**Where Does My Family Come From?**

**Lesson Information**

**Essential Questions**

* How does my family’s country of origin impact my Jewish identity?
* How did the Jewish history in my family’s country of origin affect our family’s story?

**Learning Outcomes**

* Students will learn about the Jewish community in their family’s country of origin.
* Students will reflect on how the Jewish experience in their family’s country of origin affected their Jewish identity.
* Students will discover how their Jewish practice is influenced by their country of origin.
* Students will learn that knowledge of the history of your family’s country of origin helps you to understand your family and their customs and strengthen your connection to the Jewish people.

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| Short description of lesson  <for result page> | Students will research Jewish life in their family’s country of origin. They will use resources found in the collection of the National Library of Israel and on the internet. |
| Age group | Middle school and up |
| Length of activity | 5 class periods |
| Primary sources from the NLI collections | * Variety of sources about Jewish communities found on the [NLI Education website](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/nlis/en/education/pages/results.aspx#query=any,contains,%D7%97%D7%99%D7%A0%D7%95%D7%9A&query=lsr11,exact,Communities&query=lsr16,exact,Primary%20Source).   It is important to note that the NLI Education website also includes resource packs about many Jewish communities and more are being added regularly.   * The general [NLI website](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/english/Pages/default.aspx) also has huge collections of resources about Jewish communities, although there is less information available to educators and learners about these resources than on the Education site. |
| Background information | Various entries on [Beit Hatfutsot](https://dbs.bh.org.il/) and [Jewish Virtual Library](https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/) websites. |
| Material, equipment, and preparations | * Computer access * Printed NLI analysis sheets  General analysis worksheet <link - <http://processing.nli.org.il/sites/ManofEng/PriteyHinuch/ManofDocuments/%D7%93%D7%A3%D7%A2%D7%91%D7%95%D7%93%D7%94_Primary_Source_Analysis_Worksheet.pdf>> * Photo analysis worksheet <link - <http://processing.nli.org.il/sites/ManofEng/PriteyHinuch/ManofDocuments/%D7%93%D7%A3%D7%A2%D7%91%D7%95%D7%93%D7%94_Photo_Analysis_Worksheet.pdf>> * Document analysis worksheet <link - <http://processing.nli.org.il/sites/ManofEng/PriteyHinuch/ManofDocuments/%D7%93%D7%A3%D7%A2%D7%91%D7%95%D7%93%D7%94_Document_Analysis_Worksheet.pdf> > * Materials for making a poster or link to online design applications. * Genealogy NLI resource sheet <link> * (optional) Primary sources from the students’ families or community collections |

**Lesson Plan**

Learning about the history of your family’s original Jewish community helps you to understand your family’s Jewish customs, history, and identity.

In this unit, students will research the Jewish community of one of the countries from where their family originated. This will include general research and analysis of primary sources from the NLI collection. Students will conclude their research by creating a poster or infographic about the country and writing a paragraph explaining how their family’s history in their country of origin affected their Jewish practice and identity.

**Lesson 1 – Initial Research**

1. **Class discussion – Starting off (10 minutes)**  
   The teacher leads a discussion about the different important and interesting things to learn about the community.   
   For example:
   * History – milestones in the history of the community
   * Local Jewish traditions
   * Famous Jewish figures
   * Famous Jewish sites
   * Famous Jewish institutions
   * Local Jewish culture and Jewish contributions to the wider culture.
   * Relations with non-Jewish society

The teacher then gives suggestions about where to find the necessary information.

1. **Individual activity – Researching the community (25 minutes)**The first step in this activity is to research the relevant Jewish community.

Since many students are of mixed origins, they will need to decide which community they want to research. The teacher can help students decide on their topic of research based on both their interest and the availability of online resources.

The teacher can direct the students to various sources including:

* + [My Jewish Story](https://dbs.bh.org.il/), The Museum of the Jewish People – Beit Hatfutsot.
  + [Jewish Virtual Library](https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org)
  + [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Jews_and_Judaism_by_country)
  + [World Jewish Congress: Communities](http://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/about/communities)

Students write a short summary about their chosen community based on the topics presented in the class discussion.

**3. Individual activity – Creating an infographic (begin in class and continue at home or in next lesson)**

Based on the information collected, students create an infographic presenting the main findings describing the community.

They can create the infographic by themselves using traditional art materials or use online infographic creators such as [Vengage](https://venngage.com/), [Canva](https://www.canva.com/create/infographics/), or others.

