

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PALESTINE TEACHING TRUNK

Welcome to this two-week unit of study about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We've taken some of teachers' favorite lessons from the Palestine Teaching Trunk to create this active and thoughtful unit for any high school grade. Because it requires reading, writing, discussing and listening, and because it requires deep critical thinking about essential questions, this unit meets social studies standards.

The Palestine Teaching Trunk's basic premise is that this is neither an ancient nor a religious conflict; this is a modern conflict over land, power, and equal treatment. Some lessons present two sides to the conflict, and some lessons present the human rights violations that occur under occupation. If you need more of one or the other, you can find many more materials in the [Trunk \(www.palestinett.org\)](http://www.palestinett.org). Email us (palestineteachingtrunk@gmail.com) with any questions and for help finding what you're looking for. We want to empower teachers to teach about a conflict which affects all of us wherever we live.

Here's the basic schedule:

Day 1: Introduce the Israeli-Palestinian conflict & generate questions. News Flash! KWL chart. Maps. HW: Bring in some mention of the conflict that you find in the news.	Day 2: Show the movie <i>Promises</i> (102 minutes)	Day 3: Finish <i>Promises</i> . Students finish brief movie notes & reflect. HW: Finish reflection.	Day 4: Begin playing The Occupation Game. Create persona. Write prose poem. HW: Read soldiers' accounts of enforcing the occupation.	Day 5: Finish playing The Occupation Game. Debrief what it's like to live under, and enforce, Occupation. HW: Reflection. Add to KWL chart. Reading about parallels between Palestinians living under occupation and African-Americans living in the US.
Day 6: How does a barrier affect you? The Wall. Maps. Youtube. HW: Reflection.	Day 7: Gaza: Maps. <i>One Family in Gaza</i> vimeo (23 min.). HW: Readings about Gaza.	Day 8: <i>Promises</i> Peace Conference role play: Assign roles, small group work to develop positions.	Day 9: Peace Conference: Negotiating with other groups.	Day 10: Peace Conference: Large Group Assembly to create Peace Plan, Class Discussion. HW: Writing Assignment.

1. INTRODUCTION SIMULATION: Seattle Land Redistributed!

News Flash! Tell students you are beginning a new unit of study. To gain understanding of the issues, students should imagine that the following has happened in their city: “The U.S. Government recently heard arguments of representatives from the Suquamish and Duwamish nations, the original people who lived in the Seattle area. They argue that since their lands were taken from them, they should be allowed to get them back. The U.S. is moved by their request and is now thinking about giving them the City of Seattle in compensation.” (see the News Flash! below).

Explain: Members of the Duwamish and Suquamish tribes have won their lawsuit. They are getting their land (all of Seattle) back. If you are living on this land and you are not Native American, then you have to leave. The government will compensate you. Is this fair? Is this just? Where can you go? Give students the News Flash (below) and ask them to write their thoughts. After a few minutes, guide students in discussing these issues. Other questions to ask: is it fair that you have to move even if you were born here? what if your parents and grandparents were born here? is it fair that the Duwamish and Suquamish cannot have their land even if they and their grandparents and great-great-great grandparents were born here? What about Duwamish people forced off the land 100 years ago whose children were born elsewhere? Should the children have the right to come back? What if they’re subject to racism and persecution and oppression where they currently live? What’s the time limit or generational limit on land claims? How much compensation would be enough? Where would people go? Would they fear a similar lawsuit in their new home?

Connect to Israel/Palestine: The simulated issue above parallels the claims that both Jewish Israelis and Palestinians make to their land, located in the Middle East. Both peoples have argued that they should be equated with the indigenous peoples of the area. The lesson brings the issues “home” to the students and helps them realize that these are difficult issues for any person to deal with. Obviously, if you are not teaching in Seattle, change the details to fit your location.

Guide students through beginning to fill out the **Know/Want to Know/Learned handout**. Have them take a few moments to individually write down what they already know or think they know about Israelis and Palestinians. Then have them write down what they want to learn. Have them share with a partner. Then ask each pair to share with the class one thing they’d like to know. Generate a large list of questions. If you can, post these questions prominently in the classroom so that you can all be reminded of some of the answers you’d like to find. Encourage students to continue to fill out this handout with more questions and what they’ve learned at various points in this unit.

MAPS: Show students where Israelis and Palestinians live. A basic map is included here. There are many other maps online in the Maps folder.

Also included here is a map showing how land has been taken from Palestinians for Israeli exclusive use. You can use the obvious trend visible on the series of maps to illustrate why this conflict is over land, power, and equal treatment. You might want to return to this map a little later in the unit when some of the issues of land confiscation for settlements, Israeli-only roads, the Wall, checkpoints, and military areas have been explained. There are more maps in the folder online that illustrate these concepts.

Homework: Tell students to go home and watch for news items about Israelis and Palestinians. Have them write down at least one news item heard on radio/TV/the internet and note the source.

The Seattle Post-Times

Date: Today

Time: Now

NEWS FLASH!

The U.S. Government recently heard arguments of representatives from the Suquamish and Duwamish nations, the original people who lived in the Seattle area. They argue that since their lands were taken from them, they should be allowed to get them back. The U.S. is moved by their request and is now thinking about giving them the City of Seattle in compensation.

Write your thoughts and questions here:

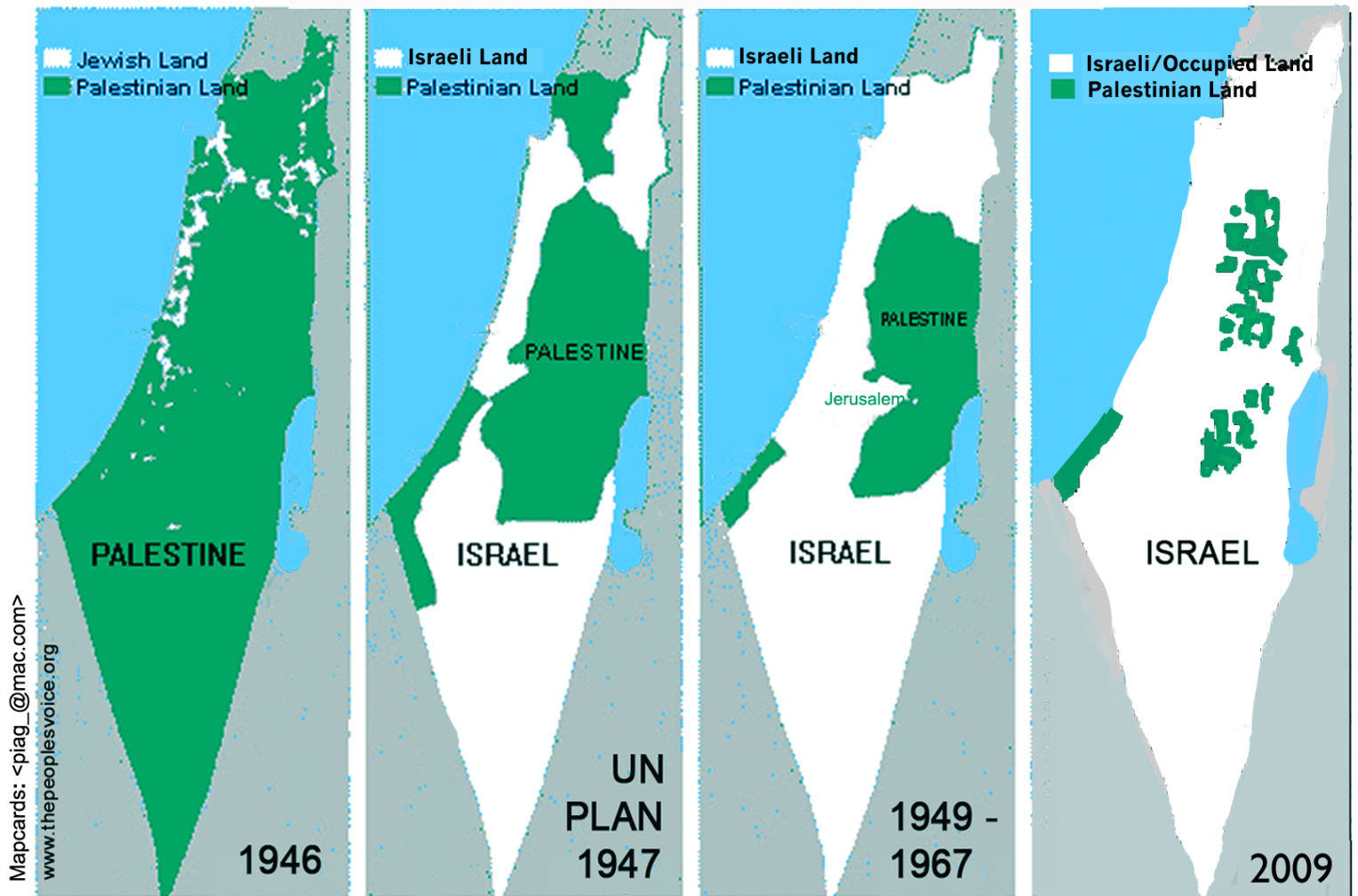
Name: _____

ISRAELIS & PALESTINIANS

KNOW	WANT TO KNOW	LEARNED



PALESTINIAN LOSS OF LAND 1946 TO 2009



2-3. *Promises* DVD AND DISCUSSION

PROMISES by the Promises Film Project, 102 minutes, English subtitles

Show the movie *Promises*. You can rent it or show it [online from here](#) on veoh.com. This movie has been cited by many as the most memorable resource for them as teenagers; it made them pay attention to the conflict. The final project for this unit is based on *Promises*: the students become the movie characters (as adults) and attempt to negotiate peace. There are many aspects of the conflict and the cultures in this movie that could also be great jumping-off points for individual research projects if you have more time.

Tell students that *Promises* is a documentary filmed in 1997-2000, which was between the two Intifadas (Uprisings) by the Palestinians against the Israeli occupation. As the opening lines say, it was a time of relative peace for Israelis, but the opening lines fail to mention that many Palestinians during that same time were being thrown out of their homes as settlement activity ramped up. Checkpoints, arbitrary detention (no charge or trial), and the strangulation of the Palestinian economy deprived many families of their livelihood. Thus it was not a time of peace for Palestinians. The film has subtitles, so you should not ask students to take many notes. The movie sections are presented below with detailed notes for the teacher. Five general questions for the students are also included. Tell them the questions in advance and discuss them with students at the end. The last two questions can also be assigned as Homework/Response.

**There is an [update](#) filmed in 2004, also available on veoh.com (19 minutes). This might be interesting to show students at the end of the unit, after they have already imagined themselves as the grownup children and tried to negotiate peace. Find out who joined the army and how everyone reacts. The update is poignant, but it will be more understandable if students have experienced the rest of the unit first.

Problems with this film:

--The film maker starts by characterizing the Mideast as a place of war and perpetual conflict. Actually, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict dates from the 1920s when Zionist Jews began arriving in British-ruled Palestine in significant numbers with plans to displace Palestinian Arabs and create a political nation-state for Jews. (Prior to this, indigenous Jewish and Muslim and Christian Palestinians had lived together peacefully as neighbors.)

--The film does not compute settlers in E. Jerusalem when it gives numbers of settlers (the numbers are out of date anyway; tell students that there are over half a million settlers in the Occupied Territories, which include E. Jerusalem).

--Many of the people in this movie use “Arab” when they mean Palestinian, and “Jew” when they mean Israeli -- you may want to warn students about this.

--The relative poverty of the West Bank and refugee camps compared to Israel is not explained; it is actually the direct result of Israeli occupation due to occupation policies of “dedevelopment”, land confiscation, and lack of funding of the Palestinian economy.

--The movie doesn’t explain that Israel illegally annexed (not just occupied) E. Jerusalem after 1967.

Teachers' notes:

The People:

The Twins: Yarko and Daniel (Jewish Israelis)-- live in W. Jerusalem, fear terrorists on buses

Mahmoud -- (Palestinian Muslim) lives in E. Jerusalem, says Jerusalem belongs to the Palestinians

Shlomo -- lives in W. Jerusalem, observant Jew with American Rabbi father, feels safe because there are both Arabs and Jews in the city

Sanabel -- (Palestinian) brief history of 1948, maps, 1967, Deheishe Refugee Camp, dad is journalist, in PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine), and in jail (arbitrary detention = no charge, no trial, just kept in prison), nondelivery of letters

Faraj -- (Palestinian) Intifada footage, tells of his friend Bassam who was shot dead for throwing a stone, we see Faraj a year later and he justifies throwing stones against bullets and nuclear power, lives in Deheishe Refugee Camp

Moishe -- (Jewish Israeli) settlement history, encouraged by government, Moishe is part of a religious settler family living in Beit El (near Ramallah in West Bank), says land belongs to descendants of Abraham (Jews), says that settlers are people who fight Arabs,

Raheli -- (Jewish Israeli) Moishe's sister, notice the difference in girls' roles in the family, discusses what happens on Shabbat/Sabbath, the "chair girl"

The Issues:

Checkpoints-- between W. Bank & Israel, between different areas in W. Bank, need permits issued by Israeli military, humiliate Palestinians, make Israelis feel safer

Somewhere Safer-- twins' grandfather reminisces about the Holocaust and moving from Poland to Israel to become safer; he seems to be an atheist but tells the twins to decide for themselves

Al-Aqsa Mosque --in E. Jerusalem in an area holy to both Jews and Muslims, praying at the Mosque

The Western Wall -- holy to Jews, praying at the Wall, division between secular and religious Jews

The Palestinian Dance -- Sanabel in Deheishe is part of a dance troupe (Ibda'a) that celebrates culture and history and dream of Palestinian statehood; they sing that the pen and the sword are their symbols

The Jerusalem Finals -- the twins in a volleyball tournament; notice that the off-duty soldier in stands has a rifle slung around his shoulders

Faraj the Sprinter -- notice the kids in army fatigues; he cries when he comes in second; the twins say they cry too

