

**Presenting a Unit from
Educational Solutions University Curriculum
on the
Israeli/Palestinian Conflict
Peace Conference
Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI)
Tantur, Israel
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Educational Solutions
International University Dialogue Project
The Israeli/Palestinian Conflict: Understanding Both Sides

Dr. Judith Jensen, Director
Susan Luxton, Associate Director
www.educationalsolutions.org



Educational Solutions Mission

Our mission is to complement traditional learning by providing global Internet-based forums for students to learn about and discuss challenging issues that divide communities and nations

Two classes representing different perspectives study the same ES PowerPoint curriculum integrated into existing university courses

Students learn conflict resolution skills and discuss issues and solutions using text dialogue on the ES Website, videoconferencing and/or cell phones

Six Components of ES Programs

1. Balanced Curriculum
2. Classes and Instructors Paired across Divide
3. Conflict Resolution Skills
4. Technologies to Bridge Divide
5. Emphasis on Solutions
6. Student Projects

Student Projects

Students will report on various efforts and proposals that offer solutions in the civil sphere

- Relationship and trust building (Sulha, Seeds of Peace, sports)
- Intercultural and interfaith initiatives (Jerusalem Peacemakers, art, theater)
- Joint projects with specific goals (physicians cooperate to treat trauma; revision of bias in Israeli and Palestinian textbooks; environmental projects)
- Joint efforts to address hard issues for peace (IPCRI, Circle of Bereaved Parents, Combatants for Peace)
- Efforts to promote human rights and democratic institutions
- Local efforts with peace-building potential
- Student suggestions

ES Model as a Container for Addressing Conflict

- **Environmental Conflict** ES is implementing a high school curriculum on Klamath River Basin water conflicts in Oregon and California, USA. The major stakeholders are
 - Native Americans
 - Farmers/Ranchers
 - Commercial Fishermen
 - Conservationists
- **Inter-Religious Conflict** ES is developing a university curriculum addressing inter-religious similarities and differences
 - Judaism
 - Christianity
 - Islam
 - Hinduism
 - Buddhism/Chinese religions

Any Questions about the ES Model?

Introducing the ES PowerPoint Curriculum on the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict

1. Dialogue: Why and How?
- 2. What Are the Claims to Israel/Palestine?**
3. Did Arabs and Jews Ever Get Along?
4. After the British Mandate and the 1947 UN Partition Plan, Why Did Israel Become a State and Palestine Did Not?
5. Centuries of Antisemitism Ending with the Jewish State: Why is This Experience Important for Understanding the Jewish Israeli Narrative?
6. Centuries of Islamic Rule Ending with Loss of Land and Occupation: Why is This Experience Important for Understanding the Muslim Palestinian Narrative?
7. How Do Israeli and Palestinian Narratives Differ Regarding the Creation of Refugees? Palestinian Refugees and Jewish Refugees from Arab Countries
8. Who Started the Arab-Israeli Wars? Superpowers? Arab Countries? Israelis? Palestinians/PLO?
9. Why Has the Peace Process Failed?
10. Possible Solutions

Introduction to Unit 2

What are the Claims to Israel/Palestine?

- The Israeli/Palestinian conflict is the 100 year struggle for the same land
- After 100 years, it is clear that neither group will give up its claims
- In Unit 2, we outline the two sets of claims
- ES offers an approach to encourage students
 - to suspend attacking the other's claims
 - and instead
 - to listen and understand that both sides believe deeply that they have real claims
- ES thinks this approach is an important prelude to considering solutions to the conflict

Preview of Student Exercise to Be Done after Studying Unit 2

About Active Listening

- Listening is the most important part of communication
- If we do not hear the other side, we cannot resolve conflict
- Active listening means listening not only to words but also to what is said by intonation and body language
- Active listening requires sincere listening without interrupting or contradicting
- Active listening also involves letting the speaker know that he or she has been heard. For example, "What I heard you say is..."

