

UNIT GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

NORA LESTER MURAD

IDA IN THE  
MIDDLE

## OVERVIEW

*Ida in the Middle* by Nora Lester Murad (Crocodile Books, 2022) follows the experiences of an 8th grade student named Ida as she seeks to understand her identity as a Palestinian-American. It highlights her individual struggle to belong, while also introducing readers to the oppression of Palestinians, especially those facing home demolitions by the Israeli government.

This unit guide serves as a comprehensive resource for educators using *Ida in the Middle* as a novel in Grades 6 through 9 English, Social Studies or other courses, or who wish to include stand-alone lessons about Palestine without teaching the full book. The guide is divided into nine lesson sequences that include pre-, during, and post-reading activity guides and student materials (provided as editable google docs). Each lesson sequence focuses on a particular theme, such as: Identity, Belonging, Generational Memory and Resistance. Each lesson sequence requires 1-3 days of inquiry. The unit guide culminates with a student-centered Social Action Research assessment where students will address a particular issue of interest within their school community. The guide itself includes enough detail and supplementary materials to support teachers in day-to-day lessons, but should be modified to meet the needs of different age groups and individual student needs within the classroom.

Lessons and activities in this guide are rooted in anti-racist and anti-bias practices, which require centering the lived experiences and perspectives of Palestinians. Students will explore the experiences of Palestinians through the lens of Palestinian organizers, artists, filmmakers, etc. While making these connections with Palestinians in the curriculum, students will also reflect on their own identities and the interconnectedness of various groups' experiences with oppression and struggles for justice. Ultimately, students will end this unit understanding the importance of community over individualism in the pursuit of liberation. In order to create a classroom environment that is conducive to these goals, educators must reflect on their own biases and preconceived notions, help students discern the consequences of existing misconceptions, and lead with an openness to further learning.

## RATIONALE

*Ida in the Middle* is an entry point for teachers and students to cultivate fuller understandings of Palestine and Palestinian people. Through an exploration of identity, resistance, joy, and community, this unit guide is an opportunity to combat the dearth of culturally-responsive curricula on Palestine.

If Palestine is included in curriculum at all, it often is taught through the lens of an equal "both sides" debate that discounts the power imbalance of Israeli occupation and the financial, military and political support of the United States government. Further, existing curricula often addresses Palestine exclusively in relation to the Holocaust, without any mention of the Nakba or its aftermath. This lens ultimately justifies the ongoing colonization of Palestine and maintains a barrier to the humanization of the Palestinians. This unit guide, however, aims to not only lift that barrier, but also to support students in being able to discern the consequences of incomplete history.

Although, it is disappointing that we still live in a time where teaching about Palestine needs to be accompanied by so much justification, the historical context, primary sources, and explanation of standards embedded in this curriculum serve as a support for teachers using this novel in their classrooms.

"I'M NOT AFRAID OF  
STORMS, FOR I AM  
LEARNING HOW TO SAIL  
MY SHIP."

-Louisa May Alcott

# UNIT GUIDE

## CONTENTS

Overview . . . . .	1	5: The Impact of Community Organizing . . . . .	20
Rationale . . . . .	1	5.1 Pre-Reading: Realities of the Occupation . . . . .	21
Author's Note . . . . .	3	5.2 During Reading: Questions . . . . .	21
About the creators of this guide . . . . .	4	5.3 Post-Reading: Making Connections . . . . .	21
Standards . . . . .	5	6: Revisiting Identity and Belonging . . . . .	22
Common Core ELA standards . . . . .	5	6.1 Pre-Reading: Palestinian Belonging in the Diaspora . . . . .	23
Social Studies-Specific Standards . . . . .	6	6.2 During Reading: Questions . . . . .	23
Additional Standards and Resources . . . . .	6	6.3 Post-Reading: Belonging in the American Dream . . . . .	23
Misconceptions about Palestine . . . . .	7	7: Voices of Resistance in the Struggle for Liberation . . . . .	24
Historical Context and Pre-Work (Required) . . . . .	9	7.1 Pre-Reading: Forms of Resistance . . . . .	24
Pre-Work: Teachers . . . . .	9	7.2 During Reading: Questions . . . . .	25
Pre-Work: Students . . . . .	10	7.3 Post-Reading: Resistance in Community . . . . .	25
Lesson Sequences		8: The Impact of Daily Colonial Violence . . . . .	26
1: Identity and Belonging . . . . .	11	8.1 Pre-Reading: Violence in Apartheid . . . . .	26
1.1 Pre-Reading: What's in a Name? . . . . .	12	8.2 During Reading: Annotations . . . . .	27
1.2 During Reading: Questions . . . . .	12	8.3 Post-Reading: Violence as a Tool of Oppression . . . . .	27
1.3 Post-Reading: Challenging Stereotypes . . . . .	12	9: Understanding the Reality of Resiliency . . . . .	28
2: Resistance Through Joy and Community . . . . .	13	9.1 Pre-Reading: School Mapping . . . . .	28
2.1 Pre-Reading: Centering Palestinian Joy . . . . .	14	9.2 During Reading: Questions . . . . .	29
2.2 During Reading: Questions . . . . .	14	9.3 Post-Reading: Social Action Research	
2.3 Post-Reading: Classroom Community Tree . . . . .	14	Brainstorming . . . . .	29
3: Generational Memory . . . . .	16	Unit Assessment: Social Action Research . . . . .	30
3.1 Pre-Reading: Surviving the Nakba . . . . .	16		
3.2 During Reading: Questions . . . . .	17		
3.3 Post-Reading: Visualizing Restriction of Movement . . . . .	17		
4: The Ongoing Nakba . . . . .	18		
4.1 Pre-Reading: <i>Ida in the Middle</i> Collective Playlist . . . . .	19		
4.2 During Reading: Questions . . . . .	19		
4.3 Post-Reading: Connecting to Resistance in Al-Quds (Jerusalem) . . . . .	19		



IDA IN THE  
MIDDLE

## AUTHOR'S NOTE



I am thrilled beyond words that Luma Hasan and Sana Ben Nacef of [Teach for Liberation](#) agreed to take on the task of writing this curriculum. Many teachers want to incorporate Palestine into their classes, and they need and deserve support to do it effectively. This curriculum is intended to help teachers bring high quality inquiry about Palestine into their classes, something I believe both Palestinian and non-Palestinian students require to be able to develop into principled and empowered global citizens.

This curriculum pushes forward a humanized view of Palestinians and a more complex understanding of history. While there are various points of view about what's happening today in Palestine, the book is an unapologetically Palestinian story, and the curriculum offers a rare and valuable opportunity to explore Palestinians' own perspectives of their experience, without having to justify or balance them with others' views. The pedagogical approach of the curriculum is anti-racist, centering Palestinians as the legitimate narrators of their own experience through critical inquiry and radical love.

While *Ida in the Middle* is a Palestinian story, I, the author, am not Palestinian. I am Jewish and I grew up in California. My life-long commitment to equality deepened while studying in the Middle East for two years. I married into a Palestinian family and became the mother of three amazing Palestinian girls who we raised in Jerusalem and Ramallah under Israeli military occupation. *Ida in the Middle* is a work of fiction, but everything that happens in the book happened to us or people we know – and it continues to happen. The curriculum that Luma and Sana have developed adds to Ida's story by bringing in historical and cultural context giving students opportunities to learn about critical topics such as joy and resilience through Palestinian experiences.

My hope is that those who delve into these topics come to realize that framing Palestinian rights as dangerous for Jews is based on a false premise that supremacy

offers more security than equality. Unfortunately, there are interest groups advancing the idea that uplifting Palestinian humanity is anti-Jewish, most recently through the institutionalization of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) re-definition of antisemitism. It's my opinion that the IHRA is a cynical attempt at censorship, like others we are seeing across the U.S., that *creates an environment of fear in which learning can't happen*. More information about the IHRA and the tactics of weaponizing antisemitism against Palestinians can be found on the book's website: [www.IdaInTheMiddle.com](http://www.IdaInTheMiddle.com).

As Cierra Kaler-Jones and Jesse Hagopian say in their [discussion guide](#), *Teaching for Black Lives*, educators "...have a duty and responsibility to stand with and beside our students to learn together, to organize, to resist, and dream the world we deserve into being." What an honor it is, then, to teach about Palestine!

