



FEZANA Age-Appropriate Lesson Plan

Subject Category (circle one): Religion/Ceremony Celebration **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): Post-Sassanid Empire- Lesson 8

Subject of the Lesson: ZYNA-Zoroastrian Youth of North America

Background Knowledge for the Teacher:

Zoroastrians have migrated and resided all over the globe. At times, these migrations have been on a large scale and other times they have begun with individuals.

The largest of these migrations happened after the Arab invasion of Iran in 631 CE mostly to India and then again in the 1980s and still ongoing with the 1979 Islamic revolution of Iran.

Those who had migrated to India in the 8th century due to the persecution of Zoroastrians in Iran are known as Parsis.

Parsis since their migration to India have migrated to other parts of the world for trade, commerce, better education, and improved living conditions.

Today, there are many Zoroastrian centers and communities residing in North America. Many of Zoroastrian centers and smaller communities come together under the umbrella of the Federation of Zoroastrian Association of North America (FEZANA).

Brief history of FEZANA:

The idea of a unifying Zoroastrian organization has long been on the minds. This became a foreseen reality in the 5th North American Zoroastrian Congress in Los Angeles in 1985. The organizers of the Congress, Ms. Farangis Shahrokh and Ms. Dhunmai Dalal placed the proposal for the organization of a North American Zoroastrian Body on the agenda. Mr. Rohinton Rivetna of Chicago drafted the constitution soon after. Delegates from different Zoroastrian centers with the aid of legal services of Ms. Dina McIntyre reviewed, fine-tuned, and finalized the document. On November 15, 1986, the final draft was sent and signed by 16 of 17 Associations of record in 1986. FEZANA was registered in the State of Illinois on June 2, 1987, as a not for profit religious and charitable corporation. FEZANA's vision is of being a forum to unite and strengthen individual Associations with the decision-making power not with the executive officers of the FEZANA but within the member Associations (individual Associations



have the only voting power). The day-to-day operations of FEZANA will be conducted by its executive officers (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer) and committees that serve under the executive officers.

FEZANA partners with Zoroastrian Associations to sponsor congresses, offers scholarships to students, and hosts educational talks among other contributions. Some of the FEZANA committees include the Religion Education Committee that supports religion education and teachers, and Interfaith Committee to introduce Zoroastrian religion to a wider audience among other active committees. For a complete list please visit <https://fezana.org/committees/>

FEZANA has a monthly newsletter that consists of shared news by different Zoroastrian organizations connecting all the Zoroastrians in North America. Many events such as youth camps, programs initiated by different organizations, new books by Zoroastrian authors and much more get circulated through the FEZANA newsletter.

For more information about FEZANA please refer to the 2007 summer issue of the FEZANA Journal or visit FEZANA's website: https://fezana.org/fjissue/FEZANA_2007_02_Summer.pdf
<https://fezana.org/>

Zoroastrian Youth of North America (ZYNA):

ZYNA is the youth committee of FEZANA organizing events from camping, road trips, youth congresses to weekly get-togethers and more. Zoroastrian youths are encouraged to join ZYNA and it is a great community for the younger generation to look forward to.

Lesson for Students:

You can present the lesson either using the accompanying PowerPoint with the provided information for each slide (1) or use the lesson and activity combination portion (2).

1. PowerPoint with the provided information for each slide:

1. The accompanying PowerPoint introduces the students to a larger community of Zoroastrians showing them a bird's eye view of different opportunities for them to get involved, contribute, and make new friends. The green check marks on the slides signify the activities in which students in grades 6-8 can participate in. The students will be asked at the end of the lesson to name some of the activities their age group can participate in. The student who recalls the most activities is the winner.
 - **Slide 1**
Zoroastrians have migrated to different areas since long ago. This lesson concentrates on the Zoroastrians who have migrated and living in North America and aims to introduce the different activities the youth can participate in.



- **Slide 2**

Two of the major Zoroastrian migrations happened after the invasion of Islamic Arabs in 631CE mainly to India (Parsis) and the second major migration happened after the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979.

- The Pahlavi Dynasty (1925-1979) was favorable to minorities and promoted ancient Iranian history. Under the Pahlavi, the country of Iran and minorities including Zoroastrians flourished. Women were free to dress how they liked, Iran was wealthy and respected by other countries. People who traveled to Iran during this time have very fond memories of the country.
- After the 1979 Islamic revolution of Iran minorities including Zoroastrians were persecuted leading to many Zoroastrians and Iranians leaving Iran to settle in other countries. Some Parsis had settled in North America long before 1979, however since then and continuing still today more and more Iranian Zoroastrians and Parsis have settled in North America.

Slide 3

Read off the slide.

Slide 4

Here are some of the Zoroastrian Associations and Groups we have across the USA and Canada.

