

BIA HORIZONS: ENLIGHTENING YOUR LIFE

Bayutl-Iman Academy

Editor-in-Chief: Sr. Ambreen Ahmad

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Principal's Message- Dr. Talat Sultan

Another issue of *BIA Horizons* is before you. Alhamdulillah. The BIA students are working diligently along with their faculty advisor to bring it out regularly each quarter. At the same time, our elementary school students and teachers have also made their due contribution. They all deserve to be complemented profusely for this remarkable endeavor.

The most important event of this quarter at BIA was the Annual BIA Fund Raising Dinner. Against all odds on that weekend, it was indeed a blessing of Allah [SWT] that a large number of parents and supporters of BIA turned out for the event. A similar major event with internationally renowned speakers was held at the same time in our vicinity. The weather was also not very cooperative and to top it all, the chief guest speaker could not come due to his schedule conflict. In spite of all these issues, the program, Alhamdulillah, was most successful. Parents greatly enjoyed the wonderful presentations from each grade

level including nasheeds and a well presented skit.

The speakers very effectively presented the challenges faced by Islamic schools in general and BIA in particular. The dinner was most delicious and was well served. The Gym/Auditorium was beautifully decorated and all the arrangements were skillfully carried out. Although, a sufficient amount was of donations were collected **we are still looking forward to additional donations from our supporters and well wishers especially to repay the heavy loans we have accumulated in purchasing this new building.**

Another important event was the Annual BIA Spelling Bee. Students from KG to 9th grades participated in it most enthusiastically. Some parents also were there to encourage their children. The winners of this competition will participate in the National Muslim Spelling Bee and surely represent BIA to the full-

est.

The regular Parent - Teacher Conference for the second quarter went very well. Most parents were there to discuss the progress of their children with the respective teachers. An elaborate display of poetry from each grade level was also made at this time. The display reflected the most creative and imaginative talents of our students. The parents greatly admired it.

The quarter came to an end with an intensive teachers' workshop dealing with some of the most urgent parent concerns and issues as well as a discussion on Islamization of Language Arts. The next workshops will continue to focus on Islamization of other subjects and at the same time addressing issues related to discipline control and strategies in teaching. . We also had a few presentations on important occasions such as Seerut-un-Nabi by Sister Lubna, Martin Luther King, Jr. for Black History

Month by myself, and recently another one about Surah Luqman done by Sister Amira.

In terms of co-curricular programs, Boy Scouts and Karate have started this year for all round personality development of the students, in addition to continuing our swimming and other programs, along with our usual rigorous studies.

Many other important activities await us in the concluding months of the school year. Events to mark down on your calendar include: the BIA Islamic Quiz Competition, the Ladies' High-Tea Event, the Science Fair with Open House, Muslim Sports' Day, and Insha'Allah much more. Your most enthusiastic participation is solicited earnestly. May Allah [SWT] give us the strength to carry out these programs most successfully. [Ameen]

7th and 8th Grade Debates: Is There Such a Thing as a “Just War”?

The generation that exists in our school today, specifically middle school, have never known an era without war. In fact, they were born either THE year, or even the year after, when the “War on Terror” began. They have never known a time of “World Peace”. In fact, “world peace” is an idealistic thought to them; a concept that is not only utopian in its very foundation, but in fact almost radical in its neoteric base. Before we start to fathom the effect that such a negative reality must have on this generation of young American Muslims, we must realize that they are still better off than the multi-generations of Afghans or Iraqis or Palestinians or Sudanese or Syrians or Libyans or the numerous others who have been born, have lived, and died leaving their children to SURVIVE and STRIVE to live in wars that have plagued their people and their nations for decades if not centuries! War is a reality that unfortunately we cannot escape. Many organizations have been created to resolve conflict without the use of violence and/or bloodshed, namely the United Nations, and laws have been created to protect those having to live during times of war, namely the laws created under the Geneva Convention of 1949. Yet, still oppression, persecution, torture, and de-basement of basic humanity still occurs, and in fact is used as a weapon of war along with WMDS and mass artillery.

Proponents of war justify it saying that if not for war many countries would still be under the rule of larger regimes, amongst them the U.S.A., India, Pakistan, and many nations in the Middle East, as well as Africa. They also argue that unfortunately war sometimes is the only resolution that can resolve conflict especially when it concerns an unreasonable empire dead set in its imperialistic endeavor. They purport that sometimes “revolution” is the only “dialogue” that can occur against a corrupt and absolute ruler. Opponents of war agree that in history war was waged for a higher purpose, with its sole goal to free people from oppressive rulers, but now it’s used for selfish gains to achieve selfish goals not very different from the imperialistic endeavors of said “Older



***“We make war
that we may live
in Peace.”
-Aristotle***

regimes”. Opponents argue that sometimes a “just” reason is “created”, agenda dictating policy, pre-meditated in its decision for the proponent, or parties that may gain (financially), for a war; rather than if the war is really “NEEDED” in order to resolve the ‘said’ conflict.