—Nora Lester Murad, March 2023

### Acknowledgements

My deep appreciation to Luma and Sana whose teaching brilliance and love for Palestine shine through this curriculum. My thanks to friends and colleagues who contributed financial support and critical input into the curriculum: Amani Barakat, Rima Hassouneh, Cyrisse Jaffee, Nazik Kazimi, Yasmeen Kazimi, Richard Lockwood, Maysanne Murad, Mona Mustafa, Alison Noyes, Marcia Okun, Abeer Ramadan-Shinnawi, Steven Virgone, Interlink Publishing, and all the creators of the excellent resources used in the curriculum. Any errors are my sole responsibility. Please write to me at [nora@noralestermurad.com](mailto:nora@noralestermurad.com) if you see something that needs fixing in future iterations of this curriculum or to share feedback about your experiences teaching about Palestine.

## ABOUT THE CREATORS OF THIS GUIDE

Co-Founders of Teach for Liberation, Luma Hasan and Sana Ben Nacef developed this curriculum as a component of their own passion project!



Luma Hasan is a Palestinian activist and organizer who has worked as an educator since 2015. Through curriculum development, professional development design, and the creation of student-centered classrooms spaces, she aims to support building an anti-racist, anti-bias, and community-oriented education future.

Sana Ben Nacef has worked in education since 2012. Her work both in teaching (6-12 Social Studies, ESL, and Humanities) and curriculum development is based on the centering of liberation, decolonization, and the dismantling of white supremacist systems to encourage radical shifts in the way we think about ourselves in community, locally, and globally.



To learn more about our work or collaborate with us: [www.teachforliberation.com](http://www.teachforliberation.com).

# STANDARDS

*Ida in the Middle* and this unit guide is most successfully utilized in schools when it is grounded in standards. Whether we like it or not, standards-based learning ensures support from school boards, administration and colleagues.

## Common Core ELA standards

### Reading and Language (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6-9)

- **Standard 1:** Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **Standard 2:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of a text.
- **Standard 3:** Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).
- **Standard 6:** Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

### Speaking and Listening (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6-9)

- **Standard 1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- **Standard 2:** Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

### Literacy (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6-9)

- **Standard 1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking; retain and further develop language skills learned in previous grades.
- **Standard 2:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing
- **Standard 4:** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade-level reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
- **Standard 5:** Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- **Standard 6:** Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; independently research words and gather vocabulary knowledge.

## Social Studies-Specific Standards

Social Studies Standards vary from state to state, therefore we have provided some examples of standards and how both Palestine and *Ida in the Middle* can be used to address these standards.

### **Example 1: 6.1.12.HistorySE.15.a (New Jersey)**

*Explain how and why religious tensions, historic differences, and a western dependence on oil in the Middle East have led to international conflicts and analyze the effectiveness of United States policy and actions in bringing peaceful resolutions to the region.*

Standards like this can create an incomplete picture of the occupation of Palestine by centering religious and historic differences rather than colonialism and racism. Utilizing *Ida in the Middle* to help students visualize the experiences of Palestinians under occupation will allow them to develop more comprehensive conclusions to whether or not U.S. policy or Israeli policy have the ability to lead peaceful/equitable solutions for Palestinians.

### **Example 2: 6.2.12.CivicsPI.6.a (New Jersey)**

*Use historic case studies or a current event to assess the effectiveness of multinational organizations in attempting to solve global issues. (New Jersey) 6.2.12.CivicsHR.6.a: Evaluate the effectiveness of responses by governments and international organizations to tensions resulting from ethnic, territorial, religious, and/or nationalist differences.*

Broad standards like these can be used as an opening to incorporate Palestine as a case study both through historical context and current event analysis. In order to effectively assess the involvement of outside organizations/governments, students need to learn about Palestinian history. The continued illegality of home demolitions can then be examined as a violation of human rights wherein students can evaluate the effectiveness of attempted resolution as well as the role of dehumanization, oppression, and power.

**"REMEMBER, CURRICULUM STANDARDS  
ARE A FLOOR, NOT A CEILING."**

-Susan Douglass, Ph.D., K-14 Education Outreach Director,  
Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University

## Additional Standards and Resources

1. [All Middle East and North African-related Social Studies Standards](#)
2. [NCSS Curriculum Standards](#)
3. [C3 Standards](#)
4. [Anti-Racist Education Standards](#)



## MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT PALESTINE

according to Marc Lamont Hill

It is important for educators to work through their own potential misconceptions prior to teaching this unit. As with any unit, adequate reflection must be spent recognizing any biases that may have been internalized as a consequence of dehumanizing propaganda regarding Palestine and Palestinians.

Below you will find a reprint of [7 Myths About The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict](#) as explained by Professor Marc Lamont Hill, author of *Except for Palestine: The Limits of Progressive Progress*.

### 1. These people have been fighting forever.

This is one of the most often repeated and inaccurate comments on the conflict. The truth is that Arabs and Jews have not been fighting forever. Rather, it can be dated to the end of the 19th century or, more acutely, the beginning of the [post-World War I British Mandatory period](#). In addition to being historically inaccurate, such a claim frames the issue as something unsolvable and intractable, in addition to reinforcing longstanding ideas of Arabs as barbaric and inherently violent.

“Palestinians want peace. But justice is always a precondition of peace.”

### 2. This is a religious conflict.

This, too, is inaccurate. Palestinians are not a religious monolith. While [majority Muslim](#), the Palestinian community has always included Muslims, Christians and Jews. Also, prior to Zionist settlement at the end of the Ottoman Empire, religious diversity was a feature of historic Palestine. Even after Jewish immigration began, Zionist settlers were [mainly secular](#), as were the indigenous Palestinians.

But this isn't just a question of historical accuracy. By framing the [conflict as religious](#), we are encouraged to see it as an internecine squabble between two equally earnest parties who are in possession of competing religious texts or scriptural interpretations. Simply put, this is not about religion. It's about land theft, expulsion and [ethnic cleansing](#) by foreign settlers to indigenous land.

### 3. It's very complicated.

In a certain way, the issue is indeed complicated. After more than a century of conflict, there is definitely a lot of nuance surrounding various truth claims, policies and solutions. Too often, however, the claim that [“it's complicated”](#) functions as an excuse to sidestep a very simple reality: this is about the 70-year struggle of a people who have been expelled, murdered, robbed, imprisoned and occupied. While there's certainly a need to engage the finer points of the conflict, we can never lose sight of this basic and very uncomplicated point.



#### 4. Palestinians keep turning down fair deals.

This argument wrongly presumes that any deal that includes the sharing of stolen land with the victims of said theft could be fair. But even in relative and pragmatic terms, this is not true. Think back to the wildly disproportionate [U.N. partition agreement](#) of 1947 that allotted 55 percent of the land to the Jewish population even though there only comprised 33 percent of the population and owned 7 percent of the land. Or look to the [2008 negotiations](#) between Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert that did not allow for a contiguous Palestinian territory nor a real resolution to the [struggle over Jerusalem](#). Palestinians have never been offered a deal that allows for a truly independent, fertile, sufficient and secure state.

#### 5. Palestinians don't want peace.

This argument plays on [Orientalist narratives of Arabs](#) as innately violent, irrational, pre-modern and undeserving of Western democracy or diplomacy. The argument also castigates Palestinians for resisting their brutal occupation and repression. Occupied people have a legal and moral right to defend themselves. To ask them not to resist is to ask them to die quietly. Palestinians want peace. But justice is always a precondition of peace.

#### 6. Israel has a right to exist!

This claim is a product of U.S. and Israeli hasbara, a term for [propaganda](#). First, this argument is only rhetorically deployed in relation to Israel, as opposed to Palestine or virtually any other nation-states. After all, no one routinely demands that Israel and its advocates declare Palestine's "right to exist" as an abstract idea, physical space or independent nation. More importantly, however, the claim obscures a more fundamental truth: **no country has a right to exist, only people do**. By naturalizing the idea that nation-states have a "[right to exist](#)," we undermine our ability to offer a moral critique of Israel's (or any settler-colony's) origin story.