Slide 5

This is the New York Dare Mehr, one of the newest ones that was built recently for 5 million dollars. It has a beautiful fountain at the front that has both water and fire coming out which is really cool.

Slide 6

This is the inside of the New York Dare Mehr.

Slide 7

This is the prayer room with the fire in the New York Dare Mehr.

Slide 8

This is the also newly made Dare Mehr in Houston, Texas. It is the only Dare Mehr in North America that has had the eternal fire transported from Iran/India.

Slide 9

This is a cool picture of the Dare Mehr lit up at night.

Slide 10

This is the prayer room with the fire in the Houston, Texas Dare Mehr.

Slide 11

This is the Dallas, Texas Dare Mehr.

Slide 12

Here is the Westminster Dare Mehr in California. It's one of the oldest Dare Mehrs in North America.



Slide 13

Here is the Los Angeles Dare Mehr in California.

Slide 14

And the Orange County one in California.

Slide 15

And the San Diego one in California. There are 6 Dare Mehrs in California.

Slide 16

And the San Jose one in California. They have camps there every year which is a lot of fun.

Slide 17

And here is the Chicago Dare Mehr in Illinois.

Slide 18

- In 1985 Zoroastrian leaders in North America realized the need for a unifying Zoroastrian organization.
- In 1987 Federation of Zoroastrian Association of North America was established as a not-for-profit organization in Illinois. (Please share what you see fit with students from “the brief history of FEZANA “section provided in material for teacher section.)
Since then, FEZANA has been active in different forms to unite all Zoroastrian centers and communities across North America through sports, the youth committee(**ZYNA**), offering scholarships, supporting various programs such as Return to Roots, and congresses.
- There’s lots of fun things FEZANA helps organize which will be presented in the following slides.

Now let’s go through some things FEZANA does.

Slide 19

- Zoroastrian Sports Committee (**ZSC**) is the sports committee of FEZANA. Usually, every 2 years there is a Z Games which is so much fun. It’s like a Zoroastrian Olympics, they have swimming, track, volleyball, basketball, tennis, and a gala night. It’s on the 4th of July weekend, with many social activities in addition to the sports competitions. California hosts it every alternate time.
- There is a green tick on this one which means at your age you can attend this! Whenever you see a check mark on the slide, write it down, it will be important at the end.

Slide 20

- **Return to Roots** is an event that aims to happen every year. As of 2023 there are 7 Return to Roots
- Trips that have happened. What is Return to Roots? It’s a 2-week trip to India where a group of 25 people can learn about our Zoroastrian history from when our ancestors migrated to India 1000 years ago. There are lots of Dare Mehrs there and so many Zoroastrian people.
- Everyone we have spoken to who have gone on this trip has said nothing but good things and usually changed their life. People that attend this trip usually make a lot of life-long friends. The age range to attend this event is 22-35 years old.



- This program is organized through an organization in India and FEZANA subsidizes 50% of the cost of the attendees. Further financial help is provided for qualifying individuals. You just need to reach out to them and ask. Remember this one for when you are older!

Slide 21

- Every 4 years there are North American Congresses. People from all ages can attend. Imagine a hotel full of lots of young Zoroastrians, it's crazy and so much fun. There's also pre and post congress events like going to Disneyland and Universal Studios.
- These are amazing places to make lifelong friends and see your friends from all over the world! Incredible memories you can look back on. **FEZANA** is also working on making a North American Youth Zoroastrian Congress only for young people. So, keep an eye out for that!

Slide 22

- FEZANA has a whole youth committee called **ZYNA** which stands for Zoroastrian Youth of North America.

Slide 23

- Read words on the slide. The future of Zoroastrians is really in our hands. From the age of 10 onwards you can be part of ZYNA and from the age of 15 you can get leadership positions in ZYNA and shape the world.

Slide 24

- ZYNA has so many WhatsApp groups you can be part of right now! And if there's one you don't see here that you want to start, reach out to ZYNA and they will likely help create a new one!
- The Z Youth WhatsApp group has more than 370+ members and whenever someone is visiting a new place, they message their group chat and say "Hey is anyone in e.g., Toronto, Canada? I'm here for a weekend and would love to hangout" and people respond! By clicking any of these links you can join them. This is also a great way to connect with young Zoros before you go to in-person events because you will already have so many friends from all over North America!

Slide 25

- No need to wait to see what people look like. Start hanging out! Every Sunday 9pm EST/6pm PST ZYNA has a Zoom hangout.
- The first Sunday of the month is a Game Night, we usually play games like quip lash and codenames.
- The second and fourth Sunday of the month we hang out and talk. And the third Sunday we have a Movie night and usually watch movies with Zoroastrian actors! Like Meher Pavri in the movie Wedding Season. If you ever want to join, click the link that's on the words "Sundays @6pm PST" and it will take you straight into the ZYNA Zoom hangout. ZYNA is super welcoming and would love to see you there.



