THE TEACHING GUIDES

Teaching World History

One lesson, one era, or the whole year · Free, ready to teach · Grades 6–12

Start at your size. Fifteen minutes: add one chapter's story, source, and question to the unit you are teaching, at teachjewishhistory.org/for-tomorrow. One lesson tomorrow: Who Are the Jews?, planned on page three, beat by beat. One era: the chart on page two holds every unit of the course. The year: taught in order, the chapters walk beside your course from the ancient world to today.

Two facts

The history runs through every era you teach. The ancient world, Rome, Islam, medieval Europe, the Enlightenment, nationalism, the world wars, the Cold War, the modern Middle East: the same people appear in each, and the chart shows where.

Your state likely requires it. A 2026 federal review found that 42 of the 50 states and D.C. require Holocaust education through academic standards or state law. The requirement usually arrives without a curriculum. Building one is left to you.

AM I QUALIFIED TO TEACH THIS HISTORY?

If you teach world history or social studies in grades 6 to 12, in a public, private, or religious school, yes. You do not need to be a specialist. The pages are written for readers new to the subject: 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, more than 3,000 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 the site fits, era by era

The chart walks your course 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
The ancient world	The Land of Israel · The First and Second Temples · the Israelite kingdoms, the Temple at the center of the story, and the evidence of the presence that never broke · /topic-land-of-israel · /topic-temples · /topic-continuous-presence
Belief systems	Who Are the Jews? · The Sacred Texts · The Calendar & the Cycle of the Year · Ritual Objects and Material Culture · The Jewish Life Cycle · a people, its texts, its year, and its practices, taught like any tradition · /topic-who-are-the-jews · /topic-sacred-texts · /topic-calendar · /topic-ritual-objects · /topic-life-cycle
World cultures and geography	A Connected People · Ethiopian Jewry, Beta Israel · the map of the whole diaspora, the communities across four continents, and how they stayed connected · /topic-communities · /topic-beta-israel
Rome and the rise of Christianity	The Diaspora · Adversus Judaeos · the year 70, the communities that spread, and where the hostility started · /topic-diaspora · /topic-adversus-judaeos
The Islamic world	The Dhimma · Maimonides · The Jews of Spain and the Sephardic World · The Jews of North Africa · Jewish life under Islamic rule, its most famous philosopher, the courtiers and poets of Córdoba and Granada, and North Africa's walled quarters and schools, 1438–1912 · /topic-dhimma · /topic-maimonides · /topic-sepharad · /topic-north-africa
Medieval Europe	Rashi · The Blood Libel · The Expulsions · The Ghetto System · scholarship in Troyes, and the libel, the expulsions, and the walled quarters that closed in around it, with the Spanish Inquisition and Toledo's 1449 statute against Christians of Jewish descent · /topic-rashi · /topic-blood-libel · /topic-expulsions · /topic-ghetto-system
The early modern world	The Ghetto System · Joseph Karo · The Jews of Poland and Lithuania · the walled quarters, begun in Venice in 1516 and dismantled three centuries later, the law code written in Safed, and the Jews of Poland-Lithuania, by 1764 the largest Jewish community of its time · /topic-ghetto-system · /topic-karo · /topic-poland-lithuania
The Enlightenment	Moses Mendelssohn · emancipation argued through one philosopher's life, and the Reform, Neo-Orthodox, and Conservative movements that followed · /topic-mendelssohn
Nationalism and empire	The Racial Turn of 1879 · The Russian Pogroms · Theodor Herzl · hostility rebuilt on race, the violence that followed, and the movement for a Jewish state · /topic-racial-turn · /topic-russian-empire-pogroms · /topic-herzl
The interwar years	The Protocols Forgery · The Nazi Synthesis · The Years Before the Killing · the lie that traveled the world, the centuries it drew on, and the laws that followed · /topic-protocols · /topic-nazi-synthesis · /topic-1933-1939
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 world	Liberation and the Displaced Persons · The Postwar Trials · Nostra Aetate · the DP camps, where survivors married, had children, and published newspapers, what the courts built from the evidence, and the Church's 1965 reversal · /topic-liberation-dp · /topic-postwar-trials · /topic-nostra-aetate
The Cold War	Soviet Jewry · the movement that made Jewish emigration an American cause · /topic-soviet-jewry
The modern Middle East	The Departure from MENA · The Modern State of Israel · The Eastward Turn · the region's twentieth century through one people's story, Israel from 1967 to today, how the hatred moved east, and the community chapters behind it · /topic-mena-departure · /topic-modern-israel · /topic-hatred-moves-east · /topic-iraq · /topic-iran · /topic-north-africa
Today	The Terror Record · Contemporary Antisemitism · The Hatred That Outlived the War · the present, documented as it occurs · /topic-terror-record · /topic-contemporary-antisemitism · /topic-it-didnt-end

IN AP WORLD HISTORY

AP World History: Modern begins in 1200, so the medieval rows forward carry the course, period by period. Every chapter is document-based, the skill the exam tests in the DBQ, and each names its standards in Classroom Connections.

