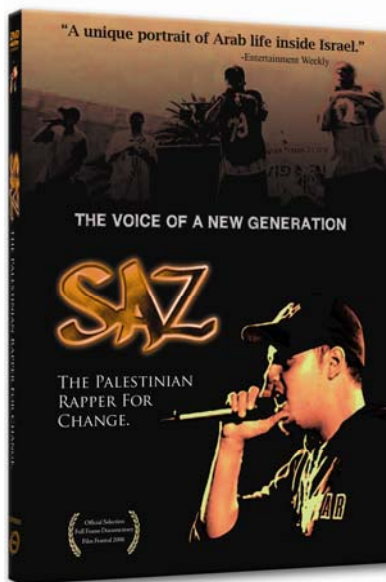




# Saz: The Palestinian Rapper for Change

## Guidebook



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## Country profile: Israel and Palestinian territories

**The division of the former British mandate of Palestine and the creation of the state of Israel in the years after the end of World War II have been at the heart of Middle Eastern conflicts for the past half century.**

The creation of Israel was the culmination of the Zionist movement, whose aim was a homeland for Jews scattered all over the world following the Diaspora. After the Nazi Holocaust, pressure grew for the international recognition of a Jewish state, and in 1948 Israel came into being.

Much of the history of the region since that time has been one of conflict between Israel on one side and Palestinians, represented by the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and Israel's Arab neighbours, on the other. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were displaced, and several wars were fought involving Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

Palestinians in the West Bank, including east Jerusalem, have lived under Israeli occupation since 1967. The settlements that Israel has built in the West Bank are home to around 400,000 people and are deemed to be illegal under international law, although Israel disputes this.

Israel evacuated its settlers from the Gaza Strip in 2005 and withdrew its forces, ending almost four decades of military occupation.

In 1979 Egypt and Israel signed a peace agreement, but it wasn't until the early 1990s, after years of an uprising known as the *intifada*, that a peace process began with the Palestinians. Despite the handover of Gaza and parts of the West Bank to Palestinian control, a "final status" agreement has yet to be reached.

The main stumbling blocks include the status of Jerusalem and the fate of Palestinian refugees and Jewish settlements.

### ISRAEL FACTS

- **Population:** 6.7 million (UN, 2005)
- **Seat of government:** Jerusalem, though most foreign embassies are in Tel Aviv
- **Area:** Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics cites 22,072 sq km (8,522 sq miles), including Jerusalem and Golan
- **Major languages:** Hebrew, Arabic
- **Major religions:** Judaism, Islam
- **Life expectancy:** 77 years (men), 82 years (women) (UN)
- **Monetary unit:** 1 new Israeli shekel (NIS) = 100 new agorot
- **Main exports:** Computer software, military equipment, chemicals, agricultural products

- **GNI per capita:** US \$18,620 (World Bank, 2006)
- **Internet domain:** .il
- **International dialling code:** +972

## PALESTINIAN FACTS

- **Population:** 3.8 million (UN, 2005)
- **Intended seat of government:** East Jerusalem
- **Area:** Palestinian Ministry of Information cites 5,970 sq km (2,305 sq miles) for West Bank territories and 365 sq km (141 sq miles) for Gaza
- **Major language:** Arabic
- **Major religion:** Islam
- **Life expectancy:** 71 years (men), 74 years (women) (UN)
- **Monetary unit:** 1 Jordan dinar = 1,000 fils, 1 new Israeli shekel (NIS) = 100 new agorot
- **Main exports:** Citrus
- **GNI per capita:** US \$1,120 (World Bank, 2006)
- **Internet domain:** .ps
- **International dialling code:** +970

**Israeli president:** Moshe Katsav

**Israeli prime minister:** Ehud Olmert

Ehud Olmert, from the centrist Kadima party, leads a four-party coalition which includes the centre-left Labour party and the ultra-orthodox Shas party. Kadima won a slim majority in parliament in elections in March 2006.

He faced his first real test in July, when Israel waged a weeks-long military campaign against Hezbollah guerrillas in Lebanon. Political opponents alleged shortcomings in the conduct of the war. The prime minister said the offensive had destroyed much of Hezbollah's weaponry and infrastructure.

Mr Olmert says he wants to fix permanent borders for Israel. This would involve a withdrawal from parts of the West Bank and the absorption into Israel of several big Jewish settlement blocs in the occupied territories. The plan would be implemented with or without a deal with the Palestinians.

As deputy premier, Mr Olmert assumed the powers of former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon when the latter suffered a major stroke in January 2006. Elections had been called before Mr Sharon became ill.

