

Professional learning for Jewish educators on Israel

A Capstone Curriculum

By Yehudit Werchow

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Each time that I play
Something in me is being
played
This is my way
for singing myself
to myself.

"בכל פעם שאני מנגן
משהו בי מתנגן.
זאת הדרך שלי
לשיר את עצמי
לעצמי .

Each time that I sing
Something in me breaks
this is my way
for lending myself to you
Until tomorrow.

בכל פעם שאני שר
משהו בי נשבר.
זאת הדרך שלי
לתת לך את עצמי
עד מחר "

Until tomorrow, By Yoni
Rechter

עד מחר/יוני רכטר

The rationale

Israel is one of the pillars of Jewish identity, together with God, the People of Israel and Torah. These are the building blocks that Jews today can stand on to build their Jewish lives. Jewish educators should be given opportunities, as part of their personal and professional Jewish development, to explore and identify what are their Israel stories and how Israel is present in their own Jewish life journey. This personal experience will empower and inspire the educators to feel competent as guides for their students on their journey to build their own lifelong relationship with Israel. Once the educators connect with their Israel stories and share them amongst the community of practitioners, their own stories are enriched and become

crystalized. These reciprocal experiences prepare educators to guide their learners in a similar process and to create together enriched nuanced communal stories that could lead to a more meaningful presence of Israel in their learners lives. .

The target audience for this curriculum is the cohort of directors of Education in the 13 URJ camps. These educators create the vision and educational strategy for Jewish Education in their respective camps and therefore should also develop and lead the educational strategy for integrating Israel organically into the Jewish Education curriculum in their camps. URJ camps are committed to Israel engagement and offer various Israel educational experiences for the camp community. Yet, in conversations that I conducted with the camps' educational leadership we recognized that there was no clear vision for educating about Israel in our camps.

"Israel and Israel programming is at the heart of our camp, but it's a constant struggle to make this a reality. How do we go beyond Yom Israel?" (Director of Education in a URJ camp)

Each of our camps invests resources in bringing Israeli counselors to our camps as a core educational strategy. This enriches the camp's community with a vibrant, vivid and authentic Israeli presence. Many of these Israeli counselors are integrated into the social and professional fabric of our camps, but at times both groups experience challenges in collaborating around Jewish and Israel education at camp, and therefore miss the opportunity to connect and create a shared sense of partnership as individuals and colleagues. Religious and cultural differences are factors that might contribute to the challenges in connecting with each other. Most of the Israeli counselors are secular and have little religious background. Their religious experience if any is Orthodox and therefore their experiences at camp are their first encounter with liberal Jewish ideas and practices. It takes many of them a while to adjust and feel comfortable around them. It is inspiring to see the change and positive feelings that many Israeli counselors develop towards liberal Judaism and its practice throughout the summer. Another significant factor is the difference in age and life experiences; most of the North American counselors are younger than the Israeli counselors and their life experiences are also different subsequently.

Most North American staff are college students whereas most Israeli counselors have just concluded their army service. Israeli counselors often come to camp with a sense of responsibility to “make everyone fall in love with Israel” or with the expectation to infuse their camp community with a great appreciation for Israel. While many North American counselors have positive connections with Israel, there are many that are distant and some who have negative feelings towards it. Alex Sinclair addresses the reasons that North American young adults struggle with Israel and feel alienated from it. He argues that

“ We need to develop a second core assumption in Israel engagement: it’s not only American Jews’ responsibility that they don’t relate to Israel; it’s also Israel’s responsibility. Note the 'not only... also' construction: this position is not a denial of the problematic elements of American Jewish identity and education, nor of the responsibility of the American Jewish community to do more to inspire its congregants to take on Jewish rituals, learn Jewish texts, speak Hebrew and explore Israeli culture. This position’s new claim is, though, that Israel engagement must also be rooted in the consideration of Israel’s part in the disconnect” .¹

Sinclair reminds us that Israel engagement is the fruit of a reciprocal commitment on behalf of Israeli and American Jewry to building meaningful relationships and collaborative efforts for strengthening the Jewish people and bettering the State of Israel. Our educational endeavors should be crafted so that they create opportunities for meaningful *mifgashim* between these two groups that will in turn inspire these collaborations. However there are many elements that unite these groups, such as the experiences during the summer, their passion and commitment for the well-being of the camp community, and above all their Jewish identity and sense of belonging to the Jewish people. Through this close collaboration, both groups and each individual are given a unique opportunity to develop a sense of “Peoplehood consciousness “, that is to develop a sense of commitment to the Jewish people and its civilization, which extends over and above the immediate social encounter with each other as individuals. If designed in a more intentional way the summer experience could inspire the participants to integrate the idea and feeling of belonging to the Jewish People into their value

¹ Sinclair, “Israel engagement is Israel’s responsibility too”, The Jerusalem Post, 09/21/2011.

system so that it nurtures their actions in the world. This feeling was expressed last year in a sermon given by one of the Israeli counselors during a Shabbat evening service at camp:

“Soon we will leave as the summer will end and the obligation to maintain and strengthen your individual connection to Israel will fall under your responsibility. Will you stay informed and educate others? Will you promise to visit, write us a letter, and keep in touch with us? We hope that you do but understand that it’s not easy. And so, even if you don’t, we will meet again, next year at summer camp.”

Curriculum Overview

This curriculum builds on the successes of URJ camps in Jewish education, and is a chapter in a yearlong process of professional learning and development for camp leadership (camp directors and directors of education). The main purpose for the yearlong work with each camp's leadership is guiding each camp in articulating their vision for educating about Israel.

The goals for the curriculum are:

1. Re imagining the place of Israel in the fabric and culture of our camps.
2. To model Israel educational experiences that enrich and are integral to the process of Jewish identity building of the camp.
3. To Inspire and enrich Jewish educators personally and professionally, and provide them with the tools and skills for their Israel educational work with campers and staff.
4. To create opportunities for the Israeli and North American staff to build strong relationships, and a sense of shared commitment to the value of Jewish peoplehood.

Methodologies that will be used for implementing the curriculum:

- On-line educators calls
- Personal and peer mentoring
- Five-day training seminar in Israel for the directors of education concurrent with the Israeli shlichim (counselors) training
- Personal visits to the camps during the summer for on-site mentoring and evaluation

Enduring Understandings, Essential Questions and Evidence of Understanding²

“וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָם לֵךְ-לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל-הָאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֹרְאָן. וְאָעֲשֶׂה לְךָ גְדוֹלָה וְאֶבְרַכְךָ וְאֶגְדָּלְךָ שְׁמֹךְ וְהָיָה בְרָכָה.” (בראשית יב:1-2)

“And God said to Abram, 'Go away from your land, from your birthplace, and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you great. You shall become a blessing.’” (Genesis 12:1-2)

First Enduring Understanding: The relationship between the individual Jew and Israel is a personal and communal ever-evolving conversation.

Essential Questions:

- What are my Israel stories?
- How do the different stories that I heard (from family, friends, educators, students) influence my Israel stories?
- How do I influence my peers and learners Israel stories?
- How are my Israel stories impacted by my interactions with Israelis?

Evidence of learning:

Knowing:

1. Educators will express their Israel stories; what inspires them about these stories and what they are conflicted about?
2. Educators will identify what are their camp's Israel stories?

² A note to the educator: The framework that I have selected for mentoring evidence of learning is the model of a whole person learning. For each Enduring Understanding I provide a diverse selection of noticing targets that could guide you in evaluating the understanding of your educators. The model of whole person learning attends to four target areas: Knowing, doing, belief/values, belonging. Please see detailed description of this model in the following section.

3. Educators will express how they understand the Jewish story of the State of Israel? What are the Jewish values that the State of Israel was founded on? What inspires them about the way these values are expressed or absent?

Believing:

- Their Israel story is part of their Jewish story, and it's a work in progress.
- Their Israel story interacts in multiple ways with the Israel stories of their family and community, and also with those of Israelis and the Jewish people.

Doing:

- Educators will explore and question their relationship with Israel, recognize what has been helpful and has contributed to creating their stories, what personal reasons prevent them from advancing on this journey of connecting with Israel? What troubles them about their stories?
- Educators will explore in a sensitive and insightful way other Israel stories and articulate which of these stories impacts their journey and how.
- Educators will demonstrate empathy and criticism to other Israel stories

Belonging:

- Educators will share and exchange Israel stories with their North American and Israeli camp community and other family and social circles.
- Educators will explore with colleagues and peers issues that they feel conflicted about.
- Educators will create opportunities for the staff that they supervise and for their peers to explore and connect with their Israel story.

רבי ישמעאל בנו אומר, הלומד על מנת ללמד, מספיקין בידו
ללמוד וללמד; והלומד על מנת לעשות, מספיקין בידו ללמוד
וללמד ולעשות.

(מסכת אבות, פרק ד', משנה ה')

Rabbi Yishmael his son used to say: He who learns in order to teach
will be enabled both to learn and to teach. But he who learns in order
to practice will be enabled to learn, to teach, to observe, and to
practice. (Pirkei Avot, 4:5)

Second Enduring Understanding: My Israel stories inform my actions and my actions nurture my Israel stories.

Essential questions:

- How do we express our Israel stories in our lives? and in camp?
- How we express in camp our story about Jewish peoplehood?
- How are my Israel stories impacted by my actions?
- How are my Israel stories impacted by my Israel experiences at camp and in Israel?

Evidence of learning:

Knowing:

1. Mapping exercise³:

- Educators will explore how to translate and integrate the diversity of their camp's Israel stories into the various educational, worship and social experiences at camp.
- Educators will identify ways that the camp community could impact the State of Israel and Israeli society.

³ A sample of the mapping exercise can be found in Appendix a.

- Educators will understand the connection between the people of Israel and the State of Israel.

Believing:

- Each individual can impact the State of Israel, Israeli society and the Jewish people in multiple ways.
- Actions are essential to Jewish life. They also create a unique opportunity for exploring values.
- Actions nurture and shape our identity.
- Educators will articulate the values that guide their camp's Israel educational work.

Doing:

- Educators will craft Israel educational experiences that will enhance the way Israel is expressed and experienced in camp. This work will be done in collaboration between Israeli and North American staff.
- Educators will encourage the campers and staff to create opportunities that will enable them to have an impact on Israel (social action projects, publications etc.)

Belonging:

- Educators will support and initiate communal events at camp for expressing and celebrating camps' Israel stories.
- Educators will create opportunities for sharing the camp community's Israel experiences with the greater community of camp: families of campers and staff, alumni, congregations, other camps.
- Educators will build relationships with and support Israeli and American initiatives/organizations that echo their Israel stories.

- Educators will create opportunities for shared learning, socializing and working experience between North American and Israeli staff.

“חוגו את חגי אבותיכם והוסיפו עליהם קצת משלכם לפי כוחכם ולפי מסיבתכם. העיקר, שתעשו הכל באמונה ומתוך הרגשה חיה וצורך נפשי, ואל תתחכמו הרבה” . ח.נ. ביאליק תרצ”ד.

“Celebrate the holidays of your ancestors and add to them a little of yourselves, according to your abilities, your taste and your occasion. What is paramount is that you do everything out of faith, a lively feeling and a soulful need, and don’t be too clever.” – H.N. Bialik (1930)

Third Enduring Understanding: Modern Israeli art and culture are powerful mediums and resources that can enrich our dialogue with Israel and our Jewish stories.

E.Q’s:

- Which stories in Israeli art and cultural resonate with me?
- Which of their messages speak to me? Which create tension in me?

Evidence of Learning:

Knowing:

- Become familiar with Israeli culture: Literature, music, film and other types of popular culture.
- Identify the narratives that each artifact conveys about Israel.

Believing:

- Israeli artists express their personal and Jewish journeys and their relationship with Israel through their works.

- Israeli art can enrich my Jewish and personal journey.
- Israeli art can help me to experience Israel and connect with Israel and Israeli society.

Doing:

- Learn and improve Hebrew
- Develop his/her repertoire of Israeli culture
- Integrate artifacts of Israeli art and culture into personal and professional life and experiences.

Belonging:

- Educators will share with their peers, colleagues and families Israeli cultural artifacts.

Seminar in Israel

The seminar for the educators will run in parallel with the training seminar of the Israeli counselors in Israel. Both seminars are six days long and will be held in separate venues. There will be separate educational experiences for each cohort as well as shared educational experiences for all. The times that these cohorts will spend together will be dedicated to conversations about Jewish identity, Israel education and building relationships between Israeli and North American counselor in camp. The educational experiences for the North American educators will take advantage of being in Israel and the opportunities that emerge from the overlap between “text” (Israel) and “context” (Israel) as well as targeting the unique professional needs of the North American educators.

Core components of the seminar:

1. Each presenter will begin the session by sharing his or her Israel stories. This will stress and model all three enduring understandings simultaneously.
2. Creating a community of practice: Each day of the seminar will conclude with a processing session that will be moderated by a member of the group and will explore ways of translating the experience into camp. The second goal for the processing sessions is creating a community of learners amongst the participants. Building a community of practitioners is most valuable for the process of constructing and nurturing the relationships between individuals and Israel. Parker Palmer draws a distinction between knowing and understanding an object and a subject. Applying his ideas to our educational endeavor teaches that knowing Israel as a subject means discovering it through relationships, allowing Israel to be the center of our attention and engaging with it and with our peers through a rich and complex web of communications. Palmer calls the community of students that is created during this process the “community of truth.”⁴ The understanding that develops is “the result of a passionate

⁴

Palmer, P.

and disciplined process of inquiry and dialogue.” The community of truth advances through “sharing observations and interpretations, torn by conflicts in one moment and joined by consensus in the next.”⁵ Once applied to professional learning of educators, this dynamic helps create a rich and complex network of relationships in which educators as individuals and as a collective explore and continue to shape and nurture their thoughts, knowledge and beliefs about Israel in general and particularly on its place in their own Jewish identities. In this reflective process we also become aware of the conflicts that might distance us from Israel and prevent us from connecting to it. These conflicts could be the result of issues that are rooted in the reality of North American Jewry or in the reality of Israel. Many of these conflicts are also rooted in one’s own personal wrestling with what does it mean to be a Jew.

3. Creating and belonging to a community of truth enables the educators to share their experiences, knowledge, observations, conflicts and passions. It is important to recognize and be aware of the fact that the impact of the community on its members can also be negative and prevent the individual from exploring and expressing different aspects of their Israel story, mainly her concerns about and challenges regarding Israel. Some educators find themselves under pressure to conceal their own attitudes towards Israel when these conflict or differ from the consensus, even when the institutions and communities to which they belong claim to be pluralist.⁶ For others it is an opportunity to enrich and develop their stories. The responsibility of the leader of the training is to create with the group a safe space for self-reflective conversations. This format should encourage the educators to converse with each other about different aspects of Israel and their relationships with Israel. Once the educators experience this for themselves they will be able to create similar experiences for their students and as part of this they will also provide the students with the content they need in order to have a nuanced dialogue about Israel and. The leader of the training should model the idea that it is acceptable to challenge preconceived notions and to alter them when and if needed.

⁵ Palmer, Pr.

⁶ Weissman, C.

Learning in a community, when done in a healthy and respectful way, offers the students and the educators a chance to look and experience Israel through the eyes of others and from various vantage points instead of forcing them to process everything through their own limited vision.⁷

4. Balancing action and reflection, connecting inquiry and experimentation: Each educational module during the seminar is created around a core component of the camps culture: prayer, music, meals, art, Torah and text etc. Each session is created as a lab where educators will experience methodologies for infusing Israel content into these areas in order to integrate Israel organically into camp's culture but more importantly we will explore if and how Israel content could enrich our Jewish experiences and learning. For example: could Israeli music enrich our liturgy and prayer experiences? Could Israeli art that was inspired by Jewish values enrich our Jewish learning of values? By creating experiential workshops and reflecting on these experiences we could reimagine our Israel and Jewish educational experiences at camp and discover ways for enriching and deepening our work. The educators will be proactive participants, each one will be responsible for facilitating the processing sessions in the evenings and this will hopefully help reinforcing this model allowing the educators to experience modeling it so that they could later implement it in their camps. This process is important because it will model another important quality; affording people increased amount of "white space" to experience the new methodologies and ideas without having to commit immediately to adapting them. Hopefully discussing these ideas amongst colleagues will spark ideas that will help taking the experiences and trying them at home.⁸
5. Mifgash: Including Israelis in this professional learning experience of the educators is essential. Since Israeli counselor are a vital component of the camp community, and play a central role in bringing Israel to camp, it is necessary that these two cohorts meet before the summer and work together on creating a sophisticated, nuanced and organic

⁷ Palmer ,P.

⁸ Senge, P.

presence of Israel at camp. Applying Parker Palmer's concept of "hospitality" to the Mifgash component could enrich the experience for both cohorts and contribute to it greatly. Palmer suggests to members of communities of learners "Receiving each other with openness and care and placing the search for meaning at the heart of the communal practice"⁹. The learning experiences for the North American and Israeli educators during the seminar should be designed thoughtfully to inspire the educators to build personal relationships with each other and to explore personal and professional questions such as Jewish Peoplehood, the vision for Israel as the Jewish State, challenges in Jewish Education etc.

⁹ Palmer, P.

Note for the educator and facilitator of the learning process

1. From professional development to professional learning: The term “learning” alludes to the ongoing nature of the work and shifts away from focusing on teachers’ deficits¹⁰. I find this very appropriate and helpful in creating a more positive and coherent frame of reference for this experience for the educators.
2. The professional learning process and this curriculum were inspired by Grant’s and Pomson’s research¹¹ on professional learning on Israel. The curriculum is built accordingly on two levels; nurturing the educators’ personal identity and relationships with Israel in order to stimulate the development of educators’ knowledge, understanding and skills.¹² The second level is inspiring individuals intellectually and emotionally in order to inspire creativity and passion about Israel but also about educating about it. I agree with Grant’s and Pomson’s argument about the difference between experiences that may enrich existing curriculum and may also make learning more meaningful, **and experiences that attend to the deep structure of teaching and learning, and therefore enable teachers to reflect on their own learning to build compelling educational experiences for students.”** This process was designed so that it will inspire the educators to rethink not only the content of their teaching, but also actually *how* they educate. It is at this last level where the potential lies for significant institutional improvement and change.
3. Whole person learning: The model of whole person learning attends to four target areas: Knowing, doing, belief/values, belonging. This model builds on two ideas about educational processes: If learners are expected to form deep and long lasting

¹⁰ Weissman, C.

¹¹ Grant, L.D., & Pomson, A.D.M.

¹² Grant, L.D., & Pomson, A.D.M.

relationships with Israel all four target areas must be addressed. Whole person learning honors the personal alchemy of each individual.¹³ The four target areas are :

- Knowledge: essential knowledge and skills that learners will acquire that will enable them in a real life Jewish/Israel experience or practice.
 - Doing: The authentic Jewish life experiences or practice
 - Belief: core beliefs or values that learners will be able to explore and articulate according to their own perspectives and understandings.
 - Belong: opportunities to caring for and connecting with other learners, family, colleagues and to Am Israel.
4. Evidence of Learning: is based on the model described above and for each Enduring Understanding I have provided educators with a diverse selection of noticing targets. Noticing targets allow us to pay attention to different types of cues from our learners and are therefore useful for our learners too. They allow both to effectively appreciate their growth in their journey with Israel. Since the different educational modules during the training are built to address the Enduring Understanding some noticing target could be helpful for more than one session/lesson.
5. Evaluation: assessment and feedback are crucial for helping people learn. The assessment of the educators learning would need therefore to achieve the following:
- Enable educators to express their understanding of the big ideas behind the learning experiences.
 - Enable educators to share their feedback about the learning experience.
 - Gather evidence of application in performance of the learning and the acquired skills. In other words, how did the educators implement what they have learned?
 - Evaluation is also an essential tool for the educators, as a way of reflecting on their personal and professional growth along the journey. It is important to share with the educators this particular purpose of the evaluation processes.

¹³ The Lomed Handbook, chapter 4.

Educators will be asked to evaluate the learning experience and also to assess the implementation of the skills and knowledge they acquired into their camps¹⁴. The evaluation forms are a framework to help the educators focus on the goals and on their performance. It is also a tool that will help us to support the educators' work and address the challenges they face. Each evaluation form will be followed by a conversation with the educator; this will help assess the process of learning, its effectiveness and also assist the educators to advance in their work.

¹⁴ See Appendix b.

Israel Kallah for URJ camps directors of education
The educational program

Unit 1 – Opening Maamad

"בכל פעם שאני מנגן משהו בי מתנגן"¹⁵ – "Each time that I play, something in me is played"

Enduring understanding: The relationship between the individual Jew and Israel is a personal and communal ever-evolving conversation.

Goals:

1. Bonding the groups socially and as community of practice.
2. Initiating the process of sharing and learning the Israel stories of the members of the group.
3. Understanding the rationale and program for the Kallah.

Description of the session:

00:10 ברוכים הבאים , Introduction to the Kallah

00:10 – 00:40 getting to know each other: Participants will introduce themselves by name and will share with the group:

- The first thing they love doing when they arrive in Israel and in camp. Describing the things/actions that symbolize for them arrival to either. What about these act mark arriving for them?

00:40- 01:00 Setting goals and expectations for our learning:

¹⁵ Yoni Recter.

Participants will walk around the room and read the various notes that will be taped to the walls; the notes list skills and characteristics that are important for Israel education: e.g. being knowledgeable about Israel (history, current affairs, society, culture), creativity, open minded, interpersonal skills, passion about Israel, etc. Each educator will select three notes according to the following criteria:

The first: representing the most important skill/characteristic for an Israel Educator

The second: representing their strongest skill/characteristic as Israel educators

The third: representing a skill/characteristic that is important for Israel education and that they wish to strengthen

01:00-01:45: Sharing in the group and identifying the needs and strengths of our group

01:45-02:00: Introducing the rationale and enduring understanding for the Kallah and going over the curriculum to identify how they might respond to the needs and strengths of the educator as individuals and as a community.

Unit 2 – “Let our eyes behold” – "ותחזנה עינינו" - Rabbi Gilad Kariv.

Presenter: Rabbi Gilad Kariv is the Executive Director of the Israel Movement for Reform Judaism. He has been a leader and advocate on behalf of liberal Judaism in Israel since 1998.

Enduring understanding: My Israel stories inform my actions and my actions nurture my Israel stories.

Description of the session: A learning session and conversation with Rabbi Kariv on:

1. His vision for the State of Israel and the ways in which his vision reflects in his personal and professional life.
2. The role and involvement of the Israeli Movement for Reform Judaism in pursuing social justice and religious pluralism for Israeli society and the State of Israel.

3. The importance of the partnership between the Israeli movement and the North American movement and its contribution to strengthening the Jewish people and the betterment of the State of Israel.

Evidence of learning:

- Knowing: Educators analyze how camp's Israel educational experiences express the camp's vision for Israel.
- Believing: Each individual can impact the State of Israel, Israeli society and the Jewish people in multiple ways.
- Doing: Educators will identify ways that the camp community could impact the State of Israel and Israeli society.
- Belonging: Educators will create opportunities for shared learning, socializing and working experience between North American and Israeli staff.

Enduring understanding for Unit 3 to 5: Modern Israeli art and culture are powerful mediums and resources that can enrich our dialogue with Israel and our Jewish stories.

Unit 3 - *"There is a special magic in our streets" Meshina – "ברחובות שלנו יש קסם מיוחד"*

Presenter: Niro Taub is a certified Israeli tour guide, an educator and an artist who has developed interactive workshops and walking tour in Israel, Greece and South America. Taub's tours explore the interaction between place and personal and collective narrative.

Description of the session: A Walking tour and workshop on photography and personal narratives.

The workshop is inspired by the photography of Alex Levac. The photography of Levac is a playful and witty description of Israeli life and society: “I really see myself as anthropologist of the street or paparazzi of the anonymous,” he said. “I do not want to call myself a historian, but I want people to look at the pictures in 50 years and see something about Israeli society.”¹⁶

Part A: 60 min. Exploring the photography of Alex Levac will prepare the participant for the second part of the workshop.

Part B: 60 min. Each pair of participants will explore the streets of Tel Aviv and document the stories of Israel that will draw their attention. The participants will be instructed to identify some of the tensions and beauties that are embedded in Israeli reality and society, to capture them with their cameras and reflect on how these tensions, contradictions and beauties influence their personal connections with Israel.

Part C: 60 min. The workshop will conclude with the participants sharing their stories and photographs. We will explore the possibilities of adapting the experience and this methodology at camp.

Evidence of learning:

- **Knowing:** educators will understand and become familiar with the art of Alex Lebac.
- **Believing:** Israeli art can help me to experience Israel and connect with Israel and Israeli society.
- **Doing:**
Educators will gain new skills for integrating photography into their educational work.
Educators will create opportunities for their staff and campers to share their Israel stories with the camp community.
- **Belonging:** educators will share their photographs with their peers, shlichim and communities.

¹⁶ <http://lens.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/05/23/israel-with-a-knowing-wink/>

Unit 4: What is Israel made of?

Presenter: Hanoach Piven: The colorful and witty illustrations of Israeli illustrator Hanoach and the principles of Piven's collage technique inspire children and adults to experiment with common everyday objects to create their own works of art. Piven's playful portraits of Israeli and Jewish leaders from around the world as well as other famous figures make a compelling and sophisticated educational resource for educating about Israel and Jewish values.

Description of the session: educators will meet Piven in his workshop in Yafo. Piven will share his personal stories about Art and Israel and how they shaped his life journey. The educators will explore and decipher some of Piven's Israeli portraits, and will create their portraits as Educators.

Evidence of learning:

- Knowing: educators will understand and become familiar with the art of Hanoach Piven and the stories of the Jewish leaders that his art represents.
- Believing: Israeli art can help me to experience Israel and connect with Israel and Israeli society.
- Doing: educators will gain new skills for integrating Piven's techniques into their educational work.
- Belonging: educators will share with their peers, shlichim and communities the ideas and works that resonated with them.

Unit 5: Flavors of Israel - טעמים של ישראל

Presenter: Raphael Cohen and friends: Dinner and conversation with Israeli chefs on food and identity.

Chef Raphael Cohen, from a Moroccan Sephardic family, serves modern variations of his grandmother's traditional North African cuisine and focuses on local produce. Each chef will share dishes and the personal stories behind these dishes. These stories tell the story of the cultural evolution in Israeli society from the times of the dominating Ashkenazi leadership and the ideology of melting pot to a more open approach that embraces and celebrates the diversity of Israeli society. The dishes and stories also represent the multicultural mosaic that constitutes Israeli society today.

Evidence of learning:

- **Knowing:**
Educators will become familiar with the richness of Israeli cuisine and cultures that constitute Israeli society and culture.
Educators will learn new Israel stories.
- **Believing:** Israeli cuisine and food can help me to experience Israel and connect with Israel and Israeli society.
- **Doing:** educators will integrate Israeli culture in a rich and nuanced way through meals which are a core component of camp life.
- **Belonging:** educators will share and exchange with their peers, shlichim and communities their families' culinary and identity stories.

Unit 6: Maamad and Sikum yom: Processing session. Each evening another participant will lead the group in processing the day that was.

Unit 7: From consumers to “prosumer”¹⁷ of media and information producing our media and content about Israel.

Enduring understanding: My Israel stories inform my actions and my actions nurture my Israel stories.

Presenter: Marcelo Kisilevski: Is a journalist and an educator who specializes in experiential learning. He works with teens and young adults on developing critical approach to media. He teaches Israeli current affairs and methodologies for producing thoughtful and sophisticated media around them.

Description of the session:

Part A: Understanding and exploring three of Israel’s pressing challenges and how they affect the connections of World Jewry with in Israel. The group will learn and discuss the tensions around Iran’s nuclear weapon, the economic justice protests in Israel and the issues of religious pluralism in Israel. Duration: 60 min.

Part B: An interactive workshop exploring methodologies for educating our campers and staff about social and political issues in Israel while empowering them to become the “prosumers” of Israel related knowledge for their camp and home communities. Duration: 90 min.

Evidence of learning:

- **Knowing :**

Educators will understand the issues discussed in the workshop.

Educators will understand the connection between the personal vision for Israel and how these events influence our connection with Israel.

¹⁷ Prosumer = a combination of consumers and producers. This term represents the change in attitude from passive consumers to a proactive attitude that exercises a more critical and thoughtful way for processing the information we are exposed to in the media.

- **Believing:** Educators will develop their ideological framework for analyzing and making decisions about events and issues in Israel.
- **Doing:** educators will plan ways to adapt the methodologies learnt in the session to camp.
Educators will continue informing themselves about event in Israel
- **Belonging:** Educators will engage in conversations with the educator's community and their camp shlichim and families to further explore issues of Israel and the Jewish people.

"Celebrate the holidays of your ancestors and add to them a little of yourselves, according to your abilities, your taste and your occasion. What is paramount is that you do everything out of faith, a lively feeling and a soulful need, and don't be too clever." – H.N. Bialik (1930)¹⁸

Unit 8: Kalabat-Shabbat team: Acting out and retelling the stories of Israel as they appear in the weekly parashot using the language and techniques of Bibliodrama and Comedy.

Enduring understanding: The relationship between the individual Jew and Israel is a personal and communal ever-evolving conversation.

Presenter: The "Kalabat Shabbat" team. "Kalabat Shabat" creates satirical comedy tied to the weekly Torah portion.

Description of the session: Educators will engage experientially in interpreting and acting the stories of the people of Israel and the land of Israel inspired by the parshiyot of the summer. During the workshop educators will acquire techniques and ideas that they will be able to utilize in camp either during learning times (limmud) or Shabbat Torah-service time.

¹⁸ This idea and advice of Bialik inspired Units eight and nine.

Evidence of learning:

- **Knowing:** Educators will express what inspires them about the biblical stories about Israel and what they are conflicted about?
- **Believing:** Their Israel stories are part of their Jewish story, and both are a work in progress.
- **Doing:**
Educators will demonstrate empathy and criticism to other Israel stories.
Educators will create educational opportunities for their staff and campers to reflect on their Israel stories utilizing their experience with the Kalabat Shabat workshop.
- **Belonging:** Educators will support and initiate communal events at camp for expressing and celebrating camps' Israel stories.

Unit 9: "איך שיר נולד?" "How a song is born?"

Enduring understanding: Modern Israeli art and culture are powerful mediums and resources that can enrich our dialogue with Israel and our Jewish experiences.

Presenter: Esteban Gottfried, the founder and director of Beit Tefila Israeli and the musicians of Beit Tefila Israeli. Beit Tefilah Israeli is a young and fast-growing, liberal and independent community in Tel Aviv. Beit Tefilah Israeli has successfully created a community built around a new model of a synagogue. Services in BTI combine live music, modern poetry, literature and personal prayers with the traditional prayer book. This shows a marked effort: to renew and revitalize the notion of prayer and to form a new indigenous Israeli liturgical language. "As the name "Beit Tefilah Israeli" implies, one of our goals is not only to bring ourselves closer to prayer, but also to bring prayer closer to us – to the place where our Jewish and Israeli identities meet."¹⁹

¹⁹ <http://www.btfila.org/en/onepage.htm>

Description of the session:

A workshop on Israeli music and prayer. Esteban and his musicians will guide the group in an experiential musical workshop. The group will explore diverse methodologies for integrating Israeli culture into our prayer experience effectively; e.g. trying to identify new and old Israeli songs that could enrich the prayer experiences in our camps. Identifying Israeli poetry that could enrich our worship etc.

Evidence of learning:

- **Knowing:** Educators will become familiar with new Israeli songs and poems that can enrich their spiritual practice.
- **Believing:** Israeli art can enrich my Jewish and experience and personal life journey.
- **Doing:**
Educators will participate in Israeli cultural life: reading literature, listening to music, live concerts.
Educators will enhance the presence of Israeli culture in their camps.
- **Belonging:** Educators will invite other members of the camp community to share their favorite Israeli literature and music during camp's worship and other social and cultural events.

Unit 10: Our flavors of Israel: best practices and challenges from our playgrounds.

Enduring understanding: My Israel stories inform my actions and my actions nurture my Israel stories.

Description of the session: The seminar in Israel creates a wonderful opportunity to strengthen the educators as a community of practitioners. Each educator has been asked to prepare for the seminar one practice in the field of Israel education that they feel that their camp excels in

and to prepare a question or an area where they feel that their camp is struggling with. This exercise will achieve two goals:

1. Model and stimulate free circulation of knowledge and practices between our camps and will encourage collaboration and support amongst the educators.
2. The opening session reflected on skills for Israel education and personal and professional skills of each educator. This session will echo the first session and will add another layer to the conversations that started during the first session. Personal and professional skills of the leadership that are enhanced by practices will enable our camps to grow in their Israel work.

Evidence for learning:

- **Knowing:** educators will discuss how to translate and integrate their camp's vision for Israel education into the various educational, worship and social experiences at camp.
- **Believing:** educators will articulate the reasons and values embedded in their camp's Israel educational work. What are the values that guide their Israel educational work?
- **Doing:** Educators will craft Israel educational experiences that will enhance the way Israel is expressed and experienced in camp. This work will be done in collaboration between Israeli and North American staff.
- **Belonging:**
Educators will work as community, continuing sharing ideas, challenges, and success from their educational work.
Educators will visit other camps to learn about their work and experience their culture.
Educators will form Israel community of practice in their camps, strengthening collaborations between Israeli and North American counselors.

Activities and experiences with the Israeli counselors:

Introduction:

From Thursday night to Motzei Shabbat the educators will join the Israeli counselors training seminar. This seminar is organized by the Jewish Agency for Israel. Below is the rationale for the Israeli counselors' training as defined by the Jewish Agency's department that is responsible for the screening, training and supervision of the Israeli counselors.

"The Shlichim²⁰ training seminar is one of the most significant cornerstones of the Summer Shlichim Program and its importance and impact on the soon-to-be Shlichim is tremendous beyond a doubt. The seminars are designed to take experienced counselors and turn them into Shlichim. The screening process has demonstrated their abilities, skills and appropriateness for the camp experience. The training works on taking these individuals and preparing them - both mentally and professionally - to work in Jewish summer camps in North America. The Seminar endows the Shaliach with tools that will enrich and extend his relationship with the campers and staff members, and allow each Shaliach to express and convey his experiences as an Israeli."

The educational experiences that will take place during the weekend will enable each educator to join their camp's delegation of Israeli counselors, to build the personal and professional relationships and prepare together for the summer. Some of the educational experiences and workshops have been created by the Jewish Agency's staff and will be facilitated by the camp directors and the educators. The overarching theme for these sessions is "Israel Education at camp" with an emphasis on the connection between Jewish Education and Israel Education. This is a very important opportunity for both cohorts to meet and work together before the summer. The fact that the educators and camp directors will be facilitating activities that they have not created themselves presents a few educational challenges; while the educators and camp directors (who are also participating in the Israeli counselors' training) agree with the

²⁰ The Israeli counselors are called "shlichim".

goals for the sessions, they have not been included in the thinking and preparation process for the seminar. The educators and camp directors learn the activities and are generally positive about and collaborative in leading them but if this seminar is supposed to model the partnerships between Americans and Israelis, this is not an effective example for modeling or instilling this culture. The URJ and the leadership of the Jewish Agency have been in conversation about the changes that should be made in the process for enhancing the partnerships between all the stake holders of Israel education in camps and ensuring the success of this important endeavor. While some significant changes have been made in the last two years, the seminar is still created and directed by the Jewish Agency with collaboration from the camps' leadership but not necessarily as a partnership.

Experiences created and facilitated by the camps' educators during the seminar:

- A. The Shabbat experience: During the seminar the Israeli counselors are introduced with the Shabbat rituals and practices at URJ camps. As described earlier, most Israeli counselors have little to no experience with Reform Jewish worship and culture. This is a particularly important area to explore together since worship is one of the core components of URJ camps. The Shabbat experience during the seminar models for the counselors the experience of Shabbat worship and rituals at our camps. On Shabbat evening after the worship, meals and songs session are over, each educator will facilitate a processing conversation for their Israeli counselors to reflect on and share their impressions and feelings from the day. We hope that the counselors will find these experiences meaningful; the educators are also prepared to deal with the challenged that their counselors might experience. Another and more practical goal is preparing them so that when they arrive in camp they will be better prepared and hopefully will be able to integrate with more ease into their camp's culture. The leaders of the services integrate Israeli music and poetry into the services and also invite Israeli counselors to participate in the services; some counselors who will be returning to their camps for the second or third summer share their Shabbat experiences from camp during the services and the processing sessions. Some Israeli counselors will help lead

the songs. The intention is to model services that are designed around the reform siddur but integrate Israeli and American culture thus creating a sense of community and unity for all.

- B. Introduction to our camps: each educator and camp director will create and facilitate interactive activities and conversations which will introduce their Israeli counselors with their camp's structure and culture; these activities allow the Israeli counselors to build personal relationships with their camp's leadership and vice versa. They create an opportunity for both to share expectations for the summer. The camp director and educator create a safe intimate space for their counselors to ask questions, express their doubts and thoughts and to develop a sense of pride and belonging to a place they have never been before. The presence of returning counselors is helpful to reduce anxiety and build excitement.
- C. Session on Education in our camps: In order to improve integration of Israel education and of the Israeli counselors into the camps' culture, the educators will model for the Israeli counselors educational experiences that are idiosyncratic to their camps culture. Each camp has a unique structure and culture for crafting their educational experiences. Introducing these norms is essential for enabling the Israeli counselors to be relevant and effective as educators in their camps. Since the directors of education oversee their camp's educational work they will be able to prepare their Israeli counselors; each educator will design this session for their counselors. On the first evening of the educators' training, the educators will discuss the goals and evidence of learning for this unit and also share ideas for this session.

**Israel Kallah for URJ directors of education
Schedule**

Tuesday May 1st

18:00 -18:30 Check in at Blue Bay Natanya

18:30-20:30 Opening session - "ותחזינה עינינו" - "Let our eyes behold"

20:30-21:30 Dinner

Wednesday May 2nd

09:00- 10:30 Rabbi Gilad Kariv "ותחזינה עינינו" - "Let our eyes behold"

10:30-14:00 – "ברחובות שלנו יש קסם מיוחד" - "*there is a special magic in our streets*" Meshina.

Niro Taub: walking tour and workshop on photography and personal narratives.

15:00 – 18:00 workshop with Hanoch Piven – What is Israel made of?

18:30-21:00 טעמים של ישראל : Dinner and conversation with Israeli chefs on food and identity

21:30 -23:00 – Maamad and Sikum yom

Thursday May 3rd

08:30 - 12:30 Marcelo Kisilevski : Producing our media and content about Israel - "ותחזינה עינינו" - איך

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch

14:30 – 16:30 Workshop with the Kalabat-Shabbat team: acting and telling the stories of Israel vis-à-vis the weekly parashot – Bibliodrama

17:00 - 18:30 "איך שיר נולד" - "How a song is born" : A workshop on Israeli music and prayer with the musicians of Beit Tefila Israeli.

18:30 -19:30 Dinner

20:00-23:00 Mifgash and activities with the Israeli counselors

Friday May 4th and Shabbat 9th – are spent with the URJ team at the Israeli counselors training.

Sunday May 6th

08:00-08:30 Shacarit siyum

8:30-11:00 our flavors of Israel: best practices and challenges from our playgrounds.

11:00 – 12:30 sikum and strategies for summer 2011

Nesiya Tova.

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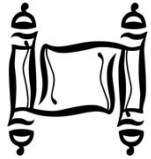
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Appendix a: Where does Israel live in your camp?

1. How is Israel visible throughout camp? (e.g. signage, posters, images, etc.)
2. What images of /messages about Israel are projected at camp? (e.g. modern vs. historical)
3. How are our campers' and staff's Israel experiences recorded and presented at camp?

T'FILAH



CABINS (TIME AND SPACE)



DAILY SCHEDULE



SPECIAL PROGRAMS



SPECIALTIES



CURRICULUM

Where does Israel appear in the camp's educational curriculum? (What age groups? How frequently? Etc.)



Where does Israel education live in your camp?

4. How is Israel visible throughout camp? (e.g. signage, posters, images, etc.)
5. What images of / messages about Israel are projected at camp? (e.g. modern vs. historical)
6. How are our campers' and staff's Israel experiences recorded and presented at camp?

HEBREW



TEVA



AROUND CAMP (SIGNAGE, POSTERS, ETC.)



MUSIC



WIDER CAMP COMMUNITY



PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS (WEBSITE, VIDEO, BROCHURES)

פייסבוק

How does each group talk about Israel?
How do we talk about Israel *to* each group?
Do these groups have a feeling of ownership for talking about Israel at camp?

CAMPERS

COUNSELORS

FACULTY (EDUCATORS, RABBIS)

SHLICHIM

Appendix a2: Eight Faces of Israel

Israel as Safe Haven for Jews ארץ מקלט *Eretz Miklat*

Israel as the destination for Jews under duress. This includes a focus on immigrants who have fled to Israel versus individuals who go by choice, destination of last resort for Jews, the need to financially support Israel's immigrants and her capacity to protect Jews.

Israel as Land of Sacred Moments ארץ מקדש *Eretz Mikdash*

Israel, in this context, is presented as the land of our ancestors in the classic Jewish texts and within the world of liturgy and worship. It also includes a strong focus on sacred places such as the Kotel and the messianic dimension of Israel.

Israel as Country at War ארץ אוכלת יושביה *Eretz Ochelet Yoshve'ha*

In this approach, Israel is presented primarily through the lens of the Arab-Israeli conflict and in the context as a country at war. This includes North American, international and Israeli political issues facing peace and security, the role of the IDF, and issues surrounding non-Jews in Israel.

Israel as Symbol ארץ כסמל *Eretz K'Semel*

Here Israel is part of the decorations and aesthetic that marks a camp as a Jewish institution. It includes Israeli flags, maps and pictures of Israel on walls, the playing of Israeli music throughout the intercom system, or the presence of Israeli media in the library. Israel appears as a constant presence that "is simply always there," seen but often unnoticed.

Israel as Our Partners ארץ של שותפות גורל *Eretz Shel Shutfut Goral*

This focus is on the Israeli Movement for Progressive Judaism and other organizations and projects in Israel that focus on shared Reform values, and the challenges of religious pluralism in Israel. This lens also includes ways in which Israel is seen as a Jewish partner.

Israel as Larger than Life ארץ גדולה מהחיים *Eretz Gadolah m'HaChayim*

This representation of Israel focuses on the larger than life narrative of Israel's history and society. This also involves the presentation of items such as the extra sweetness of Jaffa oranges, the technological advances of Israeli society, and the achievements of Israelis on the world stage. Conflicts and challenges are not directly associated with this notion of Israel.

Israel as Jewish/Hebrew Cultural Center ארץ התרבות העברית *Eretz HaTarbut Halvrit*

In this frame, Israel is the source of new Jewish and Hebrew culture. This involves literature, visual arts, performance arts and aspects of culture such as food and wine.

Israel as Home of Israelis ארץ כבית *Eretz K'Bayit*



The focus here is on the daily lives of actual Israelis, including family and friends such as the Israeli Shlichim at Camp. This involves such elements as the physical land of Israel as the setting where Israelis work, play and live and includes items that highlight both the similarities and differences between Jewish life in Israel and in North America. This lens also presents the social ills and tensions present in Israeli society, including the governmental corruption, poverty, civil rights, ethnic relations, and immigration challenges.

Eight Faces of Israel Mapping Israel in the Foreground

Instructions: Please list the artifacts/details that you have identified as presenting Israel in the foreground and list them on this sheet (feel free to make copies of the sheet). Then categorize the ways that Israel is being presented through those artifacts in terms of pictures, texts, emphasis, etc. As you categorize, select how strong or subtle the message is by assigning a range between 1 and 5, with 1 being a subtle message and 5 being a very powerful message.

Israel Artifact	Safe Haven for Jews	Land of Sacred Moments	Country at War	Symbol	Our Partners	Larger than Life	Jewish/Hebrew Cultural Center	Home of Israelis
Example 1: Pictures of three soldiers at Western Wall & Israeli flag			5	4		4		

Appendix b: Evaluation form for Israel Kallah

Goals:

1. Re imagining the place of Israel in the fabric and culture of our camps.
2. Modeling of educational experiences that enrich and are indigenous to the process of Jewish identity building in our camps.
3. Inspire and enrich the directors of education personally and professionally, and provide them with the tools for their Israel educational work.
4. Improve the integration of the shlichim into the community of camp, the culture and educational experiences that our camps are creating.
5. Create a forum for sharing best practices and creating educational strategies for integrating Israel into our educational work.

- A.** Based on the goals stated above please reflect on your Kallah experience and share the experiences of the Kallah that have helped you to achieve these goals.
- B.** Which additional experiences, resources or/and conversations could enable you to achieve these goals?
- C.** Please share two ideas that you have learnt/gained from this Kallah experience and that you plan to implement in your camp this summer:
- D.** Is there anything else you wish to add?

Appendix c : Evaluation of our Israel experiences at camp

What – a nuanced and positive vision of Israel engagement	1. Please describe your camps vision for Israel education: what kind of engagement you wish your staff and campers have with Israel? 2. Please share examples of 2-3 educational experiences that were successful in achieving this vision: • Which aspects of Israel were represented/ explored in these experiences? • What has made these experiences successful? (The resources used, methodology, setting of the activity, timing, collaboration of other staff members etc.) • Did you experience any challenges in planning or facilitating these Israel experiences? If yes, please describe what these challenges were.
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Where: In which settings Israel experiences took place?	• Describe the areas in camp where Israel was present: • Where you able to introduce Israel experiences/Israel presence in new areas? Which areas?
Who: Who was involved in conducting Israel experiences at camp?	• Where you able to engage North American staff members in creating/running Israel experiences at camp? • Please describe your methodology for doing so? • Did you experience any challenges in meeting your goals?