

UNIT One

BEDROCK AND FOUNDATION

Teacher's Guide

A curriculum for Israel Engagement

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Unit One:

Bedrock and Foundation

Goals:

- Students will be able to identify the nature of the different connections between the Jewish people and the Land of Israel throughout history.
- Students will encounter key events in the process leading up to the creation of the State of Israel.
- Students will explore Herzl's relationship to the Land of Israel and understand his decision to found the Jewish State there.
- Students will begin to explore their own connections to Israel and its significance in their own lives.

Lesson 1:

The Jewish People and the Land of Israel

This lesson opens up with a Herzl's difficult decision of where to found the Jewish State: Uganda (as proposed by the British), or in the Land of Israel. This question leads the students into the deeper question: **why the Land of Israel?** We use the following trigger to delve into the deeper historical and national connection that the Jewish People have to the Land of Israel.

1. A brief introduction to Herzl

Briefly introduce your class to Theodore Herzl; who he was, what he believed, and what he dreamed:

"IF YOU WILL IT IS NOT A DREAM" - "אם תרצו אין זו אגדה"



Theodor Herzl (1860-1904) was the father of political Zionism and founder of the World Zionist Organization. While serving as the Paris correspondent for a Viennese newspaper, Herzl was aroused by the increase of anti-Semitism in liberal France. The Dreyfus Case – a notorious anti-Semitic incident in France in which a French Jewish army captain was falsely convicted of spying for Germany – prompted Herzl to draw the conclusion that the only feasible solution to the Jewish question was a mass exodus of Jews from the countries of their torment and resettlement in a land of their own. He organized the "First Zionist Congress" in Basel in 1897 and devoted the remainder of his life to the realization of his dream: the creation of a Jewish State.

2. Herzl's Dilemma: Where to create the Jewish State?

It is critical as a trigger to this lesson that the dilemma be fully internalized by the students.

Confront the students with Herzl's dilemma:

- Theodor Herzl sought support from the British for the creation of a national Jewish homeland. It is important to note that at the time, pogroms (massacres) against the Jews were common, and having a Jewish State would have given Jews in oppressed countries a place to go. The British offered a clear proposal: the Jews would be allowed to create a Jewish State of their own in Uganda.

Herzl was faced with a dilemma:

Which land would be a better place for the Jewish People to create their State:

The Land of Israel, or Uganda?

In order to understand this dilemma, we must have a deeper understanding of WHY Israel.

- Ask the students to suggest (based on their own prior knowledge) sources of the Jewish connection to Israel. Write their answers on the blackboard or on a poster board.

3. The Jewish Historical Connection to the Land of Israel

- Discuss with the students the biblical, and modern connection between the Jewish people and the Land of Israel.

Read the information below and have the students answer the questions that follow:

The Connection to the Land- Roots:

In Ancient Times

The history of the Jewish people and the Land of Israel began about 4000 years ago with the Biblical patriarch Abraham who “crossed” into Canaan (The word “Hebrew” means to cross). Ever since, despite occupation, conquest, and exile, there has always been a Jewish presence in the Land of Israel. And throughout the 2,000-year long Diaspora (Jewish dispersion), there has been a **yearning** felt among Jews outside of the Land of Israel to return.

In Modern Times

By the end of the 19th century, the pogroms (massacres) of Jews in Eastern Europe, as well as the continued discrimination against Jews in the West convinced many Jews of the need to restore their ancient homeland. Under the leadership of Theodor Herzl, the modern Jewish movement of Jewish national liberation (Zionism) emerged. Zionism sought to establish a Jewish state in the historic Land of Israel.

Discussion:

1. **When** did the connection of the Jewish People to the Land of Israel begin?
2. **How long** did the Jewish people yearn to return to the Land of Israel?
3. **Why** do you think the Jewish People felt a yearning to return to the Land of Israel?



