

NON-CLASSROOM ENRICHMENT

ENGAGING IN FAMILY/COMMUNITY EDUCATION

YouTube Film Festival

Film is a powerful medium that helps students or participants immerse themselves in a particular topic or theme in a way that is an artistic and visual representation of events, characters, or other artistic mediums. By using film in the classroom, as a community program, or at home as a family can be an incredible evocative experience with the ability to transform participants into another time, place or perspective. Whether using documentary, short films, or feature films based on fictional or non-fictional events, film is an excellent way to teach and learn about other cultures and societies. The website, **My Jewish Learning**, has a wonderful [overview of Israeli Film](#) that we recommend you look at if you are planning to use film in any setting to teach Israel.

Beyond using individual films with students or community groups, a film festival can be a focus on a specific film-maker, genre or subject matter and is a wonderful way to engage large numbers of community members around a series of topics or issues. Film festivals work best when each film is accompanied by a discussion following the screening or with additional educational materials for audience members to take with them for further learning.

It is imperative when planning to use film, either for a single showing or as part of a film festival, that you familiarize yourself with public performance laws. [An overview can be found here](#). A teacher or educator showing a film to a class of students, where the film is “a regular part of systematic instructional activities,” does not require one to have a performance license, nor does a film program that takes place in a private home. For all other public screenings of a film, your organization will need to obtain a public performance license, the cost of which will vary depending on the age of the film, size of the audience, and the venue where the program is taking place.

[YouTube](#) is a video sharing website that was created in 2005 and which allows users to upload, view, and share videos. **YouTube** is accessible on both traditional computers as well as on mobile devices, like smart phones and tablets. Using **YouTube** as a way to engage participants with film can be an innovative approach to a traditional methodology. **YouTube** also allows anyone to create and post their own films, including having participants video their own responses and reactions to what they have seen, or creating their own works of art, which can then be shared for all participants. With the sophistication of mobile smartphones and their enhanced video capabilities, no expensive equipment is needed to conduct an engaging film program in which participants can both view and create films relating to a particular subject.

YouTube has some specific sites that may be helpful in planning for using the service in educational or communal setting:

[YouTube for Schools](#)

[YouTube Teachers](#)

[YouTube Education](#)

[YouTube Creative Commons](#) – allows you to determine certain videos that can be reused on your participants’ creation

While there is certainly value in having a program like this with a larger audience, this is also a good project to do at home or as part of a family gathering and can be a great way to introduce your children to the wide diversity of different aspects of Israeli culture; moments in Israel history; experience archaeology, geography, or other significant sites; or to hear and see viewpoints of different Israelis. Because most of the offerings on YouTube are short in length, these can be used as wonderful triggers for family discussion at dinner or other family gathering.

[The Virtual Cinema collection of the Spielberg Video Archive at Hebrew University](#) is a wonderful place to start your YouTube journey. The archive has an incredibly diverse collection of 400 films in a variety of subjects dating from 1911 and is hosted on YouTube.

How does one facilitate a **YouTube** film Festival?

1. Select the topic or theme:

In putting together a **YouTube** film festival, the most essential thing to do first is to select the topic that is going to be the focus of the festival. Once you have selected a topic, you can either:

- a. pre-select the films yourself and have them ready to go
- b. Give the participants the topic and then have them search **YouTube** for films that will be applicable and that they wish to “present.” If choosing this option, be careful to make sure that they searches are appropriate and that the participants are properly vetting the source of their selections.

2. Decide on how you are going to show the films to your participants:

Conducting a **YouTube** film festival activity will require some internet connectivity to be able to show the films, so you need to keep that in mind when planning the program. If internet connectivity is an issue for your program, you can also save the videos in advance by using the website, www.keepvid.com, which allows you to save videos in a variety of formats that you could then burn them to a DVD or play in a different manner.

Here are two possible ways that we suggest putting on a **YouTube** film festival activity (or feel free to use your own):

- a. Using a projector and screen to project the films to a whole group audience
- b. Dividing participants into smaller groups to watch the films on smaller devices such as a laptop (or desktop) computer, tablet or even a phone (depending on the size of the groups)

3. Before showing the films, you may want to distribute some background materials about the films, filmmakers (if available) or the topic to the audience. You may also want to begin by asking the participants some opening questions or things to look for while they watch the film(s).

4. Finally after watching the film(s) engage in a discussion about the major themes and topics, focus on what participants learned and their reactions to the film. Revisit the questions or other items you asked them to look at before viewing the film. You can also have participants write some reflection or distribute a [film review chart](#) (the link is to an example from the lesson below) and ask them to fill it out as they watch each of the films either individually or in groups.

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CASE LEARNING ACTIVITY

YOUTUBE FILM FESTIVAL ON CULTURAL INFLUENCES OF CURRENT ISRAELI MUSIC

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The diverse cultural framework that is Israel is a result of the varied different ethnic backgrounds of the country's residents. This diversity is evident in that Israel's Jews hail wide from a variety of regions and backgrounds and have found ways to merge this diverse heritage into the overall fabric of Israeli culture. Nowhere is this more evident than in the family and cultural influences that are impacting the contemporary Israeli musical scene. Once the province of Zionist and collective expression, Israeli music today is more representative of the individual and is influenced by the culture and experiences that each artist brings to his or her work.

