



Betzalel's Workshop

Jewish Ritual Craft Making

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Table of Contents

Who We Are	3
Our Philosophy	4
Working With Wood	5
Whittling A Yad	8
Wood Burning a Challah Board	12
Seasonal Connection	15
Working with Wool	17
Spinning tzitzit	22
Felting a kippah	27
Working With Recycled Materials	31
Cutting a Kiddush Cup	35
Making a Hand Washing Cup	41

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Who We Are

We at Teva, a program of Hazon, are incredibly grateful to have been able to work on this curriculum. This would not have been possible without the support of Rabbi Everett and Dr. Mary Gendler and the Gendler Grapevine Project. We also want to thank the Fall 2017 Cohort of Teva educators who piloted these programs.



Teva, a program of Hazon, works to fundamentally transform Jewish education through experiential learning that fosters Jewish, ecological, and food sustainability. Through experiential education, outdoor exploration, and lots of ruach, Teva strives to instill a knowledge of how the roots of our tradition are deeply entwined with the natural world.



Hazon is the Jewish lab for sustainability. The word “hazon” means vision in Hebrew. Hazon was founded in 2000 and is now the largest Jewish environmental organization in North America. We create healthier and more sustainable communities in the Jewish world and beyond. We do that through transformative experiences for individuals and communities, through thought leadership in the fields of Jewish and environmental knowledge, and through support of the Jewish environmental movement in North America and Israel.



The Gendler Grapevine Project is a six-year initiative that promotes activities within Jewish and interfaith communities who honor and support the values maintained by Rabbi Everett Gendler. The Project recognizes and celebrates the deep connections between Jewish tradition, social justice, and the environment by empowering individuals and communities to find spiritual and practical application of these values.



Rabbi Everett Gendler

Throughout his life, Rabbi Gendler has inspired the Jewish community and brought much needed action to the world through his work in the Civil Rights Movement, the Jewish Nonviolence Movement and the egalitarian Havurah movement. Rabbi Gendler’s contributions to Jewish environmental thought enliven our practice and our learning. We are honored to continue his work through this project.

Rabbi Everett Gendler and his wife, Dr. Mary Gendler, with examples of ritual objects created using this curricula.

Our Philosophy

In Betzalel's Workshop, we hope to engage the creative and spiritual passions of those who participate in Jewish crafting. By creating and working with ritual objects from local, organic, ethically-sourced, and recycled materials, participants will learn both the centrality of environmental responsibility to Jewish life, as well as a sense of ownership and pride over their participation in Jewish ritual. We feel that, by creating the basic object of a ritual, with all its flaws, character, and uniqueness, children are drawn closer to ritual. By creating an alternative to mass-produced, store bought Judaica, we create an avenue towards creative, participatory Judaism.

Through crafting, participants learn to engage tactilely with their environment. They gain confidence in their abilities to learn a new skill, to think creatively, and to affect their environment. By crafting from ethically-sourced and recycled materials, participants are able to more fully consider where all the products and parts of our consumer society come from. By crafting Jewishly, participants learn that they, too, are contributors to the unending lineage of living Torah.

In Betzalel's Workshop, we seek to incorporate a wide array of Jewish thought, from traditional to modern, in connection to our rituals. We hope to specifically highlight these values:

- ★ ***Hiddur Mitzvah***, or elevating a mitzvah, encourages us to not only complete a mitzvah, but to do so in a way that is beautiful and brings joy to ourselves, our community and the Divine. *Hiddur Mitzvah* can be applied to everything from the kind of etrog we buy for Sukkot to the way we pray. It commonly refers to having beautiful ritual objects to sanctify our spiritual experience. We seek not only to have participants make a craft, but to make a craft that they can use with dignity, feeling elevated both by their creative work and the materials used.
- ★ ***L'dor v'dor***, by creating meaningful ritual objects we renew connections with Jewish ritual that can be passed down generation to generation. Just as we intend to pass Jewish tradition on to future generations, so too do we hope to pass on a beautiful, functional natural world to our children. Ritual craft making from environmentally-conscious and recycled materials connects us with the generation before ours who relied on the labor of their hands. It connects us also with the generations to come, who will inherit our crafts, our traditions, and the environment.
- ★ ***Bal Tashchit***, or do not destroy, from Devarim 20:19-20, forbids the Jewish people from wasting resources. By creating our own ritual objects from ethically-sourced and recycled materials, we can have an object that we find beauty and delight in, without the harmful impacts of commercially produced products.

This curriculum takes its name from the biblical master craftsperson Betzalel, who was tasked with building the Mishkan (or "tabernacle" in English, the holy tent that housed the ark of the covenant while the Israelites wandered in the desert.) When the Israelite people heard of Betzalel's mission to build the Mishkan, they immediately donated their finest jewelry, cloths and wood. It is said that when Moses told Betzalel the instructions for building the Mishkan, Moses himself did not understand them, he was simply repeating verbatim what God had told him. Betzalel immediately intuited the divine meaning behind the confusing instructions and set to work. As participants pass through our workshop, we hope, God-willing, that they, like Betzalel, can elevate divine sparks and cultivate holiness from materials that earth provides.



Working With Wood

This section will explore how Jewish cultural tradition values and incorporates trees into the spiritual life of our people. Often in Jewish text, trees are emblematic of both Torah and the workings of the natural world around us. In Genesis, God shows Adam and Eve the tree of life in the Garden of Eden, asking them *L'ovdah U'lshomrah*, to guard and protect the earth. The Torah is often likened to a tree, providing spiritual fruit and seeds. There is even a holiday (Tu B'Shvat) dedicated to honoring the new year for the trees.

Many of the objects in our daily life are made from trees. From the mundane to the sacred, wood is used to make everything from tables to houses, to Torah scroll holders. Through the process of whittling a yad out of a branch and burning a design into a wooden challah board, participants will engage common building materials in a way that is uncommon in today's world. Through tactile involvement with wood, participants will create ritual objects that incorporate reverence for the natural world and all that it gives us.

Resources For Educators:

While using wood in a craft project, educators can print out or introduce these quote and question cards to encourage participants to think critically about the role of trees in Judaism.

Trees and People

Throughout Jewish literature, trees are compared and equated with human beings. We see the source in Devarim, where we are asked:

כִּי הָאָדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה
Is Man a Tree of the fields?
(Devarim 20:19)

Consider the following Hasidic story from Rebbe Nachman:

One night, while Rebbe Nachman was sleeping in an inn, he began to cry out loudly, waking everyone in the inn. As they ran into his room, Rebbe Nachman awoke and reached for a book at his side. With the innkeeper and guests standing around him, Rebbe Nachman pointed to a passage that read,

“Cutting down a tree before its time is like killing a soul.”

Sheepishly, the innkeeper admitted that the room Rebbe Nachman slept in had recently been built. In their haste, the builders cut down saplings for the logs. Rebbe Nachman looked into the faces of the innkeeper, the guests, and his hasidim. He said,

“All night I dreamed I was surrounded by bodies who had been murdered, now I know it was the trees who called out to me.”

- ★ Is a person a tree of the field? In what ways are we similar? In what ways are we different?
- ★ How would considering each tree to be an individual person affect our view of the natural world? How would it affect society if we saw each person as a necessary part of a forest?

Trees as a Symbol for Torah

עֵץ־חַיִּים הַיָּא לְמַחְזִיקִים בָּהּ וְתִמְכִּיהָ מֵאֲשֶׁר:

*She is a tree of life to them that grasp her, and all who hold onto her are happy.
(Proverbs 3:18)*

Because no Jewish object or concept garners more respect or is more central than the Torah within rabbinic tradition, it is illuminating that the Rabbis choose the tree as a primary symbol for the presence of Torah in the world...The Tree of Life of Torah emerges as the source of protection, sustenance, and proper living that allows humankind to continually reconnect with its highest self. (Steven Aranoff, *What The Talmud Teaches About Trees*, Myjewishlearning.com)

- ★ What is a “Tree of Life”? What does it look like? What are its functions?
- ★ How is the Torah like a tree?
- ★ Are there things in nature (plants, animals, etc...) that are like the Torah?
- ★ How is the Jewish people like a tree?

