

Crafting a Declaration

Before students read the Israeli Declaration of Independence, divide them into groups. Each group will create a section (1-3 paragraphs) of a draft Declaration. They may use the U.S. Declaration of Independence as a guide. The sections should answer the following:

- What is the connection of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel?
- What legal right do the Jews have to declare an independent state?
- What will the state be called, and how will it function?
- What rights will citizens have in the new state?
- What message should be delivered to Jews around the world?
- What message should be delivered to the Arabs in Palestine and surrounding countries?

Have each group present their sections to the rest of the class. This could also be done as an expanded activity where you engage members of the community to hear the students present their case for a Jewish state in May 1948.

After the students have shared their draft sections, compare them with the actual contents of the Declaration. They can engage in a discussion about the key points.

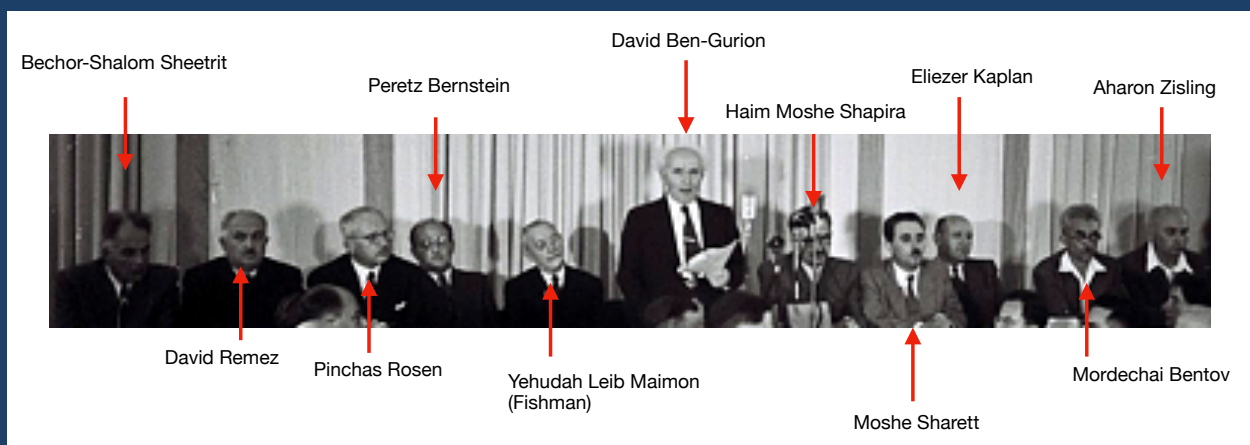
Now that the students have read and discussed the text of the Israeli Declaration, have them create a news report about the Declaration, either in writing or on video using smartphone.

Research Project

Here is David Ben-Gurion reading the Declaration of Independence on May 14, 1948. We have added the names of those who were sitting on the dais with Ben-Gurion for this historic moment. Assign students one of the individuals and have them research the individual (starting at <https://israeled.org/the-lists-of-75>) and present what they learned.

Some questions to guide them:

- Where was the person born?
- When did they make aliyah?
- What contributions did they make before the establishment of the state? After?

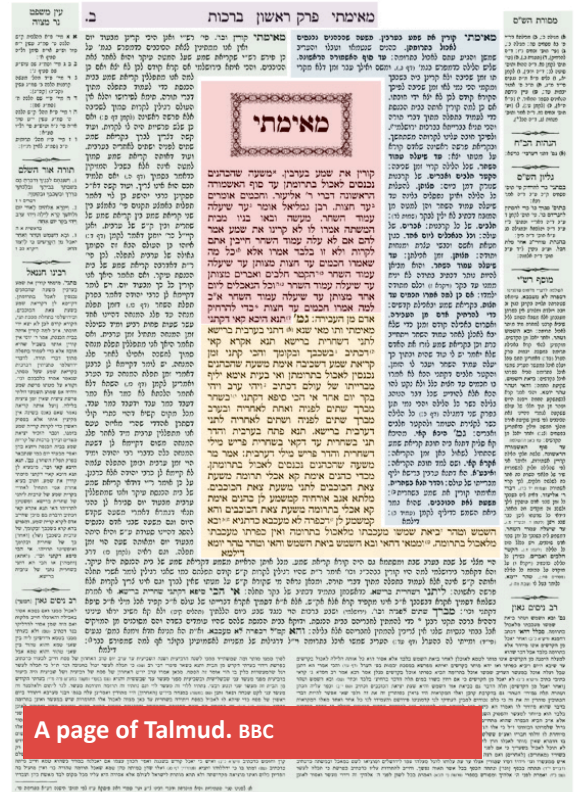


Tractate Israel

A tractate is a section of the Talmud, the collection of oral and written Jewish laws and rabbinic discussions.

