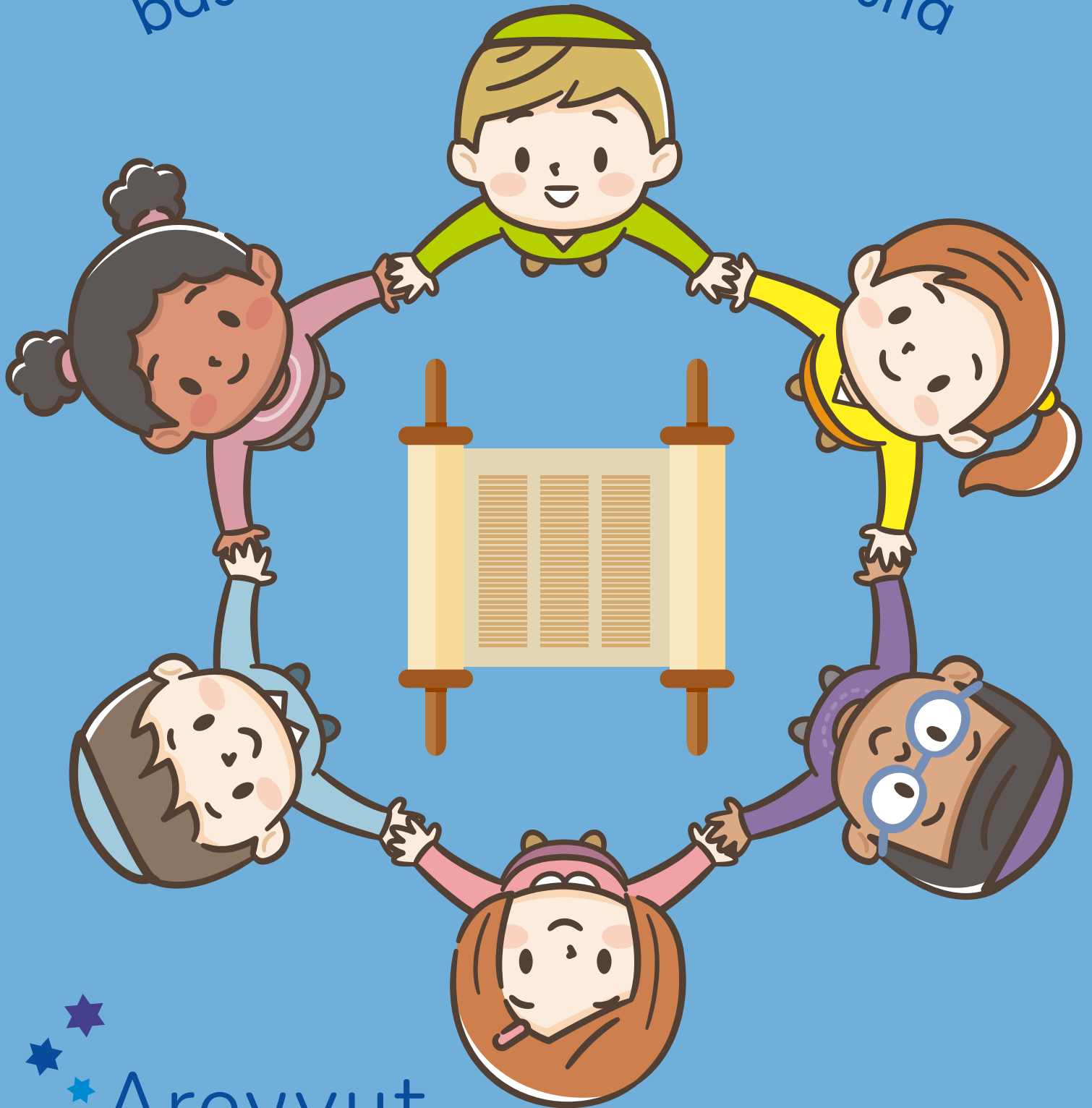


EDUCATIONAL YOUTH GROUPS

based on the Weekly Parsha



 Areyvut

We are excited to share with you our new guide filled with information and engaging activities on the weekly parsha. We see this as a supplementary resource designed to contribute to the incredible work that our synagogues, youth movements and educational workers are doing.

As an organization, Areyvut emphasizes the lessons of the Torah; in particular, the core Jewish values of chesed, tzedakah and tikkun olam. We aim to educate, engage, motivate and inspire others to action. This resource guide is one of our latest initiatives.

Within this guide, we pinpoint the specific middot – character traits – present in the weekly parshiot. We focus on teaching values such as communication, leadership and faith in ways that are relevant and meaningful for today's youth.

We provide a recommended plan for: a basic set-up, the specific weekly middot, a parsha synopsis, talking points, book recommendations and activities. Overall, each session is planned to take between thirty to forty-five minutes. We strongly encourage that one reviews and adjusts the content according to the specific audience and context.

We would like to acknowledge particularly Tanya Hoshovsky, Judith Jaffe and Rena Ray for their contributions in bringing this endeavor to fruition.

We acknowledge, thank and recognize our Board members past and present for their role in facilitating our holy and important work. Without them, their dedication and passionate commitment to the core Jewish values of chesed, tzedakah and tikkun olam, Areyvut and this resource would not exist. If you know them, please take a minute to thank them and in general we encourage you to show active appreciation and gratitude for the volunteers in your school, synagogue and community as they are the ones that help bring it all to fruition.

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We welcome any feedback that can aid us in our mission to continue creating educational tools and materials. We may be contacted at info@areyvut.org.

With warm wishes,
Daniel Rothner
Founder & Director
Areyvut

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BERESHIT

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Communication
- Family
- Creativity
- Responsibility
- Rules
- Sharing
- Rivalry
- Respectfulness

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Genesis 1:1-6:8

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." In the beginning the world was one big mess; nothing was in its place. During the six days of creation, God put each thing where it belonged.

On the 1st day, God separated night and day.

On the 2nd day, God divided the sky from the earth.

On the 3rd day, God separated the land and the sea, and created the trees, flowers and grass.

On the 4th day, God put the sun, moon and stars in their right places.

On the 5th day, God put the fish, birds and reptiles (like snakes and lizards) in their places.

On the 6th day, God created land animals like cows and sheep and the very first human beings — our grandparents, Adam and Eve!

On the 7th day, God stopped working and rested. It was Shabbat.

Adam and Eve go to live in the Garden of Eden, a beautiful place where everything is available and ready for them. They have beautiful fruit trees from which to eat, and plants, flowers and rivers to enjoy. Adam and Eve are allowed to eat of any tree or plant except one: the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil which God does not allow them to eat from.

However, the snake convinces Eve to take a bite from the tree, and she shares it with Adam. So Adam and Eve are thrown out of the Garden of Eden as punishment, and from that day on they have to work for a living and do not have it easy as before.

Adam and Eve have two children, Cain and Abel. One day, the two have a fight and Cain kills Abel. From then on, God curses Cain and he becomes a wanderer and goes all over the world without a home and anywhere to stay.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a questions below to discuss:

- What is something that is "very good" in your life?
- If you could have 9/10 of the things you want, would you be able to resist the last one?
- What is an ancestor? What do you know about your ancestors? What can we learn from knowing who and where we come from? How can we learn more about them?
- FAMILY DYNAMICS: The parsha tells the story of Cain and Abel, and man's first violent act: a lashing out of a brother against brother based on family tension, jealousy and perceived favoritism. Have you ever experienced bad feelings in your family? Have you ever been jealous of your sibling? What can we do in our families to reduce tensions, manage jealousies, and create positive family dynamics? (Recognize the special qualities of each family member. Our relationships with our family should be ever-lasting.)

- **BREAKING RULES:** One of the first things God tells Adam is not to eat from the tree of knowledge. Yet the first story about Adam and Eve together is a story about their breaking this rule. Rule breaking seems to be simply part of who we are, part of what it means to be human. But maybe each time we break a rule, we are presented an opportunity: we can transform the broken rule into an opportunity for taking responsibility. What can we learn about self-control to help us resist the temptation to break rules?
- **TIKKUN OLAM:** God placed Adam in a beautiful garden which grew delicious fruit, but in order for a garden to remain beautiful and fruitful, there has to be a gardener to work and maintain it. Adam was placed in the garden not just to enjoy the delicious fruit, but also to care for the garden. We are all gardeners in this world. We have the privilege of enjoying the gifts that God provides for us, but we also have the responsibility of keeping God's world beautiful. We must do our part! We must realize that the good we have so graciously received is from God and needs to be protected and used for good purposes (Genesis 1:1-6:8).

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: The Berenstain Bears Get in A Fight, The Berenstain Bears: All in the Family

Book 2: No Rules for Michael: Sylvia A. Rouss

Book 3: If You Plant a Seed by Kadir Nelson

SONGS (5 minutes)

SONG 1: B'TZELEM ELOHIM BY DAN NICHOLS

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah (4 times)

We all got a life to live. We all got a gift to give.

Just open your heart and let it out.

We all got a peace to bring. We all got a song to sing.

Just open your heart and let it out. Yeah...

When I reach out to you and you to me,

We become b'tzelem Elohim.

When we share our hopes and our dreams,

Each one of us, b'tzelem Elohim.

We all got a tale to tell. We all want to speak it well.

Just open your heart and let it out.

We all got a mountain to climb. We all got a truth to find.

Just open your heart and let it out. Yeah...

CHORUS

B'reishit ba-ra E- -lo- -him, (4X)

B'reishit bara Elohim, all our hopes, all our dreams,

B'reishit bara E-lo-him, each one of us, b'tzelem Elohim.

B'reishit bara Elohim, all our hopes, all our dreams,

B'reishit bara Elohim, each one of us, b'tzelem Elohim. Yeah...

CHORUS: 2 times

Repeat last line 3 times ("Each one of us, b'tzelem Elohim")

B'tzelem Elohim: In God's image

B'reishit bara Elohim: In the beginning God

SONG 2: CREATED BY [HTTP://SOLARCONFLICT.COM/W5QBNLFQFS](http://solarconflict.com/w5qbnlkfqfs).

Video+related – see creation sequence cards

B'yom rishon there was light

God created day and night,

B'yom sheini from the Torah we know

The shamayim showed

B'yom sh'lishi the earth and seas

Flowers, grass and all fruit trees

B'yom r'v'ee'ee, moon stars and sun

To bring light for everyone

And on yom chamishi

Birds that fly and fish of the sea

B'yom shishi, God did create

Animals, Adam and his mate

Yom sh'v'ee'ee, God's day of rest

Shabbat kodesh, we love best

God made the world and to show it's true

The Mitzvot of Shabbat we do

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

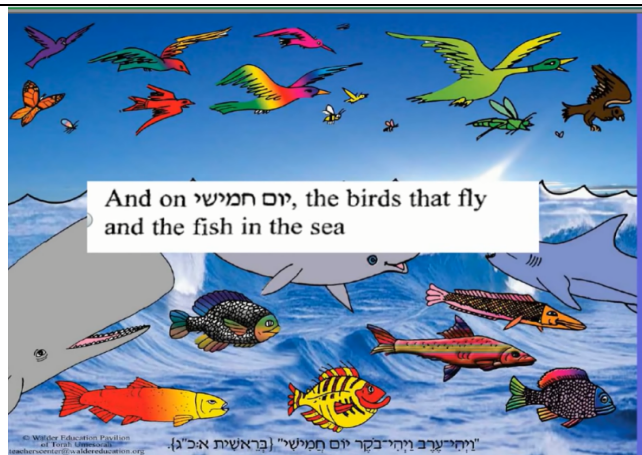
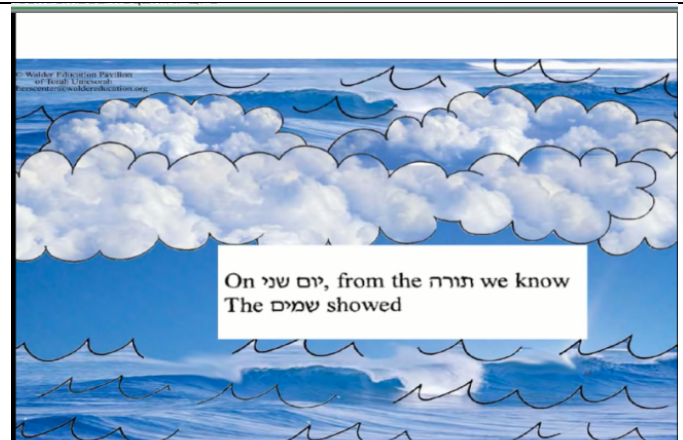
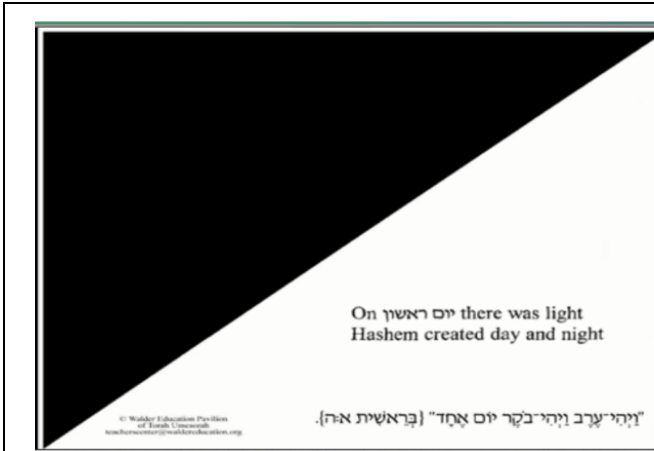
Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Eve and the Serpent (Gen 2:25 – 3:6)
 - b. Cain and Abel and God (Gen 4:8-16)
 - c. Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit (Gen 3:7-24)
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Meditate:
 - a. Imagine a scenario that makes you jealous
 - b. Then breathe deeply and, focusing on relaxing different parts of your body in turn, imagine seeing yourself looking calm, relaxed, and not bothered by that situation (Genesis 4:7)
4. Creation: distribute animal masks or pictures and discuss where the animals live, eat etc
5. Day by Day Creation Sequence Cards (See next page)
6. The Untangle Game:
 - a. Divide into groups (must be an even number)
 - b. Standing facing one another in a circle, instruct each student to grab the right hand of a student across from (not next to) him or her
 - c. Next, join left hands with a different person. Then, try to untangle without anyone letting go
 - d. Debriefing: How are tense, antagonistic relationships sort of like knots that need to be untangled? What factors make it difficult to untangle these relationships? How can we do a better job of restoring and sorting out tangled relationships?
7. One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish:
 - a. Players line up on a starting line
 - b. A soft, small, throw-able object (such as a bean bag or rubber chicken) is placed a distance in front of the starting line marked by chairs, paint or surface differences
 - c. Explain that the object is an egg and as leader (parent fish), you are in charge of protecting that egg
 - d. Tell players that while your back is turned and you are saying "One fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish," they may move, but once you finish and turn around they must stop. Practice this with the players
 - e. The leader stands behind the object facing the players
 - f. The leader turns around with the players behind them and loudly says, "One fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish"
 - g. The players may only move while the leader is turned the other way and is speaking the phrase
 - h. When the leader finishes "blue fish", s/he turns around and all players must freeze
 - i. If anyone is moving after "blue fish," the whole group goes back to the starting line
 - j. If no players are caught moving, the leader turns around again and loudly says, "One fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish" and the players get to move from their current spot
 - k. Once players get close enough to take the object from behind the leader, the players need to hide it behind their backs so the leader does not know which player has the object
 - l. Players still may only move during the phrase, but once the object is taken, the player gets to guess who has the object. (One guess per roughly 8 players)
 - m. If the leader guesses correctly, the object is returned and the players begin again at the starting line
 - n. After incorrect guesses, the players continue moving from where they are during the phrase
 - o. The object is for the players to get the object back to their starting line without the player guessing who has it.
 - p. During each freeze, a different player must have the object
 - q. Variations
 1. After each try have the team discuss their strategy and improve it
 2. Adjust how the players move: skipping, hopping, backwards, heel-to-heel (to increase complexity).

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

----- Day by Day Creation Sequence Cards -----



(45 Minutes)

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

- Attitude
- Family/Shalom Bayit
- Faith
- Change
- Discipline
- Kindness

disrupt our normal ways of life. Undergoing change is good! Although easier said than done, embrace the change with a smile on your face.

- **THE DIFFICULTY IN DISCIPLINE:** The flood destroyed everything and almost everyone. When your computer or smartphone misbehaves, often it just needs a reboot to get going about sometimes that may be an extreme step, losing all unsaved work. In life, we need to make the call between extreme measures and more cautious ones. For our personal development, we need discipline because without it, there would be chaos and disorder.
- **FAMILY:** While it rained and poured for forty days and nights, Noah's ark protected his family. Just as Noah and his family were protected from the flood by their ark, we also have our own arks that guard us from the dark and stormy world. Our families are our arks. We turn to our family when we need protection. Maintaining peace and security in our own families helps us keep the stormy world at bay.
- Noah takes 120 years to build the ark. Do you know why? God wants to give a chance to the people to repent, so Noah builds the ark very, very slowly, and whenever people pass by his yard and ask him what he is doing, he says: "I am building an ark because God will destroy the world if you do not repent. Repent, there is still a chance! Start behaving honestly and become good people!" But the people laugh at Noah and don't take him seriously. Would you have persuaded the people in a different way to Noah?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Berenstein Bear "Kindness Counts" Change

Book 2: Old Noah's Elephants by Warren Ludwig

Book 3: Good People Everywhere

Book 4: Noah's Ark by Lucy Cousins

Book 5: Strega Nona's Harvest by Tomie Depaola

Book 6: A Stowaway on Noah's Ark by Charles Santore

Book 7: Flash the Fish by Paul Kor The Monster Who Lost His Mean by Tiffany Strelitz Haber

Book 8: You Go First by Mercer Mayer

Book 9: K is for Kindness by Jodie Shepherd

Book 10: I Walk with Vanessa: A Story About a Simple Act of Kindness by Kerascoët

Book 11: Kindness Is Cooler Mrs. Ruler by Margery Cuyler

Book 12: Ordinary Mary's Extraordinary Deed by Emily Pearson

Book 13: Those Shoes by Maribeth Boelts

Book 14: What Does It Mean To Be Kind? by Rana DiOrio

Book 15: Do Unto Otters: A Book About Manners by Laurie Keller

Book 16: Louise Loves Art by Kelly Light

MUSIC (5 minutes)

SONG 1: DON'T ROCK THE ARK

(sung to "Old McDonald had a Farm")

Mister Noah built an ark

Splish Splash Splish Splash Splish

And on his ark he had two cows

Splish Splash Splish Splash Splish

With a moo, moo here

And a moo, moo there

Here a moo, there a moo,

everywhere a moo, moo

Mister Noah Built an Ark

Splish Splash Splish Splash Splish

Mister Noah built an ark

Howdy howdy do.

And on the ark there was a cow

Howdy howdy do.

With a moo moo here

and a moo moo there

Here a moo, there a moo,

everywhere a moo moo

Mr. Noah built an ark

Howdy howdy do.

SONG 2:

CHORUS

Rise and shine and give God your glory, glory!
Rise and shine and give God your glory, glory!
Rise and shine and (clap once) give God your glory, glory!
(Raise hands to shoulder level and sway back and forth.)
Children of the Lord.

The Lord said to Noah, "There's gonna be a floody, floody."
Lord said to Noah, "There's gonna be a floody, floody."
"Get those children (clap once) out of the muddy, muddy!"
Children of the Lord.

So Noah, he built him, he built him an arky, arky.
Noah, he built him, he built him an arky, arky.
Made it out of (clap once) hickory barky, barky.
Children of the Lord.

The animals, they came on, they came on by twosies, twosies.
The animals, they came on, they came on by twosies, twosies.
Elephants and (clap once) kangaroosies, roosies.
Children of the Lord.

CHORUS

It rained, and poured, for forty daysies, daysies.
Rained, and poured, for forty daysies, daysies.
Nearly drove those (clap once) animals crazy, crazy.
Children of the Lord.

The sun came out and dried up the landy, landy.
Sun came out and dried up the landy, landy.
Everything was (clap once) fine and dandy, dandy.
Children of the Lord.

Now that is the end, the end of my story, story.
That is the end, the end of my story, story.
Everything is (clap once) hunky dory, dory.
Children of the Lord.

CHORUS

SONG 3: ANIMAL WALK SONG

(sung to the tune of "Mulberry Bush")

This is the way the elephant walks,
the elephant walks,
the elephant walks.
This is the way the elephant walks going to the ark.
This is the way the kangaroo hops.
This is the way the horses gallop.
This is the way the rabbit hops.
This is the way the tigers creep.

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Noah informs his family of the coming flood. How do they/you respond? Discuss
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>

- c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
- d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>

3. Discuss:

- a. What animal do you wish you could see in the wild?
- b. If the world were being destroyed and you could save seven non-family members, whom would you save?
- c. How would you respond if God sent a messenger to inform you the world would be destroyed? Would you listen to His warning?

4. Create and snack on rainbow colored Twizzlers – discuss the rainbow and what it means

- a. A promise that the world would never be destroyed – do we see destruction in our world?
- b. Can we prevent the destruction in our world even if it isn't total?

5. Doves and Olive Branches Game

- a. Use paper olive branches or leaves
- b. Hide them throughout the play area
- c. Designate one child as Noah. The rest of the children are doves
- d. Noah says "Fly away and bring me a branch"
- e. The children scatter and look for the branches. When they find one, they return with the branches. Designate a new Noah who can hide the branches and repeat the game

6. Memory Game

- a. First child says "Noah took a ____ on the ark. (animal name goes in the blank)"
- b. Second child repeats what the first said and adds their own animal
- c. Each child must remember what has been said and add their own animal

7. Noah's Ark

- a. Print the names of animals on 2 sets of paper
- b. Make sure that each name is in the bag twice and they are all chosen
- c. The children must make the movement or sound or both of the animal they chose and find their "mate"

8. Jenga

9. Tower of Babel

- a. Gather enough ropes for each group to have one long enough for every person to hold on to with two hands
- b. Gather blindfolds for each person
- c. Help the group pick a representative who will be the only one who can ask the three questions allowed during the game
- d. Have your group begin in a straight line, blindfold them and lay a rope out by their feet
- e. Make sure everyone understands the game and its rules
- f. On your signal everyone picks up the rope at their feet
- g. Hands must remain on the rope; they may not let go of the rope for more than two seconds
- h. Instruct the group to form a shape (square, triangle, circle, etc.)
- i. Through their representative, players may ask the leader three questions during the game
- j. The leader will repeat the question so that everyone can hear and then give the answer
- k. When the group feels they have completed the task have them drop the rope at their feet and take a step back
- l. Ask the group if they think they have successfully made their shape

10. "I love my neighbor, especially my neighbor who..."

- a. Position chairs to form a circle. Make sure there is one chair less than the total number of players
- b. The person standing in the center of the circle begins the game by saying "I love my neighbor especially my neighbor who..."
- c. S/he completes the sentence with a piece of information that is true for him/her
- d. Example: "I love my neighbor, especially my neighbor who was born outside of state, loves to play basketball, has a pet, is an only child, etc.")
- e. As soon as s/he is finished with the statement, everyone (including the person in the center) who this applies to moves from their chair to an empty chair that is not right next to them
- f. The person who remains in the middle begins a second round of the game

11. Hula Hoop Friends

- a. Have group form a circle, holding hands
- b. Demonstrate how to get your body through the hula-hoop without using your hands
- c. Place the hula-hoop over two people's interlocked hands so it cannot escape the circle
- d. Explain that the goal of the game is to get the hula-hoop all the way around the circle without anyone letting go of his/her teammate's hands
- e. Have the group cheer each other on
- f. After each round, discuss the successes and challenges, and try again

Variations:

- a. Play without speaking
- b. Divide the group in two circles and have them compete

- c. Pre-K: Have students stand in a circle with plenty of room between them. Start by walking around the circle with the hula hoop, helping each student practice going through it. Then set up the challenge without holding hands, simply going through the hoop, then passing it over to the next person. After they have done this successfully many times, have them try it holding hands. The adult should walk along with the hoop, helping students as needed

12. Tower of Babel - Communications

- a. Let students know their goal for the day will be to work with their group to build the tallest freestanding tower possible. They are not allowed to lean it against anything or attach it to anything permanent in the room/on the playground
- b. Tell students there will be two minutes for planning and then two rounds of building. In between rounds they will have a chance to debrief together and share ideas with other groups
- c. Prepare a supply kit for each group of students that will be building a tower (5-6 students in each group). Make sure each group has an equal number of supplies: Big cardboard blocks or empty canisters, boxes, etc
- d. First, give the groups 2 minutes to brainstorm how they will build the tower. During this time the supplies will be in front of them but they are not allowed to touch them – only talk and plan
- e. When time begins, the group will have 10 minutes to build the tallest tower possible but without any speaking. Give students a 5 minute, 2 minute and 1 minute warning. When time is up, nobody is allowed to touch the tower
- f. Measure each tower's height and discuss what went better in the second round and what they learned about themselves or their teammates by doing this activity
- g. Discuss whether it was easy or challenging to build a building without speaking!

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

LECH LECHA

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Faith
- Bravery
- Choices
- Harmony

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Genesis 12:1-17:27

Abram was the first person to realize that there is one God, and spreads this message all the time in the city of Haran where he lives.

One day God tells Abram to leave his city and his father's home and to go to the land which God will show him. So Abram and his wife Sarai, together with his nephew, Lot, leave Haran and travel to the Land of Canaan where God reveals Himself to Abram and tells him that He will give this land to Abram's children.

Abram and Sarai love having guests. Their tent is open from all four sides so that people could come in from any direction in which they are traveling.

Abram and Sarai feed and take care of all their guests and teach them about God. God changes Abram's name to Abraham and Sarai's to Sarah.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- Would you be willing to move to somewhere else for the rest of your life?
- When two people are fighting over something, what is the best way to divide it or decide who gets what? Arguing can be avoided by creative thinking, understanding, humility and acceptance. Abraham teaches us this in his argument with Lot.
- Abraham is told to leave his home and go to a place that God will tell him. He had the faith and courage to just go, not knowing where he was going. Having this blind faith is extremely difficult. Rather than focusing on the frightening and unknown, we should try to imagine the opportunities in a new situation. The power of our imagination can give us the courage we need.
- **STANDING UP FOR WHAT IS RIGHT:** Not going along with something just because it's what everyone else is doing may not be easy, but the courage it takes is certainly rewarding. When is a time that you felt you had to stand up against the tide? When did you resist peer pressure?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Lech Lecha: The Journey of Abraham and Sarah by Greengard, Alison, Racklin-Siegel, Carol

MUSIC (5 minutes)

L'chi lach, to a land that I will show you
Leich l'cha, to a place you do not know
L'chi lach, on your journey I will bless you
And (you shall be a blessing) l'chi lach
And (you shall be a blessing) l'chi lach
And (you shall be a blessing) l'chi lach
L'chi lach, and I shall make your name great
Leich l'cha, and all shall praise your name
L'chi lach, to the place that I will show you
l'chi lach
(L'sim-chat cha-yim) l'chi lach
(L'sim-chat cha-yim) l'chi lach
Choose one activity below.

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PIObYh>
3. Blind Animals Game
 - a. Distribute a piece of paper with an animal picture on it to every participant. Suggested animal types: elephants, monkeys, cows, chicken, lions, dogs, cats etc
 - b. Ask them to wear blindfolds
 - c. Give some simple commands such as: 5 steps backwards, 4 to your left, 6 to your right etc to mix them up more
 - d. On your signal, participants then have to make the sound of their animal and find other people of the same type.
4. Blindfold Cat and Mouse
 - a. The aim of the game is for the cat to catch the mouse. Sounds easy, but both will be blindfolded and they can move just one space at a time
 - b. Select 2 people, one to act as a cat the other as a mouse
 - c. Invite them into circle and get them to put blindfolds on. You can then move both the cat and mouse to the edge of the circle to create a good distance between them
 - d. They will then take it in turns to move with the cat going first followed by the mouse. Remind them that they can only move 1 step at a time. When they move they have to say either 'cat' or 'mouse' depending on the role they are playing
 - e. On your command they can then begin the game. Once the mouse has been caught or the game has gone too long, stop the game
 - f. Switch the cat and mouse with others in the group and repeat
5. Blind Rope Line
 - a. Ensure you have enough space for this challenge
 - b. You will need to put electric or masking tape on the floor to mark a straight line on the floor (before Shabbat)
 - c. The aim of the challenge is for team members to take it in turns to walk the line while blindfolded, trying to stay as close to the line as possible. The goal is to walk the full length of the rope without putting a foot wrong or straying too far from the line. The waiting team member will act as support either side to ensure they don't fall or trip over
 - d. Make sure you have more than enough space for these challenges and stay away from areas where there are potential hazards. Think about your positioning when leading these activities, ensuring you have all participants in full view
 - e. Before beginning any blindfold challenge, ask the group if anyone is uncomfortable wearing a blindfold and adapt the activity around them, ensuring they have an enjoyable experience

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

VAYERA

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Honesty
- Gratitude
- Harmony
- Hospitality
- Communication
- Courage

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Genesis 18:1-22:24

God sends three angels dressed as men to Abraham, and Abraham rushes to prepare a delicious meal for them.

One of the angels announces that in one year from that time, Sarah would have a son. Sarah hears this and laughs! Remember: she was 89 years old!

The other angels are given a mission from God. They have to destroy the city of Sodom because it is full of wicked people who steal, kill and do lots of bad things. Abraham bargains with God and asks God to save the city but there are no righteous people in the city that can be saved. First, Abraham asks God if God would save a city with 50 righteous people, then 40, then 30, then 20, and then 10. As the angels lead them out of the city, they warn them not to look back, but Lot's wife looks back and turns into a pillar of salt.

Sarah has a child whom they name Yitzchak, Isaac (Laughter).

Abraham was a very special man who loved God very much, and to test his love, over the years God sent him ten different tests. In this parsha we learn that God sends Abraham the tenth and most difficult test of all: God commands him to bring his son Isaac as a sacrifice! Abraham doesn't cry or complain, he takes Isaac, saddles his donkey and goes to Mount Moriah. An angel stops Abraham and he is told that this was only a test, so Abraham sacrifices a ram instead.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- What living person would you want to host in your home? What questions would you ask them?
- How would you inform your guests about a specific topic that is important to you?
- When has your curiosity gotten the best of you?
- What makes you laugh?
- Would you bargain with God?
- Would you do what God or a person tells you to do? Even if it seems to contradict His will?
- Abraham has just gone through a circumcision which is very difficult at 99 years old. So God sends a very, very hot sun so that no one should travel and stop in Abraham's house to bother him while he is recovering. But Abraham is upset that there are no guests coming that day, and sits by one of the entrances to his tent to wait for someone to come so that he can fulfill the mitzvah of having guests in one's home. Would you try to reach out even when you are in pain?

