

**Ladies And Gentlemen,
Fasten Your Seatbelts And
Prepare For Takeoff...**

This Is YOUR Israel!
An Israel Orientation

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Curriculum Rationale

How can someone create a meaningful relationship with Israel without actually traveling there? Taglit-Birthright Israel answers this dilemma by saying, “You can’t.” They argue that it is not possible to create a meaningful relationship with Israel without visiting. Their answer comes in the form of a 10-day free trip to Israel for Jews between the ages of 18 and 26. Their audaciously bold vision is “to change the course of Jewish history and ensure the continuity of the Jewish people by strengthening Jewish identity, Jewish communities, and solidarity with Israel via an educational trip to Israel for Jewish young adults around the world.”¹ As of 2013, over 330,000 people took advantage of this once in a lifetime opportunity.

In sociologist Shaul Kelner’s “Tours That Bind,” he argues counter-intuitively that Birthright-Israel gifted trips are actually building a stronger *Diaspora* Jewish identity among its participants rather than an attachment to Israel. While this is a worthwhile endeavor, it is not the explicitly intended goal of Birthright Israel.

I believe that this unintended outcome—the focus on American Jewish identity—is the result of individuals feeling like strangers in their homeland and not being adequately prepared for the experience in *advance*. Anytime one travels to a new place, there are feelings of alienation as the traveler is not accustomed to the place’s culture and social norms and it is not surprising that some feel somewhat uneasy. But when a Jew travels to Israel, there is an added cultural pressure saying and demanding, “This is your home! You should feel

¹ <http://www.birthrightisrael.com/TaglitBirthrightIsraelStory/Pages/Objectives.aspx>

comfortable here.” This can be uncomfortable and even dissonant pressure. Ultimately, the real lived experience can lead travelers to feel like strangers in their so-called homeland.

In addition, those who travel to Israel often have little to no Jewish or Israel knowledge prior to their experience in Israel. As a result, many participants struggle to build a relationship with Israel, the land and the people, because they do not have a foundation upon which to build. Instead of welcoming the differences, I have personally experienced some of the participants resisting attachment to Israel as they are turned off by their feelings of alienation. Of course, there is a stranger-like feeling in any travel experience by the simple fact that you need a visa to visit. But being a stranger does not always need to be counter-productive. Feeling like a stranger is only a detriment if the alienation, rather than an impetus, becomes a block to growth and learning, causing participants to disengage and isolate themselves from the land, the people and the culture.

This curriculum guide strives to respond to this complex problem. Specifically, it seeks to provide participants with knowledge *prior* to their experience in Israel in order to give them tools to feel open to building a lasting relationship with the land and her people. Additionally, the curriculum will enable the trip participants to create a community among themselves, also prior to the experience.

One model that emphasizes the significance of reflection before and after an experience is the experiential education model known as, “Learn one, do one, teach one.” This technique is closely followed in medical schools in order to ensure that students fully internalize what they are learning. This model has

much to offer Israel trip education, too. By placing a group of young adults on a bus for 10-days and touring them around Israel we have accomplished the “do one” piece of the model. But learners cannot fully internalize an experience simply by doing; they must also have a chance to think beforehand and reflect afterward. The beginning portion of the bridge is missing and it is the responsibility of Israel educators to not only add to the pieces of wood to bridge the gap but also make the front of the bridge welcoming. In short, the experience needs to last more than 10 days.

This curriculum seeks to take any Israel trip experience from good to great. It seeks to do so by focusing on content of various “portals” that can serve as entry points into Israeli culture and society. These access portals concentrate on areas within a traveler’s experience that may cause feelings of alienation or inclusion. Three such access portals will be addressed in this curriculum: **social norms**, such as food, mobility, language and diversity of population; **social network and kinship**; and **Judaism as the dominant religion**. These access portals will be explored through primary sources, modern media, cultural experiences and personal exploration. In addition to these access portals, the curriculum offers structured opportunities for students to think about the idea of a homeland and what it means for Jews to have a Jewish homeland.

This curriculum is designed for Israel travel participants prior to their experience in Israel, such as Birthright Israel, congregation trips and high-school trips. There are a variety of ways in which this curriculum may be implemented, allowing it to fit a variety of trip models. The program should be implemented as an orientation prior to, during and after the experience. The programming time is broken down as follows:

Before the trip (within 4 months of departure):

Introductory Session (Group Leader Training)

5 hours, 15 minutes

Participant Orientations

15 hours, 15 minutes (3 sessions for ~ 5 hours each)

During the trip:

Participant Reflections/Filming Real World: Israel Edition

3 hours, 35 minutes + filming time

After the trip (within 1-2 months of returning):

Reunion

4 hours

Alternatively, the curriculum may be modified to accommodate shorter orientations. These modifications should encompass the key values of the curriculum. Ideally, the individuals participating on these trips have either never been to Israel, or they have only spent a short amount of time there.

Throughout the orientation, there will be a variety of short but ongoing assessments, such as personal journaling and contributing to a group blog. Additionally, during the trip, each participant will have the opportunity to videotape him or herself once or twice during the trip for a few minutes with the group video camera to document their days in Israel. They will give an honest account of their feelings, how the day went, what they learned, what they were bothered by, etc. At the conclusion of the trip, a few volunteer participants will create a short video of some of those clips to then be shared with all of the participants' families, friends and communities. Through this video, the participants will become ambassadors of their Israel experience, as the video will

be composed of film clips that share the honest, raw emotions and feelings of the participants.

This curriculum offers an orientation designed for Israel travel groups who are all located in a central location. This includes city, synagogue, high school and college campus trips. Additionally, the group leader needs to have spent a significant amount of time in Israel and be knowledgeable about Israel and Judaism. Ideally, they will also be part of the trip staff.

Overall, the orientation will create a safe space in which Israel travel participants may learn about Judaism and Israel, themselves, and their fellow peers so that they may create a strong and meaningful relationship with Israel and be able to be ambassadors of their Israel experience to their communities back home.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

Many American Jews feel strange and excluded in their homeland.

Alienation engages and excludes.

The real Israel often contradicts the marketed Israel.

Knowledge of social norms, social networks and Judaism, empowers travelers to Israel to engage fully with the life and culture.

Dear group leaders,

I am thrilled that you are taking steps to elevate the level of education around meaning-based Israel travel! Today, I am incredibly passionate about Israel and Israel education, but this was not always the case. My third time in Israel was for a 6-month community service living experience in Tel Aviv. I found the experience isolating and disheartening. I felt like an alien in my supposed homeland. I was not prepared for the experience and as a result, I felt defeated. Thankfully, my next living experience in Israel was meaningful and welcoming, as I was prepared for what life in Israel looked like. It was no longer a surprise.

In the future, I hope that no one ever feels alienated and isolated in Israel, as I did. I believe that this can be accomplished through an orientation before the trip to Israel, and reflections during and after the trip. This orientation is meant to offer the participants a basic level of knowledge about Israel, to create the space for the participants to struggle with the idea of Israel as the Jewish homeland, to open an ongoing, open and honest conversation about Israel, as well as to begin the socialization process of the group of participants.

As you are a group leader who has precious time spent in Israel, I hope that you will use this orientation as an opportunity to share with the participants your experiences in Israel, and to continue developing and/or struggling with your own relationship with Israel. The trip participants are incredibly lucky to have your expertise and experiences to help frame their own experience. That being said, please keep in mind that your comments and reflections are going to be highly regarded by the participants. One of the goals of the orientation is to allow the participants to struggle and work through their own assumptions and ideas about Israel, so be conscious that your ideas may influence the participants. Please try not to push your personal ideas and reflections onto the participants.

Prior to running the orientation, please read through the entire guide, including the during-trip reflections and the after-trip reunion, so you know where the guide is going and can best prepare for the orientation as a whole. Many materials need to be purchased, so take that into account when planning. Also, the orientation utilizes social media, including twitter and a blog. I encourage you to set up a blog ahead of the trip so that participants can post reflections and pictures throughout the orientation and the trip for their communities at home to view. Also, you should create a twitter handle for the participants to use on their own as well as during some of the activities.

Here are some additional notes for you to keep in mind as you navigate the orientation:

- You are referred to as the “group leader” and the travel participants are referred to as “participants” throughout the guide.
- The introductory unit is fully scripted. It will guide you as the group leaders through training and personal reflections prior to the participant orientation. If there is only one group leader, you should reflect on the introductory session with a supervisor who is knowledgeable about Israel.

- The authentic assessment is called “Real World: Israel Edition.” There is a protocol given at the end of the guide. This assessment should be explained to the participants during Orientation Session 1.
- When preparing for the sessions, make sure you have all the materials necessary for the entire orientation session.
- All resources are placed immediately behind the activity it corresponds with. They are named based on the session it is found (S=session, S1=Session 1, R=Reunion, etc.) and its chronological location of that specific session (S1-1= Session 1, resource #1).
- I encourage you to give the participants breaks through the orientation sessions, even though I do not account for them in the timing of guide. It would be nice to have snacks and drinks available!
- The journals used during the orientation should be brought on the trip for the participants to use for during the trip reflections.
- Prior to the reunion, each participant is asked to bring a photograph that represents the way Israel is in his or her life.

Thank you in advance for supporting your trip participants in what will surely be an incredibly meaningful and authentic experience in Israel.

N'siah Tovah! Safe travels!

All the Best,

Ashley Berns

Introductory Session for the Group Leaders ***(Scripted)***

The introductory unit is intended for the group leader(s) and it must be completed prior to the beginning of the three-part participant orientation. The introductory session is written as a self-lead guide. Therefore, you do not need an outside facilitator to lead it. If there is more than one group leader, they should go through these activities together. If there is only one group leader, the activities should be completed alone. Ideally, that group leader will have the opportunity to reflect on these activities with a supervisor.

Enduring Understandings

Many American Jews feel strange and excluded in their homeland.

Knowledge of social norms, social network and Judaism, empowers travelers to Israel to engage fully with the life and culture.

Essential Questions

Who are you as the leader of this Birthright group?

What brings you to lead this trip?

What do you hope your participants might gain?

What do you think might be challenging for you?

Goals

- To give the group leaders the opportunity to think about their own relationship with Israel.
- To allow the group leaders to begin to plan their role as staff members.
- To prepare themselves to lead the participant orientation.
- To prepare themselves to lead the participants on their trip to Israel.

Objectives: Group leaders will be able...

- To describe their personal feelings about Israel, including their positive feelings and the struggles.
- To develop the skills to recognize various emotions that may surface during a participant's first experience in Israel.
- To create a plan to incorporate the ideas of the orientation into the trip while in Israel.
- To acknowledge the integral role they place on the participants' experience in Israel.

Introductory Session Timeline

Activity 1	Why am I here?	1 hour, 30 minutes
Activity 2	Jewish Journey Map	1 hour
Activity 3	Why is Israel important to me?	45 minutes
Activity 4	The UN Vote	30 minutes
Activity 5	What is a homeland?	1 hour
Activity 6	Trip planning	30 minutes

Materials

Binder/Notebook for each group leader

Free-write Resource handout

Pens

Poster board for each person

Markers

Media unit (i.e. computer) to watch a video

Resource I-1: What is a homeland? Participant Support Plan—copy for each group leader

Introductory Session for Group Leaders

Activity 1: Why am I here? (1 hour, 30 minutes)

In order for the group leaders to guide the participants through this exciting and emotional journey, it is essential that the group leaders first take the time to assess their own feelings and emotions related to Israel.

