

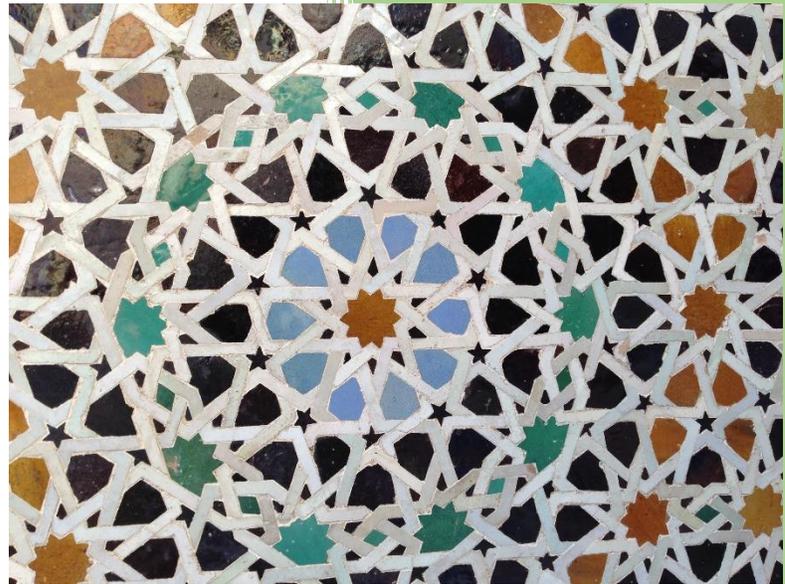


THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Center for  
Middle Eastern Studies

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# Jews on the Move: Migration of Moroccan Jews



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# Teacher Guide: Jews on the Move: Moroccan Jewish Migration

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## BACKGROUND AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

There has been a Jewish presence in the territory of modern-day Morocco for more than 2,000 years, dating back to before the establishment of Roman control. In 70 C.E., at the Roman siege of Jerusalem, Jews dispersed throughout northern Africa, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean. This widespread dispersion of Jews outside of the Land of Israel is called the Diaspora.<sup>1</sup> Although a small community of Jews already resided in the Maghrib (Morocco), the local community was bolstered by an influx of Jewish refugees fleeing the 1391 Spanish massacres, followed by further waves of immigration due to the expulsion of Spanish Jewry in 1492. The descendants of Jews who left Spain or Portugal after the 1492 expulsion as a result of the Inquisition are referred to as Sephardic.<sup>2</sup> The Sephardic Jew's customs were adopted and gave Moroccan Jews a unique identity. Beginning in the 15th century, the Jews of Fez were forced to live in special quarters called "Mellah" and other Jewish neighborhoods in many Moroccan cities were called Mellahs also.

Jewish social conditions did not materially improve until they were granted equality and religious autonomy following the establishment of the French Protectorate in 1912. The Nazi collaborationist Vichy regime rolled back these recently granted freedoms during the Second World War but were prevented from deporting the Jews due to intervention by the current Moroccan monarch, King Mohammed V.

By 1948 there were some 270,000 Jews in Morocco and, due in large part to the political uncertainty and grinding poverty, many Jews elected to leave for Israel, France, the United States, and Canada. Following the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, the community dwindled significantly. The World Jewish Congress played a critical diplomatic role during the 1950s and 1960s in enabling Moroccan Jews to emigrate to France, Israel and elsewhere. By 1971 only 25,000 Jews remained, and Hebrew University demographer Sergio Della Pergola estimated that there were 2,300 Jews in Morocco as of 2015.

