

"Al Qaeda's New Front" Teacher's Guide

ABOUT THE FILM:

Mosques burn and a filmmaker is murdered in a culture clash between Muslims and Christians in the Netherlands. A series of bombs tear apart four commuter trains in Madrid, Spain, killing 191 people and wounding 1,800. Al Qaeda terrorist cells are uncovered in the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, and Spain. In "Al Qaeda's New Front," FRONTLINE investigates the new front in the war on terror: Europe. Now home to 18 million Muslims -- which some call "Eurabia" -- the continent is a challenge to intelligence services on both sides of the Atlantic in confronting this gathering storm of deadly plots and spectacular attacks, exacerbated by political divisions over the Iraq War.

WATCHING THE FILM:

Ideally, teachers will assign the film for viewing as homework or show the film in class. Suggested discussion questions are provided. The lessons and activities in this guide can be used in the classroom regardless of whether or not the film is viewed.

A NOTE TO TEACHERS:

For classes in Social Studies, Language Arts, Current Events, and History; Grade level 9th-12th.

"Al Qaeda's New Front" tells the story of increased terrorist activity in Europe against the backdrop of strained relations with the U.S., increasing Muslim immigration and a Europe struggling to unite. These teaching activities help students examine the political ramifications after the Madrid train bombings and what actions the U.S., European countries and moderate Muslims can take to help rectify the situation.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

A list of questions for students to discuss after viewing "Al Qaeda's New Front."

FEATURED LESSON PLAN:

Summit Meeting

Students will review articles written from different perspectives, answering questions and developing short presentations in a "summit meeting" designed to expose different ideas and develop proposals for the U.S., European governments and Muslims living in Europe to work together. Students will become more familiar with:

- U.S. interests in Europe's efforts in the war on terror
- How the increased Muslim presence in Europe has put a strain on Europeans' ethnic tolerance and created further suspicion of Muslim immigrants
- Actions that can be taken to address the issues of ethnic diversity and national security

ADDITIONAL LESSON IDEAS:

Summit Meeting: Second Round

In this follow up to the Summit Meeting, students engage in further analysis and propose recommendations for improving the situation.

Ethnic Discrimination or Protecting National Security

Students will review and analyze proposed actions to control Muslim immigration to Europe, analyzing whether any violate citizens' civil rights.

Muslim-Christian Ties in Europe: Past, Present and Future

Students will learn about the historical relationship between Islam and Christianity in Europe and also the present state and future prospects of Islamic-Christian relations in Europe (This activity is recommended for AP classes but could be modified for other classes as well).

Purchasing the Film:

"Al Qaeda's New Front" can be purchased from **Shop PBS for Teachers**

[<http://teacher.shop.pbs.org/home/index.jsp>]. Also, teachers and students can watch the film streamed in its entirety on **FRONTLINE's Web site**

[<http://www.pbs.org/frontline/shows/front>].

Credits:

This teacher's guide was developed by Simone Bloom Nathan of Media Education Consultants. It was written by Greg Timmons, curriculum writer and educational consultant. Advisers were Patricia Grimmer of Carbondale High School, Carbondale, Illinois and Michelle McVicker of the Rutherford County Schools, Tennessee.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. After the Madrid train bombings, European police investigators discovered connections to the suspected bombers in Morocco, London, Paris, and Rome. Terrorism experts featured in the FRONTLINE program say that Al Qaeda is more globalized and more powerful than before September 11. President Bush has said "We're tracking Al Qaeda around the world, and nearly two-thirds of their known leaders have now been captured or killed." Why do you think the U.S. and Europe have such different views of Al Qaeda's strength?
2. From what you saw in the program, what role does poverty, unemployment, marginalization and despair play in the recruitment of young Muslim men into jihadist movements in Europe? What do these movements provide for these recruits?
3. When the Madrid train bombings occurred, Spain was just days away from elections, and in the emotional aftermath of the tragedy, the conservative government that had supported the Iraq invasion was pushed out of power. If this was the political strategy of the terrorists, what might it say for the future of democracy in Europe, Iraq or other countries?
4. In the past three years, European authorities have arrested, jailed, or detained many hundreds of people -- some illegal foreigners, some European citizens -- suspected of terrorist activity. How is the U.S. policy of not releasing suspected terrorists it is holding in detention centers like Guantanamo frustrating European efforts to prosecute their suspected terrorists? Why do you think the U.S. is hesitant to release its suspected terrorists to European officials?
5. What did you learn in the film about Salafist and Takfir Islamic ideologies?
6. What are some reasons why terrorists choose to use Europe as a training ground?
7. Young Muslim immigrants coming to Europe have had difficulty assimilating into European culture. They are often unemployed, rejected by Europeans and the targets of racism. Have you or do you know of students who have had similar difficulties coming to a new school or neighborhood? Did they eventually feel they belonged? What occurred either on their part or the part of the people already in the school or neighborhood that helped turn the situation around for them?

LESSON PLAN:

Summit Meeting

Students examine various points of view regarding Muslim immigration into Europe, Europe's reaction to this increase in an atmosphere of world-wide terrorism and specific attacks on Europe, and the future of relations between the U.S. and Europe.

Lesson Objectives:

Students will become more familiar with:

- U.S. interests in Europe's efforts in the war on terror
- How the increased Muslim integration into Europe has put a strain on Europeans' ethnic tolerance and created further suspicion of Muslim immigrants
- Actions that can be taken to address the issues of ethnic diversity and national security

Materials Needed:

The FRONTLINE program "Al Qaeda's New Front"

Student Handouts: A Note to Teachers -- The articles suggested in the handouts are of different lengths and present different political perspectives. Teachers might want to discuss with students effective ways to review the articles and respond to the questions, either as a homework assignment or in a small group activity. Each student handout sheet includes suggestions to help students to facilitate this process.

Student Handout: "Test of Tolerance" from "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer." The article provides background on the racial tensions in Europe over Muslim immigration. (For all students) [URL: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/religion/july-dec04/dutchmuslims_11-4.htm]. This link also provides streaming audio and video on the news segment. Teachers may therefore choose to show the video instead of having students read the article.

Student Handout: "Preserving the Alliance Against Terrorism" from The Heritage Foundation. The article reviews the political fallout after the train bombing in Spain and makes recommendations for the U.S to continue its influence in Europe and maintain its leadership role. (For one small group) [URL: <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/1743.cfm>]

Student Handout: "Madrid Bombings and U.S. Policy" from The Brookings Institution. The article suggests reasons for Spain's surprise election results and subsequent withdrawal of forces from Iraq. The article also makes suggestions to the Bush Administration on how the U.S. can improve relations with Spain and European allies. (For one small group) [URL: <http://www.brookings.edu/views/testimony/gordon20040331.htm>]

Student Handout: "Race and Immigration in Europe" originally from *The Economist* Online, reprinted in *Gene Expression*, an online blog of current events. The article,

beginning with "Multicultural troubles, March 25, 2004," is found by scrolling down below the commentary. The article discusses the increased tensions in Europe over Muslim immigration and the major positive contributions to Europe that a majority of Muslims are making. [URL: <http://www.gnxp.com/MT2/archives/002019.html>]

Student Handout: "Recent Laws Are Wrong Way to Integrate European Muslims" from Al-Jazeera Information Center. The article presents a critical analysis of numerous actions or policy proposals by European governments to integrate Muslims into European society. (For one small group) [URL: <http://www.aljazeera.info/Opinion%20editorials/2004%20opinions/March/11%20o/Recent%20Laws%20are%20Wrong%20Way%20to%20Integrate%20European%20Muslims%20By%20Alaa%20Bayoumi.htm>]

Time Needed:

1-3 class periods, depending on whether the class watches the FRONTLINE program.

