



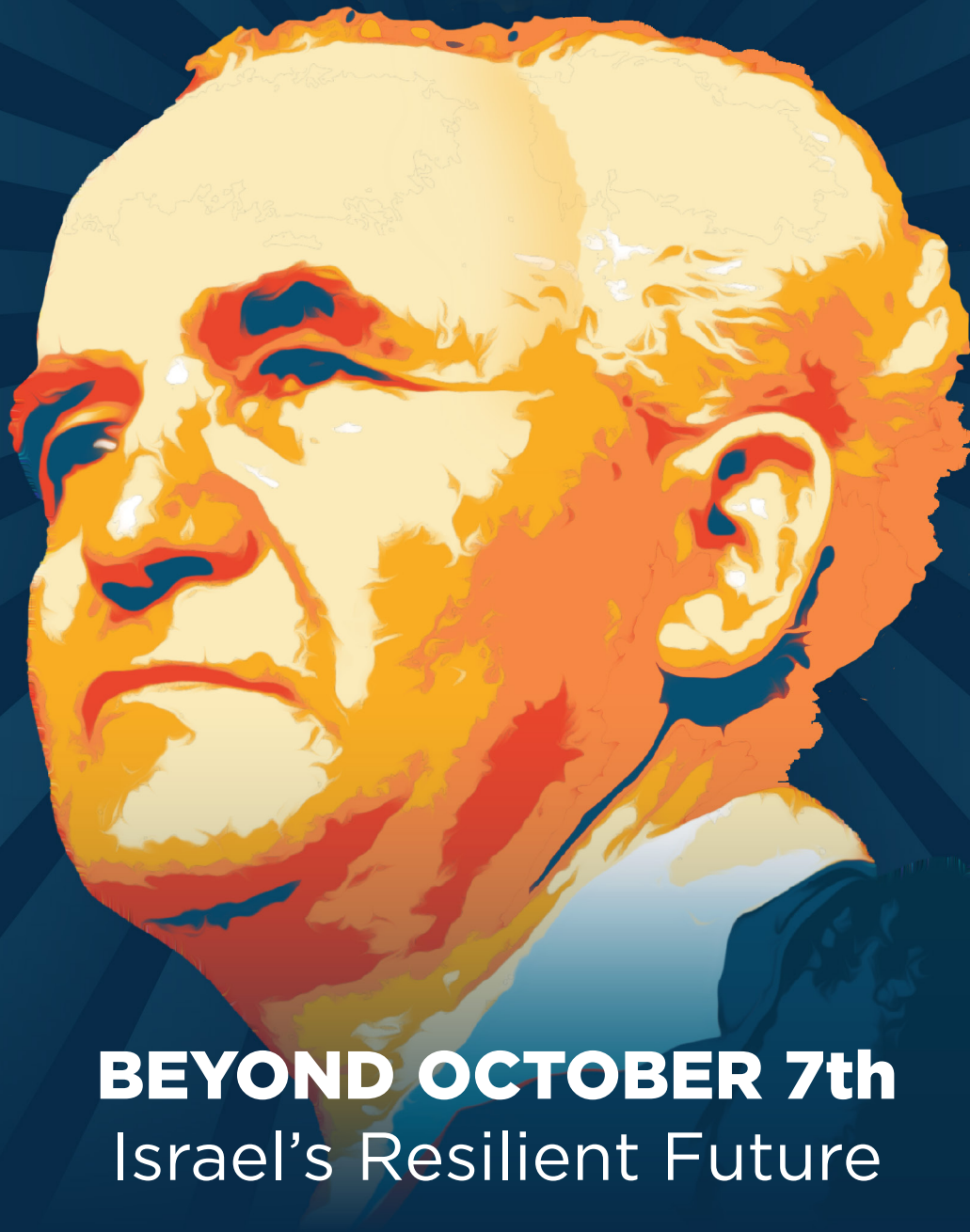
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# BEN-GURION DAY IN THE USA

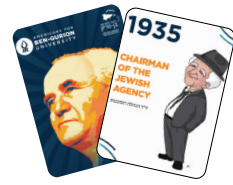
**Matching Memory Game  
Instructions & Lesson Plans**

**DEC 8, 2024**



**BEYOND OCTOBER 7th**  
Israel's Resilient Future

# The Ben-Gurion Matching Memory Game



## Objective:

The goal of the game is to collect the most pairs of matching cards. Each pair consists of a picture card showing a significant year in David Ben-Gurion's life and another card that explains what happened during that year.

## Why It Matters:

Learning about the milestones in David Ben-Gurion's life helps young people understand the important role he played in the founding of the State of Israel. This game encourages memory skills while also teaching key moments in history, and the significance Ben-Gurion's life still has today.

