

**“EXTRAORDINARY!** An intensely personal and insightful look  
at the Palestinian-Israeli conflict from the vantage point of seven children living in Jerusalem.  
A humanist’s dream.”

**Julie Salamon, The New York Times**



وعود  
**PROMISES**  
הבטחות

Film by Justine Shapiro, B.Z. Goldberg and Carlos Bolado

S T U D Y G U I D E



◆ AN ALA VIDEO ROUNDTABLE NOTABLE VIDEO FOR ADULTS ◆

Dear Educator:

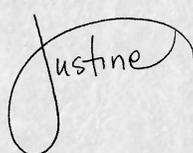
We thank you for being teachers and for sharing **PROMISES** with your students and community. We started making **PROMISES** in 1995 and completed the film in 2001. It is a great honor to report that to date, **PROMISES** has been seen by more than 7 million people in the U.S. and more than 25 million people worldwide. In the U.S., **PROMISES** was broadcast nationwide on the PBS series POV in December 2001. Hailed as "extraordinary" (The New York Times) and a "masterpiece" (Jerusalem Post) and celebrated by critics and audiences alike, **PROMISES** won two Emmy Awards — Best Documentary and Outstanding Background Analysis — and was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Feature Documentary.

Recognizing the film's commitment to presenting the many sides of the Middle East conflict, educators across the country and around the world have embraced **PROMISES** as a valuable educational tool. In the last two years, the **PROMISES** Film Project has received hundreds of requests from educators for classroom materials to accompany the film. While screening the film alone has significant educational value, we believe the viewing experience will be greatly enhanced when using the materials in this educational package. We have finally managed to bring together all the resources necessary to make this possible (wonderful, dedicated writers and donations from foundations and individuals).

We recognize that by bringing **PROMISES** to your students, you may be taking on additional work. For many of you, the very idea of bringing the Middle East into the classroom is overwhelming, both because you may not feel that you have enough background knowledge of the region and because of the emotional and political tension associated with the area. We hope you will find that this Study Guide makes it easier for you. We did not make **PROMISES** for experts. We wanted to make a film that would be embraced by people on all sides of the conflict — people familiar with the region and by people who know nothing about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In the same way, we have designed this Guide to work for teachers who come to this conflict with minimal knowledge. Some exercises are more middle school friendly, some are more high school friendly; some of the background material is primarily for teachers, but can also be used with more advanced classes.

Before screening the film, it can be helpful to remind students that this is a documentary with real people and situations that make it entirely different from reality television or a Hollywood film. To explore this further, refer to the lesson plan on Making a Documentary Film. Even if you have very limited time, you can still use some of the lessons — and we hope you will. Your students will better understand the roots of today's conflict, and you will be able to facilitate their learning about an area of the world that has been and remains part of every day's news.

Shookran, Toda, Gracias and Thank You for giving **PROMISES** life in the classroom.



Justine Shapiro



B. Z. Goldberg



Carlos Bolado

The **PROMISES** filmmakers

A beautiful and deeply moving portrait of children in the center of the Middle East conflict, **PROMISES** follows the journey of a filmmaker who travels to both a Palestinian refugee camp and an Israeli settlement in the West Bank where he meets seven Palestinian and Israeli children who exist in completely separate worlds, divided by physical, historical and emotional boundaries. Exploring the nature of these boundaries and telling the story of a few children who dared to cross the lines to meet their neighbors, this Oscar-nominated, Emmy Award winning film moves the conflict out of politics and into the realm of the human. For more information go to [www.promisesproject.org](http://www.promisesproject.org)

## BRINGING PARENTS INTO THE DISCUSSION

Because **PROMISES** focuses on Palestinian and Israeli issues, so much in today's news, and so often directly connected to the lives of American Jewish, Muslim and other families, we recommend holding a screening of the film for parents and family members. This will help teachers who are using the film in the classroom involve family members and broaden the discussion. We recommend showing the film in its entirety, and then breaking into small discussion groups led by skilled facilitators using the suggested discussion questions on page 28 of this guide.

### Credits

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Has corresponding DVD film clip

Talking about the Middle East can evoke strong emotions for you and your students, since the discussion will inevitably raise questions about land rights and religious/cultural identity. As you facilitate discussion and activities, you may find it helpful to use the following strategies:

- > Establish discussion guidelines. These include speaking only for yourself, listening with care, and not responding or interrupting until the speaker is finished.
- > Suggest to students that instead of saying, “Palestinians believe,” or “Israelis think,” students might say, “I think,” or “The film made me realize,” or “I never knew that. Where can I find more information?”
- > Stress to students that the views and opinions in the classroom discussion represent strong, personal, often diametrically opposed perspectives and that they must be prepared to both “own” their ideas and to listen to the ideas and opinions of others. The goal is comprehensive understanding, not angry debate. Remind students that there may be differences in perceptions, understanding of what happened, and points of view, and that they should always acknowledge the other person’s or group’s view.
- > Include, “I want to understand,” and, “I’d like to learn,” sentences in your contributions. Remember: acknowledging is not agreeing. It is showing respect to the other person.
- > Try to use neutral language and recognize differing points of view, but point out that the terminology we use in discussions of controversial topics often reflects the speaker’s or writer’s point of view — for example, the vastly different connotations of the words suicide bomber and martyr.
- > Respond to strong emotional responses by asking open-ended questions and soliciting other points of view. For example, a student might say, “You can’t say that!” At this point, you might encourage students to step back from the immediate issue asking, “What makes it hard for people to hear and digest what others are saying? How can we listen more actively?”
- > Rephrase what the student says so you can be sure you and the other students heard correctly. Then ask what other students think or feel.

## VIEWING THE FILM

**PROMISES** is a moving and powerful film that is best viewed in its entirety. With the exception of the pre-viewing lesson plans, teachers are urged to have students view the complete film prior to doing the lessons suggested in this guide. Even when film clips are recommended within a lesson plan, these are intended as “refreshers” rather than to replace viewing the entire film. Viewing of the entire film takes 102 minutes.

*This guide includes a menu of options that you can select from to best suit your needs and those of your students. This page provides an overview of your teaching options. (We assume a 50 minute class period.)*

<b>At a minimum: (2 class periods)</b>	<b>If you have 3 class periods:</b>
> Show the film (102 minutes)	> Background and Context Lesson Plan > Show the film (102 minutes)

We encourage teachers to use the chart below to provide homework and extra credit opportunities so that students can become more familiar with the issues that face people living in Israel and Palestine and with the reasons why people in the United States need to understand them. **All the lesson plans can be completed in one classroom period.** Listed below you will find a comprehensive pre-viewing Background and Context lesson plus many options for post-viewing lesson plans.

Lesson Name	Content/Subject Area*	Student Worksheets & Handouts
Background and Context	Palestine-/Israel History	Maps, Glossary, Overview of Key Events, "What Do You Know?"
The Children in the Film	Current Palestinian-Israeli Issues	Viewing Worksheet, Viewing Guide, Discussion Questions
Who Are You? What Makes You Who You Are? <input type="checkbox"/>	Language Arts/Identity	"Yellow Woman"
Who Are The Children in the Film? What Makes The Children Who They Are? <input type="checkbox"/>	Language Arts/ Israeli-/Palestinian Identity	"Theme for English B"
The Privileged Few <input type="checkbox"/>	Social Studies/Privilege	None
Then, Now and Beyond <input type="checkbox"/>	The Future of Palestine/Israel	Glossary, Overview of Key Events, "What Do You Know?"
Writing Choices	Language Arts	"Writing Choices", Sample poem
Making a Documentary Film	Media Literacy	"Making a Documentary Film"

Has corresponding DVD film clip

\*These lesson plans were designed by teachers with state standards for social studies, world history, geography and language arts in mind. We have not provided exact correlations because each state has different standards. Teachers should easily be able to find the connections between content and their state's standards.

### Lesson Goal

To provide students with background and contextual information about the issues facing Israelis and Palestinians and the obstacles to peace.

### Materials needed

- > Maps\*
- > STUDENT HANDOUT: Glossary
- > STUDENT HANDOUT: Overview of Key Events (long or abbreviated version)
- > STUDENT HANDOUT: What Do You Know?

### Time

One classroom period plus homework.

If time is short, instead of reviewing the long version of “Overview of Key Events,” students can review the abbreviated “Overview of Key Events” and “Sharper Focus” issues that have been provided for your convenience.

### Procedure

1. Explain to students that the claims and perspectives in the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict are rooted in history that goes back thousands of years. **PROMISES**, which was filmed between 1995 and 2000, represents the conflict through the voices of Palestinian and Israeli children. In order to understand what the children are saying, students must have some basic knowledge of terms, history and the issues. Give students the Maps, Glossary, Overview of Key Events and “What Do you Know” handouts to review as homework the night before, or, if time permits, students can review these materials in class, possibly taking turns reading the materials aloud to each other. You may also want to consider dividing the class into groups and assigning each group one area for review.
2. Hold a classroom discussion about the issues that the handouts raise or that students don’t understand.

### Lesson Extensions

Assign students to further research some of the issues.

Students can interview older family members or neighbors to find out what they know and recollect about the last 55 years of Israeli-Palestinian history.

*A NOTE TO TEACHERS: The background information provided in this lesson is only an introduction. For students to have a more complete understanding, they will need to review maps and learn more about the history of the region. The Resource Section provides suggestions for further study. Obviously, students could spend months studying the Middle East. For this lesson, they should, at the very least, review the Maps, Glossary and Overview of Key Events.*

#### \*A NOTE ABOUT MAPS:

You can find up-to-date and historical maps at the following web sites:

##### University of Texas Libraries

( <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/israel.html#country.html> )

This site has a very extensive collection of maps of the Middle East from a variety of sources.

##### BBC News

( [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/middle\\_east/03/v3\\_israel\\_palestinians/maps/html/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/middle_east/03/v3_israel_palestinians/maps/html/default.stm) )

This site includes a broad range of current and historical maps, including detailed West Bank and Gaza Strip maps showing Israeli settlements, checkpoints and Palestinian cities and refugee camps.

##### Rethinking Schools

( <http://www.rethinkingschools.org/war/activities/> )

Teachers can find classroom friendly maps of the Middle East at this site, including an engaging interactive map.

( [http://www.rethinkingschools.org/just\\_fun/games/mapgame.html](http://www.rethinkingschools.org/just_fun/games/mapgame.html) )

*NOTE: Often the words used when talking about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict are unfamiliar or mean different things to different people or groups. **This glossary provides definitions only for words that occur in the film PROMISES.** Wherever possible, we have provided several definitions to illustrate different perspectives.*

### Al Aqsa Mosque

“The Al-Aqsa Mosque (*Masjid Al-Aqsa*, literally “farthest mosque”) is part of the complex of religious buildings in Jerusalem known as either the Majed Mount or Al-Haram ash-Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary) to Muslims and the Temple Mount to Jews. Muslim tradition states that Muhammad ascended to heaven from the Mount in the year 621, making the mosque the third most holy shrine in Islam.” (wordiq.com)

### Arab

“‘Arab’ is a cultural and linguistic term. It refers to those who speak Arabic as their first language. Arabs are united by culture and by history. Arabs are not a race. Some have blue eyes and red hair; others are dark skinned; most are somewhere in between. Most Arabs are Muslims but there are also millions of Christian Arabs and thousands of Jewish Arabs, just as there are Muslim, Christian and Jewish Americans.” (Marvin Wingfield, <http://www.rethinkingschools.org>)

## F Y I

The **Arab League**, established in March 1945, aims to improve relations among Arab nations. Its headquarters are located in Cairo, Egypt. Members include: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

([http://www.dnb.com/US/communities/intlbusiness/general\\_export\\_info/intl\\_credit\\_terms\\_glossary.asp](http://www.dnb.com/US/communities/intlbusiness/general_export_info/intl_credit_terms_glossary.asp))

### Checkpoints

“Checkpoints are situated at all crossings between the West Bank and Gaza and Israel. West Bank Palestinians cannot leave the West Bank, travel to Jerusalem or even cross from one Palestinian area to another without a permit issued by the Israeli military. For Palestinians, checkpoints are a daily reminder of the occupation. Most Israelis feel that checkpoints make life in Israel safer — that they offer some form of protection from acts of terrorism.” (**PROMISES** script)

### Deheishe Refugee Camp

“Deheishe is a camp of approximately 2,500 Palestinian families situated in the West Bank about six miles, or a 10-15 minute drive from Jerusalem. Of the total of 12,000 people in the camp, approximately 50 percent are youth. The camp was established by the United Nations on 430 dunums (107.5 acres) in 1949 for Palestinian refugees from the newly created state of Israel.” (UNRWA)

### Gaza Strip

1. “Of the 3.7 million inhabitants of the Palestinian territories, 1.4 million live in Gaza.” (<http://www.reliefweb.int>)
2. “Gaza is one of the most densely populated tracts of land in the world. About 33 percent of its Palestinian population live in United Nations-funded refugee camps. Gaza is also home to about 5,000 Jewish settlers. Israeli settlements cover or control about 30 percent of the Gaza Strip.” (BBC News)
3. “The Gaza Strip is an area slightly more than twice the size of Washington, D.C., bordering the Mediterranean Sea between Egypt and Israel. Its coastline is approximately 25 miles long. It is Israeli-occupied with current status subject to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement — permanent status to be determined through further negotiation.” (CIA world factbook)

### Hamas

1. “Just over a decade after its foundation, Hamas — an acronym that in Arabic stands for the Islamic Resistance Movement — has turned into a major player in Palestinian politics, a thorn in Israel’s side and a “terrorist” organization in the eyes of some Western governments. The movement’s popularity has grown in recent years largely because of its

military operations against Israeli targets and its network of social services provided to Palestinian citizens.” (Al Jazeera)

2. “Since the start of the first intifada in the late 1980s, the militant Hamas organization has won popularity by offering a welfare network to Palestinians and declaring an uncompromising war on Israel. Its primary aim: The elimination of the State of Israel and the creation of an Islamic Palestine in its place. The movement has consistently refused to participate in any peace negotiations with Israel, initiating its policy of suicide bombings following the signing of the Oslo peace accords in 1993.” (Ha’aretz)

3. “Hamas regards Nationalism (Wataniyya) as part and parcel of the religious faith. Nothing is loftier or deeper in Nationalism than waging Jihad against the enemy and confronting him when he sets foot on the land of the Muslims. And this becomes an individual duty binding on every Muslim man and woman.” (Hamas charter, article 12)

4. “In addition to its military wing, the so-called Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigade, Hamas also devotes much of its estimated \$70-million annual budget to an extensive social services network, which includes schools, orphanages, mosques, health care clinics, soup kitchens, and sports leagues. ‘Approximately 90 percent of its work is in social, welfare, cultural, and educational activities,’ writes the Israeli scholar Reuven Paz. Since the Palestinian Authority often fails to provide such services, Hamas’ efforts in this area explain much of its popularity.”

( <http://cfjterrorism.org/groups/hamas3.html#Q14> )

### Hezbollah

1. “The name of a radical Shii Muslim group from Lebanon. The literal translation is “Party of God.” Formed in 1982 with the goal of creating an Islamic republic in the country, the group is widely known for its participation in various suicide bombings and kidnappings, and for its opposition to the existence of the state of Israel.”