A traditional page of Talmud has several elements:

- **Mishnah (pink)** — The oral law that was first written in Jerusalem around 200 C.E.
- **Gemara (yellow)** — A collection of discussions on the Mishnah among rabbis between 200 and 500 C.E. There were two editions. The first was compiled in Jerusalem (Jerusalem Talmud) around 400. The second was compiled in Babylonia (Babylonian Talmud or just the Talmud) about 100 years later. The Mishnah and Gemara together make up the Talmud.
- **Rashi (blue) and Tosafot (green) commentaries** — Notes and discussions on the Mishnah and Gemara by Rashi, an 11th century French rabbinic scholar, and the Tosafot (literally, additions), who were leading scholars from the 12th and 13th centuries.



A page of Talmud. BBC

In this activity, we use the text of Israel’s Declaration of Independence to create a Talmudic tractate on the State of Israel. Students use phrases from the document to form the Mishnah and Gemara. They then share their pages with others to create their own commentaries.

Divide students into groups. Provide each group with the Talmud template and the Declaration of Independence phrases found on the next two pages, or create a communal page on a shared-wall program such as Padlet. If you want to make the activity more in depth, don’t give students the phrases, but have them analyze and choose their own key phrases from the actual Declaration.

In creating their Mishnah, students should choose the phrases they feel are most important for what Israel represents for them. If they wish to add questions or comments (Gemara), they should do so in the box. They will then share their pages with other students. Once students have shared their pages or posted them to a community site, other students can add commentary and questions on the outside margins (Rashi and Tosafot).

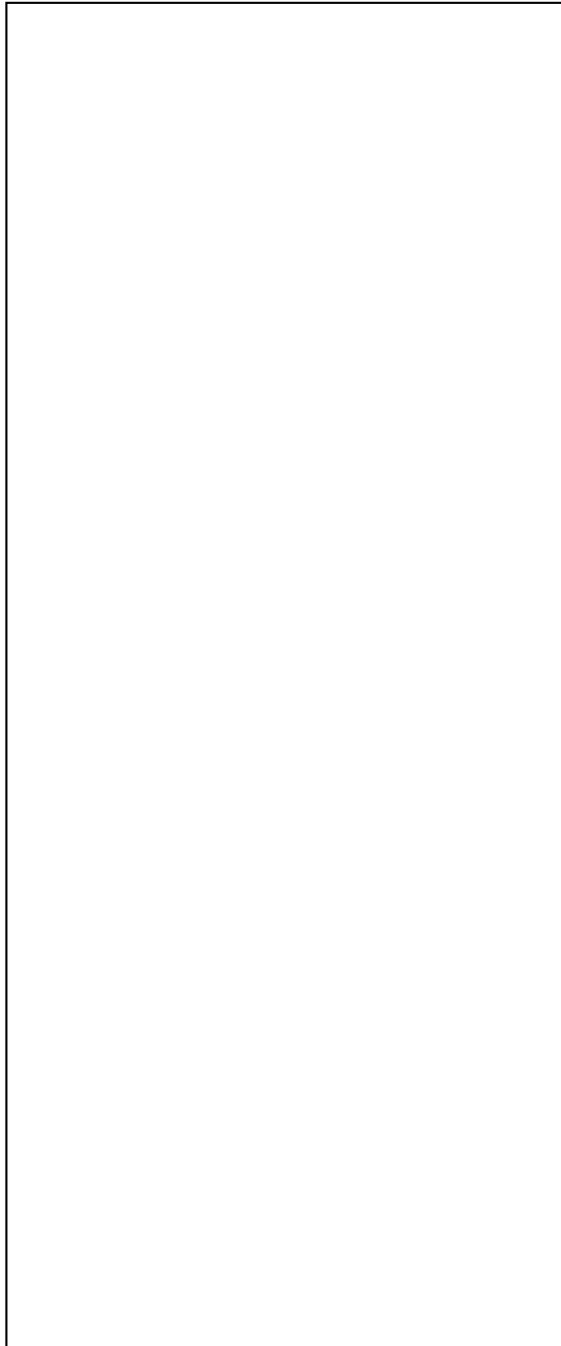
Discuss: Why did they choose the phrases that they did? Why do they think these phrases were included in Israel's Declaration of Independence?

Intentions vs. outcomes: What happens when we fail to live up to ideals? What happens when we accomplish a goal?

Additional activity: Distribute each label to a group of students to define or give an example of the phrase from the document. For example: Birthplace of the Jewish People — The Temple in Jerusalem was the center of religious and political life for Jews in the ancient world.

מסכת ישראל

Tractate Israel



The birthplace of the
Jewish People

It will ensure complete equality of
social and political rights to all its
inhabitants irrespective of
religion, race or sex

Here their spiritual, religious and
political identity were shaped

It will guarantee freedom of
religion, conscience, language,
education and culture.

The people kept faith throughout
their dispersion and never ceased
to pray and hope for their return.

It will safeguard the holy places
of all religions.

In 5657 (1897) the First Zionist
Congress ... proclaimed the
right of the Jewish people to
national rebirth.

It will take steps to bring about
the economic union of the whole
of Eretz Israel.

[The right to rebuild a national
home] was recognized in the
Balfour Declaration of the 2nd
November 1917.

We appeal ... to the Arab
inhabitants of the State of Israel
to preserve peace and participate
in the upbuilding of the State on
the basis of full and equal
citizenship.

