

## Document #1

### Voices, Together

וְכָל־הָעָם רָאִים אֶת־הַקּוֹלֹת (שמות כ':ט"ו)

**And all the people perceived the thunderings (Exodus 20:15)**

**For Israel's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary we're doing something special– and we want you to be a part of it!**

The Jewish Agency has as one of its goals to connect the Jewish people to each other and to Israel. We believe that in order to strengthen global Jewish connection, we need to **celebrate together** the diversity of the Jewish people in all its forms, and to encourage Jewish and Israeli creativity.

Therefore, we decided to celebrate Israel's 75th year by giving voice to the entire Jewish world with– **Voices, Together!**

Through a collaborative writing process, led by renowned Israeli musician [Sha'anán Streett](#) we invite everyone to write "**Voices, Together.**" This communal artistic-educational process designed to connect Jewish individuals to Israel as the state of the Jewish people and to entire global Jewish people, through producing an original and high-quality song and music clip that will be launched close to Israel's 75<sup>th</sup> Independence Day.

**'Voices, Together' offers a menu of educational and communal opportunities:**

- Voices, Together website!  
Where you can find all information and participate by making your voice heard!
- Educational Kit -
  - Conversation Cloth – A unique activity that welcomes many different voices to table
  - Writing workshop – A short engaging creative writing workshop to motivate us in finding our voice
  - Makom Israeli Playlist – Get to know the diverse Israeli culture through a playlist Makom Education Lab curated.
- Traveling Recording Booth – Our one of a kind traveling recording booth to record on site. You can order the booth and present your community with the opportunity to take an active role in creating Voices, Together.

**We invite everyone of us, together  
to participate in  
shaping our voices together in**

## Celebrating the 75th year of Israel

### Document #2

#### Creative writing workshop – Referencing Israel (Activity kit for to accompany the 'Voices, Together' project)

In preparation for the 'Voices, Together' project, we invite you to take part in a creative writing workshop that you can structure yourself, tailored to your group and community!

Goals:

- To acquire basic tools in personal and group creative writing
- To become familiar with Israeli creative writing
- To encourage writing focused on the central themes of "Israel" – "Jewish Identity" – "Connection" and everything in between.
- Making the "Voices, Together" project accessible in preparation for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the State of Israel.

The workshop is made up of three parts, with each part consisting of different writing exercises. Every part constitutes a different building block and focus in the world of writing, but does not necessarily rely on the previous block. The facilitator has the freedom to use the most appropriate and relevant writing exercises for the group they are working with, and to design the workshop as he sees fit – whether as a one-time workshop that offers a taste of what writing is, or alternatively creating a series of more in-depth meetings.

Introduction and explanation to the facilitator:

First of all – don't worry! You don't have to be a writer or poet to give a writing workshop! At the same time, we recommend experimenting with the writing exercises that you will present to your group ahead of time, in order to feel the same feelings that the participants will go through in the workshop, in order to give yourself an added dimension of leadership ability. Before the first writing workshop,

we recommend explaining to the participants what is ahead of them. Some points of emphasis:

- Introduce the goals of the writing workshop: It is worth emphasizing that the goal of writing is first and foremost personal expression, the writer's encounter with themselves, furthering learning and making it experiential. These are the same goals for everyone, and clarifying them can eliminate the tension that may arise if the participants think that the main emphasis is on the literary quality of the text.
- Introduce the structure of the workshop: according to your choice – is it a one-time workshop or one that is accompanied by follow-up meetings? Did you choose to focus on writing exercises of basic tools? Did you decide to hold only the group writing part? Are the writing exercises sequential, gradually built up, initially shorter and then longer?  
It is very important to share with the group what is expected in the initial workshop and to emphasize that it is important and encouraged to share the products, but not everyone has to share – it depends on their comfort level.
- Clarify and alleviate concerns: no prior knowledge is necessary. Some of the participants may have already experienced a writing workshop on their own, and some have not. It doesn't matter, because every starting point is good enough, and from there one can continue to develop. Emphasize that the written text is primarily for the sake of the writer, and there will be no obligation to share it – it is a choice and a right, not an obligation, and so it is possible and recommended to put the internal censor aside, and devote oneself to the writing. One should come to the workshop with an open mind. Even those who believe that they do not know how to write, or who do not like to write, should leave aside their basic assumptions and come like the blank page in front of them, open to experimentation. Even those who get 'stuck' in a particular exercise should remain open to the subsequent exercise, because maybe that is where the door will open for them. Sometimes what is 'stuck' is something else that wants to be written down, and the exercise actually pushes it further away; in such a case it is advisable to encourage writing what comes to mind and to ignore the instructions.
- Present the facilitator's expectations: maintain maximum silence while writing; every person writes for himself and there is no sharing or talking at this stage. Minimize unnecessary entrances/exits. It is permissible and desirable to ask clarifying questions regarding the exercises, if the instruction was not understood. Everyone writes. No judgment.

