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UTILIZING CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AS A VEHICLE
TO TRANSMIT VALUES RELATED TO CREATING
A KEHILAH KEDOSHAH

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Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
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"If there are no kids, there will be no goats. If there are no goats, there will be no flocks. If there are no flocks, there will be no shepherd. If there is no shepherd, there will be no world. Similarly, if there are no young people studying Torah, there will be no teachers; if there are no teachers, there will be no sages. If there are no sages, there will be no elders. If there are no elders, there will be no prophets; if there are no prophets, there will be no Divine Spirit."

(Introduction to Esther, based on a rule mentioned in the Gemora, Megillah 10b)

¹ Translation taken from *To See the World Through Jewish Eyes: Guidelines for the Preschool Years*. New York: UAHF Press, 1981, 79

Part 1: Introduction

What is a *kehilah kedoshah*, a holy community? Is it the people we choose to surround ourselves with, or the way in which we relate toward one another? Perhaps it is our individual and collective association with God's presence or maybe it is the values that act as a foundation for all of these elements to simultaneously occur. I have always found the subject of community of great interest; not only its existence but more specifically what factors contribute to creating a *kehilah kedoshah*. In my opinion, this over-arching label refers to the feeling of holy community we create inside the spaces that we call home; whether that is a personal or shared space.

Our largest *kehilah kedoshah* comprises the greater Jewish community as a whole. It is deeply rooted in our history and tradition. Since the Enlightenment in the early 1800's Jews have been faced with choices that directly affected not only their own future, but the future of the Jewish community as a whole. Post Holocaust, the conversation of Jewish continuity has grown all the more acute.

Following WWII, Mordecai Kaplan wrote a book entitled, *The Future of the American Jew*. In it, he discusses the resurrection of a people, the next stage in the Jewish religion and outlines suggestions toward a new pattern for Jewish life. Kaplan speaks of the need for Jewish stability and continuity through the education of our children and the creation of a formal community in order to invoke pride in who we are as individuals as well as who we are as *am Yisrael*.

There are Jews who refuse to stifle their awareness of belonging to an ancient, ageless, never-dying people that has inscribed itself indelibly on the consciousness of mankind through a collection of writings known as the Bible. Those Jews who wish to remain Jews and to bring up their children as Jews. They are the survivalists, the affirmative Jews. Despite all handicaps, they feel that to be Jews entitles them to a place in history, a place that confers meaning and

solemnity upon their lives. They have a share in the mystery of the universe. Whatever be their theology, or lack there of it, if that is the way they feel about being Jews, they should find one another and achieve that community of spirit which will beget the confidence and wisdom necessary to effect the needed reconstruction of Jewish life.¹

In a world where we are consistently faced with choices that lead us to further assimilation, how do we navigate the path we ultimately choose for ourselves? And in turn, how do we create a metaphorical toolkit for our children so that they are prepared to help navigate the moral and ethical choices they will surely encounter on the road to becoming Jewish adults?

Nowhere are ideals more important than in our early childhood classrooms, where children are beginning the learning process, fulfilling the role of the "next generation." We as educators have the unique opportunity and responsibility to instill these values in our youngest population, so they in turn, grow up to create Jewish continuity and community for those that come after them. Judaism places as much influence on our interpersonal behavior as it does on our ritual observance. An action without meaning is simply an action.

This thesis delves into the values that contribute to creating a *kehilah kedoshah* including Torah, *Avodah* and *G'milut chasadim*. We will explore how children's literature and *midrash* have the power to play a large role in the transmission of values contributing to our cultural identity and how educators can foster that growth through the inclusion of moral and value-laden material. Following an in-depth study focusing on what I refer to as the value of values, we will move forward to discussing the role children's literature play in the values transmission process. A section has been devoted to providing a developmental overview related to this topic.

¹ Kaplan, M. *The Future of an American Jew*. Philadelphia: Reconstructionist Press, 1981, 30.

Finally, I will present various hypotheses relating to spiritual and moral development including the works of Carol Ingall and Lawrence Kohlberg. By presenting these various philosophies, I will attempt to show the reader that the moral and ethical values derived from our cultural identity become the power which ignites the passion in the heart of our children. We will then conclude the research component with an exploration into how children acquire the array of values presented.

A detailed teacher's guide accentuating the Jewish values of *Torah*, *Avodah* and *G'milut Chasadim* has been created for this endeavor in order to illustrate how children's value-laden literature has the power and influence to inform and extend Jewish values toward children in the early-childhood market.

Part II. Values in Jewish Education

A. Value of Values

If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one quarter of one percent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous dim puff of stardust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way. Properly, the Jews ought hardly to be heard of: but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people and his importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk.²

It is the study of Torah that is the source of our hidden strength. Jewish tradition has always relied upon the use of values stemming from Torah, to gain insight and wisdom.

Al sh'loshah d'varim haolam omed: Al haTorah, al ha-avodah, v'al g'milut chasadim.

"The world depends on three things: on Torah, on worship and on loving deeds." These words from *Pirkei Avot* 1:2 act as the foundational pillars for our relationships with one another and help us define our individual and collective purpose as Jews. The following is a commentary on this text provided by a 12 year-old child in Pennsylvania:

These things are chosen for what the world stands on because Torah cultivates the mind, *avodah* (worship) cultivates the body and soul, and *g'milut chasadim* (acts of loving kindness) cultivates the community. We need all of them to make this world a world of G-d. None is more important than the other.³

Within this classification structure, the term, Torah represents the central pillar of our structure and refers to our book of law and tradition, the Torah. By learning about the actions of our ancestors, we extract the moral virtues needed to live a holy existence.

Avodah literally refers to the idea of servitude or prayer. In this context, it represents the "work" we do in order to relate and pray to God. Through *avodah*, we

² Twain, Mark. "Concerning the Jews." *Harpers Magazine*, 99 (September 1899): 525-535, 525

³ Aryeh, Age 12. "What We Need: A Commentary on Pirkei Avot 1:2"
http://www.torahquest.org/show_commentary.php?cid=22®id=100 (Accessed on January 22, 2006)

learn to connect not only with God, but with other people and our community and most importantly, with ourselves. *Avodah* is the category that helps us understand Jewish customs and traditions, so that we may carry on Judaism for the future. Finally, *g'milut chasadim* is the actualization of Jewish values. By living in accordance with our values, and performing acts of loving kindness, we make the world and one another holier in the process.

For the purposes of this thesis, the word, "value" or *middah* is defined as the principles we consider to be of the utmost importance. "How we act, who we are, what we stand for, how we respond, how we view life and the world around us, our personal qualities, attributes and traits"⁴ are central to our existence. Our *middot* stem from Jewish history and tradition, outlining a roadmap for the way each of us should ideally live our lives. *Middot* reflect the "intentionality of our efforts and the caliber of our actions."⁵

Mordecai Kaplan offers the idea that the acceptance of values are purely optional, in that each of us has the ability to incorporate them as we choose. He states:

(Values are) the alternative to authoritative dogma, which has to be accepted regardless of reason's approval. It is rather the acceptance of values which, without offending reason, are capable of satisfying our most distinctively human needs. Those are the needs which belong in the domain of the spirit.⁶

Values that stem from our Torah, formulate the basis by which we interact with each other and the decisions we make to help us make sound judgments in difficult situations. By focusing on the relationship between knowledge and action, students learn that our

⁴ Freeman, Susan. *Teaching Jewish Virtues: Sacred Sources and Arts Activities*. Denver, A.R.E. Publishing, 1999, 1

⁵ Freeman, 1

⁶ Kaplan, 246.

behavior has the ability to represent the fulfillment of the *brit* between God and the Jewish people.

There is a statement in the Zohar which states "Israel and the Torah and the Holy One, blessed be He, are one"⁷. Jewish values, and the behaviors which they lead, serve to make us *kadosh*. By completing acts considered to be virtuous, we are fulfilling the holy actions of God, thereby reflecting a spark of God's presence in each of us. In 1967, Dr. Emanuel Gamoran and Mamie Gamoran provided that "we discover God through God's work in the world. We may not grasp God's being, but God's moral qualities are reflected in the world we understand."⁸

Rabbinic theology provides that each of us is blessed with two impulses that consistently struggle for power within us, Our *yetzer ha'ra*, or bad inclination and our *yetzer ha'tov*, our good inclination compete for influence. Each of us has the independent choice to overcome the *yetzer hara* in an attempt to create a more powerful connection with God. This ideal can be exemplified by the following parable:

Once the Baal Shem saw an acrobat walking across a rope. The crowd watched the acrobat with amazement, intrigued by his perfect balance and agility. The Baal Shem sighed as he said: "This man had to practice many hours to control his body. Would that man so practiced to control his soul. Man must concentrate on the effort to control his impulses."⁹

In Judaism, holiness is achieved through the various types of relationships that exist within our life. It is the relationships between us and ourselves, *bayn adam l'atzmo*, the relationship between us and others, *bayn adam l'chavero* – and the relationship

⁷ Zohar Volume III, 73a.

⁸ Gamoran, Emanuel and Mamie Gamoran. *Talks to Jewish Teachers*. New York: UAH Press, 1967, 124.

⁹ Silverman, William B. *The Sages Speak: Rabbinic Wisdom and Jewish Values*. New Jersey: Jason Aronson Inc., 1995, 33

between us and God, *u'vayn adam l'Makom*, that bring us closer to the divine. All *middot*, or values fall under these three categories yet are not mutually exclusive.

Maxine Segal Handelman, a renowned early childhood educator, is the author of a book entitled, *Jewish Every Day: The Complete Guidebook for Early Childhood Educators*. Embedded within its chapters, Handelman discusses values as a foundation in the development of the Jewish child. She provides a list of 22 values and *mitzvot*, along with their definitions and ways they can be referred to in the classroom. A copy of this chart can be found in Figure A. Handelman then limits this list and outlines 10 *mitzvot* that are most relevant to the lives of young children. A listing of these *mitzvot* can be found in Figure B and serve as the basis for an annotated bibliography in Figure C.

In the aforementioned body of work dating back to 1967, Emanuel and Mamie Gamoran begin to explore a facet of the values acquisition process that we continue to focus on today. They ask, "Is there an opportunity during the transmission of knowledge for the development of attitudes and appreciations which may in turn lead to understanding ideals and accepting their values in a way of life?"¹⁰ In the coming section, we will delve into the many positive effects stories can hold in the lives of our youngest children.

¹⁰ Gamoran, 126

B. Values in Children's Literature

Distinguished Jewish writer Yaffa Ganz offers the following remarks to the First International Symposium on Jewish literature:

The most important item on the Jewish juvenile literary agenda today, both in the Diaspora and in Israel, is to find ways to disseminate Jewish knowledge so that we can raise an "*Am yode'a sefer*- a nation which is Jewishly learned, as the Jews have always been- and not a nation liberally educated in western civilization, but abysmally ignorant of its own heritage. This, for me, is the prime purpose of a Jewish book."¹¹

Stories, legends and parables hold the unique ability to move us, teach us, and provide a window into the teachings of our sages. Through the art of storytelling, children come into contact with Jewish values and tradition, Jewish terminology and rabbinic theology. "If you wish to get to know the One by whose word the world came into being, study the *aggadah*."¹²

In an article entitled, "Character Education through Children's Literature", author Shawna Bryndillsen discusses this recurring theme explaining that legislators, teachers, and parents are working hard to identify the best way to instill character traits proven to encourage achievement, happiness, drive and determination.¹³ She offers that the use of children's literature as a pedagogical tool holds great promise in achieving these values in young children. Additionally, she provides the notion that "literary characters have almost the same potential for influencing the reader as the real people with whom a

¹¹ Ganz, Yaffa. "*Values in Jewish Children's Literature*." *Judaica Librarianship* 7, no 1-2 (spring 1992-winter 1993), 24.

¹² Sifrei Devarim, 49

¹³ Bryndillsen, Shawna. "Character Education through Children's Literature"
<http://www.ericdigests.org/2003-3/character.htm>. (accessed February 27, 2007)

reader might share a reading experience."¹⁴ Given this, the implications for literature's role in character education is paramount.

In the late 1960's, Abraham Maslow was credited for pioneering the psychological suggestion that human beings have potential for change; that the future is ours to revolutionize and that "at the heart of the meaning of life is becoming and expressing all that we can be."¹⁵ Maslow's thinking laid the foundation for what later became known as the human potential movement. Much of his study was focused on how to model good behavior in human beings so as to encourage a repeat response. With the introduction of his paradigm shift, people started looking forward instead of solely focusing on the past. Later, the fields of experiential education and values clarification paved the way for stories and legends to be incorporated into the early childhood classroom as well as all levels of classroom learning.

Rabbi Jules Harlow provided the forward to the 1972 collection of legends entitled, "Lessons from our Living Past." In this work, Harlow presents a comparison study between mythological stories and legends that stem from Jewish history and tradition.¹⁶ He offers the idea that when Jewish legends are compared with stories of a mythological nature, the principal characters appear to us as life size while mythological subjects emerge with superhuman proportions. In my opinion, this is a conscious attempt to create legends that we can relate to and thus compare our own behavior.

¹⁴ Bryndillsen, Shawna. "Character Education through Children's Literature"
<http://www.ericdigests.org/2003-3/character.htm>. (accessed February 27, 2007)

¹⁵ L. Michael Hall, Ph.D. "Actualizing Maslow: How the Neuro-Semantics Models Actualize the Self-Actualization Vision"
http://www.self-actualizing.org/articles/actualizing_maslow.pdf (accessed January 14th)

¹⁶ Harlow, Jules. *Lessons from our Past*. New York: Behrman House, 1972, 6

In addition, while myths focus on characters with specific traits such as Hermes who could fly, Jewish legends attempt to create a blueprint of ideal behavior. Finally, while mythological epics strive to identify excellence that is character specific, Jewish legend encourages us to recognize and esteem those elements of behavior that most closely resemble the ideas embodied in Jewish law.

The notion of writing stories so that the reader can interact with the characters is repeated in the introduction to the book, *Lively Legends- Jewish Values*. Here, the author shares that:

Stories depict real struggles faced by real people in the past; dressed up in modern garb. The same struggles are still with us today. They also depict how great and simple people alike tried to resolve their difficulties and the results of their efforts. Thus, stories functioned and can still function as tools for gaining perspective, insight and wisdom.¹⁷

Our stories, our traditions, our values are all encapsulated into children's literature, waiting to be passed down from generation to generation.

Fantasy play can be encapsulated under the heading of story telling, as this process allows for a parallel pedagogical use. Children utilize exposure to these methods of learning as ways for them to make meaning for themselves, to generate their own views on the world around them. Vivian Paley, a teacher who has devoted much of her time to investigating the merits of play therapy offers the following:

If fantasy play provides the nourishing habitat for the growth of cognitive, narrative, and social connectivity in young children, then it is surely the staging area for our common enterprise: an early school experience that best represents the natural development of young children.¹⁸

¹⁷ Feinberg, Miriam P. Feinberg and Rena Rotenberg, *Lively Legends- Jewish Values: An Early Childhood Teaching Guide*. Denver: ARE Publishing, 1993, vii

¹⁸ Paley, Vivian. *A Child's Work: the Importance of Play*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004, 8

In his book entitled, *Teaching as Story Telling* Kieran Egan presents the idea that a child's imagination should play a significant role in shaping what he refers to as, "ad hoc principles" which include going from the concrete to the abstract, from the simple to the complex, from the known to the unknown and from active manipulation to symbolic conceptualization. According to Egan, the importance of a child's fantasy life should be stressed equally with that of math or other related subjects.

