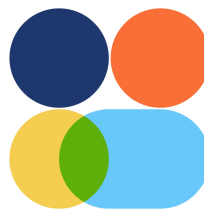


# LESSON PLAN



Theme Simchat Torah: Starting The Torah from the Beginning

Grade Level(s)

3rd - 5th Grade

Time of lesson 45 Minutes

### Key Ideas

- On Simchat Torah we celebrate the completion of a year of Torah and start a new cycle.
- We gain more knowledge the more we look at things in depth.
- Re-reading helps us notice things that we might not have noticed the first time.
- We say “*chazak chazak venitchazek*” when we finish reading a book of the Torah because reading and rereading the Torah every year can make us stronger, better people

### Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Know that the Torah is completed and a new cycle begins on Simchat Torah.
- Explain reasons why we re-read the Torah each year.
- Define the words “*Chazak Chazak Venitchazek*” and when we say them

### Materials & Resources

- [Me on the Map](#) by Joan Sweeney or [Pancakes for Breakfast](#) by Tomie dePaola or any book you want to use
- Access to player and video.
- Text Sheet (included at the end of this lesson)

### Warm-up and Overview

- Once students are settled in class, read one of the books to them.
- Have students point out details they notice or things they think of when they see the pictures.

### Introduction

- On Simchat Torah, the Torah scrolls are taken out in synagogues all over the world.
- The celebration includes a reading of the final portion in the Torah. When reading the Torah is completed, it is immediately begun again - the first chapters of the book of Genesis are read aloud.
- The teacher can prompt a discussion with students that includes:
  - What do you do at the end of a good book? You read it over again!

### Specific Accomodations

- Give students that might benefit access to the book before class so that they have the opportunity to preview it.

## Activity

- Re-read or watch the video of the same book that was introduced in the warm-up.
- Prompt the students to explain what they noticed this time that they didn't notice the first time around.
- Ask students if/what they gained by reading it again. Have students consider that if they only read the book once, they may have missed out on many details
- Introduce the line “*Chazak Chazak Vetrnichazek*” and have students try to repeat after you as you say it.
- Discuss:
  - Why do you think we say this after we finish reading the Torah?
  - What about the Torah stories make us stronger individually and as a community that other books we read do not?

## Specific

### Accommodations

- participate in small group discussion rather than large group
- point to the transliterated words as you have students say them to help students follow along

## Options for Extensions

- Have students write or make up their own story. The teacher can save it to give to students at the end of the year or hang up for students to continue to add new words/pictures throughout the year.
- Students can read the PJ Library book, [When Zaydeh Danced on Eldridge Street](#), by Elsa Okon Rael.

## Options for Remediation

- Cut out the part of the lesson about *Chazak Chazak Venitchazek* and just focus on the concept of rereading the Torah every year and why it can be helpful.

## Review and Closing

- Give the students a scroll of paper.
- Have them reflect on their favorite stories that they have learned from the Torah:
  - Why were they the favorite? Why do you enjoy hearing them each year?

## Specific Accommodations

- Provide various types of writing utensils and/or assistive technology if necessary.
- Provide ideas and choices of Torah stories for students to choose from if they cannot come up with one on their own.

## Checking for Understanding

- Torah scroll assessment paper:
  - What is one reason we re-read the Torah each year?

חֲזַק חֲזַק וְנִתְחַזֵּק



Chazak, chazak  
v'nitchazek



Be strong, be strong and  
may we be strengthened!

