## Review of 2023 Palestinian Matriculation Exams



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#### Introduction

This review examines the Palestinian matriculation exams, known as the General Certificate of Secondary Education Examination in Palestine (*Tawjihi*, or *Injaz*) for June 2023. The *Tawjihi* examinations are the culmination of the 12-year Palestinian education system. The exams not only cover the material taught in twelfth-grade Palestinian curriculum textbooks, but highlight aspects of the curriculum which are deemed worthy of special attention. The tests are a good indicator of the elements of the curriculum which are considered particularly important. They implicitly reveal the fundamental goals of the educational system, and the worldview and identity students are equipped with to play a role in Palestinian society. Given that the *Tawjihi* exams reflect the PA's educational policy and future outlook, they deserve close scrutiny.

This review evaluates the adherence of Palestinian matriculation exams to international standards of peace and tolerance in education. The matriculation exams included in this review are in the Arabic language, Islamic Education, geography, and history.

Even in the relatively small number of exams featured here, all in seemingly innocuous subjects, a number of problematic issues appear frequently. These include the glorification of violence against Israel, and of *jihad* and martyrdom in general, as well as rejection of Israel.

Students are examined on chapters and passages from PA textbooks which glorify the use of violence for the liberation of Palestine, which according to these textbooks refers to the entire territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. One question focuses on a poem praising Jerusalem's "knights" who "go to their death with a smile." Another poem featured recounts a Palestinian refugee returning to Palestine with a "weapon in [his] hand." Students are also examined on a passage in a PA textbook which discusses the importance of preparing for jihad in Palestine.

Meanwhile, exams also include questions on passages in the PA textbooks which praise violent *jihad* and martyrdom. One question asks students to explain that *jihad* is "the apex of Islam," and another examines students on a passage in a PA textbook which describes martyrdom as a great honor.

Moreover, students are tested on material that denies Jewish history in Jerusalem, and expresses rejection of Israel – a UN member state – including its right to exist. In one case, students are presented with a passage from a PA textbook which disparagingly refers to Jewish history in Jerusalem as "baseless claims," "fairy tales," and "myths." Another exam features a map which ignores Israel, and labels the entire territory of Mandatory Palestine as "Palestine." In two instances, students are tested on chapters in PA textbooks which compare Israeli Jews to the Crusaders, implying that they are foreign invaders who will eventually be defeated.

Additionally, students are examined on a textbook chapter that teaches about an attempt by two Jews to create internal strife within the Islamic community during Islam's early days, fostering a negative perception of Jews. Another question asks students to explain how "the United States took advantage of the events of 9/11 to impose its hegemony on the world," describing the attacks as an excuse used by the United States to strengthen its power.

Given that the *Tawjihi* exams can be viewed as an indicator of the importance ascribed by the Palestinian Ministry of Education to specific topics, it appears that non-recognition of Israel, the use of violence against it, and the promotion of *jihad* and martyrdom, are central to the Palestinian curriculum.

Below is an example of the cover page of a matriculation exam. It features the coat of arms of Palestine, and details the bodies in charge of the exams: "the National Center of Exams, Assessment and Educational Evaluation," and the "Directorate General of General Examinations," as well as the name of the State of Palestine and the Ministry of Education.



#### [center:]

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful General Certificate of Secondary Education Examination Test date one for 2022/23 [school] year

#### [right:]

State of Palestine Ministry of Education

National Center of Exams, Assessment and Educational Evaluation

Directorate General of General Examinations

Branches: Humanities, Shari'a, Science, Entrepreneurship and Business

Subject: Arabic Language

Form: Form A for literature and shari'a branches

Session: ----

#### [left:]

Day: Wednesday Date: 7/6/2023

Duration of the exam: three hours

Total score: 100

## Encouragment and Glorification of Violence, Jihad, and Martyrdom:

#### 1. Arabic Language matriculation exam, 7.6.2023.

Students are examined on a passage from a PA textbook titled "Jerusalem - A Compass and Glory," which glorifies martyrdom in battle, praising Jerusalem's "knights" who "go to their death with a smile," and its "fragrant young people" [a traditional Islamic characteristic of martyrs]. The passage also denies Jewish historical connection to the city, describing Jewish ties to Jerusalem as "baseless claims," "fairy tales," "myths," "illusions," and "distorted narratives." The denial of Jewish history in Jerusalem not only contradicts historical facts, but also prevents any future compromise on Jerusalem as a part of a two-state solution.

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أ) اقرأ النّصَ الآتي من درس (القدس بوصلة ومَجد)، ثمّ أجب عن الأمثلة التي تليه:
هي نافذة الصادقين الذين يعبرون الأرض تجاه المتماء عبر نوافذها الّتي باركها القرآن، إنّها مدينة الله، تجتمع في أروقتها القلوب المؤمنة، كما اجتمع الأنبياء معلنين اصطفاقهم خلف رسول الله، فغنت آية من كتاب الله.
1. ما الفنّ النثريّ الذي ينتمي إليه هذا النّصّ؟
2. لماذا نعت النّصّ المفردات المعبرة عن القدس بالقاصرة؟
3. انكر التين من معالم القدس وردا في النّصّ أعلاه.
4. وضّح الصورة الفنّية في عبارة: (القدس بوصلة ومَجد).
5. ما علاقة الجملة التي تحتها خطّ في الفقرة بما قبلها؟
6. ورد في الفقرة الكلمات: (اروقتها، اجتمع، مدينة)، ما مفرد الأولى؟ وما الوزن الصّرفيّ للتّانية؟ وما إعراب الأخيرة؟
6. ورد في الفقرة الكلمات: (اروقتها، اجتمع، مدينة)، ما مفرد الأولى؟ وما الوزن الصّرفيّ للتّانية؟ وما إعراب الأخيرة؟
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- 1. What is the type of prose to which this text belongs?
- 2. Why did the text describe the vocabulary regarding Jerusalem as limited?
- 3. Mention two sites in Jerusalem that are included in the text above.
- 4. Explain the artistic image in the expression "Jerusalem A Compass and Glory."
- 5. What is the relation between the underlined sentence in the paragraph and what comes before it?
- 6. The paragraph includes the words "its corridors," "gathered," and "city." What is the singular form of the first word? What is the morphological form of the second word? What is the suffix of the last one?