In his discussion concerning the principle of traversing from the known to the unknown, Egan provides that the contents of children's experience provide their general knowledge base and that from there, children move gradually toward the acquisition of new knowledge through the basis of abstract conceptual structures the child already has in place. He suggests that stories make sense because we can fit all the new elements and events to our abstract categories of good/bad, courage/cowardice, honor/greed, and so on."¹⁹

Egan's goal is to increase the integration of fantasy play into a child's already existing curriculum. By achieving this integration, Egans states that we will create a "richer image of the child as an imaginative as well as a logico-mathematical thinker."²⁰ He concludes with, "What we call imagination is also a tool of learning."²¹

In the next section, we will begin to delve into the development of values and spirituality in children. It is with this section that we will see how the above stated goals become reality.

¹⁹ Egan, Kieran, *Teaching as Storytelling*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986, 14

²⁰ Egan, 17

²¹ Egan, 17

C. Developmental Overview: Values and Spirituality

Human identity is comprised of many internal and external factors working both with as well as against each other to create a definitive persona. No two people are exactly alike, as their experiences in the world in which they live in vary, as do their viewpoints, ideas and values. The psychoanalytic theorist Erik Erikson tells us that "social, cultural and historical context become the ground in which individual identity is embedded."²² He explains that "identity formation employs a process of simultaneous reflection and observation."²³ Identity formation is a lifelong journey; one which continues to evolve as we incorporate values derived from our social, cultural and historical surroundings.

A core Jewish value is that each of us is made in God's image reflecting a small bit of God's light within us. It is this light we teach, that holds God's wholesomeness and truth. It is also this light, which holds our ability to live up to what God perceives as being the best of who we can be. There is a *midrash* quoted from the Babylonian Talmud²⁴ that says that before birth we know all that God knows, but as we are born God touches us upon the center of our upper lip and removes all knowledge, so that we are forced to learn it for ourselves. It is said that while we are left without this knowledge, this is the exact point which we receive our soul. This metaphor, this continuous searching for purity, provides a way of framing this section.

²² Tatum, B. *Why are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria and other Conversations about Race*. New York: Basic Books, 1997, 19

²³ Tatum, 19

²⁴ Niddah 30b

The question to ask is: How is spiritual identity formed and what effect does it have on the development of a person? James Fowler²⁵ outlines 6 stages of faith ranging from the instinctive and innate faith of our young childhood to a more standard view of faith, progressing on to a more individualized view and finally achieving the faith that comes with increased wisdom and experience. A detailed list of these phases can be found in Figure D. Fowler provides that the first rung, the intuitive-projective faith stage, encapsulates most children ages 3-7, spanning the majority of the early childhood level. It is within this time period he states that "the child is most influenced by examples, moods, actions and stories."²⁶ This notion exemplifies the value faith laden stories have in the lives of our youngest children.

In her article entitled, "The Spiritual Dimension of Adult Development" Elizabeth Tisdell discusses the possible manifestations of spirituality in people's lives.²⁷ She talks about the spirituality of dwelling, which is tied to a sense of place or to a religious tradition. She also introduces a spirituality of seeking, one in which we are continuously seeking truth through the journey of life. Lastly, she introduces the idea that spirituality can also form from a place that is deeply embedded in the name of justice. Upon reading this information, I became particularly interested in the parallel relationship that exists between Tisdell's three aforementioned factors and the Jewish values associated with creating holy community including *Torah*, *Avodah* and *G'milut Chasadim*. Dwelling, seeking and a sought after theme for justice form a distinct parallel to ideals associated

²⁵ Fowler, J. *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*. San Francisco: Harper Books, 1999, 123-213

²⁶ Fowler, 133

²⁷ Tisdell, E. J. The Spiritual Dimension of Adult development in M. Carolyn Clark & Rosemary S. Caffarella (Ed.) *An Update On Adult Development Theory: New Ways of Thinking about the life course* (Winter, pp. 87-96). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999, 89

with creating a holy community. This parallel exemplifies the apparent need to create a holy community outside the confines of Judaism. In other words, the values that are most stressed in our tradition are in actuality, values associated with our environment at large.

In the same article, Tisdell speaks of an African American friend who views her spirituality as a great responsibility because she is aware of the sacrifices and hardships her ancestors lived through so that she could have the freedom and the power to move forward in the world. This example illustrates the cultural bonds that are formed around values such as those mentioned above. She quotes the woman as saying, "So I must get up! And I must dig deep! And I must do good!"²⁸ This person managed to stay spirituality connected exemplifying the existence of people's spirituality embedded in a particular socio-cultural history.

The powerful effect of spirituality created through the interaction of those in similar socio- cultural environments is echoed in Tatum's discussion when she speaks of the benefits of cultural connectedness. Her book entitled, *"Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria and other Conversations about Race"* attempts to explore the origins and effects of racial identity. She questions whether retaining a sense of separation is protecting us, or will ultimately hurt us in the long run. This of course, is a topic for another thesis.

Now that we have examined values acquisition, let us explore the many factors that contribute to our spiritual and developmental identity.

²⁸ Tisdell, 88

D. Instilling Values in our Children

Are spiritual and developmental identity formation connected? And if they are, what role does values acquisition play in our growth? Robert Coles offers his perspective when he writes, "Children try to understand not only what is happening to them but why; and in doing that, they call upon the religious life they have experienced, the spiritual values they have received, as well as other sources of potential explanation."²⁹

Coles' posits that emotions such as shame or guilt are major components of young spirituality and that children's view of God directly plays into their moral decision-making. For example, a child might perceive that God is mad at them and therefore not giving them what they want or perhaps God is giving them a second chance, if they have realized that they have done something wrong. Vulnerability he states "becomes an occasion for prayer."³⁰

Cole points out that this integration between a secular and moral conscience is continuous, asking the child to balance his or her religious or personal life with that of the greater society. He writes:

Less evident are the strategies boys and girls devise to accommodate a secular and familial morality, on the one hand, and the religious morality they hear espoused in churches, mosques, synagogues. The task for those boys and girls is to weave together a particular version of a morality both personal and yet tied to a religious tradition, and then (the essence of the spiritual life) ponder their moral successes and failures and, consequently, their prospects as human beings who will someday die.³¹

Coles cites the use of biblical stories and narrative as a way of bridging the gap between the religious and the secular world. He provides the following in his discussion:

²⁹ Coles, Robert. *The Spiritual Life of Children*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1990, 100

³⁰ Coles, 109

³¹ Coles, 109

Biblical stories, or lessons in the Koran, have a way of being used by children to look inward as well as upward. It should come as no surprise that the stories of Adam and Eve, Abraham and Isaac, Noah and the Ark, Abel and Cain, Samson and Delilah, David and Goliath, get linked in the minds of millions of children to their own personal stories as they explore the nature of sexuality, and regard with awe, envy, or anger the power of their parents, as they wonder how solid and lasting their world is, as they struggle with brothers and sisters, as they imagine themselves as actual or potential lovers, or as actual or potential antagonists.³²

According to Coles, in addition to providing an avenue for children to navigate their emotions, biblical stories inspire them to become better individuals, aiding in the development of a stronger sense of self.

If spiritual and developmental identity are connected, how and in what manner does this process take place? Lawrence Kohlberg proposed a "ladder" with three primary stages or "rungs" of moral development which include the pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional stage. He then splits each level into 2 stages, resulting in six stages of moral development. Please see Figure E for a detailed breakdown of his theoretical ladder.

Barry Kislwicz studied the applicability of Kohlberg's theory to Traditional Jewish High Schools." He recommends adopting Kohlberg's philosophies into Jewish education when the implementation is conducted in an effective manner that does not compromise the aims of Jewish education. While I might disagree with his ultimate conclusion, I will utilize parts of his research as outlined below.

Kohlberg's three levels of reasoning correspond to a socio-moral perspective, taking into consideration how children grow to develop morals between themselves and

³² Cited in Coles, 121

those around them.³³ Kohlberg's conception of human development is based largely on the work of Jean Piaget, whose structural theory of cognitive development corresponds from a structural perspective to Kohlberg's stage-oriented levels or rungs.³⁴

Much of Kohlberg's work is derived around the notion that as children mature, they develop the moral and ethical skills needed to be part of a "just" society. Individuals who develop at a normal rate, will continue to develop further along a justice continuum until they are ultimately able to follow self-described ethical principals of their own.

Contrary to Kohlberg's model is Carol Ingall's philosophy of moral development. While Kohlberg's model is presented in a manner of fixed stages, Ingall takes a much broader approach. Her theoretical framework consists of factors she refers to as the Eight E's including Excellences, Environment, Experience, Expectations, Explanation, Examination, Exemplars, and Empathy. Please see Figure F for a detailed view of this chart. In her opinion, it is the simultaneous presence of these components that contribute to imparting positive moral and ethical behavior.³⁵

Ingall's ideas view the moral maturation process from a more functional level, creating tasks to see how children will respond as opposed to watching and evaluating as a child moves through stages. She advocates a more proactive approach that seem to reflect the ideals of experiential education. She describes this approach as, character education "making children good as well as smart."³⁶ She discusses how Jewish teachings are filled with moral messages. "If we are teaching morality anyway, we might

³³ Kislowicz, B. *Appropriating Kohlberg for Jewish High Schools*; Doctoral dissertation, Teachers College - Columbia University, 2004

³⁴ Kislowicz, 2004

³⁵ Ingall, C. *Transmission and Transformation: a Jewish Perspective on Moral Education*. New York: The Melton Research Center for Jewish Education, 1999, 7

³⁶ Ingall, 7

as well do so in a reflective, critical, and self- conscious manner; Moral education is at the very core of what we do."³⁷

Kislowicz refers to Barry Chazan who offers his view regarding the philosophies of Kohlberg:

While Kohlberg adopts "natural law theory" specifically because it allows for distinct realms of discourse for morality and religion, rabbinic Judaism's "larger purpose was to postulate an entirely new language system which denied the religion/morality dichotomy". Kohlberg takes great pains to differentiate the form of moral reasoning from its content (and focuses only on the former). In contrast, Jewish education links the two- using texts such as the Bible and the Talmud both as sources of content to present a Jewish "moral outlook and world view" and as tools "to develop the individual's power of moral judgment". Most fundamentally, Jewish education is about education as initiation to a specific lifestyle, including specific behavior patterns as well as a worldview, while Kohlberg is interested only in patterns of moral thought.³⁸

Kislowicz mentions that the fundamental difference between Kohlberg's thought process and the aim of Jewish education is that for Kohlberg, the identifying principle is justice and for Jewish education, this ultimate principle is God³⁹. This differential is yet another topic for another thesis, yet I will remain on task and state that in conclusion, the theorists presented above exemplify the rich dialogue that is currently taking place regarding values acquisition. With respect to the question posed above regarding whether our spiritual and developmental psyches are connected, I think they are most certainly intertwined, perhaps dependent upon one another for synergistic success.

The various philosophies presented demonstrate that the way in which we choose to educate and stimulate our children has a profound effect on their development psyche.

³⁷ Ingall, 8

³⁸ Cited in Kislowicz, 50

³⁹ Kislowicz, 51

Our role as parents and educators is to pass on the values that are important to each one of us, *L'dor Vador*, from generation to generation.

One might wonder if a child that is of preschool or kindergarten age possesses the intellect to process the learning of time honored values and traditions. According to Jeffrey S. Kress and Maurice J. Elias, the understanding of content related to moral values and tradition is dependent upon the level of their emotional intelligence and socio-emotional learning level (EQ/SEL).⁴⁰ They offer that each skill that corresponds with a value is also present as part of the construct of emotional intelligence and social and emotional learning. These skills lay the groundwork for positive social interaction.

⁴⁰ Jeffrey S. Kress and Maurice J. Elias "A Comprehensive Skill Building Approach to Jewish Values: Social and Emotional Learning and Caring Early Childhood Classrooms"
<http://www.caje.org/earlychildhood/publication/index.html> (accessed January 6, 2007)

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A.

JEWISH VALUES FOR GROWING OUTSTANDING JEWISH CHILDREN

MITZVAH	TRANSLITERATION	HEBREW TERM	WHEN YOU CAN REFER TO IT
Bringing Peace Between People	<i>Hava'at Shalom Bayn Adam L'Havero</i>	הכנת שלום בין אדם לחברו	When children are sharing after settling an argument
Clothing the Naked	<i>Malbish Arumim</i>	מלביש צרמקים	Clothing drive
Common Courtesy - Respect	<i>Derekh Eretz</i>	דרך-ארץ	When children show respect for each other as in letting a child get in line
Do Not Destroy Needlessly	<i>Bal Tashheet</i>	בל תשחית	Ecology; destroy property, toys, nature
Kindness to Animals	<i>Tza'ar Ba'alay Hayim</i>	צער בעלי חיים	Feeding the class pet Putting a bug outside. Instead of stepping on it
Repairing the World	<i>Tikkun Olam</i>	תיקון עולם	Recycling
Honoring the Elderly	<i>Hiddur P'ney Zakayn</i>	הדר פני זקן	Making cards for seniors
Return of Lost Articles	<i>Hashavat Avaydah</i>	השבת אבדה	When a child finds something that is not theirs and returns it to its owner
Study	<i>Talmud Torah</i>	תלמוד תורה	Telling Bible or holiday stories
Truth	<i>Emet</i>	אמת	When a child tells the truth
Visiting the Sick	<i>Bikkur Holim</i>	בקר חולים	Calling on or making cards for sick friends, classmates or relatives
Welcoming Guests	<i>Hakhnasat Orhim</i>	הקצאת אורחים	Shabbat Ema and Abba Invite guests (i.e., another class)
Cheerfulness	<i>Sayver Panim Yafot</i>	ספר פנים יפות	Greeting someone with a smile When children are happy and smiling, especially after an incident when a child was sad
Comforting Mourners	<i>Nihum Avayim</i>	ניחם אבלים	Visiting a shiva house
Do Not Covet	<i>Lo Tahmode</i>	לא תחמד	Hoarding toys
Guard Your Tongue	<i>Shmirat Halashon</i>	שמירת הלשון	Not calling other children names
Watching What You Say			
Gossip	<i>Lashon Hara</i>	לשון הרע	
Polite Speech	<i>Dibur B'nilmus</i>	דיבור בנחמס	
Shaming	<i>Boshet</i>	בשת	
Slander	<i>Rekhilut</i>	רקילות	
Honor Parents and Teachers	<i>Kibbud Horim u'Morim</i>	קבוד הורים ומורים	Doing something special for parents and/or teachers
Peace in the Home/ Classroom	<i>Shalom Bayit/Keulah</i>	שלום בית/מקוה	Sharing toys/markers
Righteous Deeds	<i>Gemilut Hasadim</i>	גמילות חסדים	When a child goes out of his/her way to help another
Righteous Justice (Charity)	<i>Tzedekah</i>	צדקה	Weekly charity Food and clothing drives
Respecting the Poor	<i>Kvod He-ahnee</i>	קבוד העני	Giving money to homeless

"For each of these *mitzvot* and *mitzvot* you can simply say: [child's name], what a wonderful example of (*mitzvah*)."

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Figure B: Early Childhood Jewish Values

The values described below,⁴¹ have been compiled by Maxine Segal Handelman, author of *Jewish Every Day: The Complete Handbook For Early Childhood Teachers*, which indicate the spirit of the Jewish view on human interaction.

Mitzvah - commandment.