Ashkelon Jail -- Sanabel and her family get up very early and ride on a bus to visit her father in prison, notice Santa Claus over the bed, go through checkpoint, soldiers seek translation from Hebrew to Arabic, bus goes into Israel to Ashkelon Prison, takes about 8 hours for a 30 minute visit, no visitors other than immediate family (even though he has not been charged or convicted but is an “administrative detainee”)

Our Land -- both Israeli and Palestinian kids say that the land is theirs. They have different explanations: religion, or conqueror’s rights, or land deeds (1931, 1942), or keys to houses

This is our House -- traveling to Ras Abu- Ammar, Faraj’s family’s house inside Israel (Faraj & grandmother are snuck in by filmmakers); village is completely destroyed and erased but they find stones from their house; grandmother discusses why they left: massacres in Dir Yassin (Deir Yassin), and fear of rape; says they sought refuge in Bethlehem; Faraj says that he has the right to live without checkpoints and to return to his ancestral village; parade for refugee rights against colonialism and Zionism and Israel; Faraj says he’ll pass the key to his children

All of Jerusalem -- Jerusalem schoolteacher contrasts captivity with freedom; children draw pictures of what it feels like to live as Palestinians; all the kids weigh in on how they feel about Jerusalem and why; settlers in Jerusalem march through Muslim Quarter guarded by soldiers; celebration and provocation; kids on both sides discuss how the other side should be killed

Murdered -- Moishe tells of a terrorist shooting of his Israeli friend Ephraim and his mother; Israeli memorial day for fallen soldiers and those killed by terrorists

Hadassa Hospital -- the twins visit their babysitter in the hospital: Matan has been hit by a missile while serving in the army; they are not sure they will join the army, they don’t want to shoot people; religious Jews are exempt from the army

Burping Contest -- Shlomo and Palestinian neighbor; Shlomo says he doesn’t want to make friends, but then joins in burping contest

Why Don’t We Meet Them? -- the kids continue discussing whether they could meet and befriend kids on “the other side” (notice the range of opinion on both sides)

Invitation -- the children record why they want to meet each other and talk on the phone with each other; they discuss whether they have pizza or hummus in the camp, international soccer teams; the Israeli children come to the camp because checkpoints prevent the Palestinians from going into Israel; parents worry about the meeting

The Meeting -- (notice that only the twins visit; we can wonder why the other Israelis did not visit, but it's not explained) they meet in Deheishe, explain areas where there were clashes, ask that the twins don't speak Hebrew, play games, eat, teach each other martial arts, play soccer, use slingshots, learn the Dubke (traditional Palestinian dance)

Our Day Together -- then they sit down and talk about issues; Ahmed remembers his brother Bassam shot by Israelis; fear that they will forget each other when BZ, the filmmaker, leaves

Respect Will Grow -- two years later, they talk about not being able to meet again, and about the situation; movie shows babies in a hospital with both Palestinian and Israeli parents

***PROMISES* by the Promises Film Project**
filmed in 1997-2000

Name: _____

1. What are the hopes and fears of the Israeli children? How do they live?
2. What are the hopes and fears of the Palestinian children? How do they live?
3. What range of opinion do the children show in discussing each other, the situation, and whether to meet?
4. What thoughts and feelings did this film evoke in you?
5. This film has been praised for showing humans on all sides of the conflict, but it has been criticized for not revealing enough about the power imbalances between Israelis and Palestinians. What are your thoughts?

4-5. WHAT IS IT LIKE TO LIVE IN AN OCCUPATION?

This will take two days. Print out the sets of cards from “The Occupation Game” that follow this description. Cut them up so they can stack like cards. You’ll need dice for each group or some way for students to come up with the numbers 1-6 by chance. Make multiple copies of the homework readings for Day 4 and 5.

Occupation Game: Sit the students in “town” groups of 4-6. Students need paper and a pen to write their reactions/prose poem. Tell the students that today they’ll be experiencing and writing about life under occupation by a foreign army. Tonight, they’ll be reading about what it’s like to be a soldier enforcing an occupation. Tomorrow, you’ll continue the lesson and discuss what they’ve learned. The homework reading for tomorrow tells about parallels between the occupation and civil rights issues in the US.

- 1) Start by asking students if they know of any occupations. They might list: Iraq, Afghanistan, Tibet, Japan’s occupation of China, World War II Europe by Nazis, post-WWII in Europe and Japan by US (and Britain and USSR), Israel/Palestine....
- 2) Tell students that we’ll be focusing on details from the occupation of Palestinians in the West Bank by Israel in order to understand some of the problems with occupations everywhere.
- 3) First, each student needs to create a persona who might live under occupation.
- 4) They should then share who they are with the other students in their town group.
- 5) Then, as a town group, they turn over the first card from “The Occupation Game”. When a card is turned over, each person has to roll the dice to see what his/her individual fate is; then each person has to write about how it impacts their persona. They have to write down what happens and feelings and actions that they take in response. This will become a “prose poem”. They can share aloud what is happening to them; this is not a silent process.
- 6) Then, the town turns over the next card. The cards are numbered 1-10. Students should begin with 1 and end with 10 (which is often a game ender). One town’s set of cards is designed to recreate the experience of Gaza, several sets recreate the slightly different experience in the West Bank. The set of cards recreating Hebron/Khalil (West Bank) assumes that settlers live inside the town. Other sets assume there is a settlement nearby. You can tell students their town name, but there is no need to go into detail; the implications will become clear.

HOMEWORK- (Day 4) - Occupying Soldiers: Have students read the accounts by Israeli soldiers who enforce the occupation. Assign different students to different readings. At home, they should read and summarize.

Continuing on the next day:

- 7) After each group has gone through all or a number of cards, stop the game (this may happen on Day 4 or 5). Have each student find a person from another town to share experiences with.
- 8) Then, debrief as a class. First, ask what happened to the personas. Then, ask students to respond to what it’s like to live under occupation.
- 9) Now turn the discussion to the soldiers. Have students summarize the readings they read. What is it like to enforce an occupation? Discussion questions are listed in the handouts that follow.

HOMEWORK- (Day 5) - Responses & Parallels with US: The assignment includes reflection on the first week, adding to the KWL chart, and reading about parallels between Palestinians and African-Americans in the US.

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO LIVE IN AN OCCUPATION BY A FOREIGN ARMY?

CREATE YOUR PERSONA

Pick a name, age, gender, profession -- write them on your paper:

My name is _____.

My name means _____ **I am** ____ **years old.**

I am a _____.

Introduce yourself to the other members of your town sitting near you.

I. First, choose a name. Here is a list of Palestinian names to help you:

Girls

Amani -- wishes

Ameena--loyalty, believer, having faith, peaceful

Fatima -- daughter of Prophet Muhammad

Hawwa -- Eve

Khadeeja -- first wife of Prophet Muhammad

Maryam -- Mary

Noor -- light

Salwa -- comfort, consolation

Sarah -- Sarah

Aysha -- alive, prosperous

Hanaan -- tenderness, compassion

Hurriye-- freedom

Layla -- night

Muna -- hope, wish

Raya--flag

Sameera -- companion

Boys

Ali -- exalted, elevated Ameen--loyal, trustworthy

Fareed -- unique, unrivaled

Hasan, Husayn -- handsome, superior

'Issa -- Jesus

Khaled -- everlasting, immortal

Mohammed, Muhammad, Ahmad, Mahmoud -- praised

Omar -- long life, thriving

Saleem -- safe, faultless

Yusef -- Joseph

Dawud -- David

Hanna -- John

Ibrahim -- Abraham

Jameel -- handsome

Majd -- Glory

Musa -- Moses

Rasheed -- rightly guided, sensible

Shareef -- honorable

II. Now choose from these occupations (or come up with your own):

doctor grape grower olive tree farmer computer scientist

lawyer teacher librarian taxi driver engineer

veterinarian mayor priest or imam artist biologist

human rights worker worker's rights advocate actor/playwright

social worker mathematics professor shepherd

III. With your neighbors:

Turn over the first card. This is an event that happens during the occupation of your town.

However, each of you must roll the dice to see specifically what happens to you as an individual.

1) Write what has happened to you.

2) Write how you think it impacts you/your family/your community.

3) Write how you feel.

4) Write what you do in response.

This will create a “prose poem”, not rhymed, but with heightened imagery and emotion. Write it in poem form.

For example, you might turn over a Checkpoint Card and write:

Soldiers stop me at a checkpoint.

I stand all day in the rain before they give me back my ID card. I lose a day's wages.

My students don't have a teacher.

My family eats more bread and less meat tonight.

Cold. Wet. Shivering.

Angry. Hopeless.

I must try to get to my job again tomorrow.

Maybe I will try a different route.

Maybe I will organize a demonstration.

Now turn over the second card.....

IV.

Find a person from a different town. Exchange prose poems. Read and discuss:

1. Did some of the same things happen to both of you?

2. Did you have different reactions or the same? Why do you think that is?

3. What would you yourself do if you were living right here, but under occupation by a foreign army, and these problems happened to you? Would your responses differ from your imaginary persona? Why?

HOMEWORK (day 4):

Soldiers' Experiences

We've learned about the people living under occupation. What about the soldiers enforcing occupation? Most Israelis have to join the army for 2-3 years after high school. What is it like to be an occupation soldier?

Person 1: Read article A and summarize the main points.

Person 2: Read article D and summarize the main points.

Person 3: Read articles E and F and summarize the main points.

Person 4: Read article G and summarize the main points.

Class Discussion

V. Answer as your persona:

What happened to your persona?

How did the soldiers impact you?

How did the Wall impact you?

How did settlers impact you?

How did checkpoints impact you?

How did curfew impact you?

How was your education/job impacted?

How was your home/land impacted?

What got you in trouble? What took you to prison? What made you leave?

VI. Answer as students in this class:

What would it be like to live in an occupation? What is one thing you learned about occupation?

How would you react if you lived under occupation?

Do you know of occupations going on in the world now, or in history? How have people reacted to them?

Questions? Comments?

VII. Soldiers' Experiences

Most Israelis have to join the army for 2-3 years after high school. What is it like to be an occupation soldier?

1. What did you learn about the occupation from these readings?

2. What would be hardest about being a soldier?








3. Why do you think the soldiers feel they cannot object at the time to what is happening?

4. Have you ever felt that you wanted to object to a problem but couldn't?











5. What questions do you still have?

HOMEWORK (day 5): After watching *Promises*, two days of the Occupation Game and reading soldiers' descriptions, reflect on what you have learned about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in this first week. Fill in more of your KWL chart. Read the article about Black Lives Matter activists and others who travelled to Palestine. What are three similarities that these Americans find between Palestinians living under occupation and African-Americans living in America today? Can you think of more? What are your thoughts on this?









TOWN 1 -- WEST BANK

<p>1 YOU CAN'T GO HOME TONIGHT Occupation soldiers have randomly closed the checkpoint between you and your home.</p> <p>Roll the Dice  to find out what happens next:</p> <p>1-2 You find someplace else to sleep tonight. 3-4 You sit at the checkpoint all night. 5 You argue with the soldiers at the checkpoint (choose Arrest, Beating, or Prison as your consequence) 6. You try to sneak past the checkpoint after dark (choose Arrest, Beating or You are Shot)</p>	<p>2</p> <h1>CURFEW</h1> <p>Anyone who leaves their home, day or night, will be shot.</p> <p> to see how many days this lasts.</p>
<p>3 ARMED ISRAELI SETTLERS PREVENT YOU OR SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY FROM REACHING YOUR SCHOOL</p> <p> to see how many days of school you miss. After those days, your teachers are able to set up school in your local mosque. If you roll 5-6, you just missed the university entrance exam which is only given once a year. Find a minimum wage job. Roll again: if you roll 3-4, that job is in an Israeli settlement.</p>	<p>4 RANDOM GUNFIRE: Every morning Occupation soldiers fire a burst of gunfire from their guard tower toward your town.</p> <p> 1 Your cousin is hit. 2 Your mother is hit. 3 You are hit. 4 Militants come and shoot back at the soldiers. 5. Militants come but you tell them to go away. 6 No militants come.</p>
<p>5 NO CLEAN WATER IS AVAILABLE.</p> <p>A nearby settlement's sewage runoff has polluted your neighborhood's well and streams. The Israeli authorities refuse a permit to dig a new well. You lose one child.</p>	<p>6 WALL</p> <p>A 24' high concrete wall is being built through your town.</p> <p> to see what is demolished to make way for it: 1-2 Your neighbor's home (they move in with you). 3-4 Your almond trees (you lose one-third of your income). 5-6 The road to your work (you lose your job since the new route takes five times as long).</p>
<p>7 ARMORED, MILITARY BULLDOZERS BUILT BY AN AMERICAN COMPANY ARRIVE IN YOUR TOWN</p> <p>Lose 100 olive trees. You replant them and wait 7 years for the first crop.</p>	<p>8 A NEW SETTLEMENT TOWN IS BEING BUILT FOR ISRAELIS ONLY</p> <p> 1-2 Your home is demolished to make room. 3-4 Your neighbor's home is demolished and your neighbor comes to live with you. 5-6 Both homes are demolished.</p>
<p>9 YOUR HOME WILL BE DEMOLISHED IN TEN MINUTES.</p> <p>Soldiers eject you and your family. Choose ten personal items to carry and save.</p>	<p>10 REFUGEES</p> <p>Your home has been destroyed by Occupation soldiers.</p> <p> 1-2 Go live with relatives in a refugee camp inside the Occupied Territories (your relatives lost their homes inside Israel in 1948 and have lived in a refugee camp in the West Bank ever since) 3-4 Leave the country and go live in a refugee camp in a neighboring country. 5 Move in with relatives. 6 Live in a tent next to your destroyed home.</p>











