



THE JEWISH
EDUCATION PROJECT

REIMAGINING ISRAEL EDUCATION



AM YISRAEL CHAI
EDUCATION FOR
BELONGING
TO A “LIVING
JEWISH PEOPLE”

BENJI DAVIS

- 02 Introduction
- 06 Land: Israel Education Is Central to Jewish Education
- 09 Language: Hebrew as “Sfat Ha’am” (tongue of our people)
- 11 Judaism as Culture: “Nothing in Judaism Should Be Alien To Me”
- 14 Conclusion

Benji Davis is Assistant Professor of Jewish Education at Yeshiva University’s Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education. During the summer he is Head of Israel Education at Camp Yavneh. He has a PhD in Education from the University of Haifa.

This essay is part of a larger collection of research commissioned for Reimagining Israel Education, an initiative of The Jewish Education Project. In the wake of the attacks on October 7, Reimagining Israel Education sought to anchor the growth of Israel education in a strategic approach to Jewish education, reimagined for this era of Jewish life and for today’s learners. More information can be found at jewishedproject.org and educator.jewishedproject.org.



Introduction

Many, if not most, American Jews identify Judaism primarily as a religion—a set of beliefs, practices, and values they may or may not choose to observe. They might sense that being Jewish involves more than just religion, but they cannot quite put into words what that means. The result is a default to Judaism as a religion when thinking about and understanding what it means to be Jewish (Davis & Alexander, 2023, 2025). This reality makes it hard for Jewish educators to help learners understand what it means to meaningfully belong to the Jewish people—a collective with a shared land, language, and culture. This essay addresses this inherent challenge by presenting a new Jewish educational paradigm that enables learners to articulate if and why they find it meaningful to belong to a living Jewish people: “*Am Yisrael Chai* education.”

In this essay, I explain how *Am Yisrael Chai* education can be applied in American Jewish educational settings through learning and experiencing the land, language, and culture of the Jewish people¹. I argue for this focus because these three elements represent common (although not exclusive) components of collective, national, or peoplehood identity.

¹ I am grateful to Alan Goldman and Michael Unterberg for introducing me to teaching this paradigm.

This reality makes it hard for Jewish educators to help learners understand what it means to meaningfully belong to the Jewish people—a collective with a shared land, language, and culture.

For the Jewish people specifically, these elements are Israel (land), Hebrew (language), and Judaism (culture). These three components give young Jews a framework for exploring how people find meaning in being part of the Jewish people today and for deciding whether they do too.

More specifically for Jewish education, this means:

- 1 **Making Israel education central to Jewish education (land).**
- 2 **Cultivating dispositions toward Hebrew as “*S’fat Ha’am*” – the tongue of our people (language).**
- 3 **Encountering Judaism as the mix of rituals, customs, community life, and ideas that have shaped Jews for generations (culture).**

By adopting these three components, we invite learners to consider the following core questions throughout their Jewish educational journey.

- 1 **What makes Jews an *am* (people or nation)?**
- 2 **How am I part of a living Jewish people?**
- 3 **Why do I believe Israel² is integral to meaningfully belonging to klal Yisrael (the Jewish collective)?**
- 4 **What do I want to contribute to my people?**

² Israel in all its many layers such as, but not limited to, *Am* (people), *Torah* (Torah), *Eretz* (land), and *Medina* (state).

The outcome of applying this paradigm is learners who make Jewishly informed decisions about what it means to belong to a living Jewish people with a land, language, and culture they call their own.

This paradigm offers four distinct advantages for American Jewish education.

First and most importantly, adopting this essay’s paradigm for Jewish education addresses the fundamental question that many Jewish learners carry: “Why Jewish?” **By teaching knowledge that supports an understanding of “Jewish” beyond individual religious choice, students develop the tools to consider why they find purpose and meaning in living as active members of *Am Yisrael*.** Whether through day school experiences, summers at camp, trips to Israel, or years at supplementary school, these educational encounters with land, language, and culture will inform the Jewish lives our learners will lead as they advance what it means to belong to our people for the next generation.