- A mitzvah is not simply a good deed, although many *mitzvot* are good deeds. Because a *mitzvah* is something we are obligated to do, *mitzvot* take on additional meaning. It is not just a nice thing to give *zedakah*. Rather, we are obligated to give *zedakah* and help the needy.
- Judaism does not teach us how to be good people by offering suggestions; we are required to do good things and be good people. It is this obligation that makes us distinct, which makes us *kadosh* (holy). In the early childhood classroom, we must be careful not to label every good deed a *mitzvah*, although there is indeed a long, yet specific, list of good deeds that are *mitzvot*. *Mitzvot* are "God's rules."
- Many of the behaviors we do engage in with children are *mitzvot*, such as giving *zedakah*, saying blessings before we eat, etc., and we should certainly point this out to children. For example, you might say, "We give *zedakah* because it's a *mitzvah* to help other people. It is one of God's rules to give *zedakah*."

Shalom - Peace, Completeness.

- According to the Talmud, "The whole Torah exists only for the sake of shalom" (Tanhuma, Shoftim 18). Jewish prayer is filled with supplications for shalom, for example, "Grant us peace, your most precious gift, O Eternal Source of peace..." One of the names for God is *Oseh Shalom* — Maker of Peace. In the *Kaddish*, an integral part of daily liturgy, we pray, "May the Maker of Peace in high places let peace descend on us, and on all of Israel."
- We are a people with a history full of tumult and destruction that seeks serenity and security, not only for ourselves, but also for the whole world. "*Shalom*" is even the salutation we use when greeting each other or taking our leave.
- In the early childhood classroom, the value of shalom takes us beyond another way to get the children quiet. Psalms 34:15 tells us, "Seek peace and pursue it." Children can become *rod fay shalom* (pursuers of peace), finding ways to bring calm and community to their own classroom (one child is a *rod fay/rodefet shalom*). Peace requires action. Children can practice the *mitzvah* of *Hava'at Shalom Bayn Adam l'Havayro* (bringing peace between people) by learning to mediate their own arguments. Children can also learn the value of *Sh'lom Bayit* (creating peace in the home). Songs such as "*Oseh Shalom*" and "*Sim Shalom*"

⁴¹ Handelman, Maxine Segal. *Jewish Every Day: The Complete Handbook for Early Childhood Educators*. Denver, A.R.E. Publishing, 2000, 78

can be regular features in the classroom song repertoire. For a lesson plan for Grades K-2 on *Sh'lom Bayit*, see Figure 1 in Teaching Jewish Virtues: Sacred Sources and Arts Activities by Susan Freeman (A.R.E. Publishing, Inc.).³

Tza'ar Ba'alay Hayim – Compassion for Animals

- (literally, preventing the pain of animals). “A righteous person knows the needs of one’s beast” (Proverbs 12:10).
- According to Jewish law, we are allowed to use animals for our benefit, but they must be treated kindly because they, too, are God’s creatures.
- Even when we kill animals for food or other uses, we must do everything within our ability to minimize the animal’s pain. In the classroom, children are observing *Tza'ar Ba'alay Hayim* when they help to take care of the class pet, or when they guide a fly outside rather than swatting it.

Tikkun Olam - Repair of the World.

- In the “*Alaynu*” prayer, we place our hopes in God that the world will be perfected through God’s reign. Yet, it is not up to God alone. We are God’s partners in the improvement of creation.
- This mitzvah illustrates the reciprocal relationship which God established with human beings. It is our obligation to take care of the earth, and in turn, it takes care of us.
- Major Jewish social action efforts are based on the value *Tikkun Olam*. *Tikkun Olam* includes the mitzvah of *Bal Tashheet* (preserving the earth).
- In the early childhood classroom, *Tikkun Olam* is embodied in efforts not to be wasteful with supplies and resources. It is present in the way the children care for the live things, plants and animals, in their classroom, and in the way they care for their playground and other outdoor spaces. We are partners with God in the completion and repair of the world. Children will rise to opportunities to act as God’s partner and take care of their world if they are given the vocabulary of the Jewish values and *mitzvot* to go along with their actions.

Bikkur Holim - Visiting the Sick.

- This mitzvah is found in the Talmud (Shabbat 127a): “These are the deeds which yield immediate fruit and continue to yield fruit in the time to come: honoring parents, doing deeds of kindness, attending the house of study, visiting the sick...”
- *Bikkur holim* is a way to model our own behavior after God’s behavior, to act *B'tzelem Elohim*, in the image of God, because God visited Abraham when he was sick (Genesis 18:1).
- In the early childhood classroom, *Bikkur Holim* is an important Jewish behavior to teach, especially when a child in the class, teacher or family member is sick. You can share the song “*Mi Sheberach*” by Debbie Friedman (on the albums *And You Shall Be a Blessing* and *Renewal of Spirit*), the prayer for the ill, and find ways to connect the children with those who are sick. This can be done through visits, phone trees, and sending letters, artwork, and photos.

***Hakhnasat Orhim* - Hospitality to Strangers**

- (Literally, bringing in guests); an important act of kindness. This mitzvah is also found in the Talmud (Shabbat 127a): “Rabbi Judah said in Rab’s name, ‘Hospitality to strangers is greater than welcoming the presence of the *Shekhinah*.’”
- It is a Jewish behavior to extend hospitality, because of the way Abraham opened his home to the three strangers who came to his tent (Genesis 18:2), and because of the lesson of the Exodus — that we were strangers in the land of Egypt. In the early childhood classroom, *Hakhnasat Orhim* dictates relationships the children have with each other and with the wider world.
- It provides a reason for inviting the child with whom you didn’t really want to play into the house corner with you. *Hakhnasat Orhim* is also present when we bring different classrooms together, visiting each other’s rooms for special occasions or simply for snack time.

***Kavod* - Respect, Honor.**

- The fifth of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:12) is *Kibbud Av v’Aym* (Honor Your Father and Mother). Basic human relations are based on *Kavod*, showing respect to the people with whom we interact.
- By honoring other people, we honor God. In the early childhood classroom, it is essential that *Kavod* be a two-way street.
- Teachers must show their children *Kavod*, and children must give teachers *Kavod* as well. One form of *Kavod* is *Derekh Eretz*, meaning the right way to behave (literally, “the way of the land,” also translated as good manners or common courtesy).

***G’milut Hasadim* - Acts of Loving kindness or Good Deeds.**

- In *Pirke Avot* (Ethics of the Fathers) 1:2 we learn: “The world stands on three things: Torah, worship, and acts of loving kindness.” The Talmud (Peah 1:1) details: “These are the things whose fruit a person enjoys in this world and whose reward is attained in the world to come: honoring parents, doing deeds of kindness, making peace, but the study of Torah is equal to them all [because it leads to them all].”
- *Hesed*, kindness, is encompassed in *G’milut Hasadim*. There have been entire curricula developed around the notion of kindness (e.g., The Kindness Curriculum, by Judith Anne Rice).
- In the Jewish early childhood classroom, it is important for children to learn that being nice and kind to other people is not just a good thing to do, it’s a Jewish thing to do.
- *G’milut Hasadim* is a collection of acts that detail the way we as Jews are to take care of fellow Jews, by caring for the needy, visiting the sick, comforting the mourner, and burying the dead, among others.
- *G’milut Hasadim* goes beyond simple acts of kindness. This mitzvah spells out for us the times when we need to take care of each other, and describes how to go about doing so. Emphasizing *G’milut Hasadim* in your classroom can imbue ordinary obligations with a greater sense of kindness. Children can learn that it is

the Jewish way to help each other willingly and with care. They should be rewarded for their acts of loving kindness, perhaps through a "*G'milut Hasadim* Tree," which continues to bloom throughout the year.

***Tzedakah* - from the root *zedek*, meaning Justice and Righteousness.**

- In Torah we are taught, "*Tzedek, tzedek tirdof* - Justice, justice shall you pursue" (Deuteronomy 16:20). Although *Tzedakah* is often translated as "charity," it has the wider connotation of giving back, or doing justice. Giving *Tzedakah* is a mitzvah; the Rabbis determined specific percentages of our income that we are obligated to give for *Tzedakah*.
- We give because, as Jews, we are commanded to help, not just because it is a nice thing to do. Giving *Tzedakah* is the just and right thing to do, and includes giving money, clothing, food, and time. In the early childhood classroom,
- *Tzedakah* should take many forms, so that children are not limited to the "penny in the pushke" definition of *Tzedakah*. Food drives, collecting gently-used clothing, and toy drives, etc., are and should be considered as acts of *Tzedakah*.

***K'lal Yisrael* - All Jews Are Part of One People.**

- There is diversity among Jews. We identify ourselves as Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, Sephardic, Ashkenazic, Israeli, American, etc. Jews have different beliefs, customs, foods, languages. Yet, we are bound together as one people by God, Torah, and Israel.
- The value of *K'lal Yisrael* can be instrumental in instilling in children an appreciation of and a tolerance for differences. Exposing children to differences through dress, food, language, songs, and stories opens children up to an appreciation for variety, and will lay the foundation for acceptance of other people in the world, Jewish and non-Jewish, who are different from them.

Figure C: Value Based Literature Review

All titles listed below encompass the early childhood spectrum, pre-kindergarten through second grade, outlined according to Maxine Handelman's 10 Jewish values that appropriate for students in early childhood.

***Mitzvah* (commandments, good deed)**

Geras, Adele, ed. "A Mitzvah is Something Special" by Phyllis Rose Eisenberg in *A Treasury of Jewish Stories*, New York: Kingfisher, 1996

This story is about a little girl who asks lots of questions about *mitzvot*. Through her questions, students learn about *mitzvot* and can be inspired to perform them.

Gershator, Phillis. *Honi and His Magic Circle*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America. 1979

Based on a Jewish legend, this title tells of Honi who wandered all over the land of Israel planting carob seeds.

Marzollo, Jean. *Miriam and Her Brother, Moses*. New York: Little Brown, 2004

Miriam, her mother, and Pharaoh's daughter all exemplify human decency in their efforts to save baby Moses' life.

***Shalom* (Peace)**

Bogot, Howard. *Shalom, Peace*. New York: CCAR Press, 1999

A story told in the languages of Hebrew, Arabic and English emphasizing the dream for peace in the Middle East.

Leaf, Munro. *The Story of Ferdinand*. New York: Viking Juvenile Books, 1936

This classic children's tale tells of Ferdinand the bull, who would rather sit under a tree and smell the flowers rather than run around act like the other bulls. His pacifist nature sets an example for us all.

Harper, Jessica. *I'm Not Going to Chase the Cat Today*. New York: William Morrow 2000

This story is about a family dog who awakes from a nap resolving that he will not chase the cat today. His change of heart inspires the family cat to not chase the resident mouse...and so on.

Frasier, Debra. *On the Day You Were Born*. New York: Harcourt Publishing, 1991

A story of a parent remembering the day a child was born; includes animals and references to nature in celebration

Tz'ar Ba'alay Hayim (compassion for animals)

Burstein, Chaya. *Hanukkah Cat*. Maryland: Kar Ben. 1991

On the first night of Hanukkah, a small orange kitten arrives outside Lenny's window. Lenny wants to keep his new Hanukkah cat more than anything.

Fraser, Debra. *On the Day You Were Born*. New York: Harcourt Publishing, 1991

A story of a parent remembering the day a child was born; includes animals and references to nature in celebration.

Mc Closkey, Robert. *Make Way for Ducklings*. New York: Viking Juvenile Books, 1941

Mr. and Mrs. Mallard search to find the perfect place to raise their ducklings.

Polacco, Patricia. *Mrs. Katz and Tush*. New York: Yearling Books, 1992

This story is about the friendship between a lonely elderly Jewish widow and a young African-American boy who come together because of a kitten. They learn that they have enough in common to become "family."

Swartz, Nancy Sohn. *In Our Image: God's First Creatures*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1998

Tikkun Olam (repairing the world)

Aardema, Verna. *Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain*. New York: Dial Press, 1981

A Kenyan Rhyme about how ki-pat brought rain to the drought-stricken Kapiti plain.

Cheng, Christopher. *One Child*. Northampton, MA: Interlink Pub Group, 1999

Saddened by environmental destruction, a girl determines to speak up for the world. She imagines what would happen "if the children of the world did all that they could."

Carle, Eric. *Tiny Seed*. New York: Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing, 1991

This book conveys the miracle of how seeds grow into flowers, expressing our relationship with nature.

Jeffers, Susan. *Brother Eagle, Sister Sky: A Message from Chief Seattle*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1991

This story is an adaptation of a speech delivered by Chief Seattle at treaty negotiations in the 1850s. The theme, passion born of love for the land, emphasizes that "all things are connected like the blood that unites us."

Muth, Jon. *Stone Soup*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2003

A Zen Buddhist tale telling the story of a group of monk's who visit an impoverished village; the monks make the villagers realize they have so much more to give.

Swartz, Nancy Sohn. *In Our Image: God's First Creatures*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1998

"Let us make humans in Our image, after Our likeness." This book focuses on the "Us" and "Our likeness." This author stresses that we are partners in creation.

Syme, Deborah Shayne. *Partners*. New York. UAHC Press, 1990

One Friday evening at synagogue, the Rabbi states that "Every Jew is God's partner in making the world a better place." Josh and Jacob are puzzled by this, and decide to ask her just how they can help God. On a class field trip to a museum in the city, the two suburban children witness the poverty and homelessness of others and are disturbed. When their teacher tells them that these problems exist because most people don't care, Josh and Jacob decide to do something.

Zalben, Jane Breskin. *Let There Be Light: Poems and Prayers for Repairing the World*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2002

This anthology of poems covers a broad spectrum of faiths including inspiring quotes from Mahatma Gandhi, the Dali Lama and others in an effort to encourage the reader to help save the world.

The 11th Commandment: Wisdom from Our Children. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1996

If there were an 11th commandment, what would it be? This book examines ideals of living with other people, living with the earth, living with family, living with ourselves, and living with God. The commandments are illustrated by children.

Bikkur Holim (visiting the sick)

Slate, Joseph. *Miss Bindergarten Stays Home from Kindergarten*. New York: Dutton, 2000.

Poor Miss Bindergarten is home in bed, while Mr. Tusky the elephant substitutes for her. In alphabetical rhyme the children also fall ill, one by one.

Wood, Douglas. *Grandad's Prayer of the Earth*. MA: Candlewick Press, 1999

A conversation between a boy and his grandfather act a springboard for a conversation about faith and prayer. Please note: this book includes the death of the grandfather figure, which helps the boy to understand the grandfather's message of the importance of nature.

Hakhnasat Orchim (hospitality to strangers)

Davis, Aubrey. *Bone Button Borscht*. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1995

A retelling of the classic "Stone Soup" story, set against the background of a Jewish *shtetl*. The stingy townspeople learn the valuable lesson of sharing from the poor beggar who comes to town.

Friedman, Ina R. and *How My Parents Learned to Eat*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1987

A story sharing the similarities and differences among cultures.

Fox, Mem. *Whoever You Are*. New York: Voyager Books, 1991 (reprint edition)

This title achieves a we-are-all-the-same message, encouraging children to appreciate all that makes us different from one another. "Little one, whoever you are, wherever you are, there are little ones just like you all over the world."

Gellman, Ellie. *Tamar's Sukkah*. Maryland: Kar-Ben, 1999

A child decorates her sukkah but finds that it isn't complete until all her guests have arrived.

Jaffe, Nina. *The Mysterious Visitor*. New York: Scholastic Books, 1997

Elijah is portrayed in different guises, settings and places as he delivers the universal message of comfort and peace.

Rylant, Cynthia. *The Relatives Came*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986

A big crowd in all shapes and sizes sets off for their relatives' place and all are settled everywhere in the house. Little does the family know, that the relatives stay for weeks!

Schram, Peninah. *The Chanukah Blessing*. New York: URJ Press, 2000

Although a poor family has little to share, they gladly allow a stranger to come in and celebrate the Chanukah holiday with them. As the family listens to the stranger tell the story of Chanukah, magic is in the air, for the very next morning, the family is repaid for its generosity with enough potatoes, flour, and money to last them through the end of the holiday.