Since the ascension to the throne of Mohammed VI in 1999 there has been a significant improvement in the Kingdom's attitude toward its Jewish community. In 2010, the King announced a new initiative to restore Jewish cemeteries in Morocco. The following year a new constitution was approved which recognized the rights of religious minorities, including the Jewish community. The El Mellah Museum, which chronicles the history of Moroccan Jewry it is the only museum devoted to Judaism in the Arab world.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/judaism-art/a/jewish-history-to-the-middle-ages>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-spanish-expulsion-1492>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/about/communities/MA>

# LESSON PLAN

TIME 2-3 Class Periods

## OVERVIEW

Students will become familiar with Moroccan culture and connect historical events such as the Diaspora, expulsion of Jews from Spain and the mass migration of Moroccan Jews as a result of the formation of the State of Israel and how modern Morocco is reconciling with its Jewish history.

## STANDARDS

**Process and Literacy Standard 2: Writing Skills.** The student will develop and demonstrate Common Core social studies writing literacy skills.

**Content Standard 5: The student will evaluate post World War II regional events leading to the transformations of the modern world.**

1. Cite specific textual and visual evidence to describe the creation of the modern state of Israel and the ongoing regional disputes with its Arab neighbors.





## DAY ONE LESSON PLAN

DAY ONE LESSON PLAN		
<p>ACTIVITY</p> <p>LEARN ABOUT MOROCCO!</p>	<p>Students will utilize the GRAPES Notetaking Guide during lecture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play Moroccan music as they enter</li> <li>• PowerPoint will include a short Arabic module to include greeting</li> </ul>	<p>RESOURCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GRAPES PowerPoint (see attached file)</li> <li>• GRAPES Notetaking Guide</li> </ul>
<p>ASSESSMENT</p>	<p>Using the notetaking guide, students will write a short paragraph demonstrating their knowledge of ONE of the features of Morocco.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paragraph Template</li> </ul>
<p>TICKET OUT THE DOOR</p>	<p>Students will respond to teacher as they leave individually or in unison.</p> <p>Teacher: salam alaikum!</p> <p>Student: wa-alaikum salam!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ticket</li> </ul>

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## NOTETAKING GUIDE

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

<b>G</b> eography	
<b>R</b> eligion	
<b>A</b> chievements	
<b>P</b> olitical	
<b>E</b> conomics	
<b>S</b> ocial	

## WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Write a short paragraph describing one of the features of Morocco.

Topic Sentence: (ex. The Geography of Morocco...)	
	Supporting Evidence
	Supporting Evidence
	Supporting Evidence
Conclusion (Restate the topic sentence)	

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TICKET OUT THE DOOR

**salam alaikum!**

السلام عليكم

**wa-alaikum salam!**

والسلام عليكم

## DAY TWO LESSON PLAN

<p>ACTIVITY</p> <p>GALLERY WALK<sup>4</sup></p>	<p>1. Set up</p> <p>Hang or place the questions or prompts in various places around the classroom to create five stations. Images, documents, or quotes will be displayed in a gallery format.</p> <p>2. Group</p> <p>Group students into teams of three to five students, depending on the size of the class. Each group should start at a different station.</p> <p>3. Begin</p> <p>At their first station, groups will read what is posted and one recorder should write the group's responses, thoughts, and comments on the chart paper or white board. For individual student accountability, you may also have the students record their own responses on a worksheet (see template below) or put their initials below what they wrote. Having different colored markers for each student is also an option.</p> <p>4. Rotate</p> <p>After three to five minutes, have the groups rotate to the next station. Students read and discuss the previous group's response and add content of their own. Repeat until all groups have visited each station. To involve all group members, you can have groups switch recorders at each station.</p> <p>5. Monitor</p> <p>As the teacher, it is important to monitor the stations while the students participate. You may also need to clarify or provide hints if students don't understand or misinterpret what is posted at their station.</p> <p>6. Reflect</p> <p>Have students go back to their first station to read all that was added to their first response. Bring the class back together to discuss what was learned and make final conclusions about what they saw and discussed.</p>	<p>***Links for images are provided as footnotes***</p>
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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/gallery-walk>

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## GALLERY WALK STUDENT RESPONSE

Prompt #1: What event prompted the migration of Jews out of Israel? How far west did they go?

