A SELECTION OF RESOURCES FOR TEACHING YOM HA'ATZMAUT

Available at the Ratner Media and Technology Center of the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland

Curricula

Benkof, David. *The Matsav*. Los Angeles: Torah Aura, 2006.

The Matsav (situation) is a set of four lessons about current issues relevant to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Disengagement, the matzav itself, the Palestinians, and the peace agenda are the subjects. Each "instant lesson" kit contains ten lessons and a brief teaching guide. For middle school and high school.

Book, Tuvia. For the Sake of Zion: Pride and Strength Through Knowledge, An Educator's Guide. New York: Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York, 2004.

Intended to "provide students with a sense of pride and understanding of modern Zionism and its achievements," this is a set of teaching units and lists of teacher resources, including videos and websites. For high school.

Bram, Debbie and Melissa Bernstein. *Hope for Israel*. Cleveland, Ohio, JECC, 2005 A fifth grade curriculum written for Suburban Temple-Kol Ami.

Bram Debbi and Melissa Berstein. *Promise of Israel*. Cleveland, Ohio, JECC, 2005. A tenth grade curriculum written for Suburban Temple-Kol Ami.

Chill, Abigail. *Teaching About the Middle East: A Resource Teacher's Guide.* Culver City, CA: Social Studies Service, 2003.

This eight unit curriculum for middle school and high school students includes a CD-ROM with Power Point presentations on several pertinent topics plus the text of the curriculum in Adobe Acrobat form.

Creating, Developing and Sustaining a Relationship with Israel. A project of the Reform Jewish Commission on Lifelong Learning. New York: Union for Reform Judaism, 2004.

A set of lessons about the relationship between American teens and Israel, designed to strengthen that relationship and to be used with confirmation classes.

IKAR: Israel Knowledge, Advocacy, and Responsibility: A Program for High School Students. New York: Solomon Schechter High School and the American Jewish Committee, 2003.

There are four parts to this program: an introductory lecture about the importance of American Jewish teens' engagement with Israel, a set of four workshops examining controversial

issues, a sample one-month classroom unit, and a DVD with four video segments that accompany the written materials.

Israel, Steve. *Connecting To Community: Jewish Peoplehood, Belonging and Commitment.* Jerusalem: Jewish Agency Ministry of Education, 2003.

An experimental edition, intended to raise the awareness of high school students about contemporary Jewry, mutual commitment and the common destiny of the Jewish people.

Textbooks

Bickerton, Ian J. and Paula L. Klausner. *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, *Udpated Fourth Edition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2005.

A college level textbook useful for teachers' background information. Also appropriate for advanced high school students.

Blumenthal, Scott E. *The Great Israel Scavenger Hunt*. Behrman House, 2003. 97pp. \$8.95. ISBN: 1874417112 Pbk.

Information about Israeli cities and important places, the diversity of the Israeli people, their social life and customs, Hebrew vocabulary, and the land's biblical ties is imparted interactively, through a breezy text and snappy format filled with cartoon-like illustrations, photographs, maps, and eye-catching details. A teaching guide is available. For grades 3-6.

Goulden. S. *Medinatenu*, 2nd Ed. The Israel History Book. United Synagogue Jewish Agency for Education, 2002.

Medinatenu is the "standard textbook for students studying for the curriculum and examinations for the United Synagogue and its Agency for Jewish education.

Passport to Israel: Teacher's Guide. Los Angeles, CA: Torah Aura, 2004.

This newly published teacher's guide is for a series of eight "instant lessons" published in previous years by Torah Aura. Each lesson takes students to a different region of Israel. For grades 3-5.

Videos

Ancient Israel and Jerusalem. Chicago, IL. New Dimension Media, n.d. VHS, 25 minutes. Great Cities of the Ancient World Series.

Computer animated reconstructions show the history of Jerusalem, including King Solomon expanding the city captured by King David and building the temple; the city being destroyed by the Babylonians; and later, being rebuilt by Herod the Great. Middle school – high school.

Arab and Jew: Return to the Promised Land. PBS Home Video, 2002, 60 minutes.

Combining new material with interviews of some of the same Israelis and Palestinians that appeared in David Shipler's original award-winning 1988 documentary, *Arab and Jew:*

Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land, it illustrates both unchanging views and an evolution of attitudes by Israelis and Palestinians before and after the Oslo peace process. High school - adult

Families of Israel. Master Communication, 2001, 30 minutes. Suitable for primary and elementary grades.

This live-action video follows two Israeli children and their families through an ordinary day. Inbar lives on a kibbutz in the Negev and Yoad lives in Jerusalem. Grades 2-4.

Israel: Small Country, Big Ideas. The Library Project of Stand With Us, www.learnisrael.org, 2005, CD ROM.

This PowerPoint presentation effectively highlights Israel's many achievements in science and technology. It can be used in conjunction with the book Israel in the World by Helen Davis but also stands by itself as an informative and positive way of explaining modern Israel's contributions to the world to teens and adult audiences. Stand With Us and learnisrael.org are organizations that advocate for Israel and distribute positive materials about Israel to libraries. Middle-school, high school, adult.

