



Level 4

(Theme: Being Part of the Community)



Torah


Lesson # and Title	Topic/question(s) to be addressed
1. <i>Am Yisrael, Eretz Yisrael, and the B'rit</i>	What is Am Yisrael? What is Eretz Yisrael? What is the <i>b'rit</i> that connects Am Yisrael, Eretz Yisrael, and God? In addition to exploring these concepts, this lesson introduces the skills necessary to find citations in the Bible.
2. Am Yisrael – Session Alef: All Jews are Members of Am Yisrael; I Am a Member of Am Yisrael	Who is a member of Am Yisrael? How do Jews feel connected to Am Yisrael? What is my connection to Am Yisrael? This is the first of a two-lesson set that explores two concepts: as Jews, we are all member of Am Yisrael, and that Am Yisrael is comprised of many different types of people.
3. Am Yisrael – Session Bet: It Takes Twelve Tribes to Create a People	In the Bible, what were the twelve tribes that made up Am Yisrael? What were their roles and responsibilities to Am Yisrael? How do the various types of people help sustain Am Yisrael? What is my role and responsibility as a member of Am Yisrael? This second lesson in the two-lesson set focuses on the different types of people required to create a community or a “people.”
4. Eretz Yisrael – Session Alef: The Physical Land 	What are the boundaries of Eretz Yisrael and what are the boundaries of the modern State of Israel? How have the boundaries of Eretz Yisrael changed over time? In what way are the climatic and geographic characteristics of Eretz Yisrael unique? How do maps and descriptions of Eretz Yisrael reflect the value of Eretz Yisrael for Am Yisrael? Using Biblical texts, commentaries and poetry, students will encounter the conceptual aspect of Eretz Yisrael and the notion of Jerusalem as the center of the world for Jews.
5. Eretz Yisrael – Session Bet: The Land for Our Souls	What are the characteristics of Eretz Yisrael that have been so attractive to Am Yisrael over time? Why might the student, as a Jew today, be intrigued by or drawn to Eretz Yisrael? Using Biblical texts, commentaries, poetry and the words of Hatikvah, Israel’s national anthem, students will explore how Jews over thousands of years have expressed their ongoing connection to the Land of Israel.

<p>6. Brit — Session Alef: Parashat Sh'lach L'cha: Becoming Like Joshua and Caleb</p>	<p>Lessons 6, 7 and 8 constitute a 3-lesson mini-unit that utilizes Torah text and interactive drama to understand the connection between commitment to a goal and the perception of challenges in achieving it. This is based on the story of the twelve scouts Moses sent into the Promised Land to report on its features, characteristics, and fortifications. The lessons address these questions: What is different and similar between the reports of Joshua and Caleb and those of the scouts regarding Eretz Yisrael? Why might the reports be different? What can we learn from the response of the Israelites to the reports about the connection between keeping our part of the <i>b'rit</i>/covenant with God and Eretz Yisrael? What advice would help the Israelites be more like Joshua and Caleb?</p>
<p>7. Brit — Session Bet: Parashat Sh'lach L'cha: Becoming Like Joshua and Caleb</p>	<p>See lesson 6.</p>
<p>8. Brit — Session Gimel: Keeping the B'rit.</p>	<p>The purpose of this lesson is to further refine the students' understanding of the concept of <i>b'rit</i>. Specific questions to be addressed include: What does it mean to keep the <i>b'rit</i>/covenant with God? (What does God want from us?) What does keeping the <i>b'rit</i> have to do with being successful in Eretz Yisrael? How does the concept "choose life" relate to the <i>b'rit</i>? What advice might help the Israelites (and all Jews) "choose life"?</p>
<p>9. Wrap-Up: We Are About to Enter the Land...</p> 	<p>What are Am Yisrael, Eretz Yisrael, and the <i>b'rit</i>? How are Am Yisrael, Eretz Yisrael, and the <i>b'rit</i> connected? What was it like for Am Yisrael to get to bring together the people of Eretz Yisrael? In this lesson, the students will consider the relationship between these three concepts and will explore the very last verses of the Torah where Moses dies, leaving the Israelites on the brink of entering the Land. Since this portion concludes the Torah, the students will be introduced to the concept of beginning the Torah immediately following the concluding verses, indicating the continual nature of our journey as Jews.</p>