A Blessing for the Trees

During the month of Nisan, the month during which we celebrate Passover, there is a special blessing to say when seeing a fruit tree in flower. This bracha is best said upon seeing two fruit trees next to each other.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁלֹּא חָסַר בְּעוֹלָמוֹ כְּלוּם וּבְרָא בּוֹ בְּרִיּוֹת טוֹבוֹת וְאֵילָנוֹת טוֹבוֹת לַיהוֹנוֹת בָּהֶם בְּנֵי אָדָם.

Blessed are You, Cosmic Majesty, for there is nothing lacking in the world at all and good creatures and good trees were created in it, through which pleasure is brought to the children of Adam

- ★ Why does this bracha call for two trees? What is special about two fruit trees next to each other?
- ★ This bracha says, “there is nothing lacking in the world”? Is this true? Why/Why not?
- ★ Why have a special bracha for trees? What’s so special about trees?
- ★ What other natural ‘firsts’ get a special bracha? What natural phenomena do you find to be amazing and wondrous?

Exploring God's Creation

בְּשֶׁעָה שֶׁבָּרָא הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֶת אָדָם הָרִאשׁוֹן, נָטְלוּ וְהִחְזִירוּ עַל כָּל אֵילָנֵי גֵן עֵדֶן, וְאָמַר לוֹ, רְאֵה מַעֲשֵׂי כַּמָּה נְאִים וּמְשֻׁבְּחִין הֵן, וְכֹל מֵה שֶׁבָּרָאתִי בְּשִׁבְלֶךָ בְּרָאתִי, יֵן דְּעַתְךָ שְׁלֵא תִקְלַקֵּל וְתַחְרִיב אֶת עוֹלָמִי, שְׂאֵם קִלְקֵלֶתָ אִין מִי שִׁיתִקֵּן אַחֲרֶיךָ

When G!d created the first human, G!d led him around all the trees in the Garden of Eden. G!d said to him, "See My works, how beautiful and praiseworthy they are. Everything I have created has been created for your sake. Think of this, and do not corrupt or destroy My world; for if you corrupt it, there will be no one to set it right after you. (Kohelet Rabbah 7:13)

- ★ God shows Adam the trees first. Why do you think that is? Would you have showed something different to Adam first?
- ★ God says, "If you corrupt it, there will be no one to set it right after you". What does it look like to "corrupt" the world?

Finding Mystery and Grandeur

Human beings have indeed become primarily tool-making animals, and the world is now a gigantic tool box for the satisfaction of their needs... Nature is a tool box in a world that does not point beyond itself. It is when nature is sensed as mystery and grandeur that it calls upon us to look beyond it.

(Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man*, 1976)

- ★ What does Heschel mean by "mystery and grandeur"? Have you experienced the mystery or grandeur of nature? When?
- ★ What does it look like for nature to "point beyond itself"? How can we make this part of our experience in nature?
- ★ Heschel says we have "become primarily tool-making." What do *you* think humanity's relationship to nature is?
- ★ Heschel seems to suggest that we should not view nature as "a gigantic toolbox". Do you agree? What is good about viewing nature as a "toolbox"? What is not good?



Whittling a Yad

A yad (or יָד in Hebrew, which literally means hand,) is the pointing tool traditionally used to help us read from the Torah scroll. By making their own yad out of locally-sourced wood, participants connect reading from the Torah with their local environment. This project can feel especially meaningful to participants preparing for their B'nei Mitzvah.

Goals: Participants will...

- Learn basic whittling techniques and safety
- Forge connections between the local natural environment and Jewish ritual
- Create an object of beauty that they can be proud of

Sample Guiding Questions:

- Trees are an important and beautiful part of creation; in order to respect the mitzvah of *Bal Tashchit* or do not waste, we would never want to waste them. Why then are we choosing to make a yad out of gathered wood? Is there special value in using wood from our local environment during our Torah service?
- A yad is often made from gold, silver, or other precious metals. For many communities, this is an important practice of *Hiddur Mitzvah*, elevating the mitzvah, of reading from the Torah. How does using materials from our surrounding forest elevate this mitzvah? What are other ways we can use nature to make Jewish practice more meaningful?

Materials:

- Whittling knives (fixed blade, sharp, non-serrated knives work best)
- Quote cards
- Safety gloves (leather or Kevlar fiber)
- Tarp or cardboard to catch wood shavings*
- 6" - 12" pieces of wood, approx. 1-2" in diameter. Either:
 - Gather local wood.
 - Look for softwoods such as pines, firs, and spruce. Use only wood without signs of decomposition. It's great to have participants pick out their own piece of wood!
 - Wood can be purchased at a local hardware store and pre-cut to size.
 - Consider sustainably sourced options first. Where there are trees, there are fallen branches!
- *Optional:* Saw for cutting wood to length
- *Optional:* Markers, colored pencil, or wood-burning tool to decorate the yad!

**Whittling generates lots of little wood shavings which can be difficult to clean up, unless caught on a tarp or inside a cardboard box. Pro tip: use the shavings as compost or kindling at your next campfire!*

Opening Activity:

1. While gathered in a circle, have a participant read a quote from one of the “Resources for Educators” cards on pages six through eight. Ask participants to read the questions and address them to the group.
2. If the local environment allows, participants should gather fallen wood to craft their yadayim. By gathering wood, participants are including materials from their local forest into the Torah service.
 - a. Instruct participants on how to find dry fallen wood. Dry wood makes snapping sound when it is broken. It is not green, soggy, or covered in moss or fungus.
 - b. Encourage them to look for wood that is one *amah* in length. An *amah* is a biblical measurement meaning from the tip of your finger to your elbow.
 - c. participants should collect two or three sticks each in case of mistakes.
 - d. Before leaving the forest, end with this closing meditation:

“Take a second, holding your sticks, and look up at the canopy above us. These are the trees that made the sticks we’re holding. At some point, you may use this yad that you will carve to read Torah. In those moments, you can think back to this forest that your yad has come from, and know that the spirit of these woods is with you while you study Torah.” – Eliana Willis, Teva Educator 2017

3. If wood is provided for participants, discuss how the wood was sourced. For example, were sustainable forestry practices used? Is this leftovers or scrap wood that would have otherwise been discarded? Is it local or repurposed? Why is that important?

Safety Notes:

While knives and burners can pose a safety hazard, informing participants of safety rules clearly and early in the program can reduce the risk of injury.

- *All participants must wear a safety glove on their non-dominant hand while the other hand has the knife.*
- *All participants must remain greater than two arms lengths away from all other people while they are whittling or burning. This is because two people need to be out of arm’s length of each other with arms extended. We call this space the “blood bubble”, and while someone is in your blood bubble, it is your responsibility to put your knife down. It is everyone’s responsibility to be conscious of staying out of each other’s blood bubbles.*
- *Facilitators of this activity should be conscious of age and maturity level of participants when deciding how many participants can safely be allowed to participate.*

Whittling:

1. Demonstrate proper whittling technique. Hold wood in the non-dominant hand, wearing a safety glove on this hand. Hold the knife in the dominant hand. Make long, smooth strokes away from the body, using the knife to shape the yad.*
2. Pass out supplies and encourage participants to get started!
3. If time and materials allow, participants can use markers, colored pencils or a wood burning tool to burn their name, a design, meaningful words, etc. into their finished yad. Encourage creativity and individuality! *See note on woodburning safety and room-set up.*
4. Clean up: Have all participants sheath their knives, unplug and properly store wood-burners and collect all wood shavings.

**For advanced whittlers, more detailed work can be done by using the non-dominant thumb to rock the back of the knife against, which allows for more controlled and deeper cuts. We call it the beaver cut method because it leaves marks that look like a beaver chewed into the wood! Based on your comfort level as a woodworker, and the skill and maturity of your students, you may or may not want to introduce the "beaver cut" technique.*

Programmatic Notes:

- *While participants are working independently, this can be a good time to walk around, offer helpful suggestions, and encourage further conversation, or it can be good to allow for quiet, meditative working.*
 - *Whittling a complete yad can often take longer than the program time allows. Let participants take their unfinished projects home and offer resources for purchasing their own knives and safety gloves. If possible, offer yourself as a resource for future project help! If the program allows, schedule multiple sessions of whittling time!*
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Fun Fact!

The *gematria*, or numerical value of Hebrew letters, of yad is 14, and there are 14 bones in a human hand. 14 + 14, like two hands working together, equals 28, the *gematria* for *koach*, which means strength.



