



Solutions Not Sides



# HOW TO RESPOND

## *To Student Questions*



### TEACHER RESOURCE



A guide to for responding to questions on the Israel-Palestine conflict from your students

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# INTRODUCTION



**This document has been created to help schools and other educational bodies respond to student questions on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and topic as a wider whole**

As educators, we will uphold the right of young people to learn about political issues in an impartial space. We will keep that space free from hate, inequality and violence. We will teach skills of critical thinking, communication, active listening and conflict resolution so they can learn to navigate these issues for themselves.

# DEALING WITH SPECIFIC QUESTIONS



As a teacher, it is best to give guidance to students about ways they can respond to the situation — but in an appropriate way that does not push them to a political position. The things to be aware of include:

- A student may have seen violent footage on social media, which could be genuine or fake - either way, it will certainly have been distressing for them, they may need to talk to a trained counsellor about what they have seen and how to emotionally cope with it
- Some students may want to distance themselves from the issue as they do not want to be associated with one side or the other due to their faith background
- Many students will feel frustrated and helpless - an approach that acknowledges their feelings and empowers them will really help
- You may need to deal with antisemitic or Islamophobic comments and sentiments during this time, or answer questions about Islamophobia or antisemitism, in which case, refer to some of our other guides addressing this

On the following pages, we will set out ways you can best support your students based on their questions and respond appropriately.



# EXAMPLE QUESTIONS



Students coming from different perspectives may raise the following:

- 'Miss, have you seen the soldiers beating up Palestinians online?'
- 'Don't you think it's unfair that the Muslims get to worship on the Temple Mount but the Jews aren't allowed?'
- 'But, sir, it's Ramadan. I don't get it, why does it always happen during Ramadan?'
- 'Why does the media always focus on Israel when there are far worse things happening in other countries every day?'
- 'What does antisemitism actually mean? Is it antisemitic to call out the violence?'
- 'What is Islamophobia?'
- 'Why is no one talking about all the terror attacks against Israelis the last few weeks, then this happens and it's all over the media?'
- 'What does the word Apartheid mean?'
- 'Are they allowed to arrest children?'

# SUGGESTED RESPONSE SCRIPT



1. Acknowledge the student's emotions
2. Assure the student that the school will not ignore the situation but will raise awareness about it
3. Inform the student that there are things they can do to make their voice heard

"It's very distressing seeing the scenes that are being shown in the media at the moment, I understand that you must be feeling very upset."

"We are a school that cares about Israel-Palestine and we will address this together as a community, bearing in mind that we also care about each other and that this will affect different people in different ways."

"Some British MPs are raising the situation in parliament, and there are organisations working for Palestinian human rights/Israeli security/countering antisemitism and anti-Israel hate/countering Islamophobia and anti-Palestine hate. We will be learning about one of them in assembly today/this week. You can write to your MP, and get involved with supporting this kind of work."



*Thank You*

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