

**Sacred Symbols and Complex Realities:
A Professional Workshop for Teaching Multiple "Israels"**

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2012

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RATIONALE

*As a sacred symbol, it is a unifying force for the Jewish people and a motivating force to do our best for ourselves and in service to others. As a complex reality, it both inspires and irritates. Israel is filled with heartbreak and hope, woe and wonder. If we focus only on the inspirational side we run the risk of indoctrination on one extreme and alienation on the other. A more holistic and responsible approach demands critical engagement with both the sacred vision and complex reality.*¹

In a study of the challenges of teaching Israel in America, Lisa Grant concluded, “the key challenges respondents perceive to teaching Israel focus on questions of meaning and relevance- how to connect people to a place and a people far away from their daily reality who often don’t live up to their desired expectations.”² Israel education too often starts and ends on the symbolic level- Yom Ha’atzmaut celebrations with Israeli flags, falafel and hummus, cooking experiences, Israeli dancing, writing prayers that will be brought to the Kotel, and the list goes on. Elan Ezrahi writes, “American Jews choose to keep Israel on the symbolic level and refrain from direct engagement with the evolving Israeli experience.”³ When American Jews feel no connection and are physically distant from Israel, teaching Israel on the symbolic level, a mythic view of what should be, becomes the safe way out. In addition, Grant argues that attachment to Israel is used as a way to strengthen American Jewish identity and group cohesiveness, thus Israel education is taught on a symbolic level to avoid over-complicating the topic of Israel.⁴ This superficial narrative often taught in North American synagogues presents a barrier for students encountering Israel in the way that Israelis experience living there do. However, the American symbolic narrative, too, is a true narrative and must be explored in all of its nuances.

¹ Lisa D. Grant, “Sacred Vision, Complex Reality: Navigating the Tensions in Israel Education,” *Jewish Educational Leadership*. 2008.

² Lisa D. Grant, “Israel Education in Reform Congregational Schools,” *Central Conference of American Rabbis*. 2007.

³ Elan Ezrahi, “Re-Imagine Israel Education,” *Agenda: Jewish Education. Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA)*. 2004.

⁴ Grant, 2008.

It is when Israel education does not go beyond the symbolic narrative that the challenge, both to teaching and learning, occurs.

Thus, this curriculum guide aims to achieve a balance between the way in which American representations of Israel are constructed and the way in which Israelis experience these American representations of Israel. This guide identifies four commonplaces: (1) Key Sites, (2) Military, (3) Hebrew, and (4) Textbooks to look at the way in which Americans construct representations of Israel in relation to the ways in which these commonplaces are lived out in Israeli society.

This guide is designed for a professional development course. The Director of Education is meant to be the teacher of this guide. The learners are the classroom teachers, both Americans and Israelis, of the various grades within the synagogue. Before deepening their students' relationships and understanding with Israel, the teachers must first be aware of their own understandings of Israel. It is critical, Chazan argues, for educators and teachers to first understand what Israel means for the Jewish people and to determine the role of Israel in their individual lives. Unless educators and teachers first acknowledge their own relationship to Israel, the struggle of how to engage students about Israel will persist.⁵

This professional development course addresses the need to deepen the understanding of Israel and Israeli life for Jews living in North America. In 16 sessions, this course will allow the learners to identify their own personal relationship with Israel since it is essential for teachers of Israel to be aware of their own biases. One of the key challenges scholars in the field of Israel education have written about is the lack of rationale that educators and teachers have for why they should teach Israel. Grant writes that this is a problem of the Reform Movement. She

⁵ Barry Chazan, *Teaching Israel in the 21st Century*, ed. Robert Tornberg (Denver: A.R.E Pub., 1998), 304.

asserts, “if the Movement had a clear message as to why Israel is central to Reform Jewish identity, chances are that educators would be able to translate that in the same manner that we can translate why holiday celebrations are important.”⁶ According to Grant’s claim, if the Reform Movement clearly addressed the central role of Israel in relation to American Reform Jews, educators might be able to translate this message more effectively. A key component of this professional development course is that the learners in the course will have the opportunity to create and revise a mission statement, which will incorporate both representations, for why Israel is important in their particular school. The culmination of this guide will be a practicum workshop where the learners will be challenged with the task of integrating the ways in which Americans construct representations of Israel in relation to the ways in which the four commonplaces (Key Sites, Military, Hebrew, and Textbooks) are lived out in Israeli society.

Guide Enduring Understandings:

1. The imperative of “attachment to Israel” dominates the lens through which American Jews construct representations of Israel.
2. The imperative of “survival” dominates the lens through which contemporary Israelis construct Israeli society.
3. A reliable story of Israel incorporates multiple nuanced narratives.

Guide Goals:

1. To sophisticate the American perception of Israel and deepen it with the perception that Israelis have living in the land
2. To teach learners to be able to differentiate between two sets of lenses: constructed American representations of Israel and lived Israeli narrative
3. To help learners develop ways to teach the development of mature

⁶ Grant, 2007.

LETTER TO THE TEACHER/EDUCATOR

Dear Educator,

I am so glad that you are making an effort to improve Israel education in your religious school. I hope that you will find the units and lessons in this guide helpful for your school and for your teachers.

My research for my capstone project in the School of Jewish Nonprofit Management was a basis for this guide. After compiling a literature review on Israel education in supplementary schools and interviewing seven directors of education in Los Angeles, two things became apparent. First, teachers in religious schools are not sure of how or what to teach about Israel. Second, the material taught remains on a symbolic level, and rarely, if ever, addresses the complex realities of Israel. Thus, this guide addresses these two challenges directly.

There are 16 lessons in this guide. Each lesson is written for an hour and half time slot. The course is designed to take place over the course of an academic year, but it could also be part of an extended orientation before the academic year begins. Unit 3 requires a practicum, which includes writing, and teaching a lesson, so this part of the guide will not be able to be completed fully in an orientation. Feel free, though, to adapt the lessons to fit your timing.

You can find the resources for each unit at the end of each unit. Most of the resources needed for this guide are included, but there are some places, where it will be best for you to use the resources you have available in your school. For example, in the textbook lesson in unit 1, it will be best for you to use the textbooks that are already in your school. If you make sure to read through the entire lesson, there will be no surprises.

A few additional notes for you, the teacher of the guide:

- When you see the word, “Instructor,” I am addressing you, the educator of the synagogue.
- When you see the word, “Learner,” I am addressing your classroom teachers.
- When you see the word, “Student,” I am referring to the students in the religious school, not the students of this curriculum guide.
- This guide is written for both American and Israeli teachers in Reform Congregations. Some of the activities and tasks might seem facile given their backgrounds. I have provided alternative questions in areas where I think this tension may arise.
- Unit 2 is fully scripted. You will see that I have scripted potential responses to the various prompts and activities. Those responses are in italics.
- **MM** indicates an activity that creates a “Memorable Moment”.

- When preparing for each lesson, make sure to read the entire lesson so that you are aware of all of the supplies and preparation that might need to be done before the class.

At the very end of the guide you will find an annotated bibliography and a works cited page. The annotated bibliography will help you prepare yourself to teach the course. The works cited includes all of the resources used to create this guide.

Remember, this is a guide, feel free to use or adapt whatever is necessary to fit your institution and make your professional development the most successful. B'hatzlacha!

Sincerely,

Amanda Greene

INTRODUCTION UNIT

Enduring Understanding:

- Learners' individual relationships with Israel influence the way in which Israel is taught in the classroom.

Goals:

- To present the learners with an overview of the course
- To teach that personal feelings and attitudes towards Israel affect the way in which we represent Israel in the classroom.

Lesson 1: The Teachers

Essential Questions:

- What is my attitude towards Israel?
- How does my personal relationship affect what and how I teach in the classroom?

Goal

- To show that everyone has a different relationship with Israel which translates into different approaches to teaching Israel

Objective: *Learners will be able to...*

- Articulate their own relationship with Israel and acknowledge others' relationships with Israel.

Set Induction

Before the first session, ask each learner to submit a personal story or memory about Israel. Type or write out the moments and place each moment in an envelope. Each envelope should be taped to an item in your school or synagogue that is used to teach about Israel (textbook, CD player, poster, Israeli flag, Hebrew books, Torah, etc). When your learners arrive, give each learner a clue to the item used to teach about Israel. Once all of your learners have found the clues and objects, they should bring both the envelope and object back to the room.

Activity 1

Go around in a circle and ask each person to share the item they brought back and read the memory. Try to guess whose memory is whose.

After reading all of the memories explain that there are many ways that we teach Israel and that there are many visuals that teach about Israel. Using the items, lead a discussion about what the various items can teach about Israel.

Activity 2

In the four corners of the classroom place the following signs: “agree”, “disagree”, “strongly agree”, and “strongly disagree”. Read a statement and ask your learners to move to the corner of the room that they identify with. After each statement, ask one or two people in each corner to share their reason for choosing that corner.

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.
I would like to visit Israel.
Judaism cannot exist without Israel.
Visiting Israel is different than visiting any other country.

Activity 3

Read a statement and ask your learners to move to the corner of the room that they identify with. After each statement, ask one or two people in each corner to share their reason for choosing that corner.

It is important for all students to love Israel
It is important for all students to visit Israel
It is important for students to be critical of Israel
It is important for students to understand the Land of Israel
It is important for students to understand the People of Israel
It is important for students to understand the State of Israel
We shouldn't criticize Israel in front of our students
My students don't care about Israel
My students shouldn't care about Israel
My students have a mature understanding of Israel
I am scared to teach Israel in the classroom
I am conflicted about how to teach Israel
I worry that my own views of Israel will come into conflict with the subject material
I feel constrained to teach Israel within the limits of this synagogue

Lesson 2: Introduction to the “Commonplaces”

Goal:

- To introduce the four “commonplaces” (Key Sites, Military, Hebrew, and Textbooks) to the learners

Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- List the four commonplaces as defined in this curriculum
- Assess the need for a new look at Israel education

Set Induction (E-Resource Intro. 2)

Show your learners the Birthright skit from Eretz Nehederet, an Israeli television show similar to Saturday Night Live.

Activity 1

As a group discuss your learners’ reactions to the video. Focus on the following questions:

- How does this depiction of tourists make you feel?
- Do you agree with this depiction? If so, which parts do you agree with?
- What might be problematic about this skit?
- As teachers of Israel, what do you feel is your responsibility in this portrayal?

Activity 2

Explain to your learners that the focus of this professional development course is to acknowledge the ways in which Americans construct representations of Israel. The course will then take a look at some of the Israeli experiences of these representations. Finally, the course will culminate with a workshop practicum where the learners will have the opportunity to integrate what they have learned in this course into their teaching. The first two units of study will be divided into four commonplaces: Key Sites, Military, Hebrew, and Textbooks. Using these commonplaces, the learners will explore both the American representations of Israel and then the Israeli experiences of these commonplaces.

Activity 3

Each learner will write his or her own mission statement, reflecting his or her own values, for what Israel education should accomplish in the synagogue religious school.

INTRODUCTION UNIT RESOURCES

E-Resource Intro. 2

<http://vimeo.com/35660324>

The video is also on the CD as an Mp4.

UNIT 1: WHAT DO WE TEACH? AMERICAN REPRESENTATIONS OF ISRAEL

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- American classroom images of Israel convey the imperative of “attachment to Israel,” which dominates the lens through which American Jews construct representations of Israel.
- “The Israel of American Jews reveals more about American Jewish ideals than about the realities of Eretz Israel.”¹

Unit Goals:

- To show how Israel, as taught in religious school classrooms, represents positive components of Israel

Unit Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- List three symbols that depict the way in which American narratives are constructed in the religious school classroom
- Create a mission statement for Israel education in their synagogue
- Critique and reflect upon the way in which Israel is taught in their religious schools

Lesson 1: Key Sites to Visit in Israel

Essential Questions:

- What makes a site in Israel “popular”?
- What are the various themes that “key” sites in Israel convey?

Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- List key Israel sites visited in, or taught about
- Articulate one major theme or message that each of the key sites conveys
- Articulate how the relationship between key sites in Israel and Israelis’ relationship to them can be compared to the way in which Americans relate to the key sites in America

Set Induction

Give your learners the following task: A tourist from another country is coming to visit America. The tourist has two weeks to spend in America. Ask your learners to come up with a list of 10-15 essential sites for the tourist to visit.

Activity 1

After brainstorming the 10-15 sites ask the following:

- Have you been to all of these sites?
- What sites haven’t been visited?
- Why would you send the tourist to these sites? What do these sites convey about American life?
- How many times have you been to these sites?
- Is there a particular age in which you remember visiting a site?
- What significance does this site play in your everyday lives?