This past marking period our Seventh and Eighth graders were given the daunting task to argue “for” and “against” this very thought: “Is there such a thing as a ‘just war’?” Whether you are on the ‘pro’ or ‘con’ side of this ‘bone of contention’, I am sure you will all agree that there is no simple “Yes” or “No” answer to this query. With this said, I leave you our BIA audience to decide, or at the very least, to think (hopefully profusely) on this subject and make it a topic of discussion at your next gathering.

-Sr. Ambreen Ahmad

PRO: “World War II was an attempt to prevent Germany from taking over all of Europe. There are also many goals that occurred after the U.S. joined WWII. The U.S. had a hand in stopping the Holocaust. The U.S. helped restore the balance of power in the world. This was also helped U.S. become a superpower. Major economic benefits resulted due to this war; such as industrialization and large scale employment in military and other similar industries.” ***-Saarah Khan (7th Grade)***

“War is a ‘necessary evil’ for many times it helps relieve the oppressed people. War is important because if we didn’t have war we wouldn’t have independence or freedom in over half of the world. Slavery might still have been practiced, and surely most of the world would be under British Rule. War was also a means for the expansion of the U.S.A. War also leads to growth in economy.” ***-Kholā Aziz (7th Grade)***

“I believe that there can be a war which has a valid reason. Most wars do not have a reason yes, or are based on a biased reason such as religious differences and/or culture, but war does not necessarily mean weapons and bloodshed. War can also mean standing up for your beliefs and fight for them too. War can also be like Martin Luther King Jr.’s ‘war’ for the purpose of equality, and Rasul-Allah’s (P.B.U.H.) war for the future of Muslims as well as the spread of Islam.” ***-Afreen Bakht (7th Grade)***

“War is justified as long as actions are being taken for the interests of the people as a whole and not just for those in power. I believe that everyone has a right to defend themselves at some point in their life, and there is nothing wrong for fight for what you believe in; especially if it’s a basic human right.” ***-Iman Khalil (7th Grade)***

“War is a challenging issue to deal with and it may bring may give birth to many un-needed conflicts. If war is morally and practically NECESSARY that it will be JUST. The defense of innocents, freedom, and direct aggression are all legitimate reasons for war. A war with an intent such as peace, independence, and justice; not limited to destruction on a grand scale, will be right in its reasoning. A JUST war is conducted with proper proportionality (not excessive force), and many times leads to progress for all those involved.” -*Sana Faysal (7th Grade)*

“I believe there is such thing as a ‘just war’. Every war has a reason and no one would start a war for no reason. So I believe it can be justified. Even though war brings two nations or people apart initially, it does resolves a conflict. The Revolutionary War was a just war and if it never occurred, we would still be paying taxes (in pounds) without representation. We would still be living under a monarchy. No matter what reason every war is a just war because no one would be insane enough to start a war just to see bloodshed and people die or persecuted.” -*Saad Farooq (7th Grade)*

CON: “There is no such thing as a ‘JUST War’. Trying to justify bloodshed for any reason is foolish. A person’s blood is more valuable to God than anything. Killing then killing, followed by more killing; It’s a never ending cycle. Bloodshed takes away from the humanity of each and every person; the one doing the killing and the ones (and families of) being killed. There is NO JUST WAR. Try resolving things with our biggest weapon, our brain and our capacity to think through a problem. We should let our minds and speech bond for a brighter, and more peaceful, future.” -*Rahma Shata (8th Grade)*

“There is no such thing as a just war. It just can’t be. Look at every war that has ever happened, did any of them result in anything but more chaos? No. Every war changed and mutilated the economic structure of the country it victimized; and sometimes even the economy of those committing the atrocity.” -*Oman Mbarki (8th Grade)*

“I think that there is no such thing as a just war because in every war that occurs one side benefits while the other side may have to bear severe losses. Also, it has been clearly stated that the just war criteria should be ‘the reason for going to war needs to be just and cannot therefore be solely for capturing a thing taken.’ Quite a lot of wars such as the Crusades occurred due to this reason. Additionally, a just war must have the right intention. While ‘correcting a suffered wrong’ is considered right intention, material gain or maintaining economies is not. Many, many wars are caused because of material gain or maintaining economies.” -*Ridaa Dadani (8th Grade)*