Kadima was founded by Mr Sharon after he left the right-wing Likud party in late 2005. He said peace with the Palestinians and Israeli security would be its main goals. Mr Olmert too left Likud to join the new party. Likud suffered heavy losses in the elections.

Ariel Sharon had been prime minister since 2001.

In 2002 his government decided to build a 640-km (440-mile) West Bank barrier, saying the structure was necessary to protect Israel from Palestinian suicide bombers. The International Court of Justice said the barrier breached international law.

Mr Sharon also pursued a plan to evacuate more than 8,000 Israeli settlers from the Gaza Strip. He said the August 2005 pullout, which stoked anger among pro-settlement activists, was aimed at making Israel safer and could help to revive an international peace plan.

**Palestinian leader:** Mahmoud Abbas

Former Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas, the candidate of the Fatah faction, won the January 2005 poll to replace the late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

Mr Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen, had already succeeded Yasser Arafat as leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), having been Mr Arafat's deputy since 1969.

He now has the task of working with the militant Islamic movement Hamas, the surprise winners of Palestinian parliamentary elections in January 2006. He says he will urge the new administration to honour existing agreements with Israel, including the peace process known as the road map.

Many analysts regard Mahmoud Abbas as a moderate. He has condemned the armed Palestinian uprising and favours the resumption of negotiations with Israel. But he faces the key challenge of persuading armed groups to stop their campaign of anti-Israeli attacks.

Mahmoud Abbas was born in 1935 in Safed, a town in present-day northern Israel. He co-founded Fatah - the main political grouping within the PLO - with Yasser Arafat in the late 1950s.

Mr Abbas established contacts with left-wing Israelis in the 1970s, and was the main Palestinian architect of the 1993 Oslo accords, which led to the foundation of the Palestinian Authority.

His brief stint as premier was plagued by power struggles with Mr Arafat over the control of the Palestinian security apparatus and over planned reforms. Mr Abbas resigned in September 2003.

The former Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat died in a French hospital on 11 November 2004, aged 75.

## **Palestinian prime minister: Ismail Haniya**

Ismail Haniya, a senior figure in the militant Islamic movement Hamas, was sworn in as premier in March 2006. The government is dominated by the movement, which won parliamentary elections in January.

## **ISRAELI MEDIA**

Israel's press and broadcasters are many and varied, and account for differences in language, political viewpoint and religious outlook.

The Israel Broadcasting Authority (IBA), set up along the lines of the BBC, operates public radio and TV services and is funded mainly by licence fees on TV sets.

Channel 2 and Channel 10 are the main commercial TV networks. Most Israeli households subscribe to cable or satellite TV packages.

Commercial radio arrived in 1995, but faces competition from unlicensed radio stations, some of which carry ultra-Orthodox programming.

All Israeli newspapers are privately-owned; many are available on the internet.

In its 2005 report the media rights watchdog Reporters Without Borders described the Israeli media as "robust and independent". But it said the army "routinely obstructed" the movements of Palestinian and foreign journalists.

### **The press**

- Yediot Aharonot - Tel Aviv-based daily
- Ha'aretz - Tel Aviv-based daily
- Jerusalem Post - daily
- Ma'ariv - Tel Aviv-based daily
- Globes - business daily

### **Television**

- Israel Broadcasting Authority - public TV, operates Channel 1
- Channel 2 - national, commercial
- Channel 10 - national, commercial

### **Radio**

- Israel Broadcasting Authority - operates public radios, including speech-based Reshet Aleph, news-based Reshet Bet, music-based Reshet Gimme, Arabic-language Reshet Dalet

- Galei Zahal - Israel Defence Forces (IDF) Radio, broadcasts news and music to mostly-civilian audience; also operates music and traffic news network Galgalatz

### **Internet**

Israel has a large IT industry and one of the world's most technologically-literate populations. Around 3.2 million people had internet access by 2004 (ITU figure).

## **PALESTINIAN MEDIA**

Television is the key source for news and information in the Palestinian areas.

Official broadcasting is run by the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) which operates Voice of Palestine radio and Palestine TV. These outlets came under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian president in early 2006; the move was seen as an attempt to prevent the new Hamas-dominated government from exerting control over the official media.

There are dozens of private TV and radio stations. Jordanian TV is widely-watched in the West Bank. Pan-Arab satellite broadcasters, including Qatar's Al-Jazeera TV, are popular.

International watchdogs regard the media as being generally more independent than in much of the rest of the Arab world. However, journalists risk harassment, attack or arrest by the security services, armed activists or militant groups. Self-censorship is widespread.