<sup>1)</sup> Read the following text from the lesson "Jerusalem - A Compass and Glory" and then answer the following questions: It is the window of the righteous ones who cross the earth towards the sky through its windows, which have been blessed by the Qur'an. It is the city of Allah, in whose corridors the believing hearts gather, just as the prophets gathered to proclaim that they stand behind the Messenger of Allah, as it became a verse from the Book of Allah.

#### Source material from Palestinian curriculum:

Arabic Language [1] - Reading, Grammar, Prosody, and Expression [Academic Track], 2020, pp. 38-41:



[Left Side:]
Unit 4: Jerusalem - A Compass and Glory

Palestine's sacred capital stands as a witness and a martyr...

She is the struggling mother that bleeds all the time but never succumbs to the invaders. She wraps her wall around herself like a dress of purity and refuses to die. The invaders tighten their grip upon her soul, but she - for fifty years now - has tightened her grip over their grip... Will the foreign invaders be able - whatever their power - to make a mother forget her sons? She knows them by their features, even though the enemies dig in her history false excavations with baseless claims and build on her soil a false heritage and a reality supported by force and tyranny.

#### [Right Side:]

... She wraps herself with her latest wounds every night and finds shelter inside the homeland's sad cave accompanied by her fragrant [traditional Islamic characteristic of martyrs] young people, and its knights who hide the Dome [of the Rock] in their eyes, and go to their death with a smile.

History is reflected in Jerusalem, shining with its facts that are neither mixed with doubt nor falsified by fairy tales and myths. Her markets tell the truth, and her inscriptions silence every claimer and expose every liar. Jerusalem is revealed as a faithful Arab city until God inherits the earth and whoever is on it.

She will remain sanctified in the nation's consciousness, high above the misery of the current situation, the distorted narratives and the usurped history, and above the grip of the invaders who do not spare an effort to falsify history, peddle illusions and set loose the tools of destruction in order to distort history... She is undefeatable, even if her soil is lying for a day or two under the invaders' feet...

In the sentence: 'Jerusalem stands as a witness and a martyr' [šāhida wa-šahīda] - Witness: observing the events around it. Martyr: sacrificing her sons who defend her.

- 4- With what did the heads of the Zionist Occupation tempt the settlers in order to encourage them to come to Palestine?
- 5- How does the occupation distort the geography of Jerusalem?

Activity: let us write a report on the Occupation's most prominent abuses of the right to education in Jerusalem.

#### 2. Arabic language matriculation exam, 7.6.2023, p. 4.

One of the questions in this Arabic language matriculation exam addresses verses from the poem "A Refugee's Will," which is taught in the PA textbook. The poem recounts the desire of a Palestinian refugee to return to his homeland. One of the verses, which is taught in the textbook but does not appear in the exam, describes the refugee returning with a "weapon in [his] hand." A subsequent question in the textbook below the poem further asks "How will the Palestinian refugee return to his homeland?" The poem, which students will have studied in preparation for the exam, may therefore encourage the liberation of Palestine by force. The passage clearly refers to pre-1967 Israel as a part of Palestinian land, as it describes the city of Haifa, which is within the borders of pre-1967 Israel, as part of the Palestinian homeland.

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تابع أسئلة مبحث: اللغة العربية الفرع: الأدبي والشرعي والعلمي والربادة والاعمال الدورة: الأولى لعام 2023

ب) اقرأ المقطع الآتي للشاعر هاشم الرفاعي، ثم أجب عن الأسئلة التي تليه:

أنا يا بُني، غذا سيطوبني الفُسَق لم لم يَبْق مِن ظل الحياة سوى رَمَق وحُظام قلب عاش مشبوب القلق قد أشرق المصباخ يوماً واحترق جف شده القصيدة؛

جفت به آمالُه هتى الختنق جمن الشاعر في هذه القصيدة؛

1. مَن الشخصيّة التي تقمّصها الشّاعر في هذه القصيدة؛

2. وضّع الصورة الفنيّة في قول الشّاعر: (وحُظام قلب عاش مَشبوب القلق).

3. استخرج من المقطع السابق حرفاً بفيد التحقيق.
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b-Read the following extract from the poet Hashem al-Rifa'i, and then answer the following questions:

The dark of night will swallow me tomorrow, O my little son Nothing is left of the shadow of life but its last breath And the broken pieces of a heart that lived with burning concern The lamp had once shone, but then it burned Its hopes had dried until it suffocated

#### Source material from Palestinian curriculum:

Arabic Language (1): Reading, Grammar, Prosody and Expression, Grade 12, 2020, pp. 85-86.