To begin, you need to ask yourself the question, “Why are you here?” Are you taking this trip because it is part of your job? Are you giving your time as a way to pay it forward to future participants, as a result of a positive experience you had in Israel? Regardless of the reasons, it’s important to name them and to be aware of them.

I am going to ask each of you to free-write based on the following questions:

1. Why am I staffing this Birthright trip?
2. Why am I staffing this trip right now, at this point in my life?
3. What are my expectations of the trip?
4. What are my expectations for myself?
5. What are my expectations for the participants of the group?
6. What “baggage” (social, emotional, familial, etc) am I bringing with me as I board the airplane?
7. What do I hope to take away from this experience as an American Jew?
8. One way that I hope to push my personal boundaries in Israel is...
9. What would a successful experience in Israel look like for me?
10. What would a successful experience in Israel look like for my participants?
11. If applicable, how can the other group leaders support me during this experience?
12. If applicable, how can the other group leaders help me to achieve my goals for this trip?

Take as long as necessary to thoroughly think through and answer each of these questions. Once all the group leaders are done writing, go around and share your answers for questions 1-3, 8, and 10-12.

If there is only one group leader, use the answers to these questions as the basis for a conversation with your supervisor.

Activity 2: Jewish Journey Map² (1 hour)

Not only is it essential to think about why you are going on this trip, but also it is important to know how you got to this point in your Jewish life. What were the significant Jewish moments in your life?

You are going to create your personal Jewish journey map. Every person will receive a poster board and there will be markers for all the participants to use. You will create a map that demonstrates visually the journey of your life, highlighting memorable moments that are significant to whom you are as a person today. These maps should include events, people, places, etc. You are encouraged to be creative in your design, allowing the map to represent you.

Once you have completed that part of the map, you will uniquely mark the following moments (If you have not had a particular experience, you can ignore it):

- The location where your Jewish life began.
- The location(s) where you questioned Judaism.
- The location(s) where you became a Jewish adult.
- The location(s) where you had positive or negative interactions with the Jewish community.
- The location where Israel became important to you, if applicable.

After all the maps are complete, each person will explain to the others their Jewish journey map as well as answer the following questions:

1. How did it feel to create your map?
Difficult, simple, thought-provoking, energizing, scary
2. Are there any other questions you wish would have been asked?

Allow time for group leaders to ask questions to each other, such as: “Why did you mark this moment?” “Why was this moment so significant to you?” “What about...?”

If there is only one group leader, reflect on the experience of creating this Jewish journey map and why the experience was either easy or difficult. This reflection can either be done through journaling or by talking to a supervisor.

Activity 3: Why is Israel important to me? (45 minutes)

Now that you spent time thinking about why you are going on this trip and you analyzed your Jewish journey, it is now time to look at why Israel is important to you, or why it is not important to you. It is essential that this orientation creates an open space for the trip participants to be honest as they struggle with this difficult topic, and there should be no judgments made

² Based on an activity by Diane Tickton Schuster in “Jewish Lives, Jewish Learning.” p.

based on personal comments. The same should go for the group leaders. You should feel comfortable sharing your honest feelings and opinions, with the understanding that your comments are going to affect the trip participants, as you are role models for them. Please be conscious of this.

Each group leader will answer the following questions in your journal.

Questions:

1. What was the first thing you remember about your first experience in Israel?
2. Why is Israel important to you?
3. When was the first time that you struggled with something about Israel, its people or its history? Do you still struggle with this? If not, how did you overcome this struggle?
4. If you have been on an organized trip to Israel, who on that trip had an impact on you? Why?
5. Participants are going to bring up difficult topics about Israel. Which topics are most difficult for you? Why are they difficult for you? How are you going to handle the situation?
6. What is the main message you want to portray to your participants about Israel?

Group leaders do not need to share their answers to these questions. However, if you would like to share some of your answers or things that came up for you while writing, everyone is encouraged to share.

Activity 4: The UN Vote (30 minutes)

Now that we have taken some time to reflect on our own experiences and reasons for leading this trip, we are going to move on to prepare you to lead certain activities of the participant orientations.

One of the activities during the participant orientation is to analyze the UN vote on Israel and the events surrounding it. This is an opportunity for you to watch the same video ahead of time and wrestle with this key moment in Israeli history.

First, you will watch the UN Vote video found here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrIjzUK0FKg#t=578>

After watching the video, each person will write a Haiku poem. Haiku poetry, developed by the Japanese, uses “just a few words to capture a moment and create a picture in the reader’s mind.”³ Haiku poems follow a format of a total of three lines: the first line has 5 syllables, the second line has 7 syllables and the last line has 5 syllables.

³ <http://www.creative-writing-now.com/how-to-write-a-haiku.html>

Using this format, you are going to create your own Haiku poem in your notebook that expresses any of the following:

- How did you feel while watching the video about the situation around the UN vote?
- How did the people living in Palestine react to the news of the vote?
- What were the emotions of the people involved with the vote?
- Describe the scene before, during or after the vote.
- What was going through David Ben-Gurion's mind during or immediately after the vote?

Take time to create the Haiku poem. When everyone is done, share the poems with each other.

Keep these Haiku poems because you will have the opportunity to share them with the trip participants during Orientation Session 2.

Activity 5: What is a homeland? (1 hour)

One of the important topics that is going to be discussed during the participant orientation is the idea of homeland. Some of the essential questions that the participants will grapple with are:

What is a homeland?

What are characteristics of a homeland?

What makes Israel the Jewish homeland?

How can a place be my home if I have never been there?

Does it make a matter that Israel is the Jewish homeland? Why?

To begin, each person is going to write in their notebook their initial definition of "homeland."

Now, use outside resources to find definitions of "homeland" in order to strengthen your own definition. These outside resources should include the Internet, and crowdsourcing through texts, emails and/or Facebook.

Once everyone has a thorough answer, share the answers and write them on a single, separate piece of paper for reference later during the participant orientation. Notice the similarities and the differences between each definition.

Together, come up with a single definition that encompasses all the components of the individual definitions. This should be a detailed, still working, definition of "homeland."

To prepare for the participant orientation, you will discuss the essential questions found above. As a group (or if alone, with a supervisor), discuss each of these questions. Respectfully challenge each other to take the conversation to a deeper level. I suggest using words such as "I wonder, I

appreciate, I notice” to help keep the conversation non-judgmental. Refer to your group definition of “homeland” as part of the conversation.

After answering these essential questions, discuss the following questions:

1. What have we noticed through this exercise about the word, “homeland?”
2. Based on varying answers, how are we going to create space during the participant orientation for multiple perspectives regarding homeland?
3. How can we support the participants throughout the orientation and the experience in Israel as they grapple with the idea of homeland?

Once you have discussed these questions, spend a few minutes each filling out “What is a homeland? Participant Support Plan” (Resource I-1).

After completing the handout, place it in your binder/notebook.

What is a homeland? Participant Support Plan

How are you going to create space during the participant orientation for multiple perspectives regarding the idea of homeland?

How are you going to support the participants during the orientation as they maneuver this difficult topic?

How are you going to support the participants while in Israel as they continue to maneuver this difficult topic?

What days/locations/interactions of the trip may affect the way a person views Israel as a homeland?

How are you going to support this when it comes up?

Activity 6: Trip Planning (30 minutes)

The last 30 minutes, or so, of the introductory unit should be designated for the group leaders to together go through the group's travel itinerary in detail. While looking at the schedule, fill out the Trip Planning handout (Resource I-2).

Trip Planning Handout

What places/days/interactions may be difficult or trying for the participants, either physically, emotionally, culturally, politically or socially? (List at least 3)

What approaches are you as the group leaders going to take when these difficult moments arise? (name 3-4 different approaches depending on the scenario-physically, emotionally, culturally, politically or socially)

What places/days may elicit a breakthrough moment for the participants? (List at least 3)

How are those moments going to be appreciated and celebrated?

When can you, the group leaders, insert unique opportunities into the schedule that may lead to memorable moments for the participants? (List at least 3)

Participant Orientation Session 1

Hineini, I Am Here

Enduring Understandings

Many American Jews feel strange and excluded in their homeland.

Knowledge of social norms, social network and Judaism, empowers travelers to Israel to engage fully with the life and culture.

Essential Questions

What is a homeland?

What are characteristics of a homeland?

What makes Israel the Jewish homeland?

How can a place be my home if I have never been there?

What does it mean to be a visitor in your “perceived” homeland?

What’s the role of Israel in my life?

Goals

- To struggle with the idea of a homeland.
- To analyze why Israel is important to the Jewish people.
- To create a safe space for participants to examine their personal Jewish journey and their personal connection to Judaism.
- To provide the opportunity for participants to reflect on the purpose of why this trip to Israel is important to the participants at this point in their life.
- To help participants to get to know each other on a personal level prior to their experience in Israel.
- To present possible expectations for the trip and encourage participants to clarify their expectations as a group.

Objectives: Participants will be able to...

- To define what “homeland” means to them.
- To articulate their feelings of being rooted in a place, or not.
- To articulate their initial attitudes toward Israel as a homeland.
- To diagram their Jewish journeys.
- To identify the reasons why this trip to Israel is significant to them and to classify them.
- To develop personal goals of the trip for themselves.
- To define what a *brit* is and recognize the collective *brit* written by the group.

Assessments

Group reflections
Partner reflections
Journaling / Letter to self

Participant Orientation Session 1 Timeline

Part 1: What is a homeland?

Activity 1	A homeland is like...	45 minutes
Activity 2	What is a homeland?	1 hour

Part 2: Who am I?

Activity 1	Jewish Journey Map	1 hour
Activity 2	Journaling / Letter to self	30 minutes

Part 3: Who are we?

Activity 1	Speed Meeting	40 minutes
Activity 2	Collective Brit	40 minutes
Activity 3	Cross the line	40 minutes

Materials for the day

Part 1:

- Computer
- Projector and Screen
- 5 poster boards
- White board (if not available, may use 2 or 3 poster boards put together)

Part 2:

- Media set up with Internet access and a screen
- Poster board for all participants
- Markers
- Journals for each participant
- Pens

Part 3:

- Wall signs for activity 3 (Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)
- Large poster board for activity 3

Orientation Session 1

Hineini, I Am Here

Part 1: What is a homeland?

Goals

- To struggle with the idea of a homeland.
- To analyze why Israel is important to the Jewish people.

Objectives: Participants will be able...

- To define what “homeland” means to them.
- To create metaphors for the idea of a “homeland,” which leads them to articulate their feelings of being rooted in a place, or not.
- To articulate their initial attitudes toward Israel as a homeland.
- To create personal connections with Israel and the ability to articulate them creatively.

Materials

Computer

Projector and Screen

5 poster boards

White board (if not available, may use 2 or 3 poster boards put together)

Activity 1: A Homeland is like... (45 minutes)

Utilize a synectic activity to think deeply about the idea of a homeland.⁴

A synectic activity is a learning tool that takes an abstract idea and helps make it understandable by putting it into a metaphor.

Synectic activity instructions:

- 1) Discuss the metaphors with which students are already familiar. (column 1 on board). Vote on which one they will work on further. (Alternately, begin with one metaphor, such as “mother”).
- 2) Warm up: simple comparisons: how is a person like a fruit or vegetable? How is going to school like driving on a freeway?
- 3) Ask students to imagine they are “X:” How do you look? How do you feel? List these on the board -- column 2. If not enough contrasting terms are listed, ask probing questions. (X being the metaphor chosen in #1)

⁴ Activity instructions from Dr. Isa Aron, professor at Hebrew Union College- Jewish Institute of Religion.

