

**A RAINBOW SYMPHONY**

—

**A Curriculum Guide**  
**Exploring LGBTQ+ Terms**  
**and Topics Through Jewsicals**  
**(Jewish Musicals)**

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## CURRICULUM RATIONALE

When I was in 9<sup>th</sup> at my religious school, we had a guest speaker come who described something as “gay”, meaning bad. I was the only “out” LGBTQ+ learner in class; all my peers’ heads turned to me, yet no one said anything. As a Jew, I felt confused. This place that I had felt so safe suddenly felt the opposite. This moment, alongside others of similar circumstances, has stuck with me for years and created within me a need to educate others through a Jewish lens, so that no LGBTQ+ person, youth or otherwise, should be made to feel uncomfortable purely for existing.

LGBTQ+ education in Reform Jewish spaces is something that is often looked over, even though the learners in these spaces may either be a part of the LGBTQ+ community, know someone within the community, or have heard of the community. This curriculum guide aids to remedy that by teaching LGBTQ+ education through original musical theatre based on Jewish texts (these musical theatre pieces are called Jewsicals). In this curriculum, LGBTQ+ education are the facts and concepts surrounding the LGBTQ+ community. This guide will cover the terms that make up LGBTQ+. Through Jewsicals, we will also explore the social-emotional aspect of LGBTQ+ education, such as with coming out, homophobia/transphobia, and celebrating the community (i.e., pride month and parades; holidays).

Although this guide uses musical theatre as its primary modality, the learners do not have to have any musical theatre experience to fully appreciate and grasp the concepts being taught. Edward Clapp (2016) writes of five crises of creativity in education, the second of which is, “I’m just not a creative person” (p.59). This guide helps learners explore different creative modalities,

so when learners are using the Jewsicals, they're able to focus on the core content of LGBTQ+ education.

There are five units in this guide: an introductory unit, a unit on sexuality, a unit of gender, a unit on the structural understanding of the LGBTQ+ community and education in greater society, and a concluding unit. The curriculum guide is structured in the way so learners will be able to get a grasp of LGBTQ+ terms and topics before diving into two of the main subcategories (sexuality and gender). This will allow them to apply this knowledge to gain a deeper understanding of these two categories. Learners will also be writing lyrics to Jewsicals of their own throughout their time in this class to be shared at an "open-mic" session in the concluding unit. These lyrics will be based around Jewish texts and explore a topic within LGBTQ+ education of their choice.

The essential questions being explored are:

- What's Jewish about LGBTQ+ terms and topics? What's queer and trans about Judaism?
- What are my responsibilities to the LGBTQ+ community?
- How do Jewsicals create space for learning about LGBTQ+ terms and topics?
- How do Jewsicals give space to finding alternative voices or truths in Jewish texts?

The enduring understandings that are being covered are:

- The LGBTQ+ community has always existed, even if it has not always been visible.
- We cannot know someone's identity purely by looking at them.

- LGBTQ+ themes can be explored through the study and creation of midrashim on Jewish texts.

This guide makes no assumptions about its learners' exposure to the LGBTQ+ community. No background knowledge of LGBTQ+ education is required, but learners will most likely have some idea of the education they will acquire, as well as hold opinions of it

Giving space for learners to explore LGBTQ+ education will ideally allow for them to expand upon their current knowledge of the community and be able to leave the classroom holding discussions with others (both in Jewish spaces and not) about the importance of LGBTQ+ education.

## LETTER TO THE TEACHER

Hi there!

First, I deeply appreciate you taking on this topic. This content is necessary and may also be potentially new for some of your learners. Some of this curriculum may be new for you, too. If you have sensitivity towards this work, that's completely okay. Knowing that, it's also imperative that you, as the teacher, enter this guide with an open heart and mind, to model for your students the importance of taking this work seriously (while still leaving room for play).

This curriculum is designed to teach the intersection of Judaism and LGBTQ+ education, which in this guide is referred to as LGBTQ+ terms and topics, through original musical theatre and spoken word pieces based on Jewish texts, called "Jewsicals". Anyone can learn from or teach this curriculum, regardless of musical knowledge or ability, as well as sexual orientation or gender identity. Some texts may be familiar to students. For example, the primary text used in the lesson on coming out (found in Unit 4) is based on the Book of Esther and takes place the night before she decides to tell King Achashverosh that she's Jewish. Other texts may be more unfamiliar to students, such as the Jewsical used for the lesson on asexuality (found in Unit 2) based on Simeon ben Azzai, a Rabbinic sage from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century who chose not to marry, as he was worried it would interfere with his studies. Jewsicals are used to explore the texts. Each Jewsical is *midrash* (commentary on scripture) and provides examples for students to create their own.

Many lessons found in units 2, 3, and 4 have a set structure of exploring the subject matter at hand, listening to the Jewsical, and then having students go into small solo or group conversations and explorations within their own artistic practices. While this may seem repetitive, it is in fact intentional, as students should quickly become familiar and comfortable

with the framework to focus on the work they are doing. You may encounter students who have a difficult time tapping into their artistry. If so, I recommend both reminding students that there is no one right way to be an artist, and to allow them to flow through the different modalities offered. As with all classrooms, some students easily tap into an area that others may find difficult. Support them all through their processes with kindness.

It is incredibly important to create a culture of curiosity and care within this space. In the first lesson you will do this through the creation of a class *brit k'hillah* (code of conduct) but keeping this consistent throughout the year is just as important. When thinking about your learners, you will likely have three types of students: students who are members of the LGBTQ+ community (and who may or may not make that public knowledge); students who are allies to the community; and students who are not allies (and may be uncomfortable, or even angry to have to learn this curriculum) or do not be aware of this community. Focusing on this third type of student for a moment, you must decide when a student is asking a question or making a comment out of ignorance and a true desire to learn, or to try and cause pain. If a student is asking a question or making a comment out of ignorance, you have the wonderful opportunity to model for your class how to answer (and, perhaps, reframe) these questions with curiosity and care. If a student does this to cause pain, I highly recommend you kindly but firmly let the student and the class know that that sort of behavior will not be allowed in the space (and you may refer to the *brit k'hillah* for this). Regardless of intention, other students may have a reaction and ask or demand that those types of questions and comments are not made in the classroom. This is another opportunity for you to give your students a life vest of sorts and help them encounter these conversations in a safe space so they can practice for them outside of the classroom (where a *brit k'hillah*, supportive peers and teacher, and familiar space may not be



present). It may be important to give students time to process these conversations as well by deviating from the written lesson, which is okay and sometimes necessary. Have *ometz lev*, courage of the heart, to try your best.

If you'd like to do some deeper reading within LGBTQ+ terms and topics through a Jewish lens, I highly recommend *Torah Queeries* (Shneer, 2009) which queers each Torah portion; *Queering the Text* (Ramer, 2010), a book which houses *midrashim* based on Jewish texts; *A Rainbow Thread: An Anthology of Queer Jewish Texts from the First Century to 1969* (Sienna, 2019) which explores Jewish texts with queer and trans narratives; and *Mishkan Ga'avah: Where Pride Dwells* (Eger, 2019), a prayer book that has prayers for different LGBTQ+ holidays, events, people, and celebrations. I would also recommend you look at two curriculum guides: the entirety of *Nonbinary Genders in Judaism* by (Tovlev, 2021); and unit 4 of *Crafting a Personal Theology: A Post-Confirmation Exploration of Jewish Thought* by (Tovlev, 2021). Both may be found in the Tartak Center at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion's Los Angeles Campus.

Take a moment and think about how you are feeling regarding teaching this curriculum. Honor those feelings. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at [elianashirarubin@gmail.com](mailto:elianashirarubin@gmail.com).

This work is ever changing and evolving; I thank you for being a part of the evolution.

## SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

### Goals/objectives (by the end of this course, students should be able to...):

- Recall facts learned about LGBTQ+ education and its community
- Have confidence to discuss LGBTQ+ education
- Directly connect LGBTQ+ education to our sacred texts
- Queer a Jewish text through the process of creating a Jewsical

### Overarching Essential Questions (EQs)/Enduring Understandings (EUs):

- EQs:
  - o What's Jewish about LGBTQ+ terms and topics? What's queer and trans about Judaism?
  - o What are my responsibilities to the LGBTQ+ community?
  - o How do Jewsicals create space for learning about LGBTQ+ terms and topics?
  - o How do Jewsicals give space to finding alternative voices or truths in Jewish texts?
- EUs:
  - o The LGBTQ+ community has always existed, even if it has not always been visible.
  - o We cannot know someone's identity purely by looking at them.
  - o LGBTQ+ themes can be explored through the study and creation of midrashim on Jewish texts.

### Unit 1: Introduction

This introductory unit provides a framework for creating a safe space, introducing what Jewsicals are, introducing LGBTQ+ education 101, and talking about how to navigate through the curriculum.

#### *Unit 1 EQs:*

- *How are Judaism and LGBTQ+ terms and topics connected?*
- *How do we create a space where learning and growth live alongside real-life content?*
- *How do we establish a safe community for open conversation?*

#### *Unit 1 EUs:*

- *The LGBTQ+ community has always existed in Jewish spaces (and beyond), even if it has not always been visible.*
- *Working together and listening to each other creates a culture of kehillah (community).*
- *Being able to step into someone else's shoes is one way to learn about how they live.*
- *We can foster a kehillah kedoshah, a holy community, by making spaces equitable and safe for the LGBTQ+ community.*

### 1.1 Introduction

*This lesson aims to help students begin to feel comfortable with each other, the content, and the objectives of the curriculum. Students will create a brit kehillah and create the baseline necessary for the remainder of the lessons.*

### 1.2 Writing a Jewsical 101

*Students will learn the basics of writing for musical theatre. This will be the induction for their final project, where students will have an open-mic night of lyrics they craft to teach LGBTQ+ education through Jewish texts.*

## **Unit 2: Sexuality**

This first core unit explores different sexualities, terminology around sexuality, responses to sexualities, and the Judaism found within it all.

### *Unit 2 EQs:*

- *What does the spectrum of sexuality look like?*

### *Unit 2 EUs:*

- *We cannot know someone's sexuality just by looking at them.*
- *Affirming viewpoints of sexuality may be seen in Jewish texts when viewed through the right lenses.*

### 2.1 Sexuality 101

*This lesson serves as an introductory point for sexuality. Students will learn about different sexualities, as well as terms used when speaking about sexuality. Students will learn about the difference between physical and romantic attraction. The primary text of this lesson will be the Jewsical that looks at the beginnings of the story of Joseph, specifically Genesis 37:1-10.*

### 2.2 Lesbian/Gay

*This lesson explores sexualities of gay and lesbian people. It also explores the differentiated treatment between gay men and lesbian women. The primary text of this lesson will be the Jewsical that looks at Miriam celebrating crossing the parted seas with her lover, based on a text from "Queering the Text: Biblical, Medieval, and Modern Jewish Stories," written by Andrew Ramer.*

### 2.3 Bisexual/pansexual

*This lesson explores sexualities of bisexual and pansexual people. It also explores biphobia within the queer community, as well as the conflict between the bisexual and pansexual communities. The primary text of this lesson will be the Jewsical that looks at Ruth deciding to stay with her mother-in-law, Naomi, based on the Book of Ruth, specifically Ruth 1:1-16.*

### 2.4 Asexuality

*This lesson explores sexuality on the asexual spectrum, as well as the difference between asexuality and aromanticism. The primary text of this lesson will be the Jewsical "More*

*than Enough,” which looks at the Rabbinic sage Simeon ben Azzai, who chose not to get married as he was worried it would interfere with his studies.*

### 2.5 Queer/sexual fluidity

*This lesson explores what it means to be sexually fluid and not needing to hold any one label for any determinate amount of time. It also explores the use of the word “queer” as an umbrella term. The primary text of this unit will be the Jewsical “We Are One,” based on the poem “Before There was Law” by Andrew Ramer from the book “Queering the Text”.*

### 2.6 Jewsical check-in

*This lesson concludes the unit on sexuality and has students explore Jewish texts used for Jewsicals from this past unit. Students will be exploring ideas of sexuality in Jewish texts and will work on drafting the first verse and chorus to their Jewsical.*

## **Unit 3: Gender**

This second core unit explores different gender identities, the difference between gender identity and gender expression, responses to gender expansion, and the Judaism found within it all.

*Unit 3 EQs:*

- *What does the spectrum of gender look like?*

*Unit 3 EUs:*

- *We cannot know someone’s gender identity or pronouns just by looking at them.*
- *Rabbinic scholars have been studying gender expansion for centuries.*
- *Affirming viewpoints of gender may be seen in Jewish texts when viewed through the right lenses.*

### 3.1 Gender 101

*This lesson serves as an introductory point for gender. Students will learn about the difference between gender identity and gender expression, as well as terms used when speaking about gender. Students will also learn about the difference between sexuality and gender.*

### 3.2 The Transgender Umbrella

*This lesson explores the umbrella term of “transgender”, while specifically looking at binary transgender people. The primary text of this unit will be the Jewsical “Human Nature,” based on the midrash that Dinah, Joseph’s sister, was conceived with the soul of a male and was made female by her mother’s wishes.*

### 3.3 Nonbinary

*This lesson explores the gender identity of “nonbinary”. This lesson also explores the six genders referred to in ancient Rabbinic texts. The primary text of this unit will be the Jewsical “Your Eyes are my Eyes” based on Genesis 1:27, from the perspective of a nonbinary youth looking back and reflecting upon generations of nonbinary and gender non-conforming Jews.*

### 3.4 Jewsical check-in

*This lesson concludes the unit on gender and has students explore Jewish texts used for Jewsicals from this past unit. . Students will be exploring ideas of gender in Jewish texts and will work on drafting their Jewsical.*

## **Unit 4: The LGBTQ+ Community in the World**

This third core unit explores the way our modern world experiences the LGBTQ+ community by exploring topics such as coming out; homo/transphobia; hetero/cisnormativity; marginalization; intersectionality; and celebration.

### *Unit 4 EQs:*

- *How do I make the world safe for LGBTQ+ individuals?*
- *What is privilege? What privilege do I have? How do I use that privilege for good?*
- *How do I respect what I don't or can't understand?*

### *Unit 4 EUs:*

- *Learning about different types of people helps us to understand the world around us*
- *Understanding someone's lived experience may help us understand who they are.*

### 4.1 Coming Out

*This lesson looks at what it means to come out of the closet, the importance of creating a safe environment for one to do so, ways to respond, and how to support someone who does. The primary text of this lesson will be the Jewsical "All Parts of Me," based on at the Story of Purim, focusing on Esther the night before she tells King Ahasuerus that she's Jewish.*

### 4.2 Homophobia/transphobia/heteronormativity/cisnormativity

*This lesson looks at homophobia, transphobia, heteronormativity, and cisnormativity in both explicit and implicit ways, both in the world at large, as well as specifically within liberal Jewish communities. This lesson also explores external and internal biases. The primary text of this lesson will be the Jewsical "Safe with You," sung from the perspective of an Israelite man singing to his lover about how they are not allowed to be together in public. This Jewsical is based on the text from Leviticus 18:22.*

### 4.3 Intersectionality

*This lesson looks at intersectionality, and what it means to hold multiple identities at once.*

### 4.4 Celebration

*This lesson explores what it means to celebrate the LGBTQ+ community, looking at past events such as pride parades or synagogue celebrations for National Coming Out Day, as well as the work it has taken to be able to publicly celebrate the community.*

### 4.5 Jewsical check-in

*This lesson concludes the unit on structural understanding and has students explore Jewish texts used for Jewsicals from all core units. Students will be exploring ideas of response and responsibility in Jewish texts. Students will make revisions to the lyrics for their Jewsicals.*

## **Unit 5: Beyond the Classroom**

This final unit is a review that has been covered to prepare the learners to take what they've discovered out into the world by showcasing the Jewsicals they've created throughout this curriculum.

*Unit 5 EQs:*

- *How do I support the LGBTQ+ community outside of safe spaces? How do I create safe spaces to begin with?*
- *How do I queer Jewish texts?*

*Unit 5 EUs:*

- *LGBTQ+ education is living, breathing, and ongoing.*
- *We can continue to foster a kehillah kedoshah, a holy community, by making spaces equitable and safe for the LGBTQ+ community.*
- *Viewing Jewish texts through a queer and trans lens may help uncover how Jewish spaces may celebrate the LGBTQ+ community.*

#### **5.1 Open Mic Preparation**

*This lesson will have students look at a Jewsical they've created from the past three core units to prepare for the open mic happening the following session.*

#### **5.2 Open Mic**

*This lesson has students share their lyrics in an open-mic style format, with each student filling out a rubric for their peers.*

#### **5.3 Where do we go from here?**

*This lesson concludes the curriculum taught by having students consider ways to take LGBTQ+ education outside of the classroom.*

Unit 1 (Introduction)  
Lesson 1 (Introduction)

**I. List of materials**

- a. Course syllabus (1 per person, plus a few extras) (Appendix A)
- b. Posterboard (1)
- c. Marker (1)
- d. Pens (1 per person, plus a few extras)
- e. LGBTQ+ key terms (1 per person, plus a few extras) (Appendix B)
- f. Interpreting texts worksheet (1 per person, plus a few extras) (Appendix C)
- g. Jewsical examples (1 per person, plus a few extras) (Appendix D)

**II. Lesson Goals (as an educator, I aim for this lesson to...)**

- a. Introduce my students to the entire scope and sequence of this curriculum guide.
- b. Present an overview of this guide's definition of LGBTQ+ education.

