



LIBERATED ETHNIC STUDIES

MODEL CURRICULUM CONSORTIUM

Contemporary Arab American Identity & Experiences

Time: 2 days

Grade Level: 9-12

Purpose (What will students learn from this lesson?):

In this lesson students will be introduced to the experiences of Arabs and Arab Americans. This lesson will examine the formation of Arab American identity, culture, and politics within the United States using a variety of sources and centering the Arab voice. This lesson will explore a broad range of topics and events pertaining to the complex and diverse experiences of Arab Americans. This lesson will focus on the history of Arab Americans, their struggle against racism, discrimination, harmful stereotypes, and social, political, and economic marginalization.

Unit Enduring Understandings Alignment:

- Explain how Arab Americans, along with non-Arab Muslims, South Asians, Sikhs, and others, have suffered from being perceived as a domestic enemy in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Explain some intersections between attitudes toward race and immigration.
- Articulate the challenges facing these populations in contemporary times and explain various ways they have resisted their continued 'othering'.
- Identify and explain commonly held stereotypes of Arab Americans; and analyze how they have been perpetuated in the media.

Lesson Guiding Questions:

- Who are Arab and Muslim Americans? What are the contemporary challenges they face living in the U.S. and how have they resisted their continued 'othering'?
- How can the media empower or disempower groups within society through the ways in which they portray them?

Essential Skills:

- Students will apply analytical skills to draw connections between othering and identity formation.

Cultural Wealth (Yosso, p. 78):

- Aspirational capital refers to “the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers. This resiliency is evidenced in those who allow themselves and their children to dream of possibilities beyond their present circumstances, often without the objective means to attain those goals” (p. 77-78).

Ethnic Studies Principles Alignment:

- Cultivate empathy, community actualization, cultural perpetuity, self-worth, self-determination, and the holistic well-being of all participants, especially Native peoples and people of color.
- Critique empire and its relationship to white supremacy, racism, patriarchy, and heteropatriarchy.
- Challenge imperialist/colonial hegemonic beliefs and practices on the ideological, institutional, interpersonal, and internalized levels.

Standards Alignment:

- CA HSS Content Standards: 11.3.4; 11.11.1; 11.11.7
- CA HSS Analysis Skills (9-12): Chronological and Spatial Thinking 1; Historical Interpretation 3 CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RH.11-12.1, 2, 3

Materials:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Slides ● Student note taker ● Additional materials linked below 	<p>Supplemental Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who are Arab Americans ● Civil Liberties & the Otherization of Arab and Muslim Americans ● Our Three Winners ● CAIR
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Modifications, Accommodations, Resources for Multilingual Students :

<p>Provide sentence frames for EL students to support their development of written and oral responses to questions.</p> <p>Pair language learners with bilingual students who share a language.</p>	<p>The lessons include graphics and media so students have a variety of sources to reference and texts can be modified to highlight key vocabulary and concepts that are important to understand.</p> <p>Provide bilingual dictionaries.</p>
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Critical Vocabulary:

<p>CRITICAL VOCABULARY</p> <p>Identity- the qualities, expressions, beliefs, physical traits, cultures, and social statuses that comprise a person and/or group of people.</p>
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Islamophobia -hatred, discrimination, fear, and prejudice against Muslims and the overall religion of Islam.
Muslim Ban - Donald Trump signed an Executive Order that banned foreign nationals from seven predominantly Muslim countries from visiting the country for 90 days, suspended entry to the country of all Syrian refugees indefinitely, and prohibited any other refugees from coming into the country for 120 days. (https://www.aclu-wa.org/pages/timeline-muslim-ban)
Othering - the act of treating someone as though they are not part of a group and are different in some way

C1: Cultural Ritual and/or Energizer

We encourage Ethnic Studies lessons to start off with land and ancestor acknowledgement.

STEP	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Step 1	Slide 3: Land Acknowledgement Share the land acknowledgement. Students take notes .	2 min
Step 2	Slide 4: Ancestor Acknowledgement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jack Shaheen • Invite students to recognize someone from your lineage who immigrated to the US (involuntarily or voluntarily) and what <i>pushed or pulled</i> them here? • Students take notes. 	5 min
	Slide 5-8: Cultural Energizer <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss the question. Students can pair-share then discuss whole class: When have you felt included or excluded in school and/or society? 2. Inclusion & Exclusion - Arab Youth Speak. Read the first quote. Discuss and have students respond in their student note taker: Identify when and how these students felt included/excluded in school and/or society? Volunteers can take turns reading quotes and taking notes in response to the question. 	5 min

C2: Critical Concepts

DESCRIPTION - Arab American Identity Concepts	TIME
Islamophobia -hatred, discrimination, fear, and prejudice against Muslims and the overall religion of Islam. Muslim Ban - Donald Trump signed an Executive Order that	5 min