- **HURTFUL WORDS:** Sarah's words could have been hurtful to Abraham. However, God changed these words so he would not hear them. We often carelessly speak in a hurtful way when we are upset but this parsha teaches us that communication is key when we are upset.
- **BEING TOO HONEST:** God changed Sarah's comment when repeating it to Abraham. We believe that God left out the hurtful words in order to promote "shalom bayit", peace in the household. Lying is wrong; however, there is a more complicated version of the truth. Lying is sometimes necessary to spare someone's feelings in order to maintain peace. The Torah even allows this.
- **WELCOMING GUESTS:** Abraham shows us what an essential value hospitality is. Helping someone feel at home can go a long way in forming and deepening friendships. How can we make people feel welcome wherever we happen to be?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

- Book 1:** Hugless Douglas and the Big Sleepover by David Melling
Book 2: Pigs, Pigs, Pigs! by Leslie Newman
Book 3: Relatives Came by Cynthia Rylante
Book 4: The Thankful Book by Todd Parr
Book 5: The Crayon Box that Talked by Shane DeRolf
Book 6: Words Are Not for Hurting by: Elizabeth Verdick
Book 7: The Berenstain Bears and the Truth by Stan and Jan Berenstain

MUSIC (5 minutes)

SONG 1:

(Tune: There's a dinosaur knocking at my door)
 Hooray Hooray (wave arms)
 There's knocking at the door (knocking motion)
 knocking 1 2 3 (clap clap clap/knock knock knock/ knocking sound effects 3x)
 I have guest,
 The very best guest,
 So come on to visit me.

SONG 2:

Tzipor Tzipor through my Chalon (Tune: Bluebird, bluebird through my window) (See activity below)

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkPH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>
3. Tzipor Tzipor through my Chalon (Song game)
 Avraham had a 4 door tent
 in and out the people went
 he gave them food and a place to rest,
 oh, ____ you are Avraham's guest.
 Take an oreich and tap him/her on the shoulder (3x)
 Oh, ____ you are Avraham's guest

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

CHAYEI SARAH

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Communication
- Reconciliation
- Forgiveness
- Family

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Genesis 23:1-25:18

Sarah dies at the age of 127. Abraham is very sad and mourns her passing. He buys a piece of land on which to bury her which is called the Cave of Machpelah in the city of Hebron. He pays 400 silver shekels. This is the place where all of our patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) and matriarchs (Sarah, Rebecca and Leah) are buried.

Isaac is now forty years old and single. Abraham asks his trusted servant Eliezer to go to Haran, Abraham's city of birth, to find a wife for Isaac. Eliezer brings lots of beautiful jewelry and gifts for the future wife. But how will he find her? There were many girls in Haran! So he asks God for a sign to let him know which girl is the right one for Isaac. The sign is that the girl will offer him water to drink.

Rebecca offers water to Eliezer and the camels and invites him to her father's house. When Eliezer asks if she will marry Isaac (on behalf of Rebecca's great uncle Abraham), Rebecca says yes.

Rebecca travels to the land of Canaan with Eliezer and marries Isaac. At the end of the parsha we learn that Abraham dies at age 175 and is buried next to Sarah in the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- Do you consider yourself to be a good negotiator?
- At what age should people get married? Why? What is the most important quality in a spouse?
- When Eliezer had finished drinking, Rebecca said, "let me draw water for your camels so that they can drink their fill." If someone asks you for a favour, agree and then look for a way to do more than they asked you. Can you give an example of when you did this or what you can do in the future?
- RECONCILIATION: Although Isaac and Ishmael had their differences, the parsha emphasizes that when the time came to bury and mourn for their father Abraham, they did so together. Even Isaac and Ishmael were able to set aside their differences to focus on what united them. While we must be realistic about acknowledging our differences, we need to focus on what unites us such as family, community and interests. Can we set aside our differences for the common good?
- HONORING PARENTS: Eliezer approached Rebecca's father to ask for permission to bring her back as a wife for Abraham's son, Isaac. Laban, Rebecca's brother, in utter disrespect for his father, jumped up and responded before his father could. Whether we agree or disagree, we must always act with deference and respect for our parents. Why do you think honoring your parents is a form of gratitude? Would you correct a parent?
- DOING CHORES: Rebecca, a young woman, carries a jug on her shoulder on her way to the well to draw water for her family. This must have been a hard chore due to the weight of the clay jug filled with water. Rebecca must have known how children also have commitments to the well-being of their family. As they grow older, their responsibilities expand so that they are able to play a larger role in taking care of their family. Physically annoying chores really keep us alive, and are very important!

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Friday Nights of Nana by Amy Hest

Book 2: A Baker's Portrait by Michelle Edwards

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Abraham buys a field with a cave as a burial place for Sarah
 - b. Abraham instructs his servant to find a wife for his son Isaac.
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PlObYh>
3. Red Rover (a negotiating game).
 - a. Two teams line up opposite each other, no more than 30 feet apart.
 - b. The first team agrees to call one player from the opposite team, and chants, "Red Rover, Red Rover, send (player's name) on over!"
 - c. The person called runs to the other line and attempts to break the chain.
 - d. Discuss how Abraham negotiated to buy Sarah's burial plot. Should physicality be used in negotiations? Discuss.
4. Orange
 - a. Explain that the group is going to play 'the Orange Game'.
 - b. Divide the children into two groups. Ask Group A to go outside and wait for you. Tell Group B that in this activity their goal is to get the orange because they need its juice to make orange juice.
 - c. Go outside and tell Group A that their goal in this activity is to get the orange because they need the peel of the orange to make an orange cake.
 - d. Bring both groups together inside and ask each group to sit in a line facing each other.
 - e. Tell the groups that they have three minutes to get what they need. Emphasize that they should not use violence to get what they want.
 - f. Then place one orange between the two groups and say, "Go".
 - g. Usually someone will take the orange and one group will have it and how the groups deal with the situation will be a surprise. Sometimes groups will try to negotiate to divide the orange in half. At other times they will not negotiate at all. Sometimes the groups will communicate further and realize that they both need different parts of the orange; someone from one of the groups will peel the orange, taking the part they need. Do not interfere.
 - h. After three minute say, "Stop" or "Time's up"

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

TOLDOT

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Communication
- Honesty
- Gratification
- Family
- Rivalry

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Genesis 25:19-28:9

Rebecca gets pregnant with twins. As the kids grow inside her belly they constantly kick around, so Rebecca asks God for advice. God tells her that there are two children in her womb who will be the fathers of two nations, and the younger one will eventually rule the older one.

Esau, hairy and red-headed, is born first. Jacob is next and is holding Esau's heel as he is born. Esau and Jacob are quite different: Esau goes hunting while Jacob stays home and cooks a pot of lentils for his father to eat.

Esau returns home very hungry and asks Jacob for his lentil stew. Jacob agrees on the condition that Esau sells him his birthright, his right to be the firstborn.

Isaac ages and becomes blind. He wants to bless his children before he dies. Esau goes to hunt for a couple of animals to prepare food for his father. In the meantime Rebecca dresses Jacob as Esau. She covers his arms and neck with hairy goatskin so that he should resemble Esau and sends him into Isaac's room to get the blessings which were destined to the firstborn son. When Esau returns and discovers that Jacob got the first blessings, he becomes very angry and wants to kill his brother. So Jacob runs away to Haran, his mother's birth-place.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- What are the best and worst things about your place in your family birth order?
- Do you think twins are always exactly alike?
- Have you ever been tempted to steal something?
- If you had to leave home, where would you go?
- BEING A MENSCH: Esau proves to be the opposite of a mensch. After a long day of work, he barges into the house and demands food from his brother. The concept of manners did not occur to Esau at a time like this. We can learn from this that no matter what our day has been like or what mood we are in, we must act like a mensch and speak in a refined and respectful manner.
- INSTANT GRATIFICATION: Esau was the firstborn and therefore entitled to certain benefits such as receiving a larger inheritance, the merit of the priesthood, and most importantly, the special blessings for a life full of goodness. However, Esau only cared about what he wanted now and did not consider his future. He gave up his birthright just for a bowl of soup. We constantly face an inner struggle between having immediate gratification and thinking about tomorrow. If we sacrifice short-term pleasure and invest in our future, we will attain true eternal pleasure and joy in this world.
- PRAYER: Isaac and Rebecca were childless for many years. They prayed, they begged and beseeched God until He answered their request after twenty long years. This shows us what it means to pray, and to never give up on our prayers. When we want something badly enough, we will do whatever we can to attain it. Sometimes, God needs to see how much we really want what we are asking for

and how serious we are in what we are praying for. He also wants us to see how much we mean it and feel for it. Can you pray without a siddur? What does that mean to you?

- Think of something good that you wish another person to be blessed with and then share it with them.

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: The Berenstain Bears Get in A Fight, The Berenstain Bears: All in the Family

Book 2: Me First by Max Kornell

Book 3: Big Sister, Little Sister by LeUyen

Book 4: Lily Learns about Wants and Needs

Book 5: David Gets in Trouble by Lisa Bullard, Christine Schneider (Illustrator)

Book 6: Pinky Promise: A Book About Telling the Truth

Book 7: Liar, Liar by Gary Paulsen

Book 8: The Boy Who Cried Bigfoot by Scott Magoon.

Book 9: Molly the Great Tell the Truth by Shelley Marshall and Ben Mahan.

Book 10: The Honest-to-Goodness Truth by Patricia C. McKissack.

Book 11: The Empty Pot by Demi

Book 12: Ruthie and the (Not So) Teeny Tiny Lie by Laura Rankin.

Book 13: The Big Fat Enormous Lie is by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat and David McPhail.

Book 14: The Berenstain Bears and the Truth is by Stan and Jan Berenstain.

Book 15: Eli's Lie-O-Meter: A Story about Telling the Truth is by Sandra Levins

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Essau trading his birthright for stew
 - b. Rebecca guiding Jacob to deceive his father
 - c. Jacob fleeing after Essau threatens him
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>
3. Richard Scarry's Busytown: Eye Found It!
4. The Untangle Game – Relationships/Rules
 - a. Divide into groups (must be an even number)
 - b. Standing facing one another in a circle, instruct each student to grab the right hand of a student across from (not next to) him or her.
 - c. Next, join left hands with a different person
 - d. Then, try to untangle without anyone letting goDebriefing: How are tense, antagonistic relationships sort of like knots that need to be untangled? What factors make it difficult to untangle these relationships? How can we do a better job of restoring and sorting out tangled relationships?
5. One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish– Relationships/Rules
 - a. Players line up on a starting line
 - b. A soft, small, throw-able object (such as a bean bag or rubber chicken) is placed a distance in front of the starting line marked by chairs, paint or surface differences
 - c. Explain that the object is an egg and as leader (parent fish), you are in charge of protecting that egg
 - d. Tell players that while you're back is turned and you are saying "One fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish," they may move, but once you finish and turn around them must stop. Practice this with the players
 - e. The leader stands behind the object facing the players
 - f. The leader turns around with the players behind them and loudly says, "One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish"
 - g. The players may only move while the leader is turned the other way and is speaking the phrase
 - h. When the leader finishes "blue fish", s/he turns around and all players must freeze
 - i. If anyone is moving after "blue fish," the whole group goes back to the starting line
 - j. If no players are caught moving, the leader turns around again and loudly says, "One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish" and the players get to move from their current spot
6. The Key Keeper
 - a. In a good sized room or space, set out an area as a start/end point
 - b. Next lay a set of keys (or any object) in front of the area

- c. The aim of the challenge is for a blindfolded key keeper to protect the keys and stop the rest of the group from retrieving them
- d. Select a person to act as the key keeper, they will then sit in the middle of the area on the floor, close to the keys
Everyone else will try and take the keys from the keeper
- e. Participants can only move when they are instructed to by the facilitator (you can do this by pointing at them)
- f. Once the person has set off they can then make a play for the keys
- g. If the key keeper points at them at any point, they then have to return back to the start point
- h. Start off with just one person at a time before building up to several players attempting to retrieve the keys at once
- i. Once the keys have been retrieved, you can either swap with the person who took the keys or they can select someone in the group of choice to act the next keeper

7. Blind Shadow

- a. Organize your group into a circle. Explain that one person will be selected to be the shadow of the group. The shadow's aim is to walk around the circle, behind the blindfolded group and try and get them out of the game
- b. They do this by standing behind another person for 3 seconds – once the 3 seconds is up, the instructor will tap the person on the shoulder and they must then kneel down as they are now out of the game
- c. To prevent the shadow from catching them out, if someone believes the shadow is standing behind them, they can raise their hand. They will be told if they catch the shadow out. They can only do this a maximum of 3 times, any more and they will be out of the game (prevents constant hand raising)
- d. Once a group member catches the shadow, they then become the shadow and you restart the game

3. Blind Animals Game

- a. Distribute a piece of paper with an animal picture on it to every participant. Suggested animal types: elephants, monkeys, cows, chicken, lions, dogs, cats etc
- b. Ask them to wear blindfolds
- c. Give some simple commands such as: 5 steps backwards, 4 to your left, 6 to your right etc to mix them up more
- d. On your signal, participants then have to make the sound of their animal and find other people of the same type

9. Blindfold Cat and Mouse

- a. Organize the group into a large circle. The aim of the game is for the cat to catch the mouse. Sounds easy, but both will be blindfolded and they can move just one space at a time
- b. Select 2 people, one to act as a cat the other as a mouse
- c. Invite them into circle and get them to put blindfolds on. You can then move both the cat and mouse to the edge of the circle to create a good distance between them
- d. They will then take it in turns to move, with the cat going first, followed by the mouse. Remind them they can only move 1 step at a time. When they move they have to say either 'cat' or 'mouse' depending on the role they are playing
- e. On your command, they can begin the game. Once the mouse has been caught or the game has gone on for too long, stop the game and switch the cat and mouse with others in the group

10. Blind Rope Line

- a. You will need a rope or something to mark a straight line on the floor
- b. The aim of the challenge is for team members to take it in turns to walk the line whilst blindfolded, trying to stay as close to the line as possible. The goal is to walk the full length of the rope without putting a foot wrong or straying too far from the line. Waiting team member will act as support either side to ensure they don't fall or trip over
- c. Useful Tips:
 - i. Make sure you have more than enough space for these challenges and stay away from areas where there are potential hazards. Think about your positioning when leading these activities, ensuring you have all participants in full view
 - ii. Before beginning any blindfold challenge, ask the group if anyone is uncomfortable wearing a blindfold and adapt the activity around them, ensuring they have an enjoyable experience
- d. Questions to ask in the review:
 - How did you feel being blindfolded?
 - How critical was listening during the challenge? How did you feel not being able to verbally communicate?
 - Did you come up with a strategy before starting the game? If yes, how did you come up with the idea?
 - How important was the support of others?

11. Tell the students that you are going to give them a chance to practice their negotiation skills through an in-class exercise

- a. Give each of the students one of the snacks
- b. The students will have 5 minutes to trade with their fellow classmates for the snack that they like the best
- c. The rules of the game: No coercing and no adding in additional objects/favors (the students must trade the snack and the snack only)
- d. Compare the trade to Esau and Jacob

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

VAYETZE

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Blessings
- Generosity
- Honesty
- Communication
- Compassion
- Harmony
- Gratification
- Favoritism

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Genesis 28:10-32:3

Last week's parsha ended with Jacob running away from Beer Sheva, where he lived with his parents and brother, to Haran. On his way out of Israel, Jacob stops to rest and takes a number of stones and puts them in a semi-circle around his head as protection and goes to sleep. He dreams of a ladder on which he sees angels going up and other angels going down. These were the angels which God sent to protect him on his trip. God reveals to Jacob and promises him that the land on which he is resting will be given to his descendants, his children and grandchildren and their grandchildren. When Jacob wakes up, the stones had become one. He takes the stone and makes it into an altar as a sign that that place is a holy place.

Jacob arrives in Haran where he meets his cousin Rachel at a well. Rachel runs home to tell her father Laban that Jacob is in town, and he is welcomed by his uncle. He begins to work for Laban as a shepherd, and after a month, Laban offers to pay him. Jacob says that his payment will be that he can marry Rachel. But... when the wedding day finally comes, Laban deceives Jacob, and gives him his older daughter Leah in marriage. Jacob is very angry at Laban. After a week, Jacob then marries Rachel, but Laban tells him he will have to work another 7 years in payment.

Leah gives birth to seven children: Reuben, Shimon, Levi, Yehudah, Yissachar, Zebulun and Dina, a daughter.

Rachel did not have children, and was very sad. She gave her maid Bilhah as a wife to Jacob so that she should have children instead of her. Bilhah has two sons, Dan and Naphtali.

Leah also gives her maid Zilpah as a wife to Jacob and she too has two sons, Gad and Asher.

Finally Rachel gets pregnant and has a son, Joseph.

Fourteen years have passed since Jacob left his parents' home, and he wants to return to Beer Sheva. However, Laban convinces him to stay by offering him more sheep so that Jacob can have a flock of his own. God blesses Jacob with his work, his flock becomes bigger and bigger, but Laban keeps on trying to cheat him out of his property. Another six years pass, and when Laban goes away for a few days, Jacob packs up his bags and, together with his wives and children, leaves Haran. When Laban finds out that Jacob left, he runs after him, but God warns Laban not to hurt Jacob and so they make a peace pact at a place called Mount Gal-Ed. Jacob and his family travel back to Beer Sheva and angels of God meet him there to accompany him back into the land.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- What is a powerful dream that you have had?
- What would you be willing to wait to get?
- Did you ever catch a friend lying? What did you do?
- **COMMITMENT:** Jacob committed to working for his uncle Laban as a shepherd with the expectation that it included standard conditions. However, after just a few days, he realized he was mistaken; the working conditions were terrible. However, he knew he had committed to the job, and saw it through until the end. Sometimes we may get more than we expected, and sometimes less. The point of the matter is: a commitment is a commitment. When we give our word to do something, we need to stand by it.
- **CHEATERS NEVER PROSPER:** Jacob ensured that his sheep never grazed in fields that did not belong to him and that he never took any of Laban's sheep to be his own. No matter how hard Laban tried to cheat Jacob, Jacob was successful in all he did while Laban's fortune suffered tremendously. All that we have is from God. He decides who will be wealthy and successful, and who will have to struggle to earn a living. God wants to bless us and give us plenty, but when we warp justice, He will not lavish His blessings upon us. How can you resist the urge to cheat?
- **SENSITIVITY:** Laban secretly commanded Leah to be the one to marry Jacob, and not Rachel. Rachel did what she knew she had to do in order to save her sister from shame, ensuring that Jacob wouldn't realize the swap until the next morning. This kind of sensitivity is courageous. It can inspire us to think more about our friends' needs and feelings, thus strengthening our bond with them. Would you sacrifice something you deserve to prevent your friend's shame?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: David Gets in Trouble by David Shannon.

Book 2: Pinky Promise: A Book About Telling the Truth by Vanita Braver.

Book 3: Liar, Liar by Gary Paulsen.

Book 4: The Stories Julian Tells by Ann Cameron and Ann Strugnell.

Book 5: The Boy Who Cried Bigfoot by Scott Magoon.

Book 6: Molly the Great Tell the Truth by Shelley Marshall and Ben Mahan.

Book 7: The Honest-to-Goodness Truth by Patricia C. McKissack.

Book 8: The Empty Pot by Demi.

Book 9: Ruthie and the (Not So) Teeny Tiny Lie by Laura Rankin.

Book 10: The Big Fat Enormous Lie by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat and David McPhail.

Book 11: The Berenstain Bears and the Truth by Stan and Jan Berenstain.

Book 12: Let's Be Honest by P.K. Hallinan

Book 13: Victory Vault is by Jake Maddox.

Book 14: Eli's Lie-O-Meter: A Story about Telling the Truth by Sandra Levins

Book 15: Coco: Miguel and the Grand Harmony by Matt de la Peña

Book 16: The Feelings Book by Todd Parr

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PIObYh>
3. Lying, Lying Game:
 - a. Have students sit in a circle and close their eyes
 - b. Once all eyes are closed, choose one student to walk around the circle for a bit and have them tap a student on the shoulder to let them know to open their eyes
 - c. They will then place a button in that student's hand
 - d. Next they will turn around and count to fifteen
 - e. In that time, the student with the button has the option of walking around the circle and choosing a new student to give the button to or keeping it to themselves. After fifteen seconds, have the original student stand in the center of the circle and ask each student "Button, button, who's got the button?" Each student will have to say no, they don't have the button
 - h. If the liar is correctly guessed, then the standing student wins. If not then the rest of the group wins

ASSESSMENT *(5 minutes)*

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

VAYISHLACH

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Attitude
- Blessings
- Satisfaction
- Selflessness

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Genesis 32:4-36:43

Jacob is finally back in the Holy Land. He had run away because of Esau who was angry at him for taking the firstborn blessings from their father Isaac. Jacob wants to make sure Esau is no longer angry, so he sends messengers to him with a message of peace, but they come back saying that Esau is coming towards Jacob with an army of four hundred men. Jacob is worried. He does three things in preparation for his meeting with Esau: he prepares for war, he prays to God, and he sends Esau hundreds and hundreds of cattle and sheep as a gift.

That night Jacob helps his family cross the Yabbok river. After the last child and animal have crossed, Jacob stays behind. There he meets an angel who is able to hurt Jacob's hip, but Jacob wins the battle. The angel blesses him and gives him a new name, Israel, which means "he who wins over the divine" (meaning the angel).

In the morning when Jacob and Esau finally meet, Esau hugs and kisses Jacob and they cry together. Esau thanks Jacob for his gift and says he doesn't really need it, but Jacob insists that he keep it. Esau then invites Jacob to travel with him to Seir where he lives, but Jacob tells him that it takes a long time to travel with the women, children and all the animals and that he'll come at a later date. Jacob does not end up going to Seir. He travels slowly and moves to different places such as Sukkot and near Shechem.

Prince Shechem of the city of Shechem kidnaps Dina, Jacob's daughter. Jacob's sons Shimon and Levi are very upset. They convince all the men of Shechem to circumcise themselves and then kill them all. Jacob is not happy with their actions.

Jacob gets a message that his mother's nurse, Deborah, has passed away, and our sages explain that this is a secret way of telling Jacob that his mother, Rebecca, has also passed away. God reveals himself to Jacob again and blesses him. Jacob continues his trip to his father's home in Hebron and on the way, Rachel gives birth to her second son, Ben Oni, but shortly afterwards she passes away. Jacob renames Ben Oni to Benjamin and buries Rachel in a place called Beit Lehem. The monument on Rachel's resting place is still there today.

Jacob finally arrives home to Hebron. Shortly after that, his father Isaac passes away at 180 years old. This week's parsha ends with a list of Esau's wives, children and grandchildren.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- After Shabbat, bring a gift to someone for no other reason than to be nice. Urge them to "take the gift because God has dealt graciously with me, and I have enough" (Genesis 32:11).
- FINDING GOD: Jacob faced many troubles and difficulties. God continuously hid from him, but Jacob never gave up. For this reason, he was blessed with twelve righteous sons. There were times in Jewish history that God revealed Himself, however, most of the time, the Almighty hides Himself, and it's up to us to find Him. When situations are particularly painful, He's really hiding in a hard-to-find place.

The lesson: don't give up and keep looking. He wants us to find Him and to reveal Him in every situation.

- **DOING OUR PART:** Jacob didn't rely on miracles when it came to meeting up with his brother Esau who wanted to kill him. He sent gifts ahead to Esau to appease him, and split his family into different camps to ensure their safety. He then prayed to God to help him, and believed that God would not let him down. Once Jacob did his part, God made miracles. We believe that God can make the impossible possible; however, we must also believe in ourselves. We must do what we can do. How can you do your part?
- **MATERIALISM:** Jacob said "I have everything." His monetary possessions did not even come close to Esau's, but nevertheless he sincerely felt that he had everything. Money and success are nice things, but Jacob had so much more than that. He had the priceless possessions a person can acquire in life. He had a wonderful family which gave him the ultimate joy and nachas one can receive. Are the people who have the most "things" the happiest? Who are the happiest people?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: One Special Day by Lola M. Schaefer

Book 2: All For Me And None For All by Helen Lester

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Jacob preparing for Esau's army
 - b. Jacob fighting with the angel
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>
3. The Untangle Game:
 - a. Divide into groups (must be an even number)
 - b. Standing facing one another in a circle, instruct each student to grab the right hand of a student across from (not next to) him or her
 - c. Next, join left hands with a different person. Then, try to untangle without anyone letting go
 - d. Debriefing: How are tense, antagonistic relationships sort of like knots that need to be untangled? What factors make it difficult to untangle these relationships? How can we do a better job of restoring and sorting out tangled relationships?

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

VAYESHEV

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Selflessness
- Hope
- Compassion
- Dreams
- Siblings

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Genesis 37:1-40:23

Jacob is now 100 years old. He decides to stay in Hebron with his twelve sons. He loves his son Joseph more than his other sons and so he gives him a special multicolored coat as a gift. Joseph's brothers are jealous of him, and particularly when he tells them about two dreams that he has in which he rules over them.

The brothers go to the fields near Shechem with their sheep. Joseph stays behind to keep Jacob company but, Jacob soon sends him to his brothers to see how they are doing. Shimon and Levi decide to kill Joseph but Reuben convinces them not to; he suggests rather that they throw Joseph into a pit as Reuben can then secretly return later to save Joseph. Reuben goes away from the brothers, and while he is away, Judah sells Joseph to a caravan of Ishmaelites. When Reuben finds out that Joseph was sold, he is very upset.

The brothers then deceive their father Jacob. They dip Joseph's special coat into the blood of a goat which is similar to the blood of a person, so that Jacob thinks that Joseph was killed by a wild animal. Jacob tears his clothing in mourning, and no one is able to comfort him. The Ishmaelites then sell Joseph to the Midianites who take him to Egypt and sell him to Potiphar, a minister of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.

Joseph is blessed by God: he is well liked by everyone and everything that he does is successful. He is soon put in charge of running Potiphar's house. One day, Potiphar's wife lies and says that Joseph tried to hurt her. So, Joseph is sent to prison. Even in prison, he manages to impress people with his attitude and way of talking. He becomes an important person in the prison and becomes in charge of the other prisoners there.

At one point Joseph meets two important people in prison: Pharaoh's chief butler who was in charge of the wine and the chief baker who was in charge of the bread baked for Pharaoh. They both have dreams which they cannot understand, and Joseph is able to explain the dreams. He tells them that in three days the butler will be freed from prison and that the baker will be hanged. Joseph asks the butler to ask Pharaoh to free him once he himself is freed. Indeed, Joseph's interpretations come true — the chief butler is freed and the chief baker is killed. But the butler forgets about Joseph and Joseph continues to suffer in prison.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- If you have wronged someone, acknowledge what you did wrong and apologize for it.
- What is the worst present you have ever received?
- What does a sibling of yours have that you are most jealous of?
- Who is your oldest friend? What do you like to do with them?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: One Special Day, written by Lola M. Schaefer

Book 2: All For Me And None For All, Written by Helen Lester

Book 3: The Brother Book by Todd Parr

Book 4: The Goodnight Train by June Sobel, Laura Huliska-Beith

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Joseph telling his father about the dreams
 - b. Joseph meeting his brothers in the field
 - c. Joseph meeting the butler and baker in prison
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>
3. Picture Game
 - a. The pictures may be used as a memory game or to spark a conversation with the group
 - b. Use them to decorate your room
 - c. Print, laminate, and store in a Ziploc bag or in your thematic bin
4. Two Truths and a Lie (dreams themed)
 - a. Each person prepares three statements about dreams she or he has had before, two of which are true and one of which is a lie. Everyone guesses which statement is the lie

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

MIKETZ

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Forgiveness
- Compassion
- Gratitude
- Self-esteem
- Charity
- Siblings

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Genesis 41:1-44:17

Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, is frustrated. He has had two dreams — one in which he sees seven fat cows swallowed by seven skinny cows, and one in which seven fat ears of grain are swallowed by seven lean ears — and he wants to understand what they mean. He calls all his interpreters and magicians, but nobody can explain the meanings of the dreams. Then, the chief butler speaks up and tells Pharaoh of this man he met in prison, Joseph, who interpreted his and the chief baker's dreams exactly right. So Pharaoh sends messengers to prison and Joseph is brought before him.

When Joseph hears the dreams, he explains to Pharaoh their meanings: There will be seven years of plenty in the land where there will be a lot of food for everybody to eat. This will be followed by seven years of hunger when no food will grow. Joseph then advises Pharaoh to hire somebody to be in charge of storing food for the first seven years, so that there will be food to eat during the years of hunger. Pharaoh is so impressed by Joseph's interpretation and his advice that he appoints him to be prime minister of Egypt, and puts him in charge of the country's food. Joseph then marries Asenat and they have two sons, Mennaseh and Ephraim.

Joseph's interpretation comes true, and in the next seven years, Egypt has plenty of extra food which Joseph puts away in special storage places he has set up. When the years of famine begin in all the surrounding lands, people are hungry, but in Egypt there is food for everyone.

Now, back in the Land of Canaan, Jacob and his sons are starving because the famine is severe and they don't have food. Jacob sends his sons to Egypt to buy food, but he keeps his youngest son Benjamin at home because he is worried for his safety. So ten of Joseph's brothers arrive in Egypt, and they go to Joseph to try to buy some grain. Joseph recognizes them immediately but they have no idea who he is—as far as they know, they are simply speaking to the prime minister of Egypt.

Joseph accuses them of being spies and says he will not believe that they are innocent until they bring back Benjamin. The brothers then go back to Canaan to get Benjamin, all except Shimon, who is put into prison by Joseph to ensure that they come back.

When they return to Canaan, Jacob refuses to send Benjamin. He says, "It is not enough that Joseph and Shimon are gone? You want to also take Benjamin?" However, the food runs out, and they need to go back to Egypt. Judah promises Jacob that he will be responsible for Benjamin, and Jacob agrees that they can go.

