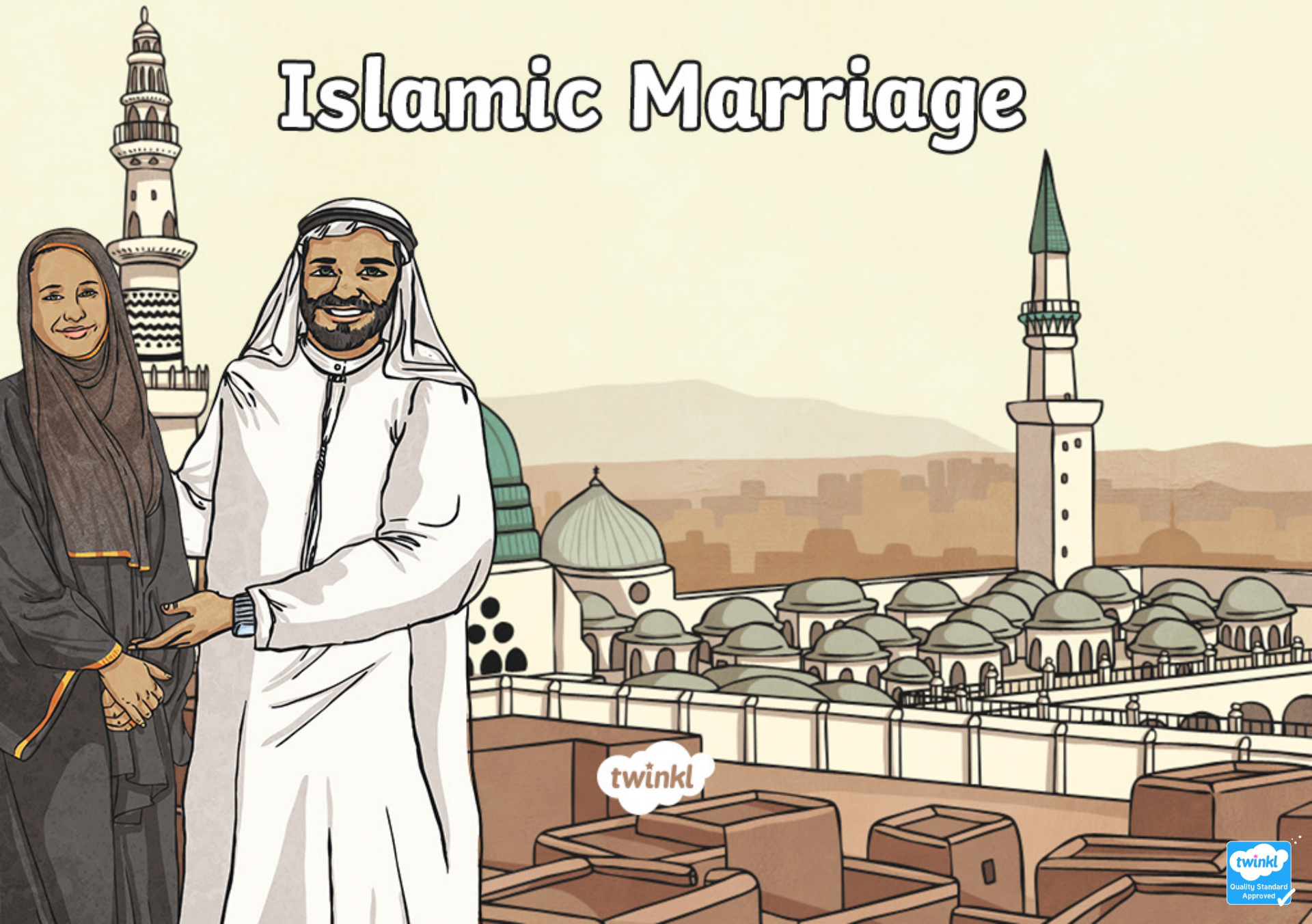


Islamic Marriage



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Learning Objective

To be able to explain the main features of an Islamic wedding.

Success Criteria

- To explain why Muslims value marriage.
- To describe some of the features of a Muslim wedding.

Why Do Muslims Value Marriage?

Muslims see marriage as a key part of life and an important aspect of their religion. Muslims believe that marriage is the best place in which to have children and raise a family.



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Why Do Muslims Value Marriage?

Many marriages are arranged by family members although both partners must agree before the wedding can take place.

Although arranged marriages are very popular, Muslims can meet their partner at work, through friends or at social gatherings.

Traditionally, the woman often proposes to her future husband via a male relative such as a brother or an uncle.



Why Do Muslims Value Marriage?

Weddings often take place in a mosque but this is not essential. Muslims can get married in their own homes or in some other suitable location.



Why Do Muslims Value Marriage?

Before the wedding ceremony, some brides decorate their hands and arms with henna, called Mehndi. Brides often wear a white wedding dress or a brightly coloured traditional shalwar-qameez outfit in red and gold.

Grooms wear a simple traditional or western-style suit or a combination of both.

Guests should be respectful and not wear revealing clothes but no matter what, the outfits are guaranteed to be bright and colourful.



Why Do Muslims Value Marriage?



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In Islam, marriage is a legal contract. This is known as the nikah. Both the bride and groom have to sign the nikah and this makes up the most important part of an Islamic wedding ceremony.

