

CHAPTER

6 SECURITY AND CONFLICT

In the Headlines

Chapter Overview: The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) serve a vital role in Israel’s safety and security. Service is compulsory, with some exceptions. Men must serve for three years and women for two years. There are various branches of the military, each with unique functions. Conflicts exist between Israelis and Palestinians, and there is much controversy about how best to achieve peace. Progress toward peace has been successful at times, but there have also been many setbacks.

Core Concepts

- Israel has a strong military with compulsory service.
- Peace is difficult to achieve, but Israel is committed to working toward it, despite many setbacks.
- Each student can help make a difference in working toward peace.

Learning Objectives – Students will:

- Articulate what the IDF is, what its values are, what its different branches are, who serves, and why. (Lesson 1)
- Discuss the complexities of Israel’s struggle for security amid hostility. (Lesson 2)
- Consider their role as Americans/Canadians in promoting peace between Israel and its neighbors, as well as identify some of the historical landmarks and pitfalls of the peace process. (Lesson 3)

Lesson Summaries

- Lesson 1: Students report on the roles of different IDF branches and create a flyer encouraging those exempt from the army to sign up for Sherut Leumi (National Service).
- Lesson 2: Students debate issues surrounding Israel’s struggle for security.
- Lesson 3: Students learn about various organizations working toward peace in Israel and the U.S. government’s role in the peace process.

Hebrew Connection

- **Pidyon sh’vuyim:** redeeming captives
- **Sherut Leumi:** national service
- **Tzahal:** Israel Defense Forces

Tech Connection

- Visit Modern Israel Online with your class and explore the links for this chapter. View photos from the Israeli Air Force, watch a video about the security fence, learn about an organization that promotes understanding between Jewish and Arab teens, and more. See page 7 of this Lesson Plan Manual for more information about Modern Israel Online.
- Visit the website of A Package from Home (www.apackagefromhome.org), an organization that sends care packages to Israeli soldiers. Check out the “Honor Roll” link for information on how your students can send letters of support and encouragement to be included in these care packages.
- Using Modern Israel Online, visit the websites of the organizations discussed in **Creative dialogue** (page 75) to learn about creative ways Israeli youth are working toward peace, and consider involvement as part of bar/bat mitzvah projects.

Chapter 6: Lesson 1

What is the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)? Who serves in the IDF and why or why not? What are the branches and what are their functions?

Materials Needed:

Markers, construction paper

Getting Started: (5 minutes)

Ask: “What would you like to do after you graduate high school?” Elicit student responses, which may include college, working, the military, etc. Once you gather the responses on the board, explain that most Israeli teens do not get to make that decision, because service is compulsory in the IDF (*Tzahal*). Young men serve for a minimum of three years and young women for a minimum of two.

Exploring the Text:

1. (10 Minutes) Students individually read **Society and the army** (page 65). Ask: “Who serves in the army?” (*men and women, rich and poor, immigrants and sabras, Israelis from all walks of life*) List the answers on the board. Ask: “Who is exempt from serving in the IDF?” Refer students to the first two paragraphs of **Alternatives to the Army** (page 65). (*religiously observant women, Arab Israelis, yeshiva students, people with disabilities*) List on the board. Ask students why each group may be exempt.
2. (10 Minutes) As directed in **Alternatives to the Army** (page 65), students create a flyer encouraging those exempt from the army to sign up for *Sherut Leumi* (National Service). Students present their flyers to the class.
3. (15 minutes) Divide students into four groups. Assign each a military branch featured in the text: Armored Corps (**Border security**, page 66), the Military Police Corps (**Checkpoints**, page 67), Air Force (**Airport safety**, page 70), and Aman (**Intelligence**, page 71). Each group writes a one-to-two sentence overview of the branch’s role and presents it to the class. Ask: “Which branch of the army would you want to serve in? Why? Which branch do you think is most critical to Israel’s security? Why?”

Wrapping It Up: (10 Minutes)

Students stand and together read aloud the **IDF’s oath of allegiance** (page 64), as if they were 18-year-olds being inducted into the IDF. Then ask: “How would America/Canada be different if we had compulsory military service? Would your life be any different? Would it be better? Worse?” Discuss as a class.

Note: Consider condensing this lesson and inviting a former Israeli soldier to class to speak about his or her experience in the army.