The writing workshop format:

- Part A – Basic writing tools
  - Defamiliarization
  - Allusion
  - Simile
  - Metaphor
- Part B – Personal in-depth writing
  - Writing identity and self-presentation
  - Nature and outdoors
  - Viewpoint, mirror, window
  - Homage
- Part C – Creative group writing
  - Brainstorming
  - Writing around a central axis
  - Writing in sequential installments

### **Part A – Basic writing tools**

Four writing exercises to acquire writing tools (defamiliarization, allusion, simile, metaphor, enjambment). Each exercise should take 5-7 minutes, so about 10-12 minutes should be devoted to each tool including explanation, practice and sharing.

The exercises are varied but at the end of each section you leave with something written, in order to "ensure" that the tool has been experienced and not just understood.

- Defamiliarization – Defamiliarization is relating to something familiar in a way that makes it seem foreign, fresh and even astounding, and which gives it a new meaning. Defamiliarization is not only a key design tool in writing, but some would argue that it is one of its ultimate goals – to encourage the reader to regard his world in a renewed, deeper and more internal way.
  - Writing exercise: choose a writing topic

You can choose a topic directly related to the issues of Israel and Jewish identity, or alternatively choose a neutral writing topic. Try to write at least five facts about the topic in a way that will make you think and look at it anew. It is helpful to compare the thing to 'its kind', that is, to things belonging to the same category (for example, if the "thing" is a pen, then it can be compared to other writing implements such as a pencil). Use an opening line that creates a sense of defamiliarization or at least will – for example: \*\*\*\*\* is a rather strange thing / I'm not sure I know what

\*\*\*\*\* is, etc.) The goal – to take something familiar that you will present from unusual angles.

After writing the facts, try to connect them in a way that can be read fluently. (For example: 'A pencil is a rather strange object, it is inanimate from which words and math exercises emerge, it is a piece of dead wood that draws a flowering tree, of all the writing tools it is the only one that agrees to erase itself, its traces...' etc.)

- Bonus: after writing, we recommend asking the participants to read what they wrote without mentioning the name of the thing, as a kind of riddle, and the group members must decipher and find out what the text was written about, and what was revealed to us after observing it.
  
- Allusion – Intertextuality is the relationship between a new text to the text before it, and it is expressed openly or alluded to in a variety of ways: direct linguistic insertion or quotation, echoing, reference to characters or events, use of distinctive signs, and more. The relationship between the text and the source always contains a dimension of continuity, and it has the purpose of strengthening the canonical status of the source, but it may also include, paradoxically, a relationship of opposition, ridicule and undermining the authority of the original text (as, for example, in the case of parody).
  - Writing exercises:
    1. Choose a biblical character that you particularly identify with, and pair it with a group of concise and short verses that touch on that aspect of the character that most evokes the identification. Use the words that appear in these verses as a necessary resource – as if these were the most essential words in the world – and write something personal about yourself using them and other words as well.

\*Suggestion: When sharing the results of this exercise, you can discuss the feelings that arose – how does it feel when you only use pre-given words? Was I able to express something personal through them, to create something original from them? In my opinion, what is the right balance between allusion and innovation in writing?