Wood Burning a Challah Board

The Shabbat table has been compared to the *Mizbeach*, or altar, in the Temple. In this activity, participants will use wood-burning techniques to design their own challah board. In doing so, participants will contemplate what the Shabbat meal means to them and how they can incorporate personal expression and values into their altar.



Goals: Participants will...

- Consider how they can make choices for their Shabbat table that reflect their values and individuality.
 - Understand their Shabbat table as a personal *Mizbeach*, and a reflection of their values.
 - Consider how materials use impacts the natural world and their internal spiritual world.
-

Materials:

- 12" x 14" x 1" #2 Pine Boards (can be purchased at a hardware store and will need to be cut to length,) or similar wood cutting boards
- Wood burning tools
- Pencils
- 1 powerstrip per every 4 participants
- Table and chairs for all participants
- Extension cords may be necessary depending on space layout
- *Optional:* paint brushes, water color, or woodstain

Pre-program set up:

- Arrange the room so everyone can sit at a workstation with access to their wood boards and a burner , with all materials at least one arm's length from other participants (this space is the "burn bubble," like the blood bubble from whittling)
- Turn burners on to pre-heat about 5 minutes before participants begin working. The wood burning tool allows the user to hold the plastic handle. The tip gets hot enough to burn designs directly into wood. Both participants and educators should treat the wood burners carefully, and never touch the tip when it is hot.

Opening Activity:

1. Take participants outdoors, ideally into a forested area.
2. Introduce the idea of a *Mizbeach*, or altar. During the time of the Temple, animal sacrifices were brought to the altar, each used for different ritual purposes. Ask participants, “what would you put on your altar?”
3. Have participants explore their environment to find a natural object that they would want on their altar. Allow about 5 minutes for exploration.
4. Call participants back and encourage them to share their object and why they found it interesting or meaningful. These objects can then become inspiration for their challah board designs.
5. If possible, point out the type of tree that the wood they will be using is from. Offer gratitude for that type of tree!

Wood Burning:

1. Have participants sketch out a design in pencil. Pass out supplies and encourage participants to get started!
 2. Tell the participants that by moving the tool slowly over the surface of the wood it makes a darker line and moving it faster makes a lighter line. Patience is key– pressing harder is less effective than placing the burner on the wood gently and waiting for it to burn a dark line.
 3. While participants work independently, walk around and offer helpful suggestions and conversation topics.
 4. Watercolor paint or wood stain is good way for participants to add a finishing touch.
 5. Close by having each member of the group share their board and speak a little bit about the meaning behind his or her design.
 6. Make sure all burners are unplugged and cool. It can be helpful to leave all unplugged burners in a heat proof bowl while they cool off.
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Programmatic Notes:

Safety

- *Wood burning tools are very hot and will burn skin and anything else they come in contact with. Participants should be aware not to touch themselves or others with the tool’s tip.*
- *The wood burning tool should always be placed in the holder, facing the center of the table while not in use.*
- *The room should be set up so participants are sitting far enough from each other so as not to accidentally bump into the burners.*
- *Make sure participants are aware the burners are on and heating up!*

Outlining and creating images on challah boards

- *Encourage participants to draw lightly as the pencil does not always erase fully.*
- *Remind participants that large, simple lines with come out much nicer than small details.*

Additional Resources For Educators:

Why Do We Eat Challah?

A Shabbat table wouldn't be complete without a Challah. Bread comes in different forms all around the world, from fluffy and sweet to flat and spicy. But what makes challah such a special bread, and why do Jews around the world eat this bread every Shabbat?

The tradition to eat challah comes from the time of the *Beit Hamikdash*, the great Temple that once stood in Jerusalem. There the *kohanim*– the priests who dedicated their lives to serving in the Temple– would receive a portion of bread from every Jewish baker in Jerusalem and eat it with their families. Today, we remember this mitzvah while baking challah by taking a portion of our dough, saying this bracha, and then burning it in the oven as an offering:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַפְרִישׁ חֻלָּה.

Blessed are you, Hashem, Ruler of the Universe, who makes us holy with the mitzvah to separate the challah.

What Makes a Challah?

In order for a piece of bread to be considered a challah, it must be made from one of the five *mezonot* grains: wheat, barley, rye, spelt or oat. The main liquid ingredient must be water, a portion of the dough of the challah must be taken out and burned, and the loaf must be baked.

Why Two Loaves?

For many Jews, a Shabbat meal means two delicious challot to say hamotzi over. But why two? When the children of Israel were wandering in the desert, God gave them a double portion of manna, the mysterious life-sustaining food, every Friday so that they would not have to collect on Shabbat. Today, we eat two challot to remember this kindness and plenty experienced by our ancestors.

★ What do two loaves of bread symbolize to you?

Seasonal Connection

Matza was the everyday offering at the altar of the *Beit Hamikdash*. Only once a year, on Shavuot, the holiday that marked the beginning of the wheat harvest, would you find the two fluffy loaves of challah. These two leavened loaves, the *shte halechem*, were made from the finest ground grain from the new harvest and accompanied by lambs, rams, and a bull.

- ★ How can we connect our Shabbat meals to the seasons of the earth?
- ★ Why do you think leavened bread, *chametz*, was only given once a year as an offering?

Why cover the challah?

Challah is always placed on the table covered by a decorative cloth. Different explanations for this tradition include:

- ★ In the absence of wine, kiddush can be made over challah. We cover the challah to make the distinction that we are making the kiddush over wine and not the bread.
- ★ While the children of Israel were wandering in the desert, God sent them manna to keep them satisfied. The manna always came wrapped in the morning dew. We use a fancy challah cover and serving board to symbolize the dew that delivered the manna.
- ★ Since both bread and wine are holy, we cover the bread so as not to embarrass it when we bless the wine first.
- ★ What other reasons might there be for covering the challah?

Washing Before Bread

There is a custom which dictates that we wash our hands and say the *Netilat Yadayim* bracha before we eat bread. This is unique to eating bread, and is not required for meals that do not include bread. According to the *Mishnah Berurah*, this practice dates to the time of the Temple when most of the holy tithings came to the *kohanim*, the high priests, in the form of bread. The offerings were considered holy, and therefore the *kohanim* would wash their hands before eating the tithings to ensure that impurities would not get onto the bread when they ate it. This was considered to be so important that they decreed all of the children of Israel should also wash their hands before eating bread. The *Mishnah Berurah* elaborates that this is an important practice today in preparation for when the *Mashiach* comes and the Temple is restored. By continuing this practice, Jews will already be in the habit of washing their hands before eating the holy tithings of bread.

- ★ Why is bread given so much importance in Jewish tradition?
- ★ What makes bread more special than other foods?

Why Do We Put Salt on the Challah Board?

Many people sprinkle a bit of salt on their challah board, table or directly onto the bread. But where did this custom come from?

- ★ In Vayikra, we are told the proper way to make a sacrifice on the altar always includes salt. Since the Shabbat table a representation of the altar, we add salt, to remind us of this commandment.

וְכָל קִרְבַּן מִנְחֹתֶיךָ בַּמֶּלַח תִּמְלַח וְלֹא תִשְׁכַּח מִלַּח בְּרִית אֱלֹהֶיךָ מֵעַל מִנְחֹתֶיךָ עַל כָּל קִרְבָּנְךָ תִּקְרִיב מֶלַח:

And you shall salt every one of your meal offering sacrifices with salt, and you shall not omit the salt of your G!d's covenant from (being placed) upon your meal offerings. You shall offer salt on all your sacrifices. (Leviticus 2:13)

Because many Jews consider the Shabbat table to be a modern representation of the altar, we place a little salt on it to remember this mitzvah.

- ★ The Arizal, the great kabbalist of 16th century Tzfat, thought that the bread represents chesed (kindness), while the salt represents gevurah (severity). While severity is often necessary, it is more important to be kind. Therefore we eat a little salt with a big piece of bread.
- ★ For much of Jewish history, salt would have been an expensive commodity, used for kashering meat and preserving food. Some feel that pouring a little out on the table is sign of abundance reserved only for Shabbat. Though today, we can easily buy salt, it still requires immense effort and resource use by the people who mine it. We can take a moment to remember the people around the world who produce our food for us when we pour a little salt out on Shabbat.
- ★ Is it important to “offer” salt on Shabbat? Why/Why not?



