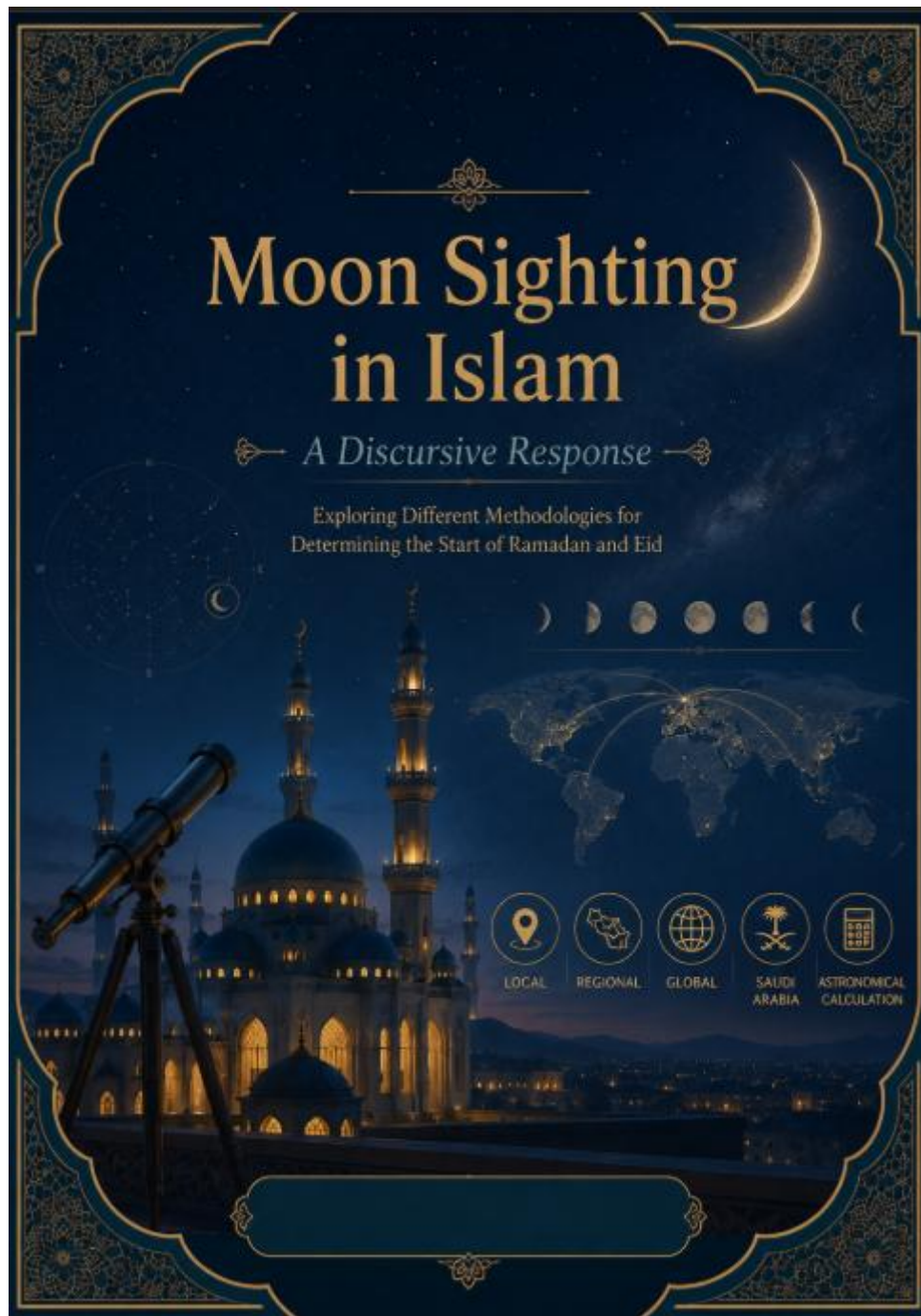


Discursive Writing Plan

Topic: Moon Sighting in Islam 🌙



Question

Which moon sighting methodology should Muslims follow to begin Ramadan and Eid?

Purpose

To explore different Islamic methodologies for moon sighting and consider their strengths and challenges. The response should respectfully explain that although there are different opinions, **local moon sighting is the preferred approach** because it is closely connected to the Qur'an, Sunnah and the lived experience of the local Muslim community.

