

THE SOUNDS OF ERETZ YISRAEL
IN AMERICA: THE CRUCIAL 60'S

STUDENT WORKSHEET

סיפורי מוסיקה
STORIES OF MUSIC



Note: This worksheet will give you an outline and overview of the lesson, and will provide you with the materials that will help you to understand and integrate the lessons major points. These materials include lyrics to songs that will be explored in depth, questions to consider while listening to some pieces of music, and more. This is not meant to be comprehensive, and your instructor may modify this lesson to enhance the learning experience for your particular class.

Introduction

This lesson will explore how music of Israel grew in the consciousness of American Jews and made its way into the larger American culture. American Jewry formulated its own brand of Zionism, which supported the enterprise in pre-state Israel (called “Palestine” at that time) but remained committed to life in America. The Israeli music that penetrated American Jewish life seems to buttress this idea.

Lesson outline

Entrance Music: “Chorshat HaEkaliptus” and “Ani v’Ata”

Part 1: The Role of Israeli Dance & Israeli Dance Music

Part 2: The American Form of Zionism

Part 3: The Reach of Israeli Music in American Pop Culture

Part 4: The Effects of the Six-day War on American Jewish Life

Part 5: Music in the Aftermath of the Six-Day War

Part 6: Coda/Conclusion (Outro: “Hallelujah”)

Part I — The Role of Israeli Dance & Israeli Dance Music

Pair share

When prompted to do so by your instructor, please pair with the person next to you and share with each other your responses to the following.

- 🔍 Recall one (or two) experience(s) in which Israeli dance was a part. (You might think broadly of life-cycle events, holiday celebrations, summer camp, visits to Israel, youth group, etc.)
- 🔍 What did this experience/these experiences mean to you as a person/Jew?

“Mayim, Mayim” — Hebrew transliteration and translation
(Music by: Emanuel Amiran; Lyrics by: Isaiah 12:3)

U-shav-tem mayim b'sason mi-may'nei ha-y'shu-a (2x)

Mayim mayim mayim mayim, hey, mayim b'sason (2x)

Hey, hey, hey, hey

Mayim mayim mayim mayim mayim mayim mayim b'sason (2x)

(English: "Joyfully shall you draw water from the fountains of triumph.")

“Yesh Lanu Tayish” — Hebrew transliteration and translation
(Music by: Folk; Lyrics by: Yitzchak Alterman)
(Note: there are different versions of this song.)

*Yesh lanu tayish
Latayish yesh zakan,
V'lo arba raglayim
V'gam zanav katan.
La la la...*

We have a goat
The goat has a beard
and four legs
And also a small tail.
La la la...

*Yesh lo karnayim
Karnayim lin-go'ach,
Yesh lo te'lafayim
Liv'ot v'liv-ro'ach.
La la la...*

He has two horns,
Horns to butt with.
He has hooves
to kick and to flee.
La la la..

“Debka Uriah” (Debkat Ha-Abir)
(Music and Lyrics by: Nachamia Sharabi)

No lyrics are used in the video.

“Tzaddik Katamar” — Hebrew transliteration and translation
(Music by: Amitai Neeman; Lyrics by: Psalm 92:13)

*Tzaddik katamar yi-f'rach
k'erez ba-l'vanon yis-ge.*

The righteous like palm trees shall flourish
Like the cedars of Lebanon shall they thrive.


Part 3 — The Reach of Israeli Music in American Pop Culture

Your instructor may divide you into groups/breakout rooms for this section. If so, each small group will examine one song that represents an arena in which Americans, including but not especially American Jews, were introduced to Israel music, even if the music were given a more Western setting.

Each group will read background information to the song prior to listening to the recording. The background information is bulleted.

Each group will present to the larger group its song: what it heard, by which composer, written in what year, what kind of sound, what cultural context would Americans have heard this, and, perhaps, play a 45-second snippet for the class. The group should, especially, offer its thought on the following question:

- ❓ What messaging does this song offer the American audience about Israel?

Songs are hyperlinked to the underlined title where it states “**PLAY** ,” found after the bulleted background information. Groups will discuss provided questions, as well as any other points you find interesting or important.

