

# Putin's historic visit to Israel (Fri 29 Apr, 2005)

## WARM-UPS

**CHAT:** Talk in pairs or groups about: Jerusalem / Vladimir Putin / Ariel Sharon / Russia / Israel / Cold War / Syria / Iran ... For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**JERUSALEM:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the Jerusalem. Share your words with your partner / group and talk about them.

**GOOGLE SEARCHERS:** For this activity, become a "Google Searcher" – visit other sites (your classmates) and try to find out what they know about Israeli-Russian history. These "searches" may be good places to start: Soviet Union / Cold War / KGB / Six-Day War / Sinai / Golan Heights / Mikhail Gorbachev / Glasnost.

Start your searches by asking:

- What do you know about...?
- What can you tell me about...?
- Can you tell me anything about...?
- Tell me all you know about...?
- Tell me something about...?
- Do you know anything about...?
- Do you have any information about...?

In groups, share the information you found in your searches. Use these sentence starters:

- I was told that...
- I found out that...
- Student X told me...
- I heard that...
- Apparently...

**MR PUTIN'S VISIT:** Read the following comments on Mr Putin's visit and agree or disagree with them with your partner / group:

- It is a wonderful event. It will help bring peace to the region.
- Russia will never be a major player in the Middle East.
- Twenty per cent of Israel's population is Russian-speaking. The visit is natural.
- Mr Putin is jealous of America's power in the region.
- Israel and Russia are partners in the War on Terror. It is right they should meet.
- Russia's sale of missiles to Syria is dangerous.
- Better late than never.
- Putin's visit to Israel shows the Arab world things must change.

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## PRE-READING

**WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... of the words 'historic' and 'meeting'.

**TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true or false:

- a. Russia's President Putin went to Israel to visit sights from the Bible. T / F
- b. President Putin wants a new role for Russia in the Middle East. T / F
- c. President Putin is the first Russian or Soviet leader ever to visit Israel. T / F
- d. Mr Putin and Mr Sharon will discuss many issues. T / F
- e. Mr Sharon has said it is OK for Russia to sell missiles to Syria. T / F
- f. Israel is still at war with Syria. T / F
- g. Mr Putin has insisted he is not helping Iran develop nuclear weapons. T / F

**SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |    |                |           |
|----|----------------|-----------|
| a. | historic       | area      |
| b. | country        | repeated  |
| c. | region         | nation    |
| d. | wide           | worried   |
| e. | sticking point | momentous |
| f. | concerned      | broad     |
| g. | insisted       | reasons   |
| h. | purposes       | obstacle  |

**PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |    |                            |                      |
|----|----------------------------|----------------------|
| a. | historic                   | a little strange     |
| b. | the first                  | of issues            |
| c. | This seems                 | point                |
| d. | twenty percent of Israelis | ever visit to Israel |
| e. | lost a lot of              | purposes             |
| f. | a wide range               | power in the region  |
| g. | major sticking             | are Russian-speaking |
| h. | peaceful                   | meeting              |

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### READING:

**GAP-FILL:** Fill the gaps with the words in the column on the right.

### Putin's historic visit to Israel

**BNE:** A \_\_\_\_\_ meeting took place in Jerusalem *role*  
earlier between Russian President Vladimir Putin and *fall*  
Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. It is the first *historic*  
\_\_\_\_\_ visit to Israel by a Russian or Soviet *purposes*  
leader. This seems a little strange because twenty *sticking*  
percent of Israelis are Russian-speaking. President *power*  
Putin is hoping for a new \_\_\_\_\_ for his country *ever*  
in the Middle East. Russia has lost a lot of *insisted*  
\_\_\_\_\_ in the region since the end of the Cold  
War. The two leaders will discuss a wide range of  
issues. A major \_\_\_\_\_ point will be Russia's  
planned sale of missiles to Syria. Israel is still at war  
with Syria and is worried the missiles may  
\_\_\_\_\_ into terrorist hands. Israel is also  
concerned about Russia's role in Iran's nuclear  
programme. Mr Putin has \_\_\_\_\_ that Russia's  
technical help in Iran is only for peaceful  
\_\_\_\_\_, such as energy, and not nuclear  
weapons.

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### DISCUSSION

- a. Were you interested in this article ?
- b. Were you surprised at anything you read in the article?
- c. Do you believe everything you read in the article?
- d. What do you think of President Putin's visit?
- e. Are you surprised it's the first ever visit to Israel by a Russian or Soviet leader?
- f. Do you think Mr Putin's visit will change anything in the Middle East?
- g. Should Russia sell missiles to Syria?
- h. Should America sell arms to Israel?
- i. Should Russia be helping Iran in its nuclear programme?
- j. Should Israel have nuclear weapons?
- k. Will Israel and its neighbours ever live together in peace?
- l. Does Russia have a role to play in the Middle East?
- m. Does America have too much power in the Middle East?
- n. Are relations between Israel and its neighbours getting better or worse?
- o. Did you like this discussion?
- p. Teacher / Student additional questions.

**ISRAEL/RUSSIA HEADLINES:** Talk to your partner / group about these imaginary headlines:

- a. Russia – the new peacemaker in the Middle East
- b. Israel to pull down its security fence.
- c. Sharon and Putin to receive Nobel Peace Prize
- d. Israel agrees to destroy its nuclear weapons in exchange for peace with Arab neighbours
- e. Iran has nuclear weapons
- f. East Jerusalem becomes Palestinian capital city
- g. Bush gives Iran 48 hours to start destroying nuclear weapons
- h. Israel attends regional Arab development conference

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### HOMEWORK

- 1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.
- 2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find information on Vladimir Putin. Share your findings with your class next lesson.
- 3. RUSSIAN-ISRAELI TIES:** Make a poster of the history between Russia and Israel since 1948. Show it to your classmates in your next lesson.
- 4. DIPLOMAT'S DIARY:** Imagine you are a diplomat for your country. Write the journal / diary entry for one day of your work.

### TEXT:

## Putin's historic visit to Israel

**BNE:** A **historic** meeting took place in Jerusalem earlier between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. It is the first **ever** visit to Israel by a Russian or Soviet leader. This seems a little strange because twenty percent of Israelis are Russian-speaking. President Putin is hoping for a new **role** for his country in the Middle East. Russia has lost a lot of **power** in the region since the end of the Cold War. The two leaders will discuss a wide range of issues. A major **sticking** point will be Russia's planned sale of missiles to Syria. Israel is still at war with Syria and is worried the missiles may **fall** into terrorist hands. Israel is also concerned about Russia's role in Iran's nuclear programme. Mr Putin has **insisted** that Russia's technical help in Iran is only for peaceful **purposes**, such as energy, and not nuclear weapons.