



Topic Summary

In the aftermath of the Six Day War, Israel yearned to define its narrative and its standing on the global stage. As a member of the European Broadcasting Union, Israel first competed in the Eurovision music contest in 1973. Over the last fifty years, Israel's top performers have been selected to compete almost 95% of the time, winning the contest four times, most recently in 2018 when Netta dominated with her breakthrough song "Toy". Throughout the years the process of selecting Israel's representative has evolved, with each selection revealing how Israel both wants to be perceived and wants to promote its culture, quality of stars and national narrative through a combination of lyrics, music and performance. As Israel's population became more diverse, and the style of music evolved, new faces, voices and messages have represented Israel to Europe and the world beyond.



Essential Questions

1. How do songs get selected by the Israeli public for the Eurovision?
2. How does the selection progress ensure representation?
3. Why is it important that Israel partake in a European contest?



Standards

[National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies \(NCSS\)](#)

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[National Core Arts Anchor Standards](#)

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Integration Opportunities

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1. Social Science
 - Human Geography
 - Cultural Anthropology
2. Jewish Studies
 - History of Israel
3. Music
 - Cultural Context
 - Making Connections
 - Analysis, Evaluation, and Critique



Create Project

The Eurovision topic's **Create** project asks students to record a newscast reporting on a new regional musical competition for Israel to represent itself to.

This project addresses the Jewish values of **being a light for all nations (Or La'Goyim)** that can be explored in the following texts:

1. I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, And have taken hold of thy hand, And kept thee, and set thee for a covenant of the people, For a light of the nations. (Isaiah 42:6)
2. And we, here, the Jews in our homeland, must also ask ourselves if Israel can help with the advancement and development of the countries of Asia and Africa? This is both a moral and political question for Israel. And from both standpoints, there is no doubt that Israel is obligated to view assistance to those countries as a great historic mission that is required for Israel no less than the benefit that it gives to the countries it assists. (David Ben Gurion)

The handout for the Eurovision's **Create** project can be [downloaded here](#).



Student Sharing

To complete the **Create** project, students will create a link of their work in YouTube or Google doc. You can have your student send a direct link to you. Additionally, your students will have the opportunity to **share** in a community Padlet in the Share module, which you can view and comment on.

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Classroom Learning Activities

- Explore other moments of Israel's representation, such as in the Olympics, in Israeli basketball, or in the World Fair. Why is it important for Israel to be represented and recognized for its accomplishments?
- Have students visit <https://www.jta.org/> and find articles where Jews are represented, either in film, music, art, theatre, sports or other categories (like Spielberg in movies, or Salk in medicine). Why is it important that the accomplishments of Jews in America be recognized and lauded by the Jewish minority and the non-Jewish majority? Does it elevate Jews' status or does it foment hatred and jealousy?
- Project yourself 20 years into the future: What do you want to be and what major accomplishments do you want for yourself? How do you want to be recognized for these? Write a newspaper article that will describe you and your accomplishments.



For Parents to Discuss with their Children

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Questions to ask children at the "dinner table"

- Why do you think it is so important for Israel to represent itself to European countries?
- What choice of the selected artists would you have changed to better represent Israel?
- Which of Israel's four Eurovision winners would you choose to take on a world tour?
- What would you want to be recognized for in the future and how important would it be that you are recognized as Jewish?



Topic Summary

As early Zionists dreamed of a country of their own, they had to manifest a culture to reflect this new national identity and society. As the young nation evolved into a state, music and song became a valuable tool to glorify Israel and its redemptive narrative. New songs were written, many based on the pioneer's poetry, to canonize and be associated with cultural moments. As time passed the performance and collective sings of these songs helped to memorialize key moments in Israeli history. As the nation evolved, new songs that represented individual narratives came to represent the diversifying character of the Israeli people, often diverging from the state's mainstream narrative.



Essential Questions

1. How is Israeli music a reflection of Israeli history?
2. How does Hatikvah reflect the diversity of Israel's people?
3. How does music cultivate collective memory of hope and loss?
4. How are national myths propagated and questioned?



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Create Project

The Nation's Song topic's **Create** project asks students to create a playlist of songs that will unite the diverse Israeli and Jewish populations to memorialize a key moment of Israel's history?

