



Teacher/Viewing Guide

Ferial Masry – Episode 110

Teacher, Politician

Grade Level: 9-12

Episode Overview:

Ferial Masry grew up in the heart of Saudi Arabia – in the holy city of Mecca. As a child, despite living in a strict society, she experienced great freedom. But, as she grew older, she saw that there were many barriers to opportunity for women in Saudi Arabia. So, as a young adult, Ms. Masry left Saudi Arabia in search of education and freedom.

Today Ms. Masry is a high school American history and government teacher in Reseda, California. She says that “teaching is reaching” and that the most important thing for her is to reach her students empower them. She gives them the knowledge of American laws and constitutional rights and then shows them how they can use the power they have to drive the direction of their community and country.

Ms. Masry certainly practices what she preaches. She became an American citizen, and has run for California State Assembly four times, becoming the first woman of Saudi Arabian descent to run for democratic office anywhere in the world. Each time she was uncertain of her chances, but she put her whole heart into the endeavor. She considers it a great honor to run for public office, and her efforts have paved the way for others and earned her the respect of community leaders. She is enjoying freedoms she could never have had back in Saudi Arabia. Her hard work and dedication has earned her great respect as a role model for other immigrants.

She has also been recognized in Saudi Arabia, where she has been invited back to speak about her experiences running for public office. Students should take note of the unique perspective offered by Ms. Masry and her journey from immigrant to American, as well as the depth of her commitment to being a US citizen. She has dedicated her life to teaching her students, and her own children, how to be positive representatives of America.

Previewing Questions:

1. How can we protect our freedom in America?
2. Why does a government have the responsibility to limit freedoms to some extent?
3. How are individual rights different in Arab countries compared to the US?

Vocabulary:

1. Legislative Assembly: Persons who make, amend, or repeal laws.
2. Civil Rights: The rights to full legal, social, and economic equality.
3. Empower: To promote the self-actualization or influence of others.
4. Western country: A country whose origins stem from the Greco-Roman tradition, often referring to democratic countries of America and Europe and their territories.
5. Naturalization: Legal process by which a citizen of one country becomes a citizen of another.

Lesson Overview/Review:

After viewing the segment on Ferial Masry, students should be prepared to brainstorm what qualities are necessary to be a great teacher and how influential (good or bad) a teacher can be on a young person. This can be done as a group activity, having students or the teacher record ideas on a board, or in their own journals.



Teacher/Viewing Guide

Journal Option: Have students take a moment to write about something that they would love to do but are afraid they will not be good at. What would it take to motivate them to try?

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

1. Why might immigrants to America appreciate the freedoms here more than people who were born here?
2. Why has Ms. Masry run for office four times (and lost)?
3. What evidence do you see in the segment that shows that Ms. Masry is indeed a positive role model?
4. Why does Ms. Masry become so emotional when speaking of her naturalization?

Activity: Women's Rights Around the World: Students will choose two countries, one western and one non-western, and research the status of women in each. Teacher will approve the country pairs—do not use America. For each country, students will create a comparison chart covering the following:

1. Name, location of country
2. Primary religion
3. Government style
4. Role of women – political, social, economic
5. Freedoms of women versus men
6. Relevant history
7. Any personal stories, accounts illustrating #4 and #5 above

Students will then write a short compare/contrast paper recounting what they have found in their research. Students should also think about living in each country that they researched and write about what would be good and bad about living in each. The goal is to present the facts of women's rights around the globe and then bring the information to a personal level of understanding.

*Note: The "Arab American Afterwords" segment with Mounira Charrad at the end of this episode focuses on Arab women involved in Arab Spring protests and may also be useful for this activity.

Assessment Ideas: Students will be graded on:

1. Participation in class discussion.
2. Quality of research.
3. Compare/contrast chart.
4. Final essay (including proper citation of sources.)

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

1. Arab Cultural Center: <http://arabculturalcenter.org/>
2. Arab American Museum: <http://arabamericanmuseum.org/>
3. Arab American Antidiscrimination Committee: <http://adc.org/>
4. United Nations, Division for the Advancement of Women: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

Interdisciplinary Options: Government; Political Science; Psychology; Sociology; Career Education

In this episode students will see how a teacher uses her own personal experiences and values to empower others.



Teacher/Viewing Guide

Common Core Alignment:

- RI6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.
- 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
- W1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- W2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- W3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- W4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- W7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- W8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
- W9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- SL2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.