

Sniff for Chevraya Alef:

By Rachel Koller and Sarah Gordon

Theme: Yom Ha'atzmaut – Remembrance and Renewal

Goal: The chanichim should leave the sicha understanding

- (1) The power of Yom Ha'atzmaut – how all these different Jews came together to fight as an Am and why it was so important for the Jews in 1948 to have an independent Jewish State.
- (2) The battle for Yom Ha'atzmaut applies to us today and we can only truly appreciate geulah by looking at Yom Ha'atzmaut as part of a cycle of Yom Hashoah and Yom HaZicaron.

Materials: Israeli flag, on index cards write out the character's listed below

Game #1: Steal the cheese (because bacon is treif)

Split the kids into 2 teams, team British, and team Palmach. Then the two teams line up on opposite ends of the room, and each player from both teams has a number. (See diagram) An Israeli flag is placed in the middle. When the leader calls out a number, that player (from each team) must run and try to "steal" the flag and return with it to his team without being tagged. If he is not tagged, he scores two points. If he is tagged, the tagger scores one point. The team with the most points wins.

Variation: The leader may call two or three numbers or even call "scramble" in which case everyone tries to steal the "cheese".

Game #2: Streets and Alleys.

Two players are chosen, one to be the "Palmach" and the second to be the "British." The other players stand in equidistant rows (at arms length). When they face front with their arms extended out, they are in the "streets" position. When they turn to their right and extend their arms they are in the "alleys" position. Enough space is left so that the Palmach guy and the British soldier can run through the streets and alleys. Players start in the "streets" position. The British soldier must try to tag the Palmach guy. The British soldier begins by chasing the Palmach guy through the streets, until the leader shouts: "Alleys!" Then the players face front and form "alleys" which change the course for the Palmach guy and the British soldier who are now running through the alleys. Neither the Palmach guy nor the British soldier may go through, or reach over lines to get from one alley or street to another. They must go around the end players to change "streets" or "alleys." If the British soldier tags the Palmach guy before X number of seconds are up, he wins; if not he loses. Two other players are then chosen and play continues.

Variation: Split all of the players into two teams. Each team selects one player to represent that team as either a Palmach guy or a British soldier. The team scores one point if their player wins. The first team to get X points wins.

Game #3: Human Bingo

Pick 12 kids, and have each of them take a card that has one of 6 characters on it. Then the rest of the kids are divided up into 2 teams and become Palmach generals. The point is that the Palmach generals have to go around and recruit an army to fight the British. Each of the 2 teams has a list of the 6 people they need to find. The rest of the chanichim who are playing parts scatter, and the generals have to run around interviewing and asking questions of the chanichim to find their 6 people and bring them back to their base. Whichever team puts together an army unit 1st wins.

Each army must have:

Dvir the Israeli Kibbutznik: he was born in Israel, grandparents born in Israel. He wants to fight to defend his kibbutz and homeland. Very active in the Hagana, believes in fighting in self-defense.

Yeziel the Holocaust survivor: from Poland, who survived Treblinka, came to Israel on an illegal boat, wants to survive – he just got freedom and now the Arabs are trying to take it away.

Yonatan the Religious Zionist student: he learns in Ateret Cohanim Yeshiva, wants to fight for a religious state, to bring the geulah.

Mark the American Soldier: Non-religious Jew, fought in WW2 for the American Army, saw the concentration camps and now wants to fight for a cause he believes in – having a Jewish Homeland.

Leibel the Chareidi Jew: A Meah Sha'arim Yerushalmi Jew. Don't believe in Zionism, but your house is under attack and under your rabbi's orders, you've gone to help build trenches and do shmirah for your neighborhood under the local Palmach leader.

Merav the Resistance Fighter: Grew up on one of the 1st kibbutzim in Israel. Her brother was killed in riots by the Arabs, and she turned to the Irgun because she believes that only by showing our power as a nation will we ever be able to be free. Many of her friends have been captured and tortured by the British, and she wants revenge.

