

Part 1: Understanding Racism

Lesson 1.1

Essential Question

What is racism and who perpetrates it?

Enduring Understanding

Racism is a system of advantage and disadvantage based on race. Racial prejudice, when combined with social power like access to resources and decision-making, leads to the institutionalization of racist policies and practices. This means that racism is structural and can be enacted by government-sponsored policies as well as individuals.

Learning Outcomes

Students will know:

- Racism is a system of advantage and disadvantage based on race.
- Racism is institutional and therefore can be enacted by governments, their policies, and their agents.
- Racism also can be perpetrated by individuals.
- When racism is perpetrated by individuals, it is done so by calling upon or harkening to a larger structure of racism.

Students will be able to:

- Compare and contrast individual and institutional forms of racism.
- Explain how racism is maintained and sustained using examples from a personal experience (local, state, or federal).
- Draw parallels between the institutional racism experienced by other minoritized communities and Muslims in the United States.

Standards:

- **SS.CV.5.9-12:** Analyze the impact of personal interest and diverse perspectives on the application of civic dispositions, democratic principles, constitutional rights, and human rights.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **CCSS.SL.9-10.1:** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Vocabulary:

- Racism
- Institutional Racism
- Racial Profiling

Time:

50-60 Minutes

Materials:

- Copies of Racism Task Cards
- Copies of *Is This Racism* handout

Procedure:

1. I Have/Have Not Activity

- Explain to students that you will read six statements and that, after each statement, they will think to themselves as to whether or not they have experienced that situation.
- Read the following statements to students, giving them a minute to consider the situation:
 - Have you ever had trouble finding beauty products for your hair type?
 - Have you ever been told not to speak your native language?
 - Have you ever watched entire films without seeing a character who looks like you?
 - Have you ever been monitored, like followed in a store, because of your race or religion?
 - Have you ever been verbally or physically harassed (or bullied), like someone yelling a racial slur at you, because of your race or religion?
 - Have you ever seen US policies prevent your loved ones from traveling or immigrating to the United States?
- Explain to students: If you have experienced any of these scenarios, you have experienced racism. Although our communities are often sources of pride, knowledge, and belonging, we sometimes face barriers that prevent our full participation in society.
- Ask students: Turn and talk to your partner: Given what you already know and have experienced, how would you describe racism to a friend?
- Select a few students to share out their answers with the class.

2. Racism Task Cards:

- Have students divide into groups of four to work on the next activity. Distribute four task cards to each group. Have students fill out the graphic organizer: Is this racism?
- Have students discuss their answers in small groups using the graphic organizer.

3. Class Discussion

- a. Bring students back together to discuss the different types of racism (individual and institutional). Be sure to discuss how anti-Muslim racism isn't always about race but can still be considered racism.
- b. Teacher should reflect on the content of the discussion, highlighting important points that students brought up. Teacher should also bring up the key talking points that did not come up in jigsaw discussions and whole class discussion.
*See the list of key talking points below

4. Reflection. You can ask students to share with the whole class or have them reflect with a Quick Write/Journal Prompt.

- a. *What is institutional racism?*
- b. *How is institutional racism perpetrated?*
- c. *How has institutional racism affected your own life or the lives of the people around you?*

Talking Points

1. Racism is institutional and therefore can be enacted by governments, their policies, and their agents.
 - a. The US government has a long history of enacting racist policies that disproportionately affect people of color.
 - b. Institutional racism prevents people from being able to fully participate in society due to barriers that affect where people live, what jobs they can have, and how much they earn, among other systemic issues.
2. Racism also can be perpetrated by individuals.
 - a. Individual racism is discrimination directed at one or a few individuals and functions on the premise that one's own racial group is superior to another.
 - b. When racism is perpetrated by individuals, it is done so by calling upon larger structures of racism.