

## UNIT ONE - Abraham to the First Exile: The Jewish People's Historical Connection to the Land of Israel (Part 1)



### Unit Project Options

#### Instructions:

Choose **one** of the following options to demonstrate your understanding of the unit. Each option allows you to explore the Jewish historical connection to the Land of Israel in a different way. Use texts, facts, and reflections from our lessons (Avraham to the Exile) to support your work. Be creative, thoughtful, and personal.

#### 1. Project-Based Assessment: "Land Through the Ages" Timeline Exhibit

**Format:** Research & Visual Display

**Task:** Students create a visual timeline (digital or physical) that traces Jewish historical connection to the Land of Israel from Avraham to the Babylonian Exile.

**Include:** At least 10 key events, texts, quotes from texts we studied, maps, images, archaeological findings, and 3 personal reflections from figures studied (e.g., Avraham, Joshua, Jeremiah).

**Goal:** Demonstrate continuity of connection and historical context.

#### 2. Performance Task: "Trial of Historical Denial"

**Format:** Mock Trial Simulation

**Task:** Students stage a courtroom trial where one side argues for the historical Jewish connection to the Land of Israel and the other challenges it, using real sources.

**Roles:** Lawyers, witnesses (e.g., biblical figures, archaeologists), judge, and jury.

**Goal:** Practice argumentation, apply historical and textual evidence, and respond to counter-claims.

### 3. Portfolio: “Voices of the Land” Personal and Historical Journal

**Format:** Curated Writing Collection

**Task:** Students compile a portfolio of 4-6 reflective journal entries written in the voices of historical characters (Avraham, David, Ruth, a Babylonian exile, etc.) across the unit.

**Include:** Historical context, personal reflections and emotions, one quote or fact from our learning, and responses to key turning points.

**Goal:** Show empathy, deep understanding of events, and personal engagement with identity.

### 4. Debate: “Who Saved the Nation?”

**Format:** Structured Debate

**Task:** Students debate the question: “Which leader most significantly contributed to Jewish survival and identity in the Land of Israel?”

**Options:** Moses, Joshua, David, Hezekiah, Elijah, etc.

**Prepare:** opening arguments, key evidence, and rebuttals.

**Goal:** Analyze leadership styles, consequences of decisions, and covenantal responsibility.

### 5. Socratic Seminar: “Exile and Identity”

**Format:** Socratic Circle

**Task:** Students participate in a text-based discussion using annotated sources: Psalm 137, Jeremiah’s prophecies, and historical sources and archaeology about the Babylonian exile.

**Focus Questions:** How do we maintain identity in exile? Is spiritual survival more important than physical survival? Why did they survive when others didn’t?

**Goal:** Critical thinking, listening, evidence-based discussion.

## 6. Case Study: “Rewriting the Nation’s Fate”

**Format:** Written Case Analysis

**Task:** Students analyze a leadership decision (Rehoboam’s arrogance, Jeroboam’s idolatry, Zedekiah’s rebellion) and choose one key moment of poor leadership and rewrite what could have happened differently.

**Include:** The original story, a revised version, what new outcomes may have resulted—spiritually and historically

**Goal:** Explore cause/effect, decision-making, and values in leadership.

## 7. Journal or Reflection Project: “Memory and Mission”

**Format:** Reflective Writing Compilation

**Task:** Write a 3–4 page reflection exploring how memory, land, and faith are connected in Jewish history.

Students reflect on **essential questions** from throughout the unit:

- a. Why is memory so central to Jewish identity and survival?
- b. What is the spiritual meaning of the Land of Israel?
- c. How does exile reshape faith?
- d. What part of the story speaks to you most—and why?

**Goal:** Internalize learning and articulate personal meaning.

## 8. Oral Presentation: “Artifact Defenders”

**Format:** Slide Presentation with Verbal Defense

**Task:** Students choose one historical archaeological artifact (e.g., Tel Dan Stele, Hezekiah’s Tunnel, Sennacherib Prism) and present its significance in defending Jewish historical connection to the land.

Give a **short presentation** explaining:

- a. What the artifact is?
- b. What it proves or teaches?
- c. Why it matters for Jewish historical memory today?

Use visuals and cite at least two sources.

**Goal:** Practice research, presentation, and oral defense of historical memory.

### **9. Simulation: “Council of Exiles – Rebuilding the Nation”**

**Format:** Role-Playing Strategy Session

**Task:** Students join a small group to simulate a meeting of Jewish leaders in Babylon and assume the roles of exiles in Babylon debating how to preserve Judaism without a Temple.

They propose institutions (e.g., prayer, study, leadership roles, a symbolic object or slogan for your group’s survival strategy) and present plans.

**Goal:** Understand the innovation of Jewish continuity and collective memory.

### **10. Arts-Based Alternative: “If I Forget You, O Jerusalem...”**

**Format:** Creative Expression (student choice)

Create an artistic representation of Jewish memory and connection to the Land of Israel.

Choose one format:

- a. Visual art painting, poster or mosaic
- b. Music: A composed melody or modern setting of Psalm 137
- c. Dramatic monologue from the voice of an exile, prophet, or pilgrim

**Include a short explanation (written or oral) of your creative choices.**

**Goal:** Express emotional and spiritual depth of exile, longing, and Jewish resilience in artistic form.