Sicha: Have the kids sit down in their 2 groups (or more if there are more chanichim) and look at the 6 different characters. Ask the chanichim, which one of these people do you think helped the most in our achieving independence in 1948? To which do you think having independence and achieving a Jewish State made the biggest difference. Why? (For example – the Holocaust survivor because now he's really free). Which would you see yourself as, if you were there fighting in 1948? Why is it important to have independence and to have our own Jewish State???

Finally, what brought all these different people together to fight for the same country? What ideals did they all have in common?

Explain to the chanichim that there was no Tzahal then, just this mix of lots of different Jews, coming together as a nation, all fighting for independence.

Ask the chanichim if they think achieving independence and a Jewish state was hard or easy? Tie this into the games we played. Who were the Jews fighting in 1948 to get independence b4 they fought the Arabs? Was it a regular battle or not? Explain to the chanichim that the Jews were fighting within the cities as resistance fighters against the British. It was very similar to the Streets and Alleys game, where you, the Jewish resistance fighter was begin chased by the British soldier. Also, the Jews were in

competition with the Arabs to see who would get Israel as a state. It was whoever had the most ideals and wanted it the most that would win the battle. This ties into to snatch the cheese. The Jews had to be pushing themselves and really want Medinat Israel, and these ideals which we saw in the different types of people that joined to fight (Holocaust survivor, American veteran, Israeli Kibbutznik) was what powered the Jews to win. Finally, point out to the chanichim how the games we played were like the battles that really went on in 1948, and lots of these Jews that we talked about ended up giving their lives so that today we can have a state. Ask the chanichim if any of them have ever been in Israel for Yom Ha'atzmaut, Yom Hazicaron or Yom Hashoah? Ask them if it feels different having these days in America versus in Israel. Why? In Israel, Yom Ha'atzmaut does not come in a vacuum, but as part of a cycle. Only after experiencing Yom Hashoah (from which many people came out of the camps to fight for Israel like Yechiel in our peulah), and then Yom Hazicaron (where young soldiers like Mark, Merav, Dvir... died defending our country) can we celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut. Only within the context of understanding that these Jews gave their lives for us to be free, can we truly feel Geulah.

Conclusion: When we think about all the different Jews that came together to fight for Medinat Israel and why they came and fought we can understand that though it was hard, it was so important for the Jews to be free and have their own Medinah.

Sniff for Chevraya Zach:
Rachel Koller and Sarah Gordon

Theme: Yom Ha'atzmaut – Remembrance and Renewal

Goal: The chanichim should leave the sicha understanding

- (3) The power of Yom Ha'atzmaut – how all these different Jews came together to fight as an Am and why it was so important for the Jews in 1948 to have an independent Jewish State.
- (4) The battle for Yom Ha'atzmaut applies to us today and we can only truly appreciate it when looking at it as part of a cycle of the hardships of Jewish History (Yom Hashoah and Yom HaZicaron).

Trigger: Pick 6 chanichim to play each of the following characters, and have them each present their story to the group. (You could bring signs with their names or cool costumes – Israeli army hat, American army hat, kippa sruga, kibbutznik hat, payot, an Israeli flag... etc).

Then divide the chanichim into groups and hand them the blurbs of the following characters and have them discuss the questions as small groups.

Dvir: Born in Israel, grandparents born in Israel, grew up on a kibbutz and wants to fight to defend his kibbutz and homeland. Very active in the Hagana, believes in fighting in self-defense.

Yechiel: Shtetl Jew who survived Treblinka, came on an illegal boat, wants to survive – he just got freedom and now the Arabs are trying to take it away.

Yonatan: Religious Zionist, who learns in Ateret Cohanim, wants to fight for a religious state, to bring the geulah.

Mark: Assimilated Jew, fought in WW2 for the Americans, saw the camps and now wants to fight for a cause he believes in – having a Jewish Homeland.

Leibel: Meah Sha'arim Yerushalmi Jew. Don't believe in Zionism, but your house is under attack and under your rabbi's orders, you've gone to help build trenches and do shmira for your neighborhood under the local Palmach leader.

