

Welcome to Our Homeland

Chapter Summary: Liat, the main narrator, welcomes your students to Israel and invites them to take a tour of the country. She presents the basic characteristics of Israel: its history as the Jewish homeland, its democratic form of government, and its national symbols.

- Page 7** • The caption next to the photograph of the Torah says that many portions of the Torah teach us about the importance of *Eretz Yisrael* to the Jewish people. Ask your students if they can recall any of the stories in which *Eretz Yisrael* is important. *Eretz Yisrael* is central in Genesis 12 and Deuteronomy 10–12.
- Page 8** • The caption around the photograph of the olive tree asks which holiday celebrates the miracle of oil burning in the Temple for eight days. (*Hanukkah*)
- Page 11** • Liat asks, “Why do you think the *halutzim* were so determined to build the Land of Israel?” (*so the Jews would have a nation of their own; so they would be free from the restrictions of the Diaspora at that time*)
- Page 12** • **Map It Out:** Students write “Herzliya” next to the picture of Herzl on the map on page 4. Students are asked to name the large body of water off the coast of Herzliya. (*Mediterranean*)
- Page 14** • Students are asked why Israel’s Independence Day and Memorial Day are observed one day after the other. (*to remember the people who sacrificed their lives for the State of Israel before celebrating its independence*)

Page 16 • **What Do You Think?** asks, “When and why do Jews gather in a synagogue?” (*on Shabbat to pray; for a special occasion, such as a wedding; to have a community meeting about an important issue; to learn*)

- **Map It Out:** Students write “Jerusalem” above the picture of the Knesset on the map on page 4. Students are asked what neighboring country is closest to Jerusalem. (*Jordan*)

Page 17 • Natan asks the students, “Can you imagine what it is like to hope and dream about something for 2,000 years?” To generate discussion, ask students about their own hopes and dreams.

Page 18 • Students are asked, “What do the words of ‘Hatikvah’ tell you about the Jewish people’s continuing love of Israel?” (*it lasted two thousand years; it was a hope for freedom; the Jews never forgot Israel*)

- Students are asked, “How do you think our love of Israel helps Jews around the world—despite great distances between us—remain as one united community?” (*if we are all working for the same cause, we will work together; if we love the same thing, we are a united community*)

- The caption above the photograph of the coins asks students to translate the Hebrew that appears at the bottom of the coins. (*Israel*)

Page 19 • Students are asked to describe how the photographs of the menorah and the *hanukkiyah* are different. (*the menorah holds seven candles but the hanukkiyah holds nine; the hanukkiyah has a Star of David on it and the menorah does not*)

Page 20 • **Living Jewish Values:** The students are asked, “How can you observe the mitzvah of *Ahavat Tzion* [Love of Israel]?” (*by visiting Israel; by giving to charities in Israel; by speaking well of Israel*)



- The caption next to the advertisement for ketchup asks the children to find the word “ketchup” in Hebrew. (*it is the first word on the right in the ad’s headline and the second word on the bottle*)

Page 21 • Road Trip: Students are asked to look at the map of Israel and write the city names in order from north to south. (*Safed, Haifa, Caesarea, Herzliya, Jerusalem, Beersheva*)

Page 24 • My Hebrew Dictionary:

<i>shalom</i>	peace, hello, goodbye
<i>Medinat Yisrael</i>	the State of Israel
<i>Eretz Yisrael</i>	the Land of Israel
<i>ḥalutzim</i>	pioneers
<i>Ivrit</i>	Hebrew
<i>Yom Hazikaron</i>	Memorial Day
<i>Yom Ha’atzma’ut</i>	Independence Day

Page 25 • Letter to a Friend: Students fill in the blanks of letter about Israel. (*New Jersey; The Land of the Bible, The Promised Land, Eretz Yisrael, Zion or Medinat Yisrael; Knesset; prime minister; Star of David; shekel; Ben Yehuda; Ben Yehuda is the father of modern Hebrew*)

Enrichment

On page 17, a timeline depicts the history of the Jews’ dispersion and return to Israel. This timeline is an opportunity to teach the difference between BCE and CE on the secular calendar. These terms are used throughout *Welcome to Israel!* and in many history classes. The acronym BCE stands for “Before the Common Era.” This period coincides with the period popularly referred to as “BC.” To explain this to your students, draw a timeline on the board and put the year 1 in the center. The year 1 is considered the first year of the Common Era (the period that coincides with what is popularly referred to as “AD.”

Before the Common Era, the later a year, the lower the number. For example, the year 25 BCE was later than the year 50 BCE. During the Common Era, the later a year, the higher a number—the year 1825 was earlier than the year 1850.