Working With Wool

Working with wool can connect us to animals and to our tradition. Our ancestors were a nomadic people, moving from place to place with their herd animals. As shepherds, they were intimately linked to the land they wandered and to the flocks they tended.

Many of our ritual objects use wool and animal skins. From today's Torah parchment, talitot, and tzitzit, many of our ritual objects require products from the animals our ancestors depended on. In this section, the participants will work with drop spindles to spin their own yarn for tzitzit and use many colors of dyed wool to felt their own kippot.

Resources For Educators:

While using wool in a craft project, educators can print out or introduce these quote and question cards to encourage participants to think critically about the ways we use wool and other animal resources.

Shepherds and Shepherdesses in the Torah

רְעֵה צֹאן עֶבְדֶיךָ גַּם־אֲנִיחוּ גַם־אֲבוֹתֵינוּ

We your servants are shepherds, as were also our ancestors

(Bereishit 47:3)

Ambling through the brush-speckled hills of Israel, spending long days in contemplative solitude among the animals that sustain them people, it's no wonder that many of the Jewish people's greatest leaders started their lives as shepherds. From Avraham and Sarah to Moses and King David, life as a shepherd entails space for quiet contemplation and spiritual growth while still being deeply connected to animals and nature.

- ★ Bereishit says, "We are shepherds"; How might a shepherd or shepherdess care for their animals? Do you see any similarities between those actions, and the actions that you take in your daily life?
- ★ When do you have space for quiet contemplation and spiritual growth? What might you do to create space for contemplation?
- ★ What other ways are you like a shepherd?

"After Moses ran away from Egypt, he lived and worked as a shepherd with his wife Tzipporah's family. One day, a lamb went missing from the flock. Moses went looking for the lamb and would not stop until the baby was returned to its mother. G!d saw this act of kindness and knew that Moses would be the right leader for the Jewish people." (Shemot Rabbah 2:2)

- ★ Why did this act of kindness make Moses a good fit for leading the Jewish people?
- ★ Is it important to be connected to animals? Why/Why not?
- ★ Are you connected to animals? How?

Building the Mishkan with Wool

וְכָל-אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-נִמְצָא אֹתוֹ תְּכֵלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי וְשֵׁשׁ וְעִזִּים וְעֹרֹת אֵילִם מֵאֲדָמִים וְעֹרֹת תְּחָשִׁים הֵבִיאוּ:

“And every person who found blue, purple, or crimson wool, linen, goat hair, ram’s skin dyed red, or Tachash skins, brought them.” (Shemot 35:23)

The Mishkan was built from a place of abundance, each person giving generously of their own belongings towards its creation. In addition to wool, many other animal products were used in the building of the Mishkan. The Tachash mentioned above is said to be a legendary animal created specifically for the purpose of using its skins for the Mishkan.

- ★ What items in your life are special to you? What makes them special? Where do they come from? What color is it? How has it come into your life?
- ★ What things in your life come from animals? Is it important to know where things come from? Why?
- ★ What unique things do you have to offer the world? How do you share those gifts?

Wise-hearted Craftsperson

מִלֵּא אֹתָם חֲכֵמַת-לֵב לַעֲשׂוֹת כָּל-מְלָאכֶת חֶרֶשׁ וְחֹשֶׁב וְרִקְמָה בְּתֵכֶלֶת וּבְאַרְגָּמָן בְּתוֹלַעַת הַשָּׁנִי וּבְשֵׁשׁ וְאַרְגָּ עֹשֵׂי כָל-מְלָאכָה וְחֹשְׁבֵי מַחְשָׁבֶת:

[G!d] filled them with heart-wisdom to make all the work of carving and designing and embroidering (in blue and in purple, in crimson yarn and in linen) and weaving – as makers of all work and designers of designs.

- ★ What does it mean to make a design from your heart? How does color play into your designs?
- ★ Where do you draw your inspiration from?
- ★ What does it mean to be *Chochmat-lev*- wise-hearted?

Tza'ar Ba'alei Chayyim

כִּי־תִרְאֶה חֲמוֹר שֹׁנֵאךָ רֵיַךְ תַּחַת מְשָׁאוֹ וְחִדַּלְתָּ מֵעֲזֹב לוֹ עֲזֹב תִּעְזֹב עִמּוֹ:

If you see your enemy's donkey lying under its burden, would you refrain from helping it? You shall surely help him. (Shemot 23:5)

- ★ How do you know if an animal needs help? Have you ever seen an animal who needed help?
- ★ Why would we be required to remove the burden from a donkey who is not ours?

Tzitzit

דִּבֶּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם וְעָשׂוּ לָהֶם צִיצִית עַל־כַּנְּפֵי בְּגָדֵיהֶם לְדֹרֹתָם וְנָתַנּוּ עַל־צִיצִית הַכֶּנֶף פְּתִיל תְּכֵלֶת: וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְצִיצִית וּרְאִיתֶם אֹתוֹ וְזָכַרְתֶּם אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה וְעָשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְלֹא־תִתְּרוּ אַחֲרָי לְבַבְכֶם וְאַחֲרֵי עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־אֲתֶם זָנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם:

“Speak to the Israelite people and instruct them to make for themselves fringes on the corners of their garments throughout the ages; let them attach a cord of blue to the fringe at each corner. That shall be your fringe; look at it and recall all the commandments of the Divine and observe them, so that you do not follow your heart and eyes in your negative impulses.” (Bamidbar 15:38-39)

From these words, we take the mitzvah to attach knotted fringes, tzitzit, to the corners of our garments. Tzitzit are meant to be a symbol that constantly reminds us to find God and God's work in everything we see, even our clothes. When Jews pray, we often wrap ourselves in the warm embrace of a Tallit, with the tzitzit at its corners, as a way to physically remind us of God's mitzvot (commandments) and majesty. Many Jews wear a Tallit Katan (or “small tallit,” a kind of undershirt with knotted fringes,) under their clothing everyday.

Tzitzit remind us to fulfill God's mitzvot, and of the splendor of God's creation, in different ways:

- ★ Tzitzit are meant to serve as a reminder of all of the 613 mitzvot. We learn from Rashi that the *gematria*, or numerical value of letters, for the word tzitzit, צִיצִית, is 600. In addition to the word itself, when tzitzit are tied according to tradition they have 5 knots and 8 strings. All together adding up (600+5+8) to the 613 mitzvot in the Torah.
- ★ The 4 tzitzit, one on each corner of a garment, can also be seen as a representation of the four cardinal directions: north, south, east, and west. This is a reminder that the whole world and everything in it is God's creation. Having the tzitzit on our clothes reminds us that while there are many different directions we can go when making a decision, we should live in a way that fulfills our values and commitments as members of the Jewish people.

What About the Blue?

From the Torah, we are commanded to “attach a cord of blue” (Bamidbar 15:38), the *Tekhelet*, to our tzitzit. However most people today, and the for the last few thousands years of Jewish history, have chosen all-white instead. Why is this? According to the Talmud, the blue dye of *Tekhelet* is produced only by a mysterious creature known as the *Chilazon*. Many believe that the *Chilazon* is a pseudo-mythic creature that no longer exists on earth, therefore *Tekhelet* can no longer be made.

However, many modern scholars and Rabbis believe *Chilazon* is actually a species of mollusk. There are clues in the Talmud that might allow us to discover the *Chilazon* amongst today’s creatures. The *Chilazon* is said to:

- ★ Have a hard shell.
- ★ Be native to the land that once belonged to the tribe of Zevulun, the seashore around modern day Haifa.
- ★ Produce an indigo-colored dye, which is in a sac that can be removed without killing the animal.
- ★ Create an ink that permanently dyes cloth.

Based on this description and archeological evidence, many researchers believe that the *Chilazon* is the *Murex trunculus*, a marine snail found on the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea. Some people have started using this snail to produce dye for *Tekhelet*, while many others remain satisfied with all-white tzitzit.

Why Blue?

Rabbi Meir asks, “Why is blue different from all other colors?” and answers, “Because blue resembles the sea, and the sea resembles sky, and the sky resembles G!d’s Throne of Glory...as it is written: ‘Above the sky over their heads was the semblance of a throne, like sapphire in appearance...’” (Babylonian Talmud Menahot 38a)

- ★ Why did Rabbi Meir not just say the “blue reminds us of G!d’s sapphire throne”? Why include the sea and the sky?
- ★ What does it mean that God possesses a “sapphire throne”? What does “G!d’s Throne” mean to you?
- ★ What else in creation reminds us of “G!d’s Throne”?
- ★ Think about the words of the Shema. Knowing how Rabbi Meir felt about the color blue, why did the Rabbis choose to include the commandment to wear tzitzit as part of the Shema?