**III. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)**

- a. Understand and reiterate the main ideas of this curriculum guide.
- b. Define what a Jewsical is.
- c. Understand what it means to queer Jewish texts.

**IV. Learning Plan**

*Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Introductions

**00:05-00:12** Set induction

**00:12-00:17** Guide overview

**00:17-00:27** *Brit kehillah* making

**00:27-00:32** LGBTQ+ terms and topics introduction

**00:32-00:47** Interpreting Jewish texts activity

**00:47-00:55** Jewsical overview

**00:55-01:00** Closure

*Detailed procedure*

**Set-up (before students arrive):** Arrange the desks to form a circle. If the chairs are separate from the desks, push the desks to the edge of the room and form the chairs into a circle. If necessary, space the chairs/desks apart in accordance with your institution's social distance guidelines.

Have a posterboard with a marker prepped for the *brit kehillah* making.

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome the students to the first day of this course and thank them for being here. Introduce yourself with your name and pronouns, then ask the students to do so, starting with the person on your right and going in a counterclockwise order.

**00:05-00:12** Explain that the work that the class will be doing throughout their time in this course will help them to gain information regarding LGBTQ+ terms and topics, as well as explore Jewish texts through queer and trans lenses. Explain that a piece of this course is about connecting Judaism and LGBTQ+ terms and topics, perhaps through the new lenses given by queering texts. Explain that queering a text comes from the late 1980s and early 1990s and was a way to challenge heteronormativity by analyzing texts and finding new ways to read and understand them, potentially through a queer and/or trans lens.

Say that we're going to go around and share a story where you understood something differently once you learned about it from a different perspective. Say that you'll share first, and then will start with person on your left, going clockwise. Ask to keep stories to around 30 seconds. Share your story and then have the person to your left share, going around in the circle.

**00:12-00:17** Pass out the course syllabus (Appendix A). Talk through each unit and lesson. When you reach the first Jewsical in the syllabus, say that you will be talking about them more in depth later in the lesson. Talk through the following points:

- Unit objectives
- Each lesson within the unit and their contents
- The Jewsical writing project
- The open mic



Ask for questions and answer any that come up.

**00:17-00:27** Explain that the class will create a *brit kehillah*, or a code of conduct.

Explain that this *brit* will consist of guidelines that all students (and the teacher) will agree upon and sign. Use the posterboard to write the *brit* on and the marker to write it with. Ask for guidelines from students. If students begin to offer guidelines that include Jewish values (e.g., *kavod* = respect; *chesed* = kindness), feel free to put the Hebrew transliterations/translations on the board (if you know them). After the class has exhausted its guidelines, have each student sign it with pens provided.

**00:27-00:32** Explain that this guide will define LGBTQ+ education as LGBTQ+ terms and topics (terms being the words used within LGBTQ+ education, and topics being what is covered throughout the lessons from the syllabus). Explain that a large aspect of this course is understanding LGBTQ+ terms and topics. Pass out LGBTQ+ key words (Appendix B). Talk through each term and its definition. Ask for any questions and answer accordingly.

**00:32-00:47** Explain that we're going to look at an example of interpreting a text and then try interpreting a text ourselves. Pass out the "interpreting texts" worksheet (Appendix C). Ask for a volunteer to read the first text (Genesis 1:27). Explain that the text is normally understood to mean God created male and female. Explain that another way to interpret this text is that a male and female God, or a bigender God, created "them," nonbinary people.

Explain that there are an infinite number of ways to interpret our sacred texts. Explain that students will be broken up into small groups (approximately 3-5 students per group) and will choose one of the sacred texts to be interpreted. Explain that the interpretations do not have to be within the LGBTQ+ terms and topics and can be about anything as long as it follows the *brit kehillah* guidelines. Explain that students will have six minutes to talk with their group about which text they want to interpret and then create an interpretation. Explain that each group will share and ask each group to appoint a spokesperson. Ask if there are any questions and answer them if they come up.

Break students up into small groups and have them work together to create their interpretations. They may move their chairs around if they would like to. Move between the groups, making sure to go to each group at least once. If one group seems to be struggling, go to that group and ask if they would like help. If they decline, go to the other groups, then check back in with the struggling group and check in with them.

Give a one-minute warning before time is up. Once time is up, have students come back to the circle. Have each group's spokesperson share which text they chose and their interpretation.

**00:47-00:55** Explain that another important component to this course are Jewsicals, which is a combination of the words Jewish and musical. Explain that Jewsicals got their start at the URJ 6 Points Creative Arts Academy and are a way to interpret our sacred texts. Explain that they may be linear or more adaptive. Pass out Jewsical example sheet (Appendix D). Explain that these two Jewsicals are both adapted from *Parshat Balak*; the first, written in 2018, tells a faithful adaption of the story of Balak. The second, written in 2019, tells the story of Balak from the perspective of the donkey Balaam rides on. Ask for two volunteers, one to read the Jewsical from 2018 and the other to read the Jewsical from 2019. Ask:

- What's similar about these two Jewsicals?
- What's different?
- What messages do you receive from these Jewsicals?

Remind students that they will be writing their own Jewsicals. Assure students that it's okay if they have never written music before and their grade is not on "how good" the Jewsical is.

**00:55-01:00** Explain that next class, students will be exploring how to act through a song. Close class by asking students to think of a song they'd like to bring in with two printed copies of lyrics. Explain that it does not have to be a musical theatre song, and all students will be working on how to act through it, to access what the song means beneath the surface.

Thank the students for their time.

## Appendix

### Appendix A: Course Syllabus

#### Unit 1: Introduction

This introductory unit provides a framework for creating a safe space, introducing what Jewsicals are, introducing LGBTQ+ education 101, and talking about how to navigate through the curriculum.

*Unit 1 EQs:*

- *How are Judaism and LGBTQ+ terms and topics connected?*
- *How do we create a space where learning and growth live alongside real-life content?*

*Unit 1 EUs:*

- *The LGBTQ+ community has always existed in Jewish spaces (and beyond), even if it has not always been visible.*
- *Working together and listening to each other creates a culture of kehillah (community).*
- *Being able to step into someone else's shoes is one way to learn about how they live.*
- *We can foster a kehillah kedoshah, a holy community, by making spaces equitable and safe for the LGBTQ+ community.*

##### 1.3 Introduction

*This lesson aims to help students begin to feel comfortable with each other, the content, and the objectives of the curriculum. Students will create a brit kehillah and create the baseline necessary for the remainder of the lessons.*

##### 1.4 Acting through a song

*Students will learn how to act through a song. This will provide a basis for the lessons involving Jewsicals.*

##### 1.5 Writing a Jewsical 101

*Students will learn the basics of writing for musical theatre. This will be the induction for their final project, where students will have an open-mic night of lyrics they craft to teach LGBTQ+ education through Jewish texts.*

#### Unit 2: Sexuality

This first core unit explores different sexualities, terminology around sexuality, responses to sexualities, and the Judaism found within it all.

*Unit 2 EQs:*

- *What does the spectrum of sexuality look like?*

*Unit 2 EUs:*

- *We cannot know someone's sexuality just by looking at them.*

- *Affirming viewpoints of sexuality may be seen in Jewish texts when viewed through the right lenses.*

### 2.1 Sexuality 101

*This lesson serves as an introductory point for sexuality. Students will learn about different sexualities, as well as terms used when speaking about sexuality. Students will learn about the difference between physical and romantic attraction.*

### 2.2 Lesbian/Gay

*This lesson explores sexualities of gay and lesbian people. It also explores the differentiated treatment between gay men and lesbian women.*

### 2.3 Bisexual/pansexual

*This lesson explores sexualities of bisexual and pansexual people. It also explores biphobia within the queer community, as well as the conflict between the bisexual and pansexual communities.*

### 2.4 Asexuality

*This lesson explores sexuality on the asexual spectrum, as well as the difference between asexuality and aromanticism.*

### 2.5 Queer/sexual fluidity

*This lesson explores what it means to be sexually fluid and not needing to hold any one label for any determinate amount of time. It also explores the use of the word “queer” as an umbrella term.*

### 2.6 Jewsical check-in

*This lesson concludes the unit on sexuality and has students explore Jewish texts used for Jewsicals from this past unit. Students will be exploring ideas of sexuality in Jewish texts and will work on drafting the first verse and chorus to their Jewsical.*

## **Unit 3: Gender**

This second core unit explores different gender identities, the difference between gender identity and gender expression, responses to gender expansion, and the Judaism found within it all.

*Unit 3 EQs:*

- *What does the spectrum of gender look like?*

*Unit 3 EUs:*

- *We cannot know someone’s gender identity or pronouns just by looking at them.*
- *Rabbinic scholars have been studying gender expansion for centuries.*
- *Affirming viewpoints of gender may be seen in Jewish texts when viewed through the right lenses.*

### 3.1 Gender 101

*This lesson serves as an introductory point for gender. Students will learn about the difference between gender identity and gender expression, as well as terms used when*

*speaking about gender. Students will also learn about the difference between sexuality and gender.*

### 3.2 The Transgender Umbrella

*This lesson explores the umbrella term of “transgender,” while specifically looking at binary transgender people.*

### 3.3 Nonbinary

*This lesson explores the gender identity of “nonbinary”. This lesson also explores the six genders referred to in ancient Rabbinic texts.*

### 3.5 Jewsical check-in

*This lesson concludes the unit on gender and has students explore Jewish texts used for Jewsicals from this past unit. . Students will be exploring ideas of gender in Jewish texts and will work on drafting the first second verse and bridge to their Jewsical.*

## **Unit 4: Structural Understanding**

This third core unit the way our modern world experiences the LGBTQ+ community by exploring topics such as coming out; homo/transphobia; hetero/cisnormativity; marginalization; intersectionality; and celebration.

*Unit 4 EQs:*

- *How do I make the world safe for LGBTQ+ individuals?*
- *What is privilege? What privilege do I have? How do I use that privilege for good?*
- *How do I respect what I don't or can't understand?*

*Unit 4 EUs:*

- *Learning about the different types of people helps us to understand the world around us*
- *Understanding someone's lived experience may help us understand who they are.*

### 4.1 Coming Out

*This lesson looks at what it means to come out of the closet, the importance of creating a safe environment for one to do so, ways to respond, and how to support someone who does. The primary text of this unit will be the Jewsical that looks at the Story of Purim, focusing on Esther the night before she tells the King she's Jewish.*

### 4.2 Homophobia/transphobia/heteronormativity/cisnormativity

*This lesson looks at homophobia, transphobia, heteronormativity and cisnormativity in both explicit and implicit ways, both in the world at large, as well as specifically within liberal Jewish communities. This lesson also explores external and internal biases.*

### 4.3 Intersectionality

*This lesson looks at intersectionality, and what it means to hold multiple identities at once.*

### 4.4 Celebration

*This lesson explores what it means to celebrate the LGBTQ+ community, looking at past*

*events such as pride parades, as well as the work it has taken to be able to publicly celebrate the community.*

#### 4.5 Jewsical check-in

*This lesson concludes the unit on structural understanding and has students explore Jewish texts used for Jewsicals from this past unit. Students will be exploring ideas of response and responsibility in Jewish texts. Students will make revisions to the lyrics for their Jewsicals.*

### **Unit 5: Beyond the Classroom**

This final unit looks at everything that has been learned thus far to prepare the learners to take what they've discovered out into the world by showcasing the Jewsicals they've created throughout this curriculum.

#### *Unit 5 EQs:*

- *How do I support the LGBTQ+ community outside of safe spaces? How do I create safe spaces to begin with?*
- *How do I queer Jewish texts?*

#### *Unit 5 EUs:*

- *LGBTQ+ education is living, breathing, and ongoing.*
- *We can continue to foster a kehillah kedoshah, a holy community, by making spaces equitable and safe for the LGBTQ+ community.*
- *Viewing Jewish texts through a queer lens allows for deep discussion about the tangibility of helping Jewish spaces celebrate the LGBTQ+ community.*

#### 5.1 Lyrics workshop

*This lesson will have students take the lyrics they've been working on and workshop them with their peers.*

#### 5.2 Open Mic

*This lesson has students share their lyrics in an open-mic style format, with each student filling out a rubric for their peers.*

#### 5.3 Where do we go from here?

*This lesson concludes the curriculum taught by having students consider ways to take LGBTQ+ education outside of the classroom.*

## Appendix B: LGBTQ+ Key Terms

### LGBTQ+ KEY TERMS

*(NOTE: This list is non-exhaustive.)*

- **LGBTQ+** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and more!
- **Gender Expression** The way we present ourselves outwardly
- **Gender Identity** The way we feel about ourselves inwardly
- **Gender Attribution** What gender roles and stereotypes are typically given
- **Gender Creative/Expansive** Someone who rejects expected gender roles and stereotypes
- **Pronouns** The words we use to describe others in the 3rd person
- **Cisgender** One's gender identity aligns with the sex assigned at birth
- **Intersex** Used to describe a person's body who defies commonly understood ideas around sex being binary. An umbrella term for biological diversity
- **Transgender** One's gender identity does not align with the sex assigned at birth
- **Nonbinary** Someone whose gender identity falls outside of the categories of man or woman

Appendix C: Interpreting Texts Worksheet

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Text 1: Genesis 1:27

אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצַלְמֵ אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם: | וַיְבָרָא אֱלֹהִים

And God created man in God's image, in the image of God God created him; male and female  
God created them.

Text 2: Proverbs 12:25

דָּאָגָה בְּלִב־אִישׁ יִשְׁחָנָה וְדָבָר טוֹב יִשְׁמְחָנָה:  
If there is anxiety in a person's mind let them quash it,  
And turn it into joy with a good word.

Interpretation one: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Interpretation two: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Text 3: Pirke Avot 1:6

עֲשֵׂה לָךְ רֵב, וְקַנָּה לָךְ חֵבֵר, וְהוֹי דֵּן אֶת כָּל הָאָדָם לְכַף זְכוּת  
Appoint for thyself a teacher, and acquire for thyself a companion and judge all men with the  
scale weighted in his favor.

Interpretation one: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Interpretation two: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Appendix D: Jewsical Examples

Balak, 2018

**BALAAM**

BALAK

KING OF MOAB

SENT ME TO CURSE THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

ON A DONKEY

I'M SITTING ON A DONKEY IN THE DESERT

WHAT IS THIS?

BALAK

KING OF MOAB

WANTS ME TO TAKE DOWN THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

ON A DONKEY

I'M SITTING ON A DONKEY IN THE DESERT.

THIS IS MY LIFE.

*The DONKEY stops short*

**BALAAM**

WHOA-A-A-A!!

SHE-DONKEY, WHY DID YOU STOP?

DID I TELL YOU TO STOP?

I NEED YOU TO KEEP GOING.

SHE-DONKEY,

YOU CANNOT STOP,

YOU HAVE TO KEEP GOING OR I WILL LASH OUT!

*BALAAM hits the DONKEY*

**DONKEY**

OW! PLEASE DON'T DO THAT, I'M (*whispers*) SENSITIVE.

**BALAAM**

WHAT? WAIT, DID YOU JUST- NO, NO IT'S THE HEAT, IT'S GOTTA BE THE HEAT-

**A VOICE**

DID G-D TELL YOU TO HIT HER?

**BALAAM**

What?

**A VOICE**

DID G-D TELL YOU TO HIT / HER?

**BALAAM**

Who is this?

**A VOICE**

DID G-D TELL YOU TO HIT HER?

I DON'T THINK G-D DID

MAYBE I WAS MISTAKEN  
OH NO WAIT I'M-

*A flash of light!!*

**ANGEL**

I'M-

I'M-

**BALAAM**

An angel?

**ANGEL**

AN ANGEL!!!

---

Balak, 2019

**DONKEY**

I ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT I WOULD BE A FARMER MULE  
I ALWAYS DREAMED I'D BE CONSIDERED HIP AND COOL  
BUT INSTEAD OF LEARNING TO TROT  
I'M IN THE SAND MOVING TOWARDS BALAK  
AND HOW CAN I BE COOL WHEN IT'S SO HOT  
(I REALLY WANT SOME WATER, PLEASE, BALAAM, GIVE ME SOME WATER)  
THIS ISN'T HOW I THOUGHT MY LIFE WOULD BE  
GOING TO CURSE THE ISRAELITES FOR ETERNITY  
WITH GUARDS ON EITHER SIDE

**GUARDS**

Hey

**DONKEY**

GUESS THEY'RE TAGGING ALONG FOR THE RIDE  
MAYBE MY LIFE WAS HAND TAILORED FOR ME  
Uh... uh... AHHH!

**BALAAM**

SHE-DONKEY, WHY DID YOU STOP?

DID I TELL YOU TO STOP?

I NEED YOU TO KEEP GOING

**DONKEY**

A GHOST

I SAW A GHOST

I SAW A GHOST

GHOSTS AREN'T REAL

I SAW A GHOST WITH A SWORD IN HIS HAND

GHOSTS AREN'T REAL

GHOSTS AREN'T REAL!!

**BALAAM**

SHE-DONKEY, YOU CANNOT STOP  
YOU HAVE TO KEEP GOING OR I WILL LASH OUT!

*Hit*

**DONKEY**

Ow! Please don't do that, I'm sensitive  
BECAUSE I SAW A GHOST  
WHY CAN HE NOT SEE THE GHOST  
MAYBE HE CAN'T SEE THE GHOST  
OH NO, HE CAN'T SEE THE GHOST  
AHHH!!!

