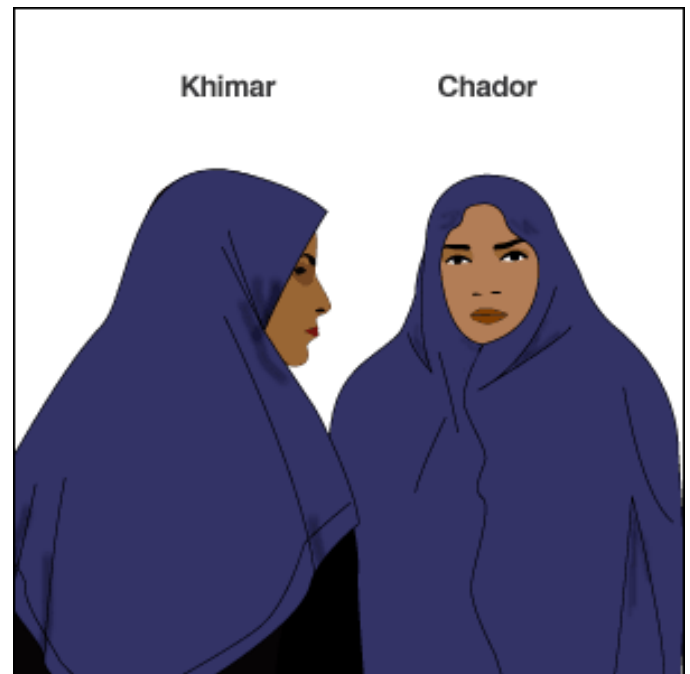
Burka





The al-amira is a two-piece veil. It consists of a close fitting cap, usually made from cotton or polyester, and an accompanying tube-like scarf. The shayla is a long, rectangular scarf popular in the Gulf region. It is wrapped around the head and tucked or pinned in place at the shoulders.

The khimar is a long, cape-like veil that hangs down to just above the waist. It covers the hair, neck and shoulders completely, but leaves the face clear. The chador, worn by many Iranian women when outside the house, is a full-body cloak. It is often accompanied by a smaller headscarf underneath.



1. Where does the word "hijab" come from?
2. Which of these is the most "western"?
3. What would you think if you saw a woman in a Niqab or Burqa at Oakbrook Mall?



1. What are these women protesting?
2. Why do you think that a lot of the world views hijab as being repressive?



Yemeni women defiantly burned their traditional veils Wednesday in protest of President Ali Abdullah Saleh's brutal crackdown on anti-government demonstrations. Thousands of women gathered in the capital, Sanaa, said witnesses. They carried banners that read: "Saleh the butcher is killing women and is proud of it" and "Women have no value in the eyes in Ali Saleh." They collected their veils and scarves in a huge pile and set it ablaze -- an act that is highly symbolic in the conservative Islamic nation, where women use their veils to cover their faces and bodies. It's the first time in the nine months of Yemen's uprising that such an event has occurred. More than 60 women were attacked in October alone by the government, said protester Ruqaiyah Nasser. Government forces are raiding homes and also killing children, she said.

1. How are these women protesting?
2. What are they protesting?



The organization Women2drive, which campaigns for women to be allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia, has been very involved in the small but very public protests. In recent months, scores of women have driven vehicles in Saudi cities in an effort to put pressure on the monarchy to change the law. One protester explains, "Driving is a basic simple right. Denying it is hurting the image of the country. Even if the ban is nothing to do with religion, it is also hurting the image of Islam,". The women,

most of whom learned to drive overseas, say their campaign will continue until a royal decree is issued allowing them to drive "without any conditions". Social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook have been key for the women drivers, providing support networks and, crucially, publicity outside the kingdom

1. What is this poster promoting?
2. How is the movement gaining strength around the world?
3. Where have you seen something similar to this in our history?

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Tawakul Karman, a Yemeni journalist and activist, is one of three women awarded the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize. She becomes the first Arab woman to win the prize. The 32-year-old mother of three founded Women Journalists Without Chains in 2005. She has been a prominent activist and advocate of human rights and freedom of expression for the last five years, and led regular protests and sit-ins calling for the release of political prisoners. Karman has been a key figure among the youth activists since they began camping out in an urban space dubbed 'Change Square' in central Sanaa in February demanding the end of Saleh's (President of Yemen) three-decade family rule. She has often been the voice of the street activists on Arabic television, giving on-the-ground reports from the square outside Sanaa University, where dozens of activists have been shot dead by government forces. "I'm so happy with the news of this prize and I dedicate it to all the martyrs and wounded of the Arab Spring... in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Libya and Syria and to all the free people who are fighting for their rights and freedoms.

1. Who is this woman and why is she being recognized by the international community?
2. Why do you think her award is so significant for the Middle East? Explain.



Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, paid a royal visit to the United Arab Emirates this week (November 2016), where an all-female security team accompanied her around. Camilla's protective squad were picked from among the more than 50 women who serve in the UAE's presidential guard, according to the website Emirates Woman. From left to right, they are Shaima al Kaabi, Basima al Kaabi, Hannan al Hatawi (hidden behind the duchess), Nisreen al Hamawi and Salama al Remeithi, per the Royal Collection Trust. During their visit to the Gulf state, the duchess and Prince Charles advocated for religious tolerance and encouraged women to take on more leadership roles. But it seems these security guards are already making their own statement. Three of the women climbed Mount Everest earlier this year.

1. What is the UAE presidential guard? How many women are employed in this group?
2. What does this picture say about the value of women in the United Arab Emirates? Why did this picture make such a big statement in the news and in social media?