

Black and Palestinian Solidarity - A History of two connected struggles for liberation

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Format: Self-paced, Asynchronous

Target Audience: Learners Aged 13 - 18

Estimated Duration: 95 - 115 minutes

Module Description: This module explores the historical and ongoing connections between Black liberation in the U.S. and Palestinian liberation. Learners will examine the forces shaping both struggles and how solidarity has been expressed historically and continues today. Learners will explore:

- How colonization and racial capitalism have shaped global oppression
- Early Black American perspectives on Zionism and shifts after 1948
- Key leaders and organizations linking Black and Palestinian liberation movements
- Contemporary solidarity movements and shared strategies for resistance
- Ethical reasoning, critical reflection, and activist strategies for justice

Activities include journal prompts, discussion boards, knowledge checks, reflective exercises, and optional extension research projects.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

- Explain how colonization and racial capitalism intersect in global histories of oppression
- Identify historical shifts in Black American perspectives on Zionism and Palestine
- Analyze the influence of leaders like Malcolm X, W.E.B. Du Bois, and organizations like SNCC and the BPP on Black-Palestinian solidarity
- Evaluate the role of knowledge sharing and tactical alliances in liberation movements
- Discuss contemporary Black Palestinian activism and its lessons for global justice
- Apply ethical reasoning and historical analysis to discussions of liberation and resistance
- Define and use key historical, political, and activist terms accurately
- Connect past and present examples of solidarity to their own experiences and communities

Content Advisory Facilitators should be prepared for the possibility that learners may experience emotional reactions when engaging with the content. These reactions may arise from personal, family, or community experiences related to racism, discrimination, violence, or displacement.

Given the complexity and sensitivity of the topics, it is essential to create a learning

environment where all participants feel safe, respected, and able to engage thoughtfully.

The goal of discussion is not to force agreement, but to support thoughtful learning, respectful dialogue, and critical analysis of historical events.

Facilitator Guidance - Establishing a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment

Facilitators should be prepared to:

- Recognize signs of emotional distress in learners
- Pause discussions if needed to allow space for reflection or grounding
- Offer learners the option to step away briefly if they need a break
- Provide access to appropriate support resources
- Encourage respectful dialogue while prioritizing learner wellbeing

Facilitators are encouraged to:

- **Validate feelings:** Acknowledge that learners may experience a range of emotions in response to the content
- **Provide choice:** Offer multiple ways to engage, including writing, discussion, reflection, or listening
- **Encourage autonomy:** Allow learners the option to pause, step back, or observe if needed
- **Promote safety:** Establish and uphold shared agreements for respectful and inclusive dialogue
- **Maintain respect and inclusion:** Ensure all learners feel heard and respected, even when perspectives differ
- **Prioritize learning over debate:** Focus on understanding, inquiry, and reflection rather than argument or persuasion
- **Encourage curiosity:** Support thoughtful questioning and open exploration of ideas
- **Model respectful communication:** Use and reinforce language that is respectful, and inclusive
- **Separate ideas from individuals:** Remind learners to critique concepts and arguments rather than people
- **Acknowledge emotional impact:** Recognize that topics such as racism, colonization, war, and injustice may evoke strong emotional responses
- **Encourage active listening:** Support learners in listening with attention, care, and respect for differing perspectives
- **Provide varied participation options:** Allow learners to engage through discussion, writing, or reflection based on comfort level
- **Ensure equitable participation:** Structure engagement so that all learners have opportunities to contribute, and no single learner dominates, is singled out, or is overexposed

Learners should be reminded that participation in discussions or reflections can be flexible. They may choose to listen, write privately, or participate in other ways that feel comfortable.

Strategies for Managing Difficult Moments

If challenging situations arise during discussion, facilitators may consider the following strategies:

- Pause the conversation if the discussion becomes tense or emotionally charged
- Allow time for reflection or grounding
- Re-center the discussion on the learning goals of the lesson

- Encourage learners to support their ideas with historical evidence or examples from the video module
- Redirect harmful or disrespectful language by reminding learners of shared agreements
- Encourage learners to ask questions rather than make assumptions
- Offer alternative participation options, such as written reflection
- Remind learners that complex historical topics often include multiple perspectives
- If a learner becomes distressed, pause the activity and provide appropriate support or referral

Community Agreements Co-Creations

Facilitators may establish clear community agreements at the outset, such as:

- Listening actively and without interruption
- Respecting diverse perspectives and lived experiences
- Using thoughtful language
- Critiquing ideas, and not individuals
- Maintaining confidentiality if appropriate

Suggested Safe Space Activity (5-10 minutes):

Activity: Community Agreements Co-Creation

Instructions:

1. **Ask learners:** *What do you need in order to feel safe, respected, and heard in this learning space?*
2. Collect responses via discussion board, shared document, or live poll
3. Synthesize responses into a shared set of community agreements
4. Revisit these agreements throughout the module as needed

Optional Reflection Prompt:

- What does respectful dialogue look like to you when discussing complex or sensitive issues?
- How can you contribute to maintaining a constructive learning environment?