## Unit 1 (Introduction)

### Lesson 2 (Writing a Jewsical 101)

#### I. List of materials

- a. Source Sheet (1 per person, plus a few extras)
- b. Laptop with internet connection (1)

#### II. Lesson Goals (as an educator, I aim for this lesson to...)

- a. Allow for students to write their own Jewsicals
- b. Give students tools to work together to write Jewsicals

#### III. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)

- a. Understand the thought process of writing a Jewsical
- b. Write a Jewsical
- c. Give classmates feedback.

#### IV. Learning Plan

##### *Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check in/set induction

**00:05-00:08** What is a Jewsical?

**00:08-00:12** Jewsical writing overview

**00:15-00:45** Jewsical writing

**00:45-00:59** Jewsical sharings/conversations

**00:59-01:00** Closure

##### *Detailed procedure*

**Set-up (before students arrive):** Cue up the three Jewsical backing tracks (instrumental music used for people to sing over) using these links:

Option 1: <https://youtu.be/NX2wrhgAhHs>

Option 2: [https://youtu.be/m\\_kdXBO7j7o](https://youtu.be/m_kdXBO7j7o)

Option 3: <https://youtu.be/Vk6BPc7a8rI>

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Ask students to think of one,

two, or three words to describe how they're feeling in that moment to share. Start with you, then go around, starting with the person on your right. After everyone has gone, ask:

- What can we gain from interpreting our sacred texts?

Take answers. Explain that today, students will learn how to write Jewsicals, and then put that education into practice. Explain that throughout their time in this course, students will each be working on a Jewsical that will be shared at the end of the course in an open mic setting. Explain that students do not need to have musical theatre writing experience to do this.

**00:05-00:08** Explain where Jewsicals come from:

- Jewsicals is the combination of the words "Jewish" and "musical"
- Jewsicals are musical numbers and songs that take our sacred texts and interpret them in any way we please
- Jewsicals were started at the URJ 6 Points Creative Arts Academy (CAA) by Eliana Rubin, a Jewish artist and educator
- Jewsicals may be linear (follow the story of the parashah as it is written), may be adaptations (refer to the example of Balak at CAA)

**00:08-00:12** Explain that a Jewsical should take into consideration the following pieces:

- What is the story you'd like to tell? Is it true to the source text or more adaptive?
- How many characters are in your Jewsical?
- How long is your Jewsical?
- Are there any goals or objectives you want to accomplish by the end?

Ask if students would like any clarification on this or have any other questions and answer accordingly.

**00:12-00:20** Explain that students will be writing Jewsicals about the tower of Babel. Explain that participants will be writing lyrics to one of three pre-existing musical options. Pass out the source sheet (Appendix A). Ask a student to read the English translation.

Explain that students will be put into groups to write their Jewsicals. Explain that students will get to choose from one of three backing tracks. These tracks will be used for students to write lyrics over. Play each backing track, one at a time. Explain that the

Jewsicals do not need to use the entire time of the backing track, or could use more than one track, if they so desire (basically, there is no minimum or maximum length).

Ask for questions. If none, break students up into groups of 3 to 5 students.

**00:20-00:45** Give students time to work on their Jewsicals. As they do, walk around, and check in with groups to see if they want/need help with their writing, melodies, and/or plot (as well as other questions that might pop up). Give students a five minute and one minute warning.

**00:45-00:59** Bring all students back together. Have each group present their Jewsicals to the class with their chosen backing track. After each group presents, ask to the class:

- What did you notice?
- How did the lyrics connect with the source material?
- Where else do you think this Jewsical could go?

**00:59-01:00** Close by explaining that next class, students will be diving into the first core unit on sexuality. Explain that we will be looking at different sexualities and the ways that they tie into Judaism through Jewsicals. Thank students for their time.

## Appendix A: Tower of Babel source sheet

ויאמרו (א) ויהי בנסועם מקדם וימצאו בקעה בארץ שניער וישבו שם: (ב) ויהי כל־הארץ שפה אחת ודברים אחדים: (א)  
 | ויאמרו הגבה (ד) איש אל־רעהו הגבה גלפגה לבנים ונשרפה לשרפה ותהי להם הלבנה לאבן והחמר הנה להם לחמר:  
 ויגיד יהוה לראות את־העיר ואת־ (ה) גבגבה־לנו עיר ומגדל וראשו בשמים ונעשה־לנו שם פון־נפון על־פני כל־הארץ:  
 ויאמר יהוה הן עם אחד ושפה אחת לכלם וזה החלם לעשות ועתה לא־יבצר מהם כל (ו) המגדל אשר בנו בני האדם:  
 ויפץ יהוה אתם משם על־פני (ה) הגבה גרדה ונגלה שם שפתם אשר לא ישמעו איש שפת רעהו: (ז) אשר יזמו לעשות:  
 על־כן קרא שמה בגל כ־שם בגל יהוה שפת כל־הארץ ומשם הפיצם יהוה על־פני (ט) כל־הארץ ויחדלו לבנות העיר:  
 {פ} כל־הארץ:

### [Genesis 11:1-9](#)

(1) Everyone on earth had the same language and the same words. (2) And as they migrated from the east, they came upon a valley in the land of Shinar and settled there. (3) They said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks and burn them hard.”—Brick served them as stone, and bitumen served them as mortar.— (4) And they said, “Come, let us build us a city, and a tower with its top in the sky, to make a name for ourselves; else we shall be scattered all over the world.” (5) Adonai came down to look at the city and tower that man had built, (6) and Adonai said, “If, as one people with one language for all, this is how they have begun to act, then nothing that they may propose to do will be out of their reach. (7) Let us, then, go down and confound their speech there, so that they shall not understand one another’s speech.” (8) Thus Adonai scattered them from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city. (9) That is why it was called Babel, because there Adonai confounded the speech of the whole earth; and from there Adonai scattered them over the face of the whole earth.

### Things to consider:

- How many characters are in your Jewsical?
- What story do you want to tell? (What is your narrative?)
- Do you have any goals/objectives you'd like to accomplish through this Jewsical?
- Why are you telling this story now?

Remember this does not (nor should not) be perfect. Have fun with it!

Behatzlacha! Good luck!

Unit 2 (Sexuality)  
Lesson 1 (Sexuality 101)

**I. List of materials**

- a. List of sexualities (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- b. “Father’s Kid” lyric sheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- c. U2L1 Jewsical worksheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- d. Pens (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- e. Whiteboard/big posterboard (1)
- f. Whiteboard marker/marker for posterboard (1)
- g. Washable paint (many, variety of colors)
- h. Paintbrushes (many)
- i. Lined paper (many)
- j. Colored pencils (many)
- k. Crayons (many)
- l. Colored markers (many)

**II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)**

- a. Understand the difference between sexual and romantic attraction
- b. Identify different sexual orientations
- c. Identify different terms used when speaking about sexuality
- d. Apply analysis techniques to Jewsicals
- e. Create interpretations around Jewsicals and their source texts (potentially by writing Jewsicals themselves)

**III. Learning Plan**

*Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check-in

**00:05-00:15** Sexuality defined / List of sexualities

**00:15-00:420** Jewsical workshop explanation

**00:20-01:20** Jewsical workshop



- **00:20-00:27** Listening/answering questions 1, 2, 3
- **00:27-00:40** Small group discussions/answering question 4
- **00:40-00:45** Back together for question 4 responses
- **00:45-01:10** Jewsical exploration
- **01:10-01:20** Back together for Jewsical exploration sharing

**01:20-01:30** Jewsical workshop debrief

*Detailed procedure*

**Set-up (before students arrive):** Cue up the Jewsical using [this link](#).

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Ask students to think of one, two, or three words to describe how they're feeling in that moment to share. Start with you, then go around, starting with the person on your right. After everyone has gone, explain that today, students will be introduced to the unit on sexuality. Explain that students will be looking at different sexuality terms, the difference between sexual vs. romantic attraction, and will then explore a Jewsical based around one of our sacred texts.

**00:05-00:15** Pass out the list of sexualities (Appendix A). Explain that this list is non-exhaustive, as new labels are being created often. Talk through each term and its definition. Ask students if there are any words that they have heard but are missing from the list. If so, have each student write them into the blank spaces at the bottom of the list. Ask for any questions and answer accordingly.

**00:15-00:20** Explain that students will look at their first Jewsical today. Pass out "Father's Kid" lyric sheet (Appendix B) and U2L1 Jewsical Worksheet (Appendix C). Explain that students will be answering questions individually, in small groups, as a class, and begin their first Jewsical exploration.

**00:20-00:27** As a class, students will listen to the Jewsical and follow along with the lyrics. Let students know that they may annotate their lyrics sheet if they would like to with any thoughts they might have as they come up.

Play the Jewsical using [THIS LINK](#). After, instruct students to answer questions 1, 2 and 3 in their U2L1 Jewsical Worksheet.

**00:27-00:40** Have students go into small groups (apx. 3-5 students). In those groups, ask them to begin by sharing their answers for questions 1, 2 and 3, and then speak together

about brainstorming question 4. Let students know that each group will be sharing their answers to this question and should choose one spokesperson from their group to share.

**00:40-00:45** Have all students come back together. Have each spokesperson share their group's ideas to question 4. As students share, write down answers on a whiteboard/large posterboard.

**00:45-01:10** Ask each student to choose one or two ideas from question 4 on the whiteboard/large posterboard to explore. Explain that students may explore using any of these choices:

- Writing music and/or lyrics
- Visual arts (drawing, painting, etc.)
- Free writing
- Writing a monologue/scene
- Dance

If there is something a student wants to do that is not on this list, they may do so as long as it is appropriate, and the materials are available. Explain that students will be doing an exploration each class and they may change their choice for how they explore each time. Explain that students may work individually or in pairs/small groups (which do not need to be the same as before). Explain that students will be invited to share their explorations but will not be required to. Ask for questions. If none, give students time to explore.

**01:10-01:20** Have all students come back together. Invite each student/pair/group to share their explorations as well as a short explanation as to what it is and why they created it.

**01:20-01:30** Ask:

- What was this like for you?
- What did you uncover about the Jewsical's text from this?
- How could this Jewsical be used to talk about sexuality broadly?

Thank students for their time.

## Appendix A: List of Sexualities

### List of Sexualities (Non-exhaustive)

*(NOTE: Sexual attraction differs from romantic attraction.)*

**Allosexual** Someone who experiences sexual attraction.

**Androsexual** Someone who is sexually attracted to masculine gender expressions.

**Asexual** A spectrum. Someone who typically does not experience sexual attraction. May still experience romantic attraction.

**Bisexual** Someone who is sexually attracted to more than one gender.

**Demisexual** On the asexual spectrum. Someone who is sexually attracted to those they already have a romantic/emotional relationship with.

**Fluid** Someone whose sexuality might change over time; not finite.

**Gay** Someone who is attracted to someone of the same gender. Homosexual is a more outdated term for this word. **Lesbian** is a word that some women/non-men use to describe a sexual attraction to other women/non-men.

**Gynesexual** Someone who is sexually attracted to feminine gender expressions.

**Heterosexual/Straight** Someone who is sexually attracted to people of the opposite gender.

**Pansexual** Someone who experiences sexual attraction to others regardless of gender identity.

**Queer** An umbrella term. Used to be used as an insult but has been reclaimed by the LGBTQ+ community.

**Questioning** Someone who is questioning their current sexual identity.

**Sapiosexual** Someone who is sexually attracted to someone based on intelligence rather than gender.

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## Father's Kid

Based on Genesis 37:1-11

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: This Jewsical is sung from the perspective of Joseph before he is sold to passing Ismaelites. Joseph is a very colorful character (both literally within the coat he wears, and figuratively with the way he carries himself). The lyrics regarding "behaving like a boy, curling his hair and penciling his eyes are derived from Gen. Rabbah 84:7 (Rabbinic texts around the Talmud and Midrash).

I look up at the desert sky  
All alone, no brothers by my side  
And I ponder  
Why my mind wanders  
Away  
I'm the son of my dad's old age  
Not the youngest, but the one who receives the praise  
And presents  
Building resentment  
Each day

I dream about greatness,  
About making changes  
Like my father before me had at night  
He dreamt of ascending,  
Of ladders and blessing,  
Of being himself, which felt so right  
I wanna be like him, wanna live as he lived  
Wanna follow my dreams as high as my father's did  
I wanna be my father's kid

I know I'm the odd one out  
When my brothers berate me for singing loud  
I can't help it  
I'm just a kid  
Like them  
And I know I like things they despise  
Like my coat of many colors, I wear with pride  
As I hear  
The laughs and sneers  
From my so-called friends

I dream about growing

Perceived as all-knowing  
As my brothers push me down and say,  
“We cannot be peaceful  
As you make piecemeal  
Decisions to mess with us, no way!”  
They’ve got it all wrong, I just wanna belong  
End the fighting just like my dad and uncle did  
I wanna be my father’s kid

So what if I behave like a boy  
Curling my hair,  
Penciling my eyes? (*Gen. Rabbah 84:7*)  
It makes me feel good to be myself  
Sorry if you disagree!  
So what if my dreams are profound  
That the sun, the moon, the stars all bow down  
I don’t know where I’m gonna go  
But I know I’m gonna stay me!

I dream of a life where  
I’m living without cares,  
And everyone sings in harmony  
My dad and my brothers  
Respect me and others  
And all of the people in the streets  
The generations above  
I look back on with love  
Because they teach me all of the things my father did  
I wanna be my father’s kid

Appendix C: U2L1 Jewsical Worksheet

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is this Jewsical about?

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2. What's Jewish about this Jewsical?

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3. How does it relate to sexuality?

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4. How do your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 inform your thinking about this Jewsical?

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## Unit 2 (Sexuality)

### Lesson 2 (Lesbian/Gay)

#### I. List of materials

- a. “Miriam’s Song” lyric sheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- b. U2L2 Jewsical worksheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- c. Pens (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- d. Whiteboard/big posterboard (1)
- e. Whiteboard marker/marker for posterboard (1)
- f. Washable paint (many, variety of colors)
- g. Paintbrushes (many)
- h. Lined paper (many)
- i. Colored pencils (many)
- j. Crayons (many)
- k. Colored markers (many)

#### II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)

- a. Understand the difference between the terms “gay” and “lesbian”
- b. Apply analysis techniques to Jewsicals
- c. Create interpretations around Jewsicals and their source texts (potentially by writing Jewsicals themselves)

#### III. Learning Plan

##### *Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check-in

**00:05-00:15** Gay/lesbian definitions

**00:15-00:20** Jewsical workshop explanation

**00:20-01:20** Jewsical workshop

- **00:20-00:27** Listening/answering questions 1, 2, 3
- **00:27-00:40** Small group discussions/answering question 4
- **00:40-00:45** Back together for question 4 responses
- **00:45-01:10** Jewsical exploration

- **01:10-01:20** Back together for Jewsical exploration sharing

**01:20-01:30** Jewsical workshop debrief

*Detailed procedure*

**Set-up (before students arrive):** Cue up the Jewsical using [this link](#).

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Ask students to think of one, two, or three words to describe how they're feeling in that moment to share. Start with you, then go around, starting with the person on your right. After everyone has gone, explain that today, students will be learning about the sexualities of gay and lesbian. Explain that students will be looking at difference definitions used for each word.

**00:05-00:15** Ask:

- How do you define “gay”?

Take answers. Explain that the word “gay” has historically been in reference to a man who is attracted to other men. Explain that the definition originally meant “happy” but was used in the 1951 copy of the Oxford English Dictionary for the first time as slang for “homosexual,” although it was most likely used for years prior. The word “gay” has also been used as an insult (being substituted for stupid).

Explain that in recent years, the word “gay” has become an umbrella term like the word “queer”. Explain that some people who are not men attracted to men use the word “gay” to describe their own sexuality.

Explain that the word “lesbian” is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as “a gay woman”.

Ask:

- Why is the word “lesbian” inherently connected to the word “gay”?

Take answers. Explain that the term “lesbian” has historically been in reference to a woman who is attracted to other women. Explain that the some people use the word “lesbian” to refer to non-men who are attracted to non-men.



Explain that while “gay” and “lesbian” have historically been in reference to men and women, some nonbinary people use the terms “gay” and “lesbian.” Explain that some gender nonconforming people might do so to reject traditional gender stereotypes.

Remind students about the difference between gender identity and gender expression.

Give an example of a butch lesbian: this woman’s gender identity may be cisgender, but her gender expression is more masculine.

**00:15-00:20** Pass out “Miriam’s Song” lyric sheet (Appendix A) and U2L2 Jewsical Worksheet (Appendix B). Explain that students will be answering questions individually, in small groups, as a class, and then go into their Jewsical exploration.

**00:20-00:27** As a class, students will listen to the Jewsical and follow along with the lyrics. Let students know that they may annotate their lyrics sheet if they would like to with any thoughts they might have as they come up.

Play the Jewsical using [THIS LINK](#). After, instruct students to answer questions 1, 2 and 3 in their U2L2 Jewsical Worksheet.

**00:27-00:40** Have students go into small groups (apx. 3-5 students). In those groups, ask them to begin by sharing their answers for questions 1, 2 and 3, and then speak together about brainstorming question 4. Let students know that each group will be sharing their answers to this question and should choose one spokesperson from their group to share.

**00:40-00:45** Have all students come back together. Have each spokesperson share their group’s ideas to question 4. As students share, write down answers on a whiteboard/large posterboard.