The massacre of millions of Jews
in Europe was another clear
demonstration of the urgency of
solving the problem of its
homelessness.

We extend our hands to all
neighboring states and their
peoples in an offer of peace and
good neighborliness.

On 29th November 1947, the
United Nations General Assembly
passed a resolution calling for the
establishment of a Jewish State in
Eretz Israel.

We appeal to the Jewish people
throughout the Diaspora to rally
round the Jews of Eretz Israel in
the tasks of immigration and
upbuilding.

This right is the natural right of
the Jewish people to be masters
of their own fate, like all other
nations, in their own sovereign
State.

With trust in the Rock of Israel.

The State of Israel will be open
for Jewish immigration and for
the Ingathering of the Exiles.

It will be based on freedom,
justice and peace as envisaged by
the prophets of Israel.

Then and Now

Israel and Jewish Peoplehood

For each of the years listed, how would you respond to the following?

You can write single terms, sentences or quotes.

	1897 (First Zionist Congress)	1948 (Israel's Independence)	2023 (Today)
Historic What connects the Jewish people to the land of Israel? What historic events justify Jews seeking/declaring/having a state?			
Legal What gives Jews the legal right to seek/declare/have a state?			
Operation How will the state function? What rights will citizens have in the new state?			
Other What else do you think should be included in a Declaration of Independence for a Jewish state?			

TEXT ANALYSIS

Part 1 — Stanzas 1-7: The Biblical, Historical and International Legal Case

ERETZ-YISRAEL [(Hebrew) - The Land of Israel] was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained to statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal Book of Books.

After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people remained faithful to it throughout their dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom.

Impelled by this historic and traditional attachment, Jews strove in every successive generation to re-establish themselves in their ancient homeland. In recent decades they returned in their masses. Pioneers, *ma'pilim* [immigrants coming to Eretz-Israel in defiance of restrictive legislation] and defenders, they made deserts bloom, revived the Hebrew language, built villages and towns, and created a thriving community controlling its own economy and culture, loving peace but knowing how to defend itself, bringing the blessings of progress to all the country's inhabitants, and aspiring towards independent nationhood.



In the year 5657 (1897), at the summons of the spiritual father of the Jewish State, Theodor Herzl, the First Zionist Congress convened and proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to national rebirth in its own country.

This right was recognized in the Balfour Declaration of the 2nd November, 1917, and re-affirmed in the Mandate of the League of Nations which, in particular, gave international sanction to the historic connection between the Jewish people and Eretz-Israel and to the right of the Jewish people to rebuild its National Home.

The catastrophe which recently befell the Jewish people - the massacre of millions of Jews in Europe - was another clear demonstration of the urgency of solving the problem of its homelessness by re-establishing in Eretz-Israel the Jewish State, which would open the gates of the homeland wide to every Jew and confer upon the Jewish people the status of a fully privileged member of the comity of nations.

Survivors of the Nazi holocaust in Europe, as well as Jews from other parts of the world, continued to migrate to Eretz Yisrael, undaunted by difficulties, restrictions and dangers, and never ceased to assert their right to a life of dignity, freedom and honest toil in their national homeland.

Part 1 — Stanzas 1-7: The Biblical, Historical and International Legal Case

Activities

A. Biblical Case

- **Discuss: Why and when was Israel the birthplace of the Jewish people?** (*When the land was promised to Abraham, Isaac or Jacob? When the Israelites came forth from Egypt? When they received the Torah and laws? When they established a kingdom? In 1897? 1948? - What makes a people a nation? Do people need a land to be a “nation?”*)
- Distribute the text from Bereishit: How was the land central to the development of the Jewish people?

“And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had parted from him, Raise your eyes and look out from where you are to the north and south, to the east and west, for I give all the land that you see to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, then your offspring too can be counted. Up, walk about the land, through its length and its breadth, for I give it to you.”

-Bereishit (Genesis) 13:14-17

- Are there other places in the Bible that stress this connection between the Land of Israel and the Jewish people? (*See: Genesis 12:1-4; Genesis 12:7; Genesis 26:1-5; Genesis 28:13-15; Exodus 19:35; Leviticus 18:24-30; Leviticus 26:40-45; Deuteronomy 30:1-5*) Discuss: What does it mean to be a “covenant people?”
- What do you think are some of the “cultural values of national and universal significance” that were created by the Jewish people and developed in the land?

B. Historical Case

- Why were Jews dispersed from the land—and how did they maintain their ties during their dispersion?
- How did Jews “keep faith” with Israel after their “dispersion?”

Group Activity: Imagine it is the year 70 and the Jews have just been exiled from Israel by the Romans after the destruction of the Temple. Until now the Temple in Jerusalem was the center of Jewish life and the land of Israel was the center of the Jewish people. All of Jewish life revolved around this physical, political, and religious connection. Now the Temple has been destroyed and the people have been removed from the land.

Your group is charged with needing to come up with strategies to keep the Jewish people together. What should the scattered Jewish communities do now that the Temple has been destroyed and they have been driven from their land? How or why are you going to keep Jews connected to each other and to the land of Israel?

