

Script for Role Play

Scene I

Three friends are walking to school and come across a mosque on their way.

Shyam: Can we meet in the school playground tomorrow evening for a game of cricket? Are all of you free?

Amir: What day of the week is tomorrow?

Shyam: Friday. Why?

Amir: Oh. Rahim and I have to go to **Masjid**.

Shyam: Masjid? What do you do there?

Amir: Masjid is the Arabic word for a mosque. We go there to pray.

Rahim: My father said the word Masjid means a place where a devout follower of Islam called a Muslim prostrates to Allah in reverence.

Satish: I have heard about **Jama Masjid**. When do you call a masjid 'Jama Masjid'?

Amir: Jama Masjid means a **congregational mosque** where members of a specific group gather to say **Namaz** collectively.

Shyam: Namaz?

Amir: Namaz in other words is Muslim prayers.

Rahim: And another name for Jama Masjid is Masjid - i - Jami.

Satish: Do you also have a priest in the Jama Masjid?

Rahim: Yes. **Imam** leads the rituals in a masjid and he also delivers **Khutba** or sermons during Friday prayers.

Shyam: How does one become an Imam?

Amir: The most learned and respected man in the group or congregation is selected as the Imam.

Satish: Oh, now I get it.

Rahim: Amir, it is prayer time now. Shall we pray?

Amir: Yes. Excuse us for a while friends.

[Rahim quickly turns around and faces a particular direction.] Amir, this is west. [The two of them spread their mats facing west and settle down to pray.]

After they finish

Shyam: Why is it that you face west while saying your prayers?

Amir: **Qibla** is the direction in which a Muslim faces while offering his prayers. Since Kaaba in Mecca - the holy land is to the west of India, we turn towards west while offering prayers.

Satish: Ok. My house is here. See you all tomorrow.

All say byes and disperse.

Scene II

The History teacher is discussing the chapter "Delhi Sultanate".

Shyam: Ma'am, I have a question. Can I ask please?

Teacher: Yes Shyam. What is it?

Shyam: Amir mentioned about congregational mosques for collective prayers. Did the Delhi Sultans build one?

Teacher: Yes. Quwwat al-Islam is a congregational mosque built towards the end of 12th century.

Satish: Can we visit the mosque if we go to Delhi?

Teacher: Yes you can. It was built by the Delhi Sultans in Dehli-i-Kuhna which is in the old part of the present city of Delhi.

Shyam: And which ruler built this mosque?

Teacher: It was built under many rulers. This huge complex was built in stages. The mosque was built during the rule of Qutbuddin Aybak, the first Sultan of Slave dynasty and expansion continued under the reign of Iltutmish and even Alauddin Khalji.

Satish: That is interesting. Are there more mosques built by the Delhi Sultans?

Teacher: In fact many more were built by them. Begumpuri Mosque built during Firoz Shah Tughlaq's rule between 1351 and 1388 was considered an architectural masterpiece.

Amir: Was this mosque also built in Delhi?

Teacher: It was built in the Sultan's new capital city called 'Jahanpanah', which means 'Sanctuary of the world'.

Rahim: Were mosques constructed till the Delhi Sultanate came to an end?

Teacher: Yes. Another mosque called 'Moth Ki Masjid' was built during the reign of Sikandar Lodi who ruled between 1517 to 1526.

Satish: Did the mosque architecture evolve with time?

Teacher: You should see Jamali Kamali Mosque built in 1528-1529 to know how construction of mosques evolved with time.

Teacher: Let us take a video tour of these mosques.

Amir: That was fun to watch. Thank you teacher. But why did the Delhi Sultans built so many mosques across the subcontinent?

Teacher: [Turning towards the class] Can anyone among you answer this question?

Rahim: Perhaps by building mosques they wanted to convey that they were patrons of Islam and guardians of Muslims.

Teacher: That is correct. Anything more?

Rahim: Mosques became centres for the believers to come together and unite in a common belief system.

Teacher: Well said. And they came together to follow the established practices. For example when and how to celebrate a festival.

Satish: Ma'am, a common place of worship also brings in a sense of oneness. Isn't it?

Teacher: You are right Satish. Muslims were coming in from different backgrounds and this idea of community was a need and a necessity. Mosques created this feeling of oneness among the group.

[The play ends]