This time, Joseph is very nice to them and invites them to a dinner at his palace. But then he tells one of his servants to put his special silver goblet in Benjamin's bag. When the brothers try to leave the next morning, Joseph sends his messenger after them. The brothers are shocked that they are suspected of stealing. They say, "Why would we steal? Go ahead, search our bags, we have taken nothing." Their bags are searched and the goblet is found in Benjamin's bag. The brothers are horrified. Joseph says that as punishment for the theft, he will take Benjamin as a slave. The brothers know that they cannot return without Benjamin.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **TAKING INITIATIVE.** Joseph saw that his advice was well needed, so he offered what he could to the king without being asked. Let's not wait to be asked to do good; let's just do it! When has someone done something good for you without even being asked? How did you feel? What are some examples of how this idea can be applied to our relationship with God?
- **SINCERE REMORSE.** Reuben explained to his younger brothers that it's good that they feel bad for what they've done to Joseph, but their remorse needs to come from feeling sorry for the sin itself. The realization that they did something wrong should bring them to remorse, and not the trouble and hardship that their mistake caused. Real remorse is feeling sorry for what we've done, period! No matter what the repercussions may be, we should feel bad about the actual action. When have you done true repentance?
- What is the strangest dream you have ever had?
- What things make you cry?
- When, if ever, is it okay to trick someone?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Don't Tell Lies, Lucy by Phil Roxbee Cox

Book 2: The Shabbat Box by Lesley Simpson

Book 3: Maddi's Fridge by Lois Brandt

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Meeting Pharaoh for the first time
 - b. Managing with a famine and doing a long journey
 - c. Joseph's servant accusing the brothers of stealing
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Forgiving Musical Chairs
 - a. Play musical chairs in the usual way but when someone is OUT (left without a chair), that one will share an idea about who or what we may need to forgive or ask forgiveness for and then will stand or sit in the middle of the musical chairs as the game continues
4. Share a Snack
 - a. Let the children go outside and enjoy an ice cream treat or a popsicle
 - b. If the teacher chooses to, the snack could be a type of competition... such as RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU HAVE FORGIVEN 5 PEOPLE THIS WEEK (those children could be given one treat)
 - c. Then ask the children to raise their hands if they forgave 4 people (that could be another treat)
5. Provide snack bags and bag for the food shelter to donate. Discuss hunger in the Torah and today

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

VAYIGASH

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Anger
- Communication
- Embarrassment
- Lying

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Genesis 44:18-47:27

Judah approaches Joseph and begs him to free Benjamin. He even offers himself as a slave. At this point, when Joseph sees how much his brothers care about one another, he can no longer hold back his feelings. He sends all his servants and guards out of the room, and when he and his brothers are left alone, he cries and says "I am Joseph, is my father still alive?"

The brothers are silent. They are shocked and terrified. Is this man, the second to most powerful man in all of Egypt, really their brother? And so Joseph begs them to come closer and repeats himself. "I am Joseph!" The brothers finally realize that it is true, this is their brother, but they are so ashamed at what they have done to him (selling him into slavery).

Joseph comforts them and makes them feel comfortable by telling them that it was God's will that he end up in Egypt so that he would become powerful and have a chance to save the entire family from the ongoing famine. Joseph then sends his brothers home to tell Jacob that he is alive as well as to invite him to come to Egypt where he will be able to live in peace. Pharaoh sends along wagons and donkeys to help Jacob move.

When Jacob sees the wagons and hears the good news that Joseph is alive after 22 years, he is overjoyed. He travels to Egypt together with his entire family, exactly 70 people. On his way to Egypt, God promises Jacob that his children will become a great nation, and that He will take them out of Egypt.

Joseph goes out to meet his father as he gets closer to Egypt and when they meet, Joseph hugs and kisses Jacob. They then go to meet Pharaoh who gives the land of Goshen to Jacob, which is where the family will live. Jacob then blesses Pharaoh.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **UNITY:** When Jacob went down to Egypt with his family, the text reads, "Seventy soul went down to Egypt", instead of "Seventy souls." The reason for this is to show us that Jacob's family was unified to the extent that it was as if they were but one soul. They shared the same beliefs and goals. They were one. In contrast, when Esau's family traveled, the text reads "souls." When we see others who seem so different from us, we may have a hard time identifying with them or even recognizing that we are like brothers and sisters. But by focusing on the fact that we share the same beliefs and traditions, we can remember that we are one. We are united until the end of time because we believe in one and the same God.
- **PEACEFUL JOURNEYS:** Jacob and his family decided to move down to Egypt. Jacob decided that there was no way he could arrive at Egypt without an important pit stop first. He stopped at a place called Beer Sheva, and prayed to God. He prayed to God for success and that his family would remain true to their beliefs even in Egypt. When we take journeys, even small ones like taking on a new mitzvah, we need to take a moment to reflect on our journey that lies ahead, and ask God for His blessings and guidance in our journey. What have you done or plan on doing that you asked/will ask God to help you with?

- **THE REAL YOU:** In this parsha, Joseph reveals himself to his brothers. He showed them that this Egyptian king was really their little brother. This teaches us that people act differently in different situations. Our personalities, emotions and the way we speak can change. Who is the real you? How do you act differently when you are around different people?
- What is one of the most pleasant surprises you have ever had?
- If you ruled the world, how would you solve world hunger?
- Forgive someone who wronged you, even if they have not asked for forgiveness. And Joseph said to his brothers, 'Come near to me, I pray you...Be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that you sold me here.'
- Invite another family's children over to your house for lunch so that the parents can have a chance to rest. "Joseph provided his father and his brothers and all his father's household with food, according to their little ones."

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Don't Tell Lies, Lucy by Phil Roxbee Cox

Book 2: The Berenstain Bears and the Truth: Stan Berenstain, Jan Berenstain .

Book 3: Enemy Pie by Derek Munson

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Judah begging Joseph to free Benjamin
 - b. Joseph revealing himself as their lost brother
 - c. Jacob meeting Joseph after 22 years
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Two Truths and a Lie:
 - a. Each person prepares three statements, two of which are true and one of which is a lie. Everyone guesses which statement is the truth

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

VAYICHI

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Anger
- Family
- Carelessness
- Priorities
- Communication
- Blessings
- Fighting

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Genesis 47:28-50:26

After Jacob has lived in Egypt for seventeen years, he feels his days on earth are ending. He calls Joseph to his side and asks him to promise that he will bury him in the land of Canaan where Abraham and Isaac are buried. Jacob then blesses Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Menasseh, that they will each become the father of a tribe just like Jacob's sons.

Jacob then calls all of his sons to his side and blesses them. He tells each son what his role will be as one of the Tribes of Israel. For example, he says that the tribe of Judah will produce kings, and Dan will produce judges. Naphtali will be swift as a deer and Benjamin as fierce as a wolf.

When Jacob is finished blessing his children, he passes away. He is 147 years old. Joseph cries and mourns his father as do his brothers and all of the people of the land of Egypt. They mourn Jacob because he was a righteous person who brought a lot of blessing to the land. Joseph keeps his promise to his father and buries him in the Cave of Machpeila in the city of Hebron.

The sons of Jacob are worried that because Jacob is no longer alive, Joseph will take revenge on them for selling him into slavery. But Joseph comforts them and tells them he is not planning to do anything against his brothers. Joseph dies at the age of 110. Before passing away, he gives a message to the people of Israel, telling them that "God will surely remember you, and bring you up out of this land to the land of which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." He asks that his body be brought out of Egypt with them because the Egyptians would not let Joseph's family take his body out of Egypt.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- Joseph knew that although his brothers were horrible to him, there was a reason God wanted it that way, and he accepted it and waited to see what those reasons could possibly be. It's all from God. All of it. Everything that happens in this world is from Him; the good, the bad, the miracles and the disasters. Our job is to see the good in all that happens, and to remember that no matter what, it's what God wants, and He has a reason for it too.
- USING OUR STRENGTHS: When Jacob was dying, he blessed his sons, assigning to each their roles as a tribe. Each was content with their mission, but yearned for the benefits of the other's job. They took what they were blessed with, and used it to its fullest. Each of us are given specific talents and blessings, and it is our job to take them and soar. How can you use what God has given you in ways that He would want you to use them?
- TAKING ACTION: This parsha discusses Jacob's last days. Everyone has a vision for their lives. However, many people live their lives without this vision in mind. Don't sit back and just hope for the best. Take action. Be the change you want to see.
- What is your vision for your future? How will you try to reach your potential?

- Does it matter to you where you will be buried after you die? Have you shared your thoughts with your family?
- What blessing would you give to the person sitting next to you? What do you wish for them?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Something From Nothing by Pheobe Gilman

Book 2: The Littlest Levine by Sandy Lanton, and Cosei Kawa

Book 3: All-of-a-Kind Family by Sydney Taylor

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Jacob blessing the brothers and grandchildren
 - b. Mourning and burying Jacob
 - c. The brothers convincing Joseph that he must fully forgive them
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Blessings:
 - a. Pair up with the person next to you and give each other three blessings. Talk about their strengths and imagine their future as a grown up

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

SHEMOT

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Anger
- Respectfulness
- Compassion
- Courage
- Women

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Exodus 1:1-6:1

Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, is worried that there are too many Jews and that they are becoming too powerful. So he decides to to enslave them by forcing all the Jews to do backbreaking labor working in the fields, schlepping bricks and building cities for him.

Next, Pharaoh calls in the two Jewish midwives, Shifrah and Puah, and tells them that whenever they are helping a woman give birth, they must kill the baby if it is a boy. But the midwives know what a horrible thing that is to do, so they don't listen to him. Extremely angered by this, Pharaoh makes a new decree that all Jewish newborn boys must also be thrown into the Nile River.

Jochved gives birth to a son, and of course, she is afraid that he will be killed, so she hides him in her house. She becomes afraid that the Egyptians will find him, and she makes him a little waterproof cradle and hides it in the long grasses near the edge of the river. As it happens, Pharaoh's daughter comes down to the river to bathe, and she notices this strange little basket floating in the river. She sends her maid to get it, and she sees a crying baby inside! She names the boy Moses and decides to take him home and raise him as her son. That's how Moses, a Jewish boy, grows up in the Egyptian palace.

When Moses grows up, he starts to discover the hardships that the Jewish people are experiencing. One day, he sees an Egyptian beating a Jew, and he gets so angry that he kills the Egyptian. When he realizes that he might get into trouble, he has to escape Egypt and runs off to a faraway country called Midian. When he arrives, he helps the daughters of Jethro. One of them is called Tziporah, and Moses marries her and also becomes a shepherd for his father-in-law's flocks.

One day Moses is taking care of the sheep and one of them runs away from the flock. Moses goes after it, and he sees an amazing thing: a burning bush that is on fire, but it is not burning! Suddenly, he hears God speaking to him. God says that he must go to Pharaoh and tell him the Jews must go free. At first, Moses doesn't want to do it. He thinks, "How can I be a messenger of God? And what if the Jews don't listen to me?" So God gives him three signs. First, Moses picks up a stick and it turns into a snake, in the second, he puts his hand into his jacket and it becomes white. Third, God tells him that if they still don't listen, he should spill water from the Nile River onto the ground and it will become blood. Moses then explains his worry that he cannot talk clearly, so God appoints his brother, Aaron, as his spokesperson.

When Moses returns to Egypt and tells the Jews that he has come to rescue them, they believe him and are very happy. He then goes to Pharaoh and passes on God's message that he should let the Jews out of Egypt. Pharaoh responds saying, "Who do you think you are? Stop disturbing the Jews from their work!" And on that very day, Pharaoh orders that the Jews' labor should become even harder.

The work is so hard that the Jews cannot do it, and the Egyptian taskmasters beat them. When Moses sees what has happened, he cries to God saying, "What have You done to the Jews? Why did You send me? Since I came to Pharaoh, he has only made things worse, and You didn't come to save them?!" God reminds Moses that He has promised to save the Jews.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a questions below to discuss:

- Do you have a secret hiding place?
- What traditional name/description of God do you relate to? When you pray, how do you relate to God? What name would you give to God?
- Which parts of your job or your school work do you dislike the most?
- Which parts of your job do you wish you could spend more time on, and or wish you could spend less time on?
- Moses had a terrible speech impediment, and he needed his own translator for people to understand him. This was a challenge for Moses, and he didn't want to lead the Jewish people. But God encouraged him, and Moses finally agreed. This lesson to us is that we can overcome challenges even if it seems really hard. What do you think it takes to overcome the challenges we face?
- One of the ways that the Jewish people survived for generations as slaves in Egypt was by remaining committed to who they were. Even though they suffered terribly, they never let go of their identity. Although it would have made their lives easier, they never changed their Jewish names for Egyptian ones, and they never tried to assimilate into the Egyptian into the Egyptian culture. Even though it seems tough sometimes, we should always be proud of who we are as Jews. How do you express your Jewish pride?
- Moses and Aaron approach Pharaoh and request freedom for the Jewish people. This is the first open conflict between Pharaoh and the Jewish people. Pharaoh will not agree, and says no to letting the Jews go free. Confrontation is not an easy task. How do you deal with conflict and confrontation? How can you remain calm during this process?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae

Book 2: I See Without My Eyes by Mark Brauner Hayward

Book 3: Dream Big, Little Leader by Vashti Harrison

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Pharaoh's daughter saving Moses from the Nile
 - b. Moses at the Burning Bush
 - c. Moses telling the Jews and Pharaoh that the Jews must go free
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PIObYh>
3. Ah! So! Gil
 - a. Everyone sits in a circle, and learns the 3 commands and their movements.
 - b. The commands:
 - i. Ah! Is said loudly, while putting your left or right hand across your forehead in a saluting motion, with fingers pointing at the person next to you
 - ii. So! Is said even louder, while putting your left or right hand across your chin in a saluting motion, with fingers pointing at the person next to you
 - iii. Gil! Is said while putting both arms together in front of you in a clapping motion and pointing to someone else, anywhere in the circle
 - c. The phrases must always go in that order, and each phrase needs its correct hand motion. You go when you are pointed at by someone next to you using Ah or So, or by someone across from you using Gi
 - d. After someone uses Gi, the person pointed at starts the sequence over again. When someone makes a mistake, (ie, goes out of order, uses the wrong hand motion or hesitates in confusion for too long) they are out
 - e. When someone gets out, each member of the group puts a hand in the middle with thumbs up, and calls "You're outta here!" like a baseball umpire
 - f. That person leaves the circle and the group closes in the space. The person who was on right side of the exited person starts the sequence again, by saying "Ah!" and pointing to the left or right
 - g. The game continues until there are two people left
3. Cross the River
 - a. In this game, children must collaboratively cross a "river" which you can make by making two parallel lines on the ground. Try using sidewalk chalk if you are outside or masking tape if you are inside
 - b. Each team of children is given six square cardboard "rafts" to use in crossing the river

- c. Impose rules on the rafts to encourage the teams to apply critical thinking skills
- d. For example, if a raft is left unattended, it will float away or if a raft has more than two feet and one hand on it, it will sink
- e. A monitor is required to remove the rafts that are out of play
- f. For an extra challenge, break children into smaller groups and have them compete to see who can cross the river fast enough
- g. Afterwards, talk about how easy it was to build and coordinate doing something together in teams

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Choice
- Courage
- Stubbornness
- Priorities
- Determination
- Listening

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Exodus 6:2-9:35

In last week's parsha, Moses cried bitterly to God about the hardships that the Jews were experiencing. Now, God speaks to Moses again and promises him that He will indeed save the Jews. He tells him that he must go to Pharaoh and demand that he let the Jews out of Egypt. However, God warns Moses that Pharaoh will not listen because God will harden Pharaoh's heart so that He can show the Jews great miracles.

Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh to try to convince him to let the Jews free, but Pharaoh refuses to listen. Aaron turns his stick into a snake, but still, Pharaoh says no. When Moses and Aaron go again to Pharaoh, God tells them to tell Pharaoh that if he doesn't listen, the water in the Nile river will turn into blood.

Pharaoh again says no, and so the plagues of punishment begin. First, the Nile is turned to blood. Next, Egypt is overrun by swarms of jumping frogs and then by itchy lice. In the fourth plague, hordes of massive, scary, wild animals invade the land, and in the fifth, all the animals belonging to the Egyptians get sick and die. Next, all the Egyptians get painful boils all over their skin, and in the seventh plague, big balls of fire and ice fall down from the sky as hail.

Each time, Pharaoh begs Moses to get rid of the plague and promises that he will let the Jews go. But as soon as the plague is over, Pharaoh changes his mind. Even though Moses warns him each time that a new plague will come, and no matter how much he knows the Egyptians will suffer, Pharaoh's heart remains hardened, and the Jews remain stuck in Egypt.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- In our modern world, what is considered a plague, and how do you think it can be resolved?
- Moses had Aaron by his side; whom do you like to have by your side when you have to do something hard?
- **DOING WHAT WE ARE TOLD:** God commands Moses to approach Pharaoh and ask him to free the Jewish people from slavery. Before Moses sets out, God warns him that Pharaoh will refuse the request. There are times when someone makes a request of you that seems to make no sense. The lesson from Moses is that when someone makes a request from you, it is important to fulfill the mission even if you don't necessarily understand it at the time.
- **DETERMINATION:** This parsha is all about the slavery of the Jewish people in Egypt. There is a sense of "slavery" in today's society. No one is born flawless. Some people become "slaves" to their shortcomings which means they become completely restricted by them. We can overcome our shortcomings by working on ourselves, remaining confident and staying determined.

- **PEOPLE OVER POSSESSIONS:** The parsha discusses most of the famous story of the ten plagues that struck the Egyptians. The reason Pharaoh wouldn't set the Jewish people free was specifically because of how wealthy he was. His greed overcame him to such an extent that he wasn't willing to give up even one possession for the sake of ending the plagues. Sometimes we care too much about what we have, and not enough about the people around us. Having nice things isn't bad, but when do you know that they mean too much to you?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Courage by Bernard Waber

Book 2: Wild Feelings by David Milgrim

Book 3: Dream Big: A True Story of Courage and Determination by Dave McGillivray

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Frogs invading Egypt
 - b. Having boils and/or lice
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PIObYh>
3. Courage Role Play
 - a. Put children in threes. Pretend that one child is bullying the other one, and the third child the teacher
 - b. Tell the children to sort out the situation by negotiation and informing the teacher who must also say something
 - c. Afterwards, discuss with the children how they chose to solve the problem with language or actions
4. Courage Tree
 - a. Create a courage tree to hang on a wall. Before Shabbat, cut a large tree shape from brown and green craft paper and glue some mini magnets at various points on the tree. Next, cut several apple shapes out of red construction paper. Tape the tree to a wall, and prepare characteristics of courage, such as "trying new things," "doing what is right," and "standing up for yourself" with Velcro
 - b. On Shabbat, encourage each child to add or remove courage apples with the Velcro based on which courage traits they think are the most important

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Anger
- Communications
- Stubbornness
- Compassion
- Family
- Arguing
- Restarting
- Honesty
- Faith

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Exodus 10:1-13:16

Pharaoh still refuses to let the Jews leave Egypt, so God brings more plagues. In the eighth plague, a very strong wind brings in great swarms of locusts which are like grasshoppers. There are so many that they darken the earth and eat all the greenery, plants and fruits from the trees, until there is no more food in the land of Egypt.

Pharaoh still refuses to let the Jews go, so God brings another plague. The ninth plague is a very thick darkness that lasts seven days. Except for the Jewish homes, the whole of Egypt cannot see, and for the last three days, they cannot even move!

Pharaoh still remains stubborn, so God brings one final plague upon him and his people. But before that, God gives the Jews an important thing to do. They receive their very first mitzvah — a special commandment from God. In this mitzvah, the Jews are commanded to set up a calendar based on the cycle of the moon. This is the same Jewish calendar that we use today over three thousand years later! The Jews must also each bring a sacrifice of a goat or lamb and brush the blood on their doorposts. This way, when the final plague comes, God will know which houses to pass over. The Jews must then eat the roasted meat with matzah and bitter herbs. (All these miracles are celebrated on a special Jewish holiday called Passover—because God passed over the Jewish homes).

Now, for the tenth and final plague: On the fourteenth of the month of Nissan, at exactly midnight, every Egyptian firstborn dies. Pharaoh is terrified, for he himself is a firstborn and declares, "Go! Go! Leave this land, you and all the Jews. Take your sheep and your cattle!" They leave quickly, and their dough does not have enough time to rise, so it becomes matzah—the very same flat bread that we eat on Passover. They do have time to ask the Egyptians for their gold and silver, emptying Egypt of all its wealth. After 210 years of slavery, the Jews finally flee Egypt.

Now that the Jews are free, God gives another mitzvah: the Jews must celebrate this Exodus - going free from Egypt - every year by eating matzah and retelling what happened. This festival is called Passover or Pesach, and we still do it today!

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **NEW BEGINNINGS:** The first mitzvah commanded to the Jewish people was Rosh Chodesh. This celebration is not merely to welcome a new month, but an opportunity to grow and mature. No matter what transpired in the previous stage of your life, you always have the opportunity to grow and right any wrongs. Each month brings a new chance. We celebrate the opportunity to be constantly growing and maturing.

- **ULTIMATE HONESTY:** Moses warned Pharaoh of the tenth and final plague — the death of every firstborn. When declaring the start of the plague, Moses said that it will begin at approximately midnight, but God had informed Moses that the plague would begin at exactly midnight. Moses was purposely vague so that the Egyptians wouldn't miscalculate the time. Honesty is so important and necessary that Moses made sure the Egyptians should not even mistakenly think that he was untrue to his word.
- **UNWAVERING FAITH:** The Jewish people were able to survive their slavery in Egypt. What kept the Jewish people intact was their unwavering faith that their situation was going to improve. They could have easily given up hope, and simply disappeared from existence. But they still believed that God would improve their situation, and He did. In everyday life, we are faced with certain challenges that can cause us to lose hope. We should always believe that the situation will improve — and truthfully, it always does with perseverance!
- Are you afraid of bugs? Why or why not?
- Are you afraid of the dark? Why or why not?
- What would you put in your backpack if you had to leave your home forever?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Courage by Bernard Waber

Book 2: Wild Feelings by David Milgrim

Book 3: Dream Big: A True Story of Courage and Determination by Dave McGillivray

Book 4: Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon by Patty Lovel

Book 5: Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss

Book 6: Ladder to the Moon by Maya Soetoro-Ng

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Preparing the Pesach sacrifice
 - b. The locusts eating everything
 - c. Fleeing Egypt
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Button, Button
 - a. Have students sit in a circle and close their eyes
 - b. Once all eyes are closed choose one student to walk around the circle for a bit and have them tap a student on the shoulder to let them know to open their eyes
 - c. They will then place a button in that student's hand
 - d. Next they will turn around and count to fifteen
 - e. In that time, the student with the button has the option of walking around the circle and choosing a new student to give the button to, or keeping it to themselves
 - f. After fifteen seconds, have the original student stand in the center of the circle and ask each student "Button, button who's got the button?"
 - g. Each student will have to say no, they don't have the button
 - h. If the liar is correctly guessed, then the standing student wins. If not, then the rest of the class wins
4. Darkness
 - a. Put the children in pairs and blindfold one child in each pair
 - b. The partner must lead their friend around the room which must have obstacles and/or objects that the blindfolded friend must identify or avoid based on the instructions of their seeing partner
 - c. Once they have made it around with correct guesses and instructions, they must swap the blindfold and do a different route. Afterwards, discuss how it was leading each other through the dark (responsibilities, how to give guidance, trust, etc.)

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

BESHALACH

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Humility
- Attitude
- Gratitude
- Complaining
- Shabbat
- Closure

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Exodus 13:17-17:16

After 210 years, Pharaoh let the Jews leave Egypt. But now Pharaoh changes his mind, and he starts chasing after them with a huge army.

The Jews are at the sea (the Red Sea today). They have the sea in front of them and Pharaoh's soldiers behind. God tells Moses to take his stick and stretch it over the sea. Moses does so, splitting the sea and allowing the Jews to walk through on dry land. The Egyptians try to follow the Jews into the sea, but the sea begins to flow again and closes in on them.

When the Jews come to the other side, Miriam leads them in a song of thanks to God.

The Jews have crossed the sea, and are now in the desert. They start to complain that they have no food. So God sends quail for meat as well as a special food called Manna that falls on the ground every morning. Then, the people complain that there is no water! God tells Moses to strike a specific rock which turns into a fountain.

A nation called Amalek comes and attacks the Jews, starting with the women and young children. Moses sends Joshua to gather an army from the Jews to go fight them. Joshua does this, and he wins against the Amalekites. But God is very angry, and promises to never forget what Amalek did to the Jews because they were the first ones to attack them in the desert.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **EXPRESSING THANKS:** After the splitting of the Red Sea takes place, the Jewish people sing a song of appreciation. It is extremely important to express gratitude to someone (especially God) publicly. What are some things that you are thankful for?
- **SHABBAT:** This parsha introduces the concept of the Shabbat, the weekly day of rest. During the week, a person is constantly distracted and busy, and they rarely have time to study Torah and explore their faith. God therefore commanded a weekly day of rest to give us the opportunity to take a break and focus on what is important. Without the distractions of work, school, iPhones, iPads, etc., there is ample time for Torah study, attending synagogue and spending quality time with family. What are some major distractions that you have during the week?
- **CLOSURE:** The Jews are now free. However, it is always a good thing to reflect back on experiences. For them, they sing a song of thanks as their reflection. We go through a lot of different experiences in life and there are specific ways for us to look back and learn from them. When you look back at experiences, did you ultimately learn something from what happened? Or do you feel that you could learn something now? How can you make each life experience an opportunity to grow?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Children's Book: The Other Side: Children's Picture Book On Being Grateful by A. M. Marcus

Book 2: My Heart Fills With Happiness by Monique Gray Smith

Book 3: The Shabbat Box by Lesley Simpson

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Being surrounded at the Red Sea
 - b. Collecting the manna
 - c. Amalek's attack
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>
3. Make a Gratitude Jar
 - a. Place a jar in a central location cotton balls. Encourage your children to share something they are grateful for. When the jar gets full, have a special treat
4. Humility/Trust Game
 - a. Two volunteers are selected but are not told what they will be doing
 - b. Blindfold one of the volunteers (hereafter referred to as blindfolded)
 - c. Explain to the other volunteer (hereafter referred to as guide) that they need to help the blindfolded go from point A to point B in the room, with the one condition that the blindfolded's feet cannot touch the ground - they must only step on two sheets of paper. They may talk and touch
 - d. Have a reflective discussion, starting with asking the blindfolded person how they felt being blindfolded, whether they trusted the other person, whether they thought it could have been done a different way, whether they felt their needs were met
 - e. Then ask the guide how they felt, what they felt their responsibilities were, whether they think they could have done it a different way, what they think the implications of their approach are, etc
 - f. Open up the discussion to the rest of the participants who were watching. Often, they will have been calling out suggestions, many will have ideas on how it could have been done better
5. Gratitude Pick-Up-Sticks
 - a. To play, hold all of the sticks in your hand and let them fall randomly.
 - b. Each player takes a turn pulling a stick from the pile.
 - c. You cannot make any other sticks move or you lose your turn and do not get to collect the stick.
 - d. Every time a player collects a stick, they must share something based on these colors:
 - Red Sticks: People you are thankful for
 - Orange Sticks: Places you are thankful for
 - Green Sticks: Foods you are thankful for
 - Blue Sticks: Specific items you are thankful for
 - Purple Sticks: Miscellaneous- Your choice of something you are thankful for
 - e. The player with the most sticks at the end of the game wins.
6. The Untangle Game:
 - a. Divide into groups (must be an even number)
 - b. Standing facing one another in a circle, instruct each student to grab the right hand of a student across from (not next to) him or her
 - c. Next, join left hands with a different person. Then, try to untangle without anyone letting go
 - d. Afterwards, talk about how difficult it was to work together and coordinate in order to untangle. Think about the Jews at the Red Sea and how they had to find a way to escape the Egyptians but needed help from God

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

YITRO

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name
-

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Humility
- Open-mindedness
- Attitude
- Leadership
- Listening

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Exodus 18:24

Moses' father-in-law, Jethro ("Yitro" in Hebrew), lives in Midian. He hears about all the amazing miracles that God did for the Jewish people, and he decides to visit Moses. So, along with Tziporah, Gershom and Eliezer (Moses' wife and sons), he leaves Midian and joins Moses in the desert.

When Jethro arrives, he sees that Moses is incredibly busy. Anytime the Jews have a problem or a question about a mitzvah, they ask Moses. Moses is therefore sitting and answering the Jews each day from morning to night. Jethro tells him that this is too much responsibility and that he needs help. Moses should create a system of judges who answer different questions. If the first level of judges don't know the answer, they go to a higher group of judges, and so on. This way, Moses only gets the hardest questions and has time for other things. Moses agrees, and he puts the system into place. Afterwards, Jethro goes back to Midian.

Next, the Jews travel to a part of the desert called Sinai where God tells them that if they accept the Torah, they will be a chosen and special nation. The Jews respond, "Everything God says, we will do!" They are told to prepare for three days for a very awesome event that will take place on Mount Sinai. They also receive instructions about the mountain itself. Because it is so holy, no one is allowed to touch it, and they must be very careful not to come too close.

On the third day, there is booming thunder and flashes of lightening. The Jews gather around the mountain, and they see a thick cloud and hear the sound of a shofar. God then "comes down" to the mountain and gives them the Ten Commandments.

These Ten Commandments set the standard for goodness in the world:

1. Belief in God
2. Not to worship idols or other gods
3. Not to swear falsely in the name of God
4. Keep the Sabbath
5. Honor your parents
6. Do not kill
7. Be faithful to your spouse
8. Do not steal
9. Do not testify falsely against somebody else
10. Do not be jealous of your friend or neighbor's possessions

When God began to give over the commandments, it was too powerful and overwhelming for the Jews to hear. Because of this, they begged Moses to receive the Torah from God and then tell it to them. So Moses did so, and went up to the mountain.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **LAYING A FOUNDATION:** The Jewish people are given the famous Ten Commandments which serve as a foundation for Judaism. A person cannot live his life without a foundation or guidelines. This is the purpose of the Ten Commandments, and the reason they are so monumental. If we set standards to live by, we are more likely to have a productive and fulfilling life.
- **IT'S NEVER TOO LATE:** Not only did Yitro leave the comfort of his home and his position of leadership, he also acknowledged that it is okay to change your lifestyle if you realize that something else is more legitimate. This powerful lesson applies to everyone. It is never too late to change your actions if you realize that there is a more proper way to act. Have you been in a situation where you realized that there is a more legitimate lifestyle and changed yourself accordingly?
- **A JEWISH NATION:** When the Jewish people received the Torah and the Ten Commandments, they were so unified that they were considered to be like one person. The world needed to be purified before the Torah could be given, and that was only possible if the Jews worked towards purifying the world as one group with one goal. Whenever a group of people set out to accomplish something, they must do it with complete unity.
- **Moses took his father-in-law's advice, and did all that he said.** Do you accept advice? Thank someone for good advice that they gave you.

