

SECTION
2

Reading for Understanding

▶ Key Ideas

BEFORE, YOU LEARNED

Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Iran are Muslim countries rich in oil resources with a history of nondemocratic governments.

NOW YOU WILL LEARN

Israel is a thriving democracy, and the Palestinian territories are trying to develop a representative government.

▶ Vocabulary

TERMS & NAMES

Holocaust the systematic killing of millions of Jews and other groups by the Nazis during World War II

Gaza Strip a narrow territory along the Mediterranean Sea

West Bank a region west of the Jordan River

Palestinian territories the West Bank and Gaza Strip combined

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) a political group that claims to represent all Palestinians and to be working toward gaining an independent Palestinian nation

Jerusalem (juh•ROO•suh•luhm) the current capital of Israel and an ancient city that is holy to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Judaism (JOO•day•IHZ•uhm) the monotheistic religion of the Jews, based on the writings of the Hebrew Bible

Christianity a monotheistic religion based on the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth and on the writings of the Christian Bible

kibbutz (kih•BUTS) a type of settlement in Israel in which the community shares all wealth and property

▶ Reading Strategy

Re-create the chart shown at right. As you read and respond to the **KEY QUESTIONS**, use the chart to record possible solutions to the problems that are listed.



Skillbuilder Handbook, page R10

IDENTIFY PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

PROBLEM:
Two groups claim
same land

PROBLEM:
One city sacred to
three religions

SOLUTIONS:

SOLUTIONS:



GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

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Israel and the Palestinian Territories

Connecting to Your World

Have you ever seen a TV show in which two people who share a room have a fight and then draw a line down the middle of the floor? Usually, they argue about the fairest way to divide the room. Now, think about what happens when two different cultural groups want to establish a nation on the same land. That situation exists between the Israelis and the Palestinians.



Israeli Security Barrier The Israeli security barrier separates parts of Israel from the West Bank.

History and Government

KEY QUESTION What foreign rulers have controlled Palestine?

Today, the land between the Mediterranean Sea and Jordan River is divided between Israel and the Palestinian territories. But for much of the last 3,000 years, that land was considered a single region. During ancient times, it was called Canaan. A people called the Hebrews moved there from Mesopotamia and eventually became known as Israelites. About 1000 B.C., they set up a kingdom, which soon afterward split into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah.



Dome of the Rock This Jerusalem mosque covers the site where Muslims believe that Muhammad rose into heaven. Jews believe it is the site where Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac.

[Click here](#) for more about the holy sites of Jerusalem @ [ClassZone.com](#)

Foreign Rule Beginning in the 700s B.C., a series of ancient empires ruled Canaan, including Alexander the Great in the 300s B.C. The last of these was Rome, which invaded in 63 B.C. The Romans renamed the region Palestine and called the people there Jews (after the name *Judah*). When the Jews staged uprisings, the Romans defeated them and drove them from Jerusalem. During the A.D. 600s, Muslim Arabs moved into the region. In 1099, Christian armies from Europe conquered Jerusalem. That began a series of wars known as the Crusades between Christians and Muslims to control the region. In the early 1500s, the Ottoman Empire conquered Palestine. After World War I, the League of Nations authorized Great Britain to govern Palestine.

A New Israel During World War II, Nazi Germany killed six million Jews in Europe in the **Holocaust**. Afterward, many people felt that the Jews should have their own country in Southwest Asia, site of their ancestral roots. The United Nations proposed dividing Palestine into two nations—Arab and Jewish—and the Jewish state of Israel was born in 1948. Its official language is Hebrew. The Arabs opposed a Jewish state in the region, so war broke out. Israel won the war, and many Palestinians fled to Arab countries as refugees.

The Palestinian Territories Arab-Israeli wars were also fought in 1956, 1967, and 1973, and each time Israel won. In the 1967 war, Israel took the **Gaza Strip**, a narrow territory on the Mediterranean coast, and the **West Bank**, a region west of the Jordan River. The two regions together make up the **Palestinian territories**. A political group called the **Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)** began to fight to have a Palestinian state on those lands. The PLO and Israelis began to hold peace talks in the 1990s. Israel withdrew its troops from Gaza and much of the West Bank, and the Palestinians elected a government. Even so, the situation remains unstable, and issues need to be resolved. For example, the two sides disagree over who should control **Jerusalem**, which is sacred to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

West-East Orchestra

Daniel Barenboim rehearses an orchestra made up of Israelis and Palestinians.



CATEGORIZE Describe the rulers who have controlled Palestine.

Culture and Religion



KEY QUESTION Why do three religions regard Jerusalem as holy?

Some people are working to help the two main groups in the region, Arabs and Jews, better understand each other. For example, Israeli conductor Daniel Barenboim and Palestinian-American author Edward Said started an orchestra for Israeli and Palestinian musicians.



Religious Groups of Southwest Asia



Religious group	
	Christian
	Jewish
	Sunni Muslim
	Shiite Muslim

Holy Place	
	Christian
	Jewish
	Sunni Muslim
	Shiite Muslim
	National capital



Islamic Mosque Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem



Jewish Synagogue Old Synagogue in Mazkeret Batz, Israel



Christian Church Getsemani Church, Jerusalem

CONNECT Geography & Culture

READING A THEMATIC MAP

Thematic maps show specific types of information, such as population density or economic activity. This map shows the diversity and distribution of religious groups in Southwest Asia. When reading a thematic map, remember that

- qualitative maps use colors (as well as dots and lines) to help you see patterns related to a specific idea
- an inset map makes a small or congested area on a thematic map easier to see

1. **Place** Which places have holy sites for three major religions?
2. **Location** Why might the location of these places be a problem?