4. Exploring Types of Connections to the Land

- a. Read out loud the information sheet (below.)
- b. Divide the class into five groups. Read the instructions out loud and ask each group to work together and answer the different questions.

Information sheet:

Read the 3 paragraphs below and ask the students to answer the following questions on **each** paragraph:

- a. What is the main topic of the paragraph?
- b. What kind of connection does the character have with the land of Israel? Explain your answer, bringing examples from the paragraph itself.
- c. Please complete the chart at the end, for a short presentation in the class.

**Parashat Lech-Lecha:**

God told Abram to leave his native land and his father's house for a land that God would show him. God promised to one day make Abram a great nation, bless him, make his name great, bless those who blessed him, and curse those who cursed him. Following God's command, at age 75, Abram took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all the wealth that they had acquired and traveled to the Elon Moreh, at Shechem in Canaan. God appeared to Abram to tell him that He would assign the land to Abram's heirs, and Abram built an altar to God. Abram then moved to the hill country east of Bet-el and built an altar to the Lord there and called God by name. Then Abram journeyed toward the Negev.

Parashat Shelach

God asked Moses to choose 12 men to spy the land of Canaan when they arrived at the east Side of the Jordan River. Moses chose 12 men (one from each tribe) and asked them to cross the river and spy the land that God promised them. He asked the men to explore the land and to see what kind of people lived there.

When the spies came back from Canaan, they told Moses that the land is indeed one of "Milk and Honey", but the people that live there are "Giants" and too difficult for them to fight off. Because of this, they told Moses that they should not go into the land which God had given them.

6. *Where do you fit in?*

This step of the lesson is extremely important. Here, we ask the students to look inward, at their own connection to Israel.

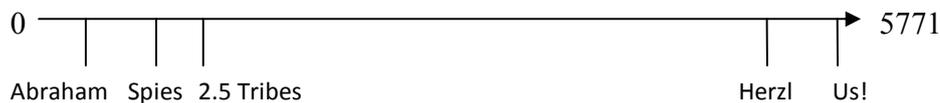
Instructions:

- Make a sign for each of the three levels of connection: “**assimilated**”, “**connected**”, and “**involved**”.
- Place the signs in three spots in the classroom, such that if lines were to be drawn between them, it would make a triangle.
- Ask the students: How connected to you feel to Israel? What kind of connection do you think you have?
- Tell the students to stand next to the sign that they feel best describes their connection, and tell them they are allowed to stand along the invisible line between two concepts if they want.
- Ask the students to share why they chose to stand where they are standing. If the student believes he or she is connected, ask them: based on what? Give them a chance to flush it out.



7. *Perspective:*

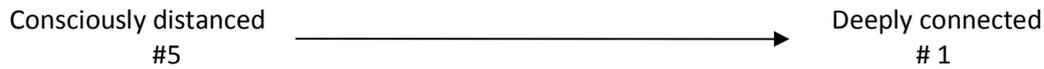
Draw a rough timeline on the board:



Let's look at the timeline and the eras we have covered today, to see when Abraham and the Bible personalities lived, and when Herzl lived. Throughout history, over thousands of years, we can see that the Jewish People has been connected to the Land of Israel in different ways. Other Jews did take responsibility to connect to the Land of Israel, each in their own way (Abraham; the two and a half tribes who did not cross the Jordan; Herzl, etc.)

8. *Connections to Israel: Today in America*

This exercise presents five different types of American Jews' involvement and connection to Israel. These five "types" represent five points along a spectrum:



The five examples of American Jewish connection to Israel are:

1. Michael Levine, a young man from Philadelphia, made aliyah on his own and volunteered to join the Israeli army. He was killed in combat during the 2nd Lebanon War.
2. The Rosenberg family lives in New York but they love Israel. Three years ago they built a house in Israel that they go to on vacation every chance they can get.
3. A community leader who works within one of the American federations, who spends all his or her free time planning new programs and projects to benefit and work in partnership with Israel.
4. Sam, a sophomore in college, has never visited Israel and was not planning to. A few months ago, he heard about this free trip to Israel for kids his age called Birthright. He signed up and is looking forward to the trip.
5. An American Jewish college student who had never been to Israel, decided to take his summer vacation to Israel to visit. After hearing the news of a terror attack in Jerusalem, he decided to change his vacation to another destination instead.

