

Lesson Plan

Title: Palestinian/Israeli Conflict – Contrasting Narratives Subject/Course: U.S. and the World

Topic: Palestine – Israel Relations Grade: 11 Designer: Sara K. Jones
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This lesson was inspired by the session Teaching the Israel-Palestine conflict by Abdel Monem Said Aly, Shai Feldman, and Khalid Shikaki; specifically their discussion of how all narratives are relevant and need to be understood in order to fully understand the conflict. While their text, *Arabs and Israelis: Conflict and Peacemaking in the Middle East*, was not used by students in the lesson, it was definitely a reference in putting materials together for the lesson.

Stage 1-Desired Results

ESTABLISHED GOALS/ PA STANDARDS:

History:

- 8.1 Historical Analysis and Skill Development
 - A. Chronological Thinking
 - B. Historical Comprehension
 - C. Historical Interpretation
- 8.4 World History
 - A. Individual and Groups
 - B. Historical Evidence
 - C. Continuity and Change
 - D. Conflict and Cooperation

Geography:

- 7.1 Basic Geographic Literacy
 - A. Geographic Tools
 - B. Location of Places and Regions
- 7.3 The Human Characteristics of Places and Regions
 - A. Population
 - B. Culture
 - C. Settlement
 - D. Economic Activity
 - E. Political Activity

Government/Civics:

- 5.4 How International Relationships Function
 - A. Countries and Conflicts
 - B. Tools of Foreign Policy
 - C. International Organizations
 - D. Media and its Influences
 - E. How Foreign Policy is Influenced

Common Core:

- 8.5 Reading Informational Texts
 - A. Specific text evidence to support analysis of sources
 - B. Determining central ideas
 - C. Evaluating explanations for actions/events

- D. Determining the meaning of words/phrases
- G. Integrating/evaluating multiple sources of information
- I. Integrating information from diverse sources into coherent understanding of an idea/event

8.6 Writing

- A. Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content
- C. Clear and coherent writing

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:

- The struggle between the Israelis and the Palestinians is one of the most enduring and explosive of all the world's conflicts.
- The two sides see events and issues so differently that peace often seems far beyond reach.
 - At issue is a struggle over territory, with each group claiming possession of the region traditionally known as Palestine.
 - Matters are complicated by the religious significance of Palestine to three major religious traditions: Jewish, Christian, and Islamic.
- The history of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is elastic; it changes dramatically depending on who is telling it and where they start the story.
 - Understanding the history of the Middle East is vital to understanding and resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict; because each side sees events so differently, presenting an objective history is extremely difficult.
- The key to discussing real prospects for peace is understanding the opinions, perspectives, and concerns of both sides without demonizing either.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- What is the history behind the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and what is the current situation?
- Why has the conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians continued for so long?
- What are the major issues standing in the way of resolving the conflict?
- How can speaking about contentious cultural and political issues foster understanding and conflict resolution, rather than intensifying conflict?
- How does the dramatically different narrative impact the conflict, as well as the chance of a peaceful solution?

CONTENT

- Brief history of:
 - Palestine
 - Israel
 - Palestinian recognition
 - Palestinian-Israeli Conflict
- Names of key historic and contemporary figures, ethnic/religious groups, locations, and events relating to Palestinian- Israeli Conflict
- Purpose/importance of narratives/graffiti in telling the story of oppression

SKILLS

- Demonstrate an understanding of past history and current events with regard to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

- Understand the origins of Jewish nationalism as well as the emergence of Palestinian nationalism and identity.
- Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas and values.
- Consider multiple perspectives of various peoples in the past by demonstrating their differing motives, beliefs, interests, hopes, and fears.
- Analyze cause-and-effect relationships.
- Read, summarize, criticize and evaluate complex pieces of writing.