As a group, develop three strategies for connecting Jewish community to the land of Israel.

Possible answers include: **Prayer/Liturgy**, (ex: see the Amidah, Birkat Hamazon) **Practice** (ex: facing Jerusalem when we pray, breaking of a glass at a Jewish wedding to commemorate the Temple), **Holidays** (ex: “next year in Jerusalem” at end of Passover seder, Tu B’shevat, Tisha B’Av), and **Calendar** (ex: fast days, prayer for rain and dew)

- Look at the phrase, “In recent decades, they returned in their masses...” What was influencing Jews to come to Eretz Yisrael at this time? (*Anti-Semitism; Impact of the Haskalah/Enlightenment; ideology*)
- **Activity:** Create a chart, or have a discussion of the five major waves of aliyot that took place between 1880 and 1939 like the one on the next page, and have students fill in the information in each box. [A good source for information can be found here.](#)



Photo: Third Aliyah Pioneers, 1921

Part 1 — Stanzas 1-7: The Biblical, Historical and International/Legal Case

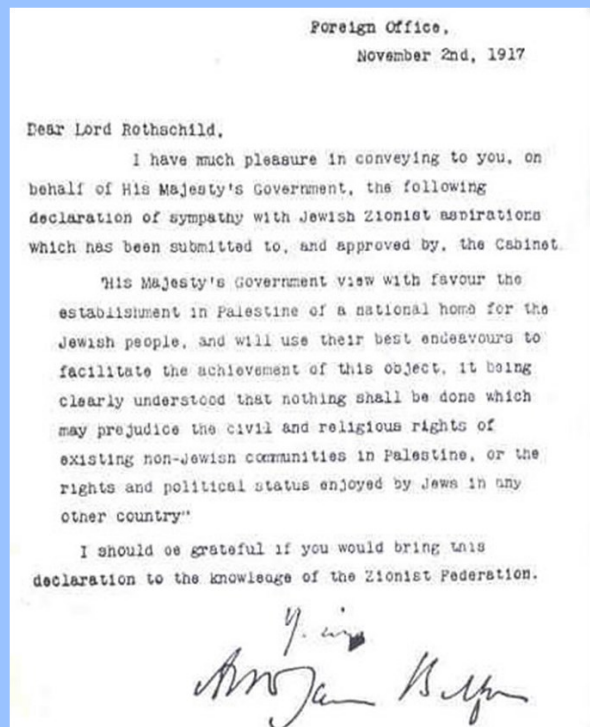
B. Historical Case (continued)

Aliyah	Dates	Estimated Number of Immigrants	Reasons for Immigrating/motivation
1st Aliyah			
2nd Aliyah			
3rd Aliyah			
4th Aliyah			
5th Aliyah			

- **Activity:** What organizations did the early pioneers create in order to establish, “a thriving community, controlling its own economy and culture?” Research organizations such as: Keren Kayemet L’Yisrael - JNF – Jewish National Fund, Keren HaYesod, Technion, Federation of Labor Union (Histadrut), Hebrew University, World Zionist Organization, Jewish Agency, Haganah. How did these organizations lay the foundations for statehood?
- **Activity:** Create a Facebook page for Theodor Herzl. Who were his friends? What might he have written on his “wall” in 1897 after the First Zionist Congress? This can be done artistically on paper or with the help of [Fakebook](#), an online Facebook page generator.

C. International/Legal Case

- **Activity:** Look at the text of the Balfour Declaration (at right) and in the [1922 Mandate for Palestine](#). On July 24, 1922, the League of Nations approved the British Mandate for the administration of the territory of Palestine. Included in the preamble was the text of the Balfour Declaration, giving political legitimacy and international recognition to the Zionist cause. When first sent as a letter, the Balfour Declaration had no international value. When it became the preamble to the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine, it achieved international legitimacy. How so? Why was that important for the Zionists? Why do you think it was referenced in Israel’s Declaration of Independence?
Look at Article 4 of the [Mandate](#)—What did Jewish and Zionist leaders need to do to make the concept of a Jewish state become a reality?
Make a list or discuss the strategies that you think the Zionist organizations employed to build up their presence in Palestine/Eretz Yisrael.