“I think that there shouldn't be any war. There is no reason behind this. War just leads to death and bloodshed. Lots of people die in wars, most of them innocent of any wrongdoing. The countries facing a conflict should just sign a peace treaty or the like. No one has to die.” -*Saif Syed (8th Grade)*

“War just leads to bloodshed and more killing. During war, even innocent people who have nothing to do with anything get killed. Nothing gets resolved by fighting. From the early 19th century, Switzerland has avoided war and been at peace which shows us that peace can be maintained without war. War is just another term for terror and destruction.” -*Fatima Gohar (8th Grade)*

“The point is that because of these ‘just wars’ a country’s own people die; so what’s the point of having these wars when afterward there will be no one to live upon the ‘peace’ that these wars created while the same war caused so many other innocent people to die in another country? I think that calling these wars ‘just’ is just an excuse to fight. To say that we are doing this for justice and freedom is a lie because if they really were doing it for justice, freedom, then there would be actual care for the innocent people who are dying for something that they did not do. Countries should compromise and negotiate because that is how true peace and happiness will be achieved. War brings more war; hatred showers us with more hatred; conflicts causing separation, and killing causes more killing.” -*Isha Sajjad (8th Grade)*

“All wars that happen don’t really have any specific reasoning to them. If you take a look at the war in Afghanistan, the reason the U.S. fought them was to get Osama bin Laden. When he was not found, the U.S. still stayed and “discovered” some important minerals over there. The reason wars usually happen is so countries can gain resources for themselves, even if they have enough. Negotiation is never an option. If the U.S. want other countries to like them and be their allies, they should not fight them. Instead, the U.S. has Israel as their ally when they should really help the Palestinians in their strive for freedom. Every ‘just war’ is just a war. -*Zonera Hashmi (8th Grade)*



“War may sometimes be a necessary evil. But no matter how necessary, it is always an evil, never a good. We will not learn to live together in peace by killing each other’s children.”
-*Jimmy Carter*

“ There shouldn’t be war at all because war just causes bloodshed and deaths. War only leads to more war, just like WWII was caused because of WWI. Wars are VERY violent and should not be waged.”

Hamdi Lababidi (8th Grade)

Future Writers– Kids’ Blogs and Tales



NiNth Grade Odes

“Our Prophet”

by Hassena Qalati
(9th grade)

The Prophet Muhammad
(SAW) respected and loved
everybody,

Whether they were poor or
rich,

Young or old,

Even if they were kind or
rude.

One thing I really respect him
for is that

He would always have a
smile on his face,

Even if it were the hardest
times of his life.

He would always smile and
told his people:

Don’t let this trial (life) affect
your smile.

The Prophet Muhammad
would treat the orphans with
love

And he would help the needy
and the weak.

He never lied or spoke bad
about anyone,

Even if the person had made
him suffer a lot.

All these things he used to do
was to teach his people how
to act in everyday life.

And by acting upon the way
of the Prophet,

It will lead people to eternal
success in this world and the
hereafter.

I really look up to Prophet
Muhammad(SAW)

Because he was the best
human being in the whole
world.

Not because of how much
wealth or property he had,
But because of his sayings
and actions.

“My Mother”

by: Marwa Lababidi
(9th grade)

You have granted me
birth,

You have fed me,

You have granted me love,

You have raised me.

You taught me to talk,

You taught me to share,

You taught me to walk,

You taught me to care,

You have brought me to
school,

To learn and to eat,

I think you are cool,

For Heaven lies at your
feet.

“Malcolm X made a difference”

by Zainab Agboola (9th grade)

Malcolm X made a difference.

With his mind, he wished things,

People could never have hoped for.

With his skill he learned things,

People never would have thought of learning.

With his mouth he said things,

People never would have thought of saying.

With his life, he accomplished things,

No one else could have ever accomplished.

What do you call
something that smells
and sees at the same
time?

Smellavision!



By Yahya Ashour 5th grade

When asked for the pros and cons of a Homework machine, here is what Tayyar Mustamir (4th grader) wrote:

“A homework machine will be good because it will make your life easier. After coming from school you will be relaxed. You will have enough time to play at home. Too bad it is not a classwork or test machine. You will fail in tests if you don't do your homework by yourself. You will not learn anything if the homework machine is doing all of your homework. If you play too much you'll be bored. Playing will not make you smart. Overall it is good and healthier to do your homework by yourself. Forget about the homework machine!!!!!!”