( <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/globalconnections/> )

2. “Iranian-backed Islamic fundamentalist terrorist organization based in predominantly Shi’ite areas of southern Lebanon that has launched numerous attacks on Israeli soldiers and civilians.”

( <http://www.projectinterchange.org/glossary.htm> )

3. “Hezbollah and its affiliates have planned or

been linked to a lengthy series of terrorist attacks: a series of kidnappings of Westerners, including several Americans, in the 1980s; the suicide truck bombings that killed more than 200 U.S. Marines at their barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1983; the 1985 hijacking of TWA flight 847; and two major 1990s attacks on Jewish targets in Argentina killing 95.” ( <http://cfjterrorism.org/groups/hezbollah.html> )

### Holocaust

“The Holocaust was the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately 6 million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators. ‘Holocaust’ is a word of Greek origin meaning ‘sacrifice by fire.’ The Nazis, who came to power in Germany in January 1933, believed that Germans were racially superior and that the Jews, deemed inferior, were life unworthy of life. During the era of the Holocaust, the Nazis also targeted other groups because of their perceived racial inferiority: Roma (Gypsies), the handicapped and some of the Slavic peoples (Poles, Russians and others). Other groups were persecuted on political and behavioral grounds, among them Communists, Socialists, Jehovah’s Witnesses and homosexuals. In 1933, the Jewish population of Europe stood at over 9 million. Most European Jews lived in countries that the Third Reich (Nazi regime in Germany) would occupy or influence during World War II. By 1945, close to two out of every three European Jews had been killed as part of the ‘Final Solution,’ the Nazi policy to murder the Jews of Europe.” (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum <http://www.ushmm.org> )

### Intifada/Intifadah — First Intifada

1. “In December 1987, a mass uprising against the Israeli occupation began in the occupied Palestinian territory. Methods used by the Israeli forces during the uprising resulted in mass injuries and heavy loss of life among the civilian Palestinian population.” (United Nations <http://www.un.org> )

2. “In December 1987, collective Palestinian frustration erupted in the popular uprising against Israeli rule known as the intifada, or “shaking off.” At first a spontaneous outburst, the intifada developed into a well-organized rebellion. Amid confusing directives, some abuses occurred.”

(Anti-Defamation League)

### Intifada/Intifadah — Second Intifada

1. “The deeply flawed ‘peace process’ initiated at Oslo, combined with the daily frustrations and humiliations inflicted upon Palestinians in the occupied territories converged to ignite a second intifada beginning in late September 2000. On September 28, Likud leader Ariel Sharon visited the Noble Sanctuary (Temple Mount) in the company of 1000 armed guards; in the context of July’s tense negotiations over Jerusalem’s holy places and Sharon’s well-known call for Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem, this move provoked large Palestinian protests in Jerusalem.” (Middle East Research and Information Project)
2. “Widespread Palestinian violence erupted on

Friday, September 29, in the Old City of Jerusalem and in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. According to the Palestinians, the violence was ostensibly provoked by the visit of then-Likud Party Chairman Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount the previous day. Israeli leaders maintain that the Palestinian violence was orchestrated by the Palestinian leadership. There were other incidents of violence against Israeli targets in the Gaza Strip days before the Sharon visit, and widespread violence did not break out until a full day after Mr. Sharon’s visit to the area. Indeed, even before the Sharon visit there were incendiary calls for action in the Palestinian media and in sermons by religious leaders.” (Anti-Defamation League)

### F Y I

#### Terrorist Attacks in Israel

Since the start of the Al-Aqsa Intifada [second intifada] exactly two years ago, the Palestinians have sent 145 suicide bombers on terror attacks within the Green Line and in the territories. Data compiled by the Shin Bet security service show that there have been more than 200 suicide terrorists since 1993. The last suicide attacker, who blew up a bus on Tel Aviv’s Allenby Street 10 days ago, was the 206th such terrorist in less than a decade. (Ha-aretz 9/04) Since the start of the second intifada in 2000 until May 2004, 6694 Israelis were injured and 989 were killed in terrorist attacks. More than 70% of both the dead and injured were civilians. (Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

### Israeli Arabs

1. “In 1948 only about 150,000 Palestinian Arabs remained in the area that became the state of Israel. They were granted Israeli citizenship and the right to vote. But in many respects they remain second-class citizens.” (Middle East Research and Information Project)
2. “Today there are over a million Israeli Arabs making up approximately 20 percent of Israel’s population.” (Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics)

### Jerusalem

1. “Jerusalem is Judaism’s holiest city, and is also holy to Christianity and Islam. Jerusalem was reunited under Israeli sovereignty as a result of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Immediately, Israel passed the Protection of Holy Places Law, which guarantees the sanctity of all holy sites and makes it a punishable offense to desecrate or deny freedom of access to them....Israel maintains that Jerusalem must remain the undivided capital under Israeli sovereignty. Palestinian leaders insist that all of East Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount, be the capital of an independent Palestinian state.” (Anti-Defamation League)
2. “Jerusalem (al-Quds in Arabic) represents the heart of three world religions, yet it is also a dangerous flashpoint to one of the world’s most intractable conflicts, the Palestine Israel issue. ...The issue of the status of East Jerusalem, annexed by Israel but regarded by Palestinians as part of the capital of their own state, remains difficult. Since the start of the second intifada of September 2000, Israel has routinely annexed access of the local Arab towns to Jerusalem, thus sealing the city for its own designs.” (Al Jazeera)

### F Y I

#### Palestinians Killed and Injured since Second Intifada

Between September 29, 2000 and September 7, 2004, 3,171 Palestinians have been killed and 27,249 have been injured. (Palestine Red Crescent Society)

## F Y I

The **Organization of Islamic Countries** has 55 member states. The 10 countries with the largest Muslim populations are: Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Turkey, Iran, Egypt, Nigeria and China. Of these countries, only Egypt is an Arab country. Most Arabs are Muslims, but most Muslims are not Arabs. (Marvin Wingfield, <http://www.rethinkingschools.org>)

3. “Jerusalem has been important to Christianity in many ways. It was the place where Jesus completed his ministry, was crucified and then rose from the dead. Thus Jerusalem is the stage on which God’s plan of salvation was put into effect. Prior to that, it had been the center of Judaism — the religion of the people Israel—which Christianity claimed to inherit and replace.”

( <http://uwacadweb.uwyo.edu/religionet/er/christ/Cglossry.htm> )

### Judaism/Jew

1. “Judaism is a monotheistic religion. The Jewish People believe there is one God who created and rules the world. Jews do not share one common ancestry or biological distinction. People of many different races have become Jewish people over the years. People of many different nationalities are Jewish. A person who was born to a Jewish mother or has gone through the conversion process is considered a Jew even if he or she does not believe in Judaism and does not observe Jewish practices. Thus, there are non-religious Jews or secular Jews.” ( <http://judaism.about.com> )

2. “There are approximately 13 million Jews in more than 80 countries around the world.”

( <http://www.us-israel.org> )

### Muhammad

“Muhammad (sometimes Mohammed) (570? – 632 CE), the founder of Islam, is regarded as the ‘seal of the prophets,’ meaning the last of the line of prophets that begins with Adam and runs through the prophets of the Old and New Testaments, including Abraham, John the Baptist and Jesus. At about age 40, Muhammad was visited by the angel Gabriel, through whom he received and recited the Qur’an.” ( <http://www.zoofence.com/define4.html> )

### Muslim

1. “A person who submits to the will of God and accepts Islam and all its tenets. One becomes Muslim by saying the shahada (testimony). There is no god but God [and] Muhammad is the messenger [or prophet] of God.” Sometimes spelled Moslem. ( <http://www.masjidannur.com/eduoutreach/articles/glossary.html> )

2. “There are nearly 1.2 billion Muslims in the world today. They are of all different racial and ethnic backgrounds including Arab, Asian, African, African-American and Caucasian.” ( <http://www.omarfoundation.org/Culture/Educators/Glossary.htm> )

### Nakba See War of Independence/Nakba

### Netanyahu, Binyamin

“Israel’s youngest prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, was one of the most right-wing and controversial leaders (of the Likud Party) in the country’s history. His election in 1996 by the narrowest of margins represented a major turning point in Israeli politics.” Defeated in 1999, he is currently Israeli Finance Minister. (BBC News)

### Occupied Territories/Territories

“Regions of the Gaza Strip, West Bank and Golan Heights that have been occupied by the Israelis since the 1967 War. Israel established a military administration to govern the Palestinian residents of the occupied West Bank and Gaza. Israeli policies and practices in the West Bank and Gaza have included extensive use of collective punishments such as curfews, house demolitions and closure of road, schools and community institutions.”

(Middle East Research and Information Project)

### Palestinian

“Today the term refers to the Arabs — Christian, Muslim and Druze — whose historical roots can be traced to the territory of Palestine as defined by the British mandate borders.” (Middle East Research and Information Project)

### Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)

“Founded by George Habash after the occupation of the West Bank by Israel in 1967, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine was formed

as a resistance movement. Combining Arab nationalism with Marxist Leninist ideology, the PFLP opposes peace with Israel.” (BBC News)

### Quran

“The holy scripture of Islam, believed to have been revealed to the prophet Muhammad through the angel Gabriel over a period of 23 years. It contains many of the same teachings, admonitions and stories of earlier prophets found in Jewish and Christian scriptures.” Sometimes spelled Koran.

( <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/teach/muslims/glossary.html> )

### Settlements

1. “Settlements are Jewish communities that were established in the West Bank and Gaza Strip after the territories were acquired in the 1967 War. Today there are at least 170,000 settlers in 145 settlements. Supporters of settlements point to historical and ideological claims, as well as security requirements, to demonstrate the importance of their existence.” (Anti-Defamation League)
2. “According to international law, all Israeli settlements are illegal. However there are 145 official settlements in the West Bank, 19 in the Gaza Strip and 15 in Jerusalem. ... Israel’s settlement system was accompanied by the massive exploitation of land and natural resources, especially water.” (Al Jazeera)

### Settler

1. “An Israeli citizen who chooses for political, religious or purely financial reasons, to live in the occupied territories.” ( <http://www.prairienet.org/cpt/csdglossary.php> )

### Shabbat/Shabbos

1. “Every week religious Jews observe the Sabbath, the Jewish holy day, and keep its laws and customs. Jews often call the day Shabbat, which is Hebrew for Sabbath, and which comes from the Hebrew word for rest.” (BBC News)
2. “Shabbat is primarily a day of rest and spiritual enrichment. The Torah prohibits ‘melachah’ which is usually translated as ‘work.’ The rabbis have also prohibited travel, buying and selling, and other weekday tasks that would interfere with the spirit of Shabbat. The use of electricity is prohibited.” ( <http://www.jewfaq.org/shabbat.htm> )

## F Y I

### Projected population for Israel, West Bank and Gaza

A survey published in December 2003 predicted that by 2020 Jews would account for 6.4 million of the population while Palestinians would count for 8.2 million.

(Agence France-Presse, 31 Dec. 2003)

### Temple Mount/Haram Al Sharif

“This is where the Jewish Temple stood two thousand years ago (See Western Wall). Today, it is the home of two of Islam’s holiest shrines: the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque. Muslims believe this is the site of Mohammed’s ascension to heaven.” (PROMISES script)

### Terrorist

1. “One who utilizes the systematic use of violence and intimidation to achieve political objectives, while disguised as a civilian non-combatant.” ( <http://www.aeroflight.co.uk/definitions.htm> )
2. “A radical who employs terror as a political weapon; usually organizes with other terrorists in small cells; often uses religion as a cover for terrorist activities. Those involved in using terrorism for political ends call themselves freedom fighters: persons who take part in an armed rebellion against the constituted authority (especially in the hope of improving conditions).” ( <http://www.cogsci.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/webwn> )

### Torah

“The first five books of the Jewish Bible and the Old Testament; also called the Pentateuch; the first major division of the Jewish Bible; torah also means ‘law’ or ‘instruction.’” ( <http://duke.usask.ca/~ckm365/BA110/glossary.html> )

### War of Independence/Nakba

1. “The state of Israel was proclaimed on May 14, 1948 and came into effect the following day. Palestinians remember May 15 as ‘al Nakba’ or the Catastrophe. The day after the state of Israel was declared, five Arab armies from Jordan, Egypt,

Lebanon, Syria and Iraq immediately invaded Israel but were eventually repulsed and the Israeli army crushed pockets of resistance.” (BBC News)

2. “Israel’s independence was officially declared in Tel-Aviv on Friday May 14, 1948 by Zionist leader David Ben-Gurion, who proclaimed: “.....We offer peace and unity to all the neighboring states and their peoples, and invite them to cooperate with the independent Jewish nation for the common good of all.” Despite the euphoria of the movement, Israel faced imminent disaster with an expected invasion by Arab nations who rejected the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. Outnumbered in men and arms, the new Israeli army was attacked from all directions.”

(Anti-Defamation League)

3. “During the course of the war, about 700,000 to 1,000,000 (the numbers are still disputed) Palestinians fled from villages and cities they inhabited, in the area which eventually became the State of Israel.” ( Wikipedia )

#### Western Wall/Wailing Wall/Kotel/ Hama’aravi

1. “A wall in Jerusalem; sacred to Jews as a place of prayer and lamentation.”

(<http://www.cogsci.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/webwn> )

2. “Jewish tradition teaches that the Temple Mount is the focal point of Creation. Jerusalem was chosen by G-d as the dwelling place of the Divine Presence. David longed to build the Temple, and Solomon his son built the First Temple there about 3,000 years ago. It was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The Second Temple was rebuilt on its ruins 70 years later. It was razed by the Roman legions over 1,900 years ago. The present Western Wall is a remnant of the western Temple Mount retaining walls.”

( <http://www.ourjerusalem.com> )

#### West Bank

1. “Territory west of the Jordan River, which Israel captured from Jordan in its defensive 1967 War. (Israeli settlers) often refer to it by its Biblical names, Judea and Samaria.”

( <http://www.projectinterchange.org/glossary.htm> )

2. About 2.2 million Palestinians live in the West Bank, together with about 400,000 Israeli settlers — including those who live in East Jerusalem. Currently 59 percent of the West Bank is officially

under Israeli civil and security control. Another 23 percent is under Palestinian civil control but Israeli security control. The remainder of the territory is governed by the Palestinian National Authority — although such areas (are often) subject to Israel incursions.” (BBC News)

#### Zionism/Zionist

1. Zionism is “the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, which holds that Jews are entitled to a homeland in the Land of Israel. Theodore Herzl, the ‘father of modern Zionism,’ formally organized the Zionist movement in 1897.” ( <http://www.projectinterchange.org/glossary.htm> )

2. “An advocate of Zionism. Also, a derogatory term synonymous with “Israeli” used by some Arabs; it implies the wrongful presence of Israel in Arab land.” ( <http://www-relg-studies.scu.edu/facstaff/murphy/courses/sctro11/glossary.htm> )

3. “Today, decades after the actual founding of a Jewish state, Zionism continues to be the guiding nationalist movement of the majority of Jews around the world who believe in, support and identify with the state of Israel.” (Anti-Defamation League)

## F Y I

### 2003 West Bank and Gaza Strip

Population ( <http://www.reliefweb.int> )

Total population > **3.7 million**

West Bank > **2.3 million**

Gaza Strip > **1.4 million**

### 2003 Israel Population

(Central Bureau of Statistics, Israel)

Total population > **6.7 million**

Jewish population > **5.4 million**

Non-Jewish population > **1.3 million**

(82 percent Muslims, 9 percent Christians and 9 percent Druze)

This chronology focuses on the last 85 years. It was completed in July 2004. For details prior to 1919, check the sources mentioned at the end of this Overview.