Stage 2-Assessment Evidence

Formative:

- Bell ringers, discussion, student feedback, teacher observation of student discussions

Summative:

- Gallery Walk posters/responses
- Occupation 101 Video E/I Chart, Occupation 101 Video open-ended questions
- Using Literature *Returning to Haifa* or *City of the Lost* posters
- “The Israel-Palestinian Conflict: Each Side’s Contrasting Narratives” handout
- Student response to The Lemon Tree excerpts
- Review activity

Stage 3-Learning Plan

Part I: The Recognition of Palestine

Activity: Gallery Walk

- Conduct a brief discussion of Palestine’s recognition by the United Nations and their recognition or lack thereof by the United States.
- Relevant quotes:
 - Students groups of three to four are given one of the following quotes.
 - Each group identifies the meaning of the quote and then summarizes for the class.
 - Groups then have the opportunity to ask questions and/or further clarify each quote during class discussion.
 - U.N.: According to the U.N. Charter and international law: “The recognition of a new State or Government is an act that only other States and Governments may grant or withhold. It generally implies readiness to assume diplomatic relations. The United Nations is neither a State nor a Government, and therefore does not possess any authority to recognize either a State or a Government.”
 - International law: “a State as a person of international law should possess a permanent population, a defined territory, a government and the capacity to enter into relations with other States.”
 - PA Pres. Mahmoud Abbas: “We did not come here seeking to delegitimize a state established years ago, and that is Israel; rather, we came to affirm the

legitimacy of the state that must now achieve its independence, and that is Palestine.”

- Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu: “The resolution in the U.N. today won’t change anything on the ground. It won’t advance the establishment of a Palestinian state, but rather, put it off further.”
- U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Susan Rice: “Any reference to the ‘State of Palestine’ in the United Nations, including the use of the term ‘State of Palestine’ on the placard in the Security Council or the use of the term ‘State of Palestine’ in the invitation to this meeting or other arrangements for participation in this meeting, do not reflect acquiescence that Palestine is a state.”

“As we have said repeatedly, the only way to establish a real Palestinian state is through the painstaking work of direct negotiations on final-status issues, without preconditions, between the Israelis and Palestinians.”

- U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry: “The United States will work with the new Palestinian unity government ‘as is appropriate’, but would be monitoring its commitment to continued cooperation with Israel. We are going to be watching (the government) very closely, as we said from day one, to absolutely ensure that it upholds each of those things it has talked about, that it doesn’t cross the line. Let me be very clear: the United States does not recognize a government with respect to Palestine, because that would recognize a state and there is no state. This is not an issue of recognition of a government.”
- Pres. Barack Obama: “One year ago [2009], I stood at this podium and I called for an independent Palestine. I believed then, and I believe now, that the Palestinian people deserve a state of their own. But what I also said is that a genuine peace can only be realized between the Israelis and the Palestinians themselves... Israelis must know that any agreement provides assurances for their security. Palestinians deserve to know the territorial basis of their state.”

- Divide class into groups of 4 – 5 students.
 - Hand out copy of article to each student in group.
 - Palestinian vote at U.N. brings recognition, but it is a far cry from practical statehood. CBS News. November 30, 2012.
 - Palestine wins historic upgrade at the UN. The Jerusalem Post. November 30, 2012.
 - Is Palestine now a state? CBS News. November 30, 2012.
 - Is Palestine Really a Country? Political Geography Now. December 7, 2012.
 - Map: Palestine Recognized by Two More Countries (134/193). Political Geography Now. November 2, 2013.
 - Give students time to read article individually, completing a talk to the text Reading Apprenticeship strategy.

- Talk to text: Students annotate text as they read it, documenting the interactions they are having with the text: what's confusing, what seems important, what's connected to what, what questions are coming up, making predictions, noting historical context, identifying unfamiliar words, paraphrasing/summarizing sections. etc.
- Groups members now come together to discuss their articles and talk to the text notes.
 - Group discussions should focus on the important points in the article and confusions/questions the group members have regarding what they've read. Once all confusions/questions are cleared up either by other group members or by further research (iPads available to groups in the classroom for further research), groups make a list of the 3 – 5 most important points, create a 25 word summary and chose their golden line (the one line they think is the most important or sums up the articles/information best – this could come from one of the articles, or be a combination from some/all articles).
- Groups complete a poster with their gathered information.
- Once all groups have finished their posters, they are hung around the classroom and all students go on a gallery walk. During the gallery walk, students use post-it notes to comment/ask questions about other group's information. At the end of the gallery walk, each group returns to its poster and reads all the comments/questions and then have the last word on the topic.