Third, this paradigm offers frameworks for finding meaning in living a Jewish life that are accessible to learners across the spectrum of observance. By framing Jewish education in terms of knowledge and experiences that inform our shared identity rather than suggesting a specific level of individual religious belief or practice, the approach invites every learner in. A learner who rarely attends synagogue and one who prays daily can each explore the same questions about belonging and purpose within *Am Yisrael* (the Jewish people) without feeling either alienated or excluded. The learner considers how the nondenominational rabbi teaching Torah in Portland, the secular *Tel Avivi* who embraces the Israeli flag as a symbol of Jewish-democratic protest, the religious Zionist from Efrat who waves that same Jewish symbol in counter-protest, the *yeshiva* student learning anywhere, and the Chabad *rebbetzin* inspiring others everywhere each embody, in their own ways, what it means to live a life of meaning and purpose as members of a living Jewish people.

Second, it provides coherence between transformative Jewish experiences and intellectual understanding. **Immersive programs, like camps and Israel experiences, often leave young Jews inspired, but the impact can fade without a coherent intellectual grounding. *Am Yisrael Chai* Education—utilizing land, language, and culture as content and experience—anchors those emotional moments to a deeper grasp of Jewish belonging.** This means that peak experiences like Shabbat at camp or singing and dancing at the Kotel with peers are not merely isolated (if transformational) emotional moments but are part of an intellectual understanding of what it means to be part of *Am Yisrael*.

Finally, the paradigm historically roots students’ Jewish choices, helping them understand that their decisions are part of a larger, ongoing Jewish saga. **Understanding Jewish life as part of a multi-millennial narrative allows learners to see their personal decisions—such as whether to study Hebrew, engage in community activism, light Shabbat candles, or live in Israel—as contributions to an unfolding historical chronicle.** This context transforms “my choice” into “my chapter” in the Jewish story, thereby deepening both personal commitment and connection.

In the sections that follow, I explain how to apply *Am Yisrael Chai* Education throughout the common settings of American Jewish education by emphasizing three common components that make the Jews a people: their land (Israel), language (Hebrew), and culture (Judaism)³. I share why and how to (1) make Israel education central to Jewish education (land), (2) cultivate dispositions toward Hebrew as “my own” even without fluency (language), and (3) teach Judaism as the foundation that has driven Jewish life for generations across all observance levels (culture). In each section, I share examples of teaching, learning, and experiencing each component based on my personal observations or previously unpublished data from interviews I conducted in 2022 with day school teachers and Israeli tour educators and from campers I taught at Camp Yavneh during the summer of 2025.⁴



LAND: Israel Education is Central to Jewish Education



As a fundamental pillar of their Jewish education—no matter the setting—Jewish learners should learn both the historical and contemporary sources that reflect the Jewish connection to the land of Israel: traditional texts presenting it as divinely promised, historical evidence of ancient Jewish sovereignty, archaeological discoveries confirming Jewish presence, liturgical expressions sustaining connection through exile, and recognition of the land as the original center of Jewish government and culture.

Learners should also examine diverse topics related to the modern state of Israel, including historical and contemporary schools of Zionism (Troy, 2018), the religious and ethnic diversity of Israeli society, core questions surrounding Israel as a Jewish democracy, geopolitical complexities, current events, and the role of Israel in the lives of Jews living outside the country (Davis & Alexander, 2024, 2025).

This vision of the ancient and the contemporary—integrating what Theodor Herzl (1902) called *Altneuland* (“old-new land”)—can unfold in day school and supplementary school classrooms through courses such as Zionism, history, *Tanakh*, literature, the Arab-Israeli conflict, social studies, *halacha*, or Judaic studies. It can also take shape experientially during youth group retreats or shabbatons, through immersive activities at camp, or as central moments within Israel experience programs.

