THE STRIVING

MUSLIM ACADEMY

Islamic and Academic Education

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Seerah Timeline and Stories

The life of the Prophet ﷺ as a timeline to fill in, with short reading passages and questions for each stage.

WHAT IS INSIDE

- Teacher's notes: how to teach seerah so it is remembered
- Makkah: the timeline to fill in
- Madinah: the timeline to fill in
- Three reading passages, with questions
- A blank timeline to build from memory

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How to teach seerah so that it is remembered



Most children finish seerah lessons able to name four battles and nothing else. These are the five reasons, and the changes are not difficult.

1. Events with no shape to hang on

Taught as a string of events, seerah becomes a list, and lists are forgotten. The child has nothing to attach a new fact to.

Give the shape first: thirteen years in Makkah, ten in Madinah. Draw the line before you tell a single story. Then every event gets placed on a structure that already exists in their head.

2. Only the battles get taught

Battles are easy to narrate, so they fill the time. The child concludes that the Prophet ﷺ spent his life fighting, which is not merely incomplete, it is a distortion.

For every battle, teach a story of patience, of trade, of a kindness. The years of being mocked in Makkah are more useful to a child's own life than the battle of Badr, because that is the thing they will actually face.

3. He is told as a legend, not a person

A child who hears only miracles cannot imagine the Prophet ﷺ being tired, grieved or rejected. They also cannot follow him, because legends cannot be followed.

Tell the human parts. He lost his mother at six. He lost his children. The year his wife and his uncle died is called the Year of Sorrow. A child who has lost someone needs to know this, and it is true.

4. Dates are drilled instead of meaning

A child who can recite that Badr was in 2 AH, with no idea why it mattered or who was frightened, has learned nothing worth keeping.

Teach order before dates. What came before what, and why one thing led to the next. Dates are the last layer, if at all. Hudaybiyyah looking like a defeat and turning out to be the opening is worth ten memorised years.

5. No question is ever asked back

Seerah is usually told, not discussed. A child who only listens does not process it, and what is not processed does not stay.

Ask one question that has no neat answer. "Why do you think he went to Ta'if when he knew they might refuse him?" The thinking is what fixes the story in place.

The dates on these sheets

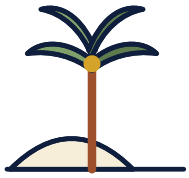
The dates follow the position most of the seerah scholars hold, taken from Ibn Hisham's *Sirah*, Ibn Kathir's *Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah* and *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*. Some are genuinely debated. The Trench is placed in 5 AH here, which Ibn Kathir reports as the majority view, though Az-Zuhri and Malik say 4 AH. The year of the Isra and Mi'raj is disputed more widely still. Where your reference differs, follow your reference.

The order of events is what matters here, and the order is not in dispute, with one exception noted on the Makkah sheet.

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Makkah: the forty years before prophethood

Fill in the last column yourself, in your own words. One sentence is enough, and your own sentence is worth more than a copied one.



HIS AGE	WHAT HAPPENED	WHY IT MATTERED. WRITE YOUR OWN ANSWER.
Birth	Born in Makkah, in the Year of the Elephant. His father had already died.	
6	His mother Aminah died. He was now an orphan with neither parent.	
8	His grandfather 'Abdul Muttalib died. His uncle Abu Talib took him in.	
12	Travelled to Syria with Abu Talib on a trading journey.	
25	Married Khadijah (may Allah be pleased with them). He was known as Al-Amin, the trustworthy.	
35	The Ka'bah was rebuilt. He settled the dispute over the Black Stone so that every tribe shared the honour.	

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Before you start the prophethood

Forty years pass before the first revelation, and children skip them. Do not let them. Every hardship in this column is preparation: the orphan, the shepherd, the trader trusted by a city that would later drive him out. **Ask them what kind of man the Quraysh already knew him to be**, and the next page lands differently.

Makkah: the thirteen years of prophethood

From the cave of Hira to the Hijrah. The same column is yours to fill in.