Introduction Plan

General Statement

The Islamic calendar is based on the moon. Important acts of worship, such as fasting Ramadan, celebrating Eid and performing Hajj, are connected to the lunar months.

Issue

Muslims do not always follow the same method when deciding the beginning of Ramadan or Eid. Some follow local moon sighting, while others follow regional sighting, global sighting, Saudi Arabia, or astronomical calculations.

Thesis

Although there are several moon sighting methodologies in Islam, **local moon sighting is the strongest approach** because it closely follows the hadith, respects local horizons and connects Muslims directly to the signs of Allah's creation.

Qur'an and Hadith Evidence

Qur'an Evidence 1

Surah al-Baqarah 2:189

“They ask you about the new moons. Say, “They are measurements of time for the people and for Hajj.””

Link

This verse shows that the moon is used to measure Islamic time, including important acts of worship such as Hajj.

Qur'an Evidence 2

Surah al-Baqarah 2:185

“The month of Ramadan is that in which the Qur'an was revealed...”

“Allah intends ease for you, not hardship...”

Link

This verse shows that Ramadan is a sacred month. It also reminds Muslims that Islamic rulings should be approached with mercy, wisdom and ease.

Hadith Evidence

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

“Observe fast on sighting it and break fast on sighting it, but if the sky is cloudy for you, then complete the number of thirty.”

Link

This hadith is one of the main foundations for moon sighting. It supports beginning and ending Ramadan through the sighting of the crescent moon, while also giving clear guidance to complete thirty days if the moon cannot be seen.

Body Paragraph 1: Local Moon Sighting



Methodology

Local moon sighting means Muslims begin Ramadan or Eid when the crescent moon is sighted in their own country, city or local area.

Benefits

- Closely follows the hadith: “Observe fast on sighting it...”
- Connects Muslims to the natural signs of Allah.
- Respects local horizons because the moon may be visible in one place but not another.
- Encourages local communities to work together through reliable witnesses and Islamic councils.

Challenges

- Different communities may start Ramadan or Eid on different days.
- Weather conditions may make the moon difficult to see.
- Disagreements may occur if people question whether the moon was truly sighted.

Judgement

Local moon sighting is the strongest approach because it is directly connected to the wording of the hadith and the reality of different horizons.

Body Paragraph 2: Regional Moon Sighting



Methodology

Regional moon sighting means Muslims follow the sighting of the moon within a wider area, such as a country, continent, or nearby countries.

Benefits

- Creates more unity than purely local sighting.
- Allows communities nearby to follow the same date.
- Useful if one city has clouds but another nearby city sees the moon.

Challenges

- It can be difficult to define what counts as a “region.”
- Some may disagree about whether a country, continent, or nearby area should be followed.
- It may still lead to differences between communities.

Judgement

Regional moon sighting is practical and balanced, but local moon sighting is stronger because it remains more directly connected to the immediate community and local horizon.

Body Paragraph 3: Global Moon Sighting



Methodology

Global moon sighting means that if the moon is sighted anywhere in the world by reliable witnesses, Muslims in other countries may begin Ramadan or Eid based on that sighting.

Benefits

- Can create worldwide Muslim unity.
- Allows many Muslims to begin Ramadan or Eid on the same day.
- Modern technology makes it easier to share sighting reports quickly.

Challenges

- The moon may be visible in one country but impossible to see in another.
- Time zones and different horizons can make this method difficult.
- Some scholars argue that distant sightings should not apply to every location.

Judgement

Global moon sighting promotes unity, but it is weaker than local moon sighting because it may ignore the reality of different horizons.

Body Paragraph 4: Following Saudi Arabia



Methodology

Some Muslims follow Saudi Arabia for Ramadan and Eid because Makkah and Madinah are the holiest cities in Islam.

Benefits

- Creates a strong connection to the sacred lands.
- Provides a clear authority for some communities.
- Important for Hajj because the pilgrimage takes place in Saudi Arabia.

