

The Founding of the State of Israel

Appendix VI

“Imagining Your Jewish State”

Theodor Herzl had never been to the Land of Israel when he wrote The Jewish State. He had a lot of ideas about how the state that he envisioned would operate and what it would be like to live there. Some of his ideas came to fruition, but of course many others did not. Whether or not you’ve been to Israel, you surely have some ideas about the country. Like any place or any thing, you like some aspects and might be less enthusiastic about some others. Now you have a chance to fashion a Jewish state that is exactly what you think a Jewish state should be. Take a few minutes to answer the questions below and use your responses as a guide for shaping your own version of the Jewish state.

- Describe what middle school kids do for fun in the Jewish state.
- What’s the most popular sport in your Jewish state?
- Does every 13 year old have to have a bar mitzvah?
- How old are you when you graduate from high school?
- What language is spoken in this country?
- Is Judaism the “official” religion?
 - If yes, what does that mean?
 - If no, is there any official religion?
- Can non-Jews live there?
 - Can they be citizens?
 - Do they enjoy equal rights?
- Is there any intermarriage?
- Are there any atheists in the Jewish state?
- Is school in session during Hanukkah?
 - How about on Christmas Day?
- Who is in charge? Rabbis? Politicians?
- Can women be counted in a minyan?
- Can women vote?
- Is the country a democracy?
- Are citizens of the Jewish state free to travel abroad?
- Who is allowed to immigrate to the Jewish state?
- Describe what groups of people are most admired in this state. Why?
- Do all men have to serve in the army? How about women? Explain why or why not.
- What makes the state Jewish?