

# Jewish Identity Curriculum - Ilana Mulcahy

Target Audience: Temple Israel Religious School - Grade Six

Objectives and Schedule:

-Students at this age are just figuring out who they are. They are becoming the people who they will be as adults. They will start to form understandings of what their values are, which will stick with them for years to come. We aim to intercept them on this path of self-discovery to ensure that their Jewish identity makes its way into their core understanding of who they are.

-Students will explore a wide range of media to learn about different aspects of Jewish culture, history, and values as they relate to Jewish collective and individual identity.

-Students will engage in reflective practices such as journaling, discussion, and creating art/music to explore their Jewish identity.

1. December 5:
  - Class intro: what does it mean to be a Jew?
  - Jewish identity in the Torah
2. January 15:
  - Diaspora Jewry: Jewish communities around the world
  - Antisemitism: Jewish Pain and Protest
3. March 5:
  - Jewish identity in Israel
  - Our relationship with Israel as diaspora Jews
4. April 23:
  - Jews in pop culture
  - Who am I: what does my Jewish identity feel like?
5. May 28:
  - Who are we? Class presentations
  - Closing reflection

Class structure:

1. Opening song/niggun
2. Journaling: Students will receive a notebook that we'll keep at school for them. They will choose from 2-3 prompts to write about during this time each class. Journals will remain private, as these reflections are personal. They can share/show us whatever they want but we will not be checking or grading them.
3. Sharing about journaling (optional to share)

4. Intro to the topic
5. Full-class activity: all watch a film or listen to a song and discuss—could teach the song if appropriate for the lesson. Can include a cooking activity, such as for the diaspora class or the Israel class
6. Break-out activities: work in chevruta, groups, or individually to explore texts, art, and other media. Rotation stations (for example: read texts to learn about a different diaspora community, choosing 3 of the 5 stations to visit). Hands-on activities like writing or drawing.
7. 5-10 minutes to update journals by cutting/pasting in pictures or poems, writing, drawing, etc.
8. Come back together with opening song or niggun
9. Share takeaways/reflections with a short prompt (ex: in a few words, what are you taking from this class into the next week? Share one word that describes your relationship with Israel. What's something you want to know more about? What's something that surprised you today? Etc.)

#### Final project:

-In the April class, students will take time to create something to express their Jewish identity to share in the final class. We can scan something they wrote or drew in their journal to put in the PowerPoint during the final presentation and they can talk about it, or they can write a new song or poem to share, write a stand-up act, monologue, etc. They can take it home to finish over the next month. They can help each other perform their projects, but each student must create their own.

-In the last class (May), we'll share our presentations in a talent-show format, then do a closing reflection.