Part 1 — Stanzas 1-7: The Biblical, Historical and International Legal Case

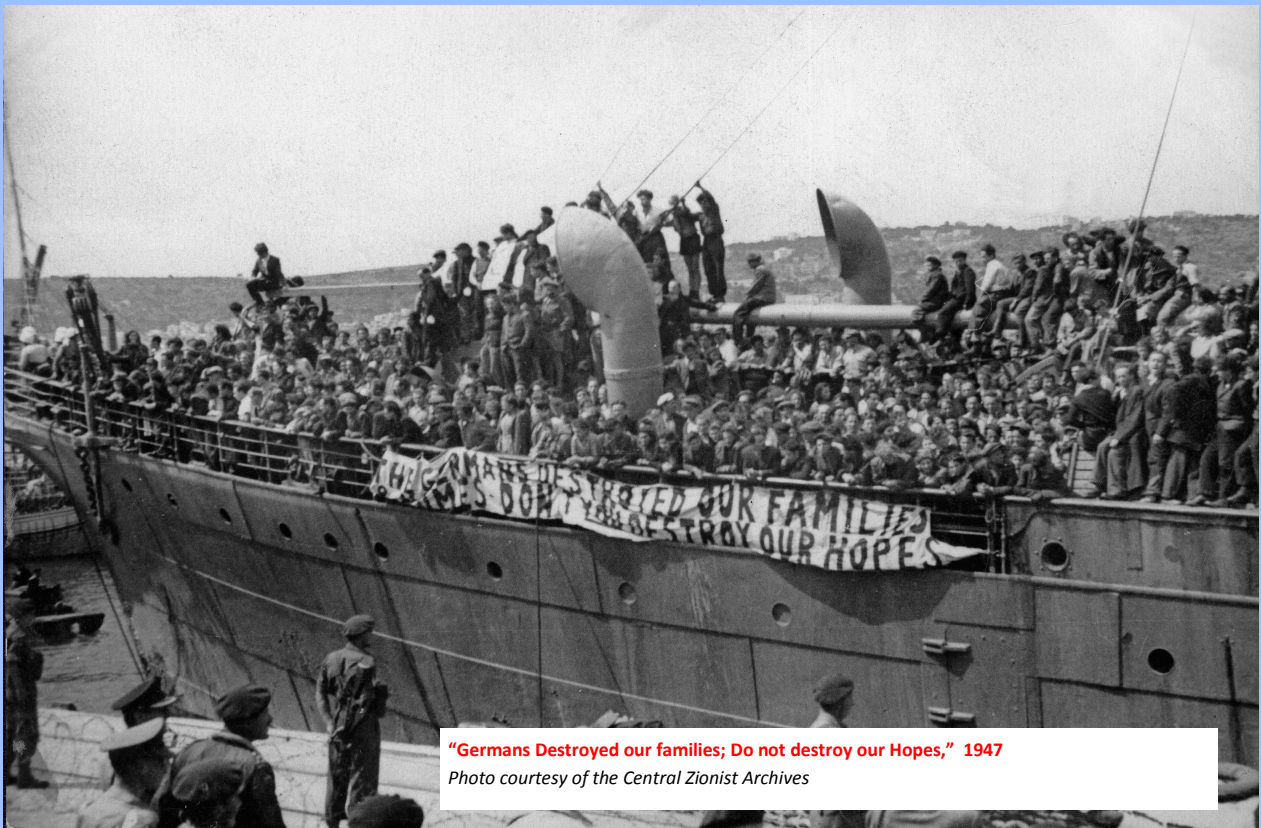
C. International/Legal Case (continued)

- Activity:** What role did the tragedy of the Holocaust have on the development of the Jewish national home? Why might this matter? How does the DOI treat the Holocaust in respect to the International case for the State? **Research how many Jews were in Israel in 1939 before the Holocaust. How many came between 1939-1948? Create a skit or have a discussion that addresses the point that Israel was only created because the world was guilty about the Holocaust. Make the case that a Jewish State was evolving strongly in 1939.**

To prepare for this activity, read [A Zionist State in 1939](#).
- Activity:** The decade of the 1930s in Palestine witnessed sporadic Arab violence against the British and Zionists. Britain finally decided to stop the growth of Jewish physical and population growth by issuing the 1939 White Paper. This changed British policy from supporting Jewish growth to stopping it.

Discuss: Did the British change their policy to appease their Muslim and Arab interests in the Middle East? What was happening in Europe at this time? Why was this a devastating blow to Jews in Europe? Why was this a setback to the national statehood endeavor? What was the reaction to the White Paper in Jewish Palestine? What does it mean in the DOI when it says, “Survivors of the Nazi holocaust in Europe, as well as Jews from other parts of the world, continued to migrate to Eretz Yisrael, undaunted by difficulties, restrictions and dangers?”

Watch and discuss the film [A Free People](#) (23 minutes) from the Spielberg Film Archive at Hebrew University. Read one of the testimonies of those who helped to organize and run Aliyah Bet on the [Palyam website](#). Have learners present their testimonies in a role play activity or by making a poster exhibit for the classroom, school or organization.

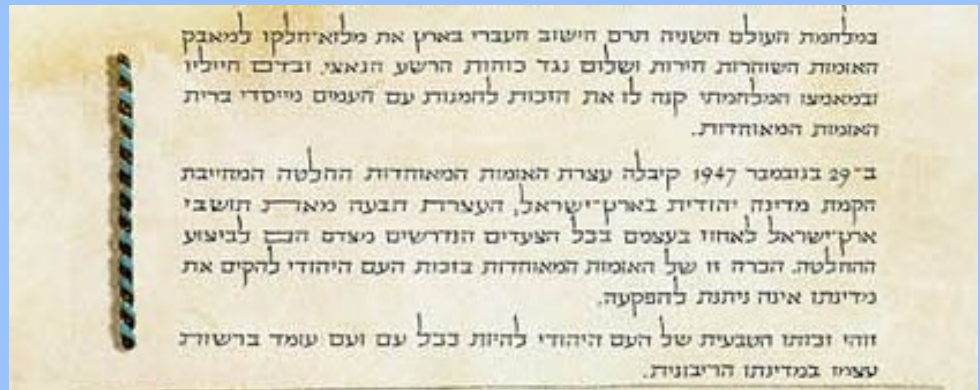


“Germans Destroyed our families; Do not destroy our Hopes,” 1947
 Photo courtesy of the Central Zionist Archives

