

Part 1: Understanding Racism

Lesson 1.2

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 institutional and can be enacted by government-sponsored policies as well as individuals.

Learning Outcomes

Students will know:

- Racism is institutional and therefore can be enacted by governments, their policies, and their agents.
- Racism also can be perpetrated by individuals.
- Islamophobia is more than fear or hatred of Muslims, it is a system of laws and policies that are enacted structurally.

Students will be able to:

- Identify examples of institutional racism in the history of the United States.
- Define Islamophobia and its development in the United States.
- Analyze how Islamophobia is enacted in society today.
- Explain how racism is maintained and sustained using examples from personal experience (local, state, or federal).

Vocabulary:

- Islamophobia
- Institutional Racism
- Racial Profiling
- Orientalism
- Anti-Muslim Racism

Time:

50-60 Minutes

Materials:

- Large sticky notes/anchor chart paper
- Copies of [Definition of Institutional Racism](#) article
- Copies of [Rethinking Islamophobia](#) article

Procedure:

1. **Carousel Walk:** Place large Post-Its/ anchor chart paper around the room, each with a different question relating to Institutional Racism/Islamophobia. Have students respond with different colored markers or small post-its with their answers.
 - a. Possible questions include:
 - i. What is Islamophobia?
 - ii. What are some examples of institutional racism?
 - iii. What causes Islamophobia?
 - iv. Who is subject to racial profiling?
 - v. How is Islamophobia enacted in society today?
2. **Model close reading and annotation** with the [Definition of Institutional Racism](#) article.
 - a. Read the text aloud, modeling close reading and annotation strategies as you read.
3. **Introduce the discussion text:** [Rethinking Islamophobia](#).
 - a. Have students read and annotate as needed to prepare for a class discussion.
4. **Class Discussion**
 - a. Bring students back together to discuss the definition of Islamophobia.
 - 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.
5. **Carousel Walk:**
 - a. Have students revisit the Post-Its and answer the same questions. Encourage them to use what they learned from the articles and discussion.
6. **Reflection:**
 - a. To end class, bring students back together for a quick reflection.
 - b. Ask students to notice how/why their answers have changed.
 - c. You can ask students to share with the whole class or have them reflect with a Quick Write/Journal Prompt.

Talking Points:

1. Racism is a system of advantage and disadvantage based on race.
 - a. Muslims, no matter their race, are still seen as the “Other.”
 - i. The term Islamophobia, with an emphasis on “phobia,” suggests that anti-Muslim discrimination is the result of individual bias. Unfortunately, this erases the systemic production of anti-Muslim racism.
 - ii. **Rethinking Islamophobia as anti-Muslim racism** is about connecting our analysis of history and forms of dominance that produce racial exclusion, including white supremacy, slavery, settler colonialism, war, and colonialism.
 - b. Anti-Muslim racism isn’t always about race, but can still be considered racism
 - i. Saher Selod: “Muslims are incredibly diverse in the United States. They’re white, they’re Arab, they’re South Asian, they’re African-American. It is not to say that Muslim has become a racial category. **It’s just that a Muslim identity has been racialized.** It has imposed newer racial meaning to these bodies of people who already occupy a specific racial category. I think the strongest case is when a white convert—for example, a white woman who is born and raised in America—is considered white in the United States until she starts to wear the hijab. Then, all of a sudden, she stops being treated as if she’s white. The hijab somehow marks her as foreigner. My work tries to show how a religious identity intersects with one’s racial identity....For example, religious discrimination is based on people’s behaviors or belief systems. **Racialization is when you identify somebody based on what you see—not on their behaviors or belief system.**”
 - c. Other groups racialized as Muslim, like South Asians, Sikhs, Arab Christians, also experience anti-Muslim racism.

Alternative Methods

1. Teachers can choose to teach these texts in different ways:
 - a. Have students close read and annotate with the intention of engaging in a [Socratic Seminar](#).
 - b. Break the text into smaller portions and have students do a Jigsaw or [Stay and Stray](#) activity with small groups.