Arab Education in Israel
A National Minority Curriculum

Eldad J. Pardo, PhD

David M. Byer, Editor

November 2022
Contents

1 Executive Summary
5 Preface//Acknowledgements
7 Introduction
11 Life in Israel: Geography, Civics, Culture
50 An Arab-Palestinian Perspective
77 Fiction and Poetry: Arab Heritage, Local Nationalism
104 Islam in Israel: Between Tolerance and Jihad
130 Conclusion
134 Methodology and International Standards
136 List of Textbooks
Executive Summary

Israel's Arab Education program is a national minority curriculum in a conflict area. The Arabs of Israel are a large minority, but form part of the large Sunni Arab majority of the region. While textbooks contain contradictions, they nevertheless successfully educate for a social and economic integration of the Arab minority within the State of Israel, while fostering Arab and Palestinian cultures. Students learn important linguistic and cultural tools for success in Israel, the region and world. The curriculum's perspective is from an Arab-Palestinian standpoint—Arab culture, history, tradition, connection to the land, and resentment and struggle with Israel. Yet there is evidence throughout that students benefit from a prosperous, peaceful and happy integration with their Jewish neighbors, so much so, that in some civic textbooks, Israel is presented as the homeland.

Main Findings

- **Israeli and Arab Culture**: The Arab curriculum in Israel encompasses the history, literature and culture of the Arab and Islamic peoples as well as Israel and the Jewish people. As such it should be seen as a national minority curriculum.

- **Arab Students Benefit** from a well-rounded education in Arabic.

- **Palestinian Identity is Promoted**: Some textbooks describe Arab citizens of Israel as Palestinians and teach a Palestinian narrative of the suffering of the Arab minority after the establishment of Israel (Nakba).

- **Israeli Identity**: Textbooks depict Arab citizens of Israel as part of a diverse Israeli society. However, there is also criticism of what is seen as unequal treatment of Arabs.

- **Conflict and Future**: Textbooks are contradictory. Some describe Zionists as rivals and political violence as "effective resistance," while others present more factual and objective views of the conflict; overall, much effort is directed toward maintaining good relations between the Arab minority and the Jewish majority and among various factions within the Arab sector.

- **Early Islam Polemic**: Textbooks teaching ancient Islamic history give negative descriptions of Jewish tribes and characters fighting and conspiring against Islam.

- **Infidels**: Respect, tolerance and good-neighborly relations are encouraged although Islamic textbooks often teach that infidels (including Jews and Christians) will go to hell.

- **Women**: The curriculum generally displays liberal attitudes toward women; literature texts criticize issues of femicide and the objectification of women in the Arab world. However, some religious textbooks treat women unequally.

- **Jihad and Martyrdom**: Most Islamic religion textbooks do not emphasize jihad and "martyrdom" per se; but there is: "the most exalted thing in Islam is jihad for the sake of
Allah Almighty against infidels." Martyrdom and jihad (as part of the Palestinian struggle) are presented as part of the historical context.

- **Antisemitic and Anti-Israeli Messaging** in certain textbooks display resentment toward Jews and Israel. Zionism is described negatively as settler colonialism.

- **Other Instruction** in civics and literature offer more liberal attitudes with respect to lifestyles, women and non-Muslims thereby countering aspects of Islamic orthodoxy.

---

**History and Literature**

Arabic language textbooks teach students both classic and modern Arabic literature (including works by Palestinian-Arab citizens of Israel). The curriculum contains pan-Arab, secular-nationalistic overtones. Arab civilization is revered and includes such literature as classical poems dealing with wine and love, from the Abbasid Caliphate, Islamic Spain, and includes modern twentieth-century Arab poetry. Israeli literature is in Hebrew language textbooks as well as in some Arabic language books.

Only one of the history textbooks teaches the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict through 1948, from a pan-Arabist Palestinian perspective. This textbook discusses Zionism in a critical manner: proclaiming the Balfour Declaration as a denial of Palestinian rights; describing the "alliance between the British and Zionism" as a great tragedy for Arabs and referring to it as settler colonialism. Violence is considered effective; radical personalities such as Amin al-Husseini, are portrayed favorably, while moderates are not. No peace initiatives and negotiations during the British Mandate are included. On the other hand, the textbook does not fully present the radical Palestinian narrative seen in Palestinian Authority textbooks; it discusses the displacement of Palestinians during the 1948 War only briefly and there is no incitement in the textbook.

Some civics textbooks translated from Hebrew, as well as a homeland, society, and civics book, also discuss the Arab-Israeli conflict. These textbooks try to examine the events in a mostly factual and objective manner, including both Israeli and Palestinian viewpoints. For example, there is mention of Palestinian displacement during the 1948 War, and that some Palestinians were driven away; however, the books also maintain that most escaped and were not expelled. A few textbooks use the word "Nakba" to express the catastrophe experienced by many Palestinians and include the Palestinian demand regarding a right of return to their lands. Other civics textbooks explain the ensuing conflict after the establishment of the State of Israel. Such circumstances as the martial law declared over Israeli Arabs are aptly described as an especially difficult period for Arabs in Israel.

Jewish history subjects include ancient Israelite kingdoms in Canaan, Jewish life in the Diaspora, the Holocaust, and Zionism. Arab-Islamic history subjects include pre-Islamic Arabian history,
the Prophet's Muhammad's era and the Rashidun, Umayyad, and Abbasid Caliphates, as well as Ottoman history.

**Palestinian, Arab, and Israeli Perspectives**

The Ministry of Education's guidelines demand that the curriculum impart "the history of the Arabs and Islam and enhance their feeling of belonging to the Arab heritage and civilization," the "struggle for independence in Arab lands," "the question of Palestine," and "Arab nationalism in Palestine." In Arabic literature the guidelines specify that "students know that the heritage of the Arab minority in the State of Israel is part of the heritage of the Arab-Palestinian people."

In Arabic language textbooks, modern Arabic literature may refer to Arab citizens of Israel as Palestinians and speak to Palestinian issues. These include poems and stories that highlight Palestinian suffering and emphasize a strong connection and desire for lost or abandoned lands. One textbook promotes "resistance poetry" written by Palestinian poets.

Homeland, society, and civics textbooks represent Arab citizens of Israel as part a diverse Israeli society, emphasizing the importance of coexistence and cooperation between Jews and Arabs. These and other civics textbooks also criticize Israel for unequal treatment of its Arab citizens, pointing for example to inequitable investment between Jewish and Arab villages. Defining incidents such as the Kafr Qasim massacre and the October 2000 events are covered. One history textbook criticizes Zionism while an Arabic literature book implicitly describes Israel as an aggressor to be resisted. At the same time, the curriculum teaches Jewish history in the land of Israel and the Diaspora, with much attention to European antisemitism and the Holocaust.

The textbooks teach about problems and traditions in Arab villages and towns, while encouraging self-help and solidarity, enhance curiosity and tolerance among diverse groups. Much space is devoted to interfaith and familiarity with the other.

**Jihad, Martyrdom, Infidels, Women, Jews, Christians**

Elements of antisemitic and anti-Israeli messaging are taught to students in aspects of literature, Islamic religion and history textbooks; quotes from the Qur'an and hadiths display resentment toward Jews and Israel. Zionism is described negatively as settler colonialism. History textbooks teaching ancient Islamic history depict Jewish tribes and characters negatively. Two textbooks indicate that Muhammad "got rid of the presence of the Jews in Medina." Two other textbooks mention a tradition according to which the first Muslim civil war (the First Fitna) was caused by a conspiracy by a Jewish man named Abdallah ibn Saba'.

Islamic religion textbooks treat Jews, Christians, and other non-Muslims as "infidels" who will go to hell; there are graphic descriptions of its horrors. In one case a textbook teaches that Muslims should not wear clothes similar to those of infidels. Some of the textbooks exalt jihad and martyrdom, teaching that "the most exalted thing in Islam is jihad for the sake of Allah
against infidels,” and that he who dies as a martyr while fighting for the sake of Allah enters Heaven. Martyrdom and jihad (as part of the Palestinian struggle) are seen as part of the historical context.

In an apparent paradox, Islamic education textbooks also say that Muslims must treat believers of different religions with respect, but only for those that "neither fought against your faith nor have driven you out of your homes. In fact, Allah loves the equitable" (Mumtahana 60:8). Apart from religion, the homeland, society and civics textbooks instruct students about the diversity of Israeli society and promote tolerance and cooperation between different groups.

Women are not treated equally in the Islamic religion textbooks. Other parts of the curriculum somewhat compensate for that with female role models and depicting women in various activities equally with men. A selection of short stories in literature textbooks decry honor killings and the objectification of women in Arab societies.

Christian religious textbooks encourage tolerance toward members of other religions, with an emphasis on Muslims. The textbooks explain the importance of the Holy Land for Jews, Muslims and Christians, and calls for respect for the members of the three religions.

**International Standards**

The curriculum promotes tolerance, understanding and respect toward the "Other." Students are taught the importance of fostering individual Others among the diverse Israeli society. However, Israelis from Arab countries are largely ignored. There is no overt hate expressed directly in the curriculum but there are aspects of resentment toward Israel in antisemitic and anti-Israeli messaging. Yet, there is no incitement toward other groups and information about peacemaking is abundant. A more comprehensive understanding of history could help alleviate much of the angst and resentment toward Israel and the Jews and go a long way toward presenting more unbiased information. And while many of the prohibitions and restrictions governing women in Islamic religion textbooks should be addressed, the curriculum generally fosters equality and mutual respect toward women. Overall, this is a curriculum that teaches the value of cooperation and provides the intellectual tools and well-rounded education for students to achieve a level of sound prosperity and success after graduation.
This report is based, for the first time, on research of a minority national curriculum for Arab education in Israel. The 2000 amendments to the Law of Education and the Ministry of Education's guidelines require that all Israeli students learn to "be loyal citizens of the State of Israel, who respect their parents and family, their heritage, cultural identity and language." They should also learn to "recognize the language, culture, history, heritage and unique tradition of the Arab population and other population groups in the State of Israel, and to recognize the equal rights of all Israeli citizens."

The Ministry's guidelines demand that the curriculum impart "the history of the Arabs and Islam and enhance their feeling of belonging to the Arab heritage and civilization," the "struggle for independence in Arab lands," "the question of Palestine," and "Arab nationalism in Palestine." In Arabic literature the guidelines specify that "students know that the heritage of the Arab minority in the State of Israel is part of the heritage of the Arab-Palestinian people."

A decidedly liberal application of the MoE guidelines and creation of a curriculum in Arabic as a primary language has far-reaching significance. Existing in a conflict area, this national minority curriculum most often takes an Arab-Palestinian standpoint, which means that in some cases it treats Israel as a rival, and accepts political violence as "effective resistance." The textbooks teach anti-Jewish and early Islamic polemic, is anti infidel, which includes Christians and Jews, and is religiously restrictive to women. Jihad and martyrdom are exalted in the context of Islam and the Palestinian struggle. There are elements of antisemitic and anti-Israeli messaging in aspects of literature, Islamic religion, and history textbooks.

Yet, there is sometimes an uneasy balance, between the Arab minority and the Jewish majority and among various factions within the Arab sector, ultimately leading to good relations among the various actors. There is a combination of candor and a decidedly can-do attitude in the Israeli-Arab curriculum. And despite serious contradictions, and lingering resentment, there is much in the Arab curriculum that is morally sound, dynamic, and forward-looking.

The curriculum imparts an array of effective linguistic and cultural tools for Israeli Arabs for success in Israel, the region and world. As they grow, Arab students are exposed to a cultural world that is distinct from the rest of the country. The overwhelming amount of content available from Arabic media helps shape their identities and offers a multitude of opportunities. While this curriculum provides young Arab students the means with which to engage and succeed in Israel, other Israelis, with only a perfunctory knowledge of Arabic lack the cultural and linguistic capabilities necessary to succeed in the Arab world. This national minority curriculum prepares
Israel's Arab student body to study and collaborate with Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza\(^1\) and to take advantage of the Abraham Accords with fellow Arabs and others throughout the region.

This IMPACT-se report on The Arab National Minority Curriculum began with the acquisition of textbooks and then compiling research on each book to be researched and translated, authored and edited. Our primary research and translation for this study was spearheaded by the capable leadership of IMPACT-se Research Associate Shahar Levikson with assists from researchers/translators Ofir Hadass and Yonathan Cohen and to Research Associate Itam Shalev for his advice and collaboration. Many thanks for their efforts. Our appreciation as always to IMPACT-se leadership CEO Marcus Sheff, COO Arik Agassi and Project Manager Odeliya Zahfire for their continued support and facilitation of this important research project.

Eldad J. Pardo, PhD
Director of Research

---


Introduction

Arabic is the primary language for the education of 23 percent of Israeli students. The Arab Education System in Israel includes Arab Muslim and Christian, Druze, Bedouin, and Circassian curricula. The current IMPACT-se research focuses on the general Arabic curriculum intended for Arab Muslims and to a lesser extent Christians living within Israel who largely share a local version of Palestinian identity—often described (by Arabs) as the Arabs of the "inside" or "Arabs of 48." Forming a large minority among the Israeli citizenry, they share a language and culture with the majority of the region's population and a particular association with Arab-Palestinians across the region and beyond.

From its creation, the new state of Israel recognized the Arab minority's cultural and linguistic "Otherness," thereby necessitating a distinct Arabic curriculum. Receiving instruction in their primary language offers much advantage to Arabic-speaking students although they learn Hebrew and English as well. Currently, while the majority of Israeli students learn only two main languages (Hebrew and English), Arab students learn three. The large Russian-speaking population, for its part, must pay for extra linguistic and cultural education. The price to pay for this wider linguistic education is often less proficiency in Hebrew, Israel's predominant language for business, communication and higher education; such lack of proficiency in Hebrew is more evident in the southern part of the country.

Elsewhere in the Middle East, in countries such as Turkey, Iran and Syria, state education in a primary cultural language other than the nation's national language (Turkish, Persian or Arabic) is generally prohibited. An exception is the Iraqi Kurds who have full control of their educational system since the Kurdistan Region attained a semi-independent status.

While benefiting from a quasi-independent educational system in their own native language, one should not overlook the historical roots and relationships Arabs have shared with Jews, first as a majority, and then as a minority population as Israel became a state. Israel's independence in 1948, and the country's War of Independence resulted in both the defeat of the surrounding Arab nations and the displacement of most Arabs living within the borders of the new country, now as a minority population. The opening of the Knesset in 1949 signaled Israel's declared intention to assimilate its Arab citizens as equal partners within an uncompromising democracy. The first speech of an Israeli Knesset member was delivered in Arabic by an Arab member, and so was

---

2 The total Israeli student body for 2021–22 was 2,248,000, from pre-elementary (ages 3–5) to university level. Compulsory education begins in kindergarten (age 5). Students in pre-elementary to Grade 12 learning in the Arab education system was 554,000. "Development of the Education System 5724, Facts and Data," (Hebrew) Ministry of Education (Economy and Budgets Administration) 2020–21, p. 5. https://meyda.education.gov.il/files/MinhalCalcala/uvdot_venetunim_stat_2021.pdf.
the next speech. Hassan Jabareen, who researched this period, argued that it was a "Hobbesian moment of Palestinian citizenship." In his words, the terms of this citizenship were Hobbesian in that they were based on surrender and fear.  

Whatever uneasy tension exists between the two populations seems reflected in the Israeli-Arabic curriculum. Given this reality, it is worthwhile to ask whether this curriculum represents the independent wishes of the Arab citizens of Israel or whether it should be seen as part of an education system aimed at keeping Israeli Arabs loyal to the country. The findings of this research will attempt to clarify this among other issues. While the curriculum succeeds to a large extent in embracing the various viewpoints and trends that exist among Arab citizens, it also serves Israel's majority interests to integrate the Arab minority as full partners in a democratic state. Education levels in the Arab curriculum have improved substantially in recent years. The percentage of Arab students attending final examinations (bagrut) is higher than in the Hebrew education system and overall higher than the national average. The success rate in these exams, however, is somewhat less impressive.

This Arab-Palestinian curriculum embodies a unique national minority; textbooks at times present contradictory approaches to various topics. Israel's Ministry of Education supervises the curriculum according to amendments (for the year 2000) to Israel's State Education Law crafted with participation of Arab Knesset members. Our findings show that the amendment is implemented in the curriculum. The textbooks teach students to "be loyal citizens of the State of Israel, who respect their parents and family, their heritage, cultural identity and language.

---

3 MK Amin Jarjoura, representing in his words "the Arab citizens of Israel," expressed pride in the new state and hope that it would be based on "equality and justice" among all citizens. Jarjoura's entire speech was translated into Hebrew and covered by the Israeli media "as one of the celebratory moments of the new era." The next speaker was MK Tawfik Toubi from the Communist Party who scolded the Arab countries for starting the war and not recognizing the two-state solution. The opening speech, the first in the Knesset's history, was delivered by Israel's first President Chaim Weitzman. Hassan Jabareen, "Hobbesian Citizenship: How the Palestinians Became a Minority in Israel," in Multiculturalism and Minority Rights in the Arab World, eds. Will Kymlicka and Eva Pföstl (Oxford, 2014).

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid., p. 14. Druze Arabic schools still lead the country with 89.2 percent; both Arab students' (69.4 percent) and the Negev's Bedouins (58.1 percent), fall below the Hebrew curriculum schools (75.8 percent) and the national average (73.4 percent). For the school year (2021–22) the percentages of those attending the Bagrut matriculation examines were: Hebrew education system (75.8 percent); Arab and Bedouin curricula (97.9 percent); Druze (99.7 percent); national average (73.4 percent).


7 1. To educate students to love human beings, their nation and country, to be loyal citizens of the State of Israel, who respect their parents and family, their heritage, cultural identity and language.

11. To recognize the language, culture, history, heritage and unique tradition of the Arab population and other population groups in the State of Israel, and to recognize the equal rights of all Israeli citizens.
heritage, cultural identity and language." They also learn—more than any other curriculum in Israel—to "recognize the language, culture, history, heritage and unique tradition of the Arab population and other population groups in the State of Israel, and to recognize the equal rights of all Israeli citizens."

The Ministry of Education guidelines enumerate the topics that should be included in the curriculum. To attain a permit, textbooks must meet the guidelines, but there is leeway to authors to decide how to present these topics. The history and cultural heritage guidelines, for example, include a wide array of topics from Arab, Arab-Palestinian, and Israeli history in the region and beyond, as well as world history. Much attention should be given to cultural accomplishments such as mathematics, astronomy, medicine, architecture, art and literature and the rise of Arab empires.

History textbooks for grades 6–9 are expected to help students understand "the interdependence and mutual influence that exists between peoples and societies during the evolution of humanity," and "the history of the Jewish people (in the country and abroad)," and be able to "the history of the Arabs and Islam and enhance their feeling of belonging to the Arab heritage and civilization."8 Books should impart the "struggle for independence in Arab lands," teach "the question of Palestine," and instruct "the [pan-Arab] national movement and Arab nationalism in Palestine." In parallel, textbooks for grades 11–12 should study the "Balfour Declarations and its impact on Jews and Arabs," "migrations and Zionist settlement in Palestine," antisemitism and the Holocaust (but not the predicament of Jews and other minorities in the Arab world).9

The Arabic literature guidelines provide a unique viewpoint into this national minority curriculum. The ministry's guidelines, prepared by leading Arab scholars, is extremely wide, encompassing Arabic literature from all eras and regions, before and after the emergence of Islam and the great Arab conquests. It specifies that "students will know that the heritage of the Arab minority in the State of Israel is part of the heritage of the Arab-Palestinian people."10

Until 1987, Islamic history and culture were taught within the history and Arabic subjects. Calls for change emerged in the 1970s, and in the mid-1980s a special committee of Arab educators and judges in the sharia courts was formed and developed a new curriculum for teaching Islam.

---

8 Claire Emran, "The Adapted Curriculum in History for 6th Grade and Middle School Students in the Arab Education" (Jerusalem: MoE, Pedagogical Secretariat: Department of Education in the Arab Sector, 2009), https://meyda.education.gov.il/files/Mazkirut_Pedagogit/HistoryArab/TochnitHistoryAarb6-9makor.pdf.


Some Arab experts contend that "this national-religious education is still murky," in the sense of not being nationalistic enough.\(^{11}\)

This report consists of four sections, each representing one dimension of the Israeli Arab experience as expressed in the curriculum. The status of women and the question of how the textbooks handle discrimination, violence and femicide is discussed in various contexts.

Section one, "Life in Israel: Geography, Civics, Culture," presents the Arab national minority as citizens of Israel. It introduces democratic values, celebrates diversity and curiosity, and explores cultural horizons of the region, with emphasis on Arab and Mediterranean countries. "An Arab-Palestinian Perspective," in the second section, outlines the conflict between the Arab Palestinians and the Jewish Yishuv and, as a national minority, with Israel. Some study materials are anti-Israeli, verging on antisemitism. In section three, "Fiction and Poetry: Arab Heritage, Local Nationalism," embraces Arabic literature. Themes covered are national Palestinian perspectives (mainly inside Israel), the treatment of women, including the tragedy of honor killings, Jewish-Israeli literary works (Hebrew and Arabic, Ashkenazi and Sephardi), and classic Arabic literature poems particularly those dealing with wine and love. The fourth section, "Islam in Israel: Between Tolerance and Jihad," section focuses on how Islam is taught in Israeli schools. Islamic studies include jihad, infidels, anti-Jewish polemic and restrictive attitudes toward women. Christian and Interfaith education is also covered.

---

\(^{11}\) Irit Haboun, "The Palestinian Arabs Struggle Over Educational Policy in Israel: Material versus Ideological Resources" (MA thesis, Hebrew, Ra'anana, Israel: The Open University, Sociology, Political Science and Communication Department, August 2009, p. 44.
This section highlights the curriculum's view on the Arab national minority as citizens of Israel. Homeland, society, and civics textbooks represent Arab citizens of Israel as part a diverse Israeli society, emphasizing the importance of coexistence and cooperation between Jews and Arabs. The Arab curriculum emphasizes Israel's civil democratic values and celebrates diversity. Where relevant, maps generally make a clear distinction between Israel and the Palestinian Authority; others pay attention to the Arabian civilization, local attachments, the country of Israel and cultural makeup of the region, with emphases on Arab and Mediterranean countries. The curriculum features graphic depictions of Israeli Arabs as a unified minority exhibiting tolerance among its various subgroups.

Homeland, society, and civics textbooks represent Arab citizens of Israel as part a diverse Israeli society, emphasizing the importance of coexistence and cooperation between Jews and Arabs. These and other civics textbooks also criticize Israel for unequal treatment of its Arab citizens, pointing for example to inequitable investment between Jewish and Arab villages.

Maps and geography lessons in the Israeli-Arab curriculum present students with a host of affiliations with which to connect, including the Muslim and Arab worlds, the Israeli-Arab community, Israeli society, Palestinians, the country of Israel/Palestine, and humanity at large. Countries friendly to Israeli Arabs—including Mediterranean Basin nations such as Egypt, Turkey and Italy—are a central focus.

---

The following examples are taken from a textbook published by an independent Arab publishing house.

The lands visited by Ibn Battuta and the seas he crossed in his thirty-year journey.

A map by Muhammad al-Idrisi, a famous twelfth-century Muslim-Arab geographer who lived in North Africa and Palermo. (The map must be reversed since north is on the bottom.)

Map of the world as drawn by Al-Idrisi (1100–1166), the author of *A Book for the Enjoyment of Those Who Seek to Traverse the Lands*. Considered the first map of the world, it [Tabula Rogeriana] was drawn by Al-Idrisi at the request of Roger II, King of Sicily.

---

An exercise using map applications on computers familiarizes students with their environment, including the home, village and various cities and localities within the country’s Arab community. Note that while Jewish majority cities such as Tel Aviv, Ashdod are marked, as well as the green line and Palestinian localities, the map and instructions depict an Israeli-Arab population between Kafr Yasif (An Arab-Christian majority city with large Muslim and significant Druze population); and Rahat (a Bedouin city). (Nazareth [Muslim majority, but famous Christian city] is in fact not the starting point of the exercise shown on the map as described in the text.)

**The Road between Kfar Yasif and Rahat**

Find your home on the map and follow the way from your home to school.

On the application's map, find other sites in your village, such as the municipal stadium, the municipal council building, the school, post office and the entrance to the village; try to connect each of these two sites on the map, while you imagine the roads that you know in your mind.

- Try to explore other benefits of the application. For example: record the name of a city, such as Nazareth, then using the directions icon, write the name of a second city, Rahat for example. Press Enter, and you will see that the application gives you the route
between the two cities, and how long it takes to travel there (1 hour and 53 minutes; the length of the road is 191 km).


The following maps clearly acknowledge both the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority. (Presented as a block: areas A, B and C areas not marked; the virtually independent Gaza regime is unmarked). Tel Aviv and Ashdod, major Jewish-Israeli cities are clearly marked in Arabic, but not Jerusalem, the country's capital. The Golan Heights are marked as part of Israel.

The following map clearly marks the West Bank and Gaza as areas of the Palestinian Authority.

---

**The State of Israel**

**Citrus Crops by Natural Area**

---

A map of Egypt's neighbors includes Israel and many other countries.

Several maps focus only on Israeli issues. In the following map, addressing climatic issues in the Negev, Israel is clearly marked in the center; the West Bank and Gaza are also visible but there is no special reference to the Palestinian Authority.


**From North to South and East to West**

[The text covers the difference of rainfall quantities as determined by longitude and latitude coordinates]

**Geography, Grade 6, The Book of Phenomena: Maps of the Mediterranean Basin,** Ahmad Hebi, Al-Minbar (Permit: 706), 2022, p. 29.
The map in the following example depicts population density in Israel but does not supply data on the West Bank and Gaza, suggesting that they are not part of the country. The map marks the Palestinian Authority within area A, which under the PA’s full control. Areas B and C (joint Israeli-Palestinian control) have the same color as the Palestinian Authority territory but are not specifically referred to in the legend.

Population Density in Israel—2005

[Chart:]
Population Density in Israel and in Selected Countries, 2003
USA, Egypt, Syria, France, Denmark, Italy, Britain, Israel, Japan, Holland

[Legend:]
- People per 1km² by color
- No data area
- Natural Area Boundary
- 特区 Territory of the Palestinian Authority (Area A)

A map of higher education institutions in Israel includes Israeli-Arab colleges, but not those of the PA. Israeli institutions in Judea and Samaria/the West Bank are marked and so is the territory under full control of the Palestinian Authority (Area A). Same color gives the impression that Israel, the PA controlled areas and Gaza consist of one country.

**Institutions of Higher Education in Israel**

[Legend:]
- ▲ University
- ◊ College or Non-University Higher Education Institute
- ● Territory of the Palestinian Authority (Area A)

[Charts:]
- A Comparison between Israel's population growth and that of students in higher education, 1949–2003
- Percentage of those attaining Matriculation Diploma among 16–17 age bracket, 1973–2004
- Expenditure on Higher Education as Percentage of GDP in Spain, Holland, France, Sweden, the USA and Israel

One section dealing with Israel's deserts represents the West Bank, Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights with different colors and dashed borders. While neighboring Arab countries are marked, The PA is not.
Students learn about Israel’s Declaration of Independence and the flag.

### The Flag

On the eve of the establishment of the state, it was decided to make the flag used by the Zionist movement the flag of the State of Israel. The shape of the flag resembles the *tallit* (prayer shawl); its colors—white and blue—resemble Biblical ritualistic tools.

---


The Declaration of Independence forms part of the learning material about Israel as a Jewish state. The textbook quotes its appeal to "the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the building of the country on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions."\(^{15}\) The opening words of this sentence—"We appeal—in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months"—has been omitted from the Arabic edition of this textbook.\(^{16}\) It quotes, however, the relevant clause from the Declaration stating:

> Israel will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions.

---


\(^{16}\) *Civics, Grades 10–12, Being Citizens in Israel in a Jewish Democratic State* (Hebrew) (Permit: 4453), 2016, p. 13.
In its treatment of the establishment of Israel as a Jewish state, the textbook offers insight into Jewish, British, and Arab-Palestinian forces and motives. There is a theoretical explanation of the difference between two types of democracies—ethno-cultural nation-states, such as Israel, and civil nation-states. There is much investment in demonstrating the liberal and democratic justifications for the existence of nation-states, and the characteristics of the State of Israel as a Jewish state from "the national, cultural and religious aspects as they appear through legislation, judicial decisions, symbols and institutions." The text also confirms Israel as the state of the Jewish people, the mutual obligation between Israel and Diaspora Jews, and inherent challenges. Included within this discussion are Jewish and Arab subgroups in Israeli Society. The text explains "Arab national identity" and the "Palestinian national identity." There are statistics on the primary "self-identification of the Arabs of Israel."

**Introduction to Part One—What is the Jewish State?**

According to the United Nations Declaration of November 29, 1947, and the [Israeli] Declaration of Independence on May 15, 1948, the State of Israel was defined as a Jewish nation state. This book deals with the issue of the identity of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state committed to human and citizen rights. In the first chapter of the book, we will discuss the meanings and consequences of defining Israel as a Jewish nation state.


Three other sections of the textbook examine Israel as a democracy, its government and policies, and Israeli society and politics. Interestingly, in the section on Israel as a democracy, while the Hebrew edition includes the most recent amendments (2000) to Israel's State Education, the Arab edition does not.

---

17 **Civics, Grades 10–12, Being Citizens in Israel in a Jewish-Democratic State,** Varda Ashkenazi, Bilha Alferson, Tamir Dubi and Dana Shtarkman, Arabic Edition by Youssef Trudi, MoE (Permit: B-4453), 2018, pp. 9, 7–123.
18 Ibid. pp., 9, 97–98. Jewish subgroups include Ashkenazi, Sephardic, Haredi, etc.; Arab subgroups include: Druze, Arameans, Circassians, etc.
19 (97),., Arab (45 percent), Palestinian (24 percent), religious (19 percent), and Israeli (12 percent).
1. To educate students to love human beings, their nation and country, to be loyal citizens of the State of Israel, who respect their parents and family, their heritage, cultural identity and language.

11. To recognize the language, culture, history, heritage and unique tradition of the Arab population and other population groups in the State of Israel, and to recognize the equal rights of all Israeli citizens.  

There are multiple examples within textbooks lauding Israeli achievements.

### The Israeli Economy

A view to Google Development Center at Haifa's Matam (Scientific Industries Center). The park is an international technological hub, hosting some of the world's leading companies.

**Robust and Advanced Economy**

Regardless of its lack of natural resources and despite its small territory, Israel is considered among the strongest economies in the region; moreover it is among the best in the world. Realistically, Israel outperforms its Arab neighbors in most economic sectors.


---

A fifth-grade geography book highlights many positive aspects of Egypt. The elections that brought the Muslim Brotherhood to power are lauded as democratic, "for the first time in Egypt." The current president, however, Abd Al-Fattah Al-Sisi is derided, as he "continues to rule Egypt relying on mock elections."21 There is no mention of the 1973 Yom Kippur War (considered a victory by Egyptians).

Muhammad Ali Pasha on the left, and Gamal Abdel Nasser, on the right

Gamal Abdel Nasser was hostile to the Hebrew state (Israel) since its creation on the land of Palestine. In his war with Israel, he lost the Sinai Peninsula, which is three times larger than the size of Israel. But Egypt regained Sinai after the 1979 peace negotiations and the Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel, during the times of Anwar Sadat, Abdel Nasser's successor.


---

Some civic books including those published by Arab publishing houses, have no reference to Palestinians or the Palestinian Authority. These textbooks nevertheless accentuate the Arab and religious identities (Islam and Christianity) of the students. A striking example of one such case acknowledges Israel as the homeland while bordering countries are represented without reference to the Palestinian Authority.

Along with modernity and competition, textbooks feature traditional, colorful views of Arab localities.

Geographical and social issues are raised through a variety of subject matter. The following excerpts, from a ninth-grade Arabic language textbook, illustrates challenges facing Arab villages and towns due to the growing population. The text criticizes local citizens for self-centeredness and violence, and recount nostalgic stories remembering better days. Criticism extends to discrimination and negligence by Israeli governments.

What is the use of building a beautiful house, if you can enter it only with great effort because the street is too narrow, the walls are high, and the neighbors 'devour' your street and accuse you of all kinds of accusations? If you asked one of them why he built his stone fence so close to the road, so that it almost swallows a piece of it, he would just stare at you with a surprised, astonished look, and say that the boundaries of his property reach the middle of the road. And even beyond that, his neighbors—with whom he does not speak and they [in turn] who do not speak with him, are [from his viewpoint] the ones who grabbed parts of the street and refused to relinquish [any land]. And this, even though he plainly did what he did [stole land from the street]. You will see him measure a few meters with his steps and say: Here is the border of my land.
A Road of Two Mules

Before the arrival of the age of cars, our ancestors used to leave enough room in the inner streets of their villages so that two loaded mules could pass side by side. These were the 'cars' of those times. It was not so bad if the load of one mule collided with that of another mule or donkey. There were no damages. The mules did not die and the cargo was not damaged. However, when a car collides with another car, these days, it is a different story. It begins with screams and curses and ends with 'toshe' [a brawl] between the families in the village and may even lead to dead and injured.

Arabic Language, Grade 9, The Phoenix Book, Ahmad Hebi, Al-Minbar (Permit: 491), 2015, p. 3.

The following example also deals with changes in the Arab towns.

The Villages Change into Towns

At the beginning of the twentieth century about 60% of the Arab citizens in the country lived in villages, while 40% lived in cities. The large cities, Jaffa, Haifa, Jerusalem and Acre were comprised of robust sectors of Arab inhabitants and included administrative, cultural and economic centers.

This geography textbook features prominent Israeli geographers as role models, such as Asmahan Masry-Herzallah, whose research has followed the emigration of young educated Arab women to Jerusalem and their successes based on merit. Since the publication of this textbook, many years ago, her career soared; among her many accomplishments she serves as a senior lecturer at Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Al-Qasemi College. Highlighting such accomplished individuals serves to encourage high school students—particularly women—toward the possibilities of successful careers in Israel.

A Meeting with a Geographer

Asmahan Masry-Herzallah

Researcher at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, teacher at a school in East Jerusalem, and Director of the Informal Education Program at Beit Berl College in the Sharon. Project Coordinator at the Gilo Center [for Citizenship, Democracy, and Civic Education] of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. . .
Research by Asmahan Masry-Herzallah

Asmahan's current research focuses on young, single, and educated Arab women who moved to Jerusalem, and came from different Arab towns in the north (the Triangle and the Galilee).

The emigration of single Arab women to Jerusalem has increased in recent years. This is explained by the lack of job opportunities for women in Arab towns, the desire to continue their education to obtain higher degrees, the desire to live near higher education institutions, the standard of living in Jerusalem and their desire for independence.

The data of the study show that the majority of those who decide to settle in Jerusalem found positions with work conditions suited to their level of education or professional skill. Sixty percent of them are fully employed; among the diverse fields of work and employment, 70 percent work in the field of education.


The textbook often uses pictures to convey an image of beauty, prosperity and an intercultural environment.

The architectural style of the above house in the [Arab] town of Ar'ara, combines Eastern and Western elements.

Images of localities are beautiful and inviting. Such an image accompanies text about the sensitive question of high-rise buildings in Arab villages.

The Village of Eyn Mahel near Nazareth

Arabic, Grade 9, The Phoenix Book, Ahmad Hebi, Al-Minbar (Permit: 491), 2015, p. 5.

Students learn in a ninth-grade Arabic language textbook what Arab villagers should do to live honestly and improve life and the environment; the textbook is critical when there is dishonesty. At the same time it criticizes state policies with respect to minority ownership of land.
Areas of Arab Towns

It is true that the failure to develop municipal areas in Arab towns worsens the housing crisis, causing an increase in the prices of land being planned or available for construction. Each meter of [private] land has become a valuable treasure, difficult to give up; it is tempting to grab and claim that land is private, even though it is not.

The official reports indicate that only 3.4 percent of the country’s land belongs to Arabs, while a great majority—17 percent (of the country’s 21 percent Arab residents)—live on that same land.

Textbooks describe ongoing disputes between many of the Bedouins in the South and consecutive Israeli governments over property rights. The following text initially presents a positive view of developments, only to later criticize the government for its environmental neglect of the Negev:

Three Groups of Towns

The number of Bedouin residents living in the Negev is 300 thousand, and they live in three types of towns. As a result, there are differences in their living conditions and opportunities for work and study.

The first group is that of the local authorities which include the city of Rahat (80 thousand people, the second largest city in the Negev) and six local councils in Lakiya, Kuseife, Houra, Tel as-Sabi [Tel Sheva], Ar’arat an-Naqab, and Shaqib al-Salam [Segev Shalom]. Then there are eleven recognized towns within the framework of two regional councils, Al-Qasoum and Wahat Al-Sahara [Neve Midbar].

The rest of the residents live in settlements or villages that the Israeli governments have not recognized. They do not receive water, electricity and other municipal services. These constitute about half of the Arab residents in the Negev.
The Israeli governments do not recognize these villages, claiming that they are spread over large areas of land and thus make development in the south more difficult. They demand that the dwellers of these areas be gathered in planned villages with all the services, on the condition that they give up their old houses and the vast areas they own. And this is what the residents refuse to do.

The same textbook displays much respect to Israel's founding father David Ben Gurion and his pioneering attachment to the Negev desert. Ben Gurion was prime minister during Israel's 1948 War of Independence.

An Israeli textbook teaches Israeli Arab youth that Israel's creation constituted a traumatic event for the Arab dwellers of the country.

The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 was a turning point that led the Arab population to a new reality. Some Arabs, whose villages were destroyed during the war, became internally displaced. They were forced to reside in other Arab towns in the country, while hundreds of thousands of Arab refugees who had been inhabitants of the country became residents of the Arab countries bordering Israel. As for the Arabs in Israel, they languished under military rule for nearly twenty years, until 1966. They were required to obtain permits to move from one place to another, to move to a new apartment, to a workplace, or to organize politically.


Losing their majority status, while urban elites largely fled the country, local Arabs found themselves disadvantaged.
With the establishment of the state, the Arabs in Israel changed from the country's majority to a minority. While some Arabs, lived in cities before the state's creation, others lived in villages; after the state was established, the majority of Arabs lived in villages and small towns, with insufficient workplaces and no prospects for development.


A high school geography textbook documents changes occurring in recent decades. The text points to increased national consciousness among Israeli-Arab citizens.

When military rule was lifted from the Arab citizens of Israel in 1966, they began to rebound. The development of the Arab population over many years was, for the most part, dependent on local and private initiatives, while benefitting only marginally from the central government’s initiatives. In recent years, Israeli governments increased the budgets allocated to Arabs in Israel to reduce the development gaps between the Arab and Jewish populations. Most of the Arab population live an urban modern lifestyle with a sense of solidarity and national consciousness. They demand the rights they deserve and participate in the civil struggle for equality and inclusion in the economic and social developments taking place in the State of Israel.

The curriculum is punctuated by many examples of various subgroups within the Israeli-Arab community, with beautiful texts and images of Muslims, Christians and Druze. Here is a short text about another ethno-religious community, the Israeli Circassians who also speak Arabic. The narrator is a Druze ten-year old named Muran. The text highlights his family, home, and environment, which includes the neighboring Circassians.

[Muran (above in red shirt) and his family against the background of nature.]


---

There is a brief report on the Circassians in Israel, referring to them as "our neighbors in the Galilee."

The Circassians
Our Neighbors in the Galilee

Report by: Maha Hanna

The Circassians live in two villages in the Galilee—Kfar Kama and Rehaniya. Who are the Circassians? And where did they come from?

The Circassians are Muslims, and they refer to themselves as Adygea. The meaning of the word Adygea is a perfect and noble man. This name signifies the will of the Adygea to reach perfection in all positive qualities and characters. The language they speak is [also called] Adygea. The Circassians came to our region from a far mountainous place called the Caucasus, which is located between the continents of Europe and Asia.
The Circassians lived in the Caucasus for 3,000 years. They were shepherds and farmers, and they were famous for their bravery and their skill as horsemen who ride well.

About 150 years ago the Circassians were expelled from their land and moved from one place to another. The Circassians eventually arrived in Turkey and Jordan, and a small percentage of them arrived in the Galilee and established the villages of Kfar Kama and Rehaniya.

The Circassians keep their customs, culture and tradition. They insist on speaking their language, and on marrying people of their society. Students in schools learn four languages: Arabic, Hebrew, English, and, of course, Adygea.

A collection of colorful images accompanies the text.

The following images portray the religious worship of Muslims, Christians and Druze. The curriculum acknowledges the centrality of Jerusalem to Muslims.
Prayer [of Muslims] at the Holy Dome of the Rock Plaza

Prayer in a Greek-Orthodox Church in Nazareth
Druze dignitaries in the Shrine of Nabi Nabi Shu‘ayb (Jethro’s Tomb), a holy place for the Druze in Israel, located on the slopes of Mount Hettin.

Discussions on Israel's Jewish majority include sensitive issues such as the Law of Return, which many Arab citizens consider discriminatory.

The State of Israel applies the Law of Return, which was enacted after the establishment of the state . . . it is facilitating Jewish settlement in Israel, helping them find work, housing, education and the like. Jews from all over the world help the State of Israel in accommodating new immigrants, primarily through donations. The coming of Jews into the country has a significant impact on the population, economy, society, and towns. It should be noted that there is no policy in Israel to help and encourage Arab immigration into the country.

A lesson on the ingathering of Jews to Israel in the modern age is sympathetic to this historical process, but also refers to those local Arabs who lost their homes because they had to leave them or were driven away during the 1948 War.

Houses and Towns for New Arrivals

A small group of new arrivals found a home on their own. As for the others, they were settled in buildings that had been used by the British army before that, and in Arab houses the inhabitants of which were forced to leave them or were expelled during the 1948 war. Some of the new arrivals joined the housing in the apartments of their relatives. When there were no apartments left, the newly coming were resettled in camps for new arrivals that were built without any infrastructure such as water and electricity and streets. The living conditions in these camps were harsh. The goal was for the new arrivals to stay there only for a brief time. But, practically, some of them remained living in the camps for many years.

50. Newcomers reaching new arrival camp, Sha'ar Ha-Aliya [The Aliya Gate] near Haifa.
51. Tents pitched in Rosh Ha-'Ayin camp, 1952.

The curriculum abundantly explores Jewish history along with the goals of Israel as the homeland for the Jewish people.

An eleven-grade chapter on late-nineteenth century European antisemitism in Europe offers a summary of the period. Unfortunately, one example explains that a class of bourgeoisie Jews unleashed hatred because of their "control of the capital, commercial companies, and banks" (instead perhaps of "perceived control."). The textbook quotes as causes for antisemitism the rise of nationalism, the emergence of ethnology and race theories, Jewish involvement in liberation movements, "economic superiority of the Jews," and religious hatred.

![Image](image.png)

**Chapter Two**

**Antisemitism and its Influence on the Jewish Diaspora in Europe**

**The Ceremony Stripping Dreyfuss of his Military Rank**

---

23 History, Grade 8, Modern History—Selected Chapters from the History of Europe, the Ottoman Empire, and the Jewish Diaspora, Sa'id Barghouti, Ali Harish, Maktabat Kull Shay' (Permit: 356), 2008, p. 194.
An overview of a ninth-grade history textbook covers Europe in the first half of the twentieth century. The textbook examines WWI, the aftermath of treaties, fascism in Italy, Nazism, WWII and the Holocaust. These topics are taught factually and objectively, with diverse viewpoints.

The textbook allots copious space to the effects of WWI on the region; emphasis on the Balfour Declaration is given in a factual and objective manner. Any contradictions between the declaration and the promises given to Sharif Hussein bin Ali are nevertheless discussed in a positive manner.

There are detailed presentations of the Nazis and the Holocaust. Topics include "extreme right wing racist principles," the Nuremberg laws, Kristallnacht, and the fifth Aliyah. The correlation between Nazi policies unintentionally promoting the Zionist agenda by leading to more Jewish immigration is included. There are explanations of the ghettos and the Warsaw

---

25 Ibid. p. 83.
26 (89–92).
27 (92–93).
28 (121).
Ghetto uprising, the Final Solution, and the numbers of Jews killed in various European countries. The textbook takes a position that the British should have allowed Jewish refugees to save their lives and find haven in Mandatory Palestine. In sum, it concludes that Nazi Germany was the most violent and cruel regime in history.

An excerpt follows:

29 (122–23).
30 (123–25).
31 (126).
32 (128).
33 (135).
The acts of killing and extermination carried out against the Jews began from the beginning of World War II; over time the pace increased. Naturally, the number of the dead increased. But apparently, the Nazi authorities were not satisfied with this number and wanted to make the extermination operations more ‘efficient.’ Therefore, they prepared a calculated plan for this matter. This plan is the ‘Final Solution,’ meaning, exterminating them as a final solution to the problem of the Jews in the German controlled areas. This plan was approved at a conference of the heads of the Nazi Party, including Heydrich and Eichmann, in Wannsee, Berlin, at the beginning of 1942.

The Nazis used different methods to exterminate the Jews. In the Russian regions that the Nazi army occupied, the Jews would be gathered and ordered to dig pits and trenches, after which they would shoot and kill them with heavy fire in the pits they dug with their hands, after which they would be buried in a mass grave. In this way the Nazis killed large numbers of Jews in the occupied Russian regions.

Another method of exterminating the Jews was to transport them in trucks with completely enclosed containers, with the gas pipe coming out of the truck connected to the container. After closing the container door completely, [the truck] would start driving and the smoke from the truck would enter the container; and by the time the truck would reach the camp, the smoke from the truck would have suffocated everyone in the container.

Another method of extermination was the transportation of the Jews by train to the extermination camps. Upon arrival at the camp, they would be rounded up, stripped, and pushed into rooms, after which the doors would be locked, and they would be murdered with poisonous gases. After that, their bodies would be burned in crematoria.

**Question:** What is the role that racial theory played in the Nazi assault and killing of Jews?

With these methods, the Nazis carried out their policy with the goal of exterminating the Jewish people in areas under their control. After the war began to turn in favor of the Russian army on the Eastern Front, the Nazis invested a lot of effort to hide the traces of the extermination camps and ghettos in Eastern Poland. They destroyed the camps and the gas chambers and crematoria, and buried the bodies. All this so that the matter of the extermination of the Jews by them in the areas under their control would not be revealed. When the Nazi army began to retreat to [Germany], they took with them tens of thousands of Jews who were still alive after the destruction of the ghettos.

The acts of killing and extermination continued even when the Nazi forces retreated into German territory. When Hitler believed that the end of his reign was approaching, he issued an order at the end of 1944 to stop the killing of the Jews, but the Nazi forces continued the killings.

As part of Hebrew reading comprehension exercises, students are given a conversation between Nur, an Arab girl and Dana an Israeli girl who want to go to concert featuring an Arab singer named Nadin.

Circle the appropriate words and complete the conversation between Dana and Nur.

**Dana**: I have tickets to a Nadin (concert/municipality/voice). Do you want to come?

**Nur**: Sure! She is my favorite (presentation/contest/singer).


A Hebrew reading comprehension exercise includes a story about Jewish and Arab friends from a robotics class who throw a birthday party for an Arab classmate and sing birthday songs to her in Arabic.
A Party at the Class

Aya, Dana, Michael, and Amir participate in a robotics class. They want to throw a birthday party for Nasrin, their Arab friend. Listen to their conversation and answer the questions in the notebook.

After the party Nasrin writes a message in the class's chat:

Robotics Group

Nasrin:
Dear friends! What a wonderful surprise you gave me!
I was so excited.
Thank you for the cake!
And thank you for singing to me! (And in Arabic!)

Math and science textbooks, including physics, biology and chemistry either in original Arabic or translated from Hebrew were not researched extensively. These textbooks, as one might expect in a science curriculum, emphasize equal rights for women.\textsuperscript{34} Beautiful scenery and attractions throughout Israel (The Dead Sea, owls doing biological control, the world's main axis for birds migration) are exhibited in a manner that emphasizes a shared homeland.\textsuperscript{35} Darwin’s evolution theory is taught.\textsuperscript{36}

\textbf{Israel—A Bridge between Continents}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Pelicans in Hefer Valley}
\end{figure}


\textsuperscript{34} Biology, Grades 1012, Human Biology, Curriculum Department—Ministry of Education, Matba’at Al-Sharq Al-Arabiyya, 2004. (No Permit) pp. 28, 90, 303.

\textsuperscript{35} Biology, Grades 10–12, Chapters in Ecology, Ruth Amir, (Permit B-8761) 2011, pp. 83, 121, 147.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., p. 138.
Women in science textbook:

**Collaboration between Body System that Allows a Person to Dance**


Woman performing mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.


**Oral Artificial Respiration**
Elementary school music textbooks offer an array of world musical traditions, with special attention to Arab and regional music. There is a recognition of Arab music's influence from earlier musical traditions. The selection epitomizes the depth of the Arab musical world which includes Israeli-Arabs; however, no Palestinian artists are featured in the group of selected Arab musicians or modern classics.37

A Saudi musical instrument, the Rabab.

---

37 Music, Grades 5–6, *Learn and Make Music*, Taysir Haddad, Dar Al-Nahda (Permit: 407), 2012, pp. 62–76. Musicians are Egyptians (Sayyed Darwish, Mohamed El Qasabgi, Umm Kulthum, Mohamed Abdel Wahab, Riad Al Sunbati, Syrian-born Farid al-Atrash, Abdel Halim Hafez), Syrians (Sabah Fakhri and Mohamed Khairi), Lebanese (Zaki Nassif, Halim el-Roumi, Wadih El Safi, Sabah, and Fairuz) and an Iraqi (Munir Bashir).
An Arab-Palestinian Perspective

A history textbook for grades 10–12 exemplifies a monolithic, pan-Arabist Palestinian perspective of major historic events; it is the only book in this curriculum dealing with the Zionist/Arab-Palestinian conflict, favoring "the Arabs of Palestine" in virtually every discussion. However, there is no incitement against Israel, Jews, or the State of Israel. While some balanced information is given, and most of the information appears to be accurate, the Jewish/Israeli Other is mostly excluded, particularly in the lack of attention to historical events affecting Jews (and indirectly the Middle East), such as the rise of Nazi Germany, growing antisemitism, and the Holocaust.

Radical characters such as Amin al-Husseini (Palestinian-Islamist leader and a Nazi criminal) and Izz ad-Din al-Qassam (A Syrian-Palestinian Islamist warrior/terrorist) are described somewhat neutrally and even favorably but there are no moderate heroes indicated in this book's historical perspective. Similarly, the description of historical Arab violence toward the British and Jews is reported, but with no overt demonization or incitement towards Jews and Israelis. "The Nakba" [Catastrophe]38 is taught, but individual cases of suffering and experiences of both Palestinians and Israelis are missing.

Harsh measures taken by the Ottoman Turks against Arab nationalists in Syria during WWI serve as a background to the rise of Arab nationalism and the decision of these nationalists to turn their backs on the Ottomans and join forces with the British Empire.

---

Jamal Pasha's hostile policy toward Arabs not only increased the dispute between the Arabs and Turks and their separation from one another but contributed to the rise in the revolutionary spirit among Arabs. The rule of Jamal Pasha turned into a decisive factor in helping most of the Arab and Muslim leaders, mainly the Sharif Hussein [of Mecca], to make the final decision to fully separate from the Ottoman Empire.

**History, Grades 10–12, Chapters in the Modern History of the Middle East**, George Salama, Maktabat Al-Khouri (Permit: 317), 2009, p. 73.
A map reflecting the Damascus Protocol was given to the Hashemites in May 1915. The protocol specified Arab nationalist demands from the British during WWI for joining what would become the 1916 Arab Revolt in the Hijaz. The textbook points to demands made to Britain that an Arab state be established in what is now Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, the PA, Syria, Iraq, and parts of Turkey in return for defense and economic treaties between Britain and "the independent Arab state."

The green areas, which the Arab demanded according to the Damascus Protocol

History, Grades 10–12, *Chapters in the Modern History of the Middle East*, George Salama, Maktabat Al-Khouri (Permit: 317), 2009, p. 76.

The textbook includes large sections devoted to each Arab country's movement toward national independence—including Palestine.

This history book describes the Balfour Declaration and establishment of the Jewish state as unfair and counter to the rights of the Palestinian people. Yet it also draws a simplistic black-and-white picture of an "alliance between Britain and the Zionists" against the Arabs and particularly the Palestinians aiming at the establishment of a "Jewish state in their homeland and at their expense," resulting in a succession of never-ending conflicts.
Despite the ambiguity that surrounded the Balfour Declaration, and the other circumstances and conditions it included, the joy of the Zionists over the declaration was enormous. For the first time, the Zionist movement achieved a great political victory—an official recognition of its national aspirations by the largest colonial power. Also, the other allied countries agreed with the declaration; this is also an official recognition that the Zionist Congress is the official representative of the entire Jewish people and that the declaration became an international document, even before the League of Nations officially approved it. Therefore, the Balfour Declaration is considered a turning point in the history of the Zionist movement and the Jewish people, and a key step toward achieving the last goal of the Zionists, which is the establishment of a state for the Jewish people in Palestine.

The publication of the Balfour Declaration constituted one of the axes of conflict between the Arabs and Britain, and it had a significant impact on the future of the Arab case in general and the Palestinian case in particular, since the Arab residents of Palestine faced an alliance between Britain and Zionism to establish a Jewish state in their homeland and at their expense. This alliance, which was formed after the First World War and after the imposition of the British Mandate on Palestine, invested efforts to implement it and brought to the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular, the greatest test in their modern history. The Palestinian issue became the heart of the Arab-Jewish conflict, and then the heart of the Arab-Israeli, and the Palestinian-Israeli conflicts, and it remains so until this day.

*History, Grades 10–12, Chapters in the Modern History of the Middle East*, George Salama, Maktabat Al-Khouri (Permit: 317), 2009, p. 146.
Defending Palestinian rights, the textbook criticizes the legal foundations of the British Mandate.

At the San Remo Conference held on April 25, 1920, the Allies decided—among the decisions they made—to impose a British mandate on Palestine; Britain’s obligations were defined by repeating the content of the Balfour Declaration as written and worded, despite the clear contradiction between the imposition of the Balfour Declaration on the Palestinian people and the right of this people for self-determination and advancement towards independence. [These rights clearly stated in] Article 22 of the Charter of the League of Nations states that: "The management and control of any country derives from the wishes of its inhabitants." and in the promises of the allies that openly and publicly pledged to support the independence of Palestine and the establish of a national government to be chosen by the people of Palestine.

History, Grades 10–12, Chapters in the Modern History of the Middle East, George Salama, Maktabat Al-Khour (Permit: 317), 2009, p. 148.

Mufti Hajj Amin al-Husseini (1895–1974) as a radical and effective national leader often appeared in religious garb. Violence, here, is seen as an effective means to an end.
Herbert Samuel tried to appease the Arabs at the expense of his Zionist friends and therefore in the same year appointed Haj Amin al-Husseini to the position of Mufti of Jerusalem (in place of his brother Kamal Effendi al-Husseini; as the family had held this position for many generations). [Amin] was convicted by the British and sentenced to ten years in prison on the charge of incitement during the riots of 1920 . . . Even though the Mufti's power was religious, he still realistically succeeded in becoming the leader of the radical Palestinian national [watanī] current that was behind the Arab upheaval and acts of violence, and which gave immediate results, since the High Commissioner announced a temporary halt to Jewish immigration.

**History, Grades 10‒12, Chapters in the Modern History of the Middle East, George Salama, Maktabat Al-Khourī (Permit: 317), 2009, p. 156**

The textbook characterizes Amin al-Husseini as an effective leader and justifies his rhetoric: "The Zionist project poses a danger to the holy sites of Islam, as the goal of Zionism is to rebuild Solomon's Temple on the site of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock."

At the end of the 1920s the influence of the Supreme Muslim Council led by the Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husseini, was growing. It had become the main factor in the leadership of the Arab people of the country. The Mufti and the Supreme Muslim Council succeeded where the Arab Executive Committee [1920–34] had failed in awakening the religious enthusiasm of the masses of the Arab people, city dwellers, and villagers against the Zionist project, which posed a danger to the holy sites of Islam; the goal of Zionism is to rebuild Solomon's Temple on the site of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, and they considered attempts of the Jews to expand their prayer rights at the 'Wailing Wall' as evidence for this.

**History, Grades 10‒12, Chapters in the Modern History of the Middle East, George Salama, Maktabat Al-Khourī (Permit: 317), 2009, p. 158.**

Izz ad-Din Al-Qassam (1881–1935) is portrayed as an Arab freedom fighter and an Islamist. The attention to his Syrian origins and use of "the people of Palestine," rather than Palestinians reflects a pan-Arabist tendency and an acknowledgement of transnational Islamism. Unlike the Mufti Hajj Amin, Al-Qassam remains a symbol of an unconditional war against Israel and the
The description focuses on his last heroic stand and avoids his many attacks on civilian targets.

The Battle of Ya’bad and the Eruption of the Revolution: Sheikh Izz ad-Din Al-Qassam, who ignited the 1936 revolution, was an Islamic preacher and Arab fighter. Before coming to Palestine, he participated in the Syrian revolution against the French. After this revolution stopped, he turned to Haifa in Palestine and settled there. Qassam believed that practical *jihad* and fighting was the best means of achieving independence. He formed his group in secret so that it surprised the British authorities and the traditional national leadership. He relied mainly on the poor from among the people of Palestine. A British police convoy accidentally collided with one of Qassam’s groups while he was surrounded [by British forces]. The firefight between them took place in the Ya’bad groves in the Jenin area on October 25, 1935. The sheikh was martyred with some of his comrades and another group was detained.

The textbook’s treatment on the "Palestinian Revolution 1936–39" describes the causes of the Arab revolt as a combination of the strengthening of the national spirit outside the country, mainly the revolutions in Syria and Egypt and the increase in Jewish immigration to the country after 1933. However, the textbook avoids discussions related to the causes for increased Jewish immigration, such as the rise of the Nazis in Germany. It points to Arab fears of losing more land to the Jewish settlement (Yishuv), distrust in British policy, and economic tension between the

---

"Arab agrarian-feudalism" and the "Jewish bourgeois industrial economy," leading to the emergence of the "Zionist Settler Colonialism" instead of the British Mandate. Finally, the martyrdom of īzz ad-Dīn Al-Qassam played a role in unleashing the revolt.40 While the textbook is clearly sympathetic to the "Palestinian Revolution," the conclusion addresses Jewish casualties as well.

[The British policy] was directed against the Arabs. It looked the other way at the Jewish arming and encouraged it. The Jewish Agency was able to establish the Haganah army consisting of regular military units trained by British officers to resist the revolution and protect their colonies.

Despite all this, the military operations of the revolutionaries continued. According to British official data, about 10000 incidents took place during the revolution, resulting in losses estimated at 211 British dead and 500 wounded. The Jews had 350 dead and 600 wounded, while the Arabs had slightly less than 2000 dead.

History, Grades 10–12, Chapters in the Modern History of the Middle East, George Salama, Maktabat Al-Khouri (Permit: 317), 2009, pp. 172–73.

40 History, Grades 10–12, Chapters in the Modern History of the Middle East, George Salama, Maktabat Al-Khouri (Permit: 317), 2009, p. 166.
The textbook cites Arab rejections of various peace and partition initiatives but does not offer in-depth analysis with respect to the outcomes. One initiative is the 1937 Peel Commission partition plan.

**The Peel Commission's Recommendations**

3. The Arab state will receive financial aid from the Jewish state, in addition to one million pounds per year from Great Britain.

4. Obligation to exchange population between the two proposed countries. As I recall, in the proposed Jewish state lived 325 thousand Arabs who owned 3.25 million dunams compared to 300 thousand Jews who owned 1.25 million dunams. The number of Jews in the proposed Arab state is only 1250 Jews, and the meaning of this is that there will be a population exchange of 325 thousand Arabs against 1250 Jews.

All groups and parties rejected the partition project. The Arab Higher Committee sent a memorandum to the British government and the [Permanent] Mandates Commission in Geneva and announced its absolute rejection of the partition plan. A general Arab conference was also convened on September 8, 1937, in Bloudan, Syria. The conference
made the following decisions: to treat Palestine as an indivisible part of the Arab homeland, rejection of the partition and opposition to the establishment of a Jewish state there, and to insist on the request to cancel the mandate.


The textbook offers no instruction on WWII and skips the Holocaust almost entirely; The narration of this time period focuses on the 1947 Partition Plan and the "1948 War." Remarkably, there are references to the creation of an American-British commission\(^{41}\) to discuss the implication of Jewish immigration to Palestine following "the situation of Jews subjected to Nazi persecution in Europe." One recommendation of this commission was "to issue 100 thousand Jewish certificates for Jewish immigration to Palestine, and other pro-Jewish recommendations."\(^{42}\)

As seen in the section "Life in Israel: Geography, Civics, Culture," European antisemitism and the Holocaust are properly taught within the curriculum. In rare cases, this also includes allegations about Jews controlling the economy, similar to what was often found within Arab curricula across the region prior to the reforms of recent years.

4. **The economic superiority of the Jews**—it was mentioned before that the achievement of equality enabled Jews to obtain important gains in the economic field, the most important of them was the crystallization of a rich bourgeois class, among them which took control of capital, commercial companies and banks. This was a cause for envy and hatred against the Jews.

**History, Grade 8, Modern History—Selected Chapters from the History of Europe, the Ottoman Empire, and the Jewish Diaspora**, Sa'id Barghouti, Ali Harish, Maktabat Kull Shay' (Permit: 356), 2008, p. 194.

---

\(^{41}\) "The Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry Regarding the Problems of European Jewry and Palestine" (Luzon: The Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, 1946).

\(^{42}\) History, Grades 10–12, *Chapters in the Modern History of the Middle East*, George Salama, Maktabat Al-Khour (Permit: 317), 2009, p. 175.
Overall, much of the history taught to high school students is through a narrow and often predisposed lens which avoids explanations that are not pro-Palestinian. However, the textbook does offer a balanced view of the 1947 partition plan, reporting about Jewish enthusiasm while referencing Arab rejection and weakness of the Palestinian leadership.
Joy filled the hearts of the Jews inside and outside [the country] due to the partition resolution. They took to the streets and organized dancing parties to celebrate the resolution even though the Jewish state was supposed to be established only on part of the "historical Land of Israel, which the Zionist movement had demanded.

The Arabs in Palestine and Arab countries rejected—as they did in the past—any proposal for a solution to the Palestinian question that does not fulfill their [pan-Arab] national hopes for the establishment of an Arab-majority state in Palestine. At the beginning of December 1947, the Arab League passed the following resolution: "To act in order to thwart the implementation of the partition plan, to prevent the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine and to secure the creation of an independent and united Arab state." At the same time, the leaders of Arab countries met in Cairo and decided to establish a military organization of Arab volunteers to help the Palestinian Arabs under the supervision of the Arab League. Ismail Safwat, the deputy commander of the Iraqi army, was chosen to serve as the commander of the fighting forces for the salvation of Palestine. The Arab League did not grant real powers to the Higher Arab Committee headed by Hajj Amin Al Husseini. They did not share the political and military fate of Palestine with the committee. The reason for this was the ambitions and interests [of Arab countries] on the one hand, and the weakness of the Palestinian leadership on the other.

History, Grades 10–12, Chapters in the Modern History of the Middle East, George Salama, Maktabat Al-Khouri (Permit: 317), 2009, p. 178.
This textbook gives a polemic view of attempts to downplay the severity of the refugee problem in the period following the announcement of the 1947 Partition Plan. The following caption asks—rhetorically—whether refugees emigrated or were forced to leave their homeland.

**Migration or Displacement!!**

The textbook concludes with a display of Palestinian sentiment focusing on the loss of land and the emergence of Palestinian refugees, with a small number remaining and becoming Israeli citizens. This is somewhat mitigated in the reporting of Israeli casualties. Nonetheless, Israel remains illegitimate in this textbook.

The emotional dimension of the Palestinian experience for many is conveyed through the illustration of Naji' Al-Ali's cartoon figure, "Handala," epitomizing the quintessential symbol of Palestinian bitterness and rejection. In Al-Ali's own words: "His hands are clasped behind

---

43 The larger context one would normally expect in an Israeli textbook, is missing from the textbook's concluding remarks including: displacement of Israelis living in territories occupied by the Arab armies; the Holocaust ending less than three years earlier with Palestinian involvement by blocking escape roots; then launching a total war to destroy the Jewish Yishuv; and a major Jewish refugee problem in Europe and the Arab counties, the latter because of the 1948 War. Conversely, the description of Palestinian suffering in this textbook, is also minimalized.

44 Because it "annexed 80 percent" of what was formerly Mandatory Palestine (with the exception of Transjordan), namely all of pre-1967 Israel. History, Grades 10–12, *Chapters in the Modern History of the Middle East*, George Salama, Maktabat Al-Khour (Permit: 317), 2009, p. 184.
his back as a sign of rejection . . . Handala was born ten years old, and he will always be ten years old. At that age, I left my homeland, and when he returns, Handala will still be ten, and then he will start growing up . . . I presented him to the poor and named him Handala as a symbol of bitterness.\textsuperscript{45}

Palestinian Actress Amal Ka’ush won the Handala Prize for the best cartoon on the 1948 Nakba of Palestine.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{45} Handala is the Arabic name of Bitter Apple, a bitter watermelon-like fruit typical to the Mediterranean Basin (\textit{Citrullus colocynthis}). "Who is Handala?", http://www.handala.org/handala/.

The war lasted twenty months. The Israeli losses in the war were six thousand dead, of which four thousand were from the army. This is how the war ended and the UN forces now oversaw security along the borders shared by Israel and its neighboring Arab countries. Israel annexed 80 percent of the territory of Mandatory Palestine, while the majority of the Arab residents living in this territory were forced to leave their homes and villages and became refugees in the camps established for them by the neighboring Arab countries. Within the State of Israel, there were about 156 thousand remaining [Arab] people who became Israeli citizens.

How does this cartoon express the Nakba of Palestine?

History, Grades 10–12, Chapters in the Modern History of the Middle East, George Salama, Maktabat Al-Khoury (Permit: 317), 2009, p. 184.

A high-school civics textbook, translated from the Hebrew, exhibits a different tenor. In a chapter title, the name of the country during the British Mandate is the "Land of Israel." Typically, the Arabic equivalent of the Hebrew Land of Israel is Filastin (Palestine).

The British, Jews and Arabs Meet in the Land of Israel
British Policy in the Middle East and the Jewish and Arab activities in the country from the Balfour Declaration to the end of WWII (1917–1945).


The same civics textbook reports on the development of an Arab-Palestinian national movement in the country during that period.
B. National Attitudes among the Arabs

An Arab-Palestinian national movement is developing in the country. The Arab dimension has grown in it as part of the Arab national movement in the entire Middle East. This movement included all Arabic speakers participating in Arab culture. The Palestinian dimension has developed, based on the interest of the great European countries in the country, and this dimension has been strengthened with the beginning of the Arab conflict [with the Zionist movement].


There is mention of Palestinian displacement during the 1948 War, and that some Palestinians were driven away; however, the books also maintain that most escaped and were not expelled.47

The new state of Israel was established as a democracy and its Declaration of Independence promised equal rights for all citizens. However, the struggle between Israel and its Arab citizens over control of the land and equal rights have continued, often with bloody confrontations. The curriculum does not ignore these events and typically advances the Arab minority's position in any discussions. Such circumstances as the martial law declared over Israeli Arabs are aptly described as an especially difficult period for Arabs in Israel.49 Following are three examples covering the 1956 Kafr Qasim Massacre; the Land Day events of March 30, 1976;50 and the October 2000 protests.

Kafr Qasim Massacre

In the context of instruction about the limits of civic and military duty in obeying the law, the concept of "blatantly unlawful orders" is introduced. The 1956 Kafr Qasim Massacre is used as an illustration of when one must disobey an unlawful order. The book describes the event, explaining that the victims were farmers, innocent and unaware that an earlier curfew had been introduced, and that a large number of women and children who unknowingly violated the curfew were killed by an Israeli border guard unit. The textbook does not offer an Arab perspective, including voices of the victims' families and friends. Students are able to read an apology by the Israel president.

50 On the Land Day events, see Ibid., p. 538.
An example of a blatantly unlawful order is the event in Kafr Qasim on October 29, 1956, with the start of the Kadesh Operation in the Sinai [Suez Crisis]. A curfew was imposed on Arab villages located between Petah Tikva and Netanya from five in the afternoon until six in the morning of the next day and [the commanders] had agreed to shoot at the violators. (The Arab villages in Israel at that time were subject to military rule, and a night curfew was always imposed on them, starting from nine o’clock in the evening. On this particular day, and because of Operation Kadesh, the curfew was moved forward by four hours, to start at five in the afternoon). The curfew order was published earlier, around noon that day, but villagers who had left early in the morning to work outside the village didn’t know about the change to the curfew hours and returned to the village as usual in the evening. The commander of one of the roadblocks understood the military orders strictly and ordered his soldiers to shoot the workers. Forty-three of Kafr Qasim’s residents were shot and killed on the road leading to the village; among them fifteen women and eleven children.

However, it is important to note that the residents of the neighboring villages were treated differently, as they were arrested for violating the curfew, which means that the border police there understood that it was forbidden to shoot villagers who did not know when the curfew was in effect.

The soldiers and the commander who committed the murder were court martialed and found guilty. The court ruled that they should be imprisoned, in spite of their claim that they had been following orders. The court rejected the claim, and said that it was their duty not to follow a "blatantly unlawful order."
In a memorial service that was held in Kafr Qasim in 2014, the President of Israel, Reuven Rivlin said: "I came here today, as a son to the Jewish nation, as the President of the State of Israel, to stand in front of you, families of the victims and wounded, to share your pain. This heinous crime in Kafr Qasim is an anomalous and dark chapter in the history of the relations between us, the Arabs and the Jews living here."


In 2000 there were a series of protests in Arab cities and towns in northern Israel that escalated into rioting by Israeli Arabs throughout Israel, and led to counter rioting by Israeli Jews and clashes with the police. These clashes ended in the deaths of twelve Israeli-Arab demonstrators. Most of the riots took place between the seventh and ninth of October. The textbook passage below explains the lead-up to the events and the deaths of the Israeli-Arab rioters. The text includes a statement from Theodore Or, the Supreme Court Justice who later led the Or Commission, created to investigate these events. Importantly, the Or Commission found that Arab citizens suffer discrimination in Israel and criticized the government for failing to give fair and equal attention to the needs of the Arab citizens of Israel. The commission found that frustration from discrimination led to the rise in violence in October 2000 and the Second Intifada.

The Events of October 2000

Arab citizens demonstrating outside the Supreme Court during the Or Commission meeting, Sept. 3, 2000
On September 29, 2000, the Arab citizens of Israel launched wide-scale and violent demonstrations in protest against the visit of Opposition Leader Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The demonstrations, which included blocking roads and throwing stones, continued for three days and required considerable police intervention. While suppressing the riots, the police used live ammunition, and caused the deaths of 12 Arab citizens. Following these events, a state commission of inquiry was established—the Or Commission (headed by Supreme Court Justice Theodor Or). The Commission tied the violent outbreak to the socio-economic situation of Israeli Arabs, and stated:

'The events, their exceptional nature, and the serious outcome are the result of deep-seated factors that have created an explosive situation among the Arab public in Israel. These factors, including the state and its governments over the years, have failed to deal in depth and comprehensively with the difficult problems presented by the existence of the large Arab minority within the Jewish state. Government handling of the Arab sector has been characterized for the most part by neglect and discrimination. The establishment has not shown sufficient sensitivity to the needs of the Arab sector, and has not taken sufficient action to allocate state resources in an egalitarian manner to this sector. The state has not done enough, and has not made enough of an effort to provide equality to its Arab citizens and remove discrimination and deprivation. . . .'
Another civics textbook describes the national divide within Israeli society following the October 2000 events and includes perspectives of both Israeli-Arabs and Israeli-Jews. Students learn that thirteen Arab protesters were killed.

The events greatly damaged the mutual trust and delicate relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel. Many of Israel's Jewish citizens felt threatened and betrayed, and viewed the riots as a consequence of ongoing radicalization among Israeli Arabs. The Arab citizens were furious at the killing of the 13 demonstrators. They claimed that the police had used excessive force that would not have been used in the same manner had been Jewish citizens. They saw in that an unavoidable result of an oppression and deprivation policy, and a proof of the discriminatory treatment by the state, which regarded them as 'second-class citizens.' Following the Events, the government formed an official investigative commission, headed by Supreme Court Judge Theodor Or (The Or Commission). The Or Commission concluded that the issues of the governmental policy towards the Arab minority and its status in Israel needed to be addressed. The commission further concluded that in the case of the October 2000 events, Israel police had used excessive force in several places, and that the conduct of the security forces did not serve to calm the situation, and in some cases, even had the opposite effect.

Another perspective is evident in a grade 4 geography textbook. Here one finds optimistic and colorful information about various local-ethnic and religious groups among the large Israeli-Arab community. Much emphasis is given to positive relationships among all citizens.

The authors here, chose a more age-appropriate method to teach about the Zionist-Palestinian struggle. The following three topics from a chapter on "Our Town during the British Mandate,"
are presented like a play in three acts, including: the high civilization of the pre-Israel Arabs of Palestine; the Balfour Declaration; and the Jewish settlements that ensued.

The chapter begins with a brief introduction on the beginning of the British Mandate. The British are described as another people who "controlled our country" and they "occupied" Jerusalem; the High Commissioner was Herbert Samuel.51 Arab partnership with the British conquest, seen elsewhere in the curriculum, is missing, but not the Balfour Declaration. Much is left for teachers to elaborate.

Representative Examples:

The Town during the British Mandate

Wurud: a fourth grade [female] student in Maysar school at the center of town, asked her [female] teacher: In third grade we learned about the Ottoman period in our country. What period came next?

Teacher: It was the period of the British Mandate that lasted for thirty years (from 1918 to 1948).

Wurud: Which peoples controlled our country during this period?

51 Samuel was the first High Commissioner, a pro-Zionist and a Jew. The chapter does not say anything negative or problematic, but students are not taught about the six other High Commissioners (not all Jewish, some anti-Zionist). On the other hand, the text does not refer to Palestine by name, even though Palestine was the official name of the country during that period.
Wurud: What is the name of the British ruler who ruled our country during the British Mandate?

Teacher: He was the British High Commissioner Herbert Samuel.

Wurud: How did the English succeed in occupying our country from the Turkish Ottomans?

Teacher: The British commander Edmund Allenby came from Egypt and occupied first the southern part of the country then entered [dakhala] the old city in Jerusalem in December 1917.

The first of the concluding topics deals with health issues during the British Mandate. The students learn that now leading Israeli hospital Rambam (Maimonides) in Haifa was originally—according to this textbook— an Arab hospital named Hamza Hospital.

52 In 1938 the British built a large medical center in Haifa (now Rambam Hospital) based on the 2018 British Governmental Hospital. Palestinians remember the hospital as Hamza Hospital. Dr. Nayef Amin Hamza was its first director. Hamza was a Lebanese Druze physician who moved to Haifa and opened a clinic in 1933. Among the myths surrounding his name is that he took a fully equipped ambulance and drove it to his village across the Israeli-Lebanese border in 1952. Ahmad Mahmoud, "Finger on the Pulse: The Story of the Rambam Hospital, 1918–2018," Mid East Med, March 19, 2020, https://www.mideastmed.org/entity/77835/post; Muhammad Aql, "Doctor Hamza Hospital in Haifa" (Arabic), Arab48, May 26, 2018, https://bit.ly/3xt8ZjT.
Health Services

Grandma Umm Nidhal [The mother of the struggle] told her grandchildren about the medical services during the times of the British Mandate. During the British Mandate, a hospital was established in our town of Haifa. It was known as 'Hamza Hospital' after its founder Nayef Hamza. The hospital served the city of Haifa and the surrounding areas. People from villages such as Tirat Al-Karmel and Isfiya and Daliat Al-Karmel. Since the people in the country did not have cars in those days, they carried the sick to the hospitals on horse- or donkey-drawn carts or on the animals' backs. Later on, the hospital was named Rambam Hospital.

Homeland, Society and Civics, Grade 4, Me and My Homeland, Razi Omar, Saleh Khatib, Baker Abu Baker, Raffoul Boulus, Maktabat Kull Shay' (Permit: 506), 2015, p. 45.

An image of Rambam Hospital with classic contours.

Rambam Hospital

Homeland, Society and Civics, Grade 4, Me and My Homeland, Razi Omar, Saleh Khatib, Baker Abu Baker, Raffoul Boulus, Maktabat Kull Shay' (Permit: 506), 2015, p. 46.

After the discussion of Rambam originally as an Arab hospital, students learn about the Balfour Declaration. However, there is no analysis or context.

53 The text comments on the village, Tirat Al-Karmel. Until 1948 there was an Arab village named Tirah (also tirat al-lawz, tirat haifa), and today it is a name of a Jewish town named Tirat Carmel. Still, the name refers to the original Arab village that was abandoned during the war—another topic for discussion in class. Daliyat al-Karmel and Isfiya are Druze majority towns near Haifa.
The Balfour Promise

Imad, from the town of Mi'ilya in the Upper Galilee in the north of the country, asked:
Teacher, we hear many times about the Balfour Promise. Can you explain to us what it is?
Teacher: Listen, Emad. This is a promise on behalf of the British government to a Jewish man named Baron Rothschild.
Imad: Why is it called the Balfour Promise?
Teacher: It is named after the British foreign minister, Arthur Balfour, who signed the promise.
Imad: What did the statement say?
Teacher: It said:

His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

[yhe textbook skips one sentence: "I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation."\(^\text{54}\)]

Yours sincerely,
Arthur Balfour

Imad: Teacher, when was the statement published?
Teacher: On November 2, 1917.

Homeland, Society and Civics, Grade 4, Me and My Homeland, Razi Omar, Saleh Khatib, Baker Abu Baker, Raffoul Boulus, Maktabat Kull Shay' (Permit: 506), 2015, p. 47.

\(^\text{54}\) The Balfour Declaration (November 2, 1917), The Avalon Project, Yale Law School, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/balfour.asp.
The textbook finishes its presentation of the Balfour Declaration with an explanation of (Jewish) "settlements."

Types of Settlement

**Moshav**—an agricultural village in which each family consists of a distinct economic unit.

**Kibbutz**—a cooperative agricultural township.

Activity:

What is a kibbutz and the way of life in it?

I can receive help from my family and various sources and register the name of a kibbutz located near my town.

While the textbook alludes to hurt and injustice from the past, the main focus is toward living happily together, first among Arabs, but also with the Jewish majority. Civil values and commitment to the state derive from an understanding of rights and obligations as well as the diversity of the country. Despite its place in the Israeli national curricula, and in contrast to other curricula in the region, the Israeli flag and national symbols are not overly emphasized. The following text encourages good Arab-Jewish relations and acknowledges the Jewish majority and Arab citizenship in the State of Israel. The text explains that there are distinct identities; each group within the state has its own unique identity.
What do We Have in Common with Others
The teacher said: Despite this difference, there are many common denominators that bind us together. She then asked us to give examples.

Fayha said: We are dwellers of the same town.
Rami said: We are all about nine-year-olds.
Adham said: We are all citizens in the State of Israel.
The Teacher said: you all did well, and then she added: Know that identity groups are diversified. Some of them are close like family and school. Others are distant such as various social groups that an individual can belong to within a state or continent. Some [groups] are large—and represent the majority, such as the Jews (who consist of around 80 percent of the inhabitants of the state). Others are smaller and represent minorities.

Fiction and Poetry: Arab Heritage, Local Nationalism

Israel's Arab education system represents an entire curriculum in which the primary language is the nation's minority language, but also the language of a major living civilization. The curriculum, for its part, provides students with a healthy portion in their native language. Beyond Arabic, there is instruction in English and Hebrew literature.

The topics covered in this section including Arab-Palestinian literature, the intermingling of Hebrew and Arabic poetry, women and femicide, poems related to wine and love—all form just part of the literature program. In Arabic language textbooks, modern Arabic literature may refer to Arab citizens of Israel as Palestinians and speak to Palestinian issues. These include poems and stories that highlight Palestinian suffering and emphasize a strong connection and desire for lost or abandoned lands.\textsuperscript{55} One textbook promotes "resistance poetry" written by Palestinian poets.\textsuperscript{56}

The study of literature becomes more significant—in terms of respect, tolerance and peace—in that it offers a distinct counter-balance to the more rigid teachings seen in religious studies, including issues of Palestinian identity, women's rights and relations with Israeli society.

Palestinian Literature in Israel

Along with history and other subjects, modern Arabic literature includes both Palestinian and general Arabic literature. Within Palestinian literature, there is more interest in authors who live in Israel. One high school literature textbook in particular,\textsuperscript{57} contains poems and short stories written by Arab poets and authors, many of them Palestinians and Arabs citizens of Israel and usually described as "Palestinians." The poems and stories often center on Palestinian issues, such as suffering caused by the Nakba, and the continuing desire to reclaim their lands. The textbook teaches a common genre in Palestinian poetry: that of "Resistance Poetry." One poem of this genre expresses the wish that tyrants (likely referring to Israel) will hang themselves.\textsuperscript{58} Another\textsuperscript{59} describes the journey of two Palestinians to their former village; one of its themes is "determination against aggressors." Another poem expresses a wish for peace.\textsuperscript{60} Other poems and stories criticize some aspects of traditional Arab societies, including a poem condemning "the phenomenon of femicide in Arab society."\textsuperscript{61}

\textsuperscript{55} Arabic Language, Grades 10–12, \textit{Bayader—Modern Literature—First Unit}, Kawther Jaber Qassoum, Muhammad Hamad Dar Al-Nahda (Permit: 415), 2012, pp. 174–82, 184–89.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., pp. 54–55.
\textsuperscript{57} Arabic Language, Grades 10–12, \textit{Bayader—Modern Literature—First Unit}, Kawthar Jaber Qassoum, Muhammad Hamad Dar Al-Nahda (Permit: 415), 2012.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid., pp. 63–65.
\textsuperscript{59} (184–89).
\textsuperscript{60} (76–78).
\textsuperscript{61} (134–36).
One chapter in this modern literature textbook corresponds to Palestinian poetry during the British Mandate and the formation of the State of Israel—before and after the "Nakba." The introduction focuses on local poets (from Israel), who are referred to as "local" or "inside" poets (as distinguished from Israeli Arabs or Arab citizens of Israel). While there is no mention of Tawfiq Ziad's role here as a Knesset member, in the introduction to his poem, the textbook points to his membership in the "Israeli Communist Party" and his six consecutive terms of office as member of the "Israeli parliament" [Knesset]. In the introduction to the chapter on local Palestinian poetry, Israel is referred to only implicitly as "the state" or "the military rule." The textbook emphasizes the national Arab-Palestinian commitment of these poets (one died in battle as a martyr in 1948) but is also quick to explain that such commitment enhanced rather than impaired their creativity. As with martyrdom in battle, "Resistance Poetry" is meant to be upbeat and central, enriching the local milieu. Despite the themes, there is no talk about encouraging actual violence with emphases on internal (Israeli-Arab) circles.
Local Palestinian Poetry

The historical and political events are considered important key points that have a profound influence on the development of Palestinian poetry. The poetry landscape before the Nakba was immersed in the events of the British Mandate in Palestine, Jewish immigration, the struggle for the land and the position of global public opinion toward this question, in the circumstances of the two world wars.

Before the Nakba, poets stood out who were committed to the national cause and expressed their affiliation through the positions. Ibrahim Tuqan, for example, used the radio as a platform for his national thought, until the British authorities fired him. Abi Salma and Abd al-Rahim Mahmoud engaged in political activity. The latter died as a martyr in the Battle of Sejera and the former was exiled to Syria, and worked from there.

The strong cohesion between the Palestinian poets in the "interior" [Israel] and in the diaspora was strong because they shared the national cause that dominated their thinking and their poetic works. The commitment did not prevent these poets from expressing their issues in fine poetry, far from being declarative and direct and from what would have been required of committed literary positions. This can be clearly seen in Mahmoud Darwish, who managed to move from the national Palestinian axis to a human global horizon, allowing for the explosion of a special lyricism and a language enveloped in creativity and inventiveness.

In the local [within Israel] poetry community, political life had a major influence on its growth and content. The state treated Palestinian poetry with great sensitivity. The atmosphere of the military rule cast its shadows and dictated its treatment of a number of poets who were arrested or placed under house arrest, such as Mahmoud Darwish, Samih al-Qasim, [MK] Tawfiq Ziad and Rashid Hussein. These and others enriched the local culture with timeless examples of resistance [muqāwama] poetry. The ideology of the Communist Party spread this idea and give it its platforms such as newspapers and conferences.

Arabic Language, Grades 10–12, Bayader—Modern Literature—First Unit, Kawthar Jaber Qassoum, Muhammad Hamad Dar Al-Nahda (Permit: 415), 2012, p. 54.

Much of the textbook's poetry derives from a Palestinian outlook, which includes animosity toward Israel, intersecting with such events as the 1967 "setback" (Six Day War) and 1987
Intifada. The textbook continues to avoid the term Israel, except in a negative context. There is no mention of the Jewish-Arab poetry community which thrives in leftist circles. Still, one can see a clear difference between "the Palestinian and the local [Israeli-Arab] poetry scenes." Here too, "local" means Arab poetry in Israel or by Israeli Arabs.

The departure of Rashid Hussein from the country, followed by that of Mahmoud Darwish, allowed them to break free from the Israeli domination and the restrictions
imposed on creative freedom. This development [also] liberated their poetry from stereotype and uniformity. Their poetry began to flow in a human direction and served as a model of committed poetry at a high artistic level. This writing style contributed to the Palestinian cause and identification with it in the world by opening to other cultures and to liberation ideas in Western societies. This move also enabled open communication between the Palestinian poets and their brothers in the Arab countries, and with the Palestinian poets in the diaspora. At the same time, an open channel of communication was maintained with local poets, within the "green line" [that is, in Israel].

The successive political events, such as the Naksa [setback, Six Day War] of 1967 and the First Intifada [uprising] of 1987, contributed to the local poetry community [within Israel]. Samih al-Qasim emerged as one of the copious poetic voices in terms of his productivity, standing and bearing in the media. His communication with the Arab world and participation in international conferences on the Palestinian cause, gave his poetry a civilized, committed luster.

Feminine voices were scant in the Palestinian and local poetry landscape; Fadwa Toukan contributed a noticeable share, but locally, there were rare voices such as Souad Qurman, followed by Baraem Shataba, who made her imprint on the path of poetry.

The textbook features a pan-Arabist poem on Egyptian-Syrian Unity, by Egyptian poet Hafez Ibrahim and a 1931 anti-colonialist poem, the "Slaughtered Turkey" (serving as an example of weak nations as victims of colonialism) by Palestinian poet Ibrahim Tuqan. Keywords are applied to literary pieces to help students throughout researched literature textbooks.

63 (14–15).
In the 1966 "The Fire of the Magi" the poet, Tawfiq Ziyad invites his readers for a long and patient struggle until the tyrants hang themselves with their own ropes. The textbook's keywords include "Resistance Poetry," "making history," "prosecuting the tyrants."

The Fire of the Magi, Tawfiq Ziad

I take my time!
I take my time!
I draw the first thread of light
From the deep darkness of night;
I tend the nursery of dreams
At the source of the torrent,
And dry the tears of loved ones
With a kerchief of jasmine.
I plant the most verdant oases
Amidst the scorched sands,
And shape a life for the outlaws
From fragrance, plenty, and justice.
If someday, on the road, my foot should stumble,
My roots will uphold and support me.
I take my time
For I am unlike the match
That flickers once, then dies.
I am more like the fire of the magi, burning bright
From my cradle to my grave.
And from my forebears to my offspring.
My endurance is as limitless as the horizon,
And the skill of the ant I've mastered.
I take my time,
For it is the function of history
To follow our dictates.
We have prepared for the downfall of the tyrants of the earth,
We will pay them back in kind;
We will give them enough rope, not that they may live longer,
But that they have enough to hang themselves.\textsuperscript{64}

\textbf{Arabic Language, Grades 10‒12, Bayader—Modern Literature—First Unit, Kawthar Jaber Qassoum, Muhammad Hamad Dar Al-Nahda (Permit: 415), 2012, pp. 63‒64.}

The textbook offers two poems by Mahmoud Darwish, considered the Palestinian national poet. "I am Joseph, Oh Father," recounts the Biblical Joseph's suffering and pain from his brothers' cruelty; "And We Love Life," appears to suggest hope for life, but in fact commits the Palestinians to struggle and martyrdom. The poem constitutes an answer for those who accuse Palestinians of hating life and loving death. It answers that "we love life, if we find a way to it." Finding the way to life means victory in the struggle to liberate Palestine, and until that time, the Palestinians "dance in-between martyrs."

\begin{quote}

\textbf{I am Joseph, Oh Father,}

"I am Joseph, Oh Father," recounts the Biblical Joseph's suffering and pain from his brothers' cruelty; "And We Love Life," appears to suggest hope for life, but in fact commits the Palestinians to struggle and martyrdom. The poem constitutes an answer for those who accuse Palestinians of hating life and loving death. It answers that "we love life, if we find a way to it." Finding the way to life means victory in the struggle to liberate Palestine, and until that time, the Palestinians "dance in-between martyrs."

\end{quote}

\begin{quote}

\begin{center}

\begin{tt}

\texttt{ونحن نحب الحياة}

ونحن نحب الحياة إذا ما استطعنا إليها سبيلا
ومن قطبين شهداء, رفع منارة الرفاه بينهما أو خيالا
نحب الحياة إذا ما استطعنا إليها سبيلا

ومنزَرُرُ من دوامة الزفر حَيطَ عيني سماها لنا وتستبِق هذا الحيلا
وتغطّي باب الحديقة كي يخرج الباشاسين إلى الطرقات نهارا جميلا
نحب الحياة إذا ما استطعنا إليها سبيلا

ومنزَرُرُ حَيطَ عيني سماها لنا وتستبِق هذا الحيلا
ومنزَرُرُ من دوامة الزفر حَيطَ عيني سماها لنا وتستبِق هذا الحيلا
وتغطّي باب الحديقة كي يخرج الباشاسين إلى الطرقات نهارا جميلا
نحب الحياة إذا ما استطعنا إليها سبيلا

\end{tt}
\end{center}

\end{quote}

And we love life if we find a way to it.
We dance in-between martyrs and raise a minaret for violet or palm trees.

We love life if we find a way to it.

And we steal from the silkworm a thread to build a sky and fence in this departure.
We open the garden gate for the jasmine to step out on the streets as a beautiful day.

Record-Breaking Temperatures Are Sweeping the West

We love life if we find a way to it.

And we plant, where we settle, some fast-growing plants, and harvest the dead.
We play the flute like the color of the faraway, sketch over the dirt corridor a neigh.

We write our names one stone at a time; O lightning brighten the night.

We love life if we find a way to it. . . .

A class to explain "And We Love Life" is offered by the Ministry of Education online and praises Darwish for his "Resistance Poetry," which details Palestinian suffering mainly in refugee camps across the Arab World. The lesson includes more direct poems such as "Ahmad Al-Zaatar," written following the 1976 massacre of Tel Al-Zaatar refugee camp in Beirut by Christian militias loyal to Syrian President Hafez al-Assad. The poem includes lines such as "Between two bullets was the exile of the sea/A camp grows and gives birth to fighters and to thyme," and "I am the bullets, the oranges and the memory." As for the "And We Love Life," the lesson explains that Palestinians will choose life once their conditions are met. Until then, martyrdom in battle, death and destruction remain the order of the day. This mixture of life, death and destruction embodies "the nature and life of the Palestinian people."

\[\text{عند بوابة النصّ}

\]

- القصيدة تقوم على المفارقات الظاهرة، فنرى المزج بين الحياة والموت، وننس الخليط العجيب بين الزرع والاستشهاد، فكأنما تأتي الحياة من خلال الموت، وينجم البناء من خلال الدمار، وهذا ما يجسد طبيعة الشعب الفلسطينيّ وحياته، المرکبة ما بين هذا وذاك.


67 Ibid., slide 7–8.
The poem is grounded in the apparent paradoxes, so we see a blend of life and death, and we feel the strange blend of farming and martyrdom [in battle]. It is as if life comes through death, and construction emerges from destruction, and this is what embodies the nature and life of the Palestinian people, combined between this and that.\(^{68}\)

The commitment of the Palestinians to life is conditional.

\[ \text{ يقوم درويش بمقارنة قوية بين فريضة الحج، وبين حب الحياة، فيؤكد أن الشعب الفلسطينيّ} \\
\text{محبّ للحياة، طالما وجدت الأسباب والظروف التي من شأنها أن تحقق هذا الشرط، وهذه} \\
\text{الأسباب هي: قيام وطن الفلسطينيّ، والزوجع إلى بلاده، ووضع حد للتوحيد والتشدّر.} \]

Darwish makes a strong comparison between the obligation of Hajj [pilgrimage] and the love of life. He asserts that the Palestinian people love life, as long as there are factors and circumstances that would fulfill this condition. These factors are: the establishment of a homeland for the Palestinian; the return to his country; and an end to wandering and homelessness.\(^{69}\)

The Palestinians are committed to struggle, jihad, work and "offering martyrs wherever they go."

\[ \text{ إنّ حياة الشعب الفلسطينيّ تتجسد في هذه الأبيات القليلة} \\
\text{ بصورة رائعة، فنرى درويش يختزل معاناة الفلسطينيّ بأدق} \\
\text{العبارات وأعمقها، والتي تؤتي باستمرارىّة النضال والجهاد} \\
\text{ والعمل، فنراهم يزرون، ويقدمون الشهداء أينما حلوه،} \]

The life of the Palestinian people is beautifully embodied in these few stanzas. We see Darwish condenses the Palestinian suffering into the most accurate and profound terms, which suggest the continuity of struggle, jihad and work. We see them farming and offering martyrs wherever they go.\(^{70}\)

This and other poems express commitment for the Palestinian struggle and resistance, but also exhort students to be patient and taste life. Similarly, a poem by Rashid Hussein includes in its introduction "the voice [of the masses] that speaks of resistance." Another poem by the same

\(^{68}\) (slide 12).
\(^{69}\) (slide 17).
\(^{70}\) (slide 22).
poet expresses a hope of peace for children in Tel Aviv and for Palestinian children, and students discuss how the "Other" is depicted in the poem. Here are the first lines of the poem.

I still have a sky of dreamy eyes in my gaze
Blue or black shining on smiling faces
Big bun rings and soft lips
I still have in my eyes a child in the streets of Tel Aviv
And a little girl in a tanned village dreaming of milk
The children of life are still the stars of my dark land
Two stars twinkle in every face
In each palm, one or two cakes
And for their sake, and for their cake, I sing for peace

In the short story genre, the textbook teaches Emile Habibi's "Mandelbaum Gate." Habibi is one of the greatest Arab novelists (The Secret Life of Saeed the Pessoptimist) and was Communist Knesset Member. Mandelbaum Gate was the checkpoint on the Israeli-Jordanian border at the center of divided Jerusalem. A customs officer on the Israeli side tells the narrator and his mother, "He who leaves here, will never return." The irony accompanying Habibi in all his works is expressed in one line: "Everyone is allowed to enter and exit through the two gates except for the residents of the country, my dear lady," demonstrating how foreigners move freely back and forth between the Jordanian gate, the Israeli gate, and the no-man's land between them,

---

71 Arabic Language, Grades 10–12, Bayader, pp. 76–78.
while the citizens of the country are only allowed to move in leave but not return. At the climax of the story, the narrator's daughter, who does not understand the issue of borders and their restrictions, runs after her grandmother who is passing between the two gates, and everyone is embarrassed, including the soldiers on both sides, and the author reflects: "An innocent girl . . . imagined in her mind that she was still in her own country . . . . Here they speak Hebrew, and there they speak Arabic, she also speaks both languages."72

Another short story, Muhammad Ali Taha's "The Bent Palm Tree," describes the narrator's wish to again see the palm tree in the village that he left, referring to a Palestinian village he left during the 1948 War.73 Taha is an Israeli citizen. His desire to return to the palm tree is a symbol of his desire to return to the homeland. In another MoE presentation, the palm tree is a symbol for the desire of the Palestinian for his land "which he left, and to which he will return some day."74

The Symbol

The symbol emerging in the story of "The Bent Palm Tree" as it denotes nostalgia, longing, and yearning for the homeland after the Palestinian was displaced from his land, which he left and will return and come back to one day.75

Astonishingly, counter to the Israeli government's current position on Palestinian "right of return"76 the Israeli Ministry of Education encourages young Israeli Arabs—as Palestinians—to learn and identify with the concept of return. Israelis typically consider the "right of return" as an

---

72 Ibid., pp. 158–64.
73 (174–82).
75 Ibid.
76 Palestinian "Right of Return": "A 'right of return' is one of the key core issues of dispute in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Palestinians claim that five million people—tens of thousands of original refugees from what is today’s Israel, and their millions of descendants—have a right to return to their ancestral lands. Israel rejects the demand, saying that it represents a bid by the Palestinians to destroy Israel by weight of numbers." in The Times of Israel, November 30, 2021, "Israel Protests as UN Marks Partition Plan With Palestinian Solidarity Event," https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-protests-as-un-marks-partition-plan-with-palestinian-solidarity-event/
existential threat and the main stumbling block on the way to peace. Notwithstanding, it remains MoE policy in textbooks for Arab students.

Another perspective on the land displacement motif one can find in "The Mukhtar (head of a village) of Al-Sammū‘ī," by Mohamed Nafa (naffā‘). The story revolves around a Palestinian village that became Jewish after the Nakba. Themes of the story according to the textbook include "the principle of defending land and property," "determination against aggressors" and "an opposing stand towards treachery and abandonment." Nafa was a Druze-Arab citizen of Israel and a Knessset member for the Communist Party (Hadash). A young child and an old man, both Palestinians (likely citizens of Israel), who go to their former village of Al-Sammū‘ī, which became the Jewish village of Kfar Shamai after the 1948 War (referred to as the Nakba), to retrieve goats that remained in the village. The old Palestinian man argues with a Jewish clerk, to whom they go to obtain certificates, insisting on referring to villages by their Arab names rather than their Jewish-Israeli names. The two Palestinians then go to meet the Jewish Mukhtar, a Yemenite Jew who is described as a person who is not honorable as the Arab Mukhtars, and the Palestinian old man disrespects him and swears at him silently. The two then pay him to retrieve the goats. Retrieving the goats is considered to be a symbol of unification of Palestinians, and of holding to their principles.

The principle of defending land and property, determination against aggressors, hostile attitude towards collaboration and inaction, dialogue, the Palestinian vernacular, popular sense of humor, critical irony, satirical language, features of the Palestinian environment, realistic language.

Arabic Language, Grades 10–12, Bayader—Modern Literature—First Unit, Kawthar Jaber Qassoum, Muhammad Hamad Dar Al-Nahda (Permit: 415), 2012, p. 189.

Israeli Elements and Palestinian Literature

In the second unit of this literary anthology, there is a section on "Local Palestinian Poetry and Israeli poetry written in Arabic." As can be seen from this screenshot from the table of contents there is a reference to only one Jewish-Israeli poet, Iraqi-born, Ibrahim Obadia. The others

77 Arabic Language, Grades 10–12, Bayader, pp. 184–89.
(Hanna Abu-Hanna, Salem Jubran, Shakib Jahshan, Farouk Mawasi and George Najib Khalil) are local Palestinians. This selection provides more questions than answers.

The works of two Israeli novelists, Amos Oz and Shimon Ballas, are also included, each with a novella in the sections on "World Literature" and "Arab and World Literature," in which they underline the cultural and social shock experienced by many among the Jewish majority in Israel. Oz's "The Way of the Wind" is placed in Kibbutz and army service contexts. Ballas in "Iya" tells the story of a Muslim nanny serving a Jewish-Iraqi family in Baghdad that is forced to leave for Israel. Despite being adopted into the Jewish family, but unable to travel to Israel, the nanny finds herself abandoned.

Hebrew language textbooks, written and published by local Arabs allow genuine literary and cultural interaction. Following are two approaches, consecutively and in one textbook, which use literature to bring people together. Ninth-graders learn two poems in Hebrew. One, is a peace song by Israeli singer Uzi Hitman; the second, by Palestinian national poet Mahmoud Darwish has Hebrew translation with the Arabic original.

Following a lesson on the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, students are taught the song "I Was Born for Peace" written during this period by Uzi Hitman. There is also a passage about the writer Hitman, noting his mixed religious-secular background and that his parents were Holocaust survivors.

80 The full text is not included in the anthology that has a full reference to an Arabic translation. For English translation and introduction see Keys to the Garden: New Israeli Writing, Ammiel Alcalay, ed. (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1996), pp. 61–99.
Singing and playing

I was born to the melodies
And songs of every country
I was born to the language, and to the land
To the few and the many
Who will give peace a hand.

I was born to peace—let it draw near
I was born to peace—let it come.
I was born to peace—let it appear
I want, I want to be in it already.

I was born to the dream
and in it I see that peace will come
I was born to the desire and the belief
that it will come after thirty years.

I was born to peace—let it draw near . . .

I was born to a people two thousand years old.
With a land of their own and their own piece of heaven.
A people watching the new day unfold,
A beautiful moment, the coming of peace.
A short bio of Hitman follows the lyrics:

Uzi Hitman (June 9, 1952—October 17, 2004)

[Hitman] was a great Israeli singer, composer, songwriter and TV host. He was one of the important writers of Hebrew songs and he wrote in several genres.

Uzi Hitman was born in Giv'at Shmuel to Abraham and Hannah Hitman, who were Holocaust survivors. . . . Hitman's father was a religious person, and a Hazzan [Jewish cantor]; his mother was secular. Hitman grew up in a traditional religious house, in which multiculturalism was an important value. . . . Hitman wrote the song "I Was Born for Peace" on the occasion of his son's birth, at the time of the negotiations prior to the signing of the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. The song expresses the hope for peace; as at the time the State of Israel had not signed a peace treaty with any Arab country.

Hebrew Language, Grade 9, Circles in Hebrew, Thaier Kizel, Sakhnin Enrichment Center (Permit: 663), 2020, pp. 180–81.
Mahmoud Darwish’s poem "To My Mother," offers a fresh perspective for young Arab students to feel comfortable in their homeland.

A Poem—Mahmoud Darwish—“To My Mother”
Singing and playing
Hebrew Translation: Reuven Snir

I long for my mother’s bread
My mother’s coffee
My mother’s touch
Childhood memories grow up in me
Day after day
And I so cherish life
Because if I died
I would be ashamed of the tears of my mother.

If one day I return, take me
as a veil to your eyelashes
Cover my bones with the grass
Blessed by your footsteps
Bind me with a lock of hair,
With thread strung from the back of your dress.
I might become a god
Become a god
If I touch the depths of your heart.
If I come back
Use me as wood to feed your fire
As the clothesline on the roof of your house
I am too weak to stand
Without your daily prayer
I am old, give me back the stars of childhood
So that I will join
the young birds
on the way back
to your waiting nest.

The Hebrew textbook provides interesting biographical information about Mahmoud Darwish, while describing the 1948 War as "The War of Independence," as Israelis describe that war. Here, too, Darwish is acknowledged to be "The Palestinian National Poet."

Let's Speak Hebrew about Arab Poets

1. What do you know about the poet Mahmoud Darwish?
2. In what language did Darwish write most of his poems?
3. What other poems by the poet do you know?
4. Read the following passage about the poet Mahmoud Darwish.
Mahmoud Darwish: was considered the Palestinian National Poet during and after his lifetime. Darwish did not grow up in the Gaza Strip or in the West Bank, but was born in [in what is now] Israel in 1942, in the village of Al-Birwa, and spent his life between Kafr Yasif and Haifa. Despite this, he decided to leave Israel in the 1970s. Darwish found a new home in Egypt, where he was received with admiration. Since then, he wandered from one exile to another: Cairo, Beirut, Paris, Cyprus and Ramallah. In 1998, Darwish wrote the Palestinian Declaration of Independence.

Darwish was a seven-year-old boy when the War of Independence broke out, and he had to leave his home in the village of Al-Birwa. When he returned at the end of the war, he found, along with his family, that the village was destroyed, and only Jewish settlements were built on its lands. This experience was burned into his memory and accompanied him all his life.

Women's Rights and the Killing of Women in Arab Societies

The topic of femicide is taught through short stories that criticize the killing of girls and women in Arab societies.

One such story "Death of the Black Hair," by well-known Syrian author Zakariya Tamer, describes the case of a woman murdered by her brother after being abandoned by her husband. None of her neighbors helped her. The keywords used for this poem include: "social criticism," "rejecting obsolete social values" and "femicide." Students are asked to write their opinion regarding "the phenomenon of femicide in Arab society."81
The midday sun was shining white on Al-Saadi quarter, while the sheikh of the mosque was telling the worshipers that it was Allah who created men, women, children, birds, cats, fishes and clouds. He also created his poor servants from dust. And on the day they die, they shall be buried in dust.

And when the noon prayer ended, the men left the mosque with a look of silent submission and pleasant pain on their faces. Most of them made their way to the cafe in the Al-Saadi quarter. And there they talked about what happened a few days ago, when Mundhir Al-Salem went to the police station and announced with his head held high that he slaughtered his sister. Because the shame in the Al-Saadi neighborhood is wiped out only by blood.

Thus, the fruit that all trees dream of, Fatma is dead. Fatma is a beautiful woman, but the most beautiful thing about her is her black hair, the dark water in which no star shines, and the tent that gives safety to the fearful pursued.

*Arabic Language, Grades 10–12, Bayader—Modern Literature—First Unit, Kawthar Jaber Qassoum, Muhammad Hamad Dar Al-Nahda (Permit: 415), 2012, p. 134.*
Fatma’s husband, Mustafa, demands that she leaves his house because he feels she does not love him enough. The brother feels he has no choice. He must kill her according to custom.

And when Fatma saw her brother charging on her, she broke into loud wails, and ran away from the house, and ran in the alleys of Al-Saadi quarter, bare-headed, her hair scattered, screaming for help. The knife caught her and reached her neck while the men, women and children stood frozen and pale.

Thus died the black hair, but Fatma is still running in the Al-Saadi quarter, knocking on the doors for help, and no door opens, and the knife is stained with blood.

An online Ministry of Education PowerPoint presentation explains the paradigmatic behavior of females and males in Arab society, also labeled "oriental" or "eastern." A key issue here is that male dominated societies do not allow opportunities for dialogue.

3. Dialogue

There is little dialogue in the story. Dialogue is external, superseded by narration since there is no room for dialogue. The narrator’s purpose is to bring to light dominant male characters who do not offer an opportunity for dialogue.82

The MoE presentation asserts that problematic family relations lead to poverty, dictatorial tendencies, violence toward women, impulsive behavior, passivity and lethargy and "a community of words, not actions." Literature is used for the encouragement of depth and complex thinking combining social, emotional, moral, and pragmatic considerations.

**Realistic Negative Aspects in Al-Saadi Quarter**

- Poverty is rampant among people. And unemployment.
- The lethargy and weakness of the people in front of the assimilating leader, who must defend the rights of the oppressed, but does not do so.
- The male domination of society, and the servile woman who stands between orders and prohibitions, obedience and beating. As a woman, only her charms count. [Male] domination leads those who hold it to the point of killing a woman under the pretext of shame.
- Rushing to make decisions without examining or ascertaining that they are correct.
- A society of words, not actions. The men of the quarter did not follow through with what they heard with all reverence in the mosque from the imam. So Fatma was slaughtered in front of their eyes, and they did not help.83

"The Dying Swan" is a short story by Syrian physician Hayfa Baytar.84 It tells the life story of Faten, a talented ballet dancer from an aristocratic Saudi family. Her art is blocked by her father, her mother and then her husband—three times during her lifetime—all quoting family honor. The story ends with Faten jumping to her death from a window after performing a final dance at home; it exposes the oppression of talent and hypocrisy in the Arab world despite an apparent obsession with high culture.

---


84 Arabic, Grades 10‒12, *Bayader—Ancient and Modern Literature* 2, Muhammad Hamad, Dar Al-Nahda (Permit: 464), 2014, pp. 188–94.
The poem, "Washing Away the Shame," by modern Iraqi poet, Nazik Al-Malaika, tells the story of a young woman of twenty killed by her brother, the "hangman," in an honor killing. The textbook analyzes issues relevant to the Arab sector in Israel, such as femicide, family honor, shame, patriarchy, lawlessness, religion's role, murder as ceremony and the voice of women.

"Be My Friend" by Kuwaiti poet Souad Al-Sabah laments that the Oriental Man "cannot accept a role, except the role of hero." Women, however, need men as friends, partners, and companions to share and love. The poem ends with a bittersweet smile pointing to a lack of intimacy.

Be my friend.
Be my friend.
My need is great for a peaceful haven,

---


And I am tired of tales of love,
Tired of ages which consider
The woman as a marble figure.
So, when you meet me, speak up . . .
Why forgets the Eastern man
Who meets a woman, half his speech?
Why does he not see in her
Except a piece of sweets, and pigeons young?
And why the apples from the orchard
Picks and then he falls asleep? 87

Lebanese author Emily Nasrallah's "Layla and the Wolf," 88 criticizes the status of women in conservative societies and was inspired by "Little Red Riding Hood." The textbook classifies this story as part of "feminist literature," for condemning the status of women in traditional societies; women are compared to flowers that have no ability to decide where to go. As an exercise, students are asked to describe this type of literature and to explain the story's criticism toward "traditional Eastern education."

**Classic Poetry of Love and Wine**

Given the immense volume of Arabic literature, the curriculum faced the obviously daunting mission of selection. The priority seems to have been diversity and quality and ranges from the literary works in pre-Islamic times to Islamic literature from the Qur'an. A wide selection is available from the major periods and genres and styles—both classic and modern—in the history of the Arabic literature.

This includes popular Syrian poet, Nizar Qabbani's "Green Tunisia," 89 and "The Coffee Cup Reader," an erotic-mystic poem on unattainable love. 90 Qabbani is known for his apparent love and respect of women and also for an interest in mysticism. The textbook invites students to compare their versions with the one reedited by Qabbani for the Egyptian singer Abdel Halim Hafez. Medieval wine poems, challenge religiosity and rigid traditionalism, as evidenced in an example of classic *muwashsha*ḥa poetry. The textbook does not analyze or contribute information on this Hispano-Arabic poem, authored in Islamic Spain by the twelfth-century poet from Seville, Ibn Zuhr Al-Hafid (1113–98).

87 Translation: Souad Al-Sabah, *In the Beginning was the Female*, translated by Abdul-Wahid Lu'lu'ah, Beirut: Dar Sader, 2003, p.22.
88 Ibid., pp. 138–46.
89 (48–50).
90 (50–53).
The Muwashshaḥ O Cupbearer
Ibn Zuhr Al-Hafid

O cupbearer, our complaints are addressed to you; we have called upon you even though you do not listen!

Many a drinking partner have I loved for his bright face,
And from his hands have I drunk wine!
Whenever he was aroused from his drunkenness

He drew the wineskin toward him, sat back on his heels, and gave me to drink four [drinks] from four [cups].

What is wrong with my eye that it is blinded by a glance?
After you, it has rejected the light of the moon!
If you so desire, listen to my tale:

My eyes have been blinded from prolonged weeping, since one part of me wept with me over another part of me.

A willow branch bent from its upright position;
The one who loved it died from excess of passion,
Quivering in his heart, weakened in his strength.

Whenever he thought of separation he wept; woe to him who
weeps over what never took place!
   I have no patience or any firmness!
What is wrong with my people that they have upbraided me
and exerted themselves in so doing?
They have denied my complaint whereby I am moved to passion.

The like of my state is deserving of complaint: [namely] the
weakness of despair and the humility of passion.

A heart that burned and tears that flow
Acknowledge the fault, yet are not acknowledged!
O you who disclaim what I describe:

My love for you has grown and increased. Do not proclaim
in matters of love: "I am a claimant!"91

As part of the chapter on ancient poetry, specifically the Abbasid period, students are taught a poem about wine by the eighth-to-ninth century poet Abu Nuwas, who was known for his wine and homoerotic poetry.92 In the poem, he describes a vista dedicated to wine and companions drinking along with the woman serving the wine. Such poetry is not unique in this textbook, although drinking contradicts Islamic sharia. The introduction describes Abu Nuwas as hedonistic, self-indulgent and also that he eventually repented—although the section about repentance was not included in the reading example.

Abū Nuwās al-Ḥasan ibn Hāni’ was born in Ahvaz, Persia. He studied with the Basra scholars and especially Abū ‘Ubayda, acquiring a broad education. Abu Nuwas became famous for his poetic ability and his strong love for wine; he was naturally inclined towards the love of pleasures and a life of debauchery. He repented before his death and

wrote beautiful ascetic poetry, in a variety of styles, including lampoons (hija'), hunting poetry (tardiyyāt), ascetic poems (zuhdiyāt), love poems (ghazal), and wine songs (khamriyyāt). Abu Nuwas excelled in rich, fluid thinking and a vivid imagination that allowed him to depict wonderful scenes. He was known for his tendency to innovate and depart from tradition. Abu Nuwas died at the age of 54.

Arabic, Grades 10–12, Bayader—Ancient and Modern Literature 2, Muhammad Hamad, Dar Al-Nahda (Permit: 464), 2014, p. 70.

Following the introduction of "Lamps in the Darkness," the first line is clearly homoerotic. The textbook asks many questions about the poem but does not provide answers. What should be noted is that the last part of the poem which covers the topic of "Epilogue: The Poet's Repentance," was left out.93

Abu Nuwas—Lamps in the Darkness

مَهَامُ الْأَنْفُسُ، مِنِ الصِّدِّيقِ الصَّالِبِ
فَلَبِسَ حَبْلَهُ مِنْهُ يَمْطُو
وَعَاجَ بِحَمْوَعِهِ عَاطِفُ الْلِّبَبِ
مَشْوَىْ سُبْبَةٍ مِنْ خَمْرِ تَكَرِيْتٌ
لَا عَجُجْنَا بَرَيَاتُ الْهَوَائِنَ
مِنْ كُلِّ سَنَحَ، بِفَرْطِ الْجُوُدِ مَنْعَوْت
بَذَلُ الْكَرَامِ، وَقَبْوَلَ كِيفْمَا شَيْبَ
عَنْدَ الْصَّبَاحِ، فَقُلْنَا: بَلْ بُهَا إِيْ
إِذَا رَمَّتُ بِشَرَّ كَالْبَيَّاَيْنَ
في الْكَأْسِ مِنْ بِينَ دَامِي الخَضْرِ مَنْكُوبٌ
قَالَتْ: قَدْ أتَّجَذَّبْ مِنْ عَهْدِ طَالِو
فِي الْأَرْضِ، مِدْفُوْنَةٍ فِي بَطْنِ نَبْوَت
شَابُكُ ذِرَّٰلِ دَيْبَاجٍ ٨ يَقَوْت
ياً دَارُ هَنَدُ بِذَاتِ الجَرْحِ حُبِّيْ
لَهُ أَقْولُ مَسْرُوحًاهَا هَايْتُ بَيْنِي

1. وَفُتُّيْةٍ كَمَصَابِيحُ الدَّجِى غُرِیْت
2. صَلَوْا عَلَى الْذَّهَرِ بِالْلُّهِ الَّذِي وَضُلْوُا
3. دَارُ الرَّمَانُ بِافَلاكِ السَّعُودِ لَهُمْ
4. نَادِمُنِهِمْ فَرَقَفَ الإسْفَقُط صَنِيفٌ
5. مِنْ الْلَّوْاتِي حُطِّيَّاَهَا عَلَى عَجْل
6. قَاـلْنِهِمْ مَنَ القُوْمُ فَلَنَا: مَنْ عَرَفُهُمْ
7. خَلَوْا بِدَارِكِ مَحْتَاَزِيْنَ، فَأَغْتَمْيِ
8. قَاـلْنِهِمْ: عَنْدِي الَّذِي تَبْغُونَ، فَأَنْظَرُوا
9. هَيِّ الصَّباَحُ أَچْيَلُ اللَّيْلِ صَفْوَتُهَا
10. فَقَبَلَتْ كَضِبِاءُ الشَّمْسِ، نَازَعَةٍ
11. قَاـلْتَ لَهَا: كَمْ لَهَا فِي الْذَّهَرِ مَدَ حُجِيْتُ؟
12. كَانَتْ مَحْتَاَتُ فِي الْذَّهَرِ ۵، قَدْ عَنْسَبَتْ
13. كَانَّهَا بِرَأْلِ الْمَزْنِ ۷، إِذْ مَرْجَتْ
14. وَعَدَّنا ضَارِبًا يَشِدُّوْ فِي فِطْرِيْئُنا
15. مِنْ أَهْلِ هَبِتِ ۹ سَخِيِّ الْجَرْحِ ۱۰ ذِي ادْبٍ

1. Splendid young blades, like lamps in the darkness, proud-nosed, stiff-necked, keen-

2. Who assaulted Fate with dalliance to which they clung assiduously, so that their
attachment to it could not be severed, 3. For whom Time brought round its felicitous
spheres and halted, bending its tender neck over them-

4. I drank with them sharp Isfant wine,94 imported from Tikrit, clear and chilled;

5. One of those whose hand we asked for in haste, when we roused the owners of the
wine-shops

6. Who said, "Who are you?" We replied, "People you know, everyone open-handed,
noted for his prodigality,

7. Who, along the way, have stopped at your house: so seize the liberality of the generous
and name your price,

8. She said, "I have what you want. Wait until the morning." We replied, "No, bring it
now!"

9. It is itself the morning; its clear radiance dispels the night when it shoots out
sparks like rubies

10. It advanced in the cup as bright as the sun at day-break, poured from /an amphora/
upturned, bleeding at the waist.

11. We said to her, "How long has it been in the amphora, since it was hidden away?" She
replied, "It was made in the time of Saul."

12. It was concealed in the amphora and has grown to be an old spinster buried inside a
coffin in the earth.

13. When mixed with clear rain-water it is like a network of pearls on ruby brocade

14. With a lutenist in our midst who moves us as he sings "Abode of Hind in Dhat al-
Jizc,95 Hail!!"

15. He is from Hit,96 swaying gracefully, refined, and I say to him in fun, "Hit it, Hiti!"97

---

Arabic, Grades 10–12, Bayader—Ancient and Modern Literature 2, Muhammad Hamad,
Dar Al-Nahda (Permit: 464), 2014, pp. 70–71.

---

94 A type of strong Vermouth. (Montgomery, pp. 119–20).
95 Unknown name place or quotation. Not explained in the textbook. (Montgomery, p. 121).
96 A city in Iraq famous for its wine quality. The line in the original ends with "give me yourself or a Hiti [wine],"
while the interlocutor is described as full of sin.
97 Translation derived, with adaptation of the line numbers, from "James E. Montgomery, "Revelry and Remorse: A
Islam in Israel: Between Tolerance and Jihad

Religious studies often oscillate between tolerance and good neighborly relations and encouraging jihad war and martyrdom for the sake of Allah in battle. There is much focus on early Islamic wars. Incitement, anti-Jewish refrains and anti-infidel (including Christian) messaging are featured. The textbooks often use punishment and threats of hell along with rewards of heaven as tools to educate students in the Islamic faith.

The curriculum calls for tolerance, particularly among Druze, Muslims, Christians and Jews. The following example emphasizes the need for religious laws, specifying Islam and Christianity with a nod to Judaism by mentioning the Ten Commandments.

Application of Religious Laws

All the heavenly religions recommend the application of laws specified in their holy books. They forbid certain things such as theft and assault on others' property. They call for love and respect toward the other, and avoid harming the environment with its various components.
Among the [Ten] Commandments: You shall not steal. Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long . . .

What are the ten commandments? Which religions talk about these commandments?

What is Islamic sharia?


There is also material that does not encourage tolerance. Students learn that Muslim men must not wear clothes similar to those of infidels or women.

As for the man's clothing, the rule regarding clothing is that it is permitted and not prohibited, except for what a Sharia text forbids. Below is a clarification of some of the Sharia clothing policies for men:

- It is forbidden to wear clothes that belong to infidels, due to the prohibition to resemble them.
- It is forbidden to wear clothes that include the likeness of women as well.
- It is desirable for the Muslim to keep his clothes clean without arrogance or exaggeration.
- A man must not wear clothes that reveal the genitals such as transparent clothes.

Surprisingly, this Israeli curriculum teaches *jihad* war. Some books teach *jihad* against infidels as the most exalted deed in Islam. The following textbook offers a hadith's discussion between the Prophet Muhammad and one of the Muslims about good deeds in Islam. One of the deeds discussed is *jihad*, which is described as the peak of Islam. The textbook explains the hadith, saying that "The most exalted thing in Islam is jihad for the sake of noble Allah, against the infidels and the usurpers."

I said, "Inform me, messenger of Allah, of an act which will cause me to enter paradise and remove me far from hell." [Muhammad explained a few good deeds]. Then he said: Shall I not inform you about the head and support of the matter and the top of its hump?" I replied, "Yes, messenger of Allah." He said, "The head of the matter is Islam, its support is prayer, and the top of its hump is jihad."

3. The most exalted thing in Islam is jihad in the sake of noble Allah, against the infidels and the usurpers.

*Islamic Religion, Grade 6, Al-Siraj Religious Studies and Islamic Education*, Hanan Abd Al-Rahman Rizqallah, Dar Al-Shuruq (Permit: 671), 2020, p. 86.
Martyrdom for the sake of Allah will bring one to heaven. *Jihad* warriors and fighter should expect to receive one hundred levels in Paradise.

### What the actions considered to lead into entering heaven?

1. Persisting to obey the commands of Allah, pray and fast. Persisting on wearing the Hijab and making other acts of worship.

2. Keeping away from everything forbidden such as lies, treachery, deception, blind imitation of world enemies, consuming forbidden food, and other sins that Allah prohibited.

3. Martyrdom for the sake of Allah. Allah has prepared for those *jihad* warriors and those who fight for him one hundred levels in Paradise.

4. Respecting parents and family. The messenger of Allah said: 'O people, extend greetings (saying salam to each other), keep relations with your kin, provide food and pray at night when people are asleep and you will enter Paradise in peace.'

---

**Islamic Religion, Grade 6, Al-Siraj Religious Studies and Islamic Education**, Hanan Abd Al-Rahman Rizqallah, Dar Al-Shuruq (Permit: 671), 2020, p. 80.

History textbooks give an orthodox interpretation of the battles of early Islam to seventh-graders. Jews are described as traitors. Students are taught that Muhammad "got rid of the presence of the Jews in Medina." They learn that Jews instigated against the Prophet and of the (unrelated) killing of all the warriors of the Jewish tribe of Banu Qurayza and the taking of its women and children as captives.
ج- غزوة الخندق (الأحزاب) 5/6 26-24 م:

سُمِّيت بـ «الخندق» نسبة إلى الخندق الذي حفره المسلمين في الجهة الشمالية الغربيّة للمدينة المنوّرة؛ لأنّها الجهة الضعيفة في دفاعات المدينة (انظر الخريطة على الصفحة التالية).

كما سُمِّيت هذه الغزوة بـ "الأحزاب"؛ لمشاركة جماعات (الأحزاب) من القبائل العربيّة واليهوديّة مع كُفار قريش فيها.

أما سببها المباشر، فهو عودة تحرير زعماء يهود خيبر لأبي سفيان، ولقريش، على مقاتلة الرسول (ﷺ) والمسلمين. ولم يكتفوا بذلك، بل جاءوا إلى هذه المهمة قبيلة غطفان، بأنّ جعلوا لها تمرّ خيبر لمدة عام، ثمّ بني سليم وغيرهم. وقد أرادت يهود خيبر بذلك الإنقاذ من الرسول (ﷺ)، لأنّه طرد بني النضير من المدينة المنوّرة، وكانوا قد لجأوا بعدها إلى خيبر.

كان عدد جيش الأحزاب (قريش وحلفائها) حوالي عشرين ألف مقاتل؛ في حين بلغ عدد جيش المسلمين ثلاثة آلاف مقاتل. ضرب كفار قريش والأحزاب حصارًا طويلًا على المدينة؛ وأصرّ على مواصلته بعد أن حصلوا على تأييد زعم بني قريظة اليهوديّة، ناقضًا بذلك شروط «الصحيفة» (كما ذكر سابقًا).

ولما تدهورت أحوال المحاصرين، بسبب ظروف الحصار الصعبة: هبوب رياح شديدة التي اقترنت الخيام من أماكنها، وعدم وفاء القبائل اليهودية بني قريظة بوعدها القرشيّين بالقتال إلى جانبهم، جرى
The Battle of the Trench (Battle of the Confederates) year 5 of the Hijra/626 AD:

[The battle] was called 'The Trench' after the trench that the Muslims dug on the northwest side of Medina. . . . It was also called the 'Battle of the Confederates,' because groups (confederates) of Arab and Jewish tribes participated in it with the infidels of Quraish.

The direct cause of the battle was the instigation of the leaders of the Jews of Banu Nadir to Abu Sufyan, and to the Quraish, to fight the Messenger and the Muslims. They did not content themselves with this, but enlisted the tribe of Ghatfan for this task, by giving them the [crop of] dates of Khaybar for a year, and also the Banu-Sulaym and others. The Jews of Khaybar wanted to take revenge on the Messenger, because he expelled the Banu Nadir from Medina, and they then fled to Khaybar.

The infidels of Quraish and the Confederates imposed a long siege on Medina, and they insisted on continuing after obtaining the support of the Jewish leader of Banu Qurayza, in violation of the terms of the "document" [Medina Treaty].

When the conditions of those laying the siege deteriorated due to the harsh conditions of the siege: strong winds dislodged the tents, and due to the non-compliance of the promise by the Jewish tribe of Qurayza to the people of Quraysh to fight by their side, the Confederates surprisingly withdrew.

The battle's results: the martyrdom of six of the Muslims, and the death of three of the Confederates. After that, the Messenger expelled the Jews of Banu Qurayza because they violated the clauses of the "Document" [Treaty of Medina]. Therefore, the Messenger ordered, according to the arbitration of their former ally Sa'd bin Mu'adh, to kill their fighters, seize the children and women, and confiscate their weapons. In doing so, he completely get rid of the presence of the Jews in Al-Medina.

History, Grade 7, History for Grade 7, Atallah Sa'id Qubti, Qubti (Permit: 350), 2010, pp. 31–32.
Similar language is applied in another seventh-grade history. Students learn of the Battle of the Trench, in which the Jewish tribe of Qurayza helped the polytheists against the Muslims and that Muhammad ordered the killing of their warriors, and the taking of their women and children captive; through this action they "completely got rid of the presence of Jews in Medina." Although this is a description of what is seen in Muslim tradition as a factual historic event, the textbook's use of the term "to get rid of" [takhallaṣa], lends credence to the idea that Jews—at least in this apparent historical relationship—should be viewed negatively.

The result of the failure of the Battle of the Trench was that the Messenger confronted the Jews of Banu Qurayza (as mentioned), and ordered to kill their warriors and capture the children and women, along with the confiscation of their weapons. In doing so, he completely got rid of the existence of the Jews in Medina and eliminated the resistance of all the hypocrites in it.

*History, Grade 10‒12, History of the Arabs and Muslims until the Fall of the Umayyad Caliphate*, Atallah Sa'id Qubti, Qubti (Permit: 331) 2011, p. 87.

Another textbook describes a conspiracy by a Yemenite Jew during the times of early Islam, as a possible reason for the First Fitna (first Muslim civil war).

Among the possible reasons suggested by historians, the textbook references a hadith describing the war as the result of a conspiracy by Abdallah ibn Saba', a Yemenite Jew who, according to the textbook, instigated against Uthman in support of the claim that Ali was the legitimate heir of Muhammad.

The figure of Ibn Saba' is sometime used to imply that the civil war was a result of Jewish conspiracy rather than disagreements among Muslims. The figure of Ibn Saba' is also sometimes used to claim that one of the core ideas of Shi'a Islam—that Ali was chosen by the Prophet to be his heir—was promoted, and possibly even created, as a result of Jewish conspiracy. Thus, using this character, extremist Sunnis can claim that Shi'ism is nothing more than a Jewish creation to divide Islam. Similar claims—in the opposite direction are also raised by Shi'ites.98

---

98 Eldad J. Pardo, "Iran’s Radical Education: An Interim Update Report," 2021–22, IMPACT-se. 2022, p. 94. 110
The Reasons for the Fitnah [first civil war]:

[Representative Translation:]

And there is another tradition that talks about a plot planned by Abdullah bin Saba, who is a Jew of Yemenite origin, which says that he went around the army cities, before he settled in Egypt, and incited against Uthman [the third caliph], and preached for Ali bin Abi Taleb, regarding the will that says that he The rightful successor of the Prophet, that is: that the caliphate must be his from the beginning . . .

History, Grade 10–12, History of the Arabs and Muslims until the Fall of the Umayyad Caliphate, Atallah Sa'id Qubti, Qubti (Permit: 331) 2011, p. 154–56.

This seventh-grade textbook too describes a conspiracy by a Jewish convert to Islam as a plausible reason for the first Muslim civil war [fitna] against Uthman, the third caliph. These textbook mentions that the existence of Ibn Saba’—the Jewish provocateur—is in dispute among historians. So the question one should ask is whether this text is appropriate at all for young students.
Reasons for the Civil War: Historians have differed on the subject; some said [it was due to] the complaints of the veteran warriors who participated in the battles . . . and some mentioned a hadith that speaks of a plot attributed to Abd Allah ibn Saba', a Jew who converted to Islam. Tradition says that he went around the cities of the army, and preached for Ali bin Abi Taleb relying on Muhammad's will that proclaims Ali as the legal heir of the prophet.

[Footnote:] This is a hadith of the historian Saif bin Umar al-Tamimi, which Hāshem Ja‘īt rejects and says that what Ibn Saba' stated regarding the will are issues of the future and later Shi‘ite ideological movement, which could not have been conceived at this stage. He adds that an internal and external analysis of the hadith that Saif himself handed down about Ibn Saba', indicates that this man never existed, and that he is a figment of the imagination. . . . On the other hand, the modern researcher Muhammad Amhazon described Ibn Saba's preaching as a real reason for the outbreak of the civil war against Uthman, and even cited this reason as the primary cause for the civil war against Uthman.

History, Grade 7, History for Grade 7, Atallah Sa'id Qubti, Qubti (Permit: 350), 2010, p. 51.

Students are taught Qur'anic verses that compare the Jews to a donkey carrying books with no understanding and accuse them of falsely claiming that they are God's favorites. The textbook interprets the verses, to explain that if Jews (falsely) claim to be God's favorites, they should not wish to die.

Interpretation of Al-Jumu'ah 62:5–8

Allah compares those who received the Torah and did not act upon it to donkeys who carry books without knowing their contents. They should know that Allah will not bless the way of the oppressors, who cross the line and disobey Allah.
Allah sent His Messenger to those who adhere to the Jewish faith who claim to be Allah's beloved more than other people. So let them hope to die if they are really telling the truth in their claim.

Allah emphasizes that they never hope to die, because they love the life of this world and fear the punishment that will come upon them at the hands of Allah, and because they have sinned, and Allah knows the wrongdoers.

They should know that the death that they fear will descend upon them; it is unavoidable, and when they wake up on resurrection day, He will repay [punish] them for their deeds.


While summarizing the verses, students are taught that "the Jews knew the truth but turned away from it." The summary also says that those who do not believe, namely the infidels, enter Hell, and that "infidels and hypocrites hate death and fear it, unlike believers."

---

**I Infer and Learn from the Verses**

- The obligation to act according to [religious] knowledge
- The verses make it clear that the Jews knew the truth and acted contrary to it.
- Death is a fact that cannot be denied.
- There is the next world, which is Resurrection Day, while the world we live in is the life in the lower world.
- All will be judged before Allah. Those who do good enter heaven and those who disbelieve [infidels] enter hell.
- The infidels and the hypocrites hate death and are afraid of it, unlike the believers.

Islam is still taught as a religion of punishment and fear, reward and temptation.\(^99\) Students learn from surat Al-Naba', that infidels will go to hell and spend eternity tortured in the most horrible ways such as having to drink boiling water while pus flows from their skin. Believers will be rewarded with heaven where they will enjoy blooming gardens, tasty fruits and drinks and beautiful women (houris, nymphs).

**An explanation:**

The noble verses describe the situation of the infidels that disobeyed noble Allah in this world: Allah will punish them for their infidelity and disobedience; they will enter hell for eternity and be tortured in the most horrible ways such as being given extremely hot water to drink, and pus will flow out of their skin as a result of the harsh torment.

**An explanation:**

Noble Allah will reward the believers that obeyed and did good deeds with the blessed heavens. There, they will enjoy the blooming gardens and every fruit they desire. There will be houris

---

(black eyed nymphs) and full glasses of every tasty fine drink. There, they will not hear any lie or bad word.

- The disobeying infidels will be tortured in the most horrible torment on resurrection day.
- The righteous believers will be rewarded with the blessed heavens on resurrection day.


As students progress through grades, descriptions and warnings from hell become more detailed. Islamic education textbooks also say that Muslims must treat believers of different religions with respect, but only for those that "neither fought against your faith nor have driven you out of your homes. While there is a clear distinction between Muslims and the non-Muslims implicitly seen as infidels, along with reserving the right to demand *jihad* and martyrdom when the need arises, Islamic religion textbooks still encourage good neighborly relations. Students are taught through lessons on the Qur'an and the hadith, they must act charitably toward their neighbors (those with whom they live, work or study) whether they are Muslims or infidels (non-Muslims).

**The Neighbor's Rights**

---

100 Ibid.
Neighbors are those who live, work or study next to us, whether they are Muslims, non-Muslims or infidels. Islam has expanded this duty toward neighbors; Allah has commanded [us] to act charitably toward neighbors: 'Worship Allah alone and associate none with Him. And be kind to parents, relatives, orphans, the poor, near and distant neighbors' (Al-Nisa, 4:36). [Archangel] Jibril instructed the Prophet to care for his neighbors with kindness, until the messenger thought that his neighbors would inherit from him: 'Jibril kept recommending treating neighbors with kindness until I thought he would assign a share of inheritance' [hadith included in] Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Islamic Religion, Grade 3, Al-Yaqin Religious Studies, Muhammad Hamza, Ferdous Ghanaim, Sakhnin Enrichment Center (Permit: 622), 2019, p. 146.

An eighth-grade Islamic religion textbook teaches Muslims through Qur'anic verses to indicate respect for Muslims and non-Muslims.

Respecting the Other

Islam calls for developing good relations with all people. Allah said: 'O people, We have created you from male and female, and divided you into nations and tribes so that you may distinguish yourselves. Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly all-knowing, all-aware' (Hujurat 49:13). Honor is an important value that is highly regarded and has an important status in Islam. This is a human value that is important to humans. According to Islam, respect includes the social relations between Muslims and between Muslims and non-Muslims. Allah has given man respect and esteem, no matter what his sex, color or religion, and no
one is allowed to harm the rights or dignity of any person. Allah said: ‘And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and provided them with transport on the land and sea and provided for them sustenance of things good and pure and conferred on them special favors above a great part of our creation (Isra 17: 70).

**The Concept of Respect:**
This is one of the exalted values and virtues that every person is committed to. People show respect toward what is around them and whatever they deal with, thus offering appreciation, interest and commitment toward people and things around them.


Special attention is given to respecting non-Muslims.

6. **Respect for non-Muslims:** One should respect them for their humanity and their heavenly religion and should not assault them. According to Islam, relations between Muslims and non-Muslims should be based on solid foundations of tolerance, justice and compassion. Allah said: ‘Allah does not forbid you to be kind and equitable to those who had neither fought against your faith nor driven you out of your homes. In fact Allah loves the equitable' (Mumtahana 60: 8).


Islam commands [Muslims] to respect people from other religions, including Jews and Christians. A Muslim should respect his or her parents, even if they are polytheists.
Part Two—Tolerance towards Non-Muslims:

The Qur'an set the foundation for the treatment of non-Muslims. If they are peace-loving, the Qur'an forbids fighting them and instructs [Muslims] to treat them with kindness and be righteous in dealing with them. Thus, Islam transforms the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims in the Islamic society into relationships based on tolerance, justice and compassion. Allah said: 'Allah does not forbid you to be kind and equitable to those who had neither fought against your faith nor driven you out of your homes. In fact Allah loves the equitable.' (Mumtahana 60: 8).

Regarding the 'People of the Book,' the relationship to them is discussed in detail in the Qur'an. The Qur'an commanded us to argue with them about what is best to do, yet permits us to marry women of these religions and eat from their sacrifices. The Prophet Muhammad considered attacking and doing them injustice a grave sin, and said: 'Whoever killed a Mu'ahid (a person who is granted the pledge of protection by the Muslims) shall not smell the fragrance of Paradise though its fragrance can be smelt at a distance of forty years (of traveling).' (Recounted by Al-Bukhari).

Another indicator for the tolerance of Islam towards non-Muslims is that the Qur'an says that the polytheist parents should be respected, even if they try to keep their son away from Islam. Allah said: 'If they argue with you to commit shirk [polytheism], of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them; however you should still treat them kindly in this world' (Luqman 31:15).

Islamic Religion, Grade 10, The Islamic Education Book 1, Sufyan Kabha and Faida Abu Mukh, Maktabat Kull Shay' (Permit: 579), 2018, p. 231.

Dialogue between Islam and Judaism can be found in examples from Hebrew language textbooks—providing insights to Muslim, Christian and Druze students as yet unavailable in the curriculum's Islamic religion books. The creation story in Genesis in the Hebrew Bible is both dramatic and uncontroversial to such students.
Texts from the Jewish Holy and Literary Sources—The Hebrew Bible

1. Read aloud these selected verses from the first chapter of the Book of Genesis: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

...Tanakh—Torah, Nevi'im, Ketuvim

The Books of the Torah: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

Genesis is the first book of the Torah, and in it there is a description of the creation of the world. The book of Genesis starts with the creation of the world, followed by the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, to the birth of Noah the righteous, through the fathers—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his [Jacob’s] 12 sons. The book ends with the departure of Joseph’s family to Egypt.

...Comparing and writing—research task:

1. Do you know a similar story in your religion? Briefly write down the story according to your religion.
One of the Hebrew language textbooks for seventh grade offers opportunities for interfaith dialogue. In reading comprehension exercises, students are taught a story about King Solomon, and are asked questions about it. After instruction about King Solomon in the Jewish tradition as well as learning about the Prophet Sulayman in the Islamic tradition they are asked to compare the different traditions.
Reading a Story from the Aggadah [from Bab. Talmud Masechat Sucha 53A]

**King Solomon and the Angel of Death**

One day, King Solomon who had exceptional supernatural powers, and was known for his qualities of wisdom and leadership, met the angel of death outside his palace.

... 

**A Conversation about King Solomon:**

1. Read the following information about the character of King Solomon.

'King Solomon was a very special character in the Bible. Solomon was the third and final king of the kingdom of Israel. . . .' 

**Comparing Hebrew and Arabic:**

1. Read the following text in Arabic about King Solomon:

Prophet Solomon, peace be upon him, is one of the prophets mentioned in the noble Qur'an . . .

a. Mark the information common to the Arabic and Hebrew texts.

b. What important quality is mentioned here in Arabic, and did not appear in the Hebrew text?

c. What stories do you know about the character of King Solomon? [Arabic: Sayyiduna Sulayman—our master Solomon, Prophet Solomon].

d. Look at the following picture. Do you know the famous story about King Solomon's wisdom? If so, write it in your notebook.

---

**Hebrew Language, Grade 7, Circles in Hebrew**, Thaier Kizel, Sakhnin Enrichment Center (Permit: 677), 2020, pp. 132–35.

**Women's Rights from a Religious Perspective**

Women's rights in religious studies textbooks continue to follow a rigid interpretation of sharia. Men are considered the guardians or "caretakers" in charge of women, who should reciprocate by obedience to their husbands in all "good" matters. Women are required to obtain their husband's permission to leave the house or in allowing others—including close relatives—to visit. Men must protect their wife's honor, even at the cost of their life.

The textbook cites a hadith which maintains: "he who is killed in defense of his family is a martyr." Thus women are shown to be weak, helpless, and in need of protection. Beyond the source hadith, the textbook refers to protecting woman's "honor,"
Husband's Duties toward his Wife:

- Expenses and housing: including food, clothing and housing according to the husband's ability. The Prophet said: 'When a Muslim spends money for his family, it is charity.' (Narrated by Bukhari). Whoever avoids this or pays less than he can, commits a great sin. The Prophet said: 'When a person neglects those who depend on him, it is enough to be considered a sin.' (Narrated by Ahmad)
- Good intimacy: maintain good friendship, refrain from harming [the woman] and show joy and tolerance. Allah said: 'Treat them with kindness,' An-Nisaa' 4:19.
- Endurance and Sweet Talk: one must take into account that the character of a woman is different from the character of a man. No one is without mistakes, and Allah instructs the couple to look at the positive sides. Allah said: 'Do not forget to show kindness to each other,' Al-Baqara 2: 237.
- Defending the wife's honor and dignity: even if it leads to his death. The Prophet said: 'Whoever is killed over his family then he is a martyr.' (Narrated by Tirmidhi)
- Teaching [the woman] and advising her: the man must give order and prohibitions to his family members, and be careful about what will bring them to heaven, and protect them from the fire of hell. Allah said: 'O believers! Save yourselves and your families from hellfire,' surat Al-Tahrim 66:6. The Prophet said: 'A man is the shepherd of his family, and is responsible for the sheep of his pasture.' (Narrated by Tirmidhi).
- Commitment to the terms of the wife: if the wife stipulated in the agreement a condition that is permissible for her, such as a specific type of residence or expenses, and her husband agreed to this, he must fulfill this obligation, because the marriage agreement is one of the most important agreements.

Women are obliged to obey their husbands "in all good matters," obtain permission to leave the house, and show respect.

**Wife's Duties toward her Husband:**

- **Obligation to obey a good request:** Allah entrusted woman to the man, meaning he is her guardian and sponsors her. Thus he has financial obligations towards her. Allah said: 'Men are guardians\(^{102}\) of women, because Allah has made one superior to the other, and (also) because men spend their wealth (on them),' An-Nisaa' 4:34.

- **Prohibit anyone hated by her husband to enter the house:** it is the husband's right over his wife that no person he hates should enter into his house. The Messenger of Allah said: 'She will not let anyone enter her house without his permission.' (Narrated by Bukhari) Al-Nawawi said: 'The wife will not allow a man, a woman, a mahram\(^{103}\) or any other person to enter the house, unless she knows that her husband does not hate them.'

- **Do not leave the house without the husband's permission:** [Permission may be] specific, to leave the house for a certain purpose, or general, to leave the house for work or other needs. Ibn Taymiyyah said: 'If a woman leaves her husband's house without his permission, she is a rebellious woman, a sinner before Allah and His Messenger, and she deserves punishment.'

- **The wife must take care of the household affairs and meet to her husband's needs:** she must educate the children, prepare food and clothes for him and take care of the household.


---


Some other renderings: Men are "the protectors and maintainers of women," "caretakers," "supporters of," "protectors and maintainers," (kind and righteous) guardians," "in charge of women," "shall have the preëminence above women," and "the managers of the affairs of women."

\(^{103}\) Mahram is a close unmarriageable relative, such as parents, siblings and in-laws with whom a woman is allowed to stay in private without the hijab.
The curriculum is divided on the subject of women. While religious textbooks teach that women are not necessarily equal to men, most other books do not adhere to a sharia-based proscription regarding the treatment of women, where they are revealed to be independent and assertive. In the section on literature, students read Syrian author Zakariya Tamer's short story of a woman murdered by her brother after being abandoned by her husband.\(^\text{104}\) The story opens with a sermon in the local mosque. The following example from this short story appears on the Ministry of Education's website. The text openly criticizes the role of religion and inappropriate use of the Qur'anic teaching that "men are the guardians of [and superior to] women." (An-Nisa 4:34)

What is the Role of Religion

The sheikh of the mosque says: 'Allah who created men, women, children, birds, cats, fishes and clouds. He also created his poor servants from dust. And on the day they die, they shall be buried in dust.'

In the order cited by the sheikh, we see that men come first and then women: men are the guardians of women, and this is related to [the cruel] Mustafa, who used to say to [his innocent and obedient wife] Fatma: 'I am a man and you are a woman, and the woman must obey the man. The woman was created to be a servant to the man.' Is this not a critical position on the status of women? And why did the writer choose to include children in the words of the sheikh in the mosque? Or is he [the sheikh] the mouthpiece...
of the writer who wants children to be a symbol of the promising future he dreams of? Then the birds that soar in the sky with complete freedom, and the cats that enjoy freedom in Al-Saadi quarter, and the fish that roam the wide seas and the clouds that fly away in the vast space of the sky without limits or obstacle, are unlike humans. Is not choosing these words and designations and arranging them in this way indicating aspiration and yearning for freedom and liberation, in contrast with what exists among humans in Al-Saadi quarter. [italics added]

In civics, students learn about different religions. The narrator of a short chapter relates experiences with his neighbors—boys and girls from various religions—Muslim, Druze, Jewish, Christian and Bahá‘í. In the story, all neighbors greet each other for their holidays and pray for the protection of all people.

My Neighbors and I

Our neighbors are good people. They are of different religions, but we respect them and they respect us, and we cooperate with them to maintain the cleanliness and beauty of the neighborhood.

My neighbor Said prays in the mosque because he is a Muslim. On Friday every week, our neighbor Said goes to the mosque to pray and hear the Friday sermon. Their clergyman is the sheikh (imam), and their holy book is the Qur’an.

The narration continues with Jewish and Druze neighbors

My neighbor Tamar is a young Jewish woman. She goes to pray in the synagogue, and her day of rest is Shabbat. Their holy book is the Torah.

My neighbor Nabil goes to the Khalwa to pray, as he is a Druze. The holy book for them is Al-Hikma.

Apart from learning coexistence in the curriculum, Muslim and Christian students often share the classroom. The Christian religion textbooks in Arabic we examined, focus on their own religious theology and generally do not criticize members of other religions. These textbooks, used in Israel's Arab schools, were published in Jerusalem during the 1990s by the Latin Patriarchate and are included in MoE's approved textbook list (with temporary permission [but no permit numbers]).

In several cases the books encourage tolerance toward members of other religions, with an emphasis on Muslims. Jews are also mentioned in this context, although rarely. A third-grade textbook explains the importance of the Holy Land for Jews, Muslims and Christians, and calls for respect for the members of the three religions.\textsuperscript{106} An eleventh-grade textbook teaches about the persecution of Christians under the rule of some Muslim leaders, but also that they generally enjoyed much freedom under the Arab Caliphs.\textsuperscript{107} To describe the country of Jesus, Christian


religion textbooks use terms such as the Holy Land, Palestine, Judea and Samaria and "our country," but not Israel.

An image of a Christian praying.

My friend Sami goes to pray in the church because he is a Christian. Their day of rest is Sunday every week. Their holy book is the New Testament, and their clergyman is the priest. During the holidays we bless our neighbors and they come to visit us and bless us.


The Bahá’í, with their world headquarters in Haifa, form part of the curriculum's version of Israel's religio-cultural mosaic. In one textbook, Juna, a Christian-Arab girl from Haifa, explains that "Haifa is a large city where Jews, and Arabs (Muslims and Christians) live." The Bahá’í Gardens are her favorite place, and she visits them daily on her way back from school.108 Another textbook teaches Arab students from Kabul (in the Western Galilee) who are visiting

various sites associated with religious faiths, that the Bahá’í faith is a heavenly religion on equal footing with Christianity, Islam, Judaism and the Druze religion.

Then they visited the beautiful Bahá’í Gardens [in Haifa] and learned about the Bahá’í faith. The guide gave an overview [of the religion’s principles] and said: Humans must thank God for His kindness and be honest. The Bahá’í religion advocates equal rights for men and women and encourages respect for others.

**Homeland, Society and Civics, Grade 4, Me and My Homeland**, Razi Omar, Saleh Khatib, Baker Abu Baker, Raffoul Boulus, Maktabat Kull Shay’ (Permit: 504), 2015, pp. 76‒77.
Conclusion

The Arab education system in Israel has developed as a national minority curriculum. While the contents of textbooks display a strong drive to integrate with Israel's dynamic economy and vibrant lifestyle, this is not just an Israeli curriculum but is best characterized as Arab/Arab-Palestinian; it was created almost completely by Israeli Arabs—either as authors or as translators and adaptors of Hebrew and other material. The primary language of this curriculum across all subjects is Arabic, the language of the Arab world and the national language of Arab-Palestinians everywhere.

Guidelines from Israel's Ministry of Education allow sufficient leeway for this curriculum to choose an Arab-Palestinian approach on many issues, often producing contradictions in subject matter within the curriculum, a condition perhaps inevitable for an essentially minority Arab curriculum within the Jewish State of Israel. Significantly, one source of conflict relates to elements of traditionalism versus modernism. The latter finds expression mainly in Islamic studies in two major domains: attitudes toward non-Muslims—particularly Jews and Israelis—and attitudes toward women.

Yet this curriculum has some success describing the multiple identities of Israel's Arab students, and their experiences within groups and various neighbors: Israeli and Palestinian, pan-Islamic, pan-Arab, attachments to local villages or towns, ethnic-tribal affiliations, and religions, among others. The centrality of families—a core value shared by most Israelis—are celebrated. There is an emphasis on engagement with others and an appreciation of diversity is taught, primarily among other minority religious and cultural groups, such as Christians, Druze, Circassians, Arameans and Bahá'í.  

This unique curriculum manifests in various ways. Students are taught about Israel as a country and political entity, about Jewish history in the land and region, and about the Diaspora, Zionism, democracy, Right of Return, the Holocaust, and Hebrew; yet the focal point of hearts and minds remains Arab/Arab-Palestinian. Students learn that Israel is where the Arab minority lives, and a place to do well and even thrive, while at the same time learning an Arab-Palestinian historical perspective which includes Arab displacement from the Nakba. And as if to emphasize one of the many inherent contradictions of the curriculum, Arab-written civics textbooks for elementary schools portray Israel as "the homeland" with no mention of the Palestinian Authority on maps and no display of the Palestinian flag.

All subjects, including from mathematics, the sciences, civics, geography, music and literature, are taught in Arabic—reason enough that successful graduates of this curriculum are equipped to study and work in the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, the Gulf or any other country in the region.

109 Note that our research found no references to the Haifa-based Ahmadiyya sect of Islam within the curriculum.
and around the world. Hebrew language textbooks are produced, written and published by Arabs, further equipping students to thrive within the Israel culture and economy.

Overall, the focal point of the curriculum is an attempt to present all subject matter in an Arabic context—whether in literature, language and composition (oral and written expression), history or religion. There is ample exposure to poems of leading Palestinian and Israeli poets. Palestinian literature, mostly from authors who lived or were born in Israel, present a Palestinian artistic and emotional view, which is fundamentally anti-Israeli. Some of the poets and writers, although Knesset members for years, are depicted within the text as Palestinians, not Israelis. The textbooks also teach literary works in Arabic from across the Arab world and throughout its rich history, before and during the emergence of Islam. Music textbooks for elementary school reveal an array of world musical cultures, with special attention to Arab and regional music.

In literature, modern stories criticizing femicide and women’s oppression and objectification come from the Arab world, not from Palestinian literature. Similarly, classic late-antiquity and medieval wine and love poems that challenge religious orthodoxy are never local but come from Abbasid Baghdad and Muslim Spain.

The thirty-four Islamic religion textbooks examined in this report include similar content to what may be found in other curriculum in parts of the Arab world and the Palestinian Authority. There is no direct incitement, but the textbooks present a traditional, rigid interpretation of sharia which includes jihad, martyrdom and stereotyping of Jews from early Islamic conflicts with Jews. These textbooks contain education for tolerance, particularly toward one's neighbor, but also openly discriminate against women. Some of the books include anti-Israeli and antisemitic passages taught to students in literature, Islamic religion and history textbooks and quoted from the Qur’an and hadiths; there is animosity toward infidels and polytheists (non-Muslims), the rejection of women's equality, and an emphasis on Islam's image as a warring religion. Other aspects of the curriculum dealing with history, civics, Hebrew language, geography and the sciences, represent a more harmonious attitude toward Israel, women and religion, including all things Jewish.

Christian religious textbooks encourage tolerance toward members of other religions, with an emphasis on Muslims. The textbooks explain the importance of the Holy Land for Jews, Muslims and Christians, and calls for respect for the members of the three religions.

The report's second section: "An Arab-Palestinian Perspective," gives extensive treatment to the curriculum's one history textbook on the conflict in British Palestine and the 1948 War; the book clearly exhibits a pan-Arab and Arab-Palestinian view toward the mandate and the war. There is much resentment displayed toward Zionism as a "colonial-settler" movement. In the first section: "Life in Israel: Geography, Civics, Culture," students also learn Israeli
perspectives from history textbooks which furnish extensive explanations of the Holocaust.\textsuperscript{110}

Here, too, students learn the Israeli perspective of the 1948 "Independence War" from a Hebrew language textbook.

The curriculum exhorts interfaith and congenial neighborly relations and seems able to address such typically uncomfortable topics as femicide, relations between neighbors in Arab villages, the conflict with Israel, or authoritarian rule in Egypt. It voices a commitment to democratic values, community harmony, dialogue, respect for public spaces, teamwork in multi-cultural environments, family values and diversity, and a connection to one common God. History and literature still convey a sense of angst or at times resentment, stemming from real or perceived injustice and humiliation that emanate from a difficult past.

Math and science textbooks, whether translated from the Hebrew or in Arabic, emphasize equal rights for women and highlight beautiful surroundings amid the many attractions offered in Israel. Darwin's theory of evolution is taught. Textbooks covering present-day Israel provide examples of successful Israeli-Arab scholars and scientists.

\textbf{International Standards}

The curriculum promotes tolerance, understanding and RESPECT toward the "Other." Students are taught the importance of fostering INDIVIDUAL OTHERs among the large diversity of Israeli society. However, Israelis from Arab countries are largely ignored. There is NO overt HATE expressed directly in the curriculum. Nevertheless, on the foundation of an Arab-Palestinian perspective and rigid Islamic religion program, aspects of the curriculum display resentment toward Israel in antisemitic and anti-Israeli messaging.

There is NO INCITEMENT in the curriculum toward other groups. Information about PEACE MAKING is abundant. Capabilities for non-violent conflict resolution and promotion of peace are taught.

To fulfill the standard of UNBIASED INFORMATION, more information should be given students regarding the plight of Palestinians and other Arabs throughout the world, as well as a historical presentation regarding the suffering experienced by Jewish refugees from Arab countries. Angst and resentment toward Israel and the Jews would benefit from a more comprehensive understanding of history. Also missing are the involvement of Arab and Jewish moderates throughout the long conflict. Finally, greater emphasis on the many contributions of Arab-Palestinians to the State of Israel should be extolled.

Overall, the curriculum fosters equality and mutual respect toward women. While many of the prohibitions and restrictions governing women in Islamic religion textbooks should be addressed,

\textsuperscript{110} MoE guidelines stipulate learning about ancient and modern Jewish history in the country and the Diaspora.
after resolving such issues, the curriculum can be considered free of language, content, and imagery that promulgates violence or discrimination on the basis of SEXUAL ORIENTATION.

Perhaps the most powerful element of this curriculum is SOUND PROSPERITY and COOPERATION. The curriculum furnishes the intellectual tools and well-rounded education for students to succeed after graduation.
Methodology and International Standards

IMPACT-se applies methodological standards which are based on UNESCO and UN declarations, and international recommendations and documents on education for peace and tolerance (see notes). Our methodology is designed to consider every detail within the textbooks; it does not paraphrase, rely on interpretations, or attempt to illustrate preconceived notions.

The following is an updated, condensed version of the IMPACT-se UNESCO-derived standards for peace and tolerance in school education:

1. **RESPECT**: The curriculum should promote tolerance, understanding and respect toward the "Other," his or her culture, achievements, values and way of life.\(^{111}\)

2. **INDIVIDUAL OTHER**: The curriculum should foster personal attachment toward the "Other" as an individual, his or her desire to be familiar, loved and appreciated.\(^{112}\)

3. **NO HATE**: The curriculum should be free of wording, imagery and ideologies likely to create prejudices, misconceptions, stereotypes, misunderstandings, mistrust, racial hatred, religious bigotry and national hatred, as well as any other form of hatred or contempt for other groups or peoples.\(^{113}\)

4. **NO INCITEMENT**: The curriculum should be free of language, content, and imagery that disseminate ideas or theories which justify or promote acts and expressions of violence, incitement to violence, hostility, harm and hatred toward other national, ethnic, racial or religious groups.\(^{114}\)

5. **PEACEMAKING**: The curriculum should develop capabilities for non-violent conflict resolution and promote peace.\(^{115}\)

---

\(^{111}\) As defined in the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance Proclaimed and signed by Member States of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Articles 1, 4.2. See also the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding Between Peoples (1965), Principles I, III. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

\(^{112}\) The goal of education for peace is the development of universally recognized values in an individual, regardless of different socio-cultural contexts. See Ibid., Article 6. See also, on exchanges between youth, the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965), Principles IV, V.


\(^{114}\) As defined in Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2106 (XX) on December 21, 1965. See also Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2200A (XXI) on December 16, 1966.

\(^{115}\) Based on the Integrated Framework for Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, approved by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-eighth session, Paris, November 1995, Article 9; and on the
6. **UNBIASED INFORMATION**: Educational materials (textbooks, workbooks, teachers’ guides, maps, illustrations, aids) should be up-to-date, accurate, complete, balanced and unprejudiced, and use equal standards to promote mutual knowledge and understanding between different peoples.\(^{116}\)

7. **GENDER IDENTITY AND REPRESENTATION**: The curriculum should foster equality, mutual respect, and should aim for equal representation between individuals regardless of their gender identity. It should also refrain from language, content, and imagery that depicts limiting and/or exclusionary gender roles.\(^{117}\)

8. **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**: The curriculum should be free of language, content, and imagery that promulgates violence or discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.\(^{118}\)

9. **SOUND PROSPERITY and COOPERATION**: The curriculum should educate for sound and sustainable economic conduct and preservation of the environment for future generations. It should encourage regional and local cooperation to that effect.\(^{119}\)

---

Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Article 5.

\(^{116}\) Based on UNESCO recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Article V.14.

\(^{117}\) The preamble to the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, notes the Convention on the Elimination of Any Form of Discrimination against Women and emphasizes respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to gender.

\(^{118}\) Based on Resolutions 32/2 (adopted June 30, 2016) and 17/19 (adopted July 14, 2011) of the UN Human Rights Council, and numerous UN General Assembly resolutions expressing concern and condemnation of laws and practices around the world which target individuals based on their gender identity and/or sexual orientation for discrimination, violence, and even extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions—all of which contradict the most basic principles of the UN and have no place in education.

\(^{119}\) Based on UNESCO recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Articles III.6, and IV.7. On the imperative for developing “systematic and rational tolerance teaching methods that will address the cultural, social, economic, political and religious sources of intolerance,” see the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Article 4.2. On education for international cooperation, see also the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965), Principle II.
List of Textbooks

The following Israeli-Arab curriculum textbooks were analyzed for the research in this study. Not all were used as references for the report. The titles both here and referenced in the text have been translated into English to aid the reader. IMPACT-se typically researches all relevant textbooks used in a curriculum. If new textbooks or previously unavailable books become available after a report's publication, every effort will be made to update reports to include any relevant material. We welcome any comments related to the acquisition of any omitted materials (http://www.impact-se.org/about-us/contact-us/).


38. History, Grade 6, *Ancient History—Selected Chapters from the Second Century BC to the Roman Empire*, Sa'id Barghouthi, Maktabat Kull Shay' (Permit: 357), 2008.


46. History, Grades 10–12, *History of Arabs and Muslims until the Fall of the Umayyad Caliphate*, Atallah Sa'id Qubti, Qubti (Permit: 331), 2010.


