

Tolerance

Grades 6-8

Segment Summary:

Royida Amme feels like a typical American girl. But on September 11, 2001, after Muslim extremists committed violent acts in the name of Allah, Royida's religion made her a possible target for ridicule and harassment.

Royida Amme rides the school bus in the mornings, does her homework before dinner and argues with her little sister. In many ways, she is a regular American girl, but her family's Islamic faith requires that Royida do some things differently than most of her friends. Muslim women cover their heads when they are in public. That means Royida must wear a scarf over her hair while she's at school. She also uses henna, a reddish-brown dye, to decorate her hands. To most of her friends, Royida's clothing is the only thing that makes her different. But the violent attacks against the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001, have created a heated tension between many Muslims and non-Muslims in the United States. Because of the actions of a few radicals, many Americans have become angry and are looking for ways to retaliate. Now Muslim Americans are frightened for their safety, fearing they will become targets for attack on the streets or in their homes, all because of religious misunderstandings.

Discussion Questions:

1. If you were to describe Royida's character, what words would you use?
2. Is Royida a "normal" American girl? Why or why not?
3. Have you ever been friends with someone who practiced a different religion than you do? Are you still friends with this person? Why or why not?
4. What do you know about the Islamic religion? Where did you learn this information? Would you like to know more? Why or why not?
5. How many different religious beliefs exist in your home, your school and your community?
6. Can you think of conflicts that arise at school or in your neighborhood due to religious differences? Describe them.
7. Why do you think it's so hard for people with various religious backgrounds to get along?
8. How did you feel when you found out about the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001? What did you think should happen next? Do you still feel that way?
9. Many Muslims in the United States are now afraid for their lives due to the September 11, 2001, attacks. Do you think there is a real threat to their safety? Why or why not?

Vocabulary Words and Definitions:

Annoy (v.)

Definition: to make someone feel slightly angry, unhappy or irritated about something

Context: Mrs. Laramie was annoyed by Keva's constant tardiness to her class.

Discriminate (v.)

Definition: to treat a person or a group differently from another in an unfair way

Context: The referees discriminated against the visiting team by making calls in favor of the home team.

Diverse (adj.)

Definition: having many different types of people or elements

Context: Hollis' diverse heritage is a combination of Mexican-American and Scottish influences.

Encryption (n.)

Definition: information in which the form has been changed so that it can't be read by people who are not supposed to see it

Context: The encryption of the document was so successful that only its creator could translate it.

Generation gap (n.)

Definition: the lack of understanding among generations or people caused by their different experiences

Context: The generation gap between Trent and his father explains their different tastes in music.

Harass (v.)

Definition: to annoy or threaten someone again and again

Context: The boys decided to harass Kenny because his clothes and skin color are different from theirs.

Intolerance (n.)

Definition: a refusal to accept ways of thinking and behaving that are different from someone's own

Context: The school took steps to prevent acts of intolerance against minorities by teaching students about cultural differences.

Muslim (adj.)

Definition: describing someone whose religion is Islam, which was started by Mohammed, whose holy book is the Koran and whose god is Allah

Context: Because Pataya is Muslim, she wears a scarf to cover her hair.

Pet peeve (n.)

Definition: something that a person strongly dislikes because it always annoys him or her

Context: One of Marisa's pet peeves is when her brother has to get in the last word in every argument.

Prayer (n.)

Definition: a wish or hope, made to God or gods, that something will happen

Context: Each night, Duma says a prayer for the safe return of her brother, who is traveling abroad.

Prejudice (n.)

Definition: an unreasonable dislike and distrust of people who are different in some way, especially because of their race, sex, religion, etc.

Context: Meredith's prejudice against anyone who does not agree with her religious beliefs causes conflict at school and in her neighborhood.

Tolerance (n.)

Definition: willingness to allow people to do, say or believe what they want without criticizing them

Context: By exposing her students to the beliefs and traditions of different cultures, Miss Olereud hopes to teach them cultural tolerance.

Source: *Longman Advanced American Dictionary*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited. 2000.

Activity: Top 10 Pet Peeves

Objectives:

Students will be able to

- Identify personal pet peeves
- Recognize that pet peeves do not cause many of their serious problems
- Conclude that it is important to communicate personal annoyances with family and friends
- Describe various communication methods to use with family and friends in order to avoid conflict

Materials:

- Pens, pencils
- Paper
- Chalkboard, overhead projector or interactive whiteboard
- ***What Is Your Pet Peeve?*** worksheet
- ***Top 10 Pet Peeves*** worksheet

Procedure:

1. To begin this activity, ask students to share with the class items, behaviors, events, etc., that annoy them. Record their answers on the board.