### "No country has a right to exist, only people do."

If a country has a natural right to exist, there is less room to challenge the means by which that country obtains land, interacts with indigenous populations or engages in international and domestic law. After all, it had a right to exist, right? The "right to exist" argument also reifies the nation-state, erasing its relatively new emergence as a political imaginary construct. In other words, the idea of nations and nationalism is relatively new. (This is why the whole "[there was never a country called Palestine](#)" argument is both ahistorical and dishonest). The argument also limits our ability to imagine the world on different terms and different political formations, including the reconstitution of historic Palestine (or contemporary Israel) as a single democracy for ALL citizens, regardless of race, class, gender or religion.

#### 7. You're anti-Semitic!

Anti-Semitism is a very real phenomenon around the globe. And we must be vigilant about addressing and destroying anti-Semitism wherever it emerges. Too often, however, this claim is leveled against [anyone who critiques](#) or protests the practices of the Israeli nation-state.

Under these conditions, allegations of anti-Semitism become nothing more than a reflexive retort, intended to shut down the conversation. More importantly, this is a key part of Zionist strategy: [equating Judaism with Zionism](#) and the Israeli state itself. Under this logic, to critique Israel is to critique Judaism. Such arguments also ignore the fact that the [Jewish tradition is one that covets justice and fairness](#), and its principles are in fundamental [opposition with the Israeli government's actions](#).

Hopefully, we can move beyond these arguments and engage in deeper and more nuanced conversations about creating peace, justice and freedom in the region for the benefit of all.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND PRE-WORK (REQUIRED)

For this unit, there is required pre-work for both teachers and students to understand the historical context of Palestine before beginning *Ida in the Middle* and/or teaching about Palestine.

### Vocabulary:

**Settler Colonialism:** a type of colonialism in which the indigenous peoples of a colonized region are displaced by settlers who permanently form a society there; the erasure of a people for a new people to occupy their land.

**Occupation:** The act of social and political control of land, movement, and resistance by a military force. In this curriculum, readers will often encounter the phrase “*Israeli occupation*” referring to the Israeli military control of Palestine.

**Apartheid:** the implementation and maintenance of a system of legalized racial, ethnic, and/or religious segregation in which one group is deprived of political and civil rights.

**Nakba:** Nakba is an Arabic word meaning “catastrophe” and refers to Israel’s ongoing colonization of historic Palestine, its exiling of Palestinians and making them into refugees, its dispossession of Palestinian property, its destruction of Palestinian cities, towns, and villages, and its attempt to erase the existence of the Palestinian people from their homeland in and since 1948

**Zionism:** an ideology that originated in the 1890s, this settler colonial movement calls for a national Jewish homeland while also supporting the ethnic cleansing and movement of Arab Palestinians; this ideology is based in a belief that Jewish people are destined for that land (*Note to teacher: if applicable for student understanding, Zionist ideology can be compared to U.S. beliefs in Manifest Destiny as justification for colonizing Indigenous land from the East coast to the West coast*)

### Audio Pronunciations

[Listen to the pronunciation of the Arabic names in \*Ida in the Middle\*](#)

[Listen to the pronunciation of the Arabic Terminology \(pages 213-219\) in \*Ida in the Middle\*](#)

## Pre-Work: Teachers

1. Because some of this unit contains violent, emotionally heavy, or complicated texts, we recommend reading the book as a class so it can be annotated and unpacked with care using trauma-informed/healing-centered practices. For Professional Development on trauma-informed teaching, please see this training by the Institute for Anti-Racist Education: [How Trauma Manifests in the Classroom](#) (1:29:50). Teachers should consider how the material may impact students differently depending on their personal experience and how they are positioned in relation to the issues discussed.
2. [A Brief Historical Background](#): As you read the historical background, be sure to consider where the gaps or misconceptions in your own knowledge are and reflect on where they may have originated from. Anti-racist teaching requires us to intentionally consider what we have learned, need to unlearn, and what the implications of those gaps have been in our teaching. Anti-racist teaching also requires us to be open to learning and modifying our practice.
3. [Video/Quote Timeline](#): What do you see? What do you think about that? What does it make you wonder?
4. [The Present](#): (24:00) Watch the film *The Present* (accessible on Netflix). What do you see? What do you think about that? What does it make you wonder?

## Pre-Work: Students

1. [A Brief Historical Background](#) (*optional for students*)
2. [Palestinian Geography Definitions](#)
3. [The Present](#): (24:00) Watch the film *The Present* (accessible on Netflix).
  - a. Introduce the short film by explaining to students that the Palestinian father is trying to travel twelve miles to buy an anniversary gift for his wife. Using reference points within your community (for example, a store or park), show students what twelve miles looks like from the school to that location. Ask them how easily (with a trusted adult) they would be able to get from point A to point B.
  - b. While students are watching have them consider:
    - i. What obstacles do the father and daughter run into on this journey?
    - ii. What does this story make you wonder? What questions do you have about the experiences of the different characters in the film?
  - c. Optional Extension: Return to this film at the end of Lesson Sequence 8 in order to have students try to address their own questions and wonderings based on what they have learned throughout the unit.
4. [Video/Quote Timeline](#): Review the historical context vocabulary before and after using this resource. Explore the videos and quotes as a class to create your own class timeline of events that led to the Nakba in 1948. Utilize [The 3 Whys Protocol](#) to discuss what students have understood.

### Additional Resources:

- Animated Map: [Vanishing Palestine](#)
- Interactive Map: [Palestine, Today](#) - Explore how the Nakba transformed Palestine

# LESSON SEQUENCE 1: IDENTITY AND BELONGING

## (Chapters 1-3)

*Estimated length 1-3 days*

### Summary of Chapters

These chapters introduce the reader to Ida's experiences in school as a Palestinian-American student who feels and is treated as an outsider by her peers and school administration. After being excessively bullied and discriminated against for her identity, Ida begins her 8th grade year in a new school. She is presented with a major project called The Passion Project.

### Essential Questions

What role do our names play in the formation and understanding of our identity?

How can we intentionally work towards unlearning the stereotypes we are exposed to from the media and our environment?

### Key Concepts

As students begin to get to know Ida in these first few chapters, it is important to create space for understanding the intersections of identity and belonging both as a middle school age student, and as an Arab and Muslim Palestinian-American.

### Lesson Objectives

Make connections to their own experiences and identity and seek belonging or connection with others, while also understanding the unique experience of Ida navigating what that looks like in such a hyper-politicized identity.

Understand the consequences of stereotyping and the gaps created when people's identities are treated as monoliths.

### Vocabulary

**Identity:** the unique characteristics that make a person who they are

**Belonging:** a feeling of being happy or comfortable as part of a particular group or place

**Stereotype:** a widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing

**Empathy:** the ability to understand and share the feelings of another

### Materials

[1.1 Pre-Reading: Name Reflection](#)

[Sample Name Art](#)

[1.2 During Reading: Annotation and Discussion Questions](#)

[1.3 Post-Reading: Challenging Stereotypes Worksheet](#)

[1.3.1 Mind Map Worksheet](#)

[Mind Map Sample](#)

Optional Video Extension: [Ida in the Middle Book Trailer on belonging \(2:22\)](#)

## 1.1 Pre-Reading: What's in a Name?

### Procedure

1. *Opening:* What do people's names symbolize? Create a list as a class.
2. Students and teachers create name-art maps, placing their full name in the center and decorating it with pictures, reasons their name was chosen, culture, words, patterns, colors, quotes, etc. to express qualities with which they identify.
3. To help students consider what to include, you might ask: What is it about you that makes you unique?
4. Allow students the time to share their name-art maps if they feel comfortable.
5. *Independent Reflection* ([1.1 Pre-Reading](#)): Students choose at least one question from the following to journal after creating their name-art maps.
6. *Closing:* As a full class explore the following questions and create protocols for how we can all participate in these situations in a way that is respectful to the weight and importance of every individual person's name:
  - a. What could you and your friends say or do if you witness someone being teased because of their name? What if that teasing comes from an elder or teacher? How do names contribute to people's feelings of belonging?
  - b. What can you do if a classmate has a name that is difficult for you to pronounce? If you have a name that is challenging for other students to pronounce, what can you do to help them learn your name?