Procedure:

1. If you are viewing the FRONTLINE program "Al Qaeda's New Front" with the class, engage them in the **Discussion Questions** following viewing.
2. Instruct all students to read the article or watch the video of "Test of Tolerance" and respond to the Reading Questions on their handouts. Review student responses to the reading questions as a large group.
3. Break the class into four small groups. Explain that each group will be reviewing an article that looks at the issues from a different perspective, and that they will be preparing a presentation to share with the class.
4. Distribute to each group one of the four student handouts. Each group should find the article online (web addresses provided) and answer both the Reading and Discussion Questions on their handouts. They can do this either independently or in their groups.
5. Each group should develop a presentation following the guidelines presented on their handouts.
6. Bring the four groups together and facilitate a "Summit Meeting" during which each group makes a presentation.
7. Engage the class in discussion about their presentations.

Method of Assessment:

Class participation

Submission of handouts

Group presentation

STUDENT HANDOUT:

"Test of Tolerance"

Reading and review of news segment from "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer," November 4, 2004. The article provides background on the racial tensions in Europe over Muslim immigration.

The NewsHour features news and analysis with multiple perspectives on issues, moderated for balanced presentation. [URL:
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/religion/july-dec04/dutchmuslims_11-4.htm]

Directions: Find the article online and answer the questions below. Be prepared to discuss these in class.

Reading Questions:

1. The Netherlands is noted for its tolerance and liberal social values. How has this tolerance been tested as the country grapples with how to welcome and integrate the growing number of Muslim immigrants?
2. What has been the reaction of many Europeans to Muslims who are unwilling to accept European cultural values, especially equality for women and gay people?
3. What are the feelings between Muslims and Europeans regarding this pressure to assimilate to European customs?
4. How have the train bombings in Madrid and the murder of the Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh heightened these feelings between Muslims and Europeans?
5. What remedies have some European leaders suggested must be implemented to address the pressures of increased Muslim immigration?
6. Describe the view of Ayaan Hirsi Ali regarding Islamic fundamentalism in Europe and the reasons why it poses a threat to Europe.
7. Describe the view of Dyab Abou JahJah regarding the forced assimilation laws in Europe and why he feels they pose a threat to Muslims living in Europe.
8. Describe how more militant Muslims like Abou JahJah see a connection between the perceived oppression in Europe, terrorists' attacks in Spain and the use of violence by Muslim extremists to address oppression.
9. Explain your views on Europe's tighter immigration laws and tougher policies to encourage Muslim integration as a response to recent terrorist activity in Europe. Do you feel these laws and policies are appropriate? Why or why not?
10. Explain whether immigrants have an obligation to assimilate into the culture of their newly chosen country. What forms should this assimilation take?

**STUDENT HANDOUT:
"Preserving the Alliance Against Terrorism"**

By Nile Gardiner, Ph.D., and John Hulsman, Ph.D

From the Heritage Foundation, April 9, 2004

The Heritage Foundation Web site features research, articles and commentary promoting conservative public policies.

[URL: <http://www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/1743.cfm>]

Directions: Find the article online and answer the Reading Questions below. Meet in your group to review the Reading Questions to make sure everyone in the group understands the article. Then in your group, answer the Discussion Questions as a guide for preparing your presentation to the class.

Reading Questions:

1. To what event do the authors attribute the surprising election results in Spain?
2. What are the authors' main concerns regarding the Spanish election results and the future of Europe's continued support of the U.S.-led war on terror?
3. What are their main concerns regarding the Spanish election results and the future of democracy in Europe?
4. In the view of the authors, what are the political and symbolic impacts of the Spanish troop withdrawal from Iraq?
5. Identify the six suggestions the authors recommend for the U.S. and its allies to:
 - address the effects of the terrorist attack on the Spanish elections
 - affect the future of security in Europe
 - increase positive relations with the U.S
6. What roles do the authors feel NATO and the United Nations should play in the war on terror and the U.S. war effort in Iraq?
7. What evidence do they present to support their view?
8. In the opinion of the authors, what lessons can be learned from the Madrid train bombings and what actions need to be taken to prevent another terrorist attack?

