



FEZANA Age-Appropriate Lesson Plan

Subject Category (circle one): **Parsi 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

Subject of the Lesson: Yazatas

Background Knowledge for Teacher:

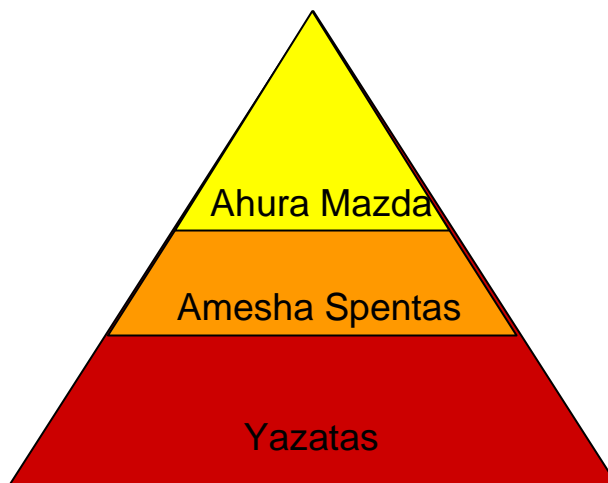
The Yazatas are helpers of Ahura Mazda who are special beings worthy of deep reverence. There are 33 Yazatas in total, with 30 of the Yazatas linked to the 30 days of the calendar and the remaining 3 Yazatas are Dahm (yazata of blessings), Hom (yazata of good health) and Burj/Barjor (yazata of water).

It is believed that many Yazatas have the ability to heal, take care of the creations and grant wishes.

The first seven days of the calendar and their Yazatas are linked to the seven Amesha Spentas:

- Hormazd - is linked to Dae pa Adar, Dae pa Mehr, Dae pa Din
- Bahman - is linked to Mohor, Gosh, Ram
- Ardibehsht - is linked to Adar, Sarosh, Behram
- Shehrevan - is linked to Khorshed, Mehr, Asman, Aneran
- Asfandarmad - is linked to Ava, Din, Ashishvangh, Mahrespand
- Khordad - is linked to Tir, Fravadin and Govad
- Amardad - is linked to Rashne, Ashtad, Zamyad

The 33 Yazatas along with the 7 Amesha Spentas aid Ahura Mazda in taking care of the creations and the physical world (see diagram below). Each yazata represents a specific principle to help Zoroastrians lead a good life.



The principle/meaning behind each yazata can be found in the calendar image below:



Vocabulary: Yazata; Humkar; Humakara, Parab (the day the roj and month coincide) ; Ghambar; Names of the Yazatas.

Suggested Material:

1. 30-day calendar

Lesson for students:

1. Explain what is a Yazata (Triangular Diagram) in comparison to Ahura Mazda and Amesha Spentas: Ask students to name some pairs of superheroes or cartoons and their sidekicks like Batman & Robin, Shrek & Donkey, Pinocchio & Jiminy Cricket. Next ask them why the sidekick is important in the context of the book or movie. What qualities does the sidekick possess (helpful, loyal, brave, lovable, obedient...)? Now compare yazatas to the lovable/adorable helpers to assist the Amesha Spenta’s in their job to keep the universe in harmony.
2. Relate Yazatas to the calendar and their meaning: Give students a copy of the calendar. Pick one Amesha Spenta and ask them to identify which other days could be connected to it. Then ask them to color those with a similar color. For example, they can color yellow, all the squares that have something to do with fire – Ardibehesht, Adar, Sarosh, Behram
3. Discuss how each set of yazatas and their Amesha Spenta are responsible for maintaining order, harmony, and integrity in the world by protecting and conserving the Earth and its resources. Hence, Zoroastrians have separate prayers dedicated to many of the yazatas because they are important for getting Ahura Mazda’s work done.
4. Introducing prayers to the Yazatas and invocations. Example: Ardibehesht Yashta (for good health, Sarosh Yasht to give courage and protection.



Activity for Students:

1. Match the name of the Yazatas to the symbols/ meanings
2. Yazata bingo.
3. Discussion: What Yazata would you like to be and why?
4. Pictorial representation of prayers associated with Yazatas and their meanings (for example Atash Niyaesh = Fire picture; Meher Yasht = rays of the sun)

Source:

1. The Story of Our Religion - Zoroastrianism by Ava Mehta
2. An Ethnic Perspective by Khojeste Mistree

Prepared by: Vehishta Kaikobad, Arnavaz Sethna, Tashan Mistree Byramji

Edited by: Vehishta Kaikobad

Date: May 31, 2023