



## Teacher/Viewing Guide

### Arab American Stories – Episode 113

#### Abdul Ace Montaser Radio Personality

**Grade Level** 9-12

**Episode Overview:**

In this episode, we meet Abdul “Ace” Montaser. Abdul is a DJ for a major Detroit top 40 radio station, 95.5 WKQI-FM. Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, Abdul is a Muslim Arab American whose parents came to America from Yemen. Ace’s family has always been of service – several of his cousins and brothers have been in the Armed forces and the New York Police Department. He shares his story of joining the United States Marines after graduating from high school in 2000, and how that decision affected his family. In particular, he speaks about how his decision impacted him and his family when the terrorist attacks of September 11 occurred just one year after he had joined the service. Abdul speaks about suddenly finding himself fighting a dangerous war in Iraq. He recalls how he made a promise to himself that if he made it home alive he would pursue his love of music and strive for a career on the radio.

After returning from Iraq, Abdul “Ace” Montaser went back to college and began working for his college radio station. Through perseverance and good luck—including meeting rapper 50 Cent—he has succeeded at his goal of a career in radio. He is now known in Detroit as “Ace on the radio.” He has his own show and is also pursuing a recording career.

**Previewing Questions:**

1. What are reasons that people choose to sign up for military service?
2. What are some benefits of military service? What are some of the drawbacks?
3. What role does goal-setting play in reaching your dreams?

**Vocabulary:**

1. Radio Personality: Also known as a radio host or a radio presenter, a person with an on-air position in radio broadcasting.
2. Iraq War: A protracted military conflict in Iraq that began in 2003 with an attack by a coalition of forces led by the United States and resulted in the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime.
3. 9/11: September 11, 2001; the date of the terrorist attack on America when two hijacked airliners were flown into the World Trade Center in New York City, another crashed in Pennsylvania, and a fourth was flown into the Pentagon.

**Lesson Overview/Review:** After viewing the segment on Abdul “Ace” Montaser, students should be prepared to discuss the concept of achieving goals, as well as the benefits and price of military service.

**Post-viewing Class discussion:**

After viewing the segment, consider the following questions:

1. Why did “Ace” choose to go to the military?
2. Abdul states that military service was not what his family wanted for him. Why do you think his family doubted his decision to join the military?
3. Abdul talks about his memories of serving in Iraq. He stated that “if he made it out alive” he would fulfill his dreams. How do you think participating in war affects soldiers during and after their service?
4. Abdul talks about being pulled out of college three times due to military redeployment. What affect do you think redeployment has on soldiers?



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**Journal option:** Ask students to respond to the following writing prompt:

Do you know anyone who has served in the military or is considering joining the military? Have you considered it yourself? What are the costs and benefits of military service?

**Activity:** Abdul speaks about his frustrations over redeployment during college and being “pulled out of college” three times. A large reason for redeployment of soldiers is that the United States military is currently based on voluntary service. The past ten years of war have led many people to re-examine our voluntary military service and reconsider the role of the draft. However, there has been strong historic opposition to the military draft. In this activity, students will research the history of military service, the draft, the end to compulsory service, and the current debate over our voluntary military service program. Explain to students that some people argue that we would be less likely to engage in conflicts if military service was mandatory. Others argue that no one should be forced to serve and that our current system of voluntary service works well. Students will debate this argument through research and an in-class oral debate.

For this activity, students should be placed in groups of four to six and given one side of the issue to represent (either pro-compulsory draft or pro-voluntary military service.) Students should research the history of United States military service policies and the prior and current debates for each side. Students should work to find not only opinions but also clear facts, figures, and data to support their arguments. Students will work in groups but each student should conduct research, share findings with their group, and write an individual position paper. Students will then present their findings during an in-class debate. Students may also create a digital presentation of their findings using slides in order to provide visuals of their data and information.

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

1. <http://www.aaiusa.org/blog/entry/arab-americans-in-the-us-army-staff-sergeant-muna-nur/>
2. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=120185651>
3. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HcfU7x4Jmx0>

**Interdisciplinary Options** Social Science, World History, English

### Common Core Alignment

- RI 7 Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.
- W6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.
- W7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.