**1919 – 22:** In the aftermath of World War 1 and the Allied defeat of the Ottoman Empire, the League of Nations grants Britain a Mandate (a “trusteeship”) which gives Britain the authority to govern Palestine, which at the time included what is now Israel, all the Occupied Territories and Jordan.

**1947 – 48:** Mounting violence, including terrorist acts by both Arabs and Jews, leads Britain to declare its Mandate over Palestine unworkable. United Nations Resolution 181 partitions Palestine, giving roughly half each to the Jews and the Arabs, with Jerusalem under the control of a separate international authority. In a strategic move, the Jews immediately accept the plan. The Palestinian Arabs, reluctant to concede more than half their land to a newly arrived Jewish minority, are unwilling to accept the plan. Britain completes its withdrawal in early May 1948, and on May 14 the state of Israel is declared. In support of the Palestinian Arabs, however, neighboring Arab nations — Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria — declare war on Israel the next day.

**1948 – 49:** The first Arab-Israeli War, called al-Nakba or The Catastrophe by Arabs and The War of Independence by Israelis, results in Israel gaining additional land. Approximately 700,000 Palestinians flee or are chased away from their villages, settling either in Jordan or in refugee camps in Gaza or the West Bank. The 150,000 Palestinians who remain within Israel’s new borders eventually become Israeli Arab citizens.

**1967:** 1967 War or The Six-Day War [ **SEE A SHARPER FOCUS: THE 1967 WAR** ] is fought between Israel and the Arab states. Israel gains land and control of the Palestinians living in the refugee camps in Gaza and the West Bank.

**1968 – 69:** Israel begins to establish Jewish settlements in newly occupied territories. [ **SEE A SHARPER FOCUS: THE SETTLER MOVEMENT** ]

**1987 – 94:** The Palestinian intifada, [ **SEE A SHARPER FOCUS: FIRST INTIFADA** ] a spontaneous popular uprising

**NOTE TO TEACHERS AND STUDENTS:**  
*Learning about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is an enormous challenge. Every term, every event, every statement takes on different meanings depending on the perspectives that viewers and speakers bring with them. In a best-faith effort to avoid giving characterizations or views of history that favor one side or another, the authors of this guide have used many sources. We have kept in the forefront of our minds the awareness that the same term might carry entirely different meanings and connotations to different people and groups. Our goal has been balance.*

against Israeli occupation, starts in the West Bank and Gaza. Palestinian demonstrators throw stones and incendiary devices at Israeli troops in the Occupied Territories. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin implements the “iron fist policy” and the Israeli military responds with a variety of means from wooden billy clubs to water cannons to rubber bullets and live ammunition. Curfews are imposed on Palestinians, and arrests and deportations follow. Killed are 1,392 Palestinians and 160 Israelis. Many more are wounded.

**1988 – 89:** Referencing U.N. Resolution 181, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) declares a Palestinian state, including the Gaza Strip and West Bank, which are under Israeli occupation. Responding to U.S. pressure, the PLO recognizes the state of Israel and calls for negotiations.

**1991:** An international Arab-Israeli peace conference is held in Madrid with Palestinians included in a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. This is the first time Palestinians are negotiating directly with Israelis.

**1991 – 1993:** While the official peace talks occur in Madrid, a “backroom” of talks takes place secretly in Norway, resulting in a series of agreements known as the Oslo Accords.

**1993:** The Oslo Accord is signed at the White House. [ **SEE A SHARPER FOCUS: OSLO PEACE ACCORDS** ] Palestinians and Israelis agree to recognize the other's right to exist. Israel begins its promised withdrawal from lands occupied since the 1967 War;

Jericho and Gaza are transferred to the Palestinians. Yasser Arafat returns from exile to establish the Palestinian Authority. The parties agree that the most sensitive “final status” issues — permanent borders, Jewish settlements, Palestinian refugees and Jerusalem — will be addressed later.

**1994:** The Nobel Peace prize is awarded to Yasser Arafat, Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin “for their efforts to create peace in the Middle East.” Jordan signs a peace treaty with Israel, ending a 46-year official state of war.

**1995:** President Clinton brings together Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO leader Yasser Arafat who sign the Oslo II Agreement with a powerfully symbolic handshake. The Agreement establishes Palestinian self-rule in parts of the West Bank and a plan for Palestinian elections. Israel continues to build settlements.

**1995 – May 2000:** The film **PROMISES** is made during this period between the Oslo accords and the second intifada.

**September 2000:** The second intifada or political uprising is sparked by Ariel Sharon’s visit to the Muslim sacred site, the al-Aqsa mosque. Violence in the region escalates to an unprecedented level and virtually all official and unofficial talks between Israeli and Palestinian governments grind to a halt.

**2001:** In a landslide, Ariel Sharon is elected as Prime Minister of Israel.

**2002:** President George W. Bush, along with the European Union, Russia and the United Nations proposes “a road map” to peace.

**2001 – 04:** Hostilities, mutual suspicion and deaths continue as both sides profess to seek an end to violence. Palestinian “suicide bombings” and Israeli “targeted killings” continue. One of the most contentious issues is Israel’s building what it calls a “security fence ” which also includes sections that are an eight meter high concrete wall and will weave in and out for approximately 400 miles along the West Bank. A U.N. report has condemned the barrier as illegal.

**February 2004:** Prime Minister Ariel Sharon proposes removing all Jewish settlers and the military from Gaza by the end of 2005. Also, four small settlements from the northern West Bank would be evacuated. This proposed “pull out” from Gaza is viewed with suspicion by many Israelis as well as by Palestinians and many Americans.

## F Y I

### Continuing Grievances

Palestinians claim that Israel’s military presence, targeted killings (executions of political and military leaders) and “collective punishment” such as limiting of freedom of movement, home demolitions, curfews and closures make life physically dangerous and economically precarious for Palestinians. The “security wall/fence” separates some Palestinians from their livelihoods (i.e., orchards, wells, farms) and their communities. Checkpoints and bypass roads divide Palestinian communities from one another and make travel extremely difficult. The high rate of unemployment for Palestinians creates hopeless conditions for Palestinians, especially youth.

For Israelis, terrorist attacks by Palestinian militants on civilian targets create an atmosphere of fear and insecurity, as well as serious danger. Many Israelis believe that existing checkpoints and the new security wall will limit or prevent future terrorist attacks. Many Israelis assert that even if the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip ends, this would not satisfy those Palestinians who want to take over all of present-day Israel. Israelis also note that Palestinian nationalist and Islamist fundamentalist groups are actively fomenting anti-Israel and anti-Jewish feelings in the Arab nations and worldwide.

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## F Y I

### European Influence

While the Ottoman Empire enters the war on Germany's side, the Arabs (led by Sherif Hussein of Mecca) agree to side with the Allies (Britain, France and Russia). They do so because of an agreement known as the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence in which Britain promises independence to what is now Syria, Palestine (Israel), Jordan, Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula should the Allies win the war. Unbeknownst to the Arabs, however, Britain also signs the Sykes-Picot Agreement with France later in 1916. This pact, which directly contradicts Hussein-McMahon, details a plan to split up most of the Middle East region between Britain and France should they defeat the Axis powers. Britain makes a third conflicting agreement, the Balfour Declaration. After ousting the Ottomans from both Jerusalem and Baghdad, they promise to support the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. (Global Connections, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/globalconnections/>)

This chronology focuses on the last 125 years. It was completed in July 2004. For details prior to 1880, check the sources mentioned at the end of this Overview.

**1880s:** Zionist migration to the region begins, fueled by centuries of pogroms (organized attacks) and persecution of Jews in Europe, as well as by a desire to retain Jewish cultural identity. Zionism, [ **SEE A SHARPER FOCUS: ZIONISM** ] the movement dedicated to establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine, was led by Theodore Herzl (1860-1904).

**1917:** The region known as Palestine is still under the control of the Ottoman Empire (the government that controlled the entire area from 1517 to 1917). In what becomes known as the "Balfour Declaration," [ **SEE A SHARPER FOCUS: THE BALFOUR DECLARATION** ] British Foreign Secretary David Balfour writes a letter articulating British commitment to a Jewish homeland within Palestine.

**1919 – 22:** In 1922, after World War I and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the League of Nations grants Britain a Mandate (a "trusteeship") giving Britain the authority to govern Palestine, which at the time included what is now Israel, all the Occupied Territories and Jordan. Two years later, the League of Nations confirms the Mandate, which lays out the terms under which Britain is given responsibility for the temporary administration of Palestine on behalf of both the Jews and Arabs living there. From 1922 to 1939, violent encounters between Palestinian Arabs and Jewish immigrants occur, including clashes over access to the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem.

**1936 – 39:** The increase in Jewish immigration and land acquisition, as well as general Arab frustration at the continuation of European rule, mobilizes increasing numbers of Palestinian Arabs, and what begins as small attacks grows into a major Palestinian rebellion lasting until 1939. The British, in part to obtain Arab support for the recently erupted war with Germany, ban most land sales to Jews.

**1936:** The Peel Commission, appointed by Britain to examine the Palestine issue, hears testimony from Jews, Zionists, Palestinian Arabs and other

Arab nationalists. The commission's report calls for the partition of Palestine into a Jewish state, an Arab state and a British-controlled corridor from Jerusalem to the coast. Palestinian Arabs reject the partition plan. The Zionist Organization accepts the principle of partition.

**1939:** Britain publishes a White Paper that reverses its commitment to the Jews and a Jewish state under the Balfour Declaration. The White Paper calls for the establishment of a Palestinian (Arab) state within 10 years. It limits the number of Jews to be admitted to Palestine over the next five years to 75,000 and places severe restrictions on land purchases by Jews. The White Paper receives a mixed Arab reception, and the Jewish Agency (the most prominent Jewish organization of the time) rejects it emphatically, calling it a total repudiation of the Balfour Declaration and Mandate obligations.

**1945:** With the end of World War II and the aftermath of the Holocaust — the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately 6 million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators — world sympathy lies with Jewish survivors seeking a homeland. Jewish refugee immigration to Palestine provokes violence between Arabs and Jews and overwhelms the British.

**1947 – 48:** Mounting violence, including terrorist acts by both Arabs and Jews, leads Britain to declare its Mandate over Palestine unworkable. Arabs begin to leave. Britain leaves the question of what to do with Palestine to the United Nations. U.N. Resolution 181 partitions Palestine, giving roughly half each to the Jews and the Arabs, with Jerusalem under the control of a separate international authority. The Jews accept the plan. The Palestinian Arabs, reluctant to concede more than half their land to a newly arrived Jewish minority, are unwilling to accept the plan. Britain completes its withdrawal in early May 1948, and on May 14 the state of Israel is declared. Both the United States and the USSR immediately recognize the new state. In support of the Palestinian Arabs, however, neighboring Arab nations — Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria — declare war on Israel the next day. The Israelis eventually repel the Arab attack.

**1948 – 49:** The first Arab-Israeli War, called al-Nakba or The Catastrophe by Arabs and The War of Independence by Israelis, [ **SEE A SHARPER FOCUS: ISRAELI INDEPENDENCE** ] results in Israel gaining additional land — 50 percent of the share that Palestine had been granted by the United Nations in 1947. As a result of this bloody war, 18,500 Palestinians and 6,000 Jews die. Approximately 700,000 Palestinians flee or are chased away from their homes, [ **SEE A SHARPER FOCUS: PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMPS** ] settling either in refugee camps in Gaza (then Egypt), Lebanon, Syria and in Jordan on both the “East Bank” or the “West Bank” of the river Jordan. After the war, no Arab states recognize the right of the new state of Israel to exist.

**1950:** Israel proclaims Jerusalem its capital. East Jerusalem, which includes the Old City, remains under Jordan's control until June 1967.

**1964 – 69:** The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) forms in 1964, and Yasser Arafat becomes its chairman in 1969.

**1967:** 1967 War or The Six-Day War or [ **SEE A SHARPER FOCUS: THE 1967 WAR** ] is fought between Israel and the Arab states. Conflict ignites after three weeks of increasing tensions, including a massive Arab troop buildup in the Sinai Peninsula and an Egyptian blockade of ships to and from Israel in the Red Sea. Israel responds by launching a surprise attack on Egypt. Other Arab nations, including Syria, Iraq, Kuwait and Jordan, join Egypt in the fighting. Israel seizes the Golan Heights from Syria, Sinai and the

## F Y I

### Palestine Population in 1948

An Anglo-American commission of inquiry in 1945 and 1946 examined the status of Palestine. No official census figures were available, so all figures are based on extrapolations and surmises. According to the report, 1,269,000 Arabs and 608,000 Jews resided within the borders of Mandate Palestine at the end of 1946. (<http://www.mideastweb.org>)

Gaza Strip from Egypt, and East Jerusalem and the West Bank from Jordan before a cease-fire is agreed upon. Israel gains land, along with control of the Palestinians living in the refugee camps in Gaza and the West Bank. The U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 outlines a “Land for Peace” plan. However, the two sides dispute the meaning of the language of the resolution.

**1968 – 69:** Israel begins to establish Jewish settlements in newly occupied territories. [ **SEE A SHARPER FOCUS: THE SETTLER MOVEMENT** ]

**1973:** “The Yom Kippur War,” also known as the October War, begins when Syria and Egypt attack Israel on the holiest day of the Jewish calendar. Initially, they gain land, but Israel rallies and battles back to the 1967 cease-fire lines. Palestinians refer to this as the Ramadan War because it occurred during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

**1974 – 75:** The Arab League declares the PLO to be the sole legitimate representative of Palestinian people. Chairman Arafat addresses the United Nations, which grants the PLO “observer status” in 1975.

**1978 – 81:** President Jimmy Carter meets with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. A peace treaty, the Camp David Accord, is signed in 1979. Sadat’s signing of the treaty results in Egypt’s expulsion from the Arab League since the agreement is an implicit acknowledgment of the state of Israel. The 1978 Nobel Peace prize is awarded to Sadat and Begin.

**1980:** The Israeli Knesset (Parliament) passes the “Basic Law on Jerusalem” which declares Jerusalem “complete and united” as its capital. The U.N. Security Council condemns the annexation of East Jerusalem.

**1981:** Egyptian President Sadat is assassinated by Islamic extremists.

**1982:** As stipulated by the Camp David Accord, Israel withdraws from the Sinai, land it captured from Egypt during the 1967 War. The Sinai reverts to Egyptian control.

