Islam:

Myths and Reality
Terminology:

The religion is called ISLAM.
The people are MUSLIMS.
Myth #1: Most Muslims are Arabs who live in the Middle East.
Reality:
Of more than 1 billion Muslims worldwide, only about 1/5 are Arabs.
Try to Guess:

Which country has more Muslims than any other country in the world?
Answer:

Indonesia - with over 200 million Muslims.

Note: The U.S. has about 5 million Muslims.
Myth #2: Muslims have a strange religion and worship a god called Allah.
Reality:
Muslims are *monotheistic* and worship the same one God as Christians and Jews.
Note:

‘Allah’ is the Arabic word for ‘God.’
Myth #3:
Muslims believe it is o.k. to kill civilians in a holy war ("jihad").
Reality:

Only Muslim extremists believe this. (Just like most Christians do NOT believe in bombing abortion clinics.)
Myth #4:
Most Muslim women wear veils over their faces and are treated very badly.
Reality:

• Muslim women have many different styles of dress. (Very few cultures require women to cover their faces.)
• The treatment of women varies from country to country and family to family.
• Some Muslim countries, like Pakistan, have had female prime ministers. The U.S. has never had a female president.
Pakistani dress (left); Saudi Arabian (right)

Shariah TV website
Iranian woman
Somali (left); West African (right)

Sharjah TV website
Malaysian (left); Indian/Bangladeshi (right)

Shariah TV website
Afghani women wearing burqas
Muslim girls in Texas protesting discrimination for wearing head scarves

http://www.cairdfw.org
Something to think about:

Should women in a Western country be allowed to wear a headscarf if they choose?
Main Beliefs of Islam

5 Pillars of Islam
Faith:

Belief in one God and that Muhammad is His prophet.
Prayer:

5 times a day – facing Mecca

http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/galleries/salah/images/5.jpg
Alms

Giving money to the poor is REQUIRED, not optional
Fasting

During the month of Ramadan, Muslims cannot eat or drink anything during the daylight hours.
Pilgrimage

Once in their lives – IF they can afford it, Muslims make a pilgrimage to Mecca
In Mecca during the pilgrimage
Vocabulary:

MOSQUE: a Muslim place of worship
Mosque in Medina, Saudi Arabia

http://islamicbooks.info/H-21-Madh'habs
Inside the Mohammed Ali Mosque

http://www.ask-aladdin.com
Dome of the Mohammed Ali mosque

http://www.ask-aladdin.com
Blue Mosque (Sultan Ahmet Mosque), Istanbul Turkey
Interior of the Blue Mosque
Dome of a mosque, Esfahan, Iran

http://www.perceptivetravel.com/issues/1106/maclean.html
Interior of a mosque in Iran

http://www.worldisround.com/articles/73022/photo621.html
Mosque in Djenne, Mali (West Africa)

http://www.travelblog.org/Photos/17028.html
North African mosque

http://www.galenfrysinger.com/tunis.htm
Indonesian mosque

http://www.richard-seaman.com/Travel/Brunei/index.html
Islamic architecture in Spain
Muslim mosque and tombstone in Sarajevo, Bosnia

Yugoslavia: Republics and Provinces
Mosque in Tempe, Arizona

http://www.4uth.gov.ua/usa/english/society/muslimlife/mosques.htm
Vocabulary:

QURAN (or KORAN): Muslim holy book
The Quran
Muslim influences on secular art
Muslim profession of faith in the Topkapi Palace, Istanbul, Turkey

http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-251804/Muhammad
Arabic calligraphy in secular art

http://www.plumsite.com/palace/arabic.html
Stained glass windows in the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul, Turkey
Conclusions:

• Islam is an important religion, which shares many beliefs and practices with Christianity and Judaism.

• Muslims live in many different countries. Islam is especially widespread in Africa, Asia, and southeastern Europe (the Balkans).

• Islam has had a great impact on world art and culture.