



FEZANA Age-Appropriate Lesson Plan

Subject Category (circle one): Religion/Ceremony History Prayer Gathas
Comparative Religion **Shahnameh**

Age Group (circle one): PreK-K Grades 1-3 Grades 4-5 **Grades 6-8** Grades 9-12

Lesson # (if applicable): 7

Subject of the Lesson: Rostam and Sohrab-Part 4

Background Knowledge for the Teacher:

Review the last sections from Lesson #4, 5 and 6 before continuing: Sohrab goes to Iran, King Kae Kaus (Kae Kavus) sends for Rostam, King Kae Kaus insults Rostam, Rostam's scathing reply, The Reconciliation, March towards the Fort of Sapid, Death of Zindeh-Razam, Sohrab takes stock, Sohrab meets Rostam, Rostam deceives Sohrab, and The Last Duel.

Rostam requests for 'Noshdaru' :

Suddenly Rostam realized that King Kae Kaus had a medicine by the name 'Noshdaru' which healed the worst of wounds. He requested Gudarz to get it urgently. When Gudarz went to King Kae Kaus and requested him to give the medicine, the king declined to give it as he feared that if Sohrab survived, then the father and son would form a formidable duo. He suspected that the two may get together, topple his rule and snatch his throne away from him. Gudarz returned to Rostam and asked him to go personally and request the king for the medicine. As an anguished Rostam set out to go, he received the news that Sohrab was no more in the world.

Sohrab breathes his last:

The news of Sohrab's death at his own hands was too much for Rostam to bear. He grieved and sobbed uncontrollably. He requested the other paladins who were sharing his grief to request the king to announce the end of war as per the last wishes of Sohrab.

The lifeless body of Sohrab was taken to Zabulistan where his grandparents Zal and Rudabeh too broke down on seeing the young and handsome Sohrab lying in a state of eternal rest. Rostam had a new Dakhma (Dakhma – an open round structure where dead bodies of Mazdayasnis/Zoroastrians are exposed to the elements) erected in the shape of a horseshoe and laid the body of his son in it.

The news of Sohrab's death spread like wildfire all around the world. In Turan, Houman delivered the news to Afrasiyab who too was grieved at this sudden death. In no time, the tragic news reached the King of Samangan who conveyed the same to Tehmina, the young mother of Sohrab. Tehmina who was excitedly preparing for the return of her young son along with his father was shattered at this news. She could not come to terms with the fact that her promising young son was now a lifeless lump of flesh.



In a mad frenzy, she destroyed everything that reminded her of Sohrab. Unable to bear the pain, she often lapsed into unconsciousness. She donned a black dress and spent her days in a dazed state. Unable to bear the shock, she too passed away within a year of her son's death.

Lesson for students:

The teacher will use the information in the “Background Knowledge for the Teacher” section to go over the story. After reading the story to the students, the students can work on the activity listed below.

Activity for Students:

After reading, students should discuss the lesson/moral of this section of the story. They can also discuss where the characters might have made changes to their actions to change the events of the story. Students will also begin to create and perform a play about the story of Rostam and Sohrab.

Some sample discussion questions can include:

- Do you think if Rostam had obeyed the King's orders and arrived at court immediately when called and had spoken with more respect, the King would have given him the solution to heal Sohrab?
- How could have Rostam changed Kae Kavus' mind to give him the medicine?
- Was it right for Rostam to ask Kae Kavus for the medicine?
- How do our actions today affect tomorrow's events?

Sources:

1. *Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings* retold by Elizabeth Laird
2. *Shahnameh: The Epic of the Kings* by Abolqasem Ferdowsi (Translated by Reuben Levy)

Background Knowledge for Teacher Prepared by: Mahnaz Behmardian

Lesson and Activity for Students Prepared by: Tanaz Karai

Edited by: Tanaz Karai

Date: 9/2024