There may be a reading from the Qu'ran and the Imam (an Islamic leader) will conduct the ceremony and announce the couple as man and wife.

During some ceremonies, the bride and groom may sit on a throne or platform so that they can be seen clearly by their guests. In some more traditional ceremonies, these guests will be separated into male and female areas and not allowed to mix until after the ceremony is over.

Why Do Muslims Value Marriage?

On the wedding day, the groom will give his bride a gift of money or something else of value. This is called the mahr and is known as a dowry. The mahr is a mark of respect and is the groom's way of showing that he is serious about wanting to marry her.

The mahr is also a form of protection or insurance for the bride in case her husband dies or the marriage ends. It is intended to give her some financial security.



Why Do Muslims Value Marriage?

As in many cultures, there is a celebration after the nikah which is called a walima. This is a banquet, usually hosted by the groom's side of the family, in which the bride and groom mingle with their guests, eat and celebrate their marriage.

The walima usually takes place the day after or within a week of the nikah and is the first time in which the two families (the groom's and the bride's) come together as one.

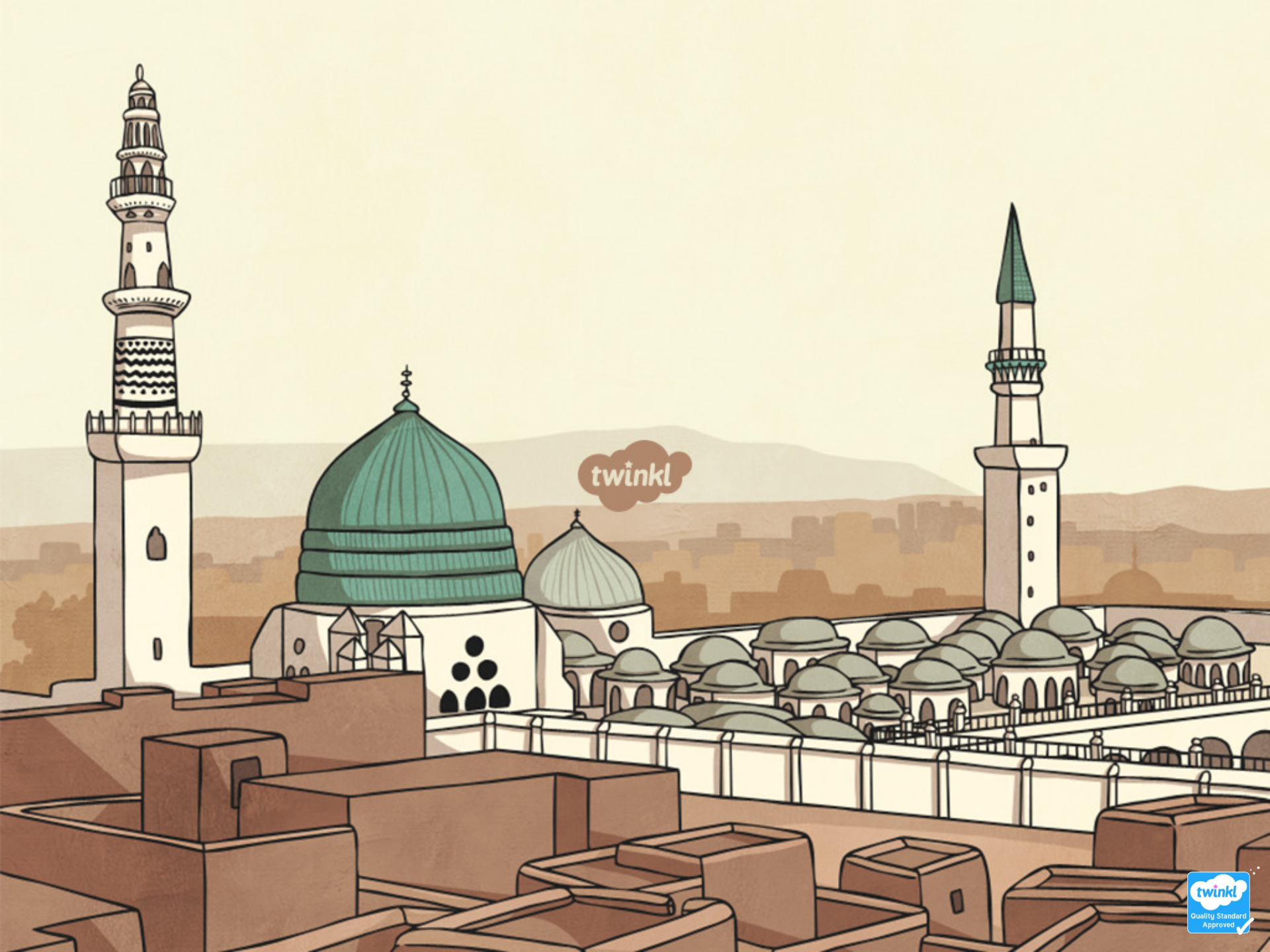


Why Do Muslims Value Marriage?

The rukhsati signals the end of the wedding celebrations. The bride is taken to where her and her new husband will now live, which is often with his parents, and they begin their new life together as a married couple.



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