



The Jewish Special Needs/Disability Inclusion Consortium of Greater Philadelphia

Presents

Jewish Disability Awareness & Inclusion Month (JDAIM) Lesson Plans



Jewish Learning Venture innovates programs that help people live connected Jewish lives.

261 Old York Road, Suite 720 / Jenkintown, PA 19046 / 215.320.0360 / jewishlearningventure.org

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INTRODUCTION

Jewish Disability Awareness & Inclusion Month (JDAIM) is a unified national initiative during the month of February that aims to raise disability awareness and foster inclusion in Jewish communities worldwide.

In the Philadelphia area, the Jewish Special Needs/Disability Inclusion Consortium works to expand opportunities for families of students with disabilities. The Consortium is excited to share these comprehensive lesson plans with schools, youth groups, and early childhood centers in our area.

We appreciate you making time for teachers to use these lessons during February—or whenever it's convenient for you.

For additional resources, please email me at gkaplan-mayer@jewishlearningventure.org or call me at 215-320-0376.

Sincerely,

Gabrielle Kaplan-Mayer,

Chief Program Officer

JDAIM 2018 Lesson Plan: 4th - 6th Grade

Created By: Rabbi Michelle Greenfield

Objectives:

- Students will identify Disability Rights as a type of civil right, and will begin to examine the history of this movement.
- Through story, text, and art, students will connect Jewish values with this civil rights movement

Jewish Value:

Tzedek-Justice צדק

Materials:

- Story from [God's Mailbox \(Marc Gellman, 1996\)](#): "Gluing the Broken Commandments Back Together," pp 68-72
- Copies of the discussion guide
- Devices with videos or written description of the Capitol Crawl
- Paper and drawing supplies

Introduction:

SAY: February is Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance & Inclusion Month (JDAIM for short). During February, the Jewish community raises awareness about how we can all support people with disabilities. There is a long history of people with disabilities fighting for their rights, sometimes with support from other advocates and allies.

ASK: Can you think of other people who have fought for their own civil and human rights?

Students will likely know about Rev Dr Martin Luther King, Jr, and they may know that Rabbi AJ Heschel marched with him in Selma

SAY: Today we are going to share a Jewish story (a modern midrash) and learn about some moments in the Disability Rights movement in the United States. You will be encouraged to think about your roles in the struggle for equal rights for people with disabilities.

Process

SAY: The Torah often tells stories without all of the details. For many years, Rabbis and other Jewish thinkers have been creating new stories to fill in the gaps in the stories. This story fills in a gap in a specific moment in the Torah. Moses broke the first set of tablets that he got on Mount Sinai, and we know that he will get a new set. The Torah tells us that the first broken set was kept in the ark with new ones. This story imagines how they got there!

READ: Read the story. Or invite kids to read the story or to act it out!

ASK:

- How would you describe Moses' role in connection to the 'go slow people?' Does it matter that Moses has power? (Introduce the words 'ally' and 'advocate'.)
- How does Moses use his privilege and power?
- Who are the go slow people and go fast people in your life/family/community?

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- Are there times when you have been a go-slow person?
- Are there times in your life when you have been asked to be an ally or an advocate?

Introduce the idea of disability rights:

- Sometimes the 'go slow people' who are ignored or left behind are people with physical, intellectual, developmental, or emotional disabilities
- What rights do people with disabilities have?
 - Answer: The same rights as everybody else!

ASK: Whose job is it to make sure that everybody has equal rights?

SAY: Until about 30 years ago, it was legal in the United States to discriminate against people with disabilities. 30 years ago, there was a law proposed to give rights to people with disabilities, but Senators and Congresspeople did not pay enough attention. We are going to watch a video (or read a description) of a moment when people with physical disabilities crawled up the steps of the Capitol building to get attention.

(You may want to invite kids to read the Capitol Crawl information attached below)

Watch: [This video of Jennifer Keelan](#) talking about her experience.

SAY: Hillel was a Jewish leader who lived almost 2,000 years ago, but we still learn his words often. I'm going to read you a quote that has 3 parts. First, just listen to all 3 parts. Then we will think about each part and how it connects to Jennifer's story.

If I am not for myself, who is for me?	<i>Im ein ani li mi li</i>	אם אין אני לי, מי לי?
And when I am only for myself, what am I?	<i>Uk'she'ani l'atzmi mah ani</i>	וכשאני לעצמי, מה אני?
And if not now, when?	<i>V'im lo achshav eimatai</i>	ואם לא עכשיו, אימתי?

Give students a piece of paper and drawing supplies.

SAY: We are all a part of creating justice and speaking out for the disability rights movement. Some of us in the room may have disabilities or may help care for people who have disabilities. Some of us are advocates or allies. Pick on part of this quote and either draw or write something you can do or something somebody else has done to help create justice for people with disabilities.

WRAP-UP (Closing activity):

Invite groups to join back together and share their learning and their art

Capitol Crawl

In March of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was stuck. Congress was not paying attention to the bill, and the needs of people with disabilities were being ignored. The Americans with Disabilities Act was the first law giving many basic rights to people with disabilities and requiring accessibility in businesses, government buildings, schools, and other institutions. On March 12th, a large group of people with disabilities gathered at the bottom of the stone steps of the Capitol building.



More than 60 activists with physical disabilities left behind their wheelchairs, crutches, and other mobility aids and began to climb the 83 steps to the Capitol. This attracted media coverage and forced congress to pay attention to the barriers that were in place. Jennifer Keelan was 8 years old and had Cerebral Palsy. She left her wheelchair and pulled herself up by her arms and legs saying, “I’ll take all night if I have to.”

