

Teaching About Jewish and Muslim Identities

Schools and classrooms are not immune from the social and political forces within the United States or between the United States and other countries. This set of resources intentionally focuses on how educators can deepen students’ cultural competence and create diverse, inclusive communities through conversations about Jewish and Muslim identities. *Its goal is to synthesize resources that educators may find helpful when strengthening their knowledge base and/or navigating student questions.*

The conversations are poignant now due to current events, and the resources can be incorporated into lessons at any point throughout the year in order to:

- Build understanding about the millions of people who practice Islam or Judaism globally
- Name and interrupt the stereotypes, fear, and discrimination they experience with increasing frequency
- Commit to anti-bias and trauma-informed practices when talking about violence, whether closer to home or abroad

Content Warning: This document and the curated resources it includes discuss violence, war, Islamophobia, antisemitism, the Holocaust, and current events in Gaza, West Bank, and Israel.

Resource Types

Lesson Plans

Teacher-facing instructions and materials for a partial or complete lesson

Lesson Resources and Texts

Activities or texts around which teachers build lessons

Lesson Ideas

Stories or strategies shared by teachers without corresponding material

Professional Learning

Opportunities for teachers to deepen their understanding and acquire new strategies

Muslim Identities and Islamophobia

Resource	Focus	Summary
American Muslims: Facts vs. Fiction from Learning for Justice	Muslim Identity Grades 6–12 Lesson Plan	Leveraging a film from Unity Productions Foundation, this toolkit outlines a six-step lesson plan centered on Islam and the lived experience of American Muslims. The film, accessible through the lesson plan and directly via UPF’s website, uses up-to-date statistics to articulate the beliefs and attitudes of American Muslims in comparison to other religious and non-religious groups. It also includes a teacher’s guide with additional questions and extension activities.
What is the Truth About American Muslims? from the	Muslim Identity Grades K–8	In this question-and-answer style publication, learners build context and understanding about American Muslims and religious freedom. Questions such as “who are American

Interfaith Alliance and Religious Freedom Project of the First Amendment Center	Lesson Resources and Texts	Muslims today” and “what is the role of mosques in American Muslim life” expand learners’ understanding, while others define terms and counter misunderstandings.
Muslim Identity and History Booklist from Teaching for Change	Muslim Identity Grades K–12 Lesson Resources and Texts	Teaching for Change offers a list of books featuring Muslim people, their experiences, and stories. Books recommended by this organization are vetted through a collaborative process with a lens toward anti-bias. It is unclear whether all of the authors featured identify as Muslim, so additional research into individual authors is encouraged.
Guide to Supporting Muslim Students from San Diego County Office of Education	Muslim Identity and Islamophobia Professional Learning	Organized as a response to community and student concerns, this guide offers teachers a brief introduction to Islam and the needs of Muslim students. It includes key ideas from the Muslim community regarding how to create welcoming, inclusive schools and resources for teachers about celebrating and uplift Muslims and their contributions to society. It also shares information about countering Islamophobia.
Challenge Islamophobia from Teaching for Change	Muslim Identity and Islamophobia Grades 6–12 Lesson Plans	This project addresses the root causes of Islamophobia by placing it firmly within a U.S. context and shared cultural history. The lessons (accessible at no cost after entering your name and email) do not teach about “the details of the Islamic faith and practices because Islam is not the root of Islamophobia.” Instead, each multi-day lesson aims to develop students’ critical thinking skills by investigating Islamophobia as racism. Use your judgment about which lessons and activities may work best for your students.
Stereotypes, Media, and Islamophobia from Facing History and Ourselves	Muslim Identity and Islamophobia Grades 6–12 Lesson Resources and Texts	Comprising four activities, this resource helps students reflect on how the media can reinforce negative stereotypes about Muslims and other identity groups. It prompts students to consider what impact stereotypes and discrimination have on individuals and groups, using contemporary stories. These activities can easily be expanded upon in order to create a full lesson.

Jewish Identities and Antisemitism

Resource	Focus	Summary
Jewish Americans from Institute of Curriculum Services	Jewish Identity Grades 6–12 Lesson Plan	This lesson plan and accompanying resources examines the bonds that unite Jewish Americans as an ethnic group, and the rich diversity that exists within the community. It uplifts intersectional stories and experiences of Jewish people, and prompts students to deepen their understanding of social identities more broadly.