- 4) Compressed conflict: Find pairs of opposites within the list. List in column 3. Vote on which one to develop further.
- 5) List things that have both these conflicting qualities in column 4. Vote on which one will become the new metaphor.
- 6) Ask students to write; “X is like Y when” or “X is like Y because”
- 7) Collect papers and redistribute randomly. Have students read the answers out loud.

Reflect with the participants about how they are currently thinking about the word “homeland” as a result of creating this metaphor. Is there a homeland that the participants feel connected to?

Activity 2: What is a homeland? (1 hour)

Note to group leaders: Use your working definition of a homeland from the introductory unit as a resource.

Break up the larger group into 5 smaller groups (it does not matter how many people are in each of those groups). Give each group a poster board. Each poster will have a different question written on top.

Questions:

- What is a homeland?**
- What are characteristics of a homeland?**
- What makes Israel the Jewish homeland?**
- How can a place be my home if I have never been there?**
- Does it matter that Israel is the Jewish homeland?**
- Why or why not?**

Each group will answer the question on their poster as a group. More than one answer is encouraged.

After 8 minutes, the posters will rotate to another group. The group will answer the question or comment on the answer of a previous group. This will continue until every group comments on every poster.

As a large group, reflect on the experience and the discussions had by the small groups. Ask each group to share one aspect of their conversation with the rest of the group.

Orientation Session 1

Hineini, I Am Here

Part 2: Who Am I?

Goals

- To create a safe space for participants to examine their personal Jewish journey and their personal connection to Judaism.
- To provide the opportunity for participants to reflect on the purpose of why this trip to Israel is important to the participants at this point in their life.

Objectives: Participants will be able...

- To diagram their Jewish journeys.
- To identify the reasons why this trip to Israel is significant to them and to classify them.
- To develop personal goals of the trip for themselves.
- To articulate their initial reaction toward Israel.

Materials

Media set up with Internet access and a screen
Poster board for all participants
Markers
Journals for each participant
Pens

Introduction

Show the participants the video, "I am Jewish" by Andrew Lustig.
(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJe0uqVGZJA>)

Tell participants: **Every person has a story. "I am Jewish" means something different to every person. Today, we are going to explore what it means to you to say, "I am Jewish."**

Activity 1: Jewish Journey Map⁵ (1 hour)

Participants are going to create their personal Jewish journey map. Every person will receive a poster board and there will be markers for all the participants to use. Participants will create a map that demonstrates visually the journey of their life, highlighting memorable moments that are significant to whom they are as a person today. These maps should include events, people, places, etc.

⁵ Based on an activity by Diane Tickton Schuster in "Jewish Lives, Jewish Learning." p. 16

Participants are encouraged to be creative in their design, allowing the map to represent them.

Once the participants create their map, instruct them to uniquely mark the following moments (*If they have not had a particular experience, they can ignore it*):

- The location where your Jewish life began.
- The location(s) where you questioned Judaism.
- The location(s) where you became a Jewish adult.
- The location(s) where you had positive or negative interactions with the Jewish community.
- The location where Israel became important to you, if applicable.

After all the maps are complete, have the participants pair off and reflect with their partner on their Jewish journey map. Each partner should explain their Jewish journey map as well as any feelings that this exercise may have brought up.

After the reflection, ask participants to create a title for their Jewish journey map, using 6 words or less. Once they have a title, ask them to write it largely on their map.

Hang the maps in the room.

Activity 2: Journaling/Letter to Self (30 minutes)

Each participant will be given a journal that will be theirs to keep and use during the orientation and the trip. The participants will be asked to privately answer the following questions in a letter to themselves, to be read privately later during the orientation.

Questions:

- 1. Why am I going on this Birthright trip?**
- 2. Why am I going on this trip right now, at this point in my life?**
- 3. What are my expectations of the trip?**
- 4. What are my expectations for myself?**
- 5. What “baggage” (social, emotional, familial, etc) am I bringing with me as I board the airplane?**
- 6. What do I hope to take away from this experience as an American Jew?**
- 7. One way that I hope to push my personal boundaries in Israel is...**
- 8. What would a successful experience in Israel look like for me?**

Break the participants into more intimate groups, of about 4 or 5 participants in each. Allow open time for the participants to share some of their answers to the questions, if they would like. No one should be forced to share. Collect the journals and hold on to them during the orientation.

Orientation Session 1: Hineini, I Am Here

Part 3: Who are we?

Goals

- To help participants get to know each other on a personal level prior to their experience in Israel.
- To present possible expectations for the trip and encourage participants to clarify their expectations as a group.

Objectives: Participants will be able...

- To define what a *brit* is and recognize the collective *brit* written by the group.
- To recall personal facts about other participants.
- To list various feelings toward Israel.
- To classify their feelings toward Israel as positive and negative, and indicate "how so?"

Materials

Wall signs for activity 3 (Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree)
Large poster board for activity 3

Activity 1: Speed Meeting (40 minutes)

Place chairs in 2 lines facing each other. Ask each participant to sit in a chair. The leader will read a question out loud. The pairs will have 3 minutes to answer the question for each other, as well as introduce themselves by name and where they are from. At the end of 3 minutes, the leader will ask one line of chairs to move one chair over so they meet a new person. This will continue until all the questions are read or you have run out of time.

Questions:

1. If you opened up your own restaurant, what would you call it and what would it be known for?
2. What Disneyland ride could you ride all day long and not get tired of?
3. If you were handed a blank plane ticket, where would you choose to go?
4. Why do you want to go to Israel?
5. What's your dream car? What color would it be?
6. What is the best present you've ever received or hope to receive?
7. Would you rather live in the rainforest, the desert, or near the ocean?
8. When was the first time you realized you wanted to go to Israel?

9. Do you have any scars and if so, what's the story?
10. What is your favorite sport to watch, your favorite sports team to root for and your favorite sport to play?
11. What specifically about Israel are you most excited to experience?
12. Are you a side, back or belly sleeper? How many pillows do you prefer?
13. If you were snowed in, what would you do all day?
14. What is one thing you could not go without in this world?
15. What is your favorite movie or tv show of all time? Can you recite a line from it?

Activity 2: Collective *Brit* (40 minutes)

Ask the participants if they know or have heard the word *brit* before. Take a few hands.

A *brit* is the Hebrew word for "covenant." The term is used in the Torah, specifically in the stories of Noah and Abraham.

Story of Noah: After the flood destroys all life on Earth besides those on Noah's ark, God makes a *brit*, a covenant with Noah in which God promises to never destroy all living things on Earth ever again. A rainbow appears as a sign of the covenant. (Genesis 9:8-17)

Story of Abraham: God promises to make of Abraham a great nation, to bless him and his name so that those who bless Abraham will themselves be blessed and those who curse Abraham in turn will be cursed. God will give Abraham's descendants land, which is known as the Promised Land or the Land of Israel. As a permanent sign of this covenant, Abraham and the male members of his family circumcise themselves. Today, this act of circumcision is known as a *Brit Milah* or *Bris*, which is a symbol of this covenant as we are the descendants of Abraham. (Genesis 12-17)

As a group, the participants are going to create a *brit* for the group, one that they can all abide by throughout the orientation and the journey in Israel. In addition to conduct and safety related points, the *brit* should be tailored to people traveling to Israel, who bring various anxieties and hopes with them.

Ask for ideas from the participants and write each one on a large poster (or white board). Once all the ideas are on the board, ask if there is any discussion that should be had about any of the points. If not, ask for agreement by all participants that they each agree to abide by this covenant. When the list is finalized, nicely write the *brit* on a poster and have all the participants sign it.

Place the *brit* on the wall of the orientation space and on the bus in Israel.

Activity 3: Cross the Line (40 minutes)

Note: Remind students to respect each person's opinion and perspective.

Place wall signs around the room ("strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree"). Read one of the statements below and ask participants to move to the sign that they most closely identify with. After each statement is read, ask that 1 or 2 participants from each sign share with the group their reason for choosing that space.

Questions:

I am Jewish.

I identify as a Jew by religion.

I identify as a cultural Jew.

Israel is a Jewish Homeland.

Israel is MY Jewish Homeland.

Israel is a safe country.

Israel is a safe place to live.

Israel is very different than America.

I love Israel.

Only Jews should live in Israel.

I would live in Israel.

Judaism cannot exist without Israel.

Visiting Israel is different than visiting any other country.

Wrap up: Ask the following questions and have some of the participants answer them for the whole group:

Did your response to any of these questions surprise you?

If yes, which question and why?

How did you feel when there were other people standing next to you at a sign, or alternatively, how did it feel to stand at a sign alone?

Why did you feel that way?

If I would ask one more question, what would you want it to be?

⁶ Taken from Amanda Greene's HUC-JIR Curriculum Guide "Sacred Symbols and Complex Realities: A Professional Workshop for Teaching Multiple Israels." 2013.

Orientation Session 2 Sabras, Dugri, and “Real” Falafel

Israel, The Land

Enduring Understandings

Knowledge of social norms, social network and Judaism, empowers travelers to Israel to engage fully with the life and culture.

The Israel traditionally marketed to American Jews does not exist.

Essential Questions

What’s the role of Israel in my life?

Does an unbiased view of Israel exist? If so, what does it look like?

Goals

- To give the participants an overview of the history of the land of Israel from the Torah to the present.
- To create a sense of community within the group.
- To expose the participants to Torah text regarding Israel.
- To introduce ways for participants to express themselves and their feelings about Israel through a variety of modes, such as personal reflection and group discussion.

Objectives: Participants will be able to...

- To explain in detail 2 key events in Israel’s history.
- To recognize the names of multiple key events in Israel’s history.
- To retell the story in which the State of Israel won statehood from the United Nations.
- To describe the way that Israel is talked about in the Torah portion Numbers chapters 13 and 14.
- To recognize the current borders in Israel and discuss how they have changed.
- To compare and contrast the images represented in the yearly Yom Ha’Atzmaut posters.
- To develop their own perspective of the history of Israel.
- To acknowledge and appreciate varying perspectives within the trip group.

Assessments

Group Reflections
Individual work
Haiku Poem
Group Presentations

Orientation Session 2 Timeline

Activity 1	Israel, The Promised Land	1 hour, 20 minutes
Activity 2	Israel through posters	1 hour, 15 minutes
Activity 3	Keeping Score: The Deciding Vote	1 hour
Activity 4	Timeline	1 hour, 30 minutes

Materials for the day

Yom Ha' Atzmaut Posters—print from iCenter website:

<http://goodman.theicenter.org/activities/poster-ales-yearning-peace>

Tape

Labels (for posters)

Blank paper (multiple pages for every participant)

Blank paper the size of postcards

Pens (for every participant)

Projector and Screen

Computer to connect to projector

Copies of Resource S2-1 (Optical Illusion)

Copies of Resource S2-2 (Participant Script)

Copies of Resource S2-3 (Leader Script)

Copies of Resource S2-4 (The Story of a Vote)

Orientation Session 2 Sabras, Dugri, and “Real” Falafel

Israel, The Land

Goals

- To give the participants an overview of the history of the land of Israel from the Torah to the present.
- To create a sense of community within the group.
- To expose the participants to Torah text regarding Israel.
- To introduce ways for participants to express themselves and their feelings about Israel through a variety of modes, such as personal reflection and group discussion.

Objectives: Participant will be able...

