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# Breaking Bread: Finding Peace in the Middle East [9th grade]

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# UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN

## Unit Cover Page

**Unit Title:** *Breaking Bread: Finding Peace in the Middle East*

**Grade Level:** 9<sup>th</sup>

**Subject/Topic Area(s):** World Geography/ Middle East

**Designed By:** Jessica Waltman

**Time Frame:** Two Weeks

**School District:** Spring Branch Independent School District

**School:** Westchester Academy for International Studies

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**Brief Summary of Unit** (Including curricular context and unit goals):

The goal of this unit is to introduce students to the Middle East region of the world. Through the themes of the resources of oil and water students will gain a deeper understanding of the conflicts that have plagued this region of the world. Students will focus on the essential questions “What creates allies and enemies?”, “Why is there conflict?”, and “Are humans the heroes or villains of the earth?” in order to better understand the perspectives towards and of this part of the world.

The activities and daily lessons of this unit are built to aid students in their understanding of the use and conservation of water and oil within the Middle East, where oil and water reserves are located, and how the location benefits certain populations and creates conflicts for others. The unit will end with a focus on the current conflict between Palestine and Israel. Students will organize a “dinner party” of perspectives on the conflict and create questions to guide the conversations of the guests to help them see the different opinions concerning resources and religion within this region.

**Unit: *Breaking Bread: Finding Peace in the Middle East***

**Grade: 9<sup>th</sup> World Geography**

**Stage 1: Desired Results**

**Understandings**

*Students will understand that...*

- Humans act in their own (economic) self interests.
- Innovation creates opportunities and unexpected consequences.
- Geographic characteristics and natural resources influence the culture of societies, the growth of cities, and dictate the major economic activities of a region.

**Essential Questions**

- What creates allies and enemies?
- Why is there conflict?
- Are humans the heroes or villains of the earth (specifically the environment)?

**Knowledge** *Students will know...*

**TEKS**

**WG.06B** Explain the processes that have caused cities to grow such as location along transportation routes, availability of resources that have attracted settlers and economic activities, and continued access to other cities and resources.

**WG.07B** Explain the political, economic, social, and environmental factors that contribute to human migration such as how national and international migrations are shaped by push-and-pull factors and how physical geography affects the routes, flows, and destinations of migration.

**WG.12C** Evaluate the geographic and economic impact of policies related to the use of resources such as regulations for water use or policies related to the development of scarce natural resources.

**National Geography Standards**

*The Geographically Informed Person knows and understands...*

**Standard 6:** How culture and experience influence people's perception of places and regions.

**Standard 11:** The patterns and networks of economic interdependence on earth's surface.

**Standard 13:** How the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of earth's surface

**Standard 14:** How human actions modify the physical environment

**Standard 16:** The changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources.

**Standard 17 & 18:** How to apply geography to interpret the past, present, and plan for the future.

**Skills**

*Students will be able to...*

**WG.19B** Analyze ways technological innovations have allowed humans to adapt to places shaped by physical processes such as floods, earthquakes, and hurricanes.

**WG.20B.** Analyze the role of technology in agriculture and other primary economic activities and identify the environmental consequences of the changes that have taken place.

## Stage 2: Assessment Evidence

### Performance Task: *The Dinner Party: Peace between Palestine and Israel*

In groups of three students will be assigned the task of creating a seating chart for a dinner party of different perspectives concerning the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict. The dinner party itself will serve as a meeting of the “minds” of Israel, Palestine, and other global perspectives. The students will “host” the dinner party with the goal of developing a solution to the essential questions: “**Why is there conflict?**”, “**What creates allies and enemies?**”, and “**Are humans the heroes or villains of the earth?**” While the focus of this unit is on resources, students will also have a basic understanding of the religions practiced within the region and the conflicts this aspect of the culture along with resources has created. The questions they create should also address the religious differences which exist and the impact it has on the region.

Students will need to determine where guests will sit, what questions they will ask one another, and invite two additional guests. Students will create a seating chart that allows different and likeminded individuals to sit next to or around each other and pose questions for conversations. The goal of the additional guests is to provide additional perspectives to help moderate the conversation and help move Palestine and Israel towards a peaceful decision. The two additional figures can be current politicians, celebrities, or historical figures—dead or alive, American or International. For the two additional figures students will write a short biography with details about their life that support the decision to invite them to the dinner. Students will develop a total of ten questions for their guests and provide a detailed written response, from the perspectives of individuals attending the party, to three of the questions.