Chapter 6: Lesson 2

What are some of the ethical struggles that Israel faces in its dealings with Palestinians?



Materials Needed:

Timer

Getting Started: (5 minutes)

On the board, write: “Why is it important for Israel to have strong security?” Students offer responses. Discuss how security is essential in Israel because the country is surrounded by hostile neighbors, some of whom do not recognize Israel’s right to exist.

Exploring the Text:

1. (5 minutes) Tell students that today, like they did a number of weeks ago, they’ll debate some of Israel’s hot-button issues. This time, the issues are security related. Remind students that Israel must balance its security needs with humanitarian concerns—as emphasized in **Military ethics** (page 72). Three volunteers serve as the *Beit din* (court) and decide the winning team for each debate. Divide the rest of the students into two teams.

Explain the rules: There will be three debates. Teams have 5 minutes to prepare for each debate, and then 5 minutes to debate. Teams make an opening statement and take turns making their arguments. The team that wins two out of three debates wins. The *Beit din* judges teams on the cohesion of their arguments, how well teammates work together to present their arguments, and their behavior toward the opposing team. During each 5-minute preparation period, the *Beit din* should review the material so they can find inconsistencies in the teams’ arguments.

2. (30 Minutes) Debate it!



Topic #1: Building the security fence in its current location was a smart and acceptable policy. (Refer students to **Security fence** [page 67].)

Team 1: Agrees

Team 2: Disagrees

Topic #2: Checkpoints placed throughout the territories to prevent terrorist attacks are essential, even though they infringe on the privacy of Palestinians. (Refer students to **Checkpoints** [page 67].)

Team 1: Agrees

Team 2: Disagrees

Topic #3: There are times when the price is too steep for *pidyon sh’vuyim* (redeeming captives). (Refer students to **Living Jewish Values** [page 72].)

Team 1: Agrees

Team 2: Disagrees

Wrapping It Up: (10 Minutes)

The *Beit din* declares a winner based on the above criteria. Ask students how they really feel about these issues. Did any of their opinions change as a result of the debates? What was it like for those students who debated an issue from the side they disagreed with? Would their opinions change if they were Palestinians living in the territories? What about if they were Israeli Jews?



Chapter 6: Lesson 3

What progress has been made toward peace between Israel and the Palestinians? What have been some of the pitfalls in the peace process?

Materials Needed:



Computer or DVD player and TV to watch downloaded video

Getting Started: (5 minutes)



On the board, write: “Why is peace in Israel important to the international community? To the United States?” Discuss as a class. (*Possible answers include: because the region has been in conflict for so long, the international community cares about it deeply, many influential Americans have ties to Israel, Israel is the home to many of the world’s religions, Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East.*) Use a world map to point out Israel’s strategic location.

Exploring the Text:

-  (15 minutes) Students individually read **Debate It** (page 71). Ask students to move to one side of the room if they identify with the “hawk” and the other if they identify with the “dove.” Then, direct students to do the same thing with “land for peace,” moving to one side of the room if they support it, the other side if they do not. Each time, have volunteers share why they chose their position and discuss the pros and cons of each approach.
-  (10 minutes) Students individually read about Seeds of Peace in **Creative Dialogue** (page 75) and then watch a brief movie about the organization, following the link on Modern Israel Online.
- (10 minutes) Direct students to read all of **Creative Dialogue** (page 75) and circle the words that tell who the program is aimed at, what the goal of the program is, and how it is achieved. Ask the questions at the bottom of the sidebar: “What do each of these programs have in common? Why do you think the programs are targeted at kids?” (*Possible answers include: because children are the future leaders, children usually don’t have the biases that adults may have.*)
- (5 minutes) Remind students that American presidents have moderated many of the peace negotiations between Israel and neighboring countries, referring them to the **photo with President Bill Clinton** (page 74). Ask students to consider how the United States can continue to influence the peace process.

Wrapping It Up: (5 minutes)

Facilitate a discussion about the importance of peace in Israel for Jews around the world. Ask: “Why is it important to us even though we don’t live there?” End by asking students how they can help promote peace. (*Answers might include: volunteering with an organization that promotes peace, being an advocate for peace in discussions with peers and adults, teaching their younger siblings about Israel, completing a bar/bat mitzvah project in which they raise funds for an organization that promotes peace.*)

