

# Discovering the Maccabees

## Framing this unit

The Maccabees, the heroes of Chanukah, continue to provide inspiration in modern Israel. How have the Maccabees been remembered throughout Jewish history? How are they viewed today?

This activity uses primary sources from the National Library of Israel to expose the students to a variety of images of the Maccabees.

With a matching game, students will discover the qualities of the Maccabees that inspired the early Zionists and the founders of the State of Israel.

At the end of the matching activity, the students will reflect on what the Maccabees mean to them and which traits they would like to emulate.

What adjectives would you use to describe the Maccabees? You are about to do an activity that includes six primary sources relating to the Maccabees. As you learn about the items, think about what traits are being showcased in each.

You can do the matching activity on [DocsTeach](#) or with this [worksheet](#).

## Discussion

- What do the Maccabees mean to you?
- Which of their traits do you admire?
- Which traits would you like to have? Why?

## Creative Activity

Choose from one of the following:

- Make a trailer for a movie about the Maccabees. Include some of the resources from the activity in your trailer. Suggested app: Microsoft Movie Maker.
- Design a poster about the Maccabees. Include their characteristics. Suggested app: Canva.com.

## Primary sources in this lesson

- [Illustration of Maccabee Graves, 1720](#)
- [Hasmonean Cave, Ben Shemen Forest](#)
- [Simon the Maccabee](#)
- [The Kindling of the Menorah](#)
- [Torch Parade](#)
- [Photograph of a Maccabi Sporting Event, Berlin 1937](#)
- [What is Chanukah? Keter Shoe Advertisement, 1934](#)