Slide 26

- ZYNA has a bunch of in person events to attend! Every year there's a ZYNA retreat that usually happens during January/February.
- Every year there is a camp in Ontario, Canada near Toronto. And now there is a Road Trip to Dare Mehrs the first one of these being to the 6 Dare Mehrs in California in 2023.

Slide 27

- ZYNA retreats are so much fun. In 2023 we went to an NBA game, awesome restaurants, karaoke, and worked on awesome projects for ZYNA.

Slide 28

- The yearly camp ZYNA supports, is great fun, there's tents, cooking on a grill, playing games, having a talent show around the fire, going to the water, having workout sessions, yoga sessions, learning relationship session etc. all with awesome young Zoros like you.

Slide 29

- As of 2023 a Zoroastrian Exchange Program was created to involve the young Zoros who aren't old enough to go to the camps/retreats/some congresses.
- If you're interested in being involved, make sure to reach out to ZYNA!

Slide 30

- If you forget everything, just remember to add yourself to the ZYNA weekly newsletter so you can have access to all the events and news to be involved with what you're interested in.
- You can be at any age to get the weekly newsletter!

Slide 31

- There are so many perks being involved with ZYNA. You have access to subsidies! For instance, ZYNA gave \$60,000 to Zoroastrian Youth in USA and Canada to help make the cost of going to the World Zoroastrian Youth Congress in London in 2023 cheaper. About 280 people went to London and only 180 people applied for the subsidy. ZYNA wants everyone to be able to be informed to access subsidies.
- By being involved in ZYNA you can gain expertise in specific skills such as graphic design through the paid version of Canva, project management and leadership skills, learn how to work within an organization etc., And there is always the huge perk of making amazing lifelong friends!

Slide 32

- Every year ZYNA throws a Zoom Nowruz Concert and Nowruz Countdown Event which attracts about 300+ people. We would love to showcase your talent. It could be singing, dancing, music, art, comedy etc., No age limit!
- Would love to see you showcased at the next concert or see you attend.

Slide 33

Read the slide.

Slide 34



Ask students to name some of the activities in which their age group can be a part of. The students who names the most activities is the winner!

2. Lesson and activity combination:

Topic/Unit: Youth Engagement in the Zoroastrian community

Lesson Objectives / Learning Targets: Understand the importance of connecting with other Zoroastrian youth, familiarize with various Zoroastrian groups (ZGroups), and how they can do so.

Essential Questions: Why is it important to connect with other Zoroastrian youth? How can we connect with them? What are ZGroups?

Materials Needed: Whiteboard, markers, Internet-connected device, slide deck

Introduction / Anticipatory Set: Start with a discussion about the students' experiences connecting with other Zoroastrian youths. Show them the slide about ZGroups and discuss the different options available for connecting with other youths.

Vocabulary: Connection, engagement, youth, ZGroups, ZFitness, Zwordle, Zrecipes, Zwealth, ZEducation, ZYouth, ZWomen, Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook.

Lesson Procedure:

Direct Instruction (10 minutes): Discuss the importance of connecting with other Zoroastrian youths and introduce the different ZGroups - ZFitness, ZWordle, ZRecipes, ZWealth, ZEducation, ZYouth, ZWomen. Discuss the Various social media platforms like Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, where they can engage with other Zoroastrians.

Guided Practice (15 minutes): Brainstorm ways students can engage with other Zoroastrian youth using ZGroups and social media platforms. Discuss the schedule presented on the slide (Game Night, Hangout, Movie Night)

Independent Practice (10 minutes): Have students come up with a plan to connect with other Zoroastrian youth, either locally or online. This plan should include joining at least one of the ZGroups and participating in one of the social activities (Game Night, Hangout, Movie Night).

Summary/Closing Activity (10 minutes): Share and discuss the plans. Reinforce the importance of building connections within the Zoroastrian youth community.

Learning Extensions: As homework, students can begin implementing their plan and write about their experiences.



Assessment: Participation in brainstorming and discussion, quality of their plan, homework reflection.

Resources: Zoroastrian community websites, social media platforms, FEZANA.

Post Lesson / Teacher Reflection: Reflect on the effectiveness of the lesson, student participation, and whether the objectives were met.

Sources:

1. <https://fezana.org/>
2. <https://fezana.org/zyna/>
3. <https://www.zathletics.com/>
4. https://fezana.org/fjissue/FEZANA_2007_02_Summer.pdf
5. <https://fezana.org/309/>

Teacher knowledge content prepared by: Artemis Javanshir

PowerPoint and the provided information for each slide: Kimiya Shahzadi

Lesson for students and activity: Nilufar Kamdar

Edited by: Nilufar Kamdar

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