Spinning Tzitzit

Through learning basic drop spindle spinning techniques, participants will learn how to spin thread that can be made into tzitzit. tzitzit play a major part in the Jewish prayer space, in addition to everyday life. By learning about how tzitzit are made, and the materials used to make them, participants will learn how the mitzvah of Tallit and the legacy of *tekhelet* can connect Jewish people to the natural world.

Goals: Participants will...

- *Learn about the resources required to make tzitzit and where they come from in the natural world.*
- *Reflect on the values and mitzvot that they want to be reminded of on a daily basis.*
- *Learn basic drop spindle techniques to turn wool into thread.*

Guiding Questions:

- Tzitzit serve to remind us to do mitzvot throughout the day. What mitzvot and/or ethical aspirations do you want to be reminded of throughout the day?
- What else reminds you throughout the day to make good choices and be a better person?

Materials:

- Drop spindle (1 per participant)
- Wool roving (approximately 4oz for 10 participants)
- Quote & question cards from Working with Wool section
- Pens and Pencils

Using a Drop Spindle:

Demonstrate to participants the proper way to use a drop spindle (the educator may want to watch a video of how to spin wool using a drop spindle to familiarize themselves with this process). Pass out spindles and roving wool.



Clockwise,
from top left



1. Give each student a handful of wool. Have them pull some of the fibers away from the mass and begin to add a twist into those fibers by spinning them between their fingers in one direction.
2. Have them continue to do this by pulling new fibers in to the twist from the un-spun wool.
3. Once participants have created loose, hand-twisted yarn of about 5 inches, tie this piece of pre-yarn under the disk of the drop spindle. This piece will be your “leader.” Once tied underneath the disk, bring the leader up and over the disk, pull it through the notch, and catch it with the hook.
4. Holding the leader in one hand and the spindle in the other, give the spindle a twist, going clockwise, by dragging the long end of the spindle towards you on your leg.

With the spindle in your lap, pull fibers out from the end of the leader. In one hand hold a handful of fiber. With the other hand, turn the spindle clockwise on your leg. Participants will begin to see the leader grabbing on to the fiber as the spindle twists.

5. As the leader continues to get longer, stop. Unwrap the working thread from the hook and remove from notch. Wind the thread below the spindle.
6. Pull some thread back up through the notch and reattach it to the hook.
7. Keep spinning until the thread reaches desired length.

Programmatic Notes:

This program serves better to demonstrate how yarn is made, rather than complete a project in a short time block. Spinning enough wool for a full set of tzitzit is lengthy and time-consuming process that will mostly likely only be accomplished after hours of work over the course of many sittings.

If program structure allows, participants may want to work on their tzitzit over multiple days, or take their wool and spindle home. Drop spinning wool is a great ‘fidget device’ and can be therapeutic and enjoyable to do throughout the day. Knowing that it is unlikely for your participants to finish the task in the time period you can encourage them instead to:

- *Incorporate the piece of yarn they have made into their felted kippah (see below,) or,*
- *Tie the yarn around their wrist as a commitment or reminder toward a goal of their choosing.*



Alternative Activity: Tying Tzitzit

Participants can also use pre-made yarn to practice tying tzitzit. While these tzitzit may not be kosher, the process of tying them will connect participants to this mitzvah as a physical practice.

Materials Needed:

- Assorted yarn, 3 shorter strands (~30") and 1 long strand (~60") per student
- Cardboard squares with hole punched into the middle (1 per student)
- Scissors
- *Optional:* masking tape

Tying Tzitzit

1. Have participants line up all 4 strands of yarn, the 3 shorter and 1 longer. The longer string is called the *shamash*, which means helper, or servant.
2. Pull all of the strings through the hole in the piece of cardboard. The cardboard represents the corner of the garment where we would be putting the tzitzit. You will now have 8 strings hanging down. 7 will be the same length and 1, the *shamash*, will be much longer.
 - a. *Tip:* Once the yarn is through the cardboard, it is helpful to tape the cardboard to the table for secure tying. If working in pairs, partners could take turns holding the cardboard for each other.
3. Holding the strings that are on either side of the cardboard into two groups of 4 strings each, tie a double knot close to the cardboard edge.
4. Wrap the *shamash* 7 times around the 7 other strings.
5. Tie a double knot with all the strings, again by separating the strings into two groups.
6. Wrap the *shamash* 8 times.
7. Tie a double knot.
8. Wrap the *shamash* 11 times.
9. Tie a double knot.
10. Wrap the *shamash* 13 times
11. Tie a double knot to finish it off.

Note: If these were kosher tzitzit, the yarn would need to be made of pure wool and spun with the intention of making tzitzit. The words "Lashem Mitzvat tzitzit" are said before tying the first knot to set the kavanah, the intention, of fulfilling the mitzvah of tzitzit. Also, tzitzit yarn cannot be cut with metal, so the end would have to be cut off with a glass shard or with one's teeth. However, if this tying is just for practice, these rules do not need to be followed (the tzitzit will just not be kosher).

Tzitzit are meant to serve as reminders of the 613 mitzvot. While we cannot complete all the 613 mitzvot in a day, or in our entire lifetime, we can use our tzitzit as reminders of the mitzvot that are most important to us. Here are some ideas for how to extend a tzitzit activity beyond the initial class session:

- Encourage participants to think of four mitzvot that they would like to set an intention, or *kavanah*, to be reminded of every day . You may want to offer prompts like, “what values or practices matter most to you in your daily life? How could you be reminded of these throughout your day?” Give a moment of quiet reflection, allowing participants to move about the space or go outside. You can also give participants a pen and paper to write down their *kavanot* to take with them.
 - Students who have completed the Teva program can use the string they made as a bracelet for their Teva beads, as a reminder to take the Teva values of awareness, ecology, interconnectedness and responsibility with them. Other groups can simply tie the string around their wrist, as the reminder of the goal they chose to work on.
-



Clockwise, from top left



Felting a Kippah

Felting is a process in which wool fibers are torn and pulled back together with a serrated needle, creating a tiny velcro effect. This allows the wool to be molded into any shape one could imagine. By felting a personalized kippah, participants will explore their beliefs around Jewish identity and expression and interact directly with wool craft.

Goals: Participants will...

- Consider how they relate Jewish identity via personal physical expression.
 - Learn the fundamentals of felting techniques.
-

Guiding Questions:

- What are physical ways we express our Jewish identity?
 - What are non-physical ways we express ourselves Jewishly?
-

Materials:

- Felting needle (1 per person)
 - Various colored roving or batting wool (approximately 0.5 oz per participant)
 - Foam blocks (1 per participant)
-

Optional Opening Activity:

(this activity encourages participants to view the natural world as a vehicle for self reflection)

1. Gather participants in a circle outside, in a natural area.
2. Pass out scavenger hunt cards (below).
3. Give participants 5 to 10 minutes to find all the items on the colors scavenger hunt card.
4. Bring participants back together and encourage them to share with each other what they found.
5. Begin craft section, encouraging continued discussion and awareness.

Colors Scavenger Hunt

Look around you into nature. What does the red of the leaves, the brown of the bark, or the color of the lake remind you of?

Explore the space and find colors that remind you of the ideas listed below. If the item is small enough to fit in your hand, bring it back to the group. If it is bigger than your hand, or a living thing that will be disturbed by moving it, draw a picture, or write its name in the space below.

This color in nature reminds me of:

A Dream	
<i>Chesed</i> (Loving-Kindness)	
A Mistake	

Friendship	
<i>Gevurah</i> (Strength)	
Responsibility	
A Party	



Felting a Kippah :

1. Demonstrate proper felting technique using the felting needle and foam block, including how to incorporate multiple colors, how to make varying shapes, and how to incorporate their spun wool string (from preceding Drop Spindle activity, if applicable).
 - a. Tips for Felting:
 - i. Start with a base color to make the shape of the kippah.
 - ii. Do not push the needle too deeply into the foam– just past the serrated part is plenty. If you push too far, the whole kippah will begin to bind to the foam underneath!
 - iii. Hold the needle above the serration gripping it like you would a pen. Make quick, small, and repetitive pokes for neatness and efficiency.
 - iv. Every few minutes, pull the kippah off the foam to ensure that it does not become stuck.
2. Pass out materials and encourage participants to begin.
3. Move throughout the room, helping and encouraging as needed.
4. When participants begin to finish, it can be helpful to shape the kippot by wetting them and stretching them over a round object like a basketball and letting them dry there for a few hours. Orm they can wear their wet kippah under a hat to help it take shape.

