

ISRAEL STORY'S *MIXTAPE*

THE STORIES BEHIND ISRAEL'S ULTIMATE PLAYLIST

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE



Photo Courtesy Israel Story

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ACCESS TO ISRAEL STORY MIXTAPE EPISODE 1

<https://israelstory.org/en/episode/36-mixtape-part-hope/>

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

Music and song play a central role in Israel's culture. From the early pioneers, who adapted their songs to their new homeland, to the contemporary sound and verse of today's poets and lyricists—The playlist evolves to reflect the changing history of Israel.

As educators, we recognize the power of music. These materials harness that power to inspire connections to the land and people of Israel through their music. Israeli music has the power to connect us.

Mixtape, an Israel Story podcast series, provides an in-depth exploration of Israel's ultimate playlist. This four-part musical journey takes us through anthems, songs of yearning and songs of war, and peace, showcasing the stories behind some of Israel's most iconic tunes. Mixtape offers a multimedia experience, using sound (podcast), visual (YouTube videos), written text, and an online presence.

We offer this educational guide to support educators as they employ Israel Story Mixtape as a tool for connecting to Israel's accomplishments and complexities.

HOW TO USE MIXTAPE

Educators have been using podcasts as a classroom tool for more than a decade—but as their popularity continues to grow, educators are finding new ways to bring them into the classroom.

Podcasts bring stories to life, exposing us to different narratives and opinions, enriching our knowledge and providing an opportunity for critical inquiry.

There are many ways to explore the rich content that Mixtape offers. Each episode can be discussed in one session or broken into several lessons, depending on time and audience. Learners can listen on their own or together, during class. Educators can facilitate discussions on key issues, assign individual exploration or implement activities.

To help you plan lessons, we include:

- Background and Summary Songs
- Speaker / Personality Description and Bios
- Themes
- Discussion Questions
- Recommended Activities
- Resources
- Songbook—heb/eng/transliteration

We encourage you to put your own spin on lessons using these materials as a foundational source.

In this four-part miniseries, Mixtape, Israel Story sets out to explore Israeli society through the stories behind some of the country's most iconic tunes.

“When it comes to Israel, everything is complicated. Politics are complicated, religion is complicated, democracy is complicated, the conflict is complicated. Even the complications are complicated... But there is (seemingly) one island within Israeli society that escapes complexity, one thing that brings us together more than it divides us: Israeli music. Or so, at least, we thought.”

—Mishy Harmon, Israel Story Host

PROLOGUE: UNICORNS AND SING-ALONGS UNDERNEATH THE SKY (00:00-15:09)

Host Mishy Harman talks to Mitch Cohen, the international director of Ramah Camps, and author David Grossman, the winner of the 2017 Man Booker International Prize. They discuss their perspectives in response to the question, “to understand what is so unifying about Israeli music?” Harman then brings these theories to David Broza, who weaves in commentary around his 1991 hit song “Mitachat La’Shamayim” (“Under the Sky”).

ACT 1: “HATIKVAH” (15:10-end)

Israel’s national anthem, “Hatikvah” (“The Hope”) has accompanied Israel from the very start. It is sung at school ceremonies, state affairs, sports events, and military marches. But that song doesn’t mention God, the Bible, or any triumph of modern Israeli history. Zev Levi takes us on a journey to examine who this song represents, and—importantly—who it leaves out. Yochai Maital edited this story

Note: This episode can be easily divided into 2 parts of approximately 15 minutes each

SONGS

- “Yihiye Tov” (“Things will be Better”)—David Broza
- “Mitachat La’shamayim” (“Under the Sky”)—Meir Ariel, David Broza
- “Hatikvah” (“The Hope”)—Naftali Herz Imber

PERSONALITIES

DAVID BROZA—*singer songwriter*

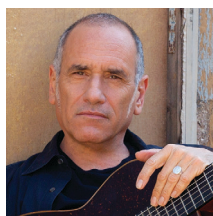


Photo Courtesy Ilan Besor

Broza’s music reflects a fusion of the three countries in which he was raised: Israel, Spain and England. Since 1977, when his hit song “Yihiye Tov” first hit the airwaves, David Broza has been working to promote a message of peace. In 2013, Broza began work on a new project—bringing together Israeli and Palestinian musicians for 8 days and nights to work side-by-side in an East Jerusalem recording studio. The result was “East Jerusalem West Jerusalem,” a collection of thirteen songs (and a documentary film) that blends culture, language and style into a powerful statement about collaboration and coexistence.



Photo Courtesy Ariel Jerozolinski

DAVID GROSSMAN—*author*

Grossman has been publishing since 1979 and was awarded the Man Booker International Prize in conjunction with his frequent collaborator and translator, Jessica Cohen, for his novel *A Horse Walks Into a Bar*. In 2018, he was awarded the Israel Prize for literature. Grossman is an outspoken peace activist.