## 1.2 During Reading: Questions

### Annotation Protocol ([1.2 During Reading](#))

Use sticky notes (or reading journal) to identify:

1. Themes of identity and belonging
2. Textual support for the discussion questions
3. Areas where you have your own questions

## 1.3 Post-Reading: Challenging Stereotypes

### Procedure

1. Students will identify the ways in which Ida experiences stereotyping in her school and use these examples to create a mind map about what stereotyping looks like, feels like, and what the consequences are through an empathy building activity.
2. Students will first explore headlines from various articles ([1.3 Post-Reading](#)) that stereotype student experiences to identify: how the headline makes them feel as students; what are the consequences of those feelings? How might we, collectively, process those feelings?
3. Then, students will work in small groups with teacher support to examine headlines that stereotype Palestinians. Students will use these examples to develop a mind map ([1.3.1 Mind Map Worksheet](#)) tying together stereotyping, identity, and belonging.
4. *Closing: Class Discussion*
  - a. What role do our names play in the formation and understanding of our identity?
  - b. How can we intentionally work towards unlearning the stereotypes we are exposed to from the media and our environment?

# LESSON SEQUENCE 2: RESISTANCE THROUGH JOY AND COMMUNITY

## (Chapters 4-5)

Estimated length 1-3 days

### Summary of Chapters

In an after school hunger any teenager can relate to, Ida decides to snack on a jar of cured olives sent by her Aunt Malayka. In the blink of an eye, Ida is transported to Palestine as if her parents had never left and she had always lived there. In this alternate reality, Ida begins to understand herself as a Palestinian-American and spends much of her time soaking in the beauty and joy of Palestine, a place she had never been able to visit.

### Key Concepts

In these two chapters, students are introduced to the village of Busala and Ida's exploration of her family's home, culture and heritage. By looking at Palestinian identity through the lens of humanity and amplifying joy, this lesson centers Palestinian joy, community, and connection, showing that even in times of difficulty, people can be funny, creative, and resilient.

### Lesson Objectives

Explain the importance of centering joy when learning about oppression and how it is connected to resistance.

Visualize the concept of indigeneity and use their own exploration of identity in order to understand what it means to build and participate in a community.

### Essential Questions

What role does joy play in the struggle for liberation?

How do we effectively participate in our community? What does it look like to create a community that meets the needs of all individuals within it?

What changes when we look at the world through a lens of connection and shared humanity?

### Vocabulary

**Indigenous:** distinct social and cultural groups that share collective ancestral ties to the lands and natural resources where they live or from which they have been displaced

**Indigeneity:** the experience of being indigenous

**Diaspora:** communities of people who now live outside the particular nation/region to which they or their ancestors were indigenous, usually without privileges to easily return to that life

### Materials

#### [2.1 Pre-Reading: Centering Palestinian Joy Worksheet](#)

Video: [El Funoun Dabke Dance Troupe](#) (3:34)

Video: [Flying Paper](#) (2:25)

Video: [Rukab Ice Cream](#) (2:00)

[Word Association Example](#)

#### [2.2 During Reading: Annotations and Critical Thinking Questions](#)

#### [2.3 Post-Reading: Classroom Community Tree Worksheet](#)

Painting: [Sliman Mansour, 2021](#)

Article: [How the olive tree came to symbolize Palestinian national identity](#)

Visual: [Classroom Community Tree](#)

Lesson Extension: [Dakota Access Pipeline Lesson](#)

## 2.1 Pre-Reading: Centering Palestinian Joy

### Procedure

1. *Opening:* What is something that brings you joy? Create a class list.
2. Students will explore a gallery walk ([2.1 Pre-Reading](#)) of videos of Palestine to develop a fuller and deeper understanding of the beauty, joy, and connection to the land that the people. Students will learn about a Dabke dance troupe, kite flying, and world-renowned ice cream! As they are exploring images and videos students will write down three word associations for each on their worksheet.
3. After the gallery walk, the words will be compiled and written out as a class to create a large word cloud poster to keep for the unit in order to maintain a connection to Palestinian joy. It is recommended that the word cloud is created physically as a full class, but an online word cloud generator can also be utilized. Words that students wrote more frequently should be written larger than ones used less frequently.
4. Keep this word association for the end of lesson 5.
5. *Closing:*
  - a. What in the videos reflects Palestinian identity?
  - b. What elements reflect pride? Their culture?
  - c. If you had to describe Palestinians from what you watched, what would you say? Use evidence from the videos.

## 2.2 During Reading: Questions

### Annotation Protocol ([2.2 During Reading](#))

Use sticky notes (or reading journal) to identify:

1. Themes of community
2. Textual support for the discussion questions
3. Areas where you have your own questions
4. Themes from previous lessons (Identity and Belonging)

## 2.3 Post-Reading: Classroom Community Tree

### Procedure

1. Explain to students that they will be exploring the symbolism of olive and citrus trees to Palestinians both in Palestine and throughout the Palestinian diaspora ([2.3 Post-Reading](#)). Trees are not only a symbol of Palestinian identity, but a symbol of indigenous connection to the land.
2. Display the painting by Palestinian artist Sliman Mansour and ask students to describe what they see. Note students' answers around the painting/on the screen. Explain to students that the title of the painting refers to the geography of pre-colonial Palestine, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. It is often used as a slogan to express that Palestinians want freedom throughout the geography connected to their Indigenous roots.
3. Using the definition of *Indigenous* provided, discuss how the painting helps us understand and visualize Palestinian indigeneity specifically.
4. Distribute the article *How the olive tree came to symbolize Palestinian national identity*. Using the same annotation protocol as reading our novel, instruct students to annotate with the same questions in mind.
5. Discuss student answers to the questions to ensure understanding and ask students to share quotes to support their answers.
6. Using the concept of trees being rooted in community, students will create a classroom community tree. Divide students into small groups to write answers to the questions in Part III on sticky notes.

7. As each group shares their answers with the class, they will place the sticky notes with responsibilities at the root, the rights at the trunk, and the growth and accountability in the branches.
8. After each group, leave time for students to ask questions or teacher prompted clarification (for example: if students write down the word respect, make sure to unpack what that means and looks like to them).
9. *Closing:* Explain to students that this classroom community tree will represent how we engage in our classroom space. Depending on classroom spacing and teacher preference, it would be ideal to keep this visual displayed for the duration of this unit. It can serve as a [Community Agreement](#) during class discussions.
10. *Optional Extension:* During the discussion about climate justice and protection of trees, you may also connect students to previous lessons you may have done about water protection within the United States. For additional lesson support, use the following resource: [Dakota Access Pipeline Lesson](#).



# LESSON SEQUENCE 3: GENERATIONAL MEMORY

## (Chapter 6)

Estimated length 1-3 days

### Summary of Chapter

Ida wakes up in Palestine again, wondering why she is there. Before heading to her grandparents house, Ida becomes acquainted with how different (and similar!) life is in Busala. Ida has the opportunity to sit with her grandfather that evening to learn about the importance of oral history, collective memory, and the generational history that lives within her very being.

### Essential Questions

How might storytelling and oral history serve as a form of resistance?

How does restriction of movement contribute to maintaining settler colonialism?

### Key Concepts

Through the eyes of Ida's grandfather, students will become acquainted with the nuances of indigeneity under apartheid. Generational storytelling is a demonstration of the importance of collective memory and oral history as a form of resistance. Students will also grapple with questions of moral obligation once a person is exposed to difficult truths.

### Lesson Objectives

Analyze the connection of people to community, land, and family as a reason for ongoing resistance to colonialism.

Reflect on mobility restrictions such as military checkpoints as manifestations of both colonialism and apartheid.