	<p>banned foreign nationals from seven predominantly Muslim countries from visiting the country for 90 days, suspended entry to the country of all Syrian refugees indefinitely, and prohibited any other refugees from coming into the country for 120 days.</p> <p>(https://www.aclu-wa.org/pages/timeline-muslim-ban)</p> <p>Othering - the act of treating someone as though they are not part of a group and are different in some way</p> <p>Review definitions of the key vocabulary (see above in lesson plan) with examples and direct students to write their short definition of the word in their notes.</p>	
	<p>Slides 10-11: Arabs and Identity</p> <p>Show the video, discuss, and direct students to share what they learned and write it in their notes.</p>	<p>10 min</p>
	<p>Slide 12: Being othered</p> <p>Show the video, discuss, and direct students to share what they learned and write it in their notes.</p>	<p>10 min</p>
	<p>Slide 13 Orient students to the questions for slides 14-17:</p> <p>How can Arab Americans' identity be influenced by the way they are "classified"? ; What happens when others try to influence how Arab Americans exert their identities? ; What happens when Arab Americans exert their own identities?</p> <p>Review the case studies of well-known Arab Americans and have students respond to the questions.</p>	<p>12 min</p>
	<p>Slides 18-20: Islamophobia</p> <p>Define Islamophobia. Discuss how understanding experiences of Arab and Muslim can be a springboard to look at Islamophobia. Remind students not all Arabs in the USA are Muslim - actually more are Christian and Arabs make up one of the smallest percentages of Muslims worldwide. People often make the mistake of conflating the two.</p> <p>Use the definition to ask: How is this religion being used to "racialize" a community; how can this affect their identity?</p> <p>Review the sharp rise in hate crimes against Muslims.</p> <p>Discuss the images - What is being communicated?; What is the influence on people's' identity, safety?</p>	<p>6 min</p>
	<p>Slides 21-23: Muslim Ban</p>	<p>10 min</p>

	<p>Review the Muslim Ban - banned people from Iran, Yemen, Syria, Libya, Somalia and Sudan. Originally included Iraq but they took that off. ACLU Muslim Ban Fact Sheet</p> <p>Show video #1 until 3:40 and all of video #2. How does the Muslim Ban support Islamophobia?</p> <p>Ask students to take notes of these questions while watching the video clips: What is happening in this example? How are Arabs and/or Muslims being included or excluded? How do you think this influences their identities? What intersections can you see with other communities?</p>	
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C3: Critical Cultural Production

STEP	DESCRIPTION	TIME
	<p>Slide 24: Critical Cultural Production - What has influenced your identity? Choose a format to answer the question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Song - written or performed (or both) ● Poem, spoken word (written or performed) ● Art Piece - collage, mural ... ● Letter, Speech ● Instagram Post ● TikTok video <p>There are many ways you can expand this - have students draw parallels to Arab American and/or Muslim-American experiences; explicitly identify the factors (social, historical, etc - there will be intersectionality here.)</p>	45 min

C4: Conclusive Dialogue/Critical Circular Exchange

<p>Connection: How is this relevant to students? How is it relevant to the unit? How do you bring</p>	<p>Slide 25: Conclusive Dialogue</p> <p>“When you talk to people, you get to know them. When you don’t talk to them, you don’t get to know them, and the thing that you don’t know strikes with you fear.”</p>
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<p>back to the PURPOSE of the unit?</p>	<p>- Native American actor Chief Dan George</p> <p>Hold a talking and sharing circle in response to the quote ensuring to make connections to Arab American experiences. Students take notes about their learning in their notes.</p> <p>Students will be exposed to and learn narratives of Arab and Muslim Americans which are often absent in K-12 education. They can take what they have learned and layer in how their own identities/challenges are similar and different and have an opportunity to empathize with their peers.</p> <p>Students will have an opportunity to discuss how historical events profoundly influence the experience of Arabs in this country.</p>
<p>Assessment: How will the students be assessed?</p>	<p>Students will participate in a variety of discussions, writing and oral assignments that ask them to apply content and skills learned throughout the lesson. These assessments are described above.</p>
<p>Evaluation: How will the effectiveness of this lesson plan be evaluated?</p>	<p>Through student work artifacts, discussion and teacher and student reflection.</p>

RESOURCES AND NOTES

- **Supplemental Resources**

Bayoumi, Moustafa. How Does It Feel to Be a Problem?: Being Young and Arab in America. New York: Penguin Press, 2008.

Haddad, Yvonne Yazbeck. Not Quite American?: The Shaping of Arab and Muslim Identity in the United States. Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2004.

The Middle Eastern-American Experience: The Early Year (MEARO)
<http://www.mearo.org/lesson1.php>

Middle Eastern-Americans in the Post-1965 Era (MEARO)
<http://www.mearo.org/module2/lesson1/>

Naff, Alixa. Becoming American: The Early Arab Immigrant Experience. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985.

The New Americans (PBS)

http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/foreducators_index.html#resources

Orfalea, Gregory. Before the Flames: A Quest for the History of Arab-Americans.
Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988.

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