ANALYZING Primary Sources

Kenneth L. Woodward is a *Newsweek* editor who wrote about who should control Jerusalem. He mentioned Jerusalem's importance to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

For billions of believers who may never see it, Jerusalem remains a city central to their sacred geography. This is why the future of the city is not just another Middle Eastern conflict between Arabs and Jews. . . . There will be no enduring solution to the question of Jerusalem that does not respect the attachments to the city formed by each faith.

Source: "A City That Echoes Eternity," by Kenneth L. Woodward

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS

According to Woodward, why is the future of Jerusalem an especially important issue?

Market in Muslim Quarter of Jerusalem ▶



ONLINE PRIMARY SOURCE For more writings on Jerusalem today, go to the Research & Writing Center @ ClassZone.com

Birthplace of Religions People from three religions have strong ties to the land that Israel occupies. It was the birthplace of two monotheistic religions, Judaism and Christianity. **Judaism**, the religion of the Jews, is based on the writings of the Hebrew Bible. This Bible includes Jewish law and historical and prophetic writings. It teaches that the Jews are descended from Abraham, who obeyed God's command to move from Mesopotamia to Canaan (later Palestine).

Christianity is based on the teachings of Jesus, who lived in Palestine under Roman rule. As a Jew, Jesus taught Jewish ideas. But he also taught ideas that some people found dangerous, so the Romans killed him. Christians believe he rose from the dead and ascended to heaven. Israel is special to Christians because Jesus taught there.

Jerusalem Jews and Muslims have their own reasons for regarding Jerusalem as holy. Jews hold it sacred because the ancient Jewish temple stood there. The temple was destroyed by Babylonian conquerors, rebuilt by Jews, and destroyed again by the Romans. Only one wall remains. One reason for conflict over Jerusalem is that a mosque now stands where the Jewish temple used to be. Muslims chose the site for a house of worship because they believe the prophet Muhammad was taken into heaven from that very spot.

FIND MAIN IDEAS Explain why three religions regard Jerusalem as holy.

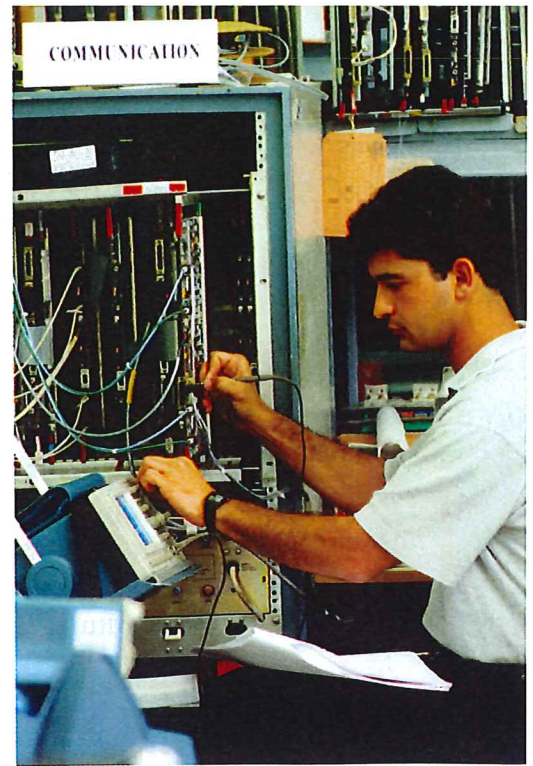
Israel Builds Its Economy

KEY QUESTION What are the main economic activities in Israel?

Israel has few water resources and, unlike its Arab neighbors, hardly any petroleum. But from the start, it did have a highly trained workforce. These workers helped Israel to develop the most advanced economy in Southwest Asia.

First, Israel developed agriculture, using irrigation in dry areas. Today, many farms use drip irrigation, in which computers control the flow of water. Many Israelis moved onto a **kibbutz**, a settlement whose members share wealth and property. They receive housing and food in exchange for labor. The first kibbutzim were farms, although some have switched to manufacturing.

Farming is now a small part of the economy, which relies more on service industries and manufacturing. Israel's most important industries include the production of electronics and chemicals and the cutting of imported diamonds. Tourism also brings a lot of money to Israel, as people from many faiths visit the holy sites there.



Electronics A computer technician inspects hardware in Israel.

SUMMARIZE Describe the main economic activities in Israel.

Section 2 Assessment

ONLINE QUIZ
For test practice, go to
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TERMS & NAMES

1. Explain the importance of

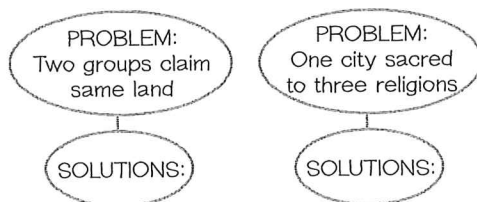
- Palestinian territories
- Jerusalem
- Judaism
- Christianity

USE YOUR READING NOTES

2. Identify Problems and Solutions

Use your completed chart to answer the following question:

How might three religions share Jerusalem peacefully?



KEY IDEAS

3. How did Palestine become an Arab region?
4. Why do some Jews regard Jerusalem as holy?
5. How has life on a kibbutz changed?

CRITICAL THINKING

6. **Make Inferences** Why do you think the Holocaust convinced many people that there needed to be a Jewish state?
7. **Evaluate** What do you think is the most serious challenge to Arab-Israeli peace?
8. **CONNECT to Today** As part of the peace process, in 2005 Israel forced Jewish settlers to withdraw from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank. The Israeli economy improved. Why might that have happened?
9. **TECHNOLOGY** **Plan a Virtual Tour** With a partner, research Jerusalem and make a list of its holy places from three religions. Plan a Web page that offers a tour of the city. Decide on links to other Web sites, design your Web page, and write captions.