My response: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Prompt #2: Why did the Jews feel the need to leave Spain and Portugal and where did they migrate?

My response: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Prompt #3: How were Moroccan Jews protected during WWII?

My response: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Prompt #4: What were some reasons for Jewish migration after WWII?

My response: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Prompt #5: Where did the Moroccan Jews migrate to after 1948 and how many are still living in Morocco compare to before the migration?

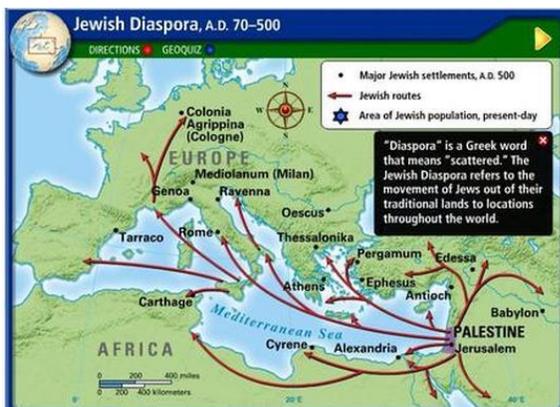
My response: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Prompt #6: In what ways is the government and King of Morocco working toward reconciliation with their Jewish history?

My response: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Gallery Walk Resources

# What event prompted the migration of Jews out of Israel? How far west did they go?



5



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## From The Works of Josephus

*Flavius Josephus*, original name Joseph Ben Matthias, (born AD 37/38, Jerusalem—died AD 100, Rome), Jewish priest, scholar, and historian who wrote valuable works on the Jewish revolt of 66–70 and on earlier Jewish history.

‘So the Romans being now become masters of the wars, they both placed their ensigns upon the towers, and made joyful acclamations for the victory they had gained, as having found the end of this war much lighter than its beginning; for when they had gotten upon the last was, without any bloodshed, they could hardly believe what they found to be true; but seeing nobody to oppose them, they stood in doubt what such an unusual solitude could mean. (404) But when they went in numbers into the lanes of the city, with their swords drawn, they slew those whom they overtook, without mercy, and set fire to the houses wither the Jews were fled, and burnt every soul in them, and laid waste a great many of the rest.’

<sup>5</sup> <https://qph.fs.quoracdn.net/main-qimg-ae12a221d09a6a666c094ea2380a0556.webp>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.myjewishlearning.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Tisha-BAV-Blog\\_Temple-e1466719037593.jpg](https://www.myjewishlearning.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Tisha-BAV-Blog_Temple-e1466719037593.jpg)

# Why did the Jews feel the need to leave Spain and Portugal and where did they migrate?

Christopher Columbus's Diary (1492 AD)

"In the same month in which their Majesties [Ferdinand and Isabella] issued the edict that all Jews should be driven out of the kingdom and its territories, in the same month they gave me the order to undertake with sufficient men my expedition of discovery to the Indies."

Edict of the Expulsion of the Jews (1492)  
Translated from the Castilian by Edward Peters

"...because every day it is found and appears that the said Jews increase in continuing their evil and wicked purpose wherever they live and congregate, and so that there will not be any place where they further offend our holy faith, and corrupt those whom God has until now most desired to preserve, as well as those who had fallen but amended and returned to Holy Mother Church, the which according to the weakness of our humanity and by diabolical astuteness and suggestion that continually wages war against us may easily occur unless the principal cause of it be removed, which is to banish the said Jews from our kingdoms."



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<sup>7</sup> <https://images.app.goo.gl/PaKTdUPgoCMxgVov7>

# How were Moroccan Jews protected during WWII?

“There are no Jewish citizens, there are no Muslims citizens, they are all Moroccans.”