Merav: Grew up on one of the 1st kibbutzim in Israel. Her brother was killed in riots by the Arabs, and she turned to the Irgun because she believes that only by showing our power as a nation will we ever be able to be free. Many of her friends have been captured and tortured by the British, and she wants revenge.

- Which one of these people do you think helped the most in our achieving independence in 1948?
- To which do you think having independence and achieving a Jewish State made the biggest difference. Why? (For example – the Holocaust survivor because now he's really free).
- Which would you see yourself as, if you were there fighting in 1948?
- What brought all these different people together to fight for the same country? What ideals did they all have in common?

Then bring the chanichim back together and have the chanichim read President Weizmann's speech (attached below):

Sicha: How does this speech make you feel? What is its message about Jewish History? It sounds a lot like the Hagada, where we say that we all have to feel as if we too came out of Egypt. Here it's saying that we all need to feel that we all experienced all the different parts of Jewish History.

Do you think that this idea mentioned in the speech (of this collective experience of Jewish History) could have what brought everyone together? Or not?

What message does this speech have for us today? How can we take the lessons and inspirations of Yom Ha'atzmaut and of all the different people that fought, with us towards the future?

Finally explain to the chanichim that we see in this speech the hardships that we had to go through throughout Jewish History and especially towards 1948 in achieving the Jewish State. Ask the chanichim if any of them have ever been in Israel for Yom Ha'atzmaut, Yom Hazicaron or Yom Hashoah? Ask them if it feels different having these days in America versus in Israel. Why? In Israel, Yom Ha'atzmaut does not come in a vacuum, but as part of a cycle. Only after experiencing Yom Hashoah (from which many people came out of the camps to fight for Israel like Yechiel in our peulah), and then Yom Hazicaron (where young soldiers like Mark, Merav, Dvir... died defending our country) can we celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut. Only within the context of having experienced all of Jewish History can we truly feel Geulah.

Conclusion: When we look at all the different types of Jews and all the different reason for which they fought in 1948, we can get ourselves inspired about Medinat Israel today and the brave history on which it was founded.

On January 16, 1996, then President of Israel, Ezer Weizmann, gave a speech to both Houses of Parliament of Germany. He gave this speech in Hebrew to the Germans, fifty years after the Holocaust, and in it he beautifully summed up what Jewish history is. He said:

"It was fate that delivered me and my contemporaries into this great era when the Jews returned to re-establish their homeland...

"I am no longer a wandering Jew who migrates from country to country, from exile to exile. But all Jews in every generation must regard themselves as if they had been there in previous generations, places and events. Therefore, I am still a wandering Jew but not along the far flung paths of the world. Now I migrate through the expanses of time from generation to generation down the paths of memory...

"I was a slave in Egypt. I received the Torah on Mount Sinai. Together with Joshua and Elijah I crossed the Jordan River. I entered Jerusalem with David and was exiled with Zedekiah. And I did not forget it by the rivers of Babylon. When the Lord returned the captives of Zion I dreamed among the builders of its ramparts. I fought the Romans and was banished from Spain. I was bound to the stake in Mainz. I studied Torah in Yemen and lost my family in Kishinev. I was incinerated in Treblinka, rebelled in Warsaw, and immigrated to the Land of Israel, the country from where I have been exiled and where I have been born and from which I come and to which I return.

"I am a wandering Jew who follows in the footsteps of my forbearers. And just as I escort them there and now and then, so do my forbearers accompany me and stand with me here today.

"I am a wandering Jew with the cloak of memory around my shoulders and the staff of hope in my hand. I stand at the great crossroads in time, at the end of the twentieth century. I know whence I come and with hope and apprehension I attempt to find out where I am heading.

"We are all people of memory and prayer. We are people of words and hope. We have neither established empires nor built castles and palaces. We have only placed words on top of each other. We have fashioned ideas. We have built memorials. We have dreamed towers of yearning, of Jerusalem rebuilt, of Jerusalem united, of a peace that will swiftly and speedily establish us in our days. Amen."