### Other evidence:

(quizzes, tests, academic prompts, self-assessments, etc.  
note – these are usually included where appropriate in Stage 3 as well)

Four Corners, Journal Entries, Class Discussions, World Report Card, Middle East Foldable

## Stage 3: Learning Activities

(Steps taken to get students to answer Stage 1 questions and complete performance task)

### Day 1: Introduction of the Major Resources—Water and Oil

Begin by having students discuss the importance of water and oil in their lives. Have students respond to the following statements by walking to a corner of the room: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree; the “fifth corner” can be neutral or unsure (*Four Corners*). If a student walks to the fifth corner they must, by the end of the discussion choose a corner to go to and explain why they agree or disagree.

1. I could not make it a day without oil.
2. Water is the most important resource in my life.
3. If we don’t find an alternative to oil soon the environment and life as we know it will be very different in the near future.
4. We should make oil and water more expensive so people don’t waste it.

Once students have discussed these statements they will respond to the following questions in a journal entry: What resource is more important: water or oil? How can humans better use and allocate these resources around the world?

At the end of class, or for homework, distribute a political map of the Middle East for students to label. As students complete the map have them highlight the names of oil rich nations in a different color. Pose the question “What type of relationship do you think the oil rich nations have with the countries that do not have as much oil?”

### Day 2: The Changes Humans Make: Aral Sea and the Many Uses of Water (Activity and reading from *Geography Alive*)

Students will begin their exploration of water as an important in the Middle East by investigating the issue of the Aral Sea. The essential question “**Are humans the heroes or villains of the earth?**”

- Have students complete *Preview 26* from *Geography Alive*—This activity includes satellite images of the Aral Sea in the 1960s, the 1980s, and today. As students view these images they will think about what they are looking at, how the images change over time, and develop hypotheses about why the changes occurred. Have students answer the following questions on their own and discuss the images as a class:
  - What are we looking at?
  - What changes have occurred?
  - What could have caused these changes? (Student might jump to the conclusion that there is a drought)
  - What is the difference between water shortage and a drought?

Once students have completed the preview have them read parts or all of Chapter 26 of the *Geography Alive* text which focuses on the issues related to the Aral Sea. As students read have them consider the following questions:

- In what ways do we use water other than for drinking?
- How does water impact the economy of a town or country?

Once students are finished with the reading and have discussed the questions above. Have them write their “evidence” for the essential question **“Are humans the heroes or villains of the earth?”** (Create evidence web to eventually use in the performance assessment)

At the end of class or for homework have students complete the physical features map of the Middle East and consider the following question.

- What physical features do you think impact the daily life of the people living in this region? How are their lives impacted?

### Day 3: Oil in the Middle East

Project a cartogram of the *Estimated Worldwide Oil Reserves* to the front of the room (cartogram can be found on page 501 of *World Geography* from McDougal Littell). Before revealing the key or title of the map ask students what information the map is giving them. Explain that there are many different types of maps used to display different statistics of the world; a cartogram does not preserve the actual area or size of land but another variable is displayed by the sizes of locations on the map. The cartogram they are looking at displays the amount of oil countries around the world are estimated to have. Have students discuss the following questions:

- Which nations have the greatest number of oil reserves? Which nations have the smallest number of oil reserves?
- Which countries have the largest population? Does size in population always (or ever) reflect the amount of oil reserves a country has?
  - Why would the location of oil reserves around the world create conflict?

At this point also introduce the essential question **“Why is there conflict?”** Have students begin writing their “evidence” for this essential question as they move through this days lesson.

Have students read an article (from *National Geographic*) which discusses the idea of Peak Oil to help students understand that not only is the amount of oil available changing but the demand for the oil that is left is growing.

Present the following questions:

- To what extent does the future of oil determine the future of the world?

(Within the article there is a discussion of the division of oil among the countries of the Middle East. There are individuals in some countries that are very wealthy because of the amount of oil in their country while other countries are very poor because of the lack of resources in their country. )

Have students write a report card concerning the division of resources in the Middle East. Students will assign the Middle East region a letter grade based on the use of resources/how well they share the resources/the conflicts it has created. They must support the grade with evidence and data from the article and cartogram read in class.

### Day 4: Introduce the Palestine/Israeli Conflict

Have students, in groups of three, read (all or parts) of the article “Lines in the Sand” Palestine Israel Conflict (*National Geographic Article* [http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0210/feature5/online\\_extra.html](http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0210/feature5/online_extra.html) ). As students read the article they will complete a foldable (fold paper into three sections) on the current conflict. The foldable should be divided into the following six sections:

1. Title page
2. Illustrated Timeline
3. Palestinian Viewpoints
4. Israeli Viewpoints
5. Discussion of the Issues
6. Questions:
  - a. How would you feel if someone told you that your neighborhood was going to be torn down for the new freeway expansion and that you may or may not get adequate compensation?
  - b. Why don’t the numerous peace agreements and treaties last?
  - c. How will the U.S. or other countries/organizations have any impact on creating peace in the region?