## F Y I

### UN Resolutions

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is the issue that has generated the largest number of resolutions in the United Nations. (Salaam)

Key resolutions are:

- > 181, which divided Palestine
- > 194 which stated that refugees can return
- > 242 which required Israel to relinquish land gained in the 1967 War
- > 338 which calls for a cease-fire and peace negotiations in 1973.

The most recent resolution, 1550, was adopted on June 29, 2004, and calls on all parties to implement resolution 338.

**1987 – 94:** The Palestinian intifada, [ **SEE A SHARPER FOCUS: FIRST INTIFADA** ] a spontaneous popular uprising against Israeli occupation, starts in the West Bank and Gaza. Palestinian demonstrators throw stones and incendiary devices at Israeli troops in the Occupied Territories. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin implements the “iron fist policy” and the Israeli military responds with wooden bats, water cannons, rubber bullets and live ammunition. Curfews are imposed on Palestinians, and arrests and deportations follow. Killed are 1,392 Palestinians and 160 Israelis. Many more are wounded.

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**1995 – May 2000:** The film **PROMISES** is made during this period between the Oslo accords and the second intifada.

**1995:** While attending a peace rally, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is assassinated by a right wing Jewish extremist who opposes the peace process.

**1996:** Palestinian elections are held. Despite calls for a boycott, Palestinians endorse the peace process by giving Arafat an overwhelming victory. An escalation of terrorism and violence in Israel brings the defeat of the Labor Party and victory for the Likud party and prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

**1998:** After a peace summit convened by President Bill Clinton, resulting in the Wye River Memorandum, Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority chairman Yasser Arafat sign an agreement calling for, among other things, the Israeli military to pull back from portions of the West Bank and the Palestinian Authority to combat terrorist groups more effectively.

**1999:** At Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat sign an agreement restating their commitment to full implementation of all agreements reached since the first Oslo Agreement.

**2000:** Wanting to forge peace between Israelis and Palestinians before leaving office, President Clinton convenes a summit at Camp David II, but talks fail to come up with mutually acceptable solutions to the status of Jerusalem and the right of return of Palestinian refugees.

**September 2000:** The second intifada or political uprising is sparked by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's visit, accompanied by Israeli soldiers, to the Muslim sacred site, the al-Aqsa mosque located on the Temple Mount above the Wailing Wall.

## F Y I

**Total Jewish Population Worldwide (2002)** ( <http://www.usisrael.org> )

> **13 million**

Approximately 44 percent live in the United States, 37 percent in Israel, and the remaining 19 percent are spread throughout the world. The countries with the 10 largest Jewish populations are, in order: The United States, Israel, France, Russia, Ukraine, Canada, United Kingdom, Argentina, Brazil and South Africa.

**Total Palestinian Population Worldwide (2003)** ( <http://www.reliefweb.int> )

> **8.7 million**

The majority (42 percent) live in the West Bank and Gaza, 31 percent in Jordan, 17 percent in other Arab countries, and 3 percent in the United States.

**2001:** The U.S. Mitchell Report calls for an immediate cease-fire and a complete freeze on Israeli settlement building in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

**2002:** President George W. Bush, along with the European Union, Russia and the United Nations, proposes “a road map” to peace.

**2003 – 2004:** Hostilities, mutual suspicion and deaths continue as both sides profess to seek an end to violence. Palestinian “suicide bombings” and Israeli “targeted killings” continue. One of the most contentious issues is Israel’s building what it calls a “security fence,” which will weave in and out for approximately 400 miles along the West Bank, incorporating Israeli settlements and cutting some Palestinians off from their farms, jobs and schools. A U.N. report has condemned the barrier as illegal. It says the fence will cause serious human suffering to 700,000 Palestinians. According to the Arab News Service, Al Jazeera, the building of the “Apartheid Wall” continues “despite worldwide protest.” The International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague, the principal judicial organ of the United Nations ruled on July 9, 2004, that the barrier should be torn down and is illegal and has imposed hardship on thousands of Palestinians.

**February 2004:** Prime Minister Ariel Sharon proposes unilaterally removing all Jewish settlers and the military from Gaza by the end of 2005. Also, four small settlements from the northern West Bank would be evacuated. This proposed “pull out” from Gaza is viewed with suspicion by many Israelis as well as by Palestinians and many Americans.

SOURCES:

- > *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Second edition) by William Cleveland (Westview Press, 2000) ISBN 0-8133-3489-6
- > Al-Jazeera News Organization (<http://english.aljazeera.net/HomePage> )
- > Anti-Defamation League
- > BBC News ([http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in\\_depth/middle\\_east/2001/israel\\_and\\_the\\_palestinians/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_depth/middle_east/2001/israel_and_the_palestinians/default.stm) )
- > Global Connections (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/globalconnections/> )
- > Palestine: The People and the Land (<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/8B6EB4AA-E7C3-49AC-9F3E-A70603635511.htm> )
- > Rethinking Schools (<http://www.rethinkingschools.org/war/activities/> )
- > FRONTLINE “Shattered Dreams of Peace” (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/oslo/etc/cron.html> )
- > The Middle East Research and Information Project (<http://www.merip.org/> )
- > United Nations (<http://www.un.org> )
- > U.S. State Department (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2003/20062.htm> )

The origins of Zionism date back to the first century when the ancient Romans expelled the Jews from Palestine (also known as Zion or the Holy Land). The Jews who ended up in Europe (and eventually spread across the world) kept alive the idea of a return to their sacred land, especially since they believed that it was their religious duty to establish the Kingdom of Israel in Zion as described in the Torah. Many Jews who ended up in Arab-speaking countries abided by this belief too and acted on it as early as the 19th century with the first Yemenite immigration. Discriminated against by governments and private individuals alike, European Jews were subject to restrictions forbidding them from entering certain professions, denying them access to universities, barring them from state employment, and confining them to specific areas of residence. In the face of oppression and prejudice, the visionary belief in an eventual return to Zion offered Jewry a measure of hope with which to endure the hard reality of the Diaspora (life outside of Zion). Yet, although Zionism was deeply ingrained in Jewish religious life, it received little organizational expression until the late nineteenth century.

Modern political Zionism — Jewish nationalism focusing on Palestine — began in Russia in the 1880s, where anti-Semitism was most rampant. Following the devastating Russian pogroms (government-organized attacks on Jews) of the late 19th century, Jewish groups formed to assist Jewish migration to the ancient homeland in Palestine. Zionism was a disorganized movement until Theodore Herzl (1860-1904) — a central European Jew and “the Father of Zionism” — arrived. Though Herzl did not originate the idea of Zionism, he used his phenomenal energy and determination to create a coherent international movement. His famous treatise — *The Jewish State (Der Judenstaat)* written in 1896 — argued that Jews constituted a nation but lacked a political/geographical state within which they could express their national culture and religion free of anti-

Semitism. According to Herzl, there was only one solution to the permanent problem of anti-Semitism: “Let the sovereignty be granted us over a portion of the globe large enough to satisfy the rightful requirements of a nation; the rest we shall manage for ourselves.” (*The Jewish State*) This famous text, which became the ideological basis for Zionism, had “an electrifying effect on East European Jewry and provided Zionism with a clearly stated political objective.” Buoyed by the positive response, Herzl organized the first Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in 1897 that adopted the following policy: “The aim of Zionism is to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law.” (The Basel Declaration)

The Zionist Congress met annually after 1897, but was not able to secure the backing of a Great Power, which Herzl deemed necessary for the plan to be a success. It was only during World War I that European support for Zionism improved dramatically.

SOURCE USED: *A History of the Modern Middle East*, Second Edition, by William L. Cleveland (Westview Press, 2000)

“The Balfour Declaration of 1917 was the first significant declaration by a world power in favour of a Jewish ‘national home’ in what was known as Palestine. Historians disagree as to what the then British Foreign Secretary, Arthur James Balfour, intended by his declaration. The letter has no mention of the word state,’ and insists that nothing should be done ‘which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine.’

The letter was addressed to Lord Rothschild, a leader of the Jewish community in Britain. It became an important arm of the movement to create a Jewish state in Palestine.

“The Balfour Declaration, proclaimed during World War I, reflected the issues that arose as the Ottoman Empire (area controlled by Turkey) disintegrated. As colonialism began to fray in many parts of the world, Britain’s Balfour Declaration reinforced old customs, even though the British did not ‘own’ Palestine — ‘did not have sovereignty over the area to allow it to give it away.’ The British Mandate over Palestine that followed was confirmed by the League of Nations: ‘in favour of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, it being clearly understood that nothing should be done which might prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine.’

“What neither the Balfour Declaration nor the League of Nations offered, however, was any idea about a plan for the indigenous population of Palestinians who would be affected by Jewish immigration and settlements. Efforts to limit Jewish immigration in the years following was, ultimately, unsuccessful, and Jewish people, often under attack in their home countries, began to come to Palestine.”

*The Palestine-Israeli Conflict* by Dan Cohn-Sherbok and Dawoud El-Alami (Oneworld Press, Oxford, 2002), pp. 104-5; BBC News

### The letter:

*Foreign Office  
November 2nd, 1917*

*Dear Lord Rothschild,  
I have much pleasure in conveying to you on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet:*

*His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.*

*I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.*

*Yours,  
Arthur James Balfour*

After World War II and the Holocaust, the plight of Jewish survivors and displaced persons combined with concerns about where wartime and post-war refugees could settle led to a more sympathetic world view toward the formation of the state of Israel. For Zionists and Jewish survivors, the events of the Holocaust made it seem all the more imperative that they create a safe haven state for themselves in Israel. In this historical and political context, the voices and needs of Palestinians and Arabs were less successful, in part because of division among Palestinians themselves.

As the Jewish state became more and more of a *de facto* reality, the British Royal Commission proposed in 1937 a partition of disputed territory into independent Jewish and Palestinian areas. Proposals for partition, which Arabs opposed, meant that over 300,000 Arabs would have to move, and “Palestinians found themselves trapped in a situation which they could not win.” As the years of World War II went on, a “stark contrast ... between the degrees of Jewish and Arab organization” emerged. “The Jewish immigrants,” according to Dawoud El-Alami, “were in Palestine because they had chosen to go there in pursuit of an ideal; the Palestinian Arabs, however, lived there because they and countless generations before them were born there.” Their “political awareness” was, after centuries of subjugation by the Ottomans, less developed. While they used to make up the majority of inhabitants of Palestine before the war, only 150,000 out of 950,000 indigenous Palestinians remained within what is now known as the state of Israel.

SOURCES USED: Al Jazeera; *The Palestine-Israeli Conflict* by Dan Cohn-Sherbok and Dawoud El-Alami (Oneworld Press, Oxford, 2002), pp. 120-137.

“As a consequence of the fighting in Palestine/Israel between 1947 and 1949, more than 700,000 Palestinian Arabs became refugees. The precise number of refugees — and questions of responsibility for their exodus — are sharply disputed. Many Palestinians have claimed that most were expelled in accordance with a Zionist plan to rid the country of its non-Jewish inhabitants. The official Israeli position holds that the refugees fled on orders from Arab political and military leaders. One Israeli military intelligence document indicates that at least 75 percent of the refugees left due to Zionist or Israeli military actions, psychological campaigns aimed at frightening Arabs into leaving, and direct expulsions. Only about five percent left on orders from Arab authorities. There are several well-documented cases of mass expulsions during and after the military operations of 1948-49 and massacres and atrocities that led to large-scale Arab flight. The best-known instance of mass expulsion is that of the 50,000 Arabs from the towns of Lydda and Ramle (just south of Tel Aviv).” (The Middle East Research and Information Project Online)

As a result of natural population increase and further displacements caused by war, the number of Palestinian refugees has significantly grown over the last 50 years. Now it is estimated that there are about 4 million Palestinian refugees, 1 million of whom live in the refugee camps.

Beginning in 1949, most of the Palestinian refugees moved to makeshift camps located in Jordan (including the West Bank and East Jerusalem which was ruled by Jordan from 1948-67) Lebanon, Syria and the Gaza Strip. Though the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) had created these refugee camps to be a temporary solution (until the Palestinians could return to their homes in Israel), they have remained intact over the last five decades. Actions taken by the Israeli government in the years following 1948 made repatriation (the return of Palestinians to their rightful homes) a very distant possibility since the Israelis quickly absorbed the Palestinian villages, urban homes

and farmland into their new state to help house and feed the massive wave of Jewish immigrants. In contrast, the camp living quarters of the Palestinian refugees “consisted of shacks made up of flattened petrol cans or tents in which extended families shared an unprivate existence. Over time, many of the camps took on more permanent features and came to resemble villages, with concrete block dwellings, schools and a few economic enterprises. But though they resembled villages, they were not the real thing; they were degrading habitations of people on the international dole, people deprived of work, of freedom and, it appeared, of a future.”

(Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*)

Palestinians demand that these refugees should have the right to return to their homes in Israel under United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194 of 1948 which “Resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.” (MidEast Web Historical Documents) Israelis note that an almost equal number of Jewish refugees fled Arab lands to Israel in 1948. The Israeli government opposes the Palestinian refugees’ “right of return” because that would create a Palestinian majority and thus would put an end to Israel as a Jewish state.

#### FURTHER SOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- > **MidEast Web** at <http://www.mideastweb.org/refugees1.htm> (for general information) and <http://www.mideastweb.org/mrefugees.htm> (for maps of the refugee camps).
- > **The Yellow Wind** by David Grossman (Picador, 1988) for memorable descriptions of the camps.
- > **Anatomy of a refugee camp** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/iraq/presentations/refugees/refugee.html>

“After 1949, although there was an armistice between Israel and the Arab states, the conflict continued and the region remained imperiled by the prospect of another war. This was fueled by an escalating arms race as countries built up their military caches and prepared their forces (and their populations) for a future showdown.” (The Middle East Research and Information Project Online)

The pivotal confrontation between Israel and the Arab world took place in June of 1967, which dramatically shifted the balance of power in the region. “The 1967 War, which lasted only six days, established Israel as the dominant regional military power. The speed and thoroughness of Israel's victory discredited the Arab regimes. In contrast, the Palestinian national movement emerged as a major actor after 1967 in the form of the political and military groups that made up the Palestine Liberation Organization.” (MERIP)

However, the most important legacy of the 1967 War was Israel's acquisition of land, now referred to as the Occupied Territories. During this defensive war, Israel captured and occupied the West Bank and East Jerusalem (from Jordan), the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip (from Egypt), and the Golan Heights (from Syria). Through a land-for-peace agreement, Israel returned the Sinai to Egypt in 1979, but still maintains strict control of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem through a strong military presence and an ever-growing system of highways, checkpoints and religious settlements. A main obstacle to peace in the region remains Israel's occupation of Arab lands following the 1967 War and the increasingly violent Palestinian response to living under Israeli rule, with the increasingly severe retaliation by Israeli Defense Forces.

FURTHER SOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- > Chapter 13: “The Fault Line.” *From Beirut to Jerusalem* by Thomas Friedman (Anchor Books, 1995)
- > *The Yellow Wind* by David Grossman (Picador, 1988) for a journalistic description of the occupation.