Photo Courtesy Wiki Commons

EDWIN SEROUSSI—*musicologist*

Seroussi is an Israeli musicologist known for his research and publications on Jewish musical traditions in North Africa, the Middle East and Israeli popular music. He is the director of the Jewish Music Research Centre at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem



Photo Courtesy Wiki Commons

RIFAAT TURK—*athlete and politician*

Turk is a former soccer player and team manager, and a former deputy mayor of Tel Aviv. Turk was the first Arab-Israeli to play for the Israel national team and to represent the country at the Olympic Games.



Photo Courtesy Wiki Commons

ABBAS SUAN—*athlete*

Suan was considered by many as one of the best Israeli soccer players. Now retires, this Arab Israeli athlete is from Sakhnin in the Galilee



Photo Courtesy Wiki Commons

URI AVNERY—*activist, author, journalist, peace maker*

Avnery was an Israeli writer, politician, and founder of the Gush Shalom movement. A member of the Irgun (Jewish underground military organization, based on revisionist zionism, active between 1931-1948) as a teenager, Avnery sat for two terms in the Knesset from 1965 to 1974 and from 1979 to 1981. He was also the owner of the news magazine *HaOlam HaZeh* from 1950 until it closed in 1993. Uri Avnery passed away shortly after the podcast was recorded in August 2018.

THEMES

1. **SHIRA BE'TZIBUR**—public sing-alongs, a quintessential Israeli activity

Shira Be'tzibur, which literally means, singing in public, is a staple of Israeli culture. It was a favorite activity of the pioneers (halutzim) of Israel, who would pass out song sheets (shironim), take out a guitar or accordion and sing around the campfire. In recent years, Shira Be'tzibur regained momentum both in Israel and abroad. Shira Be'tzibur events remain an important social

construct that bring people together, strengthening communal and emotional unity. For many Israeli and Jews who live abroad it also evokes nostalgia for the less complicated relationship with Israel. The most current and exciting form of Shira Be'tzibur is a social-musical initiative called Koolulam, which brings together a diverse group for a few hours of learning and singing together.

“The project enables its participants to enjoy the feeling of togetherness through a deep communal experience—our sounds and voices coming together to create a social choir, full of hope and optimism.” (Source: Koolulam Facebook)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Do we ever sing together? When/during what occasions do we sing together?
- What happens when we sing together? What does it look like? What does it sound like?
- What happens when we sing Israeli songs together?
- How does singing with other people make you feel?

2. **THE ZIONIST HISTORY OF “HATIKVAH,”** Zionist Congress, 1945 Bergen Belsen liberation

This is an opportunity to delve into the Zionist Movement history and the origin of “Hatikvah” as its anthem.

“In 1897, at the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, the delegates joined in a rousing rendition of the song “Hatikvah.” The beloved Zionist hymn would come to be known among generations of Jews around the world as the Jewish national anthem. Yet it was not until 2004 that the Israeli government officially designated “Hatikvah” as the country’s national anthem. Between these two facts lies the curious tale of one of the most important songs in modern Jewish history.”

Read more about ‘How “Hatikvah” (“The Hope”) Became Israel’s National Anthem’

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/hatikvah/>

About “Hatikvah”:

Herzl didn’t like “Hatikvah” especially because Imber, a poet of ill repute, wrote it. Uri Avnery stated that “Hatikvah” is not an appropriate anthem for the modern state of Israel: “...the anthem has nothing to do with Israel. It was composed by an unimportant poet, and it is about Jews somewhere abroad, who are longing for the Land of Israel.”

Arab members of Israeli soccer teams think that “Hatikvah” does not represent them and therefore they do not sing it when it is played. Rifak Turk says that “Hatikvah” is a song for Jewish people. “It’s about a Jewish soul (nefesh yehudi), but I’m not a Jewish soul, I’m an Arab. I’m an Arab soul.”

“Ha’tikvah is song for Jewish people. Nefesh Yehudi. Nefesh Yehudi. Ani lo nefesh yehudi. I am Arab! Ani nefesh... Arab nefesh.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Is “Hatikvah” a suitable anthem for Israel? Why? Why not?
- Is “Hatikvah” an anthem for all its citizens? Who is left out?
- Should Israel keep “Hatikvah” as its anthem or change/replace it?
- And if so, which words would you change?

Related: Colin Kaepernick, an NFL star player, ignited a debate over kneeling or sitting in protest during the national anthem in 2016. Critics think that “taking the knee” is unpatriotic and players should be fired from their teams. Supporters think that not standing for the national anthem is a legal form of peaceful protest, which is a First Amendment right.

- How do you feel about his actions?
- Is he justified in his action? Why or why not?
- What is another way to peacefully protest?

RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES

1. Ask learners to create a collage/drawing/artform of the two “Jerusalems” depicted in the two songs.
2. Facilitate a comparison of the two songs: What is similar? What is different? Pay special attention to the “conversation” Meir Ariel has with Naomi Shemer throughout the song, but especially in the last refrain. What is his final message to the listeners?
3. Dual Narrative: Have learners write a short story from two different perspectives using two different narrators. This can be a simple story from their everyday lives, an imaginary situation, or anything else that presents an opportunity to explore this creative writing technique. Have learners present their stories and explain their process and what they have learned from the experience.