A Refugee's Will
The dark of night will swallow me tomorrow, O my little son
Nothing is left of the shadow of life but its last breath
...
They have driven you out. Return to those who have driven you out
Because there is a land that your father used to cultivate . . .
Haifa is sighing. Have you not heard Haifa's sigh? . . .
Behind you there is a land that fed your childhood
And wants to see you one day in your youth
The horrors of the disaster have not made her forget you
She is longing but her glance is full of admonishment
If you come to her one day with weapon in your hand . . .
Then cry out: . . . I am at your service, O my dear homeland that has been deserted . . .
6- How will the Palestinian refugee return to his homeland?

#### 3. Islamic Education matriculation exam, 10.6.2023, p. 3.

This Islamic Education *Tawjihi* exam asks students to explain the term "the apex of Islam" [dhurwat sanam al-islam], from the hadith which refers to jihad and emphasizes its importance. The chapter of the PA textbook on which students are examined uses this term to describe jihad, and on the same page teaches that jihad is "one of the gates to achieving martyrdom", and that jihad is an individual duty in the event of Islamic land being occupied. This could be seen as pertaining to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The chapter also explains various restrictions on jihad.

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السؤال السادس: (20 علامة)
أ- عرّف المفاهيم والمصطلحات الآتية:
1- الإخصاب الصناعي. 2- بيع المرابحة. 3- حمل قبِّ. 4- ذروة سنام الإسلام.
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Question six: (20 marks)

a – Define the following concepts and terms:

4 – The apex of Islam [literally: the top of the hump of a camel]

#### Source material from Palestinian curriculum:

#### Islamic Education, Grade 12, 2021, p. 98:

## 🎇 فضل الجهاد في سبيل الله 🎇

- \* في الجهاد عِز ونصر وتمكين في الأرض، وفي تركه ذل وخسران، قال : "ما ترك قوم الجهاد إلا عَمَّهم الله بالعذاب ". (رواه الطبراني في الأوسط)
- \* الجهاد أفضل الأعمال إلى الله -تعالى- قال رسول الله ، " مَقَلُ الْمُجَاهِدِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ كَمَقَلِ الصَّائِمِ اللهَ الصَّائِمِ الْقَائِمِ الْقَائِمِ الْقَائِمِ اللهِ اللهِ -تعالى-". (رواه مسلم)
- \* والجهاد ذروة سنام الإسلام، والسنام ما علا من ظهر الجمل، وفي ذلك كناية عن علو شأن الجهاد في الإسلام، وقد روى في ذلك معاذ بن جَبَلٍ ، عن رسول الله الله أنه قال: "رَأْسُ الْأَمْرِ الْإِسْلَامُ وَعَمُودُهُ الصَّلَامُ وَغُمُودُهُ الصَّلَامُ وَغُمُودُهُ الصَّلَامُ وَغُمُودُهُ
- \* الجهاد تجارة رابحة مع الله -تعالى- فيها النجاة من النار والفوز بالمغفرة والجنة، قال تعالى: ﴿ يَتَأَيُّهَا ٱلَذِينَ اَمَنُواْ هَلَ ٱذَٰكُمُ عَلَى تِعِزَةِ نُنجِيكُم مِّنَ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ۞ نُوْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُجْهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِأَمُولِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ وَنُدَخِلُمُ جَنّتِ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْيَهَ ٱلأَنْهَرُ وَمَسَكِنَ طَيّبَةً فِي جَنّتِ عَرِي مِن تَحْيَهَ ٱلأَنْهَرُ وَمَسَكِنَ طَيّبَةً فِي جَنّتِ عَرِي مِن تَحْيَهَ ٱلْأَنْهَرُ وَمَسَكِنَ طَيّبَةً فِي جَنّتِ عَرِي مِن تَحْيَهَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ آلاً ﴿ وَمَسَكِنَ طَيّبَةً فِي جَنّتِ عَرِي فَلِكُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ آللهُ وَمَنْهُ وَلَيْتُ وَلَيْكُمْ وَكُنْهُ وَلَيْتُ وَلَيْكُمْ وَكُنْهُ وَلَيْتُ وَلَيْكُمْ وَكُنْهُ وَلَيْتُ وَلَاكُونَ اللهِ عَلَى مَا لَكُونُ اللّهِ وَمَنْهُ وَلَيْتُ وَلَيْتُ وَلَيْتُ وَلَيْكُمْ وَكُنْهُ وَلِيكُ وَلَيْتُولُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اللّهِ وَمَنْهُ وَلَيْتُ وَلَيْكُمْ وَلَهُ وَلَيْتُولُ مُنْهَا لَهُ وَلَيْتُ وَلَيْكُمْ وَلَيْتُ وَلِيكُ وَلِيكَ الْمُؤْرِدُ الْعَظِيمُ اللّهُ وَلَيْتُ وَلَا لَا لَهُ وَلِيلًا لَاللّهُ اللّهِ وَلَالَتُونُ وَلِيكُ وَلِيلًا لَاللّهُ وَلَا لَا لَهُ اللّهُ وَلَالَاكُونُ وَلَالًا لَلْهُ وَلَوْلُولُونَ اللّهِ وَلَالَا لَاللّهُ وَلَا لَاللّهُ وَلَوْلُولُونَا لَا لَعُولُولُ اللّهُ وَلَى اللّهُ وَلَا لَهُ وَلَا لَا لَا لَاللّهُ وَلَالَالِهُ لَاللّهُ لَا لَا لَاللّهُ وَلَا لَا لَهُ مُلْكُونُ لِلْكُ لَا لَا لَا لَعَظِيمُ اللّهُ اللّهُ اللّهُ وَلَوْلًا لَا لَا لَهُ عَلَيْهُ لَا لَا لَا لَا لَا لَا لَا لَهُ مُلْكُونُونَ اللّهُ اللّهُ لَالَالِهُ لَلْكُولُولُولُونَا لِلْهُ لَا لَا لَا لَا لَا لَا لَا لَا لَنْهُ وَلَا لَا لَا لَهُ عَلَيْكُونُ اللّهُ لِلْهُ لِلْلِهُ لِلْهُ لِلْهُ لِلْلِكُونَ لِللْهُ لِلْلِهُ لِلْلِهُ لَلْهُ لِلْلِهُ لِلْلّهُ لِلْلِهُ لِلْلّهُ لِلْلّهُ لِلْهُ لِلْلّهُ لِلْلِهُ لَلْهُ لِلْلِلْهُ لِلْلِهُ لِلْلِلْهُ لِلْمُ لِلْلِلْهُ لِلْلّهُ لِلْلِهُ لَلْهُ لِلْلِهُ لَا لَاللّهُ لِلْلِلْمُ لِلْمُؤْلِقُ لِلْلِلْهُ لِلْمُ لِلْلِهُ لِلْلِلْمُ لِلْلِلْمِ لَاللّهُ لِلْمُ لَلْلّهُ لِللّهُ لِلْمُ لِلْمُ لِلللّهُ لِلْلِلْمُ لِلللّهُ لِلْمُلْمُ لِلللّهُ لِلْمُولِلْمُ لِلْمُولِلْمُ لَالِلِلْمُولِلْمُ
- \* الجهاد باب من أبواب تحصيل الشهادة، يقول رسولنا الكريم ؟: "تكفّل الله لمن جاهد في سبيله، لا يُخرِجهُ إلا جهادًا في سبيله وتصديق كلماته، بأن يدخله الجنة، أو يُرجِعَهُ إلى مسكنه الذي خرج منه مع ما نال من أجر أو غنيمةِ" ( رواه الخاري)