Preview of Active Listening Exercise

In conflict resolution, two important early steps are

- active listening to the other side and
- demonstrating that you have heard the other side

This exercise is designed to be done in person, via email, or via cell phone

1. Students read Unit 2 on Israeli and Palestinian Claims
2. Students are paired according to Israeli and Palestinian identity
3. Students introduce themselves

Student Exercise (continued)

4. The Palestinian presents the Israeli claims, outlined in the presentation, to the Israeli. The Israeli says whether the Palestinian presented them accurately
5. The Israeli presents the Palestinian claims, outlined in the presentation, to the Palestinian. The Palestinian says whether the Israeli presented them accurately
6. Finally, the two participants individually report to their instructor, via email, their impressions of the exercise

Israeli and Palestinian Claims to the Land

Both Israeli Jews and Palestinian Muslims/Christians believe they have strong claims to the land. The claims have religious, historical, cultural, and political aspects

The religious claims stem from three historically related monotheistic traditions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. All trace their origin to Abraham, the founder of monotheism, the belief in one God. They share many of the same prophets, as well as similar ethical and spiritual values

1. Israeli/Jewish claims 6 slides, #14-19
2. Palestinian Christian/Muslim claims 6 slides, #21-26

Educational Solutions suggests that students first read the claims of the group they identify with most

Two Sets of Claims

Jewish Israeli Claims

- 1) Jewish Covenant and Scripture**
- 2) Jewish Rule and Presence**
- 3) Jewish Nationalism**
- 4) State of Israel Necessary for Jewish Survival**

Christian/Muslim Palestinian Claims

- 1) Christian Palestinian Religion and Presence**
- 2) Muslim Palestinian Religion and Presence**
- 3) Arab/Palestinian Nationalism**
- 4) Palestinian State is Justice for the Palestinians**

See Appendix I: References for comparative population numbers:
"Palestine West of the Jordan River," Sergio DellaPergola, 2001

1) Jewish Covenant and Scripture

Covenant Many Jews believe that God promised the land to the Jews, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. According to the Jewish *Tanakh* (similar to the Christian *Old Testament*), God repeatedly makes a covenant with Abraham, as well as with Isaac and Jacob

For example, God says to Abraham: “I assign the land you sojourn in, to you and your offspring to come, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting holding. I will be their God.” Bereishit/Genesis 17:7-8. (The first three books of the Tanakh contain numerous references to the covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob)

Scripture Much of the first 2000 years of their 4000 year history took place on this land and is recorded in the Tanakh/ Christian Old Testament. Scriptural accounts of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, the Judges, the Kings of Judah and Israel, and the Prophets are all associated with the holy land

Jews claim the land of Israel as the birthplace of the Jewish people. Their religion, culture and identity as a people was formed there

2) Jewish Rule and Presence

Jews remember the times they ruled the land and prayed at the 1st and 2nd Temple on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem

Most following dates are approximate: "bce" refers to before common era and "ce" refers to common era. These dates are the same as those of the Gregorian calendar now used in the West

2000 bce	Time of Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
1020-586 bce	Jewish Rule, First Kings: Saul, David, Solomon David conquered Jerusalem 1004 bce Solomon built the 1st Temple 940 bce
940-586 bce	1st Temple period
930 bce	Solomon dies and Kingdom splits into Israel and Judah
721 bce	Conquest of Northern Israel by Assyrians
586 bce	Conquest of Southern Judah by Babylonians Destruction of the 1st Temple

Jewish Rule and Presence (continued)

538 bce	Rebuilding of 2nd Temple under Persian Rule
538-70 bce	2nd Temple period
331 bce	Greek Rule
66 bce-37ce	Jewish Rule, Hasmonean Dynasty
37 ce	Beginning of Roman Rule
70 ce	Destruction of 2nd Temple by Romans

Jews maintained a presence in the land, albeit sometimes small, through times of Roman, Christian, Persian, and Muslim rule. Jews living in other lands are known as “the diaspora”

After the destruction of the 2nd Temple, synagogues were established for Jewish worship and Jews around the world prayed three times a day towards Jerusalem. Their cycle of holy days centered on Jewish history and their return to Jerusalem

3) Jewish Nationalism

Inspired by European ideas of nationalism in the 1800s, Jews worldwide believed they had a right to self-determination as a nation

- Jewish nationalism is known as Zionism. “Zion” recalls the period of King David’s establishment of the first Jewish kingdom in Jerusalem on Mt. Zion
- For Theodore Herzl, a 19th century Zionist leader, the only way Jewish culture could survive in the age of nation states was through restoration of Jewish national sovereignty
- In 1897 Herzl organized the first Zionist congress and stated that “Zionism seeks for the Jewish people a publicly recognized legally secured homeland in Palestine”
- In 1917 the **Balfour Declaration** gave British support to a Jewish homeland in Palestine. The Declaration was later incorporated into the 1922 British Mandate giving control of Palestine to Britain