The four groups are:

Group 1 — The Concert Hall: Leonard Bernstein’s *Four Sabras* (1950), following

Group 2 — The Movies: Main Theme from *Exodus* by Ernest Gold (1960), below p. 7

Group 3 — The Broadway Stage: “Independence Day Hora” from the musical *Milk and Honey* by Jerry Herman (1961), below p.8

Group 1 — The Concert Hall: Leonard Bernstein’s *Four Sabras* (1950)

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)

- Bernstein has been hailed as one of the most important orchestral conductors of all time.
- Very eclectic, Bernstein composed in many styles, including symphonic and orchestral music, choral works, chamber music, opera, ballet, film and theater music, and works for the piano.
- Bernstein maintained a deep connection to Israel, which began with his visit in 1948 during the War for Independence. Bernstein famously conducted a concert in Beersheba while fighting was taking place nearby.
- In his social and artistic circles, Bernstein was a fervent supporter for Israel, using his music and performances as a tool for advocacy.
- Bernstein wrote several works which reflect his interpretation of the local soundscape. These works demonstrate a deep interest in the music of all of the local peoples.
- He was also a pianist, author, music educator, and humanitarian.
- Bernstein’s honors include 17 Grammy Awards--including the Lifetime Achievement, 11 Emmy Awards, one Tony Award and the Kennedy Center Honor.

Four Sabras

- The sabra is a cactus-type plant with tough thorns on the outside and sweet flesh inside. In common usage, it is applied to native-born Israelis. The Sabras in this piece are: 1) Ilana, the Dreamer; 2) Idele, the Hassidele (little Jew, the little Hassid); 3) Yosi, the Jokester; and 4) Dina, the Tomboy Who Weeps Alone.

- The title page is stamped Israeli Music Publications (IMP), suggesting that the piece might have been requested by that publisher—possibly as a set of children’s piano pieces—or, conversely, that it was simply a handy piece of paper found by Bernstein when he was conducting in Israel in 1948.
- The first portrait, “No. 1, Ilana, the Dreamer,” became “Candide’s Lament” in Bernstein’s celebrated operetta *Candide*. (It was also known as a piano piece written for an anniversary occasion for a friend, Cesarina Riso.)
- In “No. 2, Idele, the Hassidele,” a student is distracted during the *rav*’s Talmudic lesson. Idele is a variant of Yudel, the name of Bernstein’s paternal grandfather. Idele’s distraction is palpable—the pianist’s right hand—while the *rav* drones on in the left hand.
- In “No. 3, Yosi, the Jokester” Yosi may refer to a friend of Bernstein’s, Yossi Stern, an Israeli artist known for his incisive cartoons. The rhythms are reminiscent of the “jump” sequence from West Side Story’s “Dance at the Gym.” A later echo of the middle lento section of “No. 4, Dina, the Tom Boy Who Weeps Alone” can be heard in Bernstein’s score for the film *On the Waterfront*.

Play [Four Sabras selections](#) 

(Instructor may prompt you to listen to 1 or 2 specific choices. Please ask!)

No. 1, Ilana, the Dreamer: 0:00-1:36

No. 2, Idele, the Hassidele: 1:37-3:41

No. 3, Yosi, the Jokester: 3:46-4:43

No. 4, Dina, the Tom Boy Who Weeps Alone: 4:47-6:05

Group 2 — The Movies: Main Theme from *Exodus* by Ernest Gold (1960)

Ernest Gold

- Ernest Gold was among the many great European composers that fled the rise of the Third Reich in the 1930’s. His deeply musical Viennese family fled from Vienna to New York where he was immediately embraced in the music scene.
- While many composers of his time were diverging from Romantic (à la Tchaikovsky, Brahms, Mahler) musical aesthetics in favor of atonality, Gold embraced a neo-Romantic style that became the bedrock of American cinema composers (think “Star Wars”).
- While many composers saw film music as a step in the wrong direction, Gold was impressed and excited by this new musical world and would move to Los Angeles where he pursued film music as his primary endeavor.
- Gold is known for his many contributions to film including scores to *Judgement at Nuremberg*, *It’s a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*, *Ship of Fools*, and *The Secret at Santa Vittoria*, but he is still best known for his Oscar-winning work on *Exodus*.