2. Describe in your own words the character you have chosen. How does it appear in your imagination? Through the external description, try to also express something from the inner world of the character (for example, King David's red hair can attest to the spirit of courage).
3. Write about yourself in your own words, with the character serving as your simile. You should focus on a specific situation, for example, 'like Noah when he came out of the ark, ... this is how I am when...'. Note – you can use the simile in a positive way as well as in a negative way: 'Like King David, I am... but unlike King David, I am...'.
  - Similes – A simile is an associative comparison between two different essences, using the word 'as' or 'like'. A simile will always leave areas of non-overlap between the object of the simile and the simile because they are not identical. However, there are similarities and usually areas of overlap between them as well, since there are clear and noticeable features in common, while in other and perhaps less central features there may be a surprising similarity that requires more in-depth investigation and discovery. Similes play a central role in the language of images and aesthetics, as well as an important role in the reading experience, since they stimulate the imagination. In addition, a simile is often used to illustrate subjective emotions and feelings or abstract concepts – through a concrete image.
    - Writing exercise: write the words 'I was like...' at the beginning of five empty lines. Think about yourself in several different periods of your life and in different situations that were important to you (birth, infancy, kindergarten, moving to a new home, etc.), and write a different simile for yourself in relation to each such period. Try to expand the simile so that it continues over a whole line (e.g., 'I was like a colorful butterfly flying from flower to flower in the open field'; 'I was like a wet and shivering kitten in the rain, needing to be petted...'). Write one last simile of you as you are now – 'Now I'm like...'
- Metaphors – A metaphor, unlike a simile, always discards the imagination and offers identity. In a metaphor, A is not like B, but A is B. In a metaphor, the

mental distance is reduced, the hesitation disappears, the writer is more committed to his choice, and maybe there is more opportunity for combinations.

○ Writing exercises:

1. Think about significant figures from the Jewish world that have meaning for you. Write a list of metaphors. If they were one of the following categories, what would they be? Plant / animal / piece of furniture / vehicle / musical instrument / book.
2. Now choose one of the metaphors and expand it, through the description of the character and your relationship with it (for example, 'My mother is a wide crimson leather couch that we can all curl up on...').
3. Write five sentences whose linguistic structure is: character's name + description + action + place. (For example: 'Herzl is thoughtfully standing on the balcony'. Surrealistic and unrealistic sentences are also possible, such as: 'Brave Moshe was the first to run into the Red Sea') Now add the word 'I' at the beginning of every sentence: 'I am thoughtfully standing on the balcony'. Choose the sentence that amuses or intrigues you the most and continue it; expand the metaphor you created for yourself.

### **Part B – Personal in-depth writing**

We will spend approximately 15 minutes on each exercise, which includes carrying out the exercise and time left for sharing.

In order to make sure we create in-depth writing, we will try to focus on three aspects: the self, the outside and nature, and free style expression.

#### "Who am I?" exercise

We will ask each participant to write 5-6 words that describe him on the page. Either we can direct the participants and ask them for words of identity, or leave the exercise open to any descriptive words they choose (which leaves an opening for characteristics, etc.).

After they have written the 6 words, ask the participants to arrange them in order of importance – ranking.

Now, ask them to put together a sentence or two describing themselves using these words, using as few connecting words as possible.

After writing, we will request that all the participants read the sentence that describes them using these words – and create another level of intimacy and familiarity between the group members.

### Nature and outdoor exercise

Through this writing exercise we will be able to feel the power of a landscape image that tells a human story. Have you sometimes felt that the landscape outside is a mirror of your feelings? That 'the sky is crying' with you? Does the freshness of growth in the spring reflect the renewal you feel? In the next exercise we will try to join modern writers who often describe landscape images as a reflection of their feelings and an expression of themselves.

- Writing exercises:
  1. Warm-up exercise: We will write three similes that connect a human feeling to a description of nature (the rain that is falling now is like...; the sunflower in the field is like...; or vice versa – I am as bored as...).
  2. We will ask each participant to choose a favorite place they have visited in Israel, a place that has raised questions for them, or a picture of them in a place in Israel that is meaningful to them.

