



THE MAKOR TEACHING GUIDES

Teaching U.S. History & Civics

One lesson, one unit, or the year · Free, ready to teach · U.S. History, government, civics, media literacy, and ELA

Start at your size. One lesson tomorrow: Emma Lazarus, planned on page three, beat by beat. One unit: the chart on page two drops a chapter into the units you already teach. The year: taught in order, the chapters walk the American story from 1654 to this morning's news.

Three facts

Your state likely requires it. Roughly twenty-nine states now mandate Holocaust education. The requirement usually arrives without a curriculum. Building one is left to you.

Your students have already met the subject. Antisemitism reaches them online before any teacher reaches them with the history.

It fits the course you already teach. The American Jewry chapter opens with its own rule: American Jewish history is a story you already teach. Five waves of one people run inside the units already on your calendar, the colonial era, immigration, the world wars, the Cold War, and the chart shows where.

AM I QUALIFIED TO TEACH THIS HISTORY?

If you teach U.S. history, government, civics, or ELA in grades 6 to 12, in a public, private, or religious school, yes. You do not need to be a specialist. Every page assumes the reader starts from zero: terms are defined, events are dated, people are introduced. If you can assign a reading and lead a discussion, you can teach this.

OPEN EVERY LESSON WITH THE STORY SO FAR

Five sentences, spoken aloud, ground any lesson from this guide. Each has a chapter behind it if the class wants more.

1. The Jews are a people, with a faith, a language, and a calendar, three thousand years old. [/topic-who-are-the-jews](#)
2. Their homeland is the Land of Israel, where their two Temples stood in Jerusalem. [/topic-land-of-israel](#) · [/topic-temples](#)
3. The diaspora spread Jewish communities across the world, before and after the Second Temple fell in the year 70, and some always remained in the land. [/topic-diaspora](#) · [/topic-continuous-presence](#)
4. Wherever they lived, they kept the same book, the same calendar, and the same hope of return. [/topic-sacred-texts](#) · [/topic-calendar](#)
5. The hatred they met kept changing its reasons, faith, then money, then race, but the target never changed. [/topic-adversus-judaeos](#) · [/topic-nazi-synthesis](#)

Where Makor fits what you already teach

The chart walks the American survey in its own order. Each row is a unit you already teach, and the chapters that belong inside it, each a single lesson. The chart lists the strongest fits, not all of them: every chapter names its courses and standards codes in its Classroom Connections section.

IF YOU ARE TEACHING

ADD THIS CHAPTER

Colonial America and the early republic	American Jewry · twenty-three refugees landing at New Amsterdam in 1654, a governor who wanted them gone, and the first synagogues of the republic · /topic-american-jewry
Immigration and the industrial era	Emma Lazarus · American Jewry · The Russian Pogroms · the poet who renamed the statue, the wave that built the picture most people carry, and the violence that pushed it here · /topic-lazarus · /topic-american-jewry · /topic-russian-empire-pogroms
The 1920s and the interwar years	The Protocols · The Founders of Hollywood · the forgery Henry Ford's newspaper carried to millions, and the immigrants who built the studios · /topic-protocols · /topic-hollywood
WWII and the Holocaust	The five-lesson unit in Teaching the Holocaust, this series' companion guide, or any of Unit 4's seven chapters at full depth · /section-4
The postwar years	Liberation & the Displaced Persons · Albert Einstein · Jonas Salk · what the American army found and what America answered, the physicist the Nazis drove out, and the first polio vaccine · /topic-liberation-dp · /topic-einstein · /topic-salk
The Cold War	Soviet Jewry · the movement that made Jewish emigration an American cause · /topic-soviet-jewry
Government and civics	The Postwar Trials · Postwar Restitution · The Legal Record · how law and public memory answered, from Nuremberg to this quarter · /topic-postwar-trials · /topic-restitution · /legal-record
Media literacy	The Protocols · Holocaust Denial & the Response · Hate Symbols · how a lie is built, how denial works, and the symbols that carry hate today · /topic-protocols · /topic-holocaust-denial · /hate-symbols
Current events	The Terror Record · Contemporary Antisemitism · It Didn't End · the present, documented as it occurs · /topic-terror-record · /topic-contemporary-antisemitism · /topic-it-didnt-end

IN AP COURSES

AP U.S. History takes the rows above in period order, and AP U.S. Government's civil-liberties unit pairs with the Government and civics row. Every chapter is document-based, the skill the AP history exams test in the DBQ, and each names its standards in Classroom Connections.

IN ELA

Every chapter is document-based reading practice: primary sources, discussion questions, and close reading, aligned to the Common Core literacy-in-history standards, the RH strand. [Emma Lazarus](#) pairs with poetry units, and [Hannah Arendt](#) with essays.