Unger, Richard. *Rachel's Gift*. Tundra Books, 2003

It's almost Passover in the little town of Chelm and everyone is busy getting ready for the holiday. At Rachel's home, a special gift has arrived: Bubbie has sent her recipe for Matzo Ball Soup. It has been said that the smell of this soup will lure Elijah the Prophet and good fortune will come to them. The soup is wonderful, and soon it draws the neighbors. Yet none of these neighbors could possibly be the great prophet, right?

Kavod (respect)

Aardema, Verna. *Why Mosquitos Buzz in People's Ears*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1975

An African folktale teaching the value of telling the truth

Bunting, Eve. *The Wednesday Surprise*, New York: Clarion Books. 1989

A loving story about granddaughter who teaches her grandmother to read. The focus is on the lessons old and young share when they learn to read each other's hearts.

Fox, Mem. *Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge*. CA: Kane/Miller Publishers, 1984
A boy helps an elderly friend gain back her memory by bringing her some of her old things. As the elderly friend begins to regain some of her memories, she shares them with her friend in return.

Friedman, Ina R. and *How My Parents Learned to Eat*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1987
A story sharing the similarities and differences among cultures.

Jeffers, Susan. *Brother Eagle, Sister Sky: A Message from Chief Seattle*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1991
This story is an adaptation of a speech delivered by Chief Seattle at treaty negotiations in the 1850s. The theme, passion born of love for the land, emphasizes that "all things are connected like the blood that unites us."

Mc Dermott, Gerald. *Creation*. New York: Dutton Juvenile, 2003
Drawing primarily from Genesis 1:1 through 2:3, this book recounts the story of creation as told from God's perspective through imaginative pictures and strong text.

Rice, David. *Because Brian Hugged his Mother*. Nevada City, CA: Dawn Publications, 1999
Brian sets off a series of unselfish acts when he gives his mother a great big hug.

Seuss, Dr., *Horton Hatches the Egg*. New York: Random House, 1966
Horton the elephant is persuaded to sit on an egg while its mother, Maysie, takes a vacation. He faithfully waits through the Winter and the Spring, never leaving the precious egg, and his kindness is pleasantly rewarded with the birth of an elephant-bird!

Sose, Bonnie L. *Designed by God So I Must Be Special*. Winter Park, FL: Character Builders for Kids, 1990
This title outlines all the many different ways that each of us is special.

Williams, Vera B. *A Chair for My Mother*. Mulberry Publishing, 1982
A story about Rosa, who saves her money to buy the chair her mother always wanted, as they start fresh following a disastrous fire.

Zemach, Margot. *It Could Always Be Worse*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976
A rabbi dispenses strange advice to a man complaining about a crowded house, helping the man realize that things could always be worse. In this retelling, the peacefulness of the home is enjoyed after the character realizes he has everything he needs to make Shabbat – and life – special.

G'milut Hasadim (Acts of Loving Kindness)

Bunting, Eve. *The Wednesday Surprise*, New York: Clarion Books, 1989
A loving story about granddaughter who teaches her grandmother to read.

Carter, Rosalynn. *Kids Random Acts of Kindness*, Berkeley, CA: Conari Press, 1994
This book containing a number of ways kids can perform random acts of kindness, and encourages the reader to perform good deeds.

Cheng, Christopher. *One Child*. Northampton, MA: Interlink Pub Group, 1999
Saddened by environmental destruction, a girl determines to speak up for the world. She imagines what would happen "if the children of the world did all that they could."

Fox, Mem. *Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge*. CA: Kane/Miller Publishers, 1984
A boy helps an elderly friend gain back her memory by bringing her some of her old things. As the elderly friend begins to regain some of her memories, she shares them with her friend in return.

Gershator, Phillis. *Honi and His Magic Circle*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publicatoin Society of America. 1979
Based on a Jewish legend, this title tells of Honi who wandered all over the land of Israel planting carob seeds.

Hershenhorn, Esther. *Chicken Soup by Heart*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002
A little boy makes soup for his sitter when she is sick, spicing it with stories of their good times together.

Lewis, Barbara. *The Kids Guide to Service Projects: Over 500 Service Ideas for Young People Who Want to Make a Difference*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, 1995
The author lists ten steps for youth to follow in developing their service projects and then gives examples of ways in which children can, for example, help care for animals, contribute to community development and beautification, and fight crime.

Lewis, Barbara. *The Kids Guide to Social Action; How to Solve the Social Problems You Choose -- And Turn Creative Thinking into Positive Action*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, 1998
More than just a testimonial to some incredible kids, this "how to" manual assists children in choosing their causes and seeing their project through to completion. This book highlights children who used effective strategies in their struggle to make a difference in the world and offers lots of practical tips and information.

Lamstein, Sara Mavil. *I Like Your Buttons!* Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman and Co., 1999
This title exemplifies how kind words can be contagious!

Muth, Jon. *Stone Soup*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2003

A Zen Buddhist tale telling the story of a group of monk's who visit an impoverished village; the monks make the villagers realize they have so much more to give.

Rice, David. *Because Brian Hugged his Mother*. Nevada City, CA: Dawn Publications, 1999

Brian sets off a series of unselfish acts when he gives his mother a great big hug.

Williams, Vera B. *A Chair for My Mother*. Mulberry Publishing, 1982

A story about Rosa, who saves her money to buy the chair her mother always wanted, as they start fresh following a disastrous fire.

Wood, Douglas. *Grandad's Prayer of the Earth*. MA: Candlewick Press, 1999

A conversation between a boy and his grandfather act a springboard for a conversation about faith and prayer. Please note: this book includes the death of the grandfather figure, which helps the boy to understand the grandfather's message of the importance of nature.

Zalben, Jane Breskin. *Let There Be Light: Poems and Prayers for Repairing the World*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2002

This anthology of poems covers a broad spectrum of faiths including inspiring quotes from Mahatma Gandhi, the Dali Lama and others in an effort to encourage the reader to help save the world.

The 11th Commandment: Wisdom from Our Children. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1996

If there were an 11th commandment, what would it be? This book examines ideals of living with other people, living with the earth, living with family, living with ourselves, and living with God. The commandments are illustrated by children.

Tzedakah (Justice and righteousness)

Muth, Jon. *Stone Soup*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2003

A Zen Buddhist tale telling the story of a group of monk's who visit an impoverished village; the monks make the villagers realize they have so much more to give.

Olidort, Baila. *Quarters, Dimes, Nickels, and Pennies*. New York: Merkos, 1993

This book shows students how every little quarter, dime, nickel, and penny helps those in need.

Rosenfeld, Dina Herman. *The Very Best Place for a Penny*. Brooklyn: Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch, Inc., 1984

This story is about a penny that moves from place to place until it finds itself in the tzedakah box

K'lal Yisrael (All Jews Are Part of One People)

Fox, Mem. *Whoever You Are*. New York: Voyager Books, 1991 (reprint edition)

This title achieves a we-are-all-the-same message, encouraging children to appreciate all that makes us different from one another. "Little one, whoever you are, wherever you are, there are little ones just like you all over the world."

Fraser, Debra. *On the Day You Were Born*. New York: Harcourt Publishing, 1991

A story of a parent remembering the day a child was born; includes animals and references to nature in celebration.

Jeffers, Susan. *Brother Eagle, Sister Sky: A Message from Chief Seattle*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1991

This story is an adaptation of a speech delivered by Chief Seattle at treaty negotiations in the 1850s. The theme, passion born of love for the land, emphasizes that "all things are connected like the blood that unites us."

Avodah

Bogot, Howard I. and Daniel B. Syme. *I Learn About God*. New York: UAHC Press, 1998

This book approaches God through the eyes of a child sensitive to the wonders of nature and the miracle of growth. This is a book for very young children.

Borosan, Martin. *Becoming Me: A Story of Creation*. Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths Publishing, 2000

This book takes the reader on a journey of how a person becomes exactly who they are. It discusses God's role of infusing all of creation in a child-appropriate and thought provoking manner.

Brichto, Myra Pollack. *The God Around Us: A Child's Garden of Prayer*. New York, UAHC Press, 1999

This title offers an array of blessings for everyday life including blessings for various aspects of nature, people, etc.

Burstein, Chaya M. *The UAHC Kids Catalog of Jewish Living*. New York: UAHC Press, 1992

A collection of kid-appropriate information ranging from learning about the beginnings of Reform Judaism to God, Torah and Israel.

Cone, Molly. *Hello, Hello, Are you there God?* New York: UAHC Press, 1999

Combining the separate volumes of *Hear, O Israel: The Shema* books into one book, this compilation teaches children what it means to be part of the Jewish people, to cherish learning, and to love God.

Cone, Molly. "The Princess Who Wanted to See God" in *Who Knows Ten? Children's Tales of the Ten Commandments*. New York: UAHC Press, 1998

A princess who has always gotten what she asked for requests to see God. She is taken to the home of a poor crippled girl and is told to look at herself in the mirror. Feeling selfish, she learns that through caring for another, she finds God.

Cone, Molly. *Who Knows Ten? Children's Tales of the Ten Commandments*. New York: UAHC Press, 1997

This book helps to portray the hidden meanings of the Ten Commandments. Each chapter begins with a commandment and shares an important lesson or value.

Kripke, Dorothy. *Let's Talk About the Sabbath*. California: Alef Design Group, 1999

From meeting the Sabbath Queen to celebrating *Havdalah*, this book portrays a vision of a perfect Sabbath experience.

Kushner, Karen and Lawrence. *Because Nothing Looks Like God*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2000

This book is designed to spark a conversation between adults and children about the world and God. Questions such as "What does God look like?" and "How does God make things happen?" help to guide children's understanding.

Maisel, Grace Ragues and Samantha Shubert. "The Just Right Prayer" in *A Year of Jewish Stories: 52 Tales for Children and their Families*. New York: URJ Press, 2004

An Angel on Yom Kippur learns that the most beautiful prayers do not have to come from a siddur but rather from the hearts of people.

Rossoff, Donald. *The Perfect Prayer*. URJ Press, 2003

In a palace, long ago, a Queen goes in search of the perfect prayer. As each of her advisors presents a sound, an important aspect of the *Sh'ma* is explained. "Shhh" is the sound of silence and listening. "Mmmm" expresses deep thinking. The awe and wonder that can be found in God's creation is shown in the sound "Ahhh".

Sasso, Sandy Eisenberg. *God In Between*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1998

Mythical tale of a poor village at the foot of a topsy-turvy town with no roads and no windows. The villagers decide to look for God, but where can God be found? They soon find that the answer is much closer than they think.

Wood, Douglas. *Old Turtle*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2001

When all of creation argues over who or what God is, the Old Turtle helps them understand that it is only when people start listening to the world around them that they begin to hear and to heal the earth.

Figure D

James Fowler's 6 Stages of Faith Development⁴²

Stage One Intuitive- Projective Faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fantasy filled, imitative phase where child is influenced by moods, actions and stories of the visible faith presented by adults • Most often typified at taking place in children 3-7
Stage Two Mythic-Literal Faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person begins to form stories, beliefs and observances for themselves that symbolize belonging to his or her community • Beliefs are connected with moral rules and attitudes • Attention to coherence and meaning takes place
Stage Three Synthetic Conventional Faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith development begins to take place outside the family setting. • Centered around the expectations and judgments of significant others • This stage often comes about during the rise to adolescence and for many becomes a permanent place of balance • The formation of a personal myth takes place in, incorporating one's past and hopes for the future
Stage Four Individuative-Reflective Faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late adolescents/adults begin to take on a sense of responsibility for commitments, beliefs, lifestyle and attitudes, • Conflict between individual and group decision-making takes place • This stage holds a great capacity for self-reflection and outlook
Stage Five Conjunctive Faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves the incorporation of self-reflection and outlook with a mindful awareness of reality • Involves delving into one's prejudices, ideal images, etc. with a critical eye
Stage Six Universalizing faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This stage gives way to an activist mentality, where a person attempts to transform the present, idealizing a life of love and justice, envisioning a universal community • This stage is considered to be very rare

⁴² Fowler, J. *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*. San Francisco: Harper Books, 1999, 123-213

Figure E

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development⁴³

<p>Pre-conventional</p> <p>Corresponds to a "concrete individual perspective; a person can't see beyond his or her own needs</p>	<p>Stage 1: <i>Heteronomous Morality:</i> A person follows rules in order to avoid punishment. Point of View is solely from their own perspective</p> <p>Stage 2: <i>Individualism, instrumental purpose and exchange</i></p> <p>An individual grows to understand that each person has his or her own needs and attempts to fulfill both theirs as well as that of the "other"</p>
<p>Conventional Level</p> <p>Member of society perspective A person understands themselves as part of a larger, organized structure</p>	<p>Stage 3: <i>Mutual interpersonal expectations, relationships and interpersonal conformity</i></p> <p>individual attempts to fulfill the expectations of the people around them; awareness of shared feelings; individual attempts to put themselves in the other person's shoes</p> <p>Stage 4: <i>Social System and Conscience</i></p> <p>takes system into account; attempts to figure own place within system</p>
<p>Post-conventional</p> <p>"prior to society perspective"</p> <p>someone who can see beyond their own laws of society and question that society; questions what are the norms that that society is based upon</p>	<p>Stage 5: <i>Social Contract or utility and individual rights</i></p> <p>aware that people hold opinions and that most values and rules are relative to their own group" – upheld due to social contract— "integrates perspective by formal mechanisms of agreement" (marriage)</p> <p>Stage 6: <i>Universal Ethical Principals</i></p> <p>individual "follows self-chosen ethical principals" emphasis on morality</p>

⁴³ Kislowicz, p 33-36

Figure F

Carol Ingall's Theoretical Framework⁴⁴

Excellences

Moral education begins with a vision of moral excellences, what philosophers call virtues, and what we Jews call *middot*. What *middot* do we wish to nurture in ourselves and our students? What are the sources of these virtues?

Environment

In traditional circles, one hears the expression, "the walls are *rebbeim*"--we learn from our environment. The way we treat property and the way we treat people model the *middot* that inform our ethical systems. How do we create in our schools and classrooms the caring environments which make them safe havens in a often uncaring world?

Experience

Traditional Jewish educators believed in the primacy of behavior. Although many of us moderns demand theological support for our practice ("Tell me why, not just how"), we still believe that we should appeal to the young through the experiential. What kinds of experiences can we structure for our students that teach moral education from a truly Jewish perspective?

Expectations

Excelsior--onward and upward. Moral educators are dissatisfied with the status quo. They urge their students to become better people. Classic Jewish texts have filled this function for Jews throughout the ages; for many of us, it was *The Little Engine That Could* and *Aesop's Fables*. What role can expectations play in nurturing virtues in a Jewish school?

Explanation

Religious education without explanation is indoctrination. Explanation allows for dialogue, give and take, for questions and answers. By engaging the learner, listening carefully, and providing history and context, explanation saves moral education from becoming an inflexible list of thou shalls or shall nots.

Examination

Examination describes the deliberative process in which the teacher selects the *middot* which undergirds her curriculum. It also describes the process of teaching how to think through a theoretical moral dilemma so that students can practice the skill in preparation for a real-life dilemma. Last, examination is the way students make moral decisions, in their own lives and around issues raised in Jewish texts. Judaism is not interested in automatons, as either teachers or as learners. How do we as Jewish teachers educate for moral autonomy?

Exemplars

One way we learn how to be moral people is through the influence of living models. Like the Hasidim who learned from the way the Tsaddik tied his shoes, children learn from their parents and teachers. They also learn from the heroes of great narratives: from literature, Bible, and Jewish history. How can we harness the power of moral prototypes to foster moral growth?