الأُصل في الجهاد في سبيل الله -تعالى- أنه فرض كفاية، قال تعالى: ﴿ وَقَلْتِلُواْ فِي سَكِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَلْتِلُونَكُمُ وَلَا تَعَالَى: ﴿ وَقَلْتِلُواْ فِي سَكِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَلَّتِلُونَكُمُ وَلَا تَعَالَى: ﴿ وَلَا تَعَالَى: ﴿ وَقَلْتِلُوا لَهُ مَنَ الْعَدُو بَمَنَ حَضَر مَنَ الْمُقَاتِلِينَ لَمُواجَهَتَه. المَقاتِلِينَ لَمُواجَهَتَه.

ويكون فرض عين، في حالات منها:

\* إذا احتلّ العدو بلدًا من بلاد المسلمين أو حرّك جيوشه لاحتلالها أو أراد أهلها بسوء، قال تعالى: ﴿يَتَأَيُّهُا اَلَذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ قَائِلُوا اَلَّذِينَ يَلُونَكُم مِنَ ٱلْكُفَارِ وَلْيَجِدُواْ فِيكُمْ غِلْظَةً وَاعْلَمُواْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلْمُنَّقِينَ ۞. (النوبة)

Question The virtue of jihad in God's cause [excerpts]:

- Jihad is the best deed in Allah Almighty's eyes. [...]
- Jihad is the apex of Islam. [...]
- Jihad is a profitable trade with Allah Almighty that comprises the rescue from Hellfire and the attainment of pardon and Paradise. [...]
- Jihad is one of the gates to achieving martyrdom. [...]

The ruling regarding jihad:

Jihad for the sake of Allah Almighty is originally a collective duty. [...] It is considered an individual duty in conditions which include:

- If the enemy occupies a Muslim land or moves its army to occupy it or intends harm to its residents. [...]
- If the Imam recruited or sent a group of people to battle. [...]

#### 4. Islamic Education matriculation exam, 10.6.2023, p. 3.

This Islamic Education matriculation exam asks students to define the term "martyr". The exam is based on the Grade 12 PA Islamic Education textbook, which describes martyrdom as a great honor, and defines a martyr as "he who sacrifices himself in the cause of Allah in defense of his religion and homeland." The textbook and the exam therefore together glorify martyrdom in battle against the enemy.

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السؤال الثالث: (20 علامة)
أ - عرِّف المفاهيم والمصطلحات الآتية:
1 - الكفار غير المعادين. 2 - التَّطَيُّر. 3 - التَققه في الدين.
4 - الشهيد. 5 - سنن الله في المجتمعات.
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Question three (20 marks):
a — Define the following concepts and terms:
...
4 — Martyr
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#### Source material from Palestinian curriculum:

#### Islamic Education, Grade 12, 2021, p. 16:

The Status of Martyrs for Allah:

And do not say about those who are killed in the way of Allah: 'They are dead.' Rather, they are alive, but you perceive [it] not, (Al-Bagara: 154).

For Allah, martyrdom is a great status, a high point, so the magnitude of the effort and the sacrifice [should emanate] from the loftiness of the goal and purpose.