**00:45-01:10** Ask each student to choose one or two ideas from question 4 on the whiteboard/large posterboard to explore. Explain that students may explore using any of these choices:

- Writing music and/or lyrics
- Visual arts (drawing, painting, etc.)
- Free writing
- Writing a monologue/scene
- Dance

If there is something a student wants to do that is not on this list, they may do so as long as it is appropriate and the materials are available. Explain that students will be doing an

exploration each class and they may change their choice for how they explore each time. Explain that students may work individually or in pairs/small groups (which do not need to be the same as before). Explain that students will be invited to share their explorations but will not be required to. Ask for questions. If none, give students time to explore.

**01:10-01:20** Have all students come back together. Invite each student/pair/group to share their explorations as well as a short explanation as to what it is and why they created it.

**01:20-01:30** Ask:

- What was this like for you?
- What did you uncover about the Jewish's text from this?
- How could this Jewish be used to talk about gay/lesbian sexualities and people broadly?

Thank students for their time.

Appendix A: “Miriam’s Song” lyric sheet

## Miriam’s Song

Based on “The Tent of Miriam” from *Queering the Text* by Andrew Ramer

ARTIST’S STATEMENT: This Jewsical focuses in on the character of Miriam as she sings while crossing the Sea of Reeds to escape the Egyptians. The lyrics are based on “The Tent of Miriam” from *Queering the Text* by Andrew Ramer. Miriam’s sexuality is never specified in the Torah, but midrash gives us an opportunity to explore many possibilities.

The sky is dark, the waters high  
The fear is tangible inside our hands  
People are stumbling, running by  
Don’t let go, my love  
They’re getting closer to the shore  
I see my brother reaching sweet dry land  
Each step is closer than before  
Keep me close, my love

Don’t look back, keep my eyes ahead  
Soon you’ll be safe, resting in your bed  
Looking in her eyes, brighter than the skies in the evening  
More and more people get across  
Wandering in the crowds, cold and taking pause  
We don’t have much, but we have enough  
Have our freedom  
And our singing

Ah!  
Ah!

We dance!  
Dance in celebration!  
Dance without hesitation!  
Dance to remember all that which we have!  
The ocean’s waves parted!  
They rose up like horses!  
The solders came after us,  
But we crossed!  
Every one of us crossed!  
The waters parted and we crossed  
Into freedom!

The night is coming up to us  
We’ll kiss her softly as she says hello  
I’ll kiss you softly, too

Don't let go, my love  
I look into the stars above  
I look into your eyes and see the light  
One journey down and more to go  
Keep my close, my love

Appendix B: U2L2 Jewsical Worksheet

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is this Jewsical about?

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2. What's Jewish about this Jewsical?

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3. How does it relate to gay/lesbian sexualities and people?

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4. How do your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 inform your thinking about this Jewsical?

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## Unit 2 (Sexuality)

### Lesson 3 (Bisexuality/Pansexuality)

#### I. List of materials

- a. “The Pledge of Ruth” lyric sheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- b. U2L3 Jewsical worksheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- c. Pens (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- d. Whiteboard/big posterboard (1)
- e. Whiteboard marker/marker for posterboard (1)
- f. Washable paint (many, variety of colors)
- g. Paintbrushes (many)
- h. Lined paper (many)
- i. Colored pencils (many)
- j. Crayons (many)
- k. Colored markers (many)

#### II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)

- a. Understand the difference between bisexuality and pansexuality
- b. Apply analysis techniques to Jewsicals
- c. Create interpretations around Jewsicals and their source texts (potentially by writing Jewsicals themselves)

#### III. Learning Plan

##### *Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check-in

**00:05-00:15** Bisexuality/pansexuality definitions

**00:15-00:20** Jewsical workshop explanation

**00:20-01:20** Jewsical workshop

- **00:20-00:27** Listening/answering questions 1, 2, 3
- **00:27-00:40** Small group discussions/answering question 4
- **00:40-00:45** Back together for question 4 responses
- **00:45-01:10** Jewsical exploration

- **01:10-01:20** Back together for Jewsical exploration sharing

**01:20-01:30** Jewsical workshop debrief

*Detailed procedure*

**Set-up (before students arrive):** Cue up the Jewsical using [this link](#).

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Ask students to think of one, two, or three words to describe how they're feeling in that moment to share. Start with you, then go around, starting with the person on your right. After everyone has gone, explain that today, students will be learning about bisexuality and pansexuality.

**00:05-00:15** Explain that bisexuality and pansexuality are two similar but different sexualities. Explain that bisexuality refers to having sexual attraction to two or more genders. Explain that bisexuality has historically meant attraction to men or women, but because of our society's evolving understanding of gender, it now means two or more sexualities, neither of which must exclusively be men nor women.

Explain that pansexuality refers to having sexual attraction to someone regardless of gender. Explain that the prefix "pan" means "all" in Greek.

Explain that there has been stigmas against bisexuality and pansexuality, with people assuming that they are just "on their way to being gay". Ask:

- Why is it important to let people label themselves?

Explain that identities might change over time, and it's important to let people label themselves without trying to step in based off of our own information.

**00:15-00:20** Pass out "The Pledge of Ruth" lyric sheet (Appendix A) and U2L3 Jewsical Worksheet (Appendix B). Explain that students will be answering questions individually, in small groups, as a class, and then go into their Jewsical exploration.

**00:20-00:27** As a class, students will listen to the Jewsical and follow along with the lyrics. Let students know that they may annotate their lyrics sheet if they would like to with any thoughts they might have as they come up.

Play the Jewsical using [THIS LINK](#). After, instruct students to answer questions 1, 2 and 3 in their U2L3 Jewsical Worksheet.

**00:27-00:40** Have students go into small groups (apx. 3-5 students). In those groups, ask them to begin by sharing their answers for questions 1, 2 and 3, and then speak together about brainstorming question 4. Let students know that each group will be sharing their answers to this question and should choose one spokesperson from their group to share.

**00:40-00:45** Have all students come back together. Have each spokesperson share their group's ideas to question 4. As students share, write down answers on a whiteboard/large posterboard.

**00:45-01:10** Ask each student to choose one or two ideas from question 4 on the whiteboard/large posterboard to explore. Explain that students may explore using any of these choices:

- Writing music and/or lyrics
- Visual arts (drawing, painting, etc.)
- Free writing
- Writing a monologue/scene
- Dance

If there is something a student wants to do that is not on this list, they may do so as long as it is appropriate and the materials are available. Explain that students will be doing an exploration each class and they may change their choice for how they explore each time. Explain that students may work individually or in pairs/small groups (which do not need to be the same as before). Explain that students will be invited to share their explorations but will not be required to. Ask for questions. If none, give students time to explore.

**01:10-01:20** Have all students come back together. Invite each student/pair/group to share their explorations as well as a short explanation as to what it is and why they created it.

**01:20-01:30** Ask:

- What was this like for you?
- What did you uncover about the Jewish text from this?
- How could this Jewish text be used to talk about bisexuality/pansexuality broadly?

Thank students for their time.



## The Pledge of Ruth

Based on Ruth 1:1-17

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: This Jewish song is written from the perspectives of Naomi and Ruth, two figures from the Book of Ruth. Naomi was the mother to Ruth and Orpah's late husbands. After the two men die, Naomi tries to send them away. While Orpah leaves (in tears), Ruth demands to stay. Ruth's final stanza is taken directly from the Book of Ruth (Ruth 1:16-17).

### Ruth

I've lost my loves, and so have you  
These are the days when judges rule  
And they've not ruled in our favor  
You travelled with me all this way  
But I cannot ask you to stay  
Go back to the houses of your mothers

Hashem will show you kindness  
As you've shown to you lost ones and to me  
You'll find another lover  
That much is clear to see  
I wish you all the best  
I wish you health and good success  
Don't forget me or our time together  
Always remember

### Ruth

Naomi, Naomi, Naomi, please don't send us away  
Naomi, Naomi, Naomi, we want to stay  
We will return to your people with you  
You met us as Moabite women,  
Now we are proud Jews!

### Naomi

Turn back, why should you go with me?  
I can't give you husbands anymore  
And would you wait until they're grown?  
My lot is much bitter than yours  
For Hashem has gone against me  
My loves, please stop your weeping and go  
Go  
Go

### Ruth

Wherever you go, I will go

And where you lodge, I will lodge  
Your people shall be my people  
And your God my God  
Where you die, will I die  
And there will I be buried  
This and more may Hashem do to me  
If anything but death parts you and me

Appendix B: U2L3 Jewsical Worksheet

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is this Jewsical about?

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2. What's Jewish about this Jewsical?

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3. How does it relate to bisexuality/pansexuality?

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4. How do your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 inform your thinking about this Jewsical?

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Unit 2 (Sexuality)  
Lesson 4 (Asexuality Spectrum)

**I. List of materials**

- a. “More Than Enough” lyric sheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- b. U2L4 Jewsical worksheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- c. Pens (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- d. Whiteboard/big posterboard (1)
- e. Whiteboard marker/marker for posterboard (1)
- f. Washable paint (many, variety of colors)
- g. Paintbrushes (many)
- h. Lined paper (many)
- i. Colored pencils (many)
- j. Crayons (many)
- k. Colored markers (many)

**II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)**

- a. Understand the asexuality spectrum
- b. Apply analysis techniques to Jewsicals
- c. Create interpretations around Jewsicals and their source texts (potentially by writing Jewsicals themselves)

**III. Learning Plan**

*Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check-in

**00:05-00:15** Asexuality spectrum definitions

**00:15-00:20** Jewsical workshop explanation

**00:20-01:20** Jewsical workshop

- **00:20-00:27** Listening/answering questions 1, 2, 3
- **00:27-00:40** Small group discussions/answering question 4
- **00:40-00:45** Back together for question 4 responses
- **00:45-01:10** Jewsical exploration

- **01:10-01:20** Back together for Jewsical exploration sharing

**01:20-01:30** Jewsical workshop debrief

*Detailed procedure*

**Set-up (before students arrive):** Cue up the Jewsical using [this link](#).

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Ask students to think of one, two, or three words to describe how they're feeling in that moment to share. Start with you, then go around, starting with the person on your right. After everyone has gone, explain that today, students will be learning about the asexuality spectrum.

**00:05-00:15** Explain that someone who is asexual usually has no sexual feelings nor attractions to others. Explain that asexuality is a spectrum, and there are different sub-labels within the spectrum. Share these sub-labels with the class:

- Aromantic – someone who does not have romantic attraction to anyone
- Grey-asexual/greyromantic – someone who may have low sexual/romantic attraction to others
- Demisexual/demiromantic – Someone who is not sexually or romantically attracted to someone unless an emotional bond is formed

Ask:

- How can someone become Jewish? (*Answers may include: parental lineage; born into Judaism; conversion*)

Explain that many Jews believe in the importance of continuing the Jewish people. Ask:

- What does l'dor v'dor mean? (*answer: from generation to generation*)

Explain that we are commanded in to “be fruitful and multiply” (Genesis 1:28). Ask:

- How can we take this commandment and make it more inclusive for Jewish people on the asexuality spectrum?

Explain that while the Torah does not explicitly say anything regarding asexuality, Rabbinic sage Simeon ben Azzai chose not to get married nor engage in sexual activity so he could spend all of his time studying Torah. Explain that he will be the subject of our Jewsical today.

**00:15-00:20** Pass out “More Than Enough” lyric sheet (Appendix A) and U2L4 Jewsical Worksheet (Appendix B). Explain that students will be answering questions individually, in small groups, as a class, and then go into their Jewsical exploration.

**00:20-00:27** As a class, students will listen to the Jewsical and follow along with the lyrics. Let students know that they may annotate their lyrics sheet if they would like to with any thoughts they might have as they come up.

Play the Jewsical using [THIS LINK](#). After, instruct students to answer questions 1, 2 and 3 in their U2L4 Jewsical Worksheet.

**00:27-00:40** Have students go into small groups (apx. 3-5 students). In those groups, ask them to begin by sharing their answers for questions 1, 2 and 3, and then speak together about brainstorming question 4. Let students know that each group will be sharing their answers to this question and should choose one spokesperson from their group to share.

**00:40-00:45** Have all students come back together. Have each spokesperson share their group’s ideas to question 4. As students share, write down answers on a whiteboard/large posterboard.

**00:45-01:10** Ask each student to choose one or two ideas from question 4 on the whiteboard/large posterboard to explore. Explain that students may explore using any of these choices:

- Writing music and/or lyrics
- Visual arts (drawing, painting, etc.)
- Free writing
- Writing a monologue/scene
- Dance

If there is something a student wants to do that is not on this list, they may do so as long as it is appropriate and the materials are available. Explain that students will be doing an exploration each class and they may change their choice for how they explore each time. Explain that students may work individually or in pairs/small groups (which do not need to be the same as before). Explain that students will be invited to share their explorations but will not be required to. Ask for questions. If none, give students time to explore.

**01:10-01:20** Have all students come back together. Invite each student/pair/group to share their explorations as well as a short explanation as to what it is and why they created it.

**01:20-01:30** Ask:

- What was this like for you?
- What did you uncover about the Jewish's text from this?
- How could this Jewish be used to talk about the asexuality broadly?

Thank students for their time.

## More Than Enough

Based on the life of the Rabbinic sage Simeon ben Azzai

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: This Jewsical is written from the perspective of Rabbinic sage Simeon ben Azzai, who refused to marry as he was worried it would interfere with his studies. Lyrically, it speaks of ben Azzai's refutes that something is wrong with him because of who he is. While his sexuality is never specified, one might wonder if he had any desire to have a sexual or romantic partner at all.

I don't want a wife  
I don't need a home  
Can't you understand  
That I'm fine alone?  
Not everybody wants what you do  
I can admit, she's kind of pretty  
Now can I get back to my studies?  
I promise, I don't want what you do

I'm happy just the way I am  
And I'm sorry if that scares you but I know that's not my issue  
I put my faith inside God's hand  
And I swear that used to scare me, but that fear is just a memory  
So don't try to make me another carbon copy  
Of the rest of us  
I'm more than enough

These people swarm around my place  
They give me pity, give no space  
Say I'm a living contradiction  
So I don't dedicate my life  
To one small verse inside the lines  
Of text I bet they don't feel free in

I'm happy just the way I am  
And I'm sorry if that scares you but I know that's not my issue  
I put my faith inside God's hand  
And I swear that used to scare me, but that fear is just a memory  
So don't try to make me another carbon copy  
Of the rest of us  
I'm more than enough

Now, don't get me wrong  
It's still important to continue our lineage  
But, it's not for me



Who am we to judge? We're made B'tzelem Eloheim  
There are enough of us to prosper  
It's our commandment, it's our scripture  
But another's not in my picture  
But maybe you

I'm happy just the way I am  
And I'm sorry if that scares you but I know that's not my issue  
I put my faith inside God's hand  
And I swear that used to scare me, but that fear is just a memory  
So don't try to make me another carbon copy  
Of the rest of us  
I'm more than enough

Appendix B: U2L4 Jewsical Worksheet

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is this Jewsical about?

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2. What's Jewish about this Jewsical?

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3. How does it relate to the asexuality spectrum?

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4. How do your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 inform your thinking about this Jewsical?

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Unit 2 (Sexuality)  
Lesson 5 (Queer/Sexuality Fluidity)

**I. List of materials**

- a. “We Are One” lyric sheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- b. U2L5 Jewsical worksheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- c. Pens (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- d. Whiteboard/big posterboard (1)
- e. Whiteboard marker/marker for posterboard (1)
- f. Washable paint (many, variety of colors)
- g. Paintbrushes (many)
- h. Lined paper (many)
- i. Colored pencils (many)
- j. Crayons (many)
- k. Colored markers (many)

**II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)**

- a. Understand the definition of the word “queer”
- b. Understand what sexual fluidity is
- c. Apply analysis techniques to Jewsicals
- d. Create interpretations around Jewsicals and their source texts (potentially by writing Jewsicals themselves)

**III. Learning Plan**

*Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check-in

**00:05-00:15** Queer/sexual fluidity definitions

**00:15-00:20** Jewsical workshop explanation

**00:20-01:20** Jewsical workshop

- **00:20-00:27** Listening/answering questions 1, 2, 3
- **00:27-00:40** Small group discussions/answering question 4
- **00:40-00:45** Back together for question 4 responses

- **00:45-01:10** Jewsical exploration
- **01:10-01:20** Back together for Jewsical exploration sharing

**01:20-01:30** Jewsical workshop debrief

*Detailed procedure*

**Set-up (before students arrive):** Cue up the Jewsical using [this link](#).

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Ask students to think of one, two, or three words to describe how they're feeling in that moment to share. Start with you, then go around, starting with the person on your right. After everyone has gone, explain that today, students will be learning about the word "queer" and sexual fluidity.

**00:05-00:15** Explain that the word "queer" began as a slur for homosexual men in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, continuing through the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is still used today. However, members of the LGBTQ+ community began reclaiming it in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, using it especially in the 1980s and 1990s to explicitly act in defiance of the word's original use. Explain that the word queer also began being used by people beyond homosexual men to find a word that could be used for all members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Ask:

- What is solidarity? What is important about it?

Explain that because it is a reclaimed word, it's understood that members of the LGBTQ+ are the ones who use the word queer, and that their cisgender and straight allies should not use this word.

Explain that the conversation will now shift to sexual fluidity. Explain that someone with a fluid sexuality may not have a specific nor solidified sexual orientation. Explain that this does not mean the person is always trying to figure out their sexuality, and their sexuality may in fact be sexually fluid. Ask:

- Why are labels important?
- How do we become comfortable with the uncertainty of not knowing which labels may or may not fit us?

