

Eyewitness in the classroom: Human rights in Palestine & Israel today

The heart of this learning workshop is a presentation by an eyewitness speaker from the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI). The activities below can stand alone, but are designed to complement that presentation by priming learners with an understanding of the Palestinian and Israeli context and international law.



In the classroom, there will be a teacher and an Ecumenical Accompanier (EA) as a guest speaker; they can plan and deliver together.

Don't have an Ecumenical Accompanier?

If you're a teacher and you want to book a talk, contact eappi@quaker.org.uk to book a school speaker with experience as a human rights observer.

Learning outcomes

- Learn about the context and experiences of Palestinians and Israelis.
- Learn about human rights and international law, and discuss how they relate to Palestine and Israel.
- Practise speaking and listening enquiry to evaluate choices about violence and nonviolence.

Age

This workshop is for learners aged ten and upwards – it is equally interesting and challenging for adults.

Timing

This lesson should take 55–90 minutes depending on how much content you use – some of the activities are more essential than others. Read the descriptions to decide on your final plan.

Resources

- Data projector, laptop and speakers, access to internet
- Initial stimulus images (optional)
- Introductory Powerpoint* and presentation EAPPI presentation
- Printed handouts (in this document): ['Who's who' cards](#) (cut-up in envelopes); [international law mimes](#); [nonviolence spectrum cards](#).

*Download the introductory Powerpoint presentation and lesson plan from: www.quaker.org.uk/resources/free-resources/teaching-resources-2

Lesson sequence

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1. Introduction (5 minutes)

From the beginning, stoke students' curiosity and imagination. Coming into a room with interesting things to look at is a good way to do this.

Suggestions

- Initial stimulus images: select five to ten images which you can print and put around the room.
- This aerial video from al-Jazeera displays locations including sections of the West Bank barrier and Jerusalem:
<https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/PalestineRemix/drone-footage-maps.html>.
- If you have any objects you can use these in the same way – for example a refugee key (or one that could be), a bottle of Zaytoun fair trade olive oil, a yamulkah, hijab or kaffiyeh, your EA notepad, your EA jacket.
- Display a powerpoint slide with a person your EA presentation focuses on, and a question, such as 'Why can't Tony see his family?'.

2. Optional: gathering learning (10 minutes)

This is good practice for getting to know a group and their starting point, but you may not have time if you only have one hour. In that event, chat with the teacher about the group's understanding beforehand.

Introduce yourself briefly – you can go into more detail about EAPPI later. Explain that you are going to be exploring Palestine and Israel, but you would like to know what the group knows already.

The purpose of this is to gauge what your group already knows and believes, what might need clarifying and what they can discover next.

Have a 'go around' in which you pass an object as a 'talking piece'. When a person takes a turn, they can share:

- their name
- something they know/believe about Palestine and Israel
and/or
- a question they have.

It's fine for someone to pass if they don't have something to share or ask.

If the group is too large or you're limited on time, say that you will take five people's suggestions. To warm this up, try think-pair-share, where students take a silent moment to reflect, then talk to a partner about it.

Record the statements and questions separately on a board or flip chart. Don't try to answer the questions, but make clear the hope is to answer as many as possible in the workshop. Perhaps they can answer the questions later! You can seek to share answers to the questions as you go along.

Clarify as you go

Some statements you hear from young people might be only partially true or inaccurate. Use the act of recording to clarify things. You might hear, for example "They're at war"; you might say "You're right – there have been several wars between Israel and neighbouring countries, and there is violence that affects Palestinians and Israelis today."

It's OK if you don't know the answer to a question – just say so.

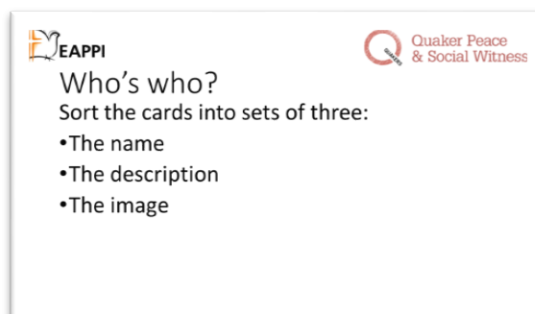
Learners will be grappling with new words and ideas, but need to feel safe enough to try to speak.



Do not jump on young people if they use dehumanising or stereotypical language, but rather note it and say "I might use different words about that. We'll talk about why that's important in a moment (the next activity explores language of identity)".

3. Who's who? (5 minutes)

This sorting task helps familiarise young people with the different terms used about people in the Middle East.