And the Martyr: he who sacrifices himself in the cause of Allah in defense of his religion and homeland; so Allah's word is supreme.

The verse prohibits describing martyrs as dead; because they live with their Lord in delight, they have moved from the life we know to another life we do not sense. 'And never think of those who have been killed in the cause of Allah as dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision.' (Al-Imran: 169)

#### 5. Islamic Education matriculation exam, 10.6.2023, p. 2.

This Islamic Education Tawjihi exam asks students to explain the importance and the rewards of ribat – the Islamic principle of preparing for jihad to defend Islamic territory. The PA textbook on which the students are examined defines ribat as living in places such as Palestine and the Levant, where danger lurks from the "enemies of Islam," while preparing for jihad. The content of the lesson on which students are examined therefore encourages students to view themselves as engaged in a religious war against a sworn enemy of their faith.



c – Explain the following:

...

4 – Ribat for the sake of Allah is one of the best deeds that is still rewarded after one's death

#### Source material from Palestinian curriculum:

#### Islamic Education, Grade 12, 2021, p. 74:

### أولاً - الرباط في سبيل الله:

الرباط: هو الإقامة مع إعداد النفس للجهاد في سبيل الله، والدفاع عن الدين والمسلمين، في الأماكن التي يُخشى على أهلها من أعداء الإسلام. كالإقامة في أرض فلسطين خاصة، وبلاد الشام عامة. والرباط أفضل الأعمال التي يبقى ثوابها بعد موت صاحبها؛ لأن أعمال البرِّ كلها قد لا يُتمكن منها إلا بالسلامة من العدو وحراسة الثغور، فيجري عليه أجر كل أعمال البر التي تقام بسبب رباطه.

Ribat: preparing one's soul to [to engage in] jihad for the sake of Allah and defending religion and the Muslims, as one continues to reside in places where people are afraid of the enemies of Islam. This refers particularly to residing in the land of Palestine and generally to the Levant [bilad al-sham, Greater Syria]. And ribat is the best deed that is still rewarded after one's death; because all the acts of righteousness will be almost impossible to achieve unless one is safe from the enemy and the frontiers are guarded. So the [one who engages in ribat] gains the reward of all the acts of righteousness that are held because of his ribat.

## Rejecting and Demonizing Israel, Denying Jewish History

#### 6. Arabic Language matriculation exam, 8.6.2023, p. 2.

Students are examined on a poem from the PA textbook which compares Jews to the Crusaders, the British and Napoleon, casting them as foreign occupiers that will be defeated. In the summary of the poem, students are taught that "the Jews have come to destroy this place and erase its history," and that "the Zionist Occupation will be defeated as the Crusaders, Napoleon, and the English were defeated." According to the summary, the poem emphasizes "the need to continue the cross-generational struggle for the liberation of Palestine." Given that PA textbooks use the term "Palestine" to refer to the entire territory of former Mandatory Palestine, the promotion of a "struggle for the liberation of Palestine," coupled with the comparison to the Crusaders, likely implies the encouragement of the destruction of the State of Israel.

The poem itself refers to Israeli soldiers as "the soldiers of Joshua," implying that the Jews are foreign invaders both in modern and ancient times. The poem also possibly implies that Israeli Jews will go back to perceived countries of origin, as it says: "we will return when the soldiers go back to their people far away." Moreover, the poem uses violent imagery, stating: "You will grow up, my son, and tell those who inherited their rifles the epic of blood on iron."



a) Read the following text from the poem "The Eternity of the Cactus" by the poet Mahmoud Darwish, and then answer the questions that follow it:

- Why was the horse left alone?
- So he can mind the house, my son,

our homes die if their owners leave them.

- 1. What is the position that the horse was entrusted with in this poetic text?
- 2. What is the day that the poet recalls in this text?
- 3. Why do homes die if their owners leave them?
- 4. What are the two elements that the storytelling method is based on, and are employed by the poet in the previous text?

#### Source material from Palestinian curriculum:

Arabic Language (2) - Literature and Rhetoric (Literature and Sharia Branches), 2020, pp. 36-39):



Displacement in Palestinian poetry

The Eternity of the Cactus (Mahmoud Darwish – Palestine)

Where are you taking me, father?

Where the wind blows, son.

While leaving the plains where Bonaparte's soldiers erected a hill to watch the shadows on ancient Acre's wall, a father says to his son: Do not be afraid. Do not be afraid of the whir of bullets. Hold fast to the ground so that you will be saved. We will be saved and climb a mountain in the north, and come back when the soldiers return to their families in distant lands.

...

And he said, while crossing a fence of thorns: O my son, remember! Here on the thorn of a cactus, the English crucified your father for two nights but he never confessed. You will grow up, my son, and tell those who inherited their rifles the epic of blood on iron.

...

So remain defiant until our return.

- -When will that be, O my father?
- -Tomorrow. Perhaps in two days.

It was a heedless tomorrow that chewed on the wind behind them on the long winter nights. Joshua's soldiers built their fortress with the stones of their houses. Breathless on the road to Cana: here our Lord passed one day.

0 my son, remember tomorrow. And remember the fortresses of the crusades eaten by April's grasses after the soldiers left.

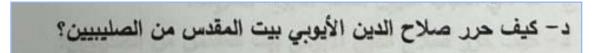
#### About the text:

The poet applies the epic style while describing the loss of Palestine and the exile of its people...