- To explain in detail 2 key events in Israel’s history.
- To recognize the names of multiple key events in Israel’s history.
- To retell the story in which the State of Israel won statehood from the United Nations.
- To describe the way that Israel is talked about in the Torah portion Numbers chapters 13 and 14.
- To recognize the current borders in Israel and discuss how they have changed.
- To compare and contrast the images represented in the yearly Yom Ha’Atzmaut posters.
- To develop their own perspective of the history of Israel.
- To acknowledge and appreciate varying perspectives within the trip group.

Materials

Yom Ha’Atzmaut Posters—print from iCenter website:

<http://goodman.theicenter.org/activities/poster-tales-yearning-peace>

Tape

Labels (for posters)

Blank paper (multiple pages for every participant)

Blank paper the size of postcards

Pens (for every participant)

Projector and Screen

Computer to connect to projector

Copies of Resource S2-1 (Optical Illusion)

Copies of Resource S2-2 (Participant Script)

Copies of Resource S2-3 (Leader Script)

Copies of Resource S2-4 (The Story of a Vote)

Activity 1: Israel, the Promised Land (1 hour, 20 minutes)

Set Induction (5 minutes)

Pass out the optical illusion picture (Resource S2-1) to each participant. Give them 1 minute to look at the picture. Ask the participants what they see? (Some will see an old woman; others will see a young woman) Have the participants look for the picture they did not see originally.

Remind the students that even when we all look at the same thing, we don't always see the same thing. Each person's perspective is unique.

Activity: (Bibliodrama: 45 minutes) (Postcard: 25 minutes)

This activity will lead the participants through a Bibliodrama⁷ experience.

Bibliodrama is a way for participants to insert their own perspective into a biblical text. It is a form of Midrash. The group leader will have the participants read through the story script. The group leader will use the "group leader script" which will prompt when to stop the text and ask questions of the characters.

Anyone can answer the questions, but they must answer them in the first person.

For further guidance to lead a Bibliodrama, visit

<http://www.bibliodrama.com/what-is-bibliodrama/>.

Pass out the "participant script" (Resource S2-2) to each person. Have the "group leader script" for yourself (Resource S2-3). Ask for 5 volunteers to each take the roles of narrator, Moses, a representative of the spies, Caleb, and either Joshua or Caleb.

Tell the participants the following:

There are many ways to study Torah. One way we study Torah is through Midrash, where we question the characters' motivations. Midrash doesn't always tell you why characters did what they did, or say what they said. Midrash is a textual commentary process that tries to fill in some of gaps that are in the Torah. We are going to read through this Torah text as a script with our volunteers reading their characters' lines. Voices and enthusiasm are always encouraged! The leader is going to interrupt the reading of the script with questions. Anyone can answer the question. The only rule is that you must answer in the first person, as if you were the character.

When the story is finished, ask the participants if they have any questions about the story or any concluding thoughts.

After finishing the script, ask the participants what is unique about postcards as opposed to a letter. Answer: *They include whom they are to and from, as well as the message is open for the public.*

⁷ Formatted after a lesson designed by Dr. Isa Aron at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 2013.

Have the participants create postcard relevant to the story. They need to include whom the postcard is for, who is writing it, and what the message would be. When the postcards are complete, ask a few participants to share their postcard with the rest of the group. Collect the postcards to be displayed during the orientation and on the bus in Israel.

Wrap Up (5 minutes):

Ask: How did you feel about this activity? What role does perspectives play in this story?

Tell the participants: Keep this story in mind as you travel to Israel, as each of you will see the same places but you will experience them differently.



The Twelve Spies
Numbers 13-14
Participant Script

Narrator: ¹And God spoke to Moses saying, ²“Send men, that they may spy the land of Canaan, which I give to the people of Israel; of every tribe of their fathers shall you send a man, every one a leader among them. ³And Moses by the commandment of God sent them from the wilderness of Paran; all those men were chiefs of the people of Israel. [Moses names all of the leaders of the tribes that will make the journey] ¹⁷ And Moses sent them to spy put the land of Canaan, and said to them,

Moses: Go up this way southward, and go up into the mountain; ¹⁸ and see the land, what it is; and the people who live in it, whether they are strong or weak, few or many; ¹⁹ and what the land is that they live in, whether it is good or bad; and what cities they are that they live in, whether in tents, or in fortresses; ²⁰ and what the land is, whether it is fat or lean, whether there is wood in it, or not. And be you of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes.

Narrator: ²¹ So they went up, and searched the land... ²⁵ And they returned from searching the land after forty days. ²⁶ And they went and came to Moses, and Aaron, and to all the congregation of the people of Israel, to the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word to them, and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. ²⁷ And they told him, and said,

The Spies: We came to the land where you sent us, and surely it flows with milk and honey; and this is its fruit. ²⁸ Nevertheless the people, who live in the land, are strong, and the cities are walled, and very great; and moreover we saw the children of Anak There. ²⁹ The Amalekites live in the land of the Negev; and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, live in the mountains; and the Canaanites live by the sea, and by the side of the Jordan.

Narrator: ³⁰ And Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said,

Caleb: Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

Narrator: ³¹ But the men who went up with him said,

The Spies: We are not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.

Narrator: ³²And the spies brought up an evil report of the land which they had spied, to the people of Israel, saying,

The Spies: The land, through which we have gone to spy, is a land that eats up its inhabitants; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. ³³ And

Resource S2-2 (Continued)

there we saw the Nefilim, the sons of Anak, who come from the Nefilim; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

Narrator: After more discussion, ¹⁴⁶ Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of those who spied the land, tore their clothes; ⁷and they spoke to all the company of the people of Israel, saying,

Joshua and Caleb: The land, which we passed through to spy, is an exceedingly good land. ⁸ If the Lord delights in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it to us; a land, which flows with milk and honey.

The Twelve Spies
Numbers 13-14
Leader Script

Narrator: ¹And God spoke to Moses saying, ²“Send men, that they may spy the land of Canaan, which I give to the people of Israel; of every tribe of their fathers shall you send a man, every one a leader among them. ³And Moses by the commandment of God sent them from the wilderness of Paran; all those men were chiefs of the people of Israel. [Moses names all of the leaders of the tribes that will make the journey] ¹⁷ And Moses sent them to spy put the land of Canaan, and said to them,

Moses: Go up this way southward, and go up into the mountain; ¹⁸ and see the land, what it is; and the people who live in it, whether they are strong or weak, few or many; ¹⁹ and what the land is that they live in, whether it is good or bad; and what cities they are that they live in, whether in tents, or in fortresses; ²⁰ and what the land is, whether it is fat or lean, whether there is wood in it, or not. And be you of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes.

Leader asks: Moses—secretly, what are you hoping for at this moment?

Narrator: ²¹ So they went up, and searched the land... ²⁵ And they returned from searching the land after forty days. ²⁶ And they went and came to Moses, and Aaron, and to all the congregation of the people of Israel, to the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word to them, and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. ²⁷ And they told him, and said,

Leader asks: People of Israel—You see the tribe leaders return from their journey. How are you feeling?

The Spies: We came to the land where you sent us, and surely it flows with milk and honey; and this is its fruit. ²⁸ Nevertheless the people, who live in the land, are strong, and the cities are walled, and very great; and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. ²⁹ The Amalekites live in the land of the Negev; and the Hitties, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, live in the mountains; and the Canaanites live by the sea, and by the side of the Jordan.

Narrator: ³⁰ And Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said,

Caleb: Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

Leader asks: Caleb—how are you feeling right now?

Narrator: ³¹ But the men who went up with him said,

Resource S2-3 (Continued)

The Spies: We are not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.

Leader asks: Caleb—Now, how are you feeling?

Narrator: ³²And the spies brought up an evil report of the land which they had spied, to the people of Israel, saying,

The Spies: The land, through which we have gone to spy, is a land that eats up its inhabitants; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. ³³ And there we saw the Nefilim, the sons of Anak, who come from the Nefilim; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

Leader asks: Moses—What are you thinking? Who can you believe?

Narrator: After more discussion, ¹⁴⁶ Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of those who spied the land, tore their clothes; ⁷and they spoke to all the company of the people of Israel, saying,

Joshua and Caleb: The land, which we passed through to spy, is an exceedingly good land. ⁸ If the Lord delights in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it to us; a land which flows with milk and honey.

Leader asks: People of Israel—Who do you trust? Do you trust Caleb and move forward in the journey to the land, or do you listen to the rest of the spies who speak of strong inhabitants?

Activity 2: Israel through posters (1 hour, 15 minutes)

Tell the participants: **Each year, the State of Israel has a poster created to commemorate Israel's Independence Day, or Yom Ha'Atzmaut. These posters often incorporate symbols that represent that specific year in Israel. By examining these posters, participants will get a sense of ups and downs in Israel's history.**

Begin by placing all the Yom Ha'Atzmaut posters on the walls around the room.⁸ Distinguish each poster by labeling it with a unique number. Give each participant a piece of blank paper and a pen.

Ask each participant to walk around the room, examining each poster. Prompt them to pick out 4 posters that stick out to them, for any reason at all. Have them write the numbers of those specific posters on their paper and the reasons why they chose those posters. Give the participants approximately 20 minutes to do this.

When the group is done, break the participants into groups of 5. Have the participants answer the following prompts and questions:

1. **Please go around the group and share the posters each participant chose and why.**
2. **Are there posters that more than one person chose? Are their reasons similar or different for choosing it?**
3. **Are there similar reasons why participants chose their posters, even if they chose different posters? What are those reasons?**

Bring the whole group back together. Have the leader pull the posters from 1978, 1995 and 1996 from the wall and bring them to the front of the whole group.⁹

For the 1978 poster:

Ask the participants to share what they notice from this poster.

Explain: This poster occurred right after Egyptian President Anwar Sadat visited Israel in 1977 as a part of the historic peace negotiations between Egypt and Israel. In 1977, Sadat arrived in Jerusalem for a 3-day visit that launched the first peace process between Israel and an Arab state. After Sadat's visit, in 1978, Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin met at Camp David, which led to the 1979 Israel-Egypt peace treaty. Since then, peace has prevailed on this mutual border.

⁸ Yom Ha'Atzmaut poster courtesy of The iCenter's Goodman Initiative
<http://goodman.theicenter.org/activities/poster-tales-yearning-peace>.

⁹ The rest of this activity is from the lesson, "Poster Tales: Yearning for Peace" published by the The iCenter's Goodman Camping Initiative for Modern Israel History
<http://goodman.theicenter.org/activities/poster-tales-yearning-peace>.

Ask: Given this information, does this change the way you look at this poster and what it represents?

For the 1995 and 1996 posters:

Ask the participants to share what they notice from the 1995 poster.

Explain: The 1995 poster reflects a time in Israel when peace with the Palestinians was on the horizon. This poster was created while Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was in the midst of working towards peace with the signing of peace agreements with the Palestinians and with Jordan. This peace process began to take shape in 1991, when Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinians met in Madrid for the first face-to-face talks. These meetings led to the 1993 Oslo Peace Accords between the Palestinians and Israel. These talks resulted in an agreement where Gaza and Jericho were turned over to the Palestinian Authority and the IDF would redeploy in the West Bank and evacuate large Palestinian towns.

Ask: Given what you now know about the peace process, how do you think Israelis felt during this time? How is that reflected in the posters?

Explain: The Oslo Agreements sparked controversy within Israel where some people supported the Government's policy while others saw it as an act of surrender. The dispute reached its climax at the end of the peace rally when an extremist Israeli Jew assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. After the assassination, the peace process slowed.

Then, look at the 1996 poster, after Rabin is assassinated.

Ask: How are the images in the 1996 poster different than the images in the 1995 poster? Why are the images different?

Explain that the 1996 poster was focused on industry and education.

