

IMPACT-se

When Peace Goes to School
The Emirati Curriculum 2016–21



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Contents

1	Executive Summary
6	Preface
8	Acknowledgements
9	Introduction
	Home and Shared Destiny
	National Identity: Roots, Federalism and Culture
	Vision and Prosperity
	Tolerance and Diversity
	Gender and Society
	The Challenge of Peace
	Regional Outlook
	Regional Outreach: Cooperation and Defense
	The Arab World and the GCC
	Iran, Turkey and Qatar
	Jews, Israel, Christians
	Global Outlook
	The West: Britain, the US and France
	Russia, China and India
16	Conclusion
21	Methodology
23	List of Analyzed UAE Textbooks

Executive Summary

This IMPACT-se report examines 220 textbooks from the United Arab Emirates' national curriculum, between 2016 and 2021. While the curriculum is mandated in government schools, private institutions are also required to teach Islamic education, social studies and Arabic as a second language. More future research in arts and sciences, will address such subjects as English, biology, mathematics, business, and technology.

Main Findings

- ◆ The Emirati curriculum teaches that **prosperity and national pride are closely associated with peace and tolerance. Engagement and cooperation with non-nationals** and the world are lauded.
- ◆ Textbooks offer a **realistic approach to peace and security**, teach **patriotism, anti-radicalism**, commitment to **defending the homeland**, and **cooperating with allies; peacemaking is by far the priority**.
- ◆ Language and moral education programs **encourage cultural diversity, curiosity and happiness**. Students **prepare for a highly competitive world**; they are **taught positive thinking and well-being**.
- ◆ The large Islamic education program **emphasizes tolerance, coexistence, and friendly relations with all non-Muslims and ethnicities**.
- ◆ The curriculum only **partially fosters gender equality through a spirit of partnership** in the public sphere; it **supports active women's participation** in all walks of life. In the home, especially, **men and women should follow traditional Islamic family values**. They should **avoid imitating each other**.
- ◆ **View of a changing Middle East**, away from blaming foreigners to taking local responsibility. Support for the **Palestinian cause continues but no longer seen as key to solving the broader range of regional challenges. Radicalism and hate are the chief threat**.
- ◆ **Iranian expansionism is a threat**; the Gulf islands' territorial dispute is taught. The **[Turkish-] Ottoman record is harshly criticized**.
- ◆ **Relations with the West are central and friendly**. A mixed history encourages trust and engagement, but also self-reliance. **China, Russia, and India are important partners**. Moderate and pragmatic Arab countries are close allies; attitude toward Qatar is business-like.
- ◆ **The Abraham Accords are taught** within Islamic education. **Anti-Israeli material has been moderated**. But **Israel is not displayed in maps**.
- ◆ Apart from unbiased information, **international standards for peace and tolerance are generally met**. The **research did not find antisemitism, hate or incitement**.

- The textbooks portray **China as an open and tolerant society for religious and ethnic minorities. Historical slavery in the Middle East is not addressed. Holocaust and Jewish history should be taught. And maps must show Israel.**
- Other historical relations, especially with Western colonialism, appear to be accurate and perceptive.

Future Vision

National visions of prosperity through hard work, education and long-term planning are encouraged. The curriculum instills an awareness of international competition, particularly in education and teaches a *can-do* attitude.

Students learn the connection between prosperity and peace; social responsibility is important. Imagination and curiosity toward other cultures and civilizations are encouraged. Being positive and experiencing happiness are fundamental values necessary to lead a rich, fulfilling, and healthy life.

From an early age, students learn the connection between peace and prosperity. Attitudes toward peacemaking are realistic. Conflict resolution skills are taught, along with security issues.

The curriculum emphasizes loyalty to the homeland and martyrdom in its defense. National identity is imprinted with references to the leadership, history, people, location, and a sense of destiny. Identities range from the various emirates and families that form the UAE federation; gender; ethnicity; expatriates; state leadership; institutions; and national symbols—to pan-Arab Gulf (Khaleeji); pan-Arab; regional; and global identities.

Between democracy and *shura* (Islamic consultation), the curriculum emphasizes a practical and open society.

Tolerance and Diversity

The curriculum conveys the advantages of relating to foreigners. Diversity is taught through various literary means. There is a natural curiosity exhibited toward what is far away and mysterious.

An expansive Islamic education curriculum emphasizes peace and tolerance; it is ill-disposed to radicalism and terrorism. Students are taught to resist and actively debunk claims that Islam is a violent religion and will never become a religion of terror.

Freedom of religion and faith is a core issue. The curriculum encourages family ties with non-Muslims. Tolerance (and even love)¹ should be directed to all non-Muslims.²

¹ *Islamic Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 3, 2020–21, pp. 49–50.

National pride is closely associated with tolerance. The history of the ancient Christian community in the UAE is mentioned. Meetings of Muslim clerics with the Pope are emphasized.

Gender

The Emirati curriculum's attitude toward gender anticipates the integration of women into the economy and public life; it thus advocates equality and a spirit of partnership between men and women publicly, with an emphasis on protecting family values according to Islam and Emirati tradition. This last point contains specific gender roles for males and females; an acceptance of (Islamic) polygamy, and the rejection of non-traditional gender roles, such as "immodest behavior in public" and imitation of the other sex.³

The UAE in the Middle East

The curriculum's authors seem determined to educate for peace and stability. Only defensive wars are justified.⁴ The Emirati curriculum embraces a realistic pro-peace paradigm. Students learn about the chaotic situation of the Middle East and are expected to help in leading the region to a better future, but when necessary be ready to defend the homeland. Problems are understood as innate to the region itself, not from the schemes of faraway enemies.

Apart from Qatar, the curriculum views neighboring Arab countries—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Jordan, Egypt, Libya, Algeria and Morocco—as close friends. In particular, Saudi Arabia is a leading partner in peace and war. Egypt, too, is an important ally. The UAE consistently supports the independence and territorial integrity of its neighbors such as Iraq; the curriculum discusses participation in Yemen's civil war in support of the Yemeni government, Saudi Arabia and other allies.

The conflict with Iran regarding the Three Gulf Islands—the Tunbs (Greater and Lesser) and Abu Musa—is told from the UAE perspective, through a measured and well-researched narrative. Students learn that the proper name for the Gulf is the "Arabian Gulf," and the region faces a threat from Iranian expansionism.

Turkey is not directly criticized, but the current curriculum disparages the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans are portrayed as colonialists, weakening the Arab world with crushing poverty with responsibility for many atrocities. Descriptions of Qatar are neutral and business-like.

The Abraham Accords with Israel are incorporated into the *Islamic Education* textbooks. Highlighted is the endorsement of the treaty by leading Islamic UAE organizations. The new

² Ibid., p. 50.

³ *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 2, 2020–21, p. 106; Regarding polygamy especially, see *Islamic Education*, Grade 11, Vol. 3, 2020–21, pp. 18–27, 36–45.

⁴ *Islamic Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 3, 2020–21, p. 46.

textbooks widen the scope of Israel's recognition. Though less significant, solidarity with other Arab countries regarding the Palestinian cause remains strong, even if the Palestinian question is no longer described as "the foundation of the conflicts and struggles in the Middle East, and the key to the solution" of that region's problems.⁵ A poem by Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish serves to encourage children—particularly girls—to dream and fulfill their dreams.

The curriculum does not teach the Holocaust or the long history of Jews (and minorities) in the region. Israel remains invisible in all textbook maps. The attitude toward Jews as a minority corresponds with the positive attitude exhibited toward other non-Muslims.

International Affairs

Relations with the West—mainly the US, Britain and France—are important; but trust is not unlimited. American culture serves both as a source of inspiration and a threat to local culture. French culture is viewed more benevolently. Relations with Britain remain important. Economic and technological ties with the West are important, but not more so than the country's independence.

The historical relations with India are highly valued and occupy more coverage than in previous editions. Relations with China are stressed somewhat less emphatically in the curriculum. Muslim and other religious persecution in that country is still ignored. Russia is treated as a major strategic partner.