HIS AGE	WHAT HAPPENED	WHY IT MATTERED. WRITE YOUR OWN ANSWER.
40	**The first revelation**, in the cave of Hira. The angel Jibril said: Read.	
40 to 43	He called people to Islam quietly, among those he trusted.	
43	He began calling publicly. The mockery and the persecution started.	
45	Some of the Muslims migrated to Abyssinia, where a just king protected them.	
46 to 49	The boycott. His whole clan was cut off from food and trade for about three years.	
49	**The Year of Sorrow.** He lost both Khadijah and Abu Talib within the same year.	
50	He went to Ta'if to call them to Islam. He was driven out and stoned.	
51	**Al-Isra wal-Mi'raj**, the night journey. The five daily prayers were given.	
52 to 53	The people of Yathrib came and pledged to him, twice, at 'Aqabah.	
53	**The Hijrah** to Madinah. The Islamic calendar begins here.	

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The question worth asking

Thirteen years in Makkah. Mockery, a boycott, the loss of his wife and his uncle, and being driven out of Ta'if. **Ask your class: why does the Qur'an spend so long on patience?** Then let them answer before you do.

On the Year of Sorrow, the historians differ over which of the two deaths came first. Most place Abu Talib before Khadijah, and some report the reverse. The row above leaves the order open on purpose. If a child asks, say plainly that we do not know.

Madinah: the first five years

The years are counted from the Hijrah. AH means "after the Hijrah".



YEAR	WHAT HAPPENED	WHY IT MATTERED. WRITE YOUR OWN ANSWER.
1 AH	Masjid an-Nabawi was built. The Muhajirun and the Ansar were made brothers to one another.	
1 AH	The agreement of Madinah, setting out how the tribes and the Jewish community would live together.	
2 AH	The qiblah changed to the Ka'bah. Fasting in Ramadan was made obligatory.	
2 AH	**Badr.** Outnumbered roughly three to one, the Muslims were given victory.	
3 AH	**Uhud.** A hard day. The archers left their position and the Muslims suffered badly.	
5 AH	**Al-Khandaq**, the Trench. Madinah was besieged, and a trench was dug on Salman al-Farisi's advice.	

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How to handle Uhud

Children expect every battle to be a victory, and Uhud is not one. Do not soften it. The archers were told to hold their position and they did not. **Say plainly that the Muslims were told afterwards that the fault was their own**, and that Allah did not abandon them for it. A child who learns that early is far steadier when their own obedience slips.

Madinah: the last five years

From the treaty at Hudaybiyyah to the Farewell Hajj.



YEAR	WHAT HAPPENED	WHY IT MATTERED. WRITE YOUR OWN ANSWER.
6 AH	**Hudaybiyyah.** A treaty that looked like a defeat and opened everything that followed.	
7 AH	Khaybar. Letters were sent to the rulers of the surrounding empires inviting them to Islam.	
8 AH	**The opening of Makkah.** He entered the city he had been driven from, and forgave its people.	
9 AH	Tabuk. Delegations came from across Arabia.	
10 AH	**The Farewell Hajj**, and the sermon he gave at 'Arafah.	
11 AH	He died in Madinah, in the room of 'A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with them).	

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Three things to count

- **13** years in Makkah
- **10** years in Madinah
- **23** years of revelation in all

If a child remembers only these three numbers, they have the frame. Everything else can be fitted in later.

The moment to dwell on

The opening of Makkah. He returned with power to the city that had mocked him, boycotted him and driven him out, and he forgave them.

Ask the children what they would have done. Let them be honest. Then read what he did. That contrast does more than any lecture on forgiveness.

Three passages to read together

Read aloud. Then answer. The last question in each set has no single right answer, and that is deliberate.



1. The Black Stone

The Ka'bah was being rebuilt, and the tribes had come to the point of fighting over which of them would lift the Black Stone into place. They agreed to let the next man who walked in decide. It was Muhammad ﷺ, before prophethood, and they were glad, because they called him Al-Amin, the trustworthy. He laid a cloak down, placed the stone in the middle, and asked a man from each tribe to take an edge. They lifted it together, and he set it in place himself.

Why did they trust him before he was a Prophet?	
What would have happened if he had chosen one tribe?	
Think of an argument you know. How could it be solved this way?	