Part 2 — Stanzas 8-10: The Right of the Jewish People to Claim Statehood

In the Second World War, the Jewish community of this country contributed its full share to the struggle of the freedom-and peace-loving nations against the forces of Nazi wickedness and, by the blood of its soldiers and its war effort, gained the right to be reckoned among the peoples who founded the United Nations.

On the 29th November, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz-Yisrael; the General Assembly required the inhabitants of Eretz-Yisrael to take such steps as were necessary on their part for the implementation of that resolution. This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish people to establish their State is irrevocable.



This right is the natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign State.

Activities

- **Research**—In what ways did the Zionists fight with the British against the Nazis? Create a collage or news report about the various ways that the community helped contribute “its fair share to the struggle of the freedom and peace nations.”
- **Activity:** Learn more about the life [Hannah Senesh](#) (Szenes) the poet and Haganah fighter. She parachuted into Nazi-occupied Europe to rescue Jews and was captured and executed by Hungarian forces. Two sources you may wish to use with students are:
 1. Toward Caesarea (more commonly known as Eli, Eli). [Click here for a YouTube video of the song.](#)

My God, My God, I pray that
these things never end,
The sand and the sea,
The rustle of the waters,
Lightning of the Heavens,
The prayer of Man.

אלי, אלי, שלא יגמר לעולם
החול והים
רשרוש של המים
ברק השמים
תפילת האדם



2. The following words were found written on the walls of her cell after her execution:

One - two - three... eight feet long
Two strides across, the rest is dark...
Life is a fleeting question mark
One - two - three... maybe another week.
Or the next month may still find me here,
But death, I feel is very near.
I could have been 23 next July
I gambled on what mattered most, the dice were cast. I lost.

Part 2 — Stanzas 8-10: The Right of the Jewish People to Claim Statehood

- **Activity:** Have students read the excerpts of the 1947 United Nations Partition Plan.

Excerpt from:

United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181

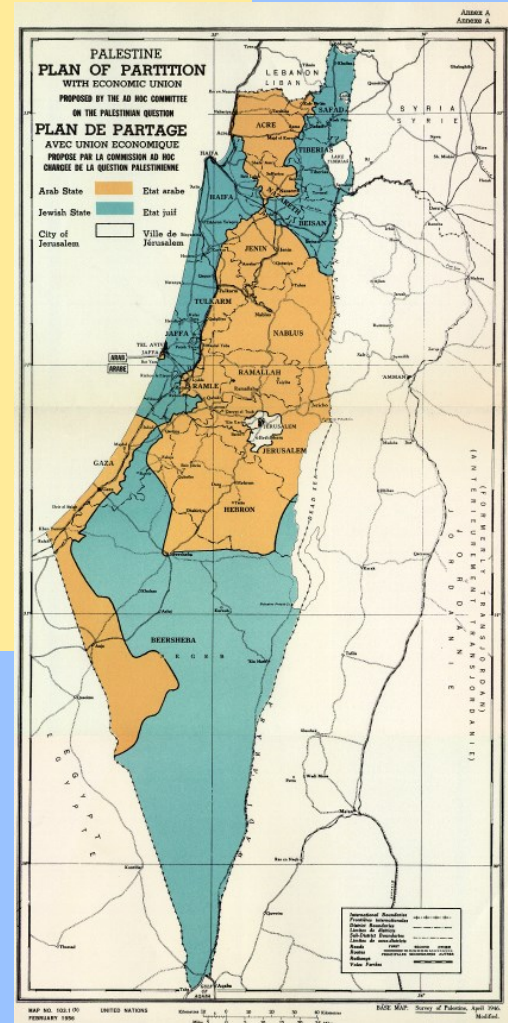
November 29, 1947

1. The Mandate for Palestine shall terminate as soon as possible but in any case not later than 1 August 1948.
2. The armed forces of the Mandatory Power shall be progressively withdrawn from Palestine, the withdrawal to be completed as soon as possible but in any case not later than 1 August 1948. The Mandatory Power shall advise the Commission, as far in advance as possible, of its intention to terminate the mandate and to evacuate each area. The Mandatory Power shall use its best endeavors to ensure that an area situated in the territory of the Jewish State, including a seaport and hinterland adequate to provide facilities for a substantial immigration, shall be evacuated at the earliest possible date and in any event not later than 1 February 1948.
3. Independent Arab and Jewish States and the Special International Regime for the City of Jerusalem, set forth in Part III of this Plan, shall come into existence in Palestine two months after the evacuation of the armed forces of the Mandatory Power has been completed but in any case not later than 1 October 1948. The boundaries of the Arab State, the Jewish State, and the City of Jerusalem shall be as described in Parts II and III below.
4. The period between the adoption by the General Assembly of its recommendation on the question of Palestine and the establishment of the independence of the Arab and Jewish States shall be a transitional period.