Standards for Peace and Tolerance

The Emirati curriculum generally meets international standards for peace and tolerance. Textbooks are free of hate and incitement against others. The curriculum teaches students to value the principle of respect for other cultures and encourages curiosity and dialogue. It praises love, affection, and family ties with non-Muslims. Gestures of interfaith, particularly with Christianity, are evident along with noticeable expressions of tolerance toward Judaism. Tolerance extends beyond Jews and Christians to any non-Muslims—even polytheists.

The curriculum teaches respect for the individual Other and supports the ideal of multiple races, faiths and nationalities living side-by-side in the Emirates. It invests much effort in the principle of peacemaking—not shying away from teaching about wars—and their resolution. The attention given to the vast peaceful heritage of the Islamic faith is a departure from what is often observed in other local curricula.

The UAE has a realistic view of the Middle East. Education for peacemaking and moderation should not be misunderstood; if necessary to defend the nation, Emirati youth are taught to be ready to join the army and sacrifice their lives in martyrdom (*shahada*). The use of such Islamic

⁵ *National Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 2, 2016–17, p. 74. (Quoted passage removed from the curriculum.)

terms in the context of national defense should be reevaluated.⁶ Purely religious concepts are often part of the terminology associated with political conflicts; this may lead to misunderstandings on the part of students.

The textbooks generally provide information in an unbiased manner, but they are not always successful. The depiction of Ottoman history is unbalanced. Students will benefit by learning an accurate and complete history of slavery and minorities in the Middle East. The People's Republic of China is surprisingly described as a tolerant, multicultural society, which respects religions. As an emerging superpower, partially relying on the UAE for energy resources, students will benefit from an accurate and realistic depiction of the PRC, especially regarding minority religious rights. Israel's cartographic presence is virtually non-existent; the question of Holocaust avoidance and the story of Jewish presence in the region leave much room for improvement.

Despite such lapses, with the reduction of biased material, an emphasis on moral education and the inclusion of the Abrahamic Accords, a serious effort is being made to teach information that leads to peace, particularly within the framework of Islamic education.

The curriculum does not fully meet the international standards of gender identity and representation. It *does* meet such standards to the extent that women are considered *equal to men* and encouraged to become prominent members of society. Textbooks refrain "from language, content, and imagery that depicts limiting and/or exclusionary gender roles." Viewed from a different perspective, the Emirati curriculum is keen on protecting family values according to Islamic sharia and the Emirati tradition. In short, men are more equal in the home environment. Women must obey their husbands. Specific gender roles for males and females allow polygamy, restrict certain interreligious marriages, and reject non-traditional gender roles and imitation of the other sex. Thus, according to UNESCO's Western-centered values of gender behavior, the Emirati curriculum falls short. As to sexual orientation, the Emirati curriculum is also "free of language, content, and imagery that promulgate violence or discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation."

The principle of sound prosperity and cooperation is often revealed as the most important element in IMPACT-se's system of evaluating curricula. In that sense, the Emirati curriculum offers a rare and notable model of an education system that is on the path toward achieving this goal.



⁶ *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2021–22, p. 46.

Preface

The collection and research of most of the textbooks for this IMPACT-se report on the United Arab Emirates curriculum occurred during the celebration of that nation's fiftieth anniversary of its independence. This auspicious time of jubilee signifies the culmination of an ongoing curriculum reform that has been taking place in recent years. In 2016 the UAE launched a significant program focused on moral education; recent editions promote a vision for the Emirates during the next half-century, revolving around peace and prosperity.

Securing peace and prosperity centers on educating for successful and responsible participation in an extremely competitive global economy. This curriculum tries hard to teach students how to balance competitiveness with compassion and adhere to traditional mores, with the goal of a happy life that draws upon shared values, love, and respect.

Seen as a whole, the curriculum appears to be in a period of transformation aimed at preparing the Emirati young generation for such a vision. It invites students to feel pride and take courage from the achievements of the UAE in its first fifty years and to draw upon lessons from the three-hundred-year history of the Coastal Emirates.

Such historical experience has apparently enabled the Emiratis to fashion a truly moderate perspective of Islam. Clearly it is at odds with any notion of political Islam, or Islamism, rooted in revival movements which have, from the eighteenth century on, tried to reform the Islamic world out of a self-perception of failure, corruption, and decline. This sentiment—justified or not—convinced such "reformers" that (radical) "Islam is the solution" for this weakness. Hence, they saw in Islam a tool for securing power. This power was considered necessary to bring justice first, by destroying existing Islamic authorities, and later, defeating the technologically advanced Europeans, who willy-nilly penetrated, and then controlled the abode of Islam.

But the experience of the Emiratis—as plainly reflected in the curriculum—is different. Local leadership was generally *not* deemed to be corrupt and oppressive. Engagement with the European powers, mainly the British, involved a few skirmishes and required some give and take, but were generally benign. The Emiratis not only benefitted from Pax Britannica, they eventually thrived. They even tried to remain a British protectorate, accepting independence only as a second choice.

Thus, resentment, the main motivation behind radical Islam, appears to be generally absent from the Emirati curriculum. And so are dreams of revenge, conquests, and hegemony. Much experience has been accumulated in engagement with the world. Tribal structures held fast, and Islam was practiced seriously but with no frenzy. Islam was not a solution to compensate for weakness. It was—and remains—"the right thing to do."

This does not mean that all Emirati citizens object to political Islam. Part of the motivation behind this curriculum and the stress on anti-radicalism may be related to activities of the Muslim Brotherhood.

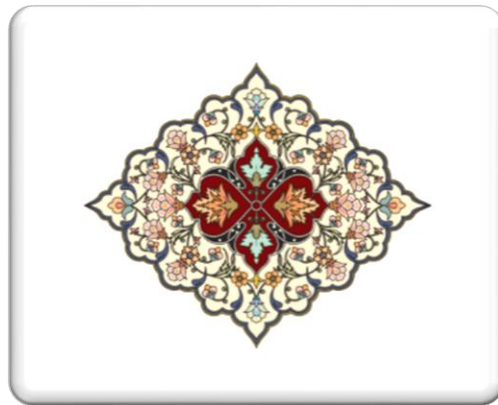
Iranian and Turkish support of Islamist radicals amounts to a regional problem that could threaten the stability of the Emirati federation. Both countries harbor imperial ambitions. To offset such challenges, the Emirati curriculum maintains its adherence to Islam and pursuit of peace while prioritizing tolerant engagement; but it pragmatically also underscores a commitment to the defense of the country.

The strong pro-peace-and-tolerance message coming out of this curriculum constitutes the best tool for combating radicalism and violence while building a viable future for the Emirates.

A political culture of free dialogue and debate requires balanced, fact-based education to explore the world's complexities, past, present and future.

The Emirati curriculum earns high marks for its pursuit of peace and tolerance. It should be equally unrelenting to provide students with unbiased information in all fields.

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IMPACT-se's research of a single curriculum often involves analysis of thousands of pages of textbooks, measured against UNESCO-based standards of peace and tolerance.

To accomplish this feat we call upon our IMPACT-se team, especially Asher Spekterman for his Arabic translations, unparalleled quality control and analysis and Itam Shalev for his scholarly translations and insights.

Supporting them, our thanks and gratitude go to a plethora of capable researchers. Kudos to: Amos Doron, Elitzur Gluck, Alon Gur, Itay Halevi, Eitan Ishai, Shir Kremer, Sharon Mor, Matan Peer, Dina Tsamir, Or Lev-Tzion, and Hagai Yehoshafat.

This corpus of 220 UAE textbooks magically appeared (although COO Arik Agassi might disagree on the magic part); keeping the research on track was just another trick up his sleeve.

Mentioned last, but leading from the front is CEO Marcus Sheff, keeping the ship afloat, the crew happy and the passengers dry.



