

**Jewish Texts
Intersecting with
Creative Arts**

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Between the Lines, Beyond the Page – Jewish Texts Intersecting with Creative Arts

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RATIONALE

First to be cut, typically optional, and treated as “extra.” When resources are scarce in Jewish education, art, music, dance, and drama must make way for the “3 Hs”—Hebrew, Holidays, and History—Jewish equivalents of secular education’s 3 Rs. While the 3 Hs theoretically produce Jews equipped with the key skills and cognitive awareness needed to celebrate and perpetuate Jewish life, they fall short. The limited time most Jews spend in educational settings does not allow them to truly internalize the 3 Hs. As Jewish educational researchers Isa Aron and Nachama Skolnik Moskowitz explain “... Jews in America, who are among the most highly educated in the history of Jewish life, who know Rembrandt from Cezanne,... can name five Shakespearean plays,... can speak articulately about almost anything, except if [we] ask them who Maimonides was, they wouldn’t know.”¹ The problem is not in ability—American Jews are smart. The problem lies in the inability of the 3 Hs to emotionally hook and hold learners. The creative arts provide those hooks and holds.

Art is not simply superficial fluff that takes away time from more important learning; it is a part of a growth process that develops in the artist over time, like Jewish identity formation. Moreover, as Jewish artist Judy Chicago believes, “art...is connected to real human feeling—[it] extends itself beyond the limits of the art world to embrace all people who are striving for alternatives in an increasingly dehumanized world.” In other words, art moves people deeply, creating emotional and spiritual connections.

Cutting the arts from Jewish education, then, is akin to cutting emotional and spiritual Jewish connections. Even when they are present, the arts are rarely integrated

¹ Aron, pg. 238.

well into overall curricular goals. Often “the arts” become throwaway craft activities, fillers to keep students entertained. Meanwhile, teachers often throw heavy dense text at students and expect them to somehow instantly connect to it. Too often, educators lament their students’ inability or unwillingness to appreciate the legacy of the Jewish textual tradition, while failing to provide learners with outlets for that connection. However, were educators to utilize the arts fully, they would find that it creates rich opportunities to teach real content.

The creative arts “sweeten an idea like honey, such that its intentions enter the heart like stakes and pegs that are implanted in the hearts of the listeners.”² Art, music, dance, and drama allow students to connect to material with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their might.³ Integrating the arts more effectively into curricula could raise a new generation prepared to explore Judaism through both the right and left sides of the brain, through both the logical and the intuitive lenses, allowing learners to synthesize literal and metaphoric concepts within Judaism.⁴

Art helps Jews connect to texts. This Curriculum Guide offers a path to connection by integrating Jewish biblical texts with the creative arts. Focusing on Exodus 15, *Shirat HaYam*, as the quintessential art infused biblical text, the Guide demonstrates the many aspects that art encompasses:

1. the inspiration (in this case, Jewish biblical texts)
2. the process of creating the piece of art

² Gottlieb, pg. 336, quoting Moses Mendelssohn.

³ The CCAR has noted this, devoting entire volumes of the *CCAR Journal* to symposiums on the creative arts (Music in the Winter 2002 issue and Visual Art in the Winter 2013 issue), demonstrating that clergy members too grapple with this desire to better incorporate the arts into Judaism.

⁴ Glick, pgs. 9-10.

3. engagement with Four Lenses of Meaning-Making (Challenge, Reassurance, Empowerment, and Commitment)

This Curriculum Guide begins by establishing the various texts, art media, and their aesthetics in Unit 1. Units 2 and 3 identify and define the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making and demonstrate these lenses via *Shirat HaYam*, a biblical poem with its own special musical trope, traditions associated with its recitation, and has inspired many pieces of art. In Unit 4, participants concretize their own artistic interpretations, solidifying their role as an interpreter of Jewish texts, staking their claim within the tradition of textual interpretation, and “breaking the canonical wall” set in place by years of interpretation historically dominated by white Ashkenazi heterosexual male Jews. Conscious of this history, we need not perpetuate it, and the voices of both Jewish men and women can contribute to the ever growing tree of Jewish meaning-making. Therefore, just as beautiful song lyrics tug at the heartstrings of any listener, or placing paint on a canvas intrigues many an eye, Jewish texts similarly invest all learners in a growth process by serving as inspiration for pieces of art informed by the Four Lenses.

Jewish texts serve as more than *halakhic* or moral authority; they also orient our life journeys. “[Moses] Mendelssohn notes that history and fables can make abstract ethical principles concrete, and poetry, painting, sculpture, and rhetoric can “transform dry truths into ardent and sensuous intuition... by transforming impulses into penetrating arrows and dipping them into enchanting nectar.””⁵ Biblical texts, full of deep lyrics and vivid images, passed down *l’dor va’dor*, from generation to generation, have incredible power behind them. When used as the impetus for art, they link both the artist and the audience to the legacy and history of the generations of Jews that came

⁵ Gottlieb, pg. 333.

before. By choosing a personally meaningful text for the on-going artistic interpretation project, participants stake their own claim within the Jewish interpretation tradition, which is an overarching goal of this Guide.

The predominant themes of art are the most profound experiences of life—challenge, reassurance, empowerment, and commitment. As evidenced by original research with leading scholars of Jewish texts, these themes are also bound up in Jewish texts, specifically with biblical texts. Texts that balance the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making speak to the heart and soul of all people, because they reflect wisdom passed down over time and across space. Jewish educational scholar Barry Holtz argues that engaging with texts and the textual tradition is one of the nine gateways to key Jewish identity work, as is engaging with Jewish culture, including the arts.⁶ Abraham Joshua Heschel called for “textpeople”⁷ beyond textbooks. Just as Heschel’s “textpeople” internalize texts so that those texts become part of their world view, this Curriculum Guide calls for people to recognize and then create “ArText,” a tangible fusion of Jewish biblical texts and the creative arts. Indeed, biblical texts are already inextricably tied up with art—the trope marks which we use to chant biblical verses add musicality to the sometimes dense and often misunderstood words and even function to give readers a semblance of punctuation. Leonard Bernstein said “Music can name the unnamable and communicate the unknowable.” Biblical trope already illuminates much about the biblical text. Further artistic interpretations add additional levels.

The aim of this Curriculum Guide is not primarily to create artists (though artists are welcome), nor is it to focus on Hebrew translation skills. Rather, this guide invites

⁶ Holtz, pg. 11-16.

⁷ Heschel, pg. 19.

Jews to engage in creating meaningful connections to Jewish biblical texts, through the vehicle of the creative arts. The creative arts are a powerful resource that allows the artist to share his/her views with a larger audience, which in turn invites the audience to reevaluate their own views and perspective. Working in a cohort environment, participants can interact with each other as both the artist and an audience member. Participants will learn to identify a text they will embrace as their own through interactive text study sessions and lesson teaching the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making. Interpreting texts does not happen in isolation in this curriculum. Participants will work in chevruta and peer reflection with co-participants on their selected biblical texts. They will also learn with professionals from both the art world and the field of Jewish textual interpretation, including the Artistic Specialist, who early on offers professional mentoring insights into the creative process. Over the course of the curriculum, participants will produce multiple artistic interpretations of a personally meaningful text, redrafting their piece of art throughout the course. These iterations will be preserved and studied in a personal portfolio. The entire process culminates in a Gallery Walkthrough event for the community.

Ideally, the participants of this curriculum will become artists of Jewish life, applying their understanding of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making to their own artistic interpretation of their text. As Micah Gottlieb notes: “The written law has never been sufficient for practice, but requires oral explanation and the living example of a teacher and a community. The living example helps truth penetrate the heart of the practitioner.”⁸

⁸ Gottlieb, pg. 335.

Through off-site visits to local cultural events and an in-house Gallery Walkthrough, participants will be encouraged to become synthesized ArText interpreters, connoisseurs capable of inspiring future generations of Jews. Participation in these events allows participants to experience connoisseurship on a variety of levels: through the text, the art, and through the relationship to one or the other. In describing curricular scholar Elliot Eisner's emphasis on connoisseurship, which is the heart of his thinking, educational scholar Edward Pajak writes:

Connoisseurship is the capacity to see and appreciate the complexity, subtlety, and importance of an object or event. ... Connoisseurship requires more than simply perceiving and recognizing qualities; it requires being able to perceive the subtleties that make a particular work of art unique. ... Connoisseurship requires an observer who is capable of perceiving subtle characteristics as well as recognizing how those characteristics are a part of a larger structure...⁹

This Curriculum Guide gives participants the tools to become connoisseurs of ArText.

As choreographer of Israeli folk dance, Yonatan Karmon, said, "The hardest thing is to make a dance that dances."¹⁰ In other words, honoring the work of the artist requires honoring the long process it takes to create that piece of art. The journey itself is as important, if not more so, than the end product itself. As such, the art produced through this curriculum will not be disposable. Rather, the pieces created by learners will express part of the very work of becoming Jewish they have experienced. "Art is man's anticipatory construction of the world as it ought to be..."¹¹ Through their own personal expressions of their thoughts and feelings, participants will connect to their own Jewish identity and become more self-aware Jewish adults.

⁹ Pajak, pg. 123.

¹⁰ Ingber, pg. 156.

¹¹ Schwarzschild, "Aesthetics," pg. 5.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:

- ✚ In addition to providing Jews with *halakhic* and moral authority, Jewish texts also orient their life journeys.
- ✚ To wrestle with Jewish biblical texts is to wrestle with life.
- ✚ Interpretation reveals as much about the interpreter as it does about the text being interpreted.
- ✚ Interpretation of Jewish classical texts causes Jews to stake their claim within Jewish tradition.
- ✚ Placing the brush on the canvas both locks and opens creative possibilities.
- ✚ The predominant themes of art are the most profound experiences of life—challenge, reassurance, empowerment, and commitment.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- ✚ How can classical Jewish texts guide us on our life journeys?
- ✚ How can classical Jewish texts add beauty to our lives?
- ✚ What is art?
- ✚ How do we respond to art?
- ✚ What makes a classical Jewish text meaningful to me?
- ✚ What is your text? What is your art? Why are they yours?

OVERALL CURRICULAR GOALS:

- ✚ to teach about two main purposes for Jewish texts
- ✚ to teach that Jewish biblical texts have beauty
- ✚ to teach that art is about more than its aesthetic qualities
- ✚ to show how the dual processes of creating and consuming art that is inspired by Jewish texts connects artists and audiences to one another and to the text.
- ✚ to teach that the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making both complement each other and contradict each other

OVERALL CURRICULAR OBJECTIVES:

Upon completing this curriculum, participants should be able to...

- ✚ Identify the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making, apply them to a variety of *TaNakh* texts, analyze the prominence of any of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making within a specific text
- ✚ Explain the meaning of a text to a partner or larger group using any of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making as reference
- ✚ Critique art not solely by aesthetic qualities, but by how they relate to the meaning and intention of the art, demonstrated in the Peer-Directed Feedback Protocol
- ✚ Select a personally meaningful text, reflect on the meaningfulness of the text, and justify their selection through the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making
- ✚ Create an artistic interpretation of their selected text
- ✚ Describe their relationship with their selected text and their artistic interpretation in a written description accompanying their art
- ✚ Develop confidence in seeking feedback from their peers and professionals
- ✚ Foster a relationship with the Artistic Specialist and the facilitator(s), creating a network of peers with whom they can consult and reflect upon their artistic process

AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT:

The Authentic Assessment, a process that unfolds over the Curriculum Guide, is inspired by three questions:

- ✚ What is your text?
- ✚ What is your art?
- ✚ Why is it yours?

Throughout the Curriculum Guide, participants will engage in the process of creating an artistic interpretation of a Jewish biblical text that includes the following steps:

- ✚ Choosing a *TaNakh* text that is personally meaningful to them, which includes being beautiful in some way.
- ✚ Creating their own piece of art that interprets this text through their own individual understanding and engagement with the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making (Challenge, Reassurance, Empowerment, Commitment), with the assistance of the Artistic Specialist.
- ✚ This process includes creating multiple drafts of the project along the way
- ✚ Sharing their work with the rest of the class and the greater community in a Gallery Walkthrough event near the conclusion of the Curriculum Guide.
- ✚ Explaining how the text is personally meaningful to them to the community during the Gallery Walkthrough by including a written description of their artistic interpretation.
- ✚ Participants will display, alongside their artistic interpretation, one page from their journal, which will be featured throughout the creative process
- ✚ Relate their text and artistic interpretation to their Jewish identity formation and articulate the connection between these parts in reflection after the Gallery Walkthrough.
- ✚ Criteria for excellence in the creation and presentation of the art piece includes:
 - ✚ The piece needs to highlight at least one but engage with all Four Lenses of Meaning-Making
 - ✚ The piece will be presented in the Gallery Walkthrough event, either displayed or performed
 - ✚ The piece will be accompanied by a museum style description of the project, including:
 - Title of the piece
 - Medium of the piece
 - Text (in translation, with credit given to the translator)
 - Explanation of the integration of the Four Lenses, as defined by the participants in units 2 and 3

LETTER TO THE FACILITATOR:

Dear Facilitator,

Welcome! By utilizing this Curriculum Guide, you are stressing not only the importance of our Jewish textual tradition, but also the essential role the creative arts play in learning by speaking to a variety of learning needs. This Guide strives to make an unforgettable experience for you and the participants in a number of ways and this letter will give you a few pointers on how to make the best of the Guide along the way.

On Hebrew:

It is not the goal of this Curriculum Guide to create savvy translators of texts from Hebrew into English. Rather, by using a translation that appeals to them (suggestions of a variety of good translations can be found in the Annotated Bibliography, beginning on page 117), participants will engage with the text in a way that is more comfortable for them. However, as the facilitator, you need to be familiar enough with the *TaNakh* to be able to guide the participants to an appropriate passage based upon their interest. If you need some assistance with this and some of the socio-historical context associated with the texts, many of the commentaries listed in the Annotated Bibliography will give you a brief overview of that text and the necessary context. It would be good to review them prior to implementing the curriculum, especially those associated with the texts found in the Text Resource Bank (Appendix B, page 78).

Prior to the first session:

Once you have decided to use this Curriculum Guide, there are two things to begin coordinating: the Artistic Specialist and the museum visit or performance. You will need to secure an Artistic Specialist to help you with the projects for the participants, to serve as a mentor and assist the participants through their creative process. The Artistic Specialist needs to be present for Sessions 2.3 (page 45), 3.3 (page 57), and 4.1 (page 63), and should be invited to and strongly encouraged to attend the Gallery Walkthrough in Session 4.2 (page 68). No one Artistic Specialist will be able to relate to all participants, who will each be focusing on their own medium, but a

specialist will be able to speak to their own creative process and offer insights to the participants on how to engage in an open reflective creative process of artistic expression.

Also, you should begin researching opportunities in your community for a museum visit or performance that you and the participants can attend in Session 3.2.5 (page 55). The visit is placed at this point in the Curriculum Guide as it is after all of the Lenses of Meaning-Making have been introduced and defined. If another opportunity comes up before then, feel free to take an additional field trip or ensure that participants reflect upon the performance after all lenses have been introduced, even if was experienced beforehand.

Note where sessions are double sessions within the Curriculum Guide. About ½ the sessions in this Curriculum Guide are double sessions, 2 hours in length, to ensure there is ample time for all activities. Many times this occurs in sessions including the Artistic Specialist to allow ample time to work on the artistic interpretations. Other sessions are 1 hour in length. The beginning of Unit 4, where participants have open time to work on their art pieces after the opening activity can be structured in 1 hour sessions or in longer sessions based on the needs of the participants (see page 66).

About a week or so before the course begins, I recommend reaching out to the participants to introduce yourself as the facilitator of this course. Along with sharing the details of the course with them and explaining to them a little about yourself, tell the participants to bring an example of a piece of art they like, enjoy, and find beautiful with them to the first session. (Note: This piece of art does not necessarily have to be Jewish in scope for this activity.) What the participant brings in does not need to be the piece of art itself—a picture or symbolic part (like a DVD or a CD) of the piece will do. Emphasize that it does need to be a physical object though. Leave the definition of what is “art” vague. It should be about what they like or enjoy, and art can fall under any number of categories. Categories of art are listed below. Ideally, you will participate in this activity as well, and also should bring in a piece of art to share on the first day.

Categories of Art:



Art can fall under a number of different categories and within each category, there is a variety of options for engaging in an artistic process. Below are just a few examples of the vast array of examples of art

Art can be:





Visual or Fine Art

-  Painting
-  Drawing
-  Sculpting
-  Multi-media
-  Collage
-  Photography
-  Textile



Literary Art

-  Poetry
-  Prose

Performance Art

-  Dance
-  Musical Composition
-  Theatre
-  Storytelling

Cinematic Art

-  Video
-  Audio

REMEMBER: This list is NOT exhaustive by any stretch of the imagination. Encourage your participants to be creative.

Feedback and Reflection:

An important part of the creative process in the Curriculum Guide is the ongoing engagement with feedback and reflection. Each unit in this Curriculum Guide offers an opportunity to engage with either feedback or reflection, and usually both. The journal, utilized throughout the course as a space for drafting and personal reflection on the creative process, is introduced in Session 1.2 (page 26). In Session 2.2 (page 43), participants begin clarifying their own texts through the collective definitions of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making they create, thus beginning the process of seeking feedback from other members of the cohort. Participants will be seeking feedback from two groups of people of the course of the Curriculum: their co-participants and the professionals involved in the course, namely you, the facilitator, and the Artistic Specialist. Three sessions in particular are devoted to giving and receiving feedback and personal reflection time in the process of creating the artistic interpretations: Sessions 2.3 (page 45), 3.3 (page 57), and 4.1 (page 63). The Peer-Directed Feedback Protocol

([Appendix C](#), page 79) and the Reflective Question Sequence ([Appendix D](#), page 80) provide guidelines for these processes during these times. Lastly, the Gallery Walkthrough offers a space for both feedback and reflection as well. Hearing from members of the greater community and making their work public to critique can be intimidating to some participants, but with on-going respectful involvement through the feedback process and the known sentence stems of step 4 of the [Appendix C](#), the participants should feel at ease. The entire course also concludes with an in-depth reflection of the entire process in Session 4.3 (page 71).