2. Ta'if

After the Year of Sorrow he walked to Ta'if to call its people to Islam. Their leaders refused him, and they set their slaves and the young men of the town on him to throw stones until his feet bled. He left, and he did not stop walking until he was well clear of the place. There the angel of the mountains was sent to him and offered to crush the town between its two mountains. He refused. He said he hoped Allah would bring from their children people who would worship Him alone.

What was he offered, and what did he choose instead?	
Why did he refuse to have them punished?	
When somebody treats you badly, what is the hardest part of this?	

3. Hudaybiyyah

The Muslims came to Makkah to perform 'Umrah and were turned back. A treaty was agreed on terms that seemed heavily against them. They would go home without entering. Anyone who left Makkah for Madinah would be returned, but not the other way round. Some of the Companions were deeply upset. Within two years the situation had changed entirely, and Makkah was opened without a battle. The treaty the Qur'an called a clear opening had looked, on the day it was signed, like a defeat.

Why were the Companions upset?	
What does this teach about judging things on the day?	
Has something ever turned out better than it first looked?	

Where these come from. Black Stone: Ibn Hisham's *Sirah*. Ta'if: Bukhari 3231, Muslim 1795; the long du'a often quoted from that day comes through Ibn Ishaq alone with a weak chain, so it is not used. Hudaybiyyah: Bukhari 2700, and Surah al-Fath 48:1.

Build the timeline from memory

Close the other pages. Fill in as much as you can. Leave the gaps empty rather than guessing, then go back and find the answers yourself.



Makkah

AGE	WHAT HAPPENED
Birth	
6	
25	
40	
49	
50	
51	
53	

Madinah

YEAR	WHAT HAPPENED
2 AH	
3 AH	
5 AH	
6 AH	
8 AH	
10 AH	
11 AH	

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One last question, and it is the real one

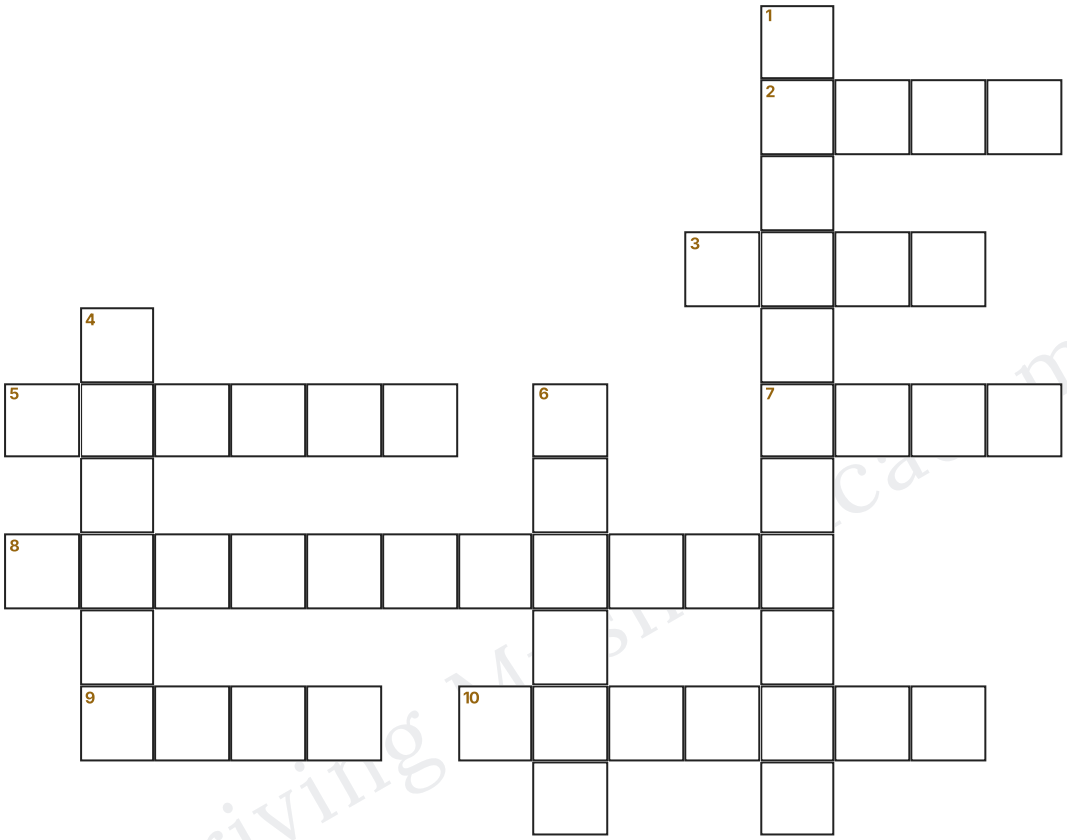
Not a date, and not an event. Ask the child: **"Which part of his life is most like something in yours?"**