When asked to write an essay on a winter day using the week’s vocabulary Rahma Shata (8th grader) wrote:

“I **aptly** arose at 7:30 a.m. to get dressed for school Friday morning. It seemed that today would be one of the most **dismissible** days I've ever lived... **Cultivating** the mind is essential; so I got ready to go to school and receive education and knowledge. **Assumptions** of the weather are made year around, accuracy being quite predictable, until winter. The character of **humanity** is **dominated** with trying to predict the unpredictable, and we pass through life **anachronistically** looking for signs that foreshadow the unseen. I opened the window and was awed to see snow angels falling **collectively** onto the ground. I was momentarily **diverted** from the thoughts of going to school until I heard the **gnarled** persistent cries of my sister, and saw the **scoundrel** smirk of my little brother. I quickly got dressed and we headed off to school. I dreaded leaving the freshness off the air, to be closed off into **musty** indoors. Suddenly, we got a call form the school. The air became still, and it seemed that nothing was moving, except the snow angels flapping their wings. They **vaulted** towards the sky, as the snow fell, fell, and fell.... We went back home, maybe I got upset maybe I didn't. All I remember is how upset I was to go back to the house, into my room, away from the snow..”

Do It Yourself: Sandwich Book Report (3rd grade project)

1) **Cut out all the pieces for the sandwich;**

-Two pieces of 'bread'. -One 'tomato' piece. -One piece of 'lettuce'. -One piece of 'cheese'. -One piece of 'meat' (or more if needed).

2) **Write on each sandwich piece.**

-**First piece of bread:** neatly write the title and author of the book. Underline the title. Write your name in the bottom right corner.



-**Lettuce:** Describe the book’s setting with both time and place.

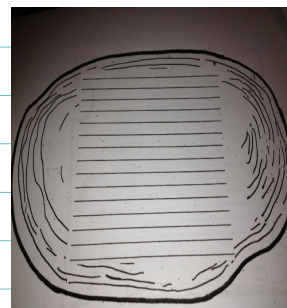
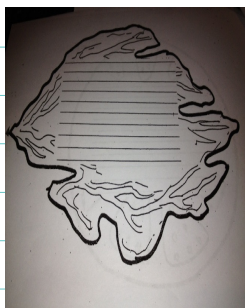
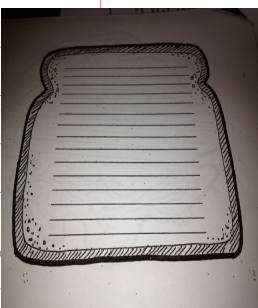
-**Tomato:** Describe the main character’s physical appearance. Give two or three character traits.

-**Meat:** give a summary of the book. *Your summary should include the problem the main character faced and the solution. You may use extra pieces of meat to write a good and well informed summary. Remember a summary is what the story is about in your **own** words.

-**Cheese:** write your favorite part of this book-be specific.

-**Second piece of bread:** neatly write your opinion of the book. Would you recommend it to others etcetera?

3) **Color around the words.**



Inspirational- Celebrating Heroes

February: African-American History Month & March: Women's History Month

Martin Luther King Jr.

Martin Luther King Jr. was a civil rights leader. He was born in Atlanta, Georgia on Jan. 15, 1929. He was the one who stopped racism, because if you weren't white you couldn't do anything. Colored people had cheap things while whites had better education and more. His speech "I had a dream" was successful enough to stop racism. On April 4, 1968 in Memphis, Tennessee Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated by James Earl in his hotel's balcony.

By Bushra Fatima Ali (1st grade)

Anne Sullivan

The woman who inspired me tremendously was Anne Sullivan. Anne Sullivan was a tutor to Helen Keller. As a child, Anne used to get physically abused by her alcoholic father and lived in poverty. At the age of five, trachoma struck Anne leaving her almost blind. Two years later, her mother died and her father abandoned his children to an orphanage in Tewksbury where her brother died shortly thereafter. After regaining her eyesight from a series of operations and graduating as class valedictorian in 1886 from the Perkins Institute for the Blind, she began teaching Helen Keller. Helen was not an easy student, but Anne learned to teach her Braille and the manual alphabet. Throughout Helen's formal education and after, Anne was a suspicion to many because believed that Anne was trying to control Keller or use Keller and they did not trust the commitment that Anne Sullivan had to her student. Eventually, her own eyesight failed her but toward the end of her life she received recognition from Temple University, the Educational Institute of Scotland, and the Roosevelt Memorial foundation for her tireless

Ayesha (R.A.)

