

Finding a Sense of Home in a Foreign Homeland

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Introduction

“I’ve never felt more at home in my life than I do in Israel” (USY)

“I found my Jewish home” (BBYO ILSI)

“I loved visiting my Jewish homeland” (Young Judea)

“I am happy that I feel safe in my home away from home” (JCC)

“I was really amazed by the Jewish State and inspired by the fact that after 2,000 years of exile, the Jews finally have a home.” (USY)

“I officially feel like Israel is my home” (BBYO ILSI)

“I will continue to advocate and speak up for my Jewish homeland” (BBYO ILSI)

“I want my kids to say they have a Jewish homeland” (BBYO ILSI)¹

These quotes represent reflections from teens who explored Israel on summer Israel trips. In each of the quotes, the speaker references the term “home” or “homeland.” But what exactly do these teens mean when they say “home”? Furthermore, it is curious that there are no quotes in from NFTY in Israel trip participants about their experiences in Israel. *Finding a Sense of Home in a Foreign Homeland* is a curriculum designed to enhance NFTY in Israel trip participant’s understanding of their notion of “home” before, during, and after their trip, asking “in what ways is (or is not) Israel my home”?

There seems to be a strong consensus among many American Jewish educators that the goal of Israel education is to connect diaspora Jews to Israel. Israel Education has the potential to include spiritual development, identity development and the opportunity to widen one’s association with different Jewish communities. This curriculum takes an approach to Israel education that focuses on participants’ personal development, through the exploration of Israel’s diverse narratives. Each session provides participants with the opportunity to find him or herself within the diverse stories of Israel, allowing each participant multiple opportunities to learn about, and connect to Israel.

Adolescent Jews growing up outside Israel today are not guaranteed to have emotional connections to Judaism, let alone to Israel. Yet, those who spend their summers at Jewish summer camp may already be aware that they are a part of multiple Jewish communities, feeling “at home” and emotionally tied to this unique Jewish place. At many Jewish camps, programming affords these adolescent campers the opportunity to learn that Israel is an important aspect of Jewish tradition, history, and contemporary

¹ Ezrachi, PhD, Elan, North American Participants in High School Age Travel Programs to Israel, 2011, Effective Partnerships in Today’s Jewish World

Jewish life. This may help them build an emotional understanding of the place of Israel in Jewish life, but in what ways do Jewish teens see themselves within the stories of Israel? What is the nature of North American adolescent Jewish camp goers' personal relationships with Israel? For those who choose to travel to Israel on four-week immersive Israel trips, how do these programs impact participants' understanding of the multiple places in which they feel "at home" Jewishly?

Though many summer trips exist providing opportunities for North American Jewish teens to visit Israel, many of these programs still utilize more traditional teaching methods, focusing on conveying content rather than providing a space for participants to make meaning. *Finding a Sense of Home in a Foreign Homeland* approaches Israel Education from a different perspective, believing that the subject of Israel education is the learner, and the subject content is the learner's relationship with Israel. This curriculum seeks to foster Israel trip participants' personal relationship with Israel, inform their thinking about home as a multifaceted concept, and provide a context in which these participants develop their sense of self as a growing Jew and person.

Identified Setting

This curriculum is designed to be implemented before, during, and after a summer camp² adolescent Israel experience. Israel experiences, like the four-week immersive experiences offered by NFTY in Israel, provide an ideal context for participant's investigation of self through a communal trip to Israel's historical, cultural, and religious sites. By exploring Israel through intense, immersive programs like NFTY in Israel, participants may consider the role Israel plays in their lives.

NFTY's summer Israel trip for URJ³ campers offers a powerful itinerary for immersive experiences of Israel, because NFTY is dedicated to providing "deep personal connections to the ancient and modern story and journey of the Jewish People...and... an understanding that Judaism is who they are, not just what they do."⁴ Lessons 4-7 of this curriculum will be implemented throughout the Israel experience, during the *Chavayah*⁵ week, when participants hike *Yam L'Yam* (Sea to Sea) over four days between the *Kinneret* (Sea of Galilee) and the Mediterranean Sea, as well as during a four day hike in the Negev desert. Through physical, intellectual and spiritual challenges, the NFTY in Israel participants engaging in this curriculum will have

² I am using the term 'summer camp' and 'youth group' interchangeably since both summer camps and youth groups (like BBYO) have organized Israel trips in which this curriculum may be implemented.

³ Union for Reform Judaism; see: <http://www.urj.org/>

⁴ "Why NFTY in Israel" Nfty in Israel. Union for Reform Judaism. 2016. Web. 1/11/16

⁵ <http://www.nftyisrael.org/programs/adventure/itinerary/index.cfm?#chavaya>

personal growth experiences while finding their own connections to Israel and Jewish heritage.

Five of the eight lessons in the curriculum (1-3 and 7-8) will be facilitated through online-learning experiences where participants may engage in real-time through an online, web conferencing platform (like Adobe Connect⁶). It is understood that this generation of Digital Natives⁷ is looking online to grow and transform through material they access, and that they are already using mobile/online devices to connect with friends, classmates and teachers. It is projected that by 2019, half of all high school courses will take place online.⁸ This curriculum has been designed to engage participants in online learning experiences that are meaningful, engaging, and relevant.

During sessions, participants will engage in higher-order thinking, discussions, and reflection on session topics while considering the nature of their relationship with Israel. This curriculum allows participants to demonstrate their growth through journal writing, photography, music, poetry, art, and other diverse modes of expression, providing multiple opportunities for meaning-making and personal, emotional connections to occur. This curriculum is designed to support participants' ability to think, process, and reflect upon the moments in which they feel "at home" Jewishly and personally, while exploring the diverse narratives of Israel.