How This Works Across Educational Settings

- 1 **Israel at every grade level:**
Even with limited time, Israel education serves as a central component of Judaic studies curricula in day schools and supplementary schools—not competing with Judaic studies but essential to it.
- 2 **Woven throughout the camp experience:**
Israeli music, Hebrew language and signage, interaction with Israeli staff and campers, and facilitated discussions and activities are not confined to a single “Israel Day” but appear throughout the routine schedule and during special events (e.g., *Maccabiah*, *Zimriah*, and *Rikkudiah*).
- 3 **Insights over sites:**
For Israel experiences, the goal isn’t adding more content or visits to the itinerary. To paraphrase Zohar Raviv (2018), the focus is not on the sites, it’s on the insights.

³ This approach embraces complexity as a teaching tool. Its scholarly grounding lies in what Hanan Alexander and I termed a “pedagogy of sacred and difference” (Alexander, 2001, 2015a, 2015b; Davis & Alexander, 2023, 2024; Davis, 2025a). Meaningful education requires rootedness in particular traditions—the sacred—yet it must also invite authentic engagement with alternative and sometimes irreconcilable perspectives—the difference. In this way, we honor learners’ agency to make informed choices about their own “visions of the good life”—that is, the traditions, values, beliefs, and communities that shape their understanding of the meaningful lives they wish to lead (Alexander, 2001, 2015a).

⁴ For the summer of 2025, I served as Camp Yavneh’s Head of Israel Education, a position supported by the Foundation for Jewish Camp’s “Teaching Israel at Camp” Initiative.

Two Vignettes from the Field

Israel education as a fundamental part of Jewish education creates opportunities for reflection, dialogue, and meaning-making. Such education equips young Jews with tools to make thoughtful, informed decisions about Judaism, belonging to the Jewish people, and Israel’s meaning and purpose in their lives as Jews. To illustrate this approach, I’ll share two examples from activities I led at Camp Yavneh that asked learners to navigate the tension of what it means for Israel to be both Jewish and democratic.⁵

ACTIVITY ONE: BUSES ON SHABBAT

The first activity is a *sicha* (discussion) about whether public buses should run on Shabbat in Israel.⁶ Below is an excerpt from a *chanich* (camper) reflecting on how the activity influenced the camper’s thought process:

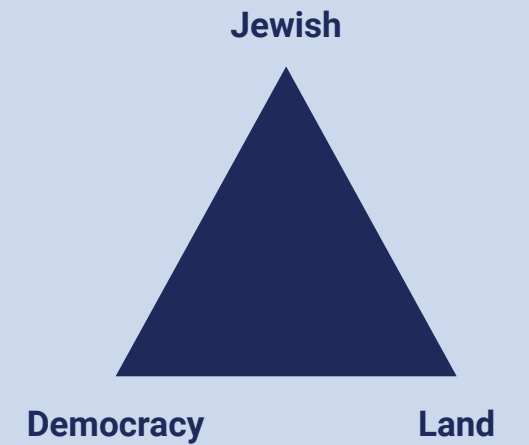
- Chanich:** Well, I didn’t even know about it (the issue of buses on Shabbat), and yeah, it changed a lot when the points were brought up about the Arabs and Christians living in Israel, too, and the non-religious secular Jews. I think that buses should run, except for in certain communities.
- Dr. Benji Davis:** That’s an opinion you formulated during the class?
- Chanich:** Yes.
- Dr. Benji Davis:** What got you there specifically?
- Chanich:** When some of the Israelis [other campers in his group that live in Israel] were talking. We also had a separate conversation after the class over on the tennis court. I was talking with one of them. The point was made, like, religious Jews are not the only people in Israel. They’re not even in the majority I don’t think. So even though it’s a Jewish state, it also has to be a secular state in order for it to run.

⁵ I’ve also led these sessions for Birthright-Israel, RootOne, and Masa Israel Journey participants and in professional development workshops for their educators. They are also commonly led by Israel education teachers in Jewish high schools (Davis & Alexander, 2024, 2025).

