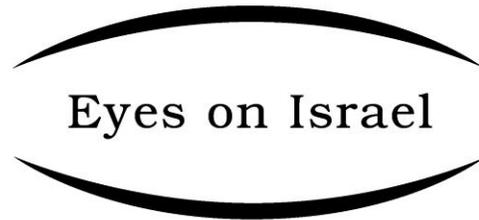


A curriculum that teaches critical analysis of news media coverage of Israel and the Middle East.



Module 1
A Brief History of Modern Israel

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A Brief History of Modern Israel

Module Introduction

Many educators, Jewish and non-Jewish, understand that what were assumed to be “known facts” about the history of Israel as well as its relationship with its Arab neighbors are actually unknown to many students. Time and again, students at all levels are confronted with exaggerations, half-truths and outright lies about Israel and Israeli history.

The purpose of Module 1—A Brief History of Modern Israel—is to give students, whether in public schools, Hebrew or day schools, a grounding in what we consider to be four essential elements of Israeli history. They are:

- Jews have religious, historical, legal and moral rights to the land of Israel.
- Jews in the land of Israel repeatedly have come under attack by Arab neighbors from the 19th century until today.
- The Jewish people have sought to negotiate peace and to share the land with adjacent Arab populations.
- The current boundaries of Israel and its neighbors are the result of many different historical circumstances.

This historical background is offered, in part, to enable students to understand news and other communications media coverage with a broader awareness of Israel’s modern development.

The following topics are covered in this module:

Lesson 1.1: Israel’s Changing Boundaries

Objective: Students will examine the changing political boundaries of pre-1948 *eretz Yisrael* and British Mandatory Palestine, and post-1948 Israel and the events surrounding those changes.

Lesson 1.2: Israel in Pictures, Then and Now

Objective: Students will demonstrate a basic understanding of the key events in the modern history of Israel in their proper sequence.

These objectives and a list of materials are included within each lesson. Actual materials needed—student handouts and teacher aids—appear in the appropriate section of each lesson.

Lesson 1.1 Israel's Changing Boundaries

Objective

Students will examine the changing political boundaries of pre-1948 *eretz Yisrael* and British Mandatory Palestine, and post-1948 Israel and the events surrounding those changes.

For the Teacher

Borders and boundaries are fundamental to news media reporting on the Middle East. Although the emphasis on this issue may obscure what many consider central to the conflict—Arab Islamic rejection of a Jewish state within any borders—there can be no doubt that the topic generates much coverage.

The goal of this lesson is to show students that the borders of the land claimed both by Jews and Arabs have varied over time due to external events as well as developments within both communities. Since claims and counter-claims over borders are still the subject of much reporting, this knowledge also helps to provide context for lessons in other modules in which students learn to appraise critically what they read, see and hear about Israel and the rest of the Middle East.

Grades: 7-12

Estimated Time: 2 periods

Materials

Student Handouts:

- **Maps and Timelines of Israel** (Student Handout 1.1A)

Teacher Aids:

- **Maps and Timelines of Israel PowerPoint** (Teacher Aid 1.1A)
- **Maps and Timelines of Israel *Speaker Notes*** (Teacher Aid 1.1B)
- **Maps and Timelines of Israel *Answers*** (Teacher Aid 1.1C)

Instructional Objective

Students will examine the changing political boundaries of pre-1948 *eretz Yisrael* and British Mandatory Palestine, and post-1948 Israel and the events surrounding those changes.

Enabling Objectives

- a. Students will examine pre-1948 and post-1948 maps of the region.
- b. Students will examine related timelines.
- c. Students will respond to questions based on the maps and timelines.

Lesson Instructions

Warm-up Activity

Distribute Student Handout 1.1A (Maps and Timelines of Israel). If you have a computer and a projector, project the first slide from Teacher Aid 1.1A (Maps and Timelines of Israel PowerPoint). Refer to Teacher Aid 1.1B (Maps and Timelines of Israel *Speaker Notes*) as you go through the PowerPoint slideshow. Have students turn to the first image, and ask:

- **Judging strictly by the way the man is dressed, do you think the poster was produced recently or a while ago? If the latter, when do you think it was made?**
[The poster was produced in the 1920s by the Bezalel Art Academy, a Jewish art institute, to promote tourism in Jerusalem.]
- **Look at the top of the poster. What is strange or striking about the words there?**
[The poster uses the name “Palestine” even though it was produced by Jews. Point out that the Hebrew next to it uses the phrase *eretz Yisrael*, which translated literally means “the land of Israel.”]
- **Look at the next group of words—“Come and See Erez Israel.” We have just heard what *eretz Yisrael* means. Why didn’t the artist write “Come and See Israel”?**
[The artist didn’t use that phrase because in the 1920s, “Israel” referred almost exclusively to the Jewish *people*, not a place. While “Israel” had once referred to the ancient northern kingdom of Israelites in Biblical times, “Israel” only became the name of a place again when the Jewish state was declared in 1948.]
- **What do you think the man in the poster is pointing to? Is there anything noteworthy about the map in your opinion?**
[The borders that we are familiar with today do not appear on this map. That’s because in the 1920s the “Land of Israel” was part of a larger territory, the Palestine Mandate awarded to Great Britain by the League of Nations. Many of the nations that border Israel today had not yet come into existence as modern states.]

Explain that “Palestine” or the “Holy Land” is what people in the West used to call *eretz Yisrael* and that in the 1920s, “Palestinians” generally were understood to be the Jews of Palestine. Most Arabs in Palestine considered themselves as members of specific clans or families or part of the wider Arab world, in particular residents of “greater Syria.”

Step 1 Project the next three images from Teacher Aid 1.1A, and have students follow in their handouts. Point out the changing boundaries of *eretz Yisrael* in the pre-modern period and the fact that the Jewish people have had a continuous presence in the land from ancient times to the present. This presence and long history in the land is critical to understanding the attempt to reestablish a nation-state in Palestine that began in earnest in the late 1800s.

Explain that the class will examine the changing maps and naming of *eretz Yisrael* in context with the timelines provided. Demonstrate the process by projecting the fifth image of Teacher Aid 1.1A, explaining what is on the map and pointing out its significant features. Tell which

event(s) on the timeline had the most impact on the contours of the map and explain the importance of the events on the timeline.

Step 2 Students will work individually or in small groups on the rest of Student Handout 1.1A. Each map is followed by a corresponding timeline and series of questions. Students will examine the maps and timeline, then answer questions based on both. Stress that students need to examine *both* the map and the timeline in order to answer the questions properly. Some questions are straightforward and factual, based on the map or the accompanying timeline. Other questions require students to analyze what they have seen and read.

Carry out this step by one of the following:

1. Divide the class into small groups and have students work together answering questions on one or more maps that you assign.
2. Distribute one map/timeline per student with each student responsible for presenting to the class the information on that map.
3. Ask each student to work with all twelve maps and timelines. This will provide the most comprehensive exposure to the content but will require the most time. If you choose this option, students can begin in class and do the rest for homework.

Decide in advance who will present each map, so that Step 3 will proceed smoothly.

Step 3 Once students have reviewed the material, bring the class together so students can discuss what they have learned with each other. For each map, have the student/group representative come to the front of the class and briefly explain:

- a. What is on the map, pointing out its significant features.
- b. Which event(s) on the timeline had the most impact on the contours of the map.
- c. Which event(s) on the timeline is “most important.”
- d. How this map differs from the previous one.

Suggested answers are provided on Teacher Aid 1.1C (Maps and Timelines of Israel *Answers*).

Weave the maps and events into a logical narrative using Teacher Aid 1.1B (Maps and Timelines of Israel *Speaker Notes*) as reference. You may wish to project the timeline for each appropriate decade as you summarize. Refer to Appendix A (History and Current Events of Israel) for a more in-depth analysis of the history and current events of Israel.

Summing up

Ask students to respond to the following statement, based on what they have seen and studied:

The current borders of the nation-states of the Middle East, including Israel, have been long-established.

Review that while the concept of the Jewish homeland was centered on the historic land of Israel,¹ the actual boundaries of that land have changed in the context of wars and negotiations. The fact is that “Palestine²” as a political, diplomatic and distinct geographic term arose from conflicts of the 20th century. Early in the century, it was proposed for the site of a re-established Jewish national home—the British Balfour Declaration, 1917—then promised as a homeland to the Jewish people by an international body (the League of Nations, 1920). It was then geographically reduced (through the creation of Jordan) and later recommended for a second division into a Jewish and another Arab section (the 1937 Peel Commission and the 1947 U.N. Partition Plan). In each case, the Jews accepted the partition proposals; the Arabs rejected them, often violently. All subsequent changes in the boundaries of the area were the outcome of attacks on the Jewish state or relinquishment of territory by Israel in an effort to reach peace with its Arab neighbors.