Module Structure:

Warm-Up – Word Association & Reflection

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

Key Concept: Initial perceptions influence understanding; reflection reveals bias.

- Learning Activities:**
- **Word Association Prompt:** What is the first word or phrase that comes to mind when you hear the term “Liberation”?
 - **Optional Activity:**
 - ✕ Facilitators may create a word cloud using learner responses to visualize common themes, patterns, or differences in perceptions. This activity can be revisited at the end of the module to reflect on how learners’ understanding may have evolved.

Part 1: Colonization and Racial Capitalism

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes

Key Concept: Understanding the systemic forces shaping both Black and Palestinian struggles

Learning Activities:

- **Content Overview:**
 - ✧ **Colonization:** Seizure of land, labor, and resources in the Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Arab world
 - ✧ **Racial capitalism:** Exploiting racial hierarchies for economic gain
 - ✧ **Connections:** Slavery, Native displacement, Palestinian dispossession
- **Journal Prompt:** “When you hear the terms ‘colonization’ or ‘racial capitalism,’ what comes to mind? How do you see these forces at work today?”
- **Short Answer:**
 - ✧ *How are colonization and racial capitalism connected globally?*
 - ✧ *Can an economic system be fair if it relies on inequality? Why or why not?*
- **Activity:** Create a timeline linking major events: transatlantic slavery, Nakba, colonization of Africa, U.S. civil rights era

Part 2: Early Twentieth-Century Black American Views on Zionism

Estimated Time: 15 - 20 minutes

Key Concept: Black American perspectives on Zionism shifted in response to global events

Learning Activities:

- **Content Overview:**
 - ✧ **Early 20th century:** Support for Zionism as self-determination
 - ✧ **Biblical identification:** Moses leading Israelites out of slavery resonated with Black Americans
 - ✧ **1948 Nakba:** Forced displacement of Palestinians changed public opinion
 - ✧ **1956 Suez Crisis:** W.E.B. Du Bois critiques Israel as aligned with colonial powers
 - ✧ Growth of Black Muslim groups opposing U.S. wars and intervention
- **Journal Prompt:** “What does ‘self-determination’ mean to you? Why is it important for oppressed communities?”
- **Short Answer Ideas:**
 - ✧ How did the Nakba affect Black American perspectives on Zionism?
 - ✧ Why were Black Muslim groups critical of U.S. military involvement abroad?
- **Sentence Starter**
 - ✧ *Learning from historical shifts can help activists today by...*
 - ✧ *Religion and cultural narratives may shape political thinking and solidarity by influencing how people...*

Part 3: Malcolm X, SNCC, and the Black Panthers

Estimated Time: 25 - 30 minutes

Key Concept: Key leaders and organizations forged Black-Palestinian solidarity

Learning Activities:

- **Content Overview:**
 - ✧ **Malcolm X:** From Nation of Islam to orthodox Islam; travels in Africa, Asia, and Palestine
 - ✧ **Zionist Logic article:** Colonialism, double standards, and “Zionist dollarism”
 - ✧ **Ethel Minor:** SNCC editor, 1967 article rejecting Zionism

- ✧ **SNCC:** Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee; youth-led civil rights organization
- ✧ **Black Panther Party (BPP):** Free breakfast programs, health clinics, armed patrols against police brutality, global anti-colonial solidarity
- ✧ **BPP International Section in Algeria:** Collaboration with Palestinian liberation fighters
- ✧ **Sekou Odinga:** Tactical training from Palestinians and support in freeing Assata Shakur
- **Journal Prompt:** “What is ‘Zionist dollarism,’ and how might financial power shape politics and liberation movements?”
- **Short Answer Ideas:**
 - ✧ How did Malcolm X link African liberation and Palestinian struggle?
 - ✧ Describe one way shared knowledge strengthens global solidarity.
 - ✧ What lessons do Sekou Odinga’s experiences teach modern activists?
- **Sentence Starter:** *One way the Black Panthers connected community programs to global solidarity was by...*
- **Activity:** Map global solidarity networks of the 1960s and 1970s connecting Black and Palestinian activists.