## Age Group and Number of Players:

This game is designed for children ages 5-10 and can be played with 2 to 4 players.

## How to Play:

- 01 Shuffle your cards thoroughly.
- 02 Lay all the cards face down on the table, arranged in rows.
- 03 Players take turns flipping over two cards at a time.
  - If the cards match (for example, a card showing Ben-Gurion in Turkey in 1913 with another card explaining his time in Turkey that year), the player keeps the pair and gets another turn.
  - If the cards do not match, they are turned face down again in the same position, and it becomes the next player's turn.
- 04 The trick is to remember where each card is located for future turns.
- 05 The game continues until all the pairs are matched. The player with the most pairs at the end wins.

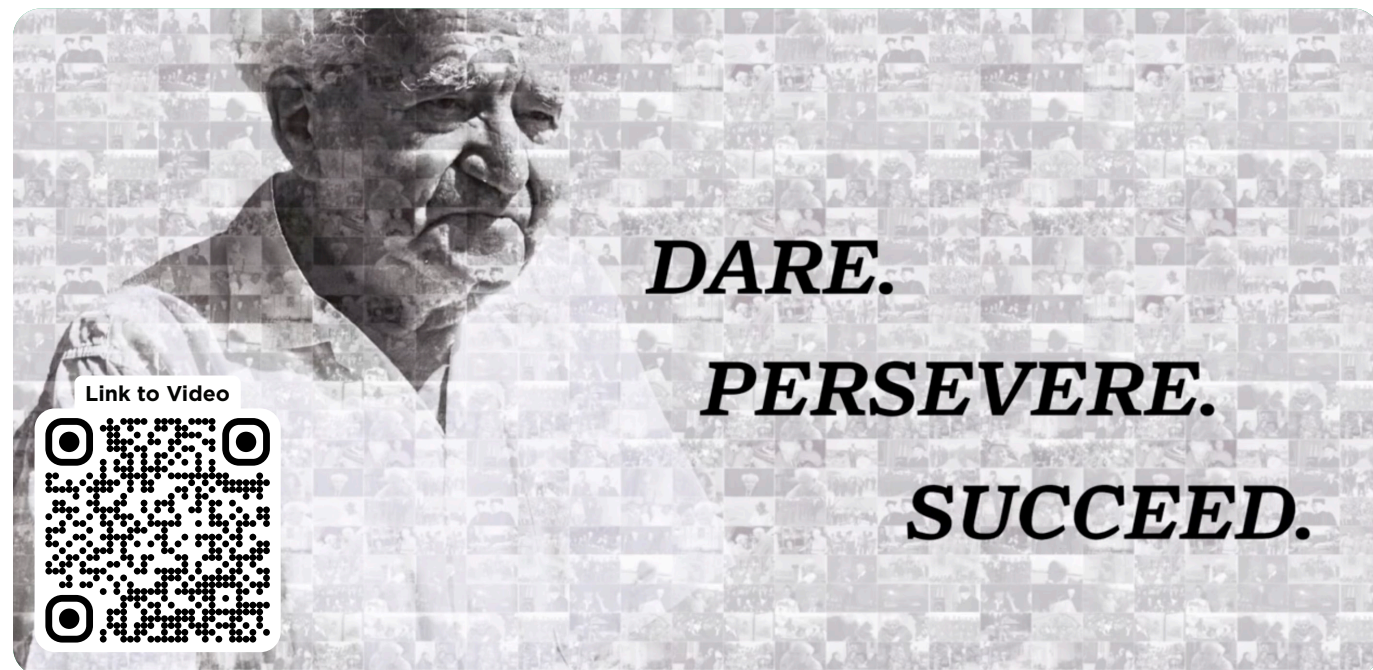
## Bonus Activity

After finishing the game, arrange the matched cards in chronological order to create a timeline of Ben-Gurion's life. Take a group photo with the timeline to commemorate your learning!

# Part 01 | The Role of Youth in Ben-Gurion's Vision

## Materials Needed:

- 01 Video clip: "David Ben-Gurion and the Greater Picture"
- 02 Paper, pens, envelopes, and stamps for a letter-writing activity



Stills from David Ben-Gurion and the Greater Picture.

## Introduction:

Today, we are commemorating Ben-Gurion Day, a day dedicated to honoring the life and legacy of David Ben-Gurion, one of the founding fathers of the State of Israel and its first Prime Minister. Ben-Gurion was a visionary leader who played a pivotal role in establishing the State of Israel and shaping its future. His life was marked by a deep commitment to the Jewish people, a passion for pioneering new paths, and **an unwavering belief in the power of youth to drive change.**

As we learn about Ben-Gurion today, we'll explore not only the key moments in his life but also the values he stood for—**courage, perseverance, and the belief that even young people can make a significant impact on the world around them.**

- **Discussion Starter:** What do you know about David Ben-Gurion?
- **Key Point:** Ben-Gurion was one of the founding fathers of the State of Israel and its first Prime Minister.

