

Chai

Learning for Jewish Life



Israel Level 1
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Lesson 1

Our Country: Here and There (Part 1)

INTRODUCTION

Lesson 1 begins our study of Israel. For the great majority of our students and their families, the idea of living in the United States or Canada and also having an attachment to another country, Israel, can be a challenging one. The goal of this lesson is therefore to establish familiarity between some of the things that the students do as Jews in North America and the things that Jews do in Israel. The lesson utilizes an engaging, age-appropriate story called *My Cousin Tamar Lives in Israel*, which must be purchased, to give students a familiar frame of reference—Jewish holiday celebrations—through which to process some of the similarities and the differences between their lives and the life of a child in the Land of Israel. The next lesson in this level, “Our Country: Here and There (Part 2)” explores additional aspects of similarities and differences between North America and Israel, such as language, music, flags, and food.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- A fundamental aspect of a healthy Jewish identity is a relationship to Israel as the historical homeland and the spiritual inheritance of the Jewish people.
- A fundamental aspect of a healthy Reform Jewish identity is a commitment to advancing the cause of religious pluralism within the modern State of Israel.
- My two countries, the United States (or Canada) and Israel, have their own symbols, foods, and sounds. Relating to the symbols, foods, and sounds of a country can help me understand it better.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. What does Israel mean to me? What do I think of when I think of Israel?
2. How can knowledge of Israel enrich my Jewish belief and behavior?
3. What different roles do *Eretz Yisrael* (the Land of Israel) and *M'dinat Yisrael* (the State of Israel) play in my relationship to Israel?
4. What are the options for relationships I might have with Israel?

QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

1. What is a country and what does a country have?
2. How are the Jewish holidays that I celebrate in my country here (the United States or Canada) the same or different than they are celebrated in Israel, my country there?

EVIDENCE OF UNDERSTANDING

Students will identify differences between where they live and Israel.

LESSON OVERVIEW

- Set Induction: What Is a Country? (5–10 minutes)
- What Does a Country Have? (10–15 minutes)
- *My Cousin Tamar Lives in Israel* (10 minutes)
- A Present for Tamar (15–20 minutes)
- Conclusion (5 minutes)

MATERIALS NEEDED

- A globe or a world map
- *My Cousin Tamar Lives in Israel* by Michelle Shapiro Abraham (New York: URJ Press, 2007)

RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

Auerbach Central Agency of Jewish Education (Melrose Park, PA), online resources for teaching Israel: <http://acaje.org/content/israel/onlineResources/tentips.shtml>

Blumenthal, Scott. *The Great Israel Scavenger Hunt*. Springfield, NJ: Behrman House, 2003.

Rouss, Sylvia A. *Sammy Spider's First Trip to Israel*. Minneapolis: Kar-Ben Publishing, 2003.

LESSON VOCABULARY

citizen

A person who lives in a certain place, such as a city, town, state, or country.

LESSON PLAN

SET INDUCTION: WHAT IS A COUNTRY? (5–10 MINUTES)

1. Ask the students if they know the name of the country we are living in (*United States* or *Canada*). Gently correct any errors in their responses, such as “Michigan” or “Indianapolis.” You can do this by positively stating, for example, that Michigan is a state in our country, and so on. You can also use a map to indicate the places the students name.
2. Ask the students if they have heard of a country called Israel. Show students Israel on the world map. Ask them to turn to page 1 in their workbooks to look at a map of Israel. Tell the students that Israel is a country halfway around the world where many Jews live. In fact, it is a Jewish country. You may want to point out, or engage the students in a brief conversation about, the difference in size between the United States and Israel.
3. Share with the students that they will be learning about some of the things that are the same and some of the things that are different between the country in which they live and the country of Israel.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

What Does a Country Have? (10–15 minutes)

1. Ask the students to look at the What Does a Country Have? activity on pages 2–3 of their student workbooks. Go through the items together one by one and ask students to raise their hand if they agree that a country has that item. Correct any misunderstandings and have them circle the items that a country has and cross out those that it doesn't. A copy of this activity appears on page 7 for the teacher.
2. Ask the students to brainstorm other ideas about what a country might have, and write these on the board. (Possible answers: *bodies of water, mountains, a name.*) Ask the students to draw a picture of one or two of these in the empty boxes provided at the bottom of page.

My Cousin Tamar Lives in Israel (10 minutes)

1. Tell the students that you will now read a story to them about a child in this country and a child in another country, Israel. While you are reading, they should think about the things that are the same and the things that are different about these two countries in the story.
2. Have the students sit as close to you as is feasible so they can see the pictures you will be showing them.
3. Read *My Cousin Tamar Lives in Israel* by Michelle Shapiro Abraham very slowly to the class. Show the students the pictures and ask them what is the same and what is different in each about how each holiday is celebrated in North America and Israel.