“In 1967, the West Bank (comprised of 2,270 square miles) was inhabited by almost 600,000 Palestinians, and the Gaza Strip (only 140 square miles) contained nearly 350,000 Palestinians, most of them refugees. “Israel’s success in capturing these territories (in the June [1967] War) raised a vexing series of questions for Israeli authorities about how to deal with the land and its inhabitants. For security reasons, the Israeli military regarded the retention of at least a portion of the territories as essential. Official Israeli political circles at the time believed that most of the occupied lands would eventually be returned in exchange for peace agreements with the Arab states. However, Jewish religious organizations viewed the territories — especially the West Bank, which they referred to by its biblical names, Judea and Samaria — as part of the historic land of Israel and claimed that Israel had a duty to retain them for the Jewish people.” (Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*)

Though Israel launched a “modest settlement policy” along the Jordan River in 1967, the settlement movement only caught wind in 1977 when a conservative government came to power, backed by religious settlers. The number of religious settlers in the territories increased by nine-fold in the following six years as the conservative party’s Prime Minister put forth economic incentives for Jews to move into and thus annex the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

“The settlement policy adopted after 1977 was also intended to break up and isolate areas where the Arab population was heavily concentrated. This tactic was pioneered by a militant religious organization called Gush Emunim (the Bloc of the Faithful), which began to establish illegal settlements on Arab-owned land in the mid-1970s.” (Cleveland)

Since 1967, “Israel has built hundreds of settlements and permitted hundreds of thousands of its own Jewish citizens to move to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, despite the fact that this constitutes a breach of international law. Israel has justified the violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and other

international laws governing military occupation of foreign territory on the grounds that the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are not technically ‘occupied’ because they were never part of the sovereign territory of any state. Therefore, according to this interpretation, Israel is not a foreign ‘occupier’ but a legal ‘administrator’ of territory whose status remains to be determined. The international community has rejected the Israeli official position that the West Bank and Gaza are not occupied and has maintained that international law should apply there. But little effort has been mounted to enforce international law or hold Israel accountable for the numerous violations it has engaged in since 1967.” (The Middle East Research and Information Project Online)

Despite the Oslo accords and other agreements, settlement building continues for security and religious reasons and for Israel to gain land.

FURTHER SOURCE RECOMMENDATION:

> Goldberg, Jeffrey. “Among the Settlers: Will they destroy Israel?” *The New Yorker* 31 May 2004: 46-69.

“In December 1987, the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza started a mass uprising against the Israeli occupation (which had begun after the 1967 War). This uprising, or intifada (which means “shaking off” in Arabic), was not started or orchestrated by the PLO leadership in Tunis. Rather, it was a popular mobilization that drew on the organizations and institutions that had developed under occupation. The intifada involved hundreds of thousands of people, many with no previous resistance experience, including children, teenagers and women. For the first few years, it involved many forms of civil disobedience, including massive demonstrations, general strikes, refusal to pay taxes, boycotts of Israeli products, political graffiti and the establishment of underground schools (since regular schools were closed by the Israeli military as reprisals for the uprising). It also included stone throwing, Molotov cocktails and the erection of barricades to impede the movement of Israeli military forces.

“Under the leadership of Minister of Defense Yitzhak Rabin, Israel tried to smash the intifada with ‘force, power and blows.’ From 1987 to 1991 Israeli forces killed over 1,000 Palestinians, including over 200 under the age of sixteen. By 1990, most of the (intifada) leaders had been arrested and the intifada lost its cohesive force, although it continued for several more years. Political divisions and violence within the Palestinian community escalated, especially the growing rivalry between the various PLO factions and Islamist organizations (Hamas and Islamic Jihad.) Palestinian militants killed over 250 Palestinians suspected of collaborating with the occupation authorities and about 100 Israelis during this period.

“Although the intifada did not bring an end to the occupation, it made clear that the status quo was untenable. The intifada shifted the center of gravity of Palestinian political initiative from the PLO leadership in Tunis to the occupied territories. Palestinian activists in the occupied territories demanded that the PLO adopt a clear

political program to guide the struggle for independence. In response, the Palestine National Council (a Palestinian government-in-exile) convened in Algeria in November 1988, recognized the state of Israel, proclaimed an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and renounced terrorism. The Israeli government did not respond to these gestures, claiming that nothing had changed and that the PLO was a terrorist organization with which it would never negotiate. The U.S. did acknowledge that the PLO’s policies had changed but did little to encourage Israel to abandon its intransigent stand.” (Middle East Research and Information Project Online)

FURTHER SOURCE RECOMMENDATION:

> Chapter 14: “The Earthquake.” *From Beirut to Jerusalem* by Thomas Friedman (Anchor Books, 1995)

Under the leadership of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Israel initiated secret negotiations in Oslo, Norway directly with PLO representatives in early 1993. These negotiations produced the Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles — also known as the Oslo Peace Accord — which was signed in Washington in September 1993.

“The Declaration of Principles was based on mutual recognition of Israel and the PLO. It established that Israel would withdraw from the Gaza Strip and Jericho, with additional withdrawals from further unspecified areas of the West Bank during a five-year interim period. During this period, the PLO [would] form a Palestinian Authority (PA) with ‘self-governing’ (i.e. municipal) powers in the areas from which Israeli forces were redeployed. In January 1996, elections were held for a Palestinian Legislative Council and for the presidency of the PA, which was won handily by Yasir Arafat. The key issues such as the extent of the territories to be ceded by Israel, the nature of the Palestinian entity to be established, the future of the Israeli settlements and settlers, water rights, the resolution of the refugee problem and the status of Jerusalem were set aside to be discussed in final status talks.

“The PLO accepted this agreement with Israel because it was weak and had little diplomatic support in the Arab world. Both Islamist radicals and local leaders in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip challenged Arafat's leadership. Yet only Arafat had the prestige and national legitimacy to conclude a negotiated agreement with Israel.

Alas, “the Oslo accords set up a negotiating process without specifying an outcome. The process was supposed to have been completed by May 1999. There were many delays due to Israel's reluctance to relinquish control over the occupied territories, unwillingness to make the kinds of concessions necessary to reach a final status agreement, and periodic outbursts of violence by Palestinian opponents of the Oslo process, especially HAMAS and Jihad. During the Likud's (conservative party's) return to power in 1996-99, Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu avoided engaging seriously in the Oslo process, which he distrusted and fundamentally opposed.

“During the protracted interim period of the Oslo process, Israel's Labor and Likud governments built new settlements in the occupied territories, expanded existing settlements and constructed a network of bypass roads to enable Israeli settlers to travel from their settlements to Israel proper without passing through Palestinian-inhabited areas. The Oslo accords contained no mechanism to block these unilateral actions or Israel's violations of Palestinian human and civil rights in areas under its control.

“Throughout the interim period there was ongoing concern that while Israel had undertaken territorial sacrifices for peace, the Palestinians did not comply with their signed commitments in the interim agreements, particularly those in the realm of security and combating terrorism and anti-Israel and anti-Semitic propaganda.” (Anti-Defamation League)

“Final status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians only got underway in earnest in mid-2000. By then, a series of painfully negotiated Israeli interim withdrawals left the Palestinian Authority with direct or partial control of some 40 percent of the West Bank and 65 percent of the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian areas were surrounded by Israeli-controlled territory with entry and exit controlled by Israel. The Palestinians' expectations were not accommodated by the Oslo accords. The Oslo process required the Palestinians to make their principal compromises at the beginning, whereas Israel's principal compromises beyond recognition of the PLO were to be made in the final status talks.” (Middle East Research and Information Project)

FURTHER SOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- > *The Process: 1,100 Days That Changed the Middle East* by Uri Savir (Vintage, 1999)
- > *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After* by Edward W. Said (Vintage Books, 2001)

What images come to your mind when you think about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?  
Where do these images come from?

What are the basic claims causing the conflict between Palestinians and the Israelis?

Name as many countries as you can in the Middle East.

Where do the Palestinians live?

Where do the Israeli settlers live?

What is the U.S. government position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

How much financial support does the United States provide to Israel?

**What images come to your mind when you think about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?  
Where do these images come from?**

Students will likely respond with images of burned-out buses, rock-throwing demonstrators, demolished homes, injured civilians, Israeli tanks, Palestinians wearing checked scarves, Religious Jews with side curls, etc. The images come primarily from media portrayals.

**What are the basic claims causing the conflict between Palestinians and the Israelis?**

While many think the conflict is primarily religious, the conflict is about land ownership, division of resources (such as water, land and financial support) sovereignty, human rights, self-determination and security. Issues that are difficult to resolve are the status of Jerusalem, the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes in Israel, Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and, more recently, the security fence/wall.

**Name as many countries as you can in the Middle East.**

The U.S. State Department lists the following 18 countries as the “Near East”: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Other countries sometimes included in descriptions of the “Middle East” include Turkey, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

**Where do the Palestinians live?**

There are different groups of Palestinians. Some live in Israel; some live in refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; others live in cities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and some live in other parts of the world. The majority, 42 percent, live in the West Bank and Gaza, 32 percent in Jordan, 17 percent in other Arab countries and 3 percent in the United States.  
( <http://www.reliefweb.int/> ) *NOTE: The Palestinian Authority has some autonomy in certain areas of Gaza and the West Bank.*

**Where do the Israeli settlers live?**

Israeli settlers live in Israeli-government built settlements in the occupied territories of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and parts of the Golan Heights and Jerusalem.

**What is the U.S. government position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?**

While the U.S. government’s stated policy is to promote a two state solution, the thrust of U.S. action has been to support Israel politically and financially.

**How much financial support does the United States provide to Israel?**

For FY 2003, the Administration requested \$600 million in economic, \$2.1 billion in military and \$60 million in migration resettlement assistance. Since 1976, Israel has been the largest annual recipient of U.S. foreign assistance. By contrast, the FY 2004 request for assistance to all of sub-Saharan African was \$1.04 billion.

### Lesson goal

This activity will help students learn more about the children who are featured in PROMISES, with the goal of broadening their understanding of the different perspective that each child has on the issues facing Israelis and Palestinians.

### Materials

- > STUDENT WORKSHEET: The Children In the Film
- > STUDENT WORKSHEET: Discussion Questions
- > The film

### Time needed

102 minutes to view the film; one class period for this post-viewing activity

### Instructions

1. Prior to viewing the film, break the class into seven groups. Assign each group a child featured in the film. Tell each group to pay special attention to their person as they view the film. (Students may take notes if they wish.) You may want to provide students with the Discussion Questions prior to viewing to give them some sense of what they will be looking for as they view.
2. Following the viewing, ask students to sit in their groups and spend 10 minutes, working individually, jotting notes to the Discussion Questions on the worksheet. After 10 minutes, ask them to talk about their answers in their groups.
3. Following the discussion, ask each student, working with their groups, to complete the Viewing Worksheet trying to reach consensus and think of examples as they write. Each group should be prepared to present information to the class.
4. Discuss the ways in which the lives of the Israeli and Palestinian children are different, even though they live only 20 minutes away from each other.
5. **EXTRA CREDIT:** Have students write an essay about a place they have either visited or heard about that is about 20 minutes from where they live. In what ways are the lives of young people growing up there the same as or different from theirs?

**After watching the film, discuss the following questions:**

1. What differences did you notice in living conditions between the Palestinian and Israeli children in the film?
2. What aspects of daily life did you see in both the Israeli and Palestinian children's lives that you would NEVER have to think about?
3. What does being Israeli mean for Daniel and Yarko? For Moishe?
4. What does the Israeli occupation mean for Faraj and Sanabel?
5. What made Faraj change his mind about meeting Yarko and Daniel?
6. Why did Mahmoud not want to meet Yarko and Daniel?
7. Why did Moishe not want to meet Palestinians?
8. What role did sports play in the film?
9. Who came in second place? What does it mean?
10. What did the burping sequence mean to you?
11. What do you have in common with your person?
12. What do you find hard to understand about your person?
13. How if at all did your person change in the film?
14. What more do you want to know about your person?  
(Note: The home video version of **PROMISES** includes updates about the children.)
15. Why do you think the film is called **PROMISES**?
16. How did you feel in the moments after watching the film?
17. What are your feelings about the prospects for peace in the Middle East?  
What in the film made you feel hopeful? What in the film made you feel discouraged?
18. What touched or affected you while watching the film? Tell two or three things.
19. What surprised you? Tell two or three things.



**Yarko & Daniel, secular Israelis, West Jerusalem, grandsons of Holocaust survivor**

*I think this is our country and it's also theirs. (Yarko)  
In war both sides suffer. Maybe there's a winner but what's a winner? People on BOTH sides die. Both sides lose. (Daniel)*



**Mahmoud, Palestinian Muslim, East Jerusalem, son of merchant in Muslim quarter of the Old City**

*The Jews say this is their land. How could it be their land? If it's their land, why does the Quran say that The Prophet Mohammed flew from Mecca to the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem?*



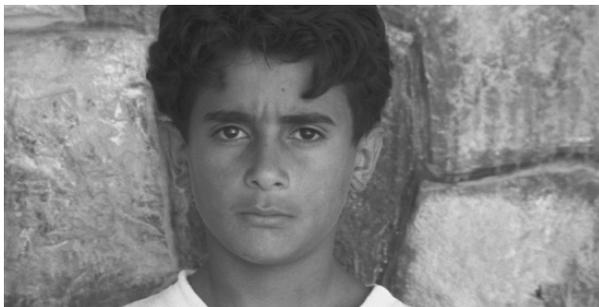
**Shlomo, Israeli Orthodox Jew, Jewish quarter of the Old City, son of a rabbi**

*I understand them because they were thrown out of here 50 years ago and they feel very very small. Very like hurt because they were thrown out that way.*



**Sanabel, Palestinian Muslim, Deheishe Refugee Camp, daughter of jailed Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) leader**

*The Jews kicked us off our land and put us in this camp.*



**Faraj, Palestinian Muslim, Deheishe Refugee Camp, son of Palestinian refugees**

*The life we live doesn't allow us to accomplish our dreams. Peace between you and me is impossible unless we get to know each other.*



**Moishe, Israeli Orthodox Jew, Beit-El, settler on West Bank**

*God promised us the land of Israel. The Arabs came and took it. I am surrounded by Arabs. We fight because this land is ours. If I could make my own future, all the Arabs would fly away.*



### Lesson goals

Issues of identity are central to the film **PROMISES**. The children in the film have a very strong sense of who they are and where they come from. The goal of this lesson is to help students identify themselves using the poem “Yellow Woman” as a guide.

### Materials

- > STUDENT WORKSHEET: “Yellow Woman”

### Time needed

About 50-60 minutes, including the time to show the film clip if desired. If time is short, students can complete #3 as homework and share their poems the next day.

### Optional film clip

- > DVD: LESSON PLAN: Who Are You?, Scene Selection: 1–4 & 5–8

### Instructions:

1. Time permitting, show the introductory film clip and ask students to comment on the ways in which the children identified themselves in the film.
2. Hand out the student worksheets and ask students to sit with three or four classmates and read Genevieve Lim-Jue's poem aloud.
3. After students have read the poem aloud, they should discuss its meaning and use Lim-Jue's structure to write a poem in their own voice about who they are. (If time is short, they can write their poems as homework and share them the next day.)
4. Invite students to share poems with each other, either in small groups or in the class as a whole.
5. **OPTIONAL FINAL DISCUSSION QUESTION:** Does the expression of identity inevitably lead to conflict?

