

Rosh Hashanah Activities

Taboo

This is a game for older children. Prepare cards in advance or use the ones below. Each card should have a name of a key word connected to Yom Kippur at the top and underneath it some associated words. For example, at the top – teshuva and underneath, shofar, tashlich, sorry.... All of these words are now taboo.

Split the children into teams. The aim is for one member of the team to pick a taboo card and try to explain the key word to the rest of their team without mentioning it or the other taboo words on the card. This should be done either against the clock or in the quickest amount of time.

An Interview with Jonah

Have someone dress up as Jonah – e.g., long beard, robe / overcoat, perhaps a small suitcase etc. Another individual should introduce the ‘Special Guest’ and ask the family what questions they would like to ask this visitor from many years ago. The children may need a bit of help getting started.

Example questions could be:

- What was going through your mind when the storm was tossing and turning your boat?
- How could you be asleep when there was a storm raging all around you?
- What was it like inside the belly of the whale?
- Did you really think you could run away from God?
- How did the residents of Ninveh react to your message?

Once ‘Jonah’ has left, ask your family members...Have you ever had an experience when things around you were going wrong yet you chose to ‘fall asleep’ - ignore them? Are you really listening to the messages you are being sent? Do you have nagging thoughts inside you that you are trying to ignore?

Just a Minute

Choose a participant to talk for a minute without hesitating, repeating words or deviating from a subject you give them – linked to Yom Kippur. For example, “Why I love going to Shul on Yom Kippur.”

It’s a Goal!

The children should be given slips of paper with words on each one such as, family, health, happiness, success in school, friends, roller blades, iPhone, computer, bike, holiday, money, clothes, toys, food etc. In pairs they should put their top five words that they would like to pray for themselves in the year ahead. They can also add their own.

Once they have done this they should return to the group and compare lists / rankings. Was this easy? Do we all have the same list or different priorities? What goals and aims do they have for the coming year?

Web of Teshuva

Stand in a circle and tie one end of a ball of wool to your hand and share something you would like to work on during the year. (For example, tidying your room or speaking kindly.) Throw or roll the ball of wool to a child keeping carefully hold of your part of the string. Ask the child to wrap it loosely around their hand and to share something that they would like to work on this year. That child should then throw the ball of wool to another child while keeping hold of their section. Once every child has had a turn there will be a web of string resembling a spider’s web connecting all the participants. Discuss how good deeds strengthen and connect us together and make the world a better and happier place.

<https://www.tribeuk.com/sites/default/files/photo-gallery/Yom%20Kippur%205778.pdf>

1
Shofar

Ram
Horn
Blow
Sound
Loud

2
Apple

Green
Red
Dip
Sweet
Honey

3
Honey

Sweet
Sticky
Yellow
Apple
Bee

4
Pomegranate

Red
Fruit
New
Seeds
Pips

5
New year

Beginning
End
Year
Calendar
Rosh Hashanah

6
Tekiah

Sound
Blow
Note
Shofar
Hear

7
Yom Kippur

Holy
Day
Fast
White
Pray

8
White

Yom Kippur
Angels
Pure
Wear
Synagogue

9
Forgive

Sorry
Mistake
Reflect
Better
Ask

10
Lulav

Long
Green
Palm
Shake
Etrog

11
Etrog

Round
Yellow
Fruit
Succot
Lulav

12
Simchat Torah

Cycle
Finish
Dance
Scrolls
Synagogue

13
Ushpizin

Guests
Visit
Invite
Succot
Seven

14
Fast

Food
Drink
Eat
Yom Kippur
Bar Mitzvah

15
Sukkah

Booth
Hut
Eat
Sechach
Succot

Tishrei
Taboo