

Exploring MAP Through the Lens of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEI+B)



**M.A.P. FOR JEWISH
LEARNING & LIVING**

This document is a companion to [My Aspirations Playbook](#) (MAP).

Below, you will find questions that align with the four dimensions explored in MAP. The questions are for you, as the educator, to consider when utilizing MAP in your teaching, to make your learning spaces affirming of all identities, so that everyone feels a true sense of belonging. Additionally, some questions have “BRAINSTORMS” for you to turn your thoughts into tangible tools.

This document is based on information found in our DEI eCourse, found here:

<https://educator.jewishedproject.org/content/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-ecourse-jewish-perspective>

Dimension One: Who Am I?

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As a Jewish child, I...

Appreciate that I am created *b'tzelem Elohim* (in the image of God/a higher power) and therefore, I, and all humanity, are important and holy.

- If we are all holy, how do I make the holiness of all identities explicit in my teachings?
- How do I ensure that all of my learners feel a sense of *b'tzelem Elohim*?
 - o BRAINSTORM: Draft 3-5 ways to create this feeling in your learners.

Make a difference in the world through my existence, interactions with others, and purpose in life.

- How might learners who hold marginalized identities navigate through their existence, interactions with others, and purpose in life differently from those who hold dominant identities? When do certain identities come to the forefront?
- How might a learner make a difference for those who hold similar identities vs. different identities?
 - o BRAINSTORM: Have your learners explore the difference between the golden rule: “treat others the way YOU want to be treated”, vs. The platinum rule: “treat others the way THEY want to be treated.” Then, have your learners explore ways to discover how they could find out ways others like to be treated.

Ask questions and grow from challenges, as an inherent part of my Jewish identity.

- How do you ensure that your learners can ask questions in kind and curious ways?
- How might you help your learners grow their resilience when someone asks a question that may be “insensitive” if it is coming from a place of genuine curiosity?
 - o BRAINSTORM: Create a *brit k'hillah* (code of conduct) with your learners to create a culture of curiosity and kindness.

Discover meaning in Jewish texts, cultural/ religious traditions, and history, so that they inform my values, decisions, and actions.

- How do you, as the educator, ensure that the texts, cultural/religious traditions, and history are shared with your class in a way that affirms everyone’s abilities to digest the material?
 - o BRAINSTORM: When choosing texts for a lesson, consider discussion questions that affirm multiple identities at the forefront, thinking explicitly about neurodivergent learners.
- When looking at traditions, pull from those that are not Ashkenormative. Here are some places you may look for traditions:
 - o [Sephardic and Mizrahi Lesson Plans, JIMENA](#)
 - o [Sephardic Traditions and Tasks, Sephardic Voices](#)
 - o [Mizrahi Musical Traditions, Unpacked](#)

Find relevance, value, and belonging in the distinctive traits of my Jewish identity and I play a crucial role in honoring the 3,000-year-old history of the Jewish people.

- How might you honor Jewish history while also making room for new traditions that are more explicit in and intentional of affirmations of identities?
- What Jewish values affirm multiple identities and why?
 - o BRAINSTORM: Have your learners choose 3 Jewish values they see in themselves and explore why.

Dimension Two: How do I navigate my spiritual journey?

As a Jewish child, I...

Develop an understanding of, and language for, my evolving Jewish spirituality and the many ways to travel on this journey.

- How can you, as the educator, help your learners understand their evolving Jewish spirituality using equitable practices, by offering multiple entry points of conversation that affirm where each student is coming from?
- How can your class create a community of belonging in regard to their evolving Jewish spirituality?
 - o BRAINSTORM: Have each student think of one way that every person in the class can do create a community of belonging, then determine tangible ways to accomplish these journeys.

Am inspired by Jewish liturgy, meditation, and/or other forms of spiritual practice.

- How can you help your learners explore and relate to Jewish liturgy in ways that are accessible for all (neurotypical and neurodivergent) learners?
- What forms of spiritual practice could your learners use that affirm their identities and allow each to be inspired individually and collectively?
 - o BRAINSTORM: Work with your class to determine different forms of spiritual practice. Explore them throughout the year and see what sticks.

Explore the concepts of obligation and choice as they relate to Jewish ideas about commandedness.

- When might obligation and choice be in tandem with one another? When might they be in conflict?
- If we are all made *b'tzelem Eloheim*, does that give us the ability to command ourselves?
 - o BRAINSTORM: Work with your learners to have them create their own interpretations of commandedness in relation to DEI+B.

Wrestle with my relationship with God/a higher power.