Part II: Understanding Occupation

Video:

- Show the video Occupation 101. As students watch video, they complete the Reading Apprenticeship Evidence/Interpretation Chart.
 - The Evidence/Interpretation Chart is a two column chart that students complete as they watch video clips/speeches/movies/etc. In the left column of the chart, students record the evidence – things they see and hear as they watch. This column acts as their notes for the video. In the right column of the chart, students record their interpretations – what they are thinking, feeling, asking, etc. as they watch the video. At the end of the video, there is a class discussion of the interpretation as either whole group or in small groups.
- Students complete open-ended questions about the film (see attached).

Part III: Understanding The Relationship Between Palestine and Israel: Then and Now

Activity One:



- Voices from the Wall (Palestinian Wall images):
 - In 2002, Israel starting building a barrier around part of the Palestinian territory it occupies called the West Bank. The barrier, which is not yet complete, has already affected the lives of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. The barrier encircles Palestinian towns and villages, separating communities and families from each other, farmers from their land, workers from their workplaces, students and teachers from education, and the sick from healthcare. Some people describe the West Bank as an open air prison because of the barrier. Many Palestinians are now forced to be dependent on aid. Part of the barrier is made of 8-9m concrete slabs, mostly in urban areas. In rural areas, it consists of barbed wire, patrolled roads, electronic ditches and is about 50m wide. There are watchtowers and sniper positions along the length of the 700km long barrier.
 - Council for Arab British Understanding
 - The Israeli West Bank Barrier has become a narrative of peoples' feelings about the occupation and the Barrier in particular, and has given rise to a vernacular art, some of which is pure venting, while others demonstrate the power of a people to continually challenge their overlords.
 - Council for Arab British Understanding
 - The graffiti generally falls into three categories.
 - Graffiti by the local population
 - Graffiti by visiting internationals
 - Graffiti by artists
- Working in pair or small groups, students will choose one piece of graffiti and answer the following questions:
 - What can be seen in the image?
 - What is message the artist wanted to convey?
 - How effective is the artist in conveying the intended message?
 - What is the impact upon the viewer?
 - How can you tell the artist's sympathies lie with the Palestinians?
 - Does this image challenge the power of the oppressor? If yes, how?

- Discuss images as a whole group.

Activity Two: Using Literature I

- The Lemon Tree, by Sandy Tolan
 - Introduce the premise of the book to students.
 - The tale of a simple act of faith between two young people – one Israeli, one Palestinian – that symbolizes the hope for peace in the Middle East. Description: In 1967, not long after the Six-Day War, three young Arab men ventured into the town of Ramle, in what is now Jewish Israel. They were cousins, on a pilgrimage to see their childhood homes; their families had been driven out of Palestine nearly twenty years earlier. One cousin had a door slammed in his face, and another found his old house had been converted into a school. But the third, Bashir Al-Khairi, was met at the door by a young woman called Dalia, who invited them in. This poignant encounter is the starting point for a true story of a remarkable relationship between two families, one Arab, one Jewish, amid the fraught modern history of the region.
 - “The Lemon Tree is not only an empathetic look at the struggles of these Holocaust survivors and Palestinian exiles, but a concise history of their competing claims for Israel and Palestine. The story of Dalia and Bashir’s first face to face meeting in 1967, and the remarkable four-decade friendship that has followed, illuminate the personal narratives at the heart of the conflict.”
 - Mother Jones
 - Bashir and Dalia speak closely related languages; both trace their ancestries back to Abraham; and their basic values are similar. They also share a passionate attachment to the same piece of land. The book really helps students understand how much these people share.
 - Not everyone is comfortable hearing the story of the other. The key to this openness, I think, lies in the interweaving narratives: when someone sees his own history represented fairly, it opens up the mind and heart to the history of the other.
 - Students are given an excerpt from The Lemon Tree, representing either Dahlia or Bashir.
 - Dahlia: “Growing up, Dahlia would frequently ask her parents and teachers: “What are these houses we are living in?”
“These are Arab houses,” she was told.
“What are these Arab houses that everyone talks about?” she would reply.
Dalia’s school was in an Arab house, and there she would learn Israel’s history. She learned about the creation of the state of Israel as a safe haven for the Jews. She studied the War of Independence as the story of the few against the many. The Arabs had invaded, Dalia would read, in order to destroy the new state and throw the Jews into the sea. Most

