

Classroom Lesson Lowers Teens' Belief in Antisemitic Tropes



The Bottom Line: New ADL research shows how one 45-minute lesson on contemporary antisemitism measurably reduced teens' belief in antisemitic tropes.

Research Summary

In fall 2025, researchers from the ADL Center for Antisemitism Research (CAR) carried out an in-class evaluation of a single, 45-minute lesson on contemporary antisemitism with 372 students across nine middle and high schools in a large, southeastern U.S. school district. The study found that a brief, well-designed instructional module on contemporary antisemitism presented as a cyclical, conspiracy-driven phenomenon appears to be a promising approach for reducing or preventing antisemitic beliefs among teens.

About the Lesson: Echoes & Reflections, Unit 11 Lesson 2

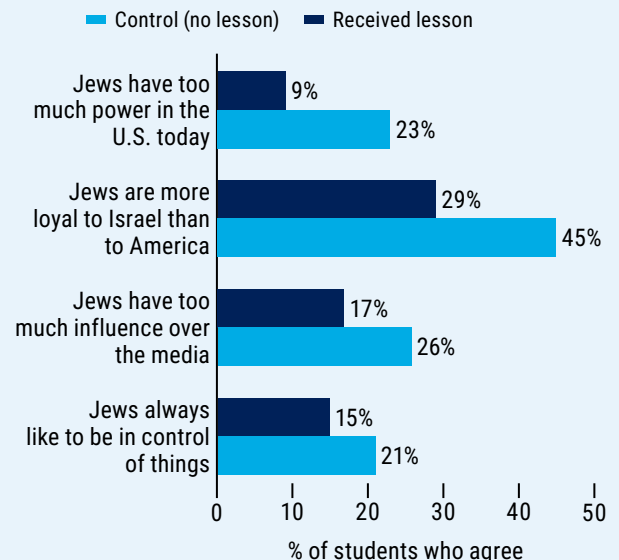
The lesson evaluated in this study is Echoes & Reflections Unit 11, Lesson 2, "What Is Antisemitism and What Are Features of Antisemitism?" The lesson combines survivor testimony, group discussion, and reflection to introduce students to antisemitism as a recurring pattern of stereotypes and conspiracy beliefs, rather than a topic confined to the Holocaust. The lesson is free to access at echoesandreflections.org.

Key Findings

Students who received the lesson were significantly less likely than their peers to endorse antisemitic conspiracy tropes, with more modest gains in allyship attitudes toward Jews. These effects held even among students most predisposed toward antisemitic beliefs and were replicated in a larger, national follow-up lab study using the same framing through short paragraphs.

- Students who received the lesson were over 14 percentage points more likely to reject the idea that "Jews have too much power in the United States today" than students who didn't.
- Students who received the lesson were nearly 14 percentage points less likely to downplay or minimize antisemitism.
- Students who received the lesson endorsed more allyship statements on average, though this effect was smaller and not consistently significant.

Students who received the lesson endorsed conspiracy tropes at lower rates than students who did not.



For Educators: Lessons for Implementation

- A single class period can shift attitudes. Describing antisemitism as a cyclical conspiracy that has recurred and evolved throughout history is particularly effective.
- Educator training isn't a prerequisite. None of the seven educators in the study had professional development on antisemitism or had taught this lesson before. Nevertheless, they were effective.
- Conspiracy framing is worth protecting in lesson design. It's likely the driving force behind the effectiveness seen in both the classroom study and the corroborating online experiment.
- To increase positive sentiment towards Jews, complementary content may be needed. Moving beliefs about antisemitism is not the same as building warmth toward Jewish people; that gap likely calls for complementary content on Jewish identity and peoplehood, which CAR's ongoing research is built to test.

For Administrators: No extra training needed to see results like these

The seven educators who delivered this lesson were selected in part because they had never taught this lesson, nor did they have professional development on it. Whether formal training would amplify effects even further remains an open question.

What's Next

CAR is prioritizing follow-up research activities to further explore best practices in Holocaust education, for example:

1. Do these findings hold in larger, more nationally representative classroom samples?
2. How long do the impacts of this lesson last?
3. What is the impact of combining antisemitism-specific content with Holocaust-specific content?

CAR is also actively investigating the effectiveness of digital literacy education in reducing or preventing belief in antisemitic mis- and disinformation as another way to reduce or prevent antisemitism.

Get Involved: ADL Innovation Lab Network

The ADL Innovation Lab Network is a partnership between CAR researchers, ADL education experts, educators, and administrators. We co-develop, test, and refine instructional modules like the one described in this brief. We start small by co-developing modules, learning what works, and then testing the most promising approaches in Holocaust education and digital literacy at scale.

- Low lift, real impact. Engagements run up to 6 hours, with rapid, iterative testing cycles and direct input from teachers and students.
- You shape the materials. CAR uses your feedback and classroom data to refine lessons before wider release.
- Compensated participation. Educators receive \$500 per engagement and can take part in multiple engagements.
- Free materials. All materials developed and tested through the Innovation Lab Network are free to use.
- Individualized results. CAR will provide partners with embargoed results for their school or district and additional support on demand.

Interested in participating? Reach out to Innovation Lab staff at CARInnovationLabs@gmail.com to learn more.



Scan or visit www.adl.org/resources/report/classroom-lesson-lowers-teens-belief-antisemitic-tropes for the full report.

Source: Antidefamation League. 2026. "Classroom Instruction on Contemporary Antisemitism Reduces Endorsement of Conspiratorial Tropes Among Teens." New York: Center for Antisemitism Research, Anti-Defamation League.

Explore the featured lesson and other classroom-ready resources at echoesandreflections.org