Seerah that stays only in the past is history. Seerah a child can find themselves in is something they will carry. That question is the whole purpose of teaching it.

Word Whizz

Crossword

Everything you need is on the pages of this pack. Read each clue and write the word in the boxes, one letter in each box. The number in brackets tells you how many letters the word has.



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Across

2 At which battle did the archers leave their position? (4)

3 Which town drove him out and threw stones at him? (4)

5 Which angel said Read in the cave? (6)

7 Which battle gave victory to Muslims who were outnumbered about three to one? (4)

8 Before prophethood he was called Al-Amin. What does it mean? (11)

9 The cave where the first revelation came. (4)

10 He entered Makkah, the city that drove him out. What did he do for its people? (7)

Down

1 Which treaty looked like a defeat and opened everything that followed? (11)

4 Which journey to Madinah is where the Islamic calendar begins? (6)

6 He lost Khadijah and Abu Talib in one year. What feeling gives that year its name? (6)

Let's Map It!

Fill in the blanks on the map with the words in the box. Read along the arrows.

USE THESE WORDS

Muhajirun **Forty**

The life of the Prophet ﷺ

is in two parts

Makkah

came after

_____ years pass before the first revelation

Madinah

began with brothers called the

Masjid an-Nabawi was built. The _____ and the Ansar were made brothers to one another.

Word search

Find each word in the grid. Words read across, down, or slanting down. Tick each one when you find it.

K	E	L	E	P	H	A	N	T
K	H	A	D	I	J	A	H	K
B	D	Q	I	B	L	A	H	C
L	D	M	A	D	I	N	A	H
O	R	P	H	A	N	T	J	H
T	I	M	E	L	I	N	E	D
R	G	C	K	C	O	C	S	K
I	B	K	M	A	K	K	A	H
U	K	A	R	C	H	E	R	S

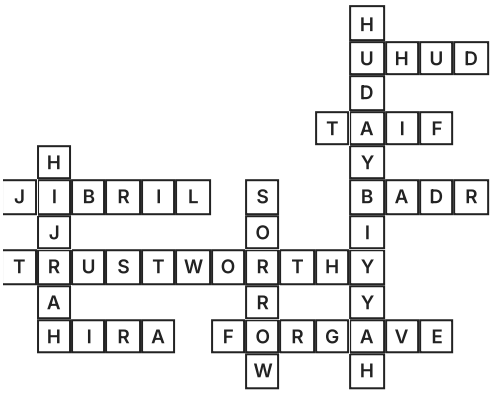
- ☐ Khadijah
- ☐ Elephant
- ☐ Timeline
- ☐ Madinah
- ☐ Archers
- ☐ Makkah
- ☐ Orphan
- ☐ Qiblah

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Answers

For the grown-up: cover this page while the puzzles are being done.

Crossword



Across: 2 Uhud, 3 Taif, 5 Jibril, 7 Badr, 8 Trustworthy, 9 Hira, 10 Forgave

Down: 1 Hudaybiyyah, 4 Hijrah, 6 Sorrow

Let's Map It

Forty; Muhajirun

Word search

K	E	L	E	P	H	A	N	T
K	H	A	D	I	J	A	H	K
B	D	Q	I	B	L	A	H	C
L	D	M	A	D	I	N	A	H
O	R	P	H	A	N	T	J	H
T	I	M	E	L	I	N	E	D
R	G	C	K	C	O	C	S	K
I	B	K	M	A	K	K	A	H
U	K	A	R	C	H	E	R	S

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