

CURRICULUM –ETHICS AND JEWISH VALUES 7TH GRADE

Many of the choices we make as Jewish people are rooted in Jewish tradition, notably the Torah (as explained in the Talmud).

Goals and objectives:

7th Grade Ethics and Jewish Values will invite students to find the connection between the ethical values and their own life experiences. The focus in each session will fall on solving and applying their own values and ethics with Jewish learning, and then moving towards the truth of his or her own personal meaning (there are a number of answers with different student opinions).

Students will work in groups to identify the different themes and to find “the right answer” to a complex series of ethical dilemmas. This is a continuation of the 5th and 6th Grades Ethics Curricula.

Textbook:

“You be the Judge” – Book 3.

Unit 1: 2 sessions – 30 minutes each

Key Concepts: Tikkun Olam – Fixing the brokenness in the world.

You be the Judge: Book 3: Stories 46 and 48

Activities:

- Group work to address different themes and trying to arrive at what they view is a “Right” answer to complex series of ethical dilemmas
- Use of internet: <http://synagoguestudies.org/jewish-ethics-challenge-where-do-you-stand>

Assessments:

- Participation/thoughtful answers

Unit 2: 1 to 2 sessions- 30 minutes each

Key Concept: Shmirat ha-teva – Guarding the environment-protecting the environment in Israel and all over the world-making an impact on the environment.

Also: You be the Judge Book 3: Story no 11.

Unit 3: 1 to 2 sessions- 30 minutes each

Key Concept: Shmirat Ha-guf – the mitzvah of guarding the body.

Also: You be the Judge Book 3: story no 37.

Supplemental Materials:

- YouTube Videos: Science of Persuasion, The Science of Lying
- Book: “Scmooze by Coopersmith- selected readings/stories on ethics

Special Activities:

- Discussion about Lying – Is it ok, when, to what degree, etc.

Unit 4: 1 to 2 sessions – 30 minutes each

Key Concept: Rodef Shalom – Peacemaking

Also: You be the Judge Book 3: story no 45.

Unit 5: 1 to 2 sessions – 30 minutes each

Key Concept: Zikaron: Never be silent: silence encourages the tormentor, not the tormented.

You be the Judge: Book 3: story no 30

Unit 6: 2 sessions – 30 minutes each

Key Concept: Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh Ba-zeh – All Israel is responsible one for the other – every Jew has an obligation to help another Jew if he/she is in need.

You be the Judge: Book 3: stories no 13 and no 44.

Unit 7: 2 sessions- 30 minutes each

Key Concept: T'shuvah- Repentance, returning, getting back on the path towards becoming the best you that you can become.

You be the Judge Book 3: story no 25 and 39.

Unit 8: 1 to 2 sessions

Key Concept: Pikuah Nefesh – Saving a soul – protecting a human life is a major obligation.

You be the Judge Book 3: story no 33

Unit 9: 2 sessions – 30 minutes each

Key Concept: Tzedakah- Charity is a matter of the heart – the Heart of the world.

You be the Judge Book 3: story no 5 and no 41

Supplemental Materials:

Book : Scmooze by Coopersmith – selected readings/stories on ethics

Activities

- General discussions relating to students' experiences
-

Unit 10: 1 session – 30 minutes

Key Concept: Talmud Torah – The lifelong process of Jewish learning leads the way to mitzvot.

You be the Judge Book 3: story no 39

Special Activities:

- Origins of Jewish customs and ideals
- Oral vs. Torah discussions and debates

Assessments:

- Exit cards
- List 3 ways to do something
- Debates differences between _____ and _____

