Islamophobia

What Teachers Can Do To Reduce It in the Classroom

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Introduction

The year 2017 marked the sixteenth year anniversary of the destruction of the World Trade Center, the worst domestic attack in U.S. history. The global environment has been very different since September 11, 2001. Prior to that date, terms such as terrorism, terroristic actions, and Islamophobia were not commonly heard. The world environment has changed greatly since then. Now people all over the world are continually on edge. They do not feel safe, either physically or mentally. Most of us are struggling to come to terms with these changes and trying to understand the causes.

The attacks on September 11, 2001 can be seen as the beginning of a series of incidents that have changed our views of mundane events. Risk seems to touch everything, whether we are traveling by air, going to a concert or a movie theatre, participating in or watching world famous marathons, or gathering for an official holiday party. "Terrorism" has become an everyday word because we too often hear about or see acts of terrorism taking place somewhere in the world. Thanks to cable news and social media, we are kept well informed with the continuing coverage of such incidents. The unintended consequences of this 24/7 media coverage have contributed to the growth of Islamophobia among the general public.

When considering a dictionary definition of Islamophobia, the *Oxford Dictionary* states it as a "dislike of, or prejudice against, Islam or Muslims, especially as a political force." However, scholars have yet to agree with any single definition of

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the term. For example, the Runnymede Trust (1997), a British race relations NGO (Non-Government Organization), described Islamophobia as "a useful shorthand way of referring to dread or hatred of Islam—and, therefore, a fear or dislike of all, or most, Muslims." Gottschalk and Greenberg (2008) called the term "a social anxiety toward Islam and Muslim cultures." Similarly, Shryock (2010) defined the term as a generalized fear of Islam and Muslims.

Islamophobia is not only focused on Islam or Muslims, but also on anyone "who may appear to be Muslim" (Ramarajan & Runell, 2007). Regardless of how we define the term Islamophobia, one thing we know for sure is that its impact on society, including the impact on U.S. schools and classrooms, is palpable.

Spread of Islamophobia

In our age of digital technology, it does not take long for news and information to be disseminated. The methods of dissemination are abundant (e.g. cable news channels, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter), and this information is available at the click of a button. Yet the major concern is not about the methods of delivery but rather how the information is represented and discussed in the media.

Let us reflect on how the media has analyzed the killings of innocent people here in the U.S. since September 11th. Take for example, the stabbing at a mall in St. Cloud, Minnesota (September 17, 2016), the mass killings in several locations, including the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida (June 16, 2016), the mass shooting in San Bernardino, California (December 2, 2015), the Fort Hood shooting in Texas (November 5, 2009), as well as many other similar incidents. In all of these cases the media not only identified the individuals who perpetrated these crimes, but also associated these individuals with their religious faith.

In addition, the media identified these

incidents as "terrorism." There is no doubt that these actions were definitely "terroristic" in nature. However, it is important to see if these incidents fit the definition of the word "terrorism." According to the *Oxford Dictionary* terrorism is "the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians." Based on this definition, the above mentioned incidents appear to be correctly identified as "terrorism."

Unfortunately, but also interestingly, there have been other mass shootings including the killing of three Muslim students in North Carolina (February 11, 2015), the church shooting in South Carolina (June 17, 2015), the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Connecticut (December 14, 2012), the Aurora Movie Theater shooting in Colorado (July 12, 2012), and the Sikh temple shooting in Wisconsin (August 12, 2012). These violent acts have not been identified as acts of "terrorism." The media did not identify the religion of these perpetrators, but instead labeled them as being "mentally disturbed or deranged" individuals. Each of these incidents clearly falls under the definition of terrorism mentioned earlier, but neither the media nor the experts who analyzed these mass killings referred to these actions as "terrorism" or identified the religion of these perpetrators.

Such biased classification of various incidents by the news media certainly has fueled the growth of Islamophobia among the general public and this media bias has not gone unnoticed by some journalists. For example, a Senior Media Editor of the *Huffington Post*, Gabriel Arana, eloquently highlights this bias in an article titled "Islamophobic Media Coverage Is Out of Control. It Needs To Stop." Arana (2015) cited CNN on the issue of the Paris attack where the CNN anchor John Vause asked the following question to a French anti-Islamophobia activist: "Why is it that no one within the Muslim community there in France knew what these guys were

up to?" The very nature of the question seemed to assume that the more than four million Muslims in France should know or be aware what this particular individual was thinking or might do!

