**Seeing Points of View in Arab Israeli Conflict**

**Lesson Plan**

**Grade Level:** 9-12  
**Curriculum Focus:** World History  
**Lesson Duration:** Two class periods

**Student Objectives**

- Research the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- Write a personal account from the point of view of an Israeli or a Palestinian student.

**Materials**

- Discovery School video on *unitedstreaming: Israel and Palestine: The Roots of Conflict*
  
  Search for this video by using the video title (or a portion of it) as the keyword.

  Selected clips that support this lesson plan:
  - Jews Come to Palestine - Arabs Revolt
  - The Six Day War Changes the Map
  - The PLO Struggles for Recognition
  - Attacks on the PLO and Refugees
  - The Antiradar Uprising
  - Negotiations Fail and the Fighting Goes On

- Computer with Internet access
- Print resources about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
- Paper, pens

**Procedures**

1. Discuss the background of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict featured in the video. These questions will help focus the discussion:
   - What region is at the heart of the conflict? Describe the claim that both groups have on this region.
   - What is Israel? When was it founded and by whom?
   - What is the Zionist Movement?
• What is the PLO? Whom does it represent?
• What was the intifada? Who was involved and what caused it?
• What effect did World War II have on the conflict?
• What caused the rise of militant Islam? What is its link to modern terrorism? What is Hamas?

2. Have students conduct research on the conflict. Encourage them to try to understand both sides of the conflict. The following Web sites offer useful information:

• The Road from Oslo (see “Parallel Realities”)
  http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/oslo/
• BBC News: In Depth: Israel and the Palestinians (see “Voices from the Conflict”)
  http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_depth/middle_east/2001/israel_and_the_palestinians/
• CNN: Mideast: Land of Conflict (see articles under “Issues”)
• Washington Post: War and Peace in the Middle East (see “Life in Wartime” photo essay)
  http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/world/issues/mideastpeace/
• Online NewsHour: Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (see “Newsmakers: Two Views of the Conflict” and “Coping with Conflict”)
  http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/middle_east/conflict/

3. After students have completed their research, have them write a personal account such as a letter or journal entry, from the point of view of an Israeli or Palestinian student. Their accounts can be written in the present day or in the past, but they must reflect a major event in the history of the conflict and should include several details based on research. Challenge students to consider how it must feel to live in the midst of such a conflict.

4. Have students work in pairs to critique each other’s work. Was the account believable? Was it clear when and by whom it was supposed to be written? Did the account include relevant facts based on research? Did it reflect how a young person might feel living in the midst of conflict? Students should revise their writing based on the critique.

5. Collect the accounts and make copies for everyone in the class. As a homework assignment, have students read the accounts and come prepared to discuss them the next day.

6. To conclude the lesson, lead a discussion about the accounts. How did students imagine it would feel to be involved in such a conflict? Did they imagine differences between Palestinian and Israeli students? How might their experiences be similar? What was most challenging about writing this assignment? Do students think it is difficult for most Americans to understand the emotions behind the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Why or why not?
Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students’ work during this lesson.

- **3 points**: Students were highly engaged in class discussions; demonstrated a clear understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; wrote a thoughtful account that included several relevant details based on research.

- **2 points**: Students participated in class discussions; demonstrated an adequate understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; wrote a thoughtful account that included some relevant details based on research.

- **1 point**: Students participated minimally in class discussions; demonstrated an incomplete understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; wrote an incomplete account that did not include relevant details based on research.

Vocabulary

**Islam**

*Definition*: A religion whose followers believe in one God (Allah) and practice the teachings of the Koran, their sacred text. People who follow Islam are called Muslims.

*Context*: Islam is the dominant faith in Arab countries.

**Israel**

*Definition*: A Jewish state established in 1948

*Context*: Located in southwest Asia on the eastern Mediterranean Sea, Israel is the Jewish homeland.

**Palestine**

*Definition*: A historical region at the center of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

*Context*: Palestine is holy to Muslims, Christians, and Jews.

**PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization)**

*Definition*: A group that represents Arab people of Palestine who were displaced by the establishment of Israel

*Context*: Yasser Arafat was the first leader of the PLO.

**Zionism**

*Definition*: A Jewish movement that arose in the late 19th century to reestablish a Jewish homeland

*Context*: Although opposed by most Arabs, Zionism has gained support by other nations.
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**Academic Standards**

**Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)**

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit link: http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- History — World History: Understands how post-World War II reconstruction occurred, new international power relations took shape, and colonial empires broke up
- Language Arts — Viewing: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media; Writing: Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process, Gathers and uses information for research purposes

**The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)**

NCSS has developed national guidelines for teaching social studies. To become a member of NCSS, or to view the standards online, go to http://www.socialstudies.org

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- Time, Continuity, and Change
- Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Civic Ideals and Practices

**Support Materials**

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html