



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

## Center for Middle Eastern Studies

# World History Lesson Plan: *Understanding Contemporary Islam & Muslims*

(Created in association with QFI Professional Development Grant - by David Olson)

Subject	Course Name	Grade
Social Studies	World History	9-12

Sequence	Length of Lesson (1 - multiple days)
<p>This lesson is best used in a unit on Islam and the Muslim people in a World History or World Cultures classroom. It can be done as an introductory activity or as a way to help students make connections between the historical origins of Islam and how Muslims live and are perceived today. The “Hajj Stories” videos will be easier to understand if this lesson is done as a modern connection (since it assumes some familiarity with the Five Pillars of Islam).</p> <p>This lesson can be modified for use in a flipped classroom or online teaching environment. The lesson design below reflects a class of 25-30 students with digital technology available (my classroom has access to Chromebooks for each student).</p> <p>The lesson is done in the context of learning about the origins and development of major world religions. This particular lesson plan is presented in the context of the <b>Gradual Release of Responsibility Model</b> (more info here: <a href="https://goo.gl/ezODJ1">https://goo.gl/ezODJ1</a>)</p>	<p>1-2 Day lesson</p> <p>This will depend on how much modeling and discussion the teacher chooses to incorporate, and how many of the videos the teacher wishes to assign.</p>

## Standard(s)

**CCSS ELA/History Standards:**  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

### **C3 Framework for Social Studies:**

D2.His.5.9-12. Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people's perspectives.

D2.His.12.9-12. Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to pursue further inquiry and investigate additional sources.

## **Learning Target(s)**

Students will identify and describe aspects of the modern Islamic faith and characteristics of Muslim peoples by evaluating several digital media resources.

Students will develop an understanding of the complexity of the "Muslim people" by analyzing various points of view.

Students will build empathy for people of different backgrounds by examining personal aspects of people's lives.

## **Texts - Resources - Technology**

- Computers with internet access (can be done as a full class activity if necessary)
- Handout/Graphic Organizer to evaluate online sources
- Websites:
  - *How Muslims and Westerners View Each Other (Pew Research Center)* - <http://www.pewglobal.org/2011/07/21/chapter-2-how-muslims-and-westerners-view-each-other/>
  - YouTube videos featuring perspectives of Muslims
    - "Meet a Muslim" - <https://goo.gl/1kn3Qc>
    - "Meet a Muslim Day" CBS News - <https://goo.gl/kk2GPh>
    - "Extended Interview: Millennial Muslims on Life in America" - <https://goo.gl/5nzAla>
  - "Hajj Stories" Videos from the Asian Art Museum - <http://education.asianart.org/explore-resources/video/hajj-stories-bay-area-introduction-hajj>
  - (Optional addition for a non-American source) British Museum "Hajj Stories" - [http://www.britishmuseum.org/whats\\_on/exhibitions/hajj/hajj\\_stories.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/whats_on/exhibitions/hajj/hajj_stories.aspx)

## “WE DO IT”

## Guided Instruction

The teacher begins the lesson by having students record a word to describe Islam or Muslim people. This can be done in a number of ways - either by having students write on a sticky-note and then place on the board or through an interactive program like Padlet (padlet.com). The purpose is to work with the stereotypes that students generate, and use them as a basis for reflection at the end of the lesson.

In order to avoid singling out Islam or Muslims, this activity can be done using all five World Religions covered in most World History or World Cultures classes. This might be a good way to avoid harming individual students (especially if there is a small Muslim student population).

The teacher will explain that stereotypes about all peoples exist - the teacher can connect this to other groups in the school, community, country, etc. The teacher should then display the results of a 2011 Pew Research study (available here: <https://goo.gl/g1Yd9U>) entitled “*How Muslims and Westerners View Each Other*.” The purpose of this graphic is to show that stereotypes exist in all communities (The top answers for “Traits associated with Westerners among Muslims...” are *Selfish* and *Violent*. The top two answers for “Traits associated with Muslims among non-Muslims...” are *Fanatical* and *Honest*).

The teacher should ask for reactions. “What do these two lists have in common?” “What surprised you?” “What are some reasons why non-Western people might have a negative view of the United States?”

## “YOU DO IT ALONE”

## Independent Practice

Students will transition to independent practice by viewing a series of online videos and recording their reactions and reflections. This portion of the lesson can be done as a whole group, or in small collaborative groups if technology availability is an issue. The primary benefit of having students complete this portion independently is that they are self-paced and students can rewatch particular and reflect on particular questions for as long as they need.

Students will use the accompanying reflection guide to respond to the videos. The videos demonstrate the contemporary experiences of Muslims - primarily in the United States.

## “YOU DO IT TOGETHER”

## Collaborative Learning

(Optional) As students finish individual video segments or when students finish the reflection sheet, instruct them to share their thoughts with a partner or small group. Prompt students to share what they learned about Islam and Muslim people - with a focus on what characteristics they noticed.

The teacher should emphasize that there are **1.6 billion Muslims in the world, so this is a very small sample**. Ask students how they would characterize the individuals in the videos they saw. Do these terms match those from the Pew Study?

## FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

This lesson incorporates multiple opportunities for checks for understanding. The initial discussion about characteristics and comparison to the Pew Research Center Study allows the teacher to get a sense of what students' preconceptions are and how well they understand stereotypes and perceptions of Muslims. During the "Independent Practice" portion of the lesson, the teacher should circulate the room and check in with individual students to gauge their reactions to the videos. The teacher can also lead or monitor a reflective discussion after students have completed their independent work.