

ירושלים של אנשים ומקומות: טקסטים לקריאה עצמית ולתרגול לרמת המתחילים ולרמת הביניים. שרה ישראלי ותמר פרלס. 2018. ירושלים, הוצאת מאגנס. 152 עמודים.

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Jerusalem of People and Places, by Sara Israeli and Tamar Perles is a collection of forty-five short essays which is intended to supplement Hebrew curricula at the beginner through intermediate levels. With Jerusalem as its backdrop, the book provides readers with texts on a variety of topics, each categorized according to its focus on a place, public figure, or phenomenon. The essays range in length from 24 to 56 lines, generally becoming longer and more complex as the book progresses. Each essay is followed by three questions: two directly assessing comprehension of the content, and the third providing the reader with an opportunity to think about the essay's topic within a wider scope. Answers to the two comprehension questions are provided on the following page. Additionally, five words per essay are highlighted in the text, with translations provided at the end. Accompanying the book is an audio CD with each text read aloud; this is a useful resource, if somewhat impeded by the fact that there is one single, four-hour long audio track, rather than separate, shorter tracks for each essay.

In the introduction the authors indicate that, of the forty-five essays, there are fifteen each at the beginners, advanced-beginners, and intermediate levels. There is not an explanation of what these terms indicate, or if they can be compared to a particular rating scale, such as the ILR or ACTFL proficiency guidelines. While the essays are not labelled according to their level, the book does generally move from simpler to more complex language. It is important to note that there are no grammar explanations or lessons provided; the aim of the book is truly as a supplement to other instructional methods or texts. Instructors hoping to use the book in their classes will need to read through each of the texts and assess whether or not it would be appropriate for their particular class.

Essay topics include history, food, geography, recreation and sport, nature and conservation, health and medicine, family, architecture, Israeli and Jewish culture, politics, and art, among others. Readers can learn about a variety of figures, from Rami Levy, Henrietta Szold, and Aharon Appelfeld to Helen Keller and Rosa Parks. While many of the essays are written as traditional third person descriptions of people, places, or phenomena, there are also a handful of first-person narrations. Woven throughout many of the essays,

there are mentions and descriptions of specific neighborhoods, streets, and shops in Jerusalem. For readers already familiar with or living in Jerusalem, these essays could form the basis for walking tours or short excursions. For those unable to visit the sites physically, there is usually enough detail provided to follow along with a tool like Google Street View, enabling those at a distance to immerse themselves in the setting as they read.

Familiarity with certain grammatical concepts is assumed from the beginning. Most notably, these include noun-adjective agreement, present tense verb conjugation in *Pa'al* and *Pi'el*, and compound nouns. Very quickly, the essays begin to include the present tense of *Hif'il* and *Hitpa'el*, and the past tense of each of these four patterns. Next to be introduced is *Nif'al* in the past and present, and in the more complex essays towards the end of the book, there are several instances of verbs in the passive *Pu'al* and *Huf'al* patterns as well. The future tense is introduced slowly as the book moves into the advanced-beginners level and becomes more commonplace as the book progresses to the intermediate essays. Use of the habitual past also becomes more common as the essays increase in complexity.

Aside from complexity in their verbs, essays at the advanced-beginner and intermediate levels are also marked by features of more formal Hebrew. Possessive pronouns begin to appear around the middle of the book and become ubiquitous in the intermediate level texts. At an even higher register, there are several examples of double construct phrases in the later essays (e.g. Essay 40, "בהלווייתו של לוחם צה"ל"; Essay 43, "פחדיו של רובי"; Essay 44, "בחלקו הקדמי של האוטובוס"). Other examples of more formal language include the use of words and phrases such as "לא רק...אלא גם..." (Essays 29 and 42), אומנם (Essay 44), and אינו / אינה / אינם in place of לא for negation (see Essays 32, 34, 40, and 43).

In general, the essays are well-written and with enough variety in their subjects that the book will appeal to readers with diverse interests. Some essays cover topics one might expect to find in a Hebrew textbook, for example *Shuk Mahane Yehuda* (Essay 3), a comparison of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv (Essay 11), the Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations (Essay 25), and Birthright (Essay 40). Others, however, give readers the opportunity to

delve into topics less commonly found in beginner and intermediate level readings. These texts, though sometimes more tenuously connected to the Jerusalem theme, give the book a welcome breadth. The shift from simpler to more complex or formal language happens gradually; a person could read through all of the essays from the start of the book and feel challenged, but not overwhelmed, by the increasing difficulty. In sum, *Jerusalem of People and Places* is well-sequenced, interesting, and would serve as a fine supplement to a Modern Hebrew curriculum.