Ask: What do you think it says that Israel chose to commemorate the year that Rabin was assassinated with a poster about technology?

Wrap Up

Ask the participants if there was anything surprising to them about these posters.

Activity 3: Keeping Score: The Deciding Vote (1 hour)

Set Induction

Ask the participants, **What is the most interesting conversation you have ever had with another person in a public restroom?**

Have a few participants share their answers.

Activity

To set up the scene for the video, pass out the “Background Material”¹⁰ (Resource S2-4) packet to participants and give them a few minutes to read it individually. After they read it, answer any questions participants have. *Keep in mind the video will also help answer questions.*

Show the participants the 10-minute video about the United Nations vote on the future of Palestine. The video can be found here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrIjzUK0FKg#t=578>

Ask a few students to share a few words about how they are feeling about the UN vote and the declaration of the state of Israel after watching the video.

At the conclusion of the video, explain to the participants the idea of a Haiku poem.

Haiku poetry, developed by the Japanese, uses “just a few words to capture a moment and create a picture in the reader’s mind.”¹¹ Haiku poems follow a format of a total of three lines: the first line has 5 syllables, the second line has 7 syllables and the last line has 5 syllables.

Using this format, the participants are going to create their own Haiku poem that expresses any of the following:

- **How did you feel while watching the video about the situation around the UN vote?**
- **How did the people living in Palestine react to the news of the vote?**
- **What were the emotions of the people involved with the vote?**
- **Describe the scene before, during or after the vote.**
- **What was going through David Ben-Gurion’s mind during or immediately after the vote?**

Give the participants time to create their Haiku poem.

¹⁰ “The Story of a Vote” program written for The iCenter for Israel Education. It can be found at http://www.theicenter.org/sites/theicenter.org/files/resources/icenter-nov_29_background_material.pdf.

¹¹ <http://www.creative-writing-now.com/how-to-write-a-haiku.html>

Wrap Up

When all the participants are done, have them sit in a large circle and have all the participants share their poems.

Group leaders should share the Haiku poems they wrote during the introductory unit.

November 29, 1947

The Story of a Vote
Background Material from The iCenter for Israel Education

What was special about 1947?

Jewish links to the Land of Israel go back thousands of years. According to the Biblical story, God promised the land to Abraham and his descendants “to eternity.” (Genesis 13:15) It was the site of the great Jewish Temples, of David’s kingdom and of the 12 tribes of Israel. While the Jews ruled the area during much of Biblical times and afterwards, the Second Temple fell to the Romans in the year 70 CE and for nearly 2,000 years the Jews were not sovereign there.

Through these centuries, Jews around the world never forgot their connection to Israel. At the Passover Seder we say, “Next year in Jerusalem,” and when Jews pray they face Jerusalem.

While the Jewish people never gave up the hope of one day regaining sovereignty in the land of their forefathers, many centuries passed in which they did little to bring about a return. It is important to note that, even during almost 2,000 years of exile, there was never a time when no Jews lived in the Land of Israel, under an ever-changing cast of regional and global powers.

Only in the late 1800s did Jews begin to take concrete action to return to Israel en masse. Early waves of Zionists came from Eastern Europe, drawn by a complex mix of yearnings for Zion and a desire to flee increasingly anti-Semitic, violent realities in the places their families had lived for generations.

In 1897, Theodor Herzl, the father of Modern Zionism, convened the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, with the express purpose of advancing efforts to create a Jewish homeland in the Land of Israel. At the conclusion of the Congress, the delegates approved a statement which said:

The aim of Zionism is to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law. The Congress contemplates the following means to the attainment of this end:

1. The promotion, on suitable lines, of the colonization of Palestine by Jewish agricultural and industrial workers.
2. The organization and binding together of the whole of Jewry by means of appropriate institutions, local and international, in accordance with the laws of each country.

Resource S2-4 (Continued)

3. The strengthening and fostering of Jewish national sentiment and consciousness.
4. Preparatory steps toward obtaining government consent, where necessary, to the attainment of the aim of Zionism.¹

At the conclusion of the Congress, Herzl wrote in his diary:

In Basel, I founded the Jewish state. If I said this out loud today, I would be answered by universal laughter. Perhaps in five years, and certainly in fifty, everyone will recognize this.

Of course, when Herzl wrote those words, in September 1897, neither he nor anyone else could have foreseen the horrific calamity that would befall European Jewry four decades later. Even Herzl, who was terribly concerned about European anti-Semitism and the persecution of Jews, never imagined the lengths to which Nazi Germany would go to try to erase any Jewish presence in the world.

But if you think for just a moment about his secret prediction, and you look at the calendar, you realize that he was exactly right in his estimate – precisely 50 years after he wrote those words in Basel, the United Nations was asked to vote on a plan to partition Palestine into two states. One would be for the Arabs of Palestine. The other would be the state that Herzl so audaciously believed he had founded at the First Zionist Congress in 1897.

The final steps leading to the vote at the United Nations' temporary headquarters, in Lake Success, NY, are the focus of the video we are about to see today.

Why did the Jews need a state?

Herzl believed that the Jews needed a state because he had come to the conclusion that Jews never would be fully accepted in other countries. He believed that if they had a homeland, with a sovereign government, all Jews would enjoy greater security wherever they lived.

Remember that Herzl began his quest for Jewish statehood long before the rise of the Nazis and long before the annihilation of European Jewry began. There can be no denying, however, that the tragedy of six million Jews killed in Europe focused the world's attention on the need.

¹ Laqueur and Rubin, *The Israel Arab Reader*, pp. 9-10

Who was in charge of Palestine before it became Israel?

Great Britain held the mandate for Palestine, granted to it by the League of Nations (the predecessor of the UN.) The British had seen Palestine as an important part of their global empire, but after World War Two came to an end,

Resource S2-4 (Continued)

they realized they could not hold onto the land indefinitely. In fact, 30 years earlier, in 1917, the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Arthur James Balfour, had issued an important declaration called the Balfour Declaration, which said:

“His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.”

It is important to stress that, while the Holocaust certainly underscored the need for a Jewish state, it did not create the need or the movement to establish Israel.

Early in 1947, the British notified the UN that they planned to leave Palestine, and the UN appointed a special committee to make recommendations about what to do with the territory. The committee recommended partitioning Palestine into two states: one for the Arabs and one for the Jews. In November, 1947, the proposal to do just that came to the floor of the United Nations.

What did the Arabs and Jews of Palestine say about the plan to partition Palestine?

The Partition Plan as proposed by the UN divided the land into two states that intersected and crossed each other in several places. Jerusalem – holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims – was to be under international rule.

The Arab High Committee for Palestine rejected the plan outright, saying they would not accept a Jewish state in the Arab Middle East under any circumstances.

There was serious debate among the Zionists in Palestine over how to greet the plan. Many said that the Jews deserved all of the territory, or at least that they should demand better, more defensible, borders. Ultimately, those who wanted to accept the plan – led by David Ben-Gurion, who was the leader of the Zionist movement and would become Israel's first prime minister – prevailed and the Zionists welcomed the Partition Plan.

Activity 4: Timeline (1 hour, 30 minutes)

Set induction

Ask participants to share their response to the following question with the person sitting next to them.

Where were you when... happened? Think of an event in American History that you distinctly remember? Why do you remember this moment so distinctly?

This next activity aims to expose the participants to some key events in Israeli history, events and people that are well-known to Israelis.

Activity

Break the group of participants into 4 or 5 small groups. Give each group a different historical event or person (events and people given below). Instruct each group to research their event or person utilizing their cell phones. After they learn about the event or person, they need to come up with a 3-minute creative presentation as if they are a news reporter team in order to teach the larger group about that event or person. The news report can either be through TV, radio, newspaper article, etc.

After all the groups finish their presentations, they will each take turns presenting to the group as a whole.

Here are some reliable news sources:

- *New York Times (Liberal, American)*
- *Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Israeli government site)*
- *Times of Israel website*
- *My Jewish Learning.com*

Events/People:

- **Beginning of British Mandate confirmed by the League of Nations in 1922**
- **Jewish Resistance Movements in the 1940's—The Haganah and Etzel**
- **Exodus 1947**
- **United Nations Partition Plan**
- **UN Vote/ War of Independence**
- **Suez Crisis 1956**
- **Six Day War 1967**
- **Yom Kippur War 1973**
- **Operation Entebbe 1976**
- **Camp David Accords**
- **1982 Lebanon War**
- **First Intifada**
- **Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin**
- **West Bank Fence 2002**
- **Oslo Accords**

- Second Intifada
- 2006 Lebanon War
- Gilad Shalit

Extra options:

Eichmann Trial

Munich Olympics

Israel's Disengagement Plan

Wrap Up

What do you notice about this group of events?

(Note to teacher: most are negative events. Why is this seen on many Israeli history timelines?)

Are there any other events or people that you would you add to this list?

Is there a person or event that may be more positive to include on the list?

Orientation Session 3

Am Yisrael

Israel, the People

Enduring Understandings

Many American Jews feel strange and excluded in their homeland.

Alienation engages and excludes.

The Israel traditionally marketed to American Jews does not exist.

Knowledge of social norms, social networks and Judaism, empowers travelers to Israel to engage fully with the life and culture.

Essential Questions

What's the role of Israel in my life?

Does an unbiased view of Israel exist? If so, what does it look like?

Goals

- To unpack assumptions about the Israeli people and society.
- To create an environment where participants can dispel assumptions they have about the Israeli people and society.
- To contemplate the idea of being included and excluded from a society.
- To provide the opportunity for participants to reflect on the orientation.
- To provide the opportunity for participants to reflect on their feelings as the trip to Israel approaches.

Objectives: Participants will be able to...

- To name 3 characteristics about Israeli people and/or society.
- To compare pre-conceived assumptions about Israeli society and people with the multi-faceted reality of 21st century Israel.
- To articulate their current perspective of Israel and compare how it has changed over the course of the orientation.

Assessments

Group Reflection

Twitter Tweets

Orientation Session 3 Timeline

Part 1: Israel, the People

Activity 1	Who is Israel?	45 minutes
Activity 2	Where's the bathroom?	1 hour, 15 minutes
Activity 3	Societal Debate	1 hour, 15 minutes

Part 2: Welcome, stranger!

Activity 1	"Tourists" by Yehuda Amichai	45 minutes
Activity 2	Letter to self, part 2	20 minutes
Activity 3	Reflections	45 minutes

Materials for the day

Part 1:

- 2 post-it notes per person (2 different colors)
- Pens
- Media components to watch a video on YouTube
- Print articles for activity 2
- Paper
- Hebrew Word resource printed for each participant

Part 2:

- Group leader copy of Resource S3-2 (Yehuda Amichai's biography)
- Copies Resource S3-3 (Yehuda Amichai poem) for each participant
- Participant Journals
- Pens
- Paper

Orientation Session 3

Am Yisrael

Part 1: Israel, the people

Goals

- To unpack assumptions about the Israeli people and society.
- To create an environment where participants can dispel assumptions they have about the Israeli people and society.
- To create a simulation of a café in Israel for participants to practice using Hebrew words and phrases.

Objectives: Participants will be able...

- To name 3 characteristics about Israeli people and/or society.
- To compare pre-conceived assumptions about Israeli society and people with the multi-faceted reality of 21st century Israel.
- To remember 5 Hebrew words or phrases.