On the Gallery Walkthrough:

In preparation for the Gallery Walkthrough in Unit 4 (page 68), be sure to leave ample time to coordinate details. Find and secure a location for the Gallery Walkthrough well in advance so that you have time to bring the participants there to install their pieces prior to the actual event. Create and send out invitations to the families of your participants, your co-workers and the staff of your organization, community members and other stakeholders, local artists, etc. Promote the event and get the participants excited about sharing their art with the community. Find donors to supply drinks and snacks. Find or create decorations for tables and the room. Make it a really fancy, memorable event for all involved.

The Gallery Walkthrough displays all of the artistic interpretations that have been created by the participants over the course of the Curriculum Guide. To familiarize yourself with the details of the Authentic Assessment, please refer to page 12 or 67 (the latter is laid out for distribution to the participants).

During the Gallery Walkthrough itself, ask a community member or volunteer, preferably with photography skills, to go around and document the displays, the attendees, and the event overall. While you proceed through the event, gather quotations from the attendees about each of the pieces and ask them about the experience in the Gallery Walkthrough. Do the same with the participants. After the fact, you can use the photos and sound bites to create a digital or physical scrapbook to share with the participants. If you do this, it is best to keep 3 copies aside for yourself: one of you personally, one for the school or organization, and one just in case.

Final Thoughts:

You are your participants' best model for this Curriculum Guide and their best resource. So:

- Don't be afraid to be involved in the creative process with your participants. Create a piece of art along with them. Integrate yourself as a participant as well as a facilitator yourself, beginning at the end of Unit 1. Share your text and your art with your participants and show that you are involved in the creative process as well, exploring your own relationship with texts and with art.
- Bring your own special expertise and circle of influence into the program by inviting your own creative friends to speak and share. Many of the examples of art offered in Appendix A (page 76) or the Annotated Bibliography (beginning on page 117) happen to be people with whom I am personally familiar.
- Provide opportunities for you and the participants to go to performances or visit a museum or other experiences above and beyond the suggested visit in Unit 3 (page 55). Experiencing the arts is the way the participants will become connoisseurs of their own art, by learning what is excellence in many forms and applying that to their own creative process.

Additionally, your work with this Guide can serve as a valuable resource and example for other facilitators in the future, so I hope you are in touch with me throughout the implementation with updates and documentation of your definitions of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making and your participants' artistic interpretations, both completed and in progress.

I am also happy to assist you with any part of this process along the way. Please feel free to reach out to me if there is anything I can do, from introducing you to artists who might be helpful, to talking through suggested activities, to serving as a mentor or attending your own Gallery Walkthrough if that is geographically possible.

Wishing you lots of beautiful artful experiences!

Lillian Kowalski

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**Unit 1 –
Jewish Biblical Texts:
An Art Form of Our Heritage
(Scripted Unit)**

I will sing to Adonai, for God has triumphed gloriously
Exodus 15:1

Relevant Enduring Understandings:

- In addition to providing *halakhic* and moral authority, Jewish texts (also) orient our life journeys.
- To wrestle with Jewish biblical texts is to wrestle with life.

Relevant Essential Questions:

- How can classical Jewish texts guide us on our life journeys?
- How can classical Jewish texts add beauty to our lives?
- What is art?
- How do we respond to art?
- What makes a classical Jewish text meaningful to me?
- What is your text? Why is it yours?

Unit Objectives:

By the end of the unit, participants will be able to...

- Identify and describe the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making (Challenge, Reassurance, Empowerment, Commitment).
- Contrast the aesthetically pleasing features of a piece of art with what they understand about the artist's intention.
- Begin to feel comfortable sharing thoughts and opinions with the group.
- Select a biblical text that is personally meaningful.

Assessments:

By the end of the unit, participants will...

- Build a safe space together
- Reflect on the process thus far
- Choose a text

Unit Overview:

This opening unit introduces participants to the three core elements of this Curriculum Guide:

1. Art
2. Jewish texts, specifically from the *TaNakh*
3. The Four Lenses of Meaning-Making

This unit spends substantial time introducing participants to the beauty of art, exploring their personal feelings about pieces of art, and then sharpening that understanding of beauty by introducing the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making (Challenge, Reassurance, Empowerment, Commitment). These Four Lenses give depth for gauging the beauty of art. Art is not simply beautiful because it has pretty colors or rhymes; art taps in to our deep emotions and moves us in powerful ways. Art challenges us and reassures us. Art empowers us to act, and compels a commitment from us.

The unit is laid out to introduce these core elements in order of familiarity. Participants will first be introduced to art and beauty, presumably the area where they might have the most familiarity at the onset of the curriculum. The idea of beauty carries over into the introduction of text, and then of ArText, where text and art are fused together. Finally, by introducing the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making, participants are able to give more substance to their understanding of what makes something beautiful. With all of these pieces in place, participants then select their own text to explore throughout the rest of the Curriculum Guide. As the first unit of the Curriculum Guide, substantial time is spent with all participants together as one group to foster a sense of community. Time is also spent in individual reflection.

By the end of this unit, participants will choose the text that they will explore throughout the rest of the curriculum. At the conclusion of the Curriculum Guide, they will have created an artistic interpretation of this text to present in the Gallery Walkthrough in Unit 4 (page 68). The text they select will be personally meaningful, and they will interpret it through a reflective artistic process, working with you the facilitator, their fellow participants, and the Artistic Specialist (who will be introduced in the next unit, in Session 2.3, on page 45).

Session Sequence:

Session 1.1 – What’s Beauty Got To Do With It? – How We View and Understand Art

DOUBLE SESSION

Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Compare different understandings of what makes something beautiful
- Describe what makes something beautiful from their perspective
- Define the characteristics of the “safe space” of this classroom, an agreement reached between each participant and the facilitator
- Begin to feel comfortable sharing thoughts and opinions with the group
- Demonstrate appreciation on a particular piece of art by writing a thank you note to a fellow participant

Lesson at a glance:

- Set Induction¹² {10 mins.}
- Activity 1 – Applying the Set {15 mins.}
- Activity 2 – Creating Safe Space {35 mins.}
- Activity 3 – What’s Your Art? {45 mins.}
- Closure {15 mins.}

Materials:

- Tablecloth
- Pieces of art brought in by the participants
- A multitude of paint color sample chips from paint stores
- Note cards with envelopes
- Pens
- Facilitator(s) need a way to document the safe space protocol in Activity 2

As noted in the Letter to the Facilitator (page 13), prior to the beginning of the course, reach out to the participants to introduce yourself as the facilitator of this course. Ask the participants to bring an example of a piece of art they like, enjoy, and find beautiful with them to the first session. Leave the definition of what is “art” vague,

¹² The set induction, applying the set activity, and the protocol for creating safe space are all modified from lessons taught by Rabbi Tali Zolkowicz, Ph.D. in the courses “EDU 620 – Professional Learning” during the Spring 2015 semester and “EDU 630 – Curriculum Design” during the Fall 2015 semester.

except to explain that not all art is visual, and emphasize that it does need to be a physical object. Remember that you should participate and bring in a piece of art to share on the first day as well.

When the participants arrive with their object or piece of art, place each object on a table off to the side of the room and cover all objects with a tablecloth. Be certain that no participant sees any object brought in by any other participant, if at all possible. Once all participants have arrived and all objects are on the table under the tablecloth, proceed with the set induction.

Set Induction {10 mins.}:

Distribute ~50-100 color samples (from paint stores) all over a table in front of the participants. Direct the participants to put together two sets of color combinations (roughly 3-5 chips to a set), a first set that THEY each consider to be BEAUTIFUL and a second that they consider UGLY. Give NO other instructions or definitions.

Once all participants have settled on two sets of color combination, open the exercise up for discussion. Ask the participants to display their sets of colors in front of them on the table or in their hands and survey the sets they see in front of them. Pose the following questions:

- What do you notice?
- Do you see other sets of colors that you think are beautiful too?
- Do you know why you chose the colors you did, and what counts as beauty or ugliness for you (re: color)?
- Is there any overarching consensus we have over what we think of as beautiful or ugly?

Activity 1 – Applying the Set {15 mins.}:

Now apply the concept of beauty to an artistic experience. Ask the participants to think of an experience with some art or art form they have seen that they consider to be “beautiful.” Remember that art can include any of the categories of art listed in the Letter to the Facilitator (page 13). Instruct them to choose four words, any part of speech, that they believe best captures the experience, but only four words. Invite

participants to share their words. Ask a few (2 or 3) participants for specifics about their choices:

- What made it beautiful, do you think?
 - **I lost track of time staring at it.**
 - **I wished I could be up there with them on stage.** (empowerment)
 - **I don't know, but I just felt good.**
 - **It challenged me to think about something differently.** (challenge)
 - **I wanted to learn more about the story behind it—where did it come from? How was it created? What inspired it?** (commitment)
 - **It gave me comfort.** (reassurance)
- Make sure contributing participants offer at least one reason about what contributed to the beauty of the art.

Debrief & analyze the set:

- How did you do these tasks? What criteria did you use?
- How did you decide when you were “right”?
- Do others in the room agree with your point of view, or is there some dissent among our decisions?

Finally, ask:

- What does this have to do with judging art?
 - **Beauty is subjective**
 - **As the phrase goes, “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.”**
 - **Another phrase is “One person's trash is another person's treasure.”**

Share with the participants that when we discuss something's beauty, or its aesthetic appeal, we are creating a value judgment about it. We need to remember to be respectful of other people's opinions and feelings, which are just as valid as our own. As a group, you all are beginning a process of encountering texts and creating art. This can be an intimidating process, because it can be deeply personal, involving your opinions and feelings and even creating value judgments. Therefore, the first step in creating a group space is to make it a place where everyone can engage in dialogue and offer feedback to each other from an honest and respectful place, where the participants can take risks and share, be respectful of other's opinions and feel respected for their own, without judgment.

Activity 2 – Creating Safe Space {35 mins.}:

If they are not already, resituate the participants so that they are all sitting in a circle facing each other. Ask them “What do you need in order to feel safe to share your work publicly, take risks, and be open to grow?”

Have participants respond one at a time what each of them personally needs to make this space safe. Participants can echo an idea already presented by another participant in addition to offering another thought. Record all answers given. Make note of where you can connect two ideas together, if they mirror each other.

Items that could be included in safe space parameters, based on previous experience, could be, but are certainly not limited to:

- *Feedback as an interactive dialogue*
- *Trust that what happens in the space, stays in the space*
- *Confidence that no one will feel shamed during or after the process*
- *Clarity, and a non-defensive approach to the pursuit of clarity*
- *Taking responsibility for one's own learning needs and respecting others' requests for needs to be met*
- *Being aware of one's own body language and how it can be read and interpreted*
- *Owning one's own soap boxes or passions*
- *Granting positive presupposition*

Be certain that each participant offers at least one contribution to the list of parameters. This could mean, depending on the number of participants, that the list may be long.

Your role as the facilitator is not necessarily to contribute your own ideas to the safe space parameters, but to clarify the points made by each participant, connect them with another idea when appropriate, and record the subsequent list of needs for future reference.

Participants should remember and respect the parameters of the safe space they have laid out. Therefore, once all of them share what they need to create safe space, reread all points of the safe space and have participants indicate that they agree to the parameters and to abide by them. This could be as simple as having the participants

verbally agree or could go so far as to include written indication of agreeing to the parameters.

Throughout the rest of the first unit of the Curriculum Guide, make sure the agreed upon Safe Space Parameters are posted somewhere visible in the room so participants can refer back to it as necessary. After the first unit is complete, the Safe space parameters should be well engrained in the participants' heads, and therefore may not need to be displayed anymore, but keep it handy just in case, especially when it comes to offering feedback, beginning in Unit 2 (Session 2.3, page 45). Remember to share the Safe Space Parameters with anyone who will be entering the space as a guest to offer feedback, so they are aware of the needs of the participants.

Activity 3 – What is Your Art?¹³ {45 mins.}

To model the parameters just laid out for the safe space, this activity involves both listening and sharing from multiple perspectives. Direct the participants to the table where the objects or pieces of art they brought in are covered with the tablecloth. Once everyone is gathered around, remove the tablecloth and direct the participants to look at the objects on the table and pick one that speaks to them. *They cannot pick their own piece—they must pick a piece brought in by another participant.* When they find one that speaks to them, they should pick it up and return to their seat. Be vague with your language here—the point is to have the participants pick an object that they relate to on some level, whatever that may be, that is not their own.

Once all participants have selected a piece and are again seated, begin to share about the pieces according to the following protocol:

1. Jordan shares why s/he chose that particular piece of art.
2. The owner of that piece is prompted to identify themselves.
3. Shawn indicates it was his/her piece and shares why s/he thinks it is beautiful.
4. Shawn then shares about the piece s/he chose from the table.
5. Continue the protocol until everyone has shared about both the piece they brought in and the piece they chose from the table.

¹³ This activity is modeled after the description found in Rachael Kessler's The Soul of Education (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2000) in chapter 1 (pgs. 8-10).

Note: if the protocol brings the sharing back to a first person, simply start over with a new first person.

Closure {10 mins.}:

Before leaving the session, distribute note cards and pens to the participants. Ask them each to write a short thank you note to the person who brought in the piece of art they chose, what it made them think about, and how they related to it. Address the envelopes and place the note card inside. Collect the envelopes and hold on to them to distribute at the beginning of the next session.

Session 1.2 – Survey the ArText Library

Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Identify at least two aspects of various texts that make them beautiful in their opinion
- List the variety of textual and artistic choices available for selecting their text and medium

Expressive Outcomes:

By the end of the session, participants will have the opportunity to...

- Reflect on the experience of relating to many texts in the Text and ArText Library activities in their first journal entry

Lesson at a glance:

- Set Induction {5 mins.}
- Activity 1 – Surveying the Text Library {20 mins.}
- Activity 2 – Surveying the ArText Library {20 mins.}
- Activity 3 – Journal reflection {10 mins.}
- Closure {5 mins.}

Materials:

- Note cards written in Session 1.1
- Texts from Appendix B, typed up, printed out, and hung in the room
- Digital resources of ArText examples
- Technology to display the digital resource
- A notebook for each participant to use as a journal throughout their creative process
- Pens or pencils

Set Induction {5 mins.}:

Distribute the note cards from the closing of Session 1.1 to each of the participants addressed on the envelope. Invite participants to open their letters and see how their fellow participants felt about the art they shared in the last session. After reading their letters, invite participants to share with the group a single word on how they feel at this moment. Possible answers might include one of the Four Lenses of Meaning Making:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| • Challenged | • Empowered |
| • Reassured | • Committed |

Keep track of those answers, if any. Explain to the participants that these letters, reflective pieces of the artistic process, are one type of art, and now we will be exploring another as we delve into our textual tradition.

Activity 1 – Survey the Text Library {20 mins.}:

Using the list of texts in Appendix B (page 78), create a text library for the participants to encounter. OMIT Exodus 15 from this exercise, as it will be the example for the rest of the curriculum guide. Display the various texts around a room and give the participants ample time to peruse each text, choosing the one they find most beautiful. Once all participants have chosen a text, ask two or three participants to share how and why they chose a particular text. Prompt them to read the text out loud to the rest of the participants and include at least two reasons for choosing that text. Remind participants of the Safe Space Parameters they created in the previous session and that their sharing and their listening should be in line with the parameters.

Choose one quote that was not chosen by any of the participants (if there is such an option) to be examined by the class all together. Poll the participants and together come up with at least one reason why someone else might find this text beautiful.

Repeat the process by asking the participants which text they like the least of the texts presented. Again, choose two or three participants to share how and why they chose a particular text. Prompt them to read their text out loud to the rest of the participants and give one reason for choosing that text.

While still in the group in the area with the texts, note where similarities occur: some texts that were beautiful for some might be disliked by others, some texts might continue to remain unselected throughout the whole activity, and some participants might choose the same text as both beautiful and disliked, for different reasons.

At the conclusion of this session, save the papers with the texts printed on them for the next session, in case participants need assistance with selecting a text for their artistic interpretation.

Activity 2 – Survey the ArText Library {20 mins.}:

Now that participants have been introduced to the variety of texts that are available in our Jewish biblical canon, the next step is to introduce them to various artistic interpretations. This activity is only meant to be a cursory glance at many different pieces of art and give the participants a taste of what is available. ArText will be discussed more in-depth in Session 2.1 (page 40).

The resource at the end of this session is comprised of five different pieces of art, one from each of the five books of the *Torah*, and covers the four areas of art listed in the Letter to the Facilitator (page 13):

- GENESIS – “*Katonti*,” music by Yonatan Razel, choreographed by Oren Ashkenazi (Performance Art) {whole dance on YouTube is 3 minutes}
- EXODUS – “Finding Moses” by He Qi (Visual Art)
- LEVITICUS – “*Parashat K’doshim*” by Rae Antonoff (Visual Art)
- NUMBERS – “Pride” by Dahlia Ravikovitch, in “Voices” section of *parashat Chukat* in The Torah: A Women’s Commentary (pg. 935) (Literary Art) {read it out loud}
- DEUTERONOMY – TNT’s “Moses” (Cinematic Art) {from 1:21-1:29 of part 2}

Go through the digital resource with the participants spending a few minutes on each piece. Prompt the participants, asking if they recognize which story is associated with each piece of art. Point out the important associations with the *Torah* from each piece¹⁴:

- Genesis 32:11 – קִטְנִיתִי מִכָּל הַחֲסָדִים וּמִכָּל הָאֲמֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ אֵת־עַבְדְּךָ – “I am unworthy of all the kindness that You have so steadfastly shown Your servant.” said by Jacob.
- Exodus 2:1-10 – baby Moses in the river, discovered by Pharaoh’s daughter
- Leviticus 19:1-20:27, specifically 19:2 – קְדָשִׁים תִּהְיוּ כִּי קְדוֹשׁ אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם – “You shall be holy, for I, your God יְהוָה, am holy.”
- Numbers 20:1-13 – Miriam dies, the community is left without water, and Moses strikes the rock
- Deuteronomy 34 – Moses dies, authority is handed over to Joshua

This is only meant to be a quick introduction to types of ArText, with only a few minutes spent on each piece, simply to show the different types of art and to show the relationship between text and ArText. Take questions only as necessary from the participants. Tell them they will have time to reflect on these pieces of art in their

¹⁴ All translations used in the digital resource come from The Contemporary Torah (2006).

journal in the next activity (see below) and that they will have more structured time to explore ArText in the future (see Session 2.1, page 40).

