Let's Learn ...

STORY

'A Visit to Salma's Home'

Begin by recalling what Eli and Salma saw when they went to Muireann's apartment: the cross and the picture of Maedbh's first Holy Communion. Tell the children that you will now tell them what happened when the children went to Salma's house.

ONLINE

'A Visit to Salma's Home'

Muireann was excited about visiting Salma's house for the first time. She and her mam got the bus there and just as they arrived, they saw Eli getting out of his dad's car. She and Eli skipped up the garden path and rang the doorbell. Mrs Shehab answered the door and waved goodbye to their parents.

'Welcome, children!' she said, 'Come in, come in! Salma is outside in the back garden. Come and I'll show you'.

Muireann and Eli followed Mrs Shehab out to the garden. As they passed through the kitchen they met Salma's grandma who was busy cooking. She stopped when the children came in and said hello to them. She was wearing clothes just like Mrs Shehab. When she went back to her cooking, Eli and Muireann heard her say '*Bismillah*'.

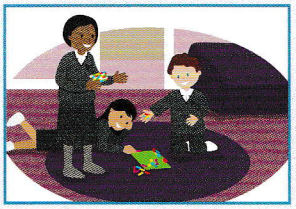
'I've never heard that word before,' Eli thought to himself. 'It must be an Arabic word.'

Eli and Muireann found Salma out in the garden bouncing up and down on the trampoline. They got onto the trampoline and, as they bounced, they chatted and giggled.

'Your Mum is so nice and your grandma too,' said Eli. 'Yes,' said Muireann, 'and I really like the clothes they're wearing'. 'You mean the *hijab*! When I'm older I'll wear a *hijab* too', said Salma.

A moment later, Mrs Shehab called the children in for something to eat. She gave them sandwiches and drinks. Before she ate, Salma said *Bismillah*.

'There's that word again,' thought Eli.



When they went up to Salma's bedroom to play, Eli asked Salma what *Bismillah* means.

'*Bismillah* is what Muslims say many times throughout the day', answered Salma. 'It means that we are doing whatever we're doing in God's name. When we eat, we say *Bismillah*. When we drink, we say *Bismillah*. When we go to sleep, we say *Bismillah*. When we're going on a journey, we say *Bismillah*.' Muireann and Eli were fascinated to learn all this from Salma.

Just then, the doorbell rang and Mrs Shehab called the children down. Eli and Muireann's parents had arrived. They thanked Mrs Shehab on their way out the door.

'See you in my house tomorrow!' Eli said to his friends. 'Don't forget!'

Having read the story, check for understanding using questions such as, 'Where was Salma when Eli and Muireann arrived?' Then dig deeper using these or similar questions:

- What is the name of the clothes worn by Salma's mother and her grandma? Do you know anyone who wears a *hijab*?
- '*Bismillah*' is an Arabic word. Can you remember what it means? Do you say any words or phrases like that? (*'Please God,' 'God bless you,' 'Thank God,' etc.*)
- Would you like to visit Salma's home? What questions would you ask her, her mum or her grandma?