

Shabbos Learning Project

Keeping It Better Together

Week 1: Writing

ANSWERS!

1. It's SLP time again! Yay! Family and guests gather round for a reading and discussion of those great SLP quiz questions. Everyone can feel the Torah and Shabbos in the air and can almost taste the raffle prize of a Shabbos meal from Kosher Gourmet. After a lively debate over the first question and the degree to which self-promotion is valid, someone remarks: "But how are we going to remember our answers after Shabbos so that we can register for the raffle when we receive that much anticipated and often delayed raffle email?" Gasp. The air leaves the room. Gloom and despair start to seep in. Not even the post-dessert Laffy Taffys can cheer everyone up, especially since only banana flavor is left anyway. "I've got it!" the creative child cries out. "Let's clear some space on the counter and we'll spell out our answer with those banana Laffy Taffys! We can leave them there until after Shabbos. After all, we don't have to be scared that anyone will touch them since they are so unappetizing. This MUST be why Hashem created them. It's Hashgacha Pratis!"
 - a. I actually like banana Laffy Taffys and I find this question a little offensive. You're not off to a great start this year. And your idea is not permitted anyway because it's playing with food.
 - b. Great idea and permissible because it's being done for a great Mitzvah purpose!
 - c. Very creative. But not allowed since you are basically writing on Shabbos.
 - d. Yes! That is allowed because the "writing" is really temporary.

Most popular answer D (56%) . CORRECT ANSWER: C
Even temporary writing is prohibited. As are banana Laffy Taffys - just kidding.

2. Yes they are a year older, but the Chayyimtovim family hasn't changed much. The competitive but good natured Ashkesfard family sit down after the meal, each one with their favorite Shabbos reading material. "Gevalt!" Kreindeleh calls out as she removed her book, "Be Nosy: Putting the Shnoz Back in Ashkenaz" to find that it is stamped along the edge with the words "Mizrach Power." She looks over at her Sefardi sister Mazal who bursts into hearty laughter. "The book fell onto my stamp," she says while gasping for air amid howls of laughter. Poor can't find any other good reading material. Can she read her book?

- a. Nope. 3 points for Mazal. By opening the book she'll be breaking letters which is tantamount to erasing on Shabbos!
- b. Since she can't find another option, she can read her book. After all it is the Rama (the primary source of Ashkenazi Halacha in the Shulchan Aruch) who decided this case leniently.
- c. What's the problem? Nothing is being erased - "Mizrach Power" remains even after she is finished.
- d. Mazal can open it for her. And she should to do teshuva.

Most popular answer B (65%). CORRECT ANSWER: B
While there is an accepted custom to be lenient, the Mishna Berura recommends being stringent if a person has another option.

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3. Mazal and Kreindeleh make up over a competitive game of Scrabble. As the game nears the end, Kreindeleh pulls ahead with a triple-score on the word "Shalishoodis." Mazal protests: "First of all that's not even a word. Second of all - I thought Ashkenazim aren't supposed to play Scrabble anyway!" Is she correct?

- a. Nischt! Shalishoodis is certainly a word and a very holy one at that! And Scrabble is fine.
- b. She is correct. The meal is actually Seuda Shelishit. And did you know that "scrabble" is actually Yiddish for "writing" - of course it's forbidden!
- c. Not sure about the word. And you can play Scrabble only if it's raining and there is no other option.
- d. The game and the word are fine but no triple points since that's like doing business on Shabbos.

Most popular answer: A (73%). CORRECT ANSWER: A.

4. You arrive at your host for the Shabbos meal. Everything looks beautiful. But out of the corner of your eye you see something unsightly on the table. No. It can't be. Don't they know what we're all about? But it is. It's a bottle of ice cold...Pepsi. How could they? You're feeling a little weak. You don't want to make a scene...but sometimes you just have to stand up for common decency. Just then you have an idea. The cold bottle has a lot of condensation on it. Maybe you could just use your finger to add the word "Stinks" to the bottle!

- a. Great thinking! That will work fine. Hopefully it will last long enough to make an impression but it's only temporary so totally permitted.
- b. Normally this would be called "writing" and not permitted. But for a Mitzvah purpose like this, we can be lenient.
- c. You should do it with your left hand.
- d. How can you stay anyway? Doesn't this cause you to question their kashrus?

Most popular answer: D. CORRECT ANSWER: The bad news is that we forgot to include the correct answer here. Well, the good news is that everyone got it right! Thank you to all the vigilant SLP students who pointed this out. The answer is that it is forbidden to form letters or even meaningful images on the condensation. This is another example of temporary writing that is still Rabbinically prohibited. This question was this week's most popular question (54%)!

5. You're searching everywhere for the frum magazine. You look high and low and in everyone's usual hiding spots. Nowhere to be found. Then you hear some crinkling. Oh no. The dog got it again. Why do they have to make those food ads so lifelike? You grab it away to find that the last paragraph of your favorite section has been torn off right through the letters. How will you know how it ends now?!

- a. Putting the torn paper together is like writing on Shabbos! You'll just have to use your imagination.
- b. You can bring the pieces close together but don't join them all the way.
- c. It's permitted to join the pieces.
- d. If it's a cartoon, you can join the pieces. If it's an article, you cannot.

Most popular answer: B (56%). CORRECT ANSWER: C