Explain to your learners that the focus of the lesson will be on the “key sites” visited and taught about Israel. Tell them to keep in mind their own relationships to the key sites.

Activity 2 (Resource 1.1)

Read the excerpt from Shaul Kelner’s *Tours That Bind* on “Sites and Themes”

Activity 3

Lead a discussion with your learners and prompt them to come up with five messages/themes that the teachers feel are important to convey about Israel (they can go back to their mission statements from the Intro unit). Then select five sites in Israel that match up with the themes/messages you want to convey.

Examples:

- Heroism→Masada, borders, etc.
- Religious life→Kotel, Jerusalem

Activity 4

Divide the teachers into three groups.

- Present one group with three different Israel trip itineraries. (Note: If your synagogue leads trips to Israel, you should use those itineraries. If not, you will be able to access other Israel trip itineraries on the internet)
- Present the second group with three religious school textbooks.
- The third group will not receive a concrete object, but will use their personal expertise and experience.

Ask each group to identify the key sites using the assigned itinerary, textbook, or personal expertise.

Come back together and share the key sites through the lens of their assigned resource. Compile the list on the board.

Activity 5

Using the combined list of key sites (or the most common listed key sites), identify the theme or message conveyed by each site. Allow learners to do this activity silently first (think). Give them 3-5 minutes. Once they have brainstormed on their own, allow them to share their thoughts with a partner (pair). Finally, ask each group to share with the entire class, one site and the message/theme conveyed by the site (share).

Examples:

- Masada→Heroism, history
- Kotel→Religious prayer, peoplehood
- Camel riding in the desert→ fun in the dessert

Process

Compare the themes and sites that the learners came up with before looking at the itineraries (using the backwards design method that Kelner referred to?) with the sites and themes from activities 3 and 4. What did you notice?

Lesson 2: Military

Essential Questions:

- What do our students learn about Israel through studying the military?
- In what ways can our students feel a connection to Israel through a distant and irrelevant military system?

Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- Articulate the difference between life after high school in America from life after High School in Israel.
- Compose a list of three goals for teaching Israel through the IDF in their classrooms.
- Critique the way in which the IDF is currently taught in religious school classrooms through the lens of their goals.
- Decipher the messages that various images of the IDF convey to students.

Set Induction (Resource 1.2)

Post the two images from the resources (IDF soldier at Kotel and IDF t-shirt) on the board. Instruct learners to answer the following questions: What can our students learn from these images? What message do these images convey?

Activity 1

Draw a Venn diagram on the board. One circle will represent that United States Army. The other circle will represent the IDF. The middle section is where there is overlap.

Write answers on the board.

Then ask the learners what they know about the Israeli Army.

Write answers on the board.

Process

Use the following questions for discussion:

- Do you think your students would have come up with a similar list? What would have been different?
- What is helpful about this comparison between the IDF and US Army?
- Most of the list will be “facts” about both of the Armies, what, in addition to the basic facts, do you think would be important for your students to learn about that IDF?

Activity 2

Divide your learners into groups of three. Ask each group to write a goal that answers the following question: Why should we teach about the IDF to our students?

After each group has composed their goal come back together as a group to share the goals.

Evaluate the goals based upon the following questions:

- What does the IDF teach about Israel as a Jewish Homeland?
- What does the IDF teach about Israeli society and life?

- Why should our American students care about the IDF?

Once each group has shared their goals, create a new list of images your learners might use to convey their desired goals when teaching about the IDF.

Closure

Use the following question as a prompt:

Imagine you just completed a lesson on the IDF with your students. What is one word or message that you would want your students to take away?

Examples: complicated, sad, scary, etc.

Lesson 3: Hebrew

Essential Questions:

- How can Hebrew be utilized as a vehicle for Israel Education?
- What does Hebrew teach our students?

Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- Articulate the various themes or messages that Hebrew, as taught in the religious school, conveys.
- Write a goal for Israel education that incorporates the vehicle of Hebrew.

Set Induction

Begin class with a word/phrase association. Ask your learners to fill in the blank:

“Hebrew is important because/for/in order to...”

Do a quick whip-around to hear their responses.

After everyone has gone, do your best to summarize their responses.

Activity 1

Divide the group of learners into 3 or 4 groups. Give each group 1-2 resources that are used in your school to teach Hebrew (i.e. posters, primers, flashcards, siddurim, worksheets, etc).

Instruct each group to answer the following questions:

- What does this resource teach about the value of Hebrew in Judaism?
- Does this resource reflect anything about Israel? If so, what?
- Does this resource convey the importance of Hebrew to your students the way in which you would like them to understand Hebrew?
- What do you think is important for your students to learn about the Hebrew language?
- Is there a different resource that you would use to convey this message?

After each group has had the opportunity to answer these questions, ask each group to share one thing from their discussion that demonstrates what their students might learn from this resource and one thing that they would like their students to learn that is in conflict with the resource.

Activity 2 (Resource 1.3)

Modern Hebrew vs. Prayer Hebrew Debate

Divide your learners into two groups. One group will have the task to defend the importance of Prayer Hebrew and the other group will have the task to defend Modern Hebrew in religious school.

After the groups have formed their arguments, facilitate a debate.

Once the debate concludes, process as a group, guided by the questions below. Allow all learners to come out of their role and back into the role of learner.

Prompt the following questions:

- Can Prayer Hebrew facilitate learning about Israel? If so, how so? If not, how not?
- Can Modern Hebrew facilitate learning about Israel?
- What are ways in which Prayer Hebrew and Modern Hebrew can build a connection or deeper understanding of Israel?

Activity 3

Divide the Learners into two groups:

- One group will create a goal for the religious school that enhances the role of Hebrew through Israel.
- The second group will create a goal for the religious school that enhances the role of Israel through Hebrew.

Share the two goals. Analyze how these goals would change the debate between what to teach when it comes to Hebrew in the religious school. Is it all about prayer Hebrew? Is it all Modern Hebrew? Is it somewhere in between? Is it something completely different?

Lesson 4: American Textbooks

Essential Questions:

- What do the American textbooks about Israel reveal about Israel?
- What type of relationship do these textbooks aim to foster?

Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- Explain how American textbooks about Israel teach for attachment to Israel.
- Evaluate the pros and cons of using textbooks to teach Israel.

Set Induction

Ask your learners to line up based on the following question:

On a scale, from 1-10, how much do you think that we should use textbooks to teach Israel in the classroom?

Process

Lead a short discussion on where your learners stand on the use of textbooks to teach Israel. Ask people at both ends of the continuum to share their opinions. Also ask others who stand somewhere in between.

Potential questions to prompt during the discussion:

- When is an example of a specific lesson, activity, or concept you taught using a textbook that was effective? A time when it was ineffective? What made it effective? What made it ineffective?

Activity 1 (Note: you will need to use textbooks from your synagogue for this activity)

Divide the class into four groups. Each group will look one textbook on Israel. All of the groups will look at how Jerusalem is conveyed through the textbook. Each group will be asked to answer the following questions:

Images:

- What images, if any, are used in the textbook?
- Are there people in the images?
- Do you think these are images that Israelis would use to teach about Jerusalem?
- What does the textbook teach about Israel using these images?

Activities:

- Are there activities used in the textbook?
- Are the activities authentic? (i.e. something that your American students would actually do?)
- Are the activities relevant and interesting?

Message:

- What is the overall message conveyed about Israel in the section on Jerusalem?
- What might your students take away about Israel from these pages in the textbook?
- What do these textbooks teach about their authors?

After each group has finished this task, come back together as a group. Post the three topics on the board (Images, Activities, Message). Ask a volunteer from each group to share what they found in each category. On the board list the overall responses of overlap from the four different textbooks.

Discuss the following question:

What do American textbooks strive to teach about American Jews relationship to Israel?

Activity 2 (Resource 1.4)

As a class ask for volunteers to read the quotes. After each quote is read, discuss the following:

- What does this quote mean to you?
- Do you agree/disagree with the quote? How/why so?
- Is the quote aligned with the textbooks you looked at? How so/not so?

Activity 3

Discuss the following questions:

- What about textbooks do you like/don't like? And do you know why?
- Is there something that you would like to see included in textbooks that would make them more useable?
- Is it the content, the style or something else that you do/do not like about the use of textbooks?

Closure

Ask your learners: On a scale from 1-10 how much do you think that we should use textbooks to teach Israel in the classroom?

Ask learners to line up accordingly. Did your place change?

UNIT 1 RESOURCES

Resource 1.1

“Tours That Bind”, Shaul Kelner:

Rather than leave decisions about the representation of sites solely to the idiosyncratic and possibly ad hoc choices of tour guides, this crucial power is assigned first to educational policymakers who can wield it strategically to serve the tour’s overall diaspora-building goals. The key effect of this rationalization of control is to allow for what in pedagogy is called “backward design.” Instead of starting with a list of popular sites and then attempting to figure out how these can be invested with relevant meaning, program designers can begin with a set of curricular themes and proceed to identify sites that might be useful for representing them (91).

Resource 1.2



Resource 1.3

This resource is for the “Modern Hebrew” side of the debate.

Our students know that Hebrew is the language spoken in Israel...but our students’ only exposure to Hebrew is through prayer...is this an accurate representation of what is occurring in Israel? Is Hebrew all about prayer and Torah in Israel?

Read the following article on Modern Hebrew and connection to Israel.

THE ALEPH-BET OF ISRAEL EDUCATION

MODERN HEBREW IN PERSONAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

BY LORI SAGARIN



I can remember the exact moment I knew that I had come to “own” the Hebrew language. I was sitting in my childhood synagogue shortly after returning from a year in Israel when I looked up to the ארון הקודש (ark) to see the words דע לפני מי אתה עומד emblazoned above. I read it, immediately understood what the words meant, and realized in a quick second that Hebrew was now second nature to me.

Since that day in the synagogue, I have taken great pride in my Hebrew fluency. I have come to naturally link my knowledge of the language with my love of Israel, deepening my inherent sense of the inextricable link between the Hebrew on my lips and the Israel in my heart. My Hebrew experience connected me to Israel and Israelis in a profound way that has continued to provide meaning and joy to my life.

Language is a primary factor that binds people to people and people to places. It is used every day, enabling us to navigate and make meaning of our lives. It is the purveyor of culture through musical lyrics, theater, newspapers, literature and more. Hebrew is more than the language of Israel – it is in many ways one of the core threads of Jewish peoplehood, connecting the Jewish people through time and space. In today's world, which can feel at one and the same time very intimate and very isolating, connection has become essential, something eagerly sought after. If some of the deepest human connections are forged through language, then it follows that if we want to create a strong sense of Jewish belonging and peoplehood, Jews must own our shared language, Hebrew.

Visiting Israel has been assuming increased importance on the Jewish community's agenda in recent years. With the success of Birthright Israel, an unprecedented number of young people have visited Israel. At the same time, small numbers "hear" and "talk to" Israel from within because of the language barrier. The Hebrew that is prominent in contemporary Jewish life is generally linked to sacred texts or prayer, and not to real people and daily life. Despite the hours spent in "Hebrew school," our young have no capacity to communicate, to connect in the language of the land.



The golden key to Jewish education is the Hebrew language. - Chaim Nachman Bialik

שאלות ותשובות:

Questions & Answers

The role of Hebrew in Jewish identity development remains neglected terrain in Jewish education, despite what we know about the centrality of language to identity and cognitive development. We believe that a significant commitment to modern Hebrew language instruction in North America is critical to the future of the Jewish people and their link with the State of Israel.

In presenting this position, we shall examine four questions:

1. How can knowledge of Hebrew reinforce positive Jewish identity in North American Jews?
2. Why is the teaching of modern Hebrew in supplementary schools an exception rather than the norm?
3. What is the role of Jewish educators and other professionals in making the case for the teaching and learning of modern Hebrew?
4. Why is now a good time for Hebrew language learning?

How Can Knowledge of Hebrew Reinforce Positive Jewish Identity in North American Jews?

Culture is the lifeblood of a people and a nation. Culture is most readily transmitted through language. Today, Jewish culture the world over is deeply influenced by Israeli culture. It is, therefore, impossible to fully embrace JEWISH culture and JEWISH identity without the capacity to engage with Israeli culture in its native tongue. It would be like listening to music without the notes.

As noted, the predominant approach to Hebrew in the United States has emphasized the teaching of

liturgical Hebrew and, more specifically, “teaching towards Bar and Bat Mitzvah.” It is both a holy and, at the same time, frustrating task.