Ayesha (R.A) was the wife of Muhammad (S.A.W) and also the daughter of his best friend plus first caliph of Islam, Abu Bakr as-Siddiq. Her mother was Umm Ruman and her half-sister was Asma bint Abu Bakr. Both Ayesha and Asma prepared for the famous migration of Abu Bakr and Prophet (S.A.W). In Islamic writings, she (Ayesha) is known as 'Mother of the Believers' (Arabic: *أم المؤمنين* umm-al-mu'minīn). She was born on 614 AD. She was born in the fourth year of prophethood. She was the third and youngest wife of the Prophet (S.A.W). She got married with the Prophet at the age of nine and went to live with him at twelve. In many Muslim traditions, people say that she was the most favored and beloved wife of Muhammad (S.A.W) after Khadija (R.A). She is a huge inspiration to all Muslims. Ayesha's life is an example for young Muslim girls, who should try to follow her devotion and love for husband and also her aptitude for knowledge and learning. We can see from examples from her life, that she really loved Rasulullah (S.A.W) till the end. And anyone she loved more than the Prophet was ALLAH (S.W.T). It is said that the Prophet did not only love her because of her luminous physical beauty but also her amazing intelligence, sound judgment, and admirable personality. She liked everything thing that the Prophet liked, and she disliked everything he disliked. Muhammad (S.A.W) passed away on the lap of Ayesha (R.A). **INNA LILLAHI WA INNA ILAYHI RAJU'UN.** When her father, Abu Bakr, passed away, she had saved the spot next to him for herself. But when the blow that Umar received was fatal, he asked her if he can be buried beside Muhammad (S.A.W) and she allowed saying 'Today I prefer Umar to myself' which shows how great she was. She narrated 2210 Hadiths. She died at the age of 67 on 17 Ramadan, 58 AH. I would tell all Muslim women to follow in the footsteps of Ayesha R.A. and try being like her. Of course no one is perfect, but we can all try, because after all the reward is worth our strive towards this .

By Zonera Hashmi (8th grade)

(cont. from Anne Sullivan) teaching and commitment to Helen Keller. This woman is such a inspiration because she dedicated her own life teaching another student who was also very inspiring to people. Although, Anne had an eyesight problem, she still dedicated her time to her student and that is an excellent quality of a teacher. Helen gave Anne a rough time sometimes but that didn't make Anne give up. Instead, she worked harder to make Helen understand. Anne had such a harsh past with her dad abusing her, Trachoma, her mom dying, and then losing her brother yet she still prospered and is recognized by many people today. I mean she graduated as valedictorian even though she lived in poverty. I think that a lot of people should learn from Anne and Helen that no matter what kind of sickness hits you, or anything that sets you back in that matter, you should never give up and stop trying, but instead conquer it and the rest will fall in to place.

By Fatima Gohar (8th grade)



HEROISM IN OUR COMMUNITY

When one thinks of a hero, one imagines an individual, possibly with a red cape, 'flying' to the rescue of a distressed victim. One conjures up an image of a possible muscular, certainly brave, person alert, attentive, self-sacrificial, and at the very least sympathetic to the tribulations of others. A person who puts others' problems above their own. A person who realizes that it takes effort to make the world a better place. A person who foresees a better tomorrow and starts towards that brighter horizon no matter how dark the present day may be. It is truly admirable when one finds not one but several heroes amongst your very own community. Masha'Allah Baytul Iman Academy is proud of their young heroes. Several BIA students have been working conjointly with the American Muslims for Hunger Relief helping them provide more than 1000 meals in various cities all over New Jersey in Philadelphia.

Unbeknownst to those of us blessed enough to have power restored to our homes, along with damage repaired to the same, there are still parts of New Jersey and Philadelphia that are still suffering from the adverse effects that Hurricane Sandy left in its wake. There are people who live daily in places termed "tent city" and the like; who strive not only for daily comforts of home, but for the mere 'luxury' of a warm meal. More than 60 volunteers helped make AMFHR's mission a possibility. Our team of BIA Webelos Scouts also joined this noble cause. Our young heroes went to Food For Friends at the First Presbyterian Church in Rahway, while another team of young saviors went to the National Islamic Association in Newark. The children were involved in preparation and arrangement of food, packing meals, serving meals, as well as organization of and clean up after of events. The young inspirations also learned the importance of feeding the hungry and the sheer blessing of Allah SWT's food truly is.

Bravo Students! May all in the BIA family be as inspirational and aspire to be heroes in every form, Insha'Allah and Ameen!



Current BIA students and Alumni and their acts of Heroism; Furqaan Syed, Omar Syed Farooq, Mohammed Junaid Ghani, Taha Awan, Omar Awan, Marium Awan, and Farhaan Ali Mohammad. Keep it up! Masha'Allah we are SO PROUD of you!

“True Heroism is remarkably sober, very un-dramatic. It is not the urge to surpass all others at whatever cost, but the urge to SERVE others at whatever cost.” -Arthur Ashe