Introduction

The United Arab Emirates has rapidly transformed itself over the past decades,⁷ making it an important regional actor exerting global significance, punctuated by economic dynamism, political influence, and military prowess. During the same period, much of the Arab Middle East embarked in the opposite direction. Country after country rebelled, imploded, fell prey to foreign invasions or to violence and destruction inflicted by radical Islamist movements or local proxies controlled by aggressive neighbors. Against this background, and with the US and Europe fatigued of policing the region, functioning Arab countries often find themselves in precarious circumstances; complete reliance on others for security is no longer feasible. In the midst of this environment, the energetic and focused UAE has become a central pillar in an emerging alliance of countries attempting to stem the tide of radicalism and bring the region back to a measure of stability, and beyond that to prosperity.

In the United Arab Emirates, education is regarded as a key factor in coping with and building on this transformation, safeguarding the necessary human and cultural development, but also ensuring that the UAE might equally contribute to this larger economic and cultural world of which it has become a part.

The current research, which examines 220 textbooks from the UAE national curriculum, represents IMPACT-se's second effort to review Emirati education. Our first preliminary report, published in September 2020,⁸ focused on the 2016 UAE Moral Education program launched across the country's seven emirates, at the time described by education experts as a "remarkable development."⁹ The report of Grades 1–12, encompasses a wide range of the UAE curriculum in subject matters such as Islamic education, national and social education, Arab literature, history and moral education. While the report is not exhaustive, the researched corpus nevertheless provides a good grasp of this transforming curriculum, between 2016 and 2021. More future research in arts and sciences, will address such subjects as English, biology, mathematics, business and technology.

Education and State Cohesion in the UAE

State cohesion based on shared identity and genuine equal rights for all inhabitants does not exist in the Middle East. All of the region's countries—democratic or not—are "unable to define,

⁷ David Pollack, "The UAE's Second Half-Century: Building Forward to What?", The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, December 2, 2021,

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/uaes-second-half-century-building-forward-what>

⁸ Dina Tsamir and Hagai Yehoshafat, "United Arab Emirates, Moral Education Textbooks," IMPACT-se, Sept 2020, <https://bit.ly/3E4lqmG>.

⁹ Richard Pring, "Development of Moral Education in the UAE: Lessons to be Learned," *Oxford Review of Education* 45, no. 3 (2019): p. 297. The preliminary report of IMPACT-se can be found on our website:

<https://www.impact-se.org/reports/unitedarabemirates/>.

project, and maintain a national identity that is both inclusive and representative."¹⁰ These countries accommodate a variety of ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural subgroups, but their "national identities" do not sufficiently embody all of their inhabitants. This cross-regional failure entails a host of problems ranging from authoritarianism, diminished well-being, and economic hurdles as well as discrimination and violence.

The Gulf States—particularly the United Arab Emirates—are a special case in this scenario. In many Middle Eastern countries zealous nationalist and Islamist regimes oppressed or threw out religious or ethnic minorities, many of them "sources of initiative and wealth."¹¹ In the UAE, however, the doors have been kept open for foreigners. Only 12 percent of the 9.8 million population consists of local Khaleeji Arab citizens; the rest are non-citizens.¹² Beside the country—from its vast oil resources—providing the capital necessary to accommodate so many non-nationals, this considered open-door policy is perhaps the leading cause for the UAE's economic success and moderate behavior. With seemingly little apprehension from the presence of the huge non-native population, this tiny Gulf nation vigorously competes to attract more talent, most recently with the newly launched "UAE Strategy for Talent Attraction and Retention,"¹³ a program aimed at attracting highly qualified professionals to settle in the Emirates.

Two other causes for the UAE's success are historical and cultural. The engagement with the British and other Western powers allowed the country to comfortably secure a semi-independent status, leading to complete independence in 1971. Tribal culture, shared language and religion, and a federalist structure also contribute to stability and development.

Since ancient times, the Gulf region was a hub of international trade between East and West. Sumerians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Persians, Indians, Africans and Arabs were all part of the cultural interaction which blossomed in the Gulf. In the sixteenth century, local Arab tribes alternatively struggled and cooperated with the Ottomans and Iranian Safavids, as well as Europeans—most significantly the Portuguese—who later arrived in ships.

But local tribes such as the Al-Qasimi clan of Ras al-Khaima, also developed impressive maritime power, and in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were in control of seas

¹⁰ R Kumaraswamy, "Who Am I? The Identity Crisis in the Middle East," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 10, no. 1 (March 2006): p. 63.

¹¹ Martin Kramer, "Israel's Vulnerable New Friends," *The Times of Israel*, September 27, 2020, <https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/israels-vulnerable-new-friends/>.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Staff Reporter, "Sheikh Mohammed Approves UAE Strategy for Talented Expats," *Expatriate Media*, April 15, 2012, <https://www.expatriatemediacom.net/sheikh-mohammed-approves-uae-strategy-talented-expats/2012/04/>;
Gavin Gibbon, "GCC Countries to 'Raise the Bar' as UAE Adopts Strategy to Attract and Retain Top Talent," *Arabian Business*, April 15, 2021, <https://www.arabianbusiness.com/jobs/462124-gcc-countries-to-raise-the-bar-as-uae-adopts-strategy-to-attract-retain-top-talent>.

in the lower Gulf and in much of the Indian Ocean. Trade consisted of mainly fishing and pearling but also involved slaves and spices.¹⁴ These local groups attacked British and Indian ships in the open seas, earning the coastal waters the moniker: "Pirate Coast." The term "pirate" probably should be understood in its historical context. For the Qasimis, and many modern scholars, it was really "tactical maritime warfare and a legitimate source of revenue," signifying a menace to the vital interests of the British Empire and its Omani allies.¹⁵

The Omanis, who in the second half of the eighteenth century became the dominant economic and naval force in the western Indian Ocean and the Gulf, similarly suffered from pressures exerted by the British, the French and Wahhabis, but, unlike the Qasimis, managed to find an accommodation with the British.¹⁶ In 1819 the British navy defeated the Qasimis, securing the Gulf region as a sphere of Western (mostly British) influence until 1971.

Western Influence

Overall, British hegemony in the region (1820–1971) and its corollary role as a leading power and protector were not coercive. Most scholars agree that Britain largely conformed to expectations of local elites regarding a protector's duties and rights.¹⁷ In 1835, a maritime truce was signed, and most of the current-day Emirates officially became part of the Trucial Coast ([Trucial States] *Al-Sāhil al-Mutaṣāliḥ*), a name given to the six initial (UAE) tribes in the Gulf who had signed treaties with Great Britain.¹⁸ This period of stability and trust had a positive impact on the region's environment as well as on political culture. The British kept the sheikhdoms' independence, "as long as they preserve law and order and maintain a system of administration that will satisfy or at any rate be tolerated by their subjects."¹⁹ This involved the well-established practice of slavery in Iran and throughout Arabia.²⁰ The British fiercely fought against African slave trafficking on the open seas mostly until the 1890s, a policy in line with

¹⁴ Abdul Sheriff, "The Persian Gulf and the Swahili Coast: A History of Acculturation over the *Longue Durée*," in *The Persian Gulf in History*, ed. Laurence G. Potter (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 173–88, 182–83.

¹⁵ Muhammad al-Qasimi, *The Myth of Arab Piracy in the Gulf*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1986), p. 173; Charles E. Davies, *The Blood-Red Arab Flag: An Investigation into Qasimi Piracy 1797–1820*, (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 1997).

¹⁶ Patricia Risso, *Oman and Muscat: An Early Modern History*, (London: Croom, 1986; New York: Routledge Reprint, 2017).

¹⁷ James Onley, "Britain and the Gulf Shaikhdoms, 1820-1971: The Politics of Protection," CIRS Occasional Papers, 2009,

<https://ssrn.com/abstract=2825942>.

¹⁸ Also known as Trucial States of the Coast of Oman (*Al-Imārāt Al-Mutaṣāliḥa*) or the Trucial Sheikhdoms (*Al-Mashyakhāt Al-Mutaṣāliḥa*). These consisted of Abu Dhabi (1820–1971), Ajman (1820–1971), Dubai (1835–1971), Ras Al Khaimah (1820–1972), Sharjah (1820–1971), and Umm Al Quwain (1820–1971); Fujairah (1952–71), only joined the Trucial States in the mid-twentieth century.