One lesson, fully planned

Teach this one first: **Who Are the Jews?**, the site's front door. It answers the question every era of the course quietly depends on, what kind of group is this, and it fits a belief-systems or cultures unit in any semester. 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. teachjewishhistory.org/topic-who-are-the-jews

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 a one-sentence answer: what kind of group are the Jews, a religion, a nation, or another kind of group? Keep the answers. They revise them at the close.

Reading, 15 min. Read two sections together: "The first question, usually answered too fast" and "So what kind of group is this?" Students note every kind of belonging the chapter names.

Discussion, 15 min. Discussion question 1, straight from the page: "This Chapter says a person can be a Jewish atheist and a person can convert into Judaism with no Jewish ancestors. In your own words, why do those two facts together show that 'religion' alone is not a complete definition?" *Listen for: the category is a people. Membership passes by birth the way a nation's does, and it can be joined the way a faith can, around one book, one calendar, and one remembered homeland.*

Close, 5 min. Students revise their opening sentences. Leave the class with the chapter's own phrase: one people, many doors in.

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 THE SITE?

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.

If a parent or your principal asks

Here is what to point to.

- **Each Chapter cites its sources on the page.** Documents, laws, and figures are credited, most with a link to the archive or museum that holds the record.
- **For the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, start with the dates.** The Modern State of Israel sets out the main events since 1967 in order, with its sources listed at the end of the Chapter.
- **Hate texts are cited, never linked.**
- **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 teachjewishhistory.org/editorial-standards, and the chapters in this guide name the state standards they support.

> **What the site adds TO YOUR WORLD HISTORY COURSE**
>
> The world history course walks straight through the centuries between the ancient world and the Holocaust: Rome, Islam, medieval Europe, the Enlightenment, the age of nationalism. The chart restores the thread one lesson at a time, inside the eras already on your calendar. When the Holocaust unit arrives, it lands as history with a history, and the course after it can answer what came next.

What Teach Jewish History is

It's ready. Every chapter can anchor a lesson, with questions, sources, and a print-ready PDF.

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

It's solid ground. Primary sources and verified standards.

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

Find your way on the site

Home · teachjewishhistory.org

The Curriculum Gap, why the site exists · /curriculum-gap

Table of Contents, the whole site on one page · /table-of-contents

For Teachers, the guides, a self-paced course, and registration for updates · /for-teachers

For Students · /for-students

K–5, the early-grades program · /k5

EVERY CHAPTER CAN ANCHOR A LESSON

Each one can anchor a lesson, 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 era 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 in the Land · The First and Second Temples · The Synagogue · The Sacred Texts · The Calendar & the Cycle of the Year · Ritual Objects and Material Culture · The Jewish Life Cycle · The Diaspora

Unit 2 · Communities Across the World · /section-2
A Connected People · The Jews of Iraq · The Jews of Iran · The Jews of North Africa · The Departure from MENA · The Jews of Spain and the Sephardic World · The Jews of Poland and Lithuania · 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 of 1879 · The Russian Pogroms · The Protocols Forgery · 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 the Middle East and North Africa · Jewish Resistance & Rescue

Unit 5 · Jewish Contributions · /section-5
Across the Fields · Rashi · Maimonides · Joseph Karo · Moses Mendelssohn · Levi Strauss · Emma Lazarus · Samuel Gompers · Theodor Herzl · Albert Einstein · The Founders of Hollywood · Jonas Salk

Unit 6 · Memory, Responsibility, and Today · /section-6
Liberation and the Displaced Persons · The Postwar Trials · Hannah Arendt · Postwar Restitution · The Memory Architecture · Nostra Aetate · Holocaust Denial and the Response · The Afterlife of the Image · The Hatred That Outlived the War

Teach Jewish History (teachjewishhistory.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 many standard textbooks, the Jewish people appear in the ancient world, then reappear more than two thousand years later as victims of the Holocaust, a history with no in-between. Read in order, its six units and more than 60 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.

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