The worksheet asks the students to label each of the five characters presented as either: "assimilated", "connected" or "involved", and then to compare the characters to the biblical characters you studied earlier in the lesson.

- a. Read the instructions out loud, ask the students to work together in groups to answer the different questions. (workbook page 6)
- b. After the students finish the worksheet, ask them:
 - What did you learn from this activity?
 - What do you feel was the purpose of the lesson?



- Do you feel connected to Israel? How can you enhance this connection?

9. Home Assignment:

The assignment consists of two parts:

Part 1:

The students are to write a fictional dialogue between Herzl and the Bible characters. The best dialogues will be used for the Contest.

Part 2:

Goals:

To discover and explore the true outcome of the Uganda Proposal, and answer the questions provided on the worksheet.

- a. Read the instructions to both parts of the assignment out loud
- b. Tell students that this dialogue is going to be presented in the Israel Contest as a play. The best dialogue will be turned into the script for the play and a group of students will act it out.

Students are to complete the assignment at home.

Suggested assessment criteria:

- a. The conversation is focused on the central theme. (30%)
- b. The characterization is well developed (30%)
- c. Quality of arguments (30%)
- d. Originality (10%)

The homework assignment looks like this:

Part 1:

Dialogue between Herzl and the Tanach Personalities

After you have explored and understood the Jewish People's different connections with *Eretz Yisrael* since the Biblical period, create a dialogue between **Herzl** and the **Bible** personalities: The two and a half Tribes, the Spies, and Abraham. **Please read the guidelines before you write the dialogue.**

Focus Questions:

- How do you think these characters could help Herzl decide where to establish the Jewish State?
- Imagine what each of them would say to Herzl and what Herzl might reply.

Guidelines

Step 1: Characterization

Personalities: Herzl, Abraham, the two and a half tribes, and the spies.

Try to get inside these personalities, then answer the following questions :

- Where and when did this personality live?
- Who are the people around him or them?
- Describe the personality's main characteristics.
- What important actions are relevant to the theme of this conversation?
- What is the personality's connection to Israel?

Step 2: Stating the Case

List the arguments that the personality could bring during the conversation with Herzl about the most suitable place to create a Jewish State.

Step 3: Writing the Dialogue

- Ensure the continuity and fluency of the conversation.
- Focus on the theme.



Part 2:**Herzl's Decision** (Historical Reality)

After writing your dialogue, research Theodor Herzl's actual decision. He presented his dilemma at the Sixth Zionist Congress (1903)

- Why do you think Herzl made this decision?
- What was the Congress' decision?

The Sixth Zionist Congress

The Sixth Zionist Congress, the "Uganda Congress," was held in Basle, Switzerland, on August 23rd, 1903. During the Congress, Herzl raised the idea of establishing an autonomous Jewish state in Uganda, the British colony in Eastern Africa. A stormy opposition to the proposal unfolded, especially among the Russian Zionists. Max Nordau tried to cushion the offer by saying that the solution provides a "temporary refuge" for the Jewish emigrants of Eastern Europe who were under oppression, and that they will eventually be able to settle in the Land of Israel. Finally Herzl's suggestion to send a delegation to investigate the region is agreed upon. While Herzl made it clear that this program would not affect the ultimate aim of Zionism, a Jewish entity in the Land of Israel, the proposal aroused a storm at the Congress and nearly led to a split in the Zionist movement.

Two years later, at the 7th Zionist Congress in 1905, the Congress heard the report of the Commission that had been sent to East Africa which had concluded that "Uganda" was unsuitable for mass Jewish settlement. The congress voted against a national home anywhere except the Land of Israel and its immediate vicinity. The Uganda Program was finally rejected.