# Activity | Practice What You Preach

01 **Watch a short video clip** ("David Ben-Gurion and the Greater Picture") about Ben-Gurion's early years, focusing on his work with the Ezra organization, his Aliyah to Israel, and his time in Sejera.

## 02 Discussion Questions:

- What did you learn from the video?
- Can you think of a similar story involving George Washington or another leader?



Stills from David Ben-Gurion and the Greater Picture.

## How Young People Shape Society:

David Ben-Gurion believed that young people play a crucial role in shaping society. He emphasized the importance of taking responsibility and staying true to one's principles.

## Discussion Questions:

- How would you explain Ben-Gurion's ideas about youth in your own words?
- Do you agree with his vision? Is it still relevant today?

# Introduction | Ben-Gurion's Quote

## Read Aloud:

Share the quote from David Ben-Gurion with your students:

“The youth will surely fulfill their mission if they know how to activate within themselves the two supreme qualities of the people’s messengers, that is:

- 01 Taking full responsibility for history in our time, as if everything depends solely on them;
- 02 Faithful adherence to the vision, connecting action to principle in everyday life.”



A young Private David Ben-Gurion, volunteer in the Jewish Legion, 1918. Photo Credit: Unknown

## Discussion Questions:

- **In Your Own Words:** Ask the students to explain what they think Ben-Gurion means by points 1 and 2 in their own words.
- **Support or Disagree:** Do they agree with Ben-Gurion’s idea of fulfilling the youth mission? Why or why not?
- **Relevance Today:** Do they think this idea is still relevant today? Encourage them to provide examples.

## Exploring the Concept of Pioneering

### Read Aloud:

Share another quote from Ben-Gurion:

“What is pioneering? - It is, first and foremost, a refusal to accept reality as it is.”

### Discussion Prompt:

- Discuss how Ben-Gurion believed that questioning and challenging the status quo is an essential part of pioneering and progress.
- Explain that while challenging reality might sometimes annoy others (like parents or teachers), it often reflects a deeper concern for improving society.

## Identifying Modern and Historical Pioneers

### Interactive Discussion:

- 01 **Pioneers in History:**  
Ask students to think of any pioneers they know, whether from history or in their personal lives. Explain that in Israeli history, pioneers were those who made Aliyah to Israel and worked the land.
- 02 **Pioneers in Your World:**  
Relate this to pioneers in the students’ world, such as early American settlers like Daniel Boone and Lewis and Clark, who explored and settled new territories.
- 03 **Modern-Day Pioneers:**  
Encourage students to identify modern-day pioneers who refuse to accept things as they are and strive to make a difference.

## Connecting Action to Principle

### Small Group Activity:

- 01 Divide students into small groups.
- 02 Have each group choose a pioneer (from history or modern times) and discuss how that person took responsibility and adhered to their vision, just as Ben-Gurion described.
- 03 Each group will then share their chosen pioneer and explain how that person’s actions connected to Ben-Gurion’s idea of fulfilling the youth mission.

## Reflection

### Whole Group Discussion:

- 01 Conclude by asking students to reflect on how they can be pioneers in their own lives. What realities would they like to challenge or change? How can they take responsibility and stay true to their principles in their everyday actions?

# Part 02 | Voices of Change — Writing for Impact

## Materials Needed:

- 01 Mary Steinberg's letter to David Ben-Gurion
- 02 David Ben-Gurion's response to Mary Steinberg
- 03 Paper, pens, envelopes, and stamps for a letter-writing activity

## Introduction:

In this next activity, we'll explore how young people, like you, can make a difference by sharing your thoughts and ideas with leaders. Just as David Ben-Gurion believed in the power of youth to shape the future, this letter-writing exercise will help you **express your own vision for change**. Through the story of Mary Steinberg, who wrote to Ben-Gurion and received a response, we'll see how a single letter can have a **lasting impact**. Now, it's your turn to let your voice be heard.



Mary Steinberg, author of the letter to David Ben-Gurion, visits Israel circa 1971.

May 27, 1970

Dear Mr. Ben-Gurion,

12.6.70

The first thought that comes to my mind while writing this letter is, will it get to you? My second thought is, if you do get it, will you read it and take it seriously? I suppose I should start back at the beginning now. My name is Mary Steinberg. A typical plain Jewish name for an American Jewish girl. An American Jewish Zionist. I am going into my Senior year in high school next year- Age 17, President of my class.. I suppose that is enough background.

I wonder how many letters you have received like this one. This is the first one I've ever written to a (shall we say) famous person, therefore it means a great deal to me. Also I am very nervous about it, fearing that you will not understand or receive this (as I have said..).

