



Lesson Plan (50 minutes)

Can Americans Be Patriots and Zionists? The Louis Brandeis Story

Step 1: Start with the goals/questions

Goals: What are the goals of this lesson?

Affective – Students will appreciate how their patriotism to their home country and Jewish Zionist values work in congruence and not in conflict.

Behavioral – Students will identify as Zionists in public ways, recognizing they don't have to choose between their personal and Zionist identities.

Cognitive – Students will learn how Louis Brandeis balanced both his Zionist and American identities, pushing back against charges of dual loyalty.

Essential Questions/Big Ideas:

What deep questions and enduring understandings do we want students to be grappling with?

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| 1. Does one have to live in Israel in order to be a Zionist? | 1. American and Zionist/Jewish values complement each other. |
| 2. How should you balance your loyalties to different countries and movements? | 2. One can balance dual loyalties. |
| 3. Are American and Zionist/Jewish values compatible or in conflict? | 3. Individuals can have an enormous influence on Israel. |

Step 2: Learning Plan

Hook/Trigger: (5 minutes)

Will I use a UED video, question, scenario...

Play spectrum with your students. Designate one side of the room as **agree** and the other side as **disagree**. Have students stand along the spectrum where they most identify based on the following statements:

- My Zionist and personal (American, Canadian, Australian, British...) identities are often in conflict.
- It is possible to be a good Zionist and live outside Israel.
- My Jewish/Zionist values make me a better citizen of my home country.
- Jews will always be more loyal to the State of Israel than their home countries.

After moving to where they most agree, students should discuss with the other students there why they chose that area and then open the conversation to the whole group to explain their stances and share personal examples. Students may change where they stand based on the conversation.

Learning Activity: (35 minutes)

What am I using from UED resources (video, discussion question, game, debate)? Do these materials fit the unit goals/essential questions?

1. Video and review questions: (11 minutes)

Watch the [Brandeis video](#) and ask the review questions.

2. Discussion: Choose 1 question (5 minutes)

a. American and Jewish values:

Brandeis believed that being a proud Jew made him a better American, and that Zionism reinforced the best of his American values.

- i. Where do you see the values of your home country and Jewish values in consonance? Do you ever see them in conflict?
- ii. For students who have spent time in Israel, ask them to compare the cultures of their home country and Israel. What is unique to each society and what can they each learn from one another (For example: Israelis can be direct but in Israel many feel that everyone is looking out for you as a family member. Americans may have a little less chutzpah but society seems to be more organized).

b. Antisemitism and the dual loyalty accusation

Watch an excerpt from the "[Whose Fault Is Antisemitism](#)" video with your students (from 2:55 to 4:36).

- i. In the second and third accusations, what is the reason for the charge of dual loyalty?
- ii. What surprises you about these accusations? Why do you think Jews are still being accused of dual loyalty today? Do you think there is anything that can be done to stop people from thinking this about Jews and Zionists?

3. Learning activity: Who is the greatest Zionist? (19 minutes)

Play [this](#) engaging activity with your students which asks them to compare four personalities and debate what makes someone a true Zionist.

Reflection: (5 minutes)

How can I help students connect with the material on a deeper and personal level?

Choose 1 question to answer:

1. Identifying as a Jew and Zionist in public

Louis Brandeis was a proud Jew who felt that his Judaism and Zionism made him a more patriotic American. He took a public role as a Zionist leader, and did not hide his Judaism, even as he rose through the ranks as an American judge.

- Do you think it's easier today to identify as a Jew and/or as a Zionist in the outside world? Why or why not? What has changed and what has stayed the same? (See our film [Unsafe Spaces](#) and its accompanying educator guide for some of the specific challenges Jewish students face at university over their Zionism).
- Do you feel comfortable identifying as a Jew and Zionist in public today? Are there situations where you might not want to wear a necklace with a Magen David, or a kippah, or share with people that you are a Zionist or have spent time in Israel? What are ways to support people to feel proud to display their Judaism and Zionism in public?
- How can Brandeis serve as a role model to Jews and Zionists today in being proud of their identities even when it's not always a popular or easy choice?

2. Would you give up your citizenship for Israel?

Imagine that the State of Israel required you to renounce your citizenship in another country in order to make aliyah:

- Would this impact your choice to move to Israel? Why or why not?
- Is there any situation where you think a country could ask you to give up your citizenship to another country? (Possible examples: Moving there,

joining the army, being elected to the government, if the two countries were in a state of war...).

Step 3: Assessment

Checking for Understanding: (5 minutes)

Were my learning goals met?

Share the following scenario with your students and ask them to answer based on what they learned in today's lesson:

A visitor asks why your synagogue has both an Israeli flag and the flag of your home country at the front of the sanctuary. Is it really possible to balance both loyalties? How would you respond?

What to think about when lesson planning:

- Is my lesson being driven by the goals/essential questions?
- Is the UED video the hook or the learning activity?
- Do I have to adjust for the age levels of my students (excerpts, simplify the questions...)?