⁶ Rather than stating my preference, I ask the *chanichim* (campers) to consider the function of religion and Judaism’s role as both religion and national culture, the autonomy that each religious community (Christians, Muslims, Druze, Jews) has to run its affairs, and the current reality in which Arab cities and specific neighborhoods in Jerusalem already have public bus service on Shabbat.

ACTIVITY TWO: THE TRIANGLE DILEMMA

The second educational example is what I call the “Triangle Dilemma,” which highlights three defining elements of Israel: (1) its Jewish character, (2) its democratic system of government, and (3) the land it controls. Students grapple with the tension between the Jewish, democracy, and land elements while considering the security, demographic, historical, religious, and moral realities of the conflict—especially post October 7. I asked a camper to share the impact of this activity with me. This is our exchange:



- Chanich:** I hadn’t thought about the West Bank in that way or that type of topic in terms of the triangle. What is Israel compromising on if they choose to annex it? How will they—it’s just that hadn’t been an idea that had ever been exposed to me before. That type of thing isn’t really taught as much because the narrative about Israel is like “oh, Israel’s one beautiful, great place that’s great on everything, and there’s no compromising. If they annex the West Bank, it’s just going to be butterflies and rainbows.” But that’s just not that, and it was just a new perspective. I felt like that was one of the biggest moments of “oh, I’m learning something.”
- Dr. Benji Davis:** You were connecting to Israel education that’s not “butterflies and rainbows,” but it still taught you a lot about why Israel is meaningful to you?
- Chanich:** Yeah, because I feel like why it’s meaningful to me is obviously because it’s the homeland of the Jewish people. But it didn’t give me the sense that Israel’s perfect. It gave me a new type of sense about, “oh, Israel’s a real thing.” It’s not just this thing that’s taught about as this butterflies and rainbows place that just doesn’t have any flaws or doesn’t have any disagreements ever.
- Dr. Benji Davis:** So it wasn’t threatening?
- Chanich:** No, it wasn’t [threatening]. I felt like, at least to me, it was just a new type of perspective and experience that I could have. That was the thing I enjoyed most from this entire class, just a different type of spirit, especially from Israelis. You lived in Israel for a long time, a lot of people in the class were from Israel, and just different perspectives from “oh, Israel is butterflies and rainbows.”

Learners Make Informed Decisions on Israel's Relevance and Meaning

By deliberating ethical dilemmas—from debates about buses running on Shabbat to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—learners shifted from unfamiliarity to informed perspectives on a real place relevant to their lives. The spontaneous follow-up conversation “over on the tennis court” showed how learners continued to reflect on these discussions beyond the classroom. Immersive dialogue with Israelis (peers and their teacher) prompted the learners to grapple with the complex reality of Israel and to deliberate why it matters to them. Moving beyond the “butterflies and rainbows” narrative gave the learners an opportunity to wrestle with what Israel means to them as a place that is also their own, whether they live there or not. As a result, they gained insights in a Jewish educational setting that shaped their understanding of Israel's relevance to their lives as members of a living Jewish people.

LANGUAGE: Hebrew as “Sfat Ha'am” (tongue of our people)

Most American Jews share the traditional American societal resistance to learning and speaking other languages (Brecht, 2015; Sarna, 2004)—a broad American trend that may be too difficult to overcome. But we can cultivate within learners the disposition that Hebrew is not a foreign language but rather “S’fat Ha’am”—the tongue of our people. The language component, therefore, emphasizes Hebrew not merely as a religious or academic subject but as a living language of contemporary Jewish and Israeli culture.

The Language of a Living People

Whether learners can understand Hebrew proficiently is not the central matter. Jews did not speak it for millennia, yet it remained our common language tying our people together: as the script for foreign tongues we adapted, such as Aramaic, Yiddish, and Ladino; for Jewish merchants communicating between Christian Europe and the Muslim Middle East; how rabbis wrote legal responsa and Torah commentaries; in the poetry of Yehuda Halevi calling for return to the land; and of course the different ways that all Jews—*Ashkenazim*, *Sephardim*, and *Edot Mizrach* (Jews from North Africa and the Middle East)—adapted liturgy.

