



## Teacher/Viewing Guide

### Arab American Stories – Episode 101

Rabih Dow

V.P. of Rehabilitation Services/Artist

Grade Level 9-12

#### Episode Overview:

Rabih Dow was born in Lebanon. He came to the United States through the help of the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee after losing his sight and use of his hand when he was a boy. He had been injured by an explosion during his homeland's civil war, an explosion which also killed his older brother. He now works as the Director of Rehabilitation Services at the Carroll Center for the Blind. This episode challenges students to think about disabilities, perspective, and perceptions. Students should consider the stereotypes and preconceived ideas about what persons with various disabilities—including blindness—can and cannot do. In addition, students should think about the impact that war has on individuals and families.

#### Previewing Questions:

1. What is blindness? What are some things that a person who is blind cannot do?
2. What are the consequences of civil war on families and individuals?
3. How do you feel about the statement that "nothing is impossible"?

#### Vocabulary :

1. Perception: The awareness of the elements of an environment through sensation or another method.
2. Perspective: The technique of depicting volumes and spatial relationships.
3. Vision Rehabilitation: The process of treatment and education that helps individuals who are visually disabled attain maximum function, a sense of well-being, a personally satisfying level of independence, and optimum quality of life.
4. Orientation: The relative physical position or direction of something.
5. Mobility: The ability to move about freely and easily. The ability to move between different levels in society or employment.

#### Lesson Overview/Review:

After viewing the segment on Rabih Dow, students should be prepared to discuss their own perceptions about people who are blind or have other differences. Students should discuss if they previously thought that a person who is blind could paint, fence, or do other things typically associated with the seeing. Students should also discuss the total impact of war on individuals and families.

#### Post-viewing Class discussion: After viewing the segment, consider the following questions:

1. What are some stereotypes that you had about the blind and their limitations?
2. How might perceived limitations prevent a person from reaching their dreams?
3. Rabih Dow talks about the 'full impact of war', including losing his sight, losing his brother, and his family losing their business. What are some of the underreported consequences of war?
4. What is the United States' role in helping victims of civil war in other nations?



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**Journal option:** Have students take a moment to write a reflection on the quote mentioned in the episode by Walt Disney, "If you can dream it, you can do it." Ask students to respond to that quote and think about a time that they challenged themselves to go beyond their perceived limits to achieve a dream.

**Activity:** Rabih Dow teaches the blind to push past their boundaries through painting and fencing. Help your students engage their other senses by creating a blind contour painting. Students will use simple white paper and a pencil and should be blindfolded. Select an object, such as a flower. Have students carefully explore the object through touch. Have them carefully feel the bends, shape and contours. Then challenge students to draw the object based on their understanding of the shapes through touch. Once they have completed the drawing have students talk about what they were "seeing" in their minds as they drew. Ask students to discuss how their perceptions may have changed when focusing on senses other than sight. Ask students to write a reflection based on what they learned from the video segment and their own personal experience with painting without sight. Students will present their reflections and painting in class for further discussion.

**Explore online:** Use the following resources to allow your students to further explore the topic and the Arab American community.

1. <http://www.adc.org/>
2. <http://www.aapd.com/>
3. <http://www.massviolence.org/The-historiography-and-the-memory-of-the-Lebanese-civil-war>

**Interdisciplinary Options** Science: Perception and Senses  
Art: Painting without use of sight sense (i.e. blind contour drawing)

### Common Core Alignment

- RI 7 Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.
- SL2 Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.
- SL5 Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.