



# My Name is Palestine: What is Freedom?

Time: 1-3 class sessions (about 1 hour 30 total)

Grade Levels: K-4

Unit: Stories

## **Purpose (What will students learn from this lesson?):**

The students will learn what freedom means to them and to others and how to promote freedom in their own and other's lives.

## **Unit Enduring Understandings Alignment:**

- Stories: We understand that our roots and indigeneity were established prior to colonization and that they are a source of knowledge, connection and healing.
- Stories: We understand and embrace the historical contributions, intellectual knowledge and cultural wealth of our people.
- Stories: We understand and place a high value on the stories of resilience, survival and resistance of our people.
- Systems: We understand the impact settler colonialism, imperialism, genocide, and hegemony have on the historical and contemporary experiences of our people.

## **Lesson Guiding Questions:**

- What is freedom?
- What makes us free?
- How am I powerful?
- What are my roots?
- How do we stand up for freedom?

## **Essential Skills:**

- I can read and analyze videos, pictures, and text for ways freedom is shown/expressed.
- I can move, feel, and think about freedom for me and for others.
- I can explain how to support myself and friends in being free.

**Cultural Wealth (Yosso, p. 78):**

- *Aspirational capital:* I can feel hopeful for freedom for Palestinian children and all children through understanding their rich and meaningful lives..
- *Resistant capital:* I can learn how people use creativity to resist (or stop) them from taking away my freedom.

**Ethnic Studies Principles Alignment:**

- Cultivate empathy, community actualization, cultural perpetuity, self-worth, self-determination, and the holistic well-being of all participants, especially Native People/s and people of color;
- Celebrate and honor Native People/s of the land and communities of color by providing a space to share their stories of struggle and resistance, along with their intellectual and cultural wealth;
- Challenge imperialist/colonial hegemonic beliefs and practices on the ideological, institutional, interpersonal, and internalized levels.

**Standards Alignment:**

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.3
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.6

**Materials:**

<p>Copy of <a href="#">My Name is Palestine</a> (Nadine Foty, 2022)  <a href="#">Slide deck</a>          computer/LCD projector/screen/speakers  <a href="#">What do you notice? Worksheet</a> (copies for individuals or pairs)</p>	<p>chart paper and markers          Optional: Palestinian olive oil, watermelon, Palestinian flag, olives, cloth or clothing with tatreez embroidery</p>
--	--

**Modifications, Accommodations, Resources for Multilingual Students :**

Seat bilingual speakers with monolingual speakers provide picture dictionaries	Utilize the Vocabulary Slide Deck to review unfamiliar vocabulary.
---	--

**Critical Vocabulary:**

CRITICAL VOCABULARY	Definition and Rationale for choosing this word, phrase, or concept	Idea for pre-teaching or front-loading the concept.
freedom	doing what you want you to do <b>and</b> people or things can't stop you from doing things you want to do	Utilize the <a href="#">Vocabulary Slide Deck</a> to teach the vocabulary as needed.
guest	someone who is invited to the home of another	see above
activist	people who fight together for what is right for everyone	see above
dabke dance	an Arabic folk dance usually danced in a line or a circle	see above
power	when you can get other people to do what you want with your words, ideas, or actions	see above
tradition	important things we do that have learned from the past and done in our family for a long	see above
belief	something that is true for you	see above
tatreez	traditional Palestinian embroidery	see above
roots	1) Part of the plant that connects it to the earth; 2) who, what, where you and your people come from	see above
kindness	treating people in a way that helps people	see above
fairness	Getting what you need AND deserve	see above