Safety Notes:

Felting needles are sharp and can prick skin. To limit the risk of poking:

- *Hand out needles only after all participants have collected their wool and are calmly seated.*
- *Instruct participants to maintain concentration, and a good grip on their needles while they work.*
- *Instruct participants to always keep their needle stuck into the foam block while they are taking a break.*



Working With Recycled Materials

It might seem strange that we would want to create ritual objects from things we pulled out of the “trash.” However this repurposing takes on new meaning when we consider the Mishkan, the holy mobile sanctuary our ancestors carried with them through the desert; every item of the Mishkan was made from objects that the people were carrying with them. All of the things we throw “away,” even to recycle, are made of valuable resources that come from the earth. When we reuse and repurpose our resources to make holy ritual objects, we are remembering their value as products of God’s creation.

We can rethink the way we use “disposable” objects, especially in our contemporary society, where waste is rampant and much of what we use winds up in landfills within six months of purchase. In this section, participants will consider their relationship with “garbage,” learn about *Bal Tashchit* (the biblical prohibition against waste,) and use recycled materials to create a Kiddush cup and a cup to use for Netilat Yadayim, ritual hand washing.

Resources For Educators:

There are many different materials that can be salvaged and used for crafts rather than being sent to the landfill. These texts can help guide discussions about waste, recycling, and the elevation of objects and resources.

Bal Tashchit: Prohibition Against Waste

כִּי תִצּוֹר אֶל עִיר יָמִים רַבִּים לְהִלָּחֵם עָלֶיהָ לְתַפְשָׁהּ לֹא תִשְׁחִית אֶת עֵצָהּ לְנִדְחַ עָלָיו גֶּרְזֵן כִּי מִמֶּנּוּ תֹאכַל וְאִתּוֹ לֹא תִכְרֹת כִּי הָאָדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה לְבָא מִפְּנֵיךְ בַּמָּצוֹר

When you besiege a city for many days to wage war against it to capture it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an ax against them, for you may eat from them, but you shall not cut them down. Is the tree of the field a man, to go into the siege before you?

(Devarim 20:19)

“The Torah teaches us that we are not to cut down fruit trees in wartime. Yet the rabbis in the Babylonian Talmud (200 C.E. – ~500 C.E.) understand verse nineteen above to be a general principle beyond war and fruit trees... If Jews must not cut down fruit trees in the extreme case of a war of conquest, when destruction is the norm, how much the more so does this apply to normal life.” (Rabbi Yonatan Neril)

- ★ In what ways are we “destructive” in our normal life? How is wasting resources a form of destruction?
- ★ Why does God allow us to take fruit from a tree, but not to cut it down?
- ★ If we treated all trees and other natural resources like we do our fellow people, how might our resource use be different?

Mishkan: Elevating Our Resources

וַיָּבֹאוּ הָאָנָשִׁים עַל-הַנָּשִׁים כָּל נְדִיב לֵב הֵבִיאוּ חָח וְנָזָם וְטַבַּעַת וְכוּמָז כָּל-כְּלֵי זָהָב וְכָל-אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הֵנִיף
תְּנוּפֹת זָהָב לַיהוָה: וְכָל-אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-נִמְצָא אֹתוֹ תְּכֵלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי וְשֵׁשׁ וְעִזִּים וְעֹרֹת אֵילָם
מְאָדָּמִים וְעֹרֹת תְּחָשִׁים הֵבִיאוּ:

“The men and the women came, every generous-hearted person, brought bracelets and earrings and rings and buckles, and all kinds of golden objects. And every person who found blue, purple, or crimson wool, linen, goat hair, ram skins dyed red, or tachash skins brought them. Everyone who would bring silver or copper, brought it as an offering to G!d, and anyone who had acacia wood for any type of work brought it.” (Shemot 35:22-24)

Through recycling and reusing, we are also re-elevating these objects.

- ★ What was the Mishkan made out of? What materials do you have at hand in today’s world?
- ★ Where did the Israelites get the materials to build the Mishkan while they were wandering in the desert?
- ★ Is reusing or recycling materials better than using new materials? Why/Why not?
- ★ What are examples of things we can make from recycled or reused materials?

Netilat Yadayim: Ritual Hand Washing

By using our washing cup to wash our hands throughout the day, and at special ritual times, we can connect to the life-giving and purifying potential of a necessary element for all life: water.

The practice of Netilat Yadayim began in Temple times, where the priests, the *kohanim*, served God and the Jewish people through ritual sacrifice and offerings. The *kohanim* made themselves ready to participate in ritual by going to the *mikveh* and washing their hands. This act established the connection for the Jewish people between water and purification, between water and preparing ourselves to take part in ritual, between water and renewal. We follow this practice of washing our hands so that we can be ready in body and in spirit to elevate parts of day (waking up, eating a meal, praying) from mundane to special.

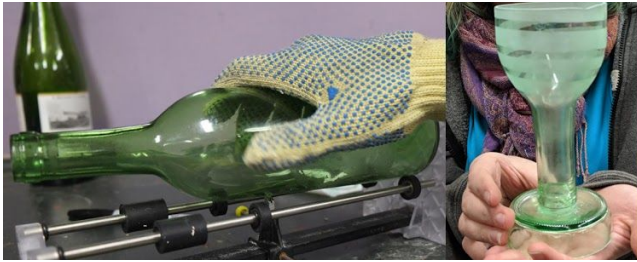
While the practice of handwashing may have started during the times of the Temple, water has fulfilled a purifying and sustaining role for the Jewish people throughout the Torah. Water has served as a symbol of sustenance, gratitude, and even the Torah itself.

“Water stands for Torah, as it is said ‘All who are thirsty, come for water.’ Having gone for three days without Torah, the prophets among them stepped forth and legislated that the Torah should be read on the second and fifth days of the week as well as on Shabbat so that they would not let three days pass without Torah” (Babylonian Talmud, *Bava Kamma* 82a)

Statistics on Waste in Our World

- Every year, the United States generates approximately 230 million tons of "trash" – about **4.6 pounds** per person per day. Less than one-quarter of it is recycled; the rest is incinerated or buried in landfills.
 - The U.S. creates about **30% of the world's waste** despite being only 5% of the world's population.
 - Recycling and composting prevented 87.2 million tons of material from being disposed in 2013, up from 15 million tons in 1980.
 - Diverting these materials from landfills prevented the release of approximately 186 million metric tons of carbon dioxide into the air in 2013 – equivalent to taking over 39 million cars off the road for a year.
-
- ★ Do you recycle or compost in your home and school? If not, what would it take to start a recycling or compost program?
 - ★ Where does the recycling and compost go by you? You and/or your students may wish to research where and how your compost, as well as glass, plastic, and other recyclables, are taken care of in your community.

Source: <https://www.epa.gov/smm/advancing-sustainable-materials-management-facts-and-figures>



Cutting a Kiddush Cup

On Shabbat and Holidays, Jewish people around the world gather around the table and raise glasses to say Kiddush. This prayer sanctifies the holiness of the day and symbolizes the joy that comes from making the day special. Kiddush is a time to celebrate the sweetness of holidays and gives us an opportunity to give thanks for sweetness in our own lives. In this workshop, participants will make a Kiddush cup out of recycled glass bottles and/or jars. In doing so, participants will engage with the values of *Bal Tashchit* and create a personalized vessel for reflecting on the sweetness of their own lives.

Goals: Participants will...