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Howard B. Wigglebottom Listens to His Heart by Howard Binkow

Book 2: Poems with Attitude by Andrew Fusek Peters and Polly Peters

Book 3: David Gets In Trouble by David Shannon

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Yitro hearing about the Exodus
 - b. Moses seeing Tziporah and his sons for the first time in a long time
 - c. The giving of the Ten Commandments
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>
3. Make a Gratitude Jar
 - a. Place a jar in a central location with empty cotton balls. Encourage kids to share something they are grateful for
 - b. When the jar gets full, have a special treat
4. Hunt for Happiness
 - a. Come up with a list of animals, people or places that make them happy or bring smiles to their faces
 - b. Go on a scavenger hunt, searching for as many items on the list as possible
 - c. Once an item is discovered, place a sticker next to it
5. Humility/Trust Game
 - a. Two volunteers are selected but are not told what they will be doing
 - b. Blindfold one of the volunteers (hereafter referred to as blindfolded)
 - c. Explain to the other volunteer (hereafter referred to as guide) that they need to help the blindfolded go from point A to point B in the room, with the one condition that the blindfolded's feet cannot touch the ground - they must only step on two sheets of paper. They may talk and touch
 - d. Have a reflective discussion, starting with asking the blindfolded person how they felt being blindfolded, whether they trusted the other person, whether they thought it could have been done a different way, whether they felt their needs were met
 - e. Then ask the guide how they felt, what they felt their responsibilities were, whether they think they could have done it a different way, what they think the implications of their approach are, etc
 - f. Open up the discussion to the rest of the participants who were watching. Often, they will have been calling out suggestions, many will have ideas on how it could have been done better
6. Broken-telephone
 - a. Have the children sit in a circle or square (they must be close to each other)
 - b. The person who starts thinks of a word/phrase and whispers it into the next player's ear once with no repeats allowed

- c. The listener tries to repeat the same word/phrase into the next person's ear, and so on.
- d. The last person in the group has to say aloud what they heard
- e. Afterwards, discuss what it was like trying to share a message with each other when you can't hear properly and how this can cause problems with friends if we don't listen properly

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

MISHPATIM

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Anger
- Communication
- Truth/Lies
- Principles
- Kindness

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Exodus 21:1-24:18

Now that the Jews have received the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai and accepted the Torah, God teaches them some of the laws. In this parsha, we learn about 53 mitzvot (out of a total of 613) that God commands the Jews. Some of which include:

1. Servants

The Torah gives very exact instructions about how one should treat his servant. First, how does a Jew become a servant? If someone steals and then doesn't have money to repay what he stole, the court sells him in order to pay it. Now that he's a servant, can his master do with him as he wishes like ordering him around and telling him to sleep in the barn? The Torah says that he must treat the servant like the others in his household — the same good food, clean bed, etc. The master must also support and provide these things for the servant's wife and children. Finally, a servant is only a servant for six years. At the end of that, he is free.

2. Crimes Against Others

The punishment for murder, kidnapping and hitting or cursing one's parents is the death penalty. If somebody hits somebody else and he gets hurt, he must pay the damages: the value of the limb which was lost, all his doctor bills, his pain, the money he would have made from work that he missed and any embarrassment the injury caused him. Someone who accidentally kills somebody else is exiled to a special city.

3. Misbehaving Animals

What happens if somebody's ox goes wild and kills somebody — is the owner responsible? Not usually, but if the animal has done this before, then the owner should have known that he has to do something about this animal. Therefore, in that case, he's responsible. If someone digs a pit, forgets to cover it up and an animal falls into it and dies, the person who dug the pit must pay the owner the full value of the animal. If someone steals another person's animal and kills or sells it, he has to pay back five times the amount he stole or four times for a stolen sheep. If he steals something and still has it, he has to repay double.

4. Taking Care of Someone Else's Stuff

If someone else's property is in our possession, we have to do everything we can to take care of it. If we are irresponsible and something happens to it, we must pay for it. However, depending on what type of guardian we are, we might be more or less responsible if something happens and it's not really our fault. An unpaid guardian is doing the person a favor by watching his possession for him, so he's not responsible if something happens (like it breaks). A paid guardian is responsible if it gets lost or stolen, but not if it's stolen in an armed robbery. A borrower is responsible no matter what happens to it, except if the owner is with him when the object gets stolen or broken. The last type of guardian is called a renter.

5. Kindness

The Torah demands that we be extra nice to strangers, widows and orphans. These defenseless people especially deserve our kindness. A few more examples of kindness: We are not allowed to curse a judge or a prince, and also newly-born animal may not be brought as a korban (a sacrifice) until it is at least eight days old. We are not allowed to eat the flesh of a mortally wounded animal.

6. Laws for Courts and Judging

Never testify falsely against somebody, and don't accept a false testimony from somebody else. We are not allowed to accept bribery. Even if someone is very poor, you're not allowed to rule in his favor just because you feel bad for him. Justice is justice no matter what our feelings are.

7. Shemitah and the Holidays

For six years we can work on the land—prepare the land, plant seeds, take care of the plants and harvest the fruits and vegetables. But the seventh year, known as shemitah, we must give the land a break and not do any work on it. In a similar way, we learn about Shabbat where we can work for six days but not on the seventh, Shabbat. There are also three important festivals throughout the year: Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot.

8. Meat and Milk

We must keep meat and milk separate. Now we know why kosher kitchens have two sets of everything: dishes, sinks, counters — one for meat and one for milk!

Lastly, God promises the land of Israel to the Jews, and Moses goes up the mountain to get the Tablets from God. He remains there for forty days and forty nights.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **HUMANKIND:** In this parsha, we learn about the laws regarding damaging someone else's property even if it was by accident. It is important to protect a borrowed item even more than you would protect your own belongings. It is not enough not to act as if they are our own, but we must treat them with extra care.
- **ACCEPTANCE:** This parsha talks about the requirement to be kind to converts and foreigners. All people deserve to be treated nicely, and even if they are somewhat different, there is no reason to treat them in a horrible way. Make sure to go out of your way to make new people feel as comfortable and included as possible. Always treat others with the same respect you like to be treated with, no matter where they come from or what they look like. The Torah tells us that we "shall not wrong the foreigner or oppress him because [we] were strangers in Egypt." What are some ways you can ensure that you will always be kind and accepting of a person who is new in your life? Invite someone who is new to the community for lunch.
- **JUSTICE SYSTEM:** This parsha gives the laws of our justice system. There is an importance to civil law in the Torah because the Torah teaches that moral conduct is the center of religious life. Who creates the values in your life? Do you have the same values as others? Does everyone doing the same thing make it right?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: The Blankful Heart by Mr. Meus

Book 2: The Empty Pot by Demi

Book 3: The Berenstain Bears and the Truth by Stan and Jan Berenstain

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Dealing with a misbehaving animal
 - b. Looking after objects according to the different types
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkPH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. "True and False"
 - a. Explain what the words "true" and "false" mean.
 - b. Make two signs, one that says "true," and one that says "false" (or T and F if the children cannot read yet). You may like to simply use pieces of paper, or index cards taped to a Popsicle stick
 - c. Give examples of things that might be true or untrue while they hold up the correct sign for what you say. You can take turns where they say things and you hold up the signs, as well
 - d. This game reminds us that we should always use our own knowledge to decide what's true – we do not have to believe without thinking for ourselves

- e. Sometimes we may even need to ask for help and learn new things to discover truth — such as when someone says a statement which is not clearly true or false to us (such as “I am ten feet tall” when we do not know how much ten feet is). Knowing when to ask questions, and remembering to use our minds when we hear things, is important for investigating what is actually the truth

4. Fingertip Hula Hoop

- a. In this game, children stand in a circle and raise their arms, then extend their index fingers.
- b. The group supervisor places a hula hoop so that it rests on the tips of the children’s fingers.
- c. Children are told that they must maintain a fingertip on the hula hoop at all times, but are not allowed to hook their finger around it or hold the hoop in any way; the hoop must simply rest on the tips of their fingers.
- d. The challenge is for the children to lower the hoop to the ground without dropping it.
- e. To make this more challenging, you can place communication constraints on the children — no or limited talking, for example
- f. Afterwards, reflect on how easy it was to coordinate this kind of carrying/building together.

5. Cross the River

- a. In this game, children must collaboratively cross a “river” which you can make by making two parallel lines on the ground. Try using sidewalk chalk if you are outside or masking tape if you are inside
- b. Each team of children is given six square cardboard “rafts” to use in crossing the river
- c. Impose rules on the rafts to encourage the teams to apply critical thinking skills
- d. For example, if a raft is left unattended, it will float away or if a raft has more than two feet and one hand on it, it will sink
- e. A monitor is required to remove the rafts that are out of play
- f. For an extra challenge, break children into smaller groups and have them compete to see who can cross the river fast enough
- g. Afterwards, talk about how easy it was to build and coordinate doing something together in teams

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

TERUMAH

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Kindness
- Blessings/Gratitude
- Beauty
- Unity
- Community

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Exodus 21:1-24:18

In this week's parsha, Moses receives instructions on how to build a special kind of "house" for God, known as the mishkan (Tabernacle). This is where God's presence will be, and where the Jews will be able to perform services for God. This was almost like a moveable synagogue.

God gives Moses detailed instructions on how to build the mishkan, so that it could travel with the Jews in the desert. All the objects in the mishkan had rings and poles attached so that they could be carried easily.

Inside the mishkan, there were two main rooms. At the back, there was a special place that had a beautiful curtain in front of it. This is where the golden ark with two cherubs (children-angel shapes) was with the two tablets that God gave Moses at Mount Sinai. In the main room, there was a table for the bread, a menorah with 7 branches of pure gold and an altar for the incense (spice offerings) called the ketoret.

Surrounding the mishkan "building" was a courtyard. The mishkan had three walls made out of 48 wooden boards that would click into each other, and they were covered with different kinds of skin cloths. The fourth side, the entrance, was also covered by a curtain.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **CONTRIBUTIONS:** This parsha describes the donations that the Jewish people gave towards building the mishkan. Sometimes working to build something beautiful for everyone to use and share can cost a lot. Just as the Jewish people donated their most expensive and valuable items for a spiritual cause, so too, we can learn to share and give most precious precious things on a project that will help everyone around us.
- **JEWISH COMMUNITY:** Miraculously, the cherubs on the Ark embraced each other when the Jewish people were united, but turned away from each other when the Jews did not treat each other kindly. The Ark was the most important item as it had the tablets with the Ten Commandments, and the fact that the cherubs were in such an important place shows how God treasures Jewish unity — and how we should too!
- The parsha describes in detail the items in the Tabernacle. The Torah gives us such detail to show us how significant each item is. We have many items of significance in our lives whether they have religious value or not. They can have a certain meaning to our families. What are some items of significance to you? Do you have any items that have been kept in your family for multiple generations?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Good People Everywhere by Lynea Gillen

Book 2: Hey Little Ant by Phillip M. Hoose

Book 3: Thankful by Eileen Spinelli

- Book 4:** The Berenstain Bears and the Joy of Giving, by Jan & Mike Berenstain
Book 5: Giving Thanks: a Native American Good Morning Message by Chief Jake Swamp
Book 6: The Giving Book: Open the Door to a Lifetime of Giving by Ellen Sabin
Book 7: The Thankful Book by Todd Parr
Book 8: Don't Say a Word, Mama by Joe Hayes

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Making the mishkan
 - b. Carrying the mishkan
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Fingertip Hula Hoop
 - a. In this game, children stand in a circle and raise their arms, then extend their index fingers
 - b. The group supervisor places a hula hoop so that it rests on the tips of the children's fingers
 - c. Children are told that they must maintain a fingertip on the hula hoop at all times, but are not allowed to hook their finger around it or hold the hoop in any way; the hoop must simply rest on the tips of their fingers
 - d. The challenge is for the children to lower the hoop to the ground without dropping it
 - e. To make this more challenging, you can place communication constraints on the children — no or limited talking, for example
 - f. Afterwards, reflect on how easy it was to coordinate this kind of carrying/building together
4. Don't Wake the Dragon
 - a. The premise is that the children are villagers in a town under siege by a fire-breathing dragon. The only way to save their village is to line up in order of height. But, they can't talk to each other, or they'll wake the dragon! Once the children feel they have lined up correctly, they should simultaneously say "Boo!" to scare away the dragon
5. Group Jump Rope
 - a. This simple game encourages teamwork while incorporating healthy movement and coordination
 - b. Two adults hold the ends of a large jump rope and swing it, with the children standing in the middle
 - c. All the children must jump together at the same time or it won't work
 - d. You could break the children into groups to compete and see which group can land the most successful jumps in a row
6. Mine Field
 - a. In this game, children learn about community
 - b. To play, first set up an obstacle course
 - c. Children play the game in pairs
 - d. One child is blindfolded and the other child attempts to verbally navigate their partner through the obstacles
 - e. Be sure to reconfigure the course between each team; that way the children watching their peers play won't know what to expect when it's their turn to be blindfolded
7. Human Knot
 - a. This is a simple game that can be played without props both indoors and outdoors
 - b. Teaches both problem solving and teamwork skills
 - c. Children stand in a closed circle, facing inward, and place their hands and arms in the center of the circle
 - d. At random, children hold on to the hand or wrist of their peers
 - e. The challenge is now for the children to disentangle themselves
 - f. This game works best with small to medium-sized groups
 - g. To make the task more challenging, try having the children complete the activity without talking
8. Cross the River
 - a. In this game, children must collaboratively cross a "river" which you can make by making two parallel lines on the ground. Try using sidewalk chalk if you are outside or masking tape if you are inside
 - b. Each team of children is given six square cardboard "rafts" to use in crossing the river
 - c. Impose rules on the rafts to encourage the teams to apply critical thinking skills
 - d. For example, if a raft is left unattended, it will float away or if a raft has more than two feet and one hand on it, it will sink
 - e. A monitor is required to remove the rafts that are out of play
 - f. For an extra challenge, break children into smaller groups and have them compete to see who can cross the river fast enough
 - g. Afterwards, talk about how easy it was to build and coordinate doing something together in teams

9. Stranded!

- a. This game requires children to be resourceful and work together to save their "stranded" peers
- b. Similar to Cross the River, you will need to cordon off a body of water
- c. Designate two or more children to play the part of the stranded islanders
- d. The children on the main shore must use what they can find to fashion a life line to pull their stranded friends to safety
- e. They may use their shoelaces, clothing or other items they can find in the room

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

TETZAVAH

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Inspiration
- Hope
- Kindness
- Blessings/Gratitude
- Leadership

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Exodus 27:20-30:10

The first thing discussed in this parsha is the olive oil used for the lighting of the menorah. Aaron and his sons (they were called kohanim/priests) must take pure olive oil and light the menorah every evening.

We also learn about the special clothing that the kohanim had to wear when they were in the mishkan. The High Priest wore an extra four garments than the regular kohanim. The kohanim did all the rituals in the mishkan, and they would do this for generations, even in the Temple (Beit Hamikdash) in Jerusalem. When the Kohanim were in the Mishkan performing their services, such as bringing a sacrifice, lighting the menorah, or taking the Mishkan down and putting it back up again (remember, it was a traveling building).

God then tells Moses how to officially initiate Aaron and his sons as Kohanim. The last thing in the parsha is instructions for how to build the golden altar.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- This parsha describes the Kohen Gadol's beautiful breastplate that served a deep spiritual purpose. Whenever the high priest was asked a question that he could not answer or was faced with a situation that he could not resolve, he would ask God for help. Letters on the breastplate would light up to give the answer. He was the wisest of all men, but even he wasn't expected to be able to solve every problem he faced, and he knew that it was okay to ask for help whenever he didn't have a solution. When a person is faced with a situation that he or she cannot resolve alone, it is important to ask for help or assistance. Who do you turn to for help?
- This parsha describes the elaborate inauguration ceremony for the priests who served in the Tabernacle. This shows us how important it is to begin each new endeavor with enthusiasm. When you make a big deal out of starting something, you're more likely to stick with it later on when the going gets tough. When have you begun something with the right attitude, and how has that helped you complete the project?
- Science has learned that the smell of lavender can help us feel calm. Which smells do you really enjoy?
- The menorah was lit every day in the Holy Temple. Unfortunately we do not have a Temple now, but each of us can create a "mini-Temple" within ourselves. Just like the menorah brightened the Temple when it was kindled, we too can brighten the world for all of those around us by making it a more positive and holy place. Being kind and charitable, helping others whenever we can and being dedicated to the mitzvot will light up the world.
- Do you have a particular routine that you do every morning?
- Which clothes make you feel extra special?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Have You Filled a Bucket Today? By Carol McCloud

Book 2: All the World by Liz Garton Scanlon

Book 3: The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein

Book 4: The Lion and the Mouse by Jerry Pinkney

Book 5: The Thank You Book by Mo Willems

Book 6: Gracias Thanks by Pat Mora

Book 7: Bear Says Thanks by Karma Wilson

Book 8: Llama Llama Gives Thanks by Anna Dewdney

Book 9: Isabella: Girl in Charge by Jennifer Fosberry

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Conducting the different services of the mishkan in pairs
 - B. Creating special clothing (bring different props)
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PlObYh>
3. Pirates of Land
 - a. Divide the group into two teams and select a leader
 - b. Each team is given a few items that they have to hide (Team A hides the objects of team B and vice versa)
 - c. The two teams then set out on a treasure hunt on the basis of the clues given by the opposite team
 - d. The leader would have to strategically plan out their course of action to find all the items before the other team
4. Fall of Trust
 - a. Get the children to form a circle, then one player is made to stand in the center and is asked to fall in any direction he/she chooses
 - b. The aim of this game is that the player ought to trust the person standing on either side to break his fall
 - c. A variation to this game is asking the children to gently push the player in a new direction. It will help strengthen their faith and trust in each other
5. Tug of war
 - a. Divide the group into two equal teams, and give them a long rope
 - b. The team that is able to pull the other team down first emerges as the winner
 - c. You can play this game without the rope, asking the team members to hold the leader, who in turn tries to pull the other team
6. Race of Hurdles
 - a. Pair up into teams of two, and tie the legs of both partners together
 - b. Now ask them to run an obstacle race. This requires cooperation and patience, planning, and not to forget, great timing.
 - c. A variant to this race is tying the partners at the hip so that the two players have their backs to each other. This will teach them to trust their partner as well
7. Sports
 - a. Games like basketball, football, baseball require the team to constructively plan their game to emerge as winners
Not everyone will be able to strategically plan the game, so a leader should be chosen to avoid chaos
 - b. The leader will take decisions and it is up to him to ensure that the members follow the instructions
8. Bouquet of Flowers
 - a. The rule of the game is simple, each child tries to hold on to their plastic/paper flower until the end of the game
 - b. All through the game, they can ask yes/no questions to one another
 - c. The person who answers “no” has to handover their flower to the one who asked them
 - d. The person with most flowers at the end of the game emerges as the winner
9. Shape-building
 - a. Bring ropes or string for groups to have one long enough for every person to hold with two hands
 - b. Help the group pick a representative who will be the only one who can ask the three questions allowed during the game. Have your group begin in a straight line, blindfold them and lay the rope out by their feet
 - c. On your signal everyone picks up the rope at their feet
 - d. Hands must remain on the rope; they may not let go of the rope for more than two seconds.
 - e. Instruct the group to form a shape (square, triangle, circle, etc.)

- f. Through their representative, players may ask the leader three questions during the game.
- g. The leader will repeat the question so that everyone can hear and then give the answer.
- h. When the group feels they have completed the task, have them drop the rope at their feet and take a step back.
- i. Ask the group if they think they have successfully made their shape.

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

KI TISA

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Patience
- Blessings
- Gratitude
- Shabbat
- Do-overs

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Exodus 30:11-34:35

This parsha discusses three major things: the mobile sanctuary called the mishkan, the Golden Calf and the second tablets.

1. Instructions to build the Mishkan:

- Every Jew should give half a shekel towards the building of the mishkan. This would also be a way to count the people.
- A washbasin of copper should be placed at the entrance to the mishkan where Aaron and his sons should wash their hands and feet before they perform the services.
- A recipe for mixing spices and oil is given for making the vessels of the mishkan holy and ready to be used.
- The recipe for the ketoret, the incense sacrifice that went on the Golden Altar inside, is also described.
- Two master craftsmen, Bezalel and Oholiab, are put in charge of the building of the mishkan.

The Jews again receive the commandment to keep the Sabbath.

2. Sin of the Golden Calf

- After the Jews heard the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai, Moses went up the mountain to receive the two tablets from God. When he doesn't come down when they expect him to, they panic and build a golden calf to worship with the support and help of Aaron. What happened is known as the "Sin of the Golden Calf."
- When God sees this, He is very angry, and wants to destroy the whole Jewish nation. God says that Moses will start a new nation. Moses begs God to save them, and then throws down the Tablets, shattering them, and destroys the Golden Calf. Moses then gathers all the Levites, and they kill all those who were involved in the building of the Golden Calf.
- Then Moses returns to God and prays for the Jews. He even tells God that if He doesn't forgive their sin, God should take his name out of the entire Torah. God forgives, but the Jews are punished with a plague, and the effects of the sin of the Golden Calf are still with us.
- God tells Moses that He will now send an angel to accompany them into the Land of Israel. Moses replies that the Jews refuse to go unless God Himself comes along. And so God agrees that He will accompany the Jews to the Holy Land.

3. Moses prepares a new set of tablets and goes up again to the mountain so God can inscribe the Ten Commandments on them. On the mountain, Moses sees a vision of God's glory, and when he comes down, his face shines so brightly that he must wear a veil. He takes off the veil only to speak to God and to teach the Jews the Torah.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- Pray that something good should happen to someone else.

- **RECTIFYING MISTAKES:** This parsha tells the episode of the Golden Calf. The story teaches us that we have the ability to rectify our mistakes. God could have easily decided to destroy the Jewish nation after they worshipped an idol straight after the giving of the Ten Commandments, but He didn't. God allowed them the opportunity to fix the mistake. Everyone makes mistakes, but not everyone learns from them and corrects them. Try to be someone who does. Have you ever done something that you regretted? How have you rectified the situation and learned from it?
- **SECOND CHANCES:** The story of the Golden Calf was quite a mistake. It was a sin; an act that the Jewish people performed that was not seen well in the eyes of God. However, God gave us a second chance. This can teach us that in life, things don't go our way. We make mistakes and we move on. Growing comes from failure. We live and do things that may not be great, but we learn from them and we gain strength from them. What have you learned from the last mistake you made?
- God commands Moshe to count the Jewish people. When something is precious to you, there is enjoyment in counting it, even if you already know how many you have. The opportunity to admire the beauty of each Jew brings God immense pride. God considers all Jews precious no matter what circumstance they are in, but it is our responsibility to be worthy of the title "God's precious ones."

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Wait by Antoinette Portis

Book 2: Did I Ever Tell You How Lucky You Are? By Dr. Seuss

Book 3: Alexander and the Terrible, Terrible, Horrible, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Panic when Moses doesn't return
 - b. Worshipping the Golden Calf and then Moses returns
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PlObYh>
3. Banana Game
 - a. Have kids stand in a straight line.
 - b. Say, "Let's see how fast we can pass a banana up and back down the line."
 - c. Here is the catch: They can't use their hands. They must hold the banana with their chins. Pass the banana, chin to chin, up and down the line. If someone drops the banana, start over
 - d. Place the banana beneath the chin of the child in front of the line
 - e. Show that child how to hold the banana between his or her chin and chest
 - f. Odds are that the banana will drop to the floor a few times during the game
 - g. Allow children to express frustration, but redirect unkind words. If children have an especially difficult time, modify the rules so kids can restart the game with the same partner who dropped the banana
 - h. When kids have finished, gather them around you in a circle
 - i. Ask: Was this game easy or difficult for you? Why? How did you feel when someone dropped the banana? Why? If you dropped the banana, how did you feel when you heard the group's reaction?
4. Sense-awareness
 - a. Divide the children into groups of 3 to 5
 - b. Distribute items that have distinctive odors, such as lemon, vanilla, cinnamon, onion, garlic, and licorice
 - c. Put each item on a small plastic lid and encourage the team (with their eyes closed) to take turns smelling and identifying them
 - d. As they describe the smells and their experiences with them, children will see that they each have a distinct perspective to contribute, all of which add to a full comparison of the smells
 - e. You can also try the activity with objects of different textures, different shapes and colors, and those that make different sounds
5. Hide-and-Seek
 - a. One player closes their eyes and slowly counts to 30 while the other players hide (this might work nicely in an outdoor area)
 - b. The counter then opens their eyes and tries to find everyone. The first one to be found is the next "counter" and the last person still hiding is the winner of the round.

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

VAYAKHEL

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Rest
- Unity
- Justice
- Charity
- Needs VS. wants

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Exodus 35:1-38:20

Moses gathers the People of Israel and repeats to them all the things God has told him in the previous three parshiot.

1. The commandment to keep the Sabbath: For six days of the week, Jews can work, and the seventh day is a special day of rest which is called Shabbat.
2. God's commandment to donate materials for the construction of the mishkan. All kinds of material were required: metals (gold, silver, copper), fabrics (wool, linen, animal skins), wood, oil, spices and precious stones.
3. As soon as Moses finished talking, the people brought things to donate to the mishkan. The people were so happy to contribute that they brought everything they had. They brought so much that Moses had to tell them to stop, and even then, there were still extra items.
4. Once again, we hear about the master craftsmen, Bezalel and Oholiab, two very talented men who were in charge of the building of the mishkan.

Next, the parsha talks about the actual building of the mishkan. Although this was already described in previous parshiot, here we learn about them doing it.

We read how they made the:

- Curtains (from twisted linen, and blue, purple, and crimson wool)
- Coverings (ram and tachash skins, the tachash was a special animal that existed then)
- Walls (acacia wood)
- Vessels: the Ark (gold and wood with a golden crown encircling its rim), the Cherubim (carved from pure gold), the Menorah (also pure gold), the Golden Altar for the incense (ketoret), the Table (wood covered with gold) and the Copper Washstand (made from mirrors donated by the Jewish women).
- Courtyard
- Other objects that belonged in the mishkan (assorted accessories like poles to carry the vessels, sockets for the planks that made up the walls, a screen for the courtyard, and more...)

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- What gift/skill do you wish you had?
- How would you like to redecorate your room?
- What art project would you like to work on?
- What is the most generous gift you have ever received?

- **THE VALUE OF REST:** Shabbat is meant to be a day of complete relaxation, and therefore no work is permitted. Think about this: what do you do when you need to study for a big test? You turn off your cell phone and all your gadgets, and you focus on getting the work done. Shabbat serves the same purpose. It is a day that you turn off all of the distractions, and you focus on Torah and prayer.
- **WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE GREATER GOOD:** Moshe had it all. He could talk to God whenever he wanted, he knew the whole Torah and practiced all the mitzvot. But that wasn't enough for him. He knew it was in his hands to help the Jewish people build their connection to God, and so he helped them build the mishkan where they could relate to God too. From here we learn that we should never be satisfied with only helping ourselves. God wants us to reach out to others and draw them into His tent, into a life of Torah and mitzvot.
- **NEEDS VS. WANTS:** The parsha lists the materials needed for the Tabernacle. A need is something that is absolutely critical to living, such as sufficient food and water, a roof over our heads, clothing to protect us from the elements and a source of income to support ourselves and our families. Everything else is a want: that red convertible, the new Apple watch, your daily habit of a large iced coffee. We easily lose perspective on the difference between needs and wants. But we must focus on the luxuries that we take for granted in our lives. How can you find a mindfulness which to help you differentiate between needs and wants?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Counting on Community by Innosanto Nagara

Book 2: Look Where We Live!: A First Book of Community Building by Scot Ritchie

Book 3: Steamboat School by Deborah Hopkinson and Ron Husband.

Book 4: "Amrita's Tree" in the Barefoot Book of Earth Tales by Dawn Casey and Anne Wilson

Book 5: Brave Girl by Michelle Markel and Melissa Sweet

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. God telling the people what Shabbat is
 - b. Donating to the mishkan
 - c. Assembling the mishkan
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Collect the prayer books used in the synagogue and return them to the bookshelves.
4. Relay Race
 - a. Set up a relay race course
 - b. Each child can stand in a designated spot and then run with "the fruit," a small ball, from one spot to the next, passing it along to the next child. Give each child ten seconds to throw the ball. If they don't succeed, they are "out"
 - c. To make it more complicated, put the children in teams and have them compete
 - d. Afterwards, talk about how it felt to be pressurized to help each other reach a goal while racing against the clock
5. Sense-awareness
 - a. Divide the children into groups of 3 to 5
 - b. Distribute items that have distinctive odors, such as lemon, vanilla, cinnamon, onion, garlic, and licorice
 - c. Put each item on a small plastic lid and encourage the team (with their eyes closed) to take turns smelling and identifying them
 - d. As they describe the smells and their experiences with them, children will see that they each have a distinct perspective to contribute, all of which add to a full comparison of the smells
 - e. You can also try the activity with objects of different textures, different shapes and colors, and those that make different sounds

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

PEKUDEI

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Justice/Fairness
- Revision
- Priorities

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Exodus 38:21-40:38

Parshat Pekudei is the last of the five Parshiot that discuss the Mishkan. The parsha begins by giving us an accounting on the gold, silver and copper that were donated to the Mishkan. We learn how Bezalel and Oholiab made the eight special garments that the Kohanim had to wear. Now that building of the Mishkan was complete, they set it up and put everything in its proper place.

Then a cloud came down upon the Mishkan, which showed everybody that God's presence had come to dwell within it.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **REVISION:** This parsha is very short, but it is a revision of what we learned throughout the book of Shemot. When we learn for a test, we also have to do revision, but it can seem boring. Why do you think revision is important and what helps you revise?
- **HONESTY AND JUSTICE:** Our sages teach us that Moses included this counting of all the materials to show that he didn't take anything for himself. Sometimes we are really jealous or want something that we thought we'd give to someone else. It's about honesty to ourselves and others. How can we be honest to ourselves and others in different ways?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Quiet by Tomie dePaola

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Counting things and making sure that you have the right number (will need props)
 - b. Creating special clothes (will need props)
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Q-Tip Maze
 - a. Kids can use one simple material to make a maze and race for their "little people."