Materials

2 post-it notes per person (2 different colors)

Pens

Media components to watch a video on YouTube

Print copies of the articles for Activity 3

Paper

Copies of Resource S3-1 (Hebrew Words) for each participant

Activity 1: Who is Israel? (45 minutes)

Set Induction

Hand each participant a post-it note and a pen (make sure every participant has the same color post-it note). Ask each person to write the first thing, preferably a single word, that they think of when they think of Israeli people. Place all the post-it notes on the wall and read some of them aloud to the group. Ask the group how they came to think of these words/ideas. *Possible answers may be: family, media, synagogue, etc.*

Activity

Watch the video, "Israel: The Vision and Venture of the Jewish People" found here (7 minutes): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImCaNcip9mU>

Now, hand the participants another color post-it note. Ask them to write something about the Israeli people, after seeing this video. Collect the post-it notes and place them on the wall, preferably next to the first set of post-it notes. Read some of these post-it notes out loud.

Lead a discussion about the assumptions the world has about the Israeli people and society. Use the following questions as a guide:

1. **What is the product of our assumptions, either positive or negative?**
2. **What underlies our assumptions about Israel and its people?**
3. **What do we do about negative assumptions that are not correct?**
4. **As someone who will be traveling to Israel, what will your role be back in America to help dispel incorrect assumptions about Israel.**

At the end, please make sure to remind the participants that being aware of our assumptions will help us on our journey in Israel as we will be more open to seeing past those assumptions.

Also, remind the participants that the video they create during the trip (authentic assessment) will be a way that they can spread information about Israel based on their first-hand experience in Israel with their families and friends.

Activity 2: Where's the bathroom? (1 hour, 15 minutes)

Note for group leaders: For this activity, you are going to create a mock café in Israel. This could be as detailed as you'd like it to be. Ideally, you could set up tables with a few chairs, and real food and drinks. This should be an exciting experience for the participants to begin using Hebrew words and phrases.

Set induction (5 minutes)

Ask participants: **What is scary about visiting another country and culture?**

After taking some participants' answers, hopefully someone will suggest the difficulty of not knowing the language. If the participants do not come up with this, ask a leading question to get them there. Tell them that language barriers are incredibly difficult and that the activity that they are about to participate in will give them some basic Hebrew words and phrases to help them navigate Israel.

Activity (40 minutes)

Before beginning the activity, set up the room and supplies as necessary. As part of this simulation experience, each participant is going to be given the Hebrew Word resource sheet (Resource S3-1) as well as a character role. Here are the following roles (determine how many of each role depending on your group's size. There should be more guests than waiter/waitress and chef/behind the bar server):

- Waiter/Waitress
- Café Guest
- Chef/Behind the bar server

Once everyone has a role, give everyone 5 minutes to go through their Hebrew word resource in order to familiarize themselves with the words and phrases related to his/her role. Students need to use these sheets as a reference for the simulation experience.

After 5 minutes, instruct the participants to begin playing their role. Guests should be sitting at tables, chatting in Hebrew with one another, as best as possible. The waiters and waitresses should be walking around the café, asking the guests what they want. If there is actual food and drinks, the waiters and waitresses will bring the guests food.

After 10 minutes, facilitate the rotation of roles, so the participants have the opportunity to use the words and phrases another way. These new roles should last another 10 minutes.

Bring the group together. Ask the participants for any words they think should have been included in the Hebrew Word resource that is not there.

Take notes of the words they would like to know. At some point between the orientation and the beginning of the trip, the group leader should create an additional resource that has the words the participants have asked for and their Hebrew transliteration. This additional resource, as well as the Hebrew Word resource (collected at the end of the activity) should be brought on the trip and distributed to the participants at the airport on the way to Israel.

Wrap up (30 minutes)

Lead a discussion with the participants using the following questions:

- 1. Is language an alienating factor when traveling?**
- 2. Does this alienation include and/or exclude people? Can it do both?**
- 3. Is there significance that Israel's language is Hebrew? How so, or why not?**
- 4. How do you feel about Hebrew right now? How do you feel now that you have learned some basic Hebrew words and phrases?**

HEBREW WORDS

Formalities

ENGLISH	HEBREW	עברית
Hello, good-bye or peace	Shalom	שלום
Good morning	Boker tov	בוקר טוב
Good evening	Erev tov	ערב טוב
See you soon	L'hitra'ot	להתראות
What's up?	Ma nishma	מה נישמה
Yes	Ken	כן
No	Lo	לא
Thank you	Toda	תודה
Excuse me/I'm sorry	Slicha	סליחה
Please/You're welcome	Bevakasha	בבקשה
What is your name? (male/female)	Ma shim'cha/shem'ch?	מה שימך?
My name is...	Shmi...	שמי...
How are you? (male/female)	Ma shlomcha/shlomech?	מה שלומך?
Nice to meet you	Na'im M'od	נעים מאוד
Fine, OK	B'seder	בסדר
Good	Tov	טוב
Not good	Lo tov	לא טוב
Excellent	Metzuyan	מצוין
I'm tired (male/female)	Ani ayef/ayefa	אני עיף/עיפה?

Shopping & Dining

ENGLISH	HEBREW	עברית
Do you have...(male/female)	Yesh lecha/lach...?	יש לך...
How much does this cost?	Kama zeh oleh?	כמה זה עולה?
I want...(male/female)	Ani rotzeh/rotzah	אני רוצה...
I don't want...(male/female)	Ani lo rotzeh/rotzah...	אני לא רוצה...
Money	Kesef	כסף
Check/Bill	Chesh'bon	חשבון
Waiter/waitress	Meltzar/meltzarit	מלצר/מלצרת
Breakfast	Aruchat Boker	ארוחת בוקר
Lunch	Aruchat Tzo'ho'raim	ארוחת צהריים
Dinner	Aruchat Erev	ארוחת ערב
Water	Mayim	מים
Coffee	Kafeh	קפה
Iced Coffee	Kafeh kar	הפק קר
Ice-blended coffee	Ice Kafe	אייס קפה
Tea	Tay	תה
Beer	Birah	בירה
Wine	Ya'in	יין

Sandwich	Sand'vich	וייץףדסנ
Pizza	Pizza	פיצה
Salad	Salat	סלט
Chicken	Oof	עוף
Beef	Basar	בשר
Fish	Dag	דג
Vegetables	Ear'a'kot	ירקות
Cheese	Ga'vi'na	גבינה
Tomato	Ag'van'ea	עגבניה
Cucumber	Mel'a'fa'fon	מלפפון
Olive	Za'it	זית
Spicy	Char'if	חריף

Emergencies

ENGLISH	HEBREW	עברית
Do you speak English? (female/male)	Aaht medaberet Anglit?/Ata medaber Anglit?	אנגלית מדברת את? אנגלית מדבר אתה?
I don't speak Hebrew (female/male)	Ani lo medaberet Ivrit/Ani lo medaber Ivrit	אני אל מדברת עברית אני לא מדבר עברית
Police	Mish'tarah	משטרה
Doctor	Rofe	רופא
Hospital	Beit cholim	בית חולים
Passport	Darkon	דרכון

Getting Around

ENGLISH	HEBREW	עברית
Where is...?	Eifoh...?	איפה
When	Matai	מתי
Why	Lama	למה
I'm going to...(male/female)	Ani nose'a l'.../Ani nosa'at l'...	אני נוסע/ נוסת ל...
There is...	Yesh...	יש
There is no...	Ain...	אין
Do you know where...is (female/male)	Ata yodea eifoh nimtza.../(aht yoda'at) eifoh nimtza...	את יודע איפה נמצא... את יודעת איפה נמצא...
What is this?	Ma zeh?	מה זה?
Wait/Just a moment	Rega	רגע
Restaurant	Mis'adah	מסעדה
Bathroom	Sherutim	שרותים
Street	Rechov	רחוב
Market	Shuk	שוק
Museum	Muzion	מוזיאון
Synagogue	Beit kneset	בית כנסת
Church	Knaissia	כנסייה

Central bus station	Tachana merkazit	תחנת מרכזית
Taxi	Monit (regular, taxi); Sherut (shared taxi, like a mini-van),	מונית, שירות
Automobile	Mechonit	מכונית
Train	Rakevet	רכבת
Bus	Otoboos	אותובוס
Hotel	Malon	מלון
Hostel	Akhsaniya	אכסניה
Airport	Na'mal te'u'fa	נמל תעופה
Room	Cheder	חדר
Beach	Chof	חוף
Grocery store	Makolet	מקולת
Food	Okhel	אוכל
Day	Yom	יום
Week	Shavua	שבוע
Month	Chodesh	חודש
Year	Shana	שנה
Today	Ha'yom	היום
Yesterday	Etmol	אתמול
Tomorrow	Machar	מחר
What time is it?	Ma hash'a'a?	מה השעה?
Right	Yamina	מינהי
Left	Smola	שמולה
Straight	Yashar	ישר

Days of the week

ENGLISH	HEBREW	עברית
Sunday	Yom rishon	יום ראשון
Monday	Yom shenee	יום שני
Tuesday	Yom shlishi	יום שלישי
Wednesday	Yom rev'i	יום רביעי
Thursday	Yom chamishi	יום חמישי
Friday	Yom shishi	יום שישי
Saturday (Sabbath)	Shabbat	יום שבת

Numbers

ENGLISH	HEBREW	עברית
One	Achat	אחת
Two	Shtayim	שתיים
Three	Shalosh	שלוש
Four	Arba	ארבע
Five	Chamesh	חמש
Six	Shesh	שש

Seven	Sheva	שבע
Eight	Shmone	שמונה
Nine	Tesha	תשע
Ten	Eser	עשר
Twenty	Esrin	עשרים
Thirty	Shloshim	שלושים
Forty	Arbaim	ארבעים
Fifty	Chamishim	חמשים
Sixty	Shishim	שים
Seventy	Shivim	שבעים
Eighty	Shmonim	שמונים
Ninety	Tishim	תשעים
One hundred	Mea	מאה
Two hundred	Mataim	תימא

*Adapted from <http://www.jewishfederations.org/hebrew-words-and-phrases.aspx>

Activity 3: Societal Debate (1 hour, 15 minutes)

Group leader explains the following to the group: (10 minutes)

Unlike America where there is a separation of church and state, the State of Israel's laws are created with Jewish law in mind. For example, public transportation does not run from Friday afternoon until Saturday night in observance of Shabbat. Even though there is a large majority of Jews in Israel who do not observe Shabbat in the strictest of ways, in most cases, Jewish law is reflected in Israeli law. The Israeli government is run by a coalition made up of various political parties. The smaller parties, with less Knesset (Israeli government) seats, have the power to negotiate, as the larger parties need those smaller parties to reach a majority. This is why many feel that the Orthodox party has so much power, as they often have a few Knesset seats.

Also in contrast to America, every person over the age of 18, male and female, is required to serve in the Israeli Army, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). Men serve three years and women serve two years. As with everything, there are exceptions. Here are the reasons one could be exempt from military duty¹²:

- If a person is permanently living abroad, after migrating abroad.
- Marriage, pregnancy or parenthood (for women only).
- Exemption for religious reasons (for women only).
- Exemption on grounds of conscience. It is a relatively rare exemption, which is granted to both women and men who are usually ordered to spend a sentence in the military jail before being granted this exemption.
- Studying in a Yeshiva might allow the postponement of the recruitment in six months, and after that one might more easily be granted a postponement for an additional six months and so on, without any limitations, as long as the student continues his studies in the Yeshiva (for men only). This exemption is called *Torato Omanuto* and is enshrined in the *Tal Law*.
- Religious Israeli Druze citizens are exempt from conscription.
- Arab citizens of Israel are also exempted.
- Some young people are exempted for holding a criminal record.