### Vocabulary

**Displacement:** forcing people out of their homes, communities, or countries en masse; the Nakba is an example of a large event that displaced Palestinians, but Palestinians are still being displaced today

**Siddo:** (pronounced *see-doe*) affectionate term for grandfather in Palestinian Arabic

### Materials

#### [3.1 Pre-Reading: Surviving the Nakba Worksheet](#)

Video: [Three generations of Palestinian women share impact of the Nakba by IMEU](#) (3:33)

[See-Think-Wonder Protocol](#)

#### [3.2 During Reading: Questions](#)

#### [3.3 Visualizing Palestine Slideshow](#)

Poster 1: [Across the Wall](#)

Poster 2: [Anatomy of Inequality](#)

Poster 3: [Segregated Road System](#)

Optional Video Extension: [Inside Israeli Apartheid](#) (22:03)

## 3.1 Pre-Reading: Surviving the Nakba

### Procedure

1. *Opening:* Reshare the definition of the *Nakba*. Ask students to think back to what they learned during the historical context lesson and write about what they think the impact of the Nakba is for Palestinians on a personal level: What do you think Palestinians were feeling during the Nakba? What issues do you think they might have faced after the Nakba? ([3.1 Pre-Reading](#))

2. Define *diaspora* and ask students if they can think of other examples of diaspora besides the displacement of Palestinians.
3. Define *Indigeneity* and ask students to add to the understanding of Indigenous people they have previously learned in schools. What does Indigenous really mean? How did we connect land and Indigeneity in the previous lesson?
4. Introduce the [video](#) from The Institute for Middle East Understanding to students by explaining that the women in the video represent 3 generations of Palestinian women sharing the impact of the Nakba. Explain that these are women living in the United States as part of the Palestinian diaspora.
5. *Closing*: Reflection and Discussion questions in Part III of worksheet using [See-Think-Wonder Protocol](#).

## 3.2 During Reading: Questions

### Annotation Protocol ([3.2 During Reading](#))

Use sticky notes (or reading journal) to identify:

1. Themes of Indigeneity and Displacement
2. Textual support for the discussion questions
3. Areas where you have your own questions
4. Themes from previous lessons (Identity, Belonging, Joy, and Community)

## 3.3 Post-Reading: Visualizing Restriction of Movement

### Procedure

1. Review the definition of apartheid with students. Prompt students to connect their understanding of apartheid to learning from previous schooling (such as Jim Crow segregation, Indigenous boarding schools, etc.).
2. Print, project, or assign the three Visualizing Palestine posters specified in the slides (and linked below). Students should be viewing high-quality images in color in order to complete their work for today's class.
3. Students will be exposed to graphics that demonstrate the restriction of movement and housing. Because of the complexity of the posters, students will use the [3.3 Visualizing Palestine Slideshow](#) with scaffolded questions.
4. *Closing*: Discuss posters as a full group to ensure universal understanding. Students should walk away with the following information:
  - a. Poster 1: [Across the Wall](#)
    - Illegal Israeli settlements are a means for continued colonialism and violence against Palestinian people.
    - Palestinian people are subject to potential home demolitions, evictions, and violence so that Israeli settlers may further occupy Palestinian land.
    - Government sanctioned bus lines connect illegal Israeli settlements to the rest of Israel thus normalizing occupation.
    - This system of separation has some parallels with United States history and other examples of segregation.
  - b. Poster 2: [Anatomy of Inequality](#)
    - Jerusalem is Israel-controlled and restricts Palestinian access to services, locations, and homes.
    - Israel's policy and treatment of Palestinians is defined as apartheid by experts in human rights and international law.
  - c. Poster 3: [Segregated Road System](#)
    - Road segregation, checkpoints, and access to movement is a form of occupation that normalizes control over Palestinian people.
    - Palestinians do not have access to much of their own territory, and their access is heavily monitored and restricted.
  - d. Why do many people refer to what is happening in Palestine as the “ongoing Nakba?”

# LESSON SEQUENCE 4: THE ONGOING NAKBA

## (Chapter 7)

*Estimated length 1-3 days*

### Chapter Summary

The tone changes in Ida's house as conversations shift from daily life to that of the violent Israeli occupation and threat of home demolitions in Busala. The emotional and mental impact of constant potential or lived violence affects every facet of their lives. The chapter ends with a visit from Aunt Malayka who has come to visit using media credentials allowing her to pass through a strict checkpoint outside of Busala.

### Key Concepts

In this chapter, students will be connecting the context they have learned about Palestine both to the text and to the real life experiences of people in Sheikh Jarrah, a Palestinian neighborhood in East Jerusalem. Through this lesson, students will be able to reframe their understanding of leadership in order to understand the strategy of responding to violence with community solidarity.

### Lesson Objectives

Connect the threat and fear of home demolitions in the text to the existing violence in Al-Quds (Jerusalem) today in order to analyze the impact of Palestinian resistance strategies.

Examine their understanding of leadership as a way to introduce them to the role of community organizing and global solidarity movements.

### Essential Questions

What is the relationship between community and leadership?

Why is it important to see leaders as members of a community rather than individuals fighting on their own?

### Vocabulary

**Israeli Settlements:** Israeli housing within Palestinian territory that is illegally taken by Israelis for exclusively Jewish use with the support of the government, often through forced evictions and home demolition. These settlements serve to further segregate the West Bank as Palestinians are then restricted from accessing or returning to those locations.

**Al-Quds:** Jerusalem in Arabic

### Materials

#### 4.1 Pre-Reading: [Ida Collective Playlist](#)

Google Form: [Collective \*Ida in the Middle\* playlist](#)

[Ida in the Middle Collective Spotify Playlist](#)

#### 4.2 During Reading: [Annotations and Critical Thinking Questions](#)

#### 4.3 Post-Reading: [Connecting to Resistance in Al-Quds \(Jerusalem\)](#)

Video: [We're Not Leaving Our Rightful Homes](#) (4:47)

Video: [The Lives of Young Palestinians Living Under Occupation in Sheikh Jarrah](#) (23:24)

Song: [Raj'een by Nai Barghouti](#) (3:55)

Song Lyrics: [Raj'een English and Arabic](#)

Image: [Raj'een](#)

## 4.1 Pre-Reading: *Ida in the Middle* Collective Playlist

### Procedure

1. *Opening*: Create a list as a class of some of the themes, symbols that have come up in the text so far (examples: identity, oranges, olives, stereotypes).
2. Using the list from the opening question, instruct students to research songs that they think reflect these different themes and to which they feel a personal connection. Provide an example of a song from your own personal playlist to model for students how to look for their own examples that connect to unit themes.
3. Students will look through their own personal music or use publicly available sources like YouTube to find songs that they feel fit into these themes/the text in general.
4. Students should choose two songs to submit and share one with the class, the theme that it connects to and why they chose it ([4.1 Pre-Reading](#)).
5. Share the following form with students for them to [submit their songs](#) to our collective *Ida in the Middle* playlist.
6. Feel free to show and play the [Ida in the Middle playlist](#) during class. Explain to students that this playlist includes songs from students who have read this book in other schools and will include their songs as well.
7. *Closing*: Choose one song that you submitted for our activity and explain how you think *Ida* would connect to this song and why you connect to this song.

## 4.2 During Reading: Questions

### Annotation Protocol ([4.2 During Reading](#))

Use sticky notes (or reading journal) to identify:

1. Themes of fear and anxiety, even in the diaspora (consider the United States or Oldbridge)
2. Textual support for the discussion questions
3. Areas where you have your own questions
4. Themes from previous lessons (Identity, Belonging, Joy, Community, and Indigeneity)

## 4.3 Post-Reading: Connecting to Resistance in Al-Quds (Jerusalem)

### Procedure

1. *Opening*: What makes someone a leader? What do different leaders that you learned about have in common?"
2. Explain to students that while Busala is not a real Palestinian village, the author drew a lot of inspiration from what Palestinians in places like Sheikh Jarrah are experiencing.
3. Introduce the following two videos to students by explaining that two of the people speaking are 22-year old Palestinian twins named Muna and Muhammad El-Kurd who worked to raise global awareness about Sheikh Jarrah, a Palestinian neighborhood in Jerusalem. Their family faced eviction by the Israeli government to force them to give their homes to Israeli settlers.
4. Part I: After watching these videos, engage in full class discussion. Leave time for students to come up with a question of their own for the discussion as well as things that they noticed in the videos ([4.3 Post-Reading](#)).
5. Part II: Now that students have a better understanding of the situation in Sheikh Jarrah, explain that we will be listening to a specific song that came out during this time period that connected Palestinians and people all over the world to what was happening.
6. Students will first simply listen to the song [Raj'een by Nai Barghouti](#) without the translation and share what emotions they can pull out from the music. Then, students will listen to the song a second time with the lyrics in order to follow along in English.
7. On the third listen, students will highlight lines that stand out to them and lines they do not understand.
8. Have students share questions they have and the lines that stood out to them, and why.
9. Part III: Share the image *Nai Barghouti* chose to accompany the song and ask why they think she would choose to include her people rather than just an image of herself?
10. *Closing*: Why is it more powerful to visualize a community working together rather than just an individual leader working on their own?