4. Sense-awareness

- a. Divide the children into groups of 3 to 5
- b. Distribute items that have distinctive odors, such as lemon, vanilla, cinnamon, onion, garlic, and licorice
- c. Put each item on a small plastic lid and encourage the team (with their eyes closed) to take turns smelling and identifying them
- d. As they describe the smells and their experiences with them, children will see that they each have a distinct perspective to contribute, all of which add to a full comparison of the smells
- e. You can also try the activity with objects of different textures, different shapes and colors, and those that make different sounds

5. What are my priorities?

- a. Have the children sit in a circle or lie down on their backs
- b. Take 3-5 minutes (depends on age of group) to do a guided imagery and/or meditation on themes such as “what is important to me,” “when do I think it is okay/never okay to lie/steal/be jealous”
- c. Encourage the children to share what they thought about during the meditation, but do not pressurize them

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

VAYIKRA

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Repentance
- Humility
- Rituals
- Gratitude
- Sacrificing ourselves

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Leviticus 1:1-5:26

Now that the mishkan has been built and completed (we read about this last week), the parsha begins with God speaking to Moses in the mishkan. God tells him of the korbonot, the sacrifices that were an important part of the service in the mishkan. We learn about various types of korbanot:

- Olah: also known as the burnt offering which is burnt entirely on the altar.
- Five types of mincha offerings, which are sacrifices made from flour and olive oil.
- Shelamim: the "peace offering," part of which was burnt on the altar and part of which was eaten by the person who brought the sacrifice as well as the kohen who was given some.
- Chatat: various sacrifices brought as an atonement for someone who sinned.
- Asham: a sacrifice brought for certain sins.
 - a) If somebody accidentally uses something that is supposed to be for the mishkan.
 - b) If someone thinks he may have sinned, but he is not sure.
 - c) If somebody swears falsely while trying to cheat somebody.

There are many laws and intricate rules regarding the korbanot, but one rule applied to all: Every sacrifice was brought with salt.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- What is your favorite thing to cook for other people?
- What foods do you like to have at a barbecue?
- What are some unintentional mistakes you have made?
- REPENTANCE: The parsha discusses the many different types of sacrifices brought in the times of the Temple. Many of these offerings were brought on the altar to atone for all different kinds of sins. This teaches us a different lesson that is powerful and comforting. We are humans, and humans are not perfect. Even when we mess up and do something against God's will, we still have another chance. Life is not an arcade game where the moment we make a bad move, it's game over. It's about repenting in the right way — feeling regret and thinking of practical ways to avoid our mistakes in the future. It's never too late! We should always be able to find our way home.
- HUMILITY: The parsha begins with the word "Vayikra." If you look closely, you will notice that the last letter of this word, the aleph, is smaller than the rest of the letters. Our sages teach us that this is because Moshe was the humblest of all men. He knew God gave him everything that he had, and he was thankful for the many gifts. He did not boast it to others' faces, yet he did not hide his capabilities. He thanked God, and used it all to do what he had to do — lead the Jewish people. Someone who is humble recognizes his talents yet knows that it is all from God.
- SACRIFICING OURSELVES: We learn from this parsha the many ways to give sacrificial offerings, mainly through animals. However, we can give sacrifices in other ways too. We can sacrifice our time and our wants or desires. We can sacrifice for ourselves, for the benefit of others and for us to come closer to God. What are ways we can sacrifice ourselves?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Zach Apologizes by William Mulcahy

Book 2: Uh-oh, I'm Sorry by Jill Ackerman

Book 3: Look-At-Me Lucy and the Rearview Mirror: Proverbial Kids by Karen Anderson Holcomb

Book 4: 10 Things I Can Do to Help My World by Melanie Walsh

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. The kohanim preparing the different korbanot
 - b. Someone sins and they bring an offering
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. An Arrogant Person
 - a. On a large piece of paper, draw a stick figure or outline of a person
 - b. Label the figure "Mr. /Miss Arrogant."
 - c. Draw on clothing or accessories to represent arrogance, such as a crown, a foam finger saying "I'm #1" or a shirt that says "I Rock" or "I'm with stupid"
 - d. Draw thought bubbles around the figure and encourage children to make suggestions about what an arrogant person would say
 - e. Children may include phrases such as "I'm better than you" or "Ha Ha. I won!"
4. Make Fun Bags for Kids
 - a. Fill gallon-sized zip-top baggies with things like an inflatable ball, or a Frisbee
 - b. Write on the outside of the bag, "If you found this bag, you're in luck! It's full of outdoor fun just for you."
 - c. When you're done playing with what's inside, put it back for someone else to enjoy
 - d. You could also donate these to a local women's shelter (where women may have children with them and few belongings)
5. Sense-awareness
 - a. Divide the children into groups of 3 to 5
 - b. Distribute items that have distinctive odors, such as lemon, vanilla, cinnamon, onion, garlic, and licorice
 - c. Put each item on a small plastic lid and encourage the team (with their eyes closed) to take turns smelling and identifying them
 - d. As they describe the smells and their experiences with them, children will see that they each have a distinct perspective to contribute, all of which add to a full comparison of the smells
 - e. You can also try the activity with objects of different textures, different shapes and colors, and those that make different sounds
6. Murderer
 - a. The objective of the game is for the murderer to kill as many other players as possible without being identified and, if you are not the murderer, identify the killer before you get murdered
 - b. One person (the selector) will not play; that person is responsible for choosing both the murderer and the detective
 - c. All of the players sit in a circle and close their eyes. The selector walks around the outside of the circle and chooses the murderer by tapping someone on the head one time. The detective is chosen by tapping someone on the head twice
 - d. After the murderer and the detective are selected (which can be done in any order), the selector tells everyone to open their eyes
 - e. The detective moves to the middle of the circle. That player's goal is to determine who the murderer is as quickly as possible
 - f. The murderer kills people by winking at them. When a player is killed, that player should lie down or leave the circle. (Many players like to make the killing dramatic by, for example, pretending they have been shot.)
 - g. The detective has three chances to guess who the murderer is. If the detective does not guess correctly, he remains the detective for the next round. If the detective does guess right, the murderer becomes the detective for the next round
 - h. After several rounds, discuss what it felt like to be pressurized and how one had to be careful about their actions and the actions of others
5. Two Truths and a Lie:
 - a. Each person prepares three statements, two of which are true and one of which is a lie. Everyone guesses which statement is the lie. The players decide for each person which korban she or he would bring based on their lie.

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Humility
- Gratitude
- Education
- Loving God
- Environment
- Roles

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Leviticus 6:1-8:36

Tzav means to command, and God tells Moses to command Aaron and his sons how to do their work correctly with the sacrifices.

A fire must be constantly burning on the altar; it is the Kohen's responsibility to make sure it never goes out. The Kohen must clean the ashes from the altar every morning.

On the Kohen's first day of doing his service, he brings a mincha offering (flour and oil). The Kohen Gadol (High Priest) brings one every single day.

Parts of certain korbanot are eaten by the Kohanim, but they have to be eaten at the right time, and nothing is allowed to be left over.

The laws of the korbanot that were explained in Vayikra are repeated here, this time to tell the Kohen what to do.

First, Moses put the special clothing on Aaron, and then he poured the special anointing oil on him and on the altar. He then put the clothing on the sons of Aaron. Then Aaron and his sons brought a bull as a sacrifice upon the Altar.

Aaron and his sons ate the meat from the korban and they remained in the mishkan for seven days.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **LOVING GOD:** The Sanctuary, where the Jews served God, was with them in the desert, and then later on in Jerusalem. Each Jew also has a small sanctuary inside of him or her. God says that He will personally dwell in the heart of every Jew. There was always a fire burning; so too, every Jew needs to have a fiery love for God. As long as we keep that fire burning in our hearts, God will dwell inside us. If He is always with us, there is no reason to fear anything at all.
- **GOOD SURROUNDINGS:** Anything that touches something impure will become impure itself. This shows us just how much we are affected by our surroundings. We have to be careful with the places we go and the situations we place ourselves in. On the other hand, this also shows us the power that we have. We can affect our surroundings for the better. It is in our hands to influence friends, neighbors and family in a positive way. Have you influenced or been influenced by others?
- **DIFFERING ROLES:** This parsha gives the laws of korbanot (sacrifices). The High Priest plays a big role during this time. However, it is not only the Kohanim! The community and the individual play certain roles as well. In our lives, we have many roles: as an individual, as a family member, as a friend, as a community member, as a student, etc. In each situation, we must act differently. Have you ever stopped to think about what it takes to succeed in your different roles?

- What is an ideal restaurant for you?
- What are your bedtime rituals?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Humble Stew by Rita Hensel

Book 2: The Tower: A Story of Humility by Richard Paul Evans

Book 3: Gracias/Thanks by Pat Mora

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Role delegation in the mishkan
 - b. Dressing up and initiating Aaron as the High Priest
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PlObYh>
3. Gratitude Scavenger Hunt
 - a. Prepare a list ahead of time to distribute
 - b. On the list, include: 'I am thankful for... something to eat, to smell, to hear, to share, things in nature, someone that's older than me,' etc.
 - c. Give the sheet to groups of 2 -3
 - d. Encourage the groups to share their findings.
4. The Gratitude Pick Up Sticks
 - a. To play, hold all of the sticks in your hand and drop them.
 - b. They will fall randomly.
 - c. Each player takes a turn pulling a stick from the pile.
 - d. You cannot make any other sticks move or you lose your turn and do not get to collect the stick.
 - e. The player with the most sticks at the end of the game wins.
 - f. Each color represents a type of thing you are grateful for:
 - i. Red Sticks: People you are thankful for
 - ii. Orange Sticks: Places you are thankful for
 - iii. Green Sticks: Foods you are thankful for
 - iv. Blue Sticks: Specific items you are thankful for
 - v. Purple Sticks: Miscellaneous- Your choice of something you are thankful for
5. Sense-awareness
 - a. Divide the children into groups of 3 to 5
 - b. Distribute items that have distinctive odors, such as lemon, vanilla, cinnamon, onion, garlic, and licorice
 - c. Put each item on a small plastic lid and encourage the team (with their eyes closed) to take turns smelling and identifying them
 - d. As they describe the smells and their experiences with them, children will see that they each have a distinct perspective to contribute, all of which add to a full comparison of the smells
 - e. You can also try the activity with objects of different textures, different shapes and colors, and those that make different sounds
6. Murderer
 - a. The objective of the game is for the murderer is to kill as many other players as possible without being identified and, if you are not the murderer, identify the killer before you get murdered
 - b. One person (the selector) will not play; that person is responsible for choosing both the murderer and the detective
 - c. All of the players sit in a circle and close their eyes. The selector walks around the outside of the circle and chooses the murderer by tapping someone on the head one time. The detective is chosen by tapping someone on the head twice
 - d. After the murderer and the detective are selected (which can be done in any order), the selector tells everyone to open their eyes
 - e. The detective moves to the middle of the circle. That player's goal is to determine who the murderer is as quickly as possible
 - f. The murderer kills people by winking at them. When a player is killed, that player should lie down or leave the circle. (Many players like to make the killing dramatic by, for example, pretending they have been shot.)
 - g. The detective has three chances to guess who the murderer is. If the detective does not guess correctly, he remains the detective for the next round. If the detective does guess right, the murderer becomes the detective for the next round
 - h. After several rounds, discuss what it felt like to be pressurized and how one had to be careful about their actions and the actions of others

7. Duck, duck, goose!

- a. Players stand in a circle
- b. One person is "it" and walks around the outside of the circle. As they walk around, they tap the player's heads and say whether they are a "duck" or a "goose". Once someone is the "goose" they get up and try to chase "it" around the circle
- c. The goal is for the "goose" to catch "it" before they are able to stand in the "goose's" spot. If the goose is not able to do this, they become "it" for the next round and play continues
- d. If they do catch "it", the person tagged has to sit in the center of the circle. Then the goose becomes "it" for the next round. The person in the middle can't leave until another person is tagged and they are replaced
- e. Afterwards, discuss the idea of different responsibilities and how it feels to be chosen suddenly for a role

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

SHEMINI

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Eating
- Consequences
- Anger

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Leviticus 9:1-11:47

We spoke about the seven days in which Moses and Aaron inaugurated the mishkan. In this parsha, we learn about the following day, which is what Shemini means — the eighth.

Aaron and his sons officially begin their jobs as Kohanim — priests serving in the mishkan. First they prepare a sacrifice, and all the Jews come to the entranceway of the mishkan to watch as they bring the sacrifice upon the altar. Then, Moses and Aaron bless the people, and a fire came down from heaven to consume the sacrifice. The people are so overwhelmed and overjoyed by this amazing sight that they begin to sing praises to God.

But then, in middle of all the celebration and excitement, something terrible happens. Two of Aaron's sons, Nadav and Avihu, light a fire to bring a sacrifice that they aren't supposed to bring, and as punishment, they die. You can imagine how sad this tragedy makes Aaron, but he remains quiet and accepts God's judgment. Moses tells Aaron and his remaining sons, Eleazar and Itamar, to continue doing the service in the mishkan while the rest of the People of Israel mourn the death of Nadav and Avihu.

God tells Moses to tell them about the animals that may be eaten and those that may not be eaten. The kosher/permissible animals each have two signs: they chew their cud and they have split hooves. Kosher fish must have fins and scales. We are given a list of the non-kosher birds, and a list of four types of locusts which are kosher. The Torah tells us that all other insects are not kosher.

We also learn about the idea of purity which is a spiritual cleanliness. If something becomes impure by touching something impure, for example, the dead body of a non-kosher animal, then it must be immersed in a special body of water called a mikvah. The mikvah has a special power to restore purity to things (like vessels, dishes and even people) that have become impure.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- We are told very specifically that we cannot eat whatever we want, whenever we want. This teaches us that food and eating are sacred matters. The food we choose is important to our physical and spiritual health.
- YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT: One of the signs for a kosher animal is chewing its cud. Why is chewing its cud a sign of kashrut? When you "chew a thought over," it means that you think before you act. As humans, we are naturally impulsive. We act maturely when we pause before doing or saying something or think through our plans before we do them. Slow down and chew it over before you act.
- What food have you never had before that you wish you could try?
- What food completely disgusts you?
- After Aaron's two sons, Nadav and Avihu, passed away, God addressed Aaron directly. He usually spoke to Aaron through Moses. It was rare for Aaron to merit a private prophecy. This was actually a divine condolence visit. God could have sent a message of condolence

through Moses, but He came Himself to teach us that during times of mourning we must exhibit the greatest degree of compassion and sensitivity. What are some other traits of God that we try to emulate?

- What wild and wacky thing have you done that you wish you hadn't?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Humble Stew by Rita Hensel

Book 2: The Tower: A Story of Humility by Richard Paul Evans

Book 3: Gracias/Thanks by Pat Mora

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. The inauguration of the mishkan
 - b. The death of Aaron's sons
 - c. Chefs in the kitchen: which foods are kosher and which are not
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PlObYh>
3. Making Decisions in a Story
 - a. Prepare a story for the children in which the main character has several decisions to make. Read the story aloud until the character has to make the first decision, and then give the group of children a choice of actions
 - b. The story could begin with: "Sarah is playing with a toy. She sees that George is playing with a toy that she wants. Should she a) steal George's toy, b) ask George if he would like to play together and share the toys"
 - c. Ask the children to raise their hands for the decision they think the character should make. The children who choose the wrong answer are out of the game while children who choose the correct answer can continue to make decisions for the character in the story.
 - d. Afterwards, explain to the children what the consequences of each action would be, and which the correct decision to make is. The children who make all the right decisions and get to the end of the story can win a small prize, such as a sweet, sticker or gold star
4. The Moral Decisions Game
 - a. Talk to the children about making moral decisions in everyday life and write out questions for the children to answer
 - b. Some of the questions could be: "What should you do if you find a lost toy that does not belong to you?" and "What would you do if you spilled some milk and your mom asked you if you did it?"
 - c. Provide at least two answers for each question and ask the children to put their hands up when they think the answer is right
 - d. Afterwards, explain to the children what the consequences of each action would be, and which the correct decision to make is.
 - e. The children who chose the correct answer for five questions win the game and can receive a prize, such as a sticker or gold star

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

TAZRIA

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Words
- Impaact
- Attitude
- Holiness

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Leviticus 12:1-13:59

The laws of purity, called the laws of Tumah and Taharah, are continued in this week's parsha.

The first topic discussed is a woman who has given birth. All baby boys must have must be circumcised which is called a "brit milah" in Hebrew.

Next, we learn about a disease called tzaraat. This is similar to leprosy, but it is not the same. The Torah teaches the kohen which signs to look for to identify the disease as tzaraat. A Metzora is a person who has tzaraat. This person is impure and leaves the camp (or city) until the tzaraat goes away, and when the Kohen visits him outside of the camp and sees that he no longer has tzaraat, he may return to the camp. Houses and clothing can also be afflicted with tzaraat, and again it is the kohen's job to identify it.

The end of the parsha discusses three other types of impurity, and how someone can be purified from each one.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **ATTITUDE:** Reflecting on our approach to life and our daily attitude is one way to begin exploring the state of our spiritual health.
- **THE ABILITY TO PERFECT:** God does everything perfect; however, it seems like a lot of things that God made are far from perfect. If God would have made everything in a state of complete perfection then the only role we would have is enjoying. We are capable of more than that. God invites us to be partners in creation, and so He gives us raw materials and we finish the job. What can we do to make this world a more perfect place?
- **MUNDANE HOLINESS:** This parsha goes into great detail about seemingly mundane activities. The Torah is teaching us that these activities can be elevated to holiness. Whether it is eating, sleeping or interpersonal relations, we can transform them all into holy activities. Everything has the ability to be holy as long as we put it in a certain framework and have a specific mindset.

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Seeds and Trees: A children's book about the power of words by Brandon Walden

Book 2: The Word Collector by Sonja Wimmer

Book 3: The Little Engine That Could by Watty Piper

Book 4: How Big Is God? by Lisa Tawn Bergren

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. A woman who has given birth goes to the temple with her new baby, family and a korban
 - b. Setup people, clothing and "houses" that has tzaraat for "checking"
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PlObYh>
3. Discuss everyone's success of the week. These could include:
 - a. Helping someone
 - b. Standing up for a peer
 - c. Standing up for something you believe in
 - d. A learning accomplishment
 - e. A skill mastered
 - f. Learning something new
 - g. An act of kindness
 - h. A good conversation
 - i. Finishing a project
4. What are my priorities?
 - a. Have the children sit in a circle or lie down on their backs
 - b. Take 3-5 minutes (depends on age of group) to do a guided imagery and/or meditation on themes such as "what is important to me," "when do I think it is okay/never okay to lie/steal/be jealous"
 - c. Encourage the children to share what they thought about during the meditation, but do not pressurize them
5. Share a Snack:
 - a. Let the children go outside and enjoy an ice cream treat or a popsicle
 - b. This can be an opportunity for a type of competition... such as RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU HAVE FORGIVEN 5 PEOPLE THIS WEEK (those children could be given one treat)
 - c. Then ask the children to raise their hands if they forgave 4 people (that could be another treat)
 - d. Afterwards, discuss the importance of forgiveness. Even if someone has done something wrong or is strange (like has tzaraat) for some reason, how can we treat them nicely?

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

METZORA

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Forgiveness
- Repentance
- Self-reflection

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Leviticus 14:1-15:33

This parsha continues on from last week where we talked about tzaraat, a specific skin disease similar to leprosy. We learned about how the kohan would identify the tzaraat and say if it was really tzaraat or not, but now we learn about what to do if it is tzaraat.

Someone who has tzaraat on their body, their house or their clothing must bring different korbanot (sacrifices) and/or do different things. These can be bringing birds with spices, rebuilding or repainting and putting the clothing in a mikvah which is a special water pool.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **FORGIVENESS/REPENTANCE:** this parsha is the continuation of very specific details about tzaraat. It can seem strange that something which looks like a simple disease gets so much attention, but tzaraat was more than a physical disease. It was a punishment for talking about other people negatively or doing a sin. When have your parents or teachers punished you for doing something wrong in order to teach you a lesson? How did you feel about it? Do you think it was fair and/or did you grow from that punishment?
- **SELF-REFLECTION:** Sometimes we have to do a lot of things to improve ourselves and help other people. This can be by helping out at home or caring more about our friends. How do you think you can become a better person?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Seeds and Trees: A children's book about the power of words Hardcover by Brandon Walden

Book 2: The Word Collector by Sonja Wimmer

Book 3: The Little Engine That Could by Watty Piper

Book 4: How Big Is God? by Lisa Tawn Bergren

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Having tzaraat and doing different things to heal
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>

3. What are my priorities?

- a. Have the children sit in a circle or lie down on their backs
- b. Take 3-5 minutes (depends on age of group) to do a guided imagery and/or meditation on themes such as "what is important to me," "when do I think it is okay/never okay to lie/steal/be jealous"
- c. Encourage the children to share what they thought about during the meditation, but do not pressurize them

4. Share a Snack:

- a. Let the children go outside and enjoy an ice cream treat or a popsicle
- b. This can be an opportunity for a type of competition... such as RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU HAVE FORGIVEN 5 PEOPLE THIS WEEK (those children could be given one treat)
- c. Then ask the children to raise their hands if they forgave 4 people (that could be another treat)
- d. Afterwards, discuss the importance of forgiveness. Even if someone has done something wrong or is strange (like has tzaraat) for some reason, how can we treat them nicely?

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

ACHREI MOT

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Repentance
- Roles
- Rituals
- Holiness

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Leviticus 15:1-18:30

We learn how only Aaron (and the future High Priest) is allowed to do certain tasks in the mishkan, and also how he needs God's permission.

The main topic of this parsha is the Yom Kippur service that the High Priest would do in the mishkan or future Temple. He would bring sacrifices and go to the mikvah (a special water pool) several times in a specific order. There was one particular sacrifice called the "Azazel" which was one of two goats. The first goat was sacrificed and the other (the "Azazel") was sent into the wilderness. It was a very long day, and our Sages say that he wasn't allowed to sleep the whole of Yom Kippur which can be over 24 hours!

We also learn that we are not allowed to eat any blood. Lastly, we learn about who we can marry and not marry.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **REPENTANCE:** The "Azazel" was in the service of Yom Kippur. Sometimes people ask why it's only "once a year" that we do self-reflection and apologize to God for our sins. Maybe though it's about summing up the year but also seeing how we can be better in the new year (remember that Yom Kippur is 10 days after Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish new year). Do you believe in new year resolutions? What are some of the ones you have made, and did you keep them?
- **ROLES/RITUALS:** Only Aaron is allowed to do certain things in the mishkan. Sometimes only certain people are chosen to do something, and we can feel left out. Do you think there is space to say that only certain people can do something? When and why?
- **FOOD CHOICES:** There are many rules about the food we eat; the types of foods we eat, how we prepare those foods and even when we eat them. This week's parsha connects food to the idea of holiness. There are many ways we can change the way we make our decisions around food, but most importantly is that we raise our awareness about what we consume. Do you "eat to live" or "live to eat"?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Stand Tall by Molly Lou Melon

Book 2: Big Al by Andrew Clements & Yoshi

Book 3: How Big Is God? by Lisa Tawn Bergren

Book 4: Did You Hear? A Story About Gossip by Frank J. Sileo

Book 5: Lazar, the Good Deed Dog: Giving Love and Respect to Our Elderly by Myrna Gelman Shanker

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. The Yom Kippur service (the children can play the animals, Aaron, other priests, etc.)
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Gossip Game
 - a. The classic game of telephone demonstrates just how a story can change as it is passed from one person to the next
 - b. Have one child whisper a short phrase into the next child's ear who then passes it on to the next person and so on around the circle.
 - c. The last child announces what she hears and the original child tells what she actually said. For example, "I like Scooby snacks" might come out at the other end as, "Jack bites soupy snakes."
 - d. Point out that although it is silly in the game, if you are talking about real people, warped or incomplete stories can be embarrassing or hurtful. Remind a child not to repeat a story they hear about someone else they have permission from the person it is about to tell it.
4. Toothpaste Object Lesson
 - a. Everyone can relate to wishing you could take back something that you said, but unfortunately, unwise or unkind words cannot be undone once they are out of your mouth
 - b. Illustrate this for children by passing out paper plates, tubes of toothpaste and plastic spoons and knives.
 - c. Ask them to squeeze a large glob of toothpaste on the plate. Give them one minute to try to stuff all the toothpaste back in the tube.
 - d. When they cannot, explain that gossip is like trying to put the toothpaste back in the tube; you can't fully do it, and you end up with a big mess.
 - e. This is why it is important to watch your words before they come out of your mouth because once they are out, the damage is done and it is difficult to take it back
5. Interpretations and Assumptions
 - a. A common rumor scenario is when people jump to conclusions based on assumption, speculation and partial knowledge of the situation, leading to all kinds of harmful misinterpretations
 - b. Give children some hypothetical examples. For instance, say you see the new girl at school getting into a police car. You don't know her or her family or anything about why she was getting into the police car but you start to talk amongst your friends about the possibilities
 - c. Ask children to identify some things that they might assume or wonder about if they saw such a situation, such as that she was being arrested for some terrible crime. After the children share, ask if their opinions would change at all if they knew that her dad was a police officer
 - d. Elicit the understanding that rumors based on partial facts and half-truths and are not reliable sources of accurate or trustworthy information, and therefore should not be repeated
6. To Tell or Not to Tell
 - a. One difficulty for most children is knowing when telling a secret constitutes gossip and when it is appropriate and necessary to tell a trusted adult for the good and welfare of another
 - b. Explain that if a friend tells you they are going to do something dangerous or illegal, telling a grownup is not gossiping, tattling or spreading rumors
 - c. Have them role play situations where one friend is sharing something with another friend. The second friend asks the everyone else for advice on whether to keep it a secret or tell, and why
3. What are my priorities?
 - a. Have the children sit in a circle or lie down on their backs
 - b. Take 3-5 minutes (depends on age of group) to do a guided imagery and/or meditation on themes such as "what is important to me," "when do I think it is okay/never okay to lie/steal/be jealous"
 - c. Encourage the children to share what they thought about during the meditation, but do not pressurize them

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

KEDOSHIM

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Love
- Honesty
- Kindness
- Image

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Leviticus 19:1-20:27

Kedoshim has a lot of commandments about how to treat other people. We are reminded not to serve idols and to honor our parents. We learn that we cannot steal, swear falsely in a legal case help the poor and allow them to take from our crops, and we absolutely cannot insult people who have physical or intellectual disabilities. Also, we learn that we have to treat animals with kindness. The famous line "love your fellow as yourself" is in this week's parsha.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **HOLINESS IN OUR PHYSICAL APPEARANCE:** There is a law against making gashes in one's flesh and tattooing oneself. We are commanded to be holy, and one of the ways to do that is through treating the body sacredly. It is difficult in our society to have a sense of respect and acceptance for our own bodies with all their inherent differences. People are often held to impossible standards when it comes to body weight, leading to eating disorders. Bodily sanctity can be nurtured. We should try to inspire others who struggle with their body image that they are acceptable, even holy, just as they are.
- **SINCERITY:** We are told to leave the corners of our fields unharvested, and we cannot go back to collect any produce that we dropped along the way. We leave this produce in our fields for those less fortunate. There is no minimum size field for leaving this gleanings. The assumption is that any landowner can always spare a little. This lesson from the Torah helps us look at what we have and see the corners we could leave unharvested, whatever it may be. What kind of surplus do you have in your life?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Stand Tall by Molly Lou Melon

Book 2: Big Al by Andrew Clements & Yoshi

Book 3: How Big Is God? by Lisa Tawn Bergren

Book 4: Did You Hear? A Story About Gossip by Frank J. Sileo

Book 5: Lazar, the Good Deed Dog: Giving Love and Respect to Our Elderly by Myrna Gelman Shanker

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. A poor person comes to gather food from your field
 - b. A court case where someone lies and makes a false oath
 - c. Being an honest businessman/woman

2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>
3. Interpretations and Assumptions
 - a. A common rumor scenario is when people jump to conclusions based on assumption, speculation and partial knowledge of the situation, leading to all kinds of harmful misinterpretations. Give the children some hypothetical examples. For instance, say you see the new girl at school getting into a police car. You don't know her or her family or anything about why she was getting into the police car but you start to talk amongst your friends about the possibilities.
 - b. Ask the children to identify some things that they might assume or wonder about if they saw such a situation, such as that she was being arrested for some terrible crime. After the children share, ask if their opinions would change at all if they knew that her dad was a police officer.
 - c. Elicit the understanding that rumors based on partial facts and half-truths are not reliable sources of accurate or trustworthy information, and therefore should not be repeated.
4. To Tell or Not to Tell
 - a. One difficulty for most children is knowing when telling a secret constitutes gossip and when it is appropriate and necessary to tell a trusted adult for the good and welfare of another.
 - b. Explain that if a friend tells you they are going to do something dangerous or illegal, telling a grownup is not gossiping, tattling or spreading rumors.
 - c. Have them role-play situations where one friend is sharing something with another friend. The second friend asks everyone else for advice on whether to keep it a secret or tell, and why.

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

EMOR

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Anger
- Kindness
- Hospitality

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Leviticus 21:1-24:23

This portion begins by telling us that a kohen must always be careful to remain tahor, pure, so that he can serve in the Holy Temple. In order to do this, he must make sure not to come in contact with a dead body because that would make him impure.

The Torah then tells us about the special times of year on the Jewish calendar. First it discusses Shabbat. For six days we do work and the seventh is a day of rest.

Next is Passover, Pesach, which happens in the Hebrew month of Nissan. For seven days, we eat matzot. The first and last of those days are days of rest on which we are not allowed to do any work.

Next is the Counting of the Omer, which begins on Passover and counts down until Shavuot. The fiftieth day of the Omer is the festival of Shavuot.

Next comes Rosh Hashanah, the "head of the year," which is the first day of Tishrei. This is when we blow the shofar.

Ten days later is the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, a fast day when we pray for forgiveness for our sins.

Next is Sukkot, a joyful festival where we eat in a booth, known as a sukkah, and we make a blessing on four types of plants that are gathered together.

This parsha ends by telling us about somebody who cursed God. Moses asked God what his punishment should be, and God said that he must be killed. We also read that somebody who kills a person is punished with death, and that somebody who hurts a person or animal must pay money to compensate for the cost.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- What is your favorite holiday?
- Do you have any personal rituals for the beginning of spring?
- KINDNESS TO ANIMALS: We are given the laws about properly treating animals. The very fact that these laws exist says a lot about Judaism's appreciation of the role of animals in our lives. Humans and animals both have emotions. The Torah is teaching us to be sensitive to the animals we encounter in our lives. Being kind to animals can make us better humans. The way we treat the world around us is upon us, and animals are part of that world.
- WELCOMING GUESTS: We are called upon to celebrate these Jewish holidays joyously, and we are always instructed to make sure we share the joy with others – our families as well as any guests we can bring into our home. We have so many great gifts, and we should

enjoy them fully; however, our own enjoyment of the world is incomplete if we cannot share it with others. Make the effort to have an open home and bring others into your world.