Activity 3 – Journal Reflection {10 mins.}:

Distribute a notebook to each participant for their use throughout their curriculum as their journal. Prompt the participants to reflect on the activity that just occurred by asking them to consider the following points:

- Which text did you consider beautiful and why?
- Which text did you not like and why?
- Which ArText was most intriguing to you and why?
- What are the most important characteristics of a piece of text that make it beautiful to you? What about with a piece of art?
- How did this activity enhance your understanding of text? Of ArText?

Journal reflection is a very open activity—participants can choose to write paragraphs, bullet points, a narrative, doodle and draw, etc. Participants must respond to the five prompts, though, in some way that is recognizable to you, the facilitator.

Closure {5 mins.}:

Instruct the participants to open to a new blank page in their journal and write the first word that comes to their mind when they think about their experience in the with the text library today. They can write it however they want—big, small, neat, messy, plain text, cursive, block letters, bubble letters—so long as it is the word they are leaving with at the end of this session. Collect the journals for the next session.

In between the two sessions, view the journal entries to ensure that all participants are participating appropriately. These reflections will be explored by the participants in the future as the beginning steps of their creative process.

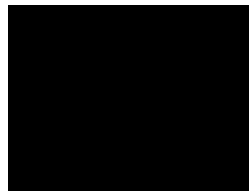
I suggest collecting the journals at the end of every session for two reasons: first, so that you, as the facilitator, always know where the journals are and so they are not lost or inadvertently forgotten throughout the course of the curriculum. Participants can always make notes or drawings on separate pieces of paper in between sessions and tape or staple them in at the next one or leave them in their portfolio folders. Second,

collecting the journals gives you time after each session to review them and offer additional feedback and guidance on the process, if necessary or desired.

SURVEY THE ARTTEXT LIBRARY

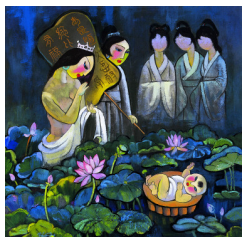
An introduction to fusion of the Jewish textual tradition and artistic interpretation.

GENESIS 32:11



- “I am unworthy of all the kindness that You have so steadfastly shown Your servant.”
- Jacob

EXODUS 2:1-10



- The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe in the Nile, while her maidens walked along the Nile. She spied the basket among the reeds and sent her slave girl to fetch it. When she opened it, she saw that it was a child, a boy crying. She took pity on it and said “This must be a Hebrew child.” (verses 5, 6)

LEVITICUS 19:1-20:27



- “You shall be holy, for I, your God יהוה, am holy.” (19:1)

NUMBERS 20:1-13

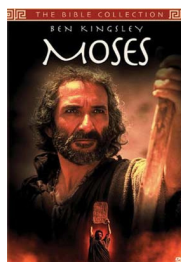
Even rocks crack, I tell you,
and not on account of age.
For years they lie on their backs
in the cold and the heat,
so many years,
it almost creates the impression of calm.
The don't move, so the cracks can hide.
A kind of pride.
Years pass over them as they wait.
Whoever is going to shatter them
hasn't come yet.
And so the moss flourishes, the snowed is cast about,
the red bursts out and slides back—
and it seems the rocks are perfectly still.
Till a little seal comes to rub against them,
comes and goes—
and suddenly the stone has an open wound.
I told you, when rocks crack, it happens by surprise.
Not to mention people.

—Dahlin Ravitzky (translated by Chana Black and Chana Kramfeld)

- The Israelites arrived in a body at the wilderness of Zin on the first new moon, and the people stayed at Kadesh. Miriam dies there and was buried there.
The community was without water, and they joined again Moses and Aaron. (verses 1, 2)

DEUTERONOMY 34

- TNT's Bible series “Moses”



- Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died; his eyes were undimmed and his vigor unabated. ...
Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hand upon him; and the Israelites heeded him, doing as יהוה had commanded Moses. (verses 7, 9)

Session 1.3 – Beauty is Only Skin Deep – The Four Lenses of Meaning-Making

Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Describe a few (2-3) characteristics of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making
- Select a text of personal significance to them to explore in an artistic interpretation.

Lesson at a glance:

- Set Induction {5 mins.}
- Activity 1 – Chalk Talk Protocol {30 mins.}
- Activity 2 – Choose Your Own Text {20 mins.}
- Closure {5 mins.}

Materials:

- large pieces of butcher paper or large post-it notes
- markers
- *TaNaKhim*, either books of the entire *TaNaKh*, individual books of the canon, or online access via websites or apps
- Copies of Appendix B, the Text Resource Bank, for participants who need additional guidance for selecting a text
- Copies of Baron's A Treasury of Jewish Quotations and Rotsten's Treasury of Jewish Quotations books for those participants who need additional guidance for selecting a text
- Various translations and commentaries (see Annotated Bibliography, page 117)
- Participants' journals
- Portfolio folders for each participant for the drafts of their work
- Lined or blank paper
- Pens or pencils
- post-it notes

Set induction {5 mins.}:

Give instructions for the set and the first activity at the same time. Participants should proceed seamlessly from the set induction into the Chalk Talk Protocol.

Distribute the journals back to the participants. Instruct them to find their closure from the previous session. Next to it (on the same page or the next page), ask them to repeat this process, writing down the first word that comes to their mind when they think about the beginning of this session. They can write it however they want—

big, small, neat, messy, plain text, script block letters, bubble letters—so long as it is the word with which they are starting this session.

Activity 1 – Chalk Talk Protocol¹⁵ {30 mins.}:

By the end of Unit 3, participants will have created their own collective definitions of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making (Challenge, Reassurance, Empowerment, Commitment). However, at this point in the curriculum, participants will be introduced to these lenses for the first time, and it is important for participants to think about the role of the Four Lenses in their lives presently before couching them in a discussion about texts and art.

Prior to the session, using large pieces of butcher paper taped on the wall or large post-it notes, set up 4 areas around a room. Each area will have 2 pieces of paper in it. Each paper will have one of the following 8 prompts on it.

- *What makes you feel challenged?*
- *How do you approach challenging times or events in your life?*
- *What makes you feel reassured?*
- *How do you experience reassurance when it comes from an object, place, or idea, rather than from a person?*
- *What makes you feel empowered?*
- *How do you empower others?*
- *What makes you feel committed to something?*
- *How do you demonstrate your commitment to others (people, places, things, ideas, etc.)?*

Bring the participants into the setting, allow them to pick a marker, and introduce this activity, known as chalk talk. Explain that chalk talk is a silent activity and no one should talk during the activity. Invite the participants to go around the room and answer the 8 questions in the different areas of the room. As they go around to the different questions, other people will already have begun to answer the questions

¹⁵ Chalk Talk Protocol is modified from the following resource:
Wentworth, Marylyn. “Chalk Talk.” National School Reform Faculty, n.d. Web. 23 Mar. 2016.

themselves. Participants may add to the chalk talk comments as they please. They can comment on other people's ideas simply by putting a check mark next to it, drawing a connecting line to another comment or question they have. Encourage the participants to leave their own individual answer to each question as well. Emphasize that each participant should visit each piece of paper a few times to see the responses that come up so they can respond to those as well. Remind the participants of the Safe Space Parameters they created together—if they need a reminder, these parameters should already be posted in the room, as noted in Session 1.1 (page 20).

Allow the participants to move about the room and proceed to answer the prompts on the pages on their own. There are likely to be long silences and time when nothing is happening as the participants think about their answers. During first 5-10 minutes, the facilitator(s) should observe from the side and let the participants direct the action and responses on their own.

After giving participants time to begin responding to the prompts and each other, facilitator(s) should begin to rove around the room to respond as well. Expand the thinking of the participants by going around and giving your own comments to the responses given on the pages. Write clarifying questions, such as:

- *Can you explain this?*
- *What do you mean by this?*
- *How does this relate to [insert one of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making]?*

Or add your own thoughts and reflections on the questions or comments. If you see a connection between 2 comments not already in discussion with each other, link them with a line and encourage participants to reflect on the connect.

Give a 5 minutes warning at the appropriate time, encouraging participants to take a last look and write final comments and return to chairs.

At the conclusion of the 5 minute warning, come back together and collect the markers. Note the dialogue that occurred and highlight on the following points:

- Choose one or two comments you (the facilitator) observed that were thought-provoking and could prove insightful for the whole group
- The chalk talk focused on four areas. What are they?
 - **Challenge**

- **Reassure**
- **Empowerment**
- **Commitment**
- These four areas are actually lenses through which we can better understand art.
- The biblical texts are one particular form of art that we will be exploring in our time together. Each one of you will be choosing a text from the *TaNaKh* to focus on for a final project

Activity 2 – Choose Your Own Text {20 mins.}

Give each participant access to a *TaNaKh* and help them to find a text that is personally meaningful to them that they will explore throughout the rest of the curriculum. This requires that either the facilitator or the participant feel savvy enough with the *TaNaKh* to be able to achieve this. This can be difficult for participant and facilitator alike.

To begin with, acclimate the participants to thinking about the *TaNaKh* as a collection of books, which includes many different stories, characters, themes, and idea. Using a technique called mind mapping¹⁶, brainstorm on a board or a large piece of paper, or online (refer to “Active Learning Strategies: Mind Mapping,” cited in the footnote below, for a few free online suggestions; http://www.austincc.edu/adnfac/collaborative/online_mapping.htm), by beginning with one idea and demonstrating all the various objects, themes or characters related to it. For example, if with start with the central idea of the character Joseph, a few things related to that character could be his brother Esau, dreams, Pharaoh, and the number 12. The number 12 evokes the stones in the priestly breastplate or the number of Minor Prophets. Perhaps struck by the garb of the priests, a textile project surrounding a ritual garment could be a final project. Using a different central idea will produce different results. Start with one example readily familiar to the participants.

¹⁶ For more in-depth information about mind mapping, see the following resources:

“Mind Mapping.” *Tony Buzan Inventor of Mind Mapping*. Tony Buzan, 2011. Web. 30 Apr. 2016.

“Mind Map.” *Wikipedia*. Wikipedia, 9 Feb 2016. Web. 30 Apr. 2016.

“Active Learning Strategies: Mind Mapping.” *Innovative Teaching Strategies*. Austin Community College, 2016. Web. 9 Apr. 2016.

Margulies, Nancy. “Mindmapping and Learning.” *New Horizons for Learning*. John Hopkins University, 2012. Web. 30 Apr. 2016.

After mapping out one example together, encourage participants to explore the *TaNaKh* to find a text that is meaningful to them. They can create their own brainstorm that might focus them towards a particular text if they already have an idea in mind. If they are having difficulties with zeroing in on particular text, [Appendix B](#) (the Text Resource Bank, page 78), utilized in the previous session, can serve as a jumping off point for inspiration. There are two selections of Jewish quotation treasuries listed in the [Annotated Bibliography](#) (page 117), by Joseph Baron or Leo Rotsten, which can also assist in this selection. Both are laid out thematically and can be used to guide participants towards a meaningful quote.

Texts can be selected using any number of criteria:

- affinity for a particular biblical character or bible story
 - one they connect with from a previous experience (like the *Torah* portion associated with their Bar or Bat Mitzvah)
 - one that confuses them (the “Bridegroom of Blood” episode of Exodus 4:24-26 is an especially confusing passage for many individuals)
 - one that inspires them (such as the stories of Devorah, Ruth, or Job)
- a theme or idea the participant desires to explore (good sources for these include the treasuries, or the list in the back of [Teaching Torah](#), or the table of contents of the Plaut and Eskenazi/Weiss *Torah* commentaries; see [Annotated Bibliography](#), page 117)
- an object or symbol they feel an affinity for or are curious about, such as:
 - ritual objects, like a *mezuzah*, *tzitzit* or the *ner tamid*
 - holiday objects, like a *shofar*, *lulav*, or *menorah*
 - natural items of personal or biblical significance, like rocks (important in the stories of Jacob and Moses), stars (featured with Abraham and Joseph), water (rivers, seas, etc.), mountains (like Sinai), animals, etc.
 - numbers, such as 12 (brothers, tribes, or spies) or 7 (days of creation or animals brought on the ark)
- a quotation they’re familiar with or that has special meaning for them (like the lyrics of “Turn Turn Turn” by The Byrds or a favorite Psalm or Proverb)
- or another way.

Be sure to look at the quote in context within the *TaNaKh* to ensure that the participant understands the message being presented.

The text chosen should speak to the participant on a personal level, a text which they find meaningful and can engage with on a number of levels, both in terms of interpretation and in terms of artistic expression. In the course of the assessment, texts

must be examined using the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making (Challenge, Reassurance, Empowerment, and Commitment). Therefore, texts should be at least one verse long.

Begin the participants' creative process by copying a translation of their text to keep with them throughout the process. Note: The saying goes that all translation is commentary, and therefore translations will differ based on the translator. Have the participants explore a couple of translation options before settling on one upon which they will focus. For suggestions on different translations to use, refer to the Annotated Bibliography (page 117). Participants should copy their selected translation twice—once in their journal for reference during the creative process and once on a separate sheet of paper to keep in their portfolio folders.

Participants can also begin this process during the class session and complete it at home. If this extra exploration time is given, be sure to set aside some time at the beginning of the next session to check in and discuss the text selections.

Closure {5 mins.}:

Once the participants have chosen their text (or committed to choosing one by the beginning of the next session), hand out 2 post-it notes to each participant. On the wall should be 5 large sheets of paper or large post-it notes, labeled as such:

- *TaNakh*
- *Challenge*
- *Reassurance*
- *Empowerment*
- *Commitment*

Have the participants create a tally of which book in the *TaNakh* their verses are found by having each participant write the book in which their verse is found on a post-it and leave it on the first piece of paper. If they can find a post-it with the same book written on it, stick them on top of each other. Also ask participants to write a down one question they are walking away with at the end of this session and stick it in the appropriate correlating lens (Challenge, Reassurance, Empowerment, Commitment).

Unit 2 – Challenge & Reassurance

*Your right hand, Adonai, glorious in power,
Your right hand, Adonai, shatters the foe!
Exodus 15:6*

Relevant Enduring Understandings:

- To wrestle with Jewish biblical texts is to wrestle with life.
- Interpretation reveals as much about the interpreter as it does about the text being interpreted.
- Interpretation stakes one's claim within Jewish tradition.
- Placing the brush on the canvas both locks and opens creative possibilities.
- The predominant themes of art are the most profound experiences of life—challenge, reassurance, empowerment, and commitment.

Relevant Essential Questions:

- How can classical Jewish texts add beauty to our lives?
- What is art?
- How do we respond to art?
- What is your art? Why is it yours?

Unit Objectives:

By the end of the unit, participants will be able to...

- Explain at least two ways that the themes of challenge and reassurance are expressed in text.
- Interpret the personal meaningfulness of their selected text through the lenses of challenge and reassurance.
- Plan at least one way to incorporate feedback received into their next draft.
- Foster a relationship with an Artistic Specialist, with whom they can consult and reflect upon their artistic process.
- Critique co-participants' works of art (in progress) in an open and respectful manner, following the Safe Space Parameters, utilizing the Peer-Directed Feedback Protocol.
- Reflect upon and evaluate their own artistic interpretation, in preparation for creating another draft, utilizing the Reflective Question Sequence.

Assessments:

By the end of the unit, participants will...

- Define Challenge and Reassurance
- Create a first draft of their project
- Reflect on the process thus far through the Reflective Question Sequence, Peer-Directed Reflection Protocol, and meeting with the Artistic Specialist

Unit Overview:

For many, engaging with text is hard. On the one hand, people may have a hard time accessing text generally, due to a lack of Hebrew skills or applicable resources. On the other hand, even if they are able to access the text, the content of the text itself presents challenges to our sensibilities, making us uncomfortable or squirmy. However, these textual content challenges can also be used as a jumping off point for interpretation.

In addition to the potential challenges found within, these texts also have the opportunity to offer reassurance. Reassurance is necessary to our lives as individuals and as Jews to help us through challenging times. Oftentimes, we encounter challenge and reassurance simultaneously. Furthermore, what looks like a challenge to one person can be viewed as reassurance to another, otherwise known as “One person’s trash is another person’s treasure.” These two lenses are inextricably linked with each other.

Units 2 and 3 in this Curriculum Guide will explore the text of *Shirat HaYam* and at least one additional text through the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making (Challenge & Reassurance in this unit, Empowerment & Commitment in the next). *Shirat HaYam*, and various artistic interpretations of it, will serve as an example to the participants of what a single text observed through all Four Lenses looks like, along with its many artistic interpretations. In this unit, texts that reflect both Challenge and Reassurance will be presented to the participants in order to further explore these themes. Participants will reflect on how these lenses inform and enhance their understanding of the text they selected in Session 1.3 (page 32) and how both challenge and reassurance are reflected in the text. This unit will end with the first of three meetings with an Artistic Specialist to reflect on and assist with the creative process.

Session Sequence:

**Session 2.1 –
Shirat HaYam:
 The Quintessential ArText**

Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Identify 2-3 aspects of *Shirat HaYam* that are both challenging and reassuring.
- Critique artistic representations of *Shirat HaYam*, based on its relationship to the text itself.
- Compare the lenses of challenge and reassurance as found in *Shirat HaYam* with other biblical texts, specifically Proverbs and Lamentations (or Isaiah).

Suggested Activities / Assessments:

Throughout the rest of the Curriculum Guide, *Shirat HaYam* will serve as the prime example of a text that can be viewed using all Four Lenses of Meaning-Making and incorporates artistic interpretation. Given its place of prominence in Judaism, this text is able to speak using all Four Lenses in a way that few other texts can.

Additionally, as a piece of biblical poetry, special associated trope, and it being termed a song in the text itself, *Shirat HaYam* already has artistic elements embedded into it and has served as a natural jumping off point for artistic interpretation.

