

Knowledge/Ilm

Knowledge is what we acquire (obtain) or get at different times of our lives.

The Arabic word for knowledge is ILM.

This is achieved by-

Seeing, Reading, Listening, Writing, Experiment.

1. SEEING

EXAMPLES OF TIMES WHEN WE LEARN BY SEEING

When we are babies, we learn by seeing things around us, such as our mothers face, the cot-mobile, the curtains, etc. When we attend school, we learn by seeing. For example, when our classmates do show and tell. In madrasah, we also learn by seeing, for example, the Salaah Postures, the direction of the Ka’bah, etc.

2. READING

EXAMPLES OF TIMES WHEN WE LEARN BY READING

As we grow old, we learn to read and understand. For example, we read the instructions on a medicine bottle for the correct dosage or read a manual on how to use machine. Reading newspapers and books educates us about different matters. We also gain knowledge by reading our text books, for example, the Tahdhib, history, geography and science books.

Reading is so important that the very first word revealed to our beloved Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) was “read.”

3. LISTENING

EXAMPLES OF TIMES WHEN WE LEARN BY LISTENING

When we were very young, older people warned us about the dangers of jumping from a high place, crossing a road or swimming alone. We obeyed them because they were older and thus know more. For example, we listen to our teacher to read to us from the holy quran. We then read to our teacher. He/she listens to us read then corrects us. In this way we learn by listening, reading, seeing. Listening to the news or educational programs on the radio is also another way of listening and learning.

4. WRITING

EXAMPLES OF TIMES WHEN WE LEARN BY WRITING

Sometime, at school/madrasah we write in our books information that our teachers write on the board. We then go home and learn from what we wrote in our books. This is an example of learning by writing.

Allah (The Exalted) tells us in Surah Al Qalam, Surah Number 68, Verse 1:

Nun - by oath of the pen and by oath of what is written by it. (Alphabet of the Arabic language; Allah and to whomever He reveals, know their precise meanings.)*

This means that we must make use of the pen to write down important information.

5. Experience

Example of times when we learn by Experience.

Experience means when we, ourselves see, do, feel or take part in some activity. For example,

- a) Learning to read the Qur'an,
- b) Riding a bicycle or horse,
- c) Fixing or repairing appliances such as a hair-drier, lawn mower or iron,
- d) Using the computer.

We may need to take lessons as well as practice many times before we can do it how we gain knowledge through experience.

Allah (The Exalted) tells us in the Qur'an in Surah Ad-Dahr, Surah number 76, verse 2:

*Indeed We have created man from mixed semen; in order to test him
– We therefore made him hearing, seeing.*

In the above Ayah, Allah (The Exalted) is reminding us that He has given us ears and eyes as gifts for our benefit. We must use them together with other parts of our bodies to gain knowledge through seeing, listening, reading, writing and experience.

WHAT DOES ISLAM SAY ABOUT KNOWLEDGE?

Our beloved Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant peace) has stated:

Seeking knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim.

This hadith tells us that it is our duty as Muslims to seek knowledge.

The Quran and the hadith have information and guidelines for us to follow. By reading and studying this information, we increase our knowledge.

We cannot obtain anything without Allah's blessing and mercy. Therefore, Allah commands us in the holy Quran in Surah Ta-ha.

TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE WE NEED TO KNOW.

Necessary

In order to understand and practice the teachings of Islam correctly, it is necessary for us to have knowledge of the following:

1. The holy Quran
2. Sunnah and Hadith

For example, Quran tells us about Salaah and Hajj and the Sunnah/Hadith explains to us how to perform them, etc.

Useful

This type of knowledge helps us to earn a living and at the same time help others. For example, doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, explorers and other skilled people.

Imam Ghazzali once said:

“Any community which a knowledgeable man amongst them doesn't have, is a poor country.”

This means that a community which does not have skilled people then they would need someone to rely on. Bakers, farmers etc.

BENEFITS OF HAVING KNOWLEDGE

Our beloved Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) advised:

“Acquire knowledge through education” because Knowledge enables us to know what’s right and wrong”.

This means knowledge helps us to understand our religion correctly. For example, knowledge helps us to know the food that is good for us (halaal foods) and the food and drinks that are haram for us.”
“Knowledge shows us the way to Allah’s pleasure and paradise.”

This means by gaining knowledge, we will learn about doing good deeds like being just and fair, performing Salaah, to be honest etc. Deeds that will gain the pleasure of Allah.

Knowledge gives us strength to bear sorrow – lessons we learned will help us through the hard times to be patient.