\*The goal of the foldable is to provide students with an organized format to keep track of the ideas/questions they have pertaining to the Israel/Palestine conflict as they read the article.

### Day 5/6: Education in Israel—Bi-lingual Arab/Jewish Schools in Israel

Students will begin to look at some of the possible solutions to bringing peace to Palestine and Israel. In the groups they worked on the foldable in students will look at several different documents (either in a computer lab on the website or printed out in class). Before or after students read the articles introduce the essential question **“What creates enemies and friends?”**

1. *Peace Studies: Children of Israel*—this article discusses one of the “Hand in Hand” schools in Israel. The goal of these schools is to educate both Jewish and Arab children in the same classrooms in a bilingual setting.

The hope is that by reaching the children of different communities they will bring change to the cultures. (<http://www.handinhand12.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=content.display&pageID=212>)

- a. Why do people change their nature? How is permanent peace found/ created?
2. *Water and Peace in the Middle East*—this article discusses water as a key to peace in the Middle East. ([http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2000/07/0714\\_water.html](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2000/07/0714_water.html) )
  - a. Why are the ways resources used, divided, and or shared key to peace? Why does human nature make peace a challenging goal? (Humans act in their own self interest).

Once students have finished reading the articles and discussing and answering the questions. Have them gather their journal entries, foldable, and articles to begin working on the performance assessment: ***The Dinner Party: Peace between Palestine and Israel.*** Students should be given some time to further research the conflict, solutions, and individuals to invite to the dinner party.

**Day 6/7: Begin working on Performance Assessment (Including library research time)**

See directions and rubric for guidelines. An actual dinner party could be held (depending on time) to create room for students to discuss the questions and answer they developed.

**Online Resources**

Aral Sea Background Information <http://www.africanwater.org/ara.htm>

Water & Peace in the M.E. Article [http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2000/07/0714\\_water.html](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2000/07/0714_water.html)

NG Lesson <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/01/g68/iraqoil.html>

Middle East Peace Initiative <http://www.mepi-eu.org/Reports/Reports.aspx>

CNN Israel/Palestine Conflict Overview <http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/mideast/>

(Student directions and rubric for performance task)

## The Dinner Party: Peace between Palestine and Israel

As members of United Nations Task Force you and two of your peers have been assigned the duty of planning and hosting a dinner party with the goal of helping Palestinians and Israelis develop a plan for peace in their region of the world. As we have discussed before, there is no easy solution to peace; in order to develop an answer to our questions, you will have to look at and discuss historical as well as recent events within the Middle East. The conversation, created by questions guests will pose to one another, should aim to answer the essential questions we have discussed throughout the unit:

- Why is there conflict?
- What creates allies and enemies?
- Are humans the heroes or villains of the environment?

There will be a total of 5 guests at your party. The three members of your team will be present at the dinner party as well; however, you will not have specific assigned seats. The three of you have the ability to mingle between guests in order to help facilitate their conversations. The guests will include:

- A representative of the Israeli government
- A representative of the State of Palestine
- A graduate of the Hand-in-Hand Center for Jewish-Arab Education in Jerusalem—who supports both groups living together in peace
- Two Guests of your choice
  - The goal of the additional guests is to provide additional perspectives to help moderate the conversation and help move Palestine and Israel towards a peaceful decision. They can be current politicians, celebrities, or historical figures—dead or alive, American or International.
  - You will need to write a short biography with details about their life that supports your decision to invite them to the dinner. (5-10 sentences for each additional guest)

Your project should include the following:

- ❖ **10 Questions:** Each guest should pose at least one question. This leaves you room to decide who will ask questions and who will respond. A single question may be posed to more than one person; however, there must be a total of 10 different questions. You may use the three essential questions as starters to your questions. Other potential topics can include, but are not limited to:
  - Water and Oil
  - Land as a resource
  - Israeli policies concerning taxes, land use, curfews, and individual freedoms of Palestinians
  - Potential Solutions (education)
- ❖ **3 Answers:** You will need to provide written detailed responses to 3 of the questions you posed. The answers must be written from the perspective of the guest you chose to answer the question. (You will not need to provide answers to all 10 of the questions.)
- ❖ **Seating Chart:** Where will your guests sit? Think about who will be asking and answering the questions.
- ❖ **Biographies:** You will include a biography for the two additional guests you invited. Each biography should provide insight into why they were invited to join the party.

