

Appendix B: Who's Who in the Middle East

A brief listing of key names (people, movements, and organizations) that appear in the Student Handouts and Teacher Aids

Abbas, Mahmoud—First prime minister and second president of the Palestinian Authority. Also known by his *nom de guerre* Abu Mazen. He continues to hold office despite his term's expiration.

Ahmadinejad, Mahmoud—Former president of Iran, elected 2005. He claimed reelection in Iran's 2009 voting despite charges of voter fraud, leading to widespread anti-regime demonstrations that were brutally suppressed. Iranian leaders including "Supreme Leader" Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Ahmadinejad and others have denied the Holocaust, repeatedly threatened to "wipe Israel off the map," and reportedly continued, despite international sanctions, a covert nuclear weapons program.

Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade—One of the terrorist offshoots of the late Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat's Fatah organization, responsible for many attacks on Israel.

Al-Assad, Bashar—President of Syria. As of January 2015, more than 200,000 Syrians reportedly had been killed under the Assad regime's suppression of anti-government demonstrations and resistance by "Free Syrian Army" units.

Al-Dura, Mohammed—12-year old Palestinian Arab boy from the Gaza Strip who allegedly was killed by Israeli forces in September 2000 (during the start of the second *intifada*). He became an instant "martyr" in the Arab world and beyond. The incident later was suspected strongly to have been a hoax. Studies of video tape shot that day in Gaza and an Israeli re-enactment suggested that Israeli soldiers lacked the necessary line of fire to have shot al-Dura, and that he was more likely to have been hit by a Palestinian bullet.

Al-Qaeda—Terrorist organization, led by Osama bin Laden, responsible for attacks around the world as well as the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center (in New York City), the Pentagon (just outside Washington, D.C.) and in Pennsylvania. Approximately 3,000 Americans and foreign nationals were murdered on September 11.

Arab League—An organization of Arab states founded in 1945 in part to launch economic boycott of Palestinian Jews and, after 1948, continued to boycott Israel; currently includes 21 countries and a Palestinian delegation.

Arab Legion—Jordan's regular army, originally founded and trained by Great Britain. It fought Israel in the Jewish state's 1948 War of Independence.

Arab Spring—Anti-regime uprisings in the Middle East that began in Tunisia in December, 2010, then spread to Egypt, Libya, Syria, Bahrain, Yemen and protests elsewhere in Arab countries. These led to the overthrow of long-time dictators in Tunisia, Egypt and eventually Yemen, and civil war with NATO involvement in Libya (leader Muammar Gaddafi was killed in October by rebel forces), and large-scale bloody repression in Syria.

Arafat, Yasir—Co-founder of *Fatah* (“Movement for the National Liberation of Palestine”), later head of the umbrella organization the PLO, responsible for many terror attacks against Israel. Although defeated and exiled to Tunis in the wake of Israel’s Lebanon campaign (1982), as a result of the Oslo Accords (1993), he became the head of the *Palestinian Authority*. He died in 2004.

Barak, Ehud—Tenth prime minister of Israel and head of government when the “al Aqsa *intifada*” began in September 2000. During Camp David negotiations two months earlier with Yasir Arafat, he offered the Palestinian Arabs a state on more than 95 percent of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with eastern Jerusalem as its capital, in exchange for peace. Arafat rejected the proposal.

Barghouti, Marwan—Imprisoned Fatah leader serving five consecutive life sentences and an additional 40 years for his part as an initiator of terror attacks resulting in the murder of Israeli citizens in the second *intifada*. He has been considered the most popular Palestinian leader and a possible successor to Mahmoud Abbas.

Bedouin—A term generally applied to Arab nomadic groups, who are found throughout much of the Middle East.

Bin Laden, Osama—Al-Qaeda leader responsible for terrorist attacks around the world as well as the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the United States in which approximately 3,000 people were murdered. In May, 2011 he was killed in Pakistan by U.S. Navy SEALs.

Copts—Native Egyptian Christians—estimated at more than 10 percent of Egypt’s population before the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak in 2011 and rise of the Muslim Brotherhood—who are often the target of attacks by Islamic extremist groups.