Official Records of the General Assembly, Second Session Supplement No. 11, Volumes I-IV.

In addition to recognizing that a Jewish state could be created, what else did Resolution 181 recognize? Make a list of the pros and cons of the partition plan? How would you think Zionist/Jewish leaders and Arab leaders reacted? Do a role play of a “town meeting” for each side to discuss and formulate a response to the United Nations.

- **Discuss:** Do you think that being master of one’s own fate is a basic human right? What is the alternative?
- **Discuss:** Is there a philosophical connection between the choice to accept God’s promises or covenants to the Jewish people, the choice to adhere to the ethics and values in the Torah and in being Jewish, and the choice of the individual to shape her and his own destiny? When did Jews begin practicing self-determination? Did it begin with when they chose to believe in one God, and chose to maintain adherence to Torah?



Part 3 — Stanza 11: The Declaration of Statehood

Accordingly we, members of the People's Council, representatives of the Jewish community of Eretz-Israel and of the Zionist movement, are here assembled on the day of the termination of the British mandate over Eretz-Israel and, by virtue of our natural and historic right and on the strength of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz-Israel, to be known as the State of Israel.



Activities

- **Activity:** Compare Israel's Declaration of Independence with the United States'.

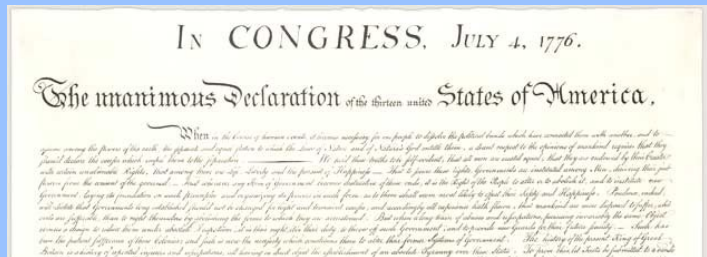
How are they similar/different?

What is the overall aim of each document?

From what source does each claim its legitimacy? Its source of authority?

Specifically compare Stanza 11 from the Israeli DOI with the last paragraph from the American Declaration in the box above. What is an "inalienable right?"

- **Activity:** For younger learners—have a



We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.



discussion about independence—How do they feel when someone tells them what to do (parent, sibling, even teacher) or takes something from them without asking. What do they do? How do they react?

Compare their responses to the way that Jews felt at certain points in their history (helpless, powerless, at the whim of others). If they were a Jew living in 1880 or even in 1948, what could they do about it?

Look at the picture on the left of people celebrating the announcement of Israel's DOI in Tel Aviv in 1948.

What do they see? Why do they think so many people were celebrating in the streets?

Depending on the age of the learners, a good film is the 16-minute video from the Spielberg Archive at Hebrew University, the [State of Israel's Birth](#), which features Abba Eban reading the DOI in English.

Part 4— Stanzas 12-19: Operation of the State

WE DECLARE that, with effect from the moment of the termination of the Mandate being tonight, the eve of Sabbath, the 6th Iyar, 5708 (15th May, 1948), until the establishment of the elected, regular authorities of the State in accordance with the Constitution which shall be adopted by the Elected Constituent Assembly not later than the 1st October 1948, the People's Council shall act as a Provisional Council of State, and its executive organ, the People's Administration, shall be the Provisional Government of the Jewish State, to be called "Israel".

THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

THE STATE OF ISRAEL is prepared to cooperate with the agencies and representatives of the United Nations in implementing the resolution of the General Assembly of the 29th November, 1947, and will take steps to bring about the economic union of the whole of Eretz-Israel.

WE APPEAL to the United Nations to assist the Jewish people in the building-up of its State and to receive the State of Israel into the community of nations.

WE APPEAL - in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months - to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.

WE EXTEND our hand to all neighboring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighborliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.

WE APPEAL to the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora to rally round the Jews of Eretz-Israel in the tasks of immigration and upbuilding and to stand by them in the great struggle for the realization of the age-old dream - the redemption of Israel.

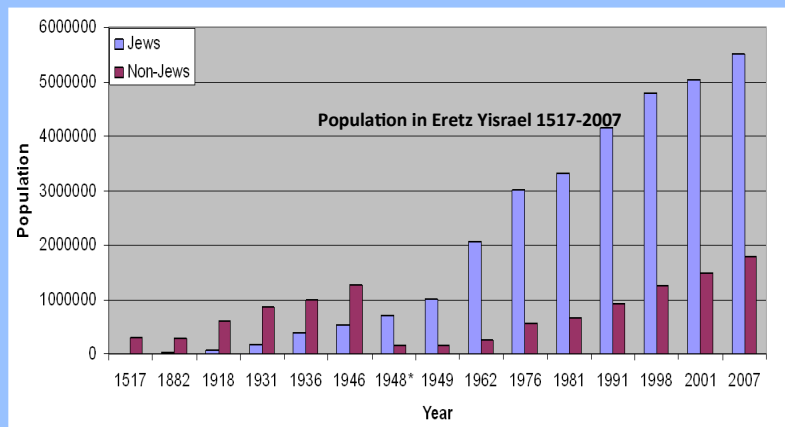
Placing our trust in the Almighty, we affix our signatures to this proclamation at this session of the Provisional Council of State, on the soil of the homeland, in the city of Tel-Aviv, on this Sabbath eve, the 5th day of Iyar, 5708 (14th May, 1948).



