

GROWING UP & FITTING IN

LESSON PLAN

LESSON GOALS

- ◆ Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.
- ◆ Recognize individual and group similarities and differences.
- ◆ Understand how oral history helps us build empathy with historical actors and events.

MATERIALS

All oral history clips and transcripts mentioned in this lesson are available for streaming or download at muslims.brooklynhistory.org.

Graphic Organizer
Interpreting Emotions from Oral History

MUSLIMS IN BROOKLYN CLIPS

The “Growing Up and Fitting In” clips draw upon memories of childhood. Some narrators discuss the challenges of being one of the few Muslims in school, while others discuss race, being a first-generation American, friendship, language, or dress. This collection is created from oral histories conducted and arranged by Brooklyn Historical Society in 2018 and 2019.

“BECOMING THE BULLY” 4:50

Rabia Ahsin describes how the 9/11 attacks affected her relationships at school.

muslims.brooklynhistory.org/oral_history_clip/becoming-bully-rabia-ahsin

“SALAT” 4:27

Idris Brathwaite describes how religious expectations intervened on his fun.

muslims.brooklynhistory.org/oral_history_clip/salat-idris-braithwaite

“FRIENDS WHO ARE GUYS” 2:03

Shahana Hanif challenges the different standards of behavior for boys and for girls in her community.

muslims.brooklynhistory.org/oral_history_clip/friends-guys-shahana-hanif

“FIRST DAY” 1:28

Suheir Hammad describes her first day of school as an English as a Second Language student in Sunset Park.

muslims.brooklynhistory.org/oral_history_clip/first-day-suheir-hammad

“THE BRIDGE GENERATION” 1:55

Asad Dandia describes growing up in a Pakistani neighborhood in Brooklyn.

muslims.brooklynhistory.org/oral_history_clip/bridge-generation-asad-dandia

“LANGUAGE OF INTELLIGENCE” 2:38

Rabia Ahsin talks about moving between different languages and different clothing choices. Her parents are Pakistani and speak Punjabi, Urdu (the official language of Pakistan), Arabic (the language of the Qur’an, the Muslim holy book), and English.

muslims.brooklynhistory.org/oral_history_clip/language-intelligence-rabia-ahsin

“TO KNOW WHERE I’M FROM” 3:16

Rabia Ahsin discusses when she started wearing a headscarf to school.

muslims.brooklynhistory.org/oral_history_clip/where-from-rabia-ahsin

“WE DIDN’T HAVE FRIENDS” 3:15

Shahana Hanif describes her parents’ attitudes toward friendships outside the home.

muslims.brooklynhistory.org/oral_history_clip/didnt-have-friends-shahana-hanif

“RAISED TO BE QUIET” 3:24

Shahana Hanif contrasts her quiet behavior with that of her sister.

muslims.brooklynhistory.org/oral_history_clip/raised-quiet-shahana-hanif

“A UNICORN IN ALL THE SPACES” 1:55

Baseera Khan recounts challenges she faced growing up in Texas.

muslims.brooklynhistory.org/oral_history_clip/unicorn-spaces-baseera-khan

“YOU’RE JUST LIKE YOURSELF” 3:16

Mohammed Fayaz describes their experiences as a gender fluid child in a traditional Muslim family.

muslims.brooklynhistory.org/oral_history_clip/just-yourself-mohammed-fayaz

“WE DON’T LOOK MUSLIM” 5:00

Alyssa Haughwout describes how her peers never knew she was Muslim.

muslims.brooklynhistory.org/oral_history_clip/look-muslim-alyssa-haughwout



LESSON SEQUENCE

What Are the Challenges of Growing up & Fitting in?

◆ Journaling Prompt

- Describe a time when you felt you had trouble fitting in.
- Describe a time when you were in a group and noticed someone else having trouble fitting in.

◆ Share

- You may ask volunteers to share what they wrote, but ask that they not share names or specific places.
- Can we generalize what issues caused difficulty for those trying to fit in?

◆ Transition

Say, *Today, we're going to listen to oral history clips of adults reflecting on times they had trouble fitting in when they were growing up.*

INTRODUCTION

CONTENT WARNING

Please note that this lesson involves discussion of bullying, sexism, and racism. This subject matter may be sensitive to both teachers and students—please review both the prompts and the clips before sharing them with students.

1 Whole Group Listening

Let the students know that they will be listening to a clip titled “**Becoming the Bully**,” which deals with a young woman’s experiences of being in school in New York City on and after 9/11.

2 Listening Protocol

- Have students use the “Interpreting Emotions from Oral History” graphic organizer while listening to make a list of sentences and phrases in the narration that resonated with them. This can be done individually or in small groups.
- Listen to the clip a second time.

LISTENING & REFLECTING

TEACHER’S NOTE

Interpreting Oral History
That different students/ groups have different interpretations of the oral history is a larger teaching point about using an oral history. For more information, see the “How to Use This Curriculum” and “Additional Resources” section of muslims.brooklynhistory.org.

LESSON SEQUENCE

- After the second time, ask students to list words that describe Rabia’s emotions for each word or phrase they recorded on their graphic organizer.

3 Share

After completing their graphic organizer, ask some students to share the phrases and emotions they recorded.

4 Reflect

Facilitate a whole group discussion on the clip. Alternatively, you might ask students to journal their responses to the following prompts:

- Was there anything in Rabia’s story that you could relate to?
- Was there anything in Rabia’s story that you could not relate to?
- Imagine you were one of Rabia’s classmates. What would you think of her?
- Do you think Rabia should have acted differently?
- How do the current events happening now affect your attitude at school?

5 Transition

Say, *Now we’re going to listen to more clips from the Muslims in Brooklyn oral history collection that contain stories of narrators growing up and fitting in.*

TEACHER’S NOTE



Vocabulary Bank

To differentiate this lesson for students who are learning English or who are still learning emotional vocabulary, you may wish to provide a word bank of emotions for students to choose from.

1 Small Group Listening

Once students have listened to the oral history as a whole group, small groups should choose one of the additional oral histories included in the **Muslims in Brooklyn Clips** section of this lesson.

2 Repeat Listening Protocol

Students will repeat the exercise of filling out the “Interpreting Emotion from Oral History” graphic organizer with the clip of their choosing.

CHOOSE YOUR OWN NARRATION

LESSON SEQUENCE

3 Compare & Contrast

The groups should then answer in journal or discussion from the following prompts:

- Was there anything in the narration you could relate to?
- Was there anything in the narration you could not relate to?
- How are the two clips you listened to similar? Different?

4 Share

Groups should then prepare to share a brief summary of the clip they listened to and their answers to the above prompts.

5 Summary

- If you were one of the narrators' friends, what would you want to say to them?
- How has listening to the narrator's stories changed the way you think about your own interactions with your peers?

Write an Advice Letter

Imagine that one of the narrators has written to you describing the issue they have growing up & fitting in. Write a letter back to them that will give them advice or make them feel better.

Poetry

Alternatively, use the *Black Out and Collage Poetry Lesson* available at muslims.brooklynhistory.org. Their work should evoke the themes of the lesson: growing up and fitting in.

APPLICATION

INTERPRETING EMOTIONS FROM ORAL HISTORY

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER



NARRATOR

CLIP NAME

1 WHAT THE NARRATOR SAID

**2 THE EMOTION I THINK
THEY ARE FEELING**

Large rounded rectangular box with a solid border and a tail at the bottom left, containing 12 horizontal green lines for writing.

Large rounded rectangular box with a dotted border and a tail at the bottom right, containing 12 horizontal green lines for writing.