

DIFFICULT CHOICES

GOAL: Students will begin to understand the value of studying Jewish texts, and the potential relationship of those texts to their lives.

- OBJECTIVES:**
1. Students will be able to identify difficult choices they face.
 2. Students will be able to analyze the difficult choices faced by Biblical characters.
 3. Students will be able to relate and compare their own difficult choices with those of the Biblical characters.

I. Introduction

II. Personal Choices (15 min.)

Students receive writing materials and answer the following questions: Try to remember a difficult choice you faced in your life:

- * What was the situation?
- * What made it difficult?
- * How did you choose?

III. Biblical Choices {50 min.)

We will divide students into five groups. Each group will receive a Torah passage, and be responsible for understanding the passage, and then presenting it in skit form to the large group. Here's the step-by-step:

A. {15 min.) Facilitator will lead a discussion of the Biblical dilemma received. Use the same questions as above:

- * What was the situation?
- * What made it difficult?
- * How did your character choose?

B. (10 min.) Once your group understands the situation, prepare a skit to present your group's situation to the rest of the group. Have fun with this! Skits should be 3-4 minutes long.

C. (25 min.) Presentation of skits

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D. Facilitator and text assignments:

Rabbi Folberg: Genesis 37:1-36 (Reuven's dilemma)

Judi Ratner : Genesis 39:1-18 (Joseph and Mrs. Potiphar)

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| #3 | Facilitator | Exodus 1:1-19 | (Shifra and Puah's |
| #4 | Facilitator: | 3:1-15, 4:1-18 | (Moses's challenge) |
| #5 | Facilitator: | 4:5-17 | (Esther's challenge) |

IV. Building the Bridge (30 min.)

We will re-divide the students into small groups, this time to make sure that each skit/passage is represented in each of the groups. Facilitators will lead a discussion of the following questions:

- * What characteristics did this Biblical personality demonstrate? (Let kids decide which skit to start with.)
- * How would you have handled this Biblical personality's difficult choice? Why?

- * Ask kids if they would rather have people share their own stories or do it anonymously/"goldfish bowl" style. Then ask for a story to be shared. Then ask: How do you think the Biblical character would have handled your difficult choice?

V. Synthesis/Metaphor Exercise (25 min.)

- A. We will bring kids back together as a large group, and lead a "metaphor warm-up" with various objects: e.g., "How is life like an onion/light bulb/baseball bat/book/gumby doll?"
- B. Kids will then receive writing materials to answer question: "How is the Torah like a sukkah?" We will hopefully have time to share some answers aloud. All answers will be posted in the sukkah later.

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