A Present for Tamar (15–20 minutes)

In this learning activity, students will draw a picture for a collage that they might bring to Tamar to show how they live their lives in the United States or Canada.

1. Distribute white paper, markers, and crayons to the students.
2. Ask the students to draw a picture of the things they would like to share with Tamar or another Israeli child about what life is like where they live. They can share their favorite foods, their favorite things to do, their favorite holiday celebrations—anything that they believe would help someone to learn about their life.
3. When the students are done, collect the pictures and display them on a bulletin board entitled “Teaching an Israeli Friend about Our Lives in _____ [insert town name].”









CONCLUSION (5 MINUTES)

1. Let the students know that since Israel is the Jewish homeland, everyone who is Jewish, including them, can become a citizen of Israel. That makes them very special.
2. Tell the students that next time they will be learning more about Israel, including the language people speak, the food they eat, and the music they listen to.

What Does a Country Have?

Circle the things that a country has.

Cross out the things that a country does not have.

<p>Does a country have a flag?</p> 	<p>Does a country have a babysitter?</p> 
<p>Does a country have a leader?</p> 	<p>Does a country have an army?</p> 
<p>Does a country have a foot?</p> 	<p>Does a country have people?</p> 
<p>Does a country have holidays?</p> 	<p>Does a country have cities?</p> 
<p><i>What else does a country have? Draw one or two pictures of your own ideas.</i></p>	



Lesson 2

Our Country: Here and There (Part 2)

INTRODUCTION

In the previous lesson, the students were introduced to the story *My Cousin Tamar Lives in Israel* as a way to process some of the things that are the same and some of the things that are different about Jewish holiday celebrations in North America and Israel. In this lesson, they will encounter Tamar, who will “visit” the classroom in the form of a puppet and who will teach them more about her life, including some simple Hebrew vocabulary. A script is provided for your use and you are free to expand upon it in any way that you think would be beneficial in promoting student engagement and understanding.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- A fundamental aspect of a healthy Jewish identity is a relationship to Israel as the historical homeland and the spiritual inheritance of the Jewish people.
- A fundamental aspect of a healthy Reform Jewish identity is a commitment to advancing the cause of religious pluralism within the modern State of Israel.
- My two countries, the United States (or Canada) and Israel, have their own symbols, food, and sounds. Relating to the symbols, foods, and sounds of a country can help me understand it better.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. What does Israel mean to me? What do I think of when I think of Israel?
2. How can knowledge of Israel enrich my Jewish belief and behavior?
3. What different roles do *Eretz Yisrael* (the Land of Israel) and *M'dinat Yisrael* (the State of Israel) play in my relationship to Israel?
4. What are the options for relationships I might have with Israel?

QUESTION TO BE ADDRESSED

How are some of the sounds, foods, and symbols of Israel similar to and different from those I am familiar with in the United States (or Canada)?

EVIDENCE OF UNDERSTANDING

- Students will say several Hebrew words.
- Students will describe one thing they learned about daily life in Israel.

LESSON OVERVIEW

- Set Induction (10 minutes)
- Hebrew and Music with Tamar (15 minutes)
- Tamar's Day (10 minutes)
- Picturing Tamar's Day (15–20 minutes)
- Conclusion (5 minutes)

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Puppet or doll to play the part of Tamar
- Track 1 from the *My Cousin Tamar Lives in Israel* CD.

LESSON VOCABULARY

שלום <i>shalom</i>	Hello, good-bye, and peace.
שמִי <i>shmi</i>	My name is.
תודה <i>todah</i>	Thank you.

LESSON PLAN

SET INDUCTION (10 MINUTES)

The purpose of this set induction is to review with the students some of the things that they learned in Lesson 1 and to introduce Tamar to the group.

1. Remind students about *My Cousin Tamar Lives in Israel*, the story they heard in class in the last session. If you think the students can recall some of the things they learned in the previous session, ask them to do so. Otherwise, ask a series of review questions, such as the following:

- In which country, the United States, Canada, or Israel, does **everyone** in the street, including the bus driver, get dressed up in costumes for Purim? (*Israel*)
- In which country does a loud horn sound in the street to let people know that Shabbat is coming? (*Israel*)

Add to the distinctions any other ideas that came up about Israel in the last class.

2. Tell the students that today, a puppet named Tamar is coming to visit the classroom to teach them more about life in Israel, where she lives. She is going to teach them some Hebrew words that she speaks.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Hebrew and Music with Tamar (15 minutes)

1. Invite the puppet or doll Tamar into your class and follow the script that appears on page 13, or create one like it. The words the students will be learning in Hebrew are *shalom* (hello, good-bye, peace); *sh'mi* (my name is); and *todah* (thank you).
2. After you have finished reading the script as Tamar to the students, suggest that everyone now play a music game with the words they have learned. Explain that you will be playing a song that contains a number of Hebrew words, including *shalom*, *sh'mi*, and *todah*. Tell the students (and Tamar!) to listen carefully and to stand and sit down quickly each time they hear one of the words in the song.
3. Play track 1, “My Cousin Tamar,” on the *Shalom Israel* CD. Help the students to listen for the words *shalom*, *sh'mi*, and *todah*.

