



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:

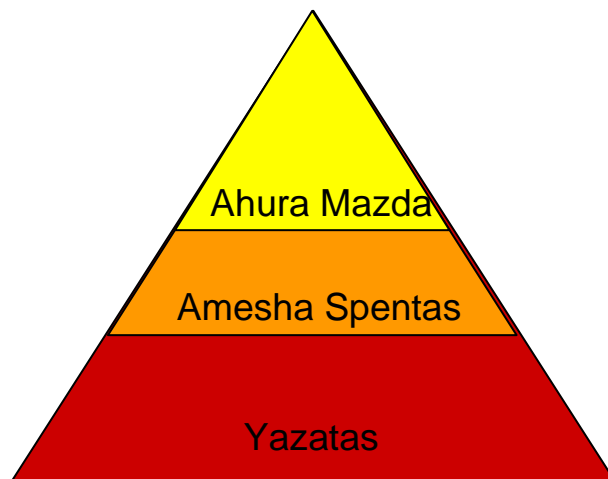
The Yazatas are helpers of Ahura Mazda who are special beings worthy of deep reverence. There are 33 Yazatas in total, with 30 of the Yazatas linked to the 30 days of the calendar and the remaining 3 Yazatas are Dahm (yazata of blessings), Hom (yazata of good health) and Burj/Barjor (yazata of water).

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

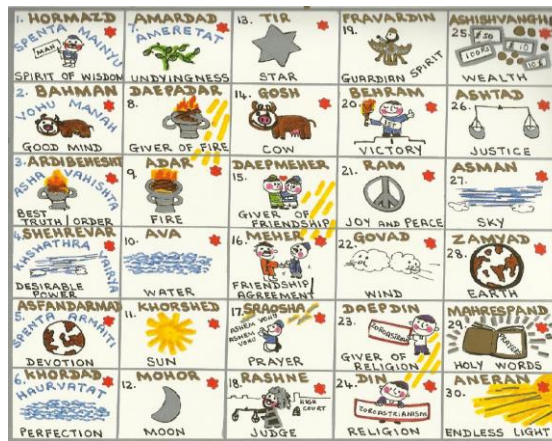
The first seven days of the calendar and their Yazatas are linked to the seven Amesha Spentas:

- 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:



Ref: *The Story of our Religion Zoroastrianism* by Ava Mehta

Suggested Material:

1. 30-day calendar

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

Lesson for students:

1. Explain what is a Yazata (Triangular Diagram) in comparison to Ahura Mazda and Amesha Spentas. Compare yazatas to lovable sidekicks in movies and books and ask them to discuss why sidekicks are important. They can be a foil to the main character, they can make a gruff hero seem more likeable, or they can assist in execution of the masterplan. Similarly, yazatas assist Amesha Spentas in executing Ahura Mazda's grand plan.
2. Relate Yazatas to calendar and their meaning.
3. Discuss different Yazatas: for example, Behram, Sarosh, Meher, Avan, Adar, Tir, Khorshed, Asfandarmad, etc. as per calendar above
4. Discuss popular adages connected to the Yazatas when meditating:
 - a. *Sarosh Yazad Panah bad* – May Sarosh Yazad protect you
 - b. *Ardvi Sur Anahita beresad* – Blessings of the water (for healing, women's health)
 - c. *Mah Bokhtar Nyaisht, Mah Bokhtar beresad* – Blessings of the moon for protection
 - d. *Ashaunam vanguish surao spentaof fravashayo yazamaide* – we rever the righteous, good, powerful beneficent fravashis
 - e. *Behram Yazad mushkil asaan* – May Behram Yazad ease/reduce your troubles

Activity for Students:

1. Match the name of the Yazatas to the symbols/meanings
2. Yazata bingo
3. Ask students in groups to draw a representation of an Amesha Spenta along with his/her yazatas. Once done, ask them to act out a scene where the team works together to solve a problem.
4. Pictorial representation of prayers associated with Yazatas and their meanings (for example Atash Niyaesh = Fire picture; Meher Yasht = rays of the sun)
5. Amesha Spentas and their helpers the Yazatas Quiz Game

Quiz Game Instruction:

- The teacher must first download this PowerPoint game and store it on his/her personal computer.
- Put the PPT in “present” or “Slide Show” mode and review all the sections – 7 Amesha Spentas and their *helpers* Yazatas.
- Click “from beginning” from the top menu bar.
- Click ‘next’ and the images go gray. The sequence is anti-clockwise.
- Begin asking questions from the Pictorial Calendar – in the anti-clockwise sequence.
 - Q. – Which Amshaspand (Amesha Spenta) is for *Spirit of Wisdom*
 - – Hormuzd
- If a student gives an incorrect answer and you click on the incorrect section, the correct section will come up – e.g. Instead of a student saying Hormuzd he/she says Ardibehesht, when you click on the slide the correct section will open up.
 - Q. – Which Amshaspand (Amesha Spenta) is for *Good Mind*
 - – Bahman
- Continue asking questions till all are done.
- Remember: The questions must be asked anti-clockwise.
- This can be played individually or in teams.

6. Niyashes and their Yazatas Quiz Game

Quiz Game Instruction:

- The teacher must first download this Power Point game and store it on his/her personal computer.
- Put the PPT in “present” or “Slide Show” mode and review all the sections – 5 Niyashes and their Yazatas.
- Click “from beginning” from the top menu bar.
- Click ‘next’ and the images go gray. The sequence is anti-clockwise.



- Begin asking questions from the Pictorial Calendar – in the anti-clockwise sequence.
 - Q. – Which Niyaesh is for *Sun*
 - – Khorshed Niyaesh

- If a student gives an incorrect answer and you click on the incorrect section, the correct section will come up – e.g. Instead of a student saying Khorshed he/she says Adar, when you click on the slide the correct section will open up.
 - Q. – Which Niyaesh is for *Friendship/Agreement*
 - – Meher Niyaesh

- Continue asking questions till all are done.
- Remember: The questions must be asked anti-clockwise.
- This can be played individually or in teams.

Source:

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

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