- **THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY:** The kohen has to maintain a special level of purity, and he may not tend to the body of someone who has passed away. However, the Torah points out that when it comes to family, the kohen can and must be of help. This teaches us that families should always stay together whether times are good or hard. How does your family help you? How can you help your family?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: I Was So Mad by Mercy Mayer

Book 2: Pig Park by MJ Minor

Book 3: How to Heal a Broken Wing by Maira Kalman

Book 4: Hugless Douglas and Big Sleepover by David Melling

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Acting out the different festivals: food, prayers (songs), etc.
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Forgiving Musical Chairs:
 - a. Play musical chairs in the usual way but when someone is OUT (left without a chair), that person has to share an idea about who or what we may need to forgive or ask forgiveness for. They then stand or sit in the middle of the musical chairs as the game continues
 - b. Afterwards, discuss how this relates to when we make a mistake or deliberately hurt someone (such as the person who cursed God in this parsha).
4. Shape-building (sukkah themed)
 - a. Bring ropes or string for groups to have one long enough for every person to hold with two hands
 - b. Help the group pick a representative who will be the only one who can ask the three questions allowed during the game. Have your group begin in a straight line, blindfold them and lay the rope out by their feet
 - c. On your signal everyone picks up the rope at their feet
 - d. Hands must remain on the rope; they may not let go of the rope for more than two seconds.
 - d. Instruct the group to form a $\frac{3}{4}$ square (so that the square has an “entrance” like a sukkah)
 - e. Through their representative, players may ask the leader three questions during the game.
 - f. The leader will repeat the question so that everyone can hear and then give the answer.
 - g. When the group feels they have completed the task, have them drop the rope at their feet and take a step back.
 - h. Ask the group if they think they have successfully made the sukkah

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

BEHAR

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Sharing
- Resting
- Faith

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Leviticus 25:1-26:2

The same way the seventh day of the week is Shabbat, every seventh year is a Shabbat for the land. This means that for six years, farmers may work on the land, sowing seeds so things should grow, pruning to help the plants grow better and harvesting the fruit and vegetables so they can sell it and make money. But in the seventh year, the year of shemittah, the land must be allowed to rest.

During this year, there can be no planting or harvesting. Instead, anything that grows becomes free for anybody who wants to just pick and enjoy. After seven cycles of shemittah, the fiftieth year ($7 \times 7 = 49$ and the year following the 49th is the 50th) is called the Yovel or the Jubilee Year. Not only is it a rest for the land, but all servants go free and all property returns to its original owner. That means that whenever somebody buys a plot of land, he knows he will only keep it until the year of yovel.

The Torah emphasizes that we shouldn't worry that we won't have enough to eat during shemittah and in the year after (since we can't plant or harvest and it takes time for food to grow). God promises that the year before shemittah, the sixth year, will produce enough food for three whole years—the sixth year, the year of shemittah, and the following year. Ultimately, it is about trusting in God that He will provide everything we need for three years.

Fun fact: Shemittah happened over 2021-2022!

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **FALSE IMPRESSIONS:** One of the things we learn about in this parsha is being honest in business. It is wrong to "misrepresent" ourselves and create an impression that is false. There are many ways to create a false impression, sometimes through addition (adding on details) and sometimes through omission (not giving all the details). This is a very demanding standard when it comes to honesty. Do you ever allow others to believe something about you that isn't true?
- **SHARING THE WEALTH:** As part of Shemittah, we learn that we have to allow the poor to gather whatever food they want. This is called tithing which is a sensible way to give to those who don't have enough. It is important to develop a life-long habit of giving. What do you think our responsibilities are to those who have less than we do? How can you give? How does it make you feel when you help out someone else?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Words Can Hurt by Paula J. Bussard

Book 2: The Boy Who Wouldn't Share by Mike Reiss

Book 3: No Rules for Michael by Sylvia A. Rouss

Book 4: Ella's Trip to Israel by Vivian Newman

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Being farmers and sharing food with the poor
 - b. Running a business honestly and/or dishonestly
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Relay Race
 - a. Gather random items.
 - b. Divide the kids into two lines.
 - c. Have them walk across the room and back while doing three different tasks. An example would be put on a hat, crawl across the room, or give a high five
 - d. All three things have to be done at once- they had to pay close attention to be able to follow the directions and finish the race.
 - e. A listening and following directions strategy is visualizing the directions before they begin.
4. Discuss our love for Israel and put the map of Israel together on the floor.
5. Two Truths and a Lie:
 - a. Each person prepares three statements, two of which are true and one of which is a lie. Everyone guesses which statement is the lie
 - b. Afterwards, discuss what it felt like not being able to trust each other
4. Gratitude Pick-Up-Sticks
 - a. To play, hold all of the sticks in your hand and let them fall randomly.
 - b. Each player takes a turn pulling a stick from the pile.
 - c. You cannot make any other sticks move or you lose your turn and do not get to collect the stick.
 - d. Every time a player collects a stick, they must share something based on these colors:
 - i. Red Sticks: People you are thankful for
 - ii. Orange Sticks: Places you are thankful for
 - iii. Green Sticks: Foods you are thankful for
 - iv. Blue Sticks: Specific items you are thankful for
 - v. Purple Sticks: Miscellaneous- Your choice of something you are thankful for
 - vi. The player with the most sticks at the end of the game wins.

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

B'CHUKOTAI

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Trust
- Faith
- Commitment

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Leviticus 26:3-27:34

In last week's parsha, Behar, we learned about the Shemittah year which happens in cycles of 7. Now, we learn about what happens if we do or don't keep the Shemittah as well as all the commandments that God has given us. These are called the "blessings" and the "curses."

Some of the blessings are:

1. Rain will come when we need it to make the crops grow
2. There will be enough food and everybody will eat until they are satisfied
3. We will have peace and security in the land
4. No wild beasts or armies will pass through the land
5. We will be successful in our battles and victorious over armies much larger than ours
6. And finally, God will be with us

The curses are the opposite of these. However, even if God is angry at the Jews and must punish them, He will never forget or abandon them.

The last thing we learn in this parsha is how to calculate the value of different types of gifts that people promise to God.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

- **FAITH:** The blessings and curses are there to show us what happens if we do or don't follow the word of God. It can be very hard to trust God or even other people when we think we know best, and it's extremely important that we realize that other people (like our parents or teachers) might know more than us. Do you find it easy to ask for advice and follow it through even if you don't want to?
- **RULES AND REGULATIONS:** Every Jew is instructed to follow rules for the betterment of him/herself and society. We have all kinds of rules in our lives; some rules make sense and are easy to follow while others are more difficult to obey. Ultimately, we navigate our way through many decisions each day. No matter what our choices are, it is important to think about why we are making them. Do you think about the consequences when you are tempted to or do break a rule?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Words Can Hurt by Paula J. Bussard

Book 2: The Boy Who Wouldn't Share by Mike Reiss

Book 3: No Rules for Michael by Sylvia A. Rouss

Book 4: Ella's Trip to Israel by Vivian Newman

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Acting out what happens if we do or don't follow Shemittah
 - b. Creating a society where some people don't follow the rules
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PlObYh>
3. Cops and Robbers
 - a. Take the children outside or to a large area and divide them into two groups "Cops" and "Robbers"
 - b. Choose an item for the Robbers to try steal
 - c. To win the game, the Robbers must successfully steal the object and take it back to a specific point without being caught by the Cops
If the Cops touch a Robber, the Robber is sent to jail (where their friends can try save them by touching them again)
 - d. Afterwards, talk about the consequences of stealing and how it felt to be the "good" or "bad" team
4. Hide-and-Seek
 - a. One player closes their eyes and slowly counts to 30 while the other players hide (this might work nicely in an outdoor area)
 - b. The counter then opens their eyes and tries to find everyone. The first one to be found is the next "counter" and the last person still hiding is the winner of the round.
 - c. Afterwards, talk about what it felt like to hide from each other

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

BAMIDBAR

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Boredom
- Order
- Challenges

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Numbers 1:1-4:20

God tells Moses to take a census, a count, of all the people who can be part of the army, meaning all men between the ages of twenty and sixty. Each of the twelve tribes had a leader, known as the nassi, who helped Moses do the counting. There were 603 550 men in total excluding the tribe of Levi which was counted separately.

This parsha discusses how the People of Israel camped and traveled in the desert. When the Jews had to leave their encampment and begin traveling, the Levites would take apart the the mishkan (Tabernacle) that the Jews built, carry it to wherever the next camp was, and set it up again. The rest of the People of Israel were divided into four groups, and camped around the Levites. To the east were Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun; to the south, Reuben, Shimon, and Gad; to the west, Ephraim, Menasseh, and Benjamin; and to the north, Dan, Asher, and Naphtali.

The family of Aaron, the Kohanim along with the Levites, did the service in the Mishkan. Originally, the firstborn sons from each family were supposed to do the service, but when they sinned with the golden calf, they lost this privilege and instead, it was given to the Levites.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **ADVERSITY:** The children of Israel have begun their 40 years in the desert. They will face many challenges and hardships. They will lose their leader, they will face battles and there will be a lack of food and water. For the sake of our own development, we need to venture out of our comfort zone, sometimes failing and sometimes succeeding. How have you dealt with obstacles or failures in the past? What might help you in the future?
- **RITUALS:** The Jewish people create a ritual for setting up the camp. Ritual is important in our lives. When we build order into our lives, we begin to manage the seemingly overwhelming tasks and take comfort in knowing that there are some things that will remain constant in our hurried lives. Do you have individual rituals that get you through the week?
- **BOREDOM:** The Jewish people are wandering in the desert. However, the journey is not aimless because it will be filled with tests and chances for regrowth. We can learn from this that it is important to appreciate the "boring" moments of life. In working through the boredom, there is a lot we can learn; for example, patience and fortitude. What important things can you find within a seemingly boring moment?
- Which of our friends would be most likely to survive in the wilderness?
- Which household chore is your job? Do you secretly enjoy that job?

BOOKS

Book 1: Barnacle Is Bored by Jonathan Fenske

Book 2: The Messy Monkey Tea Party by Cheri Blevin Deich

Book 3: Little Chief by Toni Danette

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Counting the tribes
 - b. Creating a camp (see game)
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>
3. Obstacle course
 - a. Create an obstacle course with chairs and materials available.
 - b. Make different levels of difficulty.
 - c. Explain to the kids how certain obstacles in our lives might be easier to deal with, yet some are more difficult. Some might require team work and outside help.
4. Camping Fort
 - a. Divide the children into groups. Each group must get materials to create their own fort which will be part of the camp The fort should be moveable in some way so that the children can "carry it"
 - b. Afterwards, talk about how easy/difficult it was to work together to coordinate building a fort/camp, and try to think about how the Jews camped in the desert
5. Shape-building
 - a. Bring ropes or string for groups to have one long enough for every person to hold with two hands
 - b. Help the group pick a representative who will be the only one who can ask the three questions allowed during the game. Have your group begin in a straight line, blindfold them and lay the rope out by their feet
 - c. On your signal everyone picks up the rope at their feet
 - d. Hands must remain on the rope; they may not let go of the rope for more than two seconds
 - e. Instruct each group to form a square
 - f. Through their representative, players may ask the leader three questions during the game.
 - g. The leader will repeat the question so that everyone can hear and then give the answer.
 - h. When the group feels they have completed the task, have them drop the rope at their feet and take a step back.
 - i. Ask the group if they think they have successfully made their shape. Talk about what it was like to coordinate being in a "camping" group

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Inspiration
- Growing
- Jealousy

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Numbers 4:21-7:89

The parsha begins with the completion of the census (counting of the population) that Moses started in last week's parsha (Bamidbar). Here, God tells Moses to count the Levites from ages 30 to 50, because they're the ones who will do the service of carrying the parts of the Mishkan. He counts a total of 8,580 Levites.

We also read about a Nazarite/Nazir, a person who wants to be extra holy by agreeing to keep away from certain things even though they are allowed. The Nazir keeps away from cutting his hair, drinking wine or grape juice and becoming impure through contact with a dead person.

Next, God tells Moses about a special mitzvah that Aaron and his sons have: blessing the People of Israel. This is known as Birkhat Kohanim, and we still do this today in synagogue at the end of holiday services.

The last thing the parsha tells us is about how each Nasi (Prince) brings an offering for the inauguration of the altar. The offering brought by each of them is exactly the same, but the Torah repeats each one to show us that God values each offering just as special as the next.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **VOLUNTEERING OURSELVES:** The parsha gives the laws of a Nazarite. A Nazarite's goal is to achieve a higher-than-required level of holiness. The Nazarite's discipline can lead us to reflect on what we can take on to become a better role model, ethically and spiritually. We might refrain from speaking Lashon Hara or volunteer to do social justice work. How can you uplift yourself?
- **DEDICATION:** This parsha talks about dedicating the altar (the mizbeach). When you dedicate something special, it shouldn't just be about the dedication, it should be go beyond that because it symbolizes something important. It should symbolizes something important. Next time you are dedicating your time or possession, think about the meaning behind it. How can you incorporate its significance into the dedication?
- What are three things that you like that you could give up for a month?
- What three blessings would you like to give to your family?
- What gift do you wish you could give?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: I Dissent: Ruth Bader Ginsberg Makes Her Mark by Debbie Levy

Book 2: It's Okay to Make Mistakes by Todd Parr

Book 3: Feeling Jealous! by Kay Barnham

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Bringing gifts to the mishkan as different tribal leaders
 - b. Being a nazir (could do dress-up)
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>
3. Imitating Relay
 - a. Divide the children into teams.
 - b. Each team leader will do something for their team to imitate.
 - c. Let each team member have a chance at doing something for the team to imitate and have the team all sit down after everyone has had a chance to be imitated.
4. Follow the Leader
 - a. Designate two leaders for the children to follow around an obstacle course, in and out of a designated area.
 - b. Tell children they can choose who they want to imitate and complete the "follow me game" back to the classroom.
 - c. Have children sit down on the floor in a circle, and talk about the choices and the obstacles they faced
5. Blessings
 - a. Pair up with the person next to you and give each other three blessings. Talk about their strengths and imagine their future as a grown up
 - b. Afterwards, reflect on how we can look at others positively and see them as role models in our lives even if we don't agree with everything they say
6. Relay Race
 - a. Set up a relay race course
 - b. Each child can stand in a designated spot and then run with "the fruit," a small ball, from one spot to the next, passing it along to the next child. Give each child ten seconds to throw the ball. If they don't succeed, they are "out"
 - c. To make it more complicated, put the children in teams and have them compete
 - d. Afterwards, talk about how it felt to be pressurized to help each other reach a goal while racing against the clock

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

B'HAALOTCHA

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Leadership
- Appreciation
- Curiosity

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Numbers 8:1-12:16

The parsha begins with the instruction for Aaron to light the Menorah in the Mishkan. The Menorah had seven branches made out of one lump of solid gold according to the fiery image that God had shown Moses. Next, we read about how Moses initiates the Levites to do their service in the Mishkan. Every man from the tribe of Levi between the ages of 20 and 50 served in the Mishkan by helping the Kohanim do their work.

This is the Jewish people's first year in the desert after they came out of Egypt. As they neared the end of the year, they had to prepare for their first Passover. The most important part of celebrating Passover was bringing an offering in the Mishkan — the Paschal sacrifice (called the Korban Pesach). So, in this parsha, God commands the Jews to prepare and bring the sacrifice. But some of the people are impure (tameh) because they have come in contact with a body which prevents them from being able to bring the sacrifice.

The people who are impure are really upset and they go to Moses and say, "Why should we miss out on doing the mitzvah? We also want to bring the Paschal sacrifice!" Moses asks God what they should do. God tells them that they will get a second chance. Exactly a month after Passover will be Pesach Sheini—the Second Passover. This will allow anyone who wasn't able to bring the Paschal Sacrifice on Passover a second opportunity. This is a very important story because it teaches us that it's never too late to do a good deed, and that we always get a second chance.

Next we read a bit about how the Jews rested and camped in the desert. There was a "Cloud of Glory" over the Mishkan that represented God's presence. Whenever the cloud was over the Mishkan, the Jews camped in that place. When the cloud lifted, they began traveling, but they would camp again when it stopped moving. God tells Moses to make two silver trumpets. Different sounds were blown for different occasions: when Moses wanted to talk to the leaders of the tribe, when it was time to begin traveling, when Moses wanted to gather the whole nation, when the Jews were going to war and when bringing the sacrifices on special holidays.

Every night, manna came down in the camp, and every morning, the people gathered and ate it. But now, after a year, the people complain that they are sick of eating the manna and want meat. God promises to send them meat and the next day, large swarms of quail come over the camp, and the Jews have more than enough meat to eat.

God tells Moses to appoint seventy people to help him in his job; he does so, and these seventy people receive some of Moses' prophetic ability.

Miriam gets a disease called tzaraat (from Parshat Tazria). She has to be outside the camp for seven days, and the Jews don't travel for those seven days in order for her to heal.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **CURIOSITY:** The parsha describes the seven lamps that light up the sanctuary. The lamps can be seen as education and the way we light up the minds and hearts of others. Education is not only a matter of mastering information, it's about questioning and exploring. Invite

others to engage in conversation with their own questions and thoughts about things like God, the Jewish people, and what we practice ritually.

- **BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN OTHERS:** Two men are prophesizing in the camp. Instead of being threatened, Moses welcomes them. Often, when we see the strengths of others, we are threatened. Somehow, we think their strengths mean the diminishment of our own. However, sharing power is the best kind of leadership out there. A leader should encourage and facilitate leadership in others. Even if we don't see ourselves as leaders, we should still try to bring out the best in others.
- **SHOWING APPRECIATION:** Miriam got leprosy as a punishment for speaking badly about her brother. This meant that she, along with the entire nation, had to wait until she was healed so that they could continue traveling. The reason Moshe wanted to wait for one person was because he had so much appreciation for all she had done for him growing up, and now was his chance to show it. What can you do to let those who you appreciate know that you really appreciate all they do?
- What is one time you have received a second chance?
- What food that you ate as a child do you miss now?
- Do you think everyone has the capacity to be a leader?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Sometimes You Win, Sometimes You Learn (for Kids) by John C. Maxwell

Book 2: The Curious Garden by Peter Brown

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Making the menorah
 - b. Gathering the camp and getting ready for travel (trumpets, etc.)
 - c. Miriam gets Tzaarat
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkPH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Yes or No Game
 - a. Each child receives a flower cut-out.
 - b. The rule of the game is simple, each tries to hold on to their flower until the end of the game.
 - c. All through the game they can ask Yes/No questions to one another. The fun part is that the person who answers "No" has to handover their flower to the one who asked them.
 - d. The person with most flowers at the end of the game emerges as the winner.
 - e. You can take your liberties and tweak the games to bring out the best in children. Remember to make it fun and interesting!
4. Shape-building (menorah themed)
 - a. Bring ropes or string for groups to have one long enough for every person to hold with two hands
 - b. Help the group pick a representative who will be the only one who can ask the three questions allowed during the game. Have your group begin in a straight line, blindfold them and lay the rope out by their feet
 - c. On your signal everyone picks up the rope at their feet
 - d. Hands must remain on the rope; they may not let go of the rope for more than two seconds.
 - e. Instruct the groups to form a menorah
 - f. Through their representative, players may ask the leader three questions during the game.
 - g. The leader will repeat the question so that everyone can hear and then give the answer.
 - h. When the group feels they have completed the task, have them drop the rope at their feet and take a step back.
 - i. Ask the group if they think they have successfully made their menorah
5. Sharing Food
 - a. Provide snack bags and create a bag to donate to a food shelter. Discuss hunger in the Torah and today.
6. Camping Fort
 - a. Divide the children into groups. Each group must get materials to create their own fort which will be part of the camp. The fort should be moveable in some way so that the children can "carry it"
 - b. Afterwards, talk about how easy/difficult it was to work together to coordinate building a fort/camp, and try to think about how the Jews camped in the desert

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

SHLACH

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Self-confidence
- Courage
- Perspective
- Courage

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Numbers 13:1-15:41

Moses sends twelve spies (one from each tribe) to the Land of Canaan (the original name of the Land of Israel) to see what the land and its people are like. The spies tour the whole land and when they come back after forty days, they tell the people that it is indeed a land "flowing with milk and honey." But, they add, the people in it are very strong and the cities have huge walls like fortresses, and they "even saw giants." They tell the Jews that the land would be much too difficult to conquer. Even though two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, disagree with the rest, saying that the land is very good and they can surely conquer it, the Jews believe those with the bad report, and they cry out to Moses that they don't want to go.

God is furious and wants to kill all the Jews, but Moses begs him not to, reminding Him that He is a God of mercy. So God agrees to spare the Jews but says that because they complained, except for Joshua and Caleb, none of these people will go into the land; they will all die in the desert. Then He tells Moses to turn around from the direction they were going, and head towards the desert.

When Moses tells the people that they would have to stay in the desert for forty years instead of going into the Land of Israel, they realize what a horrible mistake they had made. Some of the people say, "We realize that we sinned, and we are ready to go into the land!" They go up the mountain and get ready to enter the land. But Moses tells them that it is too late and that they should not go because God is not with them and they will not succeed. They go anyway, and suffer a terrible defeat by the Canaanites and the Amalekites.

We also learn in this parsha about the mitzvah of challah — when we bake bread, a portion of it must go to God. Today, when we don't have a Sanctuary, we still make sure to burn a piece of the dough before baking the bread.

We learn about the mitzvah of tzitzit, fringes worn on the corners of a four-cornered garment. When we see the fringes, we remember who we are, and the mitzvot that God has commanded us.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **VOICING OPINIONS:** Caleb and Joshua do not agree with the report of the spies, and they decide to speak out against it. It can be difficult when we find ourselves with a different viewpoint than that of the larger group. It can take a lot of strength to stand up for what you believe in, but it is important to not simply follow the tide. How do you feel when someone in a group introduces a new perspective?
- **KEEPING THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE:** The attitude of the spies rubbed off on the nation. Instead of making a realistic evaluation of the report and planning accordingly, they mourned. Mistakes and mishaps can happen, but we are responsible for our reactions, and only we can ensure that a small mishap remains nothing more than a small bump along the journey of life. How well can you keep life's challenges in perspective?
- **COURAGE AND SELF-CONFIDENCE:** The ten spies lack courage and see themselves as very small, saying they are as "grasshoppers"

in the eyes of the inhabitants of the land, as well as in their own eyes. They lack the self-confidence it takes to do what is required. To have a positive self-image and to develop a sense of the courage, we need to make an effort to try new things. Where do you think courage comes from?

- What is the worst advice you have ever received?
- When have you quit because the task in front of you seemed too difficult?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Courage by Bernard Waber

Book 2: Spaghetti in a Hot Dog Bun: Having the Courage to Be Who You Are by Maria Dismody

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. The story of the spies
 - b. Moses pleading with God not to kill the Jews
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Courage Role Play:
 - a. Put children in threes. Pretend that one child is bullying the other one, and the third child the teacher
 - b. Tell the children to sort out the situation by negotiation and informing the teacher who must also say something
 - c. Afterwards, discuss with the children how they chose to solve the problem with language or actions
4. Courage Tree
 - a. Create a courage tree to hang on a wall. Before Shabbat, cut a large tree shape from brown and green craft paper and glue some mini magnets at various points on the tree. Next, cut several apple shapes out of red construction paper. Tape the tree to a wall, and prepare characteristics of courage, such as “trying new things,” “doing what is right,” and “standing up for yourself” with Velcro
 - b. On Shabbat, encourage each child to add or remove courage apples with the Velcro based on which courage traits they think are the most important
5. Cops and Robbers
 - a. Take the children outside or to a large area and divide them into two groups “Cops” and “Robbers”
 - b. Choose an item for the Robbers to try steal
 - c. To win the game, the Robbers must successfully steal the object and take it back to a specific point without being caught by the Cops
 - d. If the Cops touch a Robber, the Robber is sent to jail (where their friends can try save them by touching them again)
 - e. Afterwards, talk about the consequences of competing negatively and how it felt to be the “good” or “bad” team

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

KORACH

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Rebellion
- Jealousy
- Relationships
- Communication

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Numbers 16:1-18:32

We read about a sad but important story that occurred while the Jewish people were in the desert. There were some jealous and evil people who tried to challenge Moses' leadership. The disastrous results taught all the Jews an important lesson.

The parsha is named after Korach who was from the tribe of Levi. This meant that he had the honor of helping the Kohanim and carrying the parts of the Mishkan while traveling. But for him this isn't enough; he is jealous of Aaron because he wants to be a Kohen too. So, he gets a bunch of people to be on his side—Dathan and Aviram, the usual troublemakers, On the son of Peleth, and 250 others. They go to Moses and Aaron and complain, "Why should you two be the leader and the Kohan? Isn't every Jew special? Why do you think you're better than everybody else?"

In order to prove that they really are worthy of being Kohanim, Korach and his men prepare an offering of Ketoret to bring in the Mishkan. Aaron also prepares an offering, and they all stand outside the Mishkan holding their pans. Suddenly, the earth opens and swallows those rebelling against Moses — Korach, Dathan, and Aviram, and a fire comes to consumes all the rebels.

All of the Jews watch the scene, and it is clear to everybody that Moses is the true leader, appointed by God, and that only a Kohen — Aaron or his sons — is allowed to bring the ketoret offering. However, still some of the Jews complain, so a plague begins to spread. Aaron rushes to bring a ketoret offering as an atonement for the people and the plague stops.

God makes one more miracle to prove that Aaron's family are the only true Kohanim. Aaron's staff—the dry stick he would carry with him — miraculously starts growing almonds. When everyone sees the dead stick suddenly sprouting, it is clear that Aaron is the Kohen who has been chosen by God.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **COMMUNICATION:** Moses decides to reach out to some of the rebels and asks them to meet with him. Regardless of whether the person agrees to it, this action says much more about the one who asks than it does about the person who receives the request. It is a brave thing to do, and can be very rewarding. Do you think that reaching out is a sign of strength or weakness?
- **AGREEING TO DISAGREE:** Korach was completely disinterested in anything other than himself. Korach had an uncaring coldness toward the plight of others and toward the needs of the nation. Even when we disagree with someone, we still need to infuse ourselves with sincere care and concern for them. We all have our own opinions, and we should be able to voice them and have healthy discussions with our peers.
- **STANDING UP FOR YOUR BELIEFS:** Korach stood up for what he believed to be unfair. While the way he went about it was incorrect in the Torah's eyes, he still had the courage to object and voice his opinion. When you object to something, there is a proper way to do it. Be sure to be sensitive; you can be respectful, yet effective.

- What is the worst thing you have done due to “peer pressure”?
- Have you ever been near an earthquake? What happened?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Poppy’s Best Babies by Susan Eaddy

Book 2: I Love You All the Same by Donna Keith

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Korach’s rebellion (can do the different stages separately)
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PlObYh>
3. Rock and Bucket Brigades
 - a. Divide the group into two teams and make two lines of chairs. Have each team line up behind the line of chairs.
 - b. Hand the first player in each line a bucket and have them run through the line of chairs by weaving in and out (going around each chair) and then run back through the line carrying the bucket. Once they get back, they give the next person in line the bucket.
 - c. Before the next person in line can go, they have to add a rock to the bucket. Before the next person can go, they have to add two rocks to the bucket. The next player adds three, then four, etc. This continues until the last player is carrying the bucket with all the rocks in it while running through the line. The children will get slower and slower as that game goes on. Those carrying more rocks will likely get more frustrated and jealous of those who had a lighter bucket to carry.
 - d. The first team to complete the challenge wins!
 - e. Afterwards, discuss: who here has ever been jealous of someone else? When you were jealous, did you feel happy? When you’re jealous, do you feel at peace? Jealousy causes you to stop focusing on the good things in your own life, and it makes peace nearly impossible. Just like in the game (by adding the rocks), jealousy weighs you down little by little, until you’re eventually just stuck instead of living.
4. Interpretations and Assumptions
 - a. A common rumor scenario is when people jump to conclusions based on assumption, speculation and partial knowledge of the situation, leading to all kinds of harmful misinterpretations. Give the children some hypothetical examples. For instance, say you see the new girl at school getting into a police car. You don’t know her or her family or anything about why she was getting into the police car but you start to talk amongst your friends about the possibilities.
 - b. Ask the children to identify some things that they might assume or wonder about if they saw such a situation, such as that she was being arrested for some terrible crime. After the children share, ask if their opinions would change at all if they knew that her dad was a police officer.
 - c. For Korach, he gathered followers by spreading rumors and lies about Moses. Elicit the understanding that rumors based on partial facts and half-truths are not reliable sources of accurate or trustworthy information, and therefore should not be repeated.

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

CHUKAT

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Control
- Bullying
- Language

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Numbers 19:1-22:1

The Torah is not written in the order in which events happened, and this week's parsha jumps to the end of the Jews' forty years in the desert — to the 38th year, to be exact. We begin by learning about a special mitzvah that enables a Jew who is tameh, impure, to become pure again and thus be allowed in the Mishkan. This is the commandment of the parah adumah, the red cow. If someone becomes impure because of contact with a dead body, the ashes of the parah adumah together with cedar wood, a branch of hyssop and wool, can purify him.

When the People of Israel arrive in the desert of Zin, Miriam passes away, and the well of water that they had always had in her merit dries up. So now, the people have no water and complain to Moses. God tells Moses to talk to the rock and tell it to bring forth water. But Moses instead hits the rock with his stick, and water gushes out. God then tells Moses that because he did not follow his instructions exactly, he will not be able to go into the Land of Israel.

The Jews want to continue traveling towards Israel, so they send messengers to the king of Edom asking him permission to pass through Edom's land which was next in their route. The king responds that they may not travel through his land, and if they try to, he will come and kill everybody. The Jews respond that they will not take any food or drink, they will just walk on the road so they could get to the other side. However, the king still says absolutely not. Now, the Jews must take a longer route to get around the land of Edom.

God tells Moses to take Aaron and his son Elazar up a mountain called Mount Hor. There, Moses takes Aaron's clothing and puts it on Elazar, and Aaron lays down and passes away. When the Jews see Moses and Elazar coming down alone, they realize that Aaron had passed away, and everyone begins to weep. They mourn for 30 days.