NEW TO THE SUBJECT ENTIRELY?

Give it one full period: **Who Are the Jews?**, the site's front door: a people, not only a religion. The right first chapter when the subject is new to your class. [/topic-who-are-the-jews](#)

One lesson, fully planned

Teach this one first: **Emma Lazarus**, the poet whose fourteen lines gave the Statue of Liberty its meaning. It fits an immigration unit, a Gilded Age unit, or an ELA poetry block, and it carries a question about language and power that works at every grade. The plan is a floor, not a script: teach it as written, or take the chapter your own way. The chapter page carries the full set of discussion questions, its sources, and key takeaways: the plan below uses the first question, and the rest are there when you want them.

makorproject.org/topic-lazarus

Before class. Open the chapter. Read it once. Press Open PDF if you want handouts. That is the whole prep.

Opening, 5 min. Ask each student to write one sentence: what does the Statue of Liberty stand for? Keep the answers. They revise them at the close.

Reading, 15 min. Read two sections together: “The pogroms reach New York” and “Fourteen lines for an auction.” Students note what Lazarus was doing in the months before she wrote the sonnet.

Discussion, 15 min. Discussion question 1, straight from the page: the statue was given as a monument to liberty, not immigration. What does it tell you about the power of language that fourteen lines, added twenty years later, changed what the monument means? *Listen for: the words did the renaming. A gift about liberty became the nation’s welcome because a poet who had spent months teaching pogrom refugees wrote them into bronze.*

Close, 5 min. Students revise their opening sentences. Leave the class with the chapter’s own phrase: a statue renamed by a sonnet.

The anatomy of a chapter

Every chapter page holds a readable history, written to be taught or assigned. Primary sources and images, each credited to its holding institution. Discussion questions that ask students to reason from the documents. Classroom Connections: the courses it fits and the standards it supports. Key takeaways, for review and exit tickets. A printable PDF: one button, the whole chapter.

CAN MY STUDENTS READ THE CHAPTERS?

Most chapters sit at high-school level. The Years Before the Killing reads at middle-school level, and every chapter’s print-ready PDF makes excerpting easy for younger classes. A full chapter is a half hour’s read: the lesson plans assign sections, not chapters.

DO I NEED APPROVAL TO USE MAKOR?

That depends on your district’s materials policy. In many districts, supplemental materials for a course you already teach sit within a teacher’s discretion. In others, a principal or department signs off. Either way, the material is built to pass review: every claim sourced, standards named, editorial rules published.

If a parent or your principal asks

The real fear is usually not the material. It is being accused of teaching a side. Here is why this material holds, and what to say if someone challenges you.

- **Every claim carries its source, on the page.** Dates, laws, and figures link to the archive or museum that holds the record. You are not asking anyone to trust you, or us. You are showing them a document.
- **The site documents. It does not argue.** Its standing rule is that the reader draws the conclusion.
- **Contested questions are labeled contested.** Where scholars disagree, the page says so and names them. No political side is taken, and on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict the site says plainly that it is a subject with legitimate arguments on both sides, and does not adjudicate it.
- **Hate texts are cited, never linked.** Students learn what a forgery like the Protocols did without the site ever sending anyone to read it.
- **Teaching about religion as history and culture is settled ground** in public schools, drawn in 1963 in *Abington v. Schempp*: the chapters study a tradition and never practice one.

- **The standards are public.** Every editorial rule the site follows is published at makorproject.org/editorial-standards, and the chapters in this guide name the state standards they support.

WHAT MAKOR ADDS TO YOUR U.S. HISTORY COURSE

In standard textbooks, Jewish history is a page or two in the ancient world, then the Holocaust, a history with no in-between. In the American survey the gap shows differently: students meet the statue without the poet, the Model T without the newspaper that carried the forgery, the war without the displaced, the Cold War without the movement. The chart restores the American thread one lesson at a time: the twenty-three refugees of 1654, the poet who renamed the statue, the law that closed the door, the army that opened the camps, and the cause that opened an iron curtain. The story was always inside the course. The chapters put it back on the page.

WHAT MAKOR IS

It's ready. Every chapter is a lesson: planned, one class period, teachable tomorrow.

It fits. Chapters drop into the units you already teach, with no new course to add.

It's solid ground. Primary sources and verified standards, so the documents do the talking.

It's free, with no logins and no ads.