Distribute copies of the text of Exodus 15 to the participants. Gauge the familiarity of the group with this text in particular, asking from where participants might recognize it. Liturgy & music, the Passover *seder* or story, and it being a part of the *Torah* are all possible answers—make sure to tie in the answers offered to familiarize the participants with this text’s place in the Jewish textual canon and in the canon of Jewish literacy. Have participants select which verse they find most challenging in the poem and which most reassuring. As with the library of texts in Session 1.3 (page 32), participants may select the same verse as both challenging and reassuring, the same verse may be selected as both challenging and reassuring by different participants, and some verses may not be selected at all. Be sure to cover the following questions in your discussion:

- Describe how you feel when you read this text
- In what ways does this text challenge you?
- In what ways does this text offer reassurance to you?

- Is there another point of view you can offer about the verse you chose as challenging/reassuring?

After engaging in a discussion of the text of Exodus 15, continue with the next step—artistic interpretations of *Shirat HaYam*. Using the two lenses of challenge and reassurance, analyze artistic interpretations of *Shirat HaYam* in a similar way as the biblical poem was discussed. Divide participants into small groups to look at a specific piece of art based on the text of *Shirat HaYam* (see [Appendix A](#) on page 76 for specific suggestions). Guiding questions for this analysis should include, but are not limited to:

- How is this piece of art reflective of the text we have explored (Exodus 15)? What are the similarities to the text? How is it different?
- What artistic license does the artist take that is not necessarily in line with the actual text?
- What is appealing to you about this piece (reassuring)? What is puzzling (challenging)?

Reconvene from the small groups and “rejig” the groups so that one member of each of the groups is sharing with participants from the other groups (so from XXX, YYY, ZZZ to XYZ, XYZ, and XYZ). Have the groups share with each other the key points of their art pieces that challenge and/or reassure them with each other.¹⁷ Facilitator(s) can sit with one particular group’s presentation or rove between groups. Make sure one person is assigned the task of keeping a record of the discussions had in each group about the two lenses and how they view them within the art. Collect these notes at the end for use in Session 2.2 (page 43).

Based on their understanding of challenge and reassurance from the rest of the session (even though definitions of these two lenses have not been solidified by the group—that will happen in Session 2.2, on page 43), let the participants debate the role of challenge and reassurance in our texts. Divide the participants into 4 groups and assign them each one of the following texts: Proverbs 7 and Lamentations 3 (alternatively, Isaiah 54). Assign one group looking at each text to the challenges of the text and the other to reassurances of the text. The goal of the debate is to “prove” which text is the most challenging or the most reassuring. Participants can vote at the end of

¹⁷ For more information on Jigsaw as a teaching modality, see chapter 15 of *The Strategic Teacher* by Harvey F. Silver, Richard W. Strong, and Matthew J. Perini (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2007).

the presentations on which side was more compelling for each text, challenge or reassurance. At the end of the debate, discuss how individual understanding and interpretation can sway the opinions and understandings of others.

This is the point of creating their own interpretation of a piece of text—it shows the perspective from which they understand the text, which both challenges and reassures them as the artist as well as the audiences who view the piece afterwards.

Session 2.2 – Define Your Terms (session 1)

Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Create a resource of the definitions of challenge and reassurance as a group for on-going reflection.
- Apply these definitions of challenge and reassurance to other biblical texts.

Suggested Activities / Assessments:

Together, reflect as a group on the aspects and ideas that were challenging in the text of *Shirat HaYam* and in the artistic representations of them and then on those that were reassuring. Refer back to the text if necessary. Use the notes from the jigsaw discussion on the artistic representation to remind participants of their thoughts. Gather words or ideas from the participants and create a word bank to help identify those concepts in the future. One option for this is to create a poll using PollEverywhere (www.polleverywhere.com) that the participants can respond to in real time.

Additionally, use the suggestions to create a Wordle (www.wordle.net) to show participants how they have similar yet different ideas about what is challenging and what is reassuring (Bonus: A Wordle is another form of literary art! ☺)

Based on the discussion of the text of Exodus 15 and the presentations of the art pieces in Session 2.1, have the participants collectively create criteria of what makes a piece of art challenging and reassuring. These definitions will be used later on in the curriculum as part of the criteria for excellence when it comes to explaining their own artistic interpretations.

Ensure all participants have access to the following 4 items (these could be accessible online or distributed as paper copies):

- The collective definitions of challenge and reassurance the group has created in whatever form they take
- Their selected text (2 copies)
- The Safe Space Parameters (see Session 1.1, page 20)

Divide the participants into pairs (preferably based on texts—texts from the same book of the *TaNaKh* should be paired together). Explain to the participants that receiving feedback during the artistic process is an important part of their growth with their text.

To begin with, the participants will work together to examine their texts and get to the heart of the meaning of them, with emphasis being placed on viewing the text through the lenses of Challenge and Reassurance. This exercise will help them focus on the fine points of their text, what exactly drew them to this text, and why they think it will be good inspiration for an artistic interpretation. Follow the question sequence below to ensure each participant covers all areas during this exercise.

1. Jordan shares his/her text with Shawn, by giving a copy of the text to Shawn and reading it aloud.
2. Jordan share the context of the text, including, but not limited to:
 - a. The section of *TaNakh* in which the text is located
 - b. The book in which the text is located
 - c. Who the relevant characters are (if applicable)
 - d. What action happens immediately before or after (if applicable)
3. Shawn asks clarifying questions about the text itself and the context to ensure full understanding of the verse(s).
4. Jordan shares what originally drew him/her to this text, why s/he chose it.
5. Jordan shares what is challenging to him/her about this text.
6. Shawn asks clarifying questions about the challenges this text presents to Jordan.
7. Shawn helps support Jordan's challenges by:
 - a. expressing appreciations ("I appreciate...")
 - b. restating/reflecting back what s/he understands of Jordan's point of view ("As I understand it, ...")
 - c. pointing out the extent to which the piece relates to the lens of challenge ("I notice that...")
 - d. expressing possibilities for the creator to consider ("I wonder...")
8. Repeat steps 5 and 6 using the lens of reassurance – what is reassuring about this text and clarify that.
9. Jordan shares 1 next step or "takeaway" based on Shawn's feedback
10. Repeat steps 1-7 with Shawn sharing his/her text this time.

This activity begins the process of Peer-Directed Feedback, which the participants will engage in throughout the rest of curriculum when consulting with each other on their artistic interpretations, beginning in the next session.

Session 2.3 – Bringing in the Real World – Interacting with the Artistic Specialist (session 1)

DOUBLE SESSION

Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Interact with the Artistic Specialist as a part of the reflective artistic process, by investigating steps in creating their final project.
- Produce a first draft of their final project
- Justify the selection of the necessary components of their final project, including:
 - Text and translation
 - Medium
- Articulate the aspects of the text which are challenging and reassuring to them.
- Identify connections between various art pieces and the texts that inspire them

Suggested Activities / Assessments:

Working with the Artistic Specialist, create a presentation for the participants of the Artistic Specialist's art, the process they go through in creating their art, and a discussion of how the texts they select influence their art and their creative process. As this is the first introduction of the Artistic Specialist, emphasis should be placed on the fact that working with the Artistic Specialist is a part of the creative process for this curriculum. This person is a resource that the participants can glean from and utilize to help them through their interpretation, just as the facilitator is as well.

After the introduction of the Artistic Specialist, the bulk of this session will come from the participants engaging in reflection on their creative process and crafting or drafting their artistic interpretation. Reflection time can be used in one of four different ways:

1. Individual meetings with the Artistic Specialist, where the Artistic Specialist will begin to get to know the participants, discuss and reflect upon the creative process with them, and plan at least one next step for incorporating feedback the participant has received into their next draft. (Note: prior to coming in for this session, be certain to share with the Artistic Specialist both the Safe Space Parameters agreed upon by the group and the Peer-Directed Feedback

Protocol, so the Artistic Specialist is aware of the norms for offering guidance and feedback in this setting.)

*Note: Participants should meet with the Artistic Specialist at least once during each visit, therefore three times total.

2. Peer-Directed Feedback – as introduced in the previous session, receiving feedback is an important part of growing as an artist, and the participants are in a unique situation to be able to help each other with questions and concerns they have in creating their artistic interpretations. The Peer-Directed Feedback Protocol, found in Appendix C (page 79), gives the participants a framework for offering and receiving feedback from each other. Be certain to have copies of the protocol available for participants to reference.

*Note: Participants should engage in Peer-Directed Feedback at least once during the process overall, but are encouraged to both receive and offer feedback during each of the latter three units.

3. Individual sketching or preparation time, focusing on the actual artistic interpretation being created, as part of the drafting process. Participants will need to submit two drafts of their artistic interpretation before the final product is ready for the Gallery Walkthrough (see Session 4.2, on page 68). Sketching, preparations, drafts, and other planning materials can be recorded in participants' journals or on loose sheets of paper kept in their portfolio folders.
4. Individual reflection time, focusing on the creative process and evolution that the participants are experiencing, using the reflective question sequence found in Appendix D (page 80). Individual reflections should be recorded in their journals to mark the participants' progress throughout the creative process.

This reflection time is a vital part of the creative process. It allows the participants to begin creating their artistic interpretations in their chosen media, begin to understand their individual approaches to the creative process, and spend quality time analyzing and interpreting their selected text. Remind the participants to seek feedback not only from you the facilitator and the Artistic Specialist, but also from each

other—their fellow artists are one of the most important resources in the room because they are all going through the same process together, discovering and learning with each other. Refer participants back to the Peer-Directed Feedback Protocol (Appendix C, page 79) as necessary.

Note: A similar session will be found at the end of Unit 3 (page 57), to continue the process of creating their art piece, and will conclude in Unit 4, when ample time will be spent completing their art interpretations for the Gallery Walkthrough (pages 63-67).

Unit 3 – Empowerment & Commitment

*Who is like You, Adonai, among the celestials;
Who is like You, majestic in holiness,
Awesome in splendor, working wonders!
Exodus 15:11*

Relevant Enduring Understandings:

- To wrestle with Jewish biblical texts is to wrestle with life.
- Interpretation reveals as much about the interpreter as it does about the text being interpreted.
- Interpretation stakes one's claim within Jewish tradition.
- Placing the brush on the canvas both locks and opens creative possibilities.
- The predominant themes of art are the most profound experiences of life—challenge, reassurance, empowerment, and commitment.

Relevant Essential Questions:

- How can classical Jewish texts add beauty to our lives?
- What is art?
- How do we respond to art?
- What is your art? Why is it yours?

Unit Objectives:

By the end of the unit, participants will be able to...

- Describe how the *siddur* can serve as a useful resource for finding texts that are relevant and meaningful.
- Explain at least two ways that the themes of empowerment and commitment are expressed in text.
- Apply the ideas of empowerment and creating a commitment to a need to interact with others and the world.
- Synthesize their understanding of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making by applying them to other art.
- Interpret the personal meaningfulness of their selected text through the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making.
- Plan at least one way to incorporate feedback received into their next draft.
- Foster a relationship with an Artistic Specialist, with whom they can consult and reflect upon their artistic process.
- Critique co-participants' works of art (in progress) in an open and respectful manner, following the Safe Space Parameters, utilizing the Peer-Directed Feedback Protocol.
- Reflect upon and evaluate their own artistic interpretation, in preparation for creating another draft, utilizing the Reflective Question Sequence.

Assessments:

By the end of the unit, participants will...

- Define Empowerment and Commitment
- Create a second draft of their project
- Reflect on the process thus far through the Reflective Question Sequence, Peer-Directed Reflection Protocol, and meeting with the Artistic Specialist

Unit Overview:

Units 2 and 3 in this Curriculum Guide explore the text of *Shirat HaYam* and at least one additional text through the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making. Therefore, this unit runs parallel to the previous one. In Unit 2, the lenses of Challenge & Reassurance were investigated; here in Unit 3, Empowerment & Commitment are introduced. *Shirat HaYam* continues to serve as an example to the participants of what a single text observed through all Four Lenses looks like, along with its many artistic interpretations. In this unit, texts that reflect both Empowerment and Commitment will be presented to the participants in order to explore these themes. *Shirat HaYam* still serves as the model for all Four Lenses.

While it is possible to simply use the same activities from the previous unit, alternative activities are offered here. *Shirat HaYam* is now illuminated by its consistent presence in our liturgy, as are other texts that serve to create feelings of empowerment and commitment, the book of Psalms and the prophetic texts. Participants will again craft definitions of the lenses introduced in this unit to accompany the ones created in the previous unit.

Once all Four Lenses of Meaning-Making have been introduced and defined, participants can apply their understanding of the Four Lenses by attending an exhibit at a museum or attending a performance. This Memorable Moment and associated reflection serves as a first synthesis of the Four Lenses into a cohesive whole piece of art.

At the end of this unit, participants will continue to reflect on how the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making inform and enhance their understanding of the selected text. Now equipped with all four definitions, the participants will conclude the unit with creating their second draft of their artistic interpretation in preparation for creating the final piece at the beginning of Unit 4. Like the previous unit, this unit will end with another meeting with an Artistic Specialist to reflect on and assist with the creative process.

Session Sequence:

**Session 3.1 –
Liturgical Biblical Texts –
The *Siddur* as an ArText Compendium**

Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Describe how the *siddur* can serve as a useful resource for finding texts that are relevant and meaningful.
- Describe the prominence of three key sets of texts found in the *siddur*, based on how often they appear in the *siddur*:
 - *Shirat HaYam*
 - Psalms
 - prophetic texts
- Apply the ideas of empowerment and creating a commitment to a need to interact with others and the world.
- Compare the lenses of empowerment and commitment as found in *Shirat HaYam* with other biblical texts, specifically Psalms and prophetic texts.

Suggested Activities / Assessments:

As demonstrated in the previous unit, *Shirat HaYam* serves as a prime example of a text that can be viewed using all Four Lenses of Meaning-Making and incorporates artistic interpretation. As a piece of biblical poetry and a self-identified song in the text itself, with special associated trope, *Shirat HaYam* already has artistic elements embedded into it and has served as a natural jumping off point for artistic interpretation.

The use of *Shirat HaYam* in our liturgy is a powerful entry point for understanding its place and power. The *siddur* can be viewed as a compendium of many of the most important ideas and phrases of our Jewish texts. Tour the *siddur* of your choice with the participants by asking them to find the *Mi Chamocha* in the *siddur*. Ideally, participants will find a number of different pages, all with the *Mi Chamocha* on it. Discuss with the participants that the *Mi Chamocha*, Exodus 15 overall, and the theme of freedom are important parts of our Jewish tradition. The theme of freedom is found in every service we pray as Jews. It evokes a communal memory, empowering us from generations before, and serves as a call to action, creating commitment within us.

The *siddur* is a deep resource of Jewish texts, and specifically biblical texts, since it applies these texts to the liturgical setting and utilizes them to create spiritual

meaningful moments, solidifying their place as some of the most well known catchphrases of Judaism. Therefore, it can be used to find other often utilized biblical texts, the book of Psalms and the prophetic texts. To begin introducing the book of Psalms, write on a board or place post-its on a wall, listing the numbers of many different Psalms found in the *siddur*. Examples of Psalms found in the *siddur* include Psalms 29, 92-93, and 95-99 in *Kabbalat Shabbat*, Psalms 113-118 in *Hallel*, and Psalms 145-150 in *P'sukei D'zimrah*. This list is by far not exhaustive. Many other Psalms can be found referenced in the *siddur*, sometimes using only one or a few verses, but those listed above should appear more fully. You can assign participants a particular Psalm in one of two ways using the list on the board or the wall—either participants can select a particular Psalm first and then find that selection in the *siddur*, or participants can first look in the *siddur* and then claim the first Psalm they find from the wall or board. Once each participant has found a Psalm, they should read through it fully and mark words in it that are empowering or focus on commitment. Gather the words from the participants to help with the next session.

Lastly, prophetic texts also serve as an important part of our liturgy. The recitation of the *Haftarah* during the *Torah* service is only one place where the Prophets make an appearance. Like the Psalms, many prophetic texts in just a few verses are included throughout the liturgy. Find references to the Prophets, in particular to Jeremiah and Hosea and explain the place of the Prophets in the liturgy, in the *Torah* service, and in the canon of the *TaNakh*. After finding the relationship of the Prophets to the liturgy, focus specifically on Jeremiah 31 and Hosea 2. Flip the search and look in the verses of each selection for the references that can be traced back into the liturgy. For Jeremiah 31, the reference to Rachel can be found in the *Avot V'Imahot*. Hosea 2 discusses the Baalim, other gods, which is reminiscent of the *Mi Chamocha*, which brings the discussion back to *Shirat HaYam*, our quintessential text. The interrelated nature of text brings a heightened awareness of the prominence of our biblical texts, can lead to more challenges to understanding our texts, and can also empower participants to further investigate how their selected texts relate to others.

Session 3.2 – Define Your Terms (session 2)

Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Explain the special place of *Shirat HaYam* in Jewish tradition when it comes to its recitation from the *Torah* and in relation to the holiday of Passover.
- Create a resource of the definitions of empowerment and commitment as a group for on-going reflection.
- Apply the definitions of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making to other Jewish art.

Suggested Activities / Assessments:

In the previous session, participants explored the prevalence of *Shirat HaYam*, the Psalms, and prophetic texts in the *siddur*. Now, highlight the customs and traditions associated with *Shirat HaYam* and how that also influences Jews by empowering them or creating a commitment. Together, reflect as a group on the aspects and ideas that were empowering in the text of *Shirat HaYam* and in the artistic representations of them and then on the commitment Judaism has made to the power and place of this text in our liturgy, its recitation in the annual reading of the *Torah* (when many congregations stand for the recitation, giving it a special place of honor), and in the holiday of Passover (which revolves around the Exodus narrative). The holiday of Passover is an interesting frame for this, since during the entire holiday, one has the opportunity to recite many of the Psalms referenced in the previous session as well, since *Pesach* includes at least one *Shabbat* as well. Refer back to the text of Exodus 15 if necessary.

As with the previous “Define Your Terms” session in Unit 2 (page 43), gather words or ideas from the participants and create a word bank to help identify those concepts in the future. Reference material for this should be *Shirat HaYam* and the Psalms examined in the previous session. You can create another poll using PollEverywhere (www.polleverywhere.com) that the participants can respond to in real time and/or create another Wordle (www.wordle.net) to show participants how they have similar yet different ideas about what is empowering and what creates a commitment. The words they marked in the Psalms in the previous session can also help inform these definitions.