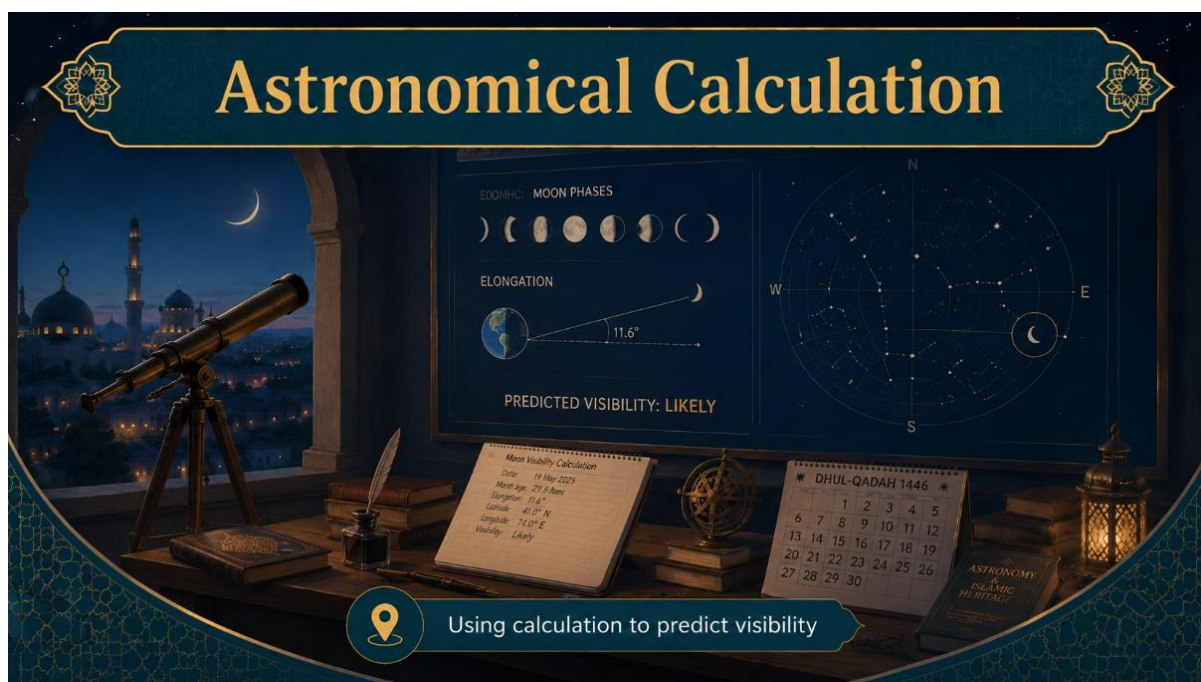
Challenges

- Muslims live all over the world, and moon visibility differs between countries.
- Ramadan and Eid are not only performed in Saudi Arabia.
- A sighting in Saudi Arabia may not match the local horizon of another country.

Judgement

Following Saudi Arabia may be simple and emotionally meaningful, but local moon sighting is stronger for Muslims living in other countries because it respects their own horizon and location.

Body Paragraph 5: Astronomical Calculation



Methodology

Astronomical calculation uses science to predict when the new moon is born and when the crescent may be visible.

Benefits

- Helps with planning for schools, workplaces, mosques and families.
- Can prevent false sighting claims.
- Useful as a supporting tool to check whether a sighting is possible.

Challenges

- Some scholars argue that calculation should not replace actual sighting.
- The hadith refers to seeing the crescent.
- It may feel less connected to the physical act of observing the moon.

Judgement

Astronomical calculation is useful as a support, but it should not replace local moon sighting as the main method.

Overall Judgement

After considering these methodologies, **local moon sighting is the preferred methodology**. This is because it remains closely connected to the hadith: “Observe fast on sighting it and break fast on sighting it, but if the sky is cloudy for you, then complete the number of thirty.” It also respects the reality that different locations have different horizons.

The crescent moon may be visible in one place but not visible in another. Therefore, following the local sighting allows Muslims to practise Islam according to their own location and community.

However, this does not mean other opinions should be disrespected. Regional sighting, global sighting, following Saudi Arabia and astronomical calculation all have reasons behind them. Muslims should approach this issue with mercy, wisdom and unity.

Conclusion Plan

Restate the Issue

Moon sighting is important because it determines the beginning of Ramadan and Eid.

Summarise the Methodologies

Muslims may follow local sighting, regional sighting, global sighting, Saudi Arabia, or astronomical calculation.