Imagine sitting in a classroom in any school, year after year, trying to learn English and emerging five years later barely able to decode and doing so without comprehension. Not only is one’s motivation to learn severely diminished, one’s attitude towards Hebrew is irreparably damaged. Students who are products of our religious schools (and many day schools) visit Israel and

quickly realize that they are unable to engage with Israelis on their own terms. The Israel experience, most commonly described as life-altering, finds our young people ill-prepared to engage with the country and its culture on its own terms, in its own language. Learning even a small amount of modern Hebrew tears down cultural and interpersonal barriers.

Elana Shohamy of Tel Aviv University notes that the precise nature of the relationship between language and identity is not clear. Drawing on second language acquisition research, Shohamy¹ suggests that language plays the following roles in identity formation:

- **Boundary maintenance:** Knowing the language means the speaker is a member of the club and naturally allied with other speakers of the language.²

Hebrew is more than the language of Israel – it is in many ways one of the core threads of Jewish peoplehood, connecting the Jewish people through time and space.

- **Language as a socializer and conveyer of values and norms:** Language is rife with nuance and provides a mode for expressing societal dos and don'ts. Values are named and explained in the language. Although actions also model values, it is the description of the motivation for the act that places it fully in the values domain.
- **Language as an emotional act:** Emotions are expressed through language, and language evokes emotion in the speaker. As with values, language evokes memories and enables the speaker to name the power of those memories.

Surprisingly, an individual's life is enhanced in diverse ways when one "owns" Hebrew: one feels a sense of belonging, possesses a deep and visceral understanding of Jewish values that can only be conveyed through language, and builds emotional bonds with Jewish culture and people in Israel and throughout the world.

Why is the Teaching of Modern Hebrew in Supplementary Schools an Exception Rather than the Norm?

Modern Hebrew has the capacity, in a sublimely inductive way, to bring children into Jewish life and to enable them feel intellectually and emotionally connected to our rich, ever-evolving and unique community. Hebrew is more than a prayer or a value word here and there. Hebrew is a key gateway into a deep, empowering, engaging modern/ancient culture. However, most Jews are willing to engage in Jewish life without knowing Hebrew, praying words that they can barely decode and that are devoid of meaning for them.

Students who are products of our religious schools (and many day schools) visit Israel and quickly realize that they are unable to engage with Israelis on their own terms. The Israel experience, most commonly described as life-altering, finds our young people ill-prepared to engage with the country and its culture on its own terms, in its own language. Learning even a small amount of Modern Hebrew tears down cultural and interpersonal barriers.

Many diaspora Jews will even claim that it is possible to be an engaged and committed Jew without the benefit of knowing Hebrew. One can learn the "language" and "symbols" of Jewish life, and read the major texts, including modern Hebrew literature and poetry, in the vernacular and feel very much in the mainstream of Jewish life – all without having a significant grasp of modern Hebrew. However, doing so is like kissing your beloved through a veil: one is a part of but, in subtle ways, apart from. Nevertheless, as long as Jews believe they can live a rich Jewish life without Hebrew, making the case for spending time teaching modern Hebrew in congregational schools will remain a challenge. Indeed, in 1904, Solomon Schechter, the central figure in the emergence of

Conservative Judaism, said that “a Jewish community that is not bilingual is a doomed community!”

As the hours that students spend in the complementary school Jewish classroom have dramatically decreased, educators have given up on the goal of Hebrew language fluency. Instead, the current wisdom says that decoding the prayers in Hebrew without real understanding and reading their Bar/Bat Mitzvah Torah portion in Hebrew, again without understanding, constitutes success in Jewish elementary and middle school complementary education. Bar and Bat Mitzvah continues to serve as the golden carrot luring parents through the synagogue door. In some cases, if there is time, some modern language learning is offered in Grade 7 in approximately 40% of schools. This and other factors mentioned support Leonard Fein’s assertion that “Hebrew school is remembered by most Jews as the place they failed to learn Hebrew,” leading to a broad sense that Hebrew school (and by association, Jewish education) is a failed enterprise.

What is the Role of Jewish Educators and Other Professionals in Making the Case for the Teaching & Learning of Modern Hebrew?

All of the above notwithstanding, we contend that not only is it possible for children in all educational settings to succeed in learning Modern Hebrew, it is imperative that we succeed in this area. Success will mean that we can demonstrate rigor and seriousness of purpose in the work of Jewish education. Success will mean that students will feel a sense of deep accomplishment in their ability to master a new language. Success will mean that Jewish life and learning become an open book for students to engage in with confidence and a sense of competence. And,

most importantly, success will mean that students will be intimately connected not only to the land of Israel but to the people and culture of Israel (and consequently Jewish life) on their own terms and in their own language.

What can Jewish educators do to ensure this kind of success for our learners? First and foremost, we must believe in our capacity to succeed in this area. Success might not mean complete Hebrew fluency by high school, but it does mean that teens, for example, are able to engage with their Israeli peers in simple conversations and feel pride in their accomplishments. It will also mean that they will think they are “cool” because they know and understand popular Israeli



→ Proficiency and knowledge of modern Hebrew can create a more meaningful connection to Israel and Israelis.

→ Prayerbook Hebrew is not connected to everyday conversation and daily life. ...”our young have no capacity to communicate, to connect in the language of the land.”

group activity and all camp settings can include modern Hebrew on a regular basis. In order to do this, teachers, youth workers and camp personnel can be incentivized to take advantage of online Hebrew learning opportunities or other Hebrew language classes. With advances in technology and the increased value attached to second language learning in the world of general education, the time is ripe to implement the abovementioned ideas.

Why is now a good time for Hebrew language learning? As Americans have embraced the notion that second language learning is not only possible but valuable for themselves and for their children, and with the advent of everything from the Rosetta Stone language learning system to online language learning such as eTeacher to language inclusion elementary schools, Jewish parents may now possess an openness to the idea of their children learning Hebrew as a second language. The world has gotten smaller with the advent of technology, and all of our children have friends who come from homes where a native language other than English is spoken. For North American Jews, Hebrew could be a kind of “native language,” albeit for many a language they have not yet learned.

music or understand what is written on their Israeli T-shirts or can bang out a few words in Hebrew on Facebook.

As Jewish educators, we can ensure that our educators (classroom teachers, camp personnel, youth workers, etc.) who are able to teach modern Hebrew are able to take advantage of the requisite professional development opportunities to become proficient Hebrew language educators and to learn to adapt materials for the needs of their learners.

We can also provide multiple frameworks for Hebrew learning in our settings. For example, at the very least, modern Hebrew should be offered as an option in the complementary school setting for eager language learners. In areas where it is possible, synagogues might be able to team up to provide this additional option. Every youth

We need to embrace the notion that Hebrew can be learned, and those who must promote that agenda are the educators, parents, rabbis and Jewish professionals who understand what Hebrew language learning can provide.

One interesting example of achievement in this field is in several suburban high schools in the greater Chicago area which offer Hebrew as one of the languages students can learn for credit. One student described her public school Hebrew class as an oasis in the non-Jewish desert of a typical American high school. She learned a lot of Hebrew, but she was also part of a Jewish community that met together once a day, five days a week. Hebrew for her and her classmates provided identity enhancement every day of their high school career.

Jews around the world have known this for decades. The Jews of Mexico, France, South America, Great Britain and South Africa, among others, have successfully taught Modern Hebrew language to generations of students. The professionals in these countries made a commitment to Modern Hebrew language learning and worked to provide professional development for the faculty, provide materials, and create a culture that supports and celebrates Hebrew learning.

In recent years there has been a renaissance of programs exposing North Americans to modern Hebrew. Whether you are a student of pointillism or pixels, the dots are beginning to form a growing positive picture of modern Hebrew language learning.

So the case can indeed be made that Hebrew should be a significant part of a holistic Israel education curriculum. It is through language that we can most coherently understand a society. For most North American Jews, this significant piece of our connection to Israel is “lost in translation.” We are doomed

to look at Israel from the outside until we possess the secret code. In this case, the code is our birthright, our heritage and our language. We live in a polarized Jewish world, where every topic is up for debate. Hebrew can be a common symbol of commitment in a time of polarization. We as Jewish educators are responsible for making decisions that determine what our students are exposed to and where they receive their learning. We must seize this day – *carpe diem* – *Ivri Daber Ivrit!*



Notes

- 1 Shohamy, Elana “Language and the Identity of Jews in Israel and in the Diaspora,” from Zisenwine, D. and Schers, D. *Present and Future: Jewish Culture, Identity and Language*, Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University School of Education, 1999
- 2 Waxman, Chaim “Language and Identity Among America’s Jews”, from Zisenwine, D. and Schers, D. *Present and Future: Jewish Culture, Identity and Language*, Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University School of Education, 1999



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Resource 1.4

Quotes:

“What we need more than anything else is not *text-books* but *text-people*.” -Abraham Joshua Heschel

“Textbooks around the world are blatantly used as tools for propaganda.”- Gary A Tobin and Dennis R. Ybarra

“Textbooks and other instructional materials ... are designed by adults with a particular purpose in mind. They present children with material their elders think they ought to know; in a very real sense they are handbooks of the ideas one generation values sufficiently to consider worthy of transmission to another.” - Walter Ackerman

“At their core, the stories a society tells its children, whether they are historical, mythological or fantastic, contain intensified versions of archetypes and representations in which the society believes. It is the power of these heightened images that facilitates their transmission. To study representations in textbooks is to examine at the most basic level the myths that construct a group’s reality.” – Jonathan Krasner

UNIT 2: ISRAELI NARRATIVE OF THE AMERICAN REPRESENTATIONS OF ISRAEL

Unit Enduring Understanding:

- The imperative of “survival” dominates the lens through which contemporary Israelis construct Israeli society.

Unit Goals:

- To teach about the importance of multiple narratives
- To teach that the Israeli narrative of the four commonplaces provides insight into the daily-lived reality in Israel and complicates one’s understanding of Israel
- To show that key sites in Israel as represented in the American narrative present real dilemmas to the lived reality in Israel
- To explore how pop culture in Israel is conveyed through the Hebrew language

Unit Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- List at least one symbol of each commonplace present in the Israeli narrative.
- Compare and contrast the American representations of the commonplaces of Israel to the Israeli narratives of these commonplaces.
- Articulate the advantages of incorporating the Israeli realities into their teaching of Israel.

Lesson 1: Key Sites

Goals:

- To expose learners to the challenges present at the key sites which derive from Israel as a lived land
- To teach about the difficulties of the lived reality faced by Israelis daily

Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- Articulate the role that these key sites play in the lives of Israelis.
- Compare and contrast the role of the key sites in the Israeli narrative vs. in the American narrative
- Identify and analyze at least one dilemma presented by each of the key sites.

Materials:

- Pens
- Copies of questions for each group
- Markers
- Paper
- Resources 2.1a, 2.1b

Set Induction (0:00-0:05)

Ask the learners to show a “thumbs up” if they have been to the site, and a “thumbs down” if they have not. Read out the names of the two sites one by one.

-The Kotel

-Rabin Square

Activity 1⁷(0:05-0:40)

Explain that today your learners will have the opportunity to look at these two sites (The Kotel and Rabin Square) through a new lens. Divide the class into two groups. Assign each group one of these sites to study. Each group will spend 40 minutes learning the narratives presented about their site. They will answer the posed questions related to their site.

KOTEL: (Resource 2.1a)

Read about the dilemmas of the Kotel and about the military ceremonies at the Kotel.

Note: These are only two components of the Kotel for Israelis who experience its reality.

As a group answer the following questions:

- Are these new narratives about the Kotel? If so, what is new about the narratives?

⁷ This activity is a version of a jigsaw. The two groups will become experts on one topic. They will then teach the other group about their topic.

- *Yes, this is new. I have always seen soldiers at the Kotel, but did not understand why they were there.*
- Do your students know about these aspects of the Kotel?
 - *Probably not. Most of my students know about writing notes to put in the Kotel. A few of them know of the Kotel as a site for Bar/Bat Mitzvah.*
- What can your students learn about Israel from studying the lived reality of the Kotel?
 - *A religious site might seem so meaningful and easy to comprehend from America, but looking through another lens makes it more complicated. I wonder if our students fully understand Israel as a place where there is a different understanding of separation between church and state.*

Note: If Israeli teachers are in this group, ask them to share some of their experiences at the Kotel.