“Main Theme from *Exodus*”

- The main theme, from which an original song (with lyrics and vocals by Pat Boone) would be derived, sounds reminiscent of the early pioneer songs and emulates the “Mediterranean style” made famous by Israeli composers such as Marc Lavry.
- *Exodus* is a film that portrays the struggle to establish the nation of Israel. The film is based on the eponymous novel by Leon Uris published just two years earlier (1958).
- The score by Ernest Gold (which won the Academy Award) acts as a storytelling mechanism. For example, when immigrants from Europe are seen, elements of melody and harmony associated with Eastern Europe or synagogue music can be heard. Additionally, various early Zionist and Pioneer songs are referenced or heard in the score.
- The “Main Theme to *Exodus*” penetrated deeply into the American popular sphere, and was covered by numerous artists.

Play [Main Theme from *Exodus* by Ernest Gold](#) 

*Optional: Listen [to the version with Pat Boone’s Lyrics and Vocals](#) 

“Theme from *Exodus*” — also known as “The Exodus Song” and “This Land Is Mine”
(Music by: Ernest Gold; Lyrics by: Pat Boone)

This land is mine, God gave this land to me
This brave and ancient land to me
And when the morning sun reveals her hills and plain
Then I see a land where children can run free

So take my hand and walk this land with me
And walk this lovely land with me
Though I am just a man, when you are by my side
With the help of God, I know I can be strong

Though I am just a man, when you are by my side
With the help of God, I know I can be strong

To make this land our home
If I must fight, I’ll fight to make this land our own
Until I die, this land is mine

Group 3 — The Broadway Stage: “Independence Day Hora” from the Broadway musical *Milk and Honey* by Jerry Herman (1961)

Jerry Herman (1931-2019)

- Born in NYC and raised in Jersey City, Herman was the only child of musical parents. He was the writer of *Hello, Dolly* (1964), *Mame* (1966), and *La Cage Aux Folles* (1983), among others.

- To research *Milk and Honey*, Herman traveled to Israel via El Al to soak up the atmosphere. On board, were a group of widowed tourists that became the story line for this musical that brought a loving first view of Israel into American homes.
- The *New York Times*, in reviewing a 1994 revival, suggests that the score to *Milk and Honey* may have been Herman's best.

***Milk and Honey* and "Independence Day Hora"**

- *Milk and Honey* opened in 1961, about 12 years after the end of Israel's War for Independence. The play concerns a group of American widows who tour Israel in search of Israeli husbands.
- The first Broadway musical set in Israel, the show expresses a similarly jubilant and righteously proud attitude toward the young country, while remaining true to its own genre of the romantic book musical.
- The show includes a Jewish-Yemenite wedding, suggesting a Jewish community in Israel that was more diverse than the American Jewish community.
- The show featured the legendary Molly Picon, as well as Metropolitan Opera stars Robert Weede and Mimi Benzell. It ran for 543 performances and was nominated for five Tony Awards.
- "Independence Day Hora" is the second number of the first act, and proudly introduces to American musical theater audiences the sound of Israel, the excitement and passion of a young country, and Israel folk dance style.

Play "[Independence Day Hora](#)"

"Independence Day Hora"

(Jerry Herman, from the musical *Milk and Honey*)

Sing, sing a song of *Mazel tov*,
 Keep mazel at your side;
 Sing, sing a song of *Mazel tov*,
 Toast the lucky groom!
 Toast the happy bride!
 Dance, dance the weary world away,
 Now that the knot is tied;
 Sing, sing a song of *Mazel tov*,
 The lucky groom!
 The happy bride!

“Silhouette” (“Galilee”)

(Leonard Bernstein, after a Lebanese folk song)

A last little bird on a palm feather riding,
Black and clean in the afterglow.
A lone little girl in the olive grove hiding,
Crooning soft as the sun sinks low: oo, oo,
Hu! ‘rrfah!
An old little jeep through the mountains
crawling,
Tough and tiny against the sun,
A young Arab shepherd upon his knees
falling,

Allah, Allah, the day is done, ee, ee, ee,
Hee! ‘rrfah!
The boys in the dark olive groves
assemble,
Hand in hand in a dancing ring,
Their eyes to the sun, and their lips
atremble,
Drunk with love and the chant they sing:
Walad ela ‘Una, Norkod taht el zetuna!
Ah! Ha! ‘Rrfah