- How do your learners view God/a higher power? What identities may be dominant and/or pushed to the side in these views?
- Who gets to decide who wrestles with God/a higher power? Do any identities have more ability to wrestle than others?
 - o BRAINSTORM: Talk with your learners about the potential worries of wrestling with God/a higher power in relation to fighting against authority.

Feel interconnected with the earth and its creatures.

- What secular ideas might be in conflict with this Jewish idea?
- How might you ensure that all of your learners feel interconnected with the earth and its creatures?
 - o BRAINSTORM: Have your learners consider the Jewish values they thought about earlier and have them work together (in small groups) to apply those values to the way they move through the world.

Dimension Three: How do I belong to my communities?

As a Jewish child, I...

Connect with Jewish friends, mentors, and family members to discover shared values, identities, and aspirations.

- What is the importance of connection?
- What happens if/when your learners' values, identities, and aspirations are in conflict with those around them?

- BRAINSTORM: Help your learners become more resilient through conversation around their values and think of ways to help them hold onto their values in moments of struggle.

Feel proud of and responsible for my expansive Jewish/ Jewish+ community and beyond, and advocate on their behalf.

- How might one feel proud if they are up against adversity?
- How might one feel able to advocate when systems are in place to keep them down?
 - BRAINSTORM: Have your learners practice the Jewish value of *ometz lev* (courage of the heart) by role-playing advocating for different things they are passionate about, then role-play advocating for Jewish ideas.

Participate in, contribute to, and find value in being part of the Jewish people.

- What happens when someone wants to participate, but the systems in power don't let them do so (fully)?
- How can one find value in being part of the Jewish people when there might be an inherent dissonance between them and their communities?
 - BRAINSTORM: Work with your learners to determine what makes a healthy community. Have them explore a project where they design their "ideal" community.

Celebrate the history, language, and people of Israel, while engaging with the Jewish homeland in all of its beauty and complexity.

- How might you lead your class in celebrating Israel and engaging in its beauty/complexity, knowing that some of your learners may live in households that don't embrace these thought processes?
- What does it mean to be a people of Israel while still affirming all identities of those within that peoplehood?
 - BRAINSTORM: Explore the story of Moses leading the Israelites crossing the Red Sea. Consider the peoplehood as an entity, as well as the individuals crossing the Sea: how did each person feel, individually? How might that inform the way a peoplehood is made up?

Encounter Hebrew as the historical and living language of the Jewish people.

- How might you help your students embrace this idea if they don't already speak Hebrew?
- How might you help your learners embrace Hebrew if they have difficulty understanding it?
 - BRAINSTORM: Speak with each of your learners individually and have an age-appropriate conversation about how they like to learn. Questions you might ask:
 - Do you like to read, write, and/or watch things?
 - What's one of your favorite subjects in school?
 - What makes you happy?
 - Take their answers as input for how you might teach Hebrew.

Dimension Four: How do I participate in the world?

As a Jewish child, I...

Make the world a better place by caring for myself, others, and all of creation.

- How can we help our learners keep in mind all identities when exploring these practices?
- How can we help our learners understand that some people have an inherent advantage over others?
 - BRAINSTORM: Have your learners use an identity web to consider different identities they may hold, then explore which identities may be inherent in a Jewish space vs. not.

Create a community— inspired by Jewish tradition—that's inclusive and empowering for all people.

- When does inclusivity have a place in Judaism? When could we go further?
- What does it mean to be empowered?
 - BRAINSTORM: Work with your learners to help them identify ways they can feel empowered in a given situation, as well as ways to access those ways.

Explore Jewish history, and act on the privilege of being an upstanding Jewish citizen in a democracy.

- How might privilege look different from person to person in this context?
- How might your learners consider the ways different identities interacted with Jewish history?
 - o BRAINSTORM: use the identity web as a visual guide for this consideration.

Engage in difficult yet thoughtful conversations rooted in the Jewish tradition of questioning and debate, recognizing that no one person has an exclusive claim on the truth.

- How can you help your learners deconstruct the possible idea that disagreements do not inherently equate to a personal dislike?
- How can you help your learners stay rooted in their beliefs while also be open to change?
 - o BRAINSTORM: Have your learners consider times when they had an idea of something, then their idea changed. Have them share why they changed their thought processes and why.

Act upon Jewish prophetic calls for justice by contributing to movements for social change.

- Are those who live in household with people who aren't Jewish called to justice? Why or why not?
- What social changes are at the top of your learners list? Why?
 - o BRAINSTORM: Explore when and how to balance the different movements of social change with your learners.