*NOTE TO STUDENTS: In Genevieve Lim-Jue's poem, printed in the left-hand column below, the speaker acknowledges and celebrates the elements that have made her who and what she is. Note that the first stanza catalogues the different jobs her ancestors had or might have had, while the second and third stanzas talk more about emotional burdens. The final stanza talks about the speaker's desire to embrace and honor both worlds.*

*After you have read the poem aloud and discussed its meanings, use Lim-Jue's structure to write a poem in your own voice about who you are.*

**"Yellow Woman"**

by Genevieve Lim-Jue

I am the daughter of  
seafarers, gold miners, quartz  
miners, railroad miners,  
farmworkers, garment workers,  
factory workers, restaurant  
workers, laundrymen,  
houseboys, scholars,  
poets, dreamers . . .  
I have seen my father's destiny  
crushed,  
by the weight of his immigrant dreams  
silently staring  
a heap of yellow misery  
inextricably tangled  
amongst the sweating, huddled flesh of Utopia.  
I have heard my mother's prayers  
shaped in tombs of darkness  
seen the invisible tears  
trickling down blank cheeks.  
Heard old women chanting elegies  
from the past,  
beseeching idle gods.  
Neighbors' children mocked their  
bound feet, knarled hands.  
Mother was a pioneer  
groping in the White Darkness.  
They called her China-Woman  
as she walked quietly alone.  
And in the winter of her isolation I was born-  
Blood of Asia,  
Flesh of the New World,  
One-hundred-and-twenty-five-year-old  
daughter of two worlds  
struggling  
to embrace  
one.

**"I Am..."**

by \_\_\_\_\_

**I am the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_**

**I have seen my father's \_\_\_\_\_**

**I have heard my mother's \_\_\_\_\_**

**Mother was \_\_\_\_\_**

**I was born \_\_\_\_\_**

**OPTIONAL**

Do the exercise above, but this time write in the voice of one of the children in the documentary. If you don't know enough details about the child's background, you can invent ones that would plausibly fit.

### Lesson goals

The goal of this lesson is to use Langston Hughes' poem "Theme for English B" as a way to help students understand more about who the children in the film are, and how their background affects the way they see the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

### Materials needed

- > STUDENT WORKSHEET: "Theme for English B"

### Time needed

One class period

### Optional film clip

- > DVD: LESSON PLAN: Who Are The Children In The Film?, Scene Selection: 1–4 & 5–8

#### A NOTE TO TEACHERS ABOUT THE POEM:

Langston Hughes' poem "Theme for English B" presents itself as an assignment that a college student has written for one of his beginning English classes. Though the speaker of the poem, the student, completes the instructor's assignment, he challenges it as well, asking his instructor questions in the body of the poem. When, for example, he says, "I wonder if it's that simple?" he is really observing, tacitly, that the assignment for him is not simple because he is African-American — "colored" — in a white world. The speaker's details and tone highlight both the fact that he is treated differently (he lives in the Harlem Y rather than the dorms because, at this time, African-Americans were not allowed in the dorms) and that he feels different even though he likes the same things as other people.

### Instructions:

1. Distribute the poem and worksheet to students.
2. After they have read the poem aloud to each other twice in small groups, ask them to join together in a whole-class discussion.
3. Questions to ask about the poem:
  - a. Who is the speaker? What is he like?
  - b. Who is the audience to whom he is speaking? Could there be more than one audience?
  - c. What is the situation and setting of the poem? When do you think it was written? How do you know?
  - d. What do you think is the purpose of the poem?
4. After the discussion of the poem, show the film clip from the beginning of **PROMISES** where each child is introduced.
5. Instruct students to complete the STUDENT WORKSHEET (#3-6).

*NOTE TO TEACHERS: You can either assign each group one of the children from the film, or you can let each group choose. It does not matter if two or more groups write on the same child; the poems will be different.*

*NOTE TO STUDENTS: Langston Hughes' poem "Theme for English B," which you will find on the next page, presents itself as an assignment that a college student has written for one of his beginning English classes.*

**Directions:**

1. Sit in groups of three to four students and take turns reading "Theme for English B" aloud. Do this twice so that you really get a sense of the voice and tone of the speaker. Discuss "Theme for English B" with the rest of the class.
2. If time permits, watch the section from the beginning of **PROMISES** where each child is introduced. (You will then choose or be assigned one child for this assignment.)
3. Think back on **PROMISES** as a whole, and brainstorm in your group about the details you will want to include for the child you have chosen or been assigned. In the film, all the children are intensely human because we get to know some of their thoughts, hopes, fears, senses of humor, joys and disappointments. You should compile a list of details and anecdotes.
4. Then, in the voice of the child you have been assigned or chosen, prepare to write a poem called "Theme for **PROMISES**." For the first line, write, "The director said" instead of "The instructor said." You will write the poem as a group.
5. Use your notes from brainstorming to begin to compose your "Theme for **PROMISES**" poem together. Think about the tone you want your poem to have. Should it be sincere? Ironic? Angry? Anguished? A combination of all these — and others too?
6. When you have finished, be prepared to read your group's poem aloud to the rest of the class.

The instructor said,

*Go home and write  
a page tonight.  
And let that page come out of you —  
Then, it will be true.*

I wonder if it's that simple?  
I am twenty-two, colored, born in Winston-Salem.  
I went to school there, then Durham, then here  
to this college on the hill above Harlem.  
I am the only colored student in my class.  
The steps from the hill lead down into Harlem,  
through a park, then I cross St. Nicholas,  
Eighth Avenue, Seventh, and I come to the Y,  
the Harlem Branch Y, where I take the elevator  
up to my room, sit down, and write this page:

It's not easy to know what is true for you or me  
at twenty-two, my age. But I guess I'm what  
I feel and see and hear, Harlem, I hear you:  
hear you, hear me — we two — you, me, talk on this page.  
(I hear New York, too.) Me — who?  
Well, I like to eat, sleep, drink, and be in love.  
I like to work, read, learn, and understand life.  
I like a pipe for a Christmas present,  
or records — Bessie, bop, or Bach.  
I guess being colored doesn't make me not like  
the same things other folks like who are other races.  
So will my page be colored that I write?

Being me, it will not be white.  
But it will be  
a part of you, instructor.  
You are white —  
yet a part of me, as I am a part of you.  
That's American.  
Sometimes perhaps you don't want to be a part of me.  
Nor do I often want to be a part of you.  
But we are, that's true!  
As I learn from you,  
I guess you learn from me —  
although you're older — and white —  
and somewhat more free.

This is my page for English B.

### Lesson goals

The goal of this lesson is to help students understand more about privilege. By engaging in this activity they will come to see that those who are privileged (in this case, privilege means those who have more art supplies) usually do not notice those who are not privileged, whereas those who are not privileged (in this case, those who have fewer art supplies) **always** notice that they have less.

### Materials needed

- > Two boxes of art supplies containing scissors, glue, construction paper, markers, crayons, tape, glitter and stickers.
- > Two boxes of art supplies containing only markers, construction paper and crayons.
- > Four pieces of poster board

### Time needed

One class period

### Optional film clip

- > DVD: LESSON PLAN: The Privileged Few, Scene Selection: 24 “invitation” to end of film.

### Instructions:

1. Time permitting, show the film clip. (Do not discuss the clip until after students have completed the activity.)
2. Divide the class into four groups and give a box of the supplies (see above) to each group. Tell each group to create a poster promoting peace in the Middle East, making their poster as attractive and appealing as possible. Allow 20-30 minutes.
3. Invite each group to share their poster with the rest of the class.  
*NOTE TO TEACHER: Invariably, the groups that have many supplies do not notice that the other groups do not have the same supplies, while the groups that have fewer supplies **always** notice that they have fewer supplies. This provides a segue to talk about privilege. Did students with fewer supplies ask to borrow stickers and glitter from the “privileged”? How did the “privileged” respond?*
4. Lead a classroom discussion about privilege and how that might affect the conflict in the Middle East. Ask students what differences they noticed in the film clip (for example, Yarko and Daniel’s mother drove a car. Yarko asked Faraj about his shoes. What did they notice about the surroundings in the camp?)
5. Discuss with students what the Israeli kids can take for granted that the Palestinian kids cannot and ask them to consider how that might affect the conflict. Ask students to talk about the ways in which each of the seven children have privilege and power, and how the Israeli kids might have more privilege. **What responsibilities do they think come with privilege?**
6. Discuss with students how their lives are the same as and different from the kids in the film.

### Lesson goal:

This lesson introduces students to the idea that an individual can have more than one opinion on the same subject and that we each carry public voices, private voices and even ancestral voices.

The purpose of this role-play is to:

- > allow each child in the film, whom we will now imagine to be 18 years old, a voice;
- > illustrate the tensions that sometimes exist between what people say and what they truly feel;
- > demonstrate the pull of the previous generations on the present;
- > explore how views of the children might change as they turn 18. Keep in mind: at age 18, secular Israelis, like Daniel and Yarko, must do compulsory military service for three years following high school before going to work or college. (Certain Orthodox Jews, like Shlomo, are exempt from compulsory service.) Mahmoud's, Faraj's and Sanabel's opportunities are more limited because of the Israeli occupation and its accompanying checkpoints and closures.

*NOTE: For the purpose of this activity, students will be asked to imagine that each of the seven children in the film is now 18 years old.*

### Materials needed

- > A current map
- > A review of the Overview of Key Events
- > A review of the FYI boxes throughout the guide
- > A review of the Glossary

### Time

One to two class periods (If time is short, show the clip at the end of a class and ask students to do reviews as homework. Then, begin the class the next day re-showing the short clip as an introduction to the activity.)

### Optional film clip

- > DVD: LESSON PLAN: Then, Now and Beyond, Scene Selection: 17–20

### Instructions:

1. Explain to students that the purpose of the exercise is both to voice the different perspectives that the film represents and also to show the different perspectives and influences *within* each of the children in the film as he or she reaches adulthood.
2. Assign students in groups of three to each of the children in the film. This will give speaking roles to 21 students. If your class is larger or smaller, adjust the exercise to accommodate your class. (See note below about how to set up the room.)
3. Each group will contain three “voices”:
  - a. “What I’m saying to the camera”: the child at age eighteen, speaking on record in his **public voice**;
  - b. “What I’m feeling inside but maybe not saying”: the **private voice** of the same eighteen-year old;

### F Y I

#### Military Service in Israel

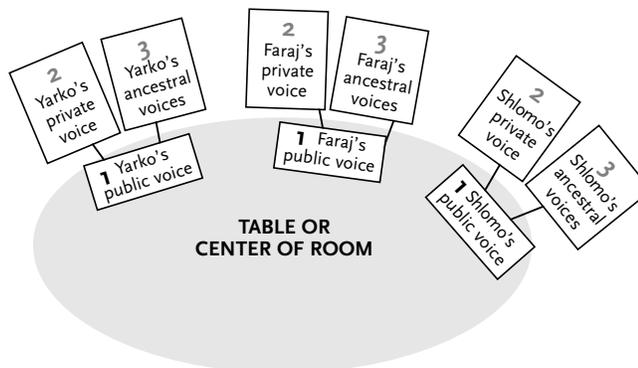
According to Israeli law, military service is compulsory at age 18 for most Israelis; exceptions are made for the ultra-Orthodox, and Palestinian Israeli citizens who do not serve. Today an additional 30 percent of 18 year old Israelis request and are granted exemption on medical or “lack of suitability” grounds. Men serve for three years and women for two, with reserve service for men lasting until age 51 and for single women until age 24. A small number of Israelis, sometimes called “refuseniks” vocally resist serving in the territories (or in the Army at all) on the grounds of conscientious objection.

- c. “What my parents and grandparents would say”: the **ancestral voice** representing the view of the previous generations of this child.
4. Each group of three students will have 10 minutes to talk amongst themselves and to think about what they might say. Each member of the group — public, private and ancestral voice — should be prepared to speak about the following questions:
- > What is your most striking memory of being in the film? Did your views change as a result of your participation in the film?
  - > What did you find it difficult to express in the film? Tell one thing you wish you had said, and explain why you wish you had said it.
  - > At the end of the film, the filmmaker chose to show newborn Israeli and Palestinian babies. Why? What do you think you will tell your children about the film in 25 years?

5. **How to set up the room**

Students representing the public voices of the seven participants in the film, now 18 years old, are sitting in a circle. Behind each student/participant, two other students will sit. One will represent the private thoughts of the participant; the other will represent parents and grandparents (ancestral voices).

*This diagram suggests a way to set up the room for this activity. Complete the circle by including the other children.*



6. Go around the room, one child at a time, hearing from each of their “voices” before moving to hear from the next child.

**LESSON EXTENSION: Creative Writing**

Invite students to consider possible ways to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict using the solutions proposed by the Geneva Accords. Students can react to the solutions from the point of view of one of the children in the film, or they can offer their own opinions.

**F Y I**

The **Geneva Accords** of 2003 are “an unofficial proposal for peace drawn up by left-wing Israelis and leading Palestinians.” The two-state solution “marks the reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians and paves the way for establishment of normal, peaceful relations between the Arab states and Israel.” It calls for dismantling Israeli settlements, a land arrangement based on the 1967 borders, divided sovereignty in Jerusalem, compensation for Palestinian refugees’ homes in Israel, and the implementation overseen by an international committee.

( <http://www.americantaskforce.org/geneva.htm> )

*INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS: Choose one of the following writing assignments. Try to engage with the issues that are raised in **PROMISES** in a way that is creative and leads to greater insight. One page minimum. There are many possible ways to approach this assignment:*

> **Dialogue Poem.**

Write a dialogue poem between two of the kids in the film, between you and one of the kids in the film, between the same kid at different points in his or her life, between BZ (the filmmaker and host) and one of the kids, between one of the kids and his/her parent, or between someone we've studied this year and one of the kids. This is wide open. Use your imagination. (See sample.)

> **Conversation.**

Write a conversation between two people. Think of the same situations as in the dialogue poem choices above, except in the conversation you would have the individuals respond directly to one another. Write the conversation between two of the kids after they finish watching **PROMISES**. Imagine Yarko and Daniel as 18 year olds; write their conversation about whether or not to resist military service in the Occupied Territories. Write a conversation between you and another student after watching the film. Write a conversation between one of the Israelis and one of the Palestinians about a recent suicide bombing.

> **Letter.**

Write a letter from you to one of the kids in the film. Write a letter from one of the kids to another of the kids in the video. Imagine you're a Palestinian filmmaker. Write a letter to the filmmakers telling them how the film made you feel or about the film you would like to make.

> **Interior Monologue.**

Write an interior monologue from the standpoint of any character or object in the film. Try to think of some of the characters that were not central to the film — e.g., Moishe's sister, Faraj's grandmother, Daniel and Yarko's grandfather.

> **Critical Review.**

Write a critical review of **PROMISES**.

> **Mix and match** any of these ideas.

