

## The Global Community of Jews Today Peula (NetzerOlamopoly) - NFTY-GER

Touchstone Text: "Amsterdam, Disneyland, Tel-Aviv - oh they're miles apart! But when we light the candles on Shabbat eve, we share in the prayer in each one of our hearts!"

Enduring Understanding:

Reform Jews around the world have a variety of ways of practicing their religion, but customs and traditions aside, we are all Jews - *kulanu yehudim*.

Essential Questions:

What *is* the thread that binds us, the so-called "mission statement" of Judaism?

Questions to be Addressed:

How do Reform Jews in areas such as Panama, South Africa, Israel, China, Ethiopia, Britain, Russia, and France practice their religion? Compare and contrast with how we do in the States.

Materials:

- NetzerOlamopoly boards
- Jewish passports (one per PP)
- writing utensils (one per PP)
- 1 giant world map (highlight areas we learned about)
- dice (1 per board)
- player pieces

GroupLeaders:

Recommended that for this program, there are two groupleaders per group. Each group is assigned one of the countries included in this program, such as China, Israel, or Russia. Groups are later called up by countries to "draw connections" on the Netzer map (explained in greater detail below).

Some info on re-making this program:

## MAP AND CARDS:

The map was made by tracing an image with a projector; we outlined the countries incorporated into the program so participants wouldn't have to search for them. We made it as large as possible, as it makes writing easier because there is plenty of space, especially when there are multiple people writing at once. Participants draw connections from country to country, then decide on what connects Jews as a whole (explained in the attached program). For the information cards, I printed out eight facts per country on business cards - it helped keep the look professional and neat (though the number can vary as needed). The vast majority of these cards is information, but for some countries, we slipped in an occasional joke or Jewish pickup line; we found that rather than detracting from the seriousness of the program, the humor helped to keep participants focused and having a good time as they learned.

## BOARDS:

The boards were made from full-sized posterboard with the help of a projector - keeping the path basic made it easy to create a lot of game boards. Each step of the path is labeled with a country name corresponding with the country card to be read; for this I used mailing address labels. Also, for the "kulanu yehudim" globe in the middle, simply printing out the graphic on sheets of sticker paper made everything quick and hassle-free. Making so many boards can be time-consuming, but fortunately all 15 of them were saved and are in perfect condition, so if anyone who may need them would rather not make them by hand, they can easily be mailed to wherever they're needed!

## PLAYING THE GAME:

Instructions are included in the packet, but here is a brief overview. The board game is Candyland style, and simple to play. Every space on the board is labeled with a country; when participants take their turn, they pick an information card that corresponds to the country they landed on. At GER's event, we had participants partner up so that there was one player piece for every two people; it makes it easier to play in large groups because people don't have to wait so long for their turns.

## Timeline:

00:00-00:05 - Split into groups/ Group intro

00:05-00:15 PPs make Jewish ID Passports

00:15-00:35 Playing NetzerOlamopoly

00:35-00:45 Discussion

00:45-01:00 Fill in map

## Detailed Procedure

00:00-00:05 Split into groups/ Group Intro

“Ever since the Jewish people were scattered into the Diaspora, we’ve made our homes all over the world, and developed very different cultures according to where those homes are. Jews in America, Israel, South Africa, Panama, and France all have a variety ways of practicing the faith we share, whether that be in level of observance or traditions. But despite these differences, *kulanu yehudim* - we are all Jews. We’re going to take a trip to learn a little bit about the global Jewish community now with a good old fashioned game of NetzerOlamopoly. Netzer Olami is the global Reform youth movement; NFTY is a part of it like GER is a part of NFTY.” PPs will be split up into groups of 8-10 people.

00:05-00:15 PPs make Jewish ID Passports

“A Jewish identity is something we all have here in NFTY, and the first thing everyone needs for a long journey is a passport! Take a few minutes now to fill out your Jewish ID:

-Are you an American Jew or a Jewish American? Why?

Does your faith describe what kind of citizen you are, or does your country describe what kind of Jew you are?

-How do you practice Judaism here?

-What experiences have contributed to the Jew You?”

00:15- 00:35 Playing the NetzerOlamapoly Game

After passports are completed, PPs will play the board game:

Rules:

NetzerOlamapoli is a Candyland-style board game. To make sure everyone gets a chance to play, two PPs will share a single player piece. Therefore, a group of 10 people will have 5 pieces on the board. Each square on the path will be labeled with a different Netzer snif. Each of these sniffim will have a corresponding pile of info cards. Whenever a player lands on one of these spots, they will pick up a card from the corresponding pile and read it to the group. First players to reach Jerusalem (the end of the path) wins!

00:35-00:45 Discussion

“As we’ve seen, global Judaism takes a lot of different directions. Who knew that there even *were* Jews in China, and that the oppression of the Jewish people is still a problem in some parts of the world.”

1. What did you find most interesting?
2. Was there anything that surprised you?
- 3a. How do other countries' Jews seem different than us?
- 3b. How do they seem the same?
4. Is there one thing that draws us all together as members of the same global community, or does each country stand more or less on its own?

