



SAMPLE

El Al Airplane

1. El Al Airplane

El Al is Israel's national airline. Its name comes from a verse in the book of Hosea and means "to the skies." Unlike other national airlines, El Al's mission goes beyond serving the commercial and transportation needs of its citizens. Since its establishment in November 1948, El Al has rescued endangered Jewry around the world and brought them to safety in the Jewish state. For example, during *Operation Magic Carpet* (1949), El Al planes brought 47,000 persecuted Jews from Yemen to the new State of Israel. For many Yemeni Jews, their flight to the Promised Land recalled God's words to the Children of Israel: "You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Me" (Exodus 19:4).

Although its humanitarian service is noteworthy, El Al's commercial operations consume most of its energies. With a modern fleet of 43 planes, El Al safely brings approximately 19 million passengers annually to Israel from 48 countries. In an age characterized by heightened security, El Al is widely recognized as the world's most secure airline.

1. If you were planning a trip to Israel, what factors would you consider when choosing an airline? Describe your feelings about El Al's role in saving endangered Jewry.
2. Israel's national anthem is "Hatikvah," which means The Hope. How is the anthem's name related to the histories you've read on this card?

Say It in Hebrew

Israel יִשְׂרָאֵל

Hebrew עִבְרִית

Other rescues include:

- *Operation Ali Baba* (1950–51)
El Al pilots flew 113,000 Iraqi Jews to freedom in Israel.
- *Operation Moses* (1984)
8,000 Ethiopian Jews who walked to Sudan were secretly airlifted to Israel.
- *Operation Solomon* (1991)
14,325 Jews were flown out of war-torn Ethiopia. El Al set an aviation record during this operation by carrying 1,087 passengers on a single flight.
- *Operation Exodus* (1990)
El Al helped airlift hundreds of thousands of Jews out of the former Soviet Union.