Avodah

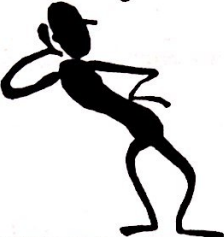

Lesson Title	Topic/question(s) to be addressed
1. Kavanah	In this lesson, students are introduced to the concept of <i>kavanah</i> — intention and concentration in prayer. What actions do I need to take in order to experience <i>kavanah</i> ? What would an experience of <i>kavanah</i> feel like for me? Through the use of games and text study, students will explore their own thoughts and feelings about <i>kavanah</i> in Jewish prayer.

<p>2. Keva: Why We Pray</p> 	<p>Students explore the value of traditional prayer and the practice that it takes to feel comfortable using the fixed language of prayer. Questions to be addressed include: Why should I pray? How do we feel if we are not prepared for fixed prayer experiences? What is the work (<i>avodah</i>) required to create a successful prayer experience?</p>
<p>3. Siddur Geography: Our Journey Through the Prayer Book</p>	<p>This lesson is designed to give students an overview of the major prayer elements of the Friday night and Saturday morning Shabbat synagogue service. The students will receive an overview of the major components of the service [Introductory Prayers and readings, the Sh'ma and its blessings, the Amidah, the Torah service, and the Conclusion (Aleinu and Kaddish)] and will explore how each of the components might relate to his or her own life.</p>
<p>4. The Sh'ma and Its Blessings: Finding Kavanah in Keva (Session Alef: Sh'ma and V'ahavta)</p>	<p>How can a fixed prayer like the Sh'ma/V'ahavta inspire kavanah? How can the themes of the Sh'ma provide meaning, guidance, and comfort in my life? Through guided meditation, text study, and storytelling, students will discern the themes of these ancient, central prayers and analyze their meaning for our own time. Please note that although this is the first of a 2-lesson "mini-unit," it can easily be taught as a stand-alone lesson.</p>
<p>5. The Sh'ma and Its Blessings: Finding Kavanah in Keva (Session Bet: Creation, Revelation, Redemption)</p>	<p>This lesson explores the themes of creation, revelation and redemption surrounding the Sh'ma and its blessings and will be most successful if taught very soon after the preceding lesson. Students will consider how understanding the themes of prayers or blessings can help them understand the prayers or blessing in a personal way. Using text study and games, the students will create their own titles for these blessing to reflect their own personal understanding of them. The concept of <i>p'tichah</i> and <i>chatimah</i> as "clue" to meaning is introduced in the lesson.</p>
<p>6. Kiddush: Sanctifying Our Lives Through Fixed Prayer and Personal Feelings of Holiness</p> 	<p>This lesson focuses on the concept of holiness as expressed in the Kiddush blessing recited on Shabbat. In this lesson, the students will consider and explore these questions: How does the Kiddush blessing express the concept of our holy relationship with God? When do I personally experience feelings of holiness? How can I bring kavanah (personal feelings of holiness) to the fixed Kiddush blessing?</p>
<p>7. Communal and Individual Prayers</p>	<p>How is praying in community different than praying individually? How can I experience personal moments of <i>kavanah</i> within a communal worship setting? What is the power of being in community? In this lesson, students will address the tension between individual and communal prayer.</p>