Learners learn to identify the various ways Jews utilize our language today. Exposure to these different approaches includes modern Israeli culture, film, literature and music; Hasidic children learning in *cheder* (Yiddish is still rooted and written in Hebrew); names of Jewish sports clubs around the world; the living language of almost half of Jews alive today; the language of our liturgy and tradition; and even the music of diaspora singers, from *hasidic* to progressive.

This deep-rootedness of the Jewish people to Hebrew is central to belonging to our people. It starts with a disposition toward that language and building learners' agency and recognition—“This Hebrew is you. What do you want to do with it?”

Hebrew Binds Us All Together

As Jewish educators, it is our responsibility to give learners access to the ways that Hebrew informs what it means to be members of *klal Yisrael* (the Jewish collective) and to empower them to make their own choices. This disposition fosters a sense of belonging: witnessing Hebrew travel through Jewish communities worldwide strengthens bonds, and singing Hebrew songs in schools, youth groups, camps, or Israel experiences cultivates rootedness and opportunities to discover meaning and purpose.

One Israeli tour educator I interviewed captured the following idea.

I want the kids to get turned on to Israeli music because I think it's more than just music. With the Hebrew language and modern Hebrew culture, you can understand Israel a lot better by listening to Hebrew Israeli music.

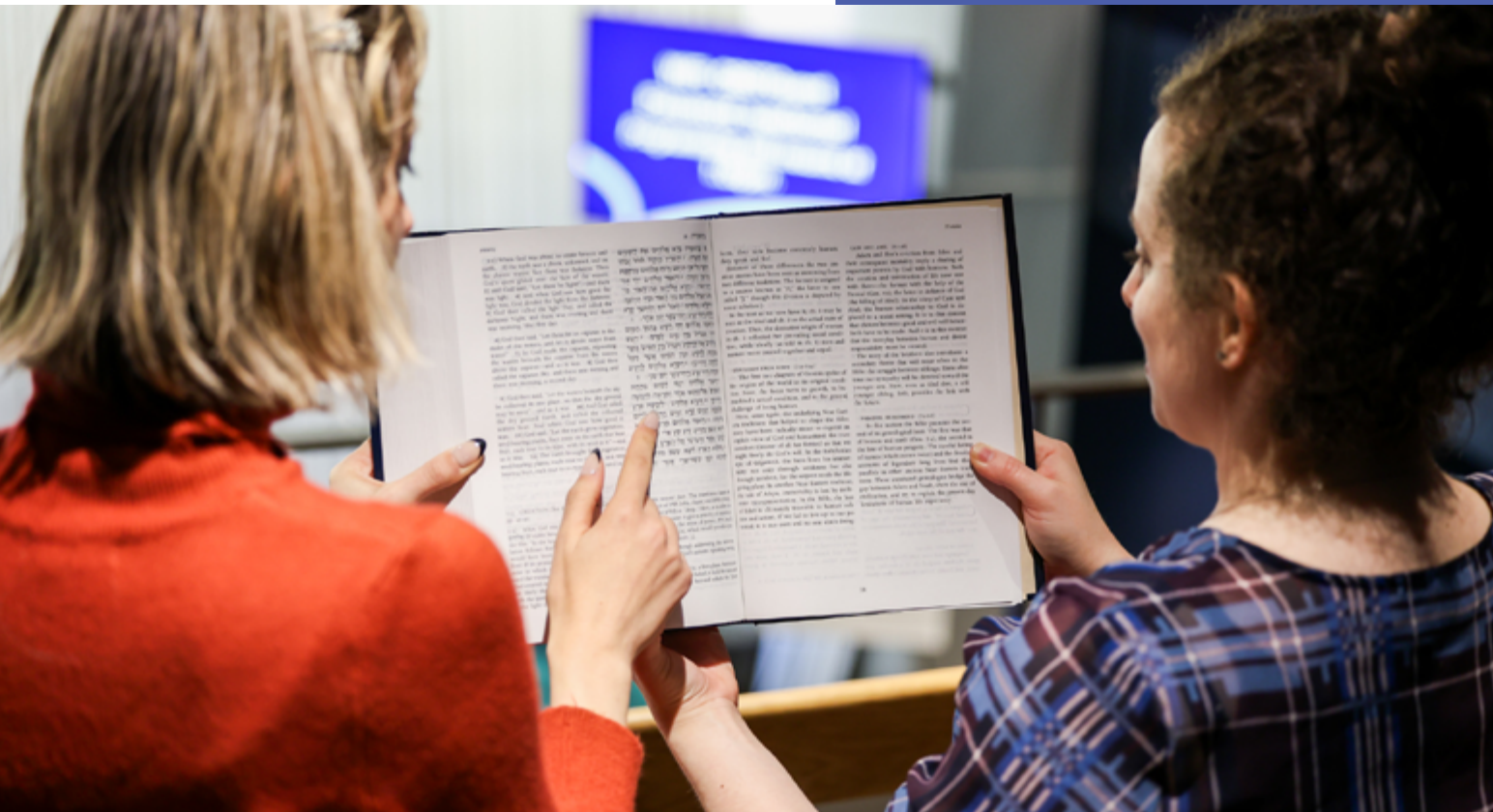
This understanding does not require fluency. It is also not only about Israel.

