

## **Grade 7: Israel Curriculum**

Textbook: Artzeinu—An Israel Encounter-- Joel Lurie Grishaver and Josh Barkin with Ethan Bair  
(Torah Aura)

The purpose of this course is to instill in the students a connection with the Land of Israel. Students will become familiar with the map, geography, regions, cities, and climates of Israel. They will get a sense of the diversity of Israel's population. They will learn about important events and figures from the history of the State of Israel. They will explore various cities and popular tourist spots, and will learn about the culture and government of modern Israel.

Unit 1: Introduction to Artzeinu Text: 1 session, 1 hour long—Chapter 1, pages 1-3

Goals and Objectives:

1. Students will be introduced to the study of Israel and why it is important.
2. Students will gain understanding of the meaning of the title of the textbook.
3. Students will discuss what the Land of Israel means to them.
4. Students will discuss why Israel is the Jewish homeland, what this has meant through history, and why it is important to have a Jewish homeland.
5. Students will gain an understanding of the diversity of Israel's population, including the diversity of the Jewish population living there.
6. Students will be introduced to the eight places in Israel that they will be studying, and will be able to locate each of these places on the map.

### **Artzeinu Text Discussion Topics:**

- Definition of Artzeinu
- History of Israel
- Map Activity

### **Key Concepts:**

- Artzeinu

### **Key Terms:**

- halutzim
- homeland

Special Activities:

- Art project on what Israel means to me
- Watch 2 videos on the importance of being connected to Israel

Assessments:

- Oral quizzes

Unit 2: Tel Aviv: 3 sessions, 1 hour each—page 4-19

Goals and Objectives:

1. Students will understand that Tel Aviv is the New York or Miami of Israel—it is like any big city in the world except that everything is in Hebrew
2. Students will be able to locate Tel Aviv on the map.
3. Students will understand that Tel Aviv is a beachfront resort city on the Mediterranean.
4. Students will recognize that Tel Aviv is a modern city, and is the financial, cultural, fashion, and high tech center of Israel, with many suburbs and trendy neighborhoods.
5. Students will explore the importance of Independence Hall, and will read and discuss the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel.

**Tel Aviv Discussion Topics:**

- History of Tel Aviv
- Tel Aviv-Yafo
- Independence Hall and the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel
- Places to Visit in Tel Aviv-Yafo

**Key Personalities:**

- Menahem Sheinkin
- Theodor Herzl
- Meir Dizengoff

**Key Terms:**

- Zionism
- Eretz Yisrael
- British Mandate

**Assessments:**

- Class discussions

Unit 3: Dead Sea: 3 sessions, 1 hour each—pages 20-37

**Goals and Objectives:**

1. Students will become familiar with the area surrounding the Dead Sea, including its geography, recreational attractions, and historical significance
2. Students will be able to find the following locations on a map: Sea of Galilee (Kineret), Jordan River, Dead Sea, Red Sea.
3. Students will explore how water starts in the Kineret, a freshwater lake, and flows via the Jordan River into the Dead Sea, where it stops. Because water does not flow out, the Dead Sea is full of minerals. Students will recognize the Hebrew name “Yam Ha-Melach”—The Salt Sea.
4. Students will understand that the Dead Sea is the lowest point on earth.
5. Students will learn about the significance of three important historical and archaeological places to visit on the Dead Sea: Qumran, Masada, and Ein Gedi.
6. Students will discuss why the Dead Sea is a popular vacation spot for Israelis, with many recreational things to do.
7. Students will learn about the Ahava Cosmetic Center.

**The Dead Sea Discussion Topics:**

- The Geography
- Archaeology
- Qumran
- The Dead Sea Scrolls
- Ein Gedi
- Masada
- Things to Do Near the Dead Sea

**Key Personalities:**

- David
- King Saul
- King Herod
- Elazar ben Ya'ir

**Key Terms:**

- archaeology
- Dead Sea Scrolls

Special Activities:

- Watch multiple videos on Masada and the Dead Sea

Assessments:

- Develop travel brochures of the area

Unit 4: Haifa: 2 sessions, 1 hour each—pages 38-49

Goals and Objectives:

1. Students will discuss why Haifa, the third largest city in Israel, is an important seaport on the Mediterranean coast and a major industrial center.
2. Students will be able to locate Haifa on the map.
3. Students will explore that Haifa is built on the side of Mount Carmel, and has three different levels which are connected by Israel's only subway.
4. Students will learn about Haifa's historical significance as a dye-making center which produced the blue thread used to make the tallit.
5. Students will learn about Haifa as a center for high-tech companies such as IBM, Microsoft, Motorola, and Google.
6. Students will explore why Haifa is considered a place of ethnic and religious tolerance.
7. Students will explore important places to visit around Haifa, including the Atlit Museum of Illegal Immigration, Rosh Ha-Nikra, and Akko.

