

Within Unit: Reality Check: You Won't See These Muslims on TV

Lesson 1: Popular Images vs. Real Diversity

Focus Question(s):

What are popular ideas about Muslims and where do they come from?

What might Muslims say if they were able to speak for themselves?

Time required: 1 40 minute class period

Objectives: Students will

- access, record, and explain their prior knowledge and ideas about Muslims and Islam.
- discuss the accuracy and fairness of their own and classmates' ideas about Muslims and Islam.
- discuss the sources of their ideas and information about Muslims and Islam.
- analyze and interpret the meanings and messages presented in the video "A Land Called Paradise".
- discuss what difficulties American Muslims might face.

Activity 1: Pretest

Instructor will distribute "Who are Muslims" pretests to students and each student will complete her/his own copy after instructor explains that the purpose is to determine what each student knows about Muslims and Islam. (6-8 minutes)

Next, on the board, teacher will write headings which correspond with questions 1-3 (or whichever desired) on the pre-test: Where Muslims live, Words associated with Muslims, and What Muslims look like. A selected student (with neat handwriting) or instructor will record students' ideas on the board under these headings. (5-7minutes)

Finally, students will be asks to come to a consensus on the final two questions (one question at a time): How Muslims feel about Americans, and whether they would travel to a Muslim country and, if so, which one. Students should be encouraged to determine how consensus should be reached and directed only if necessary. (5-7 minutes)

Activity 2: A Land Called Paradise Video, Journal & Discussion

Students will view the short film “A Land Called Paradise”, found on YouTube. After viewing it, students will write a short journal entry describing at least one challenge faced by American Muslims. (10-12 minutes)

After/while sharing journal responses, students will discuss responses and what they thought of the video and its messages. (5-7 minutes)

Materials needed: Pretests, “A Land Called Paradise” video

Lesson 2: Life in the Middle East

Focus Question(s): Are all Middle Eastern cities like Bagdad?

Time required: 1.5 40 minute class periods

Objectives: Students will

- recognize that some Middle Eastern cities are stable and relatively safe
- ask at least 2 questions they have about the presentation “Turkish and Syrian Cities”
- compare the images and information presented about “Syrian and Turkish Cities” with popular images of Middle Eastern cities

Day 1- Activity 1: Presentation of “Syrian and Turkish Cities” PowerPoint

Instructor will ask students to give their impressions of Middle Eastern cities and ask them where these images and ideas come from. Students will also be asked to list as many Middle Eastern cities as they can. Instructor will write several words that students produce on the board. (2-4 minutes)

Next, instructor will present the PowerPoint “Syrian and Turkish Cities” and provide students with firsthand anecdotes and impressions which correspond with the PowerPoint. Students will be encouraged to ask question throughout the presentation (30-35 minutes-remainder of period*).

*Presenting “Syrian and Turkish Cities” will likely run over into the next class period.

Day 2- Activity 1(continued): Presentation of “Syrian and Turkish Cities” PowerPoint

Instructor will finish presenting PowerPoint. (5-15 minutes)

Activity 2: Students will be asked to write down 2 or 3 questions they have about what they saw and heard during the presentation and briefly compare what they learn of the relevant cities (Damascus and Istanbul) with what they already thought about Middle Eastern cities. This can be done individually or in pairs. (5-7 minutes)

Students will then share questions and instructor and students will try to answer as many as possible together. A few students should also volunteer their comparisons and discuss briefly. (5-7 minutes)

Materials needed: “Turkish and Syrian cities” PowerPoint

Lesson 3: Origins and Tenets of Islam and Who Represents Islam?

Focus Question(s):

What is the relationship between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam?

What is the religion of Islam about and where did it come from?

Who represents Islam?

Time required: 30-40 minutes of a class period

Objectives: Students will

- be able explain, succinctly, the relationship between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.
- view and discuss factual statistics about the Muslim diaspora.
- discuss ideas about who should represent Islam and Muslims.

Activity: Origin of the Abraham religions and images of Muslims

Using the “Who are Muslims” PowerPoint, instructor will expose students to an introduction to the origins of the Abrahamic religions, including Islam and very basic statistics about World

Population and the number and geographic representation of Muslim and emphasize the vast number of Muslims represented. Students will be checked verbally to see that they can paraphrase an explanation for the relationship between the 3 faiths. Next, students will view the slides depicting popular images of Muslims and images NOT seen often in popular media. (10-12 minutes)

Students will discuss the question of “Who Speak for Islam?” (remaining time/5-10 minutes)

Materials needed: “Who are Muslims” PowerPoint

Lesson 4: Inside Islam

Focus Question(s):

Is it possible to tell what the world’s Muslims think?

Why is it important to understand what Muslims really think?

Time required: 2 40 minute class periods

Objectives: Students will

- understand how polls work.
- discuss the dangers of racial/religious stereotyping.
- show significant improvement in terms of accuracy of information between pretest and post-test

Activity 1: Post 9/11 backlash

Students will view several images of news headlines and stories describing hate crimes against Muslims in the United States in the wake of 9/11 (“Hate Crimes in the News” PowerPoint. They will be asked to explain why the perpetrators were motivated to do such things. Concepts of fear, retribution, misunderstanding, ignorance, and anger should surface during discussion. (5-7 minutes)

Activity 2: “Inside Islam” video

Instructor will show “Inside Islam: What a Billion Muslims Really Think” after explaining that a polling agency (Gallup) wanted to get a snapshot of worldwide Muslim feelings and ideas after 9/11. Students and instructors will discuss the significance and importance of polls and polling before showing the film. Film viewing will take portions of two class periods. (approximately 40 minutes total)

Activity 3: Post-test and discussion

Instructor will administer post-test (same as pretest). Students will complete it individually. (5-7 minutes)

Students and instructor will discuss changes (which, hopefully, should be significant). (5-10 minutes)

Time permitting, students will be asked to write a paragraph long reflection on the unit to be handed in on the way out of class. (remainder of period)

Materials needed: “Inside Islam” video, post-tests, “Hate Crimes in the News” PowerPoint