Objectives

* Students will be able to analyze myths and misconceptions about Muslims.
* Students will be able to understand the meaning of Islamophobia and its effects.
* Students will be able to create an anti-Islamophobia campaign to display in school.

**Enduring Understandings:**

* Stereotypes and fears targeted at Muslims is called Islamophobia.
* Islamophobia has a negative effect on Muslims, on people of other religious groups and on society at large.
* Countering Islamophobia requires a deep understanding of its roots and causes.

Essential Questions

* What is Islamophobia?
* How does Islamophobia negatively affect people?
* How can I combat Islamophobia and create a more inclusive community?

Materials

* Internet access
* “[Debunking Misconceptions About Muslims and Islam](http://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/tt_debunking_misconceptions_0.pdf)” handout
* “[Hijab in Europe](http://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/HijabInEurope_IslamophobiaLesson_handout.pdf)” handout

**Vocabulary:**

**discrimination** [ dih-**skrim**-*uh*-ney-shuh n ] (*noun*) the treatment of a person or a group of people as less worthy than other people, often because of traits such as race, gender, religion, ethnicity, ability or sexual orientation

**hijab** [ hi-**jahb**] (*noun*) a traditional scarf worn by Muslim women to cover the hair and neck and sometimes the face

**Islam** [ **is**-lahm ] (*noun*) the religious faith of Muslims, based on the words and religious system founded by the prophet Muhammad and taught by a spiritual text called the Koran

**Islamophobia** [ is-lahm-uh-**foe**-bee-ah ] (*noun*) hatred or fear of Muslims or of their politics or culture

**Muslim** [ **muhz**-lim ] (*adjective*) relating to the religion, law or civilization of Islam  
(*noun*) a person who follows Islam

**oppression** [ uh-**presh**-uh n ] (*noun*) the exercise of authority or power in a burdensome, cruel or unjust manner

**stereotype** [ **ster**-ee-uh-tahyp ] (*noun*) An oversimplified or biased characterization of a group or a “typical” individual member of a group

**Alignment to Common Core State Standards/College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards:**[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/CCRA/R/7), [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.9](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/CCRA/W/9), [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/CCRA/SL/2/), [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.5](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/CCRA/SL/5)

**Suggested Procedure:**

**Activity Time:** 60 minutes

Classroom Activity

1. Begin your work by discussing stereotypes. As a class, define the term. Then identify some stereotypes that you sometimes experience because you are a student. For example, do people sometimes make assumptions about you based on your age or the school you attend? What is wrong about those assumptions? Generalize from your discussion by answering the question: What makes stereotypes destructive?
2. Divide the class into small groups to explore the handout [Debunking Misconceptions About Muslims](http://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/tt_debunking_misconceptions_0.pdf) and Islam and the online sidebar [Busting Common Myths About Islam](https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/spring-2017/busting-common-myths-about-islam). Have a group member read aloud the first misconception. Have each group member take a turn answering these questions: Have you heard this stereotype before? Did you believe it? Then have the same group member read the explanation on the handout of what makes the misconception inaccurate. Consider the other stereotypes one at a time, following the same procedure. When your group has debunked all four stereotypes, formulate a group statement that completes this prompt: *In this activity about stereotypes, we learned \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Have each group share its statement.*
3. Ask students, “What happens when stereotypes and prejudice go unchecked?” Students may describe the negative consequences without explicitly using the terms *discrimination*, *oppression* and *Islamophobia*. Introduce both the terms and the definitions in the discussion.

External Resources

* [CBS News Islamophobia video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lVpMmV4KiFk&t=18s)