



NATIONAL
COUNCIL
OF CANADIAN
MUSLIMS

Your Voice. Your Future.

THE GREEN SQUARE CAMPAIGN

Material for Educators

Dear Educator,

I hope that you had a restful break!

I am in awe of the ingenuity and commitment educators continue to show during a school year unlike any other. Thank you for all that you do, it makes an incredible difference in the lives of the students and families you support.

With recent events in the United States incited by white supremacist ideology and violence, many students are processing and continue to have questions. It is important now more than ever that as students return to school, we ensure that our planning, pedagogy and curriculum are rooted in trauma-informed, anti-racist and anti-Islamophobic frameworks. Anti-racism resources can be found in our [previous newsletter](#)

Four years ago, on January 29, 2017, the Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec City was subjected to a tragic, hateful and Islamophobic crime. A gunman who was radicalized with white supremacist ideology entered the place of worship and opened fire on the worshipers, killing 6 men and injuring many more.

*As we approach January 29, 2021, it is important for us to be mindful that **this time can be increasingly difficult for Muslim staff, students and families.***

Until this day, this tragic shooting continues to shake many hearts and bring deep sadness and fear to our community. January 29 is a date that Muslims in Quebec and the rest of Canada will forever mourn.

As we approach January 29 this year, I wanted to provide you with some resources and ideas to meaningfully mark this date. Have a look at the suggestions below to support student learning and to engage your school communities.

As always, I'm happy to provide any support you may need. Feel free to call or email me with any questions. I hope you will join us in standing up against Islamophobia and hate by marking this day at your school.

Sincerely,

Aasiyah Khan
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JE ME SOUVIENS

La mosquée de Québec

I REMEMBER

Quebec City Mosque



THE GREEN SQUARE CAMPAIGN

The Green Square Campaign takes place in the week leading up to January 29 every year to remember the victims and survivors of the Quebec City mosque attack. The green square represents the green carpets of the Quebec City mosque, where the victims last stood to pray. It symbolizes the fact that the deceased are, God willing, in a garden green, in a better place since they left us that night.

Wear the green square in solidarity with the six widows, the seventeen children left fatherless, Aymen Derbali who is left paralyzed for life, and every single person suffering the consequences of this hateful and despicable act of violence.

For more information on the Green Square Campaign (GSC) visit www.greensquarecampaign.ca/



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RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

Class Activity 1: Create Your Own Green Squares

Grade level: All

Wear your commitment to safe schools and communities by creating your own green squares to wear on Jan 29. Prior to creating the squares educators can begin conversations around inclusion, acceptance, community and allyship. Try to create a space where students feel comfortable reflecting and sharing their own ideas/experiences.

Materials Required:

- Green craft felt/Green construction paper
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Safety pins/tape

Instructions:

- Cut 2" x 2" squares
- Adhere to your clothes or coat using a safety pin or tape. - Students can also create green squares for their family members.
- Younger students: Think, pair, share about why you are wearing a green square this January.
- Older students: Write and practice an elevator pitch about why you are wearing a green square. An elevator pitch is a short but impactful statement that gets your message across to your audience effectively within 30 seconds.

Class Activity 2: Join the Movement

Grade Level: All

Encourage students to create short videos or reflections on why they are choosing to wear a Green Square. Share student reflections/videos in your virtual classrooms and online. Discuss the importance of creating inclusive spaces and how we can commit to being allies.

Instructions

- Create green squares (activity above) or ask students to wear green.
- Complete the following sentence: “I wear a Green Square because...” or “I am wearing green because...”
- Get students to create a short video or written reflections, artistic pieces of their response to the question.
- Share student reflections/videos in your virtual classrooms and online.
- Tag us on Twitter @nccmeducate and we would love to share your videos, art, and reflections!

Check out the videos of other Canadians who have joined the movement on the Green Square Campaign website:

www.greensquarecampaign.ca

Class Activity 3: Conversations and Learning

Consider incorporating one of the following films into classroom/virtual learning around Jan 29, 2021. Use questions or prompts provided to get classroom conversation and reflection started.