Crusaders—Participants in a series of military campaigns launched by European Christians during the 11th through 13th centuries, usually with the aim of taking the Holy Land from its Muslim rulers.

Dayan, Moshe—One of Israel’s most prominent generals and politicians, defense minister during the 1967 War, later foreign minister instrumental in drawing up the Camp David Accords that led to a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt.

Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine—A Palestinian Marxist-Leninist terrorist organization responsible for attacks against Israeli civilians, including the 1974 attack on an Israeli school in Ma’alot (northern Israel) in which 27 people were murdered.

Durban—South African location of 2001 U.N. conference ostensibly dedicated to fighting racism. Dominated by anti-Western and anti-Zionist countries and groups, the conference and periodic follow-up events have become forums for antisemitism and defamation of Israel.

El-Sisi, Abdel Fattah—The sixth and current president of Egypt, in office since 2014. As chief of the Egyptian Armed Forces, El-Sisi played the leading role in deposing President Mohammed Morsi after a 2013 uprising against him.

Erdogan, Recep Tayyip—Turkey’s prime minister since 2003, his policies have been increasingly hostile to Israel. He permitted the *Mavi Marmara*-led flotilla to sail from Turkey toward the Gaza Strip in 2010 in an attempt to break Israel’s legal naval blockade, which was established to prevent weapons smuggling. Involvement in the flotilla was to help position non-Arab Turkey among regional countries as a champion of the Palestinian Arabs. He has continued to resist establishment of normal relations with Israel.

European Union (EU)—A union of close to 30 European countries, established in 1992. The EU was one of the groups responsible for developing and promoting the “road map” for peace between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in 2003, based in part on President George W. Bush’s June, 2002 speech envisioning two states, Israel and “Palestine,” democratic, adjacent and at peace. In 2013, the EU issued a directive forbidding any funding and cooperation to any Israelis residing beyond the 1949 armistice line, including in Judea and Samaria, eastern Jerusalem and the Golan Heights.

Fatah—The major faction within the Palestine Liberation Organization, founded by Yasir Arafat and several others in 1959 and responsible for many terrorist attacks against Israel. Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority, is from the Fatah movement.

Fayyad, Salam—Former Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority; he was finance minister from 2002 to 2006 and is an American-educated economist.

Goldstone, Richard—South African judge who led a U.N. Human Rights Council-commissioned panel that reported in 2010 on Israel’s December 2008-January 2009 battles against Hamas and its allies in the Gaza Strip in retaliation for mortar and rocket bombardment. The report accused both Israel and armed Palestinian groups (Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and similar terrorist organizations) of war crimes and possible crimes against humanity. The U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution denouncing the report, and a year and a half later, Goldstone retracted central accusations against Israel, most notably that Israeli troops had intentionally targeted Arab civilians.

Hamas—(**The Islamic Resistance Movement, whose acronym also is a word meaning “zeal”**.) A Palestinian terrorist organization with social and political wings that is closely related to the Muslim Brotherhood. Its stated goal is to establish an Islamic religiously-governed state in the area that is currently Israel and the Gaza Strip and West Bank as a step in establishing a renewed Sunni Muslim caliphate. Elected to lead the Palestinian legislative council in 2006, it violently took control over the Gaza Strip in 2007.

Hamdallah, Rami—Palestinian Prime Minister who replaced Salam Fayyad in June, 2013.

Hashemite—The royal family of Jordan descended, according to Muslim tradition, from the family of Mohammed.

Hasmoneans—The family of the Maccabees that ruled the land of Israel from 140 to 37 BCE.

Hezbollah—Translated as “Party of God,” Hezbollah is a Shi’ite Islamist terrorist organization based in Lebanon. It was founded in 1982 by Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards to fight Israel, serve as an international surrogate for Iranian terrorism and expand the influence of Lebanese Shi’ites. It has been heavily funded and aided by Iran with Syrian assistance.