In this project, participants will watch three short **YouTube** documentaries highlighting three current Israeli musicians who are representative of this change. Each short film highlights the artists' different ethnic influences, personal backgrounds and experiences, including the influences that previous generations have had on the development of their music. In addition, participants will also view a short interview with an Israeli music professor who discusses some of this shift in the Israeli music scene.

As an extension, depending on the interest and talents of the participants, participants can either create their own music pieces and/or videos for **YouTube** posting that represent their own personal musical connection to Israel. If not working with musicians, these videos can be made from existing **YouTube** content that is provided in [YouTube Creative Commons](#) with participants explaining why they chose the style that they did to represent their connection to Israel.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

Israeli culture is representative of the many diverse elements that make up Israeli society.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What is cultural blending?
- What impact does cultural blending have on creating uniquely Israeli music?
- How are musicians influenced by their personal history?
- How do musicians' works reflect their personal narratives?

OBJECTIVES:

Participants will:

- Watch four short videos
- Engage in discussion about the development of culture in society
- Create their own video (optional) that represents their cultural connection to Israel

TIME RECOMMENDED:

60-90 Minutes

GRADE LEVEL:

Middle School, High School, Young Adults

ASSESSMENT: (OPTIONAL)

Create a video using a smart phone that reflects, in music, your connection to Israel.

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ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES:

Activity One: In putting on a **YouTube** Film festival, you have several options for how participants will see the films. Select the option that works best for your space, group and what resources you have available.

Conducting this activity will require some internet connectivity to be able to show the films, so you need to keep that in mind when planning the program. If internet connectivity is an issue for your program or space, you can also save the videos in advance by using the website, www.keepvid.com, which allows you to save videos in a variety of formats that you could then burn to a DVD or play in a different manner.

Here are two possible ways that we suggest putting on the program (or feel free to use your own):

- a. Using a projector and screen to project the films to a whole group audience
- b. Dividing participants into smaller groups to watch the films on smaller devices such as a laptop (or desktop) computer, tablet or even a phone (depending on the size of the groups)

Before showing the films, some opening questions that you may want to consider asking your audience are:

- What is culture?
- What are some of our assumptions about Israeli culture?
- Is it Western culture or Eastern culture?
- Is it a "melting pot" culture or a "salad bowl" culture?
- Is it a multicultural/pluralistic society?
- Is it a secular society or a traditional one?
- What are some intercultural experiences?
- Have you ever moved from one country to another and found the experience to be difficult?

Once you have decided on the best way to show the participants the films, begin the program by welcoming everyone and explaining that you will be watching three short films from YouTube that detail three different contemporary Israeli musicians: [Mor Karbasi](#), [The Idan Raichel Project](#), and [Yemen Blues](#). Each of these musicians brings a different approach to infusing their personal heritage and culture into their music to create their own unique sound.

At this time distribute the [film review chart](#) and ask participants to fill it out as they watch each of the films either individually or in groups.

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ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES:

Activity One (continued):

Show the following three films:

- [Yemen Blues](#) - a six minute video featuring interviews and music of Yemen Blues
- [The Idan Raichel Project](#) - a seven minute story of The Idan Raichel Project
- [Mor Karbasi](#) - an 11:25 minute documentary of Mor Karbasi

Activity Two: After screening the films, allow for participants to provide some instant reaction: What did they like /not like in terms of what they saw? (This can also be done after each one of the films as opposed to after all three have been screened.)

After the initial discussion, refer to the film review charts that the participants completed. What did the participants identify as the cultural influences of each musician? What did they see in terms of how this culture is reflective of Israeli society as a whole? What can they learn about Israel from these three musicians?

Activity Three: After looking at the cultural influences of the three current Israeli artists, have participants watch the video, [Did Pop Culture “Kill” Israeli Folklore Music](#). This five minute film is a news interview with Israeli Music Professor Eitan Avitzur from Bar Ilan University. Professor Avitzur discusses the change in Israeli musical expression from the Zionist ideal of the early period to the more personal expression that exists today including the wide variety of influences on Israeli music.

After viewing the film, have participants discuss: How does Avitzur’s analysis of Israeli music match up or differ from what they saw in the three short musician clips? How is this similar or different from their understanding and appreciation of American music?

This also a good place to re-examine the questions about culture that were asked before the films – Has anyone’s perspective changed after hearing from these musicians? Been reinforced?

Activity Four: Assessment

Working in small groups, participants should create their own 3-5 minute video using a smart phone that reflects, in music, their connection to Israel. How do they express their personal culture and background into this connection to Israel?

The video can include original musical expression or compilations of other material that participants feel represents their own culture and attachment to Israel. These videos can be made from existing **YouTube** content that is provided in [YouTube Creative Commons](#) with participants explaining why they chose the style that they did to represent their connection to Israel.

Upload the videos to **YouTube** and share them with the world.