¹⁹ According to a British Gulf Resident, 1931 (quoted in Onley, "Britain"), p.11.

²⁰ Unlike the Americas and Sub-Saharan Africa, "Islamic protocols and cultural mores" granted slaves in the Gulf "certain rights and privileges such as the possibility of liberation and cultural integration." Behnaz A. Mirzai, "The Persian Gulf and Britain: The Suppression of the African Slave Trade," in *Abolitions as a Global Experience* Hideaki Suzuki, ed. (Singapore: NUS, 2016), p. 114; Jerzy Zdanowski, "The Manumission Movement in the Gulf in the First Half of the Twentieth Century," *Middle Eastern Studies* 47, no. 6 (2011): p. 863.

their "good intentions and imperial interests."²¹ Even then, they were hard pressed to reconcile their "conflicting commitments to antislavery and free markets."²² The (British) Persian Gulf Residency interfered only marginally to protect slaves in trouble or block inland trade of indigenous people (such as the Iranian Baluchis).²³ The sheikhdoms thus benefitted from security and peace, entrusted Britain with the management of their foreign affairs, and "acquiesced in considerable British influence for their domestic and commercial affairs."²⁴

When in 1968 Britain decided to depart the Gulf, thus ending "Pax Britannica," the Trucial States found themselves on their own. They tried to convince the British to stay on but apparently their offer was not even considered.²⁵ Despite the obvious disappointment felt by the Emirati rulers, the long period of foreign guardianship, which allowed for the development of local administration, helped to foster a culture of cooperation and peace. Thus, the collective emirates succeeded in achieving peaceful independence, though unwanted and unexpected.²⁶ In December 1971, after three years of negotiations, a new polity of six emirates (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah) emerged as the independent United Arab Emirates. After some hesitation, Qatar and Bahrain opted to stay out of the new federation, while Ras Al-Khaima joined two months later (in February 1972) as the seventh emirate.

Britain, for its part, initiated the idea of a federation, lobbied for it and assisted in devising solid security arrangements to offset any threats from regional or even global antagonists.²⁷ For its efforts, Britain lost most of its influence in the region and the US—with its then two regional allies Saudi Arabia and Iran—became the dominant force.

But independence was not necessarily good news for all dwellers of the Gulf.

As a result of these new political realities, travel between nations became more difficult for Gulf residents. Increased focus on security in the Gulf resulted in more scrutiny and documentation for the inhabitants of the region. Suddenly, people had to have passports and work permits. Citizenship became an issue throughout the region. A

²¹ Matthew S. Hopper, "Imperialism and the Dilemma of Slavery in Eastern Arabia and the Gulf, 1873–1939," *Itinerario* 30, no. 3 (2006): p. 76.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 77; Suzanne Miers, *Slavery in the Twentieth Century: The Evolution of a Global Problem* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira, 2003), p. 16.

²³ Hideaki Suzuki, "Baluchi Experiences Under Slavery and the Slave Trade of the Gulf of Oman and the Persian Gulf, 1921–1950," *Journal of the Middle East and Africa* 4, no.2 (2013): pp. 205–23; Mirzai, "The Persian," p. 13; Zdanowski, "The Manumission," pp. 874, 879.

²⁴ Gregory Gause, "British and American Policies in the Persian Gulf, 1968-1973," *Review of International Studies* 11, no. 4 (October 1985): p. 249.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 253. Labor party politics and general change in attitude seem to have been the immediate reason for the withdrawal, even though historical strategic and financial forces were at play; David B. Roberts, "British National Interest in the Gulf: Rediscovering a Role?" *International Affairs*, 90, no. 3 (2014): p. 668.

²⁶ William O. Beeman, "Gulf Society: An Anthropological View of the KHALIJIS—Their Evolution and Way of Life," in *The Persian Gulf in History*, Laurence G. Potter, ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 153.

²⁷ Gause, "British and American," p. 253.

Kuwaiti "citizen," for example, would have extensive rights to medical care, education, and other social guarantees that a noncitizen would not enjoy. Many people became, by happenstance, citizens of the new nations where they happened to be living when the new states were formed, despite the fact that their immediate families might be spread out all over the Gulf.²⁸

Arguably learning from lessons of the past, the United Arab Emirates adopted a positive attitude toward peace and harmony in the region. The federalist nation-state emerged not as a result of a bitter struggle for independence, but rather as a pragmatic decision agreed-upon voluntarily by the various emirates. Another lesson may relate to the centuries-old pearling industry which suddenly disappeared due to fluctuations of the global economy. The main blow occurred in the 1930s with the combination of the world depression and increased competition from Japanese cultured pearls.²⁹ When the British left in the 1970s, all traces of local pearling disappeared.³⁰

Pearling and trading were not only a source of income but also a way of life. In times of plenty, pearlmen were reluctant to invest their hard-earned profits—even in extremely safe alternative businesses. Some came to regret that later, when global markets were depressed.³¹ This is another example of the intimate centuries-old relationship between the Gulf—especially what is now the UAE—and the global environment.

The Path to a Curriculum

Looking at the path leading to the UAE curriculum, one has the impression that the Emiratis have applied historical lessons in a holistic manner, gaining impetus from both positive and detrimental influences and events. While assuming a leadership role in maintaining peace and harmony with both global and regional powers, the UAE has perhaps been in the forefront among Gulf nations in combating Islamist radicalism, judged by the Emiratis as wrong-headed and self-defeating. And if in the past, the Trucial States may have felt abandoned by the protection offered by British forces, the UAE's current armed forces have reached a level of proficiency able to cooperate with allies, and defend against both real and potential enemies, regionally and globally.³²

²⁸ Beeman, "Gulf Society," p. 153.

²⁹ Christopher M. Davidson, *The United Arab Emirates: A Study in Survival* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 2005), p. 7.

³⁰ Beeman, "Gulf Society," p. 153.

³¹ Davidson, *The United Arab*, p. 7.

³² David B. Roberts, "Bucking the Trend: The UAE and the Development of Military Capabilities in the Arab World," *Security Studies* 29, no. 2 (2020): pp.301–34; Frank Gardner, "How the UAE Emerged as a Regional Powerhouse," BBC, Sept 22, 2020,

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-54235209>;

Hussein Ibish, "The UAE's Evolving National Security Strategy," The Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington (AGSIW), April 6, 2017.

Some experts have used the metaphor "Little Sparta" to describe the UAE's prowess and martial spirit.³³

But military and economic efforts have not been enough to offset the growing radicalism in the region. The UAE struggled from the 2000s to shield itself from radical Islamism, mainly through legal and cultural campaigns. In 2011, legal measures were taken against the Muslim Brotherhood,³⁴ culminating in declaring it a terrorist organization.³⁵ In 2014, a Muslim Council of Elders was founded in Abu Dhabi under the chairmanship of Sheikh Ahmed el-Tayeb, the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar to promote interfaith and tolerance. This was followed by a law against discrimination and hatred in 2015 and a Ministry of Tolerance Program in 2016. Muhammed bin Zayed, Abu Dhabi's crown prince and the UAE's de-facto ruler, visited the Vatican in September 2016 and meeting with Pope Francis; the Pope reciprocated with a visit to Abu Dhabi in 2019.³⁶ Following this period of events, the UAE established an International Institute for Tolerance in 2017 and declared 2019 to be the "Year of Tolerance."³⁷

Likewise, the UAE's enthusiastic participation in the Abraham Accords with Israel suggests that the country opted for a vigorous collaboration with countries facing similar challenges. Despite huge oil and gas resources, the not-so-distant memory of losing its primary economic resource in pearling appears to have guided the Emirati nation to pursue a policy of diversification and specialization. The Gulf nation has proved to be fully capable of departing from a traditional past, while potentially leaping into an uncertain future—geopolitically, economically, and culturally. As in the past, however, it continues to rely on a cheap labor force from abroad and on its location as a potential hub of global trade routes.