Today, we are going to concentrate on the Tal Law, as there has been a lot of debate about it in Israeli society recently. Often, Orthodox young men who study in Yeshiva, an educational institution that focuses on traditional Jewish texts, continue to postpone their military service until they are too old to be drafted, therefore, avoiding service altogether.

¹² "Exemption from military service in Israel," Wikipedia, accessed February 24, 2014, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exemption_from_military_service_in_Israel.

Recently, other factions within Israeli society have been angered by this avoidance of service and are looking to have the law re-evaluated.”¹³

Group leader: Ask the participants if they have any questions about the information just given. Once the questions have been answered, break the group into 2 groups, one the “Religious Citizens, i.e Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox (Haredi)” and the other, “Secular Citizens.” Give each group the following news articles related to this issue.

Both groups:

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/knesset-panel-okays-bill-levying-sanctions-on-haredi-draft-dodgers/>

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/on-haredi-draft-politics-trump-pragmatism/>

Religious Group:

<http://www.jpost.com/Diplomacy-and-Politics/Conservative-rabbis-Keep-yeshiva-IDF-exemptions>

Secular Group:

<http://www.tabletmag.com/scroll/133514/israel-closer-to-ultra-orthodox-conscription>

(25 minutes) Each group is going to have to prepare to debate the issue. They need to formulate a 2-minute argument for the Israeli Knesset committee fighting for their side of the issue. In addition to articulating the points for their argument, they also need to keep in mind the arguments the other side is going to make.

(15 minutes) Once the groups have prepared their argument, the group leader is going to be the chairperson of the Israeli Knesset committee on this issue. Each group has a group captain who will give their 2-minute argument. After each group captain goes, they will each have 5 minutes to talk to their groups to come up with a 1-minute rebuttal. Each group will present their rebuttal.

¹³ Note to teacher: This information regarding the Tal Law is accurate as of publishing date, but it is a hot topic that is actively being debated. Please check the news prior to teaching in order to have the most up to date information regarding this highly controversial law and change the lesson accordingly.

Wrap-Up (25 minutes)

Lead a wrap-up discussion using these questions:

1. **Why is this issue so complicated?**
2. **What are the underlying issues related to the Tal Law?**
3. **What does this show about religious tensions in Israel?**
4. **Is there another solution to the issue?**

Orientation Session 3 Am Yisrael

Part 2: Welcome, Stranger!

Goals

- To contemplate the idea of being included and excluded from a society.
- To expose the participants to the prolific Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai.
- To provide the opportunity for participants to reflect on the orientation.
- To provide the opportunity for participants to reflect on their feelings as the trip to Israel approaches.

Objectives: Participants will be able...

- To identify themes within the poem “Tourists” by Yehuda Amichai.
- To articulate their current perspective of Israel and compare how it has changed over the course of the orientation.

Materials

Group leader copy of Resource S3-2 (Yehuda Amichai’s biography)

Copies Resource S3-3 (Yehuda Amichai poem) for each participant

Participant Journals

Pens

Paper

Activity 1: “Tourists” by Yehuda Amichai (45 minutes)

Begin by explaining to the participants the significance of Yehuda Amichai as an Israeli citizen and a poet. Amichai’s biography is included in Resource S3-2.

As a group leader, determine the information you find most important to share with your participants so that your participants understand the life of Amichai.

Pass out the Yehuda Amichai poem, “Tourists” to all the participants (Resource S3-3). Ask a volunteer to read the poem out loud to the group.

Break the group up into smaller groups, of 4-5 people. In these groups, ask the participants to discuss the questions found on the poem handout.

After they have the discussion about the poem, ask each group to write a Twitter Tweet (140 characters) that encompasses the ideas they discussed. It should be understood that the poem is complex and cannot fully be summarized in 140 characters. However, by putting all of the tweets together from all the groups, hopefully the group can get a full picture of the various perspectives that a person can get from reading the poem.

Wrap up

Bring the whole group back together and ask each group to share their Twitter Tweet.

Yehuda Amichai¹⁴ (1924-2000)

Yehuda Amichai was one of the leading contemporary Hebrew poets. His contribution extends beyond his own literary achievements to an influence that helped create a modern Israeli poetry .

Born in Germany to a religiously observant family, Amichai and his family emigrated to Eretz Yisrael in 1935, living briefly in Petach Tikvah before settling in [Jerusalem](#). In World War II he fought with the [Jewish Brigade](#) of the British Army, and upon his discharge in 1946, he joined the [Palmach](#). During the [War of Independence](#) he fought in the Negev, on the southern front. Following the war, Amichai attended Hebrew University, studying Biblical texts and Hebrew literature, and then taught in secondary schools.

Amichai's first volume of poetry, *Achshav Uve-Yamim HaAharim* ("Now and in Other Days") was published in 1955 and aroused serious interest in readers and critics alike. This and subsequent volumes of poetry revealed that Amichai was engaged in a distinctly modern literary enterprise, both in content and in language. Subjects heretofore deemed prosaic became appropriate poetic images: tanks, airplanes, fuel, administrative contracts, and technological terms figure in his work, reflecting Amichai's conviction that a modern poetry must confront and reflect contemporary issues.

Concomitant with his non-traditional choice of subjects is Amichai's innovative use of the Hebrew language. Drawing from and interfacing various strata of language, from classical Hebrew to the post-modern colloquial, Amichai became known as the "poet who plays with words." Influenced by the wit and irony of modern English poetry, Amichai, also a master of understatement, coined new idioms and slang expressions, and incorporated prose phrases in his work. As with his imagery and subject matter, his linguistic versatility reflects his sense that language, including poetic language, emerges out of the modern technological society rather than classical texts only. Hence the citation of the Israel Prize, awarded to Amichai in 1982, which heralded "the revolutionary change in poetry's language" that the poet had begun through his work.

¹⁴ "Yehuda Amichai," *Jewish Virtual Library*. accessed February 24, 2014, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/amichai.html>.

Resource S3-2 (Continued)

Amichai's poetry spans a range of emotions, from laughter to sadness to self-mockery. His work emphasizes the individual who, although conscious and integrally part of the collective experience, ultimately views the world through his personal lens. This individual perspective evinces a candid, honest approach to the outside world.

Amichai's canon is also impressive for the volume of work it encompasses, and many individual books of poetry appeared in rapid succession, as well as *Collected Poems* (1963) and *Selected Works* of 1981. *Shirei Yerushalayim* ("Poems of Jerusalem," 1987) is a bilingual edition accompanied by photographs of the city, a model Amichai used again in 1992 for other poems, scenes, and photos. In addition to his numerous volumes of poetry, he has written short stories, two novels, radio sketches, and children's literature. Much of his work has been translated into other languages.

TOURISTS¹⁵
By: Yehuda Amichai

They come here to visit the mourners.
They sit in Yad Va-Shem, wear grave faces at the Wailing Wall,
And laugh behind heavy curtains in hotel rooms.

They take pictures with the important dead at Rachel's Tomb
And at Herzl's Tomb and Ammunition Hill,
Weep for the beautiful heroism of our boys,
Lust for our tough girls,
And hang their underwear
For fast drying
In a blue, cold bathroom.

Once I sat on the stairs at the gate of David's Tower and put two heavy baskets next to me. A group of tourists stood there around their guide and I served as their orientation point. "You see that man with the baskets? A bit to the right of his head, there's an arch from the Roman period. A bit to the right of his head." But he moves, he moves!! I said to myself: redemption will come only when they are told: You see over there the arch from the Roman period? Never mind: but next to it, a bit to the left and lower, sits a man who bought fruit and vegetables for his home.

Questions

1. What are the ideas that Yehuda Amichai is trying to express in this poem?
2. What does this say about being a tourist?
3. What does this say about some Israelis?
4. How can this poem affect the way in which you sightsee on your journey to Israel?

¹⁵ Yehuda Amichai, *Yehuda Amichai: A Life of Poetry 1948-1994*, trans. Benjamin and Barbara Harshav (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994), 333.

Activity 2: Letter to Self, part 2 (20 minutes)

During the first orientation, each participant wrote a letter to themselves in their journals. Over the next 20 minutes, each participant is going to have the opportunity to take some private time to him or herself to read that letter. In addition to reading through it, the participants will add a commentary to that letter. They should answer the following questions in their journal:

1. **Have any of your ideas about Israel changed? If so, which ones and how so?**
2. **Have any of your feelings toward Israel changed? If so, which and how so?**
3. **Currently, are you struggling with some aspect of Israel that you weren't struggling with before the orientation? If so, what aspect and what are you struggling with?**
4. **How are you feeling now about the upcoming trip to Israel? What are you excited about? What are you nervous about?**

Once the participants finish writing, they should keep their journals for the next activity—the orientation wrap up.

Activity 3: Reflections (45 minutes)

Over the last 3 orientations, the group of participants has been exposed to a wide variety of perspectives and ideas about Israel. This is an opportunity for the participants to reflect on their feelings related to these new ideas. There are 2 ways to format the wrap up. It is up to the group leaders to determine which is best for their individuals group.

Method 1: Ask the whole group the following questions and have the participants share their answers with the rest of the group.

Questions:

1. **What was your initial reaction to reading your letter to yourself?**
2. **How have your feelings toward Israel changed?**
3. **Are you struggling with some aspect of Israel that you weren't struggling with before the orientation? If so, what aspect and what are you struggling with?**
4. **How are you feeling now about the upcoming trip to Israel?**
5. **What are you nervous about?**
6. **What are you excited about?**

Method 2: Have the participants sit in a circle. Open up the conversation by allowing the participants to share their feelings and reactions to Israel and the orientation with the group.

During Trip Reflection Sessions

There are 6 different reflection activities suggested below. It is up to the group leaders to determine, based on their group, which reflection activities take place on which days. There are some suggestions given below.

Goals

- To create an atmosphere for participants to express their honest reactions and feelings.
- To provide the opportunity for the participants to reflect on their experience in Israel during the trip.
- To revisit personal feelings about the idea of Israel as a Jewish homeland.

Objectives: Participants will be able...

- To write their personal feelings about the experience.
- To write about their assumptions before the trip and whether those assumptions have changed.
- To classify to what extent they believe Israel is a homeland to them.
- To articulate key moments and/or experiences on the trip that are surprising or unexpected.

Materials

Post-It Notes (3 per participant)

Journals

Pens

3 Poster Boards/Marker

Reflection Day Suggestions

Yad Vashem

Shuk

Jerusalem

Tel Aviv

A few days after Israelis join the group (if applicable)

During Trip Reflection Sessions

Reflection 1	Twitter reflection	30-40 minutes
Reflection 2	Wrap around reflection	1 hour
Reflection 3	Free-write journaling	15-20 minutes
Reflection 4	Reflection journaling (assumptions)	20 minutes
Reflection 5	Reflection journaling (feelings)	30 minutes
Reflection 6	Is Israel my homeland?	45 minutes

Reflection 1: Twitter Reflection (30-40 minutes)

Ask each participant to close their eyes and think through the sequence of their day—their interactions, food, events, sites, etc. Give the participants 3 minutes to go through their day in their head.

Have participants create a twitter tweet that encompasses either their day or a specific aspect of their day. They should use their journals to write the tweet down. Remind the participants that they only have 140 characters, so they have to be succinct and creative.

Once the participants are done, either have them give the group leader their tweets to be uploaded to twitter using the group name and /or twitter handle, or have them add the tweets to twitter themselves.

Bring the group together and ask if anyone would like to share their tweet with their group and their thoughts behind writing that tweet.