Examples: Jangling change in pockets, mispronouncing a word, popping gum, etc.

2. Tell the class that a name exists for the items, behaviors, events, etc., that annoy people and ask them to guess the name. If no one guesses “pet peeves,” tell them and write the phrase on the board.
3. Begin a discussion about pet peeves by asking the following questions:
 - Based on the pet peeves you listed, would you agree that although these elements might be annoying, they would not cause the world to come to an end? Then why do you think they bother us so much?
 - Do you feel like you can tolerate something from one person but not from someone else? If so, why do you think this is true?
 - Can you think of a time when a friend or family member continued to do something that annoyed you? What was it? Did it cause conflict in your relationship?
 - In general, we have little tolerance for our pet peeves, but should we allow them to annoy us to the point that they may damage our relationships with friends and family?
 - What are some ways to deal with our pet peeves so that they don’t interfere with our relationships?
4. Distribute the ***What Is Your Pet Peeve?*** worksheet. Explain to your students that they will create a top 10 list of pet peeves. To do this, each student will survey at least one person. While conducting the survey, each student will need to share the existing list with the survey subject and ask him or her to include an additional pet peeve not listed. Then, the subject will need to rank the six pet peeves beginning with those for which the interviewer has the highest tolerance and continuing to the lowest tolerance.

Note: You should explain to your students that the pet peeves with the highest tolerance are those that are least annoying. Pet peeves with the lowest tolerance are those that are most annoying.

5. After students complete their surveys, they will need to work in groups of five to create a top 10 list based on the responses from their surveys. Distribute one **Top 10 Pet Peeves** worksheet to each group. Students will need to use this worksheet to determine their group's top 10 pet peeves.
6. After each group completes its list, allow time for a spokesperson from each group to share his or her group's top 10 list.
7. Each **Top 10 Pet Peeves** worksheet has a dotted line printed just above the top 10 list. You may decide to cut off the top 10 lists for each group and display them on a bulletin board titled "Our Top 10 Pet Peeves."

What Is Your Pet Peeve?

Name: _____

Directions: Read the list of pet peeves to your survey subject. Ask him or her to include an additional pet peeve that is not on the list. Then ask him or her to rank the following pet peeves in order using the scale below.

Ranking One – high tolerance Six – low tolerance	Pet Peeves (In addition to the five listed, write one more personal pet peeve on the line provided.)
_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	1. Younger or older brothers and sisters 2. People whistling 3. Junk mail (regular or email) 4. No toilet paper in the bathroom 5. Other people’s bad breath 6. _____

What Is Your Pet Peeve?

Name: _____

Directions: Read the list of pet peeves to your survey subject. Ask him or her to include an additional pet peeve that is not on the list. Then ask him or her to rank the following pet peeves in order using the scale below.

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Top 10 Pet Peeves

Directions:

- 1. Fill in the Boxes:** Each student in your group should write his or her name in one of the student boxes. (Example: Tony will be Student 1 and write his name in that box. Tanya will be Student 2 and write her name in that box.) Then write the pet peeves that were added to your survey list.
- 2. Record the Answers:** Select one student to read the pet peeves listed in the chart below. As he or she reads each pet peeve, he or she will ask each member of the group to tell how that pet peeve ranked on his or her survey. The student reading the pet peeves should record that number in the appropriate box. (Example: On Tony's survey, people whistling only ranked 4. The number 4 is recorded in Tony's box next to people whistling. On Tanya's survey, people whistling ranked 1. The number 1 is recorded in Tanya's box next to people whistling.)
- 3. Find the Averages:** On a piece of scrap paper, find the average ranking of each pet peeve and write that number in the Average Ranking box. This will give you an idea of the order in which to put your group's pet peeves. Your group may find more than one pet peeve with the same average. In this case, you need to note that the two pet peeves have the same ranking. The pet peeve with the highest average is the most annoying pet peeve.
- 4. Rank the Top 10 Pet Peeves:** Use the lines below the table to write your group's top 10 pet peeves.

Pet Peeves	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	Average Ranking
Younger or older brothers and sisters						
People whistling						
Junk mail (regular or email)						
No toilet paper in the bathroom						
Other people's bad breath						

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |
