

THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Revised second edition, November 1993

INTRODUCTION FOR STUDENTS

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict is a dangerous and volatile situation that has involved America attention for some decades. It is one of the most difficult and sensitive conflicts you can study. People feel very strongly about it and sometimes get very emotional. If you can learn to state the facts, the history, and the positions of various groups and can learn to think analytically about the subject, you will be well ahead of many others.

To help you study, there are several resources attached.

1. There is a chronology of key dates in the conflict. It is always helpful to be able to structure history in terms of what happened when. Sequence is important in establishing what caused what.
2. Several lessons include documents. It is always good to see authentic first-hand accounts. If you want to know the Israeli position, don't ask the Palestinians, and if you want to know the Palestinian position, don't ask the Israelis. Go to the source.
3. Numbers are important. How many Israelis and Palestinians are there? Where do they live? How many Jewish settlers are there in the Occupied Territories? There are several charts.
4. Pay attention to geography. We Americans tend to overlook it. Remember where the major cities are, where the rivers are, where the mountain ranges are. These help us understand how countries relate to each other.
5. There are discussion topics to help you focus your attention. Your teacher will decide which of these to emphasize.
6. As you study this unit, monitor the news and use it in your classroom. Remember that news reports often follow the most sensational events and seldom give good explanations of what is happening. Read newspapers and watch television to see how they cover events. Look particularly for words or images that are not informing you but are telling you what to think. Remember that anyone who can make you feel anger or fear can control you. Read the news with a skeptical eye, to see if you are being informed or manipulated. Try to find cartoons or editorial page articles that use images of fear or anger or ethnic generalization.

This is a difficult and challenging topic, but one you will find important even after you are out of school.

Go on to Some [Key Dates](#).

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