In February 2011, Think Progress, an American political news outlet, released a study that described how Fox News manipulates language to insinuate that Muslims should be feared. The study showed that from November 2010 to January 2011, Fox News disproportionately used terms that reflected a negative view of Muslims. According to this study, Fox News used the phrases "radical Islam" or "extremist Islam" one hundred and seven times in the span of three months compared to CNN's seventy eight times and MSNBC's twenty four times.

The above examples from CNN, Fox News, and MSNBC indicate how the media encourages and perpetuates the growth of Islamophobia in their audiences. British sociologist Chris Allen (2010) also noted that news outlets are largely responsible for spreading prejudice about Islam and Muslims to their listeners.

However, Allen noted that media is not solely responsible for circulating Islamophobia. In addition to the media outlets, many politicians also spread Islamophobia when they speak to their supporters. The current U.S. president, during his campaign, was heard "calling for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States…" This statement was quickly cheered by his audience.

When news media, politicians, and radio talk-show hosts spread misinformation about Islam and Muslims, it perpetuates false beliefs among the general population that all Muslims support acts of violence and terrorism. On the contrary, the majority of the 1.6 billion Muslims in the world not only oppose, but vehemently condemn these heinous acts of killing innocent people (whether it is a mass killing or the killing of a single individual). Unfortunately, the media rarely publishes such condemnations by Muslims, leaving the general population with the idea that Muslims support or encourage such acts, since they appear to be silent against such crimes.

The above mentioned CNN anchor John Vause, in that same interview, asked the question, "Why aren't Muslims condemning this?" Arana pointed out, in his article, that if the CNN anchor had simply taken the time to search the internet using the term "Muslims condemn Paris attacks," he would have found hundreds of instances where Muslims from all around the world criticized the Paris incident as well as many other similar incidents. A similar search of the social media campaign #notinmyname shows how forcefully Muslim communities are condemning all sorts of terrorism. However, the mainstream media coverage is consistently lacking when it comes to reporting or analyzing incidents from other places around the world, where people with distorted ideologies happen to violently kill innocent Muslims.

Impact of Islamophobia in the Classroom

What, then, is the impact of this growing Islamophobia on schools and classrooms? There is ample evidence that classrooms in the United States have become more diverse than ever before. This diversity cuts across all categories of classification – race, ethnicity, gender, lifestyle, social class, religion, and much more. At earlier periods in U.S. history, several of these aspects of diversity have been focal points of contention, such as the advocacy for equality and citizenship by Native Americans, the struggle for civil rights as well as voting rights for African Americans and Latinos, the campaign for voting rights and equal pay for women, and seeking marriage equality by gay and lesbian groups. Now, in this contemporary era, it is the fight against Islamophobia.

The spread of Islamophobia within the general population has quickly reached our schools and classrooms. Some but certainly not all of the incidents of Islamophobia in schools have also been reported by the media. Since the 9/11 incident, Muslim students have faced harassment and have been bullied by fellow classmates, teachers, and administrators.

Harassments from classmates of Muslim students are somewhat understandable because students from elementary to high school are mostly immature and act based on what they see in the media or what they may have heard from their peers or family members. However, what is more concerning is the harassment committed by teachers and administrators (Joshi, 2007). School is supposed to be a safe place for all students regardless of their ethnicity, religion, life style, or creed.

For instance, in Dallas, Texas, a Muslim boy created a homemade clock and brought it to school to show his teacher; but because of his religion the teacher automatically thought the clock was a bomb, reported him to the authorities, and had him arrested (Winergar, 2016). Another 13-year old middle school student in Gwinnett County, Georgia, was asked by a teacher if she was carrying a bomb in her backpack. Harassment of Muslim students has also extended to the type of garments worn by some.

The Washington Post published a story about a popular teacher at Wootton High School in Montgomery, Maryland. During class, this particular teacher described a reckless driver he encountered by mentioning a Muslim student in class who wears a hijab (head scarf used by many Muslim women and young girls), indicating that the reckless driver was also wearing one. These comments from the teacher put the Muslim student under unnecessary attention of her classmates. One of the classmates even made a chilling remark about those who wear the hijab: "You never know what they have under there" (George, 2016).