"Now that we've learned about global Judaism, it's become clear that despite differences, we're all Jews. Take a moment to think about what it is that binds us, and add it to your passports."

#### 00:45-01:00 Filling the Huge Map

- each group will be assigned a country to about which they will fill in info; for larger countries, there may be two groups

- countries will be paired together and called up **by the program leader** to fill in their areas together - just one or two facts per country! (for example, Russia and Israel come up together, then China and Ethiopia, etc.)

- after info has been written, the two groups will "draw a connection" between the two countries and write what it is that bonds them.

- \*for example, Jews in America might celebrate Hanukkah with sufganiyot and latkes, and Jews in Israel might be drafted into the army, but in both places, they share a love for Jews' right to exist without persecution, and for the protection of the Land of Israel

#### Short Conclusion by program leader addressing whole room

- Kulanu Yehudim

- After looking at this map and all of our connections, what is it that binds ALL of the Jews? (write it on the map ) Feel free to add this to the passport which identifies you as a Jew in America - after this "trip around Netzer" it identifies you as a Jew in the global community

- I hope that this program has been meaningful - and fun! - for everyone!

#### Netzer Olamopoly Cards:

## Panama :

1. The first Panamanian Jews were conversos fleeing Spain; at the end of Spanish colonial rule, Panama attached to Colombia, and Jamaican Jews settled there and assimilated.
2. Most Jews in Panama are conservative. 85% of them keep kosher.
3. Panama has a good relationship with Israel and supports it in the UN.
4. On Rosh Hashanah, Panama Jews have a seder in which they eat pumpkin, beef, lentils, dates, pomegranates
5. The “Super Kosher” supermarket in Panama City is the largest kosher grocery store outside of Israel!
6. Panama has only about 12,000 Jewish citizens, but many accommodations – there are 10 kosher restaurants, 2 kosher supermarkets, and five dayschools!
7. Netzer Panama includes Noar (youth) Panama, which spans ages 4 ½ to 15; children are divided into groups by age. The groups are Arayot (lions), Kohavim (stars), Hamagnivim (the coolest), Beitzim (eggs), and Koah (power).
8. The Orthodox community in Panama is flourishing, but does not associate well with Reform Jews. According to Rabbi Aaron Peller, a Reform Rabbi in Panama, Reform Jews are “shunned.”
9. Panama has the largest Jewish population in Central America
10. Kol Shearith Israel was the first synagogue in Panama – and it’s now Reform and the home of Netzer Panama!

## South Africa

1. Jewish cartographers helped Vasco da Gama discover Cape of Good Hope, coming on the journey despite restrictions. In 1803, when religious freedom was granted, British Jews began to immigrate.
2. 20% of South African Jews are Reform
3. South Africa as a country is anti-Israel. It supports a boycott of Israeli goods and believes Israel to be built on stolen land.
4. Every year, about 1800 South African Jews emigrate to Israel, Australia, Canada, and the U.S.
5. Chai FM is a Jewish South African radio station!
6. Recently, a protest in South Africa claiming to be anti-Zionist morphed into chanting of “kill the Jews”
7. During the Holocaust era, the Quota Act was passed to restrict Jewish immigration into South Africa; the Alien Act a few years later did the same
8. Nelson Mandela’s defense attorney was Jewish!
9. Jews were extremely active in anti-apartheid protests in South Africa in the 1960s
10. Like Israel, South Africa has a siren sound on Yom Hashoah, and Holocaust education is mandatory
11. Per capita, Jews in Cape Town, South Africa donate more to Israel than *any other Jewish community in the WORLD*

## Israel

1. An Israeli created the Power Rangers
2. Last year, Netanyahu's office spend 10,000 shekels on ice cream
3. Most non-Orthodox Jews in Israel identify not as Reform or Conservative, but simply Israeli; Judaism is such a part of national culture that its citizens' Jewish identity often doesn't differ from their national identity
4. Because Israel is the "Jewish State" rabbis hold a place in government. Only orthodox rabbis are considered legitimate rabbis by the state, which creates discontent in many, because it gives the impression that in Israel, only one type of Jew is valid.
5. Since its creation in 1948, freedom of religion, whether Jewish or not, is a constitutionally guaranteed right
6. In the Israeli army, use of weapons or force is not permitted unless there is an explicit threat to the lives of soldiers or citizens. Because of this, many soldiers endure abuse, sometimes physical, such as having rocks thrown at them, from Arab citizens.
7. The first offer of monetary aid in the early days of Israel's creation came from Germany, which sparked a huge debate. It was decided that the acceptance of this money was considered compensation for *property* stolen in the Holocaust.
8. Israel is the only state in the Middle East in which gays are not targeted for abuse, and in which women have voting rights.
9. Israel is the only country in the world in which the national language is a revived ancient language
10. Israel publishes more books translated from other languages than any other nation in the world