- ... The Jews have come to destroy this place, erase its history and build their houses on the ruins of Palestinian houses... The Zionist occupation will be defeated as the crusaders, Napoleon, and the English were defeated.
- 5. The poet has indicated the need to continue the cross-generational struggle for the liberation of Palestine. We will define the poetic expression that shows this meaning.

#### 7. Islamic Education matriculation exam, 10.6.2023, p. 3.

Students are examined on a chapter from a PA Islamic Education textbook which compares the "Zionist occupation" to the Crusaders, asking students to discuss how they can learn from their forefathers who liberated Palestine from the Crusaders. The exam asks students about the liberation of Jerusalem from the Crusaders by Saladin, and the chapter on Saladin in the textbook from which the exam is taken asks students: "How can the Muslims nowadays follow the model of the conquering ancestors in liberating Palestine from the Zionist occupation?" The chapter on which students are examined therefore compares Israel to the Crusaders, implying that it is a foreign entity with no historical connection to the land and no right to exist. The comparison of Israel to the Crusaders also possibly implies that, if Muslims unite, Palestine can be liberated by using force – as was the case with the Crusaders.



d – How did Saladin al-Ayyubi liberate Jerusalem from the crusaders?

#### Source Material from Palestinian Curriculum:

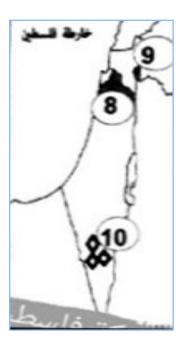
Islamic Education, Grade 12, 2021, p. 90:



How can the Muslims nowadays follow the model of the conquering ancestors in liberating Palestine from the Zionist occupation?

#### 8. Geography matriculation exam, 19.6.2023, appendix.

A geography matriculation exam includes a "map of Palestine" that ignores the existence of Israel, and views its entire territory as part of Palestine. The exam therefore expresses non-recognition of Israel, a UN member state, and discourages students from accepting a two-state solution.



[the caption on the map:] Map of Palestine

#### 9. Geography matriculation exam, 19.6.2023, p.2.

Students are instructed to explain how "the Zionist Occupation" contributes to the exacerbation of desertification in Palestine. The question refers directly to a chapter on which students are examined from the original PA textbook, which accuses Israel of being one of the causes of desertification through building settlements, and stealing Palestinian agricultural land and water resources. Although not explicitly stated, the exam and textbook therefore can be understood as implying that Israel's actions intentionally cause desertification.

d) Explain the Zionist Occupation's actions that contribute to the exacerbation of the problem of desertification in Palestine.

#### Source Material from Palestinian Curriculum:

#### Geography, 2021, pp. 100-101:

#### التصحّر في فلسطين:

♦ نشاط (٤): نلاحظ الصورتين، ثم نقوم بما يأتي:





- ندير حواراً، وندون، ممارسات الاحتلال الصهيونيّ المؤدية للتصحر في فلسطين.
  - الآثار الناجمة عن هذه الممارسات.

تعاني فلسطين من التصحّر كغيرها من الدول، بفعل ظروف طبيعيّة، كنقص كميات الأمطار، وتذبذبها، بالإضافة إلى الضغط السكانيّ على الموارد الطبيعيّة، كما تسهم ممارسات الاحتلال الصهيونيّ في فلسطين لتفاقم مشكلة التصحّر، من خلال الاستيطان، الذي استنزف الأراضي الزراعيّة المنتجة والقابلة للاستصلاح، وتدهور صلاحيّة كثير من الأراضي بسبب ضخ المياه العادمة، وبناء جدار الضم والتوسع، والسيطرة على المياه السطحيّة والجوفيّة وحرمان الفلسطينيين من استغلالها.

#### Desertification in Palestine:

Activity 5: Let's look at the two pictures and then carry out the following:

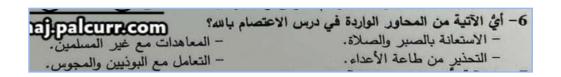
- -Let's discuss and write down: The Zionist Occupation's actions that cause desertification in Palestine.
- -The impacts of these actions.

Palestine suffers from desertification like other states due to natural conditions, such as the diminishing quantities of rainfall and its fluctuating frequency, in addition to the [growing] demographic pressure on the natural resources. The actions of the Zionist Occupation in Palestine contribute as well to the aggravation of the desertification problem through the settlement [project] that has exhausted the yielding and arable agricultural lands, the deterioration of many lands' usability due to the flow of sewage water [there], the construction of the Annexation and Expansion Wall, the control of surface and underground water, and the prevention of its utilization by the Palestinians.

Question 6: I will explain: the Zionist Occupation's measures are among the factors causing desertification in Palestine.

#### 10. Geography matriculation exam, 19.6.2023, p.2.

This Islamic Education matriculation exam tests students on a chapter of a PA textbook which teaches a story about two Jewish people who tried to sow internal strife between two Arab Muslim tribes in the early days of Islam, by reminding them of their past wars. The story is based on an interpretation of Qur'anic verses suggested by some of the early Qur'anic interpreters. By choosing to teach this specific interpretation and highlighting that the two people who conspired were Jewish, the textbook may lead to a negative perception of Jews, positioning them as hostile toward Islam. It should also be noted that, elsewhere in the Palestinian curriculum, Jews are more directly described in a negative manner.



