



## Teacher/Viewing Guide

Sergeant Mike Abdeen and Deputy Sherif Morsi – Episode 108  
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

**Grade Level: 9-12**

### Episode Overview:

Sergeant Mike Abdeen and Deputy Sherif Morsi of the LA County Sheriff's Department run the Department's Muslim Community Affairs Unit, the most successful community cultural awareness program in the country. Developed in 2006 by Sergeant Abdeen, at the request of Sheriff Leroy Baca, the program has been replicated across the country and internationally, even by the Department of Homeland Security. The program has two components: 1. A community outreach side in which the police work directly with the local community, visiting Mosques and Muslim community centers to foster communication, build trust, and teach the community how law enforcement can help them. 2. A training program within the police department where active officers and new recruits attend sessions focused on police understanding of Islam and Muslim diversity, as well as respect for traditions and customs, in order to help them be more sensitive and effective police officers. Community outreach has always been a part of a successful police program. However, following the events of 9/11 and the London bombings of 2005, it was clear that a program specifically addressing the Muslim community, both Arab and non-Arab, was vital to curbing unrest and negative influences surrounding their communities, as well as protect them. Sergeant Abdeen, a Palestinian-American, and Deputy Morsi, who is Egyptian-American, have found that their background as Muslim Americans helps promote understanding with community members. Their operation has been very successful in helping non-Muslim law enforcement agents close the gaps of understanding between themselves and those that they have sworn to protect.

### Previewing Questions:

1. What role do the police play in a community?
2. What are the challenges faced by police officers? Why must they understand different cultures in their community?
3. Why is it important that the police and the community work together and communicate?

### Vocabulary:

1. Community Policing: The system of allocating police officers to particular areas so that they become familiar with the local inhabitants.
2. Unrest: A state of dissatisfaction, disturbance, and agitation in a group of people, typically involving public demonstrations or disorder.
3. Department of Homeland Security: The federal agency that administers all matters relating to protecting the country from terrorist attacks and other disasters..

### Lesson Overview/Review:

After viewing the segment, students should be prepared to brainstorm what they think the benefits of community policing are. This may be recorded on the class board or in individual student's notebooks.



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**Journal Option:** Have students take a moment to consider how they view police in their community and if this attitude helps the community at large.

**Post Viewing Class Discussion:** Conduct a short discussion to synthesize the information students gained from viewing the video segment. Some possible topics:

1. What did you learn about the challenges faced by police officers?
2. Why did Sergeant Abdeen start the community outreach? What were the goals of the program?
3. What is the status of their Cultural Awareness program now?
4. How would your community benefit from such a program?

**Activity:** Divide the class into groups of no more than four students. Each group will work out a plan for how the school's administration and teachers can connect better with the student population as a whole. Each group's plan should address the following:

1. The problems between the students and faculty.
2. Specific plan for addressing at least one of the problems above. Include individuals involved, timing, who will facilitate, and goals.
3. Techniques to be used by both sides in order to come to an agreement.

Groups should record their plan on large poster paper. Once groups have completed the task, they will share their plans with the rest of the class. Classmates will be encouraged to ask questions and advise if they think that the plan is something that would be successful. If they don't think the plan would work, have classmates brainstorm changes to the plan necessary to make the school community collaboration a success.

Teachers – extend this activity beyond the classroom by having students actually put their plans into action!

**Assessment Ideas:** Students will be graded on:

1. Participation in class discussion.
2. Participation in group work.
3. Final group project and presentation.

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

1. Council on American-Islamic Relations: <http://cair.org>
2. Arab American Museum: <http://arabamericanmuseum.org/>
3. Arab American Antidiscrimination Committee: <http://adc.org/>
4. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Muslim Community Affairs Unit:  
[www.lasdhq.org/sites/muslimoutreach\\_new/](http://www.lasdhq.org/sites/muslimoutreach_new/)

**Interdisciplinary Options:** Psychology; Sociology; Career Planning

In this episode, students will see how dedicated individuals can help foster understanding and tolerance between different, sometimes oppositional groups.



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### Common Core Alignment:

- RI7: 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
- W3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- SL1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- SL2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- SL4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.