# C1: Cultural Rituals and Energizer

STEP	DESCRIPTION	TIME
SLIDE 2	<p><b>Land Acknowledgement</b></p> <p>If possible, do the land acknowledgement outside where the students can stand or sit on the earth. Explain that the land that we sit on (touch the ground) is actually the land of native people (look up whose land you occupy on <a href="http://nativeland.ca">nativeland.ca</a> to find out which Indigenous people's land your classroom occupies. This land was taken from the _____ people. That means we are guests on this land. As the students to explain what they know about guests. Ask them how to be a good guest in their families (e.g. smile and greet the host, bring a gift, take care of the house, offer to help, be kind to the people and pets in the home etc. ). Explain that if we are guests on this land, how do we treat the native people and the land if we are guests here? Use the brainstorming graphic organizer or chart paper to chart the student ideas of what makes a good guest or what a good guest does.</p>	5 minutes
SLIDE 3	<p><b>Ancestor Acknowledgement</b></p> <p>Arna Mer-Khamis was a teacher and activist who started the Freedom Theater in Palestine to help Palestinian children feel free and express what freedom means for them. In this video clip, her son talks about what freedom is and some of the children from the Freedom Theater talk about what freedom means to them.</p> <p>Share appropriate portions of Arna's biography: "The Freedom Theatre draws its inspiration from a unique project, Care and Learning, which used theatre and art to address the chronic fear, depression and trauma experienced by children in Jenin Refugee Camp. Set up during the first Intifada the project was run by Arna Mer Khamis, a revolutionary who devoted her life to campaigning for freedom and human rights, together with women in the refugee camp.</p> <p>The fierce and energetic humanity of this woman, who was born to a Jewish family and who had chosen to live and work among the Palestinians, inspired the children with possibilities for an alternative reality. Arna was awarded the Right Livelihood Award, also known as the Alternative Nobel Prize, in 1993 for her «...passionate commitment to the defense and education of the children of Palestine». With the award money she built a children's theatre, the Stone Theatre, which was later destroyed in the Israeli invasion of the refugee camp in 2002.</p>	5 minutes

	<p>The Intifada, for us and for our children, is a struggle for freedom. We call our children project “Learning and Freedom”. These are not just words. They are the basis of our struggle. There is no freedom without knowledge. There is no peace without freedom. Peace and freedom are bound together. Bound together!</p>	
<b>SLIDE 4</b>	<p><b>Cultural Energizer: What makes you feel free?</b>  Ask students what makes them feel free. Share, “Can you imagine what it would be like to fly? Do you ever fly in your dreams? What about swinging on a swing or jumping?” Explain that free is one word that could be used to describe that feeling. Other possible words are joy, light, and happiness. Explain that we are going to learn about a country where the children want to be free too. Here in <u>this</u> country we are allowed to wave flags but in Palestine, a different country, the people were not allowed to wave a flag, the Palestinian flag from (1967-1993). Let’s watch a short video about what the Palestinians did when they were told not to fly their flags. Help the students identify and compare the colors of the Palestinian flag and the watermelon.</p>	<b>3-5 minutes</b>
<b>SLIDE 5</b>	<p><b>Cultural Energizer (con’t):</b> Explain that we are going to learn about a country where the children want to be free too. Here in <u>this</u> country we are allowed to wave flags but in Palestine, a different country, the people were not allowed to wave a flag, the Palestinian flag. Let’s watch a short video about what the Palestinians did when they were told not to fly their flags. Help the students identify and compare the colors of the Palestinian flag and the watermelon.</p>	<b>2 minutes</b>
<b>Slide 6</b>	<p><b>Cultural Energizer (con’t):</b> Help the students identify and compare the colors of the Palestinian flag and the watermelon. Use the <a href="#">worksheet</a> to help students see the similarities in the flag and watermelon. Explain that sometimes we have to get creative to keep doing what makes us free, like the Palestinian people did with watermelons.</p>	<b>10 minutes</b>
<b>Slide 7</b>	<p><b>Cultural Energizer (con’t):</b> Show a portion of the <a href="#">video</a> with Palestinian children dancing the traditional dabke dance, a dance that tells stories and shows joy and freedom of expression. If space is available, ask volunteers to stand and move in a way that makes them feel free. Be sure that students</p>	<b>5 minutes</b>

	<p>have enough space to move without colliding with one another. In a smaller space volunteers can move or students can move their bodies with their feet planted. Another option is to have students freeze in a position that shows freedom like a freedom statue garden.</p>	
--	---	--

## C2: Critical Concepts

The teacher will introduce and read My Name is Palestine (Foty, 2022).