Part 4: Solidarity Today

Estimated Time: 15 - 20 minutes

Key Concept: Contemporary activism and struggles for liberation continues historic Black-Palestinian solidarity

- Learning Activities:**
- **Content Overview:**
 - ✧ **COINTELPRO:** FBI dismantling SNCC and BPP
 - ✧ **2014 Ferguson protests and Black Lives Matter:** Palestinian Americans’ support
 - ✧ **Dream Defenders (2017):** Youth visit West Bank, draw parallels with U.S. incarceration of Black American youth
 - ✧ **2025 Global Sumud Flotilla:** Aid to Gaza; Chris Smalls experiences racialized oppression worse than non Black activists
 - **Journal Prompts:** “How are systems of oppression in the U.S. and Palestine connected?”
 - **Sentence Starter:**
 - ✧ *One connection between historical solidarity and present-day activism is...*
 - ✧ *Past strategies for resistance influence youth movements by...*
 - **Short Answer Ideas:**
 - ✧ Compare the experiences of Black youth in U.S. prisons to Palestinian youth under occupation.
 - ✧ What strategies strengthen international solidarity today?
 - ✧ What is the significance of Sekou Odinga’s training with Palestinians?
 - **Knowledge Check Examples:**
 - ✧ What was the Nakba? *Answer: 1948 mass displacement of Palestinians*
 - ✧ Who wrote Zionist Logic? *Answer: Malcolm X*

Part 5: Honouring the Land – Reflection Activity

Estimated Time: 10 - 15 minutes

Key Concept:

Understanding our relationship to the land can deepen awareness of historical and ongoing displacement.

Learning Activities:

1. Use a resource like Native Land Digital to explore the Indigenous territories where you live.
2. Research local Indigenous communities, their histories, and present-day stewardship efforts.
3. Reflect on how land and water are protected and managed by Indigenous peoples.
 - **Journal Prompt:**
 - ✎ What is your relationship to the land and waters where you live?
 - ✎ What meaningful actions can you take to support their care and preservation?
 - ✎ How will you commit to these actions moving forward?
 - **Sentence Starter:**
 - ✎ Social movements that acknowledge Indigenous histories and stewardship may be more effective because...
 - ✎ Honoring land may help guide actions for justice and solidarity by...

Part 6: Exit Reflection

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

Learning Activities: Students may choose any one of the following formats:

- **Anonymous digital submission** (e.g., Google Form with no name required)
- **Paper reflection slip submitted in a collection box** (no names required if anonymity is preferred)
- **Private journal entry** kept in a notebook or personal document
- **Verbal reflection shared** (if comfortable)
- **Journal Prompt**
 - ✎ One thing I learned
 - ✎ One question I still have
 - ✎ One impactful quote or idea that stuck with me
- **Sentence Starter:** *When movements build solidarity with one another, they can inspire justice efforts by...*

Facilitators should clearly communicate that **learners are not required to identify themselves** unless they choose to do so.

Optional Extension Activities

- **Mini Essay:** “How are Black and Palestinian struggles connected, and what can modern activists learn from these powerful histories?”
- **Case Study Research:** Examine SNCC, BPP, or modern Black-Palestinian collaborations:
 - ✎ Historical context
 - ✎ Strategies used
 - ✎ Outcomes and impact
- **Media Analysis:** Compare media portrayals of U.S. police vs. Israeli military actions; analyze bias, omissions, and framing
- **Creative Project:** Create a timeline, infographic, or digital map connecting key figures, movements, and acts of solidarity

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Colonization:** Stealing land, resources, or labor through violence
 - **Racial Capitalism:** Economic system built on racial hierarchies to generate wealth
 - **Self-Determination:** Right to control one's own future
 - **Zionism:** Belief in a Jewish homeland, in Palestine
 - **Zionist Dollarism:** Strategy of gaining international support via financial and technological aid
 - **Nakba:** Mass displacement of Palestinians during 1948
 - **SNCC:** Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, key Civil Rights organization
 - **BPP:** Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, Black power political and militant organization founded by college students in the US
 - **Solidarity:** Mutual support between groups sharing struggles against oppression
 - **COINTELPRO:** FBI program targeting Black and radical organizations
 - **Palestinian Liberation Movement:** Political, social, and military resistance to displacement and occupation
 - **BDS:** Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions
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