Final Position

While each method has strengths and challenges, **local moon sighting is the strongest approach** because it follows the hadith closely, respects local horizons and connects the community to the signs of Allah.

Final Sentence

Ultimately, the moon should remind Muslims not only of time, but also of obedience, humility, mercy and unity.

Grammar Lessons

Moon Sighting in Islam Discursive Writing

Lesson 1: Using Connectives to Compare Viewpoints

Grammar Focus

Connectives help join ideas together.

Word Bank

Compare	Contrast	Add Ideas	Show Result
similarly	however	also	therefore
likewise	although	furthermore	as a result
in the same way	whereas	another point is	because of this
both	on the other hand	additionally	this shows that

Example

Basic sentence:

Some Muslims follow local moon sighting. Others follow global moon sighting.

Improved sentence:

Some Muslims follow local moon sighting, **whereas** others follow global moon sighting.

Activity 1: Choose the Best Connective

Choose a word from the word bank to complete each sentence.

1. Local moon sighting follows the hadith closely; _____, it may lead to different Eid dates.
2. Global moon sighting promotes worldwide unity. _____, regional moon sighting promotes unity across nearby areas.
3. Astronomical calculation helps with planning; _____, some scholars believe physical sighting is still important.
4. The moon is used to measure Islamic time. _____, moon sighting is important for Ramadan and Eid.

5. Local moon sighting respects local horizons, _____ global moon sighting relies on a sighting from anywhere in the world.

Activity 2: Build Your Own Sentence

Use this frame:

Some Muslims follow _____, whereas others follow _____.

Example:

Some Muslims follow **local moon sighting**, whereas others follow **global moon sighting**.

Lesson 2: Writing Complex Sentences

Grammar Focus

A **complex sentence** gives more detail by using words such as **because**, **although**, **if**, **when** and **since**.

Word Bank

Cause	Contrast	Condition	Time
because	although	if	when
since	while	unless	whenever
as	even though	provided that	before

Example

Basic sentence:

Local moon sighting is preferred. It follows the hadith.

Improved sentence:

Local moon sighting is preferred **because** it follows the hadith.

Activity 1: Finish the Sentence

Complete each sentence using your own words.

1. Local moon sighting is important because _____

2. Although global moon sighting may create unity, _____
_____.
3. If the moon is not sighted, _____

4. Since the Islamic calendar is based on the moon, _____

5. While calculations can be useful, _____

Activity 2: Match the Sentence Parts

Match the beginning with the best ending.

Beginning	Ending
1. If the sky is cloudy,	a. because it follows the hadith closely.
2. Local moon sighting is strong	b. Muslims may complete thirty days.
3. Although calculations are helpful,	c. some scholars prefer physical sighting.
4. Since the moon has different visibility in different places,	d. local horizons are important.

Lesson 3: Using Modality for Balanced Judgement

Grammar Focus

Modality helps writing sound thoughtful and balanced.

Instead of sounding too forceful, use careful words.

Word Bank

Strong Modality	Medium Modality	Careful Phrases
must	should	appears to
will	can	seems to
definitely	may	is likely to
always	might	could be argued

Example

Too strong:

Global moon sighting is wrong.

More balanced:

Global moon sighting **may be less suitable** because it does not always consider local horizons.

Activity 1: Make It More Balanced

Rewrite each sentence using words from the word bank.

1. Astronomical calculation is the best method.

Improved: Astronomical calculation _____

2. Following Saudi Arabia is incorrect.

Improved: Following Saudi Arabia _____

3. Global moon sighting causes confusion.

Improved: Global moon sighting _____

4. Local moon sighting is perfect.

Improved: Local moon sighting _____

5. Regional sighting solves the problem.

Improved: Regional sighting _____

Helpful Sentence Starters

- This method **may be useful** because...
 - This approach **appears to be strong** because...
 - It **could be argued** that...
 - This method **seems less suitable** when...
 - Local moon sighting **is likely to be preferred** because...
-

Lesson 4: Embedding Qur'an and Hadith Evidence

Grammar Focus

Embedding evidence means placing a quote smoothly into your sentence.

Evidence Bank

Source	Evidence
Qur'an 2:189	"They are measurements of time for the people and for Hajj."
Qur'an 2:185	"Allah intends ease for you, not hardship."
Sahih Muslim 1081b	"Observe fast on sighting it and break fast on sighting it."
Sahih Muslim 1081b	"If the sky is cloudy for you, then complete the number of thirty."

