



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): 1

Subject of the Lesson: **Amesha Spenta**

Introduction:

- The Amesha Spentas are theological concepts of Zoroastrianism
- Amesha Spenta means 'Bountiful Immortal'
- The Amesha Spentas are considered to be the attributes of Ahura Mazda that form the principles or the ethical structure that every Zoroastrian should live their life by
- According to the creation story, Ahura Mazda made the 7 creations/ Good Dominion:
 - First, he created the Sky - Khashathra Vairya (Best Power and Strength - teaches us to use our power the right way with courage and strength)
 - The waters - Haurvatat (Perfection - the pursuit of excellence in all that you do)
 - The earth - Spenta Armaiti (Holy Devotion- to be hardworking, passionate, and devoted to all that you do)
 - The plant kingdom - Ameretat (Immortality - always doing your best so that the good lives on)
 - The animal kingdom - Vohu Manah (the Good Mind - Teaches us to use our good mind/ wisdom/ use of knowledge)
 - Human beings - Spenta Mainyu (the Holy Spirit - to be a good Zoroastrian)
 - Fire - Asha Vahishta (Truth - to live with truth and order) - As per the Creation Story, the Bundahishn, the first 6 creations were static, until Fire gave life to them all
- Taking care of the environment or the 7 creations (Amesha Spentas) is what is known as 'Ecology' in present times.
- The importance of the Amesha Spentas is recognized in the Gathas, in specific prayers in the Khordeh Avesta and in all our ceremonies and festivals such as the Jashan ceremony, Gahambars, Muktdas and others.
- The first 7 days of the calendar are dedicated to the 7 Amesha Spentas.

Material for the teacher:

1. Teacher made materials/ visual aids (pictorial representation of 7 Amesha Spentas and their symbols – handmade/ power point slides)
2. Amesha Spentas masks



Vocabulary:

Amesha Spenta (Holy Immortals); sky, water, earth, plant, animal, human beings, fire; Names of 7 Amesha Spentas (Khashatra Vairya, Haurvatat, Spenta Armaiti, Ameretat, Vohu Manah, Spenta Mainyu, Asha Vahishta); Attributes; Ecology; Ethics/ Morals;

Lesson for students:

1. Introduction (Amesha Spentas means holy devotion; helpers of Ahura Mazda/ Ahura Mazda's army)
2. Physical representation of Amesha Spentas (sky, water, earth, plant, animal, man, fire)
3. Recognition and Recollection: Teach children the names of the Amesha Spentas (use pictures)
4. Introduce Avestan names (Khashatra Vairya, Haurvatat, Spenta Armaiti, Ameretat, Vohu Manah, Spenta Mainyu, Asha Vahishta) and meanings (see above in Introduction)
5. Link of Amesha Spentas to the first 7 days of calendar (Hormuz, Bahman, Ardibehesht, Shehrevard, Aspandarmad, Khordad, Amardad)
6. Connect to Ecology – taking care of environment and creations (Earth Day/ Recycling)
7. Link Amesha Spentas to Jashan ceremony
8. Link Amesha Spentas to Gathas (verses connected to Gathas)
9. Zarathushtra's revelation aided by 2 Amesha Spentas (Vohu Manah and Spenta Mainyu)

Activity for Students:

1. What is your favorite Amesha Spenta and why?
2. Conflict Resolution: How do you use the Amesha Spentas to resolve challenges in your life?
3. Hold a debate on ethical and moral values; how do you connect them with the Amesha Spentas? (Refer to The Good Life Book, ZAGNY)
4. Create your own presentation of the Amesha Spentas and their use in daily life
5. Connect Amesha Spentas with Earth Day (ex: planting trees, seeds, flowers; clean up park/streams; conservation of water; save planet; don't pollute; care of animals)
6. Connect to Ava roj/ Ava Mah; Adar roj/ Adar Mah; Spendarmad Roj/ Spendarmad Mah
7. Tie in prayers to Amesha Spentas (Ardibehesht Yasht/ Atash Niyaaesh, Tir Yasht, Ava Yasht, Khorshed, Meher, Sarosh Baj, Mah BokNr NiyaaesArdvi Sura Niyaaish, itrangs to Divo, Mountains, Waters, Plants)
8. Games: Charades; create their own games; Jeopardy

Reference:

The Good Life Book, ZAGNY: <https://zagny.org/shop/books/the-good-life-book-4th-ed/>

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