Empathy

Educators, both teachers and parents, have lately come around to recognizing that the capacity for pro-social behavior and perspective-taking cannot be taken for granted. Although researchers observe that children as young as infants seem to be able to share the pain of others, this proclivity must be developed. To paraphrase Oscar Hammerstein, children still have to be carefully taught. How can we do this in Jewish schools?

⁴⁴ Ingall, 1999, 30-133

Part III. Teacher's Guide for "My Synagogue Scrapbook"

For the practical portion of this thesis, I have decided to apply the values that contribute to creating a holy community toward the creation of a teacher's guide for use in secondary schools at the early childhood and primary grade level. The book I chose to utilize entitled, "My Synagogue Scrapbook" was created by the Editor in Chief of the URJ Press, Hara Person who commissioned me to create the corresponding teachers guide. The true vision behind creating this teacher's guide was capitalizing on the transmission of Jewish values through children's literature.

The book as well as the teacher's guide is recommended for weekly use with students who are beginning to learn and feel comfortable in their synagogue environment. Because the book centers educating young children about the synagogue setting, it was a natural extension to include a secondary layer of learning focusing on Jewish values. As a result of the teacher's guide being utilized, students will also be able to identify core values associated with creating a *kehillah kedoshah*, holy community and demonstrate ways in which they can actively work toward creating a *kehillah kedoshah* for themselves and their synagogue population. Elements presented encourage students to extend their own knowledge yet consistently stress the warmth and importance of community life.

Enduring understandings include obtaining values associated with the three tenets contributing to creating a *kehillah kedoshah*. At a basic level, students will learn that the people in the synagogue come together to create a *kehillah kedoshah*. On a secondary level, students will learn that the Torah is a book containing the laws and traditions of the Jewish people. They will also learn that the Torah is very precious, and that we use it as a guide to help us live our lives.

With reference to *avodah*, students will learn that there is no right or wrong way to pray to God. They will also learn that when we come together to pray, we create a *kehilah kedoshah*. Students will learn that we individually have the power to make a difference and improve our community by performing acts of *g'milut chasadim*. They will learn that we can work together to improve our community and also work to improve those that are far away, and that by doing this we become closer to God and create a feeling of *kehilah kedoshah*.

The book, as well as the teacher's guide follow a progression that takes the student through the various parts of the synagogue including the *Beit Knesset*, *Beit T'fillah* and *Beit Midrash*. At each point, students are introduced to knowledge associated with the events that take place in each of these areas. The teacher's guide works to extend this knowledge by offering additional activities that reinforce the topics at hand while introducing value oriented activities that contribute toward creating a feeling *kehilah kedoshah*.

For example, at the beginning of the text when the book brings about the topic of the destruction of the Holy temple in Jerusalem and our need to create different ways to show our love for God, the teacher's guide provides a role-play exercise, encouraging them to think about what would make a stranger want to come inside their synagogue. By completing this exercise, students are distinguishing the contributing factors that go into creating a feeling of *kehilah kedoshah* as well as beginning to understand the *Kavod* and sense of *Mitzvah* we feel when we come together in a house of worship.

Later on in the text, when students are learning about elements associated with the Torah, the teacher's guide provides two activities that extend the information presented

while simultaneously allowing students to explore the meaning of Torah in their own lives. They are asked to work together to create a class Torah consisting of their individual artwork and paper towel rolls. By contributing toward this project, students are not only learning about the specific values mentioned in each of the stories presented such as *Hakhnasat Orchim*, *Bikkur Cholim*, and *Tzar Ba'alay Chayim*, but they are also learning about what it means to work together and show respect and love for the Torah. The activities presented build upon one another, and so because they will have learned about the ritual objects found in the sanctuary a few weeks prior, they are able to keep their class torah in the class *aron kadosh*. Finally, students are encouraged to pick a community they would like to share their class Torah with that is far away and in need of support thus exemplifying the values of *Tikkun Olam* and *K'lal Yisrael*.

My desire to complete a teacher's guide for this thesis stems from the learning that has taken place over the course of my own life. I am an avid believer in experiential learning, and I felt that I could add a unique perspective to the book presented. By coupling value-based activities in an experiential format, my goal is to create an opportunity to begin their faith-based development process at an early age, while having fun in the process.

I am a firm believer that learning does not stop when we leave the classroom and that we continue to learn and grow from each and every one of our experiences. Because of this, I wanted to include the teacher in the learning process. Although the focus for each activity is on the child, it was important to me to include the teacher as an active and contributing partner in each and every activity. It was crucial for me to get across the idea

that not only are our synagogues holy communities, but also that each and every one of our classrooms are holy communities as well.

Because of my avid interest in the faith-based development process, I wanted to encourage students to begin thinking about God, and what drives them to become spiritual individuals. Acclaimed author and inspirational speaker Parker Palmer refers to the first book of Genesis in which we are told that humankind was first formed [in the image of God], "the image of love."⁴⁵ He further explains that as we progress through the cycle of life, we are confronted with images and experiences that cause us to doubt the existence or cloud the vision of God's presence. From the moment we are born, we are on a constant search to relocate a sense of purity, attempting to define what he refers to as "a sense of education as a process of spiritual formation."⁴⁶

Palmer provides three ways in which people have been able to become spiritually connected.⁴⁷ He first mentions the study of sacred texts, similar to our Jewish value of *Torah*. By getting in touch with the words of our ancestors, we attempt to connect with spiritual tradition, thereby bridging the gap between the past and the future. The second is the practice of prayer and contemplation, similar to our Jewish value of *avodah*. By assuming an active role in spirituality, we have the ability to connect or cease to connect with the holy being of our choice. Palmer notes that prayer differs from studying, causing the participant to become more active "seeking a truth toward which others can point to, but during the act of prayer, one can finally touch and taste for themselves."⁴⁸ The third refers to the community itself that acts as a foundation, aiding in the interpretation of

⁴⁵ Palmer, P. *To Know as we are Known*. San Francisco: Harper Publishing, 1993, 17

⁴⁶ Palmer, 17

⁴⁷ Palmer, 17

⁴⁸ Palmer, 18

texts and giving guidance to prayer. This sense of community is akin to the Jewish value of, *G'milut Chasadim* or acts of loving-kindness.

Upon conducting research for this thesis, I was consistently amazed by the way in which our identified tenets consistently permeate secular literature. Earlier in this thesis, I mentioned this parallel found in Tisdell's work as well. It is clear to me that creating a *kehilah kedoshah* is not only our aim, but rather the aim of the much broader world as well.

How to Use this Book:

For each two-page spread, pages from the original publication have been presented at center, for easy access when lesson planning. Pages contains a box on the upper left hand corner entitled, "Key Concepts" that provide the educator with a snapshot of concepts illustrated as well as an additional box containing the specific Jewish values that centralize each page of activities, included for educator reference. On each layout, the headings, "introduce", "summarize" and "extend", separate the activities from one another, allowing the educator to create mini lessons for each topic provided. Required materials are listed under each activity presented.

Because the centrality of synagogue life is synonymous with the idea of community, the educator will note activities that are labeled, "community extensions" indicating thematic activities that are appropriate for community involvement. These ideas encourage the educator to include parents, clergy members and the greater synagogue population in experiential activities that benefit both our young students as well as the greater community. The educator will see these inclusions in blue typeface.

Additionally, each page contains a number of age-appropriate children's book and music recommendations to be utilized along with the concepts presented.

If the educator plans to utilize the workbook as a thematic unit in their classroom, they might choose to consider implementing a thematic tie-in indicating to students that the subject matter is remaining consistent week to week. A possible example of this method is making use of a felt transfer project as a planning activity. A felt board can be easily taken out for each class session and be used as an introductory conversation starter encouraging students to place Judaic-themed pieces on the board.

Particular attention was focused on presenting a range of activities that varied in age and skill level for each topic. Because this guide will be distributed nationally, it is assumed that the book will be used in a wide variety of classrooms. Experiential learning activities compliment each topic presented, and allow for a variety of different learning styles. The activities presented as well as the questions asked within each subset range in complexity and allow for higher order thinking to take place. If one were to complete the unit as a whole, they would find that the skills and information builds upon itself.

As stated, this teacher's guide has been designed with one primary goal: to encourage young children to learn about their synagogue as a *kehilah kedoshah*. By extending their learning to incorporate value-based activities, I have attempted to show how children's literature has the capacity to instill the Jewish moral and values we hold so dear. It is my hope that students will continue to approach additional learning opportunities with this same lens.

I have greatly enjoyed working on this thesis. It has been a true labor of love.

March 1, 2007

About This Teacher's Guide

The following is a teacher's guide for the book, *My Synagogue Scrapbook* by Hara E. Person and Faye Tillis Lewy z"l. The book is aimed at children who are at the pre-kindergarten through the second grade level. With the assumption that this target market might be even broader and because classrooms contain students on a multitude of different levels, a variety of lesson extensions have been provided for the educator. Wherever possible, lesson ideas offer additional ways to accommodate students with various learning styles.

Page Set-Up

For each 2-page spread, the pages from the original publication have been presented at center, for easy access when lesson planning. Each page contains a box on the upper left hand corner entitled, "Key Concepts" that provide the educator with a snapshot of concepts presented as well as a box running along that bottom that references children's book and music titles that might expand upon concepts presented. Each page also contains the headings, "introduce", "summarize" and "extend", allowing the educator to create mini lessons for each two-page spread provided.

Special Features

Because the centrality of synagogue life is synonymous with the idea of community, you will note activities that are labeled, "community extensions" indicating thematic activities that are appropriate for community involvement. These ideas encourage the educator to include parents, clergy members and the greater synagogue population in experiential activities that benefit both our young students as well as the community at large. You will note these inclusions in blue typeface.

Additionally, each page contains a number of age-appropriate children's book and song recommendations to be utilized along with the concepts presented. It is important to note that with regards to music usage, choosing a special song is always better than utilizing all that are presented. In order for children to master the material, they need to review a song multiple times. To teach more than two songs in one session will make it difficult for students to absorb the material.

Note to Teacher

If you are planning to utilize this workbook as a thematic unit in your classroom, you may choose to consider implementing a thematic tie-in indicating to students that the subject matter is remaining consistent week to week. A possible example of this method is making use of a felt transfer project as a planning activity. A felt board can be easily taken out for each class session and be used as an introductory conversation starter encouraging students to place Judaic-themed pieces on the board.

An additional suggestion is utilizing a disposable camera throughout the implementation of this unit.

Good Luck!

Key Concepts:

- The Holy Temple in Jerusalem was a place where Jews came to show their love for God

INTRODUCE**What is a Community? (10 minutes)**

1. Ask students if they know what the word "community" means. You may want to use the words "shared space"
2. Explore the qualities that make your classroom environment a community. (*Shared lifecycle events, experiences, family, memories, common language, shared beliefs and values*)
3. Generate a list on the blackboard or on a flip chart
4. Explain that the Jewish people are a community, and have been for many, many years!!
5. Explain that long ago most Jews lived in the same place. They had a special Holy Temple located in Jerusalem.

Materials Needed:

- Flip Chart and markers or use of a blackboard

SUMMARIZE**Recreation of Holy Temple (20 minutes)**

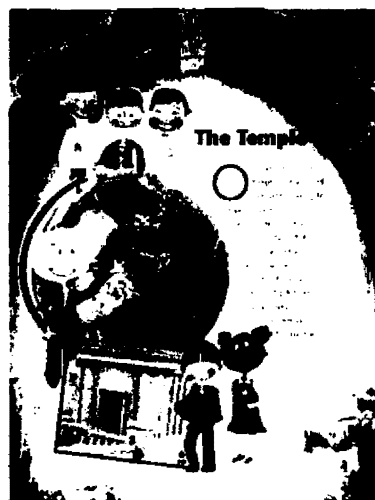
1. Explain to students that they are going to have an opportunity as a class to recreate the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.
2. Show a picture of the Holy Temple and explain that because this special place was made thousands of years ago, it was built completely out of stone.
3. Explain that we don't have stones to build our structure, but we do have blocks! Encourage students to work together to create a giant Holy Temple made completely of blocks. Upon completion, you can say a prayer inside your synagogue, and hang up pictures to make it holy!
4. Please note: this activity can also be done with Legos on a smaller scale.

Materials Needed:

- Blocks or Legos, flat surface to build upon such as cardboard box

Jewish Values Presented:

Mitzvah, Kavod, K'lal Yisrael



*The house of Jacob, come let us
walk by the light of God.*

Isaiah 2:5

EXTEND**Discussion: What Would You Give Up? (5-10 minutes)**

1. Explain to students that when people visited the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, they offered objects that were precious to them such as animals or gold that expressed their love for God. Explain that today, people pray and share of themselves in order to show how they feel.
2. Encourage students to think about how they would express their love for God if they were alive during the time the Holy Temple was built. You may wish to chart student's answers or ask them to draw a picture depicting their answer.
 - If you were alive during this time period, what would you give up? (*My toy, my stuffed animal, etc.*)

Materials Needed:

- Flip Chart or paper with crayons or markers

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Rosenblum, Richard. *The Old Synagogue*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989

Pfister, Marcus. *Rainbow Fish*. New York: North-South Books, 1992

Steven Carr Reuben. "To See the World Through Jewish Eyes" CD. *Shiron L'Yeladim*. New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 1995

Key Concepts:

- When the Holy Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed, Jews were forced to find new homes.
- A shift took place where Jews needed to create holy places in their own communities

Jewish Values Presented:

Mitzvah, Kavod, K'lal Yisrael

INTRODUCE**Jewish Communities (10 minutes)**

1. Explain that our Holy Synagogue in Jerusalem was destroyed, and we suddenly found ourselves needing a new place to show our love for God. We had to build new synagogues.
2. Every place there was a community of Jewish people, a synagogue was created.
3. Ask students:
 - If you were in charge of creating a synagogue for your community, what do you think would make someone want to come inside? (*shared practices, beliefs, a fun place to be, people feel welcomed, etc.*)
 - Note: You may choose to chart their answers and hang up on the wall for them to see.
4. Explain that today we will be talking about how Jews created communities all over the world.

Materials Needed:

- Flip chart and Markers

**SUMMARIZE****Diaspora Water Exercise (5-10 minutes)**

1. Lay out the world map on a flat surface and ask a student to find Israel (you will need to label the area before students arrive)
2. Explain that long ago, all the Jews in the world lived in this part of the world that today we call Israel. Ask a student to place the cup of water on top of this region.
3. Explain that our great Temple was destroyed and we were forced to find new homes. Tip over the cup of water so that water drops on the map.
4. Once we were all spread out, we needed to find new ways of coming together. How do you think Jews created communities?

Materials Needed:

- Laminated world map, small cup of water and paper towels for clean up

EXTEND**A Synagogue of our Own (20 minutes)**

1. Explain that each person in our class is going to have a chance to construct what we think would be the "perfect" synagogue
 - If you were asked to create a synagogue for your new community, what material would you construct it out of?
2. Guide students toward materials such as assorted art supplies, candy, etc. that they may use for their creation.
 - Please note: If time is restricted, this activity may be done as a drawing activity
3. Once completed, you may wish to create a synagogue hall of fame

Materials Needed:

- Assorted art supplies
- Flat surfaces for each student to build upon such as sides of a cardboard box

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Feiler, Bruce. *Walking the Bible: An Illustrated Journey for Kids*. New York: HarperCollins, 2004.