See example:[**My Jewish Community**](http://bit.ly/2ssPZAc)

**Lesson 2-3: Primary Source Analysis**

1. **Class Discussion – Primary sources (20 minutes)**

All serious historical research relies on an analysis of primary sources for developing understanding.

The teacher leads a class discussion about the difference between primary and secondary sources and the importance of these different sources for historical research.

2. **Individual activity – Searching for resources (35 minutes)**

The students search for 3-5 primary sources describing Jewish life in their country.   
These can include ritual items, photographs of famous community figures, photographs of synagogues, photographs connected to local celebrations of Jewish holidays, items relating to community history or news, posters relating to the community, etc.

The sources can be found in the following locations:

* Individual family collections
* Community archive
* Various websites:
* National Library of Israel website (search for the name of the community – city or country)
  + NLI education [website](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLIS/en/Education/Pages/default.aspx)
  + NLI general [catalogue](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/english/Pages/default.aspx)
  + [Historical Jewish Press](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/JPress/English/Pages/default.aspx)
  + [Time Travel](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/digitallibrary/time_journey/Pages/default.aspx) – ephemera (posters, postcards, tickets, brochures, leaflets, etc.) collections
  + [Visual Memory](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/digitallibrary/photos/Pages/photo_portal.aspx) – photograph collections
  + [Ktiv](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLIS/en/ManuScript/) – manuscript collections
  + [Center for Jewish Art Collection](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/digitallibrary/cja/Pages/default.aspx)
  + [Piyut](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/nlis/he/song)
* Other local Jewish museums, libraries, or institutions

1. **Individual activity – Analysing the primary sources (35 minutes)**

a. Complete an analysis worksheet for each of the primary sources you found.  
For each resource, choose the most appropriate worksheet from the following:

* General analysis worksheet <link - <http://processing.nli.org.il/sites/ManofEng/PriteyHinuch/ManofDocuments/%D7%93%D7%A3%D7%A2%D7%91%D7%95%D7%93%D7%94_Primary_Source_Analysis_Worksheet.pdf>>
* Photo analysis worksheet <link - <http://processing.nli.org.il/sites/ManofEng/PriteyHinuch/ManofDocuments/%D7%93%D7%A3%D7%A2%D7%91%D7%95%D7%93%D7%94_Photo_Analysis_Worksheet.pdf>>
* Document analysis worksheet <link - <http://processing.nli.org.il/sites/ManofEng/PriteyHinuch/ManofDocuments/%D7%93%D7%A3%D7%A2%D7%91%D7%95%D7%93%D7%94_Document_Analysis_Worksheet.pdf> >

b. For each of the primary sources write a paragraph summarising what it has taught you about your community.

**Lesson 4**

In the final stage, the students create a booklet, digital book, or website about the Jewish community that they researched.

1. **Class discussion – What are we doing next?** (10 minutes)

The teacher leads a discussion on the final product that the students will create, bringing together all of the resources, information, and understanding they have derived from the research activity.

* Brainstorm creative ideas in the classroom.
* Discuss what should be included in the final product.

1. **Individual work** **– Integrating the research (35 minutes and continued at home)**

Create a booklet, digital book, or website about the Jewish community.  
Include:

* Introduction
* Summary about the Jewish community
* Infographic created in the earlier stages of this project
* Pictures of the resources
* Texts about the resources and what you learnt about the community when analysing them
* Anything else about the community
* Summary – explain how the history in your family’s country of origin affected their Jewish practice and identity

**Lesson 5**

1. **Class activity – Sharing (25 minutes)**This is the time for the students to share their projects.

(If you are doing this lesson in conjunction with the larger Family History unit, share when the entire unit is complete.)

Suggested ideas for sharing:

* Students present to the whole class or in small groups.
* “Museum walk” – projects are set up around the room and students walk around viewing them.
* Students view all the projects on their computers.
* Students work in pairs, each of them originating from a different country.   
  They present their project to each other and then compare the countries’ histories.

1. **Class activity – Reflect** (20 minutes)  
   After reviewing each other’s work, the teacher conducts a class discussion on the following topics:

* What interesting information did you learn about your country?
* How did the history of the country impact your family’s personal history?
* What special foods or customs derive from your family’s country of origin?
* How is your Jewish practice influenced by your country of origin?
* What did you learn about your family from your research?
* What else would you like to learn about the Jewish community in your country of origin?
* What questions would you like to ask your parents or grandparents about their country?
* How does knowing your history strengthen your identity?