Tamar’s Day (10 minutes)

1. In this learning activity, Tamar will tell the students about her average day and the students will consider what things are the same and what things are different between her average day and their average day. Ask the students to raise their hands at the indicated pauses if they do the same thing as Tamar.
2. Use Tamar, the doll or puppet, to tell the following story:

Every morning, when I wake up, I say a prayer (*Modeh Ani*) to thank God for giving me another day of life. I get out of bed, get dressed, wash up, and have my breakfast. [pause] I put my lunch in my backpack and say good-bye to my family before I go off to school. [pause] I live in a big city called Jerusalem, but I live very near my school, so I can walk there by myself. [pause] On the way to school, I see many people on the street. Some are students like me who are going to school. Some are grown-ups who are going to work. Some are soldiers who are protecting our Jewish homeland. I like seeing the soldiers because they are always friendly and they make me feel safe.

When I arrive at school I say good morning to my teacher and to my friends. [pause] We sing “HaTikvah,” the national anthem of Israel, and we look at the Israeli flag. [pause] [Tamar can show

the Israeli flag and ask if the students can describe what the American flag looks like.] I like school, but I'm glad when it is over because then I can play with my friends! [pause] We love to play soccer and other sports.

At night, my family eats dinner. I help my mother set the table. [pause] After dinner, I do my homework and then I watch television for a while or play on my computer until my parents tell me it's time to get ready for bed. [pause] Well, that is pretty much what my day is like. [pause]

When I get in bed, I say the *Sh'ma* and I pray for peace so I won't have to fight in the army when I grow up. Someday, I want to be a doctor.

Have Tamar say good-bye to the children (*shalom*) and put her away.

Picturing Tamar's Day (15–20 minutes)

1. Ask students to open their workbooks to pages 4–8, "Picturing Tamar's Day." Explain that each of the pictures tells something about what Tamar does each day and that the students can color in these pictures. Distribute crayons and markers.
2. After the students have colored the pictures, work as a class to put the pictures in order. Each picture contains a box. The students should write a number 1 in the box of the picture that demonstrates what Tamar did first during her day, a number 2 in the box for what she did next, and so on.

CONCLUSION (5 MINUTES)

1. Ask the students to each say one new thing that they learned about Israel from Tamar's visit.
2. If there is extra time, play "My Cousin Tamar" from the CD again.

Script for Tamar

[*Tamar greets the students speaking Hebrew, and the teacher reminds her that she is in the United States (or Canada) and that she must speak English to the students.*]

Tamar: *Shalom, y'ladim! Ma sh'lomchem Sh'mi Tamar. [Hello, boys and girls, how are you? My name is Tamar.]*

Teacher: Tamar, you have to speak English.

Tamar: Okay, but why?

Teacher: Because we are not in Israel. Not everyone here speaks Hebrew.

Tamar: *B'seder* [okay]. Oh, I mean okay. I hope you learn Hebrew soon so you can come and visit me in Israel. You can come if you just speak English, but in Israel it's fun to speak Hebrew. It's the language of the Jewish people. I can teach you a few Hebrew words that you can practice, okay?

[*Teacher leads agreement.*]

Tamar: But first, what did you learn about Israel so far? [Possible answers: *it's a country, Jews celebrate the same Jewish holidays that we do, but sometimes in a different way.*]

Tamar: *Yofi!* Oops, I mean great! So let's start learning Hebrew. Did anyone ever hear the word *shalom*? Did you know that it is a Hebrew word? It means "hello," "good-bye," and "peace." Let's all say it two or three times: *shalom, shalom, shalom.*

Okay, now I am going to teach you how to say "My name is" in Hebrew. It goes like this: *sh'mi*. Try to say it. [*Let all the students say the word.*] Now let's introduce ourselves in Hebrew! *Sh'mi* Tamar. My name is Tamar. What is your name?

[*Have the students each say sh'mi followed by their name.*]

Tamar: *M'tzuyan!* Oops, I mean excellent! Now I have one more word that I want to teach you today. It's the way we say "thank you" in Hebrew and the word is *todah*. Can everyone say *todah*? [*Have the students repeat the word todah several times.*]

And *todah* to all of you! Let's see if we can practice what we just learned. I have a CD with a song on it that has many Hebrew words. Every time we hear a word we just learned—*shalom, sh'mi, and todah*—let's stand up and sit down quickly, okay? Let's practice without the music first. [*Tamar says the three words, and everyone stands and sits quickly.*] Let's play the music now!