Israel and Palestine: A Divided Land. Madison, WI, Knowledge Unlimited, 2004, VHS, 41 minutes.

Using archival footage and interviews with Jews and Arabs, this film traces the history of both groups in the region from ancient times to 1967. The issues are presented simply, giving viewers an idea of the nature of the Arab-Israeli conflict. There is a study guide to accompany the film. Middle school – high school.

Kingdom of David: The Saga of the Israelites. Pts 1 & 2. Oregon Public Broadcasting, 2003, 220 minutes.

A somewhat dry presentation of the history of the Jewish people from the time of David. Middle school – high school.

Obsession. Honest Reporting, 2006, 77 min.

Examines Islamic fundamentalism and how it threatens the West. Has interviews with Sir Martin Gilbert, Daniel Pipes, a former Hitler Youth leader, and others. A powerful film, that requires teacher preparation and class discussion afterwards. Made by the same group that made Relentless. Middle school, high school, adult.

Promises. The Promise Film Project, 2001, 102 minutes.

An intensely personal and insightful look at the Palestinian-Israeli conflict from the vantage point of seven children living in Jerusalem. While the children live just 20 minutes apart, they exist in completely separate worlds, divided by physical, historical and emotional boundaries. Middle school – high school.

Relentless: The Struggle for Peace in Israel. HonestReporting, 2003, 60 minutes.

An important documentary about events in the Middle East and the ongoing struggle. *Obsession* a new documentary by HonestReporting is due to be released late fall. High school – adult.

Recent Fiction

Allon, Hagit and Lena Zehavi. *The Mystery Of The Dead Sea Scrolls*. Illus. by Yossi Abulafia. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2004.

Told as a mystery story, this fascinating and smartly illustrated book provides interesting information about the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Judean desert where they were found, the Shrine of the Book where they are housed in Jerusalem, and a glimpse at the everyday life of a modern Israeli family. For grades 3-6.

Groner, Judye. *Let's Visit Israel* Illus. By Cheryl Nathan. Minneapolis, MN: Kar- Ben/Lerner, 2004.

A very simply written, clearly illustrated board book that introduces some of the major sites in Israel to preschoolers. Jerusalem, a kibbutz, Masada, the Dead Sea, and Eilat are some of the places visited by a little boy who serves as a guide.

Grossman, David. *Duel.* Translated from the Hebrew by Betsy Rosenberg. New York: Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2004.

Loyalty, love, and honor are the themes of this multi-layered mystery and coming-of-age story. The friendship between twelve year old David, a clever and introspective Israeli boy, and some elderly German-Jewish residents of a Jerusalem retirement home is the catalyst for a story that weaves between the past and the present. Grades 4 - 6.

Kaplan, Kathy Walden. The Dog of Knots. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdman's, 2004.

An absorbing and off-beat story set in Haifa around the time of the Yom Kippur War. A nine year old girl and an old, stray dog are the main characters, exemplifying the fortitude that is part of everyday life in Israel. Grades 5-8.

Kass, Pnina Moed. *Real Time*. New York: Clarion, 2004.

Set in Israel, this teenage novel is told in many voices: a German boy on his way to work on a kibbutz; a Russian immigrant girl reclaiming her Jewish heritage; an elderly Holocaust survivor; an aspiring Palestinian "martyr" and his family; emergency medical staff, doctors, nurses, and the police. Their lives all intersect in one violent moment, revealing the reality of a suicide bombing from many different perspectives. Winner of many awards and honors and excellent for discussion. An audio CD is available that contains an interview and readings by the author. Grades 8-11.

Lehman-Wilzig, Tami. *Keeping The Promise: A Little Torah's Journey*. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2004.

A fictionalized account of Ilan Ramon and the Torah he took with him on the space shuttle. The focus is on Rabbi Jacob Dasberg, who took the Torah with him when he was deported to Bergen Belsen and on the Bar Mitzvah of the boy who later gave the Torah to Colonel Ramon. Grades 3-6.

Sandell, Lisa Ann. *The Weight of the Sky*. New York: Viking, 2006. \$16.95. ISBN 0-670-06028-3 Pbk.

Written in free verse that reads like prose, this sensitive growing up story is told by Sarah, who spends the summer of her sixteenth year working as a volunteer on a kibbutz. Independent for the first time in her life, Sarah gains confidence in herself and the ability to make her own choices. Living as a Jew among Jews, including young people close to her own age, she is transformed by her Israel experiences. The vibrancy of life in contemporary Israel is shown, with only a few references to the Palestinian conflict. For middle school and high school.

Stein, Tammar. Light Years. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005.

A young Israeli woman studying in the United States narrates the story of why she fled Israel. Alternating chapters portray Maya's college experiences in Virginia and her life in Israel as a soldier whose life is shattered when her boyfriend is killed in a suicide bombing. Written with sensitivity and insight, this is excellent reading for older teens and young adults.

Podwal, Mark. *Jerusalem Sky: Stars, Crosses, and Crescents.* New York: Doubleday, 2005. \$15.95. ISBN: 0-385-74689-X.

