Welcome to Israel – Now Let’s Learn Some Hebrew!

Framing this unit
New immigrants need to learn the local language in order to function in their new home. Israel has absorbed immigrants from around the world and helped them to adjust to their new country by teaching them Hebrew.

In this activity, we will work in groups to analyze a poster from the NLI collections, share our findings and understandings about the posters, and finally, create posters of our own presenting the Hebrew vocabulary necessary for life in Israel today.

Discussion
When the State of Israel was founded in 1948, immigrants from all over the world arrived in the country. Discuss the historical context of this immigration with the students:

- Why did so many Jewish immigrants arrive in Israel after 1948?
- Where did they come from? What happened to many of them before immigrating to Israel?
- Why didn't they come earlier?

Immigrating to a new country is challenging. Discuss the challenges that new immigrants face:

- Have you ever moved to a new country? Do you know anyone who has moved to a new country?
- What do you think would be hard about moving to a new country?
- What communication difficulties might there be when immigrating to a new country?
- How would you learn the new language? How would your parents learn the new language?

Immigration is also a challenge for the host country. Discuss the challenges that a country might face:

- What type of assistance might new immigrants need from the government?
- What might be the reaction of the citizens to new immigrants?
- How does immigration affect employment?
- What restrictions do some countries put on immigration?
- Who is allowed to immigrate to your country? What rules are in place?
- What is your country's attitude toward immigrants?
- What challenges did Israel face when absorbing so many immigrants in its early years? How did the Israeli economy deal with these difficulties?
Group Activity
Each group analyzes a poster from the collections of the National Library of Israel, originally printed by the Education Ministry in the early days of the State of Israel, using this Poster Analysis Sheet.

Then they share their insights, including:
- What words from the poster do you think would be the most helpful to a new immigrant?
- Which words or phrases on the poster surprised you?
- What did you learn from the poster about Israeli society in the 1950s?

Creative Activity
In pairs or small groups, choose a topic and create a language poster based on vocabulary that would be useful today, using art supplies or an online graphic tool.
- Which topics would be necessary for new immigrants?
- What words would people need to know within these topics?

Display and share the finished posters.

Primary sources in this lesson
- Transportation
- Clothes
- Restaurants
- Household items
- Grocery stores
- Hebrew Posters.pdf

How did it go? Let us know! learning@nli.org.il