

Module 1: Jewish History and Heritage – My Country, My World | **Lesson 5: Winds of Change**

Grade 5/6 Lesson Plan

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Essential Questions

- What does being Jewish mean to me?
- In addition to my Judaism, what are the other components of my identity? How do I balance them?
- Where did my ancestors come from and what was it like for them once they settled in the USA?
- How do I balance my Jewish identity with my American one?
- How does memory impact my identity?
- What visible and invisible components make up my unique identity?
- How do the multiple components that make up identity help us understand the diversity of Jewish Americans?
- What are key positive and negative experiences of Jewish Americans both historically and today?

Key Takeaways

- How did Jews navigate their newfound freedoms in Western Europe?
- What are some ways Jews responded to new opportunities in America?
- What can Jewish history teach me about who I am today?
- History impacts identity. Where we come from impacts who we are today.
- Given what we learned about Jewish history in previous lessons, why do we think many Jews from around the world wanted to come to America?
- What does it mean to be free?
- What would you like future generations to know about Judaism today?

Timeline at a Glance

0:00-0:15 Introduction and Morning Meeting (15 minutes)

0:15-0:40 – Block One: Marc Chagall (25 minutes)

0:40-0:50 – Break (10 minutes)

0:50-1:25 – Block Two: Emma Lazarus (35 minutes)

1:25-1:30 – Conclusion (5 minutes)

Materials

- Dot stickers (red, yellow, blue, green pink) – one of each color per student
- Copies of the titles of the images
- Marc Chagall Posters printed on 24x36 posters
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- Computer/Projector/Screen for Emma Lazarus Video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChhnZLO32mo>
- 1 copy per student of New Colossus

- Pens and paper
- For optional Activity: textbook *Building Jewish Identity 4: Jewish History and Heritage*

0:00-0:15 – Introduction and Morning Meeting (15 minutes)

Greeting: Today, have students share their name and favorite color.

Share: Have student form pairs and share their earliest memory.

Activity: Metamorphosis Rock Paper Scissors. Have the students have a competition to go from eggs to butterflies. Each person will start as an egg and find another egg to play rock paper scissors. If you win, you advance to the next stage. You can only play against someone else in your stage. Each stage also has certain body movements: egg (crouch down), caterpillar (crawl), chrysalis (spin with arms crossed), and butterfly (walk and flap your wings). Play for approximately 5 minutes – not everyone will become a butterfly, and that's ok.

Explain that just as a butterfly has different stages in life, today we are entering a new stage in Jewish history, the transition to America in the 1800s.

0:15-0:40 Block 1: Marc Chagall (25 minutes)

This activity might best be done as a combined activity between multiple classes, with each class having a separate discussion.

Tell the students that for the first part of today we will be learning about the experience of Judaism in the modern world through the art of Marc Chagall. Here is a brief biography from Ralli Museums and the Guggenheim Museum:

Marc Chagall was born on July 7, 1887, in Vitebsk, Russia. He studied in Russia and then moved to Paris where he became a famous painter. He travelled back to Russia in 1914, when he was 27, and got trapped there when World War One started, and he stayed there until 1918. He then lived in Berlin and Paris, travelling and making art, until he moved to the US during World War 2. The time spent in the United States was not easy for the artist as he felt disconnected from his roots despite having reunited with several friends. After the war, he lived in France, travelled to Israel a lot. He made both paintings and sculptures that now hang all over the world.

Chagall stood out among his contemporary artists due to his capacity to bring together different resources and styles into one single work of art; conveying love in a work of art has always been hard to achieve yet Chagall would master this through colorful and vibrant metaphors, where his wife often appeared as his favorite model.

In 1958, Chagall started illuminating interiors with his stained glass windows. He first worked on the Metz Cathedral in Zurich, followed by the United Nations Headquarters in New York, and then the synagogue in the Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem.

He had already achieved world fame and attained distinction and recognition on behalf of the Jewish people who had been massacred and persecuted. His moment of glory came eight years before his death, when his art was exhibited at the Louvre.

Around the room, hang up different pieces of art by Chagall. Have the students walk around and look at all the art. Give each student stickers to place next to the art based on what it evokes:

The saddest: red

The happiest: yellow

The most Jewish: blue

The most European: green

The most American: pink

Give them 10ish minutes to walk around. Encourage them to take their time. *Feel free to play klezmer music in the background.*

Discuss:

- Ask them to move to stand by the piece that they placed each sticker on. Invite students to share why they chose that specific painting as the happiest/saddest/etc.
- Did most of the class agree on what the art means?
- Which piece was your favorite? Why?
- Based on this art, what do you think was important to Chagall?
- How does Chagall remember previous aspects of his life?

Teach students that one of the pieces of art is from windows that Marc Chagall made for the Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. He calls them his “gift to the Jewish People.”

List of Paintings:

- Rain – public domain
- I and the Village – public domain
- Spoonful of Milk – public domain
- Paris through the Window – public domain
- The Green Violinist
- Tapestry of 10 commandments in the Knesset
- The Dream
- Sunset, from Nice and the Cote D’Azur
- La Vie
- Bride and Groom of the Eiffel Tower
- Naftali Window
- Isaachar Window

0:40-0:50 Break

0:50-1:25 Block 2: Emma Lazarus (35 minutes)

Watch the video from AJHS “The Emma Lazarus Project” (12 minutes) to learn about Emma Lazarus’ history and her poem. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChhnZLO32mo>

- Ask, “What references did you hear to things we have learned about previously?”
 - Sephardi culture
 - Tensions between immigrants and those who lived here

Read together the New Colossus. Discuss:

- What is the main idea of this poem?
- What are your favorite lines or images?
- How does it make you feel?
- Is this a value that you still have? That we have as a country? Why or why not?

Introduce the students to the idea that we currently have refugees continuing to come to America, most recently from Ukraine, Afghanistan and various countries in Central America, but also from Syria and other places. Explain that how America welcomes and treats refugees is still important now, and the statue of liberty continues to be an important symbol.

Have students write 4-6 lines of a new poem for the Statue of Liberty and modern refugees:

- What do you want to tell new immigrants?
- What hopes do you have for them?
- How would you introduce them to America?

Invite volunteers to read their poems aloud.

1:25-1:30 Conclusion

K, W, L: Each week, as a class, we will create a large K, W, L chart to see our journey during this module. Hang up three large papers, one each for Know, Wonder, and Learned. Go through each prompt and invite a few students to respond as you write them:

Know: What did you already know before today (your family’s story, etc.)

Wonder: What do you wonder about after today?

Learned: What is one thing you learned today?

Closing Ritual “I could tell you about”: either go around the class and all listen to responses or as a one-on-one check out as they leave the classroom. You can also switch it up depending on the week and your timing. The prompt each week is “I could tell you about...” Below are some examples:

- I could tell you these facts about diversity among American Jews
- I could tell you about where my family is from.
- I could tell you about the frustration of working in groups

The goal is to have the about be somewhat related to their experience during the day: something they learned, experienced, felt, or are thinking about.