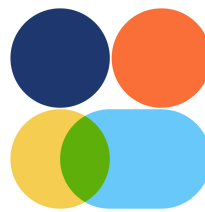


# LESSON PLAN



Theme Tu B'Shevat is an environmental holiday

Grade Level(s)

Kindergarten - 2nd Grade

Time of lesson 30 Minutes

### Key Ideas

- Jews consider this day as a way to remind themselves of their duty to care for the natural world.
- On Tu B'Shevat some Jews take part in a tree-planting ceremony, or collect and send money to Israel for them to plant a tree there.

### Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- be able to identify one thing that the Midrash explains about trees/nature
- be able to share their personal hope/wish for their tree

### Materials & Resources

- The book *Dear Tree* by Doba Rivka Weber and illustrated by Phyllis Saroff
- Variety of writing materials, markers, crayons, etc.

### Warm-up and Overview

- Start the lesson by teaching students what a *midrash* is. A midrash is a story that the rabbis made up about a part of the Torah to explain it better. Explain that *Midrash in Kohelet Rabbah* teaches: "When God created the first man he took him and showed him all the trees of the Garden of Eden and said to him, 'See my works, how beautiful and praiseworthy they are. And everything that I created, I created it for you. Be careful not to spoil or destroy my world—for if you do, there will be nobody after you to repair it.'"

### Introduction

Use the midrash to introduce students to the idea that trees are important to the Jews. Ask students how the midrash teaches us this lesson? Use the following discussion questions:

- What does it mean that everything was created for you?
- Is this a gift or a big responsibility?
- How do you take care of the world?

Next, read the book *Dear Tree*. It tells the story that on the Jewish New Year of the Trees (Tu B'Shevat), a little boy shares his hopes and wishes for trees—and especially for the one under which he plays.

### Specific Accomodations

- Consider making a large print copy and/or offering the book to read on a tablet or computer screen and/or having multiple copies of the book available.

## Activity

- Have the students think about a tree near school or their house. Prompt students to write, draw, or build a version of the tree they picked. Have them list or draw all the things they do with that tree or the things the tree does for them. Ask them to draw or write what their hopes and dreams for the tree would be. Have them include how they will act to help their tree continue to grow and keep it alive and well.

## Specific Accommodations

- Give “pause time” (~5-10 seconds) for students to process a question before taking responses.
- Allow flexible seating.

## Options for Extensions

- Create a classroom book.
- Display final products and offer students a chance to walk around the room and view/positively comment on the work of fellow students.

## Options for Remediation

- Consider sharing the book and/or visuals ahead of time for those that might benefit from previewing the lesson.
- Summarize the article and allow students to read or listen to your summary instead of reading the whole article.
- Share examples of final products.

## Review and Closing

- Have students share and/or display their drawings/ideas with the group.

## Specific Accommodations

- Allow students to answer out loud, or by writing down their answers
- Give students the option to share with a peer instead of with the whole class

## Checking for Understanding

- Remind students to explain what their “wish” or “hope” is when they complete the closing activity.