TOWN 2-- WEST BANK

<p>1 YOU CAN'T GO HOME TONIGHT Occupation soldiers have randomly closed the checkpoint between you and your home.</p> <p>Roll the Dice  to find out what happens next:</p> <p>1-2 You find someplace else to sleep tonight. 3-4 You sit at the checkpoint all night. 5 You argue with the soldiers at the checkpoint (choose Arrest, Beating, or Prison as your consequence) 6. You try to sneak past the checkpoint after dark (choose Arrest, Beating or You are Shot)</p>	<p>2 MASS ARREST Every male between the ages of 15 and 55 in your town is arrested. That includes you if you are male.</p> <p> 1-2 None are released. 3-4 Most are released. 5 All are released except your closest male relative. 6 You wait outside the nearest Israeli occupation office to find out what has happened to your family.</p>
<p>3 MILITARY CHECKPOINT You are heading to work or school. The checkpoint soldier on duty is on break.</p> <p> to see how many hours you have to wait for his return. Then decide if it is still worth it to go through that day.</p>	<p>4 CURFEW Anyone who leaves their home, day or night, will be shot.</p> <p> to see how many days this lasts.</p>
<p>5 SETTLERS ATTACK Soldiers watch but do nothing.</p> <p> to see how many of your family and neighbors are injured or killed.</p>	<p>6 GET MARRIED AND BUILD A NEW HOUSE This happens to you or someone in your family.</p> <p> 1-5 Your new home is demolished by Occupation Forces. 6 Move in.</p>
<p>7 HEART ATTACK. The hospital is on the other side of a checkpoint.</p> <p> 1-2 Go to the military checkpoint and hope the soldiers will let you through. 3-6 Have family and friends carry you on a blanket over hills to avoid the checkpoint.</p>	<p>8 YOU OR THE MAIN BREADWINNER IN YOUR FAMILY HAS GOTTEN NO SALARY IN 18 MONTHS--YOUR REQUEST FOR A PERMIT TO GO INTO BUSINESS FOR YOURSELF AND BUILD A SMALL FACTORY HAS BEEN REPEATEDLY DENIED BY OCCUPATION AUTHORITIES.</p> <p> 1-2 Poverty/hunger. 3-4 Depend on the charity of relatives. 5-6 Become a day laborer inside Israel or a settlement and hope the checkpoint is open every day. You think about leaving the country.</p>
<p>9 YOU HOLD A PROTEST SIGN AT A NONVIOLENT DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE OCCUPATION -- YOU ARE TIRED OF YOUR LEADERS WHO ARE NOT FIGHTING OCCUPATION.</p> <p> 1 Occupation soldiers arrest you. 2 Occupation soldiers teargas you. 3 Occupation soldiers shoot you. 4-5 Occupation soldiers beat you. 6 Occupation soldiers try to beat you, but Israeli activists from Rabbis for Human Rights and Anarchists Against the Wall interpose their bodies, and soldiers leave you alone.</p>	<p>10 ARREST You are kept in administrative detention without charge or trial. During the first two weeks before you are taken before a judge, you are beaten, sleep-deprived, forced to stand for long periods of time in the cold, and interrogated.</p> <p> 1-2 You are never released and spend years in prison. 3-4 You are detained for six months, which might be renewed. 5-6 After two weeks, you are released.</p>











TOWN 3 -- GAZA

<p>1 YOU OR THE MAIN BREADWINNER IN YOUR FAMILY IS UNABLE TO REACH YOUR FARMLAND BECAUSE OCCUPATION SOLDIERS SHOOT AT YOU EVERY TIME YOU APPROACH</p> <p>Roll the dice  to see what happens: 1-2 Your crops fail. You have to ask relatives for help. 3-4 You have some other land and barely manage to raise enough food for the year. 5-6 You become a day laborer and wonder if you will make enough money to feed your family.</p>	<p>2 YOUR MOTHER LIVES OVERSEAS. SHE HAS CANCER AND IS DYING. YOU MUST GET A VISA TO VISIT HER. YOU MUST TRAVEL TO THE CAPITAL TO APPLY FOR THE VISA. YOUR ID DOES NOT PERMIT YOU TO TRAVEL TO THE CAPITAL.</p> <p> 1-3 No visa. 4-5 Delayed visa. 6 Visa.</p>
<p>3 NO ELECTRICITY</p> <p>Occupation authorities have shut it off. You must study and cook using kerosene. There are kerosene shortages due to a blockade by Occupation authorities.</p> <p> to see how many hours of kerosene you get in the next two weeks.</p>	<p>4 HOLIDAY</p> <p>GO TO THE BEACH TO CHEER YOUR FAMILY UP</p> <p> 1-5 You have a good time. 6 Occupation warships fire at your family while you are there. One of you is killed.</p>
<p>5 YOUR APARTMENT BUILDING IS HIT BY A MISSILE FROM AN AMERICAN-MADE F-16 JET.</p> <p>The family next door is killed. All the windows in your apartment are broken. The children in your family will not speak. When they sleep, they have nightmares and wake up screaming.</p>	<p>6 HOSPITAL</p> <p>The hospital has run out of basic supplies, including medicine, disinfectants, and anesthetics.</p> <p> 1-2 A member of your family dies. 3-4 A neighbor dies. 5-6 Everyone you know lives.</p>
<p>7 YOUR APARTMENT BUILDING IS HIT AGAIN BY A MISSILE FROM AN AMERICAN-MADE F-16 JET.</p> <p>A member of your family is killed. The children in your family will not speak. When they sleep, they have nightmares, wet the bed, and wake up screaming.</p>	<p>8 A FRIEND DECIDES TO RESIST THE OCCUPATION USING VIOLENCE</p> <p> 1-2 You try to talk your friend out of it. 3 You turn him in to the authorities. 4 You remain silent. 5-6 You join your friend.</p>
<p>9 A TEENAGER IN YOUR HOUSE IS CELEBRATING AN IMPORTANT BIRTHDAY TODAY</p> <p> 1-2 There is a flour shortage due to the blockade by Occupation authorities, and you cannot bake a birthday cake. 3-4 There is a rice shortages due to the blockade by Occupation authorities, and you do not have enough food for a meal. 5-6 You have enough food for a meal and a cake.</p>	<p>10 YOU ARE SHOT BY OCCUPATION SOLDIERS.</p> <p> 1-2 You die instantly. 3-4 You live. 5-6 You live, but you are paralyzed from the waist down for life.</p>

TOWN 4 -- WEST BANK SMALL TOWN/VILLAGE

<p>1 YOU CAN'T GO HOME TONIGHT Occupation soldiers have randomly closed the checkpoint between you and your home.</p> <p>Roll the Dice  to find out what happens next:</p> <p>1-2 You find someplace else to sleep tonight. 3-4 You sit at the checkpoint all night. 5 You argue with the soldiers at the checkpoint (choose Arrest, Beating, or Prison as your consequence) 6. You try to sneak past the checkpoint after dark (choose Arrest, Beating or You are Shot)</p>	<p>2 THE MILITARY ROADBLOCK ON THE SINGLE ROAD OUT OF YOUR SMALL TOWN PREVENTS ANY VEHICLES FROM ENTERING, SO ALL FOOD HAS TO BE HAND-CARRIED ONE MILE. YOU ARE UNABLE TO GET ENOUGH GRAIN FOR YOUR LIVESTOCK.</p> <p> 1 The animals die. 2 The animals get sick. 3 Half the animals die. 4 Most of the animals die. 5 The animals live. 6 Humans go hungry too.</p>
<p>3 YOUR HOUSE IS OCCUPIED BY OCCUPATION SOLDIERS.</p> <p> and multiply by two to see how many hours your family is held in one room (without a bathroom).</p>	<p>4 WALL</p> <p>You wait at the single gate in the Wall every day to get to school or work. Today:</p> <p> 1 The soldier shows up to open the gate. 2 The soldier is half an hour late. 3 The soldier doesn't show up today. 4-6 The soldier tells you to go back home.</p>
<p>5 CURFEW</p> <p>Anyone who leaves their home, day or night, will be shot.</p> <p> to see how many days this lasts.</p>	<p>6 YOU'RE INVITED TO A WEDDING.</p> <p> 1 You have a great time. 2 You eat too much. 3 You spill food on your nice wedding clothes. 4 You have an argument with your friend. 5 Checkpoints closed -- wedding canceled. 6 Occupation forces carry out an extra-judicial assassination. Two wedding guests are killed.</p>
<p>7 YOU TRY TO HARVEST OLIVES FROM YOUR OLIVE TREES. ISRAELI SETTLERS ATTACK YOU AND YOUR FAMILY WITH CLUBS.</p> <p> 1 You pick a few olives, escape without injury. 2 You are unable to pick any olives. 3 Members of your family are injured. 4 Members of your family are killed. 5 Soldiers arrive to protect the settlers. 6 Soldiers arrive and convince the settlers to go back to their settlement.</p>	<p>8 ISRAELI SETTLERS vandalize your farmland at night, setting fires and chopping down olive trees. LAST NIGHT, they set a fire which burned out of control. The settlement's firefighting unit came to put the fire out. TODAY, the settlement sends you a bill. You must pay \$2000 for the fire unit's expenses. If you don't pay, the Israeli settlement will confiscate the rest of your land.</p> <p>YOU DON'T HAVE \$2000.</p> <p> to see how many days before they take your land.</p>
<p>9 YOU HOLD A PROTEST SIGN AT YOUR TOWN'S WEEKLY NONVIOLENT DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE OCCUPATION.</p> <p> 1 Occupation soldiers arrest you. 2 Occupation soldiers teargas you. 3 Occupation soldiers shoot you. 4-5 Occupation soldiers beat you. 6 Occupation soldiers try to beat you, but Israeli activists from Rabbis for Human Rights and international and Palestinian activists from the International Solidarity Movement interpose their bodies, and soldiers leave you alone.</p>	<p>10 ARREST</p> <p>You are kept in administrative detention without charge or trial. During the first two weeks before you are taken before a judge, you are beaten, sleep-deprived, forced to stand for long periods of time in the cold, and interrogated.</p> <p> 1-2 You are never released and spend years in prison. 3-4 You are detained for six months, which might be renewed. 5-6 After two weeks, you are released.</p>

TOWN 5-- HEBRON/KHALIL

<p>1 YOU CAN'T GO HOME TONIGHT Occupation soldiers have randomly closed the checkpoint between you and your home.</p> <p>Roll the Dice  to find out what happens next:</p> <p>1-2 You find someplace else to sleep tonight. 3-4 You sit at the checkpoint all night. 5 You argue with the soldiers at the checkpoint (choose Arrest, Beating, or Prison as your consequence) 6. You try to sneak past the checkpoint after dark (choose Arrest, Beating or You are Shot)</p>	<p>2 CURFEW</p> <p>Anyone who leaves their home, day or night, will be shot.</p> <p> to see how many days this lasts. If you rolled 5-6, you lose your job or missed an important test at school.</p>
<p>3 SETTLERS FIRE BULLETS THROUGH THE WALL OF YOUR HOME.</p> <p>Run to the bedroom, lie on the floor with your family.</p> <p> to see how many hours you stay there. (Soldiers arrive to protect the settlers from retaliation.)</p>	<p>4 THE SETTLERS WHO LIVE NEXT DOOR SHOOT HOLES IN THE WATER TANK ON YOUR ROOFTOP. IT WAS YOUR MAIN SOURCE OF WATER DURING THE DRY SEASON.</p> <p> 1-3 The soldiers stationed nearby to protect the settlers allow you to carry buckets of water from a neighbor's well 4-6 The soldiers won't let you, and you have to move in with nearby relatives until the rains come again.</p>
<p>5 YOU'RE INVITED TO A WEDDING.</p> <p> 1 You have a great time. 2 You eat too much. 3 You spill food on your nice wedding clothes. 4 You have an argument with your friend. 5 Checkpoints closed -- wedding canceled. 6 Occupation forces carry out an extra-judicial assassination. Two wedding guests are killed.</p>	<p>6 SETTLERS ATTACK Soldiers watch but do nothing.</p> <p> to see how many of your family and neighbors are injured or killed.</p>
<p>7 ARMED ISRAELI SETTLERS PREVENT YOU OR SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY FROM REACHING YOUR SCHOOL</p> <p> to see how many days of school you miss. If you roll 5-6, you just missed the university entrance exam which is only given once a year. Find a minimum wage job. Roll again: if you roll 3-4, that job is in an Israeli settlement.</p>	<p>8 A FRIEND DECIDES TO RESIST THE OCCUPATION USING VIOLENCE</p> <p> 1-2 You try to talk your friend out of it. 3 You turn him in to the authorities. 4 You remain silent. 5-6 You join your friend.</p>
<p>9 YOU HOLD A PROTEST SIGN AT A NONVIOLENT DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE OCCUPATION</p> <p> 1 Occupation soldiers arrest you. 2 Occupation soldiers teargas you. 3 Occupation soldiers shoot you. 4 Occupation soldiers beat you. 5-6 Settlers beat you while soldiers watch.</p>	<p>10 ARREST You are kept in administrative detention without charge or trial. During the first two weeks before you are taken before a judge, you are beaten, sleep-deprived, forced to stand for long periods of time in the cold, and interrogated.</p> <p> 1-2 You are never released and spend years in prison. 3-4 You are detained for six months, which might be renewed. 5-6 After two weeks, you are released.</p>

A.

The quotes below are from <http://www.breakingthesilence.org.il/about/organization> , the “Breaking the Silence” organization page. It is written by Israeli soldiers speaking about their time as soldiers in the Occupied Territories. As you read, think about: What did you learn about the occupation? What questions do you still have? What is unbelievable? What is believable? What would be hardest about being a soldier? Have you ever been in a situation where you wanted to object to a problem, but felt you couldn’t?

Breaking the Silence is an organization of veteran combatants who have served in the Israeli military since the start of the Second Intifada and have taken it upon themselves to expose the Israeli public to the reality of everyday life in the Occupied Territories. We endeavor to stimulate public debate about the price paid for a reality in which young soldiers face a civilian population on a daily basis, and are engaged in the control of that population’s everyday life.

Soldiers who serve in the Territories witness and participate in military actions which change them immensely. Cases of abuse towards Palestinians, looting, and destruction of property have been the norm for years, but are still explained as extreme and unique cases. Our testimonies portray a different, and much grimmer picture in which deterioration of moral standards finds expression in the character of orders and the rules of engagement, and are justified in the name of Israel's security. While this reality is known to Israeli soldiers and commanders, Israeli society continues to turn a blind eye, and to deny what is done in its name. Discharged soldiers returning to civilian life discover the gap between the reality they encountered in the Territories, and the silence about this reality they encounter at home. In order to become civilians again, soldiers are forced to ignore what they have seen and done. We strive to make heard the voices of these soldiers, pushing Israeli society to face the reality whose creation it has enabled.

We collect and publish testimonies from soldiers who, like us, have served in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem since September 2000, and hold lectures, house meetings, and other public events which bring to light the reality in the Territories through the voice of former combatants. We also conduct tours in Hebron and the South Hebron Hills region, with the aim of giving the Israeli public access to the reality which exists minutes from their own homes, yet is rarely portrayed in the media.

Founded in March 2004 by a group of soldiers who served in Hebron, Breaking the Silence has since acquired a special standing in the eyes of the Israeli public and in the media, as it is unique in giving voice to the experience of soldiers. To date, the organization has collected more than 700 testimonies from soldiers who represent all strata of Israeli society and cover nearly all units that operate in the Territories. All the testimonies we publish are meticulously researched, and all facts are cross-checked with additional eye-witnesses and/or the archives of other human rights organizations also active in the field. Every soldier who gives a testimony to Breaking the Silence knows the aims of the organization and the interview. Most soldiers choose to remain anonymous, due to various pressures from official military persons and society at large. Our first priority is to the soldiers who choose to testify to the public about their service.

D.

The quotes below are from Israeli soldiers in Hebron. More recent testimonials can be found on their website: www.breakingthesilence.org.il. Hebron is a city with 150,000 Palestinians and about 500 Jewish Israeli settlers. As you read, think about: What did you learn about the occupation? What questions do you still have? What would be hardest about being a soldier in Hebron? Why do you think the soldiers feel they cannot object to what is happening? Have you ever felt that you wanted to object to a problem but couldn't?

I. Hebron Testimonies

<http://www.shovrimshatika.org/UserFi...>

"Every day a six-man unit would cross over the roofs and enter a house. First they'd search the entrances and exits, order the entire family into a single room and get them to talk: ID cards, profession, begin to interrogate them. It also serves one of the army's aims—to make its presence felt. I remember many of the interrogations, but I recall one in particular where we asked...we spoke with an older man who, unlike many of the others who say things like, "We've got no problem with Israel," "We're neither Fatah nor Hamas"... "All we really want is peace so we can work"... Usually when they say things like that you can see that they're just looking at you. They're looking at your weapon. They're all scared, so it's only natural that they act so defeated. But this man was not obsequious, and he spoke the truth: that his life was a living hell, and that he wanted us to get out already. He said that we are to blame for this entire situation, and all he wanted was for us to get out. I think someone asked him why he hated us, why he supports the opposition fronts. Why he supports killings. I don't agree with the man's opinions, but he told the soldier that he had entered his home just like that, and was humiliating him, undermining his dignity. And I looked at this man and said to myself: wait a minute, here is this man in his own home, and it made me think of my own family home, surrounded by a garden, and greenery, a kind of fortress surrounded by a hedge of lantana and hibiscus, and I thought what if someone were to burst into our house like that, entering through an upstairs window, and force my parents and my younger brother into one of the rooms and start interrogating us, questioning us, searching the entrances and exits, and treating us so patronizingly... If I had not received the kind of education I did, I think I would certainly support even ... That is to say, this going into people's houses, how can you relate to it as something separate?

These are not people of a different kind. The men even physically look like my grandfather. ... An elderly man, or an old man who has to beg you at the checkpoint to allow him to pass, who shows you an X-Ray and you have no idea why he's showing it to you, or the man who tells you that his brother in Bab al-Zawia is ill with asthma or some other disease and that he has to pay him a visit. That same person could be your own father, for whom you have the greatest respect, but do we really understand what respect is... It's hard to say what I felt at that moment. On the one hand, I was stationed there, I didn't choose to be there. On the other hand, I wanted to get the hell out of there. As an individual who considers himself a nice guy, a moral kind of guy... I said to myself, damn I'm really doing something here that I don't believe in. I don't believe in it 100%, and I'm putting myself in a position where someone wants to kill me because of it. The question is, where am I? Do I have no choice in the matter? In other words, should I refuse? Is

refusal the answer? So there I was torn by the dilemma, pondering. I had lots of time eight by eight [eight hours on-duty eight hours off-duty] to think about it. The point is that I was faced with a crazy dilemma where I was torn between personal freedom and personal choice. Here lies the contradiction between the military, which is undemocratic and the state, which is supposed to be democratic. When you see that you are doing things which in your own home could not possibly happen and must never be allowed to happen, this is where you cross a certain line. Okay, so here you're in a different state. That is to say, everything you have known until now, all the rules by which you and your own family conduct your lives, all that does not seem to count here. *** Sit and wait. Why? Because he walked outside. Because he dared go buy something. Because he dared send his kid to school.***

E.

The quotes below are from Israeli soldiers. More recent testimonials can be found on their website: www.breakingthesilence.org.il. As you read, think about: What did you learn about the occupation? What questions do you still have? What would be hardest about being a soldier? Why do you think the soldiers feel they cannot object to what is happening? Have you ever felt that you wanted to object to a problem but couldn't?

II. Testimonial Booklet #2 (not available on Internet yet)

The witness: First Sergeant from battalion 932 of the Nahal brigade The Location: Refugee camp near Ramallah. Date: ***

Okay so our "house" swooped onto the refugee camp. That is why we were there. There was a snipers' post there. This is regarding the orders to commence fire that we're to shoot anyone who had a Molotov cocktail in his hand, because it is a life threatening situation. We knew that they were planning to throw the Molotov. We saw them with the bottle. We kept them under surveillance. There was a Molotov in their hands, but they did not ever throw it, they never lit it. SO that they would do it, we did something that was the idea of one of the platoon commanders. We told the sniper to "be ready" when we just arrived from the Ofer camp. We brought supplies or something. We said, okay, we will pass through, and we will let them throw the bottle, and then the sniper can shoot him. We intentionally drew their attention and we passed through there with our half-track, on purpose, on a road that we do not usually drive on. We went on that road on purpose. Then he threw the Molotov cocktail, and the sniper hit him. He was a 10-year-old boy.

A boy?

10-year-old boy. He did not kill him. I think he wounded him seriously or moderately, a ten-year-old boy. That is what he did there. You know, it was the intent, for the purpose of shooting someone. For doing ... I just don't know what. This is not a special story. There are a few more like that in the "cartridge".

F.

The quotes below are from Israeli soldiers in 2003. More recent testimonials can be found on their website: www.breakingthesilence.org.il. As you read, think about: What did you learn about the occupation? What questions do you still have? What would be hardest about being a soldier? Why do you think the soldiers feel they cannot object to what is happening? Have you ever felt that you wanted to object to a problem but couldn't?

III. Testimonial Booklet #2

<http://www.shovrimshatika.org/UserFi...>

Witness: Staff sergeant, Paratroops. Place: Beit-Furik. Date: end of 2003.

Can any fighter shoot? Yes. From one's personal weapon. If the commander in the patrol is a vice company commander, he can authorize such a thing. And if I accidentally hit someone in the back, or kill him – and things like that have happened to us... It happened two or three times only in our last deployment. Kids were killed? Kids were killed accidentally. One aims at the legs – shoot them in the back and kill them. How do you find out later whether they were killed? [We get] reports, later on, from the coordination and liaison office, the Palestinians report. There is cooperation in this regard. So kids get killed. For a soldier it means nothing. An officer can get a 100 or 200 Shekel fine for such a thing. 100, 200 Shekel for a kid? Yes. Prison? No, no. Trial? Is such a thing seriously investigated? No. I am sure it does not get beyond the battalion commander. I don't know [of any case] in which people were investigated. I cannot tell you for certain that it didn't happen... but I haven't seen them being taken for investigation, and I know nothing was done about that later on.

G.

The quotes below are from Israeli soldiers in Hebron. More recent testimonials can be found on their website: www.breakingthesilence.org.il. Hebron is a city with 150,000 Palestinians and about 500 Jewish Israeli settlers. As you read, think about: What did you learn about the occupation? What questions do you still have? What would be hardest about being a soldier in Hebron? Why do you think the soldiers feel they cannot object to what is happening? Have you ever felt that you wanted to object to a problem but couldn't?

IV. Soldiers' Testimonies from Hebron 2005-2007

<http://www.shovrimshatika.org/UserFi...>

Testimony 64, Hebron

First interviewee: ... At Beit Hadassah we once ran on patrol because we were told settlers were throwing stones at the Shalalas (a Palestinian market in Hebron). So we ran all the way from Menuchat Rachel: Something was happening, we ran and ran, children on recess came out of school at Beit Hadassah, and went to throw stones. When we got to the site, they already went back into class, recess was over and they began their lesson.

Second interviewee: As part of the patrol, there was always that point in time when children would come out of the Palestinian school house, so we had to stand guard and watch over them so the settlers wouldn't throw stones at them. And then you continue your patrol. Every morning.

First interviewee: ...what happened was that we got there running, out of breath, suddenly we realize this is about a few cheeky little kids, second or third graders, who had thrown stones. Our platoon commander knocked on the door of the classroom, the teacher came out and he told him: "Listen, there are children here who throw stones. I'm asking you to have them come out for a second, we need to talk with them, with whoever it was who threw stones." Then the teacher answered him: "Will you kindly let me educate my pupils as I see fit, and not intervene, please?" and he closed the door. That's how it ended. And this went on?

First interviewee: I don't know what happened afterwards. Another day, a Saturday, I was with ***, we caught little children. They were throwing stones at the TIPH (international observers) as well as at Arabs in the Shalalas. We caught them like this, they hit us and *** accidentally ripped the shirt of one of these kids as he tried to stop him from throwing stones. It was on the Sabbath and all the parents were in the Avraham Avinu settlement, at Beit Hadassah, they saw us struggling with their children and they went inside. It really felt like, what am I doing here anyway? What is this bullshit, kids hitting you, little kids. Really. Afterwards we tried to corner them into a playground there, a basketball court. And Bnei Akiva (religious youth movement) were having their get-together there, with a counselor.

So I spoke to him about this, to ask him to take the kids. You're their counselor, come on, help us, round up the children, play with them or something. And then, I don't know, we were talking and he told me that there was this ruling by some rabbi that Arabs are not humans. Some regional rabbi ruled this, and that it was okay to throw stones at them, really okay. And you're standing there, in shock, facing some boy who's a counselor in Bnei Akiva, wearing the movement shirt, and you don't know, what can you do? What am I still doing here? There's nothing I can do...

Second interviewee: I recall once standing at 44 post (army post), there's this path below which was then opened just for Abu Aisha (an isolated Palestinian family living in Tel Rumeida next to

the settlement). One of the guys passed there, a young boy, and one of the settler women from Tel Rumeida simply caught him and began to beat him. I didn't know what to do. I stood there between them. I let him go, he went back and she tried to push me away and continue hitting him. At some point she simply stood and began screaming at me and pushing me. I didn't know how to handle this. Finally a sergeant showed up (from the second platoon, I think) and he managed to get me out of there. I had no idea what to do. All she wanted was to beat him up. She said he was not allowed to be there and was jeopardizing her children by just being there. He must not pass by there and how can we let something like that happen. That he was there to murder her children and how can I let this take place. He came along, trying to go home, that's his way home. Afterwards they came and yelled at me. That's what I remember. ***

REFLECTION AFTER THE OCCUPATION GAME: Read this article. What are three similarities that these Americans find between Palestinians living under occupation and African-Americans living in America today? Can you think of more? What are your thoughts on this?

Dream Defenders, Black Lives Matter & Ferguson Reps Take Historic Trip to Palestine

Leaders from American racial justice movements connect with Palestinians living under occupation BY KRISTIAN DAVIS BAILEY, JANUARY 09, 2015 EBONY

Representatives at the forefront of the movements for Black lives and racial justice have taken a historic trip to Palestine this week to connect with activists living under Israeli occupation.

Black journalists, artists and organizers representing Ferguson, Black Lives Matter, Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100), and more have joined the Dream Defenders for a 10-day trip to the occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel. The trip comes after a year of highly-publicized repression in Ferguson, the Gaza Strip, and West Bank including East Jerusalem, as well as solidarity between these places. Ahmad Abuznaid, Dream Defenders' legal and policy director and a co-organizer of the delegation, said that the goal of the trip was to make connections.

"The goals were primarily to allow for the group members to experience and see first hand the occupation, ethnic cleansing and brutality Israel has levied against Palestinians, but also to build real relationships with those on the ground leading the fight for liberation," wrote Abuznaid. "In the spirit of Malcolm X, Angela Davis, Stokely Carmichael and many others, we thought the connections between the African American leadership of the movement in the US and those on the ground in Palestine needed to be reestablished and fortified." Abuznaid said the trip represented a chance to bring the power of Black organizing to Palestine. "As a Palestinian who has learned a great deal about struggle, movement, militancy and liberation from African Americans in the US, I dreamt of the day where I could bring that power back to my people in Palestine. This trip is a part of that process."

Over the past week, the delegation has met with refugees, Afro-Palestinians, a family that was kicked out of their house by settlers in East Jerusalem, and organizations representing Palestinian political prisoners, Palestinian citizens of Israel, and the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement (BDS).

Black Lives Matter co-founder Patrisse Cullors said apartheid is what immediately struck her about what she saw on the ground. "This is an apartheid state. We can't deny that and if we do deny it we are apart of the Zionist violence. There are two different systems here in occupied Palestine. Two completely different systems. Folks are unable to go to parts of their own country. Folks are barred from their own country."

Charlene Carruthers, national director of BYP100 said what immediately struck her was the capacity for violence, even when it's not immediately noticeable to foreigners. One such example is in the narrative projected against Palestinians. Carruthers recalled their delegation crossing paths with a tour group led by Israeli authorities. "They were clearly receiving a completely different story about the occupation. It's deeper than just spreading lies, the false narrative is violent."

Community organizer Cherrell Brown said she saw many parallels between state violence against Palestinians and Black Americans. "So many parallels exist between how the US

polices, incarcerates, and perpetuates violence on the black community and how the Zionist state that exists in Israel perpetuates the same on Palestinians,” Brown said. Brown also commented that the struggles are not the same. “This is not to say there aren’t vast differences and nuances that need to always be named, but our oppressors are literally collaborating together, learning from one another - and as oppressed people we have to do the same,” she said.

For Steven Pargett, communications director for Dream Defenders, visiting the Dheisheh Refugee Camp outside of Bethlehem made these connections clearer: “A camp doesn’t have to have a fence with barbed wire all around it in order to be a place where displaced people are struggling to survive.” Pargett said that Black people in the United States are also displaced refugees. “Our refugee camps are lower income communities and project buildings all around the country that many would not be living in had we not been taken into slavery generations ago. Rather than having the Israeli Defense occupation in our hoods, we have the occupation of police officers who often prove to have little disregard for our lives, being that they are not from these communities,” Pargett wrote.

Hip-hop was a unifying force for the delegation, Pargett said, commenting that Palestinians have been inspired by hip-hop in the US and use it as a tool to amplify their own voices. St. Louis-based rapper and activist Tef Poe said his experience in the camps connecting through hip-hop was the best day of his life. “A refugee camp with a bunch of people fighting for their lives and using hip hop to lift their spirits and spark the minds of the children and break down gender barriers between young girls and boys,” Tef posted to Facebook. “I spent a day with these ppl .. Most amazing day of my life. Thanks be to the Most the struggle is beautiful.”

This trip is another chapter in the recent history of Black-Palestinian solidarity. In November, a group of 10 Palestinian student activists visited Ferguson and St. Louis, meeting with people organizing in the streets. A month later, upon their return, the students hosted a series of events at their university in the West Bank to raise awareness with the Black struggle and stand in solidarity. Dream Defenders unanimously passed a resolution to support the Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement in this interval.

Moving forward, delegates expressed a desire for Black and American action in support of Palestine. “I believe the Black Lives Matter movement can benefit greatly by learning about struggles outside of the U.S., but particularly the Palestinian struggle,” said Patrisse Cullors. “I want this trip to be an example for how Black folks and Arab communities can be in better solidarity with one another.”

Cherrell Brown sees joint action as a way to global freedom. “I want us to take back things we can do in the now, as Americans, to raise awareness and action around Palestinian liberation. I want us to reimagine what society could and will look like when we’ve dismantled this white-supremacist patriarchal and capitalist society. I want us to do it together. I want to bring back these conversations and stories in hopes that it will help add to this global struggle to get free.”

The full list of delegates includes five Dream Defenders (Phillip Agnew, Ciara Taylor, Steven Pargett, Sherika Shaw, Ahmad Abuznaid), Tef Poe and Tara Thompson (Ferguson/Hands Up United), journalist Marc Lamont Hill, Cherrell Brown and Carmen Perez (Justice League NYC), Charlene Carruthers (Black Youth Project), poet and artist Aja Monet, Patrisse Cullors (Black Lives Matter), and Maytha Alhassen, a USC PhD student. Catch up with the delegation and follow their last few days using #DDPalestine on Twitter and Instagram.

Read more at EBONY <http://www.ebony.com/news-views/dream-defenders-black-lives-matter-ferguson-reps-take-historic-trip-to-palestine#ixzz43xkQs97w>

6. THE WALL: HOW DOES A BARRIER AFFECT YOU?

The Movement Grid: Hand students the grid on the next page. Make markers and pencils available. Then, read them the directions on the following page (or they can follow the directions individually; however, doing this together as a class will be more fun and effective). Following your directions, students will first draw an imaginary neighborhood; then they will find it bisected by a wall. Don't tell them that this is going to happen. This is a way to help students imagine how a wall might impact them and will help them understand the impact of Israel's Wall on Palestinians. Discuss.

Maps: Show the map of how the Wall runs mostly inside the West Bank, not around it.

-Point out where the wall juts into Palestinian land instead of following the "Green Line"—the boundary line between the West Bank and Israel (the 1948-1967 boundary between Israel and Jordan). Point out that some areas of Palestinian land are almost or completely enclosed by the wall.

-Point out that the entire West Bank is supposed to belong to the Palestinians according to international law, but that some areas are controlled by Israeli settlers, people who have moved from Israel to the Palestinian territories to build small cities and towns of their own. (See the following map that shows how much area Israel controls.) Explain that some of the settlers do not agree that the West Bank belongs to the Palestinians and that settlers believe the land should belong to Israel. Mention that the Israeli government has given settlers both official and unofficial support over the years by subsidizing housing, building roads, and offering the protection of the Israeli army, even though the International Court of Justice ruled that the settlements are illegal (2004).

Youtube: Play the Al Jazeera report "Israel's Wall Divides East Jerusalem," available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYJ_HdI55eM. 21 Jul 07: 4 minutes, 2 seconds long. Ask the class the following questions to facilitate discussion about the video:

1. The Israeli official who is interviewed affirms that the wall protects Israeli citizens from Palestinian attacks. How does the wall protect Israelis?
2. The newscaster calls the wall "a barrier to peace." Based on the interviews with the Palestinians who talk about the economic and psychological impact of the wall, how might the wall be a "barrier to peace?"
3. If the wall is a barrier to peace, can it effectively protect anyone?

Name: _____

MOVEMENT GRID

A	B	C	D	E	F
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

Movement Grid Worksheet

Name: _____

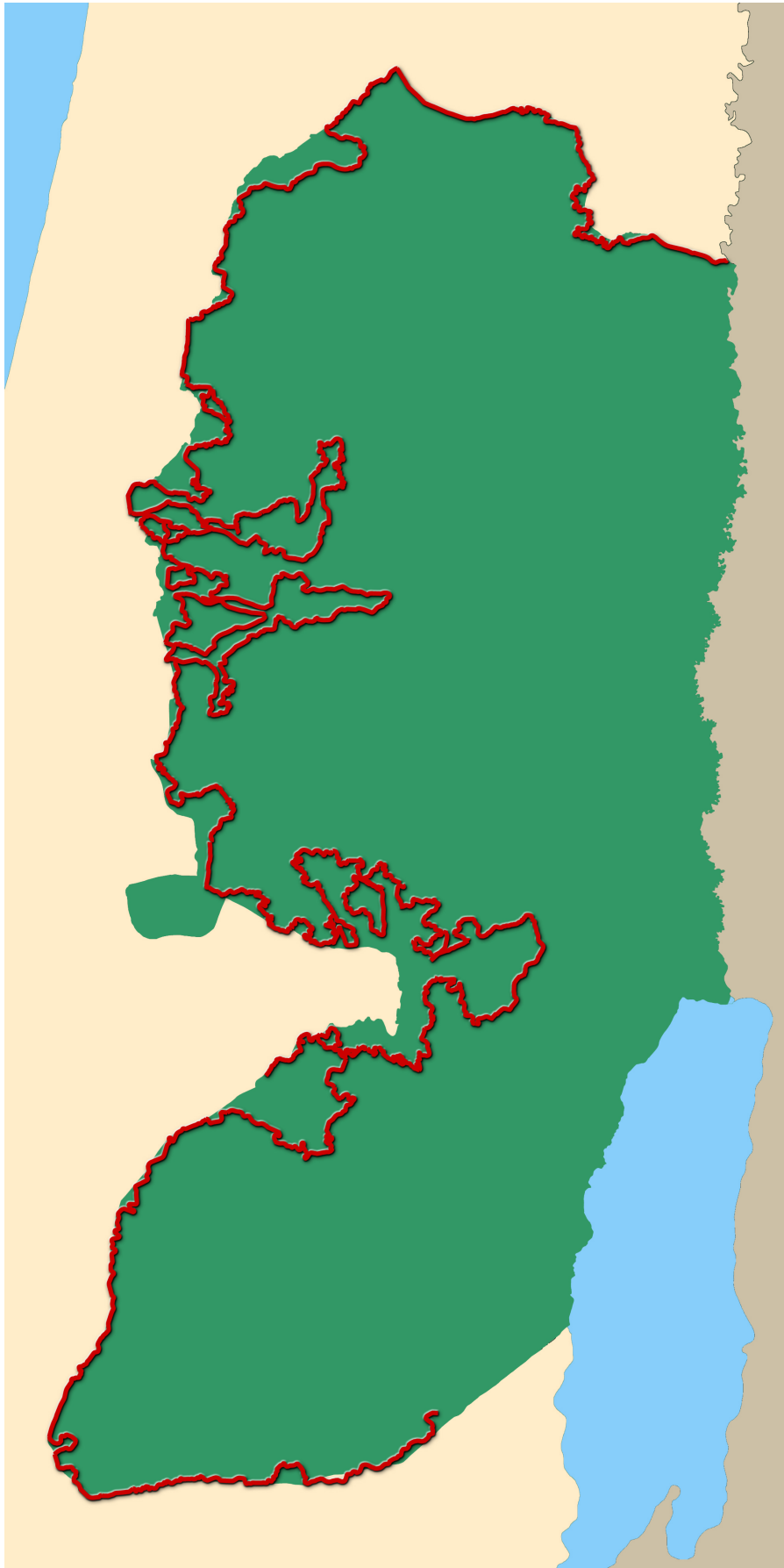
You will need a pencil and a marker for this activity. As you follow these directions, don't take up an entire square ("quadrant") with any one building. Use your pencil first:

- 1) Choose a quadrant for your house, draw your house and label it "A"
- 2) Choose a quadrant for your Grandmother's house, which is at least three quadrants away from your house, draw her house and label it "B"
- 3) Draw your school in quadrant D-4 and label it "C"
- 4) At least three spaces away from your house, draw your best friend's house and label it "D"
- 5) In quadrant B-6 draw a grocery store, label it "E"
- 6) In quadrant F-1 draw an ice cream store, label it "F"
- 7) In quadrant D-3 draw a water tower, label it "G"
- 8) In quadrant F-6 draw a shopping mall label it "H"
- 9) There is wireless internet in columns E and F, using your pencil/pen lightly shade in the two columns
- 10) In quadrant B-4 draw your most prized possession, label it "I"
- 11) Draw roads (==) that connect your house to any resources you wish to access
- 12) Using a marker, put dots on the edge of A-1, F-3, A-4, and F-6.
- 13) Using the marker, draw one continuous line to connect your dots: Draw the line from A-1 to F-3, then from F-3 to A-4, then from A-4 to F-6. This represents the building of a concrete wall 25 feet high and 9 feet wide.
- 13) Upon government orders row 4 has been confiscated: in dark colored pencil, shade in row 4.

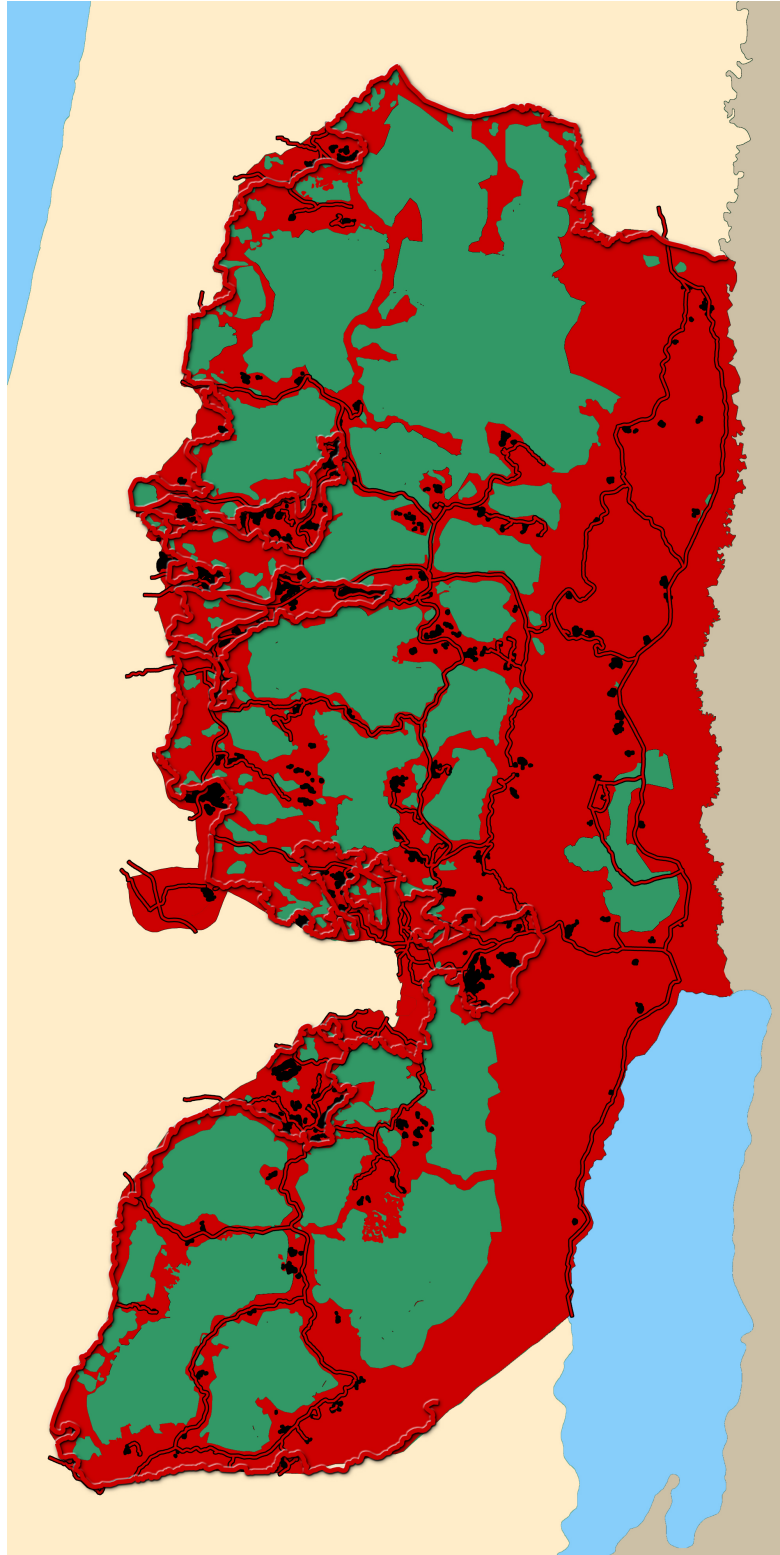
Discussion Questions (write your own answers on the back of this paper first, then discuss your answers with your group):

- 1) After the confiscation of land and the creation of barriers, what resources do you still have on the side of the wall with your house?
- 2) What resources do you no longer have that you wish you had?
- 3) How would your life be different if these barriers really existed in your neighborhood?
- 4) Are there rights that all people deserve that would be taken away from you if these barriers were constructed?

The Wall:



All Areas of Direct Israeli Control in the West Bank: Including The Wall, Settlements, Israeli-only Roads, Israeli Closed Military Areas, and Checkpoints. The West Bank is the length of Seattle to Bellingham (about 80 miles). It is 25-35 miles wide.



7. GAZA

The Israeli Assault on Gaza 2008-09 (“Operation Cast Lead”) was followed by one in 2012 and in 2014. The next one may come soon. Israeli politicians call this “mowing the grass” to maintain control of Gaza.

I. Show the maps below to emphasize how small Gaza is (25 x 5 miles). Watch *One Family in Gaza*, a 23 minute film by Jen Marlowe: <http://vimeo.com/18384109>.

In the film, a family recounts what it was like when Israeli soldiers attacked them. One son was killed, the mother and father were both injured, and their house was demolished. For two years they had to live in a tent. Although they live in desperate circumstances, the family is not overcome with despair. This becomes clear as the family tells of all the ways that they remember Ibrahim and asks questions like: “How can I build a family void of violence?” As the filmmaker says: “Palestinians in Gaza are depicted either as violent terrorists or as helpless victims. The Awajah family challenges both portrayals. Through one family’s story, the larger tragedy of Gaza is exposed, and the courage and resilience of its people shine through.”

Since the Awajahs speak in Arabic and there are subtitles, don’t ask students to take notes during the film.

II. Questions for discussion are in the handout below.

The film ends with these statistics about Israel’s 3-week assault on Gaza in 2008-09:

- 1390 Palestinians killed (of these: 318 were children),
- 13 Israelis killed,
- 3540 homes destroyed

These statistics are from B’Tselem -- an Israeli human rights organization-- and Human Rights Watch -- an international human rights organization based in the U.S.

III. Read and summarize. Below are two readings about Gaza. Students can read both, or read one and summarize/discuss with a partner or the class. This can be in class or as homework.

A. A United Nations Fact Finding Mission led by Judge Richard Goldstone* investigated the Gaza conflict. The following article from the UN News Centre describes the mission’s findings. Ask students to read the article and summarize the major conclusions of the UN Report. Ask students why the headline might lay blame equally on both sides, while the article itself focuses more on Israel. (This could lead to a discussion about how the UN is a very political body and the US, a powerful member of the UN, is a staunch ally of Israel.)

* Since the report came out, Judge Goldstone has stated that he found no Israeli military intention to harm civilians. However, the other judges who co-wrote the report have criticized Judge Goldstone’s statements and said that they are not based on fact.

B. “[The blockade on Gaza began long before Hamas came to power](#)”. For background on Gaza, and how the blockade began in 1991 and has gradually become stronger, your students can read this article. You may want to explain that Hamas is the Palestinian political party that dominates Gaza. Here is more information on Hamas from the BBC in case students ask:

Full name: Acronym for Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya (Islamic Resistance Movement) and means "zeal" in Arabic.

Origins and development: Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, committed to establishing an Islamic state in the whole of what it terms Palestine (post-1948 Israel, the West Bank and Gaza).

Since its formation 1987 it has pursued a dual function: social welfare and what it calls armed resistance. This earned respect and gratitude among Palestinians suffering under Israeli occupation, but a string of suicide bombings against Israeli civilians meant it was designated a terrorist organisation by Israel, the US and the European Union.

Its 2006 landslide win thrust on Hamas the responsibility of power and international scrutiny for the first time, but the government was not recognised by Israel or the main international mediators.

Attitude to Israel: Hamas's charter uncompromisingly seeks Israel's destruction. However, Hamas's Ismail Haniya, the prime minister of the unity government until it was dissolved in June 2007, has spoken of a long-term truce with Israel if Israel withdraws from territory occupied in 1967.

The Hamas armed wing, the Izzedine al-Qassam brigades, has participated in an informal ceasefire since 2005, but claims the right to retaliate against what it calls Israeli attacks.

Current status: Designated a terrorist group by PA donors, outside funds to the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority dried up. Banks refused to handle emergency donations fearing US penalties.

After months of wrangling with Fatah, Hamas became the senior partner in a national unity government in March 2007. But separately, it deployed a 3,000-strong shadow security force including its supporters to tackle lawlessness in Gaza. The move exacerbated tensions with pro-Fatah security agencies sparking a major show-down with Fatah.

Mr Haniya appears to be in charge in Gaza - Mr Abbas [of the Fatah party] in the West Bank. The ousted prime minister insists his sacking is illegal - as is the Fayyad cabinet, which cannot get approval in the Hamas-dominated Palestinian parliament but which is to rule by decree.

Story from BBC NEWS:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/middle_east/5016012.stm

Published: 2007/06/17 11:32:58 GMT

© BBC MMX

One Family in Gaza

Name: _____

1. How did you feel watching this movie?
2. What happened to Ibrahim, the son?
3. What is the family's life like now, after the invasion?
4. How are the children still affected by the trauma of the invasion?
5. Describe the relationship between the parents and their children.
6. Besides the poster, what are ways that the family remembers Ibrahim?
7. The father (Kamal) struggles with what message he wants to give to an Israeli, but ends by saying that he does not want any human being to go through this kind of pain. What does this say about Kamal? How would you feel and what might your message be if you had had the Awajah's experience?
8. The father wants the kind of help that will raise their "value as human beings". What do you think he means? What kind of help could that be?
9. The father also asks "How can I build a family void of violence?" What suggestions do you have? How can peaceful people deal with violence around them? Can they remove violence entirely from their surroundings?

A. Read and summarize:

UN mission finds evidence of war crimes by both sides in Gaza conflict - UN News Center

15 September 2009 – The United Nations fact-finding mission on the Gaza conflict at the start of this year has found evidence that both Israeli forces and Palestinian militants committed serious war crimes and breaches of humanitarian law, which may amount to crimes against humanity.

“We came to the conclusion, on the basis of the facts we found, that there was strong evidence to establish that numerous serious violations of international law, both humanitarian law and human rights law, were committed by Israel during the military operations in Gaza,” the head of the mission, Justice Richard Goldstone, told a press briefing today.

“The mission [concluded that](#) actions amounting to war crimes and possibly, in some respects, crimes against humanity, were committed by the Israel Defense Force (IDF).”

“There’s no question that the firing of rockets and mortars [by armed groups from Gaza] was deliberate and calculated to cause loss of life and injury to civilians and damage to civilian structures. The mission found that these actions also amount to serious war crimes and also possibly crimes against humanity,” he said.

The 575-page report [by](#) the four-person mission was released today, ahead of its presentation to the UN’s Human Rights Council in Geneva on 29 September.

“The mission finds that the conduct of the Israeli armed forces constitute grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention in respect of wilful killings and wilfully causing great suffering to protected persons and as such give rise to individual criminal responsibility,” the report’s ... summary said. “It also finds that the direct targeting and arbitrary killing of Palestinian civilians is a violation of the right to life.”

It went on to criticize the “deliberate and systematic policy on the part of the Israeli armed forces to target industrial sites and water installations,” and the use of Palestinian civilians as human shields.

On the objectives and strategy of Israel’s military operation, the mission concluded that military planners deliberately followed a doctrine which involved “the application of disproportionate force and the causing of great damage and destruction to civilian property and infrastructure, and suffering to civilian populations.”

On the firing of mortars from Gaza, the mission concluded that they were indiscriminate and deliberate attacks against a civilian population and “would constitute war crimes and may amount to crimes against humanity.” It added that their apparent intention of spreading terror among the Israeli civilian population was a violation of international law.

The report recommended that the Security Council should require Israel to take steps to launch appropriate independent investigations into the alleged crimes committed, in conformity with international standards, and report back on these investigations within six months.

It further called on the Security Council to appoint a committee of experts to monitor the proceedings taken by the Israeli Government. If these did not take place, or were not independent and in conformity with international standards, the report called for the Security Council to refer the situation in Gaza to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

It also called on the Security Council to require the committee of experts to perform a similar role with regard to the relevant Palestinian authorities.

At today's briefing, Justice Goldstone said the mission had investigated 36 incidents that took place during the Israeli operation in Gaza, which he said did not relate to decisions taken in the heat of battle, but to deliberate policies that were adopted and decisions that were taken.

As an example, he described one such incident: a mortar attack on a mosque in Gaza during a religious service, which killed 15 members of the congregation and injured many others. Justice Goldstone said that even if allegations that the mosque was used as sanctuary by military groups and that weapons were stored there were true, there was still "no justification under international humanitarian law to mortar the mosque during a service," because it could have been attacked during the night, when it was not being used by civilians.

Justice Goldstone added that the report reflected the unanimous view of the mission's four members.

The other members of the team are Christine Chinkin, Professor of International Law at the London School of Economics and Political Science at the University of London; Hina Jilani, Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and former Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Human Rights Defenders; and retired Colonel Desmond Travers, member of the Board of Directors of the Institute for International Criminal Investigations (IICI).

B. Read and summarize:

The Blockade on Gaza Began Long Before Hamas Came to Power

Wednesday, June 29, 2011 +972 Blog

The gradual closure of Gaza began in 1991, when Israel canceled the general exit permit that allowed most Palestinians to move freely through Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Since then the closure, which may soon be challenged by the second Freedom Flotilla, has become almost hermetic.

By Mya Guarnieri

EXCERPT:

Athens, Greece – The second Freedom Flotilla is slated to set sail by the end of the month in an attempt to challenge the Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip. The act will call attention to the closure that the United Nations and human rights organizations have decried as a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the collective punishment of civilians.

According to the Israeli government — and most of the mainstream media — the blockade began in 2007, following the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip. The aim of this “economic warfare” was to weaken Hamas, a group that the Israeli government had once supported. Israel also sought to stop rocket fire and to free Gilad Shalit, the Israeli soldier who has been held in Gaza since 2006.

Four years on, none of these goals have been achieved.

Israel has achieved a minor victory on one front, however. Even critics use 2007 as the start-date of the blockade, unintentionally legitimizing Israel’s cause-and-effect explanation that pegs the closure to political events.

But the blockade did not begin in 2007, following the Hamas takeover of the Strip. Nor did it start in 2006, with Israel’s economic sanctions against Gaza. The hermetic closure of Gaza is the culmination of a process that began twenty years ago.

Punitive closures begin

Sari Bashi is the founder and director of Gisha, an Israeli NGO that advocates for Palestinian freedom of movement. She says that the gradual closure of Gaza began in 1991, when Israel canceled the general exit permit that allowed most Palestinians to move freely through Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Non-Jewish residents of Gaza and the West Bank were required to obtain individual permits.

This was during the First Intifada. While the mere mention of the word invokes the image of suicide bombers in the Western imagination, it’s important to bear in mind that the First Intifada was, by and large, a non-violent uprising comprised of civil disobedience, strikes, and boycotts of Israeli goods.

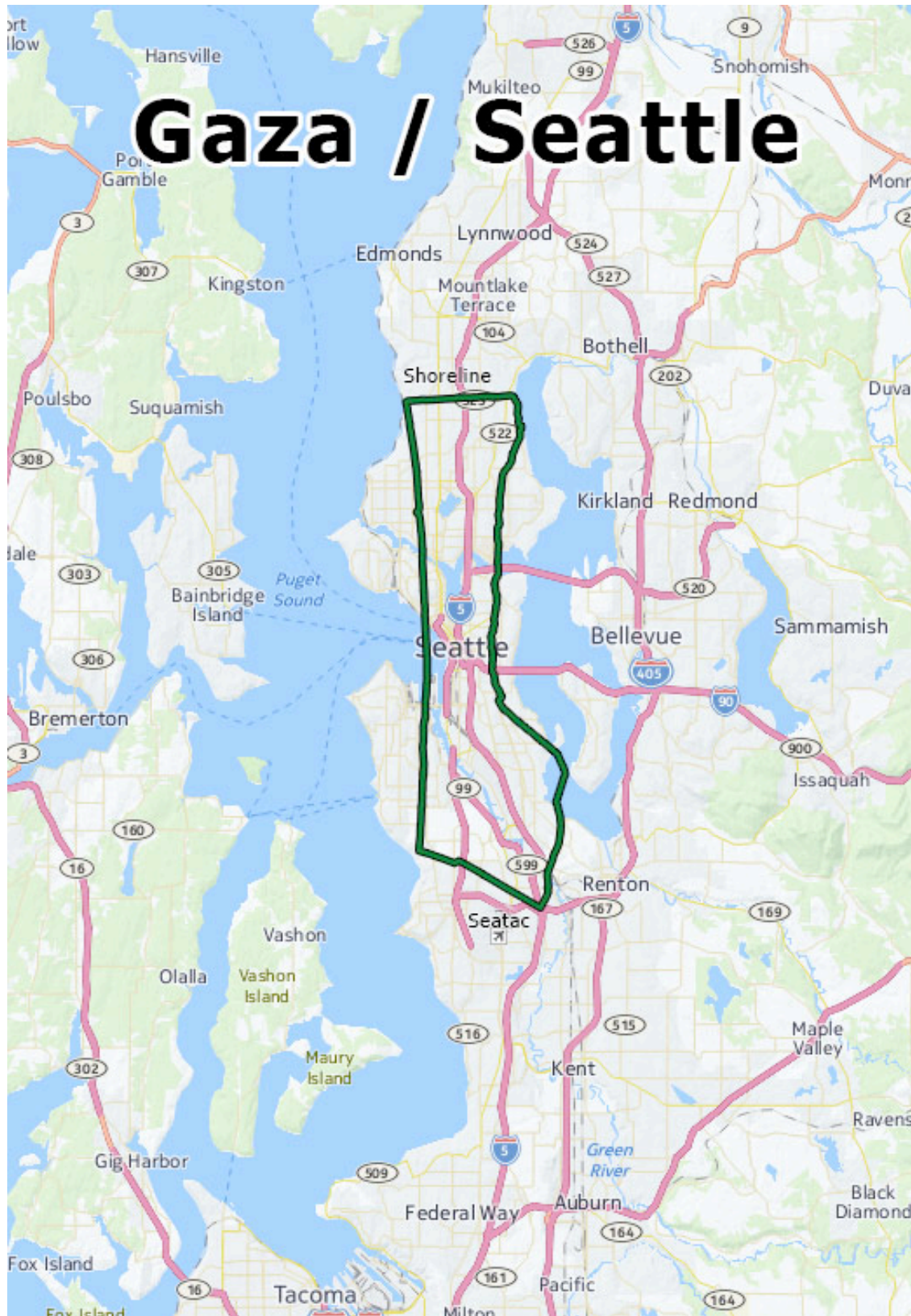
A wave of violence came, however, in 1993. It was then, Bashi explains, that Israel began closing some crossings temporarily, turning away even those who held exit permits. Because a tremendous majority of Palestinians are not and were not suicide bombers, the restrictions on movement constituted collective punishment for the actions of a few — foreshadowing the nature of the blockade to come.

Over the years, there were other suggestions that a hermetic, punitive closure was on the horizon. The beginning of the Second Intifada, in September of 2000, saw Palestinian students “banned from traveling from Gaza to the West Bank,” Bashi says. In general, travel between the Occupied Palestinian Territories came under increasing restrictions, as well.

Exports took a hit in 2003, with the sporadic closures of the Karni crossing. While the 2005 disengagement supposedly signaled the end of the occupation of Gaza, in reality, it brought ever tightening restrictions on the movement of both people and goods. And, in 2006, the few Gazans who were still working in Israel were banned from entering, cutting them off from their jobs at a time when the Strip’s economy was under even more pressure.

Gaza today: the economy has been driven into the ground. The unemployment rate is almost 50 percent and four out of every five Palestinians in Gaza are dependent on humanitarian aid. Hospitals are running out of supplies. The chronically ill cannot always get exit permits, which can lead to access-related deaths. Students are sometimes prevented from reaching their universities. Families have been shattered. Some psychologists say that the intense pressure created by the blockade – which was compounded during Operation Cast Lead – accounts for spikes in domestic violence, divorce and drug abuse.

Gaza Compared to Seattle (Seatac to Shoreline) -- Gaza is 25 miles long and about 3-8 miles wide.



8-10. The *Promises* Role Play

by Bill Bigelow

Bill Bigelow (bill@rethinkingschools.org) taught high school social studies for almost 30 years. He is the curriculum editor for *Rethinking Schools* magazine and co-directs the Zinn Education Project.

My 11th grade students at Portland's Franklin High School were captivated by the young people in *Promises*. The film entered them into the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians with greater intimacy than other parts of my Israel-Palestine curriculum. I wanted to take advantage of how well students felt that they knew Moishe, Faraj, Daniel & Yarko, Shlomo, Mahmoud, and Sanabel, the youngsters whose families they had spent time with while watching *Promises*.

The premise of this role play is that the youngsters in *Promises* have grown up. In small groups, students attempt to take on the personas of the *Promises* young people and to wrestle with some of the actual questions that confront anyone hoping to achieve a lasting peace in Palestine-Israel.

Here are some brief instructions for the role play.

Materials Needed:

- A class set of "A Roadmap to Peace?"
- Sufficient copies of the *Promises* roles so that each student within a particular group has a copy
- Six Placards that students can label with the name of the individual(s) they'll be portraying
- Markers

Suggested Procedure

1. All students should have watched *Promises* as background to the role play. Students might write interior monologues from the standpoint of one of the characters in the film, or they might write a dialogue poem from the standpoint of two of the individuals in the film. (See "*Promises* Writing" for additional writing approaches students might take. Also see the *Promises* teaching guide for an example from a Franklin High School student.)
2. Tell students to imagine that the young people they met in *Promises* are going to come together to attempt to develop a "peace plan" to address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Each of them will portray an individual they met in the film, and through negotiation and conversation will propose ways to deal with issues that thus far have been obstacles to peace and justice.
3. Count students off into six groups and have students form small circles around the room.

4. Distribute one set of roles to each group—i.e., all students in a group receive the same role.
5. Ask students to read these aloud or to themselves. Ask them to underline anything that might suggest possible “solutions” to the conflicts there. After students finish reading, they should discuss any these.
6. Distribute a copy of “A Roadmap to Peace?” to every student. Working in their small groups, students should read each question and discuss possible answers. As an alternative, it might be helpful to go over the questions as a full class, especially if students do not have a good grasp of the history. Remind them that they should attempt to remain in their role as they answer these questions. Tell students: “Make sure that each of you writes down each proposal. Try to make it as specific as possible. Remember, you’re trying to come up with a route to peace — and to justice. Don’t abandon your role, but on the other hand, remember that you want to try to reach some kind of agreement, if at all possible.”
7. As students discuss these in their small groups, circulate throughout the class and help students brainstorm ideas and clarify any historical points they might have.
8. Give students the opportunity to hold an informal negotiation session. Ask students to choose half their group as “traveling negotiators” and to move either individually or as a team to other groups to see if they might “build alliances”—work through differences or imagine new proposals. Note that it is important that travelers not meet with other travelers, that they circulate only to other students who remain seated with their groups. This is to prevent travelers from huddling together throughout the classroom and leaving remaining students in small groups with no one to speak with. A different, more sedate way to handle the negotiation session is to have travelers rotate from group to group for a specified period of time. After three sessions, members of every group will have met and discussed issues.
9. My preference for the large group assembly is to not overly script it. I simply take the issues one by one and ask for proposals and discussion, and after discussion we bring these to a vote. I tell students that whichever group makes a proposal should be prepared to speak about why they think that proposal is fair and will lead to peace. If you have introduced students to a modified version of parliamentary procedure, this is an opportunity to practice that, but the assembly works fine if it’s run more informally by the teacher. Display any agreements as they are reached.
10. Follow the assembly by asking students to write on whether the agreements reached in class could be implemented and how hopeful they are that these would, in fact, lead to a lasting peace. Encourage students to offer not just conclusions, but to explain what their opinions are based on—e.g., what they saw in *Promises* and other aspects of their

Palestine-Israel curriculum, what they know from the media, what they know from their own personal experiences trying to work through conflicts, etc. Use this writing as the basis for a class discussion.

11. In the discussion, ask students to evaluate the *Promises* Peace Conference decisions—and/or lack of decisions. Do any of these offer hope for the future? If no decisions were reached in the Peace Conference, why was it so difficult to reach agreement? Who might resist any of the agreements that you reached? Would the United States government support or oppose any of the agreements reached in class?

A Road Map to Peace?

Recently, the President of the United States once again announced that soon the administration would turn its attention to creating a “road map to peace” between Israelis and Palestinians. But what could such a road map look like?

Imagine that the youngsters from *Promises*, today in their 20s, tried to fashion such a road map. In your small group, representing one of these young people, come up with a “Peace Plan” that you would support. Afterwards, you will have a chance to meet with members of the other groups to build alliances toward a peace conference of all the *Promises* young people. Come up with proposals to deal with the following difficult issues. Be as imaginative and as audacious as you like.

1. What rights should the Palestinian refugees have? Currently, Israel allows none of the Palestinian refugees to return to Israel. They are not allowed to claim the land that was once theirs, even if it is unoccupied. Israel has not compensated refugees for the loss of their homes, the possessions and the lands they lost in 1948. Some people maintain that this is all in the past, that there was a war between Zionists (people who wanted to create Israel for Jews) and Palestinian Arabs and the Zionists won. These people believe that Palestinian refugees left on their own and are not entitled to anything. Others believe that Palestinian refugees are still refugees who are entitled to return; in many cases they still have the deeds to their land and the keys to their homes. They say that according to UN Resolution 194, refugees should be allowed to return to their lands and/or offered compensation for their expropriation by Israel. In fact, Israel’s admission to the United Nations was conditioned on Israel’s acceptance of Resolution 194. They also point out that to say that the refugees left of their own free will is misleading, that clearly Israeli armed forces were attempting to drive them out of their homes and off their land. About 750,000 people were turned into refugees, and they and their children and grandchildren still consider themselves homeless. Currently, there are about 4.9 million Palestinian refugees.

2. What should be the status of Jerusalem? Israelis say that after the 1967 war, Jerusalem was “united.” All of Jerusalem — Israeli west Jerusalem and Arab east Jerusalem — came under the control of Israel. (East Jerusalem had been administered by the Arab country of Jordan before the 1967 war.) Israel established Jerusalem as its capital. Palestinians consider east Jerusalem as their capital city. East Jerusalem also contains the “old city of Jerusalem,” including the Jewish Quarter and the Western (or Wailing) Wall (the sacred site where we saw Jews praying and inserting written prayers in *Promises*.) The old city of Jerusalem also contains the Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, sites sacred to all Muslims; and it contains the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, a site sacred to all Christians. At the present time, Israel controls checkpoints between the rest of the West Bank and Jerusalem, and for what it calls security reasons has more and more frequently not allowed Palestinians to travel the short distance between the Occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem. Israel has also surrounded Arab east Jerusalem with Jewish-only Israeli settlements, cutting east Jerusalem off from the West Bank.

3. What should be the status of the West Bank and Gaza, currently occupied by Israel? The West Bank and Gaza were and are overwhelmingly Palestinian, and represent 22 percent of what was originally Palestine. They were seized by Israel during the 1967 war. The West Bank had been administered by Jordan, and Gaza had been administered by Egypt. (Israel also seized the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt and the Golan Heights from Syria during this war.) The UN Security Council in Resolution 242 emphasized “the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security...” The resolution called for a “just and lasting peace,” based on “Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict,” and that all parties should recognize the political independence “of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.”

More than 40 years later, the West Bank and Gaza are still occupied by Israel. Israel has also encouraged tens of thousands of Jewish settlers to build homes on land conquered in the 1967 war. About 500,000 Israelis live in the West Bank and east Jerusalem. A number of these settlers are there for religious reasons, like Moishe’s family, but many more are there simply because the Israeli government offers housing subsidies and other benefits to settlers. In the 1990s, polls of West Bank Jewish settlers indicated that they would be willing to give up their homes if they were properly compensated. In 2005, Israel evacuated the last of more than 8,000 settlers from Gaza; they were given money and resettled within Israel. However, Israel continues to expand settlements in the West Bank. These settlers live in Jewish-only towns, travel on Jewish-only roads, and are subject to Israeli laws (Palestinians have harsher military occupation laws applied to them). Moreover, Israel is building a high wall deep inside the West Bank that seems to separate most of the settlers from most of the Palestinians.

4. Should the United States give aid to either the Israelis or Palestinians—or to both of them? If so, what kind of aid? The United States currently provides enormous amounts of aid to Israel — as it has for years; Israel is the largest total recipient of U.S. aid since 1945. About \$1.8 billion of military aid and \$1.2 billion of economic aid go to Israel every year. This is more than 20 percent of the total of all the foreign aid that the United States gives throughout the world. The U.S. provides everything from F-16s to attack helicopters, to tanks, to tear gas to armored bulldozers. Many Israelis feel that this aid is legitimate because Israel is threatened by its neighbors and also by Palestinian violence. Israel argues that it has always been a staunch ally of the United States and is the only vital, functioning democracy in the Middle East. Meanwhile, the United States sometimes gives Palestinians \$200 million a year. Many Palestinians argue that the United States is not an “honest broker” in this conflict, and that it is blatantly in favor of Israel. Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982, illegally occupies the West Bank, Gaza, east Jerusalem, the Golan Heights — and kills and terrorizes civilians with home demolitions, poison gas attacks, firing live ammunition without warning, deportations, detention without trial, and torture. Palestinians point out that despite all these human rights abuses by Israel, the United States still lavishes aid on the country and hardly ever even criticizes the Israeli government.

Could U.S. money go to anything that would support a peaceful and just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Think creatively.

5. What additional ideas or proposals can you make to bring about a peace and just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian crisis?

Roles:

Moishe — West Bank Jewish Settlers

Peace. Sure, you'd like to have peace between Israel and the Palestinians. But this is not your biggest objective in life. What you care most about is "Eretz Israel" — the security of greater Israel, the land given to you by God.

You live in Beit El settlement in Judea and Samaria, the area that some people call the West Bank. There is nothing secure about this place. When you were younger your best friend, Ephraim, was killed in a terrorist attack. He was minding his own business, driving on the road from Jerusalem to the settlement and he was shot by Palestinians. Killed. Just like that. Ephraim's death was perhaps the most important event in your life. If you weren't convinced before then, his murder convinced you that true security could only be found when the Palestinians were gone. "Transfer" is the polite term that is used in political discussions. Whatever it's called doesn't matter to you. What matters is that they are gotten rid of. Look, there are something like 22 Arab countries — Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, etc. — why can't any of these Arab countries accept the Palestinians? They all speak Arabic, they are all Islamic countries. Jews have only one country: Israel. Only one country with Hebrew as the official language.

Palestinians say that this is their land, that they were pushed out of Israel in 1948 and forced to live in refugee camps. They say that Israel is illegally occupying Gaza and the West Bank, that this land was stolen during the 1967 war. In the movie *Promises*, Faraj and his grandmother are sitting down going over all the deeds to their home in their village — from the 1930s and the 1940s. Look, none of that makes any difference. How can a deed, written by men, compare with the word of God? It's right there in the Torah, as you showed BZ in the movie: And God said, "I will give this land to you and your descendants." God wasn't talking to Faraj's ancestors, he was talking to yours. That one line establishes your entitlement to the land of Israel.

You know that in 2005, all 8,500 Jewish settlers in Gaza were evacuated from there by Israeli soldiers. You know that they were compensated with money and that they found other places in Israel to live. But you will never allow the army to move you. You are glad that the Israeli government seems to be continuing to encourage building of settlements in the West Bank.

Is there room for compromise? Can Jews and Palestinians live together? You don't know, but you doubt it. First thing, the Palestinians would have to stop the violence, get rid of terrorists as their leaders. You could imagine a situation where the Palestinians could continue to live in their villages in the West Bank and Gaza, peacefully, but only if they accepted the right of the settlers to also live in peace in Eretz Israel. They'd have to agree to allow the army to stay in the West Bank — because anywhere there are Jews in Israel, the army has a right to be there, too. They'd have to agree that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel, and not *their* capital. They can continue to pray at the mosques, but Jerusalem is the Jewish capital and is not to be shared.

Really, it would be so much easier if the Palestinians were not in Israel at all. The best thing would be if someone could convince them that they would lead happier, more secure, more peaceful lives if they were somewhere else. Maybe there will never be peace.

Faraj — Deheisheh Refugee Camp, West Bank

Can there be peace between Arabs and Israelis? Only if first there is justice. In 1948 your family was driven out of your home in the village of Ras Abu Ammar. Your family was forced into a crowded refugee camp in the West Bank. Israel then proceeded to demolish your village. Why? Because they wanted to send several messages to the Palestinian people: 1. You will never return to your land. 2. We now own your land; forget that you ever lived here. 3. We Israelis are powerful, you Palestinians are weak. Get used to it.

There are some who say that Palestinians should settle for the West Bank and Gaza as a new Palestinian state. But, for you, this leaves the most important question unresolved: What about the refugees? What's to become of you? You grew up hearing your grandmother talk about every detail of Ras Abu Ammar — about the olive trees, the almond trees, the valleys and rolling hills. This is where the family had lived for generations. Like so many other Palestinians, your grandmother kept the enormous key to her home. It's a treasure that will be passed from generation to generation until Palestinians have won the right to return. By contrast, your grandmother curses the day Deheisheh refugee camp was established. She has lived there more than 50 years — yes, more than 50 years — but she still feels like a foreigner, a stranger in a strange land. Another important fact to remember about the refugee situation: UN Resolution 194 states that “refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return.” International law is on your side.

Hearing your grandmother's stories about Ras Abu Ammar, you feel like you were born there. However, in reality, the first time you visited Ras Abu Ammar was when BZ sneaked you and your grandmother into Israel and you got to drive to the village. As crowded as it is, as dirty as it is, as dangerous as it is, Deheisheh refugee camp is your home. The part of you that is not convinced you'll ever be allowed to move back to Ras Abu Ammar is also the part that wants an independent and free West Bank, with no Jewish settlers and their special roads, with no Israeli soldiers, no bulldozers, no curfews, no arrests in the middle of the night, and no one stealing your water.

Yes, water — a commodity more valuable than oil, at least as far as you're concerned. Look at the statistics. Israeli settlers on the West Bank use enormous amounts of water. And whose water is it? All resources on the West Bank belong to the Palestinians. The settlers are just colonists, stealing your land and resources.

Daniel and Yarko, West Jerusalem

You are Israeli Jews living in West Jerusalem. You long for the day when you can simply ride the bus and not worry about a terrorist bomb exploding. You want to live without fear. You want to lead a normal life.

Palestinians tell Jews: Go back to where you came from. But this *is* where you came from; you were born here in West Jerusalem. You are not like those fanatics who move to the West Bank to claim Palestinian lands for a greater “Eretz Israel.” In fact, you’re not particularly religious at all. When you were a youngster, you remember telling BZ in the film *Promises* that you were more afraid of a lot of the religious Jews who prayed at the Wailing Wall in the Old City of Jerusalem than you were of Palestinians. You get tired of Jews from places like Brooklyn who move to Israel and go to the West Bank settlements for ideological reasons. They just try to stir things up and fight with Palestinians.

Jews like you ended up in Israel because of the Holocaust. The Nazis put your grandfather in a concentration camp. After the war, it was hard for Jews to get into the United States or Great Britain, but easy to get into Palestine, what became Israel. This became the only country in the world where it would be forever safe for Jews — no more pogroms, no more extermination camps, no more discrimination of any kind. The right-wingers in Israel are forever saying that the Arabs have 22 countries they can go to, the Jews have just one; so why don’t the Palestinians go to one of those 22 Arab countries? You don’t take that kind of hardline position. You believe that some kind of agreement could be worked out. But whatever agreement is negotiated, would have to guarantee that you would still have your own country. The Palestinian demand that Jerusalem should be the capital of an Arab Palestine could threaten your home.

Shlomo, Jewish Quarter, Old City of Jerusalem

You were not born in Israel. You were born in the United States, son of a prominent rabbi. Your father decided to relocate to Israel, the only Jewish homeland in the world. He didn't do this to oppress Palestinians, to occupy their land, or to knock down their homes. He did it because this is where he could truly come home to his people, to your people. Because of the Law of Return, all Jews anywhere are automatically Israeli citizens when they come to live in Israel, so it was easy for your family to come and take up residence.

You live in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem, which is in what was formerly Jordanian-controlled east Jerusalem. When the Arabs controlled this part of Jerusalem, no Jews in Israel could get in to pray at the Wailing Wall. This is a holy site to all Jews and this is why your family has come to live in this particular place in the world. Palestinians say that east Jerusalem ought to be their capital. But where would that leave you? A Jewish enclave surrounded by Palestinian soldiers in a Palestinian state? No thank you.

The Old City of Jerusalem is occupied by the Israeli army. You are a yeshiva student preparing to be a rabbi — so you will not be required to serve in the army. However, you are thankful that the army is in the Old City. If not for them you would be even more tormented by the Palestinian children who resent Jews and try to pick fights if they have a chance. It's true, Jews pick fights too, but it's the Palestinians you fear.

Judaism is a religion that emphasizes justice. You have no desire to oppress anyone and you would like to see a just resolution to this conflict between Jews and Arabs. Now, oddly, you feel relatively safe. Because you live surrounded by Arabs, no other Arab country will shoot a missile into your neighborhood. But you are also surrounded by the Israeli army, one of the most powerful in the world, and the soldiers are here to make sure that you are safe. So this is what you would like to see: Justice — but with security.

You learned in school that the Arabs have 22 countries for themselves — places like Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Syria and Lebanon. The Jews have only one: Israel. It's true that unlike you, the Palestinians were born here. But sometimes you think that it would just be easier for everyone if a rich country like the United States could just pay for the Palestinians to go to other Arab countries.

Mahmoud, East Jerusalem

Every day your heart hurts. Foreigners are controlling your country. Before 1948 when the Jews conquered most of Israel and drove Palestinians off their land and into refugee camps, this was all Arab land. There was no Israel, only Palestine — a Palestine that had been colonized and bullied by the British. A Palestine where Muslims, Christians, and Jews all lived in relative peace as neighbors. All you want is to live in your own independent country.

In your eyes, the entire state of Israel is illegal and illegitimate. Originally, in 1947 the UN established the state of Israel on about half the land it has now. What gave the UN any right to take land away from Palestinian Arabs and give it to Israeli Jews? But the Israelis went beyond what the UN had granted them, and used terror and military force to push 750,000 people out of their homes, and stole that land for an expanded Israel. As far as you're concerned, the whole of Israel belongs to Palestinians.

You live in predominantly Arab east Jerusalem. From 1948 until 1967, east Jerusalem was administered by Jordan. Then Israel conquered the whole of your city. You are now cut off from other Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza by a system of checkpoints and by the 26-foot high Israeli Wall that cuts through the West Bank. In order to travel to visit with other Palestinians, you need to wait in line for hours to get through checkpoints. You can't go to Gaza. You can't meet with Faraj in the Deheisheh refugee camp (and he needs a hard-to-get permit from the Israelis to visit you) or go to cultural events in Ramallah in the West Bank. In east Jerusalem, the Israelis regularly shut down Palestinian organizations and raid the homes of activists. In some ways, you are "privileged," because you can go to places in Israel that other Palestinians can't get to. But even these privileges make you feel cut off from your own people. You do not want privileges that are not shared by other Palestinians.

In *Promises*, there is a scene that shows jubilant Israelis dancing down the street, celebrating the theft of your country. It makes you feel so bitter to see this. You're not sure what is politically possible, and perhaps it is only a dream to wish that the state of Israel would just disappear and that all of Palestine would once again be for the Palestinians. But at the least you demand an independent Palestinian state, where all Palestinians are able to travel freely and meet with each other.

Sanabel, Jabalya Refugee Camp, Gaza*

Can there be peace between Arabs and Jews? Only if first there is justice. In 1948 your family was driven out of your home in the village of Mayroon, near the Lebanese border. Your family was forced into a crowded refugee camp in Gaza. Israel then proceeded to demolish your village. Why? Because they wanted to send several messages to the Palestinian people: 1. You will never return to your land. 2. We now own your land; forget that you ever lived here. 3. We Israelis are powerful, you Palestinians are weak. Get used to it.

Well, it has been very hard to get used to Gaza — one of the most crowded places on earth, especially in the refugee camps. You have never been to the village of your family, although you have grown up hearing so many stories that by now you can close your eyes and vividly picture every house, every tree. But the only time you are allowed into what is now Israel is to visit your father, who is imprisoned by the Israelis, even though he has never been convicted of a crime. On visiting days, you ride a Red Cross bus with all the other prisoners' families for several hours, wait several more in the hot sun with no bathrooms available, yell to your father through a wire mesh fence for 30 minutes, and then get on the bus to travel back to Jabalya refugee camp in Gaza.

Ever since the Israeli government evacuated the 8,500 Jewish Israeli settlers in 2005, Israel has seemed to feel especially free to attack Gaza whenever it wants to. The winter of 2008-09, and November of 2012 saw particularly large offensives, but almost every week, it seems that Israeli soldiers invade Gaza and shoot someone. The United Nations says that Israel has used chemical weapons illegally and you yourself saw the white phosphorus burns on several of your neighbors. Some people call Palestinians “terrorists”, but Israel is terrorizing you.

In some families, they have as many as 20 or more people sleeping on mats in one room. Your family is a little more well-off, so you are not so crowded where you live, but conditions even for the “middle class” in Gaza are getting increasingly difficult. It used to be that people — the “lucky” people — could get jobs in Israel, mostly as laborers of one kind or another. Now, almost no one is allowed into Israel, supposedly because of fears of “terrorism.” Israel complains that the militant political party Hamas is in control of Gaza, but you elected Hamas democratically. Hamas has promised to fight the Israeli occupation. When Israel refuses to let in shipments from Europe or Egypt of food or goods, you wonder whether or not the Israelis are intentionally trying to starve the Palestinians, hoping that Palestinians will be reduced to such poverty and misery that they will accept any “peace plan” that the Israelis foist on them. According to the World Bank, unemployment in the Occupied Territories is about 50 percent, even higher in Gaza. According to the U.S. Agency for International Development, Palestinian children now suffer rates of malnutrition that are higher than in Bangladesh and Somalia. Life here has never been so bad.

***Note:** As you will remember, Sanabel actually lives in the West Bank refugee camp of Deheisheh. For the purposes of the role play, I've taken the liberty of moving her to a refugee camp in Gaza.

***Promises* Writing**

Assignment: Try to engage with the issues that are raised in *Promises* in a way that is creative and leads to greater insight.

There are many possible ways to come at this assignment:

- **Dialogue Poem.** Write a dialogue poem between two of the kids in the video, between you and one of the kids in the video, between the same kid at different points in their life, between BZ (the filmmaker) and one of the kids, between someone we've studied this year and one of the kids, etc. This is wide open. Use your imagination.
- **Conversation.** Write a conversation between two people. Think of the same situations as in the dialogue poem choices above. In the conversation, you would have the individuals actually responding to one another. Perhaps write the conversation between two of the kids after they finish watching *Promises*. Or imagine Yarko and Daniel as 18 year olds; write their conversation about whether or not to resist military service in the Occupied Territories. Write a conversation between you and another student after watching the video. Write a conversation between one of the Israelis and one of the Palestinians about a recent suicide bombing or about the killing of Rachel Corrie by the Israeli army bulldozer driver.
- **Letter.** Write a letter from you to one of the kids in the video. Write a letter from one of the kids to another of the kids in the video, or between one of the kids and his/her parent. Imagine you're a Palestinian filmmaker. Write a letter to BZ critiquing his film and telling him about the film that you would have made had you had his resources and access.
- **Interior Monologue.** Write an interior monologue from the standpoint of any character or object in the video. Try to think of some of the characters that were not central to the video — e.g., Moishe's sister, Faraj's grandmother, Daniel and Yarko's grandfather.
- **Critical Review.** Write a critical review of *Promises*.
- **Mix and match any of these ideas.** Come up with another way to approach this assignment that my teacher brain was not able to come up with.