## The Dinner Party Project Rubric

	<b>Does not Meet Expectations (60 points or below)</b>	<b>Approaches Expectations (75 points)</b>	<b>Meets Expectations (85 points)</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectations (100 points)</b>
<b>Understanding of Resources and Religion within the Middle East (40%)</b>	Demonstrates misconceptions about the conflict between Palestine and Israel. Project does not provide evidence of an understanding of the conflicts resources and religion can create between societies. Project contains many factual errors or inaccuracies. <b>(24 points)</b>	Displays some understanding of the conflict between Palestine and Israel. Project provides some evidence of an understanding of the conflicts resources and religion can create between societies. Project contains some factual errors or inaccuracies. <b>(30 points)</b>	Displays an understanding of the conflict between Palestine and Israel. Students also somewhat apply this understanding to other conflicts throughout the world. Project provides evidence of an understanding of the conflicts resources and religion can create between societies. Project contains few factual errors or inaccuracies. <b>(34 points)</b>	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the conflict between Palestine and Israel. Students also apply this understanding to other conflicts throughout the world. Project provides detailed evidence of an understanding of the conflicts resources and religion can create between societies. Project contains no or few factual errors or inaccuracies. <b>(40 points)</b>
<b>Questions and Answers (30%)</b>	The questions posed do not provide evidence of an understanding of the perspectives present at the dinner. Most answers do not demonstrate an understanding of the Middle East region and the conflicts which influence it. Some/all questions/answers are missing. The documents have not been proof read and contain many spelling and grammatical errors. <b>(18 points)</b>	The questions posed provide some evidence of an understanding of the perspectives present at the dinner. Some questions allow for conversation that goes beyond the surface of the conflict between Palestine and Israel. Answers also demonstrate an understanding of the Middle East region and the conflicts which influence it. Some questions/answers are missing. There are some spelling and grammatical errors. <b>(22.5 points)</b>	The questions posed provide evidence of an understanding of the perspectives present at the dinner and have been thought out. Questions allow for conversation that goes beyond the surface of the conflict between Palestine and Israel. Answers also demonstrate an understanding of the Middle East region and the conflicts which influence it. There are few spelling and grammatical errors. Each group member has written one of the required answers. <b>(25.5 points)</b>	The questions posed provide evidence of a deeper understanding of the perspectives present at the dinner and have been well thought out. Questions allow for conversation that goes well beyond the surface of the conflict between Palestine and Israel. Answers also demonstrate a deep understanding of the Middle East region and the conflicts which influence it. There are no/few spelling and grammatical errors. Each group member has written one of the required answers. <b>(30 points)</b>
<b>Biographies (15%)</b>	Biographies do not attempt to provide information about why the additional figures have been invited to the dinner. Biographies have not been proof read and contain spelling and grammatical errors. Biographies are missing. <b>(9 points)</b>	Biographies attempt to provide information about why the additional figures have been invited to the dinner. The figures invited somewhat allow for all guests to understand how peace could eventually be reached between Palestine and Israel. Biographies contain spelling and grammatical errors. <b>(11.25 points)</b>	Biographies provide information about why the additional figures have been invited to the dinner. The figures invited allow for all guests to understand how peace could eventually be reached between Palestine and Israel. The questions these figures ask demonstrate some understanding of the issues Palestine and Israel face. Biographies contain few spelling and grammatical errors. <b>(12.75 points)</b>	Biographies provide useful information about why the additional figures have been invited to the dinner. The figures invited allow for all guests to better understand how peace could eventually be reached between Palestine and Israel. The questions these figures ask are insightful and show an understanding of the issues Palestine and Israel face. Biographies contain no/few spelling and grammatical errors. <b>(15 points)</b>

<b>Seating Chart (10%)</b>	Seating chart is missing some or all key pieces such as the arrangement of characters and/or the questions that will be asked. Visually, the product is not legible and not well organized. <b>(6 points)</b>	Seating chart is missing certain key pieces such as the arrangement of characters and/or the questions that will be asked. Visually, the product is legible but not well organized. <b>(7.5 points)</b>	Seating chart displays arrangement of characters and includes the questions that will be asked. Visually, the product is legible, organized, and some effort is apparent. <b>(8.5 points)</b>	Seating chart displays arrangement of characters and includes the questions that will be asked. Visually, the product is neat, legible, organized, and effort is apparent. <b>(10 points)</b>
<b>Self Assessment (5%)</b>				