Jewish Nationalism (continued)

From 1882 until the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, six waves (aliyot) of immigration, including illegal immigration during the time of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust, brought some 400,000 Jews to the holy land

Fleeing Russian and German persecution and inspired by Zionism, these immigrants are considered by Israelis to be their pioneers. Supported by the diaspora, they built a prestate infrastructure that included the following:

- agricultural settlements and kibbutzim
- Hebrew newspapers and publishing
- business and light industry
- Jewish National Fund to buy land
- Jewish Agency for Palestine, early governmental administration
- labor-trade union
- self-defense organizations
- Hebrew University

4) State of Israel Necessary for Jewish Survival

After centuries of European/Russian persecution and the German Nazi Holocaust, many Jews believed that only a state of their own would protect them

- Six million Jews (1/3 of their world population) were murdered during the Holocaust in World War II
- The Holocaust showed Jews that the worst threats against them could be realized
- Jews would no longer trust their fate to other countries and vowed "Never Again" to be victims
- The State of Israel was declared in 1948 and Israel survived a series of Arab-Israeli Wars in 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973
- Today, the State of Israel feels threatened by Iran, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Hamas in Gaza

Palestinian Claims

1) Christian Palestinian Claims

2) Muslim Palestinian Claims

3) Arab/Palestinian Nationalism

4) Palestinian State is Justice for the Palestinians

1) Christian Palestinian Claims

Palestinian Arab Christians, like Christians worldwide, love the holy land because it is the site of Jesus' mission. The New Testament tells of his birth in Bethlehem, his teaching in the towns of the holy land, and his death and resurrection in Jerusalem. Christians believe Jesus Christ is divine, the Son of God the Father

Arab Christians have lived in the holy land since Jesus' time. There have also been external Christian influences over the centuries

- 313-638 ce Romans converted to Christianity and the Christian Byzantine Empire ruled Palestine. Byzantines built churches on Christian sites and encouraged pilgrimages to the holy land
- 1099-1291 ce A series of Christian Crusades recaptured Christian sites from the Muslims. Christians ruled Jerusalem from 1099 to 1187 ce
- 1870-1948 ce European and American Christians established consuls, sent missionaries and founded schools during late Ottoman and British times

2) Muslim Palestinian Claims

Muslims around the world honor Al Quds (Jerusalem) as their third holiest city and have worshipped at the Haram al Sharif (Temple Mount) for almost 1,300 years

Night Journey Muhammad, the founder of Islam, journeyed from Mecca to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem where he met the prophets and ascended into heaven as related in Islamic scriptures, the Quran and Hadith

First Qiblah or Direction of Muslim Prayer Early Muslims first prayed in the direction of Jerusalem as did the Jews

Conquest of Jerusalem In 638ce, six years after Muhammad's death, the Caliph Umar peacefully conquered Jerusalem, built a mosque on the deserted Temple Mount, and renamed it the Haram al Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary)

Umayyads Caliph Abd al Malik completed the Dome of the Rock in 691 ce to commemorate Muhammad's Night Journey

Haj The pilgrimage to Mecca is one of the five pillars of Islam, required once in the life of every Muslim. Historically, Islamic pilgrims journeyed to Jerusalem on their way to Mecca and Medinah (Janin, 1940: 69,110; Glassé, 2001: 208; Gibb and Kramers, 1961: 270)

Palestinian Muslim Claims (continued)

1200 Years of Muslim Rule

Islamic Presence Umar's conquest of Jerusalem in 638 ce marks the beginning of some 1,200 years of almost continuous Islamic rule in Palestine, interrupted for 88 years when Muslims lost Jerusalem to Christian Crusaders (1099-1187ce)

Rulers of Jerusalem

638-661ce	Early Muslim Caliphs (Umar, Uthman, Ali)
661-750	Ummayyad Dynasty (Al Maliq built Dome of the Rock in 691)
750-1089	Abbasid Dynasty
1089-1099	Fatimids and Seljuks
1099-1187	Christian Crusaders
1187-1250	Ayyub Dynasty (Saladin reconquered Jerusalem in 1187)
1250-1517	Mamluk Dynasty (Baybars defeated Mongols in 1260)
1517-1922	Ottoman Rule