<p>8. Blessings of Wonder</p> 	<p>How can saying blessings help us recognize moments as holy or awesome? How does saying blessings help me feel a connection to God? What are some of the things we can do every day that provide an opportunity for avodah, making sacred connections? Using self-reflection, text study, and a scavenger hunt, the students will learn how blessings of enjoyment and wonder can transform seemingly ordinary moments into holy time.</p>
<p>9. Silent Prayer: Creating a Moment for Ourselves, with Our Own Words</p>	<p>This lesson enables students to reflect on experiences of kavanah as a way of connecting personally to God within a worship service. The focus of the lesson will address such questions as: How can I experience kavanah and feel moments of connection to God? How can I feel a sense of sacred connections by using my own words? How does having a fixed time for using my own words help my experience of kavanah throughout the service?</p>

G'milut Chasadim

Lesson Title	Topic/question(s) to be addressed
<p>1. Making Peace Among Friends</p> 	<p>Why is peace among friends important? How can you play a role in making peace among friends? What are the risks in being a peacemaker? What are different ways to make peace among friends? How is making peace an act of g'milut chasadim? Through text study, role play scenarios, and conflict problem solving, this lesson will introduce students to the ways they can implement the quintessential Jewish value of making peace.</p>
<p>2. <i>Sh'lom Bayit</i>: Peace and Harmony at Home</p>	<p>What is <i>sh'lom bayit</i>? Why is <i>sh'lom bayit</i> a Jewish value? What other Jewish values contribute to <i>sh'lom bayit</i>? Through the use of stories, games, and scenarios, the students explore the importance of peace in the home and their role in it.</p>
<p>3. Accepting Differences: Love Your Neighbor as Yourself (V'ahavta L'rei-acha Kamocha)</p>	<p>What does it mean to be different? How are people different? How can we learn to be accepting of the differences in others? How does it feel to be accepted for who you are? Why do we have a responsibility to accept differences in others? A Bingo Discovery Game brings the students to an understanding of the Leviticus text (19:18) that instructs us to "Love your neighbor as yourself."</p>
<p>4. Show Honor with Action: Honor Your Parents (Kibud Av Va-eim)</p> 	<p>What can we learn from the Torah about honoring parents? What is the difference between honor and respect? How, when, and why should we honor our parents? Through a story and the use of Biblical skits, the students will identify the ways in which parents can be honored.</p>

<p>5. Befriending the Lonely</p>	<p>How can I reach out to lonely people? What are the barriers to making friends? What do Jewish texts teach us about reaching out to people who are lonely? The students will utilize the Biblical story of the friendship between Boaz and Ruth to learn about the Jewish value of welcoming the stranger, and how they might go about making a newcomer feel comfortable.</p>
<p>6. The Danger of Gossip: <i>L'shon Hara</i></p> 	<p>What is gossip and why should we avoid it? What does our Jewish tradition teach us about the consequences of gossip? Texts, stories, and role-playing are utilized to help students understand the negative impact of gossip in our lives.</p>
<p>7. Understanding the Elderly</p> 	<p>In this lesson, students will confront some of the common myths related to the elderly and the process of aging by asking and addressing these questions: What are the signs of aging? How can we learn to understand the elderly? What responsibilities do we have toward the elderly in our community? What do Jewish texts teach us about the aging process? The learning will be conveyed through text study simulations, and creation of a program for the elderly.</p>
<p>8. Honoring the Elderly (<i>Kibud Z'keanim</i>) Session Alef</p>	<p>This lesson is the first of two parts and prepares the students for a visit to the classroom by elderly guests. Questions to be addressed include: Why should we honor the elderly? How can I show honor to the elderly? How is honoring the elderly a way of revering God? Where in Jewish sources do we learn about honoring the elderly?</p>
<p>9. Honoring the Elderly (<i>Kibud Z'keanim</i>) Session Bet</p>	<p>This lesson follows the previous one and involves inviting elderly guests into the classroom. The students will address these questions: How can I show honor [to the elderly] and act as a gracious host? What can I learn from elderly people? How do I make a difference when I honor the elderly in my community?</p>

Bonus Jewish Family Education Session: The Many Faces of My Jewish Family