



Teacher/Viewing Guide

Kareem and Nawar Shora – Episode 110

Anti-Discrimination, Civil Rights Lawyers

Grade Level: 9-12

Episode Overview:

Brothers Kareem and Nawar Shora spent their early years in Syria and moved to West Virginia when they were in middle school. Their transition to American life was anything but smooth—at school they were bullied because of their looks, religion, and culture, but gradually they started to make friends. The brothers remember their mother saying that their mission was to take the best of their Arab culture and what they learned from American culture and mix it together to become the finest people they could be. They seemed to have taken this advice to heart. Nawar was the first sophomore at his high school to become student body president. Kareem later took up leadership positions in college. Their experiences with student government influenced their career goals as they went to law school. Nawar focused on working in technology and Kareem focused on immigration and international human rights law. Kareem ultimately found work as National Director of the Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee. His work with the ADC was centered on policy and media, fighting stereotypes and negative representation of Arab Americans. After 9/11, both brothers found a new calling because they felt attacked on two fronts – as Americans and as Arab Americans who were targets of anti-terrorist hostility. Both brothers worked with the ADC to help individuals preserve their rights against discrimination, hate crimes, and governmental policies which violated their civil rights. They have now transitioned into working with the Department of Homeland Security. The brothers have learned over their lives that if something is wrong and oppressive, that all American citizens have the right and the power to create positive change.

Previewing Questions:

1. Immediately following the 9/11 attacks, how did life change for Arab Americans?
2. What makes someone a target for bullying? Are these valid reasons to be bullied?
3. Why are anti-discrimination groups important?

Vocabulary:

1. Discrimination: The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people.
2. Assimilation: People of different backgrounds coming to see themselves as part of a larger national family.
3. Civil Liberties: One's freedom to exercise one's rights as guaranteed under the laws of a country.
4. Xenophobia: Intense or irrational dislike or fear of people from other countries.

Lesson Overview/Review:

After viewing the segment on the Shora brothers, students should be prepared to talk about the civil liberties guaranteed to all citizens of the US. They should think of examples of when those rights have been violated. This can be done as a group activity, having students or the teacher record ideas on a board, or in their own journals.

Journal Option: Have students take a moment to write about a time when they felt they were being discriminated against and why the discrimination occurred.

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

Teacher/Viewing Guide

1. What do the experiences of Nawar and Kareem tell you about their character?
2. Explain Nawar's response to the 9/11 attacks when he said, "Please God, don't let it be one of us."
3. How do you feel about the death and bomb threats against Arab Americans following 9/11?
4. What positive change in the life of the Shora brothers came as a result of the 9/11 attacks?

Activity: For this activity, students will research civil rights court cases, answer evaluative questions, and present their findings in a presentation format of their choice (example: slideshow, iPrezi, poster, web page.) Students should work in heterogeneous groups which foster collaboration. The first step is to find a suitable court case, research it, and answer the questions. Students should be given a list of reliable research websites (some examples of which are below) and reminded to properly cite the sources they use on their final presentation.

Required research questions:

1. Who is the plaintiff? The defendant?
2. What is the basis of the case? What is the problem?
3. What are the facts in the case (brief)?
4. Why was this case brought to the Court?
5. Has this case already been heard in a lower court? If so, what was the ruling?
6. What was the final ruling in the case and what is the rationale for the ruling?
7. Do you agree or disagree with the court's ruling? Explain.

After the research is complete, students will work in their groups to prepare the final presentation of the information they found. Groups will then show their findings to the class. The goal of this activity is for the presenters to convince the audience of their opinion in the case, which may be counter to the actual ruling. Encourage students that it is acceptable to argue against the ruling that was made. Teachers may or may not have the whole class provide feedback on each presentation but should provoke the class to ask questions of each group.

Assessment Ideas: Students will be graded on:

1. Participation in class discussion.
2. Participation in group work.
3. Group research answers.
4. Final presentation.

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. Department of Homeland Security: <http://www.dhs.gov/>
5. American Civil Liberties Union: <http://www.aclu.org/> - can be used to search for current court cases.

Interdisciplinary Options: Government; Psychology; Sociology; Career Education

In this episode, students will see how two immigrant brothers overcame bullying and discrimination to become successful attorneys and eventually work for the US government.



Teacher/Viewing Guide

Common Core Alignment:

- RI1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- 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.
- RI8: Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., The Federalist papers, presidential addresses)
- 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.
- W6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
- 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.