As a first step we will ask the participants to describe the place using a free writing style. We will ask them to write as many details as objectively as possible. After that, we will ask them to add descriptions and similes that connect the things they wrote about the place with human feelings, and create a pictorial text describing the place – so that we have one neutral text and one pictorial text.

3. Advanced level: we will try to describe the same place we're looking at with two different feelings (for example, out of excitement and out of boredom; or sadness and joy). The place itself will be described without the person's emotions, but will only have a description of the road, the view, the sights, the sounds, and the smells. The description of the landscape will convey the emotion without it being explicitly described (for example, if excitement and boredom were chosen – we will not use words that express this directly, but in order to describe excitement we



will describe bright colors, a lot of activity and to describe boredom we will use shades of gray, will describe silence, etc.).

### Free expression exercise – viewpoint/mirror/window

- Writing exercise:
  - Choose a situation / object / character and write about it in 3 aspects while using the tools you learned (defamiliarization, simile, metaphor, allusion, enjambment, etc.)  
  
(To facilitate and focus the selection, the participants can be asked to look for an article in the context of Israel from the past week, or alternatively ask them to think about their current stand in a conversation related to Israel, etc.)
  - Viewpoint – what do you see – description of the situation
  - Mirror – what does this teach you about yourself. What does this reflect to you?
  - Window – what does it tell you about the outside (community, family, etc.)

### Bonus: 'Homage'

Homage means a tribute – a text whose form or content is a tribute to an existing text. The more distinct the source is in its form, the easier it will be to create an homage that alludes to it. The instruction is to try and write a text that will be a kind of mirror of the original text. You can choose the same opening sentences of some of its lines/verses, and ask the participants to complete as they wish or alternatively focus the participants on a structural homage (for example, if the poem describes a dialogue, then write an homage in the form of a dialogue, etc.).

- Practice:

We will place Israeli poems around the room, and we will ask each participant to choose a poem.

After that, each participant is given about 5-10 minutes to write an homage to the poem he read, with specific instructions:

  1. Use the first line of each verse to start your poem, and every verse in it.
  2. Choose 1-2 central lines that touch you in the poem you read, and write a new poem that integrates these lines integrally.

3. Identify a central structural element in the poem (is there a dialogue between two people? Does the poem describe a certain time, etc.) and write a poem that represents that structure.

### **Part C – Creative group writing**

Joint writing is no minor matter. Unlike personal writing where the individual has full control over the narrative, this is not the case here. The purpose of this part is to learn to work together around the act of writing, which is usually very personal.

We invite you to try group writing with the help of the following exercises. We will spend approximately 15 minutes on each exercise, which includes carrying out the exercise, and time left for sharing.

#### Semi-collaborative writing – brainstorming

- Writing exercises:
  - Level A:
    - We will ask all the participants to come up with every word that comes to mind when we say a certain theme (suggestions for themes related to the writing topic: Israel, Judaism, rituals, connection, Taglit-Birthright, antisemitism, democracy, etc.). We will write all the words on the board, then ask the participants to take five minutes for free associative writing (realistic, philosophical or imaginary) according to the feelings at that moment in the room, the words and the theme written in front of us. No censorship – everything is legitimate.
    - In the next step, we will ask each participant to choose 3-4 certain words and use them in writing a tangible situation that happened (to him or he heard about).
  - Level B:
    - We will conduct the same exercise described above, but with an added twist of feelings and sensations – we'll ask all the participants to come up with every word that comes to their mind when we say the word 'Israel', but this time ask if the words they come up with are words that describe a moment or a feeling (for example: like, doesn't connect, wasn't there, complicated, etc.). Then we will write all the feelings and sensations on the board,

and give the participants time to write. Possible writing instructions for this exercise:

1. Free associative writing (realistic, philosophical or imaginary) according to the feelings at that moment in the room, the words and the theme written in front of us. No censorship – everything is legitimate.
2. We will ask each participant to describe the feeling/emotion he described – in one sentence only.
3. We will ask each participant to write a description for another feeling that he did not offer as an option.
4. We will ask each participant to choose two words that represent a contrast for him, and write a short paragraph containing the two feelings and the two contrasts.

