

## ICI Lesson Plans



<p><b>Strand title: Palestinian Olive Tree Heritage, Forced Famine, and Food Security</b></p>	<p><b>Grade: 7-9</b></p> <p><b>Team Members:</b>  <b>Mohammed Vahed,</b>  <b>Uzma Ahmed</b></p>
<p><b>Topic: The Olive Trees of Palestine</b></p>	<p><b>Lesson Duration:</b>  <b>60-120 minutes</b></p>
<p><b>Key Concepts:</b> The importance of olives for Palestine and the oppression of farmers.</p>	<p><b>Lesson: 1 of 2</b></p>
<p><b>Learning Objectives:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn about the significance of olives and olive oil in the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet (saw).</li> <li>2. Acquire knowledge about the importance of olives and olive oil in Palestinian culture.</li> <li>3. Appreciate that the olive trees, olive harvesting, and family traditions are an important part of Palestinian food, identity, culture, and heritage.</li> <li>4. Recognize that for Palestinians the olive tree symbolizes a connection to their land and a deep-rooted yearning of one day returning to their ancestral home.</li> <li>5. Understand the importance of the concept of Sumud in the life of Palestinians, which forms the bedrock of their unwavering steadfastness and resistance in the face of years of illegal occupation, oppression, and siege.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Vocabulary - Key Terms</b></p> <p><b>Zaytun:</b> زيتون olives in Arabic</p> <p><b>Sumud:</b> (صمود ṣumūd) meaning “steadfastness” and “resistance” of Palestinians to the takeover and settlement of Palestinian land by the occupiers.</p> <p><b>Culture:</b> The ideas, customs, and social behavior of a particular people or society.</p> <p><b>Tradition:</b> A practice passed down through generations.</p>
<p><b>Learning Outcomes:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop an appreciation for Palestinians’ love of their olive trees, passed down through generations.</li> <li>2. Recognize how the olive industry supports the livelihoods of more than 100,000 Palestinian families and contributes to the Palestinian economy.</li> <li>3. Understand the challenges faced by Palestinian farmers of harvesting under occupation.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Culinary Arts and Heritage:</b></p> <p>Explore the symbolic importance of olive trees in Palestinian culture, fostering a deep connection to their land and heritage.</p> <p><i>“If the olive trees knew the hand that planted them, their oil would become tears.”</i> Mahmoud Darwish</p>	

## Food Security Exploration:

1. Investigate the economic importance of olives and olive oil to the Palestinian economy.
2. Explore the challenges Palestinian olive farmers face when settlers destroy their olive trees, vandalize their trees and steal their olives, and confiscate their farms.
3. Explain how the Apartheid Wall and the illegal barrier gates, with the denial of permits, affect the daily lives of Palestinian farmers.
4. Emphasize the olive farmers' desire for a peaceful harvest and the impact on food security.

## Cross curricular links: (For South African Schools)

### 1. Social Sciences (History and Geography):

Unit Standard: Investigate the significance of cultural practices in different societies, including their impact on daily life and economy (Grade 8).

Unit Standard: Analyze the role of cultural heritage in shaping identities and traditions within communities (Grade 8).

### 2. Life Sciences:

Unit Standard: Investigate the interdependence between humans and the environment, focusing on how cultural practices influence food production and sustainability (Grade 7).

Unit Standard: Analyze the impact of economic activities on sustainable development, including their effects on local communities and ecosystems (Grade 8).

### 3. History:

Unit Standard: Analyze the significance of symbols and rituals in expressing cultural identity and resistance to occupation (Grade 7).

Unit Standard: Investigate the historical roots of conflicts and resistance movements, focusing on the significance of symbols and narratives in shaping collective memory (Grade 9).

Unit Standard: Analyze the socio-political factors influencing access to resources and livelihoods in conflict-affected regions and evaluate responses to oppression and injustice (Grade 8).

## Teaching Methods

### 1. Warm-up and Introduction (15 minutes)

• Suggestion: Play the Palestinian song [Ana Shajarat Zaytoun](#) that celebrates olive trees. Turn on English subtitles. On completion, ask the students the following questions:

1. What does the opening of the video depict? (Answer: the Nakba)
2. Who is the young girl and what is she doing? (Answer: She is the grandmother in the video, escaping from the occupying soldiers as a young girl.)
3. What are the buildings depicted in the beginning? (Answer: A beautiful Palestinian village before it was destroyed.)
4. What is the grandmother showing her granddaughter in the video? (Answer: The grandmother is reminiscing about her childhood days, playing freely in the beautiful village.)

5. What is the significance of the key that the grandmother hands over to her granddaughter? (Answer: The grandmother has kept the key to the family house that was taken from them in 1948, and she has held on to the key in the hope of returning to the house. But alas, in her twilight years, the hope of returning is fading, and it is her wish and desire that her granddaughter will one day return to their village in occupied Palestine.)

