TEACHERS' GUIDE

LESSON PLAN BY
ARIEL DUBROWIN

"Avraham Menachem Mendel Ussishkin: Builder of Israel"

SUPPLEMENT 1, PAGES 4–5

In this article, students will learn about Avraham Menachem Mendel Ussishkin and his commitment to building Israel. In this lesson, students will prepare and present brief skits related to pivotal moments in his life.

OBJECTIVES

- **Students will learn about Ussishkin's role in building the State of Israel.**
- **Students will explore the issues debated in the World Zionist Congress.**
- **Students will consider the value of a Jewish homeland and modern Hebrew.**

VOCABULARY

עִיר	**city**
עִבְרִית	**Hebrew**
בַּיִת	**house**
לִבְנוֹת	**to build**
חָלוּץ	**pioneer**

QUOTES & QUESTIONS

"'That's a preposterous lie! We can pioneer and build as well as anyone else!'"

What criticism was Ussishkin responding to?

What do you think Ussishkin meant by "pioneer"?

Why did he think it was essential for Jews to "pioneer and build"?

"'It's possible to build a house without a roof, walls, or windows, but no house has ever been built without a foundation.'"

What do you think Ussishkin meant by this?

JNF bought land throughout Israel under Ussishkin's leadership. Why do you think purchasing land was important?

ACTIVITY: BUILDING ISRAEL

1. Begin the class by asking the following questions:

Has proving another person wrong ever helped motivate you?

Did you know that Jews considered building the State of Israel in Africa?

If there were no State of Israel, how would you feel?

What are some things you have heard about Israel that make you proud?

2. Read the article on pages 4–5 of BabagaNewz Israel@60 supplement together with your class using the Quotes & Questions above to facilitate discussion.

3. Study the following texts with your students:

JEREMIAH 31:16–17

God said: Restrain your voice from weeping, your eyes from shedding tears; For there is a reward for your labor, declares God: They shall return from the enemy's land. And there is hope for your future, declares God: Your children shall return to their country.

TEACHING TIP

Ussishkin was deeply influenced by the pogroms of 1881 in Russia and, as a result, he became a leader in Zionist groups.

What kind of "labor" do you think Ussishkin would have thought this prophetic text was referring to?

What "enemy's land" were people returning from in Ussishkin's time?

How has the founding of the State of Israel realized the words "Your children shall return"?

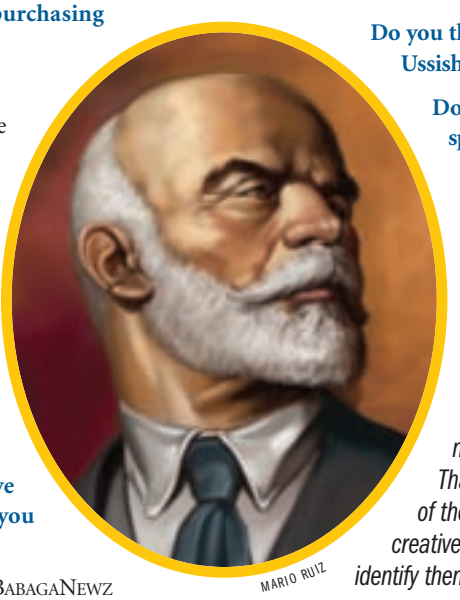
A LETTER TO THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN BY ALBERT EINSTEIN IN 1929

When one travels through the country, as I had the good fortune to do a few years ago, and sees young pioneers, men and women of magnificent intellectual and moral calibre, breaking stones and building roads under the blazing rays of the Palestinian sun; when one sees flourishing agricultural settlements, shooting up from the long-deserted soil under the intensive efforts of the Jewish settlers...what observer, whatever his origin or faith, can fail to be seized by the magic of such amazing achievement and of such almost superhuman devotion?

Why do you think Einstein was so impressed with the "Jewish settlers"?

Do you think Einstein was impressed by Ussishkin's "superhuman devotion"?

Do you think there is something spiritual about the "magic" of the accomplishments of Zionists in Ussishkin's time? Explain.



MARIO RUIZ

SEPTEMBER 1930 ADDRESS BY ALBERT EINSTEIN TO THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PALESTINE WORKERS, HELD IN BERLIN

It does not matter how many Jews are in Palestine, but it does matter what they produce there. That should be something the Jews of the whole world can point to as ideal creative work and with which they can identify themselves.

Do you agree with Einstein?

Einstein also spoke at the inauguration of Hebrew University. Do you think the creation of a university fit into this vision of "Palestine"?

4. Divide the class into small groups and ask each group to write a script they will perform for the class. Assign each group one of the scenarios below:

a) Ussishkin tells a friend about his conversation with the German Jew and explains why he thinks he was being so preposterous.

b) A colleague reacts to Ussishkin's opposition to Herzl's proposal at the World Zionist Congress for Israel to be established in Uganda.

c) A group of friends from the Paris Peace Conference react to Ussishkin's decision to speak in Hebrew.

d) Ussishkin brings a friend to see Haifa Bay in 1933.

e) Ussishkin hands over leadership of JNF.

5. Bring the class back together and give each group a chance to present its skit.

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TURN THIS PAGE OVER FOR A LESSON ON "DEFYING THE BRITISH ON THE HIGH SEAS"