RABIN SQUARE: (Appendix 2.1c)

Read excerpt from “The Many Voices of Israeli Youth” Tamar Rapoport
 “The Message: From ‘They Tore out a Part of My Heart’ to ‘Yipee’” (p. 202)

- What were the different opinions of Israeli youth after the assassination of Rabin?
 - *From this excerpt it appeared that almost everyone was in shock. Some people were very upset, others felt indifferent and still others were excited, but all were in shock.*
- Did the various opinions surprise you?
 - *Sort of. It always seemed to me that the assassination of Rabin was so tragic, but I guess it makes sense that not everyone agrees on politics and this is just another situation.*
- Did these excerpts help you gain a new understanding to the event as experienced by Israeli youth?
 - *Narratives and stories always help to make things more concrete. It is important for our students to be able to read and hear about different perspectives.*

In Rabin's pocket was a blood-stained sheet of paper with the lyrics to the well-known Israeli song Shir LaShalom ("Song for Peace"), which was sung at the rally before he was killed and dwells on the impossibility of bringing a dead person back to life and, therefore, the need for peace.⁸

Questions to think about:

- What emotions come to mind when you see the image of the bloodstained lyrics?
 - *Scary feelings, sadness, distant feelings toward Israel, despair, anger, frustration*
- What type of “Israel” does this story and image depict?

⁸ *Shir LaShalom*, Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shir_LaShalom. (March 2012)

- *Israel is vulnerable and imperfect. Tragedies happen in Israel. A Jew killed the Prime Minister, not all Jews are perfect.*
- Is this the Israel that your students understand and know?
 - *Probably not. It feels like this is a “real” picture of Israel as opposed to the ideal Israel that our students know.*
- Should we be teaching “this” Israel? How so/not so?
 - *It is important to teach the authenticity of Israel and yet, we must always keep in mind developmentally appropriate practice. I do think there are ways to incorporate this narrative.*
- What do the lyrics of the song convey about Israel?
 - *Israel is still striving to be a place where peace exists. Israel is confronted with the need for survival; complex issues are at the forefront of the daily life in Israel.*

Activity 2 (0:40-1:00)

Once the learners have completed this part of the task, ask each group to come up with an engaging way to present what they have learned about the site and how it might add to their understanding of the site. For example, it could be a creative representation of the narrative using a “tel” to depict the many layers of the Kotel. Or a group could show two sides of the narrative by engaging in a debate.

Present and Process (1:00-1:25)

Each group will have 10 minutes to present what they have learned. You should ask the following questions either at the end of each group’s presentation or at the end of all three presentations:

- What is the important take-away from this exercise?
 - *What we see from the outside, or from our American perspective, remains on a more mythic understanding of Israel as opposed to the lived reality experienced by Israelis.*
- What is one component of today’s lesson that you could use in your class? How/why do you think that component is most appealing to you to teach?
 - *Yes, I think the exercise we did today showed that there are many different ways to present a site to our students. I am not sure if I would use the exact same exercise, but the message from the exercise is important for my students. I don’t think that this is only restricted to sites in Israel, but can also be expanded to other narratives in Israel as well.*

Closure (1:25-1:30)

Ask your learners to say one word about Israel that they take away from this lesson.

- *Complicated, challenging, layered, deep*

Lesson 2: Military

Goal:

- To deepen students understanding of Israeli life through the exploration of the IDF from the lens of Israelis

Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- Use their own knowledge about the IDF to create questions for various stakeholders.
- Reflect on their conversations with the various stakeholders and identify what they learned from the experience.
- Articulate the importance of teaching the IDF to their students.

Materials:

- Paper
- Pens
- Computer equipment for Skype in three locations
- Three locations

Set Induction: (0:00-0:05)

Write the following on the board, “What do you know about the IDF”? As learners enter the room, ask them to write their responses on the board. Once everyone has had a chance to write their response on the board, make sure to review the responses with the class. Add anything that you feel might be missing from the list.

- *Compulsory service at the age of 18*
- *Some people are able to get out of their service*
- *There are many different types of jobs*
- *There is reserve duty*
- *Some people choose to serve longer than the required amount of time*
- *Service for men is three years, for women two years*

Activity 1: (0:05-0:25)

Divide the class into three groups. Explain to each group the following task:

Group 1: Create a list of five questions to ask Israeli soldiers.

- *How did you feel entering the IDF?*
- *How do you feel now that you are in the IDF?*
- *What are your plans after you get out of the army?*
- *Did you ever think of trying to get out of your service?*
- *How did you decide what job to have in the army?*

Group 2: Create a list of five questions to ask Israeli parents.

- *How do you feel about Orthodox Jewish Israeli who don't enlist?*

- *What is your son/daughter's role in the army?*
- *How often do you get to talk to your son/daughter?*
- *What makes you most nervous about your son/daughter being in the army?*
- *How does your son/daughter feel about serving in the IDF?*

Group 3: Create a list of five questions to ask Israelis under the age of 18.

- *How old were you when you first remember learning you would have to serve in the army one day? How did that feel?*
- *How do you feel about going to the army?*
- *What position do you want in the army?*
- *Do you think you would try to avoid your service?*
- *If you didn't have to go to the army, what would you want to do after High School? Would you still choose to serve?*

Activity 2: (0:25-0:50) MM

Arrange for a Skype interview with an Israeli soldier, Israeli parent, and an Israeli under the age of 18. These three interviews will take place in three different rooms.

Process: (0:50-1:05)

After each group has concluded their interview, come back as one group and share their reflections/highlights. Use the following questions for discussion.

- Was it difficult to create questions?
 - *Our group came up with lots of questions. It was difficult to narrow it down to 5 concise questions.*
- Did you feel that you had enough knowledge about the IDF to engage in a conversation with your stakeholder?
 - *I could always use more background information. What was missing was clarified through our conversation the stakeholder.*
- What was surprising about the responses?
 - *The sense of loyalty to their country and willingness to serve for their country.*
- Were your questions easy for the stakeholders to answer? How so/not so?
 - *The stakeholders were very open and honest to share.*
- What, from your interview, do you think is important for your students to grasp?
 - *People their age enter the army. It is scary for some of them, but their devotion and Israeli pride is so strong in a way that Americans don't really understand.*
- How can you convey this message to your students?
 - *I would do an activity similar to this with my students, but I would make sure to provide more background information.*
- Is this an activity you would be willing to do with your students? Why? Why not?
 - *Yes, I think my students would enjoy interacting with Israelis and being able to ask their own questions.*

Activity 3: (1:05-1:25)

Write a letter to the parents of your students explaining why you are choosing to teach about the Israeli military to your students. Make sure to convey how the military reflects Israeli life and why this is relevant to your students.

Letter may include:

- *Teaching about the IDF allows for an emotional understanding to the people of Israel.*
- *Teaching about the IDF invites students to understand Israeli society and how it differs from America*
- *Teaching about the IDF is relevant to teenagers who are similar ages to people who are entering the IDF*
- *Teaching about the IDF shows insight into the loyalty and devotion Israelis feel towards Israel*

Closure: (1:25-1:30)

Ask learners if they would feel comfortable sending their letter to the parents? Why or why not?

- *Yes, but I would want to revise it before sending it. I feel that it is important to convey explicit goals of our teaching to the parents.*

Lesson 3: Hebrew

Goals:

- To encourage learners to utilize Hebrew as a vehicle for engaging with Israel
- To show how Hebrew is the lived language of Israelis

Objective: *Learners will be able to...*

- Articulate the ways in which Hebrew manifests itself in Israeli life and pop culture

Materials:

- Resources 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.2c, 2.2d
- Questions for the groups
- Paper
- Pens

Set Induction (0:00-0:05)

Ask your learners the following question: “What are some of the popular books your students read today?” Make a list on the board.

- *Harry Potter, The Hunger Games, Twilight*

Activity 1 (0:05-0:15) (Resource 2.2a)

Explain to your learners that just as these books do not reflect any particular religious meaning or significance, Israeli books convey secular meanings as well. The Hebrew language manifests itself in Israeli society beyond religious contexts. One way in which the Hebrew language is experienced in Israel is through secular novels.

Show examples of these books written in Hebrew. Ask learners: “How can we use these books as resources to teach both Hebrew and Israel?”

- *We can use these books to teach reading and decoding-the same skills that we try to teach know through prayer Hebrew.*
- *We can use these books to bridge the connection between kids in Israel and kids in America both reading books in their native language.*
- *We can use these books to make the Hebrew language come alive. It is not merely the language of our ancient texts, but rather continues to exist in the day-to-day lives of Israelis.*

Activity 2 (0:15-1:00) (Resources 2.2b, 2.2c, 2.2d)

Set up three stations around the room. These stations will portray the way in which Hebrew manifests itself in Israeli culture and society today.

Station 1: Music⁹

Read the biography of the Israeli band Hadag Nachash. Listen to the song, “Stickers”. The lyrics in Hebrew with the English translation have been provided for you to follow along as you listen.

Answer the following questions:

- What characteristics of Israel does Hadag Nachash sing about in this song?
 - *Military, peace, war, religion, politics, fear, death*
- How do you feel when you hear this song? What images or emotions does this song create for you?
 - *I feel sad and scared for the Israelis who fight. There is much emotion in this song, such as anger.*
- Is Hadag Nachash singing about your Israel? Circle the words or phrases that describe your relationship to Israel.
 - *Hadag Nachash seems to be singing about an Israel that I am not familiar with. This is not the Israel on posters in classrooms or on Birthright trips. This is not even the Israel in the Media. This is the real Israel as experienced by Israelis.*
- What can American Jews learn about Hebrew from the music of Israel, such as Hadag Nachash?
 - *Israel is more than Birthright and more than CNN. People in Israel have feelings and emotions-they're scared, they get angry. They suffer great losses. They have political opinions.*

Station 2: Poetry

Read the pages on the poem “Amal” by Abraham Shlonsky. Discuss the following questions:

- What assumptions are made about the reader of this poem?
 - *Biblical Knowledge, understanding of Modern Hebrew, symbolism as used in Hebrew Poetry*
- Are there barriers for an American Jew to understand the poem?
 - *Yes, I think there are. I think Modern Hebrew poetry would be challenging for the average American Jew who has no grounding or background in Modern Hebrew poetry.*
- What can American Jews learn from this poem about the role of Hebrew in Israeli society?
 - *Hebrew is used to articulate feelings and emotions through poetry, but it also connects the past and present through bringing in Biblical references. This poem, in particular, makes the assumption that the reader knows the Biblical references, which teaches American Jews about the role of the Bible for Israelis.*
- How might you use Hebrew poetry in the classroom to teach about Israel?
 - *Our students could pick out the parts of the poem that are confusing to them. They can explore what might be different about the Israelis reading the poems from them. Hebrew poetry can also be used as an entire unit teaching about Israeli life and about what Israelis read.*

⁹ Activity is adapted from Conceptual Conversations: Israel-Myth and Reality.

Station 3: Slang/Idioms

- How does this list of Hebrew words and phrases relate to the Hebrew that your students are familiar with?
 - *Some of these words might be familiar to students who have been to Israel, but most will be unfamiliar. Our students are more familiar with prayer vocabulary than the everyday slang.*
- What can your students learn about Israel from a Hebrew slang and expressions?
 - *Just like Americans have slang, Israelis too have an entire vocabulary of slang and expressions. Hebrew for Israelis expands much larger than the Hebrew of the Torah and Prayer book.*
- Is there specific slang or idioms that you feel your students might connect to more than other? What are they? Why or why not?
 - *Maybe the more “fun” words, like “explosion” or the words that seem “cooler” and relatable.*

Activity 3 (1:00-1:25)

Explain to your learners that their task is to create a way to integrate the concepts (music, poetry, slang) into their classroom. Their goal is to find a way to answer the question, “how can this Hebrew be taught in America in a way that will depict this image of Israel?” Pass out several post-it notes to the learners. Ask each learner to write down his or her ideas on separate post-it notes. Using affinity grouping, have your learners stick the post-it notes on the board. Silently ask your learners to group the responses into clustered themes. One way to cluster would be pedagogically (kinesthetic, visual, logical, etc).

- *Music: First we can play Israeli music in the classroom to introduce the sound of it to our students. We could do a text study with the lyrics and discuss what we learn about Israel through the music. Another idea would be to teach a song during Hebrew as a way to teach Hebrew vocabulary and Israel at the same time.*
- *Poetry: We could either do an entire unit introducing Hebrew poetry and comparing it to American poetry so students can understand the similarities and differences. Studying Hebrew poetry and poets can also help reveal a new dimension of Israeli life to our students as well.*
- *Slang: We could have a “word” of the day. There would need to be a sense of reinforcement too. We could organize a Skype conversation with Israeli teens and our students could use the slang and they could teach the Israelis American slang too.*

Closure (1:28-1:30)

Ask your learners if this was an easy or difficult task and to turn to a partner and explain “how so.”