nations confronted with such hostilities would have been paralyzed, but tiny Israel had withstood five Arab armies. Little David had defeated Goliath. As for the Arabs, Dalia's textbooks would report that they ran away, deserting their lands and abandoning their homes, fleeing before the conquering Israeli army. The Arabs, one textbook of the day declared, "Preferred to leave" once the Jews had taken their towns. Dalia accepted the history she was taught. Still, she was confused. Why, she wondered, would anyone leave so willingly?" (pg. 115)

- Bashir: "We were exiled by force of arms. We were exiled on foot. We were exiled to take the earth as our bed. And the sky as a cover. And to be fed from the crumbs of those among the governments and international organizations who imparted their charity. We were exiled but we left our souls, our hopes and our childhood in Palestine. We left our joys and sorrows. We left them in every corner, and on every grain of sand in Palestine. We left them with each lemon fruit, with each olive. We left them in the roses and flowers. We left them in the flowering tree that stands with pride at the entrance of our house in al-Ramla. We left them in the remains of our fathers and ancestors. We left them as witnesses and history. We left them, hoping to return." (pg. 217)
- After reading one of the excerpts, students work with a partner to discuss the perspective represented in the excerpt.
- Partner groups then work with another partner group who read the other excerpt to discuss how the two perspectives differ.
- Follow with a whole group discussion of the excerpts/perspectives to check for understanding and answer student questions.
- Additional option: Listen to the Homeland Productions World Views: Voices of Ethnic Identity broadcast of The Lemon Tree from May 1998 (38:43).
 - As students listen, they should record similarities, differences, and understandings they find between Dalia and Bashir. Students then share their lists in small groups.
- Students respond to the following statement by Don Holsinger, Seattle Pacific University Professor of History:

A Jewish woman from the United States who had immigrated to Israel, exclaimed, "I've solved my problem!" It was a personal statement, but she was clearly speaking for millions of Israeli Jews who viewed the establishment of Israel as the answer to their centuries-old problem of persecution and statelessness. Nearby was a young Palestinian man serving as an Arabic interpreter. Spontaneously, he interjected, "But you gave me yours!" Also a personal statement, he was just as clearly speaking for millions of Palestinian Arabs who felt that the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine left them persecuted and stateless.

Activity Three: Using Literature II

- Students read either the novella, *Returning to Haifa* from *Palestine's Children* by Ghassan Kanafani, or *City of the Lost* by David Remnick.
 - *Returning to Haifa* tells the story of Said and Safeyya, who fled their home in Haifa during the 1948 Nakba. In the chaos of the scene, Khaldun, their infant son, was left behind. Twenty years later, they return to Haifa and find their home occupied by Miriam, a Jewish widow, and her son Dov. Dov, who is their son Khaldun, is now an officer in the Israeli army.
 - *City of the Lost* is an article that was written in 2013 about Za'atari camp, one of the Syrian refugee camps in Jordan. While the story is contemporary, it parallels the Palestinians in al Baqa'a camp in Jordan beginning in 1968.
- After reading one of the pieces, students are put into groups of 4 - 5 and asked to create a poster representing each chapter of *Returning to Haifa*, or one of the perspectives from *City of the Lost* (refugees in the camp, Jordanians (government, military), those left behind in Syria, Syrians that are not refugees, but who are trying to help, etc.).
- Student groups explain their posters to the class.

