

Headscarves: Mosque and State in Turkey World History Lesson Plan

This lesson has been designed to support *the.News* video “Headscarves: Mosque and State in Turkey.” The video can be found online at http://www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/theglobe/story.php?id=3049&package_id=632.

Lesson Author: Wendy Eagan

Subject Area: World History

Topics:

1. Family and gender roles
2. Role of women
3. Religion, belief systems, and values
4. Social class structure and interactions

Vocabulary terms:

- A. Gender roles around the world (20th century since 1945)

Knowledge/skill statements:

1. Knows conflicts in the perception of gender roles in various religions, especially the role of women
2. Understands how the legal status of women varies around the world in Muslim societies
3. Understands how the status of women from different classes has changed in the past century



Learning objectives (McRel Standards)

Standard 44: Understands the search for community, stability, and peace in an interdependent world

Level IV [Grade 9-12] Benchmark 12: Understands gender roles across the globe (e.g., conflicts in the perception of gender roles in various religions, especially the role of women; how the legal status of women varies around the world in Muslim societies, and how the status of women from different classes has changed in the past century)

Background:

Located between Europe and Asia, Turkey has a long and fascinating history with a rich cultural past. The Trojan War was fought in Asia Minor, Homer was born in Izmir, Alexander the Great swept through Anatolia, St. Paul preached at Antioch, and Constantinople was built by a Roman Emperor. The Orthodox Christian Byzantine Empire was



later conquered by Islamic Turks who renamed the capital Istanbul. Suleyman the Magnificent was one of many sultans who ruled the Ottoman Empire which was later defeated in World War I by the Allies. Turkey emerged as an independent nation in 1923. Mustafa Kemal, later known as Ataturk, introduced many Western-style secular reforms as the first President. A charter member of the United Nations, Turkey signed the North Atlantic Treaty in 1952 and is currently seeking full membership in the European Union.

Key Concept:

What civil rights can citizens expect from a modern democratic government?

Key Vocabulary:

1. **Islam:** The world's second largest religion with estimates of 1.2 billion Muslims or 21% of the world's population.
2. **Qur'an (Koran):** Sacred text believed to be the word of God (Allah) as revealed to Muhammad.
3. **Hijab:** traditional Arabic word for dress or headscarves or veils worn by Islamic women who wish to maintain the modesty valued in the Qur'an.
4. **Basortu and Tesettur:** Two Turkish terms currently used to refer to head scarves.



Questions for Discussion and Possible Research Projects

What is the definition of modern? What does it mean to be secular? Is the Western model the only model for modernity? Why and how do people maintain traditions in the 21st century?

How might the point of view of this segment be different if reported by a Turkish or European reporter? What about a reporter from neighboring Iran?

What role does Turkey play in current US foreign policy decisions in the Middle East? Why would the Foreign Minister state that the government is “serious about keeping Turkey on a modern, US-friendly track”? If the US does not restrict head scarves, why would Turkey?

Why should US students be interested in the plight of young women in Turkey?

What might be the response if US students were told they could not come to class wearing a Christian cross, a Star of David, a Sikh turban, or any other personal religious symbol?

What are the guidelines for dress and head coverings for students at your school? How are they followed and who enforces them? Is there any dissent?

How are civil rights defined for students? Should they be different than those of adults?

How are the limits of tolerance for customs different than your own after September 11th around the world? Are the fears expressed in the segment justified? Why or why not?

What role does gender play in this story? How many women have been elected to Turkey's government in legislative positions or executive positions? What similar restrictions are placed on males in the society?

Resources about Islam and women's religious rights:

1. **“The Veil and Veiling” in Islam:**
<http://www.skidmore.edu/academics/arthistory/ah369/index.html>
2. **Islam:** <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/mideast/cuvlm/Islam.html>
3. **Georgetown University: Programs and Research:**
<http://explore.georgetown.edu/news/?ID=13459>,
<http://ccas.georgetown.edu/research.cfm>,
<http://press.georgetown.edu/detail.html?id=9781589010734>
4. **Jack Straw: government official in the UK:**
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/5411954.stm
5. **Ayaan Hirsi Ali: outspoken Muslim in the Netherlands:**
<http://www.spiegel.de/international/spiegel/0,1518,399263,00.html>
6. **Orhan Pamuk: Turkish Nobel Laureate and author of the novel Snow:**
<http://www.orhanpamuk.net/biography.htm>,
http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/p/orhan_pamuk/index.html?query=EUROPEAN%20UNION&field=org&match=exact,
<http://www.spiegel.de/international/0,1518,396786,00.html>
7. **Mubaraka: a US Muslim and guest on the Oprah Show:**
http://www2.oprah.com/tows/slide/200701/20070125/slide_20070125_284_106.jhtml

Themes for Analysis:

- **Political Identity and Cultural Identity:** Discuss ways in which these can cause conflict or cooperation within a nation.
- **Change and Continuity over Time:** What historical forces cause cultural expectations to change or remain constant throughout many centuries?
- **Gender Patterns and Structure:** How are the actions of young women influenced by the wishes of other family members?