Explain that it's perfectly normal to question one's sexuality and that no one else may tell you what yours is.

**00:15-00:20** Pass out "We Are One" lyric sheet (Appendix A) and U2L5 Jewsical Worksheet (Appendix B). Explain that students will be answering questions individually, in small groups, as a class, and then go into their Jewsical exploration.

**00:20-00:27** As a class, students will listen to the Jewsical and follow along with the lyrics. Let students know that they may annotate their lyrics sheet if they would like to with any thoughts they might have as they come up.

Play the Jewsical using [THIS LINK](#). After, instruct students to answer questions 1, 2 and 3 in their U5L2 Jewsical Worksheet.

**00:27-00:40** Have students go into small groups (apx. 3-5 students). In those groups, ask them to begin by sharing their answers for questions 1, 2 and 3, and then speak together about brainstorming question 4. Let students know that each group will be sharing their answers to this question and should choose one spokesperson from their group to share.

**00:40-00:45** Have all students come back together. Have each spokesperson share their group's ideas to question 4. As students share, write down answers on a whiteboard/large posterboard.

**00:45-01:10** Ask each student to choose one or two ideas from question 4 on the whiteboard/large posterboard to explore. Explain that students may explore using any of these choices:

- Writing music and/or lyrics
- Visual arts (drawing, painting, etc.)
- Free writing
- Writing a monologue/scene
- Dance

If there is something a student wants to do that is not on this list, they may do so as long as it is appropriate and the materials are available. Explain that students will be doing an exploration each class and they may change their choice for how they explore each time. Explain that students may work individually or in pairs/small groups (which do not need to be the same as before). Explain that students will be invited to share their explorations but will not be required to. Ask for questions. If none, give students time to explore.

**01:10-01:20** Have all students come back together. Invite each student/pair/group to share their explorations as well as a short explanation as to what it is and why they created it.

**01:20-01:30** Ask:

- What was this like for you?
- What did you uncover about the Jewish's text from this?
- How could this Jewish be used to talk about gay/lesbian sexualities and people broadly?

Thank students for their time.

## Appendix A: “We Are One” Lyrics

### “We Are One”

Inspired by the poem “Before there was Law” from *Queering the Text* by Andrew Ramer

ARTIST’S STATEMENT: This Jewsical is written from the perspective of someone singing to their lover. The narrative is intentionally slightly ambiguous to mirror the fact that queerness itself may be ambiguous. This Jewsical draws from the poem “Before there was Law,” from *Queering the Text* by Andrew Ramer, which speaks on the interconnectedness of law, Torah, the linear timeline of creation, and love.

Before the temples and the kings  
Before Moses, and Noah, and Adam and Eve  
Before the skies and the trees,  
There was love  
Before there were families  
We were all in God’s arms, as God whispered to you and me  
“I will always love you,  
We are One”

I see my beloved from across the mountain tops  
I see them in the valleys below  
I see them wherever I go  
I see my beloved in the faces of those I cross  
I see them as smiles are exchanged  
I come home to them everyday

Before two there was One  
Taller than the tallest trees and lower than the deepest seas  
I’m so lucky I found  
My love  
Before there were memories  
Before hopes and ideas and questions and dreams  
God said to you and me  
“We are One”

I see you from across the mountain tops  
I see you in the valleys below  
I see you wherever I go  
I see you in the faces of those I cross  
I see you as smiles are exchanged  
I come home to you everyday

Kiss me  
Speak the word of the Torah without saying anything  
Hold me

As they hold up the laws with unwavering certainty  
Take me  
Back to the days of creation, I want to see them  
With my own eyes  
Be mesmerized



Appendix B: U2L5 Jewsical Worksheet

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is this Jewsical about?

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2. What's Jewish about this Jewsical?

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3. How does it relate to queerness?

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4. How do your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 inform your thinking about this Jewsical?

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Unit 2 (Sexuality)  
Lesson 6 (Jewsical writing)

**I. List of materials**

- a. Lined paper (plenty)
- b. Pens (1 per student, plus some extras)
- c. Review sheet (1 per student, plus some extras) (Appendix A)
- d. List of Jewish values (1 per student, plus some extras) (Appendix B)

**II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)**

- a. Apply knowledge from past lessons into a Jewsical
- b. Write a Jewsical
- c. Give feedback to each other as classmates

**III. Learning Plan**

*Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check in/set induction

**00:05-00:15** Reviewing past sessions/Jewsical writing review

**00:15-00:45** Jewsical writing

**00:45-00:59** Jewsical sharings/conversations

**00:59-01:00** Closure

*Detailed procedure*

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Ask students to think of one, two, or three words to describe how they're feeling in that moment to share. Start with you, then go around, starting with the person on your right. After everyone has gone, read this quote by Ben Bag-Bag from Pirkei Avot 5:22:

- "Turn it and turn it, for everything is in it."

Ask:

- What does this quote mean to you in the context of the work we've done thus far?

Explain that today, students will be writing Jewsicals based on what they've learned so far. Explain that the Jewsicals do not need to be a particular length but must be at least eight lines of lyric. Explain that the Jewsicals do not need to be set to melodies. Explain that students will be sharing their Jewsicals with the class.

**00:05-00:15** Pass out the review sheet (Appendix A) and the possible Jewish values (Appendix B). Explain that students will choose up to three values and one bullet point from the review sheet to write a Jewsical on.

Remind students to take the following into consideration when writing their Jewsical:

- What is the story you'd like to tell? Is it true to the source text or more adaptive?
- How many characters are in your Jewsical?
- How long is your Jewsical?
- Are there any goals or objectives you want to accomplish by the end?

Ask students who would like to work in small groups. Put those students into groups of 2-5.

Ask if students would like any clarification on this or have any other questions and answer accordingly.

**00:20-00:45** Give students time to work on their Jewsicals. As they do, walk around, and check in with groups to see if they want/need help with their writing, melodies, and/or plot (as well as other questions that might pop up). Give students a five minute and one minute warning.

**00:45-00:59** Bring all students back together. Have each student/group present their Jewsicals to the class and share which source and bullet point they've chosen. After each Jewsical is shared, ask to the class:

- What did you notice?
- How did the lyrics connect with the source material?
- Where else do you think this Jewsical could go?

**00:59-01:00** Close by explaining that next class, students will be diving into the second core unit on gender. Thank students for their time.

## Sexuality Review Sheet

**Gay:** Originally meant happy but was used in the 1951 copy of the Oxford English Dictionary for the first time as slang for “homosexual”. Has been used as an insult (being a substitute for the word “stupid”). Has become an umbrella term for some. Some people who are not men attracted to men use the word “gay” to describe their own sexuality.

**Lesbian:** Defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as “a gay woman”. Has historically been in reference to women who are attracted to other women. Some use this word in reference to non-men (people who do not identify as men) who are attracted to other non-men.

*Some nonbinary people use terms “gay” and “lesbian”. Some gender nonconforming people might do so to reject traditional gender stereotypes.*

**Bisexuality:** When someone is attracted to two or more genders, neither of which must exclusively be men nor women.

**Pansexuality:** When someone is attracted to someone else regardless of gender. The prefix “pan” means “all” in Greek.

**Asexuality:** A spectrum. Someone who may not have sexual attraction to others.

**Aromantic:** someone who does not have romantic attraction to anyone.

**Grey-asexual/greyromantic:** someone who may have low sexual/romantic attraction to others.

**Demisexual/demiromantic:** Someone who is not sexually or romantically attracted to someone unless an emotional bond is formed.

**Queer:** Began as a slur for homosexual men in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, continuing through the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is still used today. However, members of the LGBTQ+ community use it to reclaim it. The word is currently used by some as an umbrella term and by others as their sexuality.

**Sexual fluidity:** A term for someone who may not have a specific nor solidified sexual orientation. Someone may use this term to describe their own sexuality.

## **Jewish Values**

*Please choose up to three values for your Jewical.*

**Trustworthiness:** *Emunah*

**Respect:** *Kavod*

**Responsibility:** *Achrayut*

**Fairness:** *Tzedek*

**Kindness:** *Chesed*

**Community:** *Kehillah*

**Repairing the World:** *Tikkun Olam*

**Justice:** *Tzedakah*

**Courage:** *Ometz lev*

**Collaboration:** *Shiluv*

**Work/worship/service:** *Avodah*

Unit 3 (Gender)  
Lesson 1 (Gender 101)

**I. List of materials**

- a. List of gender identities (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- b. “Wrestle” lyric sheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- c. U3L1 Jewsical worksheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- d. Pens (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- e. Whiteboard/big posterboard (1)
- f. Whiteboard marker/marker for posterboard (1)
- g. Washable paint (many, variety of colors)
- h. Paintbrushes (many)
- i. Lined paper (many)
- j. Colored pencils (many)
- k. Crayons (many)
- l. Colored markers (many)

**II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)**

- a. Understand the difference between gender identity and gender expression
- b. Identify different gender identities
- c. Identify different terms used when speaking about gender
- d. Apply analysis techniques to Jewsicals
- e. Create interpretations around Jewsicals and their source texts (potentially by writing Jewsicals themselves)

**III. Learning Plan**

*Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check-in

**00:05-00:15** Gender defined / List of gender identities / difference between gender identity and gender expression

**00:15-00:20** Jewsical workshop explanation

**00:20-01:20** Jewsical workshop

- **00:20-00:27** Listening/answering questions 1, 2, 3
- **00:27-00:40** Small group discussions/answering question 4
- **00:40-00:45** Back together for question 4 responses
- **00:45-01:10** Jewsical exploration
- **01:10-01:20** Back together for Jewsical exploration sharing

**01:20-01:30** Jewsical workshop debrief

*Detailed procedure*

**Set-up (before students arrive):** Cue up the Jewsical using [this link](#).

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Ask students:

- What's something you do or wear that helps you feel like yourself?

Take answers. Explain that students will be looking at different gender identity terms, the difference between gender identity and gender, and then go into our Jewsical exploration workshop.

**00:05-00:15** Pass out the list of gender identities (Appendix A). Explain that this list is non-exhaustive, as new labels are being created often. Talk through each term and its definition. Ask students if there are any words that they have heard but are missing from the list. If so, have each student write them into the blank spaces at the bottom of the list. Ask for any questions and answer accordingly.

Explain that gender identity does not equate to gender expression. Explain that as a society, we have assigned specific types of expression, such as clothing and hair styles, to one gender or another. Explain that any one person may present however they feel comfortable. *(Teacher note: if you feel comfortable, you may describe your own gender identity and then literally describe what you're wearing. For example, if I was in the room, I would say, 'I am a trans woman currently wearing a blouse, a blazer, jeans and boots. None of that confines me to my gender identity.'*)

**00:15-00:20** Explain that students will look at their first Jewsical of the unit today. Pass out "Wrestle" lyric sheet (Appendix B) and U3L1 Jewsical Worksheet (Appendix C).

Explain that students will be answering questions individually, in small groups, as a class, and begin their first Jewish exploration.

**00:20-00:27** As a class, students will listen to the Jewish and follow along with the lyrics. Let students know that they may annotate their lyrics sheet if they would like to with any thoughts they might have as they come up.

Play the Jewish using [THIS LINK](#). After, instruct students to answer questions 1, 2 and 3 in their U3L1 Jewish Worksheet.

**00:27-00:40** Have students go into small groups (apx. 3-5 students). In those groups, ask them to begin by sharing their answers for questions 1, 2 and 3, and then speak together about brainstorming question 4. Let students know that each group will be sharing their answers to this question and should choose one spokesperson from their group to share.

**00:40-00:45** Have all students come back together. Have each spokesperson share their group's ideas to question 4. As students share, write down answers on a whiteboard/large posterboard.

**00:45-01:10** Ask each student to choose one or two ideas from question 4 on the whiteboard/large posterboard to explore. Explain that students may explore using any of these choices:

- Writing music and/or lyrics
- Visual arts (drawing, painting, etc.)
- Free writing
- Writing a monologue/scene
- Dance

If there is something a student wants to do that is not on this list, they may do so as long as it is appropriate, and the materials are available. Explain that students will be doing an exploration each class and they may change their choice for how they explore each time. Explain that students may work individually or in pairs/small groups (which do not need to be the same as before). Explain that students will be invited to share their explorations but will not be required to. Ask for questions. If none, give students time to explore.

**01:10-01:20** Have all students come back together. Invite each student/pair/group to share their explorations as well as a short explanation as to what it is and why they created it.



**01:20-01:30** Ask:

- What was this like for you?
- What did you uncover about the Jewsical's text from this?
- How could this Jewsical be used to talk about gender broadly?

Thank students for their time.

Appendix A: List of Sexualities

List of Gender identities (Non-exhaustive)

*(NOTE: Gender identity differs from gender expression.)*

**Agender** Someone who does not identify with any particular gender or may not have a gender.

**Bigender** A person who has two genders.

**Cisgender** Someone whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Demiboy/demigirl** Someone who is nonbinary but also identifies as a man or woman.

**Genderfluid** Someone whose gender identity and expression shifts between or outside of society's expectations of what gender is.

**Genderqueer** Someone who has a gender identity or expression that is not the same as society's expectations for their assigned sex or assumed gender; someone who lives their life outside of society's expectations.

**Neutrois** Someone who is nonbinary and also has a neutral or null gender.

**Nonbinary** Someone who may not experience gender within the gender binary.

**Omnigender** Someone who experiences and possesses all genders.

**Polygender/Pangender** Someone who experiences and displays parts of multiple genders.

**Transgender** Someone whose gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth. An umbrella term.

**Two Spirit** An umbrella term that encompasses different genders in Indigenous Native American communities. Specifically reserved for those who are Indigenous Native American.

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## Father's Kid

Based on Genesis 32:22-32

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: This Jewsical is a poem from the perspective of Jacob, one of our patriarchs, as he wrestles with the idea of his identity through the many moments he's physically wrestled throughout his life. Jacob, later renamed Israel after wrestling with an angel, ponders the inner battle he faces alone in opposition with the external battles he's won.

I wrestle each day.  
I wrestled in the womb, wrestled with my brother, wrestled with an angel.  
I wrestle with my mind,  
With the idea of who I'm supposed to be.  
I wrestle with my sons, to build up their strength and to spread their laughter like God promised  
for our descendants, across the land, far and wide.  
I wrestle with my name. Jacob, Israel, both mine, neither mine.  
I wrestle with too much,  
Through the night in the sand,  
Through the day in the water,  
With my wives and with my words.  
They say I have prevailed,  
But I have prevailed outwardly.  
If God is all knowing,  
And we are all made *b'tzelem Eloheim*,  
Then God must know about the wrestling inside.  
Right?

Appendix C: U3L1 Jewsical Worksheet

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is this Jewsical about?

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2. What's Jewish about this Jewsical?

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3. How does it relate to sexuality?

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4. How do your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 inform your thinking about this Jewsical?

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## Unit 3 (Gender)

### Lesson 2 (The Transgender Umbrella)

#### I. List of materials

- a. “Human Nature” lyric sheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- b. U3L2 Jewsical worksheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- c. Pens (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- d. Whiteboard/big posterboard (1)
- e. Whiteboard marker/marker for posterboard (1)
- f. Projector (1) (includes way to connect device to projector) with umbrella image cued
- g. Transgender Umbrella (Appendix A)
- h. Washable paint (many, variety of colors)
- i. Paintbrushes (many)
- j. Lined paper (many)
- k. Colored pencils (many)
- l. Crayons (many)
- m. Colored markers (many)

#### II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)

- a. Understand the definition of the word “transgender”
- b. Understand the transgender umbrella
- c. Apply analysis techniques to Jewsicals
- d. Create interpretations around Jewsicals and their source texts (potentially by writing Jewsicals themselves)

#### III. Learning Plan

##### *Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check-in

**00:05-00:15** What is the transgender umbrella?

**00:15-00:20** Jewsical workshop explanation

**00:20-01:20** Jewsical workshop

- **00:20-00:27** Listening/answering questions 1, 2, 3
- **00:27-00:40** Small group discussions/answering question 4
- **00:40-00:45** Back together for question 4 responses
- **00:45-01:10** Jewsical exploration
- **01:10-01:20** Back together for Jewsical exploration sharing

**01:20-01:30** Jewsical workshop debrief

*Detailed procedure*

**Set-up (before students arrive):** Cue up the Jewsical using [this link](#).

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Explain that today, students will be learning about the transgender umbrella.

**00:05-00:15** Explain that the word “transgender” began with the word “transvestite”, which was used in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as a way to describe people who wore clothing that was usually associated with the opposite sex. In 1949, the word “transsexual” was used to describe people that went through what we now know as gender affirmation or gender confirmation surgery, which is where someone has surgery to change their sex characteristics. One of the first uses of the word “transgender” was in 1965, found within a medical journal. It was originally used as a synonym for “Transsexual”. Explain that today, the word “transgender” is used to describe someone whose gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth, and that gender does not equate to one’s sex.

Project the image of the transgender umbrella (Appendix A). Explain that underneath the transgender umbrella are two further umbrellas: one for binary transgender people, and one for nonbinary people. Explain that binary trans people are people who exist within the gender binary of male and female, but this gender identity still does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth. Explain that the nonbinary umbrella has further identities, many of which were covered in the last session. Ask:

- When can labels be useful?

Take answers. Explain that for many, labels help people better understand who they are in the world.