Idris, Wafa—The first known female Palestinian suicide bomber who murdered one Israeli and injured scores of others.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)—A United Nations organization whose mission is to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy and to inhibit its military use, including in nuclear weapons. In 2011, the IAEA issued a report indicating that Iran had tested triggering technology and modified ballistic missiles to carry nuclear warheads, indicating that Iran’s nuclear program was designed to produce weapons rather than energy for civilian purposes. The agency has been viewed by Israel and other Western states to be ineffective in monitoring and inhibiting Iran’s nuclear program.

International Court of Justice (World Court or ICJ)—The primary judicial body of the United Nations, based in the Hague, Netherlands. Its main functions are to settle legal disputes and to provide legal advisory opinions. In 2004, it produced an opinion stating that Israel’s security fence in the West Bank, which had helped reduce dramatically Israeli and other deaths from Palestinian terrorism, was illegal. Many legal experts pointed out that the court lacked jurisdiction in the matter since the complaint was brought not by a sovereign state that was party to the treaty establishing the court but by the Palestinian Authority and because Israeli-Palestinian disputes were political matters to be settled by negotiations between them under U.N. Security Council resolutions and related measures such as the 1995 Israeli-Palestinian interim agreement and the 2003 U.N.-endorsed “road map”. They further noted that the court’s opinion in the matter was, in any case, advisory and not binding.

Islamic Jihad—A Palestinian terrorist organization, allied with the Lebanese terrorist group Hezbollah, whose stated goal is to establish a religiously-governed state in the area that is currently Israel and the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Islamic State, also known as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) or the Islamic State in the Levant (ISIL)—Radical Islamist terrorist group, which began as offshoot of al-Qaeda, known for carrying out public executions, crucifixions and ethnic cleansing. It gained the most attention for its beheadings, especially those of American journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff (also an Israeli citizen) and two British citizens, David Haines and Alan Henning. ISIS posted videos of their brutal murders on YouTube. Its goal is to create an Islamic state across Iraq and Syria and has taken control of much of that area.

Israeli Defense Force (IDF)—The military forces of the State of Israel. The IDF, commonly known in Israel by the Hebrew acronym *Tzahal*, consists of the ground forces, air force and navy.

Kadima—Israeli political party formed in 2005, by Ariel Sharon, as a breakaway from the Likud Party. In 2009, it won a plurality of votes in Knesset (parliamentary) elections but could not form a majority coalition government.

Labor—The Israeli political party that governed for the first 29 years of the state’s existence. David Ben-Gurion, Golda Meir, Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres were among its leaders.

Likud—One of Israel’s main political parties, founded in 1973. Likud has produced Israeli prime ministers Menachem Begin, Yitzhak Shamir, Ariel Sharon and Benjamin Netanyahu.

Mashaal, Khaled— Hamas leader who reached an ostensible agreement with Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas on national reconciliation and on forming a strategic partnership. This agreement, which became public in 2011 but was not implemented then, cast further doubt on Abbas’ intentions toward Israel.

Morsi, Mohammed—Muslim Brotherhood candidate who, in 2012, won Egypt’s first democratic election for president. In July, 2013, he was deposed by Egypt’s military, led by army chief General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.

Muslim Brotherhood—One of the world’s most influential and largest Islamic religious-political movements. It was founded in Egypt in 1928 as a Sunni Muslim religious, political, and social organization that rejected Western influence in Egypt and opposed Christianity and Judaism. The Muslim Brotherhood’s ascendancy in Egypt in 2012, including achieving a plurality in parliamentary elections, raised concerns regarding Egypt’s relations with its neighbors, including Israel.

Nasrallah, Sayyed Hassan—Lebanese Hezbollah leader during the 2006 War who continues to assert that his terrorist group is capable of striking any target in Israel.

Netanyahu, Benjamin—Prime Minister of Israel, 1996-1999, 2009-present. Netanyahu, leader of the Likud Party, has stressed that Palestinian Arabs must recognize Israel as a Jewish state. He has called for renewed Israeli-Palestinian negotiations on a “two-state solution.”

Ottoman—Pertaining to the Turkish empire that ruled much of the Middle East, North Africa and parts of Europe from the 13th to the early 20th centuries.

Palestinian Authority (PA)—The administrative organization established in 1994 as a result of the Oslo accords to govern parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Since being expelled from the Gaza Strip in 2007 by Hamas, its jurisdiction has been limited to most Arab population centers in the West Bank.