Evaluation Material

Students’ mastery of the instructional objective may be evaluated by their group work, map presentations and classroom discussion based on the Maps and Timelines of Israel presentation.

Further Reading and Viewing

Perhaps the most comprehensive and accessible source for understanding the changing borders of Israel and its neighbors is the tenth edition of Martin Gilbert’s *Atlas of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Routledge. London, 2012).

One popular resource for examining the history of Israel is *Myths & Facts: A Guide to the Arab-Israeli Conflict* by Mitchell G. Bard (AICE. Chevy Chase, 2002) It is also available and updated on-line at: <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/myths/mftoc.html>

A thorough review of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, focusing on the military engagements as well as the political dimensions is contained in *1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War* by Benny Morris (Yale University Press, 2008).

For an insider account of Israeli politics from the founding of the state of Israel to the near-present day, read *The Prime Ministers* by Yehuda Avner (The Toby Press, 2010).

¹ There were suggestions in the early years of modern Zionism of having a Jewish homeland in locations other than *eretz Yisrael*. They were eventually abandoned as unworkable or unlikely to attract many Jewish immigrants.

² The Romans in the second century CE were the first to use the term “Palestine” extensively. They adopted it after crushing the Second Jewish Revolt, in an attempt, in part, to blot out the name “Judaea” which was directly associated with the Jews who had caused the empire so much trouble through their rebellions. The Philistines of the southeastern coast of Canaan, whom it was meant to recall in displacement of the Jews, had been defeated and erased as a people by Babylonia around 600 BCE.

Lesson 1.2 Israel in Pictures, Then and Now

Objective

Students will demonstrate a basic understanding of the key events in the modern history of Israel in their proper sequence.

For the Teacher

The goal of this lesson is to give students a grounding in the events that have shaped the history of modern Israel, including the current conflict with the Palestinian Arabs.

Grades: 7-12

Estimated Time: 1 -2 periods

Materials

Student Handout:

- **Israel History and Current Events Test** (Student Handout 1.2G)

Teacher Aids:

- **Pictorial History of Israel 1800s to 1999 PowerPoint** (Teacher Aid 1.2A)
- **Pictorial History Israel 1800s to 1999 PowerPoint *Speaker Notes*** (Teacher Aid 1.2B)
- **Survey of Events 2000-2005 PowerPoint** (Teacher Aid 1.2C)
- **Survey of Events 2006-2010 PowerPoint** (Teacher Aid 1.2D)
- **Survey of Events 2011-Present PowerPoint** (Teacher Aid 1.2E)
- **Survey of Events 2000-Present PowerPoint *Speaker Notes*** (Teacher Aid 1.2F)
- **Israel History and Current Events Test *Answer Key*** (Teacher Aid 1.2G)

Instructional Objective

Students will demonstrate a basic understanding of key events in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict of the 2000s.

Lesson Instructions

Warm-up Activity

Review Israel's history from 1800-1999 using the Pictorial History of Israel 1800s to 1999 PowerPoint (Teacher Aid 1.2A). Weave the pictures and events into a logical narrative using Pictorial History of Israel 1800s to 1999 PowerPoint *Speaker Notes* (Teacher Aid 1.2B).

Step 1 Tell the class that this lesson will focus on recent events, beginning with the Palestinian-Israeli violence that erupted in fall 2000 and continuing to the present.

Determine students' familiarity with pertinent current events and personalities by asking them to brainstorm topics from 2000 to the present. Students may recall many of these topics from the previous lesson. List students' contributions on the board under the label "Israel Hot Topics" and ask volunteers to give a brief description. Refer to previous lesson materials and Appendix A (History and Current Events of Israel), as well as Appendix B (Who's Who in the Middle East) to refresh your recollection.