Using these new definitions for empowerment and commitment, participants can now synthesize their knowledge of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making. Encourage the participants to go on a visual scavenger hunt of your organization to find examples of the Four Lenses, using the actual building or the website. If you are meeting in a location where this is not possible, ask them to go on a digital scavenger hunt of their home congregation or school. Use the building itself (architecture is just another form of art), the physical art displayed on the walls or in creating holy spaces, the action in classrooms, photos, the website, etc. to find examples of how the organization relates to the Four Lenses. Interview other teachers or the professional staff. Each perspective and each artifact encountered will add depth and nuance to the definitions the participants have created.

Reconvene after the scavenger hunt and compile all four definitions in one place to display while the participants finish their artistic interpretations. Being able to express the place of these Four Lenses is a crucial part of the display for the Gallery Walkthrough, so all participants should be clear on what the definitions are and focus on integrating them into their pieces and explanations. Post the definitions and have participants pick and share which lens they feel is easiest for them to relate to and which is most difficult. This is one of the questions of the Reflection Question Sequence ([Appendix D](#), page 80) the participants may have begun to utilize in Session 2.3 (page 45). Now that they have all Four Lenses defined and under their belts, they are better prepared to reflect on the place of each lens in their selected text. This is a first step towards recognizing that.

Session 3.2.5 – Out and About – Museum Visit or Attend a Performance

Memorable Moment!

Expressive Outcomes:

By the end of the session, participants will the opportunity to...

- React to the experience of exploring an exhibition of art at a museum or viewing a performance.
- Reflect on the experience through journaling.

Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will the opportunity to...

- Synthesize the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making by applying them to another artist's work through a reflective journal entry.
- Apply their reflections to the creation of their own artistic interpretation.

Suggested Activities / Assessments:

As noted in the Letter to the Facilitator (page 13), from the beginning of the curriculum, the facilitator should be looking for opportunities to bring the participants out to experience art on display in the community. The ideal time to make this outing is now, after all Four Lenses of Meaning-Making have been introduced.

Facilitator(s) and participants should visit a museum or attend a performance of a piece that has a Jewish text as the inspiration for the pieces of art created and displayed or performed. This outing serves to show participants what their own Gallery Walkthrough might look like at the end of the curriculum.

After attending the performance, ask participants to reflect on the exhibition or performance in their journals, focusing on the following points:

- What exhibit or performance did we explore?
- Which part was most intriguing to you and why?
- Which part did you connect with the least and why?
- How does the exhibit or performance impact you in terms of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making?
 - How did it challenge you?
 - How did it reassure you?
 - How did it empower you?
 - What commitment did it inspire within you?

- What questions do you still have about the exhibit or performance that you would ask the artist if you could?
- What is one step you can take to apply what you experienced today into your art when we return to our space?

Viewing an exhibit or performance through the eyes of an audience member gives the participants awareness that their artistic interpretations are not meant solely for them, but will be displayed and shared with the community as well. Participants should be aware that in preparing their explanation and selecting a page from their journal to display will help alleviate some of these questions for observers of their art during the Gallery Walkthrough.

Session 3.3 – Bringing in the Real World – Interacting with the Artistic Specialist (session 2)

DOUBLE SESSION

Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Interact with the Artistic Specialist as a part of the reflective artistic process, by investigating steps in creating their final project.
- Produce a second draft of their final project
- Justify the selection of the necessary components of their final project, including:
 - Text and translation
 - Medium
 - Integration of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making within their interpretation
- Identify connections between various art pieces and the texts that inspire them

Suggested Activities / Assessments:

Like Session 2.3 (page 45), the bulk of this session will come from the participants engaging in reflection on their creative process and crafting or drafting their artistic interpretation. Again, reflection time can be used in one of four different ways:

1. Individual meetings with the Artistic Specialist
Note: prior to this session, remind the Artistic Specialist of both the Safe Space Parameters and the Peer-Directed Feedback Protocol.
2. Peer-Directed Feedback
3. Individual sketching or preparation time – sketching, preparations, drafts, and other planning materials can be recorded in participants' journals or on loose sheets of paper kept in their portfolio folders.
4. Individual reflection time, using the reflective question sequence found in Appendix D (page 80), recorded in their journals.

This reflection time is a vital part of the creative process. It allows the participants to begin creating their art interpretations in their chosen mediums, begin to understand their individual approaches to the creative process, and spend quality time analyzing and interpreting their selected text. Remind the participants to seek feedback

not only from you the facilitator and the Artistic Specialist, but also from each other—their fellow participants are one of the most important resources in the room because they are all going through the same process together, discovering and learning with each other. Refer participants back to the Peer-Directed Feedback Protocol (Appendix C, page 79) as necessary.

Note: This process will continue in the beginning of the next unit, when ample time will be spent completing their art interpretations for the Gallery Walkthrough (see Sessions 4.1 and 4.1.5, pages 63-67).

Unit 4 – Breaking the Canonical Wall

*Adonai is my strength and might;
God is become my deliverance.
This is my God and I will enshrine God;
The God of my ancestors, and I will exalt God.
Exodus 15:2*

Relevant Enduring Understandings:

- In addition to providing *halakhic* and moral authority, Jewish texts (also) orient our life journeys.
- To wrestle with Jewish biblical texts is to wrestle with life.
- Interpretation reveals as much about the interpreter as it does about the text being interpreted.
- Interpretation stakes one's claim within Jewish tradition.
- Placing the brush on the canvas both locks and opens creative possibilities.
- The predominant themes of art are the most profound experiences of life—challenge, reassurance, empowerment, and commitment.

Relevant Essential Questions:

- How can classical Jewish texts guide us on our life journeys?
- How can classical Jewish texts add beauty to our lives?
- What is art?
- How do we respond to art?
- What makes a classical Jewish text meaningful to me?
- What is your text? What is your art? Why are they yours?

Unit Objectives:

By the end of the unit, participants will be able to...

- Apply the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making definitions to a variety of texts and pieces of art.
- Justify the personal meaning they find in a piece of text or art.
- Describe how their relationship with text, art, and/or Judaism has evolved as a result of the course.

Assessments:

By the end of the unit, participants will...

- Complete a final draft of their project
- Explain the significance of their chosen text and their project in a written description of their artistic interpretation

- Reflect on the process as a whole with the entire cohort, focusing on their development as an artist of Jewish life
- Identify at least one next step to take for continued engagement with Jewish ArTexts

Unit Overview:

In this unit, the participants really shine, given the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of their selected text and the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making, to share their creations with the community, and to take a good look at the personal growth that has occurred as a result of engaging with the creative process. As the culminating unit, all previous activities lead up to this, the synthesis of all the ideas presented in the Curriculum Guide.

The unit opens with the final session with the Artistic Specialist, followed by ample time for the participants to continue working on and finish the final draft of their artistic interpretation. The formally unstructured time imbues the participants with a sense of ownership and responsibility for their own project, their process, and the accomplishment of completing the assigned tasks. They are the reason for the Gallery Walkthrough occurring, and that should be just as important to them as it is to you and to the rest of the community. The completed artistic interpretations solidify the role of each participant as an interpreter of Jewish texts, staking their claim within the tradition of textual interpretation, and “breaking the canonical wall” set in place by years of interpretation historically dominated by white Ashkenazi heterosexual male Jews. Conscious of this history, we need not perpetuate it, and the voices of both Jewish men and women can contribute to the ever growing tree of Jewish meaning-making.

The participants then share their work with the greater community in a Gallery Walkthrough event. The Letter to the Facilitator on page 13 outlines many tasks that you, the facilitator, should accomplish to prepare for the Gallery Walkthrough, so use the unstructured work time of Session 4.1.5 (page 66) to make certain that you are prepared and all details are solidified. Just as the participants are responsible for their contributions to the Gallery Walkthrough, so too can you be.

The Gallery Walkthrough represents so much more than just a display of the pieces of art. Throughout the creative process, the participants have been relating to their own work, the work of other participants, and to two experts specifically, you the facilitator and the Artistic Specialist. The Gallery Walkthrough opens the process to other experts in the field that are invited to the event, such as clergy, the staff of the organization, other artists, etc. It allows the participants to experience connoisseurship

on a variety of levels, through the text, the art, and through the relationship to one or the other. Recall that,

Connoisseurship is the capacity to see and appreciate the complexity, subtlety, and importance of an object or event. ... Connoisseurship requires more than simply perceiving and recognizing qualities; it requires being able to perceive the subtleties that make a particular work of art unique. ... Connoisseurship requires an observer who is capable of perceiving subtle characteristics as well as recognizing how those characteristics are a part of a larger structure...¹⁸

The Curriculum Guide thus far has been giving participants the tools to become connoisseurs of ArText, their own art, based on text. The Gallery Walkthrough is where they get the opportunity to demonstrate that connoisseurship and their keen facility with the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making.

Lastly, after the Gallery Walkthrough, participants will reflect upon the experience of the Gallery Walkthrough and the course overall. They will synthesize and apply the information they have encountered throughout the course, reflect on the creative process, and create concrete takeaways or next steps for themselves. The participants reflect on the entire experience, from text selection through the process of creating the artistic interpretation, understanding the justifications they have made for their artistic choices, and identifying how their understanding of and relationship with art, text, and Judaism has changed throughout the course.

¹⁸ Pajak, pg. 123.

Session Sequence:

Session 4.1 – Flax or Tablecloth? – What are You Making?

DOUBLE SESSION

Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Interact with the Artistic Specialist as a part of the reflective artistic process, by investigating steps in creating their final project.
- Produce a final draft of their final project
- Justify the selection of the necessary components of their final project, including:
 - Text and translation
 - Medium
 - Integration of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making within their interpretation
- Articulate the aspects of the text that engage with the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making.
- Identify connections between various art pieces and the texts that inspire them

Suggested Activities / Assessments:

This final unit is meant to synthesize all of the exploration into the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making and the creative process that they have done thus far for all of the participants. To open this final unit, share the text on the page following this description with the participants all together. The story poses the question of what is more important—keeping elements as they were, whole and unadulterated, or transforming them into something new, imbuing them with one’s own creative process? The story is meant to be an allegory about the Written *Torah* versus the Oral *Torah*, highlighting the importance of interpretation, stressing what interpretation adds to our understanding of a text. This could also include the creative process that the participants have been engaging with thus far and will conclude with their completed artistic interpretations. Using this text as the set for the unit overall shows the purpose of the large amount of unstructured time the participants will be having over the next few sessions. This is their time to add to the corpus of Jewish interpretation, to include themselves in the chain of tradition, and their artistic interpretation is their way of expressing that.

Like Session 2.3 (page 45) and 3.3 (page 57), this rest of this session is meant for reflection on the participants' creative process and crafting their artistic interpretation. Again, reflection time can be used in one of four different ways:

1. Individual meetings with the Artistic Specialist

Note: prior to this session, remind the Artistic Specialist of both the Safe Space Parameters and the Peer-Directed Feedback Protocol.

2. Peer-Directed Feedback

3. Individual sketching or preparation time – sketching, preparations, drafts, and other planning materials can be recorded in participants' journals or on loose sheets of paper kept in their portfolio folders.

4. Individual reflection time, using the reflective question sequence found in Appendix D (page 80), recorded in their journals.

This reflection time is a vital part of the creative process. It allows the participants to begin creating their art interpretations in their chosen mediums, begin to understand their individual approaches to the creative process, and spend quality time analyzing and interpreting their selected text. Remind the participants to seek feedback not only from you the facilitator and the Artistic Specialist, but also from each other—their fellow participants are one of the most important resources in the room because they are all going through the same process together, discovering and learning with each other. Refer participants back to the Peer-Directed Feedback Protocol (Appendix C, page 79) as necessary.

Session 4.1

Flax or Tablecloth? – What are You Making?

Text Study¹⁹

ומה בין מקרא למשנה אלא משלו משל למה"ד למלך ב"ו שהיה לו שני עבדים והיה אוהבן
אהבה גדולה ונתן לזה קב חטין ולזה קב חטין ולכ"א מהן נתן ג"כ אגודה של פשתן הפקח
שבהן נטל את הפשתן וארג מפה יפה ונטל את החטין ועשאן סולת ובררה וטחנה ולשה ואפאה
וסדרה על השלחן ופרס עליה מפה יפה והניחו עד שבא המלך

והטפש שבהן לא עשה כלום. לימים בא המלך לתוך ביתו ואמר להם לשני עבדיו בני הביאו לי
מה שנתתי לכם אחד מהן הוציא את הפת של סולת על השולחן ומפה היפה פרוסה עליו ואחד
מהן הוציא את החטין בקופה ואגודה של פשתן עליהם אוי לה לאותה בושה ואוי לה לאותה
חרפה איזה מהן חביב יותר הוי אומר זה שהוציא פת על השלחן ומפה יפה פרוסה עליו. ...

כשנתן הקב"ה את התורה לישראל לא נתנה להם אלא כחטין להוציא מהן סולת וכפשתן
לארוג מהן בגד בכלל...

What is the difference between the Written and the Oral Law? To what can it be compared? To a king of flesh and blood who had two servants and loved them both with a perfect love. He gave each of them a measure of wheat and each a bundle of flax. What did the wise servant do? He took the flax and spun a cloth. He took the wheat and made flour. He cleaned the flour and ground, kneaded and baked it, and set it on top of the table. Then he spread the cloth over it and left it until the king would come.

The foolish servant, however, did nothing at all. After some time, the king returned from a journey and came into his house. He said to his servants: my sons bring me what I gave you. One servant showed the wheat still in the box with the bundle of flax upon it. Alas for his shame, alas for his disgrace!

When the Holy One, blessed be God, gave the *Torah* to Israel, God gave it only in the form of wheat—for us to make flour from it, and flax—to make a garment from it.

- SEDER ELIYAHU ZUTA, Chapter 2

¹⁹ This translation of the text is found in Back to the Sources: Reading the Classic Jewish Texts by Barry W. Holtz (New York: Summit, 1984), on page 28.

Session 4.1.5 – What is Your ArText? – Developing the Artistic Interpretations

Expressive Outcomes:

By the end of the session, participants will have the opportunity to...

- React to the continued experience of creating their artistic interpretations based on their selected texts.

Note: reflection on this experience could occur individually during this time as well, and will also occur in Session 4.3 (page 71).

Suggested Activities / Assessments:

These additional curricular hours (approximately 5 total) are meant to be utilized as open studio time for the participants to continue crafting their artistic interpretations. This time could be set aside as regular sessions meetings, as the other sessions have been, or could be more freeform than that, depending on the dedication of the participants and the openness of your organization (if you are working in a synagogue that is open in the evening for other events or programs, perhaps the participants could utilize that time as well).

Utilizing the two drafts they created over the course of the curriculum, their reflections in their journal, the feedback they have received in the previous sessions, and all of their notes, participants will be completing the final version of their artistic interpretation. Remind the participants that their artistic interpretation needs to engage with all Four Lenses of Meaning-Making. A full list of criteria for the Authentic Assessment and display for the Gallery Walkthrough follows on the next page.

This unstructured time could also include any of the reflective elements listed in sessions 2.3 (page 45), 3.3 (page 57), or 4.1 (page 63). However, the Artistic Specialist will not be around during these times, unless they agree to that when you discuss the course with them at the beginning of the year.

Session 4.1.5 – What is Your ArText? – Developing the Artistic Interpretations

Authentic Assessment Criteria

Guiding Questions:

- ✚ What is your (current) signature Jewish biblical text?
- ✚ What is your art form?
- ✚ Why is it yours?

Over the course of this curriculum, participants have engaged in the process of creating an artistic interpretation of a Jewish biblical text. In the course of creating the artistic interpretation and preparing to present it in the Gallery Walkthrough, participants need to consider the following points:

- ✚ Which Jewish biblical text did you choose?
At the beginning of the creative process, why did you choose it? How was it meaningful to you?
Did you consider it beautiful? Why or why not?
- ✚ Your artistic interpretation needs to engage with the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making we have discussed and defined during this course. How does your artistic interpretation engage with each of the Four Lenses?
 - ✚ How is it challenging?
 - ✚ How is it reassuring?
 - ✚ How is it empowering?
 - ✚ How does it create commitment?

Note: This is about your artistic interpretation, not about the text itself!

- ✚ In the process of creating your artistic interpretation, has the meaningfulness of your selected text changed for you? How?
- ✚ What was the best piece of advice you received from the Artistic Specialist?
What about from your fellow artists?
What was the best piece of advice you received from me, the facilitator?
- ✚ Which aspect of a previous draft was most difficult for you to let go of in creating your final piece?
- ✚ What was your biggest breakthrough or success in creating your piece?
- ✚ How does this piece of art represent you as an artist and you as a Jew in addition to representing your selected text?

Using the answers to these questions, participants should craft a description of their artistic interpretation to be displayed with their piece. This description should also include:

- ✚ Title of the piece
- ✚ Medium of the piece
- ✚ Text (in translation, with credit given to the translator)

Alongside the piece of art and the description, participants should choose one page from their journal, which has been used throughout the creative process, to display as well.

Session 4.2 – Gallery Walkthrough

Memorable Moment!

Expressive Outcomes:

By the end of the session, participants will have the opportunity to...

- React to the experience of presenting their artistic interpretations in a Gallery Walkthrough.
- React to the experience of having to explain and defend their relationship to their selected text.

Note: reflection on this experience will occur in the following session, 4.3 (page 71).

Suggested Activities:

The Gallery Walkthrough represents the opportunity to share with the community the process and progress that the participants have been experiencing throughout the course. It brings a transparency to the course by sharing the end results along with opening a window onto the process in which the participants engaged. It highlights professionalism and connoisseurship of the craft of making art by including knowledgeable professionals in the audience, such as local clergy members or other teachers, who are potentially knowledgeable on the text side, and the Artistic Specialist and other artists, who understand the creative process side. Lastly, it is an important part of the process for the participants not only to be able to share and explain their pieces, but to celebrate the achievements they have accomplished during the time of the curriculum.

Ensure that well in advance of the event, you have to put the pieces of the event together, as outlined in the Letter to the Facilitator (page 13). Create and distribute invitations to the families, the rest of the school, the staff of the organization, the Artistic Specialists and other professionals. Make and submit an appropriate room set up. Acquire decorations, snacks, and drinks. Make sure the event has a special feel to it.