I saw this in action when the oldest Camp Yavneh *chanichim* (campers) spontaneously welcomed the Israeli *mishlachat* (group of Israeli emissaries) this summer, who had arrived late to camp due to the 12-day war with Iran. In the middle of dinner, as the *shlichim* (Israeli emissaries) arrived, one *chanich* played “*Od Yoter Tov*” (“Even Better”) by Uri Davidi, thereby sparking an unscripted eruption of singing and dancing in the dining hall.⁷

In that unplanned moment, every camper and staff member experienced what it means to be part of a living Jewish people with a shared language.

Most of the *chanichim* and *tzevet* (staff) didn't understand every word. But they didn't need to. **By singing and dancing in Hebrew to welcome a group of Israelis they had never met, they encountered the language as deeply authentic and organically their own.** This illustrates how a disposition toward Hebrew as our *S’fat Ha’Am*—the tongue of our people—enables meaningful Jewish education.

Without access to Hebrew (broadly conceived), it becomes far more difficult for learners to make informed decisions about whether and why being Jewish and belonging to the Jewish people with a land and country of their own embodies a life worth living.



⁷ I wrote more about this in EJewishphilanthropy, [When the mishlachat arrived: The unplanned magic of Jewish peoplehood](#) (2025).

JUDAISM AS CULTURE: “Nothing in Judaism should be alien to me”

Judaism as culture encompasses the rituals, behaviors, social life, and beliefs that have long defined Jewish existence. Modernity narrowed this understanding by separating Judaism from its political, national, and civic dimensions and recasting it as purely a religion (Batnitzky, 2011). My use of “culture” intentionally resists that limitation by embracing religion while also recovering the holistic way Judaism has shaped the what, how, and why Jews are Jewish. In a twist of Ahad Ha’am’s famous saying about Shabbat keeping the Jews, without Judaism, there would be no living Jewish people.

Traditional and Nontraditional Jewish Learning

This educational pillar recognizes Judaism as a religion, as the national culture of the Jewish people, as the civic expression of Jewish life wherever it occurs, or as all of these together. Traditional Jewish learning—rooted in Jewish ideas, values, and traditions—is therefore essential for all students, regardless of their religious (or nonreligious) identification. Whether adopting approaches from any affiliation—from Bina (secular), Hebrew Union College or the Jewish Theological Seminary (Reform and Conservative), to Pardes (pluralistic), Yeshivat Chovevei Torah (liberal Orthodox), Yeshiva University (Orthodox), Har Etzion (religious Zionist), or Beth Medrash Govoha (ultra-Orthodox)—we participate in what has been central to Jewish life for generations: traditional text study of Torah, Talmud, Midrash, and classical commentaries.