UAE Education System

The United Arab Emirates curriculum corresponds with the "meteoric economic rise" of a "small, backwater desert nation of 279,000 people in 1971, into a rich, vibrant economic center

³³Melissa Dalton and Hijab Shah, "Evolving UAE Military and Foreign Security Cooperation: Path Toward Military Professionalism," Carnegie Middle East Center, January 12, 2021,

<https://carnegie-mec.org/2021/01/12/evolving-uae-military-and-foreign-security-cooperation-path-toward-military-professionalism-pub-83549>.

Gardner, "How the UAE"; Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "In the UAE, the United States Has a Quiet, Potent Ally Nicknamed 'Little Sparta,'" *The Washington Post*, November 9, 2014,

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/in-the-uae-the-united-states-has-a-quiet-potent-ally-nicknamed-little-sparta/2014/11/08/3fc6a50c-643a-11e4-836c-83bc4f26eb67_story.html.

³⁴ Emily Alpert, "United Arab Emirates Trial Opens for 94 Accused of Trying to Seize Power," *Los Angeles Times*, March 4, 2013,

<https://www.latimes.com/world/la-xpm-2013-mar-04-la-fg-wn-uae-trial-activists-20130304-story.html>.

³⁵ Birol Baskan, "The Pope, the UAE, and the Muslim Brotherhood," Middle East Institute, February 13, 2019,

<https://www.mei.edu/publications/pope-uae-and-muslim-brotherhood>.

³⁶ "Pope Francis Arrives on Historic Visit to UAE," BBC, February 3, 2019,

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-47106204>.

³⁷ Baskan, "The Pope."

of more than nine million today."³⁸

The UAE has compulsory education for Grades 1–12. Students begin with elementary or basic education (Grades 1–5), continue with lower secondary (intermediate—Grades 6–9) and then must complete their upper secondary education (Grades 10–12) before receiving the General Secondary Education Certificate. Admission for college-level education requires taking the Emirates Standardized Test (EmSAT). Public school education is provided free of charge.³⁹

The national curriculum of the UAE, monitored in this report, is taught in government schools. The language of instruction in these schools is Arabic for all subjects.⁴⁰ The curricula offered by private institutions are varied but all schools are required to teach Islamic education, social studies and Arabic as a second language. While all schools are licensed by the UAE's Ministry of Education (MoE) and mostly teach an assortment of British, American and Indian curricula, the southern emirates administer education locally. In Abu Dhabi, there are fourteen private curricula supervised by the Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK),⁴¹ while the seventeen private sector curricula in Dubai are supervised by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA). In Sharjah, private education is regulated and licensed by the Private Education Authority (SPEA); in the northern emirates accreditation and licensing for all schools is administered by the MoE.⁴²

The large number of expatriates corresponds to their numbers in private schools; Emiratis accounted for only 17 percent of private school students in 2015–16. In Dubai, some 90 percent of all students attended private schools during that school year.⁴³



³⁸ Pollack, "The UAE's Second"; UAE, MoE, "The National Educational System: Academic Year 2020-2021," <https://www.moe.gov.ae/En/ImportantLinks/Documents/matrix/MOEducationSystem2020-2021.pdf>;

Kevin Kamal and Stefan Trines, "Education in the United Arab Emirates," WENR, August 10, 2018. <https://wenr.wes.org/2018/08/education-in-the-united-arab-emirates>.

³⁹ Kamal and Trines, "Education."

⁴⁰ Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), <https://www.adek.gov.ae/>.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² UAE MoE, <https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/education/school-education-k-12/joining-k-12-education/private-schools-in-the-uae>.

⁴³ Kamal and Trines, "Education." Among other emirates, the most recent (2014) numbers of all students attending private schools is Abu Dhabi, 64%; Sharjah, 78%; Ajman, 70%; Umm Al Quwain, 41%; Ras Al Khaimah, 40%; and Fujairah, 28%.

Conclusion

The United Arab Emirates is a key member in the emerging moderate Middle East regional coalition. Positioning itself as a vibrant member of the global economy, the UAE is developing strategically to secure a stake in the emerging world order. Innately pragmatic, the Emiratis are committed to combating radicalism: they consider it categorically wrong and self-defeating.

The country welcomes immigration from a host of countries and cultures; education for tolerance and peaceful coexistence among different cultures and religions is critical for such a society. The UAE has developed a multi-decade plan for becoming an international hub for trade and knowledge. While committed to Arab solidarity and its alliances with Western powers, the Emiratis are unwavering about their independence. Drawing lessons from the past, the UAE created successful armed forces that can act alone and collaborate with allies, both at home and beyond. In recent years, leadership toward peacemaking has added a new perspective to the country's national security outlook.

As with the rest of the Gulf region, the UAE faces structural challenges to maintaining its national cohesion and solidarity, foremost among them relating to the issue of equal rights for the entire population. The authors of the Emirati curriculum appear to be aware of such challenges and have earmarked the role of education accordingly. There is much investment toward merging high-quality, forward-looking teaching with education for solidarity, moral values and national cohesion. The unique moral education program, partially covered in this report, sheds light on Emirati culture with a view toward combining traditional customs with openness and a modern scientific approach; large income gaps with social justice; local citizenry with an extremely large immigrant/expat community; women's integration and ambition with traditional family values and adherence to orthodox Islam.

The Islamic Education program is unwavering in its erudite grasp of Islamic sources revealing the tolerant pillars of the faith. The curriculum takes seriously the psychological well-being of students, educating young generations morally and spiritually for a rapidly changing global society. Peaceful coexistence and love among people are not just a moral obligation but also sensible and worthwhile.

Yet, the basic building block of the curriculum is Emirati nationalism, independence, and patriotism. Sacrifice and martyrdom in the defense of the country are honored; awareness of security and military concerns are inculcated into teachings, along with wider perspectives aimed at peace and conflict resolution.

Beyond nationalism, and the individual patriotism of the various emirates that form the UAE, the textbooks emphasize Pan-Gulf Arab identity (Khaleeji) and the binding together of Arabs from both sides of the Gulf; Arab solidarity; Islam; and commitment to the family of nations.

The curriculum instills awareness of international competition, particularly in education. National visions of prosperity through hard work, education and long-term planning are encouraged. The students learn the connection between prosperity and peace; social responsibility is important.

The textbooks teach a *can-do* attitude; imagination and curiosity toward other cultures and civilizations are encouraged.

Islamic education forms an important part of all Emirati curricula and extends to the large private school sector. The interpretation of Islam is sharia-based and traditional, but tolerant. Family values follow traditional religious and cultural norms; gender roles are defined accordingly. Men and women are different, complement each other and should work in harmony for the benefit of the family. The sexes should not imitate one another. The curriculum energetically pushes for women's equality, excellence, freedom, integration in society and success in all walks of life—whether in education, the military, business, science, the arts, and politics.

The students also learn sharia law, which require husbands to discipline rebellious wives; violent beating is not allowed.

Historically, the Gulf region is revealed to have been an ancient cultural hub: a center for global business and transportation. The current regional outlook in the textbooks is that of a complicated and dangerous territory. There is much education for conflict resolution, but students learn of real dangers and conflicts such as the one with Iran over the three Gulf islands and the war in Yemen. Iran is described as expansionist. As for Turkey, the current curriculum takes an unusually harsh view of the Ottoman Empire as compared with earlier editions. Conversely, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk is praised while his secularist ideology is ignored. This change likely may be understood against the background of competition between the two countries and the Ottoman-inspired interventionist Islamism that has become a hallmark of Turkish policies in the region. The philosophical debate within the Sunni world as to the role of faith in politics is not lost here.

Relations with the West—mainly the US, Britain, and France—are considered important; but trust is not unlimited. American culture serves both as a source of inspiration and a threat to local culture. French culture is viewed more benevolently. Economic and technological ties are important, but not more so than the country's independence.

The historical relations with India are valued; there is increased material compared with previous editions. Relations with China are stressed less emphatically in the curriculum (but practically speaking there is a focus on courting China). Muslim persecution in that country is still ignored but praise is now printed in smaller fonts. Russia is treated as a major strategic partner.