*Quote by King Mohamad V when Nazi controlled Vichy France demanded a list of Jews residing in Morocco*

# What were some reasons for Jewish migration after WWII?

## ***This Day in Jewish History / Anti-Jewish Rioting in Morocco Leaves 44 Dead***

Within days of Israeli statehood – which was declared on May 14, 1948 – the Moroccan sultan, Mohammed V, delivered a speech in which he warned his country’s Jews not to demonstrate “solidarity with the Zionist aggression,” but also reminding Morocco’s Muslim majority that Jews had always been a protected people there. Because the address contained both a statement of support for the Jews and an implied threat against them, the effect of it on anti-Jewish sentiment is difficult to gauge. What is clear is that on the morning of June 7, rioters descended on Oujda’s Jewish quarter and killed four of its Jewish residents, as well as a Frenchman, and wounded another 30. Late that night, and continuing into the next morning, rioting also began in Jerada, a much smaller mining town some 60 kilometers (37 miles) to the southwest of Oujda. There, 37 Jews were killed. At the time, Morocco was still a French colony – independence was granted only in March 1956 – and the French commissioner for Oujda, René Brunel, pinned responsibility for the outbreak of violence on the Jews – for their passage through Oujda on their way to Israel, and their supposed sympathies with the Zionist movement. According to a report by the French Foreign Ministry, it was “characteristic that those in this region near to the Algerian border consider all Jews who depart as combatants for Israel.” If before Oujda and Jerada there had been a stream of Jews departing Morocco, afterward it became a flood. During the next year, 18,000 of Morocco’s 250,000 or so Jews left for Israel. Between 1948 and 1956, when emigration was prohibited, the number reached about 110,000.<sup>8</sup>



<sup>8</sup> <https://www.haaretz.com/jewish/.premium-this-day-44-dead-after-anti-jewish-rioting-in-morocco-1.5251018>

"They started closing one synagogue after the other, most of my school friends left, and then everybody left.

"For many it was the end of the exile".

Against a backdrop of rising Arab nationalism, European Zionists began arriving at Moroccan synagogues telling stories of the new Jewish homeland. They encouraged the local Jewish community to migrate.

Israel had sent dozens of Mossad officers to North Africa who acted as missionaries for the Zionist cause.<sup>9</sup>

According to Professor Gilzmer, even when threats were minimal, "many Jews left after being told by Zionist agents they were in danger".

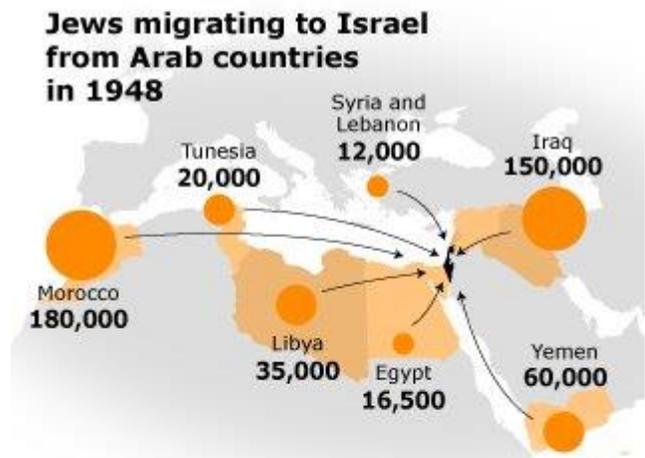
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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-06-20/the-exodus-of-moroccan-jewish-community-to-israel/9879638>

# Where did the Moroccan Jews migrate to after 1948 and how many are still living in Morocco compare to before the migration?

