

Everyone Makes Mistakes: An Israel Studies Curriculum for Older Learners
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This curriculum has been tested in the 2016-2017 B'nai Israel Congregation Talmud Torah 9th/10th grade combined class during the spring of 2017. We had a total of six classes that averaged 40 minutes in length. This course would be even more effective given more time/sessions. There were two 9th grade and eight 10th grade students in the class, for a total of ten.

I observed the classes while one of our faculty members, Jacklyn Krisch, taught the class for me. She worked with me so she would understand the goals of the lessons, including the idea that the students appreciate that the relationship between Israelis and Palestinians is complicated and is affected by the actions taken by their leaders throughout history.

My goal in writing this curriculum, supported by the professional leadership at B'nai Israel Congregation, was to offer the students tools to intelligently consider how the actions taken by leadership on both sides of the conflict help or hurt the chances of a peaceful outcome. These tools were offered in the form of historical fact, as it relates to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For the students to be able to make their own decision regarding the possibility of peaceful coexistence, the information was taught without including the educators' own opinions so as not to sway the students with any emotional narrative. Providing the students with a range of facts was the only way they could develop an answer that would ring true for them, and create an atmosphere of honest debate on the issue of peaceful coexistence. You will find an evaluation tool at the end of the materials to use in order to assess if you met these goals.

EVERYONE MAKES MISTAKES

Enduring Understanding

The relationship between Arab Israelis, Palestinian groups, and Jewish Israelis is complex. Some decisions made by the Israeli government and separately by the Palestinian leadership have created an atmosphere for their citizens that make peaceful coexistence difficult at times.

Description

Focused on teens and/or adult education, students will learn that the environment in Israel can be difficult for Palestinians as well as Israelis. They will learn about the locations of the Palestinian towns around Jerusalem, as well as examine the settlement issue in the West Bank. Students will be able to consider ideas for how Israelis can coexist peacefully with Palestinians.

Students will be able to:

- Articulate their opinion whether there can be peaceful coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians given the current situation.
- Consider what needs to happen for there to be peaceful coexistence.

Class 1: Separating Myth from Reality

Understanding the Geography of Israel

History of the Borders 1948-1967; 1967-2006; 2006-present

Lesson Plan #1

- What does the sign that is in front of B'nai Israel's building that says "We Support Israel" mean?
- What is Israel struggling for, since it already has a state?
- Why does it seem that other people don't want Israel to have a state?
- Who do you think would be considered Israel's 'enemies'? What about Israel's 'friends'?

Introduce the class and summarize that it will be exploring the history and modern day ramifications of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and will look at the conflict from multiple perspectives.

Israel's borders:

- Using a current Map of Israel, ask the students if this is what Israel has always looked like? Has it always been 'the size of New Jersey'?
- Go through the history of the borders for 1948-1967, 1967-2006, 2006-present: show map of each period, who was in control of what territory, why it changed (wars, treaties, annexations).
 - Including 1980 annexation of Gaza and East Jerusalem, 1981 annexation of Golan Heights.
 - Annexation verses conquered land- what is the difference? Conquered land, Israel has jurisdiction of the land, but the residents of the land may or may not be Israeli citizens. Annexed land is fully controlled by Israel, and its laws and people living in that area are citizens of Israel.

- Borders are artificial, discuss how politics plays a role in determining borders and who accepts those borders. Is this how it should be? Are other countries held to this same standard of needing the international community to OK its borders (ex. Russia's annexation of Ukraine's port city).

Class 2: The History of the Relationship Between Jews and Arabs in Israel

- Important years:
 - 1860-1900
 - 1900-1945 (1925 uprising by Arabs against yishuv)
 - 1945-48-Jewish Terrorists; beginning of movement towards establishment of state; Mossad, Haganah
 - 1948-1970-War for Independence, Six Day War (Recapture Jerusalem, 1967)
1970-Present-Yom Kippur War 1973, Intifada #1 ('87-'93), #2 ('00-'05);
Iron Dome 2014

Lesson Plan #2

Timeline of the Arab Israeli relations (pre-1948 events were dropped in the interest of time)

- Review the War of Independence- who was fighting and how the land was divided before and afterwards. Underline the reality that by going to war, the Palestinian people lost much more than they expected.
- Go through the 1967 war and highlight the new Israeli policy of taking land as buffer zones. Discuss how Israel gained Jerusalem and took over the West Bank from Jordan. Egypt's continuation with their War of Attrition on the Sinai Peninsula. Discuss importance of the Suez Canal and why it made other world powers (like the US) get involved in the peace process.
- Go through Yom Kippur war and how it led to Egypt signing the first peace treaty with Israel, recognizing the State of Israel and getting the Sinai Peninsula back. The start of the land-for-peace strategy.

