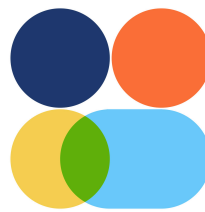


LESSON PLAN



Theme *AI Chet* for a More Inclusive New Year

Grade Level(s)

Middle School - High School

Time of lesson 45 Minutes

Key Ideas

- On Yom Kippur we say the *AI Chet* prayer to repent for all of our specific wrongdoings from the year before and to ask forgiveness as we enter a new year.
- The *AI Chet* gets very specific and allows us to reflect on the ways we may have done wrong this year.
- We can use the *AI Chet* to think of ways we have been exclusionary and make plans to be more inclusive this year.

Learning Outcomes

Students Will:

- Become familiar with parts of the *AI Chet* prayer
- Discuss ways they have (knowingly and unknowingly) “sinned” by excluding or making assumptions about people just because they are different
- Identify actions that they can take to build an inclusive classroom community

Materials & Resources

- paper
- writing utensils (a variety to accommodate all learners)
- option to type out answers if possible
- construction paper
- handout for *AI Chet* (included below)

Warm-up and Overview

Remind students of the *tashlich* Rosh Hashanah lesson that they completed the week prior. Even if you did not complete the *tashlich* lesson plan, pass out copies of the handout from that lesson (available on the Matan website) and have students refresh their memory on “sins” they want to “cast away” and *tzedakah* they want to bring into the new year.

Introduction

- Tie together the lesson from Rosh Hashanah by explaining that Yom Kippur is the culmination of all of the reflecting that we have been doing during this season, as the New Year begins.
- Ask students if they know about different ways that we repent for our wrongdoings on Yom Kippur? Write down the ideas students come up with (i.e. we fast, we go to shul, we do not wear leather).
- Take this time to explain that today’s focus will be on the *AI Chet* prayer.

Specific Accomodations

- For students that do not feel comfortable sharing with the whole group:
 - allow them to write down, draw, or share their ideas with a peer
- For visual learners:
 - provide common YK images to spark ideas (i.e. food with an X on it, person wearing sneakers at synagogue, etc.)

Activity

- Introduce the *Al Chet* prayer using the text sheet included in these lesson plans. Split into small groups to have a discussion about these lines in the *Al Chet*. See “*Al Chet* Discussion Questions”
- Coming back together as a group, give students their paper airplanes from the previous week’s *tashlich* lesson. Have students review the “sin” they decided to “cast away” and share the examples of *zedakah* they had written on their paper airplanes; brainstorm other ideas for how to create a more inclusive classroom in the year to come.
- Have students connect the text from the *Al Chet* to the “sin” they are casting off using the handout provided.

Specific

Accommodations

For audio learners:

- play a recording or sing/chant the *Al Chet* while students follow along

For visual learners:

- allow them to draw or choose an image instead of writing on their handout

Options for Extensions

- Challenge students to dive deeper into the *Al Chet* by providing a *machzor* and having them read more of the prayer
- Challenge students to think of more “sins” to cast away using the other parts of the *Al Chet*

Options for Remediation

- Cross out the Hebrew and transliteration on the handout and have students focus on the English
- Have students that need fewer tasks complete only one of the prompts on the handout

Review and Closing

- Create a space for students to add moments of inclusion or kind acts throughout the year as they see or do them. Have students add one thing they have done this week or have seen a peer do in the past week and encourage them to continue to add throughout the year. Ideas for this space are:
 - Inclusion chain: have pre-cut strips of paper on which students can write or draw their acts of inclusion. Watch as the chain grows longer throughout the year
 - Inclusion tree: put up a tree trunk made out of construction paper and pre-cut leaves on which students can write or draw their acts of inclusion. Again, watch as the tree grows throughout the year

Specific Accommodations

- Allow students to draw their kind acts instead of writing them
- If available, allow students to print pictures from the internet to represent their kind acts
- As the year goes on, allow students to add pictures they have taken/drawn/painted

Checking for Understanding

- as students are in small groups, go around and check that all students understand the *Al Chet* text
- note the ideas that students share and ensure that even if a student does not share, you can check in with them individually to hear their ideas and to ensure comprehension



Excerpt from *Al Chet*:

וְעַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטְאֲנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּאִמּוּץ הַלֵּב:
ve'al cheit
shechatanu l'fanecha
b'imutz halev.

And for the sin we committed before You by callously
hardening the heart.

עַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטְאֲנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּזָדוֹן וּבְשִׁגְגָה:
Al cheit shechatanu
l'fanecha b'zadon oo'bsgaga

For the sin we committed before You intentionally and unintentionally

וְעַל חַטָּא שְׁחַטְאֲנוּ לְפָנֶיךָ בְּפִלְלוֹת:
Ve' al cheit shechatanu
l'fanecha bi'fliloot

And for the sin we committed before You in passing judgment



Discussion Questions for *AI Chet*:

- For the mistakes I have made by having a hard heart
 - What does it mean to have a hard heart?
 - Were there times when I have looked away while others were being made fun of or excluded?
 - Were there times when I could have been compassionate when someone was alone or isolated?
- For the mistakes I have made both willingly and unintentionally
 - Have I ever hurt someone accidentally?
 - Were there times when I spoke before thinking about the impact of my words?
 - Who might I have hurt without meaning to?
- For the mistakes I have committed before you in judgement
 - Have I ever judged someone before knowing anything about them?
 - Have I ever made assumptions about a person's abilities based on what they look like, how they move, or how they communicate?

AI Chet Worksheet:

One time I had a **hard heart** by: (choose one or write your own)

Ignoring a classmate who looked sad or upset

Watching a friend exclude my classmate and not speaking up

One time I made a **mistake accidentally (unwillingly)** by: (choose one or write your own)

Forgetting to invite a classmate to a party

Forgetting to hold the door when someone behind me needed physical assistance

One time I was **judgemental** by: (choose one or write your own)

Hearing the way someone communicated and assuming they were not as smart as me

Seeing how someone walked or dressed and assuming we could not be friends because we must not have anything in common

AI Chet Worksheet:

I am going to be more compassionate by:

Noticing when someone looks sad or left out and asking them to join me

Inviting someone I do not know to sit with me at lunch/hang out after school

I am going to be more intentional by:

Counting to 3 in my head and asking myself if my comment could be taken the wrong way before speaking

Thinking about everyone in my class while making a list of invitations to a party I am hosting

I am going to stop myself before passing judgement by:

Not assuming what a person can and cannot do before speaking to them/getting to know them

Looking for a person's strengths before immediately looking for their weaknesses