Reflection 2: Wrap Around Reflection (1 hour)

Have the participants sit in a large circle, where everyone can see each other. The group leader will start a statement and the participants will go around the circle and finish it. If they are not ready when it is their turn, they can pass and go at the end. If they still do not want to answer at the end, they may pass for the statement.

Questions:

Today was...

Something happened that was _____.

It was _____ (blank from above) because...

This has influenced my experience because...

When everyone has finished the statements, ask if anyone has any concluding thoughts on the day. Once everything is complete, thank the participants for their honest thoughts and ideas.

Reflection 3: Free-Write Journaling (15-20 minutes)

Have the participants take 15-20 minutes to free write in their journal about their day and/or about the trip up to this point. After the time is up, ask if any of the participants would like to share their reflections

Reflection 4: Reflection Journaling (Assumptions) (20 minutes)

Have the participants write in their journal in response to the following questions:

1. **How do you feel here in Israel?**
2. **Does Israel feel like a home to you or do you feel like a stranger, or a little of both?**
3. **Are there any assumptions about Israel you had before the trip that have been either reinforced or proven incorrect? What are they and what changed your perspective?**

After the time is up, ask if any of the participants would like to share their reflections

Reflection 5: Reflection Journaling (Feelings) (30 minutes)

Have the participants write in their journal in response to the following questions:

1. **How did you feel about Israel before the trip and how do you feel about it now? (People, place, culture, etc.)**
2. **What parts of this trip are going to remain with you after the trip?**
3. **What is something that has surprised you about Israel?**
4. **What is something you didn't expect about Israel?**
5. **Is it important to you to bring Israel home with you? If yes, what does that look like? If not, why?**

Ask the participants if anyone would like to share any of their reflections with the group.

Reflection 6: Is Israel my homeland? (45 minutes)

Write the following questions each on their own poster and put them on three different walls.

1. **Is Israel the Jewish homeland? Why or why not?**
2. **Do you feel like Israel is a home to you?**
If yes, why?
If no, why?
3. **How do you feel in Israel on a scale from 1 (Visitor) to 10 (At Home)?**
Why?

Give each participant 3 Post-It Notes, each a different color. Have the participants answer each question on a separate Post-It note. When they are done writing their answers, have them place their Post-It note answer on the wall under the corresponding poster.

When all the answers are up on the walls, ask as few participants to group the answers to each question, based on similarities in answers.

Based on the groupings of answers, the group leader will lead a discussion reflecting on the responses of the group. Encourage participants to share in their own reflections based on the group's responses.

Pay close attention to the answers as well as reflect on where the group is as a whole and where they started the orientation in terms of the idea of Israel as the Jewish homeland.

After Trip Reunion Session

This reunion has a few purposes. First and foremost, it is an opportunity to bring the participants back together after what is surely a life altering experience and allow them to reminisce about the trip. The reunion is also an important aspect to the reflection process. This meeting will assist the participants in processing the experience as well as guide them as they move forward in life, hopefully positively affected by this experience.

Prior to the reunion, each participant is asked to bring a photograph that represents the way Israel is in his or her life.

Goals

- To provide the space for reminiscing about the experience in Israel.
- To foster a sense of empowerment with the participants to speak honestly about their experience in Israel.
- To encourage the participants to incorporate Israel into their life back in America, however they see fit.

Objectives: Participants will be able...

- To articulate how their feelings about Israel have either stayed the same or changed after their experience in Israel.
- To create a short explanation as to their feelings about Israel now that they have traveled there.
- To examine how Israel is in their life in America.

After Trip Reunion Timeline

Activity 1	Months, ago I felt... Today, I feel...	1 hour, 10 minutes
Activity 2	Real World: Israel Edition	40 minutes
Activity 3	How is Israel in my life?	1 hour, 15 minutes
Activity 4	The Big Questions— Being an ambassador of your own Israel experience	50 minutes

Materials

Real World: Israel video created by participants

5 poster boards

Markers for participants

Index card for each participant

Pens

Tape

Copies of Resource R-1 (Elevator Speech template) for each participant

Activity 1: Months ago I felt.... Today, I feel... (1 hour, 10 minutes)

Set Induction (5 minutes)

Ask the participants, “What is a memory and what makes you remember one thing over another?” Take a few responses.

Activity (25 minutes)

Place 5 poster boards around the room, each with one of the following statements:

1. Before the orientation, the sentence that would describe how I felt about Israel is...
2. After the orientation, the sentence that would describe how I felt about Israel is...
3. Today, (amount of time since trip) after the trip, the sentence that would describe how I feel about Israel is...
4. The emotion that I felt on the trip that surprised me was...
5. What is one specific moment of the trip that you will never forget?

(15 minutes) Give each participant a marker, and ask that they walk around the room and write a response to each question. They can answer the questions in any order that they would like, but encourage them to answer every question.

(10 minutes) After the participants answered the questions, ask them to walk back around the room and read the other participants’ answers.

Discussion/Wrap Up (40 minutes)

Bring the participants back together and lead a discussion based on the following questions:

1. Was this a difficult activity? Why or why not?
2. Were you surprised by any of your own answers? Why or why not? Do you mind sharing the answer that surprised you most?
3. What did you learn about the group as a whole based on all of the answers written?
4. How is this activity related to the idea of “memory” and why is it important?
5. We have now asked about your feelings toward Israel many times throughout this journey. Can you articulate for us how your feelings have changed and reflect on how that has affected you personally?

Activity 2: Real World: Israel Edition (40 minutes)

Over the course of the experience in Israel, the participants recorded themselves talking about their days, the struggles and the excitement. Between the conclusion of the trip and the reunion, a few participants should have created a

short (4-5 minute) video of those clips. This is the opportunity for the participants to watch the final product.

(10 minutes) After watching the video, have the participants get into groups of 4 or 5 people and ask the question, “what do we do with the video now?” and “what could the impact of this video have on others who did not travel to Israel with you?”

(25 minutes) Have each group share their answers to the questions. The group leader should take note of the suggestions of what should be done with the video. Ideally, the group should decide that they would like to send the video to their family, friends and community to share their honest feelings about Israel, as they are now Israel ambassadors of their own Israel experience.

By the end, the group should come to a consensus as to what they would like to do with the video and have a plan as to how to make it happen.

Activity 3: How is Israel in my life?¹⁶ (1 hour, 15 minutes)

Each participant should be asked to bring a photo to the reunion that represents how Israel is in his or her daily life (for examples, visit <http://www.theicenter.org/resource/show-us-way-israel-your-life-activity-and-resource-guide>).

(5 minutes) Give each participant an index card and ask them to write a short caption for their photo. Once they have completed their caption, have the participants place their photo and its caption on the wall, as together the pictures will create a photo museum.

(15 minutes) Give the participants time to walk around the room and look at all the photos.

(30 minutes) Bring the group back together and lead a discussion based on the following questions:

- 1. What do you notice about the collection of photos as a whole?**
- 2. What most surprised you about the collection or individual photos?**
- 3. What does this collection represent of the trip you took?**
- 4. Was it difficult to determine what picture you would bring? Why or why not?**

¹⁶ Adapted from the iCenter for Israel Education’s “Show Us A Way Israel Is In Your Life” campaign. <http://www.theicenter.org/resource/show-us-way-israel-your-life-activity-and-resource-guide>.

(15 minutes) Give the participants their journals. Ask them to answer the following questions:

1. **How is Israel in my life today?**
2. **How would I like Israel to be in my life in the future?**
3. **What do I need to do to make this a reality?**
4. **One way that my experience in Israel has affected my life is...**

Wrap Up (10 minutes)

Ask the participants if anyone would like to share any of their answers from their journal writing. Take a few volunteers.

Activity 4: The Big Questions—Being an ambassador of your own Israel experience (50 minutes)

Note for Group Leaders: One of the most difficult aspects of coming home from a trip to Israel is the big questions people ask. Where were the bombs falling everywhere? Did you sleep in a tent every night? Did you see those terribly Palestinians? This activity is designed to assist the participants answer these tough questions honestly.

Set Induction (5 minutes)

Ask the participants, **What is the strangest question someone has asked you since you returned from Israel?**

Take a few responses.

Activity (25 minutes)

Many people have misconceptions about Israel and they want to ask people who have traveled there questions, either to confirm or deny those misconceptions. Now that you have traveled to Israel, you are an Israel ambassador of your own experience, and we are going to help you reflect on your experience so you will be prepared for those big questions.

(15 minutes) Each participant is going to create their own elevator speech about their trip. An elevator speech is a short summary of any topic that can be delivered during the time span of an elevator ride. We are going to assume this particular elevator is a high-rise building, giving the participants about 2 minutes to summarize their honest impression of Israel. Give participants the Elevator Speech template (Resource R-1) to help them formulate their elevator speech and allow them individual time to fill it out.

(10 minutes) Once the participants have completed their template, have them get into groups of 2 or 3. Participants will have the opportunity to deliver their elevator speech in their small groups and get advice from his or her group.

Wrap Up (25 minutes)

When all the participants have delivered their speech, have the participants come back together in a large circle. Ask the participants, "What piece of information about Israel do you think is the most important to share with your family and friends?" Take answers.

Lastly, wrap around the group and have the participants answer the following question, "How do you feel as an ambassador of your own Israel experience?"

Elevator Speech Template

Who are you? (Not just your name, but who are you at your core and what do you do?)	
What most surprised you about your experience in Israel?	
What was your initial feelings about Israel and what are they now? Have they changed? If yes, how so?	
Has your experience in Israel changed you or affected your life in some way? If yes, how so?	
What is one story that encompasses your experience as a whole?	
Anything else?	

REAL WORLD: ISRAEL EDITION

Authentic Assessment Protocol

Goal

To create a short video that represents the real, honest experience of the participants' trip to Israel.

Before filming

Questions to consider and answer in your journal:

- **Why is it important for you to record your feelings today?**
 - **Did something happen or did you see something that was surprising or unexpected?**
 - **Was something exciting, frustrating, thought-provoking, disturbing or upsetting?**
- **Was there an event or location that had an impact on you today?**
- **What are 2 adjectives that first come to mind when you think of today?**
- **Is there a story or anecdote that represents your feelings about today or expresses something that is staying with you?**

Filming Instructions

Please think about your responses to the above questions and formulate them in a cohesive manner that someone not on the trip can understand. Share your story, an interaction or a feeling that is significant to your experience. It is acceptable if you are still uncertain about the later implications of that experience because we want your feelings at this moment.

Have someone record you for approximately 2-3 minutes.

Annotated Bibliography

Kelner, Shaul. *Tours That Bind: Diaspora, Pilgrimage, and Israeli Birthright Tourism*. New York: New York UP, 2010. Print.

In this book, Shaul Kelner analyzes meaning-based trips to Israel, specifically through the lens of Taglit-Birthright Israel. This curriculum guide is partially based off of the findings discussed in this book. It is a great resource for anyone who is going to lead a trip to Israel.

Grant, Lisa and Ezra M. Kopelowitz. *Israel Education Matters: A 21st Century Paradigm for Jewish Education*. Jerusalem: Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education, The Schechter Institute, 2012. Print.

This book discusses a new way of approaching Israel education. It is a great resource for looking at how to approach the topic of Israel for teaching.

The iCenter. *The Aleph-Bet of Israel Education*. 2011. Print.

This resource, which is also available online through the iCenter website, offers 11 articles by a variety of Israel educators who analyze different ideas related to Israel education. These articles include ideas such as thematic curriculum, lenses narratives for teaching Israel, and Jewish identity development.

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