The newly established peace treaty with Israel is legitimized by authoritative Islamic organizations and taught within the Islamic education program in three classes (Grades 6, 8, 12). Though less significant, solidarity with other Arab countries regarding the Palestinian cause remains strong, even if the Palestinian question is no longer described as "the foundation of the conflicts and struggles in the Middle East, and the key to the solution" of that region's problems.⁴⁴ There appears to be a genuine and systematic effort to reduce unwarranted negative portrayals of Israel and the Jews. There is no outright antisemitism per se but historical conflicts with Jewish tribes during early Islam are taught. While messaging focused on tolerance toward Jews is widespread throughout the texts, Israel is still not directly referenced on the maps; there are hints to its existence, but baby steps will not long be enough. A strong and powerful bridge must be built for Emirati students to traverse and welcome their new allies wholeheartedly, starting with a minimal education about the Holocaust and Jewish history.

IMPACT-se's UNESCO-based methodological standards (see section on Methodology) are paramount in evaluating a curriculum like the UAE's. Before issues like peace and tolerance can be addressed, a curriculum must first adhere to the principles of NO HATE and NO INCITEMENT against others; we could find none in the Emirati curriculum. Fairness and tolerance are demanded toward non-Muslims and foreign workers. Radicalism and violence are absolutely rejected. The curriculum teaches students to value the principle of RESPECT for other cultures and encourages curiosity and dialogue. It not only promotes tolerance, understanding and respect toward the "Other," but praises love, affection, and family ties with non-Muslims. People are thus judged not by their religious affiliation, but by good deeds. Gestures of interfaith, particularly with Christianity, are evident along with noticeable expressions of tolerance toward Judaism. But tolerance extends beyond Jews and Christians to any non-Muslims—even polytheists.

Another key standard upon which to evaluate a curriculum involves respect and acceptance of INDIVIDUAL OTHERS. The curriculum supports the ideal of multiple races, faiths and nationalities living side-by-side in the Emirates. It invests much effort in PEACEMAKING—not shying away from teaching about wars—and their resolution. The attention given to the vast peaceful heritage of the Islamic faith is a departure from what is often found in other local curricula.

Nevertheless, the UAE's view of the Middle East is realistic. Education for peacemaking and moderation should not be misunderstood; if necessary to defend the nation, Emirati youth are taught to be ready to join the army and sacrifice their lives in martyrdom.

⁴⁴ *National Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 2, 2016–17, p. 74. (Quoted passage removed from the curriculum.)

The use of Islamic terms, such as martyrdom (*shahada*) in the context of national defense should be reevaluated.⁴⁵ Purely religious concepts are often part of the terminology associated with political conflicts; this may lead to misunderstandings on the part of students. Similarly, using military objects to teach the Arabic alphabet to young elementary school students seems counter-productive to a curriculum primarily focused on peace and tolerance.

Of all the ingredients that together comprise an educational curriculum, truth surely must be the most important aspect. Students may learn skills and all of the various things that educational authorities provide for them to become solid and patriotic citizens, but without learning about the world as it is, a foundation for the future cannot be secured. The curriculum's authors generally provide lessons meant to be offered to students as UNBIASED INFORMATION—but they are not always successful.

For example, the curriculum disparages the Ottomans over whether an Islamic empire conquering Arab lands should be associated with colonialism. But a wider view of historical colonialism and empires is still necessary. The issue of historical slavery (Ottoman, British, and the Gulf) is equally pertinent and required.

While China is described as a tolerant, multicultural society where religions are respected, violations of religious freedom are ignored, as are Muslim human rights such as those of the Uyghur minority. China's energy dependence on the UAE is not mentioned. But Taiwan is not considered part of China on maps.

Similarly, Israel's cartographic presence in a curriculum filled with maps is virtually non-existent, with the exception of some shadowy spaces and one nearly invisible showing on a world map. The question of Holocaust avoidance and omission of the long and diversified history of a Jewish presence in the region also leaves much room for improvement. Despite such lapses, however, with the reduction of biased material, an emphasis on moral education, and the inclusion of the Abrahamic Accords, a serious effort is being made in teaching information that leads to peace, particularly within the framework of Islamic education.

The curriculum does not fully meet the international standards of GENDER IDENTITY AND REPRESENTATION. It *does* meet such standards to the extent that women are considered *equal to men* and encouraged to become prominent members of society and that it refrains "from language, content, and imagery that depicts limiting and/or exclusionary gender roles." From a different perspective, the Emirati curriculum is keen on protecting family values according to Islamic sharia and the Emirati tradition. In short, men are more equal in the home environment. Women must obey their husbands. Specific gender roles for males and females allow polygamy, restrict certain interreligious marriages, and reject non-traditional gender roles such as "immodest behavior in public" and imitation of the other sex. Thus according to UNESCO's

⁴⁵ *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2021–22, p. 46.

Western-centered values of gender behavior, the Emirati curriculum falls short. As for SEXUAL ORIENTATION, the Emirati curriculum is "free of language, content, and imagery that promulgates violence or discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation."

SOUND PROSPERITY and COOPERATION is often revealed as the most important element in IMPACT-se's system of evaluating curricula. In that sense, the Emirati curriculum offers a rare and noteworthy model of an education system that is on the path toward achieving this goal.

The UAE curriculum combines personal education with a community that strives for academic and technological excellence. Students are taught to cherish cultural values along with a healthy dose of patriotism. They are given a realistic awareness of dangers, coupled with an understanding of the need for systematic effort to ensure that prosperity can be created and maintained at home through peaceful and voluntary cooperation with others.



Methodology

IMPACT-se applies methodological standards which are based on UNESCO and UN declarations, and international recommendations and documents on education for peace and tolerance (see notes). Our methodology is designed to consider every detail within the textbooks; it does not paraphrase, rely on interpretations, or attempt to illustrate preconceived notions.

The following is an updated, condensed version of the IMPACT-se UNESCO-derived standards for peace and tolerance in school education:

1. **RESPECT:** The curriculum should promote tolerance, understanding and respect toward the "Other," his or her culture, achievements, values and way of life.⁴⁶
2. **INDIVIDUAL OTHER:** The curriculum should foster personal attachment toward the "Other" as an individual, his or her desire to be familiar, loved and appreciated.⁴⁷
3. **NO HATE:** The curriculum should be free of wording, imagery and ideologies likely to create prejudices, misconceptions, stereotypes, misunderstandings, mistrust, racial hatred, religious bigotry and national hatred, as well as any other form of hatred or contempt for other groups or peoples.⁴⁸
4. **NO INCITEMENT:** The curriculum should be free of language, content, and imagery that disseminate ideas or theories which justify or promote acts and expressions of violence, incitement to violence, hostility, harm and hatred toward other national, ethnic, racial or religious groups.⁴⁹
5. **PEACEMAKING:** The curriculum should develop capabilities for non-violent conflict resolution and promote peace.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ As defined in the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance Proclaimed and signed by Member States of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Articles 1, 4.2. See also the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding Between Peoples (1965), Principles I, III. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

⁴⁷ The goal of education for peace is the development of universally recognized values in an individual, regardless of different socio-cultural contexts. See *Ibid.*, Article 6. See also, on exchanges between youth, the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965), Principles IV, V.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, and based on Articles III.6, IV.7 and VII.39; and on the Integrated Framework for Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, approved by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-eighth session, Paris, November 1995, Article 18.2.

⁴⁹ As defined in Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2106 (XX) on December 21, 1965. See also Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2200A (XXI) on December 16, 1966.

