

# Activities

## Activity 3

### *Debating the Security Fence*

#### **Preparation:**

**Estimate Time:** 1.5 class periods • **Materials:** Paper, pencils, access to the Internet, *Israel 101*, informational flyers from [www.standwithus.com/flyers.asp?wc=11](http://www.standwithus.com/flyers.asp?wc=11)

**Background:** There are no natural barriers between pre-1967 Israel and the West Bank, and between 1967 and 2002, there were no manmade barriers. During the Intifada, terrorists could simply walk the few kilometers from the West Bank into Israeli communities and carry out attacks. In June 2002, Israel decided to build a security fence to prevent this easy access to its civilians. The security fence has become controversial. While Israel points out that deaths from terrorist attacks have dropped over 90 percent since the first parts of the fence were built, Palestinians object to the route of the fence and claim that it causes them grave inconveniences.

#### **Activity:**

Students debate the pros and cons of Israel's security fence along its eastern border, built to protect its citizens from Palestinian terrorist attacks.

Briefly discuss the background information with students, and have them carefully read the section about the fence on p. 33 of *Israel 101*.

Divide the students into two groups: pro and con. Help each group research its position. Use reliable sources (some are included in the Resources section on the following page). After each side has researched and mapped out its positions, hold a debate between representatives of the two groups.

Tell students to address the following questions:

- What other countries have security fences or barriers? How are they different from or similar to Israel's security fence?
- Why did Israel decide to build the security fence?
- What harm does the security fence cause? How many people does it kill or wound? How are people inconvenienced? What is meant by a "passive form of self-defense"?
- How has Israel tried to minimize the inconveniences caused by the fence?
- What is the actual route of the fence, and why was it chosen?
- Has the fence achieved its purpose? How effective is it?

**Wrap-up:** As more and more Israelis were killed by terrorists who simply walked from the West Bank into Israeli communities, Israel sought a passive, non-lethal form of self-defense and built the security fence, which resembles the security barriers of many other countries. The fence can be moved when borders are finally determined in peace negotiations.