

Part 2: Impact of Racism

Lesson 2

Essential Question

How does racism impact the lives of Muslims in the United States?

Enduring Understanding

Racism does more than impact a person's feelings. Racism also can affect a person's safety as well as their ability to travel, obtain a job, and interact with public spaces.

Learning Outcomes

Students will know:

- Anti-Muslim racism has social, economic, and emotional consequences for many Muslims.
- The Muslim experience is diverse and varies depending on race, ethnicity, and background.

Students will be able to:

- Compare and contrast the experiences of different Muslims.
- Analyze first-person narratives of Muslims of different backgrounds.

Standards:

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **SS.H.7.9-12:** Identify the role of individuals, groups, and institutions in people's struggle for safety, freedom, equality, and justice.
- **ISBE SEL 2A:** Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.
 - a. **4a:** Analyze similarities and differences between one's own and others' perspectives.
 - b. **5a:** Demonstrate how to express understanding of those who hold different opinions.
 - c. **5b:** Demonstrate ways to express empathy for others.

Vocabulary:

- Slam Poetry
- Narrative
- Poetic devices (rhyme, rhythm, repetition)

Time:

50-60 Minutes

Materials:

- Pew Forum graph, either to show on screen or copies for students to look at
- Copies of poetry graphic organizer
- Jigsaw videos
- Copies of the op-ed articles for the jigsaw (optional activity)

Procedure:**1. Opener:**

- a. Display the Pew Forum [graph](#) on Muslim demographics.
- b. Think-Pair-Share: What does this graph show us about Muslim communities in the United States? What inferences can we draw?

2. Introduce Slam Poems

Explain to students that each group will receive a slam poem by a Muslim poet, which they will analyze and then teach to their classmates. Students in each group should become experts on their poem and be prepared for a Jigsaw. After they have completed the graphic organizer, students will regroup in order to teach their classmates about the poem they read.

- a. Divide students into four groups. Each group will receive a poem to analyze.
 1. Ideally, groups should be no more than four students. To accommodate larger class sizes, consider running two simultaneous rotations of eight groups (with two groups working on each poem).
 2. Poems are leveled from least to most complex. Teachers can choose to group students randomly or strategically based on reading level/ability.
- b. Encourage students to track their thinking and organize their thoughts using a graphic organizer or discussion questions.
 1. Poetry Graphic Organizers: [SIFT](#), [TP-CASTI](#), [SOAPSTONE](#) (Additional [strategies](#) for analyzing poems).
 2. Discussion questions:
 1. What experiences have shaped the poet's worldview?
 2. How would the poet define racism?
 3. What connections can you make (from your own life, other texts, or world events) to the poet's message?
 4. Consider the poet's use of rhyme, rhythm, repetition, and other poetic devices. How do they affect tone and meaning?
 5. Given what you have learned, how would you respond to the poet's message?
- c. Poems:
 1. Group 1: ["My Name is Zainab, and I am NOT a Terrorist"](#)
 2. Group 2: ["Muslim Ban"](#)
 3. Group 3: ["Islamophobia"](#)
 4. Group 4: ["A Brief History of Parking Disputes"](#)

3. Jigsaw:

- a. Regroup students into groups of four so that each student in the new group has studied a different poem. Encourage students to discuss what they have learned using their graphic organizers or discussion questions.

4. Class Discussion

- a. 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 list of key talking points below.

5. Reflection:

- a. You can ask students to share with the whole class or have them reflect with a Quick Write/Journal Prompt.
 1. *How does racism impact the lives of Muslims in the United States?*

Talking Points

- Anti-Muslim racism has social, economic, and emotional consequences for many Muslims.
 - The enacting of racist policies often leads to the dehumanization of Muslims in the media and in government.
- The Muslim experience is diverse and varies depending on race, ethnicity, and background.
- Many Muslims consider themselves a part of a global community of Muslims that is often ignored and blamed by mainstream media.
- Muslims of every background experience discrimination and the effects of individual and institutional racisms.

Alternative Methods

- **Opener:**
 - Teachers can show this [video](#), A Brief Visual History of Black Muslims in Chicago by the *Chicago Reader*, as an opener to the discussion about Muslim communities in the United States.
 - Teachers can use this [Encyclopedia entry](#) for more information about the history of Muslim communities in Chicago.
- **Discussion: Socratic Seminar**
 - Socratic Seminars work best when all students are working on the same text or document. Teachers can choose one of the slam poems (that they think will be most beneficial to their students) and watch it as a whole class. Students can then work in groups to fill out a graphic organizer and/or create [discussion questions](#) that they can bring to a whole class discussion. After working in small groups (or individually), students should gather in a circle in the middle of the classroom to face each other (space permitting). Explain the rules of a [Socratic Seminar](#) to students before allowing them to engage in a whole-class discussion. Allow students to explain the poem they studied and discuss major takeaways. Debrief as a whole class, bringing up key talking points, and connections to Lesson 1.

- **Op-Ed/Narrative Jigsaw:**
 - Teachers can also teach this lesson using op-eds by various Muslim figures. This can be taught with a Socratic Seminar (as described above), or with a Jigsaw.
 - **Possible Narratives for the Jigsaw:**
 1. Our Own Great Witnessing: An American Muslim's Reflection on 9/11 (*Facing History and Ourselves*).
 2. Typecast as a Terrorist (*The Guardian*)
 3. Linda Sarsour, in *American Like Me: Reflections on Life Between Cultures*
 4. I Want 'Allahu Akbar' Back (*New York Times*)
 5. An Anti-Muslim Narrative Has Shaped Policy For Decades (*Vox*)
 6. From Aleppo to LA: Coming of Age as a Muslim Girl in America (*New York Times OpDocs*, available on [YouTube](#))

Lesson Extension

- To encourage deeper understanding of the Muslim experience, introduce students to the long history of Black Muslims in the United States. Try Alison Kysia's lesson [Black Muslims in the United States: An Introductory Activity](#) to expose students to a variety of historical figures and their varied experiences living as Black and Muslim in the United States.
- For an introduction to the diversity of Muslims in the United states today, consider using [these narratives](#) as part of the activity - or on their own!