- 6 Which of the following is one of the themes of the lesson "holding fast to Allah?"
- Resorting to patience and prayer
- Warning against obeying enemies
- Treaties with non-Muslims
- Treatment of Buddhists and Zoroastrians

#### Source Material from Palestinian curriculum:

Islamic Education, Grade 12, 2021, p. 24:



The interpretation of the noble verses:

Warning against obeying enemies:

The Almighty said: "O you who have believed, if you obey a party of those who were given the Scripture, they would turn you back, after your belief, [to being] unbelievers." [Al Imran, 100]

God Almighty has warned his faithful servants of obeying the hostile from among the People of the Book and the infidels, and demanded them not to trust them, and not to accept their opinions or advice, because they would mislead them and raise doubts about their religions so that they would become deniers again, after they were believers.

## ﴾ سبب نزول الآيات الكريمة: ﴿

ورد في سبب نزول الآيتين (١٠١-١٠١) أن شاس بن قيس اليهودي مرّ على نفر من أصحاب رسول الله ورد في سبب نزول الآيتين (١٠١-١٠١) أن شاس بن قيس اليهودي مرّ على نفر من أطحال على الجاهلية من الأوس والخزرج في مجلس يتحدثون فيه، فغاظهُ ما رأى من ألفتهم، بعد الذي كان بينهم في الجاهلية من العداوة، فأمر شاباً من اليهود كان معه، فقال: اعمد إليهم، فاجلس معهم، وذكّرهم بما كان بين الأوس والخزرج من قتال، ففعل، فتنازعوا، وغضبوا، وتنادوا بحمل السلاح، فبلغ ذلك رسول الله في فخرج إليهم فيمن معه من المهاجرين، فقال": يا معشر المسلمين، أبِدَعوى الجاهلية وأنا بين أظهركم، بعد أن أكرمكم الله بالإسلام، وقطع به عنكم أمر الجاهلية، وألّف بينكم، فترجعون إلى ما كنتم عليه كفارا؟ الله الله! " (رواه ابن جير في تفسيره).

فعرف القوم أنها نزغ من الشيطان، وكيد من عدوهم، فألقوا السلاح من أيديهم، وبكوا وعانق بعضهم بعضا، ثم انصرفوا مع رسول الله ، سامعين مطيعين، فنزلت الآيات الكريمة.

It was told, regarding the causes for the revelation of verses 100-101, that Shas bin Qais the Jew passed by a group of the companions of the Messenger of God, from the Aws and the Khazraj tribes, in a gathering in which they spoke to each other. He was angered to see the friendship between them, after they were enemies during the Jahiliyya [pre-Islamic times]. He ordered a young man from among the Jews who were with him, and said: get to them, and sit with them, and remind them of the past fighting between the Aws and Khazraj tribes. He did so, and they argued and became angry, and called each other to take up their weapons. The Messenger of God heard of this, so he went out to them with the Muhajirun [people of Mecca who converted to Islam at an early stage] who were with him, and said: "Oh community of Muslims! .... will you return to what you used to be as unbelievers?!". Then, the people knew that this was incitement by Satan, and a plot of their enemy against them, so they laid down their weapons, wept, and embraced each other, then they departed with the Messenger of God, listening to him obediently.

#### Miscellaneous:

#### 11. History matriculation exam, 24.6.2023, p.2.

This PA history matriculation exam asks students to explain how "the United States took advantage of the events of 9/11 to impose its hegemony on the world." This question is based on a chapter in a PA textbook on which students are examined, which discusses the "American hegemony." Students learn that the US used the 9/11 attacks to "intervene in the countries of the world in order to spread its rule and hegemony over everyone." Negative anti-American imagery accompanies the chapter, while praising and giving examples of "opposition to American hegemony in the world." Students are instructed to "form a fictitious court to trial the USA for its crimes in Iraq." Interestingly, this question appears in the exam even though the 2021 edition of the textbook removed a similar question.

	السؤال السابع: (20 علامة)
(6 علامات)	أ) وضح طبيعة نظام الحكم والإدارة في الإمبراطورية البيزنطية.
(5 علامات)	ب) لعب خصوم الإمبراطوريات ومنافسوها دوراً هاماً في سقوطها، ناقش ذلك.
(5 علامات)	ج) بين دور شعوب المستعمرات في انهيار وتفكك الإمبراطورية البريطانية.
(4 علامات)	<ul> <li>أ) وضح طبيعة نظام الحكم والإدارة في الإمبراطورية البيزنطية.</li> <li>ب) لعب خصوم الإمبراطوريات ومنافسوها دوراً هاماً في سقوطها، نافش ذلك.</li> <li>ج) بين دور شعوب المستعمرات في انهيار وتفكك الإمبراطورية البريطانية.</li> <li>د) استظت الولايات المتحدة أحداث 11 أيلول عام 2001 م لفرض هيمنتها على العالم. ناقش ذلك.</li> </ul>

Question seven: (20 marks)

d. The United States took advantage of the events of 9/11 to impose its hegemony on the world. Discuss this.

#### Source Material from Palestinian curriculum:

#### History, Grade 12, 2021, pp. 95, 98:



The Concept of Hegemony:

Activity 1: We will look at the picture, draw conclusions, and then answer:

- We will describe what we see in the picture.
- What is the appropriate term for what is represented in the picture?

