

## How to Explain October 7 and Beyond to Students

This poster timeline centers self-determination and human rights as goals for both the Jewish and Palestinian populations of Israel-Palestine. Examining key events in these parallel quests reveals central issues, providing students with the information they need to understand the current situation, and, hopefully, how to construct a path forward that recognizes the dignity and humanity of all the region's inhabitants.

Compelling questions for you to consider (and consider with your students while using this timeline):

- **What are the multiple ways that self-determination can be defined?**
- **Does presence in a place guarantee access to the full rights of citizenship? Who decides? What are the implications when only some members of society are offered citizenship?**
- **When a group does not have citizenship rights or access to the structures of a state, how can they attain self-determination?**
- **How can democracy secure the self-determination of all members of a society in a state composed of people from multiple cultural and ethnic identities?**
- **Is a sovereign state the only path to self-determination and human rights?**

Supporting questions to consider while reading the timeline:

- Late 19th Century
  - What might be the consequences on self-determination and human rights of a colonial movement directed at land populated by another group?
  - How might the aims and actions of such a movement come in conflict with one another?
- WWI, British Mandate, WWII
  - Under what authority does Great Britain promise Palestine to both the Arabs and European Jews?
  - What is the impact of Britain's involvement before and during the Mandate period?
- 1947: Partition Plan
  - How defensible or practical do you believe two states are, laid out as a jigsaw puzzle as shown in the Partition Plan map?

- What authority does the United Nations have to create such a plan, and could they use that authority to impose the plan even without the consent of those affected? (Note: The UN plan was approved but not implemented)
- Consider:
  - Is self-determination achieved only through majority population in a state?
  - How can a minority population in a state achieve self-determination?
- 1948:
  - When the Jewish population of Palestine declared a state, they expelled Palestinians from areas under their control. Why did they find this necessary?
  - Why did they not allow Palestinians to return to their homes?
- 1949:
  - What would be the consequence of the state of Israel allowing Palestinians back in as equal citizens, as required under the Right of Return?
  - Is a state a democracy if it denies people of its land the right to be citizens in it?
- 1967
  - What contradictions in international law do you see in UN Security Council resolution 242, especially as it relates to the inadmissibility of land acquisition by war?
  - Who enforces human rights and international law? What happens when it is not enforced?
  - How can self-determination and human rights be achieved while living under military occupation?
- 1972
  - If terrorism is the threat or use of violence against civilians for economic or political purposes, then are the Palestinian hijackings and Olympic murders terrorism? Is the Israeli occupation terrorism?
- 2005
  - Given that occupation is defined as effective control, when Israel removed its settlers from Gaza in 2005, did that end its occupation?
  - How does BDS differ from other efforts for Palestinian liberation?
  - Are democracy and occupation compatible? In other words, can a government that occupies a people against their will be considered a democracy?
- 2007
  - As the subject of a blockade, do the people of Gaza have self-determination?

- 2008,12,14
  - Why did Israel find it necessary to inflict such large numbers of casualties on Gaza in response to rocket fire?
- 2018
  - What are the implications of the “Basic Law: Israel as the Nation State of the Jewish People” for democracy?
  - What motivated Israel’s response to the Great March of Return?
- 2020
  - How would the Abraham Accords and Peace to Prosperity Plan impact the Palestinian quest for self-determination?
- 2023
  - What parts of Hamas’s attacks in Israel violate human rights and international law? Which parts do not?
  - What parts of Israel’s escalation after October 7, 2023 violate human rights and international law? Which parts do not?
  - Israeli leaders have for decades been consistent with the 1966 Likud party platform which states “between the Sea and the Jordan there will only be Israeli sovereignty.”
    - *Consider:* The US stated in the April 18, 2024 veto in the Security council that it requires that recognition of Palestine “only come from direct negotiations between the parties (Israel and Palestine).”
    - What circumstances need to be met to move this process forward?
- 2025
  - How does the passing on November 17, 2025 UN Security Council resolution 2803 support or deny human rights, freedom, self-determination?
  - Considering the previous events covered in the timeline, does this plan seem to address the issues of both Palestinian and Jewish self-determination and human rights?
  - If not, what adjustments need to be made?

Timeline available at: <https://resources.txchr.org/2025/12/03/how2-explain-oct-7/>