

ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

CASE LEARNING ACTIVITY

NETANYAHU'S SPEECH AT BAR-ILAN UNIVERSITY, 2009

LESSON OVERVIEW

On June 14, 2009, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu delivered a thirty minute foreign policy speech at [Bar-Ilan University](#), Israel's second largest university. [The speech](#) briefly touched on the looming Iranian threat (as it stood in 2009) and the global economic crisis, but its main focus was on the Prime Minister's vision for a resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Netanyahu's speech broke from earlier notions of a two state solution put forth by two of his predecessors, Ariel Sharon and Eud Olmert, in that he offered details for a Palestinian State, while assuring that such a state be completely demilitarized.

In this lesson, students will both read the text of the speech and watch it on video. Students will engage in a variety of diverse analytical activities related to the speech and its policy implications. As an assessment, students will choose from some of the solutions offered by the Prime Minister and create a plan based on their understanding of the speech and the current situation.

For more information on the speech, [read CIE's analysis and introduction](#) on the CIE website.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

The two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict has many complex layers and unresolved variables that have prevented it from becoming a reality.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What are the Prime Minister's prerequisites in working towards a two-state solution?
- What have been the barriers that have prevented the two-state solution from becoming a reality?
- What is the difference between an economic peace and a political peace?
- What are the "commitments" that Israel and the Palestinians are obligated to?

OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Analyze a world leader's speech through note taking, research, and by creating a word cloud.
- Understand the basic history of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.
- Identify elements of a speaker's arguments.
- Simulate how a proposal becomes a policy

TIME RECOMMENDED:

Four 45 Minute Sessions

GRADE LEVEL:

Grades 6-8, 9-12, Adult Education

ASSESSMENT:

Students will create a policy plan from one of the proposals outlined in the Prime Minister's speech.

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ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES:

Activity One: Why do leaders give speeches?

1. Begin with a general discussion of why leaders deliver speeches. Ask students to list the reasons why leaders deliver speeches and for what purpose – this can be done as a whole class activity or in groups.
2. After the class has generated a list of reasons for a leader to deliver a speech, have each group choose one reason and develop a framework for what is needed in order for the leader to deliver that particular type of speech. (what type of audience, venue, broadcast on tv or radio – and why does it matter, type of dress, a speech to a group of union auto workers on worker's rights might require something more casual than a foreign policy address before a joint session of congress)

One of the reasons that leaders give speeches is to outline their vision for the future. On June 14, 2009, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu delivered a 30 minute speech to an invited audience at Bar-Ilan University and a live television audience in Israel. The speech, which was timed to coincide with the evening news, was billed as a major statement on foreign policy, and the Prime Minister had personally urged President Barack Obama, who had delivered a [major address ten days earlier in Cairo](#), to watch.

Activity Two: Introducing Netanyahu's Speech with Word Clouds

1. After they have completed the introductory exercise, have students generate a list of 15 terms that they would expect to find in a foreign policy speech given in 2009 by the Prime Minister of Israel. After they have generated their list, they should rank the words in importance/emphasis from 1-15. After they have ranked their list, they should weight it by repeating the most important word, 15 times, the second most 14, down to the least important word which should be typed 1 time. After they have weighted their list, students should copy and paste their list into a tag cloud generator, either www.wordle.net or www.tagxedo.com.
2. After the students have created their own word clouds, copy the text of [Netanyahu's speech](#) and paste it into the same tag cloud generator that the students used. (This can either be done by the students in their groups or as a whole class activity using the interactive white board or projector). Have students compare the word clouds of the actual speech to the ones they created from their hypothetical terms. How are the two word clouds similar or different? What, if anything surprised them about the two word clouds?
3. Finally ask each group to write a 2-3 sentence predictive summary of Netanyahu's speech based on the word cloud of the speech.

Activity Three: The Speech

1. Distribute copies of the speech to the students. You can either have students read the text of the speech in groups, [or follow along as you play a Youtube clip of it](#) (the Youtube clip has simultaneous English translation). *If they are able watch and listen – then see number 2 below; if not proceed to number 3.*
2. As they are watching and listening to the speech:
 - a. What is different about seeing the speech versus reading it?
 - b. What can you tell about the speaker from his voice and delivery?

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ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES:

- c. How does the audience respond?
3. After they have read/listened to the speech, have them complete the following two activities related to it. You may choose to select only of the assignments, or they can be broken up over two in-class sessions, as a homework project, or divided among several groups with group completing one of the tasks.

a. *Who are the people mentioned in the speech?*

In the speech, Netanyahu refers to several key players who have been involved in the history of Israel and the conflict. People mentioned include: Menachem Begin, Anwar Sadat, President Obama, President Mubarak, King Abdullah, Yoni Netanhayu, Theodore Herzl, David Ben Gurion, Gilad Shalit, Yitzhak Rabin, and King Hussein. Have students pick 3-5 of the people mentioned in the speech and create a visual collage of them, including photos, and their role/significance in the history of Israel /the conflict.

b. *Connecting the Speech to Jewish Text*

The prime minister makes several references to both Biblical and liturgical texts, some more explicitly than others. Have students identify these references, find the appropriate passages or prayers, and create a visual collage of the text, including their connection/interpretation by the Prime Minister in the speech. Is the connection relevant to the original context of the text?

Digging Deeper:

1. Throughout the speech, the Prime Minister mentions “recognition” as a necessary precursor for peace. Have students research the history of Israel’s attempts at recognition by outside forces, including in its early and pre-state days, and discuss why it is such a crucial element of any final agreement.
2. What “commitments” are needed and from whom, according to the Prime Minister? Do you agree or disagree with them?
3. How does resettling Paelstinian refugees undermine Israel’s existence as the state of the Jewish people? How does the Prime Minister propose to resolve this issue? Have students research about how, “Tiny Israel successful ly absorbed tens of thousands of Jewish refugees,” from Arab countries.
4. “The right of the Jewish people to a state in the land of Israel does not derive from the catastrophes that have plagued our people.” Why is this statement so important? Why do the Jewish people have a right to a state n Israel?

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ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES:

Digging Deeper (continued):

5. What do students think was the reaction to this speech among Palestinians? Have students craft a Palestinian editorial or speech response to Netanyahu's speech. After they have created something, have them research actual responses to Netanyahu's speech and compare them to their own Palestinian responses

Activity Four: Assessment

Choose one of the proposals outlined by Netanyahu in the speech (ex: developing industrial areas to create tourist sites on p. 2 of speech or creating economic partnerships) and develop a policy plan that:

1. Addresses the concept as outlined in the speech
2. Answers the other pre-conditions for peace that are outlined in the speech
3. Addresses a vision for a peaceful solution to the conflict.