Pre-Trip Teacher Guide

CIE
Center for Israel Education

To Israel and Back:
A Journey to Our Future

Lesson 1
What is My Connection? Introduction to P.O.W.E.R. and Israel's People

Enduring Understandings:

1. Connection to the land of Israel is a core component of Jewish identity and peoplehood.
2. The nation that comprises a nation-state is defined by two essential components—national identity and a critical mass of people.

Essential Questions:

1. How has the connection between the Jews and the land of Israel been evident over time?
2. How do Jews relate to Israel in different ways?
3. How did Zionism reinvigorate the connection between Jews and Israel?
4. What are the components of Jewish national identity?
5. How can diversity and national identity coexist?
6. How large a population is necessary to create and sustain a state?

Objectives:

1. Students will examine a timeline of the Jewish people and the land of Israel.
2. Students will utilize a document written by Theodor Herzl to grasp the factors motivating 19th and 20th century Zionists.
3. Students will discuss the components necessary for statehood.
4. Students will analyze a chart to determine characteristics of the Jewish population in the land of Israel in the 20th century.
5. Students will draw conclusions about Israeli national identity by reading Israel's Declaration of Independence.
6. Students will define the role of diversity in society, using Israel and the American Jewish community as examples.

Preparations:

*Reminder: Send out the "Parent Introduction Letter" (Teacher CD) prior to this lesson.

Materials (NOTE: The Optional Activities require additional supplies):
1. Large copies of each stanza of the Declaration of Independence.
2. Ball of yarn.

Classroom Setup:

Have a flipchart/whiteboard/Post-it paper where all students can see. Makes copies of the definitions of Zionism (Teacher CD) cut up and posted around the room. Chairs should be arranged in a circle and tables organized for group work. Prepare photocopies

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of the student handouts for **Optional Activity E** below (see suggested list of bios on the Teacher CD). Colored scraps of paper, magazines, newspapers, scissors, and glue sticks should be spread across tables.

Procedures:

1. **Tell students that the Jewish people have always had some kind of connection to Israel, even though it has differed over time.**
2. Ask students to sit at the tables and turn to the timeline in their workbooks on pages 2 and 3. Tell students to work in pairs to examine the timeline and let them know that they will have 5 minutes to do so. **(5 minutes)**
3. Ask: "How many years in Jewish history have Jews been sovereign in their land? Autonomous? Why was sovereignty important?" (Answer: approximately 750 years of sovereignty; several hundred more years of varying degrees of autonomy; sovereignty meant freedom.) Explain that in the next few lessons, the class will examine what had to be in place in order for sovereignty to be restored. Note: autonomy is the right or power to govern oneself. It can be less than full independence, as in the case of an ethnic group that is granted autonomy within larger national confines; sovereignty is defined as complete independence and self-government.
4. Ask students: "Based on the timeline, how do we know that the land of Israel has always been important to the Jewish people?" (Answer: There were Jews continually living in Israel from the period of the Torah until the present day—despite the hardships they faced!) Ask students to give examples of the hardships Jews faced in the land. **(5 minutes)** Note: To achieve the first enduring understanding, you can choose procedures #1-4, or Optional Activity A or Optional Activity B. Any of the three would promote this understanding.
5. **Tell students that after so many years without Jewish sovereignty in the land of Israel, groups of Jews in the 19th Century began to consider the condition of the Jewish people in the Diaspora. Harkening back to the Jewish connection to the land and lamenting the current state of affairs for Diaspora Jewry, Theodore Herzl envisioned a solution: a Jewish state.**
6. Ask students to MOVE BACK to the TABLES, where they will work by themselves and read a quote by Herzl (in the student workbook, pages 9-10). If necessary (given knowledge level of the class), give a two-minute background explanation of the anti-Semitism taking place in Europe during Herzl's day. Have students answer the questions under the Herzl quote in their workbooks on the bottom of page 10 and on the top of page 11. Note: This is an appropriate place to insert Optional Activity D. **(10 minutes)**
7. Ask students: "Have you ever downplayed your Jewish identity, or felt pressured to hide your Jewish identity, in order to fit in?" Relate students' answers back to the Herzl segment, explaining that Zionism was founded on the idea that Jews needed their own state in order to live as free people who were masters of their own fate, free to live out their identities. **(5 minutes)**
8. **Explain that Zionists endeavored to realize Herzl's vision, understanding that creating a viable state would require P.O.W.E.R: people, organizations, water and oil, economy, and recognition.** Tell students that we will learn about these components over the next few

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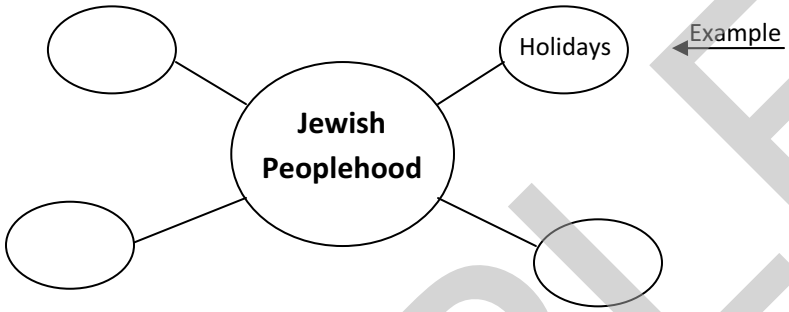
Optional Activity C: Components of Jewish Peoplehood (30 minutes)

1. MOVE to CHAIR CIRCLE. Writing responses on a whiteboard or large Post-it paper or flipchart, ask students to name components of their Jewish identities, (using their collages from Optional Activity A if chosen as a starting point). Use a web to answer the question on page 8 in the workbooks (see below).



Possible outcomes for the bubbles: prayer, observance, family, holidays, synagogue, *tikkun olam* (repairing the world), ethics, Jewish organizations, culture, blood ties, feeling, Torah, Israel, etc. Ask students: "Is a person part of the Jewish people if he/she only identifies with some of these aspects?" (Yes) How many? Who should decide this?

Emphasize during the discussion the component of the land of Israel and give examples of how integral it is to the other bubbles the students suggested (see blue box on previous page for suggestions). **(15 minutes)**

2. Write a constitution similar to the Declaration of Independence based on the components of peoplehood that you view as essential. **(15 minutes)**

H.W. Option!

Optional Activity D – Poetry and Song (30 minutes)

1. Explain that now you're going to look at the individual's connection to the land in a more personal way—through poetry. Working in the same sets of pairs, ask students to read both poems (Teacher CD) and answer the questions that follow. **(7 minutes)**
2. Then tell them that Yehudah HaLevi was a Jewish poet and philosopher, who lived in Spain in the turn of the 11th century. He tried to go to Israel toward the end of his life but only made it as far as Egypt where he died. Ehud Manor was one of Israel's most prolific songwriters and won the coveted Israel Prize for his work. He died in 2005 at the age of 64.
3. Ask: "What is each poet's relationship to Israel? What do these two poets, separated by a millennium, have in common? Is there anything different about them based on the poems?" **(8 minutes)**
4. Tell students that you will be playing a version of "I Have No Other Country," asking them to think while they listen about the choice of music and tone.

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