⁵⁰ Based on the Integrated Framework for Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, approved by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-eighth session, Paris, November 1995, Article 9; and on the

6. **UNBIASED INFORMATION:** Educational materials (textbooks, workbooks, teachers' guides, maps, illustrations, aids) should be up-to-date, accurate, complete, balanced and unprejudiced, and use equal standards to promote mutual knowledge and understanding between different peoples.⁵¹

7. **GENDER IDENTITY AND REPRESENTATION:** The curriculum should foster equality, mutual respect, and should aim for equal representation between individuals regardless of their gender identity. It should also refrain from language, content, and imagery that depicts limiting and/or exclusionary gender roles.⁵²

8. **SEXUAL ORIENTATION:** The curriculum should be free of language, content, and imagery that promulgates violence or discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.⁵³

9. **SOUND PROSPERITY and COOPERATION:** The curriculum should educate for sound and sustainable economic conduct and preservation of the environment for future generations. It should encourage regional and local cooperation to that effect.⁵⁴



Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Article 5.

⁵¹ Based on UNESCO recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Article V.14.

⁵² The preamble to the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, notes the Convention on the Elimination of Any Form of Discrimination against Women and emphasizes respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to gender.

⁵³ Based on Resolutions 32/2 (adopted June 30, 2016) and 17/19 (adopted July 14, 2011) of the UN Human Rights Council, and numerous UN General Assembly resolutions expressing concern and condemnation of laws and practices around the world which target individuals based on their gender identity and/or sexual orientation for discrimination, violence, and even extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions—all of which contradict the most basic principles of the UN and have no place in education.

⁵⁴ Based on UNESCO recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Articles III.6, and IV.7. On the imperative for developing "systematic and rational tolerance teaching methods that will address the cultural, social, economic, political and religious sources of intolerance," see the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Article 4.2. On education for international cooperation, see also the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965), Principle II.

List of Analyzed UAE Textbooks

The following UAE curriculum textbooks were analyzed for the research in this study. The titles both here and referenced in the text have been translated into English to aid the reader. IMPACT-se typically researches all available textbooks used in a curriculum. If new textbooks or previously unavailable books become available after a report's publication, every effort will be made to update reports to include any relevant material. We welcome any comments related to the acquisition of any omitted materials (<http://www.impact-se.org/about-us/contact-us/>).

Grade 1:

1. *Arabic Language*, Grade 1, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
2. *Arabic Language (Workbook)*, Grade 1, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
3. *Arabic Language*, Grade 1, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
4. *Islamic Education*, Grade 1, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
5. *Islamic Education*, Grade 1, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
6. *Islamic Education*, Grade 1, Vol. 2, 2019–20.
7. *Islamic Education*, Grade 1, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
8. *Moral Education*, Grade 1, Vol. 1, 2017–18.
9. *Moral Education*, Grade 1, Vol. 2, 2017–18.
10. *Moral Education*, Grade 1, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
11. *Moral, Social and Cultural Studies* (English edition for non-native speakers), Grade 1, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
12. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 1, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
13. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 1, Vol. 2, 2018–19.
14. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 1, Vol. 3, 2019–20.
15. *UAE Phonics (English Language)*, Grade 1, Vol. 1, 2020–21.

Grade 2:

16. *Arabic Language*, Grade 2, Vol. 4, 2020–21.
17. *Islamic Education*, Grade 2, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
18. *Islamic Education*, Grade 2, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
19. *Islamic Education*, Grade 2, Vol. 2, 2019–20.
20. *Islamic Education*, Grade 2, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
21. *Moral Education*, Grade 2, Vol. 1, 2017–18.
22. *Moral Education*, Grade 2, Vol. 2, 2017–18.
23. *Moral Education*, Grade 2, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
24. *Moral, Social and Cultural Studies* (English edition for non-native speakers), Grade 2, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
25. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 2, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
26. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 2, Vol. 3, 2019–20.
27. *UAE Phonics (English Language)*, Grade 2, Vol. 1, 2020–21.

Grade 3:

28. *Arabic Language*, Grade 3, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
29. *Arabic Language* (Workbook), Grade 3, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
30. *Arabic Language*, Grade 3, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
31. *Arabic Language*, Grade 3, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
32. *Bridge to Success* (English Language), Grade 3, Vol. 1, 2017–18
33. *Islamic Education*, Grade 3, Vol. 1, 2019–20.
34. *Islamic Education*, Grade 3, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
35. *Islamic Education*, Grade 3, Vol. 2, 2019–20.
36. *Islamic Education*, Grade 3, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
37. *Moral Education*, Grade 3, Vol. 1, 2017–18.
38. *Moral Education*, Grade 3, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
39. *Moral, Social and Cultural Studies* (English edition for non-native speakers), Grade 3, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
40. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 3, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
41. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 3, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
42. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 3, Vol. 3, 2019–20.

Grade 4:

43. *Arabic Language*, Grade 4, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
44. *Arabic Language* (Workbook), Grade 4, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
45. *Arabic Language*, Grade 4, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
46. *Bridge to Success* (English Language), Grade 4, Vol. 1, 2016–17.
47. *Islamic Education*, Grade 4, Vol. 1, 2019–20.
48. *Islamic Education*, Grade 4, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
49. *Islamic Education*, Grade 4, Vol. 2, 2019–20.
50. *Islamic Education*, Grade 4, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
51. *Moral Education*, Grade 4, Vol. 1, 2017–18.
52. *Moral Education*, Grade 4, Vol. 2, 2017–18.
53. *Moral Education*, Grade 4, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
54. *Moral, Social and Cultural Studies* (English edition for non-native speakers), Grade 4, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
55. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 4, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
56. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 4, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
57. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 4, Vol. 3, 2019–20.

Grade 5:

58. *Arabic Language*, Grade 5, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
59. *Arabic Language* (Workbook), Grade 5, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
60. *Arabic Language*, Grade 5, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
61. *Arabic Language*, Grade 5, Vol. 4, 2020–21.
62. *Bridge to Success* (English Language), Grade 5, Vol. 1, 2016–17
63. *Islamic Education*, Grade 5, Vol. 1, 2019–20.
64. *Islamic Education*, Grade 5, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
65. *Islamic Education*, Grade 5, Vol. 2, 2019–20.

66. *Islamic Education*, Grade 5, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
67. *Moral Education*, Grade 5, Vol. 1, 2017–18.
68. *Moral Education*, Grade 5, Vol. 2, 2017–18.
69. *Moral Education*, Grade 5, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
70. *Moral, Social and Cultural Studies* (English edition for non-native speakers), Grade 5, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
71. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 5, Vol. 2, 2017–18.
72. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 5, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
73. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 5, Vol. 3, 2019–20.

Grade 6:

74. *Arabic Language*, Grade 6, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
75. *Arabic Language*, Grade 6, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
76. *ASP Elite Stream English* (English Language), Grade 6, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
77. *Islamic Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
78. *Islamic Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
79. *Islamic Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 2, 2019–20.
80. *Islamic Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
81. *Islamic Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 3, 2019–20.
82. *Islamic Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
83. *Moral Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
84. *Moral Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
85. *Moral Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
86. *Moral Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
87. *Moral, Social and Cultural Studies* (English edition for non-native speakers), Grade 6, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
88. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 1, 2016–17.
89. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
90. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
91. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 2, 2016–17.
92. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
93. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 6, Vol. 3, 2019–20.

Grade 7:

94. *Arabic Language*, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
95. *Arabic Language*, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
96. *Arabic Language*, Grade 7, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
97. *Arabic Language*, Grade 7, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
98. *ASP Elite Stream English* (English Language), Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
99. *Islamic Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
100. *Islamic Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2021–21.
101. *Islamic Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 2, 2019–20.
102. *Islamic Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
103. *Islamic Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 3, 2019–20.
104. *Islamic Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 3, 2020–21.

105. *Moral Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
106. *Moral Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
107. *Moral Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
108. *Moral Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
109. *Moral, Social and Cultural Studies* (English edition for non-native speakers), Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
110. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2017–18.
111. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
112. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
113. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 2, 2016–17.
114. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
115. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 7, Vol. 3, 2019–20.
116. *The Emirates—Our History (1)*, Grade 7, 2020–21.
117. *The Emirates—Our History (1)*, Grade 7, 2021–22.