# LESSON SEQUENCE 5: THE IMPACT OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

## (Chapters 8-9)

*Estimated length 1-3 days*

### Summary of Chapters

Ida wakes up in Oldbridge, Massachusetts disoriented and overwhelmed with emotion. She dreams about Palestine when she closes her eyes and thinks about it while she's awake. The next day she asks her mom to tell her the story of her Aunt Malayka and how she died waiting for emergency care that could not arrive in time because of the Israeli checkpoints. Ida is later introduced to a connection between Israeli and U.S. occupation.

### Essential Questions

To what degree does community organizing influence policy?

How does community organizing build power and strength within a marginalized community?

### Key concepts

In these two chapters students are more explicitly introduced to the restriction of movement as a form of violence and apartheid against Palestinian people. Students will compare the reality of checkpoints with the gallery walk about joy from several lessons before. Students should understand that both joy and resistance exist simultaneously.

### Lesson Objectives

Understand the complicated narrative of joy and oppression existing simultaneously.

Explain the influence of community organizing as it pertains to people their age and evaluate the power of language and information exchange as stepping stones to resistance.

### Vocabulary

**Checkpoints:** roadblocks or military installations used by the Israeli military forces to control and restrict Palestinian pedestrian movement and vehicle traffic

**Segregation:** the systemic separation of people based on race, ethnicity, or religion in order to maintain the discrimination of one group and the supremacy of another

**Restriction of movement:** Israeli policies and structures, such as checkpoints, segregated roads, ID restrictions, that control the freedom of Palestinians to live and move freely within their own territory

**Community Organizing:** the coordination of cooperative efforts and campaigning carried out by local residents to promote the interests of their community. This may look like protesting and petitioning, but also mutual aid, community gardens, etc. Community organizing is working together with one another to improve one's community!

### Materials

[5.1 Pre-Reading: Realities of the Occupation](#)

Slideshow: [Lesson Posters](#)

[5.2 During Reading: Questions](#)

[5.3 Post-Reading: Making Connections](#)

Interactive Map: [Native Land](#)

Articles: [Making Connections](#)

## 5.1 Pre-Reading: Realities of the Occupation

### Procedure:

1. Students will explore a gallery walk on the violence of military checkpoints ([5.1 Pre-Reading](#)) that should be compared to their joy word wall from Lesson 2. Activate prior knowledge gleaned from Lesson 2 in order to contextualize this lesson. The purpose of this lesson is to examine that two things can exist simultaneously, daily life and violent occupation.
2. As the students are exploring the posters, students will write down three word associations for each poster on the worksheet.
3. After the gallery walk, the words will be compiled and written out as a class to create a large word map poster to compare to the Palestinian joy word association/map. Students should reflect on how Palestinians might exist within a space of both joy and occupation, simultaneously. Remind students that just because violence is ever-present, it should not be normalized.
  - a. Example sentence frame: Even though the Israeli occupation has created an environment of violence for Palestinians, it is imperative for Palestinians to experience joy because...
  - b. Example sentence frame: I imagine that having joy is difficult when living under occupation, however Palestinian joy is a form of resistance because...
4. *Closing:* What is something you found interesting during this activity? What is something you found surprising? Why? What are you more curious about? What questions do you have? *Note: Explore student questions around their experiences and bring in as many answers as you can, acknowledging that some questions may not have answers.*

## 5.2 During Reading: Questions

### Annotation Protocol ([5.2 During Reading](#))

Use sticky notes (or reading journal) to identify:

1. Themes of Violence and Occupation
2. Textual support for the discussion questions
3. Areas where you have your own questions
4. Themes from previous lessons (Identity, Belonging, Joy, Community, Indigeneity, Fear)

## 5.3 Post-Reading: Making Connections

### Procedure

1. *Opening:* Allow students time to explore <https://native-land.ca/> to acknowledge the land, language, territory, and people who belong to the land that the students now live on ([5.3 Post-Reading](#)).
2. For part 2, students will be introduced to a short secondary reading about Andrew Jackson. Refer back to the conversation between Ida and Carolina about the school being named after Andrew Jackson, a man guilty of egregious human rights violations, displacement, and genocide.
3. Discuss with students: Should schools be named after Andrew Jackson or other figures guilty of human rights violations? What is the power of a name? If applicable, students can discuss how they feel about the name of their own school.
4. Part 3, Students will read articles ([5.3 Making Connections](#)) on the movement to change the names of buildings that were named for people who were guilty of human rights violations.
5. *Closing Discussion:* It is important that two middle school students had a conversation about Andrew Jackson. Why do you think it is important to have these conversations and share these stories about U.S. History with your peers? How might sharing information be the starting point for community organizing?

# LESSON SEQUENCE 6: REVISITING IDENTITY AND BELONGING

## (Chapters 10-12)

*Estimated length 1-3 days*

### Summary of Chapters

In this lesson's chapters, Ida among several others discuss their feelings of belonging, the difficulties of migration, and what it means to be "neither here nor there." The interactions Ida has with family members, friends, and peers all exemplify what it means to have roots in two places i.e. Palestine and the United States, El Salvador and the United States, and Slavuta (Ukraine) and the United States. Ida and her sisters ask their parents to share their memories and stories of Palestine. Realizing they'd never asked about Palestine before, the girls are intrigued to understand the complexities of what it means to be away from home.

### Essential Questions

How does displacement affect someone's sense of belonging?

What factors influence how people experience the American Dream?

### Key Concepts

In these chapters and lessons, students become acquainted with the pain of migration as a result of war. It is important that students use concepts of connection and empathy in order to bridge experience gaps.

### Lesson Objectives

Define *belonging* and draw connections to their own challenges of belonging.

Evaluate the extent to which people have access to the American Dream.

### Vocabulary

**Pull Factor:** force that draws people to immigrate to a place (better income, education, etc.)

**Push Factor:** force that drives people away from a place (war, displacement, natural disasters, etc.)

**Immigration:** the act of moving with the intention of living in a new country

**Migration:** movement from one place to another

### Materials

[6.1 Pre-Reading Activity: Poem Analysis—Belonging in the Diaspora](#)

[6.2 During Reading: Questions](#)

[6.3 Post-Reading: Belonging and the Diaspora](#)

Video: ["How El Salvador became Dangerous"](#) (6:50)

## 6.1 Pre-Reading: Palestinian Belonging in the Diaspora

### Procedure

1. *Opening*: What does it mean to belong? Does belonging always have to do with being connected to a place or can it mean something else?
2. Facilitate a discussion with students about a time they didn't feel like they belonged. What makes students feel like they belong somewhere? Have you ever belonged to more than one place/family/thing? Is belonging an easy thing? Why?
3. Students will read an interview excerpt with Noor Hindi, Palestinian-American poet and reporter on her experiences of straddling two places, Palestine and the United States and answer questions connecting their understanding of belonging to Noor's ([6.1 Pre-Reading](#)).
4. Then, students will read two of Noor's poems and analyze using protocol developed for understanding historical events.

## 6.2 During Reading: Questions

### Annotation Protocol ([6.2 During Reading](#))

Use sticky notes (or reading journal) to identify:

1. Any connections to yourself or your way of thinking/feeling
2. Textual support for the discussion questions
3. Areas where you have your own questions
4. Themes from previous lessons (Identity, Belonging, Joy, Community, Indigeneity, Fear, Violence)

## 6.3 Post-Reading: Belonging in the American Dream

### Procedure

1. *Opening*: What is the American dream and how were you taught that narrative? Do you think this dream is accessible to everyone? Is it really everyone's dream? Explain using evidence/examples from your life, your reading, or your experiences.
2. Facilitate a classroom discussion not only to activate prior knowledge from the unit and beyond, but also draw connections to belonging ([6.3 Post-Reading](#)).
  - a. What is the difference between immigration, emigration, and migration?
  - b. Do all people want to move when they immigrate/migrate? Explain.
  - c. What are reasons people may leave a place (push factors)?
  - d. What are reasons people may arrive in a new place (pull factors)?
  - e. What might the first experiences in a new place be like for someone who newly immigrated? What challenges exist?
3. Students will examine the various people in chapters 10-12 who shared their stories of immigration. Additionally, students may add their personal experiences or that of their family/friends.
4. Students will reflect on the push and pull factors of immigration and build connections to belonging as a motivator for moving, staying, and returning back to a country of origin.
5. Optional: Discuss reflection questions as a class.
6. *Extension Activity*: Introduction to American imperialism in South America, case study on El Salvador. Students will watch a video called "[How El Salvador Became Dangerous](#)." Remind students that dangerous is a subjective term. Have students consider the ways in which Mario spoke about El Salvador vs. how his mother spoke about it. Is the way the reporter is speaking about El Salvador, fair? Explain.