Part 4— Stanzas 12-19: Operation of the State

Activities

- Activity:** For older learners — In Stanza 12, the DOI states, “in accordance with the Constitution which shall be adopted by the Elected Constituent Assembly not later than the 1st October 1948.”
 Research and learn why Israel never adopted a constitution, even though one was called for in the U.N. partition resolution and in the DOI. What were and are the arguments for and against a constitution? Do the [Basic Laws](#) function as a constitution?
 Work in groups to craft a constitution for the State of Israel. [When finished, or as an alternative, read and analyze Israel’s draft constitution as published in 1948.](#) This draft was published in **The New York Times** on Dec. 10, 1948.
- Activity :** Divide students into groups and have each one choose one of the aspirations from stanza 13 listed below. Each group should prepare a poster or presentation citing specific examples that answers the question: Has Israel been successful in its aspirations to ...
 - Be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles;
 - Foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants;
 - Be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel;
 - Ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex;
 - Guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture;
 - Safeguard the Holy Places of all religions;
 - Be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.
- Activity:** Use the population growth chart of Israel presented below to teach students about Israel’s role as a haven for world Jewry.



Divide the students into groups to research and prepare posters of presentations on:

- Operation Magic Carpet (1949)
- Operation Ezra and Nehemia (1951-1952)
- Operation Moses (1984-1985)
- Operation Solomon (1990-1991)
- Immigration of Jews from the Soviet Union (1989-2002)
- Immigration from other countries and regions (continuously)

For young learners, the children’s story [Yuvi’s Candy Tree](#) by Lesley Simpson about a young girl’s journey from Ethiopia to Israel is a valuable story about the “ingathering of the exiles.” We recommend teaching it along with Shlomo Gronich and the Sheba Choir’s song *Hamasa L’Eretz Yisrael* (Journey to the Land of Israel).

[A recording of the song is available on YouTube by clicking here.](#)

- Activity:** In Stanza 15, the DOI appeals to the U.N. to accept Israel into the community of nations. When was Israel accepted into the U.N.? Which countries recognized the new state, and when did they do so? Choose a country and learn when/if it gave official recognition to Israel. What is its relationship with Israel today?

Part 4— Stanzas 12-19: Operation of the State

Activities (continued)

- Activity:** In Stanza 16, the DOI appeals to Arab inhabitants to “preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.” How has this been accomplished in Israel’s history? Has it been accomplished satisfactorily? Look at the two charts on the right. What can we learn about Israel’s diversity from this information? How does it affect the “Jewish character” of the state? Create a video news report about each of the ethnic or religious minorities who are citizens of Israel. What challenges, if any, have they faced in trying to become a part of Israeli society? What contributions have they made to Israeli culture?

Religious Composition of Israel 2021		
Religion	Population	% of total
Jewish	6,982,000	73.9%
Muslim	1,707,000	18.1%
Christian	182,000	1.9%
Druze	149,000	1.6%
Unclassified by Choice/Other	429,000	4.5%

In Israel over the years, the Supreme Court has ensured the individual rights of all citizens. Israeli Arabs serve in the Knesset, the judiciary and virtually all ministries of government.

- Activity:** Stanza 17 extends “our hand to all neighboring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighborliness.” What has Israel tried to do to live up to this promise? Where has it succeeded/not succeeded? Create maps of the region and list in each neighboring country the status of its relationship with Israel. Or shade countries in certain colors depending on the relationship to Israel. For younger learners, provide a blank outline map of the Middle East. Have the students:

Ethnic Composition of Israel 2022		
Ethnic group	Population	% of total
Jewish	7,106,000	73.6%
Israeli Arab	2,037,000	21.1%
Others	513,000	5.3%

- Write the word "Israel" inside the borders of Israel.
- Color each neighboring country a different color.
- Mark the areas that appear to be sand or desert, and the areas that appear to be green with vegetation. Look at the flags of each country in the region. Have students make their own country flags.
- Discuss what they learned and then talk about each country’s relationship to Israel. Why is it important for Israel to have peace with its neighbors?
- Activity:** In Stanza 18, the DOI appeals to Jews around the world to help in the building of the State. How has that been accomplished? How can one support Israeli statehood? Research social action organizations in Israel (some examples: [ELEM-Youth in Distress](#), [Yad Sarah](#), [Yad Lakashish](#), [Magen David Adom](#), [Emunah Herzog Children’s Center](#)) and develop a poster for your school or organization that highlights the work of that organization.