



ASK HERZL

Program Title: The Bedouin Puzzle

Program Tagline: Have your students learn about the Bedouin community in Israel and the difficulty that comes with a community that moves from place to place.

Target Audience: Middle School

Grade: 5, 6, 7, 8

Length of Program: 30 minutes

Goal: Created by Congregation Beth El in Bethesda Maryland, this program gives students the opportunity to learn about the Bedouin community, and to think through how to best help a community that moves frequently.

Implementation:

Materials: Puzzles (20 pieces that you can get from the dollar store) for however many groups you want, suggested 4-5 participants per group

Begin with this video from YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/U1GzJsdVMYk>

Then Read:

Project Wadi Attir is a groundbreaking initiative of a Bedouin community in the Negev desert. The goal of the Wadi Attir project is to establish a model sustainable farm that respects Bedouin culture and traditional values, and uses their skills and experience in ways that will empower Bedouin communities.

The Bedouin community in Israel is sometimes at odds with the rest of Israeli society. The Bedouin community has, for generations, been a nomadic people, traveling with their families and possessions from place to place, and living temporarily for a season or year before moving their entire tribe and herds to a new location. This makes it hard for the Israeli government to help support the Bedouin community with medical support and educational opportunities the same way it does for people who live in cities and towns. The nomadic lifestyle and the government's inability to provide the same services to the Bedouin community that it provides to other citizens are factors explaining the poverty of many Bedouin communities.

Jewish National Fund is a partner in Project Wadi Attir, which aims to establish an innovative sustainable desert farming operation that will contribute to the well-being of the Bedouin community of the Negev by creating stable income sources, create jobs for and empower Bedouin women, and increase educational opportunities.



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Wadi Attir was designed by the Bedouin community. This project is designed to combine Bedouin values, aspirations, and experience in desert agriculture with sustainability principles and cutting-edge approaches to renewable energy production, recycling, and cutting-edge desert farming techniques. Developed and driven by the Bedouin community, the project demonstrates a self-reliant approach to social and economic advancement faithful to key aspects of Bedouin tradition.

The project brings up some important questions:

- Should the Israeli government take a hands-off approach to a minority community with different values than its own, and respect their way of life even if it makes it difficult to provide government services and contributes to poverty?
- Does the Israeli government have a responsibility to help improve the lives of its citizens, despite the possibility that it could change their culture?

Our activity is a fun simulation to help us think about the challenges that a nomadic lifestyle can bring.

Wadi Attir Activity Instructions: Puzzle Nomad

The students should sit by group, each group in a different area around the perimeter of the room apart from the other groups.

Each team should be given a puzzle. Tell the teams that when you instruct them to start, they will try to put their puzzle together faster than the other groups. If you can play music, then tell them they should start working when the music starts. Otherwise they can start at "Go!"

Time 60 seconds. After 60 seconds stop the music or yell "Stop!"

The teams need to stop, take apart any progress they've made on their puzzle, and pick up their pieces and rotate to a new location in the room. Then when the music starts again (or you tell "start" they begin again to try and put their puzzle together).

Run multiple rounds of this. Depending on how the students do with the puzzles, you may decide to give them only 30 seconds between moving to a new "camp" or else you can decide to give them a minute and a half between moves.

When there is only a couple minutes left in the rotation, or once a team successfully completes a puzzle, bring the groups back together and ask the following:

- What was that experience like?
- What was fun or frustrating about it?
- How does this simulate some of the challenges of living as a nomadic community?



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