Judaism as the foundational culture of the Jewish people also calls for a Jewish education that highlights the diverse ways Jews live and express their collective identity, thereby enabling each student to embrace Franz Rosenzweig’s idea that “nothing in Judaism should be alien to me” (2002). This includes the following.

Jewish history, social studies, and civics: For example, students study movements, such as the Free Soviet Jewry campaign, and connect them to contemporary efforts, like the “Bring Them Home” campaign.

Diverse Jewish practices: Learners explore how different communities express Judaism—from Orthodox *yeshivot* to secular Israeli *kibbutzim* and from Sephardi to Mizrahi traditions.

Unity within diversity: Students examine how Jewish communities across the world developed distinct customs while maintaining connection to broader Jewish civilization (for example, why one Jew eats rice on Pesach while another does not).



Finding Meaning in Judaism

One Jewish educator in a high school study-abroad program for English speakers in Israel explained to me how this approach works:

I have on my classroom wall a picture and a quote of Franz Rosenzweig—“nothing in Judaism should be alien to me.” And therefore, there’s nothing within the Jewish conversation that is not going to be on the table in the classroom. We try to expose as much as possible about what it means to be a Jew to our students. So whether it’s discussions on spirituality, whether it’s discussions on the historicity of the Tanach, whether it’s discussions on Zionism and what it means to be a Zionist, or whether it’s discussions about the difference between the different streams of Judaism. Everything I do in the classroom is influenced by this, every single class I expose students to a different element, a different idea about Jewish life.

Teaching Judaism requires giving learners an opportunity to see how others within our people embrace this integral way of expressing belonging. Navigating this requires embracing a “live and let live” approach. Orthodox Yeshiva students see pluralistic day school students as part of the same people, even as they disagree with the ways they practice Judaism. The same goes for those who embrace egalitarian or nonobservance. They don’t need to ever step foot in a *shul* with a *mechitza*. But that synagogue is just as much theirs as the egalitarian independent *minyan* or Jewish Community Center is—it is just not their access point to meaning.

I’ll close this section with a quote from the same educator from the study-abroad program explaining why and how he teaches *hasidut*:

I want them [students] to have a little taste of what it means to be a *Hasid*. So we do a *Tisch* once we’ve covered the history. I take them out of the classroom to another room where I’ve set up a big table with food and soft drinks. We sit around the table and go back and forth between historical teaching, singing songs, and telling stories, eventually trying to get them up to dance. So they get this little window into what *Hasidut* is—they’ve actually experienced it. Then we get contemporary and ask, “What’s the *Hasidic* world like today?” So hopefully at the end of it, you know, “nothing in Judaism is alien to me.” They understand what it means to be ultra-Orthodox, what it means to be *Hasidic*. When they hear about *Hasidim* in culture, in the Jewish world, in Israeli politics, they have a frame of reference for understanding where it comes from and what it’s about. Whether they like it or not—that’s for them to decide.

This explanation reflects an educational approach that treats Judaism as sacred, invites learners to engage with diverse perspectives, and empowers them to make informed choices—whether in the moment or years later—about what it all means to them. This paradigm for Jewish education equips learners to make life decisions as informed members of a living Jewish people by drawing on knowledge and experiences grounded in the conviction that “nothing in Judaism is alien to me.”



Conclusion

This new paradigm for Jewish education offers several distinct advantages for Jewish educational programs and institutions.