Sentence Starter Bank

- The Qur'an teaches that...
- This is shown when the Qur'an states...
- The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said...
- This hadith supports the idea that...
- This evidence suggests that...
- This reminds Muslims that...

Example

Dropped quote:

The moon is important. "They are measurements of time for the people and for Hajj."

Improved sentence:

The moon is important in Islam, as the Qur'an states that the new moons are **"measurements of time for the people and for Hajj."**

Activity 1: Complete the Embedded Evidence

Use the evidence bank to complete the sentences.

1. The Qur'an shows that the moon is used to measure Islamic time when it states, "_____."
2. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ taught Muslims to begin fasting through moon sighting when he said, "_____."
3. Islam is built on mercy and ease, as the Qur'an reminds believers, "_____."
4. If the moon cannot be seen, Muslims should complete the month, as the hadith states, "_____."

Activity 2: Explain the Evidence

Use this frame:

This evidence shows that _____ because _____.

Example:

This evidence shows that moon sighting is important because Ramadan and Eid are connected to the lunar calendar.

Lesson 5: Writing Topic Sentences and Judgement Sentences

Grammar Focus

A strong paragraph needs:

1. **Topic sentence:** introduces the method.
2. **Judgement sentence:** gives your final view about the method.

Method Bank

Method	Simple Meaning
Local moon sighting	Following the moon sighting in your own area
Regional moon sighting	Following the moon sighting in a nearby region
Global moon sighting	Following a moon sighting from anywhere in the world
Following Saudi Arabia	Following the announcement from Saudi Arabia
Astronomical calculation	Using science to predict moon visibility

Topic Sentence Starters

- One important methodology is...
- Another approach is...
- Some Muslims follow...
- This method means...
- In this approach, Muslims...

Judgement Sentence Starters

- Overall, this method is useful because...
- However, this method may be challenging because...
- This approach appears strong because...
- This method may not suit everyone because...
- Therefore, local moon sighting seems strongest because...

Activity 1: Write Topic Sentences

Use the method bank to write a topic sentence for each method.

1. Local moon sighting:

2. Regional moon sighting:

3. Global moon sighting:

4. Following Saudi Arabia:

5. Astronomical calculation:

Activity 2: Write Judgement Sentences

Use the judgement sentence starters.

1. Local moon sighting appears strong because

2. Regional moon sighting may be useful because

3. Global moon sighting may be challenging because

4. Following Saudi Arabia may be meaningful because

5. Astronomical calculation can be helpful because

Final Practice Task

Write One Discursive Paragraph

Use this paragraph scaffold:

Topic sentence:

One important methodology is _____.

Explanation:

This means _____.

Evidence:

This connects to the hadith where the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said,
“_____.”

Benefit:

One benefit of this method is _____.

Challenge:

However, one challenge is _____.

Judgement:

Overall, this method _____.

