

**Title:** Shavuot – Learning through the generations

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**Age Group:** Years 7-13, Students and Adults

**Format:** Text Bank, Lesson Plan

**Categories/Topics:** Shavuot Megilat Ruth

**Description** Students will learn the value of interaction and communication with people from a different generation. They will look at texts which deal interaction between generations. They will then experience a chevrotah with someone who is much older than themselves and will be able to discuss ideas with people who may be coming from a very different place. They will then put their experience into writing that they will share with the guest who came to their class. This will allow them to process the experience and put it into words in a meaningful and productive way.

Unit I

**Lesson Plan:**

In this lesson the class will learn about the importance of respecting your elders and will discuss whether you can always learn from those older than you and how we learn about this in the Torah.

**Trigger**

Begin by asking whether the class thinks that learning from the older generation and respecting your elders should be a mitzvah. Ask for two volunteers, one who will debate that it is important and one who will debate that it is not important enough to merit being a Mitzvah. The debaters should be told that they have to make three clear points. The class should then be divided into three groups. One group will help one debater the other group will help the other debater and the third group will be the judges and will form their own opinion. Each group will be given a set of sources to use to prove their points. Each group will receive the same sources. The sources will include: Moshe and Yitro, Naomi and Ruth, Jacob and Rebecca

When the groups have looked