This project addresses the Jewish value of Collective Memory (zachor) and can be explored in the following texts:

In each generation, every person should see himself as if he personally came out of Egypt. (Haggadah)

Remember [Zachor] the sabbath day and keep it holy. (Exodus 20:8)

The handout for the Nation's Songs' **Create** project can be [downloaded here.](#)



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Classroom Learning Activities

- Using the [CIE interactive timeline](#), identify key moments in Israel's history – how do timelines serve as tools for understanding?
- Compare and contrast how American music has influenced or memorialized key moments in this nation's history, (eg. look back at the music of the Vietnam War). Select an event and create a thoughtful playlist that would capture how American society felt about this event and its aftermath.
- Play Israeli music in the background as students are engaged in other activities, so that when it comes time to teach a song, it is already familiar, and so that it becomes part of their immersive culture in your school. Here are some great resources for Israeli music across genres and history:
 1. [Israeli Music YouTube Channel](#) (livni2) Array of Israeli music videos and songs: from the 1950s forward-destination YouTube channel for Israeli music videos, across eras and genres.
 2. [Galei Zahal \(Israeli Defense Forces Radio Station\)](#) Contemporary Hebrew pop music-Galei Zahal is a national radio station. It includes news and educational programs; a superb window into Israeli popular culture, can be streamed on any device-give students a chance to listen to the songs on live radio that many Israelis are tuning into at that moment.
 3. [Radio Ha'Mizrah \(Popular Mizrahi/Sephardic Israeli Music Radio Station\)](#) Middle Eastern Israeli pop music- Offers Sephardic/Mizrahi songs from the late 1970s until today.
 4. Contemporary Hebrew pop music-"Galgalatz" is a national radio station. It includes news and educational programs; a superb window into Israeli popular culture, can be streamed on any device-give students a chance to listen to the songs on live radio that many Israelis are tuning into at that moment.



For Parents to Discuss with their Children

Topic Summary

As early Zionists dreamed of a country of their own, they had to manifest a culture to reflect this new national identity and society. As the young nation evolved into a state, music and song became a valuable tool to glorify Israel and its redemptive narrative. New songs were written, many based on the pioneers' poetry, to canonize and be associated with cultural moments. As time passed the performance and collective sings of these songs helped to memorialize key moments in Israeli history. In later decades, new songs that represented individual narratives came to represent the diversifying character of the Israeli people, often diverging from the state's mainstream narrative or offering a critique.

Questions to ask children at the "dinner table"

- What Israeli songs does your family know how to sing together?
- What is the role music plays in your lives to remember the past?
- What is your role/responsibility to know and teach others about Israel's history and culture? How will you go about it?



Topic Summary

The Zionist dream compelled many Eastern Europeans to flee and join those living in Palestine ready to build a new homeland. Along with these waves of pioneers, other Jews started immigrating to Palestine on their own accord from outside of Europe. After the establishment of the State of Israel, Israel's government provided support to North African and Middle Eastern Jews who were expelled or persecuted from their homes, turning them into refugees needing asylum. These immigrant groups brought with them rich cultural heritage and religious traditions that often clashed with their primarily Ashkenazi hosts over core values of Marxism, Socialism, religious attitudes and practices and economic and education backgrounds. These groups often found themselves isolated or discriminated against in Israeli society, so their music became both a bridge into Israeli culture and a way to maintain their origin culture and identity. New generations became more assimilated and established in Israel, and these immigrant groups found creative tension in whether to choose to integrate into the mainstream culture by adapting or assimilating into the dominant culture, or returning to the roots of their parents and grandparents origin countries.



Essential Questions

1. How do immigrant groups retain their unique origin identity while becoming a part of a new nation?
2. How does immigrant culture and identity evolve over generations?
3. Why do different immigrants integrate and assimilate differently into the mainstream culture?
4. How do immigrants and their descendants become accepted and valued for their cultural contributions?



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Create Project

The Immigrant's Song topic's **Create** project asks students to create a presentation that details a Jewish immigrant group to America's music they would want to preserve, adapt or assimilate?

This project addresses the Jewish value of transmitting the tradition and maintaining the customs of past generations.

These values can be explored in the following texts:

Transmission to the next generation (Ve'Shinantam LeVaneicha)

- Impress them upon your children. Recite them when you stay at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up. (Deuteronomy 6:7)

The custom of our forefathers is in our hands (Minhag avoteinu beyadeinu)

- The Rabbis created a principle that for Jewish law and practice we follow the custom of how our parents practiced.