“Tzena, Tzena”

(Music by: Issachar Miron; Lyrics by: Julius Grossman)

(Note: Original Hebrew lyrics: Yehiel Hagiz; original English lyrics: Mitchell Parish)

Tzena, Tzena, Tzena, Tzena
Can't you hear the music playing
In the city square
Tzena, Tzena, Tzena, Tzena
Come where all our friends will find us
With the dancers there

Tzena, Tzena--join the celebration
There'll be people there from every

nation
Dawn will find us laughing in the sunlight
Dancing in the city square

Tzena, Tzena--come and dance the Hora
One, two, three, four
All the boys will envy me for
Tzena, Tzena--when the band is playing
My heart's saying: *Tzena, Tzena, Tzena*

Part 4 — The Effects of the Six-day War on American Jewish Life

“Ma Avarech” — Hebrew transliteration and translation

(M: Yair Rosenblum; L: Rachel Shapira)

Ma avarech lo ba-me y'vorach
ze ha-yeled sha'al ha-mal'ach. (2x)

“How shall I bless--with what shall I bless--
this child,” asked the angel.

U-vei-rach lo chiyuch she-kamohu ka'or
U-vei-rach lo ei-nayim g'dolot v'ro-ot.
Lit-pos bo kol perach, v'chai v'tzippor
V'lev l'har-gish lo et kol ha-mar'ot.

He shall be blessed with a smile as pure as light
He shall be blessed with eyes big and observant.
To take in every flower, bird--life!
And a heart to feel all he sees.

Ma avarech lo ba-me y'vorach
ze ha-na'ar sha'al ha-mal'ach (2x)

“How shall I bless--with what shall I bless--
this youth,” asked the angel.

U-vei-rach lo raglayim lirkod ad ein sof
V'nefesh lizkor be et kol hal-chanim.

So he blessed him with legs to dance forever,
a soul to remember all the songs,

*V'yad ha-osefet tz'dafim alei chof
V'ozen k'shuval lig-dolim u-k'tanim.*

a hand to gather shells on the beach
and an attentive ear to listen to all.

*Ma avarech lo ba-me y'vorach
Ze ha-elem sha'al hamal-ach (2x)*

"How shall I bless--with what shall I
bless--this young man," asked the angel.

*U-vei-rach ki Yadav halmudot bifrachim
Yitz-l'chu gam lil-mod et otz-mat ha-
p'lada.
V'rag-lav ha-rok'dot et masa ha-d'rachim
Us-fatav ha-sharot et mik-tzav ha-p'kuda.*

So he blessed that his hands, used to flowers,
Will succeed in learning the might of steel,
and his legs learn the dance of dusty roads,
and his lips learn the songs of rhythmic
commands.

*Ma avarech lo ba-me y'vorach
Ze ha-gever sha'al hamal-ach. (2x)*

"How shall I bless--with what shall I
bless--this man, this man?"

*Natati lo kol she-ef-shar li latet
Shir v'chiyuch v'rag-layim lirkod
V'yad m'udenet v'lev m'ratet
U-ma avarech l'cha od*

I have given him all that I can:
A song, a smile, legs to dance,
A gentle hand and a feeling heart
What other blessing might I yet give?

*Ma avarech lo ba-me y'vorach
Ze hayeled, ha-elem ha-rach.*

"How shall I bless--with what shall I
bless--this child, this tender young man?"

*Ha-na'ar ha-ze ach-shav hu mal'ach
Lo od y'var-chuhu lo od y'vorach
Elohim (3x)
Lu ach bei-rach-ta lo chayim.*

This boy is now an angel
No longer can one blessed him, and
no longer can he be blessed.
O God--if only you blessed him with life.

"Yerushalayim Shel Zahav" — Hebrew translation
(Naomi Shemer)

The mountain air is clear as wine and the scent of pines around
Is carried on the breeze of twilight, with bells resounding.
While the trees and stones softly slumber, the city is caught in a dream
So solitary lies the city, and at its heart a wall.

(Chorus:)

Oh, Jerusalem of gold, and of light and of bronze,
I am the violin for all your songs.