Intended Audience

Finding a Sense of Home in a Foreign Homeland is designed for Israel trip participants coming from North American Jewish summer camp, and may include the Israeli participants who join the NFTY in Israel program for a week. Most participants will be between the ages of 15-17. The first cohort is intended to be 7-10 teens from URJ Greene Family Camp, and 7-10 teens from URJ Camp Eisner.

Preliminary Research

Much of my preliminary research occurred as I looked inward to consider how I can combine my passions, with an identified area of possibility and growth within Jewish and Israel Education. Having spent two summers as a *mechanech* with NFTY in Israel, I had a good understanding of the NFTY approach to connecting Israel trip participants to Israel. This experience also provided me with an understanding of how I may

⁶ <http://www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect.html>

⁷ <http://www.cnn.com/2012/12/04/business/digital-native-prensky/>

⁸ Blackboard Inc. "The Voice of the Active Learner- Education From a Digital Native's Perspective." Online Video Clip. Youtube. Youtube, 8/7/12 Web. 1/17/16

supplement the NFTY in Israel curriculum with my own, enhancing the participant's experience by creating a lens through which they may view all of their experiences.

After deciding upon the concept of "home," I conducted interviews and reached out to experts for further guidance and relevant resources. These included:

- Rabbi Josh Weinberg, President, ARZA
- Dr. Barry Chazan, Director, Spertus Institute's Master of Arts in Jewish Professional Studies
- Rabbi Andrew Davids, Head of School, Beit Rabban Day School
- Paul Reichenbach, Director of Camp and Israel Programs, URJ
- Dr. Betsy Stone, Psychologist specializing in Jewish Adolescents and Emerging Adults
- Anne Lanski, Executive Director, The iCenter
- Dr. Lisa Grant, Professor of Jewish Education, HUC-JIR
- Dr. Evie Rotstein, Director, New York School of Education, HUC-JIR
- Shalom Orzach, Senior Educator and Consultant, The iCenter
- Theodore Sasson, Senior Research Scientist, The Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies and Steinhardt Social Research Institute, Brandeis University
- Danny Freeland, President, WUPJ
- Rabbi Josh Feigelson, Founder and Director, Ask Big Questions
- Rabbi Mick Fine, Director of Hebrew Language Curriculum and Instruction, Beit Rabban

After speaking with these experts, I explored the following resources:

- Nadav. Looking For Home. Blog Post, *Tivnu*, Web 10/1/15
<http://tivnu.org/2015/10/lookingforhome/>
- Grant, L., Kelman, N., & Regev, H. (2001). Traveling Toward the Self While Visiting the Other: Israeli TALI school educators on a US study tour. *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, 77 (3-4) 172-181
- Ofra Backenroth & Alex Sinclair (2014) Vision, Curriculum, and Pedagogical Content Knowledge in the Preparation of Israel Educators, *Journal of Jewish Education*, 80:2, 121-147, DOI: 10.1080/15244113.2014.907013
- Muszkat-Barkan, M., Grant, L., (2015) Like a Distant Cousin: Bi-Cultural Negotiation as a Key Perspective in Understanding the Evolving Relationship Future Reform Rabbis with Israel and the Jewish People, *Journal of Jewish Education*; Volume 81, Issue 1, 35-63
- Stein, Regina PhD., Adler, R., (2008) One Heart, Two Homes: Israel and the Sacred Identity of American Jews. *Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America*

- Where Do You Feel At Home?, *Ask Big Questions* (an initiative of Hillel)
- Jewish Peoplehood Papers (2012-2015), *Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education*, Web 11/6/15 <http://jpeoplehood.org/collection/peoplehood-papers/>

Having explored these resources, I focused in on specific studies around Israel education, adolescent education, the history of Israel education at camp, as well as the impact of Israel trips on identity and engagement. The following studies informed my decisions to design a curriculum centered around the concept of “Israel” and “Home:”

- Chazan, Barry. London, Perry. *Psychology and Jewish Identity Education. American Jewish Committee (AJC)*. 1990: Web 12/8/15
<http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=2889>
- Cohn, D’vora; Morin, Rich. *Who Moves? Who Stays Put? Where’s Home. Pew Research Center*. Washington DC. 12/29/08. Web 2/20/16
- Cohen, Steven M.; Kopelowitz, Ezra. *Assessing the Teen Israel Experience: A Focus on In-Marriage, Raising Children Jewish and Jewish Engagement. Lappin Foundation*. Salem MA. 2014. Web. 12/8/15
- Ezrachi, Elan, *North American Participants in High School Age Travel Programs to Israel, 2010, Effective Partnerships in Today’s Jewish World, The Jewish Agency, The iCenter* 2011. Web 12/8/15
- Grant, L. and Kopelowitz, E., (2012). *Israel Education Matters: A 21st Century Paradigm for Jewish Education. Center for Jewish Peoplehood Education*.
- Grant, L., Marom, D., Werchow, Y., (2012). *Israel Education for What? An Investigation of the Purposes and Possible Outcomes of Israel Education. The Consortium For Applied Studies in Jewish Education*
- Rubin-Schlansky, Hannah. *An Exploration of Israel Education in URJ Summer Camps. HUC-JIR MAJE Capstone Curriculum*, May 2012
- Zakai, Sivan, (2011) *Values in Tension: Israel Education at a U.S. Jewish Day School, Journal of Jewish Education*, 77:3, 239-265

Learning Materials and Facilitator Knowledge

The units of the curriculum do NOT require a facilitator with specific expertise. All they require in addition to the group leader who comes to every session, and participants who are willing to take responsibility for engaging in the discussion of various components of each unit of the curriculum.

As a group leader/facilitator, you take responsibility for helping to guide the sharing process as well as maintain group cohesiveness. This curriculum is intended for group participation and peer-led learning. The position of facilitator will not involve teaching in the traditional sense. Rather, you will enable participants of the group to learn from each

other, using the curriculum activities as the basis for learning. The facilitator must be dedicated to nurturing the group to ensure learning in the following ways:

- Show respect and value for each member of the group
- Make each participant feel appreciated and rewarded for his/her efforts
- Address issues of group dynamics in an open and appropriate manner
- Encourage the identification of common interests and values, sharing experiences, exchanging information and validating divergent opinions
- Most importantly, create a safe environment in which every participant feels comfortable to share his or her ideas. This may be challenging due to the diversity of the participants in the group, as they come with varying degrees of Jewish knowledge as well as knowledge about Israel.

Rationale

At the core of this curriculum is the notion that growth and change is a central aspect of the human experience. As we grow, experiencing life with increasing complexity, we come to new understandings about concepts presented to us throughout our lives. One of the concepts central to our individual and communal narrative is that of a “home.” The concept of “home” is surely complex, leading one to ask questions like *Do we have just one “home” throughout life? Can one have multiple homes? What does it mean to feel “at home” in a place, or with a specific group of people?*

According to a 2008 Pew Study, “home means different things to different people. Among U.S.-born adults who have lived in more than one community, nearly four-in-ten (38%) say the place they consider home isn’t where they’re living now. There is a wide range of definitions of “home” among Americans who have lived in at least one place besides their original hometown: 26% say it’s where they were born or raised; 22% say it’s where they live now; 18% say it’s where they have lived the longest; 15% say it’s where their family comes from; and 4% say it’s where they went to high school.”⁹ With such variety in definition, the concept of “home” deserves further investigation.

While interviewing key informants in the field of Jewish education, they suggested that for most American adolescent Jews, “home” is not a multifaceted concept. Adolescents may be aware of the multiple communities in which they are members, however, “home” may a concept felt by many to be a singular idea. Yet, thousands of North American Jewish teens attend Jewish summer camp each year, suggesting that these adolescents may consider camp to be their “second home.” Adolescent Jews who regularly go to camp then, may be already thinking about themselves in relation to the

⁹ Cohn, D’vera; Morin, Rich, “Who Moves? Who Stays Put? Where’s Home.” Pew Research Center. Washington DC. 12/29/08. Web 2/20/16

places they feel “at home” Jewishly. For those adolescents going to Israel with their summer camp, the concept of “home” will be further investigated through this curriculum as they explore the Israel, “homeland for the Jewish people.”

In a 2012 report, Hannah Rubin-Schlansky found that “there is no overarching structure of how to teach Israel the URJ camps, and thus, it is difficult to gauge success.”¹⁰ This statement suggests that Israel, as a subject of Jewish Education in summer camps, may be dealt with in a variety of ways. This curriculum responds to Rubin-Schlansky’s claim by creating a simple structure through which to view one’s relationship with Israel: *is Israel a place I call home?* In keeping with Rubin-Schlansky’s claim that “Israel travel exerts the largest, consistent measures of influence,”¹¹ this curriculum is designed to enhance the NFTY in Israel experience, providing a context for North American summer camp teens to engage with Israel through a specific lens.

By exploring their multifaceted relationship with Israel, participants on Israel programs will also consider their multifaceted notion of home. Participants will be asked *How is going to Israel different than visiting any of the other historical “homes” of the Jewish people (Venice, Poland, etc...)?* This curriculum is designed to stimulate participants thinking about the various moments in which they feel “at home” Jewishly, and guide them as they reflect on, and make meaning out of their Israel experience.

In a 2014 study by the Lappin Foundation, Steven M. Cohen and Ezra Kopelowitz found that “a rather substantial research literature has established that trips to Israel by adolescents and Jewish young adults generate positive long-terms effects along several dimensions of Jewish engagement[and that] their effects differ in accord with the particular emphasis of each program.”¹² This finding suggests that an Israel education curriculum with a particular emphasis, in this case focusing on the concept of “home,” has the potential to yield long term impacts on its participants notion of their Jewishness. To further emphasize the importance of specialized adolescent trips to Israel, the same study claims that teen trips “set in motion a process that starts even before college, producing higher rates of Jewish engagement and further Israel experiences in the undergraduate years and beyond.” As Jews worldwide ask the question of Jewish Continuity, curriculum designed to secure social ties and a strong sense of feeling “at home” in a Jewish community are more important than ever.

¹⁰ Rubin-Schlansky, Hannah, “An Exploration of Israel Education in URJ Summer Camps.” May 2012

¹¹ Rubin-Schlansky, Hannah, “An Exploration of Israel Education in URJ Summer Camps.” May 2012

¹² Cohen, Steven M.; Kopelowitz, Ezra, *Assessing the Teen Israel Experience: A Focus on In-Marriage, Raising Children Jewish and Jewish Engagement.* Lappin Foundation. Salem MA. 2014. Web. 12/8/15

In order for Israel programs to have a lasting impact, participant's experience with Israel must be emotionally stimulating. Curriculum is needed that provides a context in which Israel trip participants can reflect on their expectations and experiences of Israel, seen through the lens of "home". By providing Israel trip participants with facilitated reflection activities and dialogue, we can encourage a personal relationship with Israel based on felt experience, accessing the hearts of our learners as they explore themselves through their exploration of Israel. We must provide learners with the opportunity to find themselves through the stories of ancient and modern Israel, so to make the most of an Israel experience. Participants in this curriculum will be asked what they remember from their experience in relation to moments they felt "at home" throughout the trip, since enhancing the relationship between memory and emotional connection. Participants' memories are evidence of what emotional experiences they had in Israel, and the emotional connections made during their trip. Adolescents are already thinking about their identities, and multiple communities they are a part of, meaning that educational activities that invoke reflection on when one feels "at home" Jewishly is developmentally appropriate. Interestingly, the Negev and Yam L'Yam experiences have the great advantage of being less intellectual, more physical, allowing participants to be more emotionally vulnerable due to physical exhaustion. This context grants educators an advantage when facilitating an emotional experience that is sure to last.

Lastly, it is vital for 21st century educators to respond to the needs and trends of 21st century learners, creating engaging programming that makes use of other types of media, and educational content they interact with. This requires creating educational experiences that are online, engaging, and directly relevant to learner interests. Digital Natives are open to being vulnerable in an online setting because they are already comfortable with this mode of communication, and are relieved of the pressures of face-to-face encounters. The pre (and post) trip online encounters, combined with the informal context of NFTY in Israel's educational experiences are likely to greatly impact participants. This blended learning method will help show "the value and significance of the teen's perceptions of their experiences and how much they gain from it."¹³ A 2011 study puts it best, "while being a defined minority segment of North American Jewish youth cohort, the thousands of teens who travel to Israel demonstrate a high degree of awareness and appreciation of the experience. They are attuned, engaged, and curious and they internalize the experience into their worldviews and commitments. These teens become unrecognized and untapped "network" of Israel engage individuals who

¹³ Ezrachi, PhD, Elan, North American Participants in High School Age Travel Programs to Israel, 2011, Effective Partnerships in Today's Jewish World

show genuine interest in continuing and furthering their connection to Israel as individuals and through organized communities.”¹⁴

Priority Goals

1. To introduce the concept of multiple homes and challenge participant's understanding of their notion of home
2. To provide learners with opportunities to consider the place of Israel in their lives and sense of feeling at home in multiple Jewish communities.
3. Torah lishma

Enduring Understanding

As I grow I encounter multiple contexts in which I feel at home. Though I may not live in Israel, because I am a Jew, Israel is one of the places I call home.

Essential Questions/Core Questions

When do I feel most “at home” Jewishly?

In what way is (or is not) Israel a place I call “home”?

Learner Outcomes

Know:

- Learners will be able to identify key components that make up their identity and how that relates to their concept of home and relationship with Israel
- Learners will have more complex definitions of their different kinds of homes - spiritual, historical, temporal, physical, familial, communal, etc... and be able to explain where Israel fits in within their definitions.

Do:

- Learners will build avenues to ongoing social interaction with Israelis, after the trip is completed, by engaging in 30-minute, monthly skype sessions (for at least a year after their trip) with Israelis they connect with on their trips.
- Learners will make a digital scrapbook in response to the same question, asked before, during and after their Israel experience.

Belong:

- Learners will be able to express in some specific way (give concrete examples) of how they feel “at home” in Israel
- Learners will be able to express in some specific way (give concrete examples) of how they feel “at home” as part of their Israel trip group

¹⁴ Ezrachi, Elan, North American Participants in High School Age Travel Programs to Israel, 2011, Effective Partnerships in Today's Jewish World

- Learners will be able to express in some specific way (give concrete examples) of how they feel “at home” as part of the Jewish people, past, present and future (both in Israel and in Diaspora)
- Learners will feel “at home” in the Jewish “homeland” (the modern state of Israel)

Believe:

- Learners will be able to articulate that home may be somewhere other than their birthplace
- Learners will express in some way that they believe they can have multiple homes, and that Israel is one of them
- Learners will be able to express that they understand that Jews live in a difficult bifurcated reality with Israel and home as homelands
- Learners will expand their horizons and think about being Jewish on a larger scale

Sample Lessons with Core Concepts

	Lesson	Main Activities	Journal Prompt	Core Concept
1	Introduction/Building Community + My Israel Story	Online: Presentation of scope and sequence + Discussion about participant needs + iCenter Content Cards Activity where participants share their Israel story	In what ways are you in relationship with Israel and how does this relationship impact your sense of Jewish “self”?	Sharing our Israel stories informs our developing sense of relationship with Judaism, Israel and the communities we call “home.”
2	Landscapes of Israel Landscapes of Home	Online: Home Collage and Digital Scrapbook of “When I feel most ‘at home’ Jewishly”	Write a list of “homes” that you have. What elements do these “homes” have in common? What elements of Israel do you connect to? How does Israel impact your concept of your Jewish “home”?	There are many ways in which we relate to, and understand Israel. In the same way, we have a multidimensional concept of “home”
3	Lech Lecha	Text study: Genesis 12:1-9	In what ways have you “gone to yourself” (lech lecha) throughout this process? How has being in Israel impacted your ability to “go to yourself” (lech lecha)?	Each of us is on a journey of exploring Israel, as well as our sense of ourselves. Our communal journey helps shape our individual understandings of the places we call “home.”

4	The Am Yisrael/ The Home Triangle	Triangle Activity in the Negev + “Top 3 quotes that reflect how I relate to the people/community of Israel” activity	What does it feel like to be in Israel? When do you feel most connected to the Jewish people and when do you feel most disconnected?	Often we feel “at home” with specific groups of people. Though I may not call Israel my home, I feel “at home” as a member of the Jewish People.
5	What does “home” feel like? + Mifgash with Israeli teens	Discussion on Yam L’Yam about how the physical environment has an impact on our emotional connection to home and the feeling of being “at home” in a place	Complete the following sentence: “I feel at home when I am in....” In what environment do you feel most “at home” Jewishly? What aspects of Israel inform your understanding of where you feel “at home”?	Reflecting on our journey allows us to be aware of the way our environments shape us, and the way they impact what it means to feel “at home.”
6	What does Israel mean to us today? What does it mean to be part of the Jewish people?	Circle Activity + Gather 3-5 items that represent and reflect the role of Israel in your concept of “home.” Create a collage or picture that reflects this concept. Take a picture and upload it to your journal/google drive	In what ways has your Israel experience impacted what it means to be Jewish? In what ways do you feel part of Israel? Part of the Jewish people?	Like Israel, we may connect to the concept of “home” in many ways. The diversity in Israel allows us multiple ways to connect and be in relationship with Israel, and the Jewish people.

7	Who do we welcome into our "home"? and who is without a "home"?	Online: Using Images to talk about contemporary issues around "home," "homelessness," and being "strangers" in someone else's "home."	Who in our world does not have a home? What does it mean for a Palestinian to feel "at home" in the Jewish state?	There are many peoples who do not have "homes" or feel "at home" in our countries, states and cities. It is our privilege to welcome others into our "home" and create space for people to feel "at home" wherever they go.
8	Building a "home" for ourselves for our future	Online: Evaluations/What's Next?	Why is Israel called "the Jewish homeland"? and do you feel "at home" in Israel? What are the components of "home" and how has your concept of "home" changed throughout your Israel experience? or	In the same ways that "home" is something I carry with my wherever I go, I carry Israel with me wherever I go in the future.

Acceptable Evidence for Learning

- Learners demonstrate their learning by journaling throughout the course of the curriculum, having three publishable pieces around core questions (for ejewishphilanthropy.com, forward.com, urjyouth.org, or similar online publications)
- Learners will develop ongoing, long term relationships with someone in Israel through skype meetings, letter writing, or blog posts
- Participants will skype once a month (for 30-minutes each month, for at least a year after their program) with at least one Israeli they met on their trip
- Learners will engage in their youth group, or local Jewish organization's Israel programming

Suggested Tools to Collect Evidence of Understanding

- Students will create online journals in which they will reflect on guiding prompts after each lesson
- Student's will post screenshots of their video-chats with the Israelis they speak with, and post in our Facebook group as well as publically in order to demonstrate their ongoing relationship with Israel and Israelis.
- Online surveys sent to participants before, during and after their Israel trip

Sample Evaluation/Quantitative Analysis Questions (before, during and after trip):

- *Is this your first trip to Israel?*
 - Yes, No
- *To what extent do you feel connected to Israel?*
 - Not at all, a little, somewhat, very much
- *If someone were to ask you about your relationship with Israel, how confident do you feel in your ability to articulate this relationship?*
 - Not at all confident, a little confident, somewhat confident, very confident
- *To what extent do you believe this session/activity/lesson impacted your understanding of home?*
 - Not at all, a little, somewhat, very much so
- *To what extent do you believe this session/activity/lesson impacted your understanding of Israel as your home?*
 - Not at all, a little, somewhat, very much so
- *How much do you AGREE or DISAGREE with the following statement: Israel is my home because it is the home of the Jewish people*
 - Strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree
- *Thinking back to your trip to Israel, would you say that the trip made you closer to Israel?*
 - Not at all, a little, somewhat, very much
- *Thinking back to your trip to Israel, would you say that the trip was a life-changing experience?*

- *Not at all, a little, somewhat, very much*
- *To what extent has your definition of home changed from when you began this course/went to Israel?*
 - *Not at all, a little, somewhat, very much*
- *How do you define home? In what ways does Israel play into your understandings of “home”?*

Process for Determining Evidence

- Participants’ answers after their trip will be compared to their assumptions and beliefs before engaging in this course (information gathered in surveys sent before and after the Israel experience)
- Participants will themselves share how their understandings of “home” and “Israel” have changed, and how their Israel experience will inform their ongoing relationship with Israel and the places they call “home.”

Learner Experiences

This curriculum is designed to give different types of learners opportunities to demonstrate their connection to course content in many ways. Lessons 1-3 will be facilitated in an online format, where participants sign in to a group chat, and can dialogue with other participants through text exchange, live video dialogue, as well as in the creation of online content, viewable to both participants and facilitator. Lessons 4-6 will be facilitated in person, throughout the participant’s Israel trip. Through outdoor activities and group dialogue, participants will share in real-time the impact of their learning, and experiences in Israel. Facilitated activities will not only enhance the curriculum and experiences of NFTY in Israel, but also utilize the specific environments in which the participants are, to prompt deeper understanding of the relevance of their experiences. Lessons 7-8 are facilitated in an online format, after the participants return from their Israel trip.

Developmental Issues and Inclusivity- Diversity of Learners

Howard Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences suggests that learners require diverse styles and methods for engaging with concepts being explored. Thus, this curriculum is designed to include a wide variety of modes, methods and activities to respond to the diverse needs of our learners. The diverse activities and modes of learning presented in this curriculum act as varied pathways of connection between student and content, inviting different types of learners to express their knowledge and understanding in multiple ways. Though this curriculum takes into consideration learners with specific physical and mental needs, the NFTY in Israel program has yet to design its programming with a special needs cohort in mind.

Examples of Learning Activities

List of Lessons

	Lesson
1	Introduction/Building Community + My Israel Story
2	Landscapes of Israel/Landscapes of Home
3	Lech Lecha
4	The Am Yisrael/The Home Triangle
5	What does “home” feel like? + Mifgash with Israeli participants
6	What does Israel mean to us today?
7	Who do we welcome into our “home” and who is without a “home”?
8	Building a “home” for ourselves for our future

Lesson #1 “My Israel Story”

- A. **Lesson Overview:** This lesson will be conducted in an online, distance-learning platform (example: Adobe Connect), intended for the Israel trip participants who will engage in the curriculum and study before, during and after their Israel trip (Summer 2017). In this lesson, participants will connect themselves to the stories of Israel through sharing one “my Israel” story. A “my Israel story” is a story that reflects a participant’s memory, or sense of relationship with an aspect of Israel’s history, culture, land and people. This lesson is meant to allow participants to learn about each other’s unique relationship with Israel, as well as find points of commonality between each other’s stories. The lesson will also introduce participants to the scope and sequence of future lessons, as well as explore the needs of the participants so to express a standard of excellence expected out of the group.
- B. **Enduring Understanding for the Unit of which this lesson is a part**
- As I grow I encounter multiple contexts in which I feel at home. Though I may not live in Israel, because I am a Jew, Israel is one of the places I call home.
- C. **Core Concept for this individual lesson**
- Sharing our Israel stories informs our developing sense of relationship with Judaism, Israel and the communities we call “home.”
 - Each of us has a personal relationship with Israel based on our life experiences as Jews
- D. **Essential Questions for this lesson**
- In what ways can one be a Zionist?
 - Why should American Jews care about Israel?
 - In what ways is (or is not) Israel the home of the Jews?
 - In what ways is having a relationship with Israel an important part of being Jewish?
 - Why are stories so important to us?
- E. **Evidence of understanding for this lesson**
- Participants will learn new things about others in the group
 - Participants will understand and appreciate the multiple ways in which people are connected to Israel
 - Participants will realize the complexity of Israel’s history, people, land, and culture
 - Participants will leave with more questions than they came with
- F. **Outline of Lesson Activities**
- 00:00-00:10** Introducing Ourselves: The facilitator will invite each person to share his or her name, as well as ask the question, “Where is your home?” This activity

will allow participants to introduce themselves as well as introduce the notion of the complexity around our diverse understandings of home.

00:10- 00:30 My Israel Story Activity: Participants choose one card from the iCenter Content Cards and share one story related to the person, place, or event on their chosen card. Facilitator needs to make sure that participants are respectful of each others sharing time, and engaged in what each other shares. Participants may ask only clarifying questions, rather than responding in full.

00:30-00:40 What do you need to succeed? Facilitator asks participants to take 2-3 minutes to write down a list of “things that they need in order to be successful as a member of this group.” Participants should come up with 3-5 needs each, allowing each participant to set the standard for excellence in the group. Possible needs include:

- Quiet time for reflection
- Respect from other participants when others are talking
- No bullying or making fun
- A safe environment for all participants to be vulnerable and open
- A no-judgment space
- Engaging activities, etc.....

Participants can write their needs in the “Blank Sheet” or “Group Chat Box” part of their Adobe Connect application. Facilitator will either copy the list or save the document, so to be able to refer to the list if problems arise in the future.

00:40- 00:50 Scope and Sequence: Facilitator will present the the different aspect of the curriculum:

1. Online sessions before Israel trip
2. Journal writing before, during and after their Israel trip
3. Engagement in the sessions during their Israel trip
4. Opportunities for creative thinking, deep thought, respectful dialogue, individual expression, communal connection and adventure
5. Surveys following each lesson (before, during and after their Israel trip)
6. Online sessions following participant’s Israel trip

The Prezi Presentation can be found at:

http://prezi.com/0o0xaol1luil/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share

00:50-00:55 Participants sign pledge/*brit*, committing to engage in the subsequent 7 sessions that occur before, during, and after their Israel trip. (see Appendix)

00:55-00:60 Taking Out: Participants will reflect on what they are “taking out” of this session. Ask participants one thing that they will take with them, have learned, or have gained from the experience.

G. **Materials needed** (including all handouts)

Computer (with microphone and video camera)
Adobe Connect software
Scope and Sequence Presentation

(Prezi:

http://prezi.com/0o0xaol1luil/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share)

Brit/Pledge (see Appendix)

Survey

H. **Survey Questions**

Why is it important for Jews to have a relationship with Israel?

What are your goals for engaging in this curriculum?

Is this your first trip to Israel?

What are your expectations for the trip, the curriculum, and what you'll learn?

What is your definition of "home" today?

Lesson #2 “Landscapes of Israel, Landscapes of Home”

A. Lesson Overview: LP1: Defining Home versus Homeland

This lesson will be conducted through an online, distance-learning platform (example: Adobe Connect), intended for the ten Israel trip participants who will engage in the curriculum and study before, during and after their Israel trip (Summer 2017).

In this lesson participants will get to know the other people in their “cohort” through a “Home Collage” activity. This lesson introduces concepts that they will engage with throughout the curriculum, revolving around our definitions of home, and our relationship with Israel (to name a few). This lesson is intended to invite learners to consider (possibly for the first time in their lives) their conceptions of home, and how Israel plays a role their definition.

B. Enduring Understanding for the Unit of which this lesson is a part

- As I grow I encounter multiple contexts in which I feel at home. Though I may not live in Israel, because I am a Jew, Israel is one of the places I call home.

C. Core Concept for this individual lesson

- There are many ways in which we relate to and understand Israel. In the same way, we have a multidimensional concept of “home.”

D. Essential Questions for this lesson

- How do you define home?
- What are the components of a home?
- What does it mean to be guest in my homeland?
- In what ways is (or is not) Israel my homeland?
- Why should American Jews care about Israel?

E. Evidence of understanding for this lesson

- Learners will be able to articulate their current definition of home
- Learners will be challenged by the diverse definitions of home they hear from their peers and may want to change (or add complexity to) their own definitions
- Learners will consider how the five “landscapes” or approaches to understanding Israel (Imagined Land, Covenantal Land, Remembered Land, Lived Land, Envisioned Land) impact their own relationship to Israel?
- Learners will express their questions around the possibility of having multiple homes, moving from a simple definition of birthplace, to more nuanced definitions.

- Learners will know the names of the other people in their cohort and be able to express one new thing they learned about each of their peers.

F. Outline of Lesson Activities

Prior to the online webinar, participants will be asked to make a collage out of images and texts found in magazines in their homes (or online) that represent their definition of “home.” During the first webinar, participants will share their collages, explaining the components of their definition of “home” through the symbols in their work. Participants will then be presented with the five landscapes of Israel, as described in The iCenter’s *Aleph Bet of Israel Education* (Imagined Land, Covenantal Land, Remembered Land, Lived Land, Envisioned Land), and will be asked to discuss which version of Israel best relates to their current approach to, and relationship with Israel.

Instructions for “Home Collage” Activity (to be completed prior to the webinar):

1. Gather art supplies (8.5 by 11 inch blank paper, pens, markers, glue) and 2-3 magazines
2. Write down a list of places you call “home” (one answer is okay, don’t need multiple)
3. Think of the elements that define a home. Why do you call this place “home”? What about your “home” is unique or distinct from other places you go?
4. Write down 5 elements/components of a home
5. Without writing your definition of home on the 8.5 by 11 inch paper, create a “Home Collage” that symbolizes your definition of “home.” You may use up to 6 images found online or from the magazines you found. You must use at least one image or symbol (no more than 6), but other than that....the options are endless!
6. Do not spend more than 30 minutes on this activity.
7. Take a picture of your collage and upload a scan or photo to the Google Drive entitled “Home and Homeland”
(https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/0B7uBlg_0tWwcRIVlUE43bzRBNWc)
8. Title the photo or scan in the following order: *Your Name, Home Collage, Date*
9. After you have submitted a photo of your “Home Collage” view at least two other “Home Collages” found in the folder, writing down what you think the definition of home is according to the collages you view.
10. Email maxeinsohn@gmail.com to let him know that you have completed the activity and he will send you the link to the webinar.

00:00- 00:15 Introductions (signing in, checking audio and video for all participants)

Participants and Facilitator introduce themselves (their names, their birthplace, a hobby/something they love doing, one word that reflects how they

are feeling about interacting in this experience). This activity is done in “popcorn style” where the next person shares based on something that he or she shares in common with the previous participant.

00:15-00:30 Participants share their collages with each other (1-2 minutes each)

Participants share in order of their birthdays (starting with January and moving chronologically towards December). Participants present their collages, explaining how their work symbolizes their definition of “home.” After each participant shares his work, he or she is asked the following questions:

- What did you have in common with the other “Home Collages” you viewed?
- What was unique about your “Home Collage” that you think makes it stand out?
- Was Israel a part of your definition? If so, why? If not, why not?

The facilitator should be the last person to share his or her “Home Collage.”

00:30-00:53 Facilitator introduces 5 Landscapes of Israel with interactive Prezi

https://prezi.com/jybjbflg_vje/the-landscapes-of-israel/

Facilitator leads participants through the “Landscapes of Israel” presentation, stopping to ask clarifying questions after each “landscape” in order to help participants make connections. Facilitator may say: “In this presentation we will explore 5 different perspectives on how the Jewish people relate to Israel. Take this time to listen, and consider your current approach and relationship with Israel. Write notes down of compelling ideas you learn. Write down questions you have or things you are confused about. We will have time after each landscape to ask clarifying questions before moving on to another landscape.

The Imagined Israel

- Facilitator may ask: What is your current understanding of Israel as homeland based on your education thus far?

The Covenantal Israel

- Facilitator may ask: What is a covenant?
- What do you know about the covenant between God and the Jewish people? Facilitator may also ask: What do you know about the role Israel plays in the covenant between God and the Jewish People?

The Remembered Israel

- Facilitator may ask: When do you think of Israel?
- Facilitator may also ask: When does Israel play a role in your life?

The Lived Israel

- Facilitator may say: Just in the way that we may define the covenantal relationship between God and Israel (the Jewish people) in different ways, we may interpret its implications on Israeli society in different ways. This may lead to multiple perspectives on how Judaism and the modern state balance their ideals.
- Facilitator may ask: In what ways is Israel a home for the Jewish People, and in what ways is Israel a Jewish state?

The Envisioned Israel

- Facilitator may say: Israel can be a home for Diaspora Jews because we are all part of Am Yisrael (Jewish Peoplehood).
- Facilitator may ask: Do you feel a part of Am Yisrael? What responsibilities may we have to Israel if it is supposed to be our homeland? What is the difference between a home and homeland?

00:53-00:58 Group reflection on the session

Participants share one thing they were: surprised about, excited about, confused about, still wondering, learned, or are taking away. Facilitator needs to write these responses down, in order to compare with the personalized survey done by participants after the session.

00:58-00:60 Facilitator explains next session (see next LP) and sends link to participants to fill out survey.

G. **Materials needed** (including all handouts)

Computer (with microphone and video camera)
Art Supplies (Paper, colored markers, glue, tape)
Adobe Connect software
Survey
5 Landscapes of Israel Prezi
(https://prezi.com/jybjbflg_vje/the-landscapes-of-israel/)

H. **Survey Questions**

What do you think of when you think of home?
Can you have multiple homes? If so, what are the common components?
Do you feel like Israel is your home?
Would you call Israel the homeland for the Jewish People?
What was surprising, exciting, confusing about today's session and what did you learn?

Lesson #4 “The Am Yisrael/The Home Triangle”

A. Lesson Overview:

In this lesson, participants will be asked to explore their emotional connection to home, in particular the people they associate with home. Using a triangle visual cue, participants will map out their personal connections, encouraging them to reflect on how they build their ‘Am Yisrael’. This program is intended for the evening of the third day hiking in the Negev on the NFTY in Israel program.

B. Enduring Understanding for the Unit of which this lesson is a part

- As I grow I encounter multiple contexts in which I feel at home. Though I may not live in Israel, because I am a Jew, Israel is one of the places I call home.

C. Core Concept for this individual lesson

- Often we feel “at home” with specific groups of people. Though I may not call Israel my home, I feel “at home” as a member of the Jewish People.

D. Essential Questions for this lesson

- Why should we define home?
- With whom do you feel most at home?
- Who makes up “Am Yisrael” today?
- With whom do you feel “at home” in Israel? Why?