Jeff Klepper and Susan Nanus. "The Synagogue." *Shirón L'Gan*. CD. Transcontinental Music Publications/UAHC: New York, 1997

Key Concepts:

- Synagogues have different names including temple, congregation and *shul*
- Synagogues have different names in Hebrew that are devoted to the many functions they provide. These are often referred to as *Beit Kneset* (house of gathering), *Beit T'fillah* (house of worship) and *Beit Midrash* (house of learning).

Jewish Values Presented:

Mitzvah, Tikkun Olam, G'milut Chasadim, Tzedakah and Kavod

EXTEND

Creating a Community Web! (10-15 min)

1. Encourage students to think about the many people who create their synagogue community. You may choose to provide them with a worksheet that includes blank spots in web for them to complete

Materials Needed: Worksheet with blank web

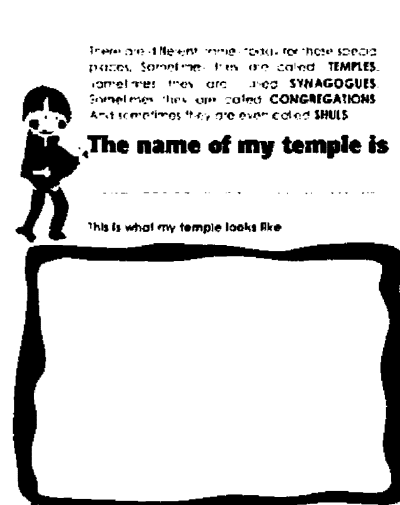
INTRODUCTION

Let's Talk About Our Synagogue! (10 minutes)

1. Ask students:
 - Who can tell me the name of our synagogue?
 - Who comes to our synagogue? (*Children, grandmas and grandpas, teachers, moms and dads, etc.*)
 - What kinds of things do people do when they come to our synagogue?
2. Explain that today we're going to talk about the different parts of our synagogue!
3. Note: You may choose to chart student's answers on a flip chart.

Materials Needed:

- Flip Chart/Markers



COMMUNITY EXTENSION

Our Synagogue Scrapbook!

1. Invite students and families to create a page for our synagogue scrapbook!
2. Invite clergy, educators and members of your congregation to create a page that you can duplicate for each child's book. A master copy can be kept in your classroom so that next year's class (and prospective students) will have something to look at!

Materials Needed

- 3 ring binder, peel back pages, magazines, Synagogue bulletins and other related supplies
- Glue

SUMMARIZE Art Mural (time will vary)

1. Ask students to think of different images that fall under each category presented. Encourage them to act their suggestion out for the rest of the group.
2. Explain to students that they are going to have an opportunity to create a mural that will hang in their classroom or throughout the building
3. Provide students with a long piece of butcher paper and either paint or markers. Encourage children to draw each of the three houses listed (or if they are different in your synagogue, please modify). **Teacher Note:** *This step may need to be completed before students arrive.*
4. Guide students to think of the activities they acted out and to recreate them under the appropriate heading

Materials Needed:

- Butcher Paper, markers or paint

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Hoffman, Lawrence A. and Ron Wolfson. *What You Will See Inside a Synagogue*. Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths, 2004

Jeff Klepper and Susan Nanus. "The Synagogue." *Shirah L'Gan*. CD. Transcontinental Music Publications/UAHC: New York, 1997

Key Concepts:

- *Beit Kneset* is the Hebrew name for the area of the synagogue devoted to providing opportunities for people to gather together, help each other and help their community.

INTRODUCE

What happens in the Beit Kneset? (10 minutes)

1. Explain that the first area of the synagogue we are going to study is the *Beit Kneset*, or house of gathering. Explain that in this area of our synagogue, people gather together to share in the happy and sad times they might be going through in their lives.
2. Ask students:
 - Can you think of some reasons why people would want to come together in a synagogue? (Weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs, etc. (Teacher note: you may choose to complete this portion using charades
3. Explain that another reason why people gather together in a synagogue is to help each other, as well as other people in the Jewish community.

No Materials Needed



Jewish Values Presented:

Mitzvah, Kavod, Tzedakah, Tikkun Olam, G'milut Chasadim



EXTEND

Let's Make A Quilt! (20-30 minutes)

1. Explain to students that synagogues not only take care of the people in their own community, but they also try and take care of people in other communities too!
2. Explain that one way we can show a group of people that we care is to create a quilt! Quilts keep us warm when we wrap them around us, but they can make a whole group of people feel warm inside when they are shared by a community far away.
3. Explain to students that they are going to create a quilt for another community who might need our help.
4. Ask students who they think might be in need of their help. Generate a list on a flip chart.
5. As a class, decide on a good place to send your quilt.
6. Distribute handkerchiefs (or cloth napkins) and fabric markers. You may wish to provide a theme, depending on where it will be sent.
7. After students create their square, ask a parent to sew the squares together.
8. Together with your community, look back at the list generated and decide who will receive your quilt, reemphasizing the value of *mitzvah* and *g'milut chasadim*.

Materials Needed:

- Flip chart and markers
- Handkerchiefs or cloth napkins
- Fabric markers

Estimated Time: Assembly time varies based on desired construction.

SUMMARIZE/EXTEND

Mitzvah Day! (Time will vary)

1. Provide an opportunity for your students to engage your synagogue in a community-wide mitzvah project. Possible ideas are mentioned on p. 28.
2. Ask students to think about area of your community needing improvement and request that families participate. Examples including cleaning up a local park, collecting toiletries or volunteering at a soup kitchen.

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Muth, Jon J. *The Three Questions*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2002
Prose, Francine. *You Never Know: A Legend of the Lamed-vavniks*. New York: Greenwillow Publishing, 1998
Syme, Deborah Shayne. *Partners*. New York: UAHC Press, 1990
Zalben, Jane Breskin. *Let There Be Light: Poems and Prayers for Repairing the World*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2002
The 11th Commandment: Wisdom from Our Children. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1996

Fran Avni. "Giving" CD. *Shiron L'Gan*. New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 1997

Key Concepts:

- *Beit Midrash* is the Hebrew name for the area of the synagogue devoted to learning for people of all ages
- There are many different kinds of learning that take place within the synagogue.

Jewish Values Presented: *Mitzvah, Kavod, K'lal Yisrael, G'milut Chasadim, Tikkun Olam, Shalom, Tzedakah, Klal Yisrael*

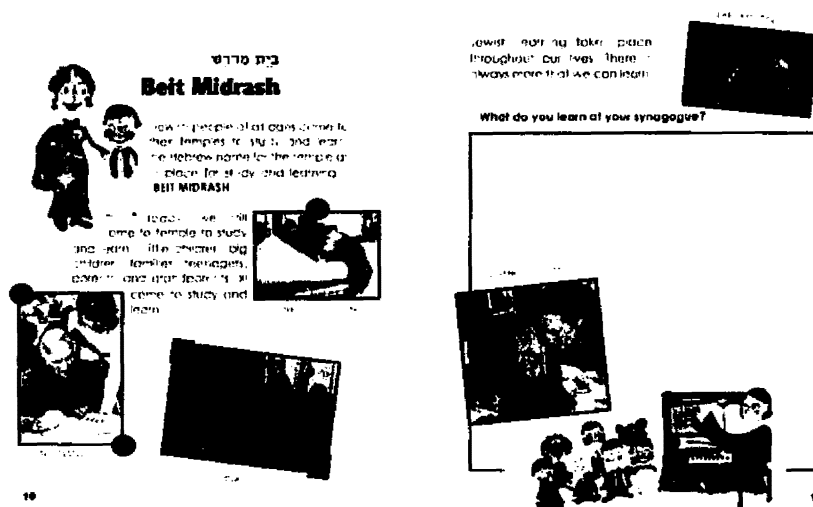
INTRODUCE/SUMMARIZE

The Whole Torah! (Time Will Vary)

1. Explain to students that because we love to learn, synagogues devote a lot of time and energy to making sure that there are opportunities for all kinds of people to learn about being Jewish! This special part of the synagogue is called the "*Beit Midrash*" or house of study.
2. Ask students, "Who can give me the name of the special scroll we use that contains our very special laws? (*Torah*)"
3. Explain to students that the Torah holds stories of our people, our laws and our traditions. We read out of the Torah each week! In fact, the Torah is so long that it takes us an entire year to read through the whole thing!
4. Ask students: Would you like to see what the Torah looks like when it is unrolled?
5. Guide students to sit in a circle, and with the help of an additional teacher or clergy member, slowly roll out the Torah on their laps so each child is holding a piece of the Torah. You may wish to preface this activity with a "no hands touching the Torah" rule.
6. Ask students to notice the language the Torah is written in (*Hebrew*.) Also guide them to notice the fancy way in which the Torah script is written, with some characters bigger than others.

Materials Needed

- Small Torah, Clergy person (if desired)



COMMUNITY EXTENSION

Let's Get Everyone Learning Together!

1. Invite the clergy and educators in your synagogue to join with your class and other grades in a community-wide learn-a-thon! Possible ideas include inter-generational learning and inter-denominational learning

EXTEND

Stage a *Beit Midrash* (Time Will Vary)

1. Share with students that some synagogues hold a *beit midrash* where people get together and study about a particular topic. Explain that they are going to have an opportunity to decide what they want to learn about and plan the activities that will help us learn about that topic
2. Generate a list of interested topics and narrow down to one that the whole class will be excited about.
3. Ask students to show you through behavior what they think happens in a *Beit Midrash*.
4. Encourage your students to think of ways we can learn about that topic and offer those opportunities during that class or the next class period.

Teacher Note: You may choose create a community activity from this idea and invite families to the synagogue for Shabbat study

Materials Needed:

- Flip chart/markers, various books

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Burstein, Chaya M. *The UAHC Kids Catalog of Jewish Living*. New York: UAHC Press, 1992

Cone, Molly. *Who Knows Ten? Children's Tales of the Ten Commandments*. New York: UAHC Press, 1997

Maisel, Grace Ragues and Samantha Shubert. "The Just Right Prayer" in *A Year of Jewish Stories: 52 Tales for Children and their Families*. New York: URJ Press, 2004

Muth, Jon J. *The Three Questions*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2002

Sicorl, Danny. *Tell Me a Mitzvah: Little and Big Ways to Repair the World*. Maryland: Kar-Ben Comics, 1993

Steven Carr Reuben. "Tora Li" CD. *Shiron L'Yeladim*. New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 1995

Key Concepts:

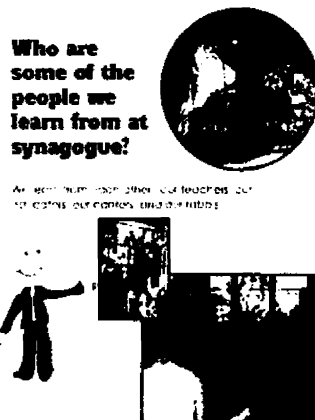
- Rabbis, cantors, educators and teachers are all people who take part in helping us learn.
- We can even learn from each other!

Jewish Values Presented:

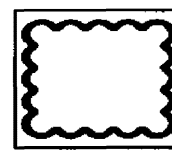
*Kavod, Klal Yisrael, Shalom,
Tzedakah, G'milut Chasadim*

INTRODUCE**Who Are the People We Learn From? (10 minutes)**

1. Explain to students that a synagogue is filled with people who we can learn from. Ask if they can name some of their teachers or clergy members for the rest of the group. Include that we also learn from each other!
2. Tell students that people we learn from all have different roles inside a synagogue. Ask students to share what they think each person's job is.
3. Encourage students to pick one person from our community who they like to learn from. Ask them to think about a time that they learned something that that is important to them.



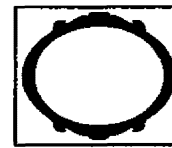
These are the people I learn from:



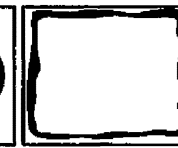
My teacher's name is



My educator's name is



My cantor's name is



My rabbi's name is

At my synagogue I also learn from

EXTEND**Calling All Clergy and Educators! (Time Will Vary)**

1. Invite the clergy and educators to a panel discussion hosted by your class. Before guests arrive, generate a list of questions that the children would like to have answered during this special time.
2. Display clergy and educator answers for the community to see!

Materials Needed:

- Paper and pen to generate questions
- Table and chairs for panel to sit

Teacher Note: You may choose to have students create invitations inviting clergy members to this panel discussion

SUMMARIZE Puppets (15 minutes)

1. Explain that today we are going to create sock puppets representing the people in our synagogue that we learn from!
2. Show students a model of a sock puppet you have created using a sock, markers and string and explain that they will have an opportunity to create a puppet of their own representing a Rabbi, a Cantor or a teacher in our synagogue.
3. Share with students that after we are finished, we we'll take time to put on a puppet show explaining everyone's place in our synagogue! Guide students toward materials and allow them to develop their creations.

Materials Needed

- Socks, markers, glue, yarn

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Brichto, Mira Pollak. *God Around Us Volume 2- The Valley of Blessings*. New York: UAHC Press, 2001

Jeff Klepper and Susan Nanus. "The Rabbi." CD. *Shiron L'Gan*. New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 1997

Jeff Klepper. "The Cantor" CD. *Shiron L'Gan*. New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 1997

N.Rubin, Julie Jaslow Auerbach. "The People in My Synagogue." CD. *Shiron L'Gan*. New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 1997

Key Concepts:

- The *Beit Tefillah* is the Hebrew name for the part of the synagogue devoted to talking to God through prayer.
- When we pray, we say thank you to God for the good things in our life and in the world.

Jewish Values Presented:

Mitzvah, Kavod, Tikkun Olam, Klal Yisrael, Shalom

INTRODUCE

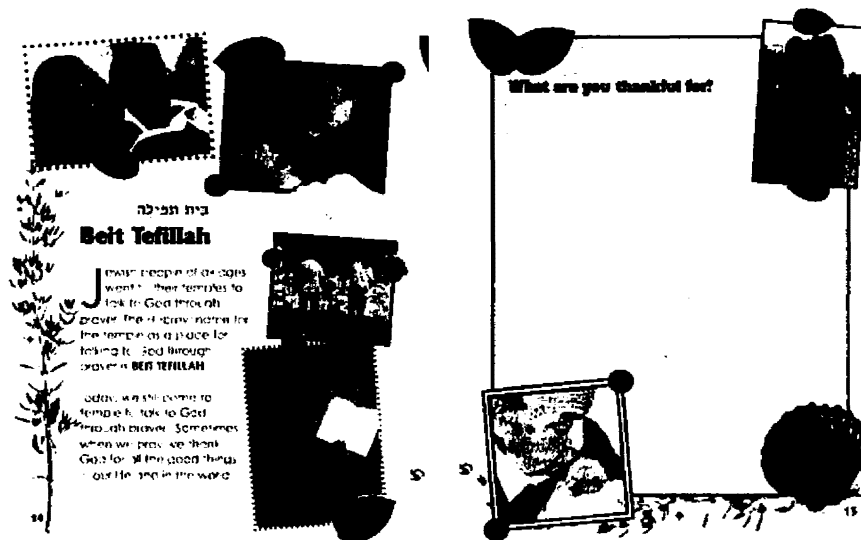
Beit Tefillah (Time Will Vary)

1. Today, we are going to spend time talking about the part of the synagogue that is devoted to praying to God! This section is called the "*Beit Tefillah*" or house of worship.
2. Explain that thinking about how to talk to God can be very hard. Sometimes, we can make it easier by breaking down our questions.
3. Gather students in a circle, and hold a discussion asking the following questions:
 - Where do I like to pray to God?
 - How do I like to pray to God?
 - When do I like to pray to God?
 - Why do I like to pray to God?

Teacher Note: Depending on the age level of your students and time allotted for this activity, you may wish to choose to extend their learning in the following ways:

- Students can paint their answers on a mural
- Students can write their answers on easel paper hung up around the room.