**00:15-00:20** Pass out “We Are One” lyric sheet (Appendix B) and U3L2 Jewsical Worksheet (Appendix C). Explain that students will be answering questions individually, in small groups, as a class, and then go into their Jewsical exploration.

**00:20-00:27** As a class, students will listen to the Jewsical and follow along with the lyrics. Let students know that they may annotate their lyrics sheet if they would like to with any thoughts they might have as they come up.

Play the Jewsical using [THIS LINK](#). After, instruct students to answer questions 1, 2 and 3 in their U3L2 Jewsical Worksheet.

**00:27-00:40** Have students go into small groups (apx. 3-5 students). In those groups, ask them to begin by sharing their answers for questions 1, 2 and 3, and then speak together about brainstorming question 4. Let students know that each group will be sharing their answers to this question and should choose one spokesperson from their group to share.

**00:40-00:45** Have all students come back together. Have each spokesperson share their group’s ideas to question 4. As students share, write down answers on a whiteboard/large posterboard.

**00:45-01:10** Ask each student to choose one or two ideas from question 4 on the whiteboard/large posterboard to explore. Explain that students may explore using any of these choices:

- Writing music and/or lyrics
- Visual arts (drawing, painting, etc.)
- Free writing
- Writing a monologue/scene
- Dance

If there is something a student wants to do that is not on this list, they may do so as long as it is appropriate and the materials are available. Explain that students will be doing an exploration each class and they may change their choice for how they explore each time. Explain that students may work individually or in pairs/small groups (which do not need to be the same as before). Explain that students will be invited to share their explorations but will not be required to. Ask for questions. If none, give students time to explore.

**01:10-01:20** Have all students come back together. Invite each student/pair/group to share their explorations as well as a short explanation as to what it is and why they created it.

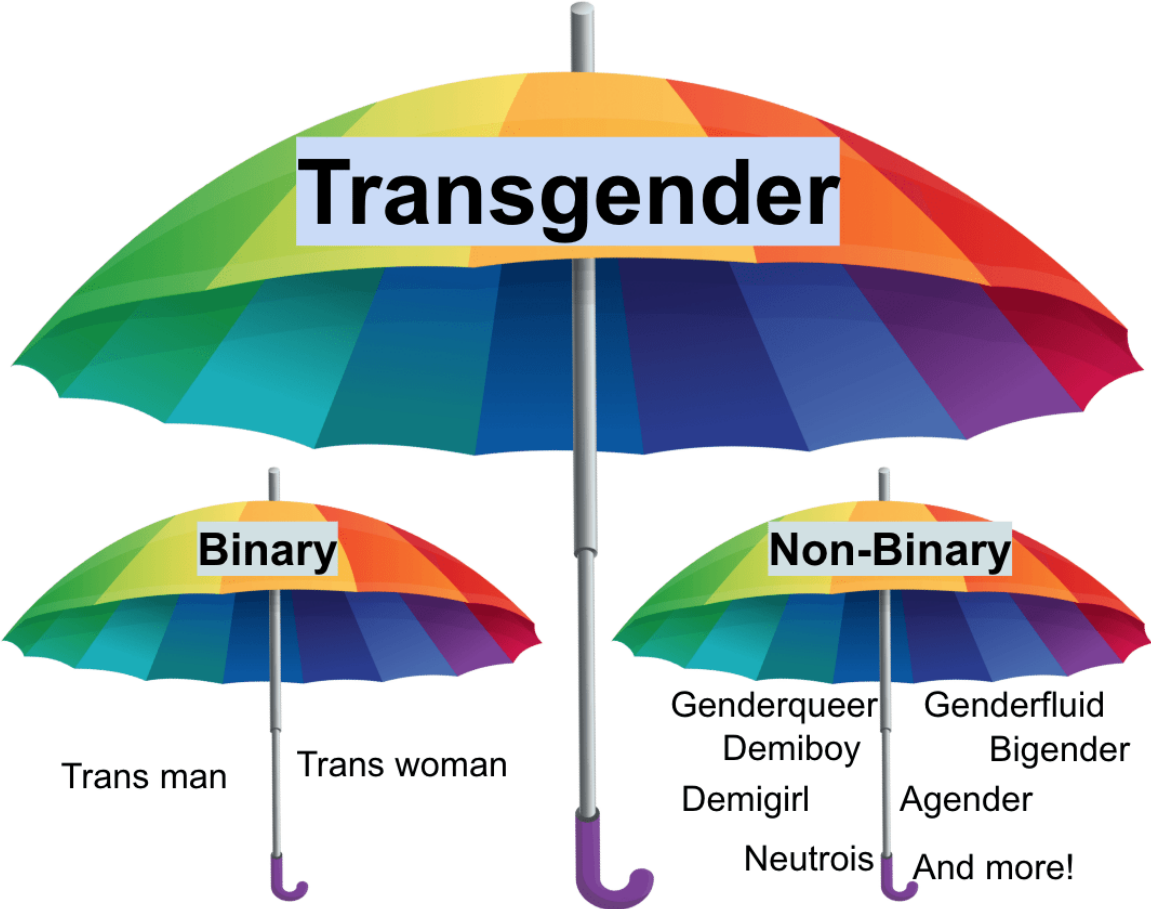
**01:20-01:30** Ask:

- What was this like for you?
- What did you uncover about the Jewish's text from this?
- How could this Jewish be used to talk about transgender identities and the transgender umbrella?

Thank students for their time.



Appendix A: Transgender Umbrella Image



\*See “List of Gender Identities (Non-exhaustive)” for definitions.

## Appendix B: “Human Nature” Lyrics

### “Human Nature”

Based on the midrash that Dinah, Joseph’s sister, was conceived with the soul of a male and was made female by her mother’s wishes

ARTIST’S STATEMENT: This Jewsical is written from the perspective of Dinah, Joseph’s sister, who is said to have been conceived with the soul of a male. It explores the yearning to want to be someone else while also knowing who they are. The title comes from the idea that we all have it is only human to be transgender.

I was born from the heart of my mother  
How she prayed when she wanted a daughter  
She already had sons  
Didn’t want another one  
So her sister Rachel could be equal with the handmaids

I have 10 awesome men to call my brothers  
They’re a tribe, they’re alive with each other  
There are times where I’d like  
To be inside of their minds  
But I like the way I am, the way I was made

It doesn’t matter what others want me to be  
I know myself  
Nobody treats me differently, but would they  
If I was a man of honor?  
My soul is my heart is my mind is my wealth  
I’m gonna stay true to me, I am human nature

I will live from the heart beating in me  
I will thrive from the parts of the world I’ve yet to see  
I will keep an open mind  
I will keep Adonai  
In the heart and soul that Adonai gave to me

Appendix C: U3L2 Jewsical Worksheet

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is this Jewsical about?

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2. What's Jewish about this Jewsical?

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3. How does it relate to transness?

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4. How do your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 inform your thinking about this Jewsical?

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Unit 3 (Gender)  
Lesson 3 (Nonbinary)

**I. List of materials**

- a. “Your Eyes are my Eyes” lyric sheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- b. U3L3 Jewsical worksheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- c. Pens (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- d. Whiteboard/big posterboard (1)
- e. Whiteboard marker/marker for posterboard (1)
- f. Six Genders of Rabbinic Text (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- g. Washable paint (many, variety of colors)
- h. Paintbrushes (many)
- i. Lined paper (many)
- j. Colored pencils (many)
- k. Crayons (many)
- l. Colored markers (many)

**II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)**

- a. Understand the definition of the word “nonbinary”
- b. Understand the definition of the word “intersex”
- c. Understand the different genders referred to in ancient Rabbinic texts
- d. Apply analysis techniques to Jewsicals
- e. Create interpretations around Jewsicals and their source texts (potentially by writing Jewsicals themselves)

**III. Learning Plan**

*Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check-in

**00:05-00:15** Nonbinary definition/genders in Judaism

**00:15-00:20** Jewsical workshop explanation

**00:20-01:20** Jewsical workshop

- **00:20-00:27** Listening/answering questions 1, 2, 3
- **00:27-00:40** Small group discussions/answering question 4
- **00:40-00:45** Back together for question 4 responses
- **00:45-01:10** Jewsical exploration
- **01:10-01:20** Back together for Jewsical exploration sharing

**01:20-01:30** Jewsical workshop debrief

*Detailed procedure*

**Set-up (before students arrive):** Cue up the Jewsical using [this link](#).

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Ask:

- How can interpretations give us power?

Take answers. Explain that today, students will be learning about nonbinary identities and the different genders in Rabbinic texts.

**00:05-00:15** Ask students to recall what the word “nonbinary” means. Explain that nonbinary itself is an umbrella term (as learned about last week) and there are multiple identities that fall within the umbrella.

Explain that there is another term that is used to describe both sex characteristics and a gender identity: intersex. Recall that in an earlier lesson, students learned about intersex people and that approximately 1.3% of the human population is intersex. Explain that when someone is intersex, their sex characteristics might not align with what some people normally associate as male or female characteristics (usually a penis or vagina). Explain that some intersex people identify as transgender and/or nonbinary, but the two are not inherently linked.

Explain that both binary transgender and nonbinary people (including intersex people) are referenced in our sacred texts. Specify that the six genders found within these texts do not directly align with the definitions we have today. Explain that even with this truth, the fact that ancient rabbis understood different gender identities beyond what we now call

cisgender men and cisgender women shows that gender expansion was a part of historical societies.

Pass out the six genders in Rabbinic texts handout (Appendix A). Ask for student volunteers to read out loud. After, ask:

- Why might it be important to consider *l'dor v'dor*, from generation to generation, when thinking about these six genders?

**00:15-00:20** Pass out “Your Eyes are my Eyes” lyric sheet (Appendix B) and U3L3 Jewsical Worksheet (Appendix C). Explain that students will be answering questions individually, in small groups, as a class, and then go into their Jewsical exploration.

**00:20-00:27** As a class, students will listen to the Jewsical and follow along with the lyrics. Let students know that they may annotate their lyrics sheet if they would like to with any thoughts they might have as they come up.

Play the Jewsical using [THIS LINK](#). After, instruct students to answer questions 1, 2 and 3 in their U3L3 Jewsical Worksheet.

**00:27-00:40** Have students go into small groups (apx. 3-5 students). In those groups, ask them to begin by sharing their answers for questions 1, 2 and 3, and then speak together about brainstorming question 4. Let students know that each group will be sharing their answers to this question and should choose one spokesperson from their group to share.

**00:40-00:45** Have all students come back together. Have each spokesperson share their group’s ideas to question 4. As students share, write down answers on a whiteboard/large posterboard.

**00:45-01:10** Ask each student to choose one or two ideas from question 4 on the whiteboard/large posterboard to explore. Explain that students may explore using any of these choices:

- Writing music and/or lyrics
- Visual arts (drawing, painting, etc.)
- Free writing
- Writing a monologue/scene
- Dance

If there is something a student wants to do that is not on this list, they may do so as long as it is appropriate and the materials are available. Explain that students will be doing an exploration each class and they may change their choice for how they explore each time. Explain that students may work individually or in pairs/small groups (which do not need to be the same as before). Explain that students will be invited to share their explorations but will not be required to. Ask for questions. If none, give students time to explore.

**01:10-01:20** Have all students come back together. Invite each student/pair/group to share their explorations as well as a short explanation as to what it is and why they created it.

**01:20-01:30** Ask:

- What was this like for you?
- What did you uncover about the Jewish text from this?
- How could this Jewish text be used to talk about nonbinary identities?

Thank students for their time.

Appendix A – Six genders in Rabbinic text handout (Kukla, 2006)

*Used with permission from Ze'evi Tovlev. Adapted from Rabbi Elliott Kukla*

[http://www.transtorah.org/PDFs/Classical\\_Jewish\\_Terms\\_for\\_Gender\\_Diversity.pdf](http://www.transtorah.org/PDFs/Classical_Jewish_Terms_for_Gender_Diversity.pdf)

**Zachar:** This term is derived from the word for a pointy sword and refers to a phallus. It is usually translated as “male” in English.

**Nekevah:** This term is derived from the word for a crevice and probably refers to a vaginal opening. It is usually translated as “female” in English.

**Androginos:** A person who has both masculine or male, and feminine or female, characteristics. *149 references in Mishnah and Talmud (1st-8th Centuries CE); 350 in classical midrash and Jewish law codes (2nd -16th Centuries CE).*

**Tumtum:** A person whose [masculine or male], or [feminine or female] characteristics are indeterminate or obscured. *181 references in Mishnah and Talmud; 335 in classical midrash and Jewish law codes.*

**Aylonit:** A person who is assigned female at birth but develops masculine or male characteristics at puberty and is infertile. *80 references in Mishnah and Talmud; 40 in classical midrash and Jewish law codes.*

**Saris:** A person who is assigned male at birth but develops feminine or female characteristics at puberty and/or is lacking a penis or testes.

**Saris chamah:** A naturally occurring saris

**Saris adam:** A person who becomes a saris through human intervention  
*156 references in Mishnah and Talmud; 379 in classical midrash and Jewish law codes.*



Appendix B: “Your Eyes are my Eyes” Lyrics

## “Your Eyes are my Eyes”

Based on Genesis 1:27 (“And God created humans in God’s image – male and female God created them.”)

ARTIST’S STATEMENT: This Jewsical is written from the perspective of a modern-day nonbinary youth looking back and reflecting upon generations of nonbinary and gender non-conforming Jews. At the heart of this Jewsical is the translation of Genesis 1:27 – “And God created humans in God’s image – male and female God created them.” Usually, this is meant to read that God created men and woman. However, what if it were to be interpreted as a “male and female God” (or a bigender God) created “them”, nonbinary people?

I was created by the one who created everyone and everything  
I was created in the image of God  
I was created by the one who created the ones in my legacy  
I was created with the upmost thought

God makes no mistakes, we’re perfect just as we are  
And God will show the way, it doesn’t matter how far  
We have to go to get there  
Because I know we’ll get there  
It might take time to realize  
That your eyes are my eyes  
We’ll made the same  
In our own way

I was created from the stories and tales passed down / from generations, l’dor v’dor  
I was created by my family  
I was created from the first time I saw myself in the pages  
I was created by me

God makes no mistakes, we’re perfect just as we are  
And God will show the way, it doesn’t matter how far  
We have to go to get there  
Because I know we’ll get there  
It might take time to realize  
That your eyes are my eyes  
We’ll made the same  
In our own way

Whoa, I’m interwoven from the very beginning  
Whoa, we’re all made B’tzelem Eloheim  
Whoa, God saw that all that had been made was good  
Whoa, we are created with divinity

God makes no mistakes, we're perfect just as we are  
And God will show the way, it doesn't matter how far  
We have to go to get there  
Because I know we'll get there  
It might take time to realize  
That your eyes are my eyes  
We'll made the same  
In our own way

Appendix C: U3L3 Jewsical Worksheet

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is this Jewsical about?

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2. What's Jewish about this Jewsical?

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3. How does it relate to nonbinary identities?

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4. How do your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 inform your thinking about this Jewsical?

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Unit 3 (Gender)  
Lesson 4 (Jewsical writing)

**I. List of materials**

- a. Lined paper (plenty)
- b. Pens (1 per student, plus some extras)
- c. Review sheet (1 per student, plus some extras) (Appendix A)
- d. List of Jewish values (1 per student, plus some extras) (Appendix B)

**II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)**

- a. Apply knowledge from past lessons into a Jewsical
- b. Write a Jewsical
- c. Give feedback to classmates

**III. Learning Plan**

*Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check in/set induction

**00:05-00:15** Reviewing past sessions/Jewsical writing review

**00:15-00:45** Jewsical writing

**00:45-00:59** Jewsical sharings/conversations

**00:59-01:00** Closure

*Detailed procedure*

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Ask students to think of one, two, or three words to describe how they're feeling in that moment to share. Start with you, then go around, starting with the person on your right. After everyone has gone, read this quote from Pirke Avot 2:21:

- "You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to desist from it."

Ask:

- What does this quote mean to you in the context of the work we've done thus far?

Explain that today, students will be writing another Jewsical based on what they've learned so far. Explain that students may either continue working on the Jewsicals they began at the end of the unit on sexuality or begin a new one. If students begin a new one, they may pull from both core units covered so far. Remind students that the Jewsicals do not need to be a particular length but must be at least eight lines of lyric. Explain that the Jewsicals do not need to be set to melodies. Explain that students will be sharing their Jewsicals with the class.

**00:05-00:15** Pass out the review sheet (Appendix A) and the possible Jewish values (Appendix B). Explain that students will choose up to three values and one bullet point from the review sheet to write a Jewsical on.

Remind students to take the following into consideration when writing their Jewsical:

- What is the story you'd like to tell? Is it true to the source text or more adaptive?
- How many characters are in your Jewsical?
- How long is your Jewsical?
- Are there any goals or objectives you want to accomplish by the end?

Ask students who would like to work in small groups. Put those students into groups of 2-5.

Ask if students would like any clarification on this or have any other questions and answer accordingly.

**00:20-00:45** Give students time to work on their Jewsicals. As they do, walk around, and check in with groups to see if they want/need help with their writing, melodies, and/or plot (as well as other questions that might pop up). Give students a five minute and one minute warning.

**00:45-00:59** Bring all students back together. Have each student/group present their Jewsicals to the class and share which source and bullet point they've chosen. After each Jewsical is shared, ask to the class:

- What did you notice?
- How did the lyrics connect with the source material?
- Where else do you think this Jewsical could go?

