

# Teacher Guide: Reasons to Study Israel and Palestine

What gives  
you hope?

What does  
peace look  
like to you?

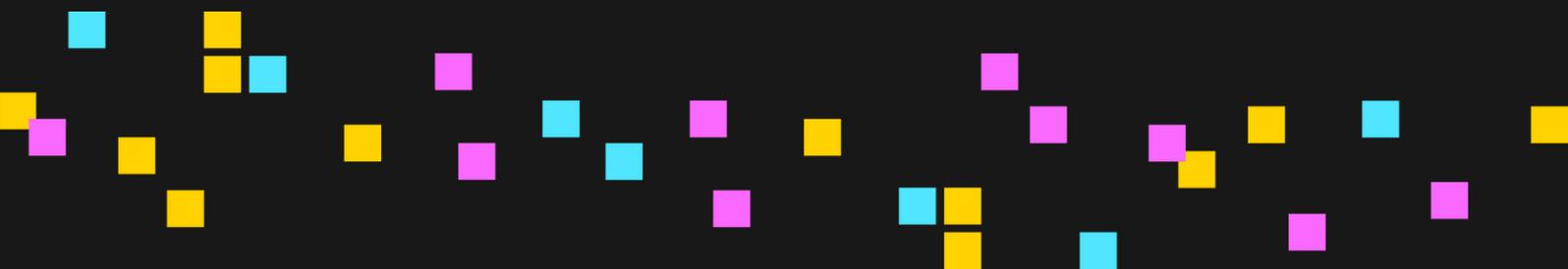
How do you  
cope with fear  
or anger?

How do  
you react  
to hate?

## Introduction

This document has been created to help schools and other educational bodies see the benefits in studying the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at KS4 and KS5.

Whether you are already studying the conflict with your students or currently faced with that choice, you'll be aware of how the topic makes headlines in the UK on a regular basis. However, the headlines are often around how we in the UK are talking about the conflict, and what constitutes offensive or racist speech or attitudes. We are also often seeing pro-Palestine or pro-Israel protests, campaigns, debates, discussions, groups, and celebrities declaring themselves for one side or the other. It's easy to see how the myriad of ways to 'get involved' in the conflict here in the UK can pressure young people into taking a stance on a topic that they know very little about.



## Why study the conflict?

- Gives students the opportunity to learn facts and information about the conflict from trusted impartial sources, rather than only from pressure groups, friends or family, or unverified internet sources
- Is an interesting topic that many young people actively want to learn about
- Teaches the students about Britain's role in the conflict and is a useful platform to discuss themes of imperialism and Britain's history
- Tackles questions around identity, religion, belonging, and nationalism; questions that many young people are dealing with on a daily basis in the UK
- Can empower students to know about the conflict before they get to university, where they are often pushed to pick a side
- Is a springboard to learning about other countries, conflicts, and cultures in the Middle East, some of whom have ongoing conflicts which students don't have the opportunity to study
- Provides students with a safe space in which to ask hard and often polemical questions about religion, race, nationalism, and identity. These questions may cause offence and upset outside of the classroom, but students need to be able to ask questions in a non-judgmental environment

# Curriculum compatibility

## 1. Citizenship (KS4 & KS5)

SNS workshops support Citizenship by:

- Developing critical thinking and political literacy
  - Evaluating multiple perspectives on complex global and domestic issues
  - Distinguishing facts, opinions, misinformation, and propaganda
  - Understanding how narratives are shaped by power, media, and identity
- Strengthening democratic engagement
  - Exploring the role of dialogue, protest, non-violent action, and civic participation
  - Examining how citizens can hold leaders and institutions to account
  - Encouraging respectful debate and reasoned argument
- Promoting social cohesion and respect for the rule of law
  - Addressing polarisation, hate, and extremism through non-violent conflict resolution
  - Understanding rights, responsibilities, and equality under the law
  - Examining how democratic societies manage disagreement

# Curriculum compatibility cont...

- Supporting active citizenship
  - Encouraging informed, ethical participation rather than apathy or radicalisation
  - Building skills in listening, deliberation, empathy, and compromise

## 2. Religious Studies (KS4 & KS5)

SNS workshops support RS by:

- Exploring beliefs, values, and ethics in real-world contexts
  - Examining how religious, cultural, and moral worldviews shape perspectives
  - Understanding how identity, belief, and belonging influence conflict and peace
- Developing evaluative and reflective skills
  - Analysing ethical dilemmas involving justice, human rights, violence, and peace
  - Reflecting on moral responsibility, dignity, and the value of human life
- Encouraging respectful engagement with difference
  - Encountering diverse lived experiences without stereotyping or essentialising
  - Challenging prejudice, antisemitism, Islamophobia, and other forms of hate

# Curriculum compatibility cont...

- Linking religion to contemporary global issues
  - Understanding the role religion can play in both conflict and reconciliation
  - Avoiding simplistic or binary explanations of complex situations

## 3. PSHE / RSHE (KS4 & KS5)

SNS workshops support PSHE by:

- Supporting emotional literacy and wellbeing
  - Helping students recognise emotions such as fear, anger, shame, and empathy
  - Providing tools for emotional regulation (e.g. grounding, reflection, self-awareness)
- Building respectful communication and relationships
  - Practising active listening and constructive disagreement
  - Developing confidence to express views without hostility or harm
- Addressing identity, belonging, and peer influence
  - Exploring how group identity can fuel inclusion or exclusion
  - Understanding social pressure, online dynamics, and radicalising pathways

# Curriculum compatibility cont...

- Promoting resilience in a digital and polarised world
  - Tackling misinformation, online hate, and social-media amplification
  - Encouraging responsible digital citizenship

## 4. Cross-Curricular Strengths (KS4 & KS5)

Across all three subjects with some relevance also for History, SNS workshops:

- Align with Ofsted’s emphasis on personal development, SMSC, and British values
- Provide safe, structured spaces for discussing sensitive and controversial issues
- Reinforce oracy, debate, and extended reasoning
- Support schools in meeting their political impartiality duties through balanced, educational—not activist—approaches
- Complement exam specifications without replacing curriculum content

## Summary

SNS workshops complement KS4 and KS5 Citizenship, RS and PSHE by developing students' critical thinking, ethical reasoning, emotional literacy and civic engagement. They help young people navigate disagreement, identity and global issues in a balanced, respectful and educational way, supporting both academic outcomes and wider personal development.

All in all, tackling this issue at KS 4 & 5 is akin to tackling a controversial and sensitive issue at one the most formative, vulnerable, and important stages of young people's lives.

The teenage years are the opinion-forming years, and also the years in which human beings are more open to hearing divergent views and perspectives, and practising empathy and active listening.

By choosing to study this conflict during these years, you are equipping young people with knowledge and skills to go out into society and into the world and discuss the conflict and those connected to it with maturity, complexity, and leadership.

If you aren't able to study the conflict as part of the curriculum, there are still ways to provide Palestine-Israel education to your students. SNS offers resources and has teacher training and student-led-learning packs to keep your students engaged and learning.

# Thank you

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