Activity Four: Competing Narratives

- As students read the articles "The Israel-Palestinian Conflict: Each Side's Contrasting Narratives" and "Appreciating Differing Narratives: Toward Understanding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict", they will complete the handout, *Contrasting Narratives in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, where they will indicate the perspectives of each side by identifying 10 – 15 statements/quotes/comments that represent each side's narrative. These statements can be found in the articles, and/or in any of the previous activities. In addition, they will indicate why Palestine believes it should be recognized, while Israel does not.

Activity Five: Competing Narratives Review

- After completing Activity Four, students are each given two index cards. On one card they will put a statement/quote/comment representing the Palestinian narrative and on the second they will put a statement/quote/comment representing the Israeli narrative.
- After index cards have been collected, they are shuffled randomly. Each student then selects a card, identifies it as Palestinian or Israeli and explains why. Cards are then hung on a wall chart to indicate the contrasting narratives.

Resources

Gallery Walk:

Palestinian vote at U.N. brings recognition, but it is a far cry from practical statehood. CBS News. November 30, 2012.

Palestine wins historic upgrade at the UN. The Jerusalem Post. November 30, 2012.

Is Palestine now a state? CBS News. November 30, 2012.

Is Palestine Really a Country? Political Geography Now. December 7, 2012.

Map: Palestine Recognized by Two More Countries (134/193). Political Geography Now. November 2, 2013.

Occupation 101 Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tr9CIGeePXU>

Using Literature I:

<http://www.homelands.org/series/views.html#lemontree>

Tolan, Sandy. *The Lemon Tree: An Arab, a Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East*. New York: Bloomsbury Pub., 2006. Print

Using Literature II:

Kanafani, Ghassan, Barbara Harlow, and Karen E. Riley. *Palestine's Children: Returning to Haifa and Other Stories*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000. Print

Remnick, David. "City of the Lost." *The New Yorker*. N.p., 26 Aug. 2013. Web. 31 Mar. 2015.

Competing Narratives:

Flick, Deborah L., PhD. "Understanding the Israeli - Palestinian Conflict Narratives." *Understanding the Israeli - Palestinian Conflict Narratives*. University of Colorado, June 2002. Web. 31 Mar. 2015.

Ehrenfeld, Sylvain. "The Israel-Palestinian Conflict: Each Side's Contrasting Narratives." *The Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County NJ A Humanist Religion*. Ethical Cultural Society of Bergen County, 11 Apr. 2012. Web. 31 Mar. 2015

'Occupation 101': The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The film 'Occupation 101' gave us some insight to facts and hidden truths surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In addition, it dispelled many long-perceived myths and misconceptions about what this conflict is all about. The film also gave details about the lives of Palestinians under Israeli military rule, the role of the United States in the conflict, and the major obstacles that stand in the way of a peace agreement. 'Occupation 101' explains the complicated reality of the conflict and gives audiences a complete context in which to understand the Israeli-Palestinian debate. The roots of the conflict are explained through thought-provoking commentaries from leading Middle East scholars, peace activists, journalists, religious leaders, and humanitarian workers whose voices too often have not been heard in the mainstream media.

At the beginning of the film it says that any violence by a large number of people is a warning that something is wrong. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?

Imagine peace in the Middle East. Imagine a future in which Israelis and Palestinians join forces to bring prosperity and freedom to the region. Envision a reality in which Palestinian and Israeli children play together.

Who, you may ask, wouldn't want such a future? Who doesn't want a safe and secure Israel alongside a prosperous and stable Palestine?

Using examples from the film, explain why peace is not being accomplished in between these groups.

Write a paragraph explaining your impressions/opinions of the film and its description of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Contrasting Narratives in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

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