

# Meaningful Middot:

## Making Learning Stick

BEFORE:

- What are the Big Ideas you want your students to take away from this experience?

\* Hanukkah = dedication. Just like our ancestors burned oil for 8 days to dedicate the Temple, we do good deeds/lacks of kindness to re-dedicate ourselves to one another by taking on communal responsibility. (למנוחה)  
\* Increasing the light. R. Hilfel taught that we start with 1 candle and increase each day. Our actions have a cumulative effect on the world. Acts of kindness can bring "light" into the darkness of winter time.

\* Macabbes were brave/knew what they stood for. Increasing the light each night through Acts of Kindness takes bravery and grit/persistence. We can't just want it--we have to do it.

- Which middah/ot are you connecting to this lesson?

נצח (netzach) - Persistence / Grit  
אחריות (achrayut) - Social Responsibility

AFTER:

- What went well?

- Kids really got into brainstorming Acts of Kindness  
- Enjoyed this being a different way to talk about Hanukkah (interesting for me as a teacher!)  
- It felt relevant.  
• What would you do differently?  
- It was hard to keep the candles together in each bundle.  
- Think about box/container for project?

- What did you hear students say during reflection?

- "It's kind of like giving people a different kind of hanukkah present."  
- My dad is going to get really excited about doing this.  
• What would you want parents to know about the experience?  
- This project leads to a spiritual practice/activity for the whole family to participate in during hanukkah.



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By Babylonian Talmud  
Shabbat 21b

### 2. Connect the Text

Choose a piece of text that relates to the activity, a selection of Torah, a quote, a poem, or book for younger students. Write down what you will be reading/sharing, the **middot** it applies to, and how you will discuss its relevance to the activity:

Beit Shimon says, "On the first day, one kindles and from there on, gradually decreases."

Beit Hillel says, "On the first day one kindles 1 and from there on, gradually increases..." The reason for Beit Hillel's opinion is that one elevates in matters of sanctity and does not downgrade.

MIDDOT: נְסִיחָה (Perseverance/Grit) & דְּאִיּוּת (Social Responsibility)



### 3. Framing the Activity

Include materials you will need, instructions, grouping (if applicable), and background info students will need to understand the purpose of the activity.

Context: -Brainstorm ways to bring kindness in the world.

-Read "Mitzvah Pizza" or similar book on paying it forward.

Materials: - Construction paper scissors, markers, Hanukkah stickers, 1 full box of Hanukkah candles per student

Each "Shan. Lutz" will be wrapped around the correct number of candles for the mitsvah that night.)

### 4. Describe the Activity

- Make an 8-run paper chain - lit that you will assemble in your house each night after you light the candles. At the end of Hanukkah, 4a. Do the activity. students will have a

paper chain hanging in each of their homes displaying their Acts of Kindness throughout the holiday.

### 1. Tell Your Story

How is this activity meaningful to you? Jot down a personal story or anecdote that will help students understand your connection.

Winter time is dark and cold, it is the time of year when the nights are longest and the days are shortest. LITERALLY - it is the time of year with the least light. Every winter, I try to do a random act of kindness every day for eight days. Can anyone think of what eight days of the winter that might be???

HANUKKAH!

### 5. Discuss the Experience

How will you reflect on the experience? Include information about how you will re-focus the students, what questions you will ask, and how you will wrap it up at the end so that the meaning and connection sticks.

Discussion questions: ① How will you know if your Acts of Kindness are having an effect??

② How did you choose which Act of Kindness to pair with each night?

③ Where in your house will you hang/build your paper-chain, and why?