**Haifa Discussion Topics:**

- How Haifa is Put Together
- The History of Haifa
- The Druze and Druze Villages
- The Baha'I World Center
- Places to Visit In and Around Haifa

**Key Concepts:**

- tolerance/coexistence/pluralism

**Key Terms:**

- tekhelet
- Druze
- Baha'i

Special Activities:

- In-depth discussions on other religions: Druze and Bahi

Assessments:

- Class discussions

Unit 5: New Jerusalem: 4 sessions, 1 hour each—pages 50-67

Goals and Objectives:

1. Students will gain an understanding of New Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and center of government and politics
2. Students will be able to locate Jerusalem on the map.
3. Students will understand that Jerusalem is both the capital and largest city in Israel.
4. Students will recognize that the Jerusalem is one of the most ancient cities of the world.
5. Students will discuss that Jerusalem was originally many cities: modern Jewish Jerusalem, Arab East Jerusalem, the walled Old City of Jerusalem, Meah Shearim, and many other neighborhoods and suburbs—the city was unified as one in 1967 after the Six Day War.
6. Students will understand that all new buildings must be built out of Jerusalem stone, to preserve the historic character of the city.
7. Students will learn about Israel's parliamentary government system, and will participate in a mock election.
8. Students will learn about important places to visit in New Jerusalem, including Mount Herzl, Yad Vashem, and Machaneh Yehuda.

**New Jerusalem Discussion Topics:**

- The Capital of Israel
- The Israel Museum
- The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- Mount Herzl
- Yad Vashem
- Latrun and Mini-Israel
- Machaneh Yehudah
- The Midrachov
- Meah Shearim

**Key Personalities:**

- David Ben-Gurion
- Theodor Herzl
- Yitzhak Rabin
- Golda Meir

**Key Terms:**

- Knesset
- Prime Minister
- Nasi (President)

Special activities:

- Compared and contrasted our political and educational systems with those of Israel

Assessments:

- Students will list three things that they learned on an exit card

Unit 6: Old City of Jerusalem: 4 sessions, 1 hour each—pages 68-89

Goals and Objectives:

1. Students will become familiar with the four quarters of the Old City, and will explore the historic and religious significance of the Old City for Jews, Christians, and Muslims.
2. Students will identify the four quarters of the Old City on a map (p. 71).
3. Students will explore the significance of Christian religious sites connected to the life of Jesus.
4. Students will discuss the importance of Jerusalem as the third holiest city in Islam, its connection to the life of Muhammad, and important sites such as the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque.
5. Students will recognize the significance of the Western Wall, located in the Jewish Quarter, as the only surviving remnant of the Second Temple.

**The Old City of Jerusalem Discussion Topics:**

- The Old City of Jerusalem: Three Faiths
- History
- Armenian Quarter
- Muslim Quarter
- Christian Quarter
- Jewish Quarter
- A Few Other Sites Near the Old City

**Key Personalities:**

- King David
- King Solomon
- Herod the Great
- King Hezekiah

**Key Terms:**

- Temple Mount (Har Ha-Bayit)
- Western Wall (Kotel Ha-Maaravi)
- Second Temple
- Shuk

**Special Activities:**

- Class wrote and shared a letter of peace in honor of the Western Wall
- Videos about Israel

**Assessments:**

- Oral quizzes
- Class discussions

Unit 7: Galilee: 3 sessions, 1 hour each—pages 90-105

**Goals and Objectives:**

1. Students will gain familiarity with the northern part of Israel.
2. On the map, students will be able to locate the Galilee, the Golan Heights, and the Sea of Galilee (Kineret).
3. Students will discuss that due to its cooler climate, rainfall, and fertile valleys, the Galilee is a great place for agriculture, which is what the economy is mainly based on.
4. Students will recognize that due to its mountains and scenery, the Galilee is a great place for hiking and camping, and is a popular vacation place for Israelis.
5. Students will discuss why the Galilee is also important to Christians as the place where Jesus lived most of his life.
6. Students will learn about life on a kibbutz.
7. Students will explore the strategic importance of the Golan Heights, in terms of the military, economy, and water supply of Israel.

**Galilee Discussion Topics:**

- History of the Galilee
- Modern Galilee
- Kibbutz
- Degania Alef
- Kibbutz Lavi
- Megiddo
- Golan
- Challenge for Israel: Water Management
- Tiberias
- Katzrin
- The Banias Nature Reserve

**Key Personalities:**

- Rachel Bluwstein
- Naomi Shemer

**Key Terms:**

- Tel
- Kibbutz
- Halutzim

Unit 8: The Negev: 2 sessions, 1 hour each—pages 107-121

**Goals and Objectives:**

1. Students will become familiar with the geography, population, and potential for development in the Negev region of southern Israel.
2. Students will be able to locate the Negev on the map.
3. Students will recognize the massive size of the Negev—this region makes up 60% of Israel’s land.
4. Students will understand that the word “Negev” means both “dry” and “south”—the Negev is a dry, rocky desert in the southern part of Israel.
5. Students will recognize that the Negev is undeveloped compared with the rest of the country, containing only 8% of Israel’s population. As the country welcomes more immigrants and runs out of space, the Negev will become very important for future settlement. Many Russian and Ethiopian immigrants have already been settled there.
6. Students will explore the experiences of Ethiopian Jews.
7. Students will learn about the lifestyle of the Bedouins in the Negev, both those who remain nomads and those who live in towns.
8. Students will explore the two cities of the Negev: Beersheva and Eilat.
9. Students will learn about the Ramon Crater, which is Israel’s Grand Canyon.
10. Students will learn about Kibbutz Yotvata, which is a large producer of Israeli ice cream and other dairy products.

**The Negev Discussion Topics:**

- The Negev Today
- Bedouins
- Beersheva
- Rivkeh Alemayehu
- Eilat
- Mitzpe Ramon
- Kibbutz Yotvata

**Key Personalities:**

- Ilan Ramon
- David Ben-Gurion

**Key Terms:**

- Negev
- Bedouin
- Beta Yisrael
- Operation Moses/Operation Solomon

**Assessments:**

- Exit cards



Unit 9: Tzfat: 3 sessions, 1 hour each—pages 122-133

**Goals and Objectives:**

1. Students will gain an understanding of Tzfat's importance as a holy city, a center for Kabbalah, and a center for Sephardic Hasidic Jews.
2. Students will be able to locate Tzfat on the map and will notice that it is located in the mountains in the Galilee region.
3. Students will learn that Tzfat was one of the four holy cities of Israel, along with Jerusalem, Hebron, and Tiberias.
4. Students will learn how Tzfat became an important spiritual center when it was settled in the 16<sup>th</sup> century by scholars and rabbis who had been expelled from Spain.
5. Students will be able to describe old Tzfat as a city of narrow cobblestone alleys, a large artist colony, and famous medieval synagogues.
6. Students will learn about how the Lecha Dodi prayer and the Kabbalat Shabbat service were created in Tzfat.
7. Students will recognize the differences between Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews.
8. Students will learn about Kabbalah and Hasidism in Tzfat through the example of Natan Sharansky (p. 128).

**Tzfat Discussion Topics:**

- The History of Tzfat
- Tzfat's Artist Colony
- Natan Starsky: Kabbalah and Hasidism
- Lecha Dodi
- Tzfat: Sephardic City
- Tzfat: Ashkenazic City

**Key Concepts:**

- Hasidism
- Kabbalah

**Key Personalities:**

- Rabbi Isaac Luria (Ha-Ari)
- Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz

**Key Terms:**

- Ashkenazic
- Sephardic

**Assessments:**

- Pencil and paper quiz

Unit 10: Artzeinu: 1 session, 1 hour long—pages 134-144

**Goals and Objectives:**

1. Students will explore how what they've learned throughout the year has helped them to develop a relationship with or connection to Israel.
2. Students will identify reasons why they should care about Israel: It's the Jewish state and all Jews are connected, the Bible happened there, they speak Hebrew there, it is the center of Jewish life, it is the center of Jewish culture.
3. Students will discuss Israel in the news and will find articles about Israel in the newspapers.
4. Students will listen to modern Israeli music.
5. Students will learn about the origins of Israeli folk dancing and will learn a dance.
6. Students will discuss Israeli shopping and products, and Israeli products will be brought to class.
7. Students will learn about how Israeli foods originated in places all over the world and were bought when Jews immigrated to Israel. Students will sample popular Israeli foods.
8. Students will discuss why it is important to travel to Israel, and different options for making a visit: a family bar/bat mitzvah celebration, a high school program, a college year abroad program, a volunteer program on a kibbutz or an archaeological dig.

**Artzeinu Discussion Topics:**

- Why Care About Israel?
- Israel and the News
- Israeli Music
- Israeli Dance
- Israeli Things
- Israeli Food
- Plan a Trip to Israel

**Key Concept:**

- Jewish State

**Key Terms:**

- Hummus
- Falafel
- Tehina
- Shakshuka
- Schnitzel
- Pomelos

**Assessments:**

- Discussion of what Israel means to the Jews here in America