In another incident in Vandalia, Ohio, a seventh grader threatened to kill a sixth grade Muslim student and called this Muslim a "son of ISIS," referring to the terrorist group in the Middle East (Blad, 2016). Similarly in New York City, a sixth grade Muslim student was nicknamed ISIS by her fellow classmates (Winegar, 2016).

These are just a few examples of harassment faced by Muslim students at the hands of both fellow classmates and school officials across the country. There are many more stories that can be found in newspaper articles and professional journals. A non-profit organization, the CAIR (the Council on American-Islamic Relations) conducted a survey of middle and high school students in California in 2014 (Blad, 2016). The survey showed that 52% of respondents reported being "verbally insulted or abused." In addition, 29% of female Muslim students who wore a hijab reported offensive touching or pulling of their head coverings by classmates.

The impact of Islamophobia in schools and classroom must not be ignored. The effects of it not only impede the social and emotional development of the Muslim students but clearly will also impede their academic progress. Unless educators are able to address and eliminate Islamophobia in the classroom, it will also negatively impact the non-Muslim students in their development as good citizens of a pluralistic society, since many of them will continue to harbor ill feelings about Muslims and Islam in general through misinformation.

Addressing Islamophobia

To eradicate Islamophobia from the

classroom, teachers must provide their students with a better understanding of Islam and Muslims. Such understanding can be delivered through three approaches which were initially mentioned in an earlier article entitled, "Understanding Islam in the U.S. Classroom" (Hossain, 2013). Those three approaches are: (1) The Concept of Contributions; (2) The Concept of Diversity; and (3) The Concept of Similarities.

In light of the current environment of Islamophobia, a fourth approach, (4) The Concept of the Historical Roots of Muslims in America, needs to be added. This approach should be the first to be implemented by teachers at all levels. Students from Kindergarten through high school need to understand that the existence of Muslims in America is not a new phenomenon. The roots of Muslims in America run deep and it is a history that speaks for itself.

The following are brief descriptions of each of the four approaches. Teachers are encouraged to modify these as they see fit in their classrooms based on the grade levels they are teaching. The following suggested strategies are intended to provide teachers with some ways to facilitate the diminution of Islamophobia in their classrooms.

The Concept of the Historical Roots of Muslims in America

This approach is particularly suitable for middle and high school students. They are typically required to learn about American history. Teachers can develop a unit that focuses on the historical roots of Muslims in America as part of the curriculum. For example, recent news about the plan to admit Syrian refugees, or the objections to such a plan, or the arrival of neighbors or classroom peers who came to the United States after the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, can give a false impression that the existence of Muslims in the United States is something new.

On the contrary, the presence of Muslims in America has existed from soon after the arrival of Columbus in the New World (Mufti, 2004). Many of the African slaves who were brought to America during the slave trade were practicing Muslims (Johnson, 2012; Curtis IV, 2012). Some estimate that more than ten percent of these slaves were Muslims (Smith, 2012). Most of these Muslims came from West Africa. Many of these Muslim slaves were forced to convert to Christianity (Austin, 1997) and therefore lost their original religious identity as well as their freedom.

However, a revival of Muslim identity among African Americans has occurred since the time of the slave trade. The first such revival came through the leadership of a man named Noble Drew Ali who was born as Timothy Drew in 1886 (Smith, 2012). According to Smith, Drew Ali preached that "salvation was possible only if Negroes ignored the identity forced on them by White Americans and found their true belonging with Asiatic Muslims." A further revival came through the emergence of the Nation of Islam in the 1920s with the involvement of well-known African Americans like Malcolm X, Wallace Fard, Elijah Mohammad, and Louis Farrakhan.

In addition to the African-American Muslims, a large number of Muslim immigrants from different countries around the world, just like the European Christians before them, have come to America in search of a better life. These immigrants came in several waves. The first wave of such immigrants came in the late 19th century through the early 20th century, mostly from Syria and Lebanon, which were then part of the Ottoman Empire (Curtis, 2009). While many of these immigrants were Christians, perhaps ten percent were Muslim. Many of these Muslims first settled in Ross, North Dakota, and built the first mosque (place of worship for Muslims) in the U.S. there in 1929.