- Learn about the principle of *Bal Tashchit* in relation to a Jewish ritual object
 - Practice safe glass cutting and glass etching techniques
 - Create a beautiful and usable Kiddush cup from recycled wine bottles
-

Guiding Questions:

- What is *Bal Tashchit*?
 - How is making recycled kiddush cups an act of “not destroying”?
 - Saying Kiddush is a practice to give thanks for the sweetness in our lives. What are some sweet things in your life that you are grateful for? What are some other ways we make Shabbat and holidays special?
-

This workshop is a multi-step process, and is divided below into multiple stations/steps of the process. The stations you choose will partly depend on whether you have access to a sand blaster or are using etching cream to create designs on the cups, and whether you are making wine glass-style cups or tumblers; wine glass-style cups are wonderful, and they take more time to complete because the glue used to fasten on the bottoms of the glasses needs time to dry. Tumbler-style cups may be better if you have limited time.

Cutting Station:

- Empty wine bottles (2 per participant and 2-3 for demonstration)
- Glass bottle cutting kit (that comes with a scoring tool)
- Permanent marker
- Heat resistant rubber gloves (2-3 pairs, enough for each person cutting at any one time)
- Eye protection goggles (2-3 pairs, enough for each person cutting at any one time)

Cutting Station (continued)

- Dry rags (many!)
- 2 large pots:
 - one for ice water
 - one halfway full of *near* boiling water
- 2 ladles (one for hot water, one for cold)
- Burner or hot plate for hot water pot (if using a hot plate, you'll need an outlet and possibly an extension cord, too)

Gluing Station:

- Glass cement or epoxy (5-minute epoxy works best)
- A few pieces of recycled cardboard
- Scratch paper

Soaking Station:

- Tub of water or sink
- Baking soda
- Steel wool or Brillo
- Grape juice (for *L'chaims*, i.e. toasts!)

Design Station:

- Contact Paper
- Pencils (1 per participant)
- Scratch paper (1 sheet per participant)
- Scissors

Frosting Station

- Sandblaster OR etching cream
- If using sandblaster:
 - Sand and electrical power (if using sandblaster)
 - Ear protection for 2 people
- If using etching cream:
 - warm water for rinsing
 - Whatever other supplies are listed on the etching cream you are using

Edge-Sanding Station:

- Diamond grit glass-sanding pads (2 coarse and 2 fine)
- Kevlar (or similarly cut-resistant) work gloves (3-4 pairs, enough for each person sanding at any one time)
- Eye protection goggles (2-3 pairs, enough for each person sanding at any one time)
- Bowls of water (to aid glass sanding)
- Dry rags

Pre-Activity Set Up:

- Ensure that all bottles are clean and have labels removed. Soaking them in warm water and baking soda helps get sticky labels and glue off. Use steel wool to scrub off stubborn labels.
- Ensure all safety equipment is in good condition, without holes or tears anywhere on gloves.
- Use as many workstations as necessary to make sure that participants are not crowding each other.
- Set up 5 Stations:
 - Cutting Station: Set up two pots next to each other on one table. One pot should be full of ice water, and the other should be half-full of hot water on a burner. Turn burner on and keep water at a near-boil (this may take a while). Place glass bottle scorer on a flat surface nearby. Be sure rags, eye protection, and gloves are accessible.
 - Edge-Sanding station: Set bowls of water and sanding blocks out with enough room to work. Be sure rags and eye protection are accessible.

- Design and Frosting/Etching Stations (these stations are combined if using etching cream, though contact paper for designs should be applied at a separate table from where the etching cream is used.)
 - Design Station: Set materials out on a separate table with enough room to work.
 - Frosting/Etching Station: Set up sandblaster or etching cream on a separate table. If using a sandblaster, a separate room is ideal for noise protection. Be sure ear protection is accessible.
- Gluing Station: Have glue, scratch paper and cardboard on a flat surface where cups can be left out overnight to set.
- Soaking Station (optional): Place bottles in water with baking soda (enough that the water is slimy to the touch) at least an hour before the start of the workshop. Place steel wool nearby.

Opening Activity:

Explain that you will be using recycled materials to make your own Kiddush cups. Ask participants why it is important to use recycled materials– refer to Resources for Educators section about recycled materials. Ask them to share what they think is special about Kiddush cups. Demonstrate the cutting process before getting started and explain each station.



Clockwise,
from top left



Cutting Station:

1. While participants are working on their designs at the design station, call them up one or two at a time to the water station to cut their bottles.
2. Using the scoring tool from the glass bottle cutting kit, score an even line around the bottle. Both the height and placement of the blade can be adjusted by turning the knobs on the scoring tool. Once you have determined how tall you wish your cup to be, set up the cutter so that the bottle rests on the blade at the height you have chosen. Make sure that when you turn your bottle in place, the blade is touching the glass.
3. Mark the bottle on the side– this will serve as a visual aid so you know that you’ve spun the bottle all the way around.
4. Applying even pressure, turn the bottle for one full turn. You should hear a scratching noise and see a score line. Do not turn the bottle more than once– this increases the chance of jagged lines when the glass is cut.
5. If your scoring tool came with large rubber bands, apply these to the bottle on either side of the score line.
6. Wearing rubber gloves and safety goggles, have participants repeatedly pour the hot, then the cold water over the score mark using ladles to pour the water.
 - a. Rotate the bottle while pouring so the water heats along the entire score line.
 - b. Switch back and forth between cold and hot every 5–10 seconds.
 - c. This causes the glass to rapidly expand and contract, eventually breaking along the score line.

Notes:

- *To create a tumbler-style cup: cut the bottle once, using the bottom on the bottle as the part you will decorate and drink from.*
- *To create a wine glass-style cup: cut the bottle twice, once to cut off the neck of the bottle plus a few inches. The neck will become the stem, the few inches of bottle will become the cup you drink from. Cut the bottle again an inch or two from the bottom– this will become the base of the glass.*

Safety Notes:

Remind participants that hot glass looks the same as cold glass, and caution should be taken when picking up jars at this station.

- *It is best to assume that all glass at this station is too hot to touch with bare hands.*
- *At the end of the session, the boiling water should be immediately poured out, and the burner should be turned off, unplugged, and left to cool in a safe place.*

Edge-Sanding Station

1. Pass out sanding pads, eye protection and kevlar gloves to participants at this station.
2. Show participants how to sand down the sharp edge of the glass first with the coarse sander, then the fine sander to make the glass smooth enough to handle and drink from. They should be sure to sand all the way around the rim to go over all sharp edges. The rim itself has 3 edges, the outside edge, the top of the cup and the inside edge. Make sure that the participants dip the sanders in water every 5 seconds while sanding. This cuts down on the amount of glass dust in the air, which can be very harmful to the lungs.

Design Station

1. Have participants sketch out a design onto the contact paper. Advise participants that larger shapes work better than intricate lines and details.
2. Emphasize that the stickers will be a negative space design– anything they cover with a sticker will remain transparent, and all surfaces uncovered will be frosted.

3. Use a hard surface such as a credit card or i.d. to fully affix contact paper to jar. This will reduce the amount of air bubbles so that your design will come out as crisp as you intended.
4. Once the participants have finished cutting their glass bottles, dry the glass before having them firmly place the contact paper onto their cut and edge-sanded bottles.

Frosting Station: etching cream

For facilities that do not have a sandblaster, glass etching cream can be used instead to create the same frosted glass effect. Every brand of etching cream works a bit differently, so be sure to check for brand specific instructions. Generally, the cream works as follows;

1. At a separate table, spread etching cream over the areas that you want to be etched, including over the stencils you laid out.
2. Follow the timing as instructed on the bottle.
3. Rinse off the cream with hot water. Remove the contact paper.

Safety note:

Etching cream is highly caustic and will burn skin. Rubber gloves must be worn and adults should be the ones painting on the cream. Check packaging for brand-specific safety needs.

Frosting Station: sandblaster

1. Make sure all stickers/contact paper are firmly stuck to the glass.
2. Follow these instructions:
 - a. Anyone near the sandblaster should wear ear protection.
 - b. Lift lid of the sand chamber, place glass where it can be reached. Make sure sand hose is close enough to be reached by the gloves.
 - c. Close and lock lid.
 - d. Turn on sandblaster.
 - e. Place hands in gloves. Hold glass piece in your non-dominant hand, and the sand hose in your dominant hand. Hold the hose like you would a pencil for maximum control.
 - f. Hold the tip of the hose perpendicular and about 3 inches away from the surface of the glass. Use the foot pedal to “turn on” the sand stream.
 - i. The closer you hold the hose, the smaller the “brush stroke” width will be, and the more likely it is that the stickers will come off while you sandblast.
 - ii. Point the hose only at the glass- be sure to avoid pointing it at the window of the sand chamber (it will scratch and make it hard to see into the chamber).
 - iii. Take your foot off the pedal any time you’re not using the sand hose; this makes it less likely you will point the hose at the box window.
 - g. When you’ve finished etching around the design, sandblast around the drinking edge of the cup (for safety), this time holding the hose about ½ inch away from the edge.
 - h. Take your foot off the pedal. Turn off the machine.
 - i. Unlock the chamber, shake off any excess sand from the glass and remove the piece from the chamber.
 - j. Check the glass- if you want to etch more, repeat steps a-i. If not, gently peel the stickers away.
 - k. Rinse the piece 3-4 times to be sure it is clear of sand. When you rinse it, the etching will appear to disappear, but have no fear- when it dries, the etching will be more apparent.

