

6c: Roundtable on Applying the Film's Message to Our Times

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Overview and Purpose of the Lesson:

Lesson 6a utilized the content of the film to explore the social and political conditions under which cultural pluralism and religious tolerance can thrive, and the forces that undermine it. This lesson builds on understandings developed through viewing the film, and guides students toward the critical and historical thinking skill of drawing contemporary parallels while respecting the distance between our own time and social conditions and those in the past. The lesson concludes with an activity related to applying civically responsible and creative behaviors on the part of the students toward fostering tolerance and responding to intolerance. It can be used as a current events civics lesson as well, and as an assessment activity for the documentary film.

Performance Objectives:

- Build upon the ideas presented in *Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain*
- Articulate positive and creative forms of civic behavior that foster tolerance, and discuss what individuals and groups can do to encourage it.
- Identify behavior that should be avoided because it is intolerant and discuss what appropriate measures individuals and groups can take to counter it.
- Identify current events, policies and actions by individuals and groups in the nation and the world that form examples of fostering tolerance or creating conditions for intolerance.

Materials Needed:

Roundtable:

- Completed graphic organizers from Activity 6a, *conditions that help foster tolerance*, and *conditions that contribute to intolerance*
- Lesson Set-up aids for the Teacher from Lesson 6a.
- Student Handout 6c: What would you do if...?

Extension:

- Classroom or hallway bulletin board, butcher paper mural, or poster boards
- Markers, writing paper, construction paper, display materials

Time:

Roundtable: About 15-20 minutes for roundtable discussion in groups as a concluding post-viewing activity.

Extension: Approx. 1-2 class periods for class round table discussion, plus homework, library, or computer lab assignment to clip news items and articles related to tolerant or intolerant public or civic behavior observed by

Procedure for Roundtable:

1. This roundtable discussion can be a whole-class activity, or students can be divided into groups of 4 or 5 students each, with a table leader selected. The teacher should go over the *Lesson Set-up aids for the Teacher* from Lesson 6a as a foundation for leading the class discussion, or it can be given to table leaders ahead of time if class is to be divided into groups.
2. All students should take a few minutes to go over their completed graphic organizers from Lesson 6a, “*conditions that help foster tolerance,*” and “*conditions that contribute to intolerance.*”
3. Brainstorm scenarios of intolerance in our own times that seem parallel or equivalent to the actions shown in the film. Against whom are they directed, and what do you think the motives are behind such acts?
4. Write the events or acts in brief form in the rows on the left column of the chart (Handout 6c).
5. In the rows on the right column opposite the event or act, write a brief description of what you might do to challenge the intolerant behavior in a civically responsible manner.
6. Brainstorm scenarios of tolerance in our own times that can foster good relations, civility, and a sense of security among various groups in society.
7. In each row on the left column of the chart (Handout 6c), write an action that you could carry out in conjunction with school, work environments and society at large in order to foster tolerance.
8. Write a brief summary of how you think a person might respond after witnessing or being affected by your expression of tolerance.

Procedure for Extension:

1. After completing the roundtable activity, have students—as homework or in the library or computer lab—search news reports in a variety of sources and media to identify acts that foster intolerance, whether they are related to individual actions or speech, local, state, or national policies by a government, or laws. Such actions have the effect of limiting, denigrating certain groups, and making them feel insecure, and fostering poor civic relations. For each one of these news clips the student finds, they must locate another one that illustrates tolerant or inclusive behavior, or behavior toward certain groups that fosters a sense of security and positive social relations.
2. After students have presented a few of their clippings, have a roundtable discussion about the actions and outcomes that result or could result from the actions, speech, policies or laws described in the articles or media clips.
3. Make a bulletin board or butcher paper mural that displays the media clippings in a manner that expresses for viewers what are the “inputs” and “outcomes” of tolerant and intolerant behavior in modern society. Develop a graphic layout using colors, lettering and symbols or designs that conveys the message to the viewer effectively.

Student Handout 6c:

What would you do if someone acts intolerant...?

Action witnessed	Your response

What could you do to foster tolerance...?

Action you could take	Likely response