



# Proud to be a Muslim?

## Survey data to use in your classroom

In our British Muslim Youth Survey we inquired among more than three hundred Islamic school pupils aged 11–18. The survey was completed with the supervision of RE teachers in about twenty different schools. Some schools sent just a few responses, but others with a high-density Islamic demographic sent 30–40 replies. This rich research sample enables us to see in a series of snapshots what Muslim young people are experiencing, their reflections on their identity, and their insights into the nature of religion, culture and community.



In this article we present 21 answers to the question ‘What makes you proud of Islam?’ It is the first published result from the British Muslim Youth Survey. There is an extended sample of replies, 39 in all, available on the website and better suited to examination classes.

### Use this method with your pupils:

- 1 Talk with the class about the methods of social studies and ethnography that can be used to study religion. These methods collect data by asking people about their own experience. Such methods complement the methods of history, philosophy or theology in religious studies by drawing attention to the lived experience of religion in particular contexts.
- 2 Ask your pupils in threes to consider the research question: ‘What makes young people proud of Islam?’ Get them to guess a range of answers.
- 3 Give pupils the data to read and consider. It is best to print out the cards and cut them up. Then the groups can read them aloud in turn, one by one. Can they classify the data as they read? They should discuss and write down their answers.

Then ask them

- a. Did your guesses match what the sample Muslim voices say?
  - b. What generally popular replies did you notice?
  - c. What individual replies – from just one person – did you notice?
  - d. What did you learn from this sample of Muslim ideas?
  - e. What are the key words among all the replies?
  - f. How has this method, listening to young Muslims, added to your understanding of Islam?
- 4 Share thinking around the class, and then write a summary individual paragraph on what makes young Muslims proud about their religion.
  - 5 Develop an idea for some research of their own: a similar survey among young Christians, or atheists? A different question addressed to young Muslims?

Can they do this research even if it is on a small scale?

- 6 What do pupils have to say about the sense of pride they feel in their own identities? Is it similar to or different from the pride these young Muslims articulate?

Understanding Islam: a strategy to resource teachers. RE Today advisers are currently working on this project, and have already published *Picturing Islam, Picturing Muslims*. Look for further resources in 2023.

