

HISTORY OF ISRAEL EXPLAINED

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



ISRAEL'S DISENGAGEMENT FROM GAZA

Section 1: Additional Resources

- Daniel Gordis, *Israel: A Concise History of a Nation Reborn*, chapter 17
- Noah M. Levine, "Understanding the Gaza Disengagement"
<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/gaza-disengagement/>
- Rabbi Rabbi Yosef Elnkaveh, "To the Youth of Gaza: It Wasn't Always Like This"
<https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/to-the-youth-of-gaza-it-wasnt-always-like-this/>
- William Booth and Ruth Eglash, "A Decade Later, Many Israelis See Gaza Pullout as a Big Mistake" https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/a-decade-later-israelis-see-gaza-pullout-as-big-mistake/2015/08/14/21c06518-3480-11e5-b835-61ddaa99c73e_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.bfb686fbf7cb
- Primary source - Ariel Sharon-George H.W. Bush letters
<https://israeled.org/resources/documents/george-bush-ii-ariel-sharon-letters/>

Section 2: Discussion Questions

- Given what you know about Israel's past 15 years since the Gaza disengagement, do you think the decision to withdraw from this area was good or bad? Explain.
- Israelis who opposed the disengagement used the slogan "Yehudi lo migareh Yehudi" "A Jew does not expel a Jew." What do you think they meant by this? Thinking about the history of Jews being expelled from lands, why might some view this slogan as effective and others may view it as offensive?
- For many, the disengagement from Gaza evoked the Altalena battle in June, 1948 and the evacuation of Yamit in 1982. After watching these three UNPACKED videos, what are the similarities and differences in each of these episodes?
- Ariel Sharon ran on the platform promising not to leave Gaza, and then he did not have a referendum on the decision to disengage from Gaza. Do you view this decision as undemocratic as many Israelis did or do you see it differently, perhaps as the responsibility of a leader to make tough decisions?

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Section 3: Review

1. In what year did Israel withdraw from Gaza?
 - a. 1995
 - b. 2000
 - c. 2005
 - d. 2015
2. Who was the prime minister of Israel at the time of the disengagement?
 - a. Ariel Sharon
 - b. Yitzhak Rabin
 - c. Ehud Barak
 - d. Ehud Olmert
3. What terror group took charge of the Gaza Strip after Israel's withdrawal?
 - a. Fatah
 - b. Hamas
 - c. Hezbollah
 - d. ISIS
4. What is the name of the group of Jewish settlements that were situated in Southern Gaza?
 - a. Gush Katif
 - b. Gush Dan
 - c. Gush Etzion
 - d. Gush Emunim
5. Why do Israelis often remember the disengagement with pain?

Section 4: Reflection Questions

- In this Ynet article on how Palestinian life in Gush Katif 10 years after the disengagement, it says: "On the ruins of the settlement, where 60 Israeli families lived prior to the disengagement, the Palestinians have built an amusement park, complete with a Ferris wheel, small roller coaster, carousel and various other rides in a myriad of colors – a lone island in a sea of sand dunes and fields, and all surrounded by a gray concrete wall and piles of rubbish and scrap."
- Do you feel happy for the Palestinians, sad for the Jews who used to live there, or do you hold both feelings at once?
- Israeli soldiers were tasked with forcibly removing those Israeli citizens who did not leave their homes in Gush Katif. What do you think this experience was like for Israeli soldiers to forcibly remove other Israelis and Jews?
- The Israeli government feared that soldiers would refuse orders and not remove Israeli citizens from Gush Katif. Most soldiers did obey, though. Why do you think most soldiers did obey these difficult orders? And for those who did not, were they justified in doing so? What would you have done?

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- Look at this picture of a Jewish community in a town near the beach in Gush Katif. There were full-fledged houses and infrastructure left behind. How would you react if your government demanded that your community must evacuate its homes and start anew elsewhere?
- Widely perceived as the “quintessential hawk,” Ariel Sharon made the decision to leave Gaza where there were 8,800 Jewish Israelis living among over one million Palestinians. Similarly, Begin, who was also known as a hawk made the decision to evacuate Yamit and return the Sinai to Egypt. What about these leaders allowed them to make this difficult decisions?