Discussion Questions:

1. How do the authors compare the Spanish and British support for the war on terror with the U.S.-led war in Iraq?
2. Why don't all countries in Europe see these two efforts as one-and-the-same?
3. What evidence now exists that there is no connection between Al Qaeda and Iraq?
4. The authors make references to "Old Europe" and "New Europe." What do these terms mean and how does this reference relate to the U.S. war effort in Iraq?
5. How might future terrorists' attacks in Europe cause a shift to "Old Europe" and affect the U.S. war effort in Iraq?
6. What do you see as the strengths of the proposals made by the authors of this article?
7. What do you see as the weaknesses?
8. What "middle ground" can be found between the new Spanish government and the U.S. for continued positive relations and mutual support of the war on terror?

9. How would strengthening this relationship help improve the security of both Europe and the U.S.?

In your group, develop a presentation that provides an overview of the content of the article from the reading questions and the conclusions your group developed from the discussion questions.

In the class "summit meeting" have different members of your group present the different parts of the presentation:

1. A summary of the reading – provide the title of the article, name of the author(s), name and perspective of the publisher and date. Summarize the content of the article by reviewing the Reading Questions.
2. Point out important aspects of the article that you discovered in the Discussion Questions.
3. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals or recommendations made in the article.
4. Present your proposals, as close as possible to the point of view of the author, on what you think should be done to address the problems presented in the article.

STUDENT HANDOUT:

"Madrid Bombings and U.S. Policy"

Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, March 31, 2004.

By Philip H. Gordon, Director, Center on the United States and Europe at the Brookings Institution

The Brookings Institution is an independent, nonpartisan organization devoted to research, analysis, and public education on economics, foreign policy, governance, and metropolitan policy.

[URL: <http://www.brookings.edu/views/testimony/gordon20040331.htm>]

Directions: Find the article online and answer the Reading Questions below. Meet in your group to review the Reading Questions to make sure everyone in the group understands the article. Then in your group, answer the Discussion Questions as a guide for preparing your presentation to the class.

Reading Questions:

1. The author opens his talk with a discussion of the effects of Spain's actions after the March 11 train bombing. What examples does he present that would support the belief that Spain's actions are a rejection of the war on terror?
2. What evidence does he present that such a conclusion is "misplaced and counter productive?"
3. What mistakes does the author feel the outgoing Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar made right after the train bombings that contributed to the change in government?
4. The author believes that although the vote against Aznar's Popular Party was a vote against the Iraq war, it was not, in Spanish eyes, a vote against the war on terrorism. What evidence does he present to support this claim?
5. Because of these conclusions, the author warns against making policies based on false assumptions. Describe the six policy guidelines he suggests the U.S. should make to:
 - help ensure Spanish support in the short run
 - provide continued European support for the war on terror in the long run

Discussion Questions:

1. Examine the two contrasting views presented in the article on Spain's reaction to the Madrid train bombings, in particular the election results changing the government and the eventual withdrawal of Spanish troops from Iraq. Which do you feel has the strongest argument? Support your answer.
2. Explain the connection between Spain's rejection of the Aznar government and its position on the war on terror and its participation in the war in Iraq.
3. What do you see as the strengths of the proposals made by the author in this article? What do you see as the weaknesses?
4. What "middle ground" can be found between the new Spanish government and the U.S. for continued positive relations and mutual support of the war on terror?
5. How would strengthening this relationship help improve security for both Europe and the U.S.?

In your group, develop a presentation that provides an overview of the content of the article from the reading questions and the conclusions your group developed from the discussion questions.

