



A Yom Hazikaron Program

Connecting with Israel Through Story, Memory & Meaning

Empathy. Identity. Responsibility

Yom Hazikaron is Israel's Memorial Day, a day on which Israel and Jewish communities around the world pause to honor those who have fallen. Since the Battle of Tel Hai in 1920 until October 6, 2023, at least 446 North Americans are



known to have given their lives in Israel's defense. Since October 7, 2023, that number has risen by more than 100.

While Yom Hazikaron is solemn, it also offers students an opportunity to reflect and connect. This program introduces them to the personal stories of individuals with ties to North America, bringing Israel to life and deepening their connection to the people and history we remember.

This program serves as a guideline for middle and high school students. It can be used for a Memorial around October 7, during Yom Hazikaron, or at any other time of year.

Group Discussion – Who Are We Remembering?

- On Yom Hazikaron, Israeli Memorial Day, we remember both soldiers who died in war and civilians killed in terror attacks. How are their sacrifices similar, and how are they different?
- Following the October 7 attacks, many reservists volunteered for duty, even beyond those obligated. What motivates individuals to serve?
- How do Yom Hazikaron in Israel and Memorial Day in the U.S. differ in honoring those who have fallen?
- How might families' experiences of loss shape the meaning of Yom Hazikaron for them, and how can we honor their sacrifices thoughtfully?
- What can we learn from remembering people we've never met who gave their lives for Israel?
- After October 7th, in what ways does Yom Hazikaron feel different for you?



Explanation:

- **Soldiers** actively protect the country on the front lines.
- **Terror victims** were targeted simply for being Jews or Israelis.
- **Both** reflect different forms of courage and sacrifice, reminding us of our shared fate.
- **North Americans** refers to individuals with personal or family ties to North America.

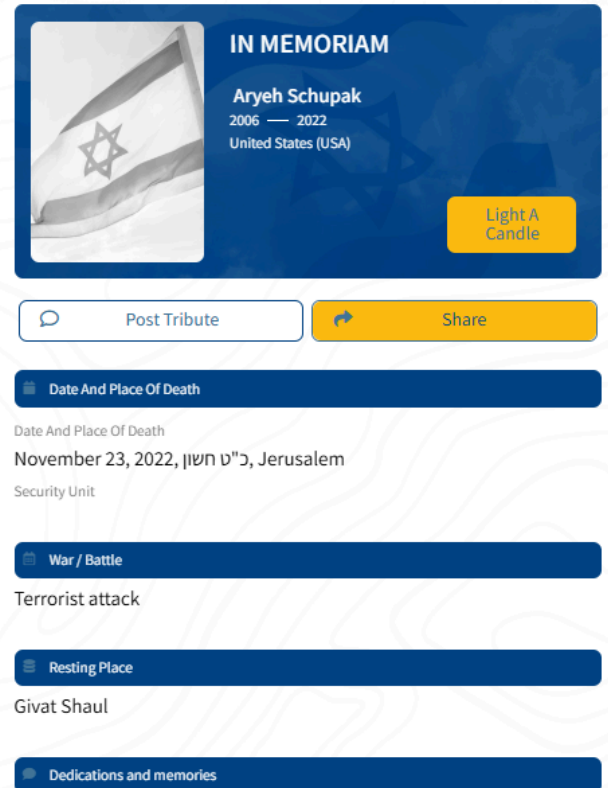
Interactive Activity For Middle/High School | Tech-Based

Option A – Meet a Hero

- Students (individually or in pairs) explore www.aaciremembers.org
- Use the search bar to explore your hometown, a nearby city, or any place you're curious about.

Reflection Questions:

- Name, age, and where they were from
- What they loved
- How they died
- Why their story stands out to you
- One word to describe their legacy



Option B – Hero Cards (Younger or Larger Groups)

- Print 10–15 profiles (1 page each) of fallen soldiers and terror victims
- Place them around the room like a mini-gallery
- Students read 2–3 profiles and choose one that speaks to them
- Write the person's name and one thing they learned on an index card

Group Sharing and Reflection

Ask students:

- Which fallen individual stood out to you?

- What made this person feel real to you?
- What emotions did you feel learning about those affected by October 7?
- How does it make you feel about your own connection to Israel?
- Why do you think they chose to live in Israel?

Closing Thought:

The individuals you have researched are more than just names. They're real people who loved Israel and lived full lives. Their memories now rest in our hands.

Optional Closing Ceremony (*may be in memory of October 7th*)

- Read aloud student-chosen names or fallen since October 7th, 2023.
- Light a candle or observe a moment of silence.
- Recite a poem or prayer.
- Invite students to place index cards on a **Wall of Remembrance**.



Follow-Up Options

- Create a school memorial wall or digital board with student tributes
- Send letters to bereaved families (with AACI coordination)
- Invite a virtual speaker (e.g., lone soldier, AACI staff, or family member of a fallen- AACI could help you coordinate that)
- Connect the program to Israel Education, identity, or responsibility

Questions or Feedback?

Contact us at projects@aaci.org.il