Class 3: Arab Israelis and Palestinians

What is the difference between them? Look at the citizens of East Jerusalem and those living in the West Bank/Gaza. Arab Israelis and the Knesset-what are the rights of citizens? SEE POLITICAL PARTY INFORMATION RESOURCES FROM HEBREW UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR REUVEN HAZAN:

CLASSIFYING PARTIES INTO POLITICAL CAMPS

DOVES/LEFT	29	HAWKS/RIGHT	44
Zionist Union	24	Likud	30
Meretz	5	Jewish Home	8
		Israel Our Home	6
	SOCIO-ECONOMIC CENTER	21	
	Yesh Atid	11	
	Kulanu	10	
ARAB MINORITY	13	ULTRA-RELIGIOUS	13
Joint List	13	Shas	7
		UTJ	6

PARTIES IN THE ISRAELI KNESSET

17 MARCH 2015		
PARTY NAME	VOTES (%)	SEATS (%)
Likud	984,966 (23.4)	30
Zionist Union	786,075 (18.7)	24
Joint List	443,837 (10.5)	13
Yesh Atid	370,850 (8.8)	11
Kulanu	315,202 (7.5)	10
Jewish Home	283,559 (6.7)	8
Shas	241,200 (5.7)	7
Israel Our Home	215,083 (5.1)	6
United Torah Judaism	211,826 (5.0)	6
Meretz	165,292 (3.9)	5

Relationship of oil rich Arab countries to the Palestinian Arabs? What reasons do they give for not helping the Palestinians? Why are they still refugees where they live? *Include the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) definition material

<https://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/2010011791015.pdf>

Lesson Plan #3

Arab Israelis and Palestinians

- Discuss that the term Arab can refer to a Muslim or a Christian, meaning that they are from the Arabian Peninsula or the Middle East/North Africa.
- Who are the Israelis- explain the different non-Jewish groups living in Israel: Arab Muslims, Arab Christians (Greek Orthodox, Catholic Orthodox), Bedouin, Druze, Circassians, Armenians, etc. Explain how they get full citizenship and representation in the Knesset. Explain how the Knesset works and the different parties and how they represent different groups and ideologies. Arab Muslims do get a say in the government and how they are governed. Include that there is no mandatory military service for non-Jews.

- Who are Palestinians- Historically living in the land when the 1948 war happened and their descendants, or by choice.
- Who governs the Palestinians? History- Fatah (started from Egypt to harass Israel as a terrorist organization) controlling West Bank and Gaza. Black September (Fatah trying to start a civil war against Jordanian King and being exiled from Jordan and going to Lebanon). 2006 Elections voting in Hamas, Fatah rejecting Hamas and splitting the leadership of the Palestinians between the West Bank (Fatah -> Palestinian Authority) and Gaza (Hamas). Hezbollah in Lebanon as a terrorist organization with backing from Syria and Iran.

Class 4: West Bank Settlements

What are the implications? Who are the Jewish settlers? Many of them are radical right wing religious people.

- History of fighting against peace with the Palestinians
- Assassination of Rabin; B'tselem as an organization
- 1973-Israel has security concerns for land as a buffer; why was government encouraging citizens to create this buffer? What is the biblical justification for being in that part of the Land-Joshua, Samuel, and Saul, lived in what is called the "occupied territories"; Jewish archaeology; biblical birthright
 - 1. evacuation of Sinai in 1978; Jewish settlements had begun on the Sinai Peninsula
 - 2. unilateral Gaza withdrawal in 2006; settlers removed from land forcefully by IDF-Ariel Sharon
 - Examine what is happening in 2017

These are the experiences of unilateral withdrawal when we do what the Arabs want; **no more secure; worse for southern Israel since the Jews moved out of Gaza. The settlers believe they are serving as a buffer, protecting the eastern part of Israel.**

Makes Israel less popular in international community. Other countries have done the same and not had the same criticism over time.

Lesson Plan #4

Using the article by Ken Stein on the consequences we see today as a result of the Six Day War, plus a *Frontline* video on the mood in Israel surrounding the Oslo Accord negotiated by Yitzhak Rabin, the class will examine the "in-fighting" among Jewish Israelis and how each side has its own differing ideas and the consequences of their behavior.

- Open with Ken Stein article - <https://israeled.org/june-1967-war-actions-unfinished-consequences/>
- Talk about how Egyptian in-fighting led to the major losses of territory. Then remind the class how there was in-fighting with the Palestinians (Fatah) and Jordan, and then between Fatah and Hamas- each time resulting in more and more division of Palestinian territory.
- Transition to the Israeli side- briefly explain the Oslo accords and how Israel agreed to start withdrawing from land (Gaza and Jericho) and dividing up the West Bank (show Israeli vs. Palestinian villages map of greater Jerusalem)
- Show *Frontline* clip, <https://youtube.com/watch?v=JhMF30VLZCA> (article that accompanies the

show, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/netanyahu-rabin-and-the-assassination-that-shook-history/>

- Explain how Benjamin Netanyahu (Bibi) and the far right were against giving up land at all- would not give land for peace (which was Rabin's method). Note that after Rabin assassination there was an uptick in terrorist attacks and Bibi was able to take power saying he would be hard on terrorists.
- Talk about the settlements- who are the settlers, why are they there? How do Palestinians feel about the settlers? Give examples of Israeli military going into Palestinian towns in the West Bank and clashes.