Vikki Polovin was an 11th grader at Franklin High School in Portland, Oregon, when she wrote this poem in Sandra Childs' global studies class.

**We are Children by Vikki Polovin**

**We are children**

*Of Israelis* of Palestinians  
*In settlements* in refugee camps

**We are children**

*Guarded by the military who protect us*  
Surrounded by cruel soldiers who control us

**We are children**

*Our parents have no restrictions.*  
Our parents have curfews.

**We are children**

*My people are free to travel anywhere they please.*  
My people must wait for hours at checkpoints.

*Then there are the Arabs.*

Then there are the Jews.

**Intifada!**

*We have guns.*

We have rocks

**We hate them because they hurt us.**

*They use our buses as bombs and kill innocent people.*  
They shoot us down with no compassion.

**We are scared. We are children.**

*We see our friends blown up downtown.*  
We see our friends shot by soldiers.

**They murder us.**

*We will get rid of* We will liberate

**The Palestinians.**

**This is our land.**

**We are children —**

**Who met children we hate.**

**We are children —**

**Who played with children we hate.**

**They are not so bad. They are not at fault.**

**They are children**

*Who will rise from the rubble*

Who will grow up and become soldiers.

**But for now — we are children.**

*A NOTE TO TEACHERS: Since **PROMISES** was first broadcast, the filmmakers have screened the film for thousands of youth audiences. They are often struck by the fact that these young people don't recognize that **PROMISES** is a documentary and often think that the children in the film are "acting." Before or after watching **PROMISES**, engage students in a discussion about documentary filmmaking.*

### Lesson goal

Students will enhance their media literacy skills and gain a fuller understanding of different types of media that present "reality."

### Materials

- > STUDENT WORKSHEET: Making a Documentary Film

### Time needed

One Classroom Period

### Procedure

1. Have students complete the worksheet "Making a Documentary Film."  
(This can be given for homework if time is short.)
2. Give students the following information about **PROMISES**:
  - > the children are not actors and were filmed in their real lives with few interruptions in their everyday reality;
  - > it took the filmmakers more than five years to make the film;
  - > independent documentary filmmakers need to raise money to make their films. It was difficult for the independent filmmakers to raise funding to make the documentary;
  - > the film was nominated for an Academy Award for best documentary and won two Emmy awards for "Best Documentary" and "Outstanding Background Analysis."
3. Engage students in discussion based on the worksheet. What are the key differences among documentaries, Hollywood dramas and reality television? Specifically, invite students to compare the different ways in which films and television programs are funded — by Hollywood studios, television advertisers, and corporate and foundation funders. Ask them to consider how the funder might influence the content of films and why documentary filmmakers are willing to struggle to obtain funding so that they can maintain editorial and artistic control of the film's content, tone and style.
4. Discuss with students the issue of editorial and artistic control of a film's content. What does editorial control mean? What does artistic control mean? Invite them to consider who has editorial control over different types of films. Do documentary films have to show different sides of an issue or can they show only one side? What is the impact if only one side is shown? Does **PROMISES** show different sides?
5. Ask students to think about a story they would like to tell, in their own way, in a film. How and why would the way they tell the story change if they were telling it on behalf of a particular group? Who might be interested in funding their film? How would the funders affect the editorial content of the film?
6. Invite students to analyze who produced and funded **PROMISES**. How does this compare with funding for a Hollywood movie or a network television show? **PROMISES** was produced by The Promises Film Project, a non-profit organization founded in 1997. **PROMISES** was co-produced by the Independent Television Service (ITVS) and received major funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), The Open Society Institute, The Ford Foundation, The Fund for Jewish Documentary Filmmaking of the National Foundation for Jewish Culture, The Lear Family Foundation, The Yip Harburg Foundation, Steven B. Belkin Foundation and donations from more than 3,000 individuals.

*NOTE TO STUDENTS: You may want to review the following web sites before or after completing this worksheet.*

For a definition of reality television programming:

> <http://www.free-definition.com/Reality-television.html>

For a definition of documentaries:

> [http://www.documentorseminars.com/pages/main\\_what\\_is\\_doc.html](http://www.documentorseminars.com/pages/main_what_is_doc.html)

For a more detailed description of documentaries:

> <http://www.mediaknowall.com/Documentary/definitions.html>

**Complete the following chart:**

	INDEPENDENT DOCUMENTARY FILM	HOLLYWOOD-PRODUCED DRAMATIC FILM	NETWORK OR CABLE REALITY TELEVISION
What is its primary purpose?			
Who usually makes this type of program?			
How is it funded?			
Where is it usually seen?			
Do the people appearing in the film get paid a lot, a little, or nothing?			
Who has editorial control of the film's content?			

What is a documentary film?

How is a documentary film different from a drama?

How is a drama different from "reality television"?

How is a documentary film different from "reality television"?

*Learning about the history of the Jews and Palestinians can be a daunting project. There are hundreds of Internet sites and books on the topic, each with a different perspective. Listed below are some of the books and web sites that are relatively easy for students to understand and/or that provide information from multiple perspectives. (All resources are listed alphabetically.)*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### “A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict,”

Fourth Edition, by Ian J. Bickerton and Carla L. Klausner (Prentice Hill, 2002)

> This relatively concise and comprehensive text includes well-organized chronological chapters, each accompanied by a series of primary documents.

### Al Jazeera

(<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/720C142B-6C68-4E9C-BBBB-3188A635BAFC.htm>)

> The English language web site for the Al Jazeera Arabic news service includes a section entitled: “Palestine, the People and the Land.”

### BBC News

([http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in\\_depth/middle\\_east/2001/israel\\_and\\_the\\_palestinians/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_depth/middle_east/2001/israel_and_the_palestinians/default.stm))

> A comprehensive section on Israel and the Palestinians provides a detailed set of eight maps, each based on a specific time period, along with a timeline, which can be accessed by date. The “Guide to a West Bank Checkpoint” offers an opportunity to explore many aspects of the checkpoints. There are also concise descriptions of key figures and historical events, along with the content of relevant documents.

### Los Angeles Times

(<http://www.latimes.com/>)

> Extensive background and up-to-date coverage on their “Conflict in the Middle East” section. Also includes links to foreign media and the U.S. State Department. (Requires free registration.)

### Palestine Monitor

([http://www.palestinemonitor.org/new\\_web/index2.htm](http://www.palestinemonitor.org/new_web/index2.htm))

> This web page includes a comprehensive series of maps showing the impact of the proposed Israeli “segregation wall.”

“The Founding of the State of Israel,” edited by Mitchell Bard (Greenhaven Press, 2003)

> Part of the *At Issue in History* series, this collection of essays “enables students to learn about

controversial historical events through reading a diverse selection of sources and interpretations.”

“The Israel-Arab Reader: A Documentary History of the Middle East Conflict,” Sixth Edition, edited by Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin (Penguin Books, 2001)

> This comprehensive compilation contains hundreds of primary documents on the Arab-Israeli conflict, including “speeches, letters, articles and reports dealing with all the major interests in the area from all of the relevant political parties and world leaders.”

### The Mideast: A Century of Conflict

(<http://www.npr.org/news/specials/mideast/history/index.html>)

> This 2002 NPR News series traces the roots of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute from the perspectives of Palestinian and Israeli historians.

The Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP <http://www.merip.org>)

> MERIP is a “progressive, independent organization” that produces the Middle East Report providing news and perspectives about the Middle East “not available from mainstream news sources.” Their web site contains a chronology of Palestinian-Israeli Relations and a useful “primer” explaining historical and current Middle East events. It also includes recent op-ed and other news articles.

“The Palestine-Israeli Conflict” by Dan Cohn-Sherbok and Dawoud El-Alami (Oneworld Press, Oxford, 2002)

> This book provides background information from both a rabbi and a Palestinian scholar. It is organized in two parts, each written about the same time period, but with a different perspective. This is a very useful and relatively objective resource.

The Routledge Atlas of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, Seventh Edition, by Martin Gilbert (Routledge, 2002)

> This book uses 160 easy-to-reproduce maps to trace the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict from ancient times to the present.

## OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT WEB SITES

### Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs

<http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa>

### Palestinian National Authority

<http://www.pna.gov.ps/>

## WEB SITES WITH COMPREHENSIVE ANNOTATED RESOURCE LISTINGS

### FRONTLINE “Shattered Dreams of Peace”

( <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/oslo/> )

> This web site accompanies the FRONTLINE film looking at peace efforts between Israelis and Palestinians over the past 10 years. The site includes a timeline from both perspectives, excerpts from the book “Parallel Realities” by journalist Eric Black, historic documents including the U.N. Resolution of 1947, Palestinian National Charter, and Oslo Accord, and a selection of readings and links looking back at the past 100 years of conflict. Particularly helpful is the “Readings and Links” section of the web site: ( <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/oslo/etc/links.html> ).

### The Middle East Network Information Center

( [http://menic.utexas.edu/menic/Government/Politics/Israel\\_Palestinian\\_Conflict/](http://menic.utexas.edu/menic/Government/Politics/Israel_Palestinian_Conflict/) )

> This web site, created by The Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Texas at Austin, provides an extensive list of links on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.

**Primary Source** is an organization dedicated to “teaching students how to respect and appreciate the history and culture of those often forgotten in history.” ( [http://www.primarysource.org/library/islam\\_resources.htm](http://www.primarysource.org/library/islam_resources.htm) )

> This web page describes an extensive annotated list of books and web sites related to the Middle East.

## PROMISES

( <http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2001/promises/resources.html> )

> This web site, which accompanies the film, includes a timeline from both Palestinian and Israeli perspectives and provides a detailed list of annotated resources divided into multiple categories. The site also includes a map. The site

also provides links to noteworthy material from News Hour including: ( [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/middle\\_east/conflict/index.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/middle_east/conflict/index.html) ), an introduction, with a map and up-to-date news reports on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and ( <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/jan-june02/mideast.html> ), which introduces the conflict clearly and concisely.

## NEWS ORGANIZATIONS

### Al Jazeera [ SEE BACKGROUND ]

### Arutz Sheva

( <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/> )

> A news service of the religious-Zionist settler movement in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

### BBC News [ SEE BACKGROUND ]

### Chicago Tribune

( <http://www.chicagotribune.com> )

> Requires free registration to access “Chronicles of crisis, portraits of hope” — stories from their foreign correspondents.

### Christian Science Monitor

( <http://www.csmonitor.com/world/middleEast.html> )

> This site has a daily Terrorism/Security update and a special section on the Middle East.

### CNN

( <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/meast/archive/> )

### Ha’aretz Daily Newspaper

( <http://www.haaretzdaily.com/> )

> Translated daily from the Hebrew edition, this Israeli newspaper offers extensive coverage of both Israeli and Palestinian affairs.

### Jerusalem Post

( <http://www.jpost.com> )

### The Jerusalem Report Magazine

( <http://www.jrep.com/> )

### Los Angeles Times [ SEE BACKGROUND ]

### The New York Times

( <http://www.nytimes.com> )

**Palestine Monitor** [ SEE BACKGROUND ]

**PBS, Online News Hour with Jim Lehrer**

( [http://www.pbs.org/newshouse/bb/middle\\_east/conflict/index.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshouse/bb/middle_east/conflict/index.html) )

> Contains a special section on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.

**The Economist**

( <http://www.economist.com/countries/Israel/> )

> Includes an excellent profile of Israel with well-written backgrounders, relevant links, current reportage and news analysis, and economic data.

**The Electronic Intifada**

( <http://electronicintifada.net/new.shtml> )

> According to their web site, "The Electronic Intifada (EI) publishes news, commentary, analysis, and reference materials about the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict from a Palestinian perspective."

**The Financial Times**

( <http://news.ft.com/home/us> )

> Includes comprehensive background and analysis about the Middle East, most available only by subscription.

**The Guardian**

( <http://www.guardian.co.uk/online/> )

> Includes searchable archive.

**Tikkun**

( <http://www.tikkun.org/> )

> This bimonthly magazine critiques politics, culture, and society from a Jewish perspective.

**Wall Street Journal**

( <http://www.wsj.com> )

> In addition to current news, you can search for news articles from the previous 30 days without paying a fee.

**The Washington Post Online**

( <http://washingtonpost.com> )

> Requires free registration; contains a special section on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

( <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/world/issues/mideastpeace/> ).

**BOOKS**

*The books listed here have been recommended by teachers who use PROMISES in their classrooms.*

**"Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land"** by David K. Shipler (Penguin Books, 2002)

> Originally written in 1986 and revised for the 2002 edition, this Pulitzer Prize-winning classic by former *The New York Times* Jerusalem Bureau Chief is "the best and most comprehensive work there is in the English language on this subject." Long (over 500 pages) but engaging, Shipler brings the tensions of the region to life through his portraits of the many Israelis and Palestinians he meets during his tenure in the Middle East.

**"Death as a Way of Life: Israel Ten Years After Oslo"** by David Grossman (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003)

> The author, a celebrated Israeli reporter, novelist and peace activist bitterly disappointed in the leaders of both sides, explores the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from the inside and in the moment.

**"Drinking the Sea at Gaza: Days and Nights in a Land Under Siege"** by Amira Hass (Owl Books, 2000)

> "The author (an Israeli journalist for the daily *Ha'aretz*) lived in the Gaza Strip and personally observed the events she so eloquently relates in this highly readable and lucid book. She describes in agonizing detail the hardship and deprivation experienced by ordinary Palestinians as they live their lives under Israeli rule."

**"From Beirut to Jerusalem"** by Thomas Friedman (Anchor Books, 1995)

> The second half of this book focuses on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and is very easy to use with students in excerpted form. Chapter 13 ("The Fault Line") adeptly explores the effects of Israel's 20-year occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem leading to the first intifada of 1987, which Friedman presents well in Chapter 14 ("The Earthquake.")

**"Habibi"** by Naomi Shihab Nye (Simon Pulse, 1999)

> Recommended for grades 5-9. This autobiographical novel's 14-year-old protagonist, Liyana Abboud, moves with her Palestinian father and European-American mother from Missouri to

Jerusalem where she encounters new relatives, new landscapes, and a host of challenges which arise when she falls in love with a Jewish boy.

**“Healing Israel/Palestine: A Path to Peace and Reconciliation”** by Michael Lerner (North Atlantic Books, 2003)

> “Healing Israel/Palestine shows that it is possible to be both pro-Israel and pro-Palestine, and provides a clear blueprint for a peace settlement. Unequivocally opposed to war-makers and terrorists, Rabbi Michael Lerner asserts that a spiritual and progressive perspective, rooted in the highest values of the human race, is crucial.”

**“I Saw Ramallah”** by Mourid Barghouti (Anchor Books, 2003)

> “Barred from his homeland after the 1967 War, the poet Mourid Barghouti spent 30 years in exile...As he returns home for the first time since the Israeli occupation, Barghouti crosses a wooden bridge over the Jordan River into Ramallah and is unable to recognize the city of his youth.”

**“Inside Israel: The Faiths, The People, and The Modern Conflicts of the World’s Holiest Land,”** edited by John Miller and Aaron Kenedi (Marlowe and Company, 2002)

> This collection “gathers essays by some of the world’s pre-eminent thinkers, historians and journalists in an attempt to bring insight, understanding and solutions to this perpetually troubled and infinitely vital region.” The essays are subdivided into three sections: “The History,” “A Day in the Life” and “The Peace Process.”