Around the same time, another group of Muslims from the Middle East settled outside of Detroit in the city of Dearborn, Michigan. These immigrants were attracted to the employment opportunities at the Ford Motor Company (Curtis, 2009). Today, Dearborn is known to be the home of the largest Middle Eastern population in the U.S.. During the first wave of Muslim immigration, a group of Europeans with Islamic faith also arrived in the United States. These Muslims came mostly from Bosnia and Albania.

Another wave of Muslim immigration to the Unites States occurred following passage of the 1965 immigration bill which repealed the quota system on immigrants (Smith, 2012). The passage of the 1965 bill paved the way for Muslims from outside the Middle East to immigrate to the U.S. Muslims then came from many countries like, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia, and other regions of the world. Most of these immigrants settled in urban areas like, New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

This review indicates the richness of Muslim history in the United States, which is, unfortunately, not known to most people and is definitely unfamiliar among school-aged children. The history of the United States is clearly not complete without an accurate historical understanding of the existence of all religious groups that make up the population. A plethora of books and articles have been written on this topic and are readily available online, as well as in various libraries. High school and middle school teachers can develop research assignments for their respective students to explore the history of Muslims in the United States. These research efforts can help students come to realize that Muslims have always been a part and parcel of the American fabric and that Muslims share the same values and dreams as the rest of their classmates.

The Concept of Contributions

This approach is most suitable for upper elementary grade levels where students are learning the basic concepts of mathematics and science. In addition to teaching the traditional curriculum of math and science, teachers can also address the background history of where these concepts were developed and who did the developing. In this way middle and high school math and science teachers can identify the contributions of Muslim scientists and mathematicians related to the specific topics they are teaching.

Also during the elementary school years, when children learn about the number system, one of the important concepts to learn is the use of "zero." When there is no quantifiable number to represent, "zero" is used as a place value. However, students at this level as well as the middle and high school levels have no idea where this concept of "zero" came from. Since the origin of "zero" is not usually mentioned or discussed by teachers, students generally perceive that the concept of "zero" is another invention of the Western world, which is not true.

The concept of "zero" was in fact introduced by Muslim mathematicians from the ancient Middle East. Ali Abdullah Al-Daffa' (1977), in a book titled *The Muslim Contribution to Mathematics*, pointed out that "this specific invention marks one of the significant turning points in the development of mathematics."

The contributions of Muslims in other areas of mathematics are also well documented (Al-Hazza & Lucking, 2015; Joseph, 2011; Al-Daffa', 1977) yet not well known. Developments in the areas of algebra, geometry, and trigonometry can be traced to Muslim scholars. For example, in trigonometry, the functions of 'sine,' 'cosine,' and

'tangent' were developed by Muslim scholars "with Mohammed Ibn Jabir Batanni being considered 'the father' in this field of mathematics" (Al-Daffa', 1977). Another mathematician, Habash al-Hasib, in the 9th century developed the first table for tangents and cotangents (Joseph, 2011). He also developed the first sine and tangent table at intervals of one degree, accurate to five decimals. The contributions of many other Muslim mathematicians between the 8th and the 13th centuries (known as the Islamic Golden Age) are also well documented (Joseph, 2011; Al-Daffa, 1977).

Similar to the area of mathematics, Muslim scholars have contributed in many disciplines of science. A plethora of literature is available on these contributions (Khan, S. A., 2016; Al-Hazza & Lucking, 2015; Mohamed, 2008; Falagas, Zarkadoulia, & Samonis, 2006; Reichert, 1993). Muslim scholars' contributions to the body of scientific knowledge include the fields of Earth Science, Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, and Medicine.

The origin of the word "Chemistry" comes from the Arabic word "Alchemy." Abu Musa Jabir Ibn Hayyam is known to be the "Father of Arabic Chemistry." In the Western world "he is credited with discovering several chemical compounds, scientifically describing calcinations and reduction, and working on methods for evaporation, sublimations, and crystallization" (Reichert, 1993). Ibn Al-Haytham was the first scientist who reported that vision occurs in the brain rather than the eyes in his *Book of Optics* (Khan, 2015; Mohamed, 2008). He is also known as the founder of experimental psychology (Mohamed, 2008). Another famous pioneer in experimental psychology was Al-Buruni, who described empirically the concept of reaction time (Mohamed, 2008).