The Mosque- A Community's Struggle



Available online.

Running Time: 44:08 mins.

Recommended grade level: 9 & up.

Description: This film follows the lives of the families who lost loved ones and the mosque community in Quebec City who is still coming to grips with the horrific act of violence that took place a year prior, on Jan 29, 2017.

Prompts/Questions:

At 4:40 min into the documentary, we see a haunting image of a shelf with shoes. This shelf has been untouched since the horrific incident of Jan 29, 2017. What might this symbolize?

What are some examples of collective healing and community building in the documentary?

Anti-racism activist, Nora Loreto notes that there is a “far-right radio ecosystem” in Quebec which easily translates into xenophobia within society (15:17-15:47 mins). How might this hateful messaging translate into policies/practice? How might this impact Muslim communities in Quebec? Can you think of any current examples of policies/legislation that evokes this xenophobic rhetoric? Why is critical media literacy important?

Aymen Derbali took 7 bullets on the day of the incident and potentially prevented many more lives from being lost. Aymen is now paralyzed and continues to speak against hate and intolerance. Some say that he is the “living embodiment of the tragedy”. If you could describe Aymen in 3 words what would they be?

“I don’t think we’re going anywhere. We’re here to stay and we’ll continue together. The most important is that we continue to work together to create a better world, a better Quebec and better Canada” (42:41 min). What does this quote mean to you? What are ways that we can make our classrooms and communities more inclusive?

Home No More



Available online.

Running Time: 19:01

Recommended grade level: 7 & up.

Description: In the aftermath of the terrorist attack on a Quebec City mosque, 3 Muslim women contemplate leaving the place they call home.

Prompts/Questions

How do you define 'home'?

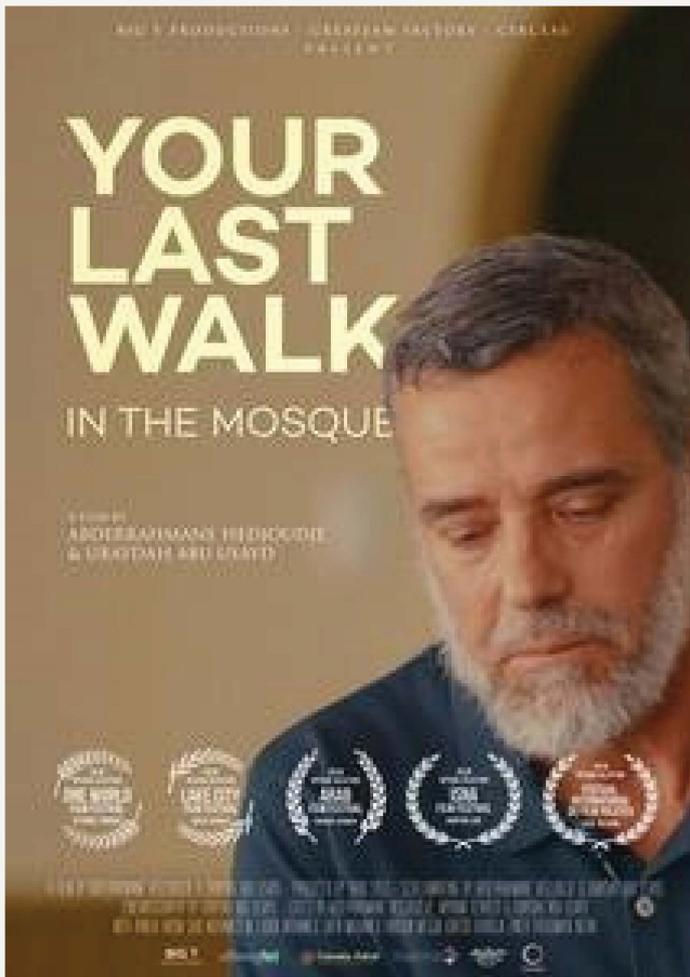
Ammata noted, "Jan 29 tragedy, that was a turning point. But before that I have noted that things started degenerating in society" (5:17min). What are some strategies to deal with instances of hate and intolerance before they escalate? Make a list of bystander intervention strategies.

