

Matan

B'nai Mitzvah
Inclusion Guide

Unit 6:

Case Studies



BIG IDEAS

You will meet many different types of learners as a *b'nai mitzvah* tutor. Being intentional with your instruction will help you match your teaching to the learner in front of you.

It is important to be aware of and understand a range of disabilities, learning types and student profiles so that you can meet the needs of each student you tutor.

Not all students learn in the same way and not all students need the same accommodations in the *b'nai mitzvah* process. Learning about a variety of methods will help make the *b'nai mitzvah* experience meaningful for each child.





Common Learning Differences

Case Study 1 (Sarah)

Sarah is an 11-year-old girl with a language-based learning disability. She has difficulty reading and is not on grade level with her peers. She often appears distracted in class and can be found playing with toys or fidgets at her desk. Although she is not looking at the board, she is still processing what the teacher is saying. Identifying letters in both English and Hebrew is challenging for her. If you read a passage to her, she can explain to you what happened. Sarah is very interested in playing sports and having friendly debates with her friends.

What recommendations can you make to Sarah's *bat mitzvah* tutor?

Possible Strategies for Sarah

- Read the *parsha* aloud to her and discuss the storyline together
- Have a debate about the “hot topics” in the *parsha*
- Present the Hebrew text in small portions rather than all at once (less overwhelming to process the words)
- Read the Hebrew words to her, multiple times, and have her repeat them back
- *Mitzvah* project: donating sports equipment to those in need



Case Study 2 (Adam)

Adam is a 10-year-old boy on the Autism Spectrum. He loves calendars, American History, and the color red. He knows how to read English and Hebrew and loves talking about his interests. Adam is in a special education school for kids with Autism and learns best through modeling, repetition, and visual aides. He is in a typical Hebrew school environment and works with a 1:1 shadow to support him. His *bar mitzvah* is coming up in a few years.

What recommendations would you make to his tutor?

Possible Strategies for Adam

- Collaborate with Adam's team both at his school and religious school
- Use of color coding and/or visual representations of *trope* symbols (try to incorporate the color red when possible)
- Create a comic strip or graphic novel about the *parsha*
- Utilize a picture schedule/set of expectations during each tutoring session
- Create a calendar together that represents a realistic study schedule
- Possible *mitzvah* project: collecting History textbooks to be donated to schools in need

Case Study 2 (Jordyn)

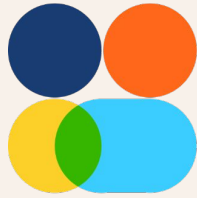
Jordyn is a 12-year-old with a diagnosis of ADHD. They are on grade level for their academics though really struggle to stay focused in school. They often appear to their teachers to be disruptive or uninterested in the class work. They will often play with something at their desk or pace around the room while the teacher is speaking. By the end of the day in Hebrew school, they are often hungry, irritable, and hard to redirect. They love painting, playing basketball, and going to summer camp.

What recommendations can you make for their *b'nai mitzvah* tutor?

Possible Strategies for Jordyn

- Shift your expectations: allow Jordyn to learn while walking around or moving (they are listening!)
- Let them create as often as possible (i.e., paint a part of their *d'var Torah*)
- Try to schedule tutoring sessions on weekend mornings, when they are most focused, rather than after school
- Tap out the sounds of the *trope* or utilize hand motion symbols
- Possible *mitzvah* project: fundraise money for their summer camp





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**Reshaping Jewish
Communities Through
Disability Inclusion**