Prior to the event, gather the participants together to install the pieces as necessary and rehearse the order of the event. If there are both performance or cinematic pieces that need to be experienced along with visual or literary pieces, ensure that there is ample time for both structured and unstructured time. Ensure also that there is time for each participant to share a quick explanation of their artistic

interpretations with each other and that all participants see all of the pieces at this time, as they may not have time during the Gallery Walkthrough event itself.

At the time of the Gallery Walkthrough, open the event by thanking everyone for coming, explaining the course and the reason for the Gallery Walkthrough to the attendees, and thanking (among others) the participants and the Artistic Specialist for their time and contributions.

During the opening remarks, you can use the quote by Martin Buber on the following page to set the tone for the Gallery Walkthrough, read either by you or by the group of participants, either in unison or divided up into paragraphs for individuals. Share with attendees some of what the participants have been experiencing throughout the creation of their artistic interpretations during the course, or have participants offer their own words, potentially even from their own journal, about what this process has been like for them.

Allow ample time for the attendees to experience all of the art pieces, to discuss with the participants about their pieces and their process, and celebrate the accomplishments of the participants. Be sure to go around during the event and talk to parents, staff members, artists, and other attendees to get their perspective on the pieces and how they relate to the participants and their artistic interpretations. Document the event as it unfolds with pictures and quotes from attendees. You can use these in the last session. This is the true test of the artistic interpretation—how another person views and understands the art that the artist has now put out into the world. Encourage attendees to use the sentence stems found in the Peer-Directed Feedback Protocol ([Appendix C](#), page 79, step 4) when offering critique to ensure continuity and that the feedback can be heard and internalized by the participants.

At the end of the event, take your own time to find something you appreciate about each piece of art and write down your thoughts and comments about them. A good starting point for these comments is those same sentence stems found in step 4 of [Appendix C](#) (page 79). As a bookend to the opening unit, where participants offered appreciation to each other on the pieces of art they shared, you could write out thank you cards to the participants about their pieces of art that you can give them at the conclusion of the next session or mail to them after the course concludes.

Session 4.2 – Gallery Walkthrough

Quotation for Opening Remarks²⁰

This is the eternal origin of art that a human being confronts a form that wants to become a work through him. Not a figment of his soul but something appears to the soul and demands the soul's creative power. What is required is a deed that a man does with his whole being; if he commits it and speaks with his being the basic word to the form that appears, then the creative power is released and work comes into being.

The deed involves a sacrifice and a risk. The sacrifice: infinite possibility is surrendered on the altar of the form; all that but a moment to go floated playfully through one's perspective has to be exterminated; none of it made penetrate into the work; the exclusiveness of such a confrontation demand status. The risk: the basic word can only be spoken with one's whole being; whoever commits himself may not hold back part of himself; and the work does not permit me, as a tree or a man might, to seek relaxation in the It-world; it is imperious: if I do not serve it properly; it breaks, or it breaks me.

The form that confronts me I cannot experience nor describe; I can only actualize it. And yet I see it, radiant in the splendor of the confrontation, far more clearly than all clarity of the experienced world. Not as a thing among the "internal" things, not as a figment of the "imagination," but as what is present. ...

Such work is creation, inventing is finding. Forming is discovery. As I actualize, I uncovered. I leave the form a crossed—into the world of It. The created work is a thing among thing and can be experienced and described as an aggregate of qualities. But the receptive beholder may be bodily confronted now and again.

– Martin Buber

²⁰ This text is found in I and Thou (Trans. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970. Print.), on page 60-61.

Session 4.3 – Stake Your Claim – The Effects of Engaging with ArTexts

DOUBLE SESSION

Expressive Outcomes:

By the end of the session, participants will have the opportunity to...

- Reflect on the experience of presenting their artistic interpretations in a Gallery Walkthrough.
- Reflect on the experience of having to explain and defend their relationship to their selected text.
- Reflect on the experience of creating their artistic interpretations over the course of the curriculum

Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will be able to...

- Apply the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making definitions to the array of Jewish biblical texts the participants have been exploring in their artistic interpretations.
- Identify a next step or next text with which to engage.
- Narrate the trajectory of their relationship with text, art, and Judaism in the course.

Suggested Activities / Assessments:

Reconvene after the Gallery Walkthrough with the participants for the final session of the course. This session concentrates on synthesizing and applying the information the participants have encountered throughout the course, reflecting on the creative process, and creating concrete takeaways or next steps for the participants. The participants should be reflecting on the experience of engaging with a particular text over time, the process of creating the artistic interpretation, having to justify and explain their artistic choices to others, and how their understanding of and relationship with art, text, and Judaism has changed throughout the course.

Distribute their journals back to the participants and ask them to reflect upon the experience of the Gallery Walkthrough that they encountered the last time you met.

Possible questions to reflect on can include, but are not limited to:

- What was the most inspiring part of creating your artistic interpretation? The most difficult?
- What was the best reaction or comment you received about your artistic interpretation during the Gallery Walkthrough?

- Which of the other pieces of art were you most intrigued by and why? Which of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making did you identify in it most prominently? How?
- How did your understanding of your text evolve as you engaged in the creative process?
- If you could have done something differently in your creative process, what would it be and why?
- If you could pick another text to explore artistically next, what would it be?
- How do you relate to art differently after this process? What about text? How has your relationship with Judaism changed?

Another way to reflect with the participants about the process is to do a four corners activity. Label the four corners of your room with the following phrases:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| • <i>Strongly Agree</i> | • <i>Disagree</i> |
| • <i>Agree</i> | • <i>Strongly Disagree</i> |

Offer statements about the creative process, the end result artistic interpretation, the participants' relationship with their selected text and art, and how the participants feel at the culmination of the course. After each statement, ask participants to move towards the phrase that best identifies how they relate to that statement. Ask the participants to share why they either agree or disagree with the statement and have them give reasons to back up their claims. Potential statements could include, but are not limited to:

- I found the process of creating my artistic interpretation difficult.
- I found the process of creating my artistic interpretation inspiring.
- I am excited to create another artistic interpretation.
- I feel proud of the work I created for the Gallery Walkthrough.
- Engaging in the creative process gave me a greater appreciation for my text.
- Viewing the text through the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making gave me a greater appreciation for my text.
- I have a different relationship with art after experiencing this process.
- I have a different relationship with text after experiencing this process.
- I relate to Judaism differently after experiencing this process OR My Jewish identity has changed because of this process. (*be sure this is the last statement*)

This activity can also be done as a spectrum rather than 4 corners. Label one side of the room “Strongly Agree” and the other “Strong Disagree” and ask participants to place themselves on the line where they fit between the two extremes. The benefit of the 4 corners version is that there is no choice to remain neutral—the participants must choose one of the options. For the activity to work best, begin with questions that might be easier for the participants to discuss and move into more difficult ones.

After the last statement about the change in Jewish identity, ask participants to sit down where they are, remaining in their agree/disagree locations, and distribute their journals or post-it notes and pens. Participants can write down how exactly they perceive a change in their Jewish identity or relationship with Judaism. The change can be marked in stages (here's where I was, here's what happened, here's where I am now) or explain how they will relate to *ArText* differently in the future, now that they are equipped with the tools of the *Four Lenses of Meaning-Making* (using the terms underlined above are changes in and of themselves that might inform this exercise). Change may be a large epiphany or might have occurred in small steps. The hope is to note at least one place where the participants now feel differently now that the course has reached its conclusion.

Comparing this last journal entry with the first entry from Session 1.2 (Activity 3, page 29) could also be important to gauge the evolution that has occurred, especially if a participant is stuck trying to find a concrete example of the progress. Participants can go back to the first pages of the journal and after perusing that entry, flip to the last entry before this session, from session 4.1 (page 63) or from the open studio independent work time prior to the Gallery Walkthrough. Participants can note where they see the biggest change in utilizing the journal or how they now relate to ArTexts (and therefore to one aspect of Judaism) differently.

After an appropriate amount of time for reflection, if participants are comfortable sharing, ask those who wish to offer some insights to the group about how this course has changed them. Other participants should be encouraged while others are sharing to both respectfully listen and take in the thoughts and ideas of others, as their Safe Space Parameters dictate, but also to make notes for themselves if something another participant says resonates with them. This final journal entry serves to mark both the breadth of experience the participants have encountered over the course of the curriculum and also be a reminder of where they are starting as the process continues (see penultimate paragraph, about a final reflection and next steps, on the next page).

After taking some time to reflect on the Gallery Walkthrough and on the creative process, apply the definitions that were created by the group to more texts. Reconstruct the Text Library from Session 1.2 (page 26) for the participants. For this Text Library activity, be sure to include all texts used in Session 1.2 and add in any additional texts

the participants chose for their artistic interpretations. After giving them time to peruse the texts again, some of which they might be very familiar with at this point, ask the participants to select texts from the library based on the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making and the definitions they created of them in sessions 2.2 (page 43) and 3.2 (page 53):

- Which one is the most challenging to them?
- Which one is the most reassuring to them?
- Which one empowers them the most?
- Which one instills the greatest sense of commitment in them?

Instruct the participants that for this activity, they should not be picking the text that they have been working closely with for their artistic interpretation during the course.

The point is to take the knowledge they have acquired in the process and apply the definitions they have created to other texts. The last time they encountered this activity, they only viewed these texts through pure aesthetic, whether it was beautiful or not. Now, they have the ability to describe the texts more thoroughly in terms of what it might represent or how they relate to it on a deeper level, more so than a surface “I like it.” or “I don’t like it.” Again, like with the first Text Library activity, ask a few participants each round to share why they chose the text that they did and give a couple of reasons to support their choice.

After their encounter with the Text Library, have participants return to their own artistic interpretations. What will be done with these pieces now that they are complete? How will the participants utilize them or incorporate them into their lives as Jewish adults? Ask participants to consider the possibilities for displaying their artistic interpretations in their homes or rooms or how they might share them with a different audience. This could be verbally or written in their journal or on a post-it note.

To close the course with the participants, have them share what they are most excited for in continuing to engage with Jewish texts in the future and what other ways they could creatively engage with and interpret them. Take notes if you are having a discussion or if participants are writing, ask them to write it down twice—once in their journal for them and again on a post-it note or separate sheet of paper for you (you could also make photocopies of those journal pages instead, if that is possible). Hold on to these notes and any written reflections you collect for a few weeks (see below).

Send the participants home with their art pieces, their journals, and the note of appreciation you wrote at the Gallery Walkthrough. A few weeks later, follow up with the participants by sending them a memento from the Gallery Walkthrough, such as a photo, a quotation, or a memory book you create from the photos and quotations and descriptions of the pieces of art. Include the post-it note or copies of their journal pages they wrote out during your last session together to remind them of their next step(s) when the formal course ended. A course evaluation, whether a paper copy or a link to one online, could be a useful thing to include at this point as well—participants have had ample time to consider the impact of the course on them at this point, even if the finer points of the activities may have been forgotten since their last session. Ask them to share with you how their piece is being displayed or used in their home now. Keep copies of photos and quotations from the Gallery Walkthrough, the memory book, and any responses you receive back from the participants as examples for future classes.

Appendix A – Exodus 15 (Shirat HaYam) Art Pieces

- 🎨 Rae Antonoff micrography pieces
 (Antonoff, 2014)
 “*Shemot/Exodus*”
 (<http://www.raeandesigns.com/#!/product/prd1/2841567081/shemot-exodus%3A-print>)
 “*Parashat Beshalach*”
 (<http://www.raeandesigns.com/#!/product/prd1/4436556291/parashat-beshalach%3A-print>)
 “*Miriam at the Sea*”
 (<http://www.raeandesigns.com/#!/product/prd1/1624489215/miriam-at-the-sea%3A-print>)
- 🎨 Menachem Boas micrography piece “Splitting of the Sea”
 (<http://yourarts.com/Boas%20Page/pages/Splitting-of-the-Sea.htm>)
 (“Menachem Boas,” n.d.)
- 🎨 Michele Goren piece “Parting the Sea”
 (<http://yourarts.com/Goren%20Page/pages/GP-PARTINGL.htm>)
 (“Michele Goren,” n.d.)
- 🎨 Additional visual art piece, located on the next page
- 🎨 Visual Midrash article “The Splitting of the Red Sea”
 (<http://www.talivirtualmidrash.org.il/ArticleEng.aspx?art=9>)
 (Virtual Midrash, n.d.)
- 🎨 *Vatikach Miryam*
 Singer: Lahakat Kolot {2012}; choreographer: Sagi Azran {2014}
 (“Vatikach Miryam,” 2016; Rokdim LA 2014)
- 🎨 Any of the plethora of musical compositions for *Mi Chamocha*.
The Complete Shireinu (2001) is a good place to start, since it has number of selections [pgs. 272-274], but there are many more compositions out there.
- 🎨 Debbie Friedman’s Miriam’s Song
 (*The Complete Shireinu* 150; Long and Sawyer 157-158)
- 🎨 Franz Schubert’s “Mirjams Siegesgesang (Miriam's Song of Triumph), Op. 136”
 (Long and Sawyer 158)
- 🎨 George Frideric Handel’s oratorio “Israel in Egypt” [select 5-7 min excerpt]
 (Long and Sawyer 113-114)
- 🎨 “The Ten Commandments” (1956) [select 5-7 min. excerpt]
- 🎨 “The Prince of Egypt” (1998) [select 5-7 min. excerpt]
- 🎨 “Exodus: Gods and Kings” (2014) [select 5-7 min. excerpt]
- 🎨 “Moses” miniseries (1996) [select 5-7 min. excerpt]
- 🎨 “Voices” section for *parasha B’shalach* in *The Torah: A Women’s Commentary* (2008) [pgs. 404-406]

Additional Visual Art Piece:

This piece is located at B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation in Albany, NY
Title and artist unknown (no plaque accompanies the piece)
Documented April 25, 2016



Appendix B – Text Resource Bank

While writing this curriculum, I surveyed five of professors from HUC-JIR and one from Brandeis University and asked them what the five most beautiful texts were to them and why. I intentionally left the question vague and open-ended to allow for the most variety of answers possible. Of the answers I received, only one-fifth of them fell outside of the *TaNaKh*. Listed here are the *TaNaKh* texts as a suggested Text Resource Bank for working with throughout the Curriculum Guide. Some I point to in the Guide as specific suggestions for particular sessions. Feel free within the Guide to include those texts you find challenging and reassuring, that create a feeling of empowerment or commitment, in addition to the ones listed below.

TORAH:

Genesis

Chapter 1 – Creation
Chapters 37-50 - Joseph

Exodus

Chapter 15 - *Shirat HaYam*

NEVI'IM (PROPHETS):

Kings

I K 18:20-39

Isaiah

54:1-11
57:14-58:14

Jeremiah

31:15-20

Hosea

2:16-25

Amos

5:18-24

Micah

6:6-8

KETUVIM (WRITINGS):

Psalms

All
Chapter 1
Chapter 23
Chapter 104
Chapter 114

Proverbs

Chapter 7

Song of Songs

All
2:8-14
5:2-8

Lamentations

All

Appendix C – Peer-Directed Feedback Protocol²¹

As part of the creative process, you will be seeking feedback from the Artistic Specialist and from me. However, there is another extremely valuable tool to help guide you—your peers! Your fellow artists are a wonderful sounding board for you as you go about this creative process, as they are potentially are wondering and concerned about many of the same things you are.

At least three times over the course of this program, you will have the opportunity to seek feedback from the Artistic Specialist, myself, and your fellow artists on your artistic interpretation as it progresses. In order to get the best results from your time together, and with respect to our Safe Space Parameters, here are some steps for you to follow when consulting with one another.

The goal of these consultations is twofold: *first*, to receive feedback while you are creating your artistic interpretations in order to, *second*, produce a more thoughtful and meaningful piece of art. In order for feedback to be most helpful, it should be delivered in ways that are helpful and easy to hear by the creator. Feedback should be:

- delivered in a supportive and caring manner
- non-judgmental
- focused on the art, not on the artist

Steps for Peer-Directed Feedback:

1. The creator gives context for the piece. What is the text you have selected to work with for your piece? (Be sure to distribute a copy of the text!) Why? What medium are you using? How do you plan on presenting the piece? {1 min.}
2. The creator explains the mindset behind the piece and where they are in the process of creating it. {1 min.}
3. Fellow artists ask clarifying questions about the content of the selected text and/or where the creator is in the process and how they got to their current point in their work. Creator responds. {3 mins.}
4. Fellow artists offer feedback using I-statements, by: {10 mins.}
 - a. expressing appreciations (“I appreciate...”)
 - b. restating/reflecting back what they understand of the creator’s point of view and intention (“As I understand it, ...”)
 - c. pointing out the extent to which the piece relates to the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making (“I notice that...”)
 - d. expressing possibilities for the creator to consider (“I wonder...”)
5. Creator shares 1-2 next steps or “takeaways” based on feedback given {2 mins}

Remember this process is meant to enhance your artistic interpretations. We all want each other to succeed with creating the best version of each individual piece of art!

²¹ This protocol is modeled after lessons taught by Rabbi Tali Zerkowicz, Ph.D. in the course “EDU 630 – Curriculum Design” during the Fall 2015 semester when offering feedback on the curriculum guide creation process.

Appendix D – Reflective Question Sequence

Personal reflection and introspection are a huge component of the creative process. No one knows better than you what your process is and how you best function. As part of creating your artistic interpretation, we encourage you to spend time getting feedback from the Artistic Specialist, myself, your fellow artists, and also from yourself by turning these same questions back to you.

Use the following questions as prompts for reflection in your journal. Answer them in any form that you find useful—writing, bullet points, drawing, etc. They are meant to help you clarify the process of creating your piece and to help frame it using all the “tools” we have learned about together.

Questions to consider:

1. Where are you in the process?
How are you progressing through your artistic interpretation at this point?
2. What has been your biggest success in creating your artistic interpretation so far?
Did you share it with someone? How did they react?
What kind of feelings or thoughts did this create in you? How does this motivate you to continue reaching small or big milestones in this process?
3. What problems have you encountered so far in your creative process that you could use some assistance in solving?
Have you inquired about this assistance yet? Have people been receptive to your needs?
Can you reframe your problem as a possible opportunity for growth?
4. Of the Four Lenses of Meaning-Making, which are you having the easiest time applying to your text? Which one creates the most questions for you? How do you plan on expressing these thoughts in your artistic interpretation?
5. Go back in your current journal entry, reread or look at your entry, and mark the most important part of it for easy reference later on. This could be a paragraph, a sentence, one word, a particular drawing, etc.
6. Finish your journal entry by writing down one word that describes how you feel right now about your project and the creative process.