## China

1. Jewish merchants on the Silk Route were the first to live in the country
2. The first Chinese synagogue was built in 1163 and thrived for eight centuries until its eventual decline
3. Chinese Jews were assigned traditional surnames because a Ming emperor found their names confusing
4. There are currently about 2500 Jews in China
5. RANDOM JEWISH PICKUP LINE: In some shuls, women are not called up to the torah. May I call you up at home?
6. In 1937 the Shanghai Jewish population was destroyed when the Japanese captured the city, closed immigration, and deported the Jews
7. In Beijing, Chabad has established a womens' mikveh
8. Every three months, kosher meat is flown in from South Africa to Beijing

9. In Hong Kong, there is a JCC, a Modern Orthodox synagogue, a Reform synagogue, and two Sephardic synagogues
10. As of now, there is no Netzer Snif in China

#### Ethiopia

1. Ethiopian Jews once called themselves Beta Israel (house of Israel), and were relatively independent in their homes since before the 4<sup>th</sup> century, until the 13<sup>th</sup> century
2. In 1624, Ethiopian Jews faced a massacre, and were either killed or forced into slavery or baptism.
3. Operations Solomon, Dove's Wings, and Moses were Israeli missions to bring Ethiopian Jews into the safe haven of Israel; thousands have been rescued
4. Nobody is sure as to how Jews got to Ethiopia in the first place
5. Many Ethiopian Jews who have either made Aliyah or grown up in Israel experience racism from fellow Israelis
6. The traditional language of prayer of Ethiopian Jews is not Hebrew, but another ancient language called Ge'ez
7. It is traditional for Ethiopian Jews to slaughter a sheep for the Rosh Hashanah meal; some eat the meat with honey.
8. The method of kosher slaughter in Ethiopia differs from that of North Africa and Europe
9. Ethiopian Jews do not blow the shofar on Rosh Hashanah; instead, they beat drums and cymbals
10. Ethiopian Jews have priests rather than rabbis – they are currently struggling to be recognized in Israel, where the Orthodox rabbinate is in charge.

#### Britain

1. There are TWO Netzer sniffim in the UK!
2. Britain is pro-Israel; in 1948 Palestine was given to the Jewish people by Britain, and Israel was born
3. The stereotype of Jews as wealthy bankers originated in Britain in the Middle Ages; money handling was considered a sin by the Church, and so it fell to Jews, who often set high interest rates
4. England was the first European country to expel their Jewish population
5. London is home to one of the top yeshivas in the world
6. RANDOM JEWISH PICKUP LINE: You know how it is with Jewish culture – everything begins at sundown ;)
7. The British Jewish community is shrinking dramatically because of intermarriage and disinterest
8. An estimated 65% of Jewish children in Britain go to Jewish schools
9. The JW3, London's recently opened Jewish Community Center, is designed similarly to the JCC in Manhattan
10. RANDOM JEWISH PICKUP LINE: Is your sukkah kosher? Because the only stars I can see are in your eyes

## Russia

1. During Soviet rule, Jews were targeted in pogroms as the government attempted to destroy them. What famous movie depicts this? (If I were a rich man, yabadubadubadubadubadubaah!)
2. Since the end of Soviet rule, Jewish life is recovering. In Moscow alone, there are five synagogues, six day schools, and a kosher restaurant!
3. In 2012, Shimon Peres (Israel's president) opened the Jewish Museum and Center of Tolerance in Moscow
4. The Soviet Union recognized Israel in 1948, but immediately turned anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic when Israel allied with the West
5. Russian Jews have a strong community in Israel, where there are Russian newspapers, TV stations, and magazines
6. Despite his despicable policies toward gays and human rights in general, the Jewish community has flourished during the Putin administration
7. Western Russian Jews have a custom of setting a raw egg before a bride as a symbol of fertility (not unlike the egg on the Passover plate!)
8. Gefilte fish was invented in Russia as a way to make food stretch cheaply – you can thank 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian Jews for the smelly jars of ick that have lived in your fridge since Passover
9. RANDOM JEWISH PICKUP LINE: Shabbat must be over because I can see the stars in your eyes
10. What do you call a daredevil violinist? Fiddler on the Roof.

## France

1. France was once a center for Jewish learning however, as the middle ages wore on, persecution toward Jews became more common.
2. Most Jews in France today are Sephardic (Jews of Spanish or Portuguese descent) or Mizrahi (Jews of Middle Eastern descent)
3. After the six day war, France became unfriendly to Israel because the French government supported the Arabs' side of the conflict.
4. Because of the ever growing anti-Semitic feelings in France, many Jews have emigrated to other countries such as Israel, United States, and more tolerant European nations.
5. In Paris alone, there are about 20 Jewish day schools, and Hebrew is offered as a foreign language in some French high schools
6. In 2012, there were 614 anti-Semitic attacks, as opposed to 389 in 2011, and in 25% of Jews considered emigration to Israel out of concerns for safety
7. If a Jew eats a cronut on Hanukkah, does that make it a French sufganiyah?