The extra-long journey around the land of Edom discourages the Jews, and they complain again to Moses. Poisonous snakes then attack the camp, and God tells Moses to put up a brass serpent high on a pole. Anyone who sees Moses' brass serpent after being bitten, heals. The Jews sing a song of thanks to God for the well that provided them with water in the desert.

Now the Jews reach another land that they have to pass through. So they send a message to Sihon, King of the Amorites, asking for permission to pass through his land. This time, Sihon did not just say no, he actually went out to war against the Jews. They fought back and won, gaining all of his three lands. Then Og, King of Bashan, came out to fight and came out to fight, and the Jews won again and conquered his land.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **THE POWER OF WORDS:** Out of temper, Moses hits the rock twice instead of speaking to it. As punishment, God takes away his opportunity to go into the Land of Israel. This teaches us how careful we need to be with our words, especially when we are role models. Words can push people apart, but they can also bring people together. By taking the time to think before we speak, we have a better chance of finding the right words in every situation. How can you affect others with your speech?

- **BULLYING:** Again, out of temper, Moses calls the people “rebels.” He uses this hurtful label in public. Showing tolerance and respect for others, despite their shortcomings, is essential. We should discourage labeling others. We should strive to be respectful to others who are different from us rather than trying to raise ourselves. How can social groups and cliques be hurtful?
- **LOSING CONTROL:** Moses loses control by losing patience with his people who are constantly complaining. We might be dealing with ongoing frustrations, but whatever the issue may be, it is better to address the deeper issue than for us to lose control. Did losing your temper ever accomplish anything worthwhile?
- Are there any laws or social rules that completely baffle you?
- What is something really bad you have done because you were angry?
- Have you ever come face to face with a snake in the wild? What did you do?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: I’m Like You, You’re Like Me: A Book About Understanding and Appreciating Each Other by Cindy Gainer

Book 2: Just a Bully by Mercer Mayer and Gina Mayer

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Purifying someone with the red cow (becoming impure, preparing the mixture, etc.)
 - b. Moses hitting the rock
 - c. The snakes in the camp
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>
3. Create a group rap or song about bullying and/or words to perform
4. Tag
 - a. Choose someone to be “It”
 - b. The “It” counts to 10 and the other children scatter by running away
 - c. “It” has to chase after them and touch someone. That person then becomes the “It” and the game starts again.
 - d. After several rounds, discuss how it felt to be running away from other people and trying to protect yourself like the Jews did with Edom and the Amorites.
5. Blessings
 - a. Pair up with the person next to you and give each other three blessings. Talk about their strengths and imagine their future as a grown up
 - b. Afterwards, reflect on how we can look at others positively and see them as role models in our lives. Also talk about how we can encourage others to see the best in themselves
6. Relay Race
 - a. Set up a relay race course
 - b. Each child can stand in a designated spot and then run with “the fruit,” a small ball, from one spot to the next, passing it along to the next child. Give each child ten seconds to throw the ball. If they don’t succeed, they are “out”
 - c. To make it more complicated, put the children in teams and have them compete
 - d. Afterwards, talk about how it felt to be pressurized to help each other reach a goal while racing against the clock

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

BALAK

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Temptations
- Jealousy
- Love

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Numbers 22:2-25:9

In the previous parsha, we read about how when other nations attacked the Jews, they were badly defeated and their lands were conquered. So in this week's parsha, we learn that Balak, the king of Moav, has seen what's happened to those other nations and is terrified. But he knows that if he tries to fight the Jews, he will lose. So he thinks of a better plan that will make him victorious over them: hiring a prophet to curse the Jews.

Balak hires Balaam, a non-Jewish prophet, to curse the Jews. So Balaam saddles his donkey and sets out on his journey. God sends an angel to block his path, and Balaam's donkey, seeing the angel, goes off the road to bypass the angel. Balaam, who doesn't see the angel, beats the donkey for going off the road. The donkey then opens its mouth and starts speaking to Balaam, asking why he is beating her! Then Balaam sees the angel who tells him that he should know that he will not be able to curse the Jews and will only be able to say what God allows him to.

So Balaam arrives at his destination, and King Balak and all the dignitaries are there waiting for him to come and curse the Jews. Balaam begins to speak, but instead of cursing the Jews, he blesses them! Balak tells Balaam, "What did you do?! I hired you to curse the Jews, and instead you're blessing them?" Balaam replies that he can only say the words that God puts into his mouth.

Balak takes Balaam to another mountain, hoping that a change of place will allow him to be more successful in cursing the Jews. But when Balaam opens his mouth again, he speaks more blessings! This time, Balak just says, "Enough! Don't curse them and don't bless them. Just don't say anything!" But Balak really wants it to work, so they try one last time. Once again, Balaam opens his mouth, and blessings pour out.

Finally, Balak gets really angry and says, "I hired you to curse my enemies, and instead you blessed them three times!" Balaam answers that he can only say the words that God puts in his mouth and then ends off with a prophecy.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **TEMPTATIONS:** The Israelites are camped in the desert and find themselves tempted in many ways by foreign cultures. They indulge their temptations, and it causes havoc in the community. Our lives are full of temptations. It is important that we know what our values are so that we can make sure they outweigh the temptations we encounter. What do you do to resist your temptations?
- **JEALOUSY:** Balaam realized that in order to curse the Jewish people, he would need to physically see them, thereby arousing feelings of jealousy and anger. Jealousy is when one spends too much time looking at what others have. Instead, we should be looking at ourselves and what we have, appreciating our blessings. We each have unique capabilities, and we should focus on those instead. What are your unique talents?
- **MODESTY:** Balaam observed the Jewish encampments, and the first thing he noticed was their modesty. Their tent doors faced away from each other, ensuring each other's privacy. He saw their modesty in the way they conducted themselves, and he was impressed. He was so inspired that he began to bless the Jewish people! It is hard to dress in a modest way and speak in a refined manner. If we realize what we can accomplish through our actions, it helps us conduct ourselves in a modest way.
- What wisdom have you received from an animal?

Book 1: A Color of His Own by Leo Lionni

MUSIC

1. “HINEI MA TOV” (Behold how good)

Hinei ma tov umanain
Shevet achim gam yachad
Hinei ma tov umanain
Shevet achim gam yachad
Hinei ma tov (hinei ma tov)
How good and pleasant it is
May brothers live in communion

2. “MA TOVU” (How goodly)

Ma tovu ohalecha Ya’akov
Mish’k’no’techa Yisrael.
Va’ani b’rov chas’d’cha
Avo beitecha
Eshtachaveh el heichal kod-sh’cha
B’yiratecha.
How goodly are Thy tents O Jacob
Thy tabernacles Yisreal
And in Thy great compassion
I will come into Your house
There I will bow
There I will fear
Thy holiness oh Lord
Thy holiness oh Lord

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Balak summoning Balaam
 - b. Balaam trying to curse the people
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PlObYh>
3. Blessings
 - a. Pair up with the person next to you and give each other three blessings. Talk about their strengths and imagine their future as a grown up
 - b. Afterwards, reflect on how we can look at others positively and see them as role models in our lives. Also talk about how we can encourage others to see the best in themselves
4. Rock and Bucket Brigades
 - a. Divide the group into two teams and make two lines of chairs. Have each team line up behind the line of chairs.
 - b. Hand the first player in each line a bucket and have them run through the line of chairs by weaving in and out (going around each chair) and then run back through the line carrying the bucket. Once they get back, they give the next person in line the bucket.
 - c. Before the next person in line can go, they have to add a rock to the bucket. Before the next person can go, they have to add two rocks to the bucket. The next player adds three, then four, etc. This continues until the last player is carrying the bucket with all the rocks in it while running through the line. The children will get slower and slower as that game goes on. Those carrying more rocks will likely get more frustrated and jealous of those who had a lighter bucket to carry.
 - d. The first team to complete the challenge wins!
 - e. Afterwards, discuss: who here has ever been jealous of someone else? When you were jealous, did you feel happy? When you’re jealous, do you feel at peace? Jealousy causes you to stop focusing on the good things in your own life, and it makes peace nearly impossible. Just like in the game (by adding the rocks), jealousy weighs you down little by little, until you’re eventually just stuck instead of living.

4. Hide-and-Seek

- a. One player closes their eyes and slowly counts to 30 while the other players hide (this might work nicely in an outdoor area)
- b. The counter then opens their eyes and tries to find everyone. The first one to be found is the next "counter" and the last person still hiding is the winner of the round.
- c. Afterwards, talk about what it felt like to hide from each other

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

PINCHAS

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Determination
- Fairness
- Moderation

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Numbers 25:10-30:1

In last week's parsha, Pinchas stopped a fierce plague that killed many Jews. In this week's parsha we read about his reward: God giving him a special covenant of peace and appointing him as Kohen.

After the plague, God again tells Moses to count all of the men between the ages of 20 and 60. These are the men who will receive a part of the Holy Land. The total count is 601,730. God also tells Moses how the land will be divided between the twelve tribes. The tribe of Levi is counted separately as it will not receive a part of the Holy Land because they will serve God in the Holy Temple, the Beit Hamikdash. The tribe of Levi includes 23,000 men.

Machlah, Noah, Chaglah, Milkah and Tirtzah, the five daughters of Tzelophchad of the tribe of Menashe, ask Moses an important question. Their father had passed away without having any sons, and according to the law at that time, their family would not be entitled to receive a part of the Land of Israel. So they ask Moses to give them their father's portion of the land. Moses asks God what to do and God says that the daughters of Tzelophchad are right – they should get part of the land. God then adds a law to the Torah's laws of inheritance that if a man passes away without having had any sons, the inheritance should be given to his daughters.

God tells Moses to go up on Mount Avarim from where he can see the entire Holy Land before passing away. Afterwards, Moses puts his hand on Joshua bin Nun in front of the Jewish people, showing that he will be the next leader.

This week's parsha ends with a list of the daily offerings as well as the extra offerings which were brought on Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh, Pesach, Shavuot, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **BALANCING PASSIONS:** Pinchas sees a fellow Israelite behaving in a way that he believes to be unjust. His passion is fueled and in his desire to right this injustice, he takes the law into his own hands. He did in fact see the man breaking a law, but does that mean that it was acceptable for him to serve as a judge and jury? Passions drive us to take action, but sometimes we must refrain. How do your passions affect your actions? How can you use your passions for the good?
- **STANDING UP FOR YOURSELF/WOMEN'S RIGHTS:** The five sisters have no brothers and do not stand to inherit their father's property because they are women. They daringly stand before Moses and the whole assembly to make their request to inherit the property of their father, the property of their father, even though they are women. Moses confers with God and then fulfills their radical request. It is important to advocate for yourself. You never know what will happen if you don't speak up. What are the benefits of standing up for oneself?
- **ABOVE AND BEYOND:** The general rule in the Torah is that a Kohen has to be born into the family of Kohanim—one can't just become a priest. But there was an exception made for Pinchas. Pinchas did an act that was beyond what was expected of him: he risked his very

life and killed Zimri, one of the tribal leaders of the Jewish people who was leading them to sin. Pinchas did much more than what anyone would have expected — he thought only about the will of God. We can't become Kohanim, but we can be sure that when we do more than what is expected, God will reward us in an exceptional manner, too.

- When you are angry, how do you calm yourself down? How do others calm you?
- How do you respond when you get bad news?
- What do you think are important qualities in a leader?
- What do you feel passionate enough about to protest?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: It's Not Fair! By Tom Lichtenheld and Amy Krouse Rosenthal

Book 2: Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon by Patty Lovell

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. The daughters of Tzelophchad talking to Moses
 - b. Moses going up on the mountain to see the Land of Israel
 - c. Moses showing his approval of Joshua as the next leader
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>
3. Four Corners Discussion
 - a. Place a sign in each of the four corners of the room: strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree.
 - b. Inform students that they will listen to statements, then move to the corner of the room that matches their viewpoint.
 - c. Choose statements that offer room for discussion and have no easy answers, such as "It's OK to take one life to save five."
 - d. Read the first statement and ask students to move.
 - e. Once they've all chosen a side, ask for students from each corner to justify their choices. Give students in other corners the chance to make rebuttals and change corners if they wish.
 - f. Repeat the exercise with the next statement.
4. Blessings
 - a. Pair up with the person next to you and give each other three blessings. Talk about their strengths and imagine their future as a grown up
 - b. Afterwards, reflect on how we can look at others positively and see them as role models in our lives. Also talk about how we can encourage others to see the best in themselves
5. Courage Role Play
 - a. Put children in threes. Pretend that one child is bullying the other one, and the third child the teacher
 - b. Tell the children to sort out the situation by negotiation and informing the teacher who must also say something
 - c. Afterwards, discuss with the children how they chose to solve the problem with language or actions
6. Courage Tree
 - a. Create a courage tree to hang on a wall. Before Shabbat, cut a large tree shape from brown and green craft paper and glue some mini magnets at various points on the tree.
 - b. Next, cut several apple shapes out of red construction paper. Tape the tree to a wall, and prepare characteristics of courage, such as "trying new things," "doing what is right," and "standing up for yourself" with Velcro
 - c. On Shabbat, encourage each child to add or remove courage apples with the Velcro based on which courage traits they think are the most important

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

MATOT

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Responsibility
- Accountability
- Violence
- Independence

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Numbers 30:2-32:42

In last week's parsha, we read about how Pinchas killed Zimri and the Midianite woman when they committed an immoral act. God now commands the Jewish people to wage war against the Midianites for trying to convince the Jews to act immorally and worship idols. Moses chooses 1,000 men from each of the twelve tribes to serve as soldiers, and appoints Pinchas as one of the leaders of the army. When the Midianites see the Jewish army coming to fight them, they laugh and say, "The Jewish army is so small, we will win over them for sure!" However, with God's help, the Jewish army is victorious over the Midianites without losing even one soldier.

After the war is over, two tribes, Reuven and Gad, approach Moses to make a request. They ask him if they can settle with their families on the east side of the Jordan River instead of crossing the river and entering the Land of Israel. Moses is angry and asks why they don't want to live in the Land of Israel, and how they can even consider leaving the people to conquer the Land alone. They explain that they had noticed that the land on the east of the Jordan was very fertile with rich, green grass for their cattle to graze. Also, they knew that Moses would not be buried in the Land of Israel and so they wanted to remain near his burial place. When the tribes clarify their request stating that they will gladly join their brothers in battle, Moses agrees to let them settle there. When Moses agrees, half of the tribe of Menashe join the tribes of Reuven and Gad in settling the land east of the Jordan River.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **KEEPING YOUR WORD:** The parsha began by discussing vows and the importance of not breaking a promise. The Torah tells us to be very careful about making promises so that we don't accidentally break them. Instead of making a promise, one should say "I hope I can..." Have you ever promised to do something and not kept your promise?
- **TAKING RESPONSIBILITY:** Moses accuses Israel's enemies of tempting the Israelite men to sin instead of placing the blame on the Israelites themselves. Is it helpful to place the blame on someone else? Does accusing others fix the problem? As difficult as it can be, we do need to take responsibility for our own actions
- Is war necessary? Is it inherently evil? What are the rules for a just war?
- Is it okay to move far away from your family in order to make more money?
- Would you like to move somewhere else? Where would you like to move?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: The Day No One Played Together: A Story About Compromise by Donalisa Helsley

Book 2: But it's not my fault by Julia Cook

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Fighting the Midianites
 - b. The tribes explaining to Moses why they want to live on the east of the Jordan
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PlObYh>
3. Cooperative “Musical” Hoops
 - a. You’ll need small hula hoops or rings scattered throughout the room (one hoop per two children to start with).
 - b. Hum to cue the movement.
 - c. Children move around the room, stepping anywhere except inside a hoop.
 - d. On your signal, everyone finds a hoop and steps inside as quickly as possible. (Two or more children can be in the same hoop.) To be considered “inside” a hoop, a child must have at least one foot in.
 - e. The other foot may not touch the ground outside the hoop. When the game continues, remove one hoop.
 - f. Continue playing and removing hoops until children cannot possibly squeeze any more people into the remaining hoops.
4. Cops and Robbers
 - a. Take the children outside or to a large area and divide them into two groups “Cops” and “Robbers”
 - b. Choose an item for the Robbers to try steal
 - c. To win the game, the Robbers must successfully steal the object and take it back to a specific point without being caught by the Cops
 - d. If the Cops touch a Robber, the Robber is sent to jail (where their friends can try save them by touching them again)
 - e. Afterwards, talk about the consequences of stealing and how it felt to be the “good” or “bad” team
5. Sharing Food
 - a. Provide snack bags and create a bag to donate to a food shelter. Discuss hunger in the Torah and today.
6. Relay Race
 - a. Set up a relay race course
 - b. Each child can stand in a designated spot and then run with “the fruit,” a small ball, from one spot to the next, passing it along to the next child. Give each child ten seconds to throw the ball. If they don’t succeed, they are “out”
 - c. To make it more complicated, put the children in teams and have them compete
 - d. Afterwards, talk about how it felt to be pressurized to help each other reach a goal while racing against the clock

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

MASEI

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Accomplishments
- Justice
- Revenge
- Inheritance

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Numbers 33:1-36:13

The parshai begins by listing all of the 42 stops that the Jews made on their travels through the desert. We then read what the borders of Israel are according to the Torah. We learn about the sea, the rivers, the desert and the mountains that are the boundary lines of the county.

We also learn about the mitzvah to build 6 "cities of refuge" in the Land of Israel (this is not done today in Israel). These cities were a safe place for someone who had accidentally killed someone else. The classic example is someone who was cutting down a tree, and the hammer fell or the wood fell and killed his friend. That person would then run to the closest city of refuge. If he reached there safely and the court agreed that he was innocent of deliberate murder, then he would be able to live there peacefully without fear of revenge from the murderer's family. He had to stay there until the current High Priest died, and then he could go free.

We also return to the 5 daughters of Tzelophchad who had received land for themselves. They were obligated to marry within their tribe so that the land would not go to another tribe before the people had even settled the land of Israel.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** Moses keeps a written record of the progress of the Jews wandering through the desert. Each stage of their journey is written down. In this way, they could always see where they came from and how far they still have to go. What were your accomplishments last week, last month and last year?
- **REVENGE:** The cities of refuge are an important part of the Land of Israel. Why do you think we need them? Should we have places for people who killed others by accident and/or how should we punish them?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: The Day No One Played Together: A Story About Compromise by Donalisa Helsley

Book 2: But it's not my fault by Julia Cook

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes – follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Fighting the Midianites
 - b. The tribes explaining to Moses why they want to live on the east of the Jordan

2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>
3. Duck, duck, goose!
 - a. Players stand in a circle
 - b. One person is "it" and walks around the outside of the circle. As they walk around, they tap the player's heads and say whether they are a "duck" or a "goose". Once someone is the "goose" they get up and try to chase "it" around the circle. The goal is for the "goose" to catch "it" before they are able to stand in the "goose's" spot. If the goose is not able to do this, they become "it" for the next round and play continues
 - c. If they do catch "it", the person tagged has to sit in the center of the circle. Then the goose becomes "it" for the next round. The person in the middle can't leave until another person is tagged and they are replaced
 - d. Afterwards, discuss the idea of different responsibilities and how it feels to be chosen suddenly for a role
4. Murderer
 - a. The objective of the game is for the murderer is to kill as many other players as possible without being identified and, if you are not the murderer, identify the killer before you get murdered
 - b. One person (the selector) will not play; that person is responsible for choosing both the murderer and the detective
 - c. All of the players sit in a circle and close their eyes. The selector walks around the outside of the circle and chooses the murderer by tapping someone on the head one time. The detective is chosen by tapping someone on the head twice
 - d. After the murderer and the detective are selected (which can be done in any order), the selector tells everyone to open their eyes
 - e. The detective moves to the middle of the circle. That player's goal is to determine who the murderer is as quickly as possible
 - f. The murderer kills people by winking at them. When a player is killed, that player should lie down or leave the circle. (Many players like to make the killing dramatic by, for example, pretending they have been shot.)
 - g. The detective has three chances to guess who the murderer is. If the detective does not guess correctly, he remains the detective for the next round. If the detective does guess right, the murderer becomes the detective for the next round
 - h. After several rounds, discuss what it felt like to be pressurized and how one had to be careful about their actions and the actions of others

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

DEVARIM

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Criticism
- Fairness
- Attitude

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Deuteronomy 1:1-3:22

On the first of Shevat (thirty-seven days before his passing), Moses begins his repetition of the Torah to the assembled children of Israel. He reviews the events that occurred and the laws that were given in the course of their forty-year journey from Egypt to Sinai and into the Promised Land. Moses also rebukes the people for their failings and iniquities and tells them to keep the Torah and observe its commandments in the land that God is giving them as an eternal heritage. The Jews will cross into this Land after Moses' death.

Moses recalls his appointment of judges and magistrates to ease his burden of meting out justice to the people and teaching them the word of God. He recalls the journey from Sinai through the great and fearsome desert. He recalls the sending of the spies and the peoples' subsequent spurning of the Promised Land, so that God decreed that the entire generation of the Exodus would die out in the desert. "Also against me," says Moses. He was not able to enter the Land of Israel either.

Moses also recounts some more recent events: the refusal of the nations of Moab and Ammon to allow the Israelites to pass through their countries; the wars against the Emorite kings Sichon and Og; and the settlement of their lands by the tribes of Reuben and Gad and part of the tribe of Manasseh; and Moses's message to his successor, Joshua, who will take the people into the Land and lead them in the battles for its conquest.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **LISTENING TO ALL SIDES:** Moses emphasizes the importance of listening – paying close attention and patiently listening to all sides. A qualified judge must ignore external factors and do his best to learn as much as he can about the litigants and their arguments. Try not to jump to conclusions. Listen, evaluate and consider.
- **MAKING GOALS:** Since Moses is unable to go into the land, he talks to the people for their future. He told the Jewish people what they might fear and what obstacles they might face, but also that they told them that they have the talents to overcome any obstacle. He gave them clear focus and aim. Whenever you are about to embark on something big, something important, a new stage in life, don't "wing it" or say that you'll worry about it when you get there. Make objectives and plan ahead.
- How would you summarize your family's story in 25 words or less? What incidents would you include and what would you leave out?
- What do you know how to do that you could teach someone else?

BOOKS (10 minutes)

Book 1: Crunch, the Shy Dinosaur by Cirocco Dunlap

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Moses giving his speech
 - b. Acting out the various events that Moses recounts
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Triple Free Tag
 - a. One or more “its” are chosen randomly to pursue the rest of the players.
 - b. Be sure to have a quick, equitable system for selecting the “its,” such as drawing names or numbers.
 - c. When tagged, the tagged player must freeze with his/her hands overhead.
 - d. To be released, three other children must join hands in a circle around the frozen player and shout, “1, 2, 3—YOU’RE FREE.”
 - i. Teaching Tip: Prior to playing the game, review “tagger’s choice” rule and “safe tags.”
 - ii. “Tagger’s choice” means the tagger has the last word on whether he/she tagged someone or not.
 - iii. “Safe tags” are done with two fingers on the shoulders or back. (Use interactive modeling to teach, review, and practice safe tags.)
4. Look Ma, No Hands!
 - a. Children try to pass a designated object (Frisbee, stuffed animal, etc.) around the circle without using their hands and without letting the object touch the floor.
 - b. Teaching Tip: Begin with smaller groups of 8-10 students each, so that “wait times” are not too long for younger children. Also, try adding additional objects (of different shapes or sizes) to be passed, so that more children are actively involved.
5. Broken-telephone:
 - a. Have the children sit in a circle or square (they must be close to each other)
 - b. The person who starts thinks of a word/phrase and whispers it into the next player’s ear once with no repeats allowed
 - c. The listener tries to repeat the same word/phrase into the next person’s ear, and so on.
 - d. The last person in the group has to say aloud what they heard
 - e. Afterwards, discuss what it was like trying to share a message with each other when you can’t hear properly and how this can cause problems with friends if we don’t listen properly
6. Story Building:
 - a. Gather your players into a circle on the floor or around a table
 - b. Person one (this could be the teacher), starts off the story
 - c. Person two continues the story by saying the next sentence
 - d. Person three carries the story on and so on
 - e. Depending on the size of the group each player may have between 2 to 5 goes each
 - f. When the story is coming to an end, the last player says the ending sentence.

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

VAETCHANAN

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Ethics
- Consequences

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Deuteronomy 3:23-7:11

Moses continues to tell the Jewish people about what happened during the years of his leadership. He tells them about how he asked God to let him go into the Land of Israel, and about how God refused, but let him see the Land from a mountain. He then reminds the people of two major events in our history: the Exodus from Egypt and the Giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai.

Moses then talks about what will happen in the future. He says that the people will worship idols and be sent away from the Holy Land and scattered all over the world, but then they will feel bad for what they did and return to God and keep His laws.

This week's Torah portion includes a repetition of the Ten Commandments and the words of the Shema which talk about the fact that God is One. It also mentions various mitzvot including the mitzvah of putting on tefillin and of putting a mezuzah on the doorposts of our homes.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **TEACHING ETHICS:** Moses is told that he will not be able to enter the Promised Land, but is to teach the people of Israel a body of ethics to guide them in their new lives and into the future with each new generation. Whether it is honesty, commitment, kindness to one's neighbor, giving to the poor or gratitude, the ethics we instill in others will travel a great distance. What does being ethical mean to you?
- **ACTIONS HAVE CONSEQUENCES:** Moses deals with the consequences of his actions. He only gets a glimpse of the Promised Land because of his moment of sin. In the moment when we react quickly, it is unlikely that we are running through all possible scenarios of action in our minds. So what happens when we are later faced with the consequences of those actions? There are times when apologies can make things right, and there are times when, like Moses, we simply need to accept the consequence of our sin.
- What are the miracles that you see in your life?
- What advice do wish you had received five years ago?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Healthy Foods Make Your Body Go by David Mason

Book 2: Teach Your Dragon To Understand Consequences: A Children's Story To Teach Kids About Consequences and Making Good Choices by Steve Herman

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Moses warning the people about the future
 - b. Revising the Ten Commandments (giving them on the mountain, etc.)

2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups

- a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
- b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
- c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
- d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>

3. Jenga

4. Making Decisions in a Story

- a. Prepare a story for the children in which the main character has several decisions to make. Read the story aloud until the character has to make the first decision, and then give the group of children a choice of actions
- b. The story could begin with: "Sarah is playing with a toy. She sees that George is playing with a toy that she wants. Should she a) steal George's toy, b) ask George if he would like to play together and share the toys"
- c. Ask the children to raise their hands for the decision they think the character should make. The children who choose the wrong answer are out of the game while children who choose the correct answer can continue to make decisions for the character in the story.
- d. Afterwards, explain to the children what the consequences of each action would be, and which the correct decision to make is. The children who make all the right decisions and get to the end of the story can win a small prize, such as a sweet, sticker or gold star

5. Broken-telephone:

- a. Have the children sit in a circle or square (they must be close to each other)
- b. The person who starts thinks of a word/phrase and whispers it into the next player's ear once with no repeats allowed
- c. The listener tries to repeat the same word/phrase into the next person's ear, and so on.
- d. The last person in the group has to say aloud what they heard
- e. Afterwards, discuss what it was like trying to share a message with each other when you can't hear properly and how this can cause problems with friends if we don't listen properly

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

EIKEY

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Behavior
- Anger
- Gratitude

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Deuteronomy 7:12-11:25

Moses continues his last speech to the People of Israel. He says that if the Jews keep to the Torah's commandments, they will be rich and satisfied in the Land of Israel.

He criticizes the people for the sins they did over their forty years in the desert: the sin of the Golden Calf, Korach's rebellion and the sin of the spies who spoke badly of Israel and others. Then he tells them of God's forgiveness, and the second tablets they received after their repentance.

Moses then speaks about the Land of Israel that the Jews are about to enter. He says that it is God's chosen land, flowing with milk and honey, and blessed with "seven kinds" of fruit and grain: wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranate, olives and honey dates. He commands them to destroy any idols in the land and to always realize that the good they have comes from God.