**00:59-01:00** Close by explaining that next class, students will be diving into the second core unit on gender. Thank students for their time.

Appendix A: List of Sexualities

List of Gender identities (Incomplete)

*(NOTE: Gender identity differs from gender expression.)*

**Agender** Someone who does not identify with any particular gender or may not have a gender.

**Bigender** A person who has two genders.

**Cisgender** Someone whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Demiboy/demigirl** Someone who is nonbinary but also identifies as a man or woman.

**Genderfluid** Someone whose gender identity and expression shifts between or outside of society's expectations of what gender is.

**Genderqueer** Someone who has a gender identity or expression that is not the same as society's expectations for their assigned sex or assumed gender; someone who lives their life outside of society's expectations.

**Neutrois** Someone who is nonbinary and also has a neutral or null gender.

**Nonbinary** Someone who may not experience gender within the gender binary.

**Omnigender** Someone who experiences and possesses all genders.

**Polygender/Pangender** Someone who experiences and displays parts of multiple genders.

**Transgender** Someone whose gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth. An umbrella term.

**Two Spirit** An umbrella term that encompasses different genders in Indigenous Native American communities. Specifically reserved for those who are Indigenous Native American.

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## **Jewish Values**

*Please choose up to three values for your Jewical.*

**Trustworthiness:** *Emunah*

**Respect:** *Kavod*

**Responsibility:** *Achrayut*

**Fairness:** *Tzedek*

**Kindness:** *Chesed*

**Community:** *Kehillah*

**Repairing the World:** *Tikkun Olam*

**Justice:** *Tzedakah*

**Courage:** *Ometz lev*

**Collaboration:** *Shiluv*

**Work/worship/service:** *Avodah*

## Unit 4 (The LGBTQ+ Community in the World)

### Lesson 1 (Coming Out)

#### I. List of materials

- a. “All Parts of Me” lyric sheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- b. U4L1 Jewsical worksheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- c. Pens (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- d. Whiteboard (1)/big posterboard (2)
- e. Whiteboard marker/marker for posterboard (1)
- f. Washable paint (many, variety of colors)
- g. Paintbrushes (many)
- h. Lined paper (many)
- i. Colored pencils (many)
- j. Crayons (many)
- k. Colored markers (many)

#### II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)

- a. Understand what it means to come out
- b. Understand the history of “coming out”
- c. Understand the importance of and create a safe space
- d. Apply analysis techniques to Jewsicals
- e. Create interpretations around Jewsicals and their source texts (potentially by writing Jewsicals themselves)

#### III. Learning Plan

##### *Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check-in

**00:05-00:15** “Coming out” history and conversation

**00:15-00:20** Jewsical workshop explanation

**00:20-01:20** Jewsical workshop

- **00:20-00:27** Listening/answering questions 1, 2, 3



- **00:27-00:40** Small group discussions/answering question 4
- **00:40-00:45** Back together for question 4 responses
- **00:45-01:10** Jewsical exploration
- **01:10-01:20** Back together for Jewsical exploration sharing

**01:20-01:30** Jewsical workshop debrief

*Detailed procedure*

**Set-up (before students arrive):** Cue up the Jewsical using [this link](#).

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students and let them know that today they begin their third and final core unit on the LGBTQ+ community in the world. Ask students:

- Think of a time when you revealed something about yourself to someone. What did it feel like to tell them?

Take answers. Explain that students will be exploring the idea of “coming out of the closet,” its history, and the importance of creating a safe space for folks to do this, as well as brainstorming tangible ways to make this happen.

**00:05-00:15** Explain that the term “coming out” originated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries with gay men “coming out” into gay society, the term stemming from debutante society, where young women would be presented at balls and inducted into high class society. Explain that in the 1930s, 40s and 50s, there was a growing backlash against the LGBTQ+ community in North America, and when the Stonewall Riots happened in 1969 (in which patrons of the Stonewall Inn in New York City fought back against a police raid), the term “coming out” became more political. By this point, the closet was associated with coming out. The term was referenced again at the first Gay Liberation March in NYC in June of 1970, when one of the organizers said, “we’ll never have the freedom and civil rights we deserve as human beings unless we stop hiding in closets and in the shelter of anonymity.”

Explain that as time has gone on, coming out has become more normalized but there is still fear around it, as coming out of the closet implies that being LGBTQ+ is not part of

mainstream society. Explain that it's very important to support someone when they choose to come out (or if they are outed, which is when their identity is revealed without their consent). Ask:

- How can we create a safe space for people to come out, should they want to?

Take answers and write them on the whiteboard or a poster board. (*Teacher note: save this list for next class.*)

**00:15-00:20** Pass out "All Parts of Me" lyric sheet (Appendix A) and U4L1 Jewsical Worksheet (Appendix B). Explain that students will be answering questions individually, in small groups, as a class, and begin their first Jewsical exploration.

**00:20-00:27** As a class, students will listen to the Jewsical and follow along with the lyrics. Let students know that they may annotate their lyrics sheet if they would like to with any thoughts they might have as they come up.

Play the Jewsical using [THIS LINK](#). After, instruct students to answer questions 1, 2 and 3 in their U4L1 Jewsical Worksheet.

**00:27-00:40** Have students go into small groups (apx. 3-5 students). In those groups, ask them to begin by sharing their answers for questions 1, 2 and 3, and then speak together about brainstorming question 4. Let students know that each group will be sharing their answers to this question and should choose one spokesperson from their group to share.

**00:40-00:45** Have all students come back together. Have each spokesperson share their group's ideas to question 4. As students share, write down answers on a whiteboard/large posterboard.

**00:45-01:10** Ask each student to choose one or two ideas from question 4 on the whiteboard/large posterboard to explore. Explain that students may explore using any of these choices:

- Writing music and/or lyrics
- Visual arts (drawing, painting, etc.)
- Free writing
- Writing a monologue/scene
- Dance

If there is something a student wants to do that is not on this list, they may do so as long as it is appropriate, and the materials are available. Explain that students will be doing an exploration each class and they may change their choice for how they explore each time. Explain that students may work individually or in pairs/small groups (which do not need to be the same as before). Explain that students will be invited to share their explorations but will not be required to. Ask for questions. If none, give students time to explore.

**01:10-01:20** Have all students come back together. Invite each student/pair/group to share their explorations as well as a short explanation as to what it is and why they created it.

**01:20-01:30** Ask:

- What was this like for you?
- What did you uncover about the Jewsical's text from this?
- How could this Jewsical be used to talk about coming out of the closet?

Thank students for their time.

## All Parts of Me

Based on the story of Purim, centering in on Esther the night before she tells King Ahasuerus that she's Jewish.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: This Jewsical is sung from the perspective of Esther the night before she decides to tell King Ahasuerus that she's Jewish. She does this to save the Jewish people from murder at the hands of Haman but risks her own safety to do this. Her "coming out" may have higher stakes than those of us in modern-day society when it comes to *kehillah kedoshah*, a holy community, but the stakes may still be high for an individual.

How am I supposed to tell the truth  
Knowing what Haman plans to do  
I'm the queen, I have the power  
So why do I sit and cower

Ahashuvarter wanted me  
But he fell in love with a dream  
I wish I didn't have to lie  
But it's the only way to survive

I was never taught it was okay  
For those like me to have a place  
At the table  
Now I'm at the head

Everybody laughs and drinks their wine  
But nobody knows what lies behind  
The fable  
Inside my head  
These people want my people gone  
But I just smile and move on

I don't wanna fake it anymore  
I don't wanna take responsibility  
For what others see  
I'm allowed to be my honest self  
I should be the world just who I can be  
I should show all parts of me

I think about who came before  
Put down her foot, thrown out the door  
Like the garbage  
So-called royalty

And I think about who has the say  
To decide which people should be slayed  
I can promise you  
It's never me

Every one of my people live in fear of what will become of us  
They fast, they cry, they wail, while I live in a royal husk  
I have a responsibility  
To all my people, and to me  
If I perish, then I perish  
But I have to try and see

I don't wanna fake it anymore  
I don't wanna take responsibility  
For what others see  
I'm allowed to be my honest self  
I should be the world just who I can be  
I should show all parts of me

Whatever happens, I should be proud  
No second guessing myself allowed  
Oh, my God, please give me the strength  
To bless me and our people for all days

I don't wanna fake it anymore  
I don't wanna take responsibility  
For what others see  
I'm allowed to be my honest self  
I should be the world just who I can be  
I should show all parts of me

Appendix B: U4L1 Jewsical Worksheet

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is this Jewsical about?

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2. What's Jewish about this Jewsical?

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3. How does it relate to coming out?

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4. How do your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 inform your thinking about this Jewsical?

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## Unit 4 (The LGBTQ+ Community in the World)

### Lesson 2 (Homophobia/transphobia/cisnormativity/heteronormativity)

#### I. List of materials

- a. “Safe with You” lyric sheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- b. U4L2 Jewsical worksheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- c. Pens (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- d. Whiteboard/big posterboard (1)
- e. Whiteboard marker/marker for posterboard (1)
- f. Washable paint (many, variety of colors)
- g. Paintbrushes (many)
- h. Lined paper (many)
- i. Colored pencils (many)
- j. Crayons (many)
- k. Colored markers (many)

#### II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)

- a. Understand homophobia/transphobia/cisnormativity/heteronormativity
- b. Recall the importance of and create a safe space
- c. Apply analysis techniques to Jewsicals
- d. Create interpretations around Jewsicals and their source texts (potentially by writing Jewsicals themselves)

#### III. Learning Plan

##### *Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check-in

**00:05-00:15** Breaking down homophobia/transphobia/cisnormativity/heteronormativity

**00:15-00:20** Jewsical workshop explanation

**00:20-01:20** Jewsical workshop

- **00:20-00:27** Listening/answering questions 1, 2, 3
- **00:27-00:40** Small group discussions/answering question 4
- **00:40-00:45** Back together for question 4 responses

- **00:45-01:10** Jewsical exploration
- **01:10-01:20** Back together for Jewsical exploration sharing

**01:20-01:30** Jewsical workshop debrief

*Detailed procedure*

**Set-up (before students arrive):** Cue up the Jewsical using [this link](#).

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Ask students:

- What makes you feel welcome and seen in a community?

Take answers. Explain that students will be exploring homophobia, transphobia, cisnormativity, and heteronormativity.

**00:05-00:15** Ask:

- What is a phobia?

Take answers. Explain that a phobia is described as “an extreme or irrational fear of or aversion to something” (from Oxford dictionary). Explain that homophobia and transphobia are the fear of queer and trans people. Explain that people may be homophobic and/or transphobic for several reasons, such as teachings from adults and caregivers, political views, and misinformation. Explain that while homophobia and transphobia are never okay, it is not always the fault of the person who experiences them that they are the way they are. Explain that even so, this does not excuse any potential harmful behavior towards others.

Explain that cisnormativity and heteronormativity are based in the idea that the world currently exists with cisgender being the normalized gender identity and heterosexuality being the normalized sexual orientation. Explain that some ways these norms are upheld may be in relation to gender expression (i.e., men can’t wear dresses or makeup).

Read aloud this translation from Exodus 24:7:

- “All that Adonai has said we will do and we will hear (understand).”

Ask:

- What is the difference between doing and understanding?



Take answers. Ask:

- Do we need to understand something to do it?
- Do we need to understand something to respect it?

Take answers. Explain that while understanding something may help people process the information, when it comes to basic human rights (such as the right to exist with those one loves, or to exist as the person one is), one does not need to understand in order to respect. Explain that there are caveats to this, such as if the person's existence inherently wants to hurt others.

**00:15-00:20** Pass out "Safe with You" lyric sheet (Appendix A) and U4L2 Jewsical Worksheet (Appendix B). Explain that students will be answering questions individually, in small groups, as a class, and begin their first Jewsical exploration.

**00:20-00:27** As a class, students will listen to the Jewsical and follow along with the lyrics. Let students know that they may annotate their lyrics sheet if they would like to with any thoughts they might have as they come up.

Play the Jewsical using [THIS LINK](#). After, instruct students to answer questions 1, 2 and 3 in their U4L2 Jewsical Worksheet.

**00:27-00:40** Have students go into small groups (apx. 3-5 students). In those groups, ask them to begin by sharing their answers for questions 1, 2 and 3, and then speak together about brainstorming question 4. Let students know that each group will be sharing their answers to this question and should choose one spokesperson from their group to share.

**00:40-00:45** Have all students come back together. Have each spokesperson share their group's ideas to question 4. As students share, write down answers on a whiteboard/large posterboard.

**00:45-01:10** Ask each student to choose one or two ideas from question 4 on the whiteboard/large posterboard to explore. Explain that students may explore using any of these choices:

- Writing music and/or lyrics
- Visual arts (drawing, painting, etc.)
- Free writing
- Writing a monologue/scene
- Dance

If there is something a student wants to do that is not on this list, they may do so as long as it is appropriate, and the materials are available. Explain that students will be doing an exploration each class and they may change their choice for how they explore each time. Explain that students may work individually or in pairs/small groups (which do not need to be the same as before). Explain that students will be invited to share their explorations but will not be required to. Ask for questions. If none, give students time to explore.

**01:10-01:20** Have all students come back together. Invite each student/pair/group to share their explorations as well as a short explanation as to what it is and why they created it.

**01:20-01:30** Ask:

- What was this like for you?
- What did you uncover about the Jewsical's text from this?
- How could this Jewsical be used to talk about homophobia/transphobia/cisnormativity/heteronormativity?

Thank students for their time.

## Safe with you

Based on the Leviticus 18:22.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: This Jewsical is sung from the perspective of sung from the perspective of an Israelite man singing to their lover about how they are not allowed to be together in public. The gender of the singer is left intentionally ambiguous for audience interpretation.

It is so wrong  
To love you  
To watch you as the moon shines bright above our heads  
As I hold you in your bed  
It's a fact  
Not a fear  
That I like the way it feels when you kiss my hand  
This was never planned

People say that the love we have is wrong  
The stolen glances, the careful passes along the riverbank  
Every day I wait until the night  
To sneak into your home and feel just like I did as a kid  
So safe  
Safe with you  
Safe with you

Do you think back  
To that day  
When I looked across the market and saw your eyes  
I was mesmerized  
Ran to you  
Asked who you are  
I like to think that history was made that day  
As you told me your name

People say that the love we have is wrong  
The stolen glances, the careful passes along the riverbank  
Every day I wait until the night  
To sneak into your home and feel just like I did as a kid  
So safe  
Safe with you  
Safe with you

I love you like I've loved no other  
I want to show the world our colors

You and I are not an abhorrent thing  
We are a melody, we deserve to sing  
And be heard

People say that the love we have is wrong  
The stolen glances, the careful passes along the riverbank  
Every day I wait until the night  
To sneak into your home and feel just like I did as a kid  
So safe  
Safe with you  
Safe with you

Appendix B: U4L2 Jewsical Worksheet

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is this Jewsical about?

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2. What's Jewish about this Jewsical?

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3. How does it relate to homophobia/transphobia/cisnormativity/heteronormativity?

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4. How do your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 inform your thinking about this Jewsical?

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Unit 4 (The LGBTQ+ Community in the World)  
Lesson 3 (Intersectionality)

**I. List of materials**

- a. “Jewsical” lyric sheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)<sup>1</sup>
- b. U4L3 Jewsical worksheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- c. Pens (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- d. Whiteboard/big posterboard (1)
- e. Whiteboard marker/marker for posterboard (1)
- f. Washable paint (many, variety of colors)
- g. Paintbrushes (many)
- h. Lined paper (many)
- i. Colored pencils (many)
- j. Crayons (many)
- k. Colored markers (many)

**II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)**

- a. Understand what intersectionality is
- b. Understand pieces of the intersection between Jewish and LGBTQ+ identities
- c. Apply analysis techniques to Jewsicals
- d. Create interpretations around Jewsicals and their source texts (potentially by writing Jewsicals themselves)

**III. Learning Plan**

*Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check-in

**00:05-00:15** Breaking down intersectionality

**00:15-00:20** Jewsical workshop explanation

**00:20-01:20** Jewsical workshop

- **00:20-00:27** Listening/answering questions 1, 2, 3

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<sup>1</sup> To be added

- **00:27-00:40** Small group discussions/answering question 4
- **00:40-00:45** Back together for question 4 responses
- **00:45-01:10** Jewsical exploration
- **01:10-01:20** Back together for Jewsical exploration sharing

**01:20-01:30** Jewsical workshop debrief

*Detailed procedure*

**Set-up (before students arrive):** Cue up the Jewsical using this link<sup>2</sup>.

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Ask students to turn to the person next to them (forming either groups of two or three) and have them respond to this question:

- What identities do you hold?

Give an example for yourself (e.g., your age, your height, your race, your sexuality, your gender identity, your hobbies, etc. **Only share what you feel comfortable sharing.**)

Explain that students only need to share what they feel comfortable sharing. Give student approximately 30 seconds per person. After, come back together and ask:

- How do your identities intersect?

Take answers. Explain that students will be exploring intersectionality and how they relate to the LGBTQ+ community.

**00:05-00:15** Explain that the term “intersectionality” was created by Kimberlé Crenshaw, a scholar and writer on civil rights. Explain that she coined the term in 1989 to describe how race, class, gender, and other pieces of one’s identity may “intersect” with one another.

Ask:

- Why might it be important to recognize the intersection of identities?

Explain that students will be focusing in on the intersectionality of Judaism and LGBTQ+. Ask:

- How might this intersection affect either or both identities?