General Websites for Teacher /Student Reference:

1. **Islam and Islamic Studies Resources:** <http://godlas.myweb.uga.edu/>
2. **Internet Islamic History Sourcebook:**
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/islam/islamsbook.html>
3. **Islam:** <http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/ISLAM/ISLAM.HTM>
4. **USC-MSA Compendium of Muslim Texts:** <http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/>
5. **EU-Turkey Relations:** <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/eu-turkey-relations/article-129678>

6. US-Turkey Relations:

<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav020404.shtml>,
<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2006/68577.htm>



Headscarves: Mosque and State in Turkey

Language Arts/Media Literacy Lesson Plan

This lesson has been designed to support *the.News* video “Headscarves: Mosque and State in Turkey.” The video can be found online at http://www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/theglobe/story.php?id=3049&package_id=632.

Lesson Author: Julie Weiss, Ph.D

Subject Area: Language Arts/Media Literacy

Key Concept: When a news story presents a topic that is controversial, consider the sources presented and why they would hold that point of view.

Key Vocabulary:

1. **Hijab**
2. **Secular**
3. **Koran**
4. **Islam**
5. **Tolerance**
6. **Fundamentalism**

Background:

Journalist Simon Marks illustrates the debate over Turkish teens wearing head scarves by interviewing individuals with different opinions. Based on who is speaking, we understand the problem, how it affects the Turkish people, and the international implications (the piece can be found at: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/theglobe/story.php?id=3049&package_id=632)

Goals:

1. To see how news stories can frame debates.
2. To distinguish the various dialogues, visuals, and locations presented in a news story and understand how these elements reflect different points of view about the debate.
3. To think about what is missing from a debate.

Learning Objectives (McRel Standards)

Language Arts Standard 9: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

Level III Benchmarks 1, 2, 3

Level IV Benchmarks 1, 2, 3, 11

Language Arts Standard 10: Understands the characteristics and components of the media

Level III Benchmarks 2, 5

Level IV Benchmarks 2, 10, 12

FRAMING A DEBATE ABOUT HEADSCARVES

A good news report presents different sides of a controversial issue. As a keen observer of news, you can learn a lot by looking closely at how the news story sets up the debate. That includes asking questions like: How do reporters define the different sides of the controversy? Would someone else define the sides differently? Who are the people who express the different points of view? And, equally important but easy to miss, which people and points of view are **not** included? Asking about what's missing is one of the most important things you can learn to do as a citizen news consumer.

STUDENT ACTIVITY #1

Let's look closely at this report on headscarves in Turkey (the piece can be found at: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/theglobe/story.php?id=3049&package_id=632).

1. State in a sentence or two what controversy is being reported?
2. Debates take shape around the opinions of the people interviewed. They're the ones who express the different opinions. Who is interviewed in the story?

To find out, fill in this chart. It identifies the six people reporter Simon Marks interviewed on camera for this story. Filling in the chart will help you see patterns among the interviewees.

Interviewee	Person's Job/Group	Favors Headscarves?	Opposed?	Why?
Hava Donmez				
Alporslan Acepkesh				
Derya Mercan				
Recip Tayipp Erdogan				
Bedri Baykam				
Abdullah Gul				

- a) Look first at the numbers:
 - How many of the six people favor the right to wear headscarves in public?
 - How many of the six people oppose the wearing of headscarves in public?
 - What do the numbers say about who is included in the story?

 - b) Look next at the credibility of the people:
 - Who are they? What are their jobs, or what group do they represent?
 - Which of them do you find most convincing? Why?
 - Which do you find least convincing? Why?

 - c) Who's missing? There are, of course, other people Simon could have interviewed. In fact, he probably did interview other people, but they didn't make it into the final version of the report. The fact that other people were not included doesn't mean there's anything wrong with the story. It just means that there's only so much you can fit into the time allotted in the news program. Still, as an analytical viewer, it's a good practice to ask yourself who else could have been included? List five to 10 other kinds of people who might have something to say about the headscarf debate. For example, Turkish religious leaders might have a range of viewpoints.
3. The news report also includes Simon's words. What role does the reporter play in shaping the debate? Look at the script for Headscarves. What words does Simon use to describe the controversy? Which of those words suggest a two-sided debate? Which of them describe a more complex controversy, one with many points of view?

 4. Now that you've looked more closely at the people involved in the debate, look again at the controversy. Surely the many different kinds of people you've thought of might have different points of view about the headscarf controversy. In other words, there might be more than two points of view on the subject. Do you feel that there were more than two points of view in this story about the headscarves? Who else in Turkish society might see this whole situation differently? What information might they provide?

STUDENT ACTIVITY #2: Wrap-Up

Write an essay to synthesize what you've learned in this lesson. To do so, write one paragraph for each of the items below.

1. Explain how this news story frames the headscarf debate. Identify the controversy. Explain the different sides of the controversy.
2. Explain the visual techniques the reporter has used to inform viewers about the controversy. Include information about who is interviewed.
3. Suggest a different way the headscarf debate could be framed. Include who might be interviewed for a different version of the debate.
4. Summarize what you have learned about how a news story sets up debate about a controversial issue.