Model Paragraph

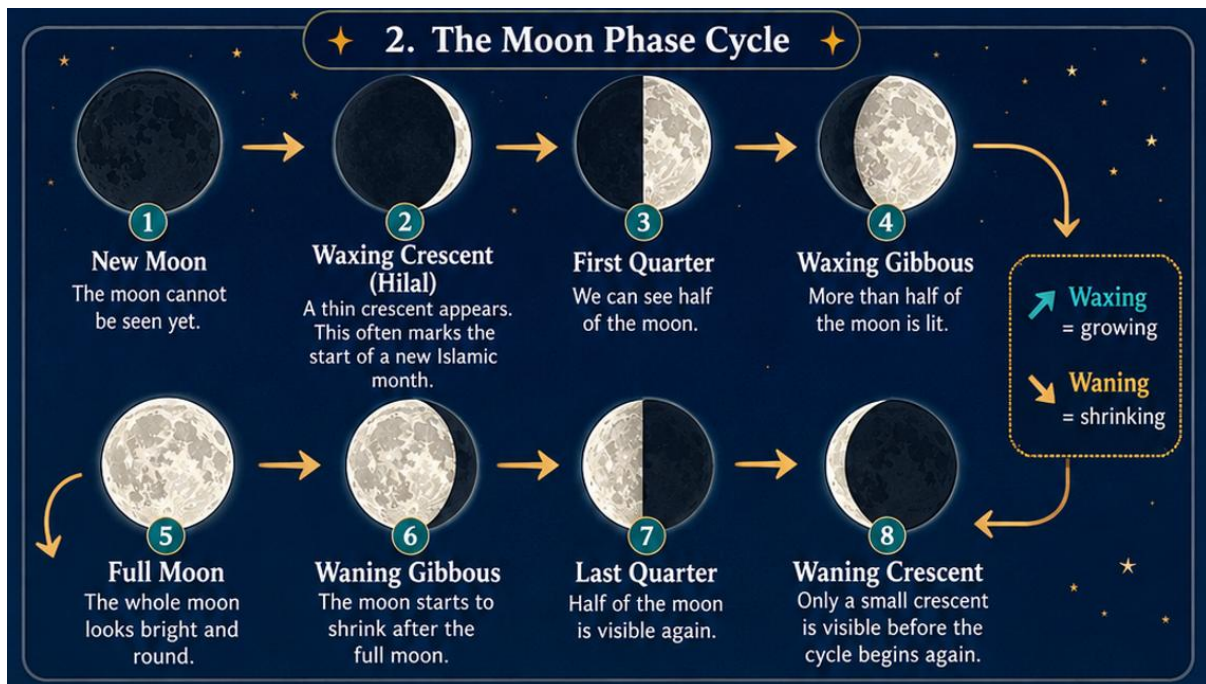
One important methodology is **local moon sighting**. This means Muslims begin Ramadan or Eid when the crescent moon is sighted in their own area. This connects to the hadith where the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, **“Fast when you see it and end the fast when you see it.”** One benefit of this method is that it closely follows the Sunnah and respects local horizons. However, one challenge is that different communities may begin Ramadan or Eid on different days. Overall, local moon sighting appears to be the strongest approach because it connects Muslims to the hadith, their local community and the signs of Allah’s creation. 🌙

Word	Definition	Sentence
Moon sighting	The act of looking for the new crescent moon.	Moon sighting is used to help decide the beginning of Ramadan and Eid.
Crescent	The thin curved shape of the new moon.	Muslims look for the crescent at the end of the lunar month.
Lunar	Related to the moon.	The Islamic calendar is a lunar calendar.
Calendar	A system used to organise days, months and years.	The Islamic calendar follows the phases of the moon.
Ramadan	The ninth month of the Islamic calendar, when Muslims fast.	Ramadan begins when the new month is confirmed.
Eid	A Muslim celebration after Ramadan or during Hajj.	Eid al-Fitr is celebrated after the month of Ramadan ends.
Hajj	The pilgrimage to Makkah that Muslims perform if they are able.	The moon helps determine the timing of Hajj.
Methodology	A method or approach used to do something.	Local moon sighting is one methodology used by Muslims.
Local	Related to a nearby area or community.	Local moon sighting depends on seeing the moon in one's own area.
Regional	Related to a wider nearby area.	Regional moon sighting may include sightings from nearby cities or countries.
Global	Related to the whole world.	Global moon sighting accepts a sighting from anywhere in the world.
Calculation	The use of numbers or science to work something out.	Astronomical calculation can help predict whether the moon will be visible.

Word	Definition	Sentence
Astronomical	Related to the study of the moon, stars and planets.	Astronomical information can support moon sighting decisions.
Visibility	How easy something is to see.	Moon visibility can be affected by clouds or weather.
Horizon	The line where the sky appears to meet the land or sea.	The crescent may appear close to the horizon after sunset.
Sighting	An occasion when something is seen.	A confirmed moon sighting may mark the start of a new Islamic month.
Evidence	Information used to support an idea.	Qur'an and hadith evidence is important in Islamic discussions.
Hadith	A recorded saying, action or approval of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.	The hadith teaches Muslims to fast when the moon is sighted.
Qur'an	The holy book of Islam.	The Qur'an explains that the moon is used to measure time.
Sunnah	The teachings and example of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.	Many Muslims try to follow the Sunnah when beginning Ramadan.
Authentic	Reliable and accepted as true.	Students should use authentic hadith evidence in their writing.
Opinion	A personal or scholarly view about an issue.	Different scholars may have different opinions about moon sighting.
Perspective	A way of thinking about something.	A discursive response explores more than one perspective.
Viewpoint	A person's position or belief about a topic.	One viewpoint supports local moon sighting.

