

Arab Americans as a subfield of Asian American Studies

This course will explore a broad range of topics and events pertaining to the complex and diverse experiences of Arab Americans. There are 22 Arab speaking countries in the world located across the Middle East and North Africa; Arab-Americans are people who identify as immigrating from or having ancestral roots in one of these countries. Arab-American studies has long been a subfield of Asian American studies because of the shared geography yet people from the Arab world have distinct identities and experiences. While this section is focused on Arab-Americans, it also includes lesson on Muslim Americans. It should be noted that not all Arabs are Muslim, and that there are more Christian Arab Americans in the USA than Muslim. Additionally, the Muslim American experience encompasses a community beyond just Arabs.

This course will focus on the history of Arab Americans, starting from their first immigration into the country to present day, highlighting their contributions and how they have—similar to other communities of color—struggled against racism, discrimination, harmful stereotypes, and social, political, and economic marginalization. For example, students will be exposed to how Arab Americans, along with non-Arab Muslims, South Asians, Sikhs, and others, have suffered from being perceived as a domestic enemy in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. These negative sentiments toward Arab Americans stem primarily from ignorance, but they also reflect a troubled relationship between the US and the Arab world as a result of US imperialism.

This section includes a list of sample topics and important people (pages 52-54) and four sample lessons (pages 54-106). These lists and sample lessons are potential suggestions, just like the others found through the model curriculum. Educators should not feel limited by them.

The four sample lessons that are included are:

| Page #s | Title of Sample Lesson |
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| 54-72 | <p>Arab Immigration to the United State</p> <p>In this series of lessons, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● describe the course of Arab immigration to the United States starting in the early 1900s; ● explain the reasons for Arab immigration to the United States; ● identify major US policies toward immigrants, specifically those from the Arab world; ● make connections between labor and immigration patterns; ● explain some intersections between attitudes toward race and immigration; ● will link Arab immigration to immigration in other communities, particularly Latinos. <p>The essential questions that will anchor this series of lessons are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are the similarities and differences between the immigration patterns among Arabs throughout US history? ● What are the similarities and differences in the experiences of Arab groups after immigrating to America? ● How are the experiences of Arab immigrants connected to those of other communities? |
| 72-93 | <p>Hip-Hop as Resistance</p> <p>In this series of lessons students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● be exposed to a form of cultural expression that many will be familiar with to understand how hip-hop as an art form can be used as a political tool of resistance; |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● understand how Hip-hop can be used to resist oppression and counter-hegemonic beliefs perpetuated through mainstream media; and as an educational tool to offer an alternative to the stereotypes often associated with Arab-Americans which are then perpetuated in mainstream media portrayals of Arab-Americans. ● explore the roots of hip-hop, understand how it is used by various cultures to provide a look inside their communities; and is a form of poetry and expression. <p>The essential questions that will anchor this lesson are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How can the media empower or disempower groups within society? ● How can Hip-hop be used as a form of resistance against hegemonic beliefs? <p>At the end of the lessons, students will produce their own songs.</p> |
| 93-98 | <p>Understanding Arab and Muslim Americans and their challenges in contemporary social/political contexts in the US</p> <p>In this series of lessons students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● focus on understanding who Arab and Muslim Americans in the United States are; and the challenges they have faced in contemporary times; ● explore a variety of sources to learn about where these communities live; how they are different and where they overlap; and how media and government policies have placed both communities as the other - particularly post 9/11 and after the election of president Trump; ● Identify examples of how these communities have claimed spaces as Americans in the United States and how their numerous contributions have served as methods of resistance to their othering. <p>The essential question that will anchor this lesson is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who are Arab and Muslim Americans; what are the contemporary challenges they face living in the United States, and how have they resisted their continued ‘othering’? |
| 98-106 | <p>Islamophobia - What is it and how can it be challenged?</p> <p>Since 9/11 and with Trump’s rhetoric against Muslims, Islamophobia is on the rise in the U.S. Arab Americans, South Asian Americans and Muslim Americans have endured racial profiling, illegal detentions, social harassment, and violence. This is an important contemporary issue affecting large communities across the US.</p> <p>In this series of lessons students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● understand what Islamophobia is, its history in the U.S., why it is on the rise, and what is being done about it; ● learn about the impact of Islamophobia on individuals and communities; and ● brainstorm ways to counteract Islamophobia <p>The essential questions that will anchor this lesson are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What causes Islamophobia? ● What impact has Islamophobia had on the Muslim community? ● What are ways Islamophobia can be challenged? |