The handout for the Immigrant's Song's **Create** project can be [downloaded here](#).



Student Sharing

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Classroom Learning Activities

Interview a family or community member (living biography project) to better understand the challenges, contributions and successes of being an immigrant.

- Where did your family come from? Why did they move and in what historical context? Were there push or pull factors?
- What items at home remind your family of their country of origin? Why were those important artifacts to preserve and hand down from one generation to the next?
- Use the “Heirloom Circle” or “What’s Your Story” activities as a tool for talking about heirlooms in the classroom or as a project for students to do with their families.



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Questions to ask children at the “dinner table”

- How important is it for your family to retain the traditions of their origin countries?
- Do you think 2nd and 3rd generation immigrants should make a point to preserve their parents’ and grandparents’ culture, try to adapt it into their country’s culture or assimilate into the mainstream culture?
- What music that has come from immigrant groups to America has impacted you? What about its style and approach do you enjoy? In what ways does it challenge your appreciation of popular American music?



Topic Summary

The State of Israel was formed as a socialist government leading to many institutions to be publicly run. This included the radio and television, thus limiting distribution of content to the artists, performers and messages aligned with the government's interests. As new forms of music arrived from America and through immigrant groups, new musical styles and individual voices arose. With the privatization of the media industries, new opportunities for these new voices increased the popularity of alternative music and the mainstreaming of individual perspectives, even those that questioned established narratives, perspectives and tropes of Israeli life.



Essential Questions

1. How does Israeli Hip Hop differ from US Hip Hop?
2. What role do new styles of music play in the diversification of performers?
3. How do the messages of the new alternative music differ from Israel's traditional music?
4. How do the first pioneers of Israel's alternative music scene lay the groundwork and contrast with the later waves of alternative artists?



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Create Project

The New Voice topic's **Create** project asks students to create a video with audio commentary of a selected group of performers that best represent Israel's modernity? Or they can create an audition tape of their own performance of songs from their chosen performers.

This project addresses the following Jewish values that can be explored in the following texts:

Protesting injustice

1. Do not stand idly by (Leviticus 19:16)
2. Justice, justice shall you pursue, that you may thrive and occupy the land that the LORD your God is giving you. (Deuteronomy 16:20)

Welcome the stranger

1. When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not wrong him. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens; you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I the LORD am your God. (Lev.19:33-34)
2. You too must befriend the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. (Deuteronomy 10:19)

The handout for the Eurovision's **Create** project can be [downloaded here](#).



Student Sharing

To complete the **Create** project, students will create a link of their work upon publishing their recording on [EdPuzzle](#) or [YouTube](#). You can have your student send a direct link to you. Additionally, your students will have the opportunity to share in a community Padlet in the **Share** module, which you can view and comment on.

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Classroom Learning Activities

1. Explore an artist with fame and success in America but with deep roots and ties to their country of origin (like Rihanna, Gloria Estefan, Rita Moreno and Carlos Santana).
 - How do they go about bridging the cultural divides and celebrating their origins while experiencing/overcoming prejudice and stereotypes?
 - Do you think they change the majority opinions of what is acceptable and popular effectively?
 - How do they view their role and responsibility and how do they use their fame?
2. Why did Hip Hop in America become a part of mainstream culture?
 - Who were the primary figures responsible for that transition and why is it important for understanding American society today?
3. Pick a song with staying power. At the time that it was released, how was it a “new voice”?
 - What did the lyrics convey that made it non-mainstream at the time?
 - Which songs of new voices will fade from history and which do you think will have staying power? Why?





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Questions to ask children at the "dinner table"

1. Do you think Israelis should celebrate and promote music that questions the State of Israel's values and beliefs of Israel's founders?
 2. Why do you think Hip Hop and rap music became so popular in Israel starting in the 1990s?
 3. Israel's embracing New Voices is a lot about the value it places on freedom of speech in a democracy, and one's ability to express one's dismay with how you perceive whether the country is living up to its ideals and potential.
- When and where should we as American Jews criticize Israel in any way?
 - Why is it healthy to express this and when/where can it be detrimental?
 - How do you take into consideration intent (engaging in critique because we care and want to improve vs. anti-Zionist/anti-Israel expressions) and audience (other Jews/non-Jews/etc.)?
 - How does this parallel America's contemporary challenges around freedom of speech and expression?

