A Visit to the Mosque with Ellie

Learning objective: To identify key features and practices of Islam, including the importance of the mosque and the meaning of Salah.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below in full sentences.

Ellie the elephant was visiting a local community center to learn about Islam. She met a friendly guide who explained that Muslims go to a building called a mosque to pray. Before entering the prayer hall, Muslims perform a special washing ritual called wudu to ensure they are clean and focused. Inside, the floor is covered with soft carpets. Ellie noticed that there were no pictures of people or animals on the walls; instead, the walls were decorated with beautiful, colorful geometric patterns and elegant Arabic calligraphy.

The guide explained that Muslims pray five times every day. This daily prayer is known as Salah. When they pray, they face towards the city of Makkah. To help them find the right direction, there is a special arched niche in the wall called a mihrab. Ellie was fascinated to learn that everyone stands side-by-side during prayer, which shows that everyone is equal. After their prayers, many people stay to read the Quran, the holy book of Islam. Ellie felt very peaceful as she learned about how important faith, kindness, and community are to Muslim families.

Word bank: Mosque · Salah · Qibla · Wudu · Prayer mat

1. What is the name of the special washing ritual that Muslims perform before they pray? (1 mark)

2. What is the name of the arched niche in the wall that helps people find the direction of Makkah? (1 mark)

3. Why do you think the mosque does not have pictures of people or animals on the walls? (2 marks)

4. How does the way people stand during prayer show their beliefs about equality? (2 marks)

5. Why do you think it is important for people to have a quiet place like a mosque for their daily prayers? Give a reason for your answer. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a pattern inspired by the geometric shapes you might see inside a mosque, using bright colors and repeating lines.

Extension challenge: Research what the 'Five Pillars of Islam' are and write one sentence about why these might be important to a Muslim.