Grade 8:

118. *Access Book* (English Language), Grade 8, Vol. 1, 2018–19.
119. *Arabic Language*, Grade 8, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
120. *Arabic Language*, Grade 8, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
121. *Arabic Language*, Grade 8, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
122. *Arabic Language*, Grade 8, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
123. *Bridge to Success* (English Language), Grade 8, 2016–17.
124. *Islamic Education*, Grade 8, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
125. *Islamic Education*, Grade 8, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
126. *Islamic Education*, Grade 8, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
127. *Islamic Education*, Grade 8, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
128. *Moral Education*, Grade 8, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
129. *Moral Education*, Grade 8, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
130. *Moral Education*, Grade 8, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
131. *Moral Education*, Grade 8, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
132. *Moral, Social and Cultural Studies* (English edition for non-native speakers), Grade 8, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
133. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 8, Vol. 1, 2017–18.
134. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 8, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
135. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 8, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
136. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 8, Vol. 2, 2017–18.
137. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 8, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
138. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 8, Vol. 3, 2019–20.
139. *The Emirates—Our History (1)*, Grade 8, 2020–21.
140. *The Emirates—Our History (1)*, Grade 8, 2021–22.

Grade 9:

141. *Arabic Language*, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
142. *Arabic Language*, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
143. *Arabic Language*, Grade 9, Vol. 2, 2020–21.

144. *Arabic Language*, Grade 9, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
145. *Bridge to Success* (English Language), Grade 9, 2019–20.
146. *Islamic Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
147. *Islamic Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
148. *Islamic Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
149. *Islamic Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
150. *Moral Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
151. *Moral Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
152. *Moral Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
153. *Moral Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
154. *Moral, Social and Cultural Studies* (English Edition for Non-native Speakers), Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
155. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2017–18.
156. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
157. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
158. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
159. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 3, 2019–20.
160. *Social Studies and National Education*, Grade 9, Vol. 3, 2020–21.

Grade 10:

161. *Arabic Language*, Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
162. *Arabic Language*, Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
163. *Arabic Language*, Grade 10, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
164. *Arabic Language*, Grade 10, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
165. *Bridge to Success* (English Language), Grade 10, 2020–21.
166. *Islamic Education*, Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
167. *Islamic Education*, Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
168. *Islamic Education*, Grade 10, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
169. *Islamic Education*, Grade 10, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
170. *Moral Education*, Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
171. *Moral Education*, Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
172. *Moral Education*, Grade 10, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
173. *Moral Education*, Grade 10, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
174. *Moral, Social and Cultural Studies* (English Edition for Non-native Speakers), Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
175. *Social Studies and National Education: Historical Depth of Federal Thought in the UAE* (Book Viewing and Analysis), Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
176. *Social Studies and National Education: Historical Depth of Federal Thought in the UAE* (Book Viewing and Analysis), Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
177. *Social Studies and National Education: Historical Depth of Federal Thought in the UAE* (Workbook), Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
178. *Social Studies and National Education: Historical Depth of Federal Thought in the UAE* (Workbook), Grade 10, Vol. 1, 2021–22.

179. *Social Studies and National Education: Sustainable Development—Framework and Implementations, the UAE as an Example* (Book Viewing and Analysis), Grade 10, Vol. 2, 2020–21.

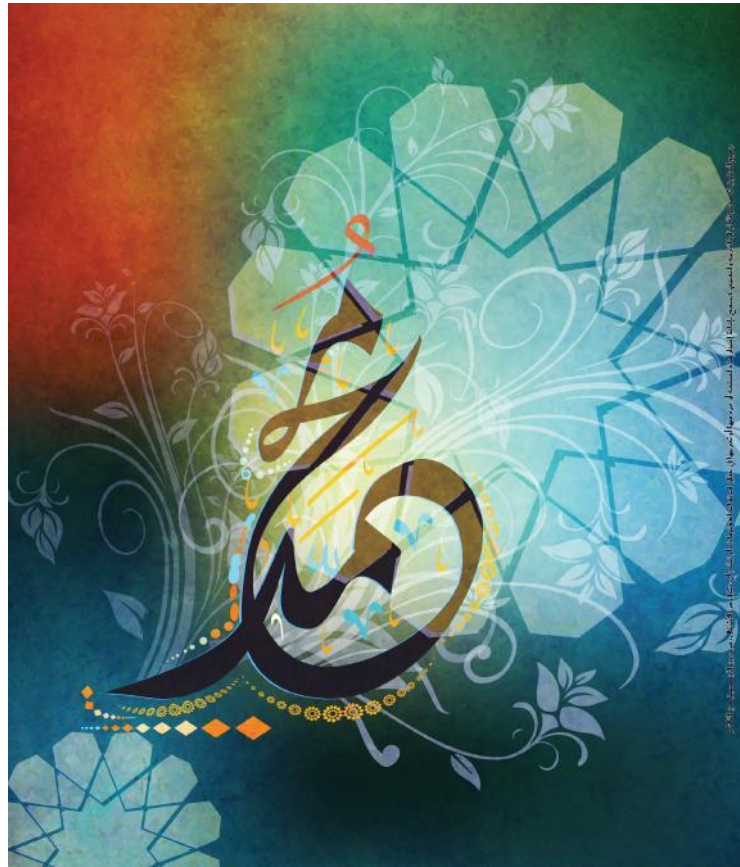
Grade 11:

180. *Arabic Language*, Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
 181. *Arabic Language*, Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
 182. *Arabic Language*, Grade 11, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
 183. *Arabic Language*, Grade 11, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
 184. *Bridge to Success—Advanced* (English Language Workbook), Grade 11, 2018–19.
 185. *Islamic Education*, Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
 186. *Islamic Education*, Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
 187. *Islamic Education*, Grade 11, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
 188. *Islamic Education*, Grade 11, Vol. 3, 2019–20.
 189. *Islamic Education*, Grade 11, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
 190. *Moral Education*, Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
 191. *Moral Education*, Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
 192. *Moral Education*, Grade 11, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
 193. *Moral Education*, Grade 11, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
 194. *Moral, Social and Cultural Studies* (English edition for non-native speakers), Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
 195. *Social Studies and National Education: Al-Ain UNESCO World Heritage Sites* (Workbook), Grade 11, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
 196. *Social Studies and National Education: Zayed’s Ethical Approach*, Grade 11, Vol. 3, 2019–20.
 197. *Social Studies and National Education: Zayed’s Ethical Approach*, Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
 198. *Social Studies and National Education: Zayed’s Ethical Approach*, Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
 199. *The Three Occupied Islands of the UAE*, Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
 200. *The Three Occupied Islands of the UAE*, Grade 11, Vol. 1, 2021–22.

Grade 12:

201. *Arabic Language*, Grade 12, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
 202. *Arabic Language*, Grade 12, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
 203. *Bridge to Success—Advanced* (English Language), Grade 12, 2020–21.
 204. *Islamic Education*, Grade 12, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
 205. *Islamic Education*, Grade 12, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
 206. *Islamic Education*, Grade 12, Vol. 2, 2020–21.
 207. *Islamic Education*, Grade 12, Vol. 3, 2019–20.
 208. *Islamic Education*, Grade 12, Vol. 3, 2020–21.
 209. *Language Applications*, Grade 12, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
 210. *Moral Education*, Grade 12, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
 211. *Moral Education*, Grade 12, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
 212. *Moral Education*, Grade 12, Vol. 2, 2020–21.

213. *Moral Education*, Grade 12, Vol. 3, 2019–20.
214. *Social Studies and National Education: My Early Life—Sultan bin Muhammed al-Qasimi* (Book Viewing and Analysis), Grade 12, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
215. *Social Studies and National Education: My Early Life—Sultan bin Muhammed al-Qasimi* (Book Viewing and Analysis), Grade 12, Vol. 1, 2021–22.
216. *Social Studies and National Education: Technology and the Future of Energy* (Book Viewing and Analysis), Grade 12, Vol. 3, 2019–20.
217. *The Emirates—Our History*, Grade 12, 2020–21.
218. *The Emirates—Our History*, Grade 12, 2021–22.
219. *With the Strength of the Union—His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan—Leader and State*, Grade 12, Vol. 1, 2020–21.
220. *With the Strength of the Union—His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan – Leader and State*, Grade 12, Vol. 1, 2021–22.



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