Lesson 4: Israeli Textbooks

Goal:

- To show how Israeli textbooks convey Jewish life in Israel

Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- Identify the similarities and differences between the textbooks used in America to teach about Israel and the textbooks used in Israel to teach about Judaism.
- Create a list of reasons why the textbook images in Israel are similar to/different from the textbook images in American religious school classrooms.

Materials:

- Textbook images
- Pens
- Paper
- White board and markers
- Resource 2.4

Set Induction: (0:00-0:05)

Ask your learners: “What do you think Israeli textbooks that teach Judaism might look like? What images do you think you would find?”

- *Bible*
- *Symbols (Jewish star, Israeli flag)*
- *Lots of Hebrew*

Activity 1 (0:05-0:25) (Resource 2.4)

Post the Israeli textbook images around the classroom. Explain to the learners that the images are from textbooks used in 5th and 6th grade classes in Israel. Instruct the learners to walk around the room and study the images. They should focus on the following:

- Are there images? If so, what are the images?
 - *Yes, in some of the books there are images. There are images of people, and more abstract images, too.*
- Are there words that are recognizable? If so, what are some of the topics of this sample of textbooks?
 - *Some words are recognizable, it is clear that they are studying books of the Torah and other parts of the TaNaKh.*
- Aside from Hebrew, do the Israeli textbooks look similar to/different from the textbooks you use in your classroom?
 - *Similarities: physical layout, activities look similar, images look similar*
 - *Differences: focus on the text, commentaries*

Activity 2 (0:25-1:00)

Ask your learners to share their observations of the Israeli textbook images. On the board make a list of the similarities and differences between the American textbooks and Israeli textbooks.

Engage your learners in a discussion of why these differences and similarities might exist. Ask the following questions to begin the discussion:

- What do you already know about Israeli life and society that might influence the way in which these textbooks are constructed?
 - *Israelis have a lived and experienced understanding of Judaism. It is part of their everyday lives. There is a fine line between separation of church and state in Israel, so Judaic studies is taught in a formal context of the school system.*
- What can this sample of Israeli textbooks, titles, and topics of the Israeli textbooks teach about Israeli society?
 - *Judaism is part of Israelis lived reality. It is not taught explicitly the same way it is taught in America. The Judaic studies in Israel focuses on the text, specifically on the TaNaKh (in these grades).*
- If American textbooks are constructed towards an attachment to Israel, what might be the way in which Israeli textbooks and images are constructed?
 - *The images and pictures on the textbooks don't seem so far off from the American textbooks. They don't appear to be engaging images. The topics in Israel are more specifically related to text. Since Israelis experience Judaism in their everyday lives, rabbinic text doesn't appear to be the focus in terms of tradition and ritual and holidays specifically, but rather everything is taught in the context of the Biblical text.*

Activity 3 (1:00-1:25)

Explain to your learners that this is the last lesson of unit 2, “The Israeli Narrative of the American Representations of Israel”. Instruct your learners to create a compelling thesis for why it is important to be aware of this second narrative and incorporate it into their teaching. The case should complete the sentence, “by ignoring this second narrative in our teaching, we risk...” They can work on these thesis statements in pairs or small groups.

- *By ignoring this second narrative in our teaching, we risk losing the authenticity of the experiences of Israelis.*
- *A reliable story of Israel incorporates multiple nuanced narratives.*
-

Explain that they are going to start writing a lesson plan using the dual-narrative approach and to start thinking about ways in which they might do this.

Conclusion (1:25-1:30)

Ask students, “Are you ready to integrate the two narratives?” How/Why not?

- *YES!*

UNIT 2 RESOURCES

Resource 2.1a

The Kotel currently operates under the governance of Orthodox rabbinic authorities. There is a separation between men and women. Women's prayer groups or non-Orthodox prayer services are not allowed. Recently a woman was arrested for violating the Orthodox rules that govern the Kotel area. A group known as “Women of the Wall” insists that women be given greater access to prayer at the Kotel. Non-Orthodox groups insist that the Kotel should be available for non-Orthodox prayer services, without separation of genders. Many Orthodox Jews find the current situation unsatisfactory for a variety of reasons.

Women of the Wall Mission Statement:

As Women of the Wall, our central mission is to achieve the social and legal recognition of our right, as women, to wear prayer shawls, pray and read from the Torah collectively and out loud at the Western Wall.

We work to further our mission through **social advocacy, education and empowerment**. In our **social advocacy** work, we aim to change the status-quo that is currently preventing women from being able to pray freely at the Western Wall. This goal has great ramifications for women’s rights in Judaism and in Israel and must be achieved through social advocacy in order to raise awareness and change the social perception of these issues.

We take it upon ourselves to **educate** Jewish women and the public about the social, political and personal ramifications of limiting and eliminating women’s right to pray as a group at a holy site. When the law and the society literally, publicly and deliberately silence women in prayer, it is a violation of civil rights, human rights and religious freedoms. Education is the key to changing perspectives, laws and lives.

Every time we meet to pray, we **empower** and encourage Jewish women to embrace religion freely, in their own way. We stand proudly and strongly in the forefront of the movement for religious pluralism in Israel, in the hopes to inspire and empower women from all over the world and across the spectrum of Jewish movements to find their spiritual voice.

With this great mission before us, our vision is to strengthen and expand our organization, to reach out and influence policy makers and leaders, to demand full access to prayer at the Western Wall for women. In addition, Women of the Wall works to expand our network of allies and partners around the world who will advocate and take action with us.



Golani Soldiers Swear In at the Kotel



Golani Brigade's inaugural ceremony takes place at the Western Wall for the first time in 22 years.

By Elad Benari

On Wednesday, the inaugural ceremony of the Golani Brigade took place at the Kotel (Western Wall) in Jerusalem. While IDF swearing in ceremonies often take place at the Kotel, the Golani ceremony was especially meaningful as this was the first time that it had taken place in the Kotel. For the past 22 years, these ceremonies have been held at the division's training base. The IDF's website reported that the Golani Brigade's trademark brown berets could be seen filling the Western Wall Plaza as the soldiers stood in excitement, waiting to swear their loyalty to the IDF and to the State of Israel.

The special atmosphere could especially be felt when brigade commander Colonel Ofek Buchris spoke to the soldiers:

"Today we swear allegiance to defend our homeland and we operate out of this commitment," he said. "After more than 20 years, there is no place more appropriate to swear allegiance than the Kotel, a place that combines the old with the new and expresses the depth of our connection to our homeland."

The excitement was even felt among the veteran commanders who have experienced many swearing in ceremonies, none of which has been as exciting as the one in the Kotel.

"As a company commander I have experienced quite a few swearing-in ceremonies, yet I was still very excited during this one," said a commander in Golani's 12th Battalion. "Standing in front of the Kotel with the soldiers and the flags around gave me chills."

Resource 2.1b



Shir L'Shalom -- A Song For Peace

Lyrics: Yaakov Rotblit Melody: Yair Rosenblum

Rhymed translation by Joel David Bloom

**Tnu lashemesh la'alot,
laboker leha-ir
Hazakah shebatfilot,
otanu lo tachzir**

**Let the sun come up again
and give the morning light.
the purest prayer that you can find
can't change our deadly plight.**

**Mi asher kavah nero,
uve'afar nitman,
bekhi mar lo ye'iro,
lo yakhziro lekhan.**

**He whose light has been snuffed out
can't taste your bitter tear.
Nothing you can do or say
can bring him back to here.**

**Ish otanu lo yashiv,
mibor takhtit afel,
Kan lo yo'ilu,
lo simkhat hanitzakhon,
velo shirei haleil!**

**Nobody can raise us up
from our cold dark graves.
Don't try to help us
with your cheers of victory
or your songs of praise.**

**Lakhen, rak shiru shir lashalom,
al tilkhashu tefillah!
mutav tashiru shir lashalom,
bitze'akah g'dolah!**

**So only sing a song for peace;
don't whisper us a prayer.
Better to sing a song for peace.
Let shouting fill the air!**

**Tnu lashemesh lakhador,
miba'ad laprakhim.
Al tabitu le-akhor,
hanikhu laholkhim.**

**Let the sun shine through again
to let the flowers grow.
Don't look backward to the past;
let those who left you go.**

**Se-u einayim betikvah,
lo derekh kavanot
shiru shir la-ahavah,
velo lamilkhamot**

**Let your eyes look up with hope,
not through a rifle sight.
Sing a song, a song for love,
not for another fight.**

**Al tagidu yom yavo,
havi-u et hayom!!
Uvekhol hakikarot
hari'u lashalom!**

**Don't tell me 'the day will come';
work for it without cease.
inside every city square
let out a cheer for peace!**

**Veshiru, shiru shir lashalom,
al telkhashu tefillah!
mutav tashiru shir lashalom,
bitze'akah g'dolah**

**Come on and sing a song for peace;
don't whisper us a prayer.
Better to sing a song for peace.
Let shouting fill the air!**

Resource 2.1c

that represent ways to understand an event (Geertz, 1973). The assumption is that interpretive schemes are shaped within a context, and that the interpretations given by young people to the assassination are fed by the complex web of ethnopolitical meanings in Israeli society.

The interpretive schemes for understanding the assassination and mourning were derived from an analysis of four subjects addressed by all the respondents: (1) the message—their spontaneous reaction upon hearing the news of the assassination; (2) who was killed—the meaning they attributed to Rabin as a man and leader; (3) what was killed—the meaning they attributed to the assassination and its implications; and (4) the pattern of mourning—their behavior and feelings during the days of mourning.

The Message: From "They Tore Out a Part of My Heart" to "Yippee"

Information about the attack on Rabin and his death came as a blow to most of the respondents who were engaged in routine Saturday-night activities: Alina and Sarit (names of all respondents are fictitious), like many others, were watching TV. David saw the assassin on TV with the rest of his family, and then we realized that [the murderer] was our neighbor and his mother was my nursery school teacher." As soon as they heard the news of the attack, he and his brother took the car "without thinking twice" to the home of the parents of Yigal Amir, and on the way they heard the announcement of Rabin's death. Gitit heard the news on the radio as she was buying ice cream with a friend. Nurit had just returned home from the rally and was talking on the phone with her youth movement counselor, telling her how much fun it had been. Yifat and Roi were preparing for bed at their boarding school while their friends were watching TV in the lounge. The news of the death of Rabin spread like wildfire that night, skipping over only those few who had already gone to sleep.

All the respondents reported being shocked by the news. Some of those who opposed Rabin's political views were indifferent or happy about his death, but even they were shocked to hear of an assassination of a Jew by a Jew. All described their feelings in dramatic terms of shock, stress, confusion, fear: "[I] can't believe it," "it can't be," "I didn't know how to respond," "I didn't absorb it." Sarit in Jerusalem, who said she agreed with Rabin's politics, gave a characteristic description of the inability and unwillingness to absorb the news:

And then I saw them bring him to the hospital . . . but I didn't take it so hard because I thought, okay, they shot him in the arm or the leg and that's it and he'll be in the hospital. And then suddenly I saw and heard Hayim Yavin [a newscaster] say that the prime minister died, Yitzhak Rabin died, and it . . . I was left like that, with my mouth open, facing the TV all night and I didn't know what to say, how to react, and what to think.

Similar descriptions were given by others who believed in Rabin and his politics. Their feelings were captured by Odella's words: "[I felt] as if a part of my heart was torn out."

These dramatic reactions were not universal. Viki, for example, reacted indifferently to the shooting: "I heard they shot the prime minister and it didn't interest me very much; let's put it this way . . . I wasn't happy and wasn't sad, I said it happened and he's wounded and that's that." Avri reported: "They said he was killed and it wasn't so nice"; Amihai carried on with what he was doing: "I didn't have any special reaction, I just kept working; I wasn't sorry about it or anything."

Although most reacted with shock and fear upon hearing the news of Rabin's death, some jumped for joy and shouted "yippee." Reactions of joy, expressed in their rooms or hallways, were reported primarily by some of the students from Hadas (the fictitious name of a boarding school in Jerusalem for youth from collective farm communities and "disadvantaged areas"). Odella, like several others, tried to convey the feeling that the dominant reaction there was one of joy:

I didn't like him or his political views very much, and I didn't agree with the Oslo agreement and giving back territories, so when I heard that they shot the prime minister . . . I didn't relate to it. I said that it happened, he was hurt, and that's it, and then when I heard he died, I was still like that. . . . A lot of people here started to laugh and be happy, really most of them.