Ibn Sina and Al-Razi Ibn Sina were two of the most prominent physicians well known in the Western Europe during the Golden Age. Ibn Sina's famous book *The Canon of Medicine* was used widely in European medical schools (Beshore, 1998). Like Ibn Sina, Al-Razi was also known for his famous books *Kitab al Shifa (Book of Healing)* and *Treatise on Smallpox and Measles* (Faruqi, 2006). Al-Razi's contribution to mental health was highlighted in Faruqi's article where she noted,

> He established separate wards in hospitals for the mentally ill, thereby creating the means for clinical observations of these diseases. In his studies, Al-Razi also included ideas involving human behavior. He was a pioneer in the field of psychology,

thus debunking the notions of demons and witchcraft associated with these diseases.

The scholarship of Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Zakariyya ar-Razi (Rhazes) made the distinction between smallpox and measles, as well as introduced the use of mercurial ointments and hot moist compresses in surgery. The above descriptions are just a few examples of Muslim contributions in the field of medicine. Many other such contributions in medicine and other fields of science can be found in the literature.

Over the last several centuries we have seen tremendous advancement in the fields of mathematics and science. The Islamic Golden Age contributed significantly to such advancement. One of the greatest inventions in the field of technology is undoubtedly the computer. The computer is a binary system which means that it only understands "zero" and "one." All computer programs are written using the combinations of "zero" and "one." This could not have been possible if Muslims during the Golden Age had not introduced the concept of "zero" to the Western world.

Many school age children from elementary through high school, and many adults in the general population as well, do not realize the impact of "zero" in the advancement of computer technology. It is the responsibility of teachers to highlight this significant contribution by Muslims when they teach scientific concepts in their classrooms.

The use of the Contributions Approach can help students of all ages understand that Muslims are present in all professions and include scientists and mathematicians. Not all discoveries in math and science have come from non-Muslim Europeans. Reichert (1993) highlighted this with an appropriate article titled "Not all of those giants were European."

The Concept of Diversity

Muslims are typically seen by many as a homogeneous group. On the contrary, Muslims are just as diverse as the rest of the U.S. population. According to Pew Research Center (2016), there are an estimated 3.3 million Muslims in America who make up about 1% of the United States population. The Pew Research Center also estimates this population will double by 2050. This U.S. Muslim population is a part of the world's 1.6 billion Muslims.

Many in the United States believe that all Muslims are from the Middle East or are of Arab origin. The recent news about Syrian refugees did not help to overcome

this misconception. In reality, only 20% of the world's 1.6 billion Muslims are originally from the Middle East. In other words, 80% of the world's Muslim population live outside the Middle East.

The country with the largest Muslim population in the world is Indonesia, which is in South East Asia, and the language spoken by Indonesian Muslims is not Arabic. According to the Pew Research Center, in 2009 Bangladesh and Pakistan were the top two countries from where Muslims immigrated to the United States. The languages, customs, traditions, and cultures of these countries are very different, with the primary commonality being the religion of Islam.

The diversity among Muslims has been captured succinctly by Findley (2001) in the statement "Islam is a universal, multicultural, and multiracial religion." Skerry (2011) made a similar observation, noting the "enormous diversity of this small (but growing) population. America is home to the most varied agglomeration of Muslims on the planet." These statements reflect the fact that in terms of ethnicity, regions, and customs, Muslims vary greatly in cultural traditions including language, food, clothing, and social etiquettes.

The Pew Research Center has identified 77 source countries for Muslims in America (Skerry, 2011). Diversity among Muslims occurs not only in these demographic indicators but also in worldviews, even when Muslims come from the same geographic location. Again, Skerry's observation illuminates this point: "Egyptian-American do not see the world the same way Moroccan-American do, nor do they have the same concerns about American policy."

Engaging this Concept of Diversity approach would be most suitable for elementary classrooms when children learn about their communities and their ancestral backgrounds. This is especially the case when students talk about their ancestral backgrounds, religions, and places of origin. If teachers have any Muslim students in the classroom, teachers can help non-Muslim students see that Muslims, like many of their classmates, come from different and diverse places.