Media rights watchdog Reporters Without Borders said in 2005 that threats, violence and killings of journalists had "increased alarmingly" amid political instability.

### **The press**

- Al-Quds - private, Jerusalem-based, largest-circulation Palestinian daily
- Al-Ayyam - private, Ramallah-based daily
- Al-Hayat Al-Jadidah - Palestinian National Authority daily

### **Radio**

- Voice of Palestine - official

### **Television**

- Palestine TV - official
- Palestine Satellite Channel - official, Gaza-based

- Private TV stations include Al-Quds Educational TV, Al-Mahd TV, Al-Majd TV, Al-Nawras TV, Shepherds TV and Watan TV

### **News agency**

- Palestine News Agency - Wafa - official, in Arabic, English, French and Hebrew

### **Internet**

Around 160,000 people had internet access by 2004 (ITU figure).

Story from BBC NEWS:

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/middle\\_east/country\\_profiles/803257.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/middle_east/country_profiles/803257.stm)

Published: 2006/08/15 10:47:50 GMT

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# Lesson Plan: Using Music to Bring Awareness to Important Issues

**Materials Needed: Saz DVD**

**Time to complete: 30-45 minutes for each step.**

In the film, Saz uses his music to bring attention to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In this lesson, your students will be able to use their own means of self-expression to help bring awareness to a current issue.

## **Step One: Identify the Issue.**

Talk with your students about an issue currently affecting your community. Discuss why attention needs to be brought to it and what has been done in the past to raise awareness.

## **Step Two: Explore the Issue.**

Discuss how the issue ties into past issues in history. This can be on a local, national, or international level. Is this an ongoing problem? Or is it one that has been solved or addressed before? To what degree were the arts used to deal with this issue?

## **Step Three: Bringing in Current Music That Addresses the Issue.**

Have students bring in current music, CDs, or music videos that address the issue. Discuss how they are useful and not useful in dealing with this issue.

For reference, have students listen to and read the lyrics for Saz's tracks "Mother" and "Story of My Life" which are found on the Special Features menu of the DVD. Discuss how Saz's lyrics discuss his life and the political situation in his country. Ask students to discuss other songs/lyrics from other artists and discuss how successful/unsuccessful they are in addressing their chosen issue.

## **Step Four: Create a New Song/Rap to Address the Issue.**

Students can either work individually or in teams to write lyrics for a song or rap that addresses the chosen issue. Give students a timeframe on when to complete the lyrics and then have the class review them.

For those with musical skills, ask them to add music to the lyrics and discuss how different forms of music, whether it be rap, country or classical influences how the lyrics are perceived by the listener.

**Step Five: Performance and Discussion. How does the new song raise awareness?**

When the songs are ready, have students perform them in class. After the performance, discuss how performance of a song adds to the impact on the listener. Ask students to come up with other avenues where the song could be performed or used to get more audiences aware of the issue being discussed.

**National Standards Correlation:**

**The National Standards for Arts Education:**

**Music (9-12)**

**Standard 6: Listening to, analyzing, and describing music**

**Music (9-12)**

**Standard 8: Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts**

**Music (9-12)**

**Standard 9: Understanding music in relation to history and culture**

## References

- Morgan, Andy and Mu'tasem Adileh. "The Sounds of Struggle". 2000. In Broughton, Simon and Ellingham, Mark with McConnachie, James and Duane, Orla (Ed.), *World Music, Vol. 1: Africa, Europe and the Middle East*, pp 385-390. Rough Guides Ltd, Penguin Books. ISBN 1-85828-636-0
- Cohen, Dalia and Ruth Katz (2005). *Palestinian Arab Music : A Maqam Tradition in Practice*. University of Chicago Press. ISBN 0-226-11298-5.
- Mashmalon, Micah (1988). *Palestinian Folk Songs (Morris Moore Series in Musicology, 4)*. Shazco. ISBN 9998300916.

## Links:

<http://www.adc.org/index.php?id=247> – Arab Contributions to Society (Arab-American Anti Defamation Committee)

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/spl/hi/middle\\_east/03/v3\\_israel\\_palestinians/maps/html/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/spl/hi/middle_east/03/v3_israel_palestinians/maps/html/default.stm) - Key maps in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict – Source BBC News online.

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2058/> - Learning From Lyrics lesson plan from ArtsEdge. Students research contemporary songs (alternative, country, metal, pop, rap, and rock music) to study current social issues. They deliver oral presentations using factual data, graphics, and other media to interpret the song lyrics.

<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/muslimlife/> - Muslim Life in America – Resource site from U.S. State Department on Muslim life in The United States.