Keep in mind: during the Gallery Walkthrough, your artistic interpretation will be displayed with a description of the piece as well as one page of your journal. The important pieces you marked for #5 are good places to start when considering these additional elements.

Appendix E – Tzedakah Tatzil Mi'mavet

During the creation of this Guide, one of the art installations at HUC-JIR in Los Angeles was “Tzedakah Tatzil Mi'mavet [Tzedakah Saves From Death] Proverbs 10:2,” which included pieces by a variety of artists, all of whom used Jewish texts for inspiration in creating their art works. It was a serendipitous encounter with the idea of ArText that I was trying to capture in the Authentic Assessment.

In order to include this installation in this curriculum guide, I took pictures of the pieces of art on the walls. These photos are found on the following pages, after the description of the installation.

Note that many of the pieces included in the installation are inspired from texts outside of the *TaNakh*, as evidenced by the inspiration text pages that began the exhibit and the description of the installation itself. The whole exhibit is a great introduction to the idea of ArText. To focus specifically on the *TaNakh*, I would point to the photos of the pieces by Vicki Reikes Fox, beginning on page 94.

Tzedakah Tatzil Mi'mavet
[Tzedakah Saves From Death]
Proverbs 10:2

February 1, 2015 – December 31, 2019

Artists:

Rhea Carmi

Carol Es

Vicki Reikes Fox

Susan Gesundheit

Mary Kay Stam

Hillel Smith

Ruth Weisberg

Karen Frimkess Wolff

This exhibition was curated by Anne Hromadka and organized by the HUC-JIR Enhancement Committee.

Tzedakah Tatzil Mi'mavet [Tzedakah Saves from Death], is part of HUC-JIR, LA's effort to engage artists in a multitude of ways, including turning all hallways and main classrooms into unified exhibition space. The works on display in these areas are all long-term loans, allowing the College to integrate the arts as a form of interdisciplinary learning throughout the institution. Previously on display were sixty-five works from the Berman/Bloch collection, showcasing modern and contemporary Israeli art.

This exhibition uses Proverbs 10:2 as a uniquely Jewish lens through which to explore the importance of justice, healing, and giving. The Biblical and Talmudic teaching that "tzedakah saves from death" connects to several core values of the campus and to parts of the curriculum across several programs, including the rabbinical, non-profit management, and education schools. While preparing for this exhibition, artists were given classical sources referencing the theme of tzedakah and were invited to respond to them in multiple ways. The texts they studied (adapted from learning materials developed by Amplified) are presented at the start of the show. They offer the theoretical and scriptural framework for this exhibition.

I first encountered the teaching "tzedakah saves from death" in the classrooms of HUC-JIR, LA in a Jewish non-profit management class, which focused on fundraising and philanthropy. In addition to the Biblical source, we explored the way it was developed in Talmudic and midrashic writings. The most well known of these texts, told in the Talmud (Shabbat 156 b), involves a the [sic] daughter of Rabbi Akiva, who on the eve of her wedding thwarts death's hand through the simple gesture of listening and responding to the needs of those less fortunate.

In a style reminiscent of classic European fairytales, the story begins when a young woman overhears a group of fortunetellers in the village market place, one of which prophesies her death on her wedding day. As a pious Jew, she placed no stock in the predictions of star-gazers, yet their words will ultimately come back to haunt her.

On the night before her wedding, the home was a bustle with activity. When the young bride retired for the night, she removed a long, silver pin from her hair. She carefully sticks the pin deep into the wooden slats of the wall so she could retrieve it the following morning. When she arose the next day and pulled the hairpin loose from the wall, to her horror she discovered a poisonous snake dangling from its end. She screamed from the shock of seeing the creature and at the realization of her narrow escape from death. Her father rushed to her chamber door, as she recalled for him the words of the fortuneteller and her miraculous salvation.

Akiva had often taught that the observance of mitzvot can prevent misfortune; however, he knew his daughter to be unfailingly kind and generous. What had she particularly done in the previous day that had caused her life to be spared? The daughter then recounted an incident from the last evening, in which she noticed a stranger who looked tired and hungry. Though all the other members of the household were too busy with wedding preparations to respond, Akiva's daughter took notice of him and without hesitation provided him with food, even offering her portion of the upcoming feast to the beggar.

Upon hearing of his daughter's actions, Akiva carefully removed the snake from the pin and quoted to his beloved daughter: "Tzedakah saves from death." Together they conclude it was her act of simple generosity that saved her life. While most brides or grooms would have been too absorbed in their own preparations to notice a stranger among them, Akiva's daughter made space for the stranger to celebrate alongside her as an equal.

In a variant of this story, Akiva's daughter saves herself as she pins her wedding veil to her hair. Grotesquely, the snake had crawled up the back of her gown and her pin pierces it through the eye. In this version, the bride had offered coins to a poor man who had arrived at her doorstep on eve of the wedding.

There is another related teaching found in the Midrash Tanhuma, which also focuses on a couple and a beggar on the eve of the wedding. In this story, the bride is a cursed woman, who has been betrothed three times and each time become a widow on her wedding night—trading in her white gown for a black veil. Hence, she is referred to in Aramaic as the *katlanit* (killer). This recurrent character in rabbinic literature may have been loosely based on the Hellenist folklore of Tobit.*

In this story, when a fourth suitor comes for her, both she and her father try to dissuade him. Yet, he persists and they decide to marry. During their ceremony Elijah appears offering the following advice to the groom: I have come to help you in your hour of need. Remember that only tzedakah will deliver you from death.

During the wedding feast a beggar appears. This time, the groom offers the stranger both dignity and sustenance. He calls out, "Come, my good friend, you are welcome at my marriage feast. You shall sit beside me, for all are welcomed." Then he instructed the servants to go to the door and let all who are hungry have a place at the banquet. When the Angel of Death arrives later to claim the soul of the new groom, his wife intervenes and demands an audience with the Heavenly Court. She says:

"Does it not say that any man that has betrothed a wife and has not taken her let him go and return to his house lest he die in battle and another man return to his house and take her? It is further stated that when a man has taken a bride he shall not be taken into the army, nor shall he be required for any business, he shall be free in his home for one year and there he shall gladden his wife whom he had married? (Deut. 24:5) If the Holy One, Blessed be He is true and His Torah is true, and you still take the soul of my husband, then you will be turning Torah into Falsehood."

The Heavenly Courts assents and the decree of death is lifted, both because of the wife's words and in part to her husband's actions. In this version of the story, both words and deeds save from death.

This recurrent motif in rabbinic literature of celebrations nearly derailed by calamity, except by a virtue of an act of tzedakah creates an interesting tension. In these stories, as in elsewhere in the Talmud, good actions literally save lives. Yet, as moderns who know well that life does not always work that way, we must wrestle with the meaning of these stories. Rabbi Harold Kushner, the celebrated author of *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* records a story of a young boy and his father leaving the

hospital, where his mother is gravely ill. As they walk, they encounter a man asking for food and the father offers a few coins. The young boy exclaims with great relief that he knows his mother will recover. The father asks what makes him sure, and the child replies by quoting “tzedakah tatzil me’mavet!” The father sadly places his hand on his son and explains that the act of giving will not heal his mother; rather, it will save the poor man-- at least for this evening. Thus, Kushner reinterprets the concept—the merit of tzedakah is not that it saves us now, but rather that it saves the recipient of our generosity.

The artists gathered in this exhibition winding through our hallways and classrooms all are inspired by these complex and beautiful ideas. Ruth Weisberg’s *Entrance* (1994) monotype within this exhibition becomes re-cast as a depiction of Akiva’s daughter opening her door to the poor and all those Jews who have opened themselves to brokenness in the world. She stands at the door ready to take action. On the other side, we encounter the celebratory nature of the wedding stories, represented in the white canvas and graphite drawings of Karen Frimkess Wolff. Carol Es often deals with physical and psychological pain in her work. The works gathered here deal directly with her Jewish heritage and suggest that art is a source of healing, as in *Inherited Shock* (2009), mixed media on canvas. Vicki Reikes Fox, in her matriarchal handbag series explores the baggage that our ancestors, and by extension modern women, carry. Emerging artist Hillel Smith reminds us of the value of clearly delineated words of Torah in his spectacular Hebrew typography. The large-scale abstract work of Rhea Carmi, Mary Kay Stam, and the colorful mono-prints of Susan Gesundheit all explore the motif of a dark, shattered world that needs to be reassembled. These works reminds us that our actions, large and small, can have a lasting effect.

Anne Hromadka
Exhibition Curator

* *Brides Who Challenge Death: A Jewish Folktale Motif Retold in Different Cultural Context*, Kristen Lindbeck, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida, vol 10, No 2 (2013)

Exhibit Inspiration Text Pages

Selected Jewish Texts on Giving

AMPLIFIER

The Jewish Giving Center

1

ATTITUDES TOWARD GIVING

The very word that Jews use for giving - *tzedakah* - encapsulates Jewish attitudes on the topic. Unlike "charity" and "philanthropy," which derive from Latin words meaning "love," *tzedakah* means righteousness, fairness, justice. The poor have a right to *tzedakah* and the donor has an obligation to give it - giving is an act to create a more perfect and just world, not a favor or a voluntary act of kindness or benevolence. Every person is created in the image of God, and thus must be treated with equality and empathy.

As you read these texts, ask yourself:

1 What value is the text describing? Do you agree with the text? Why or why not?

2 What conditions might the text's author have been responding to when it was written, and how might contemporary conditions change its meaning and relevance?

3 How does the text change your understanding of the issues you are trying to address with your giving?

4 Do you want to incorporate this value into your daily life and/or into your giving circle—and if so, what would that look like? What might stand in your way? How might the text affect your circle's funding areas—or process—this year?

Charity is equal in importance to all the other commandments combined.

BABYLONIAN TALMUD, BABA BATRA 34

There are eight levels in charity,
each level surpassing the other.

8. The highest level beyond which there is none is a person who supports a Jew who has fallen into poverty [by] giving him a present or a loan, entering into partnership with him, or finding him work so that his hand will be fortified so that he will not have to ask others [for alms]
7. A lower level than this is one who gives charity to the poor without knowing to whom he gave and without the poor person knowing from whom he received
6. A lower level than that is an instance when the giver knows to whom he is giving, but the poor person does not know from whom he has received
5. A lower level than that is an instance when the poor person knows from whom he took, but the donor does not know to whom he gave
4. A lower level than that is giving [the poor person] in his hand before he asks
3. A lower level than that is giving him after he asks.
2. A lower level than this is giving him less than what is appropriate, but with a pleasant countenance.
1. A lower level than that is giving him with sadness.

MAIMONIDES, MISHNEH TORAH, LAWS ON GIVING TO THE POOR,
10:7-14

> We must be especially careful to observe the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah*, more so than any other positive *mitzvah*, for *tzedakah* is a sign of the righteous [*tzadik*] lineage of Abraham, our father, as it is said (in Genesis 18:19), "For I have singled him out, that he may instruct his children and his posterity [to keep the way of the Lord] by doing what is just and right." The throne of Israel is established and the religion of truth stands only on *tzedakah*, as it is said (in Isaiah 54:14) "You shall be established through righteousness [*tzedek*]. And Israel will only be redeemed through *tzedakah*, as it is said (in Isaiah 1:27) "Zion shall be saved in the judgment; her repentant ones, in the retribution [*tzedakah*]."

MAIMONIDES, MISHNEH
TORAH, LAWS OF GIFTS
TO THE POOR, 10:1

6 THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING

Tzedakah was considered one of the most important positive commandments (i.e. something one is commanded to do, as opposed not to do). The Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur liturgy tells us that, even if one has sinned and been sentenced to die, *tzedakah* is one of the three acts - along with repentance and prayer - that can convince God to change our fate for the better. We are all responsible for each other, Jewish tradition teaches us, and our purpose on earth is to make the world a better, more just and equitable place.

› If a person closes his eyes to avoid giving charity, it is as if he committed idolatry.

BABYLONIAN TALMUD,
KETUBOT 68A

› [Hillel] used to say, the more *tzedakah* the more *shalom* [peace, fullness].

PIRKEI AVOT 2:8

Additional Resources

Tzedakah Saves From Death:

- *Tzedakah, Part 4: Charity Saves you from death* – podcast lecture by speaker Rabbi Pinny Rosenthal given on Monday, July 21, 2008 at Yeshiva University
- Student Study Guide: <http://chevraed.org/tzedakahUnit>
- AJWS Alternative Post: <http://wheredoyougive.org/blog/post/charity-saves-from-death-part-ii>

› Rabbi Yehuda says: Ten strong things have been created in the world. The rock is hard, but the iron cleaves it. The iron is hard, but the fire softens it. The fire is hard, but the water quenches it. The water is strong, but the clouds bear it. The clouds are strong, but the wind scatters them. The wind is strong, but the body bears it. The body is strong, but fright crushes it. Fright is strong, but wine banishes it. Wine is strong, but sleep works it off. Death [which is the ultimate sleep] is stronger than all, and charity saves from death, as it is written (Proverbs 10:2) "*Tzedakah* saves from death."

BABYLONIAN TALMUD,
MAGGA 12B

› The world rests on a single pillar: righteousness [*tzadik*—the root of the word *tzedakah*].

BABYLONIAN TALMUD,
CHAGIGA 12B

Rhea Carmi





Carol Es









Vicki Reikes Fox

Esther Purse I



Esther Purse II



Esther's Purse



Ruth's Purse



Sarah's Purse



Tamar's Purse



Susan Gesundheit













Mary Kay Stam



Hillel Smith

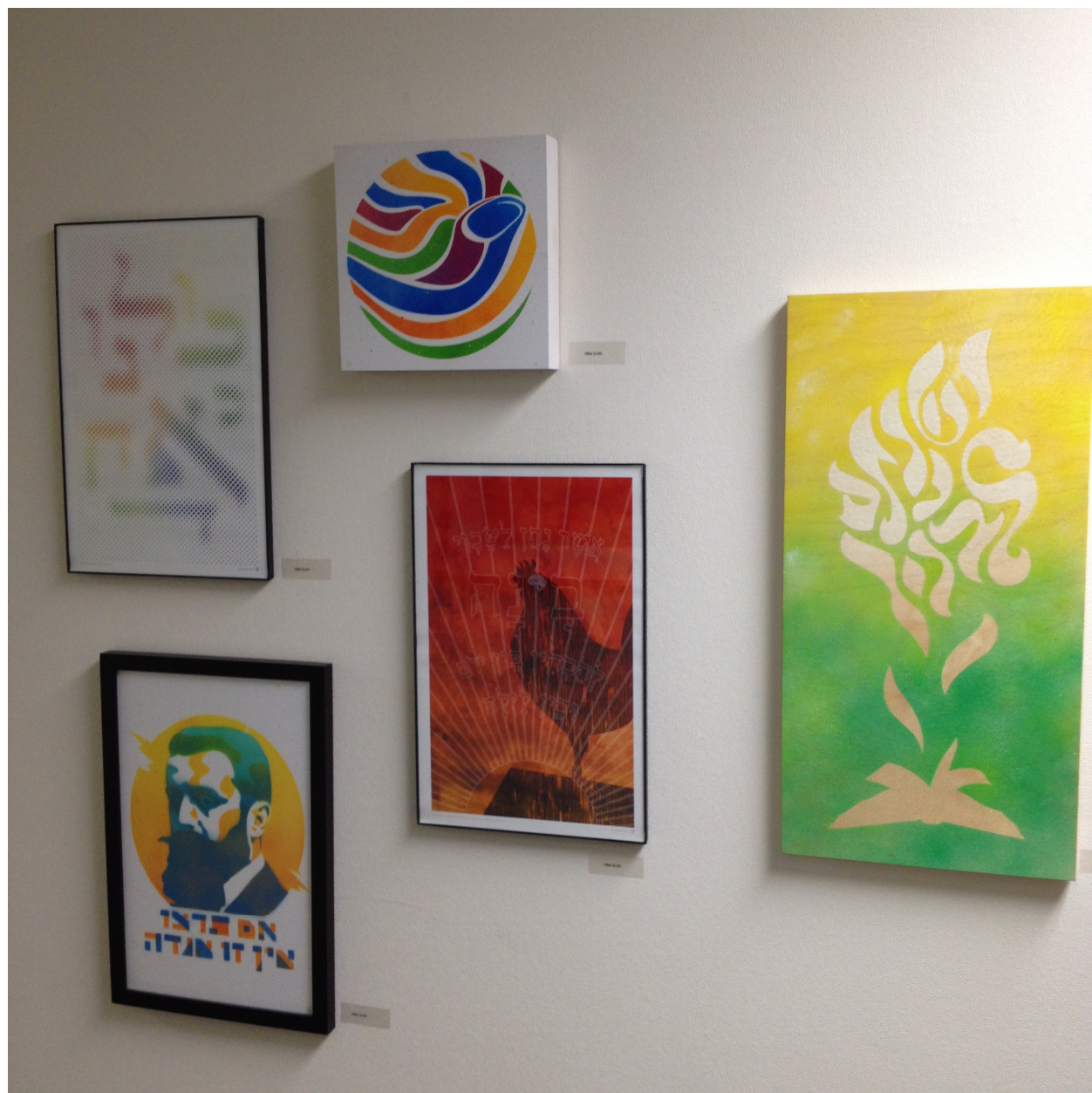










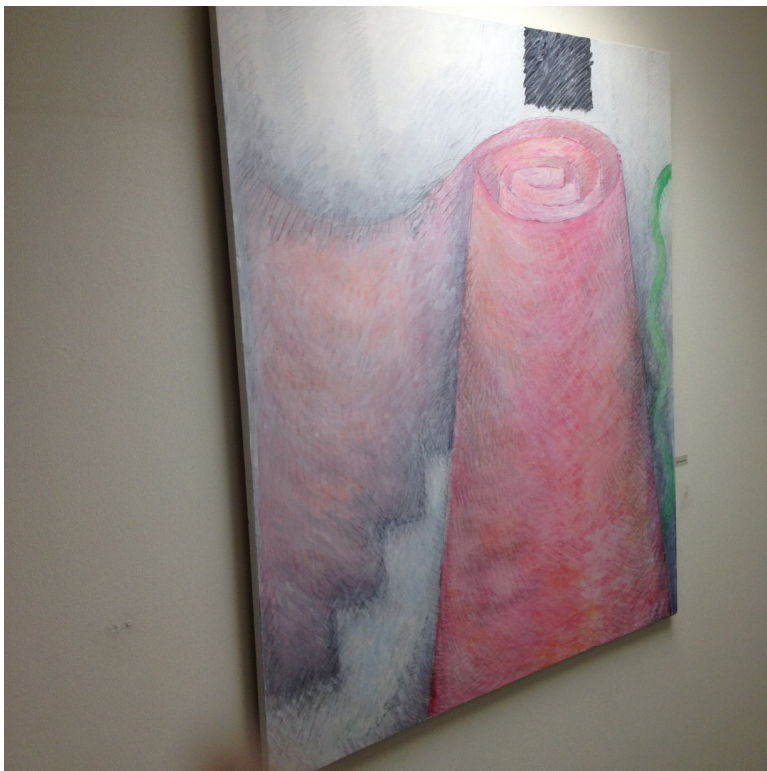


Ruth Weisberg



Karen Frimkess Wolff





Appendix F – Anita Rabinoff-Goldman

A well known entity in the Jewish community of Albany, NY, Anita Rabinoff-Goldman is a textile artist, focusing on designing and creating quilts and visual works of art with fabric.