E. Evidence of understanding for this lesson

- Learners can articulate the people in their lives with whom they feel at home
- Learners can express their understandings of the concept of ‘Am Yisrael’
- Learners demonstrate a connection between the people they feel at home with and their Jewish community through discussion activity

E. Outline of Lesson Activities

****Triangle should be drawn in sand before the commencement of program, or by another (not leading) staff member during the first five minutes.****

00:00 - 00:05: Sing ‘Am Yisrael Chai’, building energy and excitement. After song has finished, ask participants about meaning of the phrase. Ask participants “who makes up Am Yisrael, today?”

00:05 - 00:15: Participants gather around triangle (that has been drawn in the sand). Nominate each corner as a different “answer”, and ask them to step along the lines of the triangle to be closest to the line/spot that represents them. Participants will later explain why they have chosen their answer, and what it

means within the context of understanding Am Yisrael and the community with whom we feel at home.

Questions:

1. How do you feel after our hike? (Corners - great, not too bad, completely exhausted)
2. Do you think you could wander in the desert for 40 years? (Corners - yes, no, maybe if I had wifi)
3. What do you think of when you hear the word 'home'?? (Corners - friends, family, Jewish community)

00:10 - 00:25: Participants break off into three groups based on the answers from the third triangle question (friend group, family group, Jewish community group) (if there was a majority at one corner, split the group evenly in three). They will discuss in their groups the following questions:

- Why did you gravitate towards that particular corner when you thought of home? (Why might people do that?)
- What obligation do you feel towards this group of people?
- How does that community/group contribute to your idea of "home"?
- How would your idea of home be impacted without that particular group of people?

00:25 - 00:40: Three split groups come back together to discuss answers. Facilitator should press participants to really clarify their answers and responses.

00:40- 00:60 Participants will then engage in an Am Yisrael activity utilizing different quotes reflecting possible ways of relating to the people of/community of Israel. Participants choose 3 quotes from the list below, and explain how these quotes reflect the ways in which they are in relation with the community of Israel/people of Israel. Participants then discuss the various ways we feel "at home" as part of Am Yisrael.

Possible Quotes:

- "Almost all Jewish groups in Israel and the diaspora express a commitment to Jewish survival, peoplehood, and unity. But the interpretation of those concepts different systematically from group to group." - **Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks**
- "Peoplehood" is the knowledge-based sense of belonging and commitment to the Jewish people, its values, its big ideas, its potential, and to Israel, the expression of its national sovereignty. - **Avraham Infeld**
- "The relation of Diaspora Judaism to that of Israel is like the relation of heat to the flame that produces it. Without the flame, there could be no heat. If we wish to enjoy the heat of Jewish creativity in the Diaspora, we must, through our personal participation in the Zionist cause, keep feeding the flame of Jewish life in the State of Israel." - **Mordechai Kaplan**

- “Without a Jewish People regenerated in spirit, no matter how successful the state that it would establish, and how large a population that state could muster, Zion will continue to be unredeemed.” - **Mordecai Kaplan**
- “The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped.” - **Declaration of Independance of the Establishment of the State of Israel**
- “I do think of myself as being Jewish ethnically. But I’m not religious at all. I have no religion.” - **Sarah Silverman**
- “It is not just a matter of religious observance or practice. To me, being Jewish means and has always meant being proud to be part of a people that has maintained its distinct identity for more than 2,000 years, with all the pain and torment that has been inflicted upon it.” - **Golda Meir**
- “Nobody understood what it was like to be black and Jewish... being different from everyone else just made me a lot stronger.” - **Drake**
- The Jewish people, ever since David slew Goliath, have never considered youth as a barrier to leadership.” - **John F. Kennedy**
- “The Jewish people are a divided, obstinate, highly individualistic people who have cultivated faith, sharp wittedness, and polemics to a very high level.” - **Shimon Perez**
- “A Jew must be sensitive to the pain of all human beings. A Jew cannot remain indifferent to human suffering. The mission of the Jewish people has never been to make the world more Jewish, but to make it more human.” - **Elie Wiesel**
- The Jewish people have been in exile for 2,000 years; they have lived in hundreds of countries, spoken hundred of languages and still they kept their own language, Hebrew. They kept their Aramaic, later their Yiddish; they kept their books; they kept their faith.” - **Isaac Bashevis Singer**
- “If I am not for myself, who is for me? If I am only for myself, what I am? And if not now, when?” - **Hillel the Elder (Pirke Avot 1:10)**
- “I am a peace-supporting Jew.” - **Alan Dershowitz**
- “We Jews have a secret weapon in our war with the Arabs; we have nowhere else to go... we have to fight.” - **Golda Meir**
- “To be a Jew means always being with the oppressed and never the oppressors.” - **Marek Edelman**
- “Some people like the Jews, and some do not. But no thoughtful man can deny the fact they are, beyond any question, the most formidable and the most remarkable race which has appeared in the world.” - **Winston Churchill**
- “I’m Jewish and my wife isn’t so right now we’re literally decorating a Christmas tree with Jewish stars draped around it.” - **Max Greenfield**

F. Materials needed

Giant stick for drawing triangle in sand

Quotes, printed on laminated paper

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Appendix

PARTICIPANT BRIT/CONTRACT

By signing this contract you agree to do the following things:

- Attend all sessions before, during, and after your Israel experience
- Fill out all surveys and do respond to all journal prompts with a one page reflection within 24 hrs of the end of the session
- Not engage in any media or communications during online sessions that are not related to the activities of the session.
 - Respect fellow participants in the cohort as well as the facilitator
- Contribute to a safe space where multiple perspectives are welcome during dialogues and other activities in which participants will share their understandings, stories, and thoughts.
- Bring joy, honor, love, compassion, humility, wonder, and curiosity to all sessions... but mainly, bring your entire self to all activities!

If you are found to be in violation of this agreement, your participants in the NFTY in Israel summer program may be at stake.

Participant Signature

Date