To the question "How did you react when you heard Rabin was shot?" Orna replied, "Everyone in the room yelled 'yay' when we heard, and someone said 'let's hope he dies.' Then later we heard that it was true and we were in shock." And Ruth was happy about both the attack on Rabin and his death: "Truthfully in the beginning when they said, 'Rabin was hurt' I was happy and I ran around yelling 'yippee, yippee,' and I danced with my friends and we took pictures, and then later I said, great, he's dead."

Resource 2.2a



Resource 2.2b

*Hadag Nachash is a relative new, highly successful, funk-rap band in Israel. The lead rapper and lyricist, Shaanan Street, exemplifies what one might call a patriotic protestor. His lyrics are full of Jewish awareness, Zionist zeal, and social concern, together with a raging critique of current affairs in Israel.*¹⁰

¹⁰ Summary is adapted from *Conceptual Conversations: Israel-Myth and Reality*.

Shirat Hasticker- "The Sticker Song" Lyrics by David Grossman, Translated by Gabe Salgado, Part I

<p>A Whole Generation Demands Peace Let the IDF Win A Strong Nation Makes Peace Let the IDF Mow Down There's No Peace with Arabs Don't Give Them Weapons Battle Ready is The Most, Brother Draft Everyone, Exempt Everyone There's No Desperation in the World Yesha is Here Na-Nachman Me'uman No Fear, The Messiah's Here No Arabs, No Terrorist Attacks The Supreme Court Endangers Jews The Nation is with the Golan The Nation is with Transfer Smog Test in Yarka Friend, You Are Missed The Holy One Blessed Be He, We Elect You Direct Elections are Bad <i>The Holy One Blessed Be He, We are Zealots to You</i> Death to the Zealots</p> <p>How Much Evil (How much evil, Evil) Can we Swallow? (Can we swallow, swallow?) Daddy Show Mercy, Daddy Show Mercy My Name is Nachman and I stu-stutter How Much Evil (How much evil, Evil) Can we Swallow? (Can we swallow, swallow?) Daddy Show Mercy, Daddy Show Mercy <i>Baruch Hashem, I am breathing, and therefore...</i></p> <p>Halachic State- The State is Gone Whoever Was Born, Scored Long Live King Messiah I Have Confidence (also: Security) in Sharon's Peace Hevron- Always and Forever And Whoever Wasn't Born, Missed Out</p>	<p>דור שלם דורש שלום תנו לצה"ל לנצח עם חזק עושה שלום תנו לצה"ל לכסף אין שלום עם ערבים אל תתנו להם רובים קרבי זה הכי אחי גיוס לכולם, פטור לכולם אין שום ייאוש בעולם יה יש"ע זה כאן ננחמן מאומן NO FEAR משיח בעיר אין ערבים אין פיגועים בג"ץ מסכן יהודים העם עם הגולן העם עם הטרנספר טסט בירכא חבר, אתה חסר הקדוש ברוך הוא אנהנו בוחרים בך בחירה ישירה זה רע הקדוש ברוך הוא אנהנו קנאים לך ימותו הקנאים</p> <p>כמה רוע (כמה רוע רוע) אפשר לבלוע (אפשר לבלוע לוע) אבא תרחם אבא תרחם קוראים לי נחמן ואני מגמ מגמגם כמה רוע (כמה רוע רוע) אפשר לבלוע (אפשר לבלוע לוע) אבא תרחם אבא תרחם ברוך השם אני נושם ולכן...</p> <p>מדינת הלכה - הלכה המדינה מי שנולד הרוויח יחי המלך המשיח יש לי בטחון בשלום של שרון חברון מאז ולתמיד ומי שלא נולד הפסיד</p>
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Continued....

Shirat Hasticker- "The Sticker Song" Lyrics by David Grossman, Translated by Gabe Salgado, Part II

Hevron of our Forefathers	חברון אבות
Shalom, Transfer	שלום טרנספר
Kahane Was Right	כהנא צדק
CNN Lies	CNN משקר
We Need a Strong Leader	צריך מנהיג חזק
Nice Job on the Peace, Thanks for the Security	סחתין על השלום תודה על הבטחון
We Can't Spare Kids for Unnecessary Wars	אין לנו ילדים למלחמות מיותרות
The Left Helps the Arabs	השמאל עוזר לערבים
Bibi's Good for Jews	ביבי טוב ליהודים
Oslo Criminals to Trial	פושעי אוסלו לדין
Us Here, Them There	אנחנו כאן הם שם
Brothers Don't Abandon	אחים לא מפקירים
Uprooting Settlements Divides the Nation	עקירת ישובים מפלגת את העם
Death to Traitors	מוות לבוגדים
Let Animals Live	תנו לחיות לחיות
Death to Values (sounds like: Arabs)	מוות לערכים
How Much Evil (How much evil, Evil)	כמה רוע (כמה רוע רוע)
Can we Swallow? (Can we swallow, swallow?)	אפשר לבלוע (אפשר לבלוע לוע)
Daddy Show Mercy, Daddy Show Mercy	אבא תרחם אבא תרחם
My Name is Nachman and I stu-stutter	קוראים לי נחמן ואני מגמ מגמגם
How Much Evil (How much evil, Evil)	כמה רוע (כמה רוע רוע)
Can we Swallow? (Can we swallow, swallow?)	אפשר לבלוע (אפשר לבלוע לוע)
Daddy Show Mercy, Daddy Show Mercy	אבא תרחם אבא תרחם
<i>Baruch Hashem, I am breathing, and therefore...</i>	ברוך השם אני נושם ולכן...
How Much Evil (How much evil, Evil)	כמה רוע (כמה רוע רוע)
Can we Swallow? (Can we swallow, swallow?)	אפשר לבלוע (אפשר לבלוע לוע)
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How Much Evil (How much evil, Evil)	כמה רוע (כמה רוע רוע)
Can we Swallow? (Can we swallow, swallow?)	אפשר לבלוע (אפשר לבלוע לוע)
Daddy Show Mercy, Daddy Show Mercy	אבא תרחם אבא תרחם
<i>Baruch Hashem, I am breathing, and therefore...</i>	ברוך השם אני נושם ולכן...
Exterminate, Kill, Expel, Mislead	להסל, להרוג, לגרש, להטעות
Annihilate, Extradite, Death Penalty, No Fear	להדביר, להסגיר, עונש מוות, נו פיר
Destroy, Make Extinct, Eradicate, Burn	להשמיד, להכחיד, למגר, לבער
It's All Your Fault, Friend	הכל בגללך, חבר

Resource 2.2c

Shirat Hasticker- "The Sticker Song" Lyrics by David Grossman, Translated by Gabe Salgado, Part II

Hevron of our Forefathers	חברון אבות
Shalom, Transfer	שלום טרנספר
Kahane Was Right	כהנא צדק
CNN Lies	CNN משקר
We Need a Strong Leader	צריך מנהיג חזק
Nice Job on the Peace, Thanks for the Security	סחתין על השלום תודה על הבטחון
We Can't Spare Kids for Unnecessary Wars	אין לנו ילדים למלחמות מיותרות
The Left Helps the Arabs	השמאל עוזר לערבים
Bibi's Good for Jews	ביבי טוב ליהודים
Oslo Criminals to Trial	פושעי אוסלו לדין
Us Here, Them There	אנחנו כאן הם שם
Brothers Don't Abandon	אחים לא מפקירים
Uprooting Settlements Divides the Nation	עקירת ישובים מפלגת את העם
Death to Traitors	מוות לבוגדים
Let Animals Live	תנו לחיות לחיות
Death to Values (sounds like: Arabs)	מוות לערכים
How Much Evil (How much evil, Evil)	כמה רוע (כמה רוע רוע)
Can we Swallow? (Can we swallow, swallow?)	אפשר לבלוע (אפשר לבלוע לוע)
Daddy Show Mercy, Daddy Show Mercy	אבא תרחם אבא תרחם
My Name is Nachman and I stu-stutter	קוראים לי נחמן ואני מגמ מגמגם
How Much Evil (How much evil, Evil)	כמה רוע (כמה רוע רוע)
Can we Swallow? (Can we swallow, swallow?)	אפשר לבלוע (אפשר לבלוע לוע)
Daddy Show Mercy, Daddy Show Mercy	אבא תרחם אבא תרחם
<i>Baruch Hashem, I am breathing, and therefore...</i>	ברוך השם אני נושם ולכן...
How Much Evil (How much evil, Evil)	כמה רוע (כמה רוע רוע)
Can we Swallow? (Can we swallow, swallow?)	אפשר לבלוע (אפשר לבלוע לוע)
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Daddy Show Mercy, Daddy Show Mercy	אבא תרחם אבא תרחם
<i>Baruch Hashem, I am breathing, and therefore...</i>	ברוך השם אני נושם ולכן...
Exterminate, Kill, Expel, Mislead	לחסל, להרוג, לגרש, להטעות
Annihilate, Extradite, Death Penalty, No Fear	להדביר, להסגיר, עונש מוות, נו פיר
Destroy, Make Extinct, Eradicate, Burn	להשמיד, להכחיד, למגר, לבער
It's All Your Fault, Friend	הכל בגללך, חבר

Abraham Shlonsky

TOIL · ÁMAL* · עָמַל

- הַלְבִישִׁינִי, אִמָּא כְּשָׂרָה, כְּתַנְתְּ-פְּסִים לְתַסְאָרֶת
וְעַם שְׁחָרִית הוֹבִילִינִי אֵלַי עָמַל.
- 3 עוֹטָסָה אֶרְצִי אוֹר כְּטָלִית.
בָּתִּים נִצְבוּ כְּטוֹטָפוֹת.
וּכְרָצוּעוֹת-תְּסִילִין גּוֹלְשִׁים כְּכִישִׁים, סָלְלוּ כְּפִים.
- 6 תְּפִילַת שְׁחָרִית סָה תְּתַפְּלֵל קְרִיָּה נָאָה אֵלַי בּוֹרָאָה.
וּכְבוֹרָאִים
בְּנֵךְ אַבְרָהָם,
פָּיְטָן סוֹלֵל בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל.
- 9 וּבַעֲרֵב בֵּין הַשְּׂמֵשׁוֹת יָשׁוּב אִבָּא מִסְּבִלוֹתָיו
וּכְתַפְּלָה יִלְחֵשׁ נָחַת:
הֲכֵן יִקְרֶה לִי אַבְרָהָם,
עוֹר וְיָדַיִם וְעֵצָמוֹת.
הַלְלוּיָהּ.
- 12 Uvaérev beyn hašmášot yášuv ába misivlótav
Veḥitfila yilḥaš náhat:
Havén yákir li avráham,
Or vegídím vaatsámot.
Halelúya.
- 15 הַלְבִישִׁינִי, אִמָּא כְּשָׂרָה, כְּתַנְתְּ-פְּסִים לְתַסְאָרֶת
וְעַם שְׁחָרִית הוֹבִילִינִי
אֵלַי עָמַל.
- 15 Halbišini, ima kšéyra, któnet-pásim letif'éret
Veím šáḥarit hovilíni
Eléy ámal.

Born in Poltava (Ukraine) in 1900, Abraham Shlonsky belongs to the group of innovators who brought to Hebrew literature the revolutionary verve, experimental audacity, and iconoclasm typical of the new century. His father, a true product of the changing East European Jewish world, gave his son a secular Hebrew as well as a religious education, sending him off in his thirteenth year to study in Jaffa's newly founded suburb of Tel Aviv. Unlike earlier Hebrew poets, Shlonsky learned spoken Hebrew in childhood and for a short period

lived in the exciting milieu of the pre-war Tel Aviv *gymnasium* that was to give Israel many of its leaders and intellectuals. After the outbreak of World War I, he was forced to return to Russia, where he completed his high school work and lived through the crucial years of the Revolution. In 1922 he emigrated to Israel as a young pioneer and worked as road-builder and farmer.

A prolific writer, Shlonsky has published many volumes of verse, seventy translations (among them *Hamlet*, *Eugen Onegin*, *Tyl Eulenspiegel*), and an anthology, *Russian*

Poetry, co-edited with Lea Goldberg, which affected younger writers deeply. As editor and mentor, he headed the literary Left, an extremely productive force during the first decade of the new nation. As leader and spokesman of the anti-classicists, he challenged the authority of Bialik and in his own poetry he reflected the influence of Blok's symbolism and the experimentalism and wild imagery of Mayakovsky and Yesenin. A great innovator in language, Shlonsky introduced the raciness of the newly spoken idiom into the verse and where words were lacking he coined them. (Many have since become an accepted part of the language.)