Jewish American Heritage Month Resource Guide from Berkeley Public Schools	Jewish Identity Grades ECE–8 Lesson Resources and Texts	Jewish American Heritage Month is recognized in May, yet many of the resources compiled by Jewish community members and school district staff can be used throughout the year. Focused on two key ideas – expand knowledge, get intersectional – there are links to research, videos, biographies, and lesson plans that can be used with younger students.
Jewish Identity and History Booklist from Teaching for Change	Jewish Identity Grades K–5, 6–8, 9–12 Lesson Resources and Texts	Teaching for Change offers a list of books featuring Jewish people, their experiences, and stories. Books recommended by this organization are vetted through a collaborative process with a lens toward anti-bias. It is unclear whether all of the authors featured identify as Jewish, so additional research into individual authors is encouraged.
History of Antisemitism and the Holocaust from United States Holocaust Memorial Museum	Antisemitism Grades 7–12 Lesson Plan	This lesson shares an approach to understanding the historical origins of antisemitism. The first part of the lesson builds students’ background knowledge while helping them distinguish between facts, opinions, and beliefs. The second part focuses on how antisemitism contributed to an environment where prejudice, hate speech, and violence could occur during the Nazi-led government and Holocaust. The last section prompts students to think of modern instances of antisemitism. It also includes additional resources for teachers, virtual tools, and modifications that attend to learner variability.
Old Hatred, New Paradigms: Combating Antisemitism in the Twenty-First Century from Facing History and Ourselves	Antisemitism Grades 7–12 Lesson Plans and Lesson Resources and Texts	Bringing together resources from across its catalog, this set of curated plans helps educators integrate the study of traditional and contemporary antisemitism into classroom conversations about discrimination and stereotypes. Within each of the resources listed, there are activities, videos, and texts that offer different entry points to the conversation. As part of the “Antisemitism Today” collection, Antisemitism and Its Impacts gives students a detailed overview and introduces antisemitic tropes with examples. Facing History and Ourselves plans to continue to add to this set ongoing.

Anti-Bias and Trauma-Informed Practices

Resource	Focus	Summary
Teaching in the Wake of Violence from Facing History and Ourselves	Anti-Bias Grades 6–12 Lesson Resources and Texts	The four activities in this resource can help educators to navigate conversations with their students after news of a mass shooting, terrorist attack, or other violent event. While this is a difficult task, we risk normalizing the violence and the beliefs that motivate it when we choose not to talk about it in the classroom. The activities focus on: the initial classroom response, the factors that contribute to hate crimes, community responses, and strategies for following the news.

<p>Extreme Prejudice Webinar from Learning for Justice and the Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding</p>	<p>Anti-Bias Professional Development, Lesson Ideas, and Lesson Plans</p>	<p>This one-hour webinar focuses on how to teach about extremism accurately and safely. It offers examples and plans for how to discuss extremism across multiple religions, examine the context in which extremism arises, and empower students to create a more inclusive school. The webinar includes recommendations and resources for lessons. While the presenters reference some outdated school infrastructure (computer lab rather than student laptops), the ideas showcased represent quality steps educators can take. You will need to register to access the webinar and materials.</p>
<p>Supporting Youth Affected by the Violence in Israel and Gaza: Tips for Families and Educators from National Association of School Psychologists</p>	<p>Trauma-Informed Practices Grades ECE-12 Professional Development and Lesson Ideas</p>	<p>Caregivers and educators can be instrumental in helping young people feel a sense of safety by helping them understand what is going on factually, how events do or do not affect their lives, and how to manage their emotional reactions. The resource offers suggestions for how to keep explanations developmentally appropriate, possible emotional responses, and practical steps to take.</p>
<p>School Climate Resources from Learning for Justice</p>	<p>Anti-Bias Professional Development</p>	<p>This collection features Learning for Justice’s most-requested materials for making schools more open and welcoming to all students. For educators, <i>Speak Up at School</i> and <i>Let’s Talk! Facilitating Critical Conversations with Students</i> support you in talking about and interrupting bias when it occurs. For school leaders, <i>Responding to Hate and Bias at School</i> offers practical advice for preventing and navigating a hate-related crisis. Sections of all three resources may be relevant for young people depending on their age.</p>

***We recognize that this resource set is incomplete and continues to evolve.
If you have other resources to suggest, complete [this form](#).***