

# Home



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# Home

This activity explores the notion of “home” and employs artistic technique to make the topic personal and relevant to the students. The activity seeks to discuss the sacrifices and choices one makes when deciding where and why to set up a home, and what the ramifications of this prioritization are.

## Goals:

- The students will clarify and learn to articulate what “home” means to them
- The students will understand that choosing a home will often mean navigating tensions in multiple values, and making choices/sacrifices
- The students will grasp the broader implications of Israel as a “collective home” for the Jewish People.

## Outline:

### Stage 1

#### *Art Therapy*

In the first stage of the lesson, the students will do an art therapy exercise that will challenge the students to think about what “home” means to them.

### Stage 2

#### *Discussion and P’s lesson*

In the second stage, the students will discuss and articulate the meanings of home, and learn the “6 P’s” that contribute to a positive home.

### Stage 3

#### *Tensions*

In the third stage, the students will explore the tensions that can arise within, and between, the different home components. They will also understand that choosing a home can ultimately mean choosing one component/value over another.

### Stage 4

#### *Home for a collective*

In the last stage, the students will understand what home means for a collective in Israel. They will look at 2 case studies: Aliyah and Gush Katif.

## Part 1:

### *Making Home Personal*

#### **Activity:** Art Therapy

This first activity seeks to get the students thinking seriously about what home means to them. They are asked to create symbolic, artistic interpretations of home, and communicate what the feelings of home elicit from them.

**Materials Needed:** translucent clear, plastic paper/transparency film (like this: <http://www.officedepot.com/a/products/405472/Apollo-Plain-Paper-Copier-Transparency-Film/>), permanent markers, large (A3) sized white paper, tape or glue sticks

## Instructions:

1. Give each student 1 sheet of transparency paper, and several markers. Make sure they have a light-colored work surface (not a dark wood or black desk/table) so they can see their work on the transparent sheet.
2. Instruct the students to think for several moments about home. Then, instruct them to draw an image/symbol/representation on the paper of **something of critical importance that they feel they have in their home**. It is important to emphasize that you don't (necessarily) want an illustration of their house (think the drawing on the right) or a picture of an **object** in their home, but rather a more abstract or symbolic notion of something that they could not live without at home (could be the people, the place, the sense of security they feel towards home, abstract feelings like love or belonging, etc.)



3. Once they have finished, hand out a second piece of transparency paper.
4. Instruct the students to think for several moments about their home *now*, and think about the home they hope to someday build, down the line, in the future, when they're all "grown up" and living on their own. Ask them to draw on the paper one thing that they plan to **absolutely have someday when they start their own home** (regardless of whether or not they currently have it at home). Again, we don't mean "a flat-screen TV", or "a walk-in closet", we mean more abstract elements that contribute to a positive feeling towards home.
5. Instruct the students to place the two images on top of each other. You may want to hand out some plain white pieces of paper first, so that they can see the images clearly. The goal is to have a final product consisting of the 2 original images, that ideally could stand on its own as a single image. Instruct them that they are allowed to rotate, slide, even bend the images (but not cut them).

This finished product is a visual representation of the student's 2 most important "home elements": one being something they already have in their home, and one being something they hope to one day have in their future home.

In the best cases, the two images will find a way to complement each other in an interesting or enlightening way (for example, an image of a fire place inside of a heart). But even if they don't (2 independent images that may not easily mesh), the finished product will have a great deal of representational significance, and will help the students have a pool of concepts to draw from as the session unfolds.

If you like the finished products, frame them and display them on a classroom bulletin board!

## Optional:

As an example of using one medium artistically to make a variety of points and statement, we recommend this:

### **Israel-at-60 Israeli flag animation**

It uses 60 interpretations of the Israeli flag to depict different characteristics of Israel:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=40qulprXl1Y&feature=related>

## Part 2:

### Web

*Raise the following question to the group:*

- What is the difference between HOUSE and HOME?

If the conversation is not flowing, try these trigger questions:

- Can you have more than one house? Home?
- What if you move? So you're living with the same people and the same stuff, but in a different house on a different street? Is it still home?
- Do you feel "at home" in anyone else's home?

Ask the group **where and from what they think the "home" feeling they experience comes from**. The answers to this may be: people, community, love, family, familiarity, etc.) We suggest a way of dividing the elements of the an ideal home into a convenient package, would be according to "the 6 P's". As the students contribute their own answers, see whether you can fit them into these categories.

1. **People:** the people and relationships who make your house, neighborhood, etc. feel like home (could be family, friends, community, etc.)
2. **Place:** the geographic place your home is situated in (your town, neighborhood, street). It may be important for a host of reasons: it's a beautiful place, a sentimental one, because you have a personal or family history there, it has religious significance, etc.
3. **Purpose:** your feeling of purpose towards the place: what you contribute and your presence means. It may be that you care for your family, you contribute to the community, you have a good job there, etc.
4. **Protection:** the feeling of safety and security you feel at home.
5. **Passion:** ideology, patriotism, or loyalty towards the place. This feeling is less about you and more about a collective attachment to the place (or spiritual) [including, but not limited to, shared history and collective memory/attachment]

6. **Practice:** the culture, lifestyle, and language that you want to be living and speaking. This refers to the general way of life and in many cases in the most obvious and tangible characteristic of a place (for example, it's what makes living in Italy different from living in America)

### Optional:

After you discuss the six p's raise the option of a seventh p: the **preservation** of home. How do you ensure it stays and is maintained? What is your responsibility towards home?