In the class "summit meeting" have different members of your group present the different parts of the presentation:

1. A summary of the reading – provide the title of the article, name of the author(s), name and perspective of the publisher and date. Summarize the content of the article by reviewing the Reading Questions.
2. Point out important aspects of the article that you discovered in the Discussion Questions.
3. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals or recommendations made in the article.
4. Present your proposals, as close as possible to the point of view of the author, on what you think should be done to address the problems presented in the article.

STUDENT HANDOUT:

"Race and Immigration in Europe"

Originally from *The Economist* Online, this article is reprinted in *Gene Expression*, an online blog of current events. The article, beginning "Multicultural troubles, March 25, 2004," is found by scrolling down below the commentary.

Published in Britain, *The Economist* magazine features a European perspective on news, analysis, and reporting on business, politics, science and technology.

[URL: <http://www.gnpx.com/MT2/archives/002019.html>]

Directions: Find the article online and answer the Reading Questions below. Meet in your group to review the Reading Questions to make sure everyone in the group understands the article. Then in your group, answer the Discussion Questions as a guide for preparing your presentation to the class.

Reading Questions:

1. The author of the article points out that anxiety toward growing Muslim immigration has increased since September 11, 2001 and that anti-immigration policies in Europe have gone mainstream. Identify examples of some European governments' policies proposed or put into place to force Muslim assimilation into European culture.
2. What evidence does the author present that such policy proposals might be legitimate in regards to terrorists living among the European Muslim population?
3. What conclusions does the author draw from other facts regarding the reasons most Muslims come to Europe that are not related to terrorism?
4. Though the overall Muslim population in Europe is small (estimated at a little over 3 percent), identify where the concern rises over the increasing Muslim population and why this concern exists.
5. What evidence does the author present that rejects the view that the increasing Muslim population is a threat to European security and thus, forced assimilation is unnecessary?

Discussion Questions:

1. Review the examples of European government policies to force Muslim assimilation. Why do you think these governments believe these methods will be effective in preserving security? What possible violations of European civil rights protections might these policies create? Information on the rights enumerated in the European Constitution can be found at [URL: <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2004:310:SOM:EN:HTML> Click on "Part II: The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union".]
2. What historical parallels can you draw from current European policies directed toward Muslims' assimilation? What differences do you see in these comparisons?
3. In light of the attacks of September 11 and March 11, the growing evidence of active terrorist activity in Europe, and the growing Muslim rejection of European

customs and ideas, do you agree or disagree with the author's conclusion that Muslim immigration is of greater benefit than threat to Europe? Explain your reasons.

In your group, develop a presentation that provides an overview of the content of the article from the reading questions and the conclusions your group developed from the discussion questions.

In the class "summit meeting" have different members of your group present the different parts of the presentation:

1. A summary of the reading – provide the title of the article, name of the author(s), name and perspective of the publisher and date. Summarize the content of the article by reviewing the Reading Questions.
2. Point out important aspects of the article that you discovered in the Discussion Questions.
3. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals or recommendations made in the article.
4. Present your proposals, as close as possible to the point of view of the author, on what you think should be done to address the problems presented in the article.

STUDENT HANDOUT:

"Recent Laws are Wrong Way to Integrate European Muslims"

By Alaa Bayoumi

Al-Jazeera, March 11, 2004

Alaa Bayoumi is a researcher at the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). CAIR is the United States' largest Muslim civil-liberties advocacy group. The Al Jazeera Web site offers news with an Islamic perspective on unfolding events in the Middle East and throughout the world.

[URL:

<http://www.aljazeera.info/Opinion%20editorials/2004%20opinions/March/11%20o/Recent%20Laws%20are%20Wrong%20Way%20to%20Integrate%20European%20Muslims%20By%20Alaa%20Bayoumi.htm>]

Directions: Find the article online and answer the Reading Questions below. Meet in your group to review the Reading Questions to make sure everyone in the group understands the article. Then in your group, answer the Discussion Questions as a guide for preparing your presentation to the class.

