



Educator's Guide

Yamit: Exchanging Land for Peace

This video discusses the backdrop, story and implications of the Israeli Sinai settlement, Yamit. Before the evacuation of Jewish residents from Gaza in 2005, it was the evacuation of Yamit in 1982 which shook the Israeli world. After Israel took over the Sinai desert following the victory of the Six Day War, Jews began to settle there. In 1982, Israel pulled out of Sinai in agreement with the Camp David Accords, in order to secure peace on the Egyptian border. Most Israelis left with compensation and without protest, but there were some people who put up a fight and were forcefully removed. It's an emotionally-charged story, which the video and educator resources below will help you unpack with your students. What is the price of peace? What is a country willing to sacrifice to this end?

Video: <https://unpacked.education/video/yamit-exchanging-land-for-peace/>

Further Reading

1. Daniel Gordis, *Israel: A Concise History of a Nation Reborn*, chapter 15
2. Itamar Rabinovich, "Bold Decisions: Three Israeli Prime Ministers Who Went Against Their Grain"
<http://www.itamarrabinovich.tau.ac.il/publications/127-bold-decisions-three-israeli-prime-ministers-who-went-against-their-grain.html>
3. Yitzhak Shargil, "Behind the Headlines: The Fate of Yamit"
<https://www.jta.org/1978/09/27/archive/behind-the-headlines-the-fate-of-yamit>
4. Danny Rubenstein, "Menachem Begin's Choice"
<https://www.haaretz.com/1.4682702>



Review - Did the students understand the material?

1. Who signed the Camp David Accords, and what were its outcomes?
2. Why did Yamit residents fight so hard to avoid relinquishing Yamit?
3. Why did Israel choose to demolish the Sinai structures it had built rather than leave them standing?
4. When did Israel capture the Sinai desert?
 - a. 1948
 - b. 1963
 - c. 1967 (correct answer)
 - d. 1973
5. Where was Yamit located?
 - a. Gaza
 - b. West Bank
 - c. Sinai (correct answer)
 - d. Golan Heights

Discussion Questions

1. Israel's government encouraged Israelis to settle in Sinai after its capture and subsequently commanded them to withdraw from their new homes and communities. Are the sacrifice and pain they experienced worth the peace?
2. How is the evacuation from Gush Katif/Gaza different from and similar to the one from Yamit?
3. Some extremists vowed to kill themselves rather than be evacuated but ultimately did not follow through with this. Why do you think they vowed this in the first place, and why do you think they did not act upon it?



Learning Activities

1. Guide your students through a [Pros and Cons Activity](#) on the question of “land for peace”. Before they begin their own research, get them thinking with a few of the major arguments on both sides:
 - In favor of “Land for Peace”: If done [properly](#) and in coordination with the other side, land for peace can lead to diplomatic and security stability for both sides.
 - Opposed to “Land for Peace”: Why should Israel give up valuable land that could be meaningful both historically and for security reasons if there is no guarantee of peace from the other side?

2. Give your students the opportunity to compare and contrast the evacuations of both [Yamit](#) and [Gush Katif \(Gaza\)](#) in 2005. They can record their thoughts and findings using [Venn Diagrams](#). Create a collective Venn Diagram as a class to collect everyone’s thoughts and reflections. Students should answer the following questions when researching their information:
 - What were the reasons for the evacuation?
 - What was the reaction within the Israeli public to the evacuations?
 - How did the evacuees themselves react?

3. Give your students our [Kahoot](#) on Yamit!

Reflection Questions

1. The Israelis who had settled in Sinai first left their homes to build new ones, and then left those for new ones again when ordered to do so. What do you think they were feeling each time, both when they began to settle in Sinai and when they left it?

2. When the Israeli government gave the order to leave Sinai and Yamit residents held fast to their homes, it was up to Israeli soldiers to remove them. What do you think this experience was like for the soldiers, who were following orders to



remove Jews from their land? Does a soldier have an obligation to follow orders at all costs, even if s/he believes they are wrong?

3. A major value in this whole episode is sacrifice--by the Israeli government, people and military. Who in your life has had to sacrifice in order to achieve a greater need?