## Part 3: *Tensions*

The tough thing about the 6 P's is that it is very rare to be at optimal levels of all six of them. There tends to be a tension both within an element, as well as between multiple elements.

***Tensions within one distinct "P":*** an example of tensions that exist within place might be: I feel a calling to live in the Negev because it's my history and they need me there. However, it's really hot there and far away from things I like which would make it difficult for my to make the Negev my home.

***Tensions between P's:*** often there are tensions or conflicts between one P and another. For example, you may love the Place of your house (pretty block, good restaurants nearby), but all your friends (People) have moved away to another neighborhood.

Ask the students to make it personal: Where do you feel your own tensions in your own lives? Describe the moments in which you experienced those tensions?

### ***The next step can be done in two ways:***

- Write each "P" word on the board in a sort of circle (feel free to add any helpful associative words the class contributed earlier), have each student come up and draw a line between the P's between which they experience tension. You should be left with a mess/web of lines in 2-D.
- Place 6 easels around the room, on each, place a sign or large paper with a different "P" on it. Give each student several pieces of yarn with a piece of tape on each end, and have them attach the string from one P to the one they feel it experiences tension with. You should be left with a 3-D tension web that the students created themselves with their emotional expression.

## Discussion:

How might we go about managing these tensions?  
Is it daunting, or perhaps comforting to see so many tensions within this one room?  
Does the fact that so many tensions exist possibly contribute to the feeling of home?

**Highlight the realization and appreciation that in a tension, one of the two poles usually overpowers the other.** At the end of the day, you either choose to stay living in a dangerous neighborhood anyway, because your house is important to you, or, you choose to let “protection” determine your choices, and you move to a safer place. But just because one P tips the scale and “beats out” the other P, doesn’t mean the losing P is not important, it just means that you prioritized, and the one you chose was *more* important.

## Part 4:

### *“Home” as a collective*

Discuss the following points about “collective home” with the students, and bring the example of Gush Katif to highlight to point.

**When you live as part of a collective**, your situation is unique in that you and others have many of the same elements of home in mind, and what happens to that home affects more than just you and your family. The exercise looks at Israel as a society in which, in addition to personal and familial homes, there is a larger collective home for the Jewish people. Making collective decisions that affect the home can have a different impact than individual decisions. In Israel, this is felt quite strongly. What happens to one community deeply affects others. So whichever P in the tension wins out, you also care very much about the side that “lost”.

The example of aliyah exhibits the personal choice to leave the comforts and familiarity of home, for the purpose of joining the collective home in Israel. Aliyah often means choosing “passion” and “purpose”, over “people” and “practice”.

The story of Gush Katif is highlighted as an example in which national decisions were made about Jewish homes, and the way in which the decision affected not only the evacuated families, but the entire collective.



## 2 CASE STUDIES:

### 1. *Aliyah: from home to homeland*

Since 2002, over 25,000 people from The U.S.A., Canada, and the U.K. have made Aliyah (immigrated to Israel). For Jews from these countries, moving to Israel is almost always a decision made based on passions and ideals. Though some immigrants to Israel from countries with lower standards of living may also go to seek opportunity, the Western countries' quality of living is high, and the move to Israel may even be considered a downgrade in this respect. And yet, 25,000 people have decided to leave the comforts of the people, places, language, and culture behind, to fulfill a dream to live in the State of Israel, and start a new home among the Jewish collective there.

In a recent e-mail, an old friend of the MAKOM team announced his plans to make aliyah. Below is an excerpt from his email, which we think captures the feelings one has upon leaving the home they know on the ascent (*aliyah*) to Israel.

Dear Friends,

It is with **a great deal of excitement, a bit of sadness, and a healthy twinge of trepidation** that I share with you my family's plan to make aliyah (move to Israel) this summer.

As many of you know, moving to Israel has always been on our family's strategic plan. It wasn't a question of if – rather, a question of when. With xxx entering high school next year and yyy entering Junior High, this is a window of opportunity to make such a move. Our family and friends in Israel are very excited about the impending family/friend reunion.

We have truly cherished our 15 years in Philadelphia. We arrived in town as a young married couple. We bought our first home here, raised our family here, shared in the community's ups and downs, and made countless personal and professional friendships. Definitely, the most difficult part of moving will be saying good-bye...

*Show the following clip about Aliyah from North America and the UK:*  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=56hyhPs-4Vc>

## 2. Gush Katif: leaving home for the sake of home

The example of the **2005 withdrawal from Gush Katif** highlights the point about collective home, and the sacrifices that need to be made, at times, for the collective. Due to many political and military influences, the Israeli government made the decision to evacuate Jews from their homes in Gush Katif on the Gaza Strip, and leave Gaza solely inhabited by Palestinians. The hope was that this move, though difficult, would be better for the “collective home” of the Jews, the rest of the State of Israel. When the Israeli army came to remove the Gush Katif residents from their homes, Jews all over Israel felt a deep sense of loss.

When it comes to a *collective* home, even the people who “get their way” realize that the decision may come at the expense of other important things.

**Close the session by showing the following song** (with English subtitles):

The Song “Zeh Hayah Beiti” / “This was my home” was re-made in 2005 in response to the Israeli withdrawal from Gush Katif:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m4X4qeoQU6w>