Be sure to cover all individuals/events below:

- Hamas
- Yasir Arafat/Mahmoud Abbas
- Ehud Barak/Ariel Sharon/Ehud Olmert/Benjamin Netanyahu
- Camp David 2000
- Al-aqsa *intifada*
- Park Hotel
- Jenin “Massacre”
- Road Map
- 2004 Bush-Sharon letter
- Operation Cast Lead
- Flotilla
- The Goldstone Report
- Operation Protective Edge

Step 2 Once you are comfortable with the knowledge level of the class, show students the Survey of Events PowerPoints (Teacher Aid 1.2C, 1.2D and 1.2E). Speaker notes, along with cues when to click the next step in the slide show, are available as Teacher Aid 1.2F.

Step 3 After completing the PowerPoint, see if students can better identify the events or individuals listed above. You can question the students verbally or administer a more formal evaluation using Israel History and Current Events Test (Student Handout 1.2G). The questions followed by an answer key are available on Teacher Aid 1.2G.

Summing up

Review students’ responses with the class, summing up the key events of the past decade. See CAMERA’s Web site for a listing of Middle East issues, which provides extensive and accurate information related to current topics: http://www.camera.org/index.asp?x_context=7

Digging Deeper

By focusing on key political events, it might seem as if the history of modern Israel is little more than a never-ending struggle for survival against unyielding enemies. While there may be some truth to that view, there is much more to the Jewish state than only the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Here are a few of Israel’s many innovations and accomplishments that your students can explore:

- Making the Desert Bloom—19th century travelers to the Holy Land, including Mark Twain, frequently commented on the desolate nature of the land yet today Israel exports produce and other agricultural products all over the world. How did Israel turn swamp and desert areas into productive soil and how does it share its expertise in this field with the rest of the world?

- Operation Solomon—A trip to Israel today reveals a vibrant, multi-racial society. Of the many ethnicities in Israel, Ethiopian Jews are now a significant part of the Israeli landscape. Their history and the story of how they came to the Promised Land is a fascinating subject.
- Rescue at Entebbe—In the 1970s, Palestinian terrorists used airplane hijackings as a means of getting the world’s attention. One such hijacking to Uganda, Africa took a dramatic turn with a lightning-swift Israeli raid on July 4, 1976 that freed the hostages. The rescue at Entebbe became the subject of several Hollywood films.
- Ilan Ramon: Israel’s astronaut—The biography of Ilan Ramon is an inspiring story of a man who took risks and explored uncharted territory, while staying true to his heritage and values.
- The Israeli music scene—Israel is home to one of the liveliest music scenes on the planet, where influences as varied as hip-hop and Amharic, Celtic and Carlebach manage to intermingle and create harmonies. Various Web sites enable students to explore the sounds of modern Israel and bring them into a classroom setting.
- Hi-Tech paradise—Did you know that key cell phone technology was developed in Israel? Or that the basis for AOL Instant Messenger was designed there? The Disk-on-Key, known as a flash drive or data stick, was also invented in Israel. The Java platform inside Amazon's Kindle was developed in Israel too. A look at Israel’s growing economy and high-tech sector would be a rewarding subject to highlight.
- Medical advances—The Clear Light device, a new acne treatment that causes acne bacteria to self-destruct without damaging surrounding tissue was developed in Israel. Did you know that an entrepreneur from Israel developed ReWalk, a device that can help paraplegics to stand and walk? A video showing ReWalk in action can be seen here:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQRQs-N-ZIM>
- Humanitarian Aid—Israel excels in providing humanitarian aid across the globe. For instance, IsraAID (Israel Forum for International Humanitarian Aid) and other Israeli relief teams were among the first to respond to Haiti after a devastating 2010 earthquake, setting up treatment rooms and makeshift clinics that were reported on by major news media.

Evaluation Material

In this lesson, students complete the Israel History and Current Events Test (Student Handout 1.2G) as a means of evaluating their comprehension of the material.

Further Reading and Viewing

To learn more about Israel’s humanitarian and technological accomplishments, be sure to watch *Israel Inside the Movie: How a Small Nation Makes a Big Difference*. Go to www.israelinsidethemovie.com for more details.

Israel21c is an online news site offering diverse and reliable news and information about 21st century Israel, including technological breakthroughs and economic and cultural developments. Go to www.israel21c.org

Israel produces more start-up companies than larger and less threatened nations such as Japan, China, India, Korea, Canada and the United Kingdom. To find out why, read *Start-Up Nation*:

the Story of Israel's Economic Miracle, by Dan Senor and Saul Singer (A Council on Foreign Relations Book, 2009, Twelve: Hachette Book Group, New York, N.Y.).