

# How do people express their faith through the arts?

Learning Objective:

To find out how Islamic art helps Muslims to worship.

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Muslim men and women believe it is wrong to have images or statues of religious figures. Why do you think this is?



Think, pair, share your ideas.

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Muslims do not have pictures of Muhammad or other religious figures because they do not wish to worship anyone but Allah. They believe that if there are pictures and statues of people to look at during worship, it is considered idolatry which is a sin. There are no pictures of Allah either since they consider him to be beyond image. Jewish people also have a rule that says they should not have pictures or statues of people in synagogues.



**How is this different to how Christians use images in worship?**

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Islamic art focuses instead on calligraphy and arabesque patterns. It also uses a lot of leaf and flower imagery to reflect creation.

Have a look at these examples of Islamic art. Think about how shape, pattern, calligraphy and the shapes of flowers and leaves are used.



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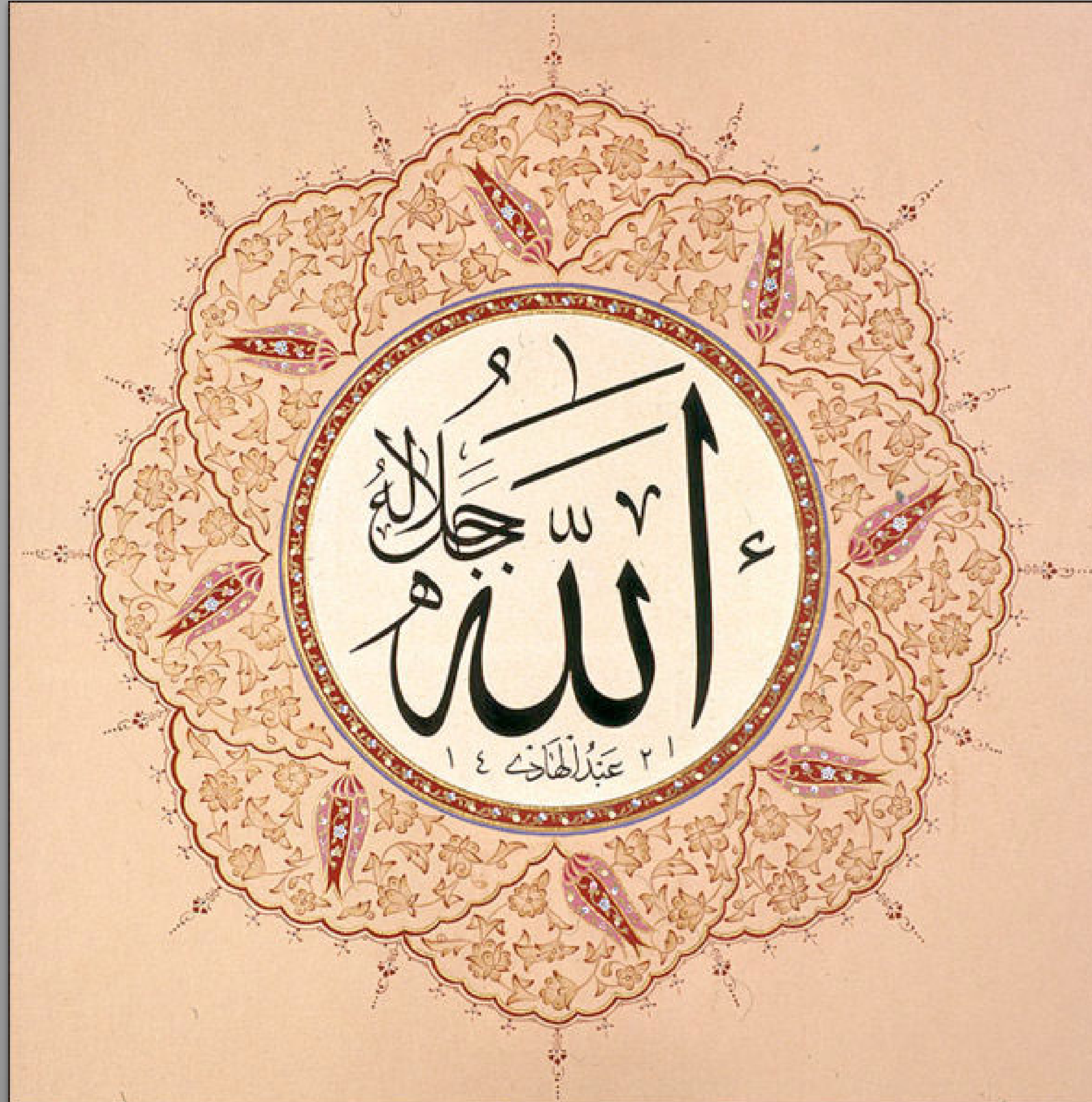
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Mosques, where Muslims go to worship, have very little furniture. One of the reasons for this is because Muslims use prayer mats to pray on. Prayer mats must always face Mecca (a holy place) and they are decorated using Islamic art.



Have a look at the examples on the next slides. What do they all have in common? Why do you think they have been decorated this way?



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What is similar about them?

Why have they been decorated in this way?



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What is similar about them?

Why have they been decorated in this way?



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