

**“The Honorable Joha, Mulla Nasruddin Hodja and the Tricky Case”**  
*An English Language Lesson Plan by Mary Brooks*



**Unit/Theme:** using good judgment

**Proficiency Level:** novice to intermediate low (ACTFL Guidelines)

**Timing:** two to three hours with writing assignment

### **Content Objectives**

For students to:

- understand the characters and relate personalities to everyday people
- be able to describe the situation
- be able to retell the story

### **Language Objectives**

For students to:

- use new vocabulary
- use discourse markers for the sequence of the story
- find meaningful metaphors
- determine the meaning of new words using context clues
- integrate listening, reading, speaking, and writing
- retell the story
- relate the story to a personal experience, first orally, and then in writing

### **Learning Strategies**

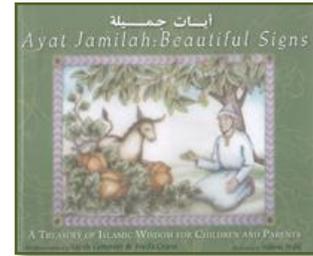
For students to:

- understand the story sequence by building a context
- use discussion skills to consider the lesson of the story as a pre-reading strategy
- describe what the characters said when the reading is divided into time segments, and then retell the story using discourse markers
- use the reading as a context for writing

**Key Vocabulary:** poor widow, list of petitioners, hailed, humbly, addiction to sugar, squandering, stroked his beard, gaze, contemplated, request, pronouncement, postpone, persisted, anxiously, clasping, cowered, beaming

## Materials

- *Ayat Jamilah: Beautiful Signs: A Treasury of Islamic Wisdom for Children and Parents*, collected and adapted by Sarah Conover and Freda Crane. Boston: Skinner House (2010). Available at [www.uuabookstore.org](http://www.uuabookstore.org) or 800-215-9076 and wherever books are sold.
- mp3 player/recorder



## Context Building

Ask the students:

- Have your parents ever tried to help you change a habit (for example, watching TV, playing video games, using social media)? What happened?

## Presentation (Teachers)

1. Now that the students have some background for the moral of the story, play the whole story for an overview, without stopping.
2. Play the recorded story again.
3. Play the recorded story a third time and pause at the following parts in order to emphasize their importance:
  - the request
  - one week later
  - the next week
  - another week
  - one month later
4. Read the moral out loud: “I had to cure myself of the same habit, didn’t I? How could I have known it would take so long?”

## Practice/Application

1. Retell the story with the students. Start a story chain. Use the new vocabulary in the retelling.

Use sequence markers, for example:

first of all, second, third  
in the first place, for one thing, then, next  
before, now, after, while  
into, until, last, during  
since, always, later, earlier, in the end, finally

2. Help the students use descriptive adjectives and interesting verbs.
3. Make sure the lesson of the story is clear.

### **Assessment**

Use a dictation to give the students assessment questions. The dictation sequence is: listen, listen and repeat, listen and write, listen and check.

They can write the answers individually and then share with a partner.

1. Why did the mother take her son to see the mulla?
2. What was the process of making the decision?
3. How long did it take the mulla to make a decision?
4. Do you think addiction to sugar is a common problem?
5. Do you think the mulla is a wise man? Why?
6. Can you think of a similar situation in your own life?

### **Extension**

#### Reading into Writing

1. Ask the students:
  - When has a parent tried to change one of your habits? What happened? Did you change the habit? If you changed, why? If you did not change, why?
2. Tell the students:
  - Think about your own stories and brainstorm with a partner about significant events of change.
  - Select an event and tell your partner what happened.
  - Record this story.

3. Tell the students:

Use this practice storytelling and your recording to write your story. Divide the story in this way:

- Describe what led up to the event.
- Describe the event.
- What happened later? (Did you change or not?)

Use sequence markers, descriptive adjectives, and interesting verbs when you write the story.

4. Follow standard writing process to guide the students into editing and redrafting their stories.