10. Reflection

Ask the students:

- What did you learn from this activity?
- Why do you think the teacher decided to do this lesson?
- Do you feel connected to Israel? What can do to improve this connection?

**11. Suggested Assessment Criteria**

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. The dialogue is based on the central theme | (30%) |
| b. The characters are well-characterized | (30%) |
| c. Arguments | (30%) |
| d. Originality | (10%) |

Lesson 2:

The Creation of the Jewish State

Introduction:

In the first lesson they learned about the importance of the Jewish People's connection to the Land of Israel. They learned about the history of the connection, and the different natures and varieties in connections one can feel towards the land. We also touched on the feelings of longing (and belonging) for the land, particularly during times of oppression or distress.

In light of all of this, it is important that the students understand how the Jewish State was created and founded, and what makes the modern State of Israel unique. In this lesson, the students will learn about the reasons for the creation of the State, and the process that led up to its founding.

1. Factors contributing to the establishment of the State of

Israel In-class exercise:

Have the students read the information box below, and answer the question that follows:

The establishment of a Jewish State took on an increased urgency following World War II and the Holocaust, in which 6 million Jews, 1.5 million of them children, were herded into concentration camps, enslaved, tortured, and murdered by German Nazis and their collaborators.

After the war the world awakened to the plight of the Jews. There were also thousands of Jewish refugees from Europe who had fled or been kicked out of their homes, and had nowhere to go or call home.

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations voted to partition British Mandatory Palestine into two states: one Jewish and one Arab. This was a huge accomplishment for the Jews: the right to their own state granted to them by the U.N.! The Jews gladly accepted the plan, though Arab leaders rejected the U.N. Partition Plan. On May 14th, 1948, David Ben Gurion declared the independence of the State of Israel, and immediately, the armies of five Arab States invaded Israel. Though vastly outnumbered and undersupplied, the new State triumphed. The people of the newborn Israel suffered a heavy loss of life, but Israel endured.

What were the main reasons for the creation of the State of Israel?



2. The U.N. Partition Plan

The United Nations Partition Plan was the vote on whether or not the British Mandate would be dissolved and replaced by not one, but two national states – one Jewish, one Arab.

Read the Information Sheet together, as reproduced from the Israel Knesset website on www.knesset.gov.il/holidays/eng/29nov_e.htm and have students answer the questions that follow.

On November 29, 1947, the UN General Assembly voted in favor of a resolution, which adopted the plan for the partition of Palestine, recommended by the majority of the UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP). 33 states voted in favor of the resolution and 13 against. 10 states abstained (did not vote YES or NO). UNSCOP was appointed seven months earlier, after Great Britain, which ruled the country on the basis of a League of Nations Mandate, decided that in light of the growing Jewish resistance and violent opposition to its rule, it was unwilling to continue on the existing basis, and handed the whole issue over to the UN. The UN Committee reached the conclusion that the British Mandate for Palestine should end, and most of its members recommended the establishment of both an Arab state and a Jewish state, and keeping Jerusalem International.

The partition map proposed by UNSCOP allotted the Jewish state a relatively small territory in Western Palestine. Despite this fact, the Zionist Organization and the institutions of the Jewish community in the Land of Israel agreed to accept the plan. The adoption of the partition resolution by the General Assembly was received by the Jewish community with great joy and thousands went out to the streets to celebrate, (though it was clear that the Arab states and the Palestinian Arabs would reject the plan and inevitably initiate a war on the Jewish State).

Questions:

- Write down 5 main facts about the UN General Assembly vote on Resolution #181.
- What questions do you have about any of the items mentioned in this article?
- What questions do you have any questions about this particular event?



3. As if you were there

For this activity, you will need internet connection and speakers, as there is no downloadable version available.

