

Lesson Plan – Community

The following lesson plan is a suggestion of how some of the resources contained in this unit could be incorporated into a 60-minute class period for a high-school age class. There are many other themes and teaching opportunities found in this unit of resources which would take more classroom-time to explore with your students.

Goal: To consider the importance of community as a value in Judaism, using the ideas shared by Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks *zt”l* who communicates the power and meaning of community with great passion and clarity.

1-10 minutes: Opening Activity – Together or One by One? The Object Game

Create two teams from your students and give each team the same task: to transport one ball each from one side of the classroom to the other without touching the floor (you will need as many balls - or other objects - as you have students).

The twist is, there should be a key difference between the way you assign the task; Team A receives the instructions individually (each student receives a written instruction in the singular – “Transport your ball without touching the floor...” etc.), and Team B receives one set of instructions written in the plural – “Your team’s task is to transport all the balls ...” etc.

At the end of the task, debrief on what happened. It is highly likely that Team B worked as a team and achieved the task far quicker and more efficiently. Discuss why.

11-15 minutes: Quickfire Discussion

Have a fast-paced discussion with your students (use the board to draw an ideas map) on which aspects of Judaism happen in a community, and either *cannot happen without* or are *lesser in quality if they happen without* community.

Examples could include:

- Public prayer
- Life-cycle celebrations
- Education
- Welfare (*tzedakah*)
- The building of religious institutions/infrastructure (such as *mikveh*, *shechitah* and other institutions of *kashrut*, paid rabbinic leadership, etc.)
- Security in general, and action during a crisis

Alternatively, you could ask your students the question, “what aspects of Judaism cannot take place if you are an individual stranded alone on a desert island?” What would your Jewish life look like if you lived there (or in any place in the world where there were no other Jews)?

16-35 minutes: Sub-Groups in Conversation

Divide your students into small *chaburot*/sub-groups and allocate each small group a text from the section in our Community Unit entitled “[Texts from the writings of Rabbi Sacks on community.](#)” Ask them to read through the text in their group, and then to discuss what ideas can be understood about the idea of community in Judaism from the text.

36-55 min: Presentations

Bring your students back together and ask each group to present what they learned from the text (and to read out a short excerpt that they found particularly powerful or enlightening).

56-60 min: In Conclusion

Summarise for your students what you have learned together, and why community is such a central value in Judaism.