أعطت أحداث الحادي عشر من أيلول سنة ٢٠٠١م، وما نجم عنها من تدمير برجَي التّجارة العالميّين في الولايات المتّحدة من التزاماتها، ولفرض أولويّاتها على السّياسة الدّوليّة، واتّخذت من شعار محاربة الإرهاب مبرّراً للتّدخّل في الشّؤون الدّاخليّة لأيّ بلد يقع في دائرة الاهتمام الأمريكيّ، وأصبح مطلوباً من دول العالم كافّة تقديم معلومات لأمريكا، وأن تعيد النّظر في مناهجها الدّراسيّة، والتّعاملات الماليّة، وتعلن أنّها ضدّ الإرهاب، وتوجيه سياساتها الإعلاميّة بما لا يتعارض مع سياسة الولايات المتحدة الأمريكيّة. كما منحتها حقّ التّدخّل في دول العالم؛ لبسط سيطرتها وهيمنتها على الجميع، وتصبح شرطيّ العالم؛ خاصّة بعد احتلالها أفغانستان سنة ٢٠٠١م، والعراق سنة ٢٠٠٠م.

The events of September 11th, 2001, and the resulting destruction of the Twin Towers at the World Trade Center in the United States, gave the US the excuse to absolve itself of its commitments and impose its priorities on international politics. It took up the slogan of the War on Terror as an excuse to intervene in the internal affairs of any country within the US sphere of interest. All countries of the world were demanded to pass on information to America, to re-examine their school curricula and their financial transactions, to declare that they are against terrorism, and to direct their media policy in such a way that does not contradict US policy. It [9/11] also gave it [the US] the right to intervene in the countries of the world in order to spread its rule and hegemony over everyone, while becoming the world's policeman, especially after its occupation of Afghanistan in 2001, and Iraq in 2003.

## Methodology

IMPACT-se applies methodological standards which are based on UNESCO and UN declarations, and international recommendations and documents on education for peace and tolerance (see notes). Our methodology is designed to consider every detail within the textbooks; it does not paraphrase, rely on interpretations, or attempt to illustrate preconceived notions.

The following is an updated, condensed version of the IMPACT-se UNESCO-derived standards for peace and tolerance in school education:

#### **RESPECT**

The curriculum should promote tolerance, understanding and respect toward the "Other," his or her culture, achievements, values and way of life.<sup>1</sup>

#### 2 INDIVIDUAL OTHER

The curriculum should foster personal attachment toward the "Other" as an individual, his or her desire to be familiar, loved and appreciated.<sup>2</sup>

#### 3 NO HATE

The curriculum should be free of wording, imagery and ideologies likely to create prejudices, misconceptions, stereotypes, misunderstandings, mistrust, racial hatred, religious bigotry and national hatred, as well as any other form of hatred or contempt for other groups or peoples.<sup>3</sup>

#### 4 NO INCITEMENT

The curriculum should be free of language, content, and imagery that disseminate ideas or theories which justify or promote acts and expressions of violence, incitement to violence, hostility, harm and hatred toward other national, ethnic, racial or religious groups.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> As defined in the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance Proclaimed and signed by Member States of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Articles 1, 4.2. See also the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding Between Peoples (1965), Principles I, III. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The goal of education for peace is the development of universally recognized values in an individual, regardless of different socio-cultural contexts. See *Ibid.*, Article 6. See also, on exchanges between youth, the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965), Principles IV, V.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, and based on Articles III.6, IV.7 and VII.39; and on the Integrated Framework for Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, approved by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-eighth session, Paris, November 1995, Article 18.2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> As defined in Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2106 (XX) on December

#### PEACEMAKING

5

The curriculum should develop capabilities for non-violent conflict resolution and promote peace.<sup>5</sup>

#### 6 UNBIASED INFORMATION

Educational materials (textbooks, workbooks, teachers' guides, maps, illustrations, aids) should be up-to-date, accurate, complete, balanced and unprejudiced, and use equal standards to promote mutual knowledge and understanding between different peoples.<sup>6</sup>

## 7 GENDER IDENTITY AND REPRESENTATION

The curriculum should foster equality, mutual respect, and should aim for equal representation between individuals regardless of their gender identity. It should also refrain from language, content, and imagery that depicts limiting and/or exclusionary gender roles.<sup>7</sup>

#### 8 SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The curriculum should be free of language, content, and imagery that promulgates violence or discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.8

## 9 SOUND PROSPERITY and COOPERATION:

The curriculum should educate for sound and sustainable economic conduct and preservation of the environment for future generations. It should encourage regional and local cooperation to that effect.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>21, 1965.</sup> See also Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2200A (XXI) on December 16, 1966.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Based on the Integrated Framework for Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, approved by the General Conference of UNESCO at its twenty-eighth session, Paris, November 1995, Article 9; and on the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Article 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Based on UNESCO recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Article V.14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The preamble to the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, notes the Convention on the Elimination of Any Form of Discrimination against Women and emphasizes respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to gender.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Based on Resolutions 32/2 (adopted June 30, 2016) and 17/19 (adopted July 14, 2011) of the UN Human Rights Council, and numerous UN General Assembly resolutions expressing concern and condemnation of laws and practices around the world which target individuals based on their gender identity and/or sexual orientation for discrimination, violence, and even extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions—all of which contradict the most basic principles of the UN and have no place in education.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Based on UNESCO recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Articles III.6, and IV.7. On the imperative for developing "systematic and rational tolerance teaching methods that will address the cultural, social, economic, political and religious

sources of intolerance," see the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Article 4.2. On education for international cooperation, see also the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965), Principle II.