- 1 It connects the deep meaning young Jews find in collective, immersive Jewish experiences (e.g., camps, Israel trips, and Jewish schools) with intellectual understanding of what it might mean to belong to the Jewish people with a shared land (Israel), language (Hebrew), and culture (Judaism).
- 2 It enables Jews across the spectrum—from secular to observant—to construct their own vision of why being Jewish is meaningful without prescribing how to be Jewish.
- 3 It situates individual choices within the context of belonging to something larger that is both meaningful and full of purpose.
- 4 Most importantly, this approach to Jewish education empowers learners to articulate their own vision for Jewish life—ultimately answering for themselves the essential question: “Why is being Jewish a meaningful life to live?”

I'll illustrate the impact of this approach with one final educational vignette.

JEWISH PEOPLE SLOGANS ACTIVITY: WE STAND WITH ISRAEL AND AM YISRAEL CHAI

I've led multiple discussions with different groups of Jewish learners across the age spectrum—from middle school through adults—exploring whether the two slogans proudly embraced by our people since October 7, "We Stand with Israel" and "Am Yisrael Chai" ("The Jewish people live"), mean the same thing.

We explore the following questions: Does "We Stand with Israel" mean *Am Yisrael Chai*? Why did *Am Yisrael Chai* become the common theme in Israel while "We stand with Israel" became the slogan displayed on so many Jewish families' cars and lawns in the United States? Do Jews, no matter where we live, have shared language to describe our belonging to *Am Yisrael*?

One camper at Camp Yavneh shared a personal insight with me about this activity:

That we say "we stand with Israel" sounds more like we stand with these people. We support you, but we're not really with you. Whereas Am Yisrael Chai is more like "This is my people. I am with you. We are together. We are one and we will survive . . ." I feel like the [discussion] gave me this realization that it's not like "I stand with you." I am with you. I don't need to stand. We're already together.

The "Jewish People Slogans Activity" helped this 16-year-old American Jew understand that being Jewish is not just a religion, and Israel is not just some distant country to support. When a young American Jew declares *Am Yisrael Chai*—or, in his own words, "I am with you. We are together. We are one, and we will survive"—we witness the transformative power of a Jewish education that doesn't merely teach about Israel, Hebrew, and Judaism for their own sake but invites learners to explore whether and why they find meaning and purpose in belonging to a living Jewish people with a land, language, and culture they can call their own.



References

- Alexander, H. A. (2001). *Reclaiming goodness: Education and the spiritual quest*. University of Notre Dame Press.
- Alexander, H. A. (2015a). Reimagining liberal education: *Affiliation and inquiry in democratic schooling*. Bloomsbury.
- Alexander, H. A. (2015b). Mature Zionism: Education and the scholarly study of Israel. *Journal of Jewish Education*, 81(2), 136–161.
- Batnitzky, L. (2011). *How Judaism became a religion: An introduction to modern Jewish thought*. Princeton University Press.
- Brecht, R. D. (2015). *America's languages: Challenges and promise*. American Academy of Arts and Sciences Commission on Language Learning.
- Davis, B., & Alexander, H. A. (2023). Israel education: A philosophical analysis. *Journal of Jewish Education*, 89(1), 6–33.
- Davis, B., & Alexander, H. (2024). "You Never Told Me": *The pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) of Israel education*. *Contemporary Jewry*, 44(2), 369–395.
- Davis, B., & Alexander, H. A. (2025). Liberal Jewish identity and the pedagogy of Israel education. *Journal of Religious Education*.
- Herzl, T. (1902). *Altneuland*. Hermann Seemann Nachfolger.
- Rosenzweig, F. (2002). *On Jewish learning* (N. N. Glatzer, Ed.). University of Wisconsin Press.
- Sarna, J. D. (2004). *American Judaism: A history*. Yale University Press.
- Troy, G. (2018). *The Zionist Ideas: Visions for the Jewish homeland—Then, now, tomorrow*. The Jewish Publication Society.
- Raviv, Z. (2018) "The 10 Values of Birthright Israel." <https://www.blog.birtrightisrael.com/the-spirit-of-birtright-israel/> accessed February 10, 2026