Teachers can also discuss the two major groups in the Islamic faith: Sunni and Shia. This would also help students realize that Muslims have multiple denominations just like the Christians have in their faith (e.g.. Protestant, Catholic, Lutheran etc). However, discussions about these two groups might be more appropriate at the Middle and High School Levels.

The Concept of Similarities

Everyone is aware that the United States is a country of diverse religions. The majority of the population identifies as Christian, estimated at about 78% (Pew Research Center, 2014), with 48% of Christians identifying as Protestant and 23% as Catholic (Gollnick & Chinn, 2017). The number of people in the U.S. population comprising two other major religions—Islam and Judaism—are about 1% and 1.8% respectively (Pew Research Center, 2014). Given that the origins of these three major religions are intertwined, there are similarities in the principles of these three faiths which can be used by teachers to expand student understanding and help combat Islamophobia.

An examination of similarities among these three religions provides a great opportunity for teachers to help students overcome many of the misconceptions that they may have about religions other than their own. This can be especially helpful in seeking to eradicate Islamophobia among non-Muslim students. Adolescents are usually more receptive to commonalities than differences (Hossain, 2013), therefore, this approach should be suitable for all levels with appropriate adjustments according to students' grade levels.

All three of these major religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—share an Abrahamic heritage. Therefore, there exist many similarities in their basic principles. So instead of addressing the differences, teachers can begin the conversation about these three religions by stressing the similarities. The importance of comprehending such similarities was highlighted by Esposito (1997):

> Real understanding can begin when we, the majority, come to realize that, despite our differences, there is a common Judaeo-Christian-Islamic heritage shared by all the children of Abraham, and that Islam is not a "foreign" or Middle Eastern religion any more than Judaism and Christianity.

A literature search will result in many resources in which teachers can find information on these similarities. A few of the similarities are discussed below to provide some examples.

One of the most significant similarities among these three religions is that they are each Monotheistic, which means that all three religions believe in one God. However, the followers of each religion may call "this God" a different name. A possible exercise for students at any grade level would be researching the differences names used to depict God in these various religions.

Another similarity between these three major religions is the exercise of prayer, which again offers students the opportunity to research and identify approaches used in each relgion. In Islam, for example, all followers are required to say five prayers a day. Prior to each prayer, followers wait for the "Call to Prayer" from the Mosque—the place of worship. The first phrase of this "Call to Prayer" is "Allahu Akbar" which in Arabic known as the "Takbir" meaning "God is greater than anything" (Ryan, 2015). Ryan pointed out that similar liturgy can be found in the Hebrew Bible: "You are great, O Lord God; for there is no one like you, and there is no God besides you" (2 Sm 7:22). This knowledge can be used to compare to the role of prayer in each of the three religions.

From these and other similarities among Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, it is clear that there are many commonalities among the followers of these three major religions, which leads one to wonder why there exists so much intolerance among the believers. These similarities can be used as a springboard to overcome Islamophobia and other forms of intolerance. Teachers at all levels should take this as a teaching moment to help their students to realize that Islam is not a strange religion but rather a mainstream one, like Christianity and Judaism.

Conclusion

Prejudice appears, unfortunately, to be an inherent characteristic of the human race. Most people will have prejudicial views at one time or another about a person, or an event, or a belief system, based on their own social, cultural, or religious history and perspective. Prejudice typically stems from lack of knowledge of the values, beliefs, and history of other individuals and groups.

Islamophobia is an example of such prejudice. Many non-Muslims harbor prejudice or suffer from Islamophobia due to having no knowledge or limited knowledge about Islam, or general misinformation about it. Teachers at all levels can play a big role in filling these knowledge gaps by providing accurate information about the history and nature of Islam, both in the U.S. and worldwide. Unless we succeed in educating students during their school years, it will be very difficult to change the perceptions of negativity about any particular religion later in adulthood.

Strategies mentioned in this article can be a stepping stone for teachers at all levels to begin the conversation about Islam and Muslims with their students. Tapping into the local Muslim community can also be an excellent resource from which teachers can gain relevant information. Community leaders who are knowledgeable about their respective religions can be invited to visit and speak to classes.

Given the current spread of misinformation and fear, it is vital that teachers from pre-school to college address the issue of Islamophobia. While the strategies mentioned here may not completely eradicate Islamophobia from society and from the classroom, they will certainly reduce it significantly because students will become equipped with accurate information about Islam.

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