# LESSON SEQUENCE 7: VOICES OF RESISTANCE IN THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION

(Chapters 13-14)

*Estimated length 1-3 days*

## Summary of Chapters

Back in Palestine, Ida's family hosts a meeting of families in their community who are fearful of the coming home demolitions. The community discusses modes of organizing and ultimately decide that they need as many forms of resistance as possible. Soon after, Ida visits West Jerusalem with her Aunt Malayka. Ida witnesses a picture of freedom she does not have on her side of the city.

## Essential Questions

What does resistance look and feel like?

How do people influence a situation that is controlled by someone with more power than they have?

## Key Concepts

In these chapters, students will be grappling not only with the forms of resistance that are present in Palestine, but their own understanding of what resistance entails. It is important that students are able to conceptualize and critique their own understanding while developing an idea of the nuances of resistance in response to oppression.

## Objective

Analyze forms of resistance and disruption to unjust causes and determine their power in resisting oppression.

## Vocabulary

**Disrupt:** refusal to accept or comply with something; the attempt to prevent something by action or argument

**Resist/Resistance:** a form of collective action to disrupt a given behavior or pattern through some form of protest

**Food Sovereignty:** the ability of communities to determine the quantity and quality of the food that they consume by controlling how their food is produced and distributed

## Materials

[7.1 Pre-Reading: Forms of Resistance](#)

[7.2 During Reading: Questions](#)

[7.3 Post Reading: Resistance in Community](#)

Optional Pre-Work Extension for Teachers: [5 Broken Cameras](#) Documentary (1:30:00)

## 7.1 Pre-Reading: Forms of Resistance

### Procedure

1. *Opening:* Discuss the following questions as a class.
  - a. In what ways can we change our classroom/school through action?
  - b. In what ways can we change our society through action?
  - c. Think back to some of our previous lessons. What does community organizing mean? What do you think it entails? Provide an example.
2. Students will be introduced to community organizing and violence as modes of resistance. Using examples and quotes by activists students will draw conclusions about their preconceived notions about each form of resistance, develop their own definition of it, and reflect on the purpose of each ([7.1 Pre-Reading](#)).
3. *Closing:* Review the analysis questions as a class. Students should walk away with insight about violent protest, how violence is used in unequal power dynamics, and the power of community organizing.

## 7.2 During Reading: Questions

### Annotation Protocol (7.2 During Reading)

Use sticky notes (or reading journal) to identify:

1. Themes of Resistance
2. Textual support for the discussion questions
3. Areas where you have your own questions
4. Themes from previous lessons (Identity, Belonging, Joy, Community, Indigeneity, Fear, Violence)

## 7.3 Post-Reading: Resistance in Community

### Procedure

1. Students will examine a poster from Visualizing Palestine regarding Palestinian food sovereignty ([7.3 Post Reading](#)). While the poster responds to Israel's food restrictions in Palestine, students will be examining the ways communities in the U.S. are actively combatting those restrictions.
2. Students will read an article about how a Virginia community gathers annually to support Palestinian farmers. At the end of the article students will reflect on their own responsibility and power to make a difference.
3. *Closing:*
  - a. What is food sovereignty?
  - b. What is your responsibility when it comes to helping international causes?
  - c. How might you support Palestinian farms, artists, writers, etc? How might you do the same within your community?
  - d. What does this story tell you about individual power? What does this tell you about the power of community?
  - e. Is withholding food and water a form of violence? Explain.

# LESSON SEQUENCE 8: THE IMPACT OF DAILY COLONIAL VIOLENCE

## (Chapters 15-16)

*Estimated length 1-3 days*

### Summary of Chapters

These chapters closely follow Ida and Faris through a world of uncertainty, danger, and trauma as Israeli forces attack Busala to demolish homes. Ida feels responsible for the protection of Faris and her identity is strengthened by understanding violence through his eyes.

### Essential Question

What is violence?

In what ways is violence perpetuated without physical harm?

### Key Concepts

These chapters highlight violence from active Israeli attacks and home demolitions through Ida's eyes. It is essential that students walk away from these chapters with the understanding that eyewitness accounts of violence are valid and don't need approval from Western media or sources to be deemed credible. While both violence and extreme fear seem overwhelming in these chapters, the resilience of character, community, and organizing are central to the anti-apartheid movement in Palestine.

### Lesson Objectives

Examine violence through the eyes of Palestinians living both within Palestine and in the diaspora and draw conclusions about the impact of that violence during daily life

### Materials

[8.2 During Reading: Annotations](#)

[8.3 Post-Reading: Violence as a tool of Oppression](#)

Video: [Life in a Palestinian Refugee Camp](#) (3:19)

Video: [How Israeli Apartheid Destroyed My Home](#) (23:45)

## 8.1 Pre-Reading: Violence in Apartheid

### Procedure

1. *Opening:* What is violence?
2. As a class, discuss the forms of non-physical violence students have read about throughout the unit and book, so far.
3. Have students participate in a four corners activity with the words “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree”, and “Strongly Disagree.” The teacher will make a series of statements and use examples that will expand on students’ understandings of the word “violence” and the ways in which violence may be life-threatening even when it doesn’t cause physical harm.
  - a. Violence is always physical
  - b. Withholding food and water is violent
  - c. Being removed from your home and put into a refugee camp is violent
  - d. Segregation is violent
  - e. Restricting someone’s ability to leave their home, neighborhood, or city is violent
  - f. Violence should not be used to fight violence
  - g. Demolishing a home is not violent, as long as no one is inside of the home.
  - h. The military coming into a school and demanding students leave the building at gunpoint is an act of violence
  - i. Restricting medical care for life-saving treatment is violent

- j. Peaceful protest is the most effective response to violence
  - k. Arresting children for exploring their world is violent
  - l. The constant reminder that military personnel with guns control your daily life is violent
4. *Closing*: Develop a class definition for “violence.” Then, answer the following questions as a whole group.
- a. What are the long and short term effects of this kind of violence?
  - b. What emotions might people grapple with when exposed to long-term violence daily? List.
  - c. Why do you think this unit started with a lesson on Palestinian joy? How does joy serve as resistance to violence?
  - d. In what ways is violence perpetuated without physical harm?

## 8.2 During Reading: Annotations

### Annotation Protocol (8.2 During Reading)

Use sticky notes (or reading journal) to identify:

- 1. Instances of resilience in the face of violence are present
- 2. Areas where you have your own questions
- 3. Themes from previous lessons (Identity, Belonging, Joy, Community, Indigeneity, Fear, Violence, Resistance)

## 8.3 Post-Reading: Violence as a Tool of Oppression

*Note: In the video entitled “How Israeli Apartheid Destroyed My Hometown” (23:45), students will witness guns being shot. While no person gets injured on-screen, it is an important trigger warning for students. Further, there is a light trail of blood on concrete from 1994 footage (12:18). Finally, while the lesson has slides with the videos embedded, it is **strongly recommended** that these videos are processed as a class. The teacher should provide breaks during the video to debrief information and answer questions.*

### Procedure

- 1. Students will watch two videos in class (8.3 Post-Reading), one about the Balata refugee camp outside the city of Nablus and another about the ways in which occupation destroyed the once bustling city of Hebron. In both videos, Palestinian-American journalist Dena Takruri goes to Palestine to investigate. Students should consider how Ida felt going to Palestine as they watch Dena navigate the reality of the West Bank.
  - a. For each video students will write down examples, quotes, or thoughts that respond to the essential question: In what ways is violence perpetuated without physical harm?
- 2. *Closing*: First, take some time with students to work through what they are thinking about and how they are feeling. Then, answer the full-class discussion question on the last slide.
- 3. *Optional Extension*: Return to the film “The Present” and create space for students to try to address their own questions and wonderings based on what they have learned throughout the unit.