The following is text from the “About” section of her Etsy profile (“Anita Rabinoff-Goldman,” 2016):

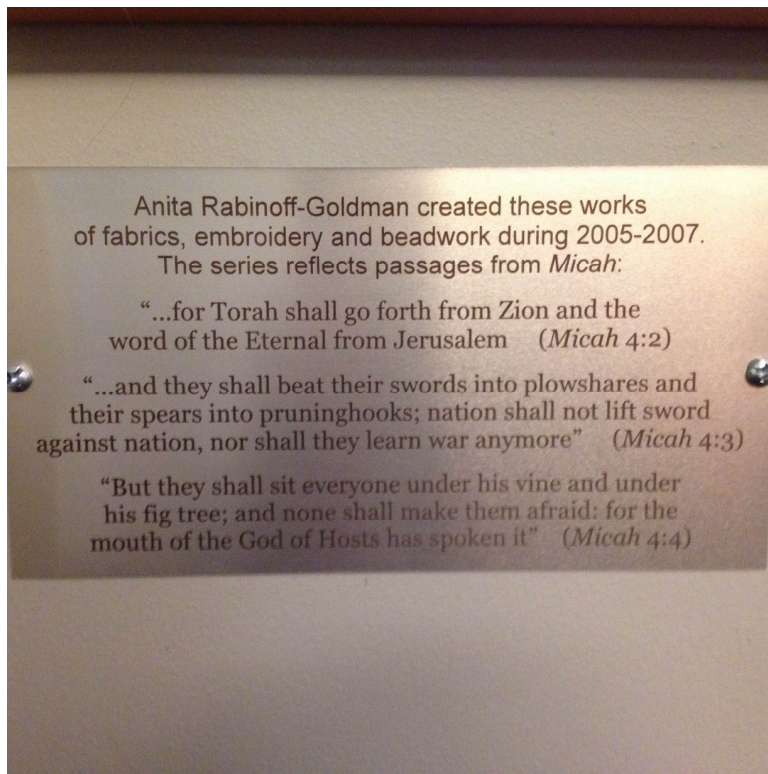
The graphic quality of 18th and 19th century American quilts created a new audience for the highly creative and beautifully crafted handwork of unknown women artists of those periods. A pivotal exhibit of American quilts at the Whitney Museum of Art in 1971 turned many visual artists - myself included - to the medium.

Art quilts are a canvas - fabrics the paint. While visual imagery may be transferable between media, the added tactile dimension of the quilt along with the emotional dimension that fabric adds to our lives makes quilting a potent creative force for me.

Exterior landscapes - seasons, colors, energy - as well as interior landscapes - rooms, relationships, the imagination - all combine to create imagery through the use of pattern, color and texture.

My work has been exhibited in local, regional and national juried shows and can also be found in private collections.

Among those private collections are the following four pieces, on display at B’nai Sholom Reform Congregation, in Albany, NY. In addition to these pieces, Mrs. Rabinoff-Goldman has been commissioned to create other incredible pieces, a fair number specifically for the Jewish community of Albany, and her visually stunning and meaningful work was the first image that came to mind in thinking about visual textile Jewish art.







ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Symbol key:

§ - Bible commentary and/or translation

‡ - Cinematic Art

⌘ - Literary Art

± - Performance Art

† - Visual Art

“About.” 929, n.d. Web. 9 Apr. 2016. ⌘†

Note: The entire 929 Project offers a unique opportunity, the study of one chapter of *TaNaKh* a day, which creates an almost 4 year cycle of on-going engagement with biblical texts directed at the masses. The project also enlisted Israeli artists to create works of art based on biblical texts. The entire website could be useful, if one has the extensive Hebrew knowledge necessary to sift through. The only page available solely in English is this one, which gives an overview of the project and the intentions behind its creation. I first encountered it through its Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/929project>. I am indebted to Dr. David Mendelsson for introducing me to this project. His daughter Galit was a finalist in the textile design competition for her creation גלימת שאול, based on the Book of Samuel.

Alter, Robert. Ancient Israel: The Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings: A Translation with Commentary. New York: W.W. Norton, 2013. Print. §

---. The Book of Genesis. New York: W.W. Norton, 2009. Print. §

---. The Book of Psalms: A Translation with Commentary. New York: W.W. Norton, 2007. Print. §

---. The David Story: A Translation with Commentary of 1 and 2 Samuel. New York: W. W Norton, 1999. Print. §

---. The Five Books of Moses: A Translation with Commentary. New York: W.W. Norton, 2004. Print. §

---. Strong as Death is Love; Song of Songs, Ruth, Esther, Jonah, and Daniel: A Translation with Commentary. New York: W.W. Norton, 2015. Print. §

---. The Wisdom Books: Job, Proverb, and Ecclesiastes: A Translation with Commentary. New York: W.W. Norton, 2010. Print. §

“Anita Rabinoff-Goldman.” *Etsy*. Etsy, 2016. Web. 27 Apr. 2016. †

Note: As the appendix notes, Anita Rabinoff-Goldman is a textile artist who hails from Albany, NY. Her pieces are on display in many Jewish organizations in the greater Capital District, including the synagogue noted in the appendix, B’nai Sholom, and in my home synagogue, Congregation Beth Emeth, both in Albany, NY. I also own a tallit she made.

Antonoff, Rae. *RaeAn Designs*. n.p., 2014. Web. 9 Apr. 2016. †

Note: micrography based on books of the *Torah*, *parshiot*, and individual characters

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Note: Produced by The Society for Classical Reform Judaism and used in services held at Robinson’s Arch at the Western Wall in 2016. It contains Hebrew translations of readings from the Union Prayer Book, and includes art pieces that coordinate with the readings, some of which are based in *TaNakh* texts.

BINA LA. “Leah Hochman, Ph.D. | The Eye of the Beholder: Beauty & Ugliness for Jews and Judaism.” Online video clip. *YouTube*. YouTube, 5 Oct. 2012. Web. 5 Apr. 2016.

Note: Dr. Hochman, Director of the Loucheim School of Judaic Studies at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles, was an invaluable resource to me in finding research associated with the idea of Jewish artistic aesthetics. This short Ted Talk style video shows her discussing the very topic of aesthetics in Judaism and how we understand the Beautiful and the Ugly (capitalization intentional). While not directly reflected in the Rationale of this Curriculum Guide, this video was invaluable for me to understand the direct relationship between Judaism, Jewish texts, and the creative arts, how our minds are drawn to the aesthetics of art and texts.

Collins, John J. “Books from “The Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries.”” Yale University, n.d. Web. 25 March 2016. §

Note: The Anchor Yale Bible Commentary Series includes over 80 titles. Almost every book of the Hebrew Bible is covered by the assorted commentaries. To list them all in this Bibliography would be a vast undertaking for this project. The website, though, provides direct access to every volume available currently.

The Complete Shireinu: 350 Fully Notated Jewish Songs. Ed. Joel N. Eglash. New York: URJ Press, 2001. Print. ±

Note: This source includes an “Index by Text Source” on pages 400-401 that is extremely useful for a quick reference to music inspired by biblical sources.

The Contemporary Torah: A Gender-Sensitive Adaptation of the JPS Translation. Ed. David E.S. Stein. Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 2006. Print. §

Elad Shtamer. “Et Lirkod - עת לרקוד.” Online video clip. *YouTube*. YouTube, 16 Mar. 2015. Web. 9 Apr. 2016. ±

Note: singer – YA'AKOV SHWEKEY {2014}; choreographer – ELAD SHTAMER {2014}

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Note: singer – YONATAN RAZEL {2012}; choreographer – OREN ASHKENAZI {2013}

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- Holzer, Eli and Orit Kent. A Philosophy of Havruta. Boston, MA: Academic Studies Press, 2013. Print.
- Ingber, Judith Brin. "Shorashim: The Roots of Israeli Folk Dance." Seeing Israeli and Jewish Dance. Ed. Judith Brin Ingber. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2011. 99-169. Print.
- The Jewish Study Bible. Eds. Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler. New York: Oxford University, 2004. Print. §
- The Jewish Study Bible. Eds. Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University, 2014. Print. §
- "Katonti." *Israelidances.com*. Sam Lipski Associates of Melbourne Australia, 2016. Web. 9 Apr. 2016. ±
- Kessler, Rachael. The Soul of Education. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2000. Print.
 Note: While only noted specifically in Unit 1, Kessler's book has been a continual source of inspiration about how to relate to students of all ages, tackling the questions that drive our lives and how we live them. No other book that I encountered while a student at the Rhea Hirsch School of Education has been more influential and formative in my understanding of educational ideology than this one.
- The Koren Siddur. Jerusalem, Koren Publishers, 2009. Print.
 Note: The Koren *siddur*, specifically with translation and commentary by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, is invaluable as a reference. In particular, when it comes to Unit 3 and exploring biblical texts in the *siddur* (page 51), the Koren *siddur* distinguishes between full passages of biblical texts and liturgical texts by utilizing two different Hebrew fonts. To the untrained eye, it may be a little hard to distinguish, but it is easy to figure it out, especially since biblical texts are often referenced in the margins or in the commentary.
- Laemmle, Susan E., ed. *Inspiration & Opportunity: The Arts and Jewish Life*. Spec. issue of *CCAR Journal The Reform Jewish Quarterly* 60.1 (2013): 1-230. Print.

Lemberger, Michal. After Abel and Other Stories. Altadena, CA: Prospect Park Books, 2015. Print. ✕

Levine, Baruch A. The JPS Torah Commentary: Leviticus. New York: Jewish Publication Society, 1989. Print. §

Loeb, Sorel Goldberg and Barbara Binder Kadden. Teaching Torah. Denver, CO: A.R.E. Publishing, Inc., 1997. Print.

Long, Siobhán Dowling and John F. A. Sawyer. The Bible in Music: A Dictionary or Songs, Works, and More. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015. Print. ±
 Note: “There have been numerous publications in the past decade or two on the Bible in literature, the Bible in art, the Bible in film and other aspects of the reception history of the Bible...” the introduction notes, and if I could have found any of these resources, I would have noted them in this bibliography as well. This volume is a thorough compendium of a variety of compositions inspired by biblical sources. Entries are listed alphabetically by title, spanning from the Middle Ages to contemporary times, with a special focus on including female composers. It includes a lengthy chronology, glossary, and bibliography.

“Menachem Boas.” *Your ArtsDesire, L.L.C.* n.p., n.d. Web. 27 Apr. 2016. †
 Note: micrography based on the *Torah*. Pieces are created utilizing the entire *Torah*, specific books, *parshiot*, and a special Passover piece even includes text of the *haggadah* and prophetic texts. I was made aware of this artist because a copy of this piece is displayed at my home synagogue, Congregation Beth Emeth, in Albany, NY, which I visited while finishing this Curriculum Guide.

“Michele Goren.” *Your ArtsDesire, L.L.C.* n.p., n.d. Web. 27 Apr. 2016. †
 Note: I tripped across this artist and her rendition of Exodus 15 while researching the above entry from the same website.

Milgrom, Jacob. The JPS Torah Commentary: Numbers. New York: Jewish Publication Society, 1990. Print. §

Mishkan T'filah: A Reform Siddur. Ed. Elyse D. Frishman. New York: CCAR Press, 2007. Print.

“Moses.” *The Bible Collection*. Writ. Lionel Chetwynd. Dir. Roger Young. Perf. Ben Kingsley, Frank Langella, Christopher Lee. TNT Network, 1996. DVD. ‡

My People's Prayer Book. Ed. Lawrence A. Hoffman. Vol. 3 – *P'sukei D'zimrah*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 2011. Print.

My People's Prayer Book. Ed. Lawrence A. Hoffman. Vol. 8 – *Kabbalat Shabbat*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 2005. Print.

Pajak, Edward. Approaches to Clinical Supervision: Alternatives for Improving Instruction. 2nd ed. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, 2000. Print.

Pearce, Stephen S., ed. *Symposium: Synagogue Music*. Spec. issue of *CCAR Journal A Reform Jewish Quarterly* 49.1 (2002): 1-68. Print.

Plaut, W. Gunther. The Haftarah Commentary. New York: UAHC Press, 1996. Print. §

The Prince of Egypt. Dirs. Brenda Chapman, Steve Hickner, Simon Wells. Perf. Val Kilmer, Ralph Fiennes, Michelle Pfeiffer, Sandra Bullock, Jeff Goldblum. Touchstone, 1998. DVD. ‡

Psalms as a Vision of Prayer. Jerusalem, Israel: Behar, 2009. Print. †

Note: The Museum of Psalms in Jerusalem is a small, off the beaten path, gem of a museum displaying works by a single artist, Moshe Tzvi HaLevi Berger, inspired by biblical texts and *Kabbalah*. Entry into the museum is free of charge and is well worth the time when visiting Jerusalem. This accompanying book, available for purchase at the museum, is filled with pictures of forty of the beautiful paintings displayed in the museum, all based on the book of Psalms. It also includes explanations and translations of those Psalms.

Qi, He. He Qi Art. Songyang He, 2013. Web. 9 Apr. 2016. †

Note: “It’s Chagall meets Matisse meets Picasso meets the East.” While a Christian, He Qi does have six pieces from the Hebrew Bible as well, and his Chinese cultural influence features prominently in this artistic presentation. These six pieces are the first six listed in the Poster Gallery page of his website, under the Gallery & Store section (<http://www.heqiart.com/poster-gallery.html>). I would not recommend using this artist as the only source of ArText, specifically because he is not Jewish, and that may detract from the overall message of the Curriculum Guide. However, his perspective does add an unusual and refreshing take on texts.

Rokdim LA. “Vatikach Miryam - Sagi Azran שגיית עזרון - ותקח מרים.” Online video clip.

YouTube. YouTube, 12 Sept. 2014. Web. 9 Apr. 2016. ±

Note: singer – LAHAKAT KOLOT {2012}; choreographer – SAGI AZRAN {2014}

Rotsten, Leo. Treasury of Jewish Quotations. New York: Bantam, 1980. Print.

Note: This treasury is laid out thematically, and therefore may be used to focus participants’ investigation for their chosen text for the on-going project. It contains quotes from the breadth of Jewish textual tradition. For the purposes of this Curriculum Guide, the focus should remain on biblical texts.

Sarna, Nahum M. The JPS Torah Commentary: Exodus. New York: Jewish Publication Society, 1991. Print. §

---. The JPS Torah Commentary: Genesis. New York: Jewish Publication Society, 1989. Print. §

Schwarzschild, Steven S. "Aesthetics." 20th Century Jewish Religious Thought: Original Essays on Critical Concepts, Movements, and Beliefs. Eds. Arthur A. Cohen and Paul Mendes-Flohr. Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 2009. Print.

---. The Pursuit of the Ideal: Jewish Writings of Steven Schwarzschild. Ed. Menachem Kellner. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1990. Print.

Seeing Israeli and Jewish Dance. Ed. Judith Brin Ingber. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2011. Print.

Sefaria. n.p., n.d. Web. 9 Apr. 2016.

Note: Sefaria is an easily accessible, online database of Jewish texts. However, the translations provided are not always of the best quality (if they are there at all), as Sefaria depends on user submitted information, like Wikipedia. Therefore, while it is a good starting point for accessing Jewish texts, one should not rely on it alone.

Simon, Uriel. The JPS Bible Commentary: Jonah. Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1999. Print. §

The Ten Commandments. Dir. Cecil B. DeMille. Perf. Charlton Heston, Yul Brynner. Paramount, 1956. DVD. ‡

Tigay, Jeffrey H. The JPS Torah Commentary: Deuteronomy. New York: Jewish Publication Society, 1996. Print. §

The Torah: A Modern Commentary. Ed. W. Gunther Plaut. New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1981. Print. §

The Torah: A Women's Commentary. Eds. Dr. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi and Rabbi Andrea L. Weiss. New York: URJ Press and Women of Reform Judaism, 2008. Print. § ✕

Note: Each *parasha* is accompanied by not only commentary on that section of *Torah*, but also by a section called "Voices," which includes "creative responses to the *parashah*, mainly in the form of poetry" (pg. xxxv) which is an innovative mode of expanding and extending the *Torah* text" (pg. lx).

A Treasury of Jewish Quotations. Ed. Joseph L. Baron. New York: Crown, 1956. Print.

Note: This treasury is laid out thematically, and therefore may be used to focus participants' investigation for their chosen text for the on-going project. It contains quotes from the breadth of Jewish textual tradition. For the purposes of this Curriculum Guide, the focus should remain on biblical texts.

"Vatikach Miryam." *Israelidances.com*. Sam Lipski Associates of Melbourne Australia, 2016. Web. 9 Apr. 2016. ±

Visual Midrash. Tali Education Fund, n.d. Web. 9 Apr. 2016. †