A lyrically written, beautifully illustrated celebration of the sky above Jerusalem and its sacredness to Jews, Christians, and Muslims. The tone is of conciliation and hope. For grades 3-5.

Zenatti, Valerie. When I Was a Soldier. New York: Bloomsbury, 2005.

The author has written a memoir of her last year of high school in Beersheva and her experiences in the Israeli army. Her cynical point of view becomes monotonous and very little understanding of herself or other is revealed. This insider's view of what service in the IDF is like is essentially incomplete and disappointing. Translated from the French. High school – young adult.

Recent Non-Fiction

Bard, Mitchell. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Middle East Conflict*, third edition. New York: Alpha/Penquin, 2005.

Traces the origins of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as well as the wars between the people of the Middle East from biblical times to the present. Focusing on the Arab-Israeli conflict, the book ends with a chapter that brings the conflict up to the present, including the deaths of Yitzhak Rabin, King Hussein, and Yasser Arafat, and the dispute about Jerusalem and the territiories. For high school – adult.

Bard, Mitchell. *1001 Facts Everyone Should Know about Israel*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005.

Topics include Zionism, religion, war and peace, the United Nations, and notable quotations. Most of the facts are just a few sentences long, making this a very concise guide. High school – adult.

Davis, Helen. *Israel in the World: Changing Lives through Innovation*. London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2005.

An overview of Israeli society and its technical developments in medicine, science and technology, agriculture, and outreach. Illustrated with many color photographs. Middle school and high school.

Dudley, William, Editor. *The Middle East. Opposing Viewpoints Series*. Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven/Gale, 2004.

Organized by four main topics that are central to an understanding of the Middle East, this is a compilation of pro and con viewpoints on issues such as Islam and democracy, oil dependence, Palestinian leadership, and Israel's security fence. Not every one of this publisher's books that pertain to Israel is acceptable and each should be evaluated before a decision is made to use it. For middle school and high school.

Ellis, Deborah. *Three Wishes: Palestinian And Israeli Children Speak.* Toronto: Groundwood Books, 2004.

The Canadian author of this book brings to it assumptions that will set off alarm bells. One is that the United Nations is an honest broker. Another is that the West Bank is occupied. A third is that refugee camps are an inevitable result of the conflict. Yet this flawed book, consisting of interviews with Israeli and Palestinian youth, gives a heart-wrenching picture of life during a terrorist war, expressed in what appear to be genuine voices. It requires discussion after reading and is a good choice for schools. Recommended with reservations for a wide audience, from grades 5-12.

Finkelstein, Norman. Ariel Sharon. Minneapolis, MN, Lerner, 2005.

An objective and unbiased account of the life of the current Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon. It is organized chronologically and deals with important events in the childhood, personal, military and political life of this controversial soldier and politician. There are two very poor books about Israel listed among the books and websites in the appended section of the book. Illustrated with maps and black and white photographs. The author's depiction of Arafat as genuinely wanting a peaceful resolution of the conflict gives the book limited value as a source of information and understanding of the Arab-Israeli conflict. For grades 6-8.

Garfinkel, Adam. *Israel*. *Modern Middle East Nations and Their Place in the World Series*. Philadelphia, PA: Mason Crest, 2004.

Notable for its accuracy and lack of bias, this is an authoritative account of Israel from its beginning to the modern state. The land, people, and history are introduced and the emphasis is on Israel's place in the world today, with issues of security and conflict at the forefront. Maps, photographs, a glossary, an index, a list of websites and books for further reading accompany the text. An excellent choice for grades 7-12.

Goldstein, Margaret. *Israel In Pictures, Revised Edition.* Visual Geography Series. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner, 2004.

Keyed to Lerner's *Visual Geography Series* website, <u>www.vgsbooks.com</u>, which substantially expands the information in the book, this is geared to the informational needs of elementary and middle school students. Extensively revised from the previous edition published

in 1987, which it replaces, this is highly recommended for every library, Jewish and non-Jewish. For grades 5 - 8.

Greenfeld, Howard. A Promise Fulfilled: Theodor Herzl, Chaim Weizmann, David Ben-Gurion, and The Creation of the State of Israel. New York: HarperCollins/ Greenwillow, 2005.

A succinct and well-written history of modern Zionism, told through the biographies of three of its most important figures. The backgrounds, influences, achievements, strengths, and weaknesses of each man are skillfully woven into the historical chronicle. The section on Herzl is particularly strong in portraying the contradictions in his personality that contributed to the Zionist cause. Middle school and high school.

The Israel Project's Guide to Proven Pro-Israel Communications. Arlington, VA: The Israel Project, 2005.

A guide, based on market research, about how to present a pro-Israel position to the media and in speaking to groups about the Arab-Israeli conflict. The advice is to keep the message positive and to emphasize the common values between the U.S. and Israel, rather than historical facts. For college students and adults.

Miller, Jennifer. *Inheriting the Holy Land: An American's Search for Hope in the Middle East.* New York: Ballantine, 2005.

A young woman from a prominent family uses her connections to travel throughout Israel and ruminate on the chances for peace. She interviews important political personages in the region as well as young people from the Seeds for Peace program. High school and adult.

10 April 2006



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