Distribute envelopes with sets of cards for pairs or small groups to sort out. They should match a label, a description and an image.



Who's who?
Sort the cards into sets of three:

- The name
- The description
- The image

To make it faster/easier you could remove some of the cards or put different combinations in different envelopes.

It doesn't matter if they don't quite finish; a sense of urgency is good.

Debriefing this activity is important, which you can do using the short presentation that follows.

4. Short overview presentation (10 minutes)

This flows on from 'Who's Who?', beginning with maps. The first simply gives a sense of scale, so students can relate Palestine Israel to their own locality.

The second map allows you to elicit through questioning what the different terms in "Who's who?" describe and distinguish Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

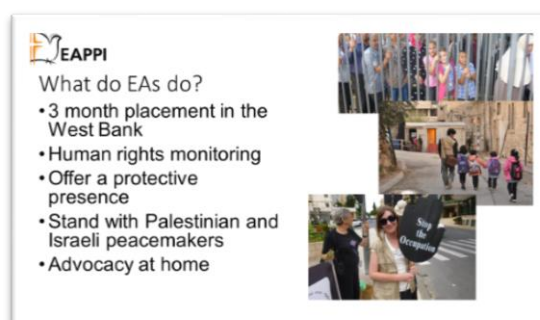


Here you may also want to highlight where you have been.

Take this opportunity to explore how you want to use respectful language about people. Ask students why it would be a problem to say "The Muslims are angry" or "Jews think they own the land". You could relate to the complexity of identities like 'British' – what does it mean?

This is also a good opportunity to introduce the work of EAPPI with the slides.

Having agreed with the class you will aim to use respectful language and not generalise, it can be useful to unpack the history.



4a. Video: [Israeli Palestinian conflict explained: an animated introduction to Israel and Palestine \(5 minutes\)](#)

This video from Jewish Voice for Peace is a clear and accessible introduction to the history, using some of the same terms as in 'Who's Who?'.

Play the first 5 minutes and 10 seconds – the section that focuses on the history rather than the campaign for peace.

5. International Law mimes (15 minutes)

Having set the scene, it's useful to prime students about international law before you share your experiences.

The goal of this is to prime students with an understanding of human rights and the language to discuss them. Explain that there is a lot of international law – for example laws of war, treaties about issues like climate change and the sea, or about human rights.

Explore what students already know.



Groups of 3–5 students are given a slip of paper to mime a particular human rights. They will need 5 minutes to prepare. The rest of the group tries to guess what they're seeing (hands up please!).

Differentiation: while it is good for children to use their language skills to articulate what the right or law might say, younger students may need a list to choose from the printed list.

Before they start preparing, model an example, perhaps 'the right to shop' or 'the right to ice cream' as examples.

It is useful to see this activity and your presentation as working together. Choose the international law and rights mimes most relevant to the stories you will share. Structure your presentation in a way that helps students spot them without labouring the point.

Debrief as you go. Note for example, that when the Fourth Geneva Convention talks about an "occupying power", that applies to Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. You may also want to ask, "Why does that law/right exist?"

Pushed for time? Instead of doing the mimes, give out the printed parts of international law and ask students to listen out for them. Or you could try human rights bingo during your presentation. Students could fill in the grid handout and try to get three in a line as they listen to you.

6. Your EA presentation (15 minutes)



Fifteen minutes of talking is a reasonable amount of time for a class to listen, but you can make it shorter, freeing up time to discuss informally.

You will discuss afterwards which human rights and international issues arose, so leave some “breadcrumbs” as you speak, for example saying “I remember the children weren’t able to get to school again that day” to suggest the right to education.

Don't be text heavy in your presentation. Focus on images that *show* what you want to say.

Suggested structure

- Introduce a Palestinian or Israeli you know well and explain that you are going to tell their story. Perhaps there is more than one person you want to talk about.
- Explain how you got there. Why were you placed in that community. What was your job supposed to be? What sort of place is it? Don't be afraid to talk about your own feelings and hopes – students will be interested.
- Return to the person's story. Share what happened to them and how they responded. If appropriate, pause and ask "What would you do in that situation?", "What do you think happened next?" or "Why do you think this person did that?".
- Give context to the story. Link the personal story to the bigger picture in the West Bank. If you talked about a house demolition, explain the extent of this, why Israel says it does this, and perhaps link to settlements.
- Leave with a message of hope: talk about at least one Palestinian and one Israeli example of people working for peace and justice.

7. Concluding plenary: What do we know? (5 minutes)

Debrief the presentation by asking what human rights or international law issues the students spotted. You may link this to why EAPPI records and shares things with the international community.