"Toil" appears in a sequence named for Mt. Gilboa, a hill dominating the Valley of Jezreel in whose fields Shlonsky worked. All the poems of this era (1927) mirror a landscape which had been a nostalgic dream in Russia and which, after it became real, lost none of its festive appeal. Shlonsky presents the new Palestinian earth in an ecstatic, quasi-religious light. The building of the homeland and the tilling of its soil are transformed into acts of worship. And the modernist influences of Blok, Yesenin, and other Russian poets are absent from the "Gilboa" poems: they follow the style and language of the Bible and Prayerbook. The lines have the undefined rhythms of the Psalms, varying in length and seemingly arbitrary in shape; but read aloud, they reveal an orderliness indicative of Shlonsky's inclination toward symmetry even in free verse:

(1) *Dress me, good (pious) mother, in a glorious coat of many colors* (2) *And with dawn lead me to toil.*

(3) *My country wraps itself in light as in a prayer shawl.* (4) *Houses stand out [lit. stood] like phylacteries.* (5) *And like phylactery straps, the highways that palms have paved glide down.*

(6) *Here [now] the beautiful town prays matins to its creator* (7) *And among the creators* (8) *[Is] your son, Abraham,* (9) *A hymn-writer (poet)—road-paver in Israel.*

(10) *And in the evening, at sunset, father shall return from his labors* (11) *And like a prayer, he will whisper with contentment:* (12) *My darling son Abraham,* (13) *Skin and veins and bones,* (14) *Hallelujah!*

(15) *Dress me, good (pious) mother, in a glorious coat of many colors* (16) *And with dawn lead me* (17) *To toil.*

Each word in the first stanza is loaded with associations and symbols. The speaker addresses not his own but the generic "mother" common to Yiddish folk-poetry. In the new life, detached from the recent past, nostalgia turns "mother" into a symbolic figure who can give both a blessing and a sacrifice. The "coat of many colors" is of course an allusion to Genesis 37:3, where Jacob makes his gift of love to Joseph. But the Bible reader knows that the coat will be soaked in blood, and line 2 recalls the Isaac story, where sacrifice is also an act of love to be done with "your only son, which you love." Love and sacrifice become one. The pioneer-speaker is a beloved son and the altar is toil. Toil has become an act of worship.

Stanza 2 is a composite of allusions: to Psalm 104:2 (describing God as "wrapped in light as with a cloak"); to the prayer shawl (*talit*); to phylacteries (*tfilin*), which are part of daily worship. The latter consist of boxes called "houses" and of leather straps. The square houses perched on the hills are like phylactery boxes worn on the head, and the roads gliding into the valley like the phylactery straps. The land is now a worshipper standing at his morning prayer.

The words *góljim kójsim* make a striking synthesis of old and new. In the Song of Songs (4:1), the hair of the beloved descends (*galpú*) like a flock of mountain goats. *Kójsim*, however, is a modern term ("roads") associated with the new homeland. The lines also speak of labor, and *kapáyim* ("palms") reinforces the image of worship: the roads are being paved by "palms" of young pioneers, many of whom as members of the intelligentsia had never worked with their hands.

Kitya (6) in old Hebrew usually designates Jerusalem but in modern usage, a new town or settlement. The town prays to the creator, but it is not God, creator of the old world, but man the creator of the new. This Abraham is a new Abraham: poet, road-builder. *Pdytan* (6) traditionally refers to a writer of medieval hymns but here Shlonsky celebrates his grand role as worker-poet in the tradition of the early poets of the Russian Revolution. The meter here has a "boastful" lilt. If we ignore the printed form, lines 6-7-8 become a quatrain of trochaic tetrameters.

The penultimate stanza makes the son's act not a sacrifice but a recompense for the father's suffering, as the father whispers contentedly: "My darling son," echoing "Ephraim, my darling son" (Jeremiah 31: 19). And it is not the spiritual Ephraim-Abraham whom the poem celebrates but an Abraham of "skin and veins and bones." With the last stanza repeating the opening lines, toil is exalted while at the same time recognized as a necessary daily burden. The secular days have become a prolonged sacrifice and a prolonged festival.

— LEA GOLDBERG

Abraham Shlonsky

THREE OLD WOMEN · ŞALÓŞ ZKEYNÓT · שלש זקנות

This poem comes from the last section of *Stones of Chaos* (*Aveny Bóhu*, 1934). In contrast to the intimate, nostalgic tone of the 1927 volume in which "Toil" appeared, *Stones of Chaos* is permeated by the sense of crisis that pervaded Europe and Palestine in the thirties. The book contains Shlonsky's Paris poems (he had spent much time in that city), poems about building the homeland which are now darkened by the foreshadowing catastrophe, short introverted lyrics, and odes of an apocalyptic mood. For all of Shlonsky's meticulous riming, constructing, and skillful playing with verbal meanings, one senses a disrupting world. Then suddenly, in the last section, one finds poems of childhood that speak of the poet's growth as an artist in a milieu in which Jewish and non-Jewish influences interplay: "... Maimonides looks upon the portrait of Bakunin."

Placed between two autobiographical poems, "Three Old Women" seems out of context. Its atmosphere and its terms of reference are universal whereas the other

poems move between the poles of childhood and old age. Our poem seems to be unique in balancing an epic-like sweep with immediate observation:

(1) *In the gray evening, by the white house, (2) Three old women sit, looking [out] before them. (3) And silence [is all] around. (4) As though the hawk suddenly froze in (his) flight. (5) Three old women sitting by the house.*

The first impression recalls a Dutch genre painting and line 3—*vehás saviv* ("silence all around")—confirms the static quality. But with the introduction of the hawk, the silence becomes charged with a sense of terror—the verb "froze" is hardly reassuring. Line 5 makes an effort to restore the quietude, repeating the first impression.

(6) *Above their heads, someone is silently knitting (7) A stocking of blue in the old style. (8) A skein of gold unrolls on the horizon. (9) Three old women suddenly saw a boy.*

Leaving the real setting, the poem extends the picture to the universe. The sky is now an old-fashioned "stocking of blue" (7) that

Resource 2.2d

Hebrew Slang and Common Israeli Expressions

You can go to ulpan and learn to read, write and speak Hebrew but becoming familiar with the nuances and slang that are the workings of the language is a very different story. Here are some tips and pointers to assist you in your journey to learn Hebrew, and more importantly to learn how to speak the kind of everyday "street" Hebrew that Israelis speak.

The background on slang

Slang has been a part of the modern state of Israel since 1948 and consists mainly of a mixture of Yiddish, Arabic and English. Naturally, slang is more prevalent among teenagers and young adults but there are some slang words that date back many years, even decades. A good example of "older slang" is the expression "*Ma-nish-ma*" which has been around for many years. It literally means "*What will we hear?*" but is commonly used, in a slang way, as a greeting equivalent to the English expression "*What's up?*", (meaning "How are you?"). As you can see, whether in English or Hebrew, slang often bears little resemblance to the actual meaning intended by the expression.

Common Hebrew Slang Words

The following words/expressions translated into their English equivalent slang all denote positive expressions in Hebrew.

Achla - Derived from the Arabic word "ahala" – Means cool, fantastic

Eser - Literally "ten" - Means awesome, great

Sababa - This is a popular one used by young and old alike - Means cool, great

Pitzootz - Literally "explosion" - Means cool, awesome

Chaval Al HaZman (also Chavlaz if you're really cool!) - Literally "a waste of time" - Means awesome, amazing (N.B. this could also mean the complete opposite – depending on the intonation)

Sof HaDerech - Literally "end of the road" - Means cool, awesome

Al-a-Kefak - Derived from Arabic - Means really, really cool!

The following words/expressions translated into their English equivalent slang all denote negative expressions in Hebrew.

Al HaPanim - Literally "on the face" - means awful, bad - e.g. - "the pizza at that restaurant was "al ha'panim"

Eize Basa - derived loosely from the Arabic "yom asal yom basal" meaning "a honey day, an onion day" in other words - "what a drag"

Fashla - Means a "screw up" or "mess up" - e.g. "The plumber did a real fashla on the shower hose"

Eize Zevel - Literally "what garbage!" - Same use as in English

Common Hebrew terms/expressions

Fri'er - It is not clear where the origins of this word are from but "fri'er" is more of a concept than a word. It means a "sucker or chump" which unfortunately is a far more prevalent concept in Israel than in the west. Due to a number of reasons Sabras often feel the need not to appear in any way to be a "fri'er", as it is a sign of weakness. What many in the west take for granted as apologising when in the wrong has quite different connotations in Israel. A common usage is "*lo yatzati frier*" - "I didn't come out of the deal a sucker".

Protexia - Protexia is part of everyday life in Israel, mainly enjoyed by those born in Israel as opposed to Olim. As Israel is like one big family (of Jews) people tend to look after their own and help others out. Most Israelis have an aunt in the Iriyah, an uncle on the police force and a cousin in the bank. Let's say you go for a job interview and end up getting the job because the job interviewer was in the same unit as your dad in the army, that's protexia.

Combina - A combina is also a concept unique to Israel in many ways. Derived from the English word "combination." Let's say you go to a hotel and end up paying partially for the bill with vouchers that you got from a friend as well as somehow getting the best price because you have a friend who is a travel agent, that's a combina. Basically using the system to your advantage, a pastime that is very popular in Israel.

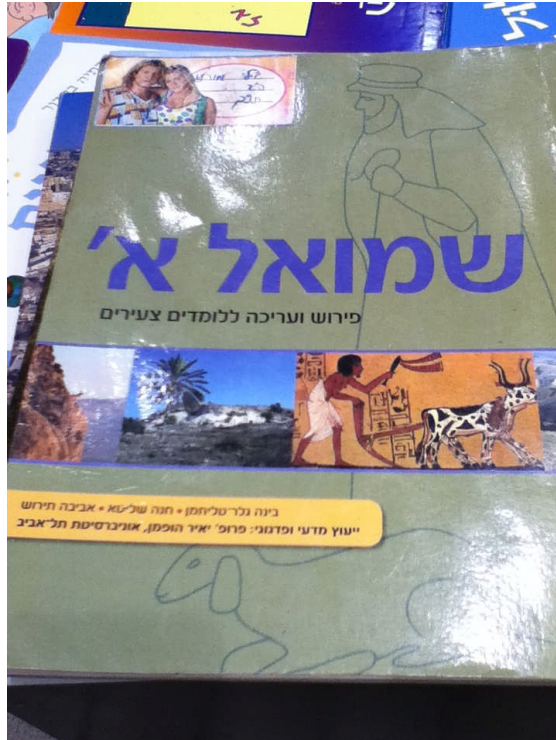
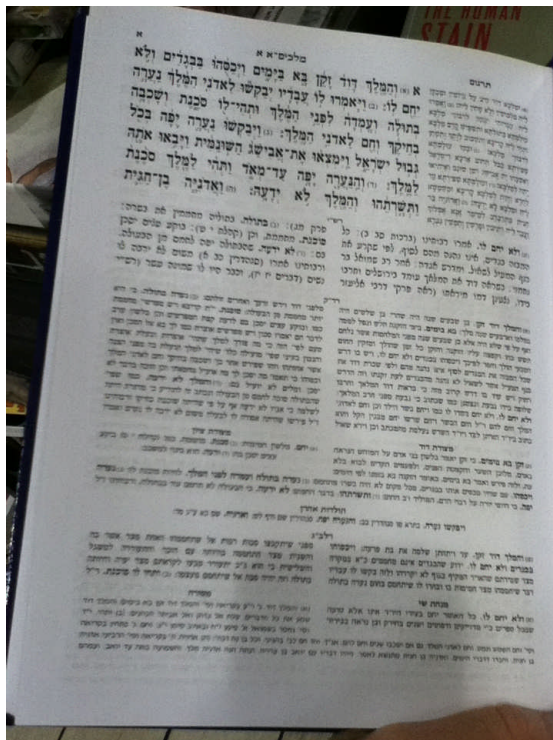
Pa'am shlishit glida - As Israel is a small country it is normal for acquaintances to bump into each other a lot, sometimes even numerous times in a day. If you happen to bump into somebody twice in one day by chance you would say to them "pa'am shlishit glida" - which means that if you bump into them a third time they have to buy you an ice cream. (It even happened to me once!)