Instruct your students to imagine that they themselves were alive on November 29th, 1947, listening to the radio as the U.N. votes were tallied. With the class, listen online to the UN General Assembly's vote on: www.knesset.gov.il/holidays/eng/29nov_e.htm

Questions to discuss with the students:

(optional: divide the students into groups to discuss among themselves):

Imagine that you actually heard the radio broadcast on November 29 1947 in America at the time of the vote of the U.N.

- What would you have thought?
- Whom would you tell about it?
- What questions would you have had?



Imagine that you were listening to the radio broadcast in Israel.

- What are you thinking and feeling?
- What hopes do you have?
- What questions do you have?



4. Herzl's Dream: Mission accomplished?

Have the students read this information box, then answer the questions that follow:

Sadly, Herzl did not live to see his political dream begin to take shape, as the Second Aliyah arrived, the First World War (1914-1918) changed the face of Europe, the Balkans and the Middle East, making way for the Balfour Declaration (1917), and the establishment of the British Mandate over Palestine (1922-1948). The Jewish people living in the Land of Israel saw further influxes of Aliyah, laying the foundations for what would be the Jewish State. And finally, as you learned just minutes ago, the U.N. passed Resolution 181: The Partition Plan, finally granting the Jews their own State.

1. In your opinion, was Herzl's dream (to create a Jewish State) fulfilled?

Yes / No



Explain:

After the exercise, conduct a discussion with the students about how they feel.



5. Homework Assignment: Israel's Independence Hits the Headlines!

Introduce the homework assignment to the class:

The assignment explores the way the world reported the establishment of the State of Israel in the News.

Part 1:

In 1948, Israel's decision to declare Independence made Headlines around the world.

[Click here](#) to see *how the Palestine Post – now the Jerusalem Post – showed it.*



[Click here](#) to see how the New York Times showed it:

The students are to write down their answers to the following questions:

1. *Why are the headlines important?*
2. *How do they differ?*
3. *How do the articles differ?*



Part 2:

During class, present the students with two project options below. Each student must choose to do one of the following two assignments, and “sign up” during class.

Students who sign up for the “Media Coverage” assignment should be grouped together **by you** in groups of 3.

Option A: Media Coverage

Instructions:

The student is a reporter for a Jewish newspaper in 1948, working with a photojournalist. In groups of 3 students, each student will **report on the Establishment of the State Israel and the Declaration of Independence** from a different geographic location: **Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, or the USA.**

Each “reporter” can choose their own feature type: news, op-ed, interview on the street, interview a personality, etc.

The report can be either a print written *or* filmed report.

To plan their feature, the students are encouraged to address the following questions:

- How did the event impact you?
- How did it impact those around you?
- What response do you want to get from your Jewish readers / viewers
- What will be your main points?
- What will be your front page headline and byline, and why?
- Suggest headlines and bylines for two additional features.
- What images or cartoons would you include?
- Suggest some original perspectives on the event!



Each student is to prepare the report by him/herself.

Option B: Musical Expression

The student is to imagine that s/he has traveled back in time to be present for a few hours on the day the **State of Israel was declared**. They are instructed to translate the emotions felt on that day into a song.

They can either compose a "**Dayenu**" style song, or a **rap** about connecting to the emotions and experiences felt when they "traveled back in time" to the establishment of the State of Israel.

To plan the song, the students are encouraged to address the following questions:

- How did the event impact you?
- How did it impact those around you?
- What response do you want to get from in your Jewish listeners ?
- What will be your main points?
- What will be your choice of song title and why?
- Suggest titles for two additional songs.
- What background visuals would you project?
- Suggest some original perspectives on the event!



Suggested Assessment Criteria

Feature is well-grounded in the theme of Israel's Establishment as a State	25%
Feature is coherent, adds depth and perspective to the event	20%
Quality of: language, composition, style, appearance, media	20%
Comprehensive and responses to planning questions, follow-Through	15%
Title/Byline attracts interest and encapsulates content	10%
Originality	10%