Slide	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Slide 8	<p>Explain that now we are going to study and read the book <u>My Name is Palestine</u> (Foty, 2022).</p>	<b>1 min</b>
Slide 9	<p>Explain that we will be reading <u>My Name Is Palestine</u> by Nadine Foty and Illustrated by Wathmi de Zoysa. Explain that the author wrote the words and that the illustrator made the pictures. For older students ask what they know about authors and illustrators and how they do their work and why? Ask if the book would be as effective without the author's' words or the illustrator's pictures?</p> <p>Take the students on a picture walk to help them with their prediction skills. Slowly flip through the story page by page asking students: What do you think will happen next? Ask a few volunteers to share their prediction with evidence with the sentence frame above ("I think _____ will happen because _____.").</p>	<b>5 min</b>
Slide 10	<p>Explain that the author wrote this story about her life. Begin reading the book. You may decide to read it through once before going back to this slide to take an in depth analysis of each page or a selection of pages of the book.</p> <p>Page 1: The main character's name is Palestine. Why do you think she is named that? What would it be like to be named after a country? Why do you think her parents named her after a country? Why do you think Palestine has a magic power? Names have power. Do you know what your parents chose your name for you? What kind of power do you have?</p>	<b>5 min</b>
Slide 11	<p>Page 3: How is your home or home country important to you and your family? What are the important traditions and beliefs</p>	<b>5 min</b>

	in your family that are important to you and your family? How do these traditions and beliefs help people feel connected to their homes and families?	
<b>Slide 12</b>	Page 5: What does your family make “by hand”? Food, clothes, crafts, gifts? The tatreez is a special craft of embroidery that Palestinian women have passed down for thousands of years. Mothers teach daughters and those daughters teach their daughters. The patterns and designs are color will tell you about the person wearing the dress and maybe where they are from. Watch the <a href="#">video</a> .	<b>5 min</b>
<b>Slide 13</b>	Page 7: Explain that Palestine has roots from thousands of years ago, just like the olive tree. The olive tree’s olives make olive oil and the olive tree is a symbol of peace and rootedness to the land. Discuss with students and have volunteers share: What are your family’s roots? Where do they come from? Why is where you come from important? Why is home important? What is important about your home to you?	<b>5 min</b>
<b>Slide 14</b>	Pages 9-13: Flags have symbols. Symbols remind us of something meaningful to us. What does the Palestinian flag’s colors symbolize for her? Explain that for the main character, Palestine, that the red symbolizes love, the white, freedom to return to the land of Palestine, and green, olive trees and olive oil because olive trees grow in Palestine.	<b>3 min</b>
<b>Slide 15</b>	Page 15: On this page Palestine is thinking about how people in Palestine are not free-like when they were told they couldn’t wave the Palestinian flag. She is telling us that she can see when something is not fair and kind. How do you know when something is not fair or kind? How do you know? What do you do? For more advanced students and classes, ask, When you see something taken from someone else or when a friend is bullied and scared, what do you feel? What can you do? Explain to students that a long time ago the Palestinian people’s homes were stolen but they kept their keys to their stolen homes. That is why the key is in the treasure box. The key to their homes is a treasure along with fairness and kindness is a treasure too.	<b>5 min</b>
<b>Slide 16</b>	Page 17: Show students where Palestine is on the globe. Explain that all people deserve to be free and this is what Palestine wants for her home country. Ask volunteers to share what they hope for Palestine. Using your kindness as key, what freedoms do you think ALL children in the world should have?	<b>5 min</b>

## C3: Community Collaboration and/or Critical Cultural Production

STEP	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Slide 17	<p><b>Reader's Theater</b></p> <p>Divide the class into 9 groups. Each group is assigned one page. They will perform the book standing in order of the book. Have them practice reading together in their groups. For children who are not yet reading, help them describe what Palestine is doing in each picture. For more advanced students, have them act out the scene and/or add a movement that represents freedom to them after they read. Once they are ready, have the students stand in order of the book and guide them through the performance.</p>	<b>10-30 min</b>

## C4: Conclusive Dialogue/Critical Circular Exchange

<p><b>Connection:</b> How is this relevant to students? How is it relevant to the unit? How do you bring back to the PURPOSE of the unit?</p>	<p>Facilitate a discussion about what freedom means for Palestine and what it means for the students in class. (Slide 18)</p>
<p><b>Assessment:</b> How will the students be assessed?</p>	<p>Take notes as students are sharing about their understanding of the lesson questions:            What is freedom?; What makes us free?; How am I powerful?; What are my roots?; How do we stand up for freedom?            Use a class list to create a checklist and notes catcher based on lesson objectives and goals.</p>
<p><b>Evaluation:</b> How will</p>	<p>Use assessment notes to identify areas of need and modify</p>

the effectiveness of  
this lesson plan be  
evaluated?

upcoming lessons to address gaps and build knowledge.

---

Lesson Plan Contributors: Tricia Gallagher-Geurtsen & Samia Shoman