I have just finished reading Robert St. John's biography about you (and I must admit, it was for a school assignment) and 2 articles about your resignation from the Knesset and your haircut. All of my ten years in Sunday school I heard of the man Ben-Gurion. I really knew nothing about him. I know little more now - only that I am inspired enough to write to him...

As I said, I am a Zionist. Hopefully you have heard of the Youth movement, Hashachar. I have been a member of it for about 9 years. Oh yes, I didn't tell you- I live (and have always lived) in Charleston, S.C.- a small southern city with a fairly small Jewish community. Of the few Jews who live here, some keep up with the daily strife in Israel, others donate once a year, most are totally apathetic to the world (let alone Israel.). A few have gone for a few week visit to see the Hadassah hospital, and have returned with glowing reports. Mainly though, most are uninterested, and this is what I must live with. That is why I have turned to the youth movement. I'm the only member in Charleston, but am fortunately the Regional (9 states) president. This has given me a chance to travel, to meet people, to learn about Hess, Syrkin, Borochoy, and among many others, David Ben-Gurion. The point I am getting to, I suppose, is that over the past nine years I have learned to love Israel- through other people, outside of my town. My mother, though not Zionist enough for Aliyah, has encouraged me. My father, who passed away a couple of years ago, also encouraged my desires to learn, to experience. Next year, From October 1971 to September 1972 I am coming to live in Israel. I will be on the Hashachar Year Course. If all is as I hope, eventually, I will plan to stay. Over the years though, I think people have gotten thoroughly lost in "ideology". I know that in the movement kids are planning garinim now- kids want to live together as a community in Israel- they feel this is part of the "ideology". I am confused. First I must live there, then commit myself.

Actually, as you must have realized by now, this has turned out to sound like a typical teenage American girl's letter to David Ben-Gurion. I have said a lot of words, none of which mean a great deal to you. Also, this is poorly typed. But, there is one last thing I want to say, and that is that I pray that I may be able to meet you, speak to you while I am there.. Part of the Year course is spent on kibbutzim.. and many of my friends have worked on Sde Boker.

I respect you greatly.. and what you have done. I am tired of America and her raging students. I am ready to commit myself to something worthwhile...

Very sincerely, L'Hitz'ot, and Shalom,

Mary Steinberg



[Link to Letters](#)

Sdeh Boker, 12.6.70

My dear Mary Steinberg,

I have read your letter with deep interest. The greatest, most vital and important thing which we need here - is youth - pioneers, and there is something in your letter of the pioneering spirit. I will be glad to meet you here in Sdeh-Boker, whenever you are coming next year or earlier. Do you learn Hebrew? Learn!

Yours,

D. Ben-Gurion

Mary Steinberg,

34 Smith St.,

Charleston, S.C. 29401,

USA



[Link to Letters](#)

### Mary Steinberg Quotes:

“I was never compelled to write to any famous or notable person before or after David Ben-Gurion. Something about him made me want to write to him.”

“When I received the letter, I felt excited. He made me feel heard and special. I felt proud that he wrote back.”

“I learned Hebrew because of his letter. I received special permission from my high school to go off campus and learn Hebrew as a foreign language.”

# Activity | Letter-Writing

## 01 Read Mary Steinberg's letter

to David Ben-Gurion and his response.

## 02 Discussion Questions:

- What can we learn about Mary from her letter?
- How did Ben-Gurion view the role of young people in society?

## 03 Read Mary's quotes

about her experience writing and receiving the letter. How did it impact her?

## 04 Letter Writing:

- Write a letter to a leader (such as the President, school principal, Mayor, or Federal representative) expressing your thoughts on an issue that matters to you.
- These letters can be sent to their intended recipients, and any letters to Ben-Gurion can be scanned and added to the Ben-Gurion Archives.



Mary Steinberg met David Ben-Gurion at his kibbutz Sde Boker in the Negev. This photo shows Steinberg picking breadfruit at Ben-Gurion's kibbutz.

## Final Discussion:

As we reflect on today's activities, consider the role that young people, like yourselves, can play in shaping the future. Just as David Ben-Gurion believed in the power of youth to drive change, you have the ability to influence the world around you with your ideas and actions.

## Discussion Questions:

- What does it mean to be resilient in today's world?
- How can young people take responsibility for the challenges we face, just as Ben-Gurion encouraged?
- In what ways can you apply Ben-Gurion's belief in action and principle to your own life?

## Closing Reflection:

Take a moment to reflect on how you can be a pioneer in your own life. What steps can you take to bring about positive change, whether in your school, community, or even on a larger scale? Resilience is not just about enduring challenges, but about shaping the future with courage and conviction.