The final thing in the parsha is the second chapter of the Shema which talks about the rewards for doing mitzvot and the punishments for not doing them.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **CONTROLLING ANGER:** This parsha talks about the obligation to destroy idol worship in all its forms, including the physical destruction of idols. Sometimes though, the "idol" isn't really an image or sculpture, it is ourselves. Anger is a self-centered indulgence, a modern form of idolatry. What are ways to handle feelings of anger?
- **THE VALUE OF GRATITUDE:** Moses instructs the Israelites to be grateful for all the blessings in their lives, especially for each meal. We lead blessed lives, and it is easy to overlook what we have and what we should be thankful for. Why do you think it is hard to be grateful sometimes?
- **THE ROLE OF A ROLE MODEL:** The words of the Shema tell us that we should teach the words of the Torah wherever we are. Each and every one of our actions is a teaching moment, and an educational opportunity. What can others learn from our actions?
- How do you do God's work?
- What is a miracle that happens every day?
- If you could only eat bread and one other food, what would the other food be?
- What are seven foods that you really like?
- What have you seen or experienced that you would want your children to know about?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Polite Elephant by Richard Scary

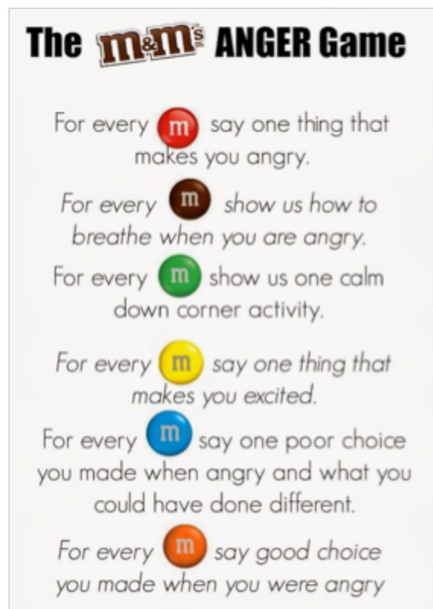
Book 2: I Was So Mad by Mercy Mayer

Book 3: The Thankful Book by Todd Parr

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Discovering the Land of Israel
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PlObYh>
3. The M&M Anger Game



4. Gratitude Circle
 - a. This group activity takes place sitting in a circle. Each student takes a turn sharing what they are grateful for.
5. Sharing Food
 - a. Provide snack bags and create a bag to donate to a food shelter. Discuss hunger in the Torah and today.
6. Camping Fort
 - a. Divide the children into groups. Each group must get materials to create their own fort which will be part of the camp. The fort should be moveable in some way so that the children can "carry it"
 - b. Afterwards, talk about how easy/difficult it was to work together to coordinate building a fort/camp, and try to think about how the Jews camped in the desert and had to get ready to move to the Land of Israel
7. Blessings
 - a. Pair up with the person next to you and give each other three blessings. Talk about their strengths and imagine their future as a grown up
 - b. Afterwards, reflect on how we can look at others positively and see them as role models in our lives. Also talk about how we can encourage others to see the best in themselves

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

RE'AH

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Charity
- Selflessness
- Choice
- Discipline

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17

Moses told the people of Israel that keeping the Torah and mitzvot is the key to conquering the Holy Land and living the good life there. In this week's parsha, Moses teaches about fifty-five mitzvot. Let's explore some of them here:

1. Destroying Idols. When the Jews come to Israel, they should destroy all the idols that the former inhabitants left behind.
2. The Temple. They should build a Holy Temple, called the Beit Hamikdash, where they will serve God and bring sacrifices.
3. Preparing Meat. Animals must be slaughtered in a special way for it to be kosher. Blood is never allowed to be eaten, therefore meat is salted before cooking.
4. False Prophets. Anybody who gives false prophecies must be put to death. How do we know if he is a false prophet? If he says that he is saying a prophecy from an idol (a false god) or if he says that God told him to tell the Jews that they must violate a certain mitzvah. In both cases, we know immediately that he's making it up and is a false prophet.
5. Kosher Animals. The signs of kosher animals and fish are repeated here. A kosher animal chews its cud and has split hooves. Kosher fish have fins and scales. Next is a list of the 24 non-kosher birds; all other birds are kosher. The final law about kosher food is that milk and meat must not be mixed together.
6. Tithes and Firstborns. When a farmer grows produce (fruit, grain, or vegetables), he must take a tithe or a tenth of what he has grown, and eat it in Jerusalem. In some years, the tithe goes to the Levite. All firstborn cattle are offered in the Beit Hamikdash, and their meat is then eaten by the Kohen.
7. Festivals. The parsha ends by telling us the three high points in the Jewish calendar: Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot. During the times of the Beit Hamikdash, all the Jews would go up to Jerusalem during these holidays; that's why they are called the Pilgrimage Festivals. Today, we celebrate Passover by eating matzah, Shavuot by hearing the Ten Commandments, and Sukkot by eating in special huts for seven days.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **FREE WILL:** Moses tells the people about the blessings and curses. In other words, the consequences of their actions. The people have a choice; they can obey the commandments and merit the blessings or they can fail to listen to the commandments and suffer. We have impulses, but we also have the freedom of choice. What kinds of choices are hard for you?
- **TZEDAKAH:** The parsha says we should not harden our hearts or be tight-fisted in response to the needy. Charity/tzedakah is not just a matter of feeling philanthropic, but an act of justice in our world. A perfect theme for a Mitzvah Project! There are plenty of volunteer opportunities in our society to participate in!
- **GIVING OF OURSELVES:** We give 10 percent of our income in money, time or products. Even though we are encouraged to be generous in our giving, the text indicates that we should not give more than 20 percent. This law is trying to model a balance between taking care of others and taking care of ourselves. What is important is not how much we give, but that we give sufficiently in relation to our means.
- When, if ever, is it okay to destroy churches, mosques or other places that non-Jews consider holy?

- Should governments make laws to protect people from hurting themselves?
- Do you ever analyze your dreams?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Those Shoes by Maribeth Boelts

Book 1: Monkey Bandit and the Naughty Ball by Maria Ellis

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Deciding whether food is kosher or not
 - b. Going up to Jerusalem for the festivals
 - c. Building the Beit Hamikdash (the Temple)
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PlObYh>
3. Interpretations and Assumptions
 - a. A common rumor scenario is when people jump to conclusions based on assumption, speculation and partial knowledge of the situation, leading to all kinds of harmful misinterpretations. Give the children some hypothetical examples. For instance, say you see the new girl at school getting into a police car. You don't know her or her family or anything about why she was getting into the police car but you start to talk amongst your friends about the possibilities
 - b. Ask the children to identify some things that they might assume or wonder about if they saw such a situation, such as that she was being arrested for some terrible crime. After the children share, ask if their opinions would change at all if they knew that her dad was a police officer
 - c. Afterwards, discuss how this relates to the "false prophet" in the parsha
4. Sharing Food
 - a. Provide snack bags and create a bag to donate to a food shelter. Discuss hunger in the Torah and today

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

SHOFTIM

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Fairness
- Environment
- Selflessness

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Deuteronomy 16:18-21:9

This parsha discusses certain topics.

1. Justice

The name of this week's parsha, Shoftim, means "judges," and the parsha begins with Moses commanding the people of Israel to appoint judges to decide the law. This is a part of making sure that we live in a just society where laws are fair and are applied properly. If someone is accused of committing a crime, it must be investigated properly, and no one can be judged guilty unless there are at least two witnesses who actually saw him do the crime. A judge is never allowed to take bribes because even if he thinks that he'll just take the money and then decide the case fairly, the Torah says that this is impossible as people's minds are always influenced by money.

2. Laws for Kings

When the Jews come to the Land of Israel and appoint a king, there are certain rules he will have to keep. He cannot have too many horses, too much gold and silver and too many wives. He must also have two Torah scrolls. One is to be carried around with him to remind him that even though he is king, he must be humble, follow the Torah and remember that God is above him.

3. Cities of Refuge

If somebody accidentally kills somebody else, he doesn't have to be put to death. For example, if two people are chopping wood together, and the top of one person's axe flies off the handle and kills the other, then a relative of the victim may be so angry that he wants to go after the killer even though it was an accident. So the Torah commands the Jews to set up special cities in Israel called "cities of refuge" where the person who killed accidentally can run and be safe from the victim's family. Once a person is in the city of refuge, the family of the person he killed cannot hurt him. But he has to stay there for a long time until the Kohen Gadol (high priest) passes away.

4. Rules of War

Before the Jews go to war against their enemies, a Kohen will tell them that there is no reason to fear for God is with them and will fight for them. So everybody should go bravely to war except for the following people: Someone who just built a house, planted a vineyard or has gotten married. Another person exempted from battle is someone who is afraid. If he is afraid, it shows he does not have faith in God or that he knows he sinned and is not worthy of God's protection; in that case, he should not go to war with the rest of the Jews.

When the people of Israel come to fight with an enemy, they should first offer peace.

When they take over a country, they are not allowed to chop down or destroy trees that give fruit.

5. The Laws of "Eglah Arufah"

If a person is found dead outside a city, the city that is closest to the body has to take responsibility for the death, and perform a special procedure with a calf. This teaches us that it is our responsibility to make sure that whenever somebody leaves our city, they have enough food and protection for the way so that they arrive home safe and sound.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **PRESERVING THE ENVIRONMENT:** This parsha introduces the mitzvah to protect fruit trees from destruction. This mitzvah is the foundation for the Jewish value of ba'al tashchit which teaches us not to be wasteful and to care for the environment. What are ways that you can care for the environment?
- **FAIRNESS:** The parsha talks about the court system and urges us repeatedly to pursue justice. We must do the best we can to navigate fairly in all the situations at home when a concern of fairness is raised. That can be the modest beginnings of coming to know what justice means in the wider world. What does it mean to be fair?
- **RESPECT TOWARDS ELECTED OFFICIALS:** This parsha talks about appointing a king and having a monarchy. There are certain rules in governing the leadership. The king is not allowed to have too many horses, too much silver or too many wives, etc. There needs to be a certain level of respect for our elected officials.
- Do you believe in magic? When have you felt it?
- Would you like to write a book? What would you write about?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: New Shoes by Susan Lynn Meyer

Book 2: The Tree Lady: The True Story of How One Tree-Loving Woman Changed A City Forever by Joseph Hopkins

Book 3: Once Upon a Balloon by Bree Galbraith

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Creating a court of law
 - b. Crowning a king and telling him his responsibilities
 - c. Finding a dead body and the ceremony that happens
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. The “Take Turns” game
 - a. Player 1 makes an animal noise which the others repeat.
 - b. Player 1 selects another player who makes an animal noise which the others repeat.
 - c. You could take turns making funny faces or naming friends, etc.
4. Interpretations and Assumptions
 - a. A common rumor scenario is when people jump to conclusions based on assumption, speculation and partial knowledge of the situation, leading to all kinds of harmful misinterpretations. Give the children some hypothetical examples. For instance, say you see the new girl at school getting into a police car. You don't know her or her family or anything about why she was getting into the police car but you start to talk amongst your friends about the possibilities
 - b. Ask the children to identify some things that they might assume or wonder about if they saw such a situation, such as that she was being arrested for some terrible crime. After the children share, ask if their opinions would change at all if they knew that her dad was a police officer
 - c. Afterwards, discuss how this relates to the ideas of justice and fairness in the parsha
5. Making Decisions in a Story
 - a. Prepare a story for the children in which the main character has several decisions to make. Read the story aloud until the character has to make the first decision, and then give the group of children a choice of actions
 - b. The story could begin with: “Sarah is playing with a toy. She sees that George is playing with a toy that she wants. Should she a) steal George's toy, b) ask George if he would like to play together and share the toys”
 - c. Ask the children to raise their hands for the decision they think the character should make. The children who choose the wrong answer are out of the game while children who choose the correct answer can continue to make decisions for the character in the story.
 - d. Afterwards, explain to the children what the consequences of each action would be, and which the correct decision to make is. The children who make all the right decisions and get to the end of the story can win a small prize, such as a sweet, sticker or gold star

4. The Moral Decisions Game

- a. Talk to the children about making moral decisions in everyday life and write out questions for the children to answer
- b. Some of the questions could be: "What should you do if you find a lost toy that does not belong to you?" and "What would you do if you spilled some milk and your mom asked you if you did it?"
- c. Provide at least two answers for each question and ask the children to put their hands up when they think the answer is right
- d. Afterwards, explain to the children what the consequences of each action would be, and which the correct decision to make is.
- e. The children who chose the correct answer for five questions win the game and can receive a prize, such as a sticker or gold star

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

KI TEITZEI

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Caring
- Environment
- Responsibility
- Self-deception

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19

Seventy-four more mitzvot are discussed in this parsha. Let's look at a few of them:

1. RETURNING LOST OBJECTS: When we find something that somebody has lost, we must return it to the owner if there's a way we can find out who it belonged to.
2. BURYING THE DEAD: We must respect the body of a dead person and bury it as soon as possible.
3. PROTECTING THE MOTHER: Before we take eggs or baby birds from a nest, we must send away the mother bird, so that she won't see and be sad. We learn from this to be compassionate to all creatures.
4. FENCING: Anyone who builds a new house has to make a fence for the roof, so nobody will fall and hurt themselves. This teaches us to always take precautions to make sure there are no dangers that might trip up others.
5. NO MIXING: We must be careful not to create kilayim which is a mixture of two different species. For example, we can't plant two types of plants too close to each other where they might cross-pollinate. This is the same with animals: we can't yoke together two different species such as an ox and a donkey. Similar to this is the idea of shaatnez: we may not wear wool and linen mixed together.
6. TZITZIT: Any time we wear a four-cornered garment, we have to attach strings, called tzitzit, at the corners. In order to do this mitzvah at all times, we wear a special garment with four corners with the strings attached. That garment is called tzitzit as well.
7. EATING ON THE JOB: When you have people working for you in the field, picking fruit or vegetables, you must let them eat whatever they want while they work. The worker can't take whatever s/he wants home, but eating on the job is his or her right.
8. A LESSON FROM MIRIAM: If someone says something bad about another Jew, he is punished with tzaraat. We learned about this in Tazria and Metzora. The Jews are reminded of this here, and Miriam is held up as an example. Because she spoke ill of Moses, she was struck with tzaraat.
9. REMEMBERING AMALEK: Amalek is the evil nation who attacked the Jews after they left Egypt. We must work to erase its memory.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- RESPECTING GOD'S CREATIONS: The parsha forbids us from plowing an ox and a donkey plow together because it would be painful to the smaller animal. This shows the Torah's humanitarian concern for animals. Why do you think it is important to be kind to animals? What can you do to be kind to animals?
- DECEIVING OURSELVES: We are instructed to return lost objects that we may find lying on the street. It is not always an easy mitzvah to fulfill when you are the finder; however, we must be truthful to others and to ourselves. What is a promise that you made that you still need to fulfill?
- REMEMBERING OUR HISTORY: We are commanded to remember Amalek. Even though this was a difficult time for the Jewish people, it is still imperative for us to remember our history and learn from it. If we don't remember our history and pass it down from generation to generation, our history will be lost. The past needs to inform the future.

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Hurty Feeling by Helen Lester

Book 2: Animal Rescue by Patrick George

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Shooing away the mother bird
 - b. Separating items from each other
 - c. Getting Tzaraat after speaking badly about someone
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>
3. Pets! Pets! Pets!
 - a. Invite the children to talk about their pets and how they take care of them.
 - b. Read the following statements and have the children put their thumbs up if a statement is a kind way to treat pets. Have them put their thumbs down if it is an unkind way to treat pets.
 - i. Feed them good food every day.
 - ii. Forget to feed them.
 - iii. Forget to give them water.
 - iv. Have fresh water available for them to drink.
 - v. Provide a safe, comfortable place for them to sleep.
 - vi. Keep them shut up in a hot place all day.
 - vii. Give them love and attention.
4. Responsibility Cards
 - a. Have cards ready with different names and pictures showing responsibilities
 - b. Encourage kids to pick and discuss each one in pairs. Afterwards, have the different pairs compare their answers
5. Blessings
 - a. Pair up with the person next to you and give each other three blessings. Talk about their strengths and imagine their future as a grown up
 - b. Afterwards, reflect on how we can look at others positively and see them as role models in our lives. Also talk about how we can encourage others to see the best in themselves

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

KI TAVO

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Sharing
- Gratitude
- Blessings

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8

Moses continues his speech to the Jewish people. He reminds them that when they enter the Holy Land, they will have to bring bikkurim, the first produce of their fields and orchards, to the Holy Temple. While offering the bikkurim, they should thank God for all the good He does and has done for them.

The parsha also mentions the mitzvot of the tithes which must be given to the Levites as well as to poor people. Moses reminds the Jewish people that they are God's chosen people, and that they too chose Him as their God.

The parsha continues with a list of blessings which God will reward the people with when they follow the Torah's laws. However, the parsha also includes the "tochachah," or "rebuke," which is the list of curses that will happen if they abandon the Torah and God's commandments.

The parsha ends with another reminder to follow God's commandments.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE:** God promises that blessings will pursue one who chooses the path of growth. Part of the assurance of blessing here is that the blessing and goodness will "pursue us" even though we may perceive it as unfair or difficult while it is happening. Things come our way in life that don't always seem like blessings. When have you ever experienced something that seemed bad at first, but ultimately turned out to be very good?
- **FIRSTS:** The parsha gives the laws of the first fruits. We give them to the Kohanim. There are many laws in the Torah regarding "firsts." This can teach us the significance of firsts and beginnings. Beginnings give us new chances at something. We can start afresh and have a clean slate. We have the opportunity to think about what we would like to accomplish, what our goals may be and how we can get to where we want to be. This is a beautiful blessing we have in our lives, and we must take advantage of it!
- **CHALLENGES:** We are all faced with adversity, hardship and challenge. They define us as a people. We should not be ashamed of it, we should not be upset about it and we should not let it take over; rather, we need to embrace it! We will overcome our obstacles with time, patience and perseverance. What is one challenge you face?
- What gets you excited about the future?
- What is the worst thing that you could be cursed with?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Jonathan & Martha by Petr Horáček

Book 2: Rabbit's Gift by George Shannon and Laura Dronzek

Book 3: How Do Dinosaurs Play With Their Friends? By Jane Yolen

Book 4: Llama Llama Time to Share by Anna Dewdney
Book 5: One Big Pair of Underwear by Laura Gehl and Tom Lichtenheld
Book 6: Llama Llama Gives Thanks by Anna Dewdney

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Giving the bikkurim (first fruits) in the Temple
 - b. God giving the blessings and cur
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>
3. Play the Magic Ball
 - a. This toddler-friendly, hot potato-style game is a great way to teach kids how to share.
 - b. As you sing the words to the song, kids pass the ball from one to the next.
 - c. In this game, no one wants to hoard the ball for fear of being "it!"
4. Responsibility Cards
 - a. Have cards ready with different responsibilities on them
 - b. Encourage kids to pick and discuss each one
5. Blessings
 - a. Pair up with the person next to you and give each other three blessings. Talk about their strengths and imagine their future as a grown up
 - b. Afterwards, reflect on how we can look at others positively and see them as role models in our lives. Also talk about how we can encourage others to see the best in themselves
6. Making Decisions in a Story
 - a. Prepare a story for the children in which the main character has several decisions to make. Read the story aloud until the character has to make the first decision, and then give the group of children a choice of actions
 - b. The story could begin with: "Sarah is playing with a toy. She sees that George is playing with a toy that she wants. Should she a) steal George's toy, b) ask George if he would like to play together and share the toys"
 - c. Ask the children to raise their hands for the decision they think the character should make. The children who choose the wrong answer are out of the game while children who choose the correct answer can continue to make decisions for the character in the story.
 - d. Afterwards, explain to the children what the consequences of each action would be, and which the correct decision to make is. The children who make all the right decisions and get to the end of the story can win a small prize, such as a sweet, sticker or gold star
7. Sharing Food
 - a. Provide snack bags and create a bag to donate to a food shelter. Discuss hunger in the Torah and today

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

NITZAVIM

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Limitations
- Tradition
- Living

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Deuteronomy 29:9-30:20

Moses continues speaking to the People of Israel. He says some very important things for us to learn from Jewish unity, the future redemption, our power and our choices.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **INHERITANCE AND CONTROL:** God has made a covenant not only with the current generation, but with the generations that came before and also future generations. Our lives depend on those who came before us, and we bear a responsibility to those who come after us. We may be born with a Jewish identity, but what will we do with that? What are things you inherited, and what are things you can control?
- **ASPIRATIONS AND GOALS:** The parsha says, "It is not in the heavens," in other words, what the Torah instructs is not beyond us to accomplish. What is something new you would like to try?
- **ENSURING JUDAISM'S LONGEVITY:** We are instructed by Moses to choose life. The Torah recognizes that although we may very well know what is good for us and what is not, we still need to be reminded to make the right choices. Sometimes, we can't comprehend the long-term consequences of our actions. How can we learn to "choose life" when challenged?
- What are questions that we should have the answers to? What are secrets that should remain in secret?
- Who could be called as a witness against you? Who knows your worst secrets?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: The Little Engine That Could by Watty Piper

Book 2: Giraffes Can Dance by Giles Andreae

Book 3: I'm Like You, You're Like Me: A Book About Understanding and Appreciating Each Other by Cindy Gainer

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. The final redemption
 - b. Groups joining together for a common goal
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>

- c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
- d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>

3. Trivial Pursuit

- a. Divide into teams.
- b. Everyone submits unusual or unknown facts about themselves that are read aloud without identifying who the fact belongs to
- c. Create categories such as: "What I did while visiting my grandparents"; "How I got into trouble"; "Love and marriage"; "Oh my gosh"; "Home town trivia"; "Veterans"; "When and where"; and "My funniest or most embarrassing moment"

4. Cops and Robbers

- a. Take the children outside or to a large area and divide them into two groups "Cops" and "Robbers"
- b. Choose an item for the Robbers to try steal
- c. To win the game, the Robbers must successfully steal the object and take it back to a specific point without being caught by the Cops
- d. If the Cops touch a Robber, the Robber is sent to jail (where their friends can try save them by touching them again)
- e. Afterwards, talk about the consequences of stealing and how it felt to be the "good" or "bad" team

4. What are my priorities?

- a. Have the children sit in a circle or lie down on their backs
- b. Take 3-5 minutes (depends on age of group) to do a guided imagery and/or meditation on themes such as "what is important to me," "when do I think it is okay/never okay to lie/steal/be jealous"
- c. Encourage the children to share what they thought about during the meditation, but do not pressurize them

3. Interpretations and Assumptions

- a. A common rumor scenario is when people jump to conclusions based on assumption, speculation and partial knowledge of the situation, leading to all kinds of harmful misinterpretations. Give the children some hypothetical examples. For instance, say you see the new girl at school getting into a police car. You don't know her or her family or anything about why she was getting into the police car but you start to talk amongst your friends about the possibilities
- b. Ask the children to identify some things that they might assume or wonder about if they saw such a situation, such as that she was being arrested for some terrible crime. After the children share, ask if their opinions would change at all if they knew that her dad was a police officer
- c. Afterwards, discuss how this relates to the ideas of justice and fairness in the parsha

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

VAYELECH

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Leadership
- Education
- Tradition

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Deuteronomy 31:1-31:30

Moses is coming to the end of his speech, and now he announces to the people that Joshua will be the new leader after he dies. We also learn that Moses wrote copies of the Torah and all of the teachings in order to give them to the Levites, priests and elders because they were the educators and leaders.

We are given the mitzvah of "hakal" which is to take place every 7 years when there is a king. The entire people of Israel must come to the Temple (when the Temple was standing), and the king would read the Torah for everyone.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **EDUCATION AND TRADITION:** passing on the Torah to future generations is a very important theme in this parsha. God commands that the Torah be written down and be preserved even though there may be times where the people will go astray. Do you think that tradition is important? What are important examples of tradition in your opinion?
- **LEADERSHIP:** Moses publicly announces that Joshua is to be the leader once he (Moses) has passed away. When leaders do not give instructions on who is to follow them, there can be a lot of confusion and a lot of bad things can happen. Why do you think it is important to know in advance who will be leading the people?
-

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Counting Blessings by Eileen Spinelli

Book 2: Red: A Crayon's Story by Michael Hall

Book 3: The Name Jar by Yangsook Choi

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Moses ordaining Joshua in front of the people
 - b. Gathering for Hakal
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkPH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>

- c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
- d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2Pl0bYh>

3. Darkness

- a. Put the children in pairs and blindfold one child in each pair
- b. The partner must lead their friend around the room which must have obstacles and/or objects that the blindfolded friend must identify or avoid based on the instructions of their seeing partner
- c. Once they have made it around with correct guesses and instructions, they must swap the blindfold and do a different route
- d. Afterwards, discuss how it was leading each other through the dark (responsibilities, how to give guidance, trust, etc.)

4. Making Decisions in a Story

- a. Prepare a story for the children in which the main character has several decisions to make. Read the story aloud until the character has to make the first decision, and then give the group of children a choice of actions
- b. The story could begin with: "Sarah is playing with a toy. She sees that George is playing with a toy that she wants. Should she a) steal George's toy, b) ask George if he would like to play together and share the toys"
- c. Ask the children to raise their hands for the decision they think the character should make. The children who choose the wrong answer are out of the game while children who choose the correct answer can continue to make decisions for the character in the story.
- d. Afterwards, explain to the children what the consequences of each action would be, and which the correct decision to make is. The children who make all the right decisions and get to the end of the story can win a small prize, such as a sweet, sticker or gold star

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

HA'AZINU

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Leadership
- Guidance
- Communication
- Faith
- Consequences

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Deuteronomy 31:1-31:30

The parsha of Ha'azinu is almost entirely a poem written and sung by Moses to the people. Moses sings to them about their experiences together, but also rebukes them harshly for the things they have done wrong and will do in the future. However, he reminds them importantly that even though God gets very angry at their sins, He will always come back to His people.

After the poem, God tells Moses to go up the mountain of Nebo. From there, he will see the Land of Israel, but he will not be able to enter. After he sees the land, God tells him that his soul will be gathered to heaven, and he will pass away.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **GUIDING OTHERS:** Moses' poem is almost entirely a rebuke and warning to the people about what will happen in their future if they don't obey the mitzvot. However, it's still considered a poem. When we rebuke or warn others about the consequences of their actions, we can learn from here to do it in a way that they will listen. We should be careful that they will understand our message in the way that we want them to. What are ways we can talk to our friends in a way they'll understand?
- **LEADERSHIP:** Moses is at the end of his month-long speech. One would think that he would not say anything bad about the people, but he does. He openly tells them what bad things will happen. Part of being a good leader is being honest to your people rather than lying to make yourself more popular. Have you ever chosen to tell the truth even if you feel peer-pressure to lie?
- **FAITH:** God will always come back to us even when times are hard. Sometimes we see God in both small and large ways. Can you give examples of where you have felt that God was with you in your life?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Counting Blessings by Eileen Spinelli

Book 2: Red: A Crayon's Story by Michael Hall

Book 3: The Name Jar by Yangsook Choi

MUSIC

By ABBA

I'm nothing special, in fact I'm a bit of a bore
If I tell a joke, you've probably heard it before

But I have a talent, a wonderful thing
 'Cause everyone listens when I start to sing
 I'm so grateful and proud
 All I want is to sing it out loud
 So I say
 Thank you for the music, the songs I'm singing
 Thanks for all the joy they're bringing
 Who can live without it? I ask in all honesty
 What would life be?
 Without a song or a dance, what are we?
 So I say thank you for the music
 For giving it to me
 Mother says I was a dancer before I could walk
 She says I began to sing long before I could talk
 And I've often wondered, how did it all start?
 Who found out that nothing can capture a heart
 Like a melody can?
 Well, whoever it was, I'm a fan
 So I say
 Thank you for the music, the songs I'm singing
 Thanks for all the joy they're bringing
 Who can live without it? I ask in all honesty
 What would life be?
 Without a song or a dance what are we?
 So I say thank you for the music
 For giving it to me
 I've been so lucky, I am the girl with golden hair
 I wanna sing it out to everybody
 What a joy, what a life, what a chance
 Thank you for the music, the songs I'm singing
 Thanks for all the joy they're bringing
 Who can live without it, I ask in all honesty
 What would life be?
 Without a song or a dance what are we?
 So I say thank you for the music
 For giving it to me
 So I say
 Thank you for the music, for giving it to me

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Moses seeing the Land of Israel from the mountain (some children can be the "scenery")
 - b. Singing a song about gratitude (see above)
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PI0bYh>
3. Blessings
 - a. Pair up with the person next to you and give each other three blessings. Talk about their strengths and imagine their future as a grown up
 - b. Afterwards, reflect on how we can look at others positively and see them as role models in our lives. Also talk about how we can encourage others to see the best in themselves
4. Broken-telephone
 - a. Have the children sit in a circle or square (they must be close to each other)
 - b. The person who starts thinks of a word/phrase and whispers it into the next player's ear once with no repeats allowed
 - c. The listener tries to repeat the same word/phrase into the next person's ear, and so on.

- d. The last person in the group has to say aloud what they heard
- e. Afterwards, discuss what it was like trying to share a message with each other when you can't hear properly and how this can cause problems with friends if we don't listen properly

ASSESSMENT *(5 minutes)*

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?

V'ZOT HABRACHA

(45 Minutes)

SET UP

- Arrange the chairs in a circle so everyone can feel part of the group.
- Encourage every child to go around and say their name to 'break the ice.' Ideas for ice-breakers are: namejective, beach ball questions and mail call
- The parsha synopsis is for the facilitator but depending upon the participants (age and knowledge), ask the participants questions about the portion, providing an opportunity to gauge knowledge. It is impossible to discuss middot related to the parsha without knowing the parsha.
- By doing this, every child has the opportunity to speak and has something to contribute. A child can choose to pass if they have nothing to say but their name

MIDDOT INCLUDED IN THIS PARSHA

- Remembrance
- Individuality
- Tradition
- Blessing

PARSHA SYNOPSIS

Deuteronomy 33:1-34:12

In Ha'azinu (the previous parsha), Moses sung a poem to the people which warned them about the future. Now, in the very last parsha of the whole Torah, Moses blesses each of the 12 tribes individually.

Once again, we learn that Moses saw the Land of Israel from atop a mountain because God would not allow him to enter the land. Lastly, we learn that Moses died at 120 years old in perfect health. He was buried by God himself, and no one knows where he is buried.

TALKING POINTS (5–10 minutes)

Choose a topic below to discuss:

- **SELF-IDENTITY:** Moses gives his parting words and his last wishes to the Jewish nation. He gives blessings, instructions and directions. His job as a leader never ends, and he continues to inspire and guide the people right before his death. Think about the messages you would like to be known by. We can each have a profound impact on our world.
- **COUNTING OUR BLESSINGS:** Moses blesses the tribes of Zebulun and Issachar, and he tells them to rejoice in their journeys and in their tents. The ability to rejoice is another blessing in our lives. Focusing on the overwhelming number of positives rather than on the fewer negatives can foster better perspective and balance. The capacity to feel joy is tied directly to being able to enjoy the blessings we do have. Our own joy is contagious. What are five blessings in your life for which you are thankful? Why do you think it is sometimes easy to take them for granted?
- **THE IMPORTANCE OF A NAME:** The Parsha lists all the tribes of Israel and their corresponding jobs. A name is no random thing. Our names have meaning. Some people are named after a loved one, the month they were born in, a character from the bible and some are named simply because of its beautiful meaning. What does your name represent? Can we find a way to connect the meaning of our names to our personality or our lives?

BOOKS (10–15 minutes)

Book 1: Counting Blessings by Eileen Spinelli

Book 2: Red: A Crayon's Story by Michael Hall

Book 3: The Name Jar by Yangsook Choi

ACTIVITIES (15 minutes)

Choose one activity below.

1. Role-play various scenes: follow story but improvise reactions and thoughts
 - a. Moses blessing the people
 - b. Moses going up on the mountain to see the Land of Israel
 - c. Moses' death
2. Perform skits: great for readers to perform for peers or younger groups
 - a. Sedra-Scenes: <https://amzn.to/2OOgkpH>
 - b. Kings and Things: <https://amzn.to/2qavbw3>
 - c. The Jewish Story Theater: <https://amzn.to/2ELAcVW>
 - d. Magic Tanach: <https://amzn.to/2PlObYh>
3. The Name Game
 - a. Go around the circle talking about your name.
 - b. Does your name have a meaning?
 - c. Give the children opportunities to share stories, about themselves with their class, e.g., a story about a time they felt proud/achieved something, a story that reminds them of a family time, a story about a journey they have taken.
 - d. Ask the children to find out stories from their parents, grandparents or other family members to share.
 - e. Ask the children where possible to bring in objects or photos to support their storytelling.
5. Blessings:
 - a. Pair up with the person next to you and give each other three blessings. Talk about their strengths and imagine their future as a grown up
 - b. Afterwards, reflect on how we can look at others positively and see them as role models in our lives. Also talk about how we can encourage others to see the best in themselves

ASSESSMENT (5 minutes)

Ask the participants how they felt. What will they share about the middah (be sure to use the word/middah specifically)?