Waqf Over time, thousands of Muslim gifts of property were endowed to the Jerusalem Waqf for administration (Friedland and Hecht, 1996: 350). Once a property is dedicated to God and endowed, it is considered by Islamic Law irrevocably part of the Waqf. Income from such property is used for religious or charitable purposes as specified by donor (Glassé, 2001: 417)

3) Arab/Palestinian Nationalism

In the late 1800s, **Arab Nationalism** stemmed from

- discontent with failing Turkish Ottoman rule
- revival of Arab language, literature and culture
- spread of European idea of nation states

After Ottoman defeat in World War I (1917), British and French influence increased based on their secret agreement (**Sykes-Picot 1916**) to divide the Middle East

- **Arabs** petitioned Britain to honor promise of Arab independence (**Hussein-McMahon 1915-1916**)
- **Palestinians** worked initially for independence as part of Arab Greater Syria before French took control (1920)
- **Palestinians**, unique among Arabs, faced the Zionist goal of establishing a homeland in Palestine and feared resulting colonization and displacement

Palestinian Nationalism: Congresses and the Arab Revolt

Between 1919 and 1928, Palestinians organized seven congresses to resist British domination and Zionism

- In 1919, the first congress, organized by the Muslim-Christian Association, rejected the 1917 Balfour Declaration supporting a Jewish homeland in Palestine

In 1922, Britain took formal control of Palestine under the British Mandate that incorporated the Balfour Declaration

- Further Palestinian congresses unsuccessfully appealed to the British to support Palestinian nationalism, including the 1928 proposal for a state that represented the Palestinian majority and Jewish minority

The mid-1930s were characterized by world depression and the rise of Nazi Germany. Increased Jewish immigration caused Arab unrest

- 1936-1939 A grassroots strike led to the Arab Revolt against Jewish settlements and British forces. Violence increased when British proposed partition of land into Jewish and Arab states and population transfer. British repression of the revolt decimated Palestinian leadership

4) Palestinian State is Justice for the Palestinians

In 1947, the British, unable to fulfill the nationalistic aspirations of both Jews and Arab Palestinians, turned the issue over to the recently formed United Nations. On November 1947, the General Assembly approved UN Resolution 181 to partition Palestine. The Jewish state was to consist of 5,500 square miles (55%) and contained 538,000 Jews and 397,000 Arabs. The Arab state was to occupy 4,500 square miles (45%) and contain approximately 800,000 Arabs and 10,000 Jews (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 83)

All other Arabs under the British and French Mandates (Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria) became nations. Arab Palestinians felt that their right as a majority to form a state had been violated. They felt the international community had unjustly made them pay for centuries of European antisemitism and the Holocaust

Arabs and Israelis fought wars in 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973. During 1948, about 750,000 Palestinians were expelled or fled from their homes. They were not allowed to return to the new State of Israel. In the 1967 war, Israel conquered Gaza and the West Bank and approximately 200,000 Palestinian refugees left (Tessler, 1994: 402-403)

Today Israel occupies the West Bank and continues to build settlements. Palestinians feel under seige and fragmented by occupation and internal divisions

Questions

Do you think this Unit is Balanced?

If you were a student in a university class, would you want to add anything?

Do you want to try the Active Listening Exercise?

Active Listening Exercise

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Student Exercise (continued)

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Appendix I: History of Population Growth of Jews, Christians and Muslims

POPULATION IN PALESTINE WEST OF JORDAN RIVER, BY RELIGION GROUPS, 1ST CENTURY-2000 - ROUGH ESTIMATES, THOUSANDS

Year	Jews	Christians	Muslims	Total (a)
First half 1st century C.E.	Majority	-	-	~2,500
5th century	Minority	Majority	-	>1st century
End 12th century	Minority	Minority	Majority	>255
14th cent., bef. Black death	Minority	Minority	Majority	225
after Black death	Minority	Minority	Majority	150
1533-39	5	6	145	157
1690-91	2	11	219	232
1800	7	22	246	275
1890	43	57	432	532
1914	94	70	525	689
1922	84	71	589	752
1931	175	89	760	1,033
1947	630	143	1,181	1,970
1960	1,911	85	1,090	3,111
1967	2,374	102	1,204	3,716
1975	2,959	116	1,447	4,568
1985	3,517	149	2,166	5,908
1995	4,522	191	3,241	8,112
2000	4,969	217	3,891	9,310