**“Israel Palestine and Peace,”** essays by Amos Oz (Harvest Books, 1995)

> This collection of essays, speeches and letters from the period 1976-94 reflects Amos Oz’s concern about paths to peace between Israelis and Palestinians. The book contains a collection of 12 pieces stressing the general themes that the Palestinian demand for statehood is a legitimate one and that peace is essential for Israel’s survival.

**“Live from Palestine,”** edited by Nancy Stohlman and Laurieann Aladin (South End Press, 2003)

> “This book tells two stories that have become

intertwined in the Middle East: the Palestinians who — tired of waiting for U.N. peacekeepers — have called upon the world’s activists for protection, and the people who are putting their lives on the line answering that call. Together these Americans, Palestinians, Israelis and Europeans are making a non-violent, grassroots attempt to challenge the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.”

**“One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs under the British Mandate”** by Tom Segev (Metropolitan Books, 2000)

> “This book explores the tumultuous period before the creation of the state of Israel, when Britain’s promise to both Jews and Arabs that they would inherit the land set in motion the conflict that haunts the region to this day. Drawing on untapped archival materials, Tom Segev reconstructs an era (1917 to 1948) of limitless possibilities and tragic missteps.”

**“Resurrecting Empire: Western Footprints and America’s Perilous Path in the Middle East”** by Rashid Khalidi (Beacon Press, 2004)

> “Begun as the United States moved its armed forces into Iraq, Rashid Khalidi’s new book examines the record of Western involvement in the region and analyzes the likely outcome of our most recent Middle East incursions. Drawing on his encyclopedic knowledge of the political and cultural history of the entire region as well as interviews and documents, Khalidi paints a chilling scenario of our present situation and yet offers a tangible alternative that can help us find the path to peace rather than Empire.”

**“Strangers in the House: Coming of Age in Occupied Palestine”** by Raja Shehadeh (Steerforth Press, 2001)

> “Raja Shehadeh’s *Strangers in the House* is a vivid, deeply felt account of what it has meant to come to maturity through all the catastrophes that have attended Palestinian life since 1948. Shehadeh’s voice is a rare one in the turmoil of Palestine: angry yet dispassionate, committed yet free.”

**“The Case for Israel”** by Alan Dershowitz (John Wiley & Sons, 2003)

> “Dershowitz, one of the nation’s most

prominent and visible defense attorneys, is also an ardent, eloquent, but not always uncritical defender of Israel. This book is written in the form of a legal brief. Each of the 32 chapters begins with a commonly heard accusation against Israel, with long quotes from reputable “Accusers” (including newspapers and intellectuals), followed by “The Reality” as Dershowitz sees it, and “The Proof,” often drawing on the historical record.”

**“The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After”** by Edward W. Said (Vintage Books, 2001)

> “In 50 essays, most of which were originally published in the Cairo *Ahram Weekly* and London’s *al-Hayat* between 1995 and 2000, Said probes the Palestinian’s people’s relationship to the Israeli government and their lives under Arafat’s Palestinian Authority.”

**“The Other Israel: Voices of Refusal and Dissent,”** edited by Roane Carey and Jonathan Shainin (New Press, 2004)

> A highly readable collection of short essays, “‘The Other Israel’ is an urgent and passionate intervention by Israeli citizens challenging the continued occupation of Palestinian territory and the failed policies of Ariel Sharon’s government. The book includes contributions from journalists, novelists, activists, military reservists and former government officials.”

**“The Yellow Wind”** by David Grossman (Picador, 1988)

> “The Israeli novelist David Grossman’s impassioned account of what he observed on the West Bank in early 1987 — not only the misery of the Palestinian refugees and their deep-seated hatred of the Israelis, but also the cost of occupation for both occupier and occupied — is an intimate and urgent moral report on one of the great tragedies of our time.” Easily excerpted, each individual chapter stands alone in portraying life for the Palestinians within the refugee camps.

**“Via Dolorosa,”** a monologue by David Hare (Faber and Faber, 1998)

> “In 1997, after many invitations, the 50-year-old British playwright resolved finally to visit the 50-year-old state of Israel. The resulting play offers a meditation on an extraordinary trip to both Israel

and the Palestinian territory, which leaves Hare questioning his own values as searchingly as the powerful beliefs of those he met.”

**“Wrestling with Zion: Progressive Jewish-American Responses to the Israel-Palestinian Conflict,”** edited by Tony Kushner and Alisa Solomon (Grove Press, 2003)

> This collection of essays “brings together prominent poets, essayists, journalists, activists, academics, novelists and playwrights representing the diversity of opinion in the progressive Jewish-American community regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.”

#### INFORMATION ABOUT ISLAM

**“Islam: The Straight Path”** by John L. Esposito (Oxford University Press, 1998)

> This book is a guide to Islamic history, faith, culture and politics, giving readers a solid understanding of the faith, belief, and practice of Islam from its origins to the present.

**“Teaching About Islam & Muslims in the Public Schools”**

*Handbook for Educators The Council on Islamic Education* ( <http://www.cie.org> )

> This book provides comprehensive background information about Islam and Muslims. Written in question and answer format, it also has a detailed glossary, annotated list of recommended resources and information for teachers about being sensitive to Muslim students’ needs.

#### INFORMATION ABOUT JUDAISM

**“What I Wish My Christian Friends Knew About Judaism”** by Robert Schoen (Loyola Press, 2004)

> This book gives basic information in easy to understand language about the beliefs and practices of Jews in the United States. It includes a glossary and brief chapters on Israel, the Holocaust and “Old Wars and New Wars.”

#### PEACE GROUPS

**Adam Institute**

( <http://www.tolerance-net.org/network/inst/adaminst.html> )

> “The Adam Institute for Democracy and Peace (Jerusalem/Israel) is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization which focuses on developing

and implementing educational projects to teach the fundamental principles of democracy. In its educational work with Arabs, Jews, new immigrants, schoolchildren, soldiers and police officers, the Adam Institute aims at breaking down stereotypes and teaching non-violent methods of conflict-resolution." The site includes links.

#### **BitterLemons**

( <http://www.bitterlemons.org> )

> Produced by a Palestinian and Israeli, this web site "presents Israeli and Palestinian viewpoints on prominent issues of concern. 'No intelligent and articulate views are considered taboo.'"

#### **Foundation for Middle East Peace**

( <http://www.fmep.org> )

> The Foundation for Middle East Peace (FMEP) is "a nonprofit organization dedicated to informing Americans about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and assisting in a peaceful solution that brings security for both peoples." The site includes very detailed maps of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and extensive annotated links.

#### **Geneva Accords**

( [http://www.heskem.org.il/index\\_en.asp](http://www.heskem.org.il/index_en.asp) )

> The Geneva Accords of 2003 are "an unofficial proposal for peace drawn up by left-wing Israelis and leading Palestinians." The two-state solution "marks the reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians and paves the way for establishment of normal, peaceful relations between the Arab states and Israel." It calls for dismantling Israeli settlements, a land arrangement based on the 1967 borders, divided sovereignty in Jerusalem, compensation for Palestinian refugees' homes in Israel, and the implementation overseen by an international committee.

#### **Givat Haviva**

( <http://www.dialogate.org.il/peace/> )

> Winner of the 2001 Unesco prize for Peace Education, "Givat Haviva is an education, research and documentation center. More than 50,000 children, youth and adults from Israel and abroad participate annually in the seminars, workshops, courses, conferences and other projects offered by Givat Haviva in a range of educational, academic and professional fields."

#### **Gush Shalom**

( <http://www.gush-shalom.org/english> )

> Translated from the Hebrew, meaning Peace Bloc, Gush Shalom "works to influence Israeli public opinion and lead it towards peace and conciliation with the Palestinian people." This is a comprehensive site that includes many articles, documents, extensive links and information about issues such as the "separation wall."

#### **Jewish Alliance for Justice and Peace (Brit Tzedek v'Shalom)**

( <http://www.btvshalom.org/resources/> )

> This relatively new peace organization is meeting with great success in terms of bringing both left as well as centrist Jews into the process.

#### **Jewish Voice for Peace**

( <http://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org> )

> "Jewish Voice for Peace is the voice of the overwhelming majority of American Jews who, as polls consistently show, support a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and an end to Israel's Occupation of Palestinian land. Although many mainstream American Jewish organizations continue to call for "unwavering support" of Israel, JVP demonstrates that those groups are not representative. We further prove that criticizing Israeli policy is not anti-Semitic, and that Jewish tradition requires justice for Palestinians and Jews."

#### **Middle East Children's Alliance**

( <http://www.mecaforpeace.org> )

> This non-governmental organization based in California works to improve Palestinian children's lives through construction of nursery schools, playgrounds, parks and other programs. Their web site includes links, and they offer a slide show to help educate Americans about the plight of Palestinian children.

#### **National Mifkad**

<http://www.mifkad.org.il/eng> )

> "The People's Voice is a new, broad-based civil initiative whose founders recognize that a way exists to bridge the intolerable impasse between Israelis and Palestinians." The group is headed by Israeli Ami Ayalon and Palestinian Sari Nusseibeh.

### Neve Shalom

( <http://nswas.com/> )

> “Neve Shalom ~ Wahat al-Salam (ne-’vé shal-’om /’wah-at i-sal-’am: Hebrew and Arabic for *Oasis of Peace* [Isaiah 32:18]) is a village in Israel established jointly by Jews and Palestinian Arabs of Israeli citizenship and engaged in educational work for peace, equality and understanding between the two peoples.”

### Peace Now (United States)

( <http://www.peacenow.org> )

> Americans for Peace Now [APN] “helps Israel and the *Shalom Achshav* movement to achieve a comprehensive political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict consistent with Israel’s long-term security needs and its Jewish and democratic values.” The web site includes extensive annotated links.

### Peace Now/Shalom Achshav (Israel)

( <http://www.peacenow.org.il/English.asp> )

> This Israeli peace movement’s primary goal is to “address the Israeli government to seek peace — through negotiations and mutual compromise with our Arab neighbors and the Palestinian people.”

### Peres Center

( <http://www.peres-center.org/> )

> Founded by Nobel Laureate Shimon Peres, the center’s mission is “to build an infrastructure of peace by and for the people of the Middle East that promotes socio-economic development, while advancing cooperation and mutual understanding.” The site includes a listing of colleges and universities that offer peace education programs, news articles from a variety of organizations, and a listing of projects and resources.

### Seeds of Peace

( <http://www.seedsofpeace.org> )

> Seeds of Peace is a non-profit, non-political organization dedicated to preparing teenagers from areas of conflict with the leadership skills required to promote coexistence and peace. While the organization focuses primarily on the Middle East, its programs have expanded to include other regions of conflict. As of 2003, participants come from the Middle East, the Balkans, South Asia and Cyprus. The entry point for the Seeds of Peace program is its international camp in Maine. Working with

experienced facilitators and staff, these teenagers participate in a wide variety of coexistence, educational and recreational activities designed to create mutual understanding and respect.

### Sulha

( <http://www.metasulha.org/sulha/> )

> “Sulha is an indigenous, Middle Eastern way of reconciliation. Our goal is to rebuild trust among neighbors, Arabs and Jews, heart to heart, as a grassroots contribution to Peace in Israel. In these excruciating and critical times, we feel there is a need for a safe place to hear and appreciate each other’s stories, hopes, fears, traditions and cultures beyond a specific political agenda.”

### Ta’ayush – Arab Jewish Partnership

( <http://www.taayush.org/> )

> “Ta’ayush (Arabic for “life in common”), is a grassroots movement of Arabs and Jews working to break down the walls of racism and segregation by constructing a true Arab-Jewish partnership.”

### The Open House

( <http://www.openhouse.org.il> )

> “The Open House Center in Ramle was founded in 1991 to further peace and coexistence among Israeli Arabs and Jews in this mixed city of 65,000 residents.” They offer a summer peace camp, Arabic speaking nursery school and a variety of international outreach programs.

### Yesh Gvul

<http://www.yeshgvul.org/english/> )

> “Yesh Gvul (“There is a limit!”) is an Israeli peace group campaigning against the occupation by backing soldiers who refuse duties of a repressive or aggressive nature.”

#### A NOTE ABOUT WEB SITES

*At the time of writing, all Web sites referenced in this section were fully operational. Students should be encouraged to carefully evaluate all Web sites as they review them. Guiding questions should be: Who sponsors this Web site? What bias might the sponsor have? What kinds of sites does this Web site link to? How current is the information?*

*The enclosed DVD includes a number of extras which you are welcome to incorporate into your lesson plan as you see fit.*

### UPDATE ON THE KIDS

In 2004, the filmmaker B.Z. Goldberg and Justine Shapiro interviewed most of the Palestinian and Israeli children that were featured in **PROMISES**. The children, now teenagers, tell the filmmakers how their perception of the Middle Eastern conflict has changed and under which circumstances their relations to the “other” have been re-shaped. The complexity and struggles of their situations have grown with age and we see how hard it is to come up with concrete answers to their cultural difficulties, or to stick with these theories for any length of time. In this additional chapter, the viewer will find stunning comments from Sanabel, Moische, Rahel, Faraj, Yarko and Mahmoud. The footage gives an insight into what’s going on in their lives and how they are turning into different people, with some core cultural perspectives remaining.

Mahmoud recognizes the changes of nature and tells us that “when you grow up you have to adapt”. Now, he is a grown young man who is into cars and sports. Despite his new liberal tendencies in opinion, he still insists that “the land is for the Palestinian people”. Wisely, he comments that “peace between hearts that have been poisoned by hatred is impossible”.

Faraj now lives in Massachusetts after receiving political asylum in the USA. He works at Wal-Mart to save money for a college education and is learning to play guitar from his half Jewish/ half Arab foster family. He compares the U.S. with his native land in terms of co-existence among ethnically different communities. He is puzzled that many different ethnic groups live in the U.S. side by side in peace whereas in Israel and Palestine, in such a small territory, people kill each other on a daily basis.

Sanabel is shocked to hear that Yarko and Daniel are serving in the Israeli army as the twins represented the grassroots efforts of the public for co-existence. Yarko, though in the Israeli army, comments that “people should stop blaming the other side” while also saying that his connection to Sanabel will have to wait until after his required term of service is up.

### THE KIDS JOURNEY TO THE OSCARS –

*March 2002, Los Angeles, California*

This additional chapter shows us behind-the-scenes footage of the cast and crew of **PROMISES** prior to the Academy Award ceremony that took place in 2002 in Los Angeles, when the film was nominated for Best Feature Documentary. Amidst the necessary clothing fittings that Sanabel and Yarko and Daniel go through to attend the awards, Sanabel also participates in an interview with CBS correspondent Bob Simon. Unfortunately, she is only partially quoted for an emotional reaction she has to some of his questions about the Middle Eastern conflict, and a controversy ensues. This special addition ends with footage from 2004 of Yarko and Sanabel discussing their night at the Oscars, and the consequences of being misunderstood.

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