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Educational Staffing and Recruitment Solutions ... This is American Academy

IN THE NEWS

Arab Cultural Awareness and Student ESL Learning

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The literature indicates that in order to support authenticity in classroom tasks and avoid disengaging Arabic-speaking ESL students from classroom activities, teachers need to know something about Arab culture. Aburumuh, Smith & Ratcliffe (2009) conducted a study to examine educators' knowledge and perceptions of Arabic and Islamic cultures. The study collected surveys from 131 elementary and middle school teachers and 87 teaching faculty in the U.S. Southwest. The participants were asked to match the terms Arab, Arabic, Islam, and Muslim with their definitions, and they were also asked to answer true/false questions about Arabs and some Islamic holidays. The study found that most participants lack basic knowledge about Arab and Islamic culture, including knowledge of Muslim holidays, such as Eid al Fitr.

Moreover, most participants mistakenly considered Ramadan to be a Muslim holiday, when in fact, it is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar when Muslims are required to fast during the whole month from dawn to sunset. This knowledge can be useful for teachers so they can provide safe environments for students during

Ramadan and other important days. For example, teachers may avoid scheduling tests during Islamic holidays and enable students to go to the library at lunchtime during Ramadan (Aburumuh, Smith & Ratcliffe, 2009; Ariza, 2006; Carrasquillo & Rodríguez, 2002).

In addition, Brisk (2010) pointed out that culture has an impact on Arabic-speaking ESL students' interactions in the classroom. She gave an example of Sudanese Muslim girls who disengaged from interacting with boys in their groups. This disengagement occurred as a result of their own culture that needs to be understood by teachers in order to help students fully engage in classroom activities. However, giving such opportunities for Arabic-speaking ESL students is not enough without sufficient knowledge of the students' cultural and background knowledge. To demonstrate cultural awareness and support authenticity, Wingfield & Karaman (2001) suggested some actions, such as introducing Arabic language and literature in the classroom to encourage Arab students to participate and interact in the learning process.



AA Contracts Teachers to SPSP

American Academy is pleased to announce that SPSP Al-Khafji contracted with AA to supply Bilingual Arabic-English NNES ESL English teachers. This current contract is expected to be extended throughout several training modules in 2018, The continued support services of AA to the SPSP team has been well received by Aramco's trainees and SPSP's head office.



Alasala Uni. Contracts with AA

American Academy is happy to confirm that we now have delivered all of the requested AA native speaker ESL instructors to our new client school, Alasala University. AA was able to secure an outstanding team of highly qualified English instructors all of whom hold Master degrees in TESOL or English related tertiary level qualifications.

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