



## Lesson Procedures

### **Materials Included in this Lesson**

Background Essay and Map  
Document Set  
Evidence Organizer  
“Answering the Question” assessment and rubric  
Videos, “Truman Decision Series”, 1963  
Additional Historical Background for Teacher

### **Lesson Preparation**

Print packets for students including: background essay, document set, evidence organizer, assessment and rubric.

### **Suggested Lesson Procedure**

- Hook: Ask students to respond to the following prompt:
  - ◆ *“Think about a time you decided to do something different than advice given to you by you friends or parents. Describe the situation. Why did you make that decision?”*
- Introduce Palestinian conflict with two maps of Palestine and the background essay. This provides students with the historical context of Palestine and the situation after World War II and the expiration of the Balfour Declaration. Read individually, in pairs, or as a class. Ask students what they notice while looking at the maps. Make sure students understand the situation between the Arabs and Jews at the time as well as the goals and definition of Zionism.
- Watch “1963 Part 1 - Truman Decision Series”. The video provides historical images from Palestine as well as an interview with President Truman after his presidency describing the initial conflict in the Palestinian area. Ask students to think about what the conflict was that Truman was facing and what decision he was being asked to make. Discuss after watching the video.
  - ◆ Additional discussion point: Why was it so important for a new country to get American recognition?
- Preview Evidence Organizer/Evidence Log. Students will be looking at primary sources gathered from the Truman Presidential Library Archives in order to decide if it was a good decision to recognize the new Jewish state of Israel or not based on the evidence provided to President Truman between 1945 and 1948. In the evidence log, students will identify arguments that could be used from each source to convince President Truman in favor of recognition of the new state of Israel or against recognition.



- Preview “Answering the Question” assignment. Students will act as U.S. citizens writing a recommendation letter to President Truman either arguing for recognition of Israel or advising against it, based on the evidence provided. The rubric has been created for Standards Based Grading with three specific social studies skills in mind: using historical tools, using and evaluating sources, and communicating conclusions.
- Begin investigating document set. Students may work individually or in pairs. Students should take the following steps with each source:
  - ◆ After reading source, decide whether the evidence promotes the argument for the creation of Israel or if it argues against it. Circle “in favor” or “against” at the top of the source.
  - ◆ Answer the historical thinking questions at the bottom of the source. Recommend that students may want to read the source a second or third time to help answer these prompts.
    - *Historical Tools Learning Goal: I can evaluate the significance of events and historical trends.*
  - ◆ Add source information to the Evidence Log. Students should place the source in the “in favor” column or the “against” column, name the document, and write in their own words why that document can be used as good evidence.
    - *Using Sources Learning Goal: I can compare the point of view/perspective of more than one source.*
- Before beginning the letter to President Truman, students should brainstorm and discuss their perspectives on the situation. Remind them that there really isn’t ever one “correct” answer to the Palestine-Israel problem, even during Truman’s time. Instead, they should pick whichever side they feel has stronger evidence. Teachers may want to select a few thinking prompts from the following website to help students differentiate their opinions from those outlined in the sources:  
[https://ohiouswc.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/ire\\_templatessimple1.pdf](https://ohiouswc.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/ire_templatessimple1.pdf)
- After establishing which stance they will take, students may begin writing their letters to President Truman. See the rubric attached to the letter assignment for further information.
  - *Communicating Conclusions Learning Goal: I can create a claim or an accurate historical interpretation based on available evidence.*
- After students have written their letters, show “1963 Part 2 - Truman Decision Series” to see Truman explain what he finally decided to do and why. Students will appreciate



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being able to hear from Truman himself about the process he took to make his decision, although it was against the advice given to him by the State Department.

- ◆ Additional Recommendation: At this point, you have the option to explore post-1948 conflict in Palestine and Israel and discuss with students how Truman's decision to recognize Israel may or may not have impacted current events in the Middle East.