"But I felt like being black, and wearing a veil, was just at the top of.... at the top of the top. You know bringing together race and a religious symbol was kind of just too much to the eyes of many people" (9:20 min). What it meant by this powerful statement? Adopt an intersectional lens and explore this statement further, note classroom reflections. How might this relate to gendered Islamophobia and or anti-black racism?

What does meaningful allyship mean? Can you relate the experiences of Islamophobia to your own experiences of being othered/ feeling different?

"We talked a lot about building bridges in the society and I think we need that. I'm not running away from that, no, no... There're still people who will do that, who will keep doing that (17:57). Can you give an example of what building bridges might look like? List ways you can create safe and inclusive spaces in your schools and communities.

Your Last Walk in The Mosque



Running Time: 50:00

Recommended grade level: 9 & up

Description: The film details the impact of the horrific events that took place on Jan 29, 2017. With reflections from the families and community on how they carry the trauma of this event and how it will continue to shape their lives.

Prompts/Questions

What are some examples of the ways in which this community is coming to terms with this horrific event?

What policies and practices can be put into place to make our communities safer?

How would you create a more inclusive classroom and school?

Class Activity 4: Law and Society

Recommended grade level: 10 & up

The Quebec City mosque attack was the most violent attack on a place of worship in Canadian history. The attacker, Alexander Bissonnette was driven by a deep hatred of Muslims and immigrants.

Under Canada's new sentencing laws, he could have been sentenced to 150 years in prison. The judge sentenced him to 40. But in November 2020, survivors of the Quebec Mosque Shooting and many Canadians were shocked to learn that on appeal, Bissonnette's sentence was changed and he is now eligible for parole in 25 years rather than 40 years. This has triggered debates on cruel and unusual punishment within sentencing laws and the notion of criminals serving consecutive sentences.

Engage students in a critical reflection on the debate on Alexander Bissonnette's sentence, sentencing laws, and the place of "cruel and unusual punishment" in our judicial system.

Activity

Read the CBC article ["Quebec mosque shooter's sentence reduced as Appeal Court finds consecutive life sentences are unconstitutional"](#).

Ask students to write/present a critical reflection on the article.

School-Wide Announcement

Make an announcement/send out an email recognizing the impact of January 29 and ways you will continue to commit to creating inclusive classrooms and communities.

Suggested announcement:

"Four years ago, on January 29, 2017, the Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec City was subject to a tragic, hateful and Islamophobic crime. A gunman entered the place of worship in the middle of a prayer in congregation, and opened fire on the worshippers, killing 6 men and injuring many more. Until this day, this tragic shooting continues to shake many hearts and bring deep sadness to our communities. We are asking you to participate in building more loving, caring, and inclusive schools and communities. Say no to hate, intolerance and bullying in all its forms. Let's take a moment of silence (observe silence)."

Mental Health and Wellbeing

It is important for us to be mindful that this month can be increasingly difficult for Muslim staff, students and families. Ensure to incorporate a Trauma-Informed Lens throughout any learning around the Quebec Mosque Shooting. Below are culturally responsive mental health supports.

Khalil Center is a psychological and spiritual community wellness center advancing the professional practice of psychology rooted in Islamic principles. Khalil Center utilizes faith-based approaches rooted in Islamic theological concepts while integrating the science of psychology towards addressing psychological, spiritual and communal health.

Naseeha provides an anonymous, non-judgmental, confidential and toll-free peer support helpline for youth experiencing personal challenges. Naseeha's services are open to all regardless of age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, family makeup, social status, income, ability, physical and mental health, and religion. Phone: 1 (866) 627-3342, Text: 1 (866) 627-3342

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