



Educator's Guide

Is the Dead Sea Dying?

In this video, we're distilling the salty truth about the Dead Sea, beginning with the misconceptions that it is a sea and it is dead. The Dead Sea is one of the biggest tourist destinations in the region, but it's been drying up for decades and losing water at a frightening rate. And it's our own fault. For the last century, the Dead Sea has been heavily mined, which has had a devastating effect not only on the lake and its shoreline but also on nearby freshwater sources. There are some plans to breathe life into the Dead Sea. Like so many things in the Middle East, though, no one can quite agree on getting them started and no one can quite agree on whether they'll do more good than harm. The one thing everyone agrees on is that it would be a disaster if the Dead Sea were allowed to die.

[Link to video](#)

Further Reading

1. Times of Israel, [Into the Land: Dead Sea Walking](#)
2. National Geographic, ["Can Israel and Jordan cooperate to save the dying Dead Sea?"](#)
3. Israel21C, ["9 eerie and stunning photos of the disappearing Dead Sea"](#)
4. BBC News: ["Dead Sea drying: a new low-point for earth"](#)

Review – Did the students understand the material?

1. What is the salinity (level of salt) of the Dead Sea?
 - a. 33.7%
 - b. Approximately half
 - c. 61.3%
 - d. 17.3%
2. True or false? There are living things inside the Dead Sea.
3. What is the surface elevation of the Dead Sea?
 - a. Sea level



- b. - 250 meters
 - c. - 433.5 meters
 - d. - 135.3 meters
- 4. True or false? The Dead Sea is the lowest point on earth.
- 5. How much saltier is the Dead Sea than the ocean?
 - a. 9 times as salty
 - b. 3 times as salty
 - c. The same
 - d. Half as salty
- 6. What is the name of the Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian initiative to save the Dead Sea?
 - a. The Middle Eastern Dead Sea Project
 - b. Red Sea Dead Sea Pipeline
 - c. The Sea of Galilee Dead Sea Project
 - d. The Israeli-Jordanian Dead Sea Initiative

Discussion Questions

1. In Judaism, water plays a significant role in a variety of contexts, and the Torah is compared to water. In your day-to-day life, what are specific ways you can have gratitude for water and the role it plays in your life?
2. In Talmud tractate Ta'anit 23a, a famous story is told of Honi HaMe'agel, a famous Jewish personality in the 1st century B.C.E. "One day, he (Honi HaMe'agel) was walking along the road when he saw a certain man planting a carob tree. Honi said to him: After how many years will this tree bear fruit? The man said to him: It will not produce fruit until seventy years have passed. Honi said to him: Is it obvious to you that you will live seventy years, that you expect to benefit from this tree? He said to him: I found a world full of carob trees. Just as my ancestors planted for me, I too am planting for my descendants."



Why should we have a responsibility to preserve the planet for future generations?

- 3.** The Red Sea-Dead Sea Pipeline is a groundbreaking collaboration between Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority. Perhaps if Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority would collaborate more often and focus on common needs as opposed to areas of conflict, they would establish a more peaceful relationship with each other. Do you agree or disagree with this assessment?

Learning Activities

- 1.** Read the following [article](#) about the Israel-Jordan relationship. Despite the fact that the two countries have had a peace agreement since 1994, many people refer to their relationship as a “cold peace.” Brainstorm some ways in which Israel and Jordan can strengthen their relationship and create connection between the two populations.
- 2.** Debate: In regards to the Red Sea-Dead Sea Pipeline, which of the following two outcomes are more important?
 - Saving the Dead Sea
 - Cooperation between Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority
- 3.** Give your students our [Kahoot](#) on the Dead Sea!