We came back to the water wells to the market place and the square.
On the Temple Mount within the city, the shofar rings out loud.
Within the caverns in the mountains a thousand suns glow,
Again, we will go down to the Dead Sea road that runs through Jericho. *(chorus:)*

When I come today to sing to you--and you with crowns adorn,
I am the least of all your children, of all the poets born.
Your name scorches my lips, like a seraph's kiss,
If I forget thee, o golden city (*chorus:*)

“Kabbalat Shabbat” — Hebrew transliteration and translation
(Paul Ben-Haim)

IX. Hashkiveinu

*Hashkiveinu ADONAI eloheinu l'shalom,
v'ha-amideinu malkeinu l'hayim.
Ufros aleinu sukat sh'lomecha,
V'tak'neinu b'aitza tova mil'fanecha,
V'hoshieinu l'ma-an sh'mecha.
V'hagein ba-adeinu, v'haseir mei-aleinu,
oyeiv, dever, v'cherev, v'ra-av, v'yagon;
Uv'tzeil k'nafecha tastireinu –
Ki El shom'reinu umatzileinu ata;
Ki El melech chanun v'rachum ata.
Ushmor tzeiteinu uvo-einu –
l'hayim ul'shalom mei-ata v'ad olam.
Ufros aleinu sukat sh'lomecha.
Baruch ata Adonai,
haporeis sukat shalom aleinu,
v'al kol amo Yisrael v'al Y'rushalayim.*

Lay us down, HaShem our God, in peace,
and raise us up again, our Ruler, to life.
Spread over us Your sukkah of peace,
Repair us with Your good counsel.
Save us for Your Name's sake.
Shield us and turn us away from every
enemy, plague, sword, famine, and sorrow.
Shelter us in the shadow of Your wings,
for You are a God who watches and spares us,
for You are a gracious and compassionate Ruler.
Guard our going out and our coming in
grant us life and peace, now and always.
Spread over us your sukkah of wholeness.
Blessed are You, HaShem,
who spreads Your sukkah of wholeness over us,
over all Your people Israel and over Jerusalem.

“Ahavat Hadassah” — Hebrew transliteration and translation
(Music by: Yemenite Folk; Lyrics by: Rabbi Shalom Shabazi)

*Ahavat Hadassah al l'vavi nik-sh'ra
Va'ani b'toach gola, p'amai tsol'lim.*

The love of Hadassah is tied to my heart
And my steps are sunk deep in exile.

*Lu yesh r'shut li e'ele et-chab'ra
Toch sha'arei Tsiyon asher heim
nahalalim.*

If I could, I would go up and connect
Inside Zion's praised gates.

*Shacharit v'aravit bat n'divim ez-k'ra
Libi v'ra'ayonai b'cheshek niv-halim.*

Morning and evening I recall her
My heart and thoughts are shaken with
desire.

“Hallelujah” — Hebrew transliteration and translation

(Music by: Kobi Oshrat; Lyrics by: Shimrit Orr)

*Haleluya la'olam,
haleluya yashiru kulam
b'mila achat bod'da
halev malei b'hamon toda
V'holem gam hu eize olam nifla.*

*(Chorus:)
Haleluya im hashir,
haleluya al yom she-me'ir,
Haleluya al ma shehaya,
uma she-od lo haya--
Haleluya*

*Haleluya la'olam
haleluya yashiru kulam
V'ha-inbalim hag'dolim
y'had-hedu b'hamon tz'lilim
V'itanu hem yom'ru - haleluya.
(Chorus)*

*Haleluya al hakol
halelu al machar v'et-mol
Haleluya ut-nu yad b'yad
v'shiru milev echad--
Haleluya
(Chorus)*

Hallelujah to the world,
everyone will sing
One word only
and the heart is full of thanks
And beats as well what a wonderful world

(Chorus:)
Hallelujah with the song,
for a day that shines
For all that has been
and for all that is about to happen
Hallelujah!

Hallelujah to the world,
everyone will sing
And the big bells
will echo in a lot of sounds
And together with us they will say--
hallelujah!
(Chorus)

Hallelujah for everything,
yesterday and tomorrow
Hallelujah hand in hand
and sing in one heart--
Hallelujah!
(Chorus)