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)—An umbrella organization of Palestinian terrorist groups, founded in 1964, that sought the destruction of Israel and the establishment of a Palestinian state in its stead. The PLO pledged at the start of the 1993 Oslo process, before creation of the Palestinian Authority, to seek peace with Israel. This pledge has not been fulfilled, nor has the “PLO Covenant,” which calls for Israel’s destruction, been revised, though Palestinian leaders indicated that it would be.

Quartet—A group composed of the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, and Russia established in 2002 to mediate the peace process in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and that in 2003 endorsed the “road map.”

Qurei, Ahmed—Like Mahmoud Abbas a long-time colleague of Yasir Arafat’s. Qurei briefly replaced Abbas as PA prime minister beginning in 2003.

Ross, Dennis—America’s chief Israeli-Palestinian negotiator during the Clinton administration. His book, *The Missing Peace: The Inside Story of the Fight for Middle East Peace*, 2004, documents Arafat’s rejection of the Israeli-U.S. offer of a West Bank and Gaza Strip state at Camp David in 2000.

Rouhani, Hassan—President of Iran since June, 2013, replacing Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Shalit, Gilad—Israeli IDF soldier abducted in 2006 in Israel by Palestinian gunmen in a cross-border raid via underground tunnels near the Israeli border with the Gaza Strip. Hamas held him for more than five years, until his release in October 2011 in exchange for 1,027 Palestinian Arabs (many convicted and jailed for murders of Israelis and foreign visitors, including Americans) held in Israeli prisons.

Sharon, Ariel—The eleventh prime minister of Israel (Likud Party) and a general in the 1967 Six-Day War and the 1973 Yom Kippur War as well as defense minister during the 1982 Lebanon War. The “al Aqsa *intifada*” began in September 2000 immediately following Sharon’s public visit to the Temple Mount. This visit was agreed to by Palestinian security forces but subsequently used as a justification for launching the *intifada*.

Shi’ite—The second-largest denomination of Islam, whose followers are largely based in Iran, southern Iraq, eastern Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, parts of Lebanon and elsewhere. Also referred to as the “Shi’a.”

Shin Bet—Israel’s domestic security agency, somewhat similar to the American FBI.

Sunni—The largest denomination of Islam.

Taliban—Fundamentalist Muslims in Afghanistan, who formerly ruled the country and provided Osama bin Laden with sanctuary. Taliban fighting against U.S. and allied forces and the Western-supported Afghan government continued in 2012. A separate Taliban threatens Pakistani governments.

Tanzim—One of the terrorist arms of Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat’s Fatah organization, responsible for many attacks on Israel.

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)—United Nations organization created to encourage “international peace and universal respect by promoting collaboration among nations.” In 2011, UNESCO voted overwhelmingly to approve full membership to the Palestinian Authority, as if it were a sovereign state. The PA has used its membership in UNESCO to lay claim to Jewish holy sites throughout *eretz Israel*, such as attempting to designate the Machpelah (Tomb of the Patriarchs) in Hebron a Palestinian “World Heritage Site,” calling it a mosque. Most recently, UNESCO approved listing the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, occupied and trashed by Palestinian gunmen during the second *intifada*, under the name “Palestine.”

United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)—The United Nations body tasked with providing assistance, protection, and advocacy for Palestinian refugees. Created shortly after Israel’s 1948 War of Independence as a temporary aid organization, UNRWA became a large, permanent bureaucracy, reliant on U.S. funding. The U.N. deals with all other refugees through its High Commissioner on Refugees. UNRWA helped perpetuate rather than solve through resettlement and integration the “Palestinian refugee problem.” It has awarded refugee status and associated financial and other support to descendants of refugees, making the Palestinian Arabs the only group authorized to bequeath refugee status from generation to generation indefinitely.

Waqf—The religious administrative body responsible for the Muslim shrines atop Jerusalem’s Temple Mount. It has permitted unauthorized excavations on the Mount for creation of a new mosque, destroying First and Second Temple period Jewish and later Byzantine Christian archaeological material in the process.