Class 5: How Do We Live with Those That Want to Destroy Us?

- History of Palestinian attacks on Israel; Intifada #1 & 2, PLO, Hamas, etc.
 - Gaza 2014; Iron Dome technology
 - Iran Deal 2015

Lesson Plan #5

Continuation of Session on the West Bank Settlements

- What is the West Bank? Maps: Trading Land for Peace, Security Fence, Jerusalem neighborhoods.
 - Disputed territory - Taken over by Israel in the 1967 War, military controlled, pulled out military as part of the Oslo accords (1995) in major West Bank towns, 2002 operation - during the second intifada the military went back in, security fence (2003).
 - Show video of the security fence and going through a checkpoint.
 - Palestinian-Israeli daily interactions - work visa, medical visas, 1-day peace visa (recent terrorist attacks).
- Who are the Israeli Settlers?
 - right wing political settlers (Hebron) citing biblical and archeological evidence of Jewish ownership
 - religious Zionists- living on the land
 - housing issues
 - permit and building freezes
 - Evacuation of Amona (2017)- Palestinian claims on the land

Class #6-Peaceful Coexistence?

Government policies over time-have they helped or hurt a possible solution?

- Review:
 - Terrorism of Haganah, Mossad
 - Six Day War
 - Intifada-what provoked the Palestinians?
 - History of Settlements
 - Jerusalem

Due to a gap in class weeks, the above outline was adjusted from the original outline and focused on reviewing the thrust of each side's argument and then spending time on reflection and evaluation for the 50 minute session.

Lesson Plan #6

Show two videos (5 minutes each) of the two polar opposite sides, one the extremist Palestinian side, one the extremist Israeli side, and give the students time to reflect and discuss in between each. Then show the class a *Seeds of Peace* video, and reflect and discuss the possibility of peaceful coexistence.

The outline is:

- Palestinian story of Israel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r002cgmozjA>
 - Write down reflections and questions, discuss as a group for a few minutes.
- Israeli story of Israel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngFYOLokmal>
 - Write down reflections and questions, discuss as a group for a few minutes.
 - What are some of the discrepancies between the videos?
 - What perspective of the story is each trying to get you to focus on?
 - Do the videos cancel each other out?
- Show the *Seeds of Peace* Video:
<https://www.seedsofpeace.org/programs/developing-leaders/middle-east/>
 - What is their method of creating coexistence?
 - Does that solve the whole problem? Does coexistence = peace?
- Do evaluations and reflect as a group.

Note: We had all ten students in the class for the last night, thus received reflections from everyone.

RESOURCES

- Timeline of Key Events since 1967
- The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) definition material -
<https://www.unrwa.org/userfiles/2010011791015.pdf>
- Maps - <https://israeled.org/resources/maps/>
<http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/AboutIsrael/Maps/Pages/Israel%20in%20Maps.aspx>
 - State over time - <https://www.vox.com/a/maps-explain-the-middle-east#map-16>
<https://www.vox.com/a/maps-explain-the-middle-east#map-17>
<https://israeled.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Israel-and-her-neighbors-2014.jpg>
 - Jerusalem municipal borders-green line
 - Settlements/West Bank
- Information on B'tselem, <http://www.btselem.org>
- Israel political parties coalitions list from Reuven Hazan
- *Frontline* Documentary on the Israeli Political Environment Surrounding the Oslo Accords, <https://youtu.be/JhMF30VLZCA>
- Palestinian story of Israel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r002cgmozIA>
- Israeli story of Israel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngFYOLOkmal>
- *Seeds of Peace* Video: <https://www.seedsofpeace.org/programs/developing-leaders/middle-east/>

EVALUATION OF ISRAEL STUDIES CURRICULUM

1. Description

The description of the curriculum for this class is:

The students will learn that the environment in Israel can be difficult for Palestinians as well as Israelis. They will learn about the locations of the Palestinian towns around Jerusalem, as well as examine the settlement issue in the West Bank. Students will be able to consider ideas for how Israelis can coexist peacefully with Palestinians.

Do you think the above description is accurate for what you learned? Why or why not?

2. Goals

Do you feel that you were given enough information to consider the following?

- Articulate an/your opinion whether there can be peaceful coexistence between Israelis and the Palestinians given the current situation.
- Consider what needs to happen for there to be peaceful coexistence.

Please share your reflections on the above goal; can there be peaceful coexistence? How can that happen?

3. Course of Study

Do you believe the information you learned in the course deepened your understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Why or why not?

Was the information you learned valuable to you? Why?

4. Do you have any additional suggestions or thoughts?