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<sup>2</sup> To be added

Take answers. Explain that the reform Jewish movement specifically has both made plenty of strides to become more inclusive of the LGBTQ+ community, and that there is still work to do. Ask:

- How do we decide which of our identities is more important than others? Is that answer set in stone? How might it change, and why?

Take answers.

**00:15-00:20** Pass out “Jewsical” lyric sheet (Appendix A) and U4L3 Jewsical Worksheet (Appendix B). Explain that students will be answering questions individually, in small groups, as a class, and begin their first Jewsical exploration.

**00:20-00:27** As a class, students will listen to the Jewsical and follow along with the lyrics. Let students know that they may annotate their lyrics sheet if they would like to with any thoughts they might have as they come up.

Play the Jewsical using [THIS LINK](#)<sup>3</sup>. After, instruct students to answer questions 1, 2 and 3 in their U4L3 Jewsical Worksheet.

**00:27-00:40** Have students go into small groups (apx. 3-5 students). In those groups, ask them to begin by sharing their answers for questions 1, 2 and 3, and then speak together about brainstorming question 4. Let students know that each group will be sharing their answers to this question and should choose one spokesperson from their group to share.

**00:40-00:45** Have all students come back together. Have each spokesperson share their group’s ideas to question 4. As students share, write down answers on a whiteboard/large posterboard.

**00:45-01:10** Ask each student to choose one or two ideas from question 4 on the whiteboard/large posterboard to explore. Explain that students may explore using any of these choices:

- Writing music and/or lyrics
- Visual arts (drawing, painting, etc.)
- Free writing
- Writing a monologue/scene
- Dance

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<sup>3</sup> To be added



If there is something a student wants to do that is not on this list, they may do so as long as it is appropriate, and the materials are available. Explain that students will be doing an exploration each class and they may change their choice for how they explore each time. Explain that students may work individually or in pairs/small groups (which do not need to be the same as before). Explain that students will be invited to share their explorations but will not be required to. Ask for questions. If none, give students time to explore.

**01:10-01:20** Have all students come back together. Invite each student/pair/group to share their explorations as well as a short explanation as to what it is and why they created it.

**01:20-01:30** Ask:

- What was this like for you?
- What did you uncover about the Jewsical's text from this?
- How could this Jewsical be used to talk about intersectionality?

Thank students for their time.

Appendix A: “Jewsical” lyric sheet

## **JEWSICAL ON INTERSECTIONALITY**

Appendix B: U4L3 Jewsical Worksheet

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is this Jewsical about?

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2. What's Jewish about this Jewsical?

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3. How does it relate to intersectionality?

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4. How do your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 inform your thinking about this Jewsical?

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Unit 4 (The LGBTQ+ Community in the World)  
Lesson 4 (Celebration)

**I. List of materials**

- a. “Jewsical<sup>4</sup>” lyric sheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- b. U4L4 Jewsical worksheet (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- c. Pens (1 per student, plus a few extras)
- d. Whiteboard/big posterboard (1)
- e. Whiteboard marker/marker for posterboard (1)
- f. Washable paint (many, variety of colors)
- g. Paintbrushes (many)
- h. Lined paper (many)
- i. Colored pencils (many)
- j. Crayons (many)
- k. Colored markers (many)

**II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)**

- a. Understand the importance of celebrating the LGBTQ+ community
- b. Identify ways to celebrate the LGBTQ+ community
- c. Apply analysis techniques to Jewsicals
- d. Create interpretations around Jewsicals and their source texts (potentially by writing Jewsicals themselves)

**III. Learning Plan**

*Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check-in

**00:05-00:15** Breaking down intersectionality

**00:15-00:20** Jewsical workshop explanation

**00:20-01:20** Jewsical workshop

- **00:20-00:27** Listening/answering questions 1, 2, 3

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<sup>4</sup> To be added

- **00:27-00:40** Small group discussions/answering question 4
- **00:40-00:45** Back together for question 4 responses
- **00:45-01:10** Jewsical exploration
- **01:10-01:20** Back together for Jewsical exploration sharing

**01:20-01:30** Jewsical workshop debrief

*Detailed procedure*

**Set-up (before students arrive):** Cue up the Jewsical using <sup>5</sup>this link.

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Ask students:

- How do we celebrate? As people? As Jews?

Take answers. Explain that students will be exploring celebrating the LGBTQ+ community.

**00:05-00:15** Write on whiteboard: “How do we celebrate the LGBTQ+ community?”

Take answers from students. *(If students are having a difficult time coming up with answers, feel free to offer the following:*

- *Pride month (June in the USA)*
- *LGBTQ+ holidays (e.g., National Coming Out Day on October 11; Trans Day of Visibility on 3/31)*
- *Pride month in Tel Aviv*
- *Learning about the LGBTQ+ community, potentially through a Jewish lens (e.g., why do we have an orange on the seder plate?)*
- *Honoring LGBTQ+ historical beings*

Ask:

- What is the difference between these three terms: inclusion; belonging; celebrating?

Take answers on the board. Ask:

- How do we celebrate in communities that may not know how to, or perhaps, not want to, celebrate the LGBTQ+ communities? How does this celebration change in Jewish communities?

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<sup>5</sup> To be added

Take answers.

**00:15-00:20** Pass out “Jewsical” lyric sheet (Appendix A) and U4L4 Jewsical Worksheet (Appendix B). Explain that students will be answering questions individually, in small groups, as a class, and begin their first Jewsical exploration.

**00:20-00:27** As a class, students will listen to the Jewsical and follow along with the lyrics. Let students know that they may annotate their lyrics sheet if they would like to with any thoughts they might have as they come up.

Play the Jewsical using [THIS LINK](#). After, instruct students to answer questions 1, 2 and 3 in their U4L4 Jewsical Worksheet.

**00:27-00:40** Have students go into small groups (apx. 3-5 students). In those groups, ask them to begin by sharing their answers for questions 1, 2 and 3, and then speak together about brainstorming question 4. Let students know that each group will be sharing their answers to this question and should choose one spokesperson from their group to share.

**00:40-00:45** Have all students come back together. Have each spokesperson share their group’s ideas to question 4. As students share, write down answers on a whiteboard/large posterboard.

**00:45-01:10** Ask each student to choose one or two ideas from question 4 on the whiteboard/large posterboard to explore. Explain that students may explore using any of these choices:

- Writing music and/or lyrics
- Visual arts (drawing, painting, etc.)
- Free writing
- Writing a monologue/scene
- Dance

If there is something a student wants to do that is not on this list, they may do so as long as it is appropriate, and the materials are available. Explain that students will be doing an exploration each class and they may change their choice for how they explore each time. Explain that students may work individually or in pairs/small groups (which do not need to be the same as before). Explain that students will be invited to share their explorations but will not be required to. Ask for questions. If none, give students time to explore.

**01:10-01:20** Have all students come back together. Invite each student/pair/group to share their explorations as well as a short explanation as to what it is and why they created it.

**01:20-01:30** Ask:

- What was this like for you?
- What did you uncover about the Jewish's text from this?
- How could this Jewish be used to talk about celebrating the LGBTQ+ community?

Thank students for their time.

Appendix A: “Jewsical” lyric sheet

## **JEWSICAL ON CELEBRATION**



Appendix B: U4L4 Jewsical Worksheet

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is this Jewsical about?

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2. What's Jewish about this Jewsical?

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3. How does it relate to celebrating the LGBTQ+ community?

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4. How do your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 inform your thinking about this Jewsical?

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## Unit 4 (The LGBTQ+ Community in the World)

### Lesson 5 (Jewsical writing)

#### IV. List of materials

- a. Lined paper (plenty)
- b. Pens (1 per student, plus some extras)
- c. Review sheet (1 per student, plus some extras) (Appendix A)
- d. List of Jewish values (1 per student, plus some extras) (Appendix B)

#### V. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)

- a. Apply knowledge from past lessons into a Jewsical
- b. Write a Jewsical
- c. Give feedback to each other as classmates

#### VI. Learning Plan

##### *Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check in/set induction

**00:05-00:15** Reviewing past sessions/Jewsical writing review

**00:15-00:45** Jewsical writing

**00:45-00:59** Jewsical sharings/conversations

**00:59-01:00** Closure

##### *Detailed procedure*

**00:00-00:05** Everyone will find a seat and sit. Students will place their belongings (if they have them) underneath their chairs. Welcome students. Ask students to think of one, two, or three words to describe how they're feeling in that moment to share. Start with you, then go around, starting with the person on your right. After everyone has gone, read this quote from Pirke Avot 2:21:

- "Why is education so important to us as Jews?"

Take answers. Explain that today, students will be writing another Jewsical based on what they've learned so far. Explain that students may either continue working on one of the Jewsicals they began at the end of the unit on sexuality and/or gender or begin a new one. If students begin a new one, they may pull from all three core units covered so far.

Remind students that the Jewsicals do not need to be a particular length but must be at least eight lines of lyric. Explain that the Jewsicals do not need to be set to melodies. Explain that students will be sharing their Jewsicals with the class.

**00:05-00:15** Pass out the review sheet (Appendix A) and the possible Jewish values (Appendix B). Explain that students will choose up to three values and one bullet point from the review sheet to write a Jewsical on.

Remind students to take the following into consideration when writing their Jewsical:

- What is the story you'd like to tell? Is it true to the source text or more adaptive?
- How many characters are in your Jewsical?
- How long is your Jewsical?
- Are there any goals or objectives you want to accomplish by the end?

Ask students who would like to work in small groups. Put those students into groups of 2-5.

Ask if students would like any clarification on this or have any other questions and answer accordingly.

**00:20-00:45** Give students time to work on their Jewsicals. As they do, walk around, and check in with groups to see if they want/need help with their writing, melodies, and/or plot (as well as other questions that might pop up). Give students a five minute and one minute warning.

**00:45-00:59** Bring all students back together. Have each student/group present their Jewsicals to the class and share which source and bullet point they've chosen. After each Jewsical is shared, ask to the class:

- What did you notice?
- How did the lyrics connect with the source material?
- Where else do you think this Jewsical could go?

**00:59-01:00** Close by explaining that next class, students will be diving into the second core unit on gender. Thank students for their time.

## Appendix A: List of Terms Covered

### List of terms covered in this unit

**Coming out (of the closet)** Someone choosing to share their sexuality and/or gender identity. Works under the assumption that heterosexuality and cisgender are the norms.

**Homophobia** The fear of queer people.

**Transphobia** The fear of trans people.

**Heteronormativity** Based in the idea that the world currently exists with heterosexuality being the normalized sexual orientation.

**Cisnormativity** Based in the idea that the world currently exists with cisgender being the normalized gender identity.

**Intersectionality** A term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 to describe how race, class, gender, and other pieces of one's identity may "intersect" with one another.

**Celebration** The act of celebrating the LGBTQ+ community.

## **Jewish Values**

*Please choose up to three values for your Jewical.*

**Trustworthiness:** *Emunah*

**Respect:** *Kavod*

**Responsibility:** *Achrayut*

**Fairness:** *Tzedek*

**Kindness:** *Chesed*

**Community:** *Kehillah*

**Repairing the World:** *Tikkun Olam*

**Justice:** *Tzedakah*

**Courage:** *Ometz lev*

**Collaboration:** *Shiluv*

**Work/worship/service:** *Avodah*

Unit 5 (Beyond the Classroom)  
Lesson 1 (Open Mic Preparation)

**VII. List of materials**

- a. Lined paper (plenty)
- b. Pens (1 per student, plus some extras)

**VIII. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)**

- a. Explain what their Jewsical is about
- b. Give feedback to each other as classmates

**IX. Learning Plan**

*Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check in/set induction

**00:05-00:10** Open mic/day schedule talk through

**00:10-00:45** Jewsical rehearsal

**00:45-01:15** Open mic rehearsal

**01:15-01:20** Closure

*Detailed procedure*

## Unit 5 (Beyond the Classroom)

### Lesson 2 (Open Mic)

#### **I. List of materials**

- a. Lined paper (plenty)
- b. Pens (1 per student, plus some extras)

#### **II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)**

- a. Share their Jewsical
- b. Explain what their Jewsical is about

#### **III. Learning Plan**

##### *Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check in/set induction

**00:05-00:15** Final prep

**00:15-00:45** Open Mic

**00:45-00:55** Gallery Walk

**00:55-01:00** Closure

##### *Detailed procedure*

## Unit 5 (Beyond the Classroom)

### Lesson 3 (Where do we go from here?)

#### **I. List of materials**

- a. Lined paper (plenty)
- b. Pens (1 per student, plus some extras)

#### **II. Student Objectives (Students should be able to... SShBAT...)**

- a. Identify ways to use LGBTQ+ terms and topics outside of the classroom
- b. Celebrate themselves and one another

#### **III. Learning Plan**

##### *Timeline*

**00:00-00:05** Check in/set induction

**00:05-00:15** Teacher feedback forms

**00:15-00:25** What have we learned?

**00:25-00:40** Where do we go?

**00:40-00:55** Celebrations

**00:55-01:00** Closure

##### *Detailed procedure*



## AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT

### Authentic Assessment:

- By the end of this course, students will have written a Jewsical (with or without music) relating to one topic within LGBTQ+ terms and topics.
- By this point in the course, students will have written four Jewsicals (with or without music) on their own or in small groups. Each unit thus far (units 1-4) has concluded with a Jewsical writing workshop where students have written Jewsicals based on Jewish values and one piece of content from each unit. Students will have learned how to and done the action of giving feedback to one another on their Jewsicals (explored in U1L2).
- This final unit has students reflect upon the course at large and write a Jewsical on their own or in small groups about any of the previous lessons' content. Students will be able to go through the entirety of Jewish texts available to them and find one they'd like to use as their source text. As students explore and are exposed to Jewsicals used in the curriculum, students will also be able to see the infinite ways to adapt texts for Jewsicals.
- Students will create an artistic statement for their Jewsical. This artistic statement will showcase their understanding of their reasoning for their source texts and their creation for the Jewsical, as well as any context that is important for the audience to know.
- Students will share these Jewsicals in an open mic setting.
- Students will think about the following:
  - What story do you want to tell?
  - How many characters are in the Jewsical?
  - How long is it?
  - Are there any goals or objectives you want to accomplish by the end?
  - Why are you telling this story now?
- The Jewsical authentic assessment is an opportunity for students to take the information gained and apply/analyze them through the lens of a Jewsical. The Jewsical will also be an opportunity for students to share their knowledge in their own words and share any viewpoints they might have.

## **AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT – JEWSICAL FINANCING WORKSHOP**

**PICTURE THIS:** You are the artistic director of a brand-new theatre company dedicated to telling Jewish stories through new lenses. Your theatre company is currently working on a series of Jewsicals to tell stories through a queer and trans lens, and you're putting together a showcase of Jewsicals to potential investors! You've been rehearsing for weeks, and now it's time to put on a show...

**Goal (Your task is...):** is to write a Jewsical (either lyrics or music and lyrics) that explores one topic of LGBTQ+ terms and topics covered in class. These Jewsicals must be adapted from one sacred text you find. You will also be creating an artistic statement to support your Jewsical. Imagine this Jewsical will make or break your investor's curiosity.

**Role (Your job is...):** To write this Jewsical in your own words (you may use Hebrew and its translations when appropriate). Your job is also to define your own viewpoints based on the knowledge learned.

**Audience (Your target audience is...):** the investors at the workshop. This will be represented by other students, families, other teachers, and other guests invited.

**Situation (The context you find yourself in is...):** trying to raise money to create a full-fledged production of Jewsicals.

**Product/Performance/Purpose (You will create a... in order to...):** You will create a Jewsical that explores one topic of LGBTQ+ terms and topics covered in class in order to showcase your understanding, analysis, and viewpoints of the topic chosen.

**Standards or criteria for success (A successful product/performance will...):** be evaluated using a criterion-based performance list.

Rubric:

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Jewsical Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

**Jewsical Authentic Assessment Rubric**

	Advanced	Formed	Emerging
Understanding of topic chosen within LGBTQ+ education	Deep understanding, with lyrics that go beyond topics learned in class	Good understanding, with lyrics that cover topics learned in class	Loose understanding, with lyrics that touch on topics learned in class
Applying the source text to the Jewsical	Source text is evident within Jewsical, with adaptation to fit the voice of the Jewsical	Source text appears occasionally, might be adapted to fit the voice of the Jewsical	Source text not found within Jewsical or does not fit the voice of the Jewsical
Analyzing of source text within the context of the Jewsical	Student showcases at least one clear link between the source text and the context of the Jewsical	Student showcases one link that may not be clear between the source text and the context of the Jewsical	Student does not show any links between the source text and the context of the Jewsical
Storytelling within Jewsical	Story is clear and easy to follow	Story is mostly easy to follow	Story is difficult to follow
Quality of Jewsical	Jewsical sharing engages audience through clear and vivid lyrics/imagery and commitment to the acting (if applicable)	Audience attention wanders because of some lack of clarity in lyrics/imagery and commitment to the acting (if applicable)	Audience not engaged because of lack of clarity in lyrics/imagery and commitment to the acting (if applicable)
Quality of Artistic Statement	Student presents clear understanding of their reasoning for their choice of text and creation of Jewsical. Student also shares any context for the audience to know	Student presents partial understanding of their reasoning for their choice of text and creation of Jewsical. Student presents partial context for the audience to know	Student presents little or lack of understanding of their reasoning for their choice of text and creation of Jewsical. Student presents little or no context for the audience to know

**Teacher's Notes/Comments:**

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