

## Lesson 9:

# Our Names, Our Identity

Appendix B – These Are the Names By Sami Shalom Chetrit

### **Note to teacher:**

Make enough copies for each student.

## Our Names, Our Identity Source Sheet

These Were the Names/Sami Shalom Chetrit	אלה שמות/שמי שלום שיטריט
<p>And we had names with the scent of abroad* Alain, <i>viens à la maison, vite</i> Jackie <i>T'la el Dar, D'ia</i>.** And there was Beber with a triangular body And Patrick and Jojo and Dede. The girls had names like bells: Brigitte, Alice, Michelle Georgette and Annette.</p> <p>And the teacher recorded our names in the diary in Hebrew: Ilan, Yaakov, Avraham, David and Aliza, Zehava and Hannah <i>chchchch ... Ya'ani to tell us</i> We knew. But we insisted Just a little more scent of abroad Before the ringing of the bells stops: Sami, Mimi, Rochelle, Mardusha...</p>	<p>והיו לנו שמות עם ריח חוס לארס: אלן, ויה א-ל-מזו, ויט. ז'קי טלע אל דאר, דעיה. והיה בבר עם גופה משולשת ופטריק וז'ז'ו ודדה. לבנות היו שמות פעמונים: בריז'יט, אליס, מישל ז'ורז'ט ואנט.</p> <p>והמורה רשמה לנו ביומן שמותינו עבריים: אילן, יעקב, אברהם, דוד ועליזה, זהבה וחנה ככככ... יעני באה לגיד לנו. ידענו. אבל התעקשנו עוד קסת ניחוח חוס לארס לפני שיידום צלצל הפעמונים: סמי, מימי, רשל, מרדושה..</p>

\*chutz la'aretz in Moroccan accent

\*\*Come home, quick! In French followed by Moroccan Arabic)

From Poems in Ashdodian, By Sami Shalom Chetrit. Adalus Publishing House, Tel Aviv 2003

## Teachers Notes:

The poem “These are the Names” appears in Sami Shalom Chetrit’s book “Songs in Ashdodian”. The name of the poem refers to the first line of the first chapter of the Book of Exodus, where the names of those leaving Canaan for Egypt are listed. The poem describes the practice of immigrants having their names changed by teachers, social workers and officials, upon their arrival in Israel. After Israel’s inception, there was a push to create a “New Israeli” who left behind the challenges of diaspora life along with any other cultural indicators like language, traditions and names.

In this poem, the children stand up to the teacher and insist on holding on to their heritage for just a little bit longer. Today many immigrants from Ethiopia, who had their names changed after arriving in Israel are returning to their original Amharic names.

### **For more information about Sami Shalom Chetrit**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sami\\_Shalom\\_Chetrit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sami_Shalom_Chetrit)

### **For more information about names and Mizrahi culture in Israel:**

<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-the-last-name-israelis-are-most-keen-to-shed-mizrahi-1.5440002>