(a) Including "Others": Druzes, other small religious minorities, and since 1990, immigrants from the former USSR without religious affiliation

(DellaPergola, 2001: 5)

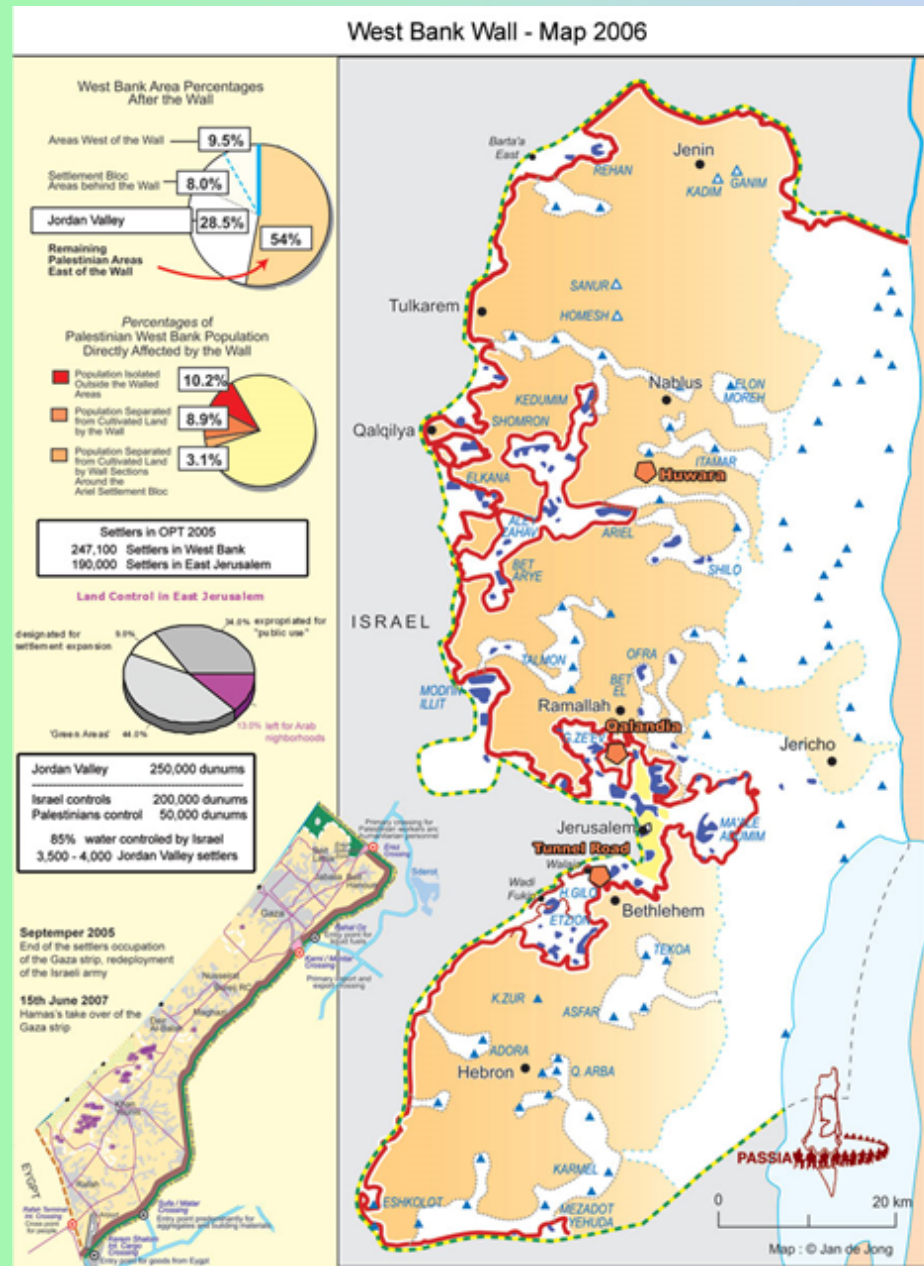
Appendix II: Israeli map

Modern Israel (within boundaries and cease-fire line)



Appendix II: Palestinian map

PASSIA, West Bank Wall-Map 2006



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