- Ask students to raise their hands if they have tried olive oil. Ask those who raise their hands what kind of foods they usually add olive oil to or what they can do with olive oil (possible answers: for cooking, or adding to pizza, salad, pasta, etc.)
- Inform the students that this lesson is about a very special symbol of the Palestinian culture and identity, the olive tree.
- In order to provide students with some background information on Palestinian, inform them of the history of the creation of the Israeli state, the involvement of Britain, the Nakba, and the ongoing occupation of the Palestinians by using the slide show provided.
- For background information on Palestine and the Nakba the teacher could watch the video: “How Israel was created.”  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eLEUioCL2iwVENVdzzmWUNTDOG1t-6cN/view?usp=sharing>

## 2. Lesson on the importance of the olive tree to Palestinians (25 minutes)

- Tell the students that olives are a truly amazing and blessed fruit! They are mentioned in the Qur’an seven times, the Prophet (saw) encouraged the use of olives and their oil, and that they have great nutritional as well as cosmetic benefits. Then using the slide show, provide them with proofs from the Qur’an and Ahadith, as well as some of their health values and benefits.

Use the slide show

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Zk3Xa\\_ejWQL2nFvw9s1--PUZVCvEDhAv/edit?usp=sharing&oid=109588440624122500750&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Zk3Xa_ejWQL2nFvw9s1--PUZVCvEDhAv/edit?usp=sharing&oid=109588440624122500750&rtpof=true&sd=true)

to teach the students about the olive tree, everyday uses of olives, the importance of olives to Palestinians, the tradition of olive harvesting which is a time when the family gathers and enjoys the results of their hard work, and the pressing of olives into olive oil.

- Use the slide show to teach the students that the olive tree symbolizes Palestinians’ connection to their land and holds a special place in their hearts.
- Tell the students that we will watch these videos to learn more about Palestinian olives. (Can show both if time allows or choose one)
  - [Palestine’s Olive Harvest: A Timeless Tradition - YouTube](#)

The ending of this video previews the next video in the series, which include descriptions of settler violence against Palestinian farmers – may need to stop the video before this if not appropriate for your students.

- [Olive oil: the story of Palestinian identity - YouTube](#)

- Ask the students: What were some things you learned from these videos?

If not mentioned by students, highlight the importance of olives to Palestinian culture, heritage, and tradition; olives as a symbol of resistance and connection; and obstacles faced because of illegal Israeli occupations and settler violence.

- Use the slide show to discuss how olives contribute to the Palestinian economy.

### 3. Olive harvesting under occupation (25 minutes)

- Use the slide show to examine challenges faced by Palestinian olive farmers with the destruction of their olive trees, the vandalizing of the trees and theft of olives by the settlers, and the confiscation of their farms.
- Show the students how the apartheid wall and illegal barrier gates, with the denial of permits, impact the daily lives of Palestinian farmers and highlight the desire of olive farmers for a peaceful harvest, emphasizing the impact on food security.
- Use the slide show to do a case study of the story of Palestinian farmer Tayseer Amarneh and the numerous challenges he has faced on his farm.

Thereafter ask the students:

1. What are some of the challenges faced by farmers like Tayseer?
2. How are these challenges affecting the Palestinian economy?
3. What solution can you provide for overcoming these challenges?

The teacher could link students' local experiences to the global themes, making the content more relatable and impactful. For instance,

- a) compare students' local farming practices to olive farming in Palestine, highlighting how agriculture shapes different cultures and economies.
- b) Relate local historical sites to Palestinian sites, emphasizing the importance of preserving historical landmarks in both local and global contexts.

### 4. Sumud - (صمود *ṣumūd*) meaning “steadfastness” and “resistance” of Palestinians to the takeover and illegal settlement of Palestinian land by the settlers. (25 minutes)

- Use the slide show to teach the students about the important concept of Sumud, which forms the basis of a lifestyle of endurance, holding onto the land like a deeply rooted olive tree, preserving one's identity, pursuing autonomy and agency, preserving the Palestinian narrative and its culture in the face of elimination.
- Get the students to appreciate the power of Sumud, which has been aptly described as: *When the occupation uproots our olive trees, we plant many others; when they demolish our homes, we reconstruct new ones; when they close our schools, we create makeshift schools; when they obscure our history, we engage in witnessing, remembering, and documenting.*
- Educate the students of the many ways in which Sumud is practiced.
- Watch the video of Dr Mads Gilbert, the Norwegian doctor who worked in Gaza, talk about the beautiful quality of Sumud that he found in the Palestinians.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wS2LbgusN5NU3zVMKyB4troDxVLdrY7d/view?usp=sharing>

### Activity:

As a suggestion, include the following open-ended question: "On average, an olive tree lives about 500 years, with the oldest olive tree being 1500 years old. Can you write a short passage discussing the parallels between the resilience of olive trees and the resilience of the Palestinians, who have endured a harsh occupation but continue to thrive and produce remarkable examples of humanity?"