The classroom toolkit

- **The Timeline.** Project it as a warm-up, or have students place the day's lesson on it. makorproject.org/timeline
- **The Museum.** Manuscripts, coins, and objects, each credited to the institution that holds it. One object, projected, opens a class. makorproject.org/museum
- **Virtual Field Trips.** Archaeological sites, memorials, and historic Jewish quarters, from the projector. makorproject.org/field-trips
- **Films.** Curated film and video by unit, grade bands marked. makorproject.org/films
- **The Incident Record.** Documented antisemitic incidents of the contemporary era, each entry ending with its record: a verdict, a plea, or an official finding. makorproject.org/incident-record
- **The Legal Record.** Judgments, treaties, and statutes, each linked to its primary document. Built for civics. makorproject.org/legal-record
- **Misconceptions and the Glossary.** The beliefs students bring to class, set beside the documents, and every term defined. makorproject.org/misconceptions · makorproject.org/glossary
- **The source-literacy lessons.** Reading documents against headlines, and recognizing propaganda, with printable handouts. makorproject.org/for-teachers
- **Standards & Mandates.** The state requirements, on one page: find your state's. makorproject.org/state-mandates
- **Sample Syllabi.** The full elective plan, plus a college survey. makorproject.org/sample-syllabi

Find your way on the site

Home · makorproject.org

The Curriculum Gap, why the site exists · [/curriculum-gap](https://makorproject.org/curriculum-gap)

Table of Contents, the whole site on one page · [/table-of-contents](https://makorproject.org/table-of-contents)

For Teachers, the guides, a self-paced course, and registration for updates · [/for-teachers](https://makorproject.org/for-teachers)

For Students · [/for-students](https://makorproject.org/for-students)

K–5, the early-grades program · [/k5](https://makorproject.org/k5)

EVERY CHAPTER IS A LESSON

One class period of material each, with discussion questions, sources, a print-ready PDF, and a Where-this-Chapter-fits note naming the courses it supports, all on the chapter page. The shelf is a menu, not a syllabus: take the chapter your unit calls for, and leave the rest where they are. The lessons planned in this guide come from this shelf, and any other chapter teaches the same way.

Unit 1 • The Jewish World · [/section-1](#)

[Who Are the Jews?](#) · [The Land of Israel](#) · [The Continuous Jewish Presence](#) · [The First & Second Temples](#) · [The Synagogue](#) · [The Sacred Texts](#) · [The Calendar & the Cycle of the Year](#) · [Ritual Objects & Material Culture](#) · [The Jewish Life Cycle](#) · [The Diaspora as a Phenomenon](#)

Unit 2 • Communities Across the World · [/section-2](#)

[A Connected People](#) · [The Jews of Iraq](#) · [The Jews of North Africa](#) · [The Jews of Iran](#) · [The Departure from MENA](#) · [Soviet Jewry](#) · [American Jewry](#) · [Ethiopian Jewry](#), [Beta Israel](#) · [The Modern State of Israel](#)

Unit 3 • The Evolution of Antisemitism · [/section-3](#)

[Adversus Judaeos](#) · [The Blood Libel](#) · [The Ghetto System](#) · [The Expulsions](#) · [The Racial Turn](#) · [The Russian Pogroms](#) · [The Protocols of the Elders of Zion](#) · [The Nazi Synthesis](#) · [The Dhimma](#) · [The Eastward Turn](#) · [The Terror Record](#) · [Contemporary Antisemitism](#)

Unit 4 • The Holocaust Era · [/section-4](#)

[The Years Before the Killing](#) · [Aktion T-4](#) · [The Nazi Ghettos](#) · [The Camp System](#) · [The Einsatzgruppen](#) · [The Holocaust in North Africa & the Middle East](#) · [Jewish Resistance & Rescue](#)

Unit 5 • Jewish Contributions · [/section-5](#)

[Across the Fields](#) · [Rashi](#) · [Maimonides](#) · [Joseph Karo](#) · [Moses Mendelssohn](#) · [Emma Lazarus](#) · [Theodor Herzl](#) · [Albert Einstein](#) · [The Founders of Hollywood](#) · [Jonas Salk](#)

Unit 6 • Memory, Responsibility, and Today · [/section-6](#)

[Liberation & the Displaced Persons](#) · [The Postwar Trials](#) · [Hannah Arendt](#) · [Postwar Restitution](#) · [The Memory Architecture](#) · [Nostra Aetate](#) · [Holocaust Denial & the Response](#) · [The Afterlife of the Image](#) · [It Didn't End](#)

The Makor Project (makorproject.org) is a free online textbook of Jewish history and the history of antisemitism, built from primary sources. It was built to close a gap: in standard textbooks, the Jewish people appear in the ancient world, then reappear two thousand years later as victims of the Holocaust, a history with no in-between. Read in order, its six units and 57 chapters form a full course. Taken singly, each chapter drops into lessons teachers already teach. Every chapter names the standards it supports in its Classroom Connections section, so the alignment work is already done.

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