

# Reading Essentials and Study Guide



## Chapter 6, Section 1

For use with textbook pages 191–194

### THE RISE OF ISLAM

#### KEY TERMS

**sheikh** the ruler of an Arab tribe (page 191)

**Quran** the holy scriptures of Islam (page 193)

**Islam** (“peace through submission to the will of Allah”) the religion founded by Muhammad (page 193)

**Hijrah** the journey of Muhammad and his followers to Madinah (page 193)

**hajj** a pilgrimage to Makkah, one of the Five Pillars of Islam (page 193)

**shari’ah** a set of laws followed by Muslims (page 194)

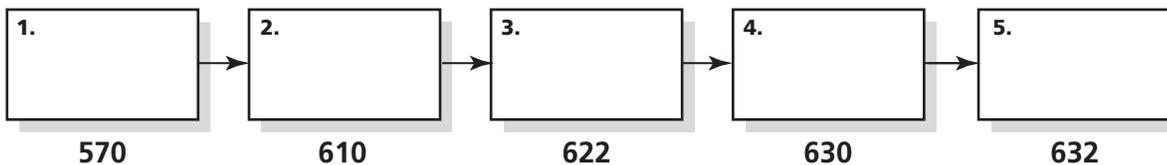
#### DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

Does your community have many churches? What religions do these churches represent? How do you think people decide what religion to follow?

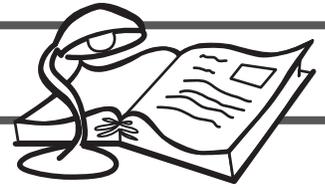
This section focuses on the development and beliefs of Islam.

#### ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the time line below to help you take notes. Identify five important events in the development of Islam.



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## Chapter 6, Section 1 (continued)

### READ TO LEARN

- **The Arabs** (page 191)

The Arabian Peninsula is a desert land. The early Arabs were nomads who lived in the Arabian Peninsula. They moved constantly to find water and food for their animals. They were organized into tribes to help one another. The ruler of each tribe was called a **sheikh**. A council of elders chose the sheikh from one of the leading families. At first, the Arabs made their living by shepherding or by raiding the trading caravans that passed through the desert. Eventually, they began to take part in the caravan trade themselves. They became some of the major traders in the area. A trade route developed that went through Makkah (Mecca) to present-day Yemen and then by ship across the Indian Ocean. Towns along this route prospered from the trade. But tensions developed between the wealthy merchants in the towns and the Arabs in the deserts, called Bedouins.

Most early Arabs were polytheistic—they believed in many gods. The Arabs trace their ancestors to Abraham and his son Ishmael, who were believed to have built at **Makkah** (Mecca) the Kaaba (KAH •buh), a house of worship whose cornerstone was a sacred stone, called the Black Stone. The Arabs recognized a supreme god named **Allah** (*Allah* is Arabic for “God”), but they also believed in other tribal gods. They revered the Kaaba for its association with Abraham.

The Arabian Peninsula took on a new importance when political disorder in Mesopotamia and Egypt made the usual trade routes in Southwest Asia too dangerous to travel. A safer trade route that went through Makkah to present-day Yemen and then by ship across the Indian Ocean became more popular.

Communities along this route, such as Makkah, prospered from the increased caravan trade. Tensions arose, however, as increasingly wealthy merchants showed less and less concern for the welfare of their poorer clanspeople and slaves.

6. How did the early Arabs make their living?

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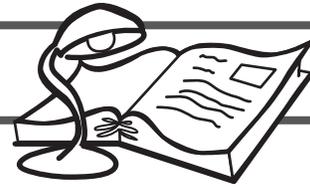
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## Chapter 6, Section 1 (continued)

### • The Life of Muhammad (page 192)

Muhammad was born in Makkah in 570 A.D. He grew up to become a caravan manager. Over time, he became concerned about the gap between the Makkans and the rich merchants in the city. He began to go to the nearby hills to meditate. In 610, during one of these times of meditation, he had a vision. He heard a voice that he believed was inspired by Allah. The voice told him to recite what he was hearing. Muhammad believed that Allah had already revealed himself through Moses and Jesus. But he believed that the final revelations of Allah were now being given to him. Muhammad's revelations were eventually written down in the **Quran**, the holy scriptures of **Islam**. (The word *Islam* means "peace through submission to the will of Allah.") Those who practice Islam are called Muslims. Muslims believe that there is only one God, Allah, and that Muhammad is his prophet.

Muhammad tried to convince the people of Makkah about the truth of his revelations. Most of the people of Makkah did not accept his message, so he and his followers moved to Yathrib. Yathrib was later renamed Madinah (Medina), which means "city of the prophet." The journey of Muhammad and his followers to Madinah is known as the **Hijrah**. The journey took place in 622. This year became year 1 in the official calendar of Islam. Muhammad began to gain supporters in Madinah. He also had supporters in the Bedouin tribes. Muslims did not see any difference between political and religious authority. Submission to the will of Allah meant submission to his prophet, Muhammad. Muhammad soon became both a religious and a political leader. He formed a military force to defend himself and his followers. Their success soon attracted more supporters. In 630, Muhammad returned to Makkah with a force of ten thousand men. The city surrendered, and most of the people converted to Islam. In 632, Muhammad died, just as Islam was beginning to spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula.

7. What event marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar?

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### • The Teachings of Muhammad (page 193)

Like Christianity and Judaism, Islam is monotheistic. Muslims believe that Allah is the only God, who created the universe and everything in it. Islam offers the hope of an afterlife. Those who want life after death must submit to the will of Allah. Muslims do not believe that Muhammad was divine. He is

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## Chapter 6, Section 1 (continued)

considered a prophet, but he was also a man like other men. Muslims believe that Allah sent his final revelation through Muhammad because people rejected his earlier prophets.

Islam stresses the need to obey the will of Allah. This means following the Five Pillars of Islam. These are: (1) belief in Allah and in Muhammad as his prophet; (2) standard prayer five times a day and public prayer on Fridays at midday; (3) giving alms, such as food and money, to the poor; (4) observance of the holy month of Ramadan, including fasting from dawn to sunset; (5) making a pilgrimage to Makkah at least once in a lifetime. This pilgrimage is called the **hajj**.

Islam is not just a set of beliefs but also a way of life. After Muhammad's death, Muslim scholars drew up a set of laws to regulate daily life. These laws are called the **shari'ah**. Much of the *shari'ah* is taken from the Quran. Muslims are expected to follow strict guidelines for behavior. In addition to the Five Pillars, Muslims are forbidden to gamble, eat pork, drink alcohol, or engage in dishonest behavior.

8. What is the *shari'ah*?

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