### Qur'anic Verses:

*'By the fig and the olive, and by Mount Sinai, and by this secure city [Makkah], We have certainly created man in the most excellent of forms...'* (Surah At-Tin, 95:1-4)

*'And He it is who causes gardens to grow, [both] trellised and untrellised, and palm trees and crops of different [kinds of] food and olives and pomegranates, similar and dissimilar. Eat of [each of] its fruit when it yields and give its due [Zakat] on the day of its harvest. And be not excessive. Indeed, He does not like those who commit excess.'* (Surah Al-An'am, 6:141)

*And [We brought forth] a tree issuing from Mount Sinai which produces oil and food for those who eat.'* (Surah Al-Mu'minun, 23:20)

*'He causes to grow for you thereby the crops, olives, palm trees, grapevines, and from all the fruits. Indeed, in that is a sign for people who give thought.'* (Surah An-Nahl, 16:11)

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*'And [We produce] gardens of grapevines and olives and pomegranates, similar [each of] its fruit when it yields and [at] its ripening. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who believe'. (Surah Al-An'am, 6:99)*

*Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp, the lamp is within glass, the glass as if it were a pearly [white] star lit from [the oil of] a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost glow even if untouched by fire. Light upon light. Allah guides to His light whom He wills. And Allah presents examples for the people, and Allah is Knowing of all things. (Surah An-Nur: 35).*

### **Ahadith:**

The Prophet (saw) said, *"Eat the oil (of olives) and use it on your hair and skin, for it comes from a blessed tree."* (Tirmidhi)

The Prophet (saw) said, *"Season (your food) with olive oil and anoint yourselves with it, for it comes from a blessed tree."* [Ibn Majah].

*"Take oil of olive and massage with it – it is a blessed tree."* (Darimi, 69:103).

### **Assessments:**

1. The questions in the "Warm-up and Introduction" based on the Palestinian song Ana Shajarat Zaytoun.
2. The questions are based on the case study of the story of Palestinian farmer Tayseer Amarneh and the numerous challenges he has faced on his farm.

## Resources and Materials:

Suggestion: Play the song that celebrates olive trees - [Ana Shajarat Zaytoun](#)

For background information on Palestine and the Nakba watch the video: "How Israel was created."

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eLEUioCL2iwVENVdzmWUNTDQG1t-6cN/view?usp=sharing>

Recommended videos and articles to build background for teachers:

[Palestine's Olive Harvest: A Timeless Tradition - YouTube](#)

[Olive oil: the story of Palestinian identity - YouTube](#)

Virtues of olives and olive oil in the Qur`an and Sunnah

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1h-SM569vu5v3jf3qYk9JBppSlwx8-5ZR/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uv-4RV3456Mc3rNC0QSuQxN0u8gdyRKv/view?usp=sharing>

[factsheet-OliveTrees.pdf \(miftah.org\)](#)

[The olive tree: a symbol of Palestinian steadfastness, subject to systematic destruction – Middle East Monitor](#)

[Record yield reported from 2019 olive harvest | United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - occupied Palestinian territory \(ochaopt.org\)](#)

<https://www.ochaopt.org/content/record-yield-reported-2019-olive-harvest>.

[Infographic: Palestine's olive industry | Infographic News | Al Jazeera](#)

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/166BZLqbk2\\_pKlkI8AeLSfnGafmV9hpt/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/166BZLqbk2_pKlkI8AeLSfnGafmV9hpt/view?usp=sharing)

Slide show –

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Zk3Xa\\_ejWQL2nFvw9s1--PUZVCvEDhAv/edit?usp=sharing&oid=109588440624122500750&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Zk3Xa_ejWQL2nFvw9s1--PUZVCvEDhAv/edit?usp=sharing&oid=109588440624122500750&rtpof=true&sd=true)

Recommended articles and video on Sumud

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MvoxR6IAKHURiZxi3Tf96uU4CdWBXaar/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MvoxR6IAKHURiZxi3Tf96uU4CdWBXaar/view?usp=drive_link)

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<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1G-UlwHSK7XLVdZ12hhS2pITczVZpVbqS/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wS2LbgusN5NU3zVMKyB4troDxVLdrY7d/view?usp=sharing>

## Additional notes:

A recommendation to the teacher is to use whichever parts of this material that appeals to you having regard to your time constraints.