Reading Questions:

1. What actions are several European countries taking to assimilate Muslims into European society?
2. The author cites several detailed examples of Danish, Dutch and French government actions to address assimilation. Summarize these and state the author's political and historical arguments against such actions.
3. Describe the author's view on how Muslims play an integral part in Europe.
4. Describe the three "real problems" the author believes European governments should be addressing in the Muslim community.
5. How does the author feel the new integration laws will "scapegoat" Muslims for the real problems facing European society?

Discussion Questions:

1. The author identifies several actions proposed or implemented by European governments to address Muslim integration. Identify the possible civil rights violations these actions might cause. Information on the rights enumerated in the European Constitution can be found at [URL: <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/JOhtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2004:310:SOM:EN:HTML> Click on "Part II: The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union".]
2. Discuss the French law that bans the wearing of religious symbols. If the ban is on the wearing of all religious symbols, how is this discriminatory? Why would Muslims feel it is only directed at them?
3. In the author's opinion, how does ethnic integration and economic problems give support to those who fear Muslim extremism?

4. Explain how the author sees the proposed anti-Muslim laws as creating more integration problems, not less.

In your group, develop a presentation that provides an overview of the content of the article from the reading questions and the conclusions your group developed from the discussion questions.

In the class "summit meeting" have different members of your group present the different parts of the presentation:

1. A summary of the reading – provide the title of the article, name of the author(s), name and perspective of the publisher and date. Summarize the content of the article by reviewing the Reading Questions.
2. Point out important aspects of the article that you discovered in the Discussion Questions.
3. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals or recommendations made in the article.
4. Present your proposals, as close as possible to the point of view of the author, on what you think should be done to address the problems presented in the article.

ADDITIONAL LESSON IDEAS

Summit Meeting: Second Round

As a follow up to the "Summit Meeting," students should meet in their small groups and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the other groups' recommendations. Through discussion and analysis, they can review their own conclusions, make any necessary revisions, and propose recommendations on what course of action the U.S., European governments and Muslims living in Europe might take to improve the situation.

Ethnic Discrimination or Protecting National Security

Assign students to review some of the actions taken or proposed in Europe to control the rising Muslim immigration population. Have them determine what civil rights violations these actions might create. Then have students assess the value of these proposals with their potential for civil rights violations weighed against the need to protect national security. Information on the rights enumerated in the European Constitution can be found at [URL: <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/JOhtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2004:310:SOM:EN:HTML> Click on "Part II: The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Union".]

Muslim-Christian Ties in Europe: Past, Present and Future

Assign the article "Muslim-Christian Ties in Europe: Past, Present and Future" found on the Islam Online Web site [URL: <http://www.islamonline.net/english/Contemporary/2004/03/Article01.shtml>]. This article, written by Dr. Hans Koechler, Chairman of the Philosophy Department at the University of Innsbruck, Austria, reviews the history of Islamic-Christian relations in Europe, the role of both Islam and Christianity in shaping community relations in Europe, and the present state and future prospects of Islamic-Christian relations in Europe. Have students review the article and write a paper summarizing the three parts of the article (This activity is recommended for AP classes but could be modified for other classes as well).

INTERNET RESOURCES

A Note about Internet Resources:

Students need to be aware that Web sites sometimes present only one view of an issue. Encourage them to think about Web sites even as they are reading. Guiding questions as they review Web sites are: What did you learn from this site? What didn't you learn from this site? Who sponsors this site? What bias might the sponsor have? How current is the site?

FRONTLINE

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/front/> The companion Web site to the FRONTLINE film includes: a country-by-country breakdown of terrorist activity in Europe; a comparison of European and American approaches to fighting terrorism; a look at why radical Salafist and Takfir Islamic ideologies are taking root among some European Muslims; a closer look at the current understanding of Al Qaeda and how it operates; interviews with European and U.S. counterterrorism officials and streaming video of the full show.