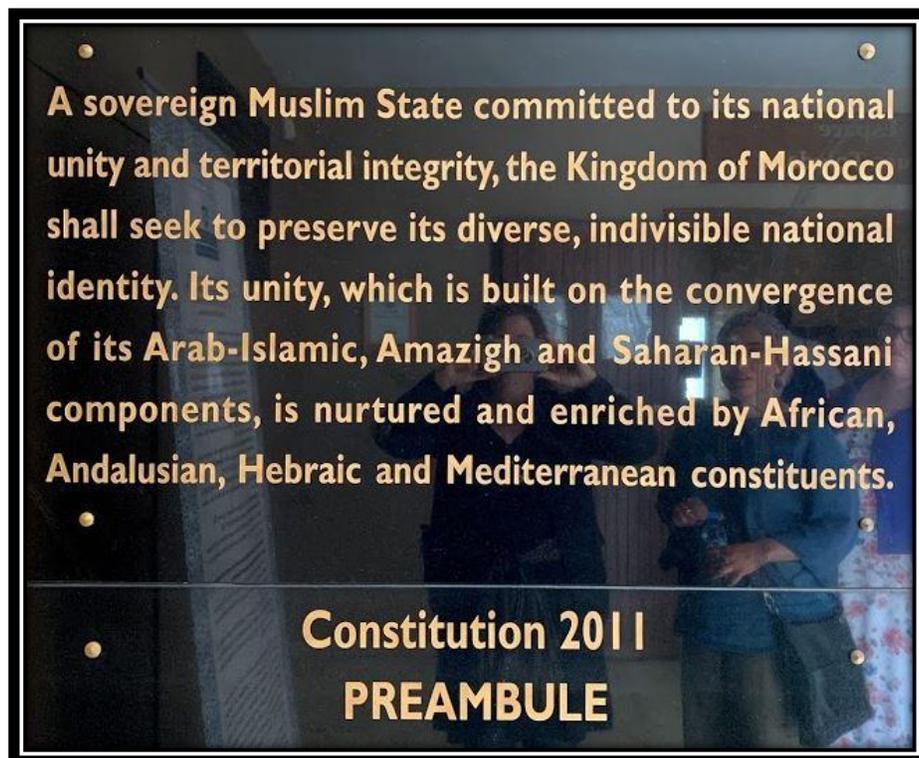
Jewish pop.	Date established	1948	2016
Algeria	1-2 <sup>nd</sup> century CE	140,000	0
Egypt	2 <sup>nd</sup> century BCE	75,000	Less than 15
Iran	3 <sup>rd</sup> century BCE	100,000	8,000
Iraq	3 <sup>rd</sup> century BCE	150,000	5
Lebanon	1 <sup>st</sup> century BCE	20,000	Less than 20
Libya	3 <sup>rd</sup> century BCE	38,000	0
Morocco	1 <sup>st</sup> century BCE	265,000	2,000
Syria	1 <sup>st</sup> century BCE	30,000	Less than 15
Tunisia	1 <sup>st</sup> century BCE	105,000	1,000
Yemen	3 <sup>rd</sup> century BCE	55,000	50

Chart showing displacement of Jewish communities and when they were founded (Source: IIAC, updated by the author)



Source Abu Shakrah

# In what ways are the government and King of Morocco working toward reconciliation with their Jewish history?



## Morocco Rediscovered Its Jewish Past and Lures Visitors of All Faiths

SEFROU -

### The king gets involved

In 1947, some 6,000 Jews lived in Sefrou, comprising a third of the town's population. In the three decades that followed, almost all of Morocco's 240,000 Jews emigrated, mostly to Israel, Canada and France. Today there are a mere 2,500 or so left in the country. Sefrou's last Jewish family left for Fez in 1985. But once a year, on the holiday of Lag ba'Omer, the cavern fills with the descendants of families who used to pray here. They come to mark the traditional anniversary of the death of the revered rabbis thought to dwell here.

Until recently, this renewed pilgrimage was a mere trickle. But this has changed over the last decade with a rise in Jewish tourism that has put Sefrou, along with other treasures of Morocco's Jewish past, in the spotlight.



In 2010, King Mohammed VI inaugurated a program to renovate Jewish cemeteries and shrines. Overseen by Serge Berdugo, head of Morocco's Jewish community and an advisor to the king, the project has restored 167 cemeteries and 12,600 graves. <sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.haaretz.com/jewish/features/.premium-morocco-rediscovered-its-jewish-past-and-lures-visitors-of-all-faiths-1.7608422>