# LESSON SEQUENCE 9: UNDERSTANDING THE REALITY OF RESILIENCY

## (Chapters 17-18)

*Estimated length 1-3 days*

### Summary of Chapters

With the siege over, Ida now has to grapple with the aftermath of the violence and its effects on the lives of Palestinians like Layla and her family. Still frustrated by the lack of resolution despite everything they have been through, Ida finally returns home to Oldbridge. It's time to push past her fears and present her passion project. She is determined to share the plight of the Palestinian people with her school.

### Key Concepts

In these final chapters of the book, students will reflect on the ending of the story, which intentionally lacks a resolution. With this in mind, students will begin brainstorming for their own Social Action Research in order to legitimize their own experiences as experts within their school community. Throughout this process, they will think through the collective work that social change necessitates.

### Objectives

Validate the importance of their experiences as students and members of the school community in order to identify various issues for their potential social action projects.

Use cause and effect to identify root causes of issues that they experience in their school community.

### Essential Questions

What factors contribute to how people's experiences are validated?

Why might some people's experiences and emotions not be validated equally to others?

How do people continue to fight for justice when it feels impossible to win?

### Materials

[9.1 Pre-Reading: School Mapping](#)

[9.2 During Reading: Questions](#)

[9.3 Post-Reading: Social Action Project Brainstorming](#)

[Cause and Effect Example](#)

## 9.1 Pre-Reading: School Mapping

### Procedure

1. *Opening:* What are the different emotions you feel while at school? Do your emotions change based on where you are in the building/on school grounds? Do your emotions change based on who is around you? Where and with who are you most yourself?
2. Explain to students that this activity is the beginning of their final Social Action Research for this unit. They will be mapping out their school and the emotions they associate with different areas ([9.1 Pre-Reading](#)).
3. Independently, students will draw a map of the school (or use a map provided by the teacher) and identify symbols or colors for the key. Depending on student responses to the opening question, feel free to change the emotions or add more.
4. As a class: As students choose ideas and emotions from their individual maps to share with the class to create one large class map. Identify and discuss what patterns may exist. What is causing these feelings in different areas of the school? Create a list of issues that students experience based on location. If relevant, create categories under which these issues fall (Academic, Health/Wellness, Environment, etc.).
5. *Closing:* Students will journal what they found surprising, interesting, and/or troubling from the full class discussion of the school map.

## 9.2 During Reading: Questions

### **Annotation Protocol** ([9.2 During Reading](#))

Use sticky notes (or reading journal) to identify:

1. Themes of Social Action
2. Textual support for the discussion questions
3. Areas where you have your own questions
4. Themes from previous lessons (Identity, Belonging, Joy, Community, Indigeneity, Fear, Violence, Resistance)

## 9.3 Post-Reading: Social Action Research Brainstorming

### **Procedure:**

1. *Opening:* Review the community issues that students identified in the pre-reading activity. Explain that today they will try to identify the root causes of these issues. Emphasize to students that the way to create change is to address the root of the problem. Start with an example that explains the difference between a cause and an effect. (The flu is a good example: have students identify what might cause someone to get the flu, and what are its effects or symptoms).
2. Write one key issue or problem students identified about their school on the board. Now ask students why this is a problem. Continue to ask “but why?” until students feel they have identified the root of the problem. Then, have students explain the effects of the issue. This will serve as a model for what students do in their groups.
3. Before students move to selecting their topic, divide students into small groups to explore one of the issues identified in the opening. Assign each group an issue from the school mapping activity and identify causes ([9.3 Post-Reading](#)). Students should pick one of the causes from the list they developed and continue to ask “but why?” until they get to the root of the problem. Then, map out the effects of the issue based on the causes identified.
4. Debrief as a class and have each group share one of their causes:
  - a. How hard was it to get to the root of the problem? When did you know you had reached it? How can you tell a symptom from a cause? Are some things both causes and effects?
  - b. What were some of the root causes that the groups generated?
5. After hearing from all the groups, students will rank the issues they are most interested in researching and explain the reasons behind their rankings.
6. Divide students into research groups depending on their rankings (Note: The number of groups depends on the number of students, issues identified, and how they ranked them).

# UNIT ASSESSMENT: SOCIAL ACTION RESEARCH

*Estimated Length 4-7 days*

**Description:** In small groups, students will develop Social Action Research based on an issue they feel needs to be addressed within their school community. Students will center their own experiences, as well as those of their peers (or other allies), in order to research and formulate a student-centered view of a particular issue. If possible, aside from presenting to their classmates, students should be able to present their findings to decision makers or power-holders (administration, staff, community members, etc.).

## **Objectives**

1. Validate the importance of centering those most affected (in this case, students) when working towards solutions to issues;
2. Develop students' community organizing skills and commitment to working as a collective rather than as individuals;
3. Reinforce the reality that social justice and community issues require ongoing resistance and often will not be resolved after the first struggle, but they will always be stronger when approached from a place of strategy, hope, and collaborative support.

## **Materials**

[10.1: Deciding on a Mission and Vision](#) (Part I)

[10.2: Power Analysis](#) (Part II)

[10.3: Research Methods](#) (Part III)

[10.5: Social Action Project Presentation](#) (Optional Part V)

## **Part I: Deciding on a Mission and Vision**

In research groups students should write their selected research topic on a large poster paper. Students should think of themselves as teaching others in their community about their experience related to this topic. As you move through this exercise, encourage students to think about how they will get other people excited about their topic.

- a. *What is your guiding vision?* This is what students would like to see happen in an ideal world if their problem or issue was completely solved.
- b. *What is your mission?* The mission is what you will actually attempt to do or make happen.
- c. *What are your specific goals?* What type of impact do you expect? What type of change do you want your findings to make?
- d. *What are your research questions?* Students will come up with three questions to help them meet their goals. These questions should be large enough that they help them understand the topic better.

## **Part II: Power Analysis**

In their research groups, students will be examining the people/groups who hold power in regards to their specific topic. Students will be completing a power analysis chart to examine allies, opponents, and adversaries relating to their topic. Encourage students to identify the motivations of people/groups that might support or interfere with their topic. Debrief as a full class and allow students to offer suggestions or reflections to other groups.

## **Part III: Research Methods**

As a class, review the pros and cons of various research methods in the handout and add some of their own. In their groups, students will consider what kind of information they need to answer their question and meet their goals by completing the Planning Your Research portion of the handout. Be sure to allocate class time for students to create their research materials and begin collecting data.

## Part IV: Social Action Research Findings

Students will use their findings to write about their Social Action Research either independently or as a group. Depending on the school environment and the comfort of the students, these findings can be shared with the appropriate decision-makers. The written assessment should include:

- a. An introduction of the topic with an explanation of their mission, vision and goals.
- b. A detailed explanation of their research methods: What methods they chose and why, who they researched, how many people are represented in the data, etc.
- c. An explanation of their significant findings: 2-3 specific data points and what conclusions they have drawn from the data.
- d. (Optional) Their personal reflections on the research process and/or proposed solution to the issue they researched based on their findings.

## Part V: Social Action Project Presentation (Alternative Assessment)

Now that students have collected and discussed their data, they will examine the different options for presenting and sharing their findings. As a class, complete the Media Brainstorm portion of the worksheet to ensure students have reflected strategically on the options for presenting their projects. Then, in their research groups, complete the Media Presentation Discussion portion of the worksheet to pinpoint their main presentation goals and determine which form of media they will use to present their findings.

## Part VI: Reflections

After students have completed their projects and presented, create space in the classroom for reflection on this process individually and as a whole group:

- a. What did you learn from going through this process of research and presentation? Do you wish you did anything differently?
- b. How did your group members support each other within this process?
- c. What were the benefits of doing this work as a full classroom community?
- d. While there may not have been a clear resolution to the problem at the end of this project, do you feel interested in pursuing this topic further? What actions could you or your group take to pursue this?

### We want to hear from you!

If you teach the curriculum or use any parts of it, please share your feedback, examples of student work and ideas for other teachers!



[nora@noralestermurad.com](mailto:nora@noralestermurad.com)