Safety note:

- *The sandblaster is a power tool that young people should be supervised while using.*

Remember, you can always add etching to the glass, but once a spot is etched, it essentially has been scratched by the tiny sand (silicon oxide) particles in the sand as it was blasted at high pressure. It cannot be “un-etched”.

Gluing Station (for wine glass-style cups)

1. Make sure all glass pieces are dry.
2. Prepare epoxy or glue according to instructions on the package, using scrap paper as a mixing palette.
3. Using a piece of cardboard as an applicator, apply a thin, even layer to the bottom of the cup (what used to be the neck) where it will attach to the base.
4. Gently press the glass pieces together and hold for at least 30 seconds. Refer to epoxy or glue package for setting time. If allowing the cup to set overnight (recommended), flip it upside down– it’s less top heavy that way.

Soaking Station

1. While participants are waiting on another station, have them remove bottles from the baking soda solution.
2. Use steel wool to scrub labels off the bottles. Use these bottles for the next time you do this workshop!

Closing:

When all participants have completed their cup, collect and clean up all materials.

Optional: pass around some grape juice to those who have cups that they can drink from. Say the blessing over grape juice and ask the participants to make a L’chaim and share what sweetness they are celebrating!

Programmatic Notes:

- *As this is a time consuming process, it works best to have participants begin designing their kiddush cups, or remove labels from bottles for future kiddush cups, while they are waiting to begin the cutting/sanding/etching process.*
- *Since gluing is the last step for wine glass-style cups, you may not have time to get to this. If that’s the case, educators can glue the cups and get them back to participants at a later time.*
- *It’s helpful to show participants an example of creating a design with a sticker. You may wish to demonstrate by peeling a sticker off after etching, to help them understand negative space.*

Safety Notes:

- *Double check the drinking edge of each cup. All edges need to be properly sanded to a smooth edge to ensure that no one cuts their mouth or other body parts on a cup.*
- *There should be no more than 2 people at the cutting station at any given time (one pouring hot water, the other pouring cold, then switch); very hot water is dangerous!*
- *If you are using a sandblaster, it may take time to train participants on how to use it. It is often helpful to do a “practice etching” before etching the final product. You can also train participants/let them practice etching while they wait their turn to cut and sand.*



Making a Hand-Washing Cup

It is a custom to pour water over each hand and take part in the mitzvah of Netilat Yadayim each day. In the morning upon waking, before prayer, and before eating, we use a special cup with two handles to perform this mitzvah. In this activity, participants will make a hand-washing cup from recycled materials.

Goals: Participants will...

- Learn about the principle of *Bal Tashchit* in relation to a Jewish ritual object.
- Consider the role of water within Jewish tradition.
- Make a unique hand-washing cup.

Guiding Questions:

- What are the different times throughout the day that we do Netilat Yadayim (*waking up, before prayer, before bread*)? What do these things have in common with each other? Why do we wash our hands after or before each?
- What are some places that we see water in the Torah? Are these experiences purifying? What does it mean to purify?

Materials:

- Empty cans, cleaned and with label removed (1 per participant, 28oz cans are best)
- Discarded metal utensils (at least 2 per participant) *Note: these must be easily bendable. Look for low-quality silverware being sold at thrift stores, garage sales, or sitting unused at home*
- Pop-riveting tool & rivets (suggested size $\frac{1}{8}$ ")
- Drill
- Drill bit (to match the rivet size)
- Rolls of tape of varying width (painter's tape or masking tape)
- Assorted spray paints
- Stencils
- Varying sized paint brushes
- Old cardboard boxes or a dropcloth
- Small butane plumber's torch
- Tabletop vice

Safety Equipment:

- Safety goggles
- Leather Safety gloves
- Bucket of cold water to cool off metal

Pre Activity Set Up:

- Create 4 workstations:
 - **Metalwork Station:**
 - On a sturdy table affix the vice and prepare the blow torch, drill, and safety goggles.
 - **Tape Station:**
 - Arrange painters tape and cans on a table.
 - **Rivet/Drilling Station:**
 - Set up drill and riveting supplies on a sturdy table.
 - **Spray paint Station:**
 - In an outdoor area, lay down flattened cardboard boxes or a dropcloth so as not to get paint on the ground. Arrange paint bottles nearby.

How to:

Tape Station:

- Participants remove paper from can and create a stencil decoration– using tape– to be spray painted.
- Make sure that the participants understand that everything not covered by the tape will be colored by the spray paint.
- Push the tape down firmly for crisper lines and designs.

Metalworking Station (1 to 2 participants at a time at this station):

With the help of an educator, one participant at a time may use the blowtorch to bend the cutlery into a handle shape. Each step should be carefully supervised and the equipment should be carefully handled.

1. Place the desired cutlery into the clamp secured onto the table.
2. Have the student point to the part of the utensil where they want to make the bend.
3. Turn on the blowtorch and aim the flame at the chosen spot until it turns red.
4. Turn off the blowtorch and put it somewhere safe (or hand it to the educator).
5. Bend the utensil with pliers, right above where it glows red, into the desired shape.

Rivet/Drilling Station:

1. Use the drill to make two holes in the silverware, one at the top and one at the bottom.
2. Drill the lower hole on the can (the place where the silverware will attach and line up.)
3. Load your rivet tool, and proceed to rivet the hole on the can to the silverware. The silverware should still be able to rotate at this time
4. Align the silverware with the top of the can, and drill through the hole previously made in the silverware (this will make sure the silverware is aligned properly).
5. Rivet through the silverware and the can through the hole that you just drilled.

Safety Notes:

- *All participants should wear safety goggles and gloves at all times when drilling or riveting.*
- *Use a pair of pliers to submerge the hot silverware in a bucket of cold water, to cool off hot metal immediately after torched.*

Spray Paint Station:

Once all participants have finished preparing and creating their cups, take the participants outside or to a well ventilated area and spray paint the cups. This is best done outside over opened cardboard boxes, newspaper or a drop cloth. Spray paint is permanent and will not come off surfaces that the cups might be rested on or in front of.

Programmatic Notes:

This is a time-consuming process. If you're running low on time, leaving the riveting until the end can be a way to save time. If you run out of time, educators can go back later and finish riveting.



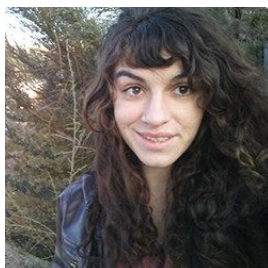
About the Authors



Elan Margulies aims to inspire joy and reverence for the natural world by introducing students to earth-based Jewish traditions and the wonders right outside their door. Elan worked as the Director of Teva, and Hazon's Director of Education, taught ecology at Eden Village Camp, the Student Conservation Association, and the Cornell University Naturalist Outreach Program. He has led hikes in Israel, volunteered in the Kalahari Desert, worked for the US National Park Service, and directed a Jewish educational farm outside Chicago – where he learned that the best way to catch a goat is to run away from it. He pursued graduate studies in forest ecology at University of Michigan and The Hebrew University. In his free time, he enjoys finding wild edibles, brewing ginger beer and working with wood and metal.



Frances Lasday came to Hazon to live and work on the Topsy Turvy Bus which she did for two summers before settling at Isabella Freedman to work for Teva in the Fall of 2016 through spring 2019. Frances graduated from the University of Vermont with a major in Environmental Studies, a minor in Food Systems, and a thesis on the possibility of local kosher meat in the state of Vermont. In her free time she enjoys social reading, starting knitting projects, general silliness, and getting dirty.



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