Word	Definition	Sentence
Unity	Being together or connected as one group.	Some people support global moon sighting because it may promote unity.
Community	A group of people who share something in common.	The local Muslim community may gather to confirm the moon sighting.
Mercy	Kindness, compassion and gentleness.	Differences in moon sighting should be approached with mercy.
Ease	The opposite of hardship or difficulty.	The Qur'an reminds Muslims that Allah intends ease, not hardship.
Discursive	A type of writing that explores different ideas or viewpoints.	A discursive response can discuss several moon sighting methodologies.
Judgement	A final opinion after considering different ideas.	The judgement may favour local moon sighting because it follows the hadith closely.

Phases of the Moon in the Islamic Calendar



1. What is the Islamic Calendar?

The Islamic calendar is a **lunar calendar**. This means it follows the moon, not the sun.

Each Islamic month begins when the **new crescent moon**, called the **hilal**, is sighted. This is why Muslims look for the crescent moon to know when important months begin.

Islamic months are usually **29 or 30 days long**.

2. Qur'an Connection

Allah says in the Qur'an:

“They ask you about the new moons. Say, ‘They are measurements of time for the people and for Hajj.’”

Surah al-Baqarah 2:189

This verse teaches us that the moon helps people measure time. In Islam, the moon is connected to important acts of worship, such as **Ramadan**, **Eid** and **Hajj**.

3. What are Moon Phases?

The moon does not always look the same. Sometimes it looks like a thin crescent, sometimes it looks half full, and sometimes it looks bright and round.

These different shapes are called **moon phases**.

The moon goes through its phases in a cycle. This cycle helps Muslims know when a new Islamic month may begin.

4. The Moon Phase Cycle

1. New Moon

The moon cannot be seen yet. It is dark from our view on Earth.

2. Waxing Crescent, Hilal

A thin crescent appears in the sky. This is very important in Islam because it may mark the beginning of a new Islamic month.

3. First Quarter

Half of the moon is visible. It looks like one side of the moon is lit.

4. Waxing Gibbous

More than half of the moon is lit. The moon is growing closer to becoming full.

5. Full Moon

The whole moon looks bright and round. This usually happens around the middle of the lunar month.

6. Waning Gibbous

After the full moon, the moon begins to look smaller. More than half is still lit, but it is shrinking.

7. Last Quarter

Half of the moon is visible again, but it is the opposite side from the first quarter.

8. Waning Crescent

Only a small crescent is visible before the cycle begins again. Soon, the moon will become a new moon.

5. Important Moon Words

Word	Meaning
Lunar	Related to the moon.
Lunar calendar	A calendar based on the moon.
Crescent	The curved shape of the moon.
Hilal	The new crescent moon.
Moon sighting	Looking for the crescent moon.
Waxing	The moon looks like it is growing.
Waning	The moon looks like it is shrinking.

6. Why Does This Matter in Islam?

The moon phases matter because Muslims use the Islamic calendar to know when important times of worship begin.

For example:

Islamic Event	Connection to the Moon
Ramadan	Begins when the new crescent moon is sighted.
Eid al-Fitr	Begins after Ramadan ends and the next crescent is sighted.
Hajj	Takes place in Dhul-Hijjah, an Islamic lunar month.
Eid al-Adha	Occurs during the month of Dhul-Hijjah.

The moon reminds Muslims that Allah created signs in the sky to help people measure time and organise worship.

7. Quick Check Questions

1. What type of calendar is the Islamic calendar?
 2. What is the **hilal**?
 3. How many days are Islamic months usually?
 4. Which moon phase is bright and round?
 5. What does **waxing** mean?
 6. What does **waning** mean?
 7. Why is the crescent moon important for Ramadan and Eid?
-

8. Mini Activity

Draw the moon phase cycle in your book.

Label these phases:

1. New Moon
2. Waxing Crescent, Hilal
3. First Quarter
4. Waxing Gibbous
5. Full Moon
6. Waning Gibbous
7. Last Quarter
8. Waning Crescent

Then write one sentence explaining why the moon is important in the Islamic calendar.

Sentence starter:

The moon is important in the Islamic calendar because

_____.