Materials needed varies based on chosen activity



EXTEND

What Are We Thankful For? (Time Will Vary)

1. Encourage students to bring in pictures of those people and places in their lives they feel particularly thankful for. Create a bulletin board and emphasize the community aspect of feeling of being together.

SUMMARIZE/EXTEND

My God Journal (Time Will Vary)

1. Explain to students that thinking about God can sometimes be confusing. One way to begin recording all of our questions is to start a journal.
2. Distribute notebooks or pads that students make their own either with stickers or markers.
3. Encourage students to record their questions about God, or things in their life they wish to share with God.

Teacher Note: For younger students, this can be a great place to record pictures representing their thoughts about God. This can become a weekly or monthly activity.

Materials Needed:

- Notebook or pad for each student
- Pencils
- Stickers or markers

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Bea, Holly. *Thank You God*. New York: North-South Books, 2003

Cone, Molly. *Hello, Hello, Are you there God?* New York: UAHC Press, 1999

Goodman, Arnold. *Sweet Words to God*. Georgia: Longstreet Press, 2001

Groner, Judyth. *Thank You, God: A Jewish Child's Book of Prayers*. Maryland: Kar-Ben Publishing, 2003

Maisel, Grace Ragues and Samantha Shubert. "The Just Right Prayer" in *A Year of Jewish Stories: 52 Tales for Children and their Families*. New York: URJ Press, 2004

Rossoff, Donald. *The Perfect Prayer*. New York: URJ Press, 2003

Wood, Douglas. *Old Turtle*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2001

Kol B'seder. "Modch Ani." *Songs for Growing*. CD. New York: Transcontinental Music Publications/UAHC, 2001

Judy Kaplan Ginsburgh. "Thanks God!" *My Jewish World*. New York: Transcontinental Music Pub/UAHC, 2002

Key Concepts:

- Sometimes when we pray, we thank God and at other times we ask God for help.
- We can use words from the prayer book or our own words to talk to God.

Jewish Values Presented:

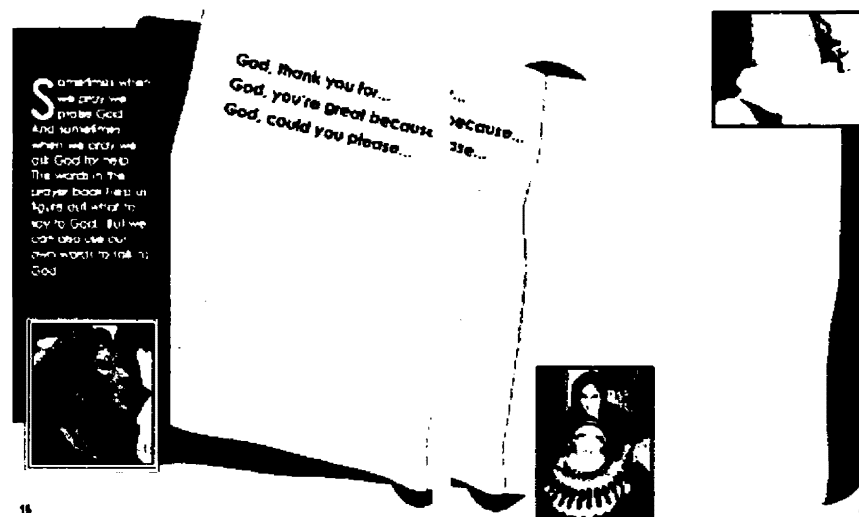
Mitzvah, Kavod, Shalom

INTRODUCE/SUMMARIZE**My Very Own Prayer Book (Time Will Vary)**

1. Ask students:
 - Is there a right or a wrong way to pray to God? Who makes the decision about how we pray?
 - What are some ways you pray to God?
2. Explain to students that one of the best ways to learn about praying to God is to create our very own prayer book!
3. Distribute a format that is conducive to your student's age and school environment. Suggestions include a 3-ring binder, marble notebook or blank white notebook.
4. You may choose to select prayers that are age and skill appropriate
5. Provide an area on each page for students to make their own meaning for each prayer presented. You may ask them to create their very own prayer!
6. Suggested prayers are listed below: *Modeh Ani, Barchu, Sh'ma, Hashkiveinu, Avot V'imahot, Shehecheyanu*

Materials Needed:

- Prayer Book for whole class
- Markers/crayons/pencils

**COMMUNITY EXTENSION****Classroom Share!**

1. If prayer book is an ongoing activity, invite parents and grandparents into class for a meaningful prayer experience utilizing student's prayer books.

EXTEND**Sign Language for the Sh'ma (20 minutes)**

1. Explain to students that there are many ways we can talk to God. Sometimes, we don't even use any words!
2. Ask students if they have ever heard of a special language called sign language? Explain that this language is usually used to talk to people who have trouble hearing with their ears. We use our hands to make signs back and forth in order to communicate!
3. Tell students that today we are going to learn a prayer called the *sh'ma* which talks about our love for God, and learn the sign language that goes along with it! *(Teachers can find additional info in the appendix of this teachers guide)*
4. After students learn the sign language for this prayer, you may wish to share their new skill with the rest of your synagogue community.

Materials Needed:

- Reference sheet for sign language

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Bogot, Howard I. and Daniel B. Syme. *I Learn About God*. New York: UAHC Press, 1998
 Boroson, Martin. *Becoming Me: A Story of Creation*. Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths Publishing, 2000
 Brichto, Mira Pollak. *God Around Us Volume 2- The Valley of Blessings*. New York: UAHC Press, 2001
 Conc, Molly. *Hello, Hello, Are you there God?* New York: UAHC Press, 1999
 Kushner, Lawrence. *The Book of Miracles: A Young Persons Guide to Jewish Spiritual Awareness*. New York: UAHC Press, 1997

Sasso, Sandy Eisenberg. *God In Between*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1998
 Wood, Douglas. *Old Turtle*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2001
 Allard, Peter and Ellen. "Healing Prayer." CD. *Bring the Sabbath Home*. 80-Z music, Inc., 1995
 Klepper, Jeffrey. "Prayer Is Reaching" Manginot: The Complete Jewish Songbook for Children. New York: Transcontinental Music Publications/UAHC, 2002

- Synagogues can be found in all different kinds of places and there are all different types of synagogues.
- Synagogues are places where Jews can gather and be together.

Klal Yisrael, Shalom

And let them make
Me a sanctuary that
I may dwell among
them

Exodus 25:8

All Kinds of Synagogues (10 minutes)

1. Explain to students that there are different kinds of synagogues that exist all over the world!
2. Ask students: What kind of a synagogue do you think a community would have by the water? What kind of synagogue do you think a community would have by the mountains?
3. Explain to students that it doesn't matter what the synagogue looks on the outside, but how it makes you feel on the inside!
4. Ask students:
 - How do you think a synagogue can make you feel comfortable or secure?
 - Where in our synagogue do you feel the most comfortable? (*the sanctuary because of the Torah, our classroom, when I walk through the doors, etc.*)
5. It's important to talk about how our synagogue makes us feel!

No Materials Needed



Let's Create a Partnership!
(Time Will Vary)

1. Encourage your congregation to create a partnership with a synagogue from another part of the country or even the world that might need assistance.
2. Encourage your students to connect with members of that community of their own age by conducting an artwork exchange or setting up an email pen-pal program.

Materials vary based on execution

Mapping it Out! (20 minutes)

1. Draw a map of your synagogue on a piece of large butcher paper. Be sure to include all the rooms in the synagogue, labeled so that students will be able to identify them easily.
2. Explain to students that a synagogue is YOUR place. A place to learn, but also a place for you to feel comfortable. Show the map to your students and ask them to think about their favorite place in the synagogue. Ask, "Where do you feel the most comfortable?" The sanctuary? The school?
3. Encourage students to color the map in, incorporating their own pictures of what their synagogue means to them.

Materials Needed:

- Large piece of butcher paper, crayons/markers

Jeff Klepper and Susan Nanus, "The Synagogue." *Shirón L'Gan*. CD. Transcontinental Music Publications/UABC; New York, 1997.

Key Concepts:

- Although synagogues are different, every synagogue contains some items that are always the same.

Jewish Values Presented:

Mitzvah, Kavod

INTRODUCE

What's In a Synagogue? (5-10 minutes)

- Explain to students that even though some synagogues are located in big cities, and some are by the ocean, there are certain objects that they always have.
- Ask students:
 - Can you think of what some of these objects might be? (A Torah, Menorah, prayer books)
- Explain to students that these objects are all part of Jewish tradition, and they help us remember we are in a very special place

No Materials Needed

What's in a synagogue?

Match the names used with the right photos.

Match the names used with the right photos.

Match the names used with the right photos.

Match the names used with the right photos.

Match the names used with the right photos.

Match the names used with the right photos.

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Match the names used with the right photos.

Match the names used with the right photos.

Match the names used with the right photos.

Match the names used with the right photos.

COMMUNITY EXTENSION

It's Diorama Time!

- Hold a contest with your classroom community and encourage parents and their children to create a diorama of your synagogue sanctuary.
- Display each family's diorama outside by the sanctuary on Shabbat!

EXTEND

Let's Make an Aron Kodesh! (25 minutes)

- Teach students that one of the most important things we will find inside a sanctuary is the *aron kodesh*, or the ark where the Torah is kept.
- Ask students, "Why do you think the Torah is kept inside this very special place?"
- Explain to students that we are going to take time to create our own *aron kodesh* in our classroom. This way, we will make our classroom an even holier place!
- Show students a cardboard box that has a slit down the front. Position it in such a way that students see that a Torah can be kept inside, and can be taken out each week.
- Encourage students to create drawings on paper or directly on the box in order to personalize for your classroom community.
- When complete, place tissue paper and small Torah (from consecration) inside

Materials Needed:

- Cardboard box with slit
- Markers
- Tissue paper

SUMMARIZE

Putting it Together! (20 minutes) Please note: This activity requires enlarging a photo and laminating it beforehand

- Take a picture of your synagogue's sanctuary and blow it up as large as possible, capturing the ritual objects presented on this page.
- Laminate the picture and cut it up into a puzzle.
- After taking your students on a field trip to the sanctuary to "spot and label" the many ritual objects, present them with the puzzle and ask them to put it together.
- Depending on the age of your students, you may wish to ask them to label these objects on your puzzle.

Materials Needed:

- Laminated picture of your synagogue's sanctuary and hard surface to put puzzle together

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Chaikin, Miriam. *Menorahs, Mezuzas, and Other Jewish Symbols*. New York: Clarion Books, 1990

Hoffman, Lawrence A. and Ron Wolfson. *What You Will See Inside a Synagogue*. Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths, 2004

Schwartz, Amy. *Mrs. Moskowitz and the Shabbat Candlesticks*. Philadelphia and Jerusalem: Jewish Publication Society, 1983

Van Dusen, Susan and Rabbi Marx Berkson. *The Synagogue: House of the Jewish People*. New York: Behrman House 1999

Kol B'Seder "The Bimah Song". *Songs for Growin'*. CD. New York: Transcontinental Music/UAHC, 2001

Kol B'Seder "The Mezzuzah Song". *Songs for Growin'*. CD. New York: Transcontinental Music/UAHC, 2001

Kol B'Seder "The Kippah Song". *Songs for Growin'*. CD. New York: Transcontinental Music/UAHC, 2001

Goldin, Barbara Diamond. "The Best Merchandise" in *A Family Book of Midrash*. NJ: Jason Aronson, 1996

Key Concepts:

- The Torah tells the story of the Jewish people. Each year on *Simchat Torah*, we read our history again and again.
- The Torah has 54 portions and we read one section each week!

Jewish Values Presented:

Mitzvah, Kavod, Tikkun Olam, Klal Yisrael, Shalom, tzar Ba'alay Chayim, Hakhnasat Orchim, Bikku Cholim

It is a tree of life to those who hold fast to it and all of its supporters are happy.

Proverbs 3:18

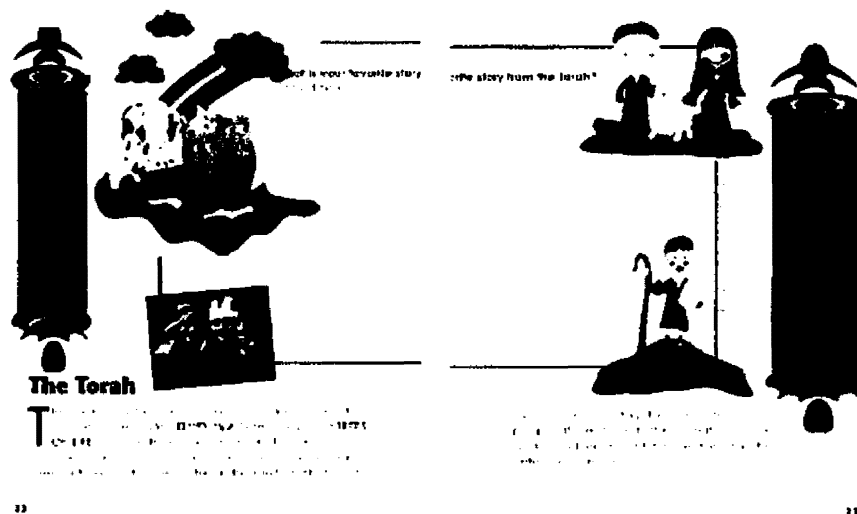
INTRODUCE

The Torah (10 minutes)

1. Ask students:
 - Who can tell me what they know about our special scroll, the Torah? *(It has five books, it contains the traditions, laws and stories of our people)*
2. Explain to students that the stories in the Torah are so special that we read them again and again every year!
3. Ask students:
 - Why do you think we take time to read them over and over? *(as we grow older, the stories mean different things to us)*

Materials Needed

- A small Torah would make a great compliment to this lesson



SUMMARIZE

Let's Act It Out! (Time Will Vary)

1. Provide an opportunity for students to put on skits relating to the *parisha* or portion of the week.
2. Depending on the age and skill level of your students, you may wish to read an appropriate summary of the portion beforehand.

Materials Needed:

- Summary of Torah portion, available props

EXTEND

Create Your Own Class Torah (15 minutes)

1. Explain to students that our whole class is going to work together to create a classroom Torah of our own! (If you have created the ark, this is a perfect connecting activity)
2. Show students two large paper towel rolls and explain that a real or kosher scroll has handwritten letters written by a special person named a *sofer*. We are going to use our imaginations to come up with a Torah scroll of our own!
3. Describe to students that their artwork is going to be combined to create the body of the Torah. Depending on the age and skill level of your class, you may wish to have children choose between pieces of paper pre-labeled with the books of the Torah written out, or encourage them to draw a picture about what the Torah means to them.

Teacher Note: This activity can be modified to be included in your curriculum each week based on the current Torah portion. Estimated Time Varies Based on Execution

Materials Needed:

- Paper towel rolls, paper, tape, crayons/markers

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Cone, Molly. "The Princess Who Wanted to See God" in *Who Knows Ten? Children's Tales of the Ten Commandments*. New York: UAHC Press, 1998

Cowan, Rachel and Paul. *A Torah is Written*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1986

Lewis, Shari. *One-Minute Bible Stories*. New York: Doubleday, 1989

Pinckney, Jerry. *Noah's Ark*. New York: North-South Books, 2002

Ray, Eric. *Sofer, The Story of a Torah Scroll*. Torah Aura Productions, 1986

Steven Carr Reuben. "Hands Hold the Torah." (CD UNKNOWN) CD. New York: Transcontinental Music Publications/UAHC.