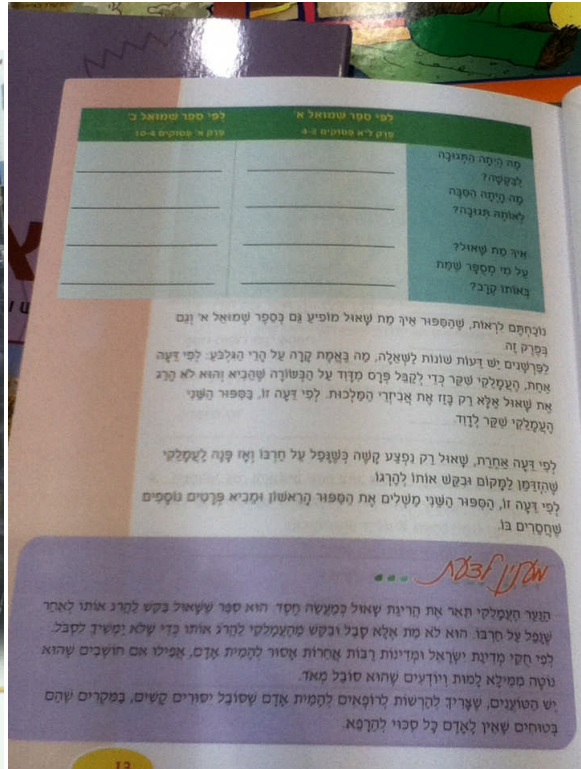
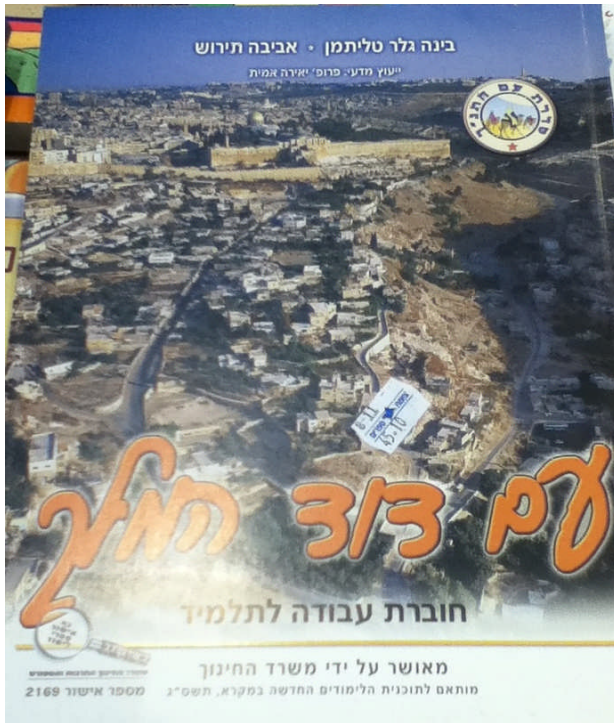
- Note: There is an Israeli urban myth claiming that the origin of this expression is from English: "First time I say, second time I yell, third time I scream". Although no English speaker has ever heard of it, there are many Israelis who will tell you authoritatively that this is the true origin of the term!)

Sof ha'olam smola - This is a great little expression, literally meaning "at the end of the world, turn left!" Means "in the middle of nowhere"

Ma ani, ez?! - This translates as "what am I a goat?!" - In the U.K. they say, "What am I a scotch mist" (i.e. am I invisible?!). Jews from New York coined the expression "What am I, chopped liver?!"

Resource 2.4





UNIT 3: WORKSHOP

Unit Enduring Understanding:

- A sophisticated relationship with Israel integrates American representations of Israel and the Israeli narrative of these representations.

Unit Goal:

- To show learners that the dual-approach to narratives will raise the level of discourse and understanding about Israel among educators and students

Unit Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- Develop a lesson plan integrating American representations of Israel and the Israeli narrative of these representations.
- Teach a lesson to their students using this dual-narrative approach.
- Articulate the pros and cons of lessons taught using the dual-narrative approach.
- Reflect upon the process of teaching a lesson using the dual-narrative approach.

Lesson 1 and 2: Lesson Plan

Essential Question:

- What would a lesson integrating the American representations of Israel and the Israeli narrative of these representations look like?

Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- Create a lesson plan integrating what they have learned from unit 1 and unit 2 to teach to their students.
- Revise their mission statement for Israel Education from unit 1 incorporating the added lens of the Israeli narrative.

Set Induction

Ask your learners to shout out the major concepts they learned from unit 2. Write all of the ideas on the board.

Activity 1

Hand out the learners' mission statements. The learners will re-read their mission statements. Learners will work in pairs or small groups to revise their mission statements for what Israel education should look like in your religious school. They should include what they have learned from units 1 and 2. Once each learner has revised his/her mission statement, solicit some examples. Try to compile a list on the board of commonalities among all of the mission statements. Using the list of commonalities create, as a group, one mission statement that encompasses the importance of teaching Israel integrating both American representations of Israel as well as the Israeli experienced narrative of these representations.

Activity 2

Using the mission statement composed by the entire group, learners will develop a lesson plan to teach to their students before lesson 4. Your learners can work on the lessons in pairs or small groups based on the grade level in which they teach.

Each lesson plan must focus on one of the following commonplaces: Key Sites, Hebrew, Military, or textbooks. The lesson plan must incorporate both an American understanding of that commonplace and an Israeli understanding of that commonplace. Any learner who chooses to write a lesson plan on teaching the military should send the letter he/she wrote to the parents prior to teaching the lesson.

The following steps are essential in creating and complete lesson plan:

1. Learner must articulate the goals and objectives for the lesson
2. Learner must include engaging activities
3. Learner must include a measure of assessment of student work to be used during the "review the lesson plan" session

Learners should work in teams based on the grade level in order to share ideas. This lesson plan must integrate the American representations of Israel as well as the Israeli narrative of these representations.

Lesson 3: Workshop Lesson Plan

Goals:

- To teach about the importance of providing and receiving feedback
- To teach that writing lesson plans can require multiple drafts
- To show learners that the dual-approach to narratives will raise the level of discourse and understanding about Israel among educators

Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- Use their knowledge of the dual-narrative approach to provide constructive feedback and suggestions on lesson plans.
- Provide constructive feedback on what a successful lesson plan would look like.
- Use the rubric to evaluate their own lesson plan.
- Articulate the importance of multiple drafts of lesson plans.

Activity 1

After each grade level has created a lesson plan to teach, pair those learners up with another grade level. Using the phrases “I wonder, I notice, I appreciate”, learners will provide feedback. The comments should focus most specifically on the content area the dual-narrative approach.

Activity 2

Once all learners have received feedback, learners should revise their lesson plans. At the end of the class, make sure that all learners are prepared to teach the lessons before the next session.

Homework

Before lesson 4 all learners should teach and video tape their lesson. They should bring the student work/evaluation to the session 4.

Lesson 4 and 5: Review the Lesson Plan

Essential Question:

- What was the outcome of the lesson plan taught through the dual-narrative approach?

Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- Evaluate student work according to the given protocol.
- Review their own lesson and list the ways in which the goals and objectives of the lesson were and were not met.
- Review other learners' lessons and provide feedback on the alignment of the teaching and the lesson plan objectives and goals.

Activity 1

In pairs, learners will view their videotaped lessons. There is no need to watch the entire videotape, but make sure the learners watch enough for a worthwhile observation. Make sure to confirm with your learners which part of their lesson plan they would like to review. Both learners will take notes using the following chart as they review the videotaped lesson.

American Representations of Israel	Israeli Narrative of American Representations	Student Reactions/Response

After filling out the chart, allow the two learners to share their chart. Make sure learners pay close attention to the way in which the students reacted to the activities in the lesson plan. What were the students' questions? What activities were they more engaged in?

Activity 2

Review the student work from the lesson plan in small groups. Note: You may only have time to review one or two teachers' students' work, depending on size of class. Be sure to archive all student work for further professional learning.

Steps¹¹:

1. Teacher of the lesson will provide the context and any background for this assignment (i.e. the instructions, the grade level, etc)

¹¹ Adapted from the Tuning Protocol originally developed by y Joseph McDonald and David Allen.

2. Clarifying questions. Learners will ask the teacher of the lesson any clarifying questions on the student work.
3. Teacher of the lesson will present overarching goals and objectives of the assignment to the other learners to focus on as they view the student work.
4. Take time to study the sample/s of student work.
5. Reflect upon & then provide feedback to the teacher, both positive and challenging feedback. This is the time to offer feedback directly related to the integrated approach of the two narratives. How could this lesson be improved? What are the next steps?
6. Debrief process. What worked? What was helpful? Would the teacher teach this lesson again? If so, what might he/she change?

Lesson 6: Reflection

Objectives: *Learners will be able to...*

- Reflect on the process of writing a lesson plan integrating American representations of Israel and Israeli narratives of the American representations.
- Articulate the pros and cons of the particular lessons that were taught using the dual-narrative approach.
- Propose an enduring method of using the dual-narrative approach in the school.
- Hypothesize the ways in which this dual-narrative approach will have a positive outcome for their students.

Set-Induction

Give each learner two different color post-it notes. On one color the learners should write what worked well in their lesson. On the other color the learners should write what did not work well in their lesson. The learners should stick all of the post-it notes on the board.

Activity 1

Give learners 5 minutes to do a free-write on their experience teaching the lesson. Learners should also include their reflections on the evaluation and feedback process.

Activity 2

Ask your learners to share their reflections on this process. As a class, make a list of pros and cons, what worked well, what was challenging. Also discuss ways in which this could be improved for future lessons on Israel. Which representations appear easier to teach?

Note: You should archive this list and revisit it to add to it as further Israel Education professional learning takes place.

Activity 3

Learners will be divided into two groups to create presentations. One presentation will be for the parents and one presentation will be for the students. Both presentations will focus on the dual-narrative approach to Israel education. This presentation should be made on the first day of religious school for the following year. If possible, the learners should first make the presentation to the synagogue board members and clergy. The presentation should include:

- A revised mission statement
- Rationale for this approach
- Hypothesis for the outcome of this approach
- Goals and objectives of this approach
- Sample student work from the “trial” lesson plans
- A sample of “commonplaces” to be used in various grades

At the conclusion of the presentation to the board and clergy, lead a discussion, which includes a question, and answer session where the learners will receive feedback. In addition, at the

presentation for the parents and students of the religious school, solicit responses on note cards in the form of “I notice, I wonder, and I appreciate.”

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<http://makomisrael.org/blog/israel-myth-and-reality/>.**

This is one of six sessions that was created in 2005 to help North American Jewish adults re-engage with the essential questions surrounding their relationship with Israel. This particular session is most in line with this curriculum guide as it addresses the issue of Israel as myth vs. Israel as reality. This resource includes background on this issue in addition to activities and lesson plans to use in order to confront this issue.

Grant, Lisa D. *Sacred Vision, Complex Reality: Navigating the Tensions in Israel Education*. Jewish Educational Leadership, Lookstein Center for Jewish Education. Fall 2008: 1-13.

This curriculum guide is based on this article. Grant helps to define the language of “symbol” in her article. In addition, this article explicitly acknowledges the challenge that this guide attempts to address.

Kelner, Shaul. *Authentic Sights and Authentic Narratives on Taglit*. Association for Jewish Studies (AJS), Maurice & Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies (CMJS). 16 December 2001:

In this paper, Kelner provides helpful vocabulary and definitions for “authenticity”. He writes about authenticity with regards to tourism and personal experience. Kelner provides a new lens with which to use the word “authenticity” in a way that is most fitting to the experiences of Israel tours.

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

In his book, Kelner addresses the issues of tourism in Israel. Kelner reframes tourism in Israel and critically analyzes the American tours that take place in Israel. He looks at the way in which a tour frames the Israel experience in a symbolic or mythic way. This book is based on Kelner’s years of first hand observation of tourism in Israel. This book will provide background information on the rationale of this guide, and will also offer helpful narratives throughout that could be used in the teaching of this guide.

**"The Aleph-Bet of Israel Education." *The ICenter*. Web. 11 Apr. 2012.
<http://www.theicenter.org/aleph-bet>.**

These short but powerful and rich 11 articles address core ways in which Israel education ought to be thought out and approached. The Aleph-Bet on Modern Hebrew in resource 1.3 and will be very helpful for the Hebrew commonplace, however, all of the articles are relevant to this guide.

**Zelkowitz, Tali. *Authoring, Authority, and Authenticity: The Storying of Jewish Education*.
Sh'ma: A Journal of Jewish Responsibility. Josh Rolnick, The Sh'ma Institute.
March 2010: 6-7.**

In her article, Zelkowitz describes an authenticity artifact exercise she does with her students each year, that both answers posed questions and stimulates more questions on the authenticity of the various artifacts. This will be a helpful article to read prior to the introduction unit where you will discuss various artifacts with your learners.

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