In this exercise, which involves emotions and feelings, we can raise questions for the participants to discuss – which words bring me closest to the feeling that accompanies me most strongly today / in the recent period. What words describe the feelings we wrote (for example: if the feeling of security came up, then words like strength, protection, power, express it).

### Writing around a common theme

We will present to the group a common theme – a writing axis (can focus on Israel and Jewish identity, or rather be broader such as protest, change, etc.).

- Writing exercises:
  1. First and foremost – we will hold a group discussion about the significance of the dialogue, and the facilitator should choose key words and write them on the board, in front of the group. This is an open discussion whose purpose is to hear different opinions, diverse points of view, and so on, on the subject.
  2. Now, we will divide the group into small groups (only 2-3 people), and we will ask each group to write a short piece on the topic.
  3. After writing in small groups, we will return to the whole group and present all the pieces that were written. After hearing all of them, we will ask to combine them into one piece.  
Note – this may be difficult because we did not specify a writing structure in the previous stage (it could be that one group will write a poem, and the

other a short story, the third descriptive sentences, etc.). The challenge will be to produce one meaningful piece, revolving around one center of gravity and comprised of many different voices and opinions.

### Joint writing – a serialized story

- Writing exercises:
  - "The postman" game – we will ask the first participant to write an opening sentence, and pass the page to the participant sitting next to him, the next participant will continue the story, but fold the page so that the next in line sees only the last sentence, and so on. In fact, each participant knows only what was written before him, and not the whole story. Finally, we will open the entire page and read the story from the beginning. Then ask the participants, if they could write the story themselves – what would they change?
  - We will present to the participants the beginning of a situation that tells a story related to the content worlds of Israel and Jewish identity. And then ask the group to continue the situation freely – without instructions. This is an interesting exercise both in terms of group dynamics, power relations and in the story that is told.

## Document #3

### Voices, Together: Conversation Cloth

How can we facilitate different voices around the relationship between Israel and the Jewish people? How can we have a diverse conversation around Israel?

We wish to raise these essential questions utilizing the celebration of Israel's 75th and **Voices, together** with this unique tool – the Conversation Cloth!

The main purpose of the conversation cloth is to allow open and honest conversation, based on texts and ideas. During this activity participants will be active in reacting to classic and modern texts, voice their own opinions and suggest words and language they think should be used today.

#### What is a conversation cloth?

A tailor made tablecloth, printed with seven different texts each expressing a different voice and perspective. The designed cloth is available for your own use, feel free to print it or use it online.

#### Where can it be used, and with whom?

This tool is designed to fit a variety of crowds (youth, young adults, leadership etc.) and capacities. Some examples can be:

- Partnership Together Steering Committees
- Community round-tables sessions
- Informal or formal education settings
- As prompt during community events
- Delegations to/from Israel
- And more!

#### How can I use the conversation cloth?

- 1) Place people in small groups (4-6 people) around rectangle tables or in breakout groups online. Place the conversation cloth front and center on the table.
- 2) Give the group time to read each text OR ask each person to look at the text in front of them.
- 3) As a group or individuals ask to follow the following instructions (also printed on the tablecloth itself)

- How does each text envision the relationship between Israel and the rest of the Jewish world?
  - How does that model strike you?
  - How does it make you feel? How might you add to / adjust / correct / push back against this writer's voice?
- 4) Now, invite people to add their voice by physically commenting on the text/s: Their commentary can clarify, argue, question, suggest something new. They should physically write on the cloth!
  - 5) Your finished conversation cloth should be a written-on tablecloth, filled with words, voices and interpretations.
  - 6) Urge every participant to upload their “voice” to the Voices, together website and take part in writing "**The People's Song**", a collaborative writing process, led by renowned Israeli musician [Sha'anun Streett](#)