Richard Silverman. *Tree of Life*. (cd info tba)

Kol B'Seder "La'asok B'divrei Torah". *Songs for Grown'.* CD. Transcontinental Music Publications/UAHC: New York, 2001

Judy Kaplan Ginsburgh. "The Torah!" *My Jewish World*. CD. New York: Transcontinental Music Publications/UAHC, 200

Key Concepts:

- When we are at synagogue, many people wear special clothing like a *tallit* and a *kippah* that help us show our love for God.
- When we go to synagogue, we see people of all ages and people who work there. We even see people who are helping others in our community!

INTRODUCE Special Clothing (5 minutes)

1. Ask students:

- Have any of you seen a friend or family member wearing special clothes in the sanctuary? These clothes help them feel connected to God.
- Can anyone name any of these articles?

SUMMARIZE/EXTEND

Let's Make Kippot! (20 minutes)

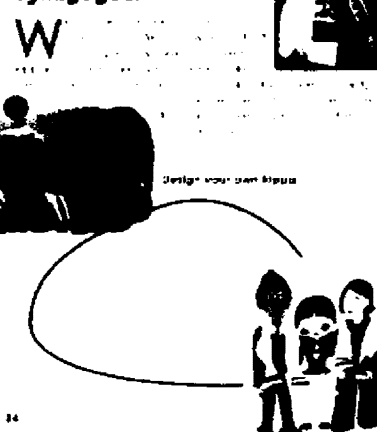
1. Explain to students that many people where a *kippah* or yarmulke when they are in the sanctuary because it helps them feel closer to God. It helps them remember where they are. In fact, some people wear them all the time!
2. Show a *kippah* to your class and explain that both girls and boys can wear *kippot*.
3. Explain to students that they are going to make a *kippah* of their own. Show them the material, and guide them toward fabric paint (or markers) which will help them personalize their *kippah*.

Resource:

www.milechai.com/kippot/kippah_WhiteSatin.html

(You may choose to encourage them to draw their design on the workbook page first and then create the fabric *kippah*)

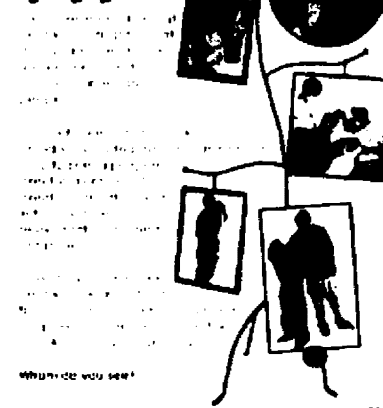
What do we wear in synagogue?



Jewish Values Presented:

Mitzvah, Kavod

Who do we see at synagogue?



COMMUNITY EXTENSION

Calling all Family Members!

1. Invite parents/grandparents into your class to discuss a piece of clothing that holds special significance to their family. Examples may include a special jacket or scarf, a *tallis* bag, *kippah*.

Synagogues should always have windows, so that we don't forget about the world outside...

Source unknown

SUMMARIZE/EXTEND

We're Goin' On A Scavenger Hunt! (Time Will Vary)

1. Explain to students that now that we have learned about all the people and places inside the synagogue, we are going to create a scavenger hunt around the building to meet all the people in our synagogue community.
 2. You may choose to hide clues around the building, and generate a list of questions that will send them from one area to the next, meeting people along the way. Possible questions include:
 - What do you do at our synagogue?
 - What is your favorite part of your job?
 3. You might also choose to make this into a detective game where students search for the Rabbi's, educators, etc. favorite holiday, favorite story in the torah, etc.
- * This is a great opportunity to combine with other classes for more of a community-oriented experience.

Materials Needed:

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Burstein, Chaya M. *The UAHC Kids Catalog of Jewish Living*. New York: UAHC Press, 1992
Oberman, Sheldon. *The Always Prayer Shawl*. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, 1994
Polacco, Patricia. *The Keeping Quilt*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998

Kol B'Seder "The Kippah Song". *Songs for Grown'.* CD. New York: Transcontinental Music Publications/UAHC, 2001

Key Concepts:

- The religious school where we go to school is part of our synagogue.
- Shabbat is celebrated at our synagogue.
- Many people come to synagogue to celebrate with friends and family.

INTRODUCE Why Do We Gather? (5 minutes)

1. Explain to students that synagogues are wonderful places where people gather together to help celebrate special occasions.
2. Ask students:
 - Can you think of the many occasions people gather with each other in a synagogue? (*Religious School, Shabbat, weddings, baby namings, etc.*)

SUMMARIZE

Let's Stage a Wedding! (Time Will Vary)

1. Explain that today our class is going to stage a wedding!
2. Encourage students in your class to pick out stuffed animals from your classroom environment and gather together for the big event. You may choose to invite your Rabbi to perform the ceremony!
3. You may wish to take this opportunity to teach students about the various parts of the wedding ceremony.
4. Hold a feast where members of your class can celebrate with one another and understand what it feels like to gather together as a community.

Materials Needed:

- Costumes, props, food for a feast

What happens in the synagogue?



Jewish Values Presented:

Mitzvah, Kavod, Tikkun Olam, Klal Yisrael



COMMUNITY EXTENSION

Let's Celebrate Shabbat Together!

1. Invite clergy and parents to a special Shabbat program on Friday afternoon before services. Give out roles to students and encourage them to take part.
2. If you created the *aron kodesh*, class torah or prayer books mentioned in the previous pages, this is a great opportunity to bring these concepts together.
3. After services, your class can gather together for a class Shabbat Dinner

EXTEND

Your Hebrew Name! (15 minutes)

Teacher Note: This activity requires getting the Hebrew names of the students in your class beforehand.

1. Explain to students that most children who are Jewish are given two names when they are born. They have their American name, and then they also have a Hebrew name. Sometimes it sounds like your English name, and sometimes it's different!
2. Tell students that their Hebrew name is a sign that they are part of the Jewish people. It's also another way we can feel closer to God.
3. Tell students that a great way to make their Hebrew name become an important part of who we are is create a door plaque! This way, our names can hang on our bedroom doors where we can always see it!
4. Distribute pieces of cardstock with student's names written out in English and in Hebrew. Encourage students to trace the letters (if they can) and draw pictures to personalize!

Materials Needed:

- Hebrew names of students in your class
- Cardstock
- Markers

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Kripke, Dorothy. *Let's Talk About the Sabbath*. California: Alef Design Group, 1999

Maisel, Grace Ragues and Samantha Shubert. "The Just Right Prayer" in *A Year of Jewish Stories: 52 Tales for Children and their Families*. New York: URJ Press, 2004

Van Dusen, Susan and Rabbi Marx Berkson. *The Synagogue: House of the Jewish People*. New York: Behrman House 1999

Debbie Friedman. "Shiru Shir L'yom Shabbat" *The Alef Bet*. CD. San Diego: Sounds Write Publishers, 2001

Debbie Friedman. "Shabbat Blessings: Shirim Al Galgalim". CD. San Diego: Sounds Write Publishers, 1994

Peter and Ellen Allard. "We Sing Shabbat, We Sing Shalom". *Shabbat Shalom: Jewish Children's Songs for Sabbath At Home*. Transcontinental Music Publications/UAHC: New York, 2003

Rick Recht. "Shabbat Shalom". *Shabbat Shalom: Jewish Children's Songs for Sabbath At Home*. New York: Transcontinental Music Publications/UAHC, 2003

Abraham, Michelle Shapiro. *Shabbat Shalom*. New York: UAHC Press, 2003

Key Concepts:

- Many events happen in a synagogue like holiday celebrations, learning and activities that help one another.
- Synagogue is also a place where we cook and eat foods that are related to our holidays!

Jewish Values Presented:

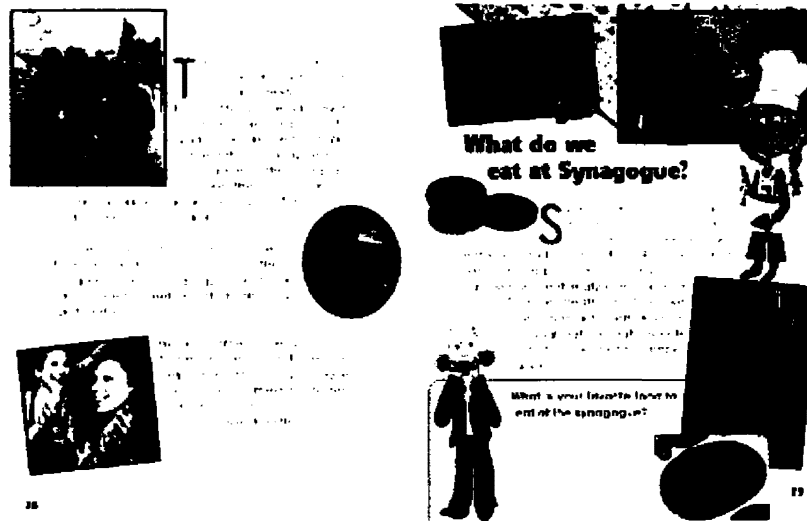
Mitzvah, Tikkun Olam, Klal Yisrael, Shalom, G'milut Chasadim

INTRODUCE/SUMMARIZE

Synagogues Are Busy Places! (5 minutes)

1. Ask students:

- We've been talking a lot about the many different activities we do in a synagogue. Who can remember some of the celebrations we come together for in the synagogue? (*Shabbat, weddings, bar and bat mitzvot, etc.*).
- Can anyone remember other reasons why we come together? (*To help each other, and other people in our community and communities far away*)



EXTEND

Cooking for the Holidays! (Time Will Vary)

1. Explain to students that food is a very important part of Jewish culture. There are special foods we eat during Shabbat and on holidays that help us mark this very special time.
2. Depending on when this lesson falls out in the calendar year, explain that today, we will be making:
 - Shabbat – *Challah*
 - Chanukah – Potato Latkes
 - Purim – *Hamantaschen**Recipes can be found in the Chocolate Chip Challah cookbook listed below.
3. You may wish to teach your students a song or read them a book about the holiday from the list provided below.

Materials Needed:

- Will vary depending on recipe

COMMUNITY EXTENSION

Helping Each Other!

Below, please find a list of activities you can do with your class to help out another community or those in your own community needing assistance:

- Clothing drive, Book drive, Canned food collection, Visiting a soup kitchen, Creating vases for flowers for a soup kitchen, Bake Sale, Visiting a community center or nursing home and spending time with the residents, Sandwich preparation, Visiting the elderly population of your synagogue who are home-bound, Creating get-well cards for those who are not feeling well

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Burstein, Chaya M., *A First Jewish Holiday Cookbook*. New York: Bonim Books, 1980

Rauchwerger, Lisa, *Chocolate Chip Challah Cookbook*. New York: UAHC Press, 1999

"Blessing Over Bread". CD. *Shabbat Shalom: Jewish Children's Songs for Sabbath At Home*. Transcontinental Music Publications/UAHC: New York, 2003

Craig Taubman, "Yad b'yad" *The Voice of the Spirit*. LA: Sweet Louise Productions, 1983

Ginsburgh, Judy Caplan, "Tot Birkat Hamazon". *Shabbat Shalom: Jewish Children's Songs for Sabbath At Home*. CD. New York: Transcontinental Music/ Publications/UAHC, 2003

Kol B'Seder "You Can Change The World". *Songs for Grown'.* CD. New York: Transcontinental Music/UAHC, 2001

Peter and Ellen Allard, "Healing Prayer." CD. *Bring the Sabbath Home*. Mass.: 80-Z music, Inc., 1995

Key Concepts:

- When we arrive and leave the synagogue, there are many special sayings we say to wish each other "hello" or "Happy holidays" "congratulations" "Happy New Year" and "Shabbat shalom!"

Jewish Values Presented:

Klal Yisrael, Kavod

EXTEND**How Do We Say it in Hebrew?
(Time Will Vary)**

1. Ask students to think of a list of words that they would like to learn how to say in Hebrew
2. Each week, teach one or two new words and review them each week.

Materials Needed:

- Hebrew/English dictionary

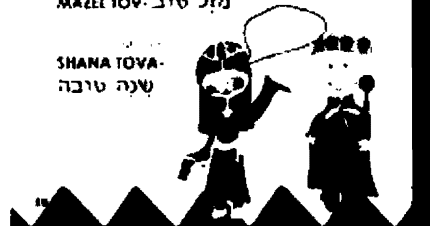
INTRODUCTION**Hello, Goodbye, Shalom! (10 minutes)**

1. Explain to students that the synagogue is a place where people feel part of a community. People are happy to see each other and make one another feel welcome
2. Continue by explaining that in a synagogue, sometimes people use Hebrew expressions to say hello or goodbye, congratulations, Happy New Year or happy holidays!
3. Explain that we are going to learn those greetings today!
4. You may choose to put these greetings on large index cards with the English transliteration for your class
5. Introduce each of the words and encourage students to repeat after you.

Materials Vary Based on Execution

**What do we say in
synagogue?**

שלום - SHALOM
שבת שלום - SHABBAT SHALOM
חג שמח - CHAG SAMEACH
מזל טוב - MAZEL TOV
שנה טובה - SHANA TOVA

**What would you say?****SUMMARIZE Charades! (15 min)**

1. Invite students to sit in a circle and explain that we are going to play charades with the greeting we learned today.
2. Explain that you are going to whisper a greeting into a student's ear, and they will act it out while everyone else guesses the phrase! Whoever guesses the correct greeting gets to go next!

No Materials Needed

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Kol B'Seder "Boker Tov, Shalom Shalom". *Songs for Grown'.* CD. Transcontinental Music/UAHC: New York, 2001

Kol B'Seder "Shavua Tov, May You Have A Good Week ". *Songs for Grown'.* CD. New York: Transcontinental Music/UAHC, 2001

EXTEND**Let's Sing A Song! (Time Will Vary)**

1. Invite the cantor into your classroom and ask him/her to teach a song involving Hebrew sayings.
2. Additional song suggestions are listed below.

Materials Needed:

- Cantor/music teacher

Key Concepts:

- The synagogue is a great place for my family and I to grow and learn together!

Jewish Values Presented:

Mitzvah, Kavod

Culmination Activity (Time Will Vary)

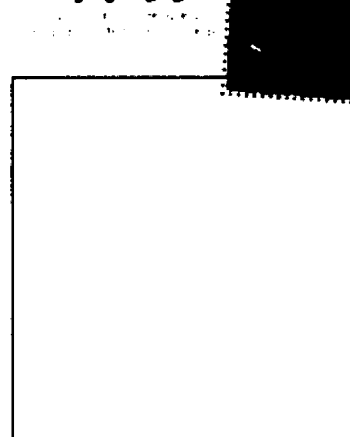
Now that students have completed this book and have learned all about their synagogue, it's time to show off their knowledge!

1. Explain to students that they are now experts on our synagogue! Tell them that the following week, parents and perhaps even the rabbis, cantors and teachers are going to come on a tour guided by THEM!
2. As a community, generate a list of places in the synagogue that you want to take your guests and think about the information that should be told at each place.
3. Assign one location per student.
4. On the date of the tour, some children can act as congregants interacting with the people who work at the synagogue.

You may wish to do the following to celebrate this culminating event:

- Create invitations and/or tickets for this tour
- Host a potluck banquet, celebrating your student's accomplishments.

In my synagogue



*What is learned in
early childhood
is absorbed
in the blood.*

*-Avot de Rabbi
Natan 24*

Supplementary Book and Music Titles:

Kol B'Seder "With My Family". *Songs for Grown*. CD. New York: Transcontinental Music/UAHC, 2001
Kol B'Seder "We Say Shehecheyanu". *Songs for Grown*. CD. New York: Transcontinental Music/UAHC, 2001