Ask students if they can now answer any of the questions they shared at the beginning, and pick out any that might still need unpacking. Again, don't worry if you can't answer everything!

7a. Optional: Nonviolence spectrum (extra 10 minutes)

This is an enriching activity if you have time, providing a moral discussion about violent and nonviolent choices.

Cut out this range of activities that Palestinian people and Israeli forces carried out during the First Intifada. How violent or nonviolent are they? You can work with small cards in pairs, or as a whole-group 'human spectrum' in which each person takes one large action card and positions her or himself on a line from the most violent to the most nonviolent. Participants can then see the spread and discuss it, perhaps persuading each other to move

7b. Final go around: each student should share something that they will remember.

What can we do?

If students ask, "What can we do?" here are some suggestions:

- join Amnesty International as individuals or as a school group, and they can take action for human rights, not just in Palestine and Israel but around the world
- tell teachers they want to be a Sanctuary School or a UNICEF Rights Respecting School
- learn more – check out the Eyewitness blog and other organisations working for peace and justice: eyewitnessblogs.com
- hold a fundraiser for a human rights or humanitarian organisation such as the Red Crescent.

Handout: International law mimes

Cut up these examples and give one to each group of four or five students to act out. They can take more if they work fast. You can provide the whole list in the original or simple language to students as they guess what is being acted.

Original: The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.

- Fourth Geneva Convention

Simple: When your army takes control of somewhere else, you cannot move your own people to live there. -Fourth Geneva Convention

Original: Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family.

- Article 16, Universal Declaration of Human rights

Simple: Every adult has the right to marry and start a family.

- Article 16, Universal Declaration of Human rights

Original: Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property... is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations.

- Fourth Geneva Convention

Simple: When your army is in control of somewhere outside your own country, you should not destroy homes and people's stuff unless you have to as part of the war.

- Fourth Geneva Convention

Original: State Parties recognise the right of children to education.

- Article 28, UN Convention on Rights of the Child

Simple: Every child has the right to an education.

- Article 28, UN Convention on Rights of the Child

Original: The construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated régime, are contrary to international law.

- International Court of Justice ruling, 2004

Simple: The wall Israel has built in Palestine is illegal.

- International Court of Justice ruling, 2004

Original: Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

- Article 18, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Simple: You can join groups and meet up with people.

- Article 18, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Original: Children have the right to relax and play.

- Article 31: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Original: No-one shall be subject to arbitrary arrest.

- Article 9, Universal Declaration of Human rights

Simple: You can't be arrested and locked up for no reason.

Article 9, Universal Declaration of Human rights

Original: Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

- Article 13, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Simple: Everyone is free to move around the country

- Article 13, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Original: Governments must do everything they can to protect and care for children affected by war.

- Article 38, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Simple: Governments must keep all children safe from war.

- Article 38, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Original: Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

- Article 19, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Simple: You have the right to think for yourself and tell other people what you believe.

- Article 19, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Original: The right to conscientious objection is recognised.

- Article 10, EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

Simple: You have the right to refuse to fight in a war if you think it's wrong.

Teacher's note: Article 10 is related to conscription in Israel. Of course Israel is not part of the European Union, but it is party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which is understood by the United Nations Human Rights Committee to underpin a universal right to conscientious objection.



Human rights bingo

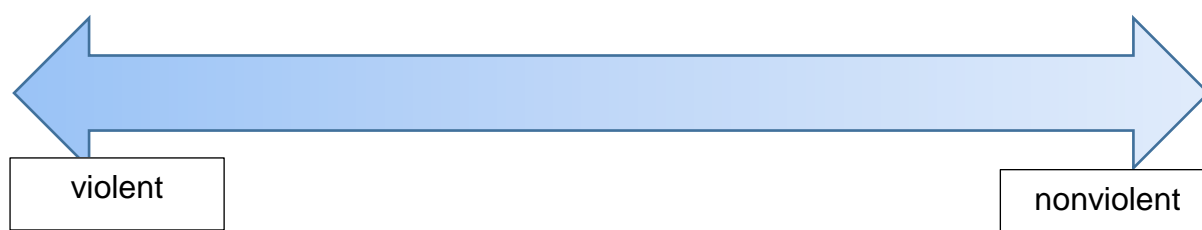
Choose nine examples from the international law handout and put them in your grid.
Can you get three in a line?

Resource: How [non]violent is that?

Arrange these actions from the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians from the most violent to the most nonviolent.






Going on strike from your job	Shooting	Holding a big public protest	Burning your ID card because it's a tool of control
Beating protesters	Distributing leaflets calling for nonviolent resistance	Closing schools to make it harder for young people to protest together	Resigning your job in the police so you're not helping stop protests
Throwing stones at people	Using tear gas on a big protest demonstration	Firing rubber-coated bullets at protesters	Going to school even though it's been closed
Imposing a curfew in every town so everyone had to stay in	Setting everyone's watch to the wrong time to annoy soldiers	Arresting protest leaders	Building settlements on other people's land
Boycotting (refusing to buy) products made by the other side	Waving your people's national flag	Suicide bombing	Arresting protesters
Throwing a Molotov cocktail (a bottle that spreads fire when it smashes)	Using Checkpoints to restrict people's movement	Putting people in prison without trial	Uprooting farmers' olive trees



Blockading a village to restrict food and supplies	Smashing the locks of striking shops	Bulldozing the homes of protest leaders	Shooting plastic bullets at protesters
Deporting key resistance leaders out of the country	Graffiti protesting the Israeli occupation	Seizing leaflets that call for protest	Refusing to show your ID card to a soldier
Blocking access to a village with a roadblock	Graffiti which calls for violence	Forcing people to wait for hours at a checkpoint to get to work	Providing people with less water than they need.



Discussion questions

- Why is one thing more violent than another?
- Can we develop criteria for what is violent or nonviolent?
- On learning that the blue cards are Israeli and the green cards are Palestinian, is it less violent for a civilian to punch a soldier than for a soldier to punch a civilian?
- Is graffiti more violent if it calls for violence?

<p>Israeli</p>	<p>One of eight million citizens of the state of Israel, founded in 1948. There were also several kingdoms called Israel 2-3,000 years ago.</p>	 <p><small>Laliv Gal Pikiwiki Israel [CC BY 2.5] (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/), via Wikimedia Commons</small></p>
<p>Palestinian</p>	<p>An Arab from the region between the Eastern Mediterranean and the River Jordan. The area they are from includes Israel, the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem but today they do not have a nation state with fixed borders. Many of these people have lived for years in other Middle East countries as refugees.</p>	 <p><small>By Picture taken by Justin McIntosh, [CC BY 2.0] (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/), from Wikimedia Commons</small></p>
<p>Ecumenical Accompanier (EA)</p>	<p>A human rights observer from a World Council of Churches Programme offering a protective presence in the Palestinian West Bank. Some but not all EAs are Christians.</p>	
<p>Settler</p>	<p>A Jewish Israeli living on occupied land in the Palestinian territories. There are over 700,000 settlers in the West Bank including 300,000 in East Jerusalem. Moving people on to occupied land like this is illegal under international law.</p>	 <p><small>delayed gratification on Flickr: https://www.flickr.com/photos/joshhough/2100674231/</small></p>
<p>Christian</p>	<p>Someone who believes in Jesus Christ as the son of God and follows the teachings of the New Testament in the Bible. This includes a large minority of Palestinians in places like Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Ramallah.</p>	 <p><small>Photo: JKaprio, EAPPI</small></p>

<p>Arabic</p>	<p>A language spoken by Arabs and others in Palestine, Israel and across the Middle East and North Africa. It is also the language of the Muslim holy book, the Qu’ran.</p>	
<p>Jew</p>	<p>Someone who follows the religion of Judaism and/or who is ethnically Jewish. To get Israeli citizenship, people are asked to prove they have one Jewish grandparent under the Law of Return. Judaism is a 3,500-year-old faith.</p>	 <p><small>By Berthold Werner [GFDL (http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html) or CC BY-SA 3.0 from Wikimedia Commons</small></p>
<p>Hebrew</p>	<p>An ancient language, revived in the 20th century and spoken as a first language mainly by Jews in Israel.</p>	 <p><small>https://www.flickr.com/photos/58558794@N07/7628799526/in/photostream/</small></p>
<p>Arab</p>	<p>A member of a large ethnic group of roughly 450 million people who live mainly in the Middle East and North Africa, though millions live in other countries around the world.</p>	 <p><small>Magharebia [CC BY 2.0 (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/), via Wikimedia Commons</small></p>
<p>Muslim</p>	<p>A follower of the religion of Islam, believing that Allah is the one God and Muhammad is his Prophet. It began in Arabia in the 7th century. Islam has over 1.5 billion followers.</p>	 <p><small>Asim Bharwani https://flic.kr/p/8TRk2k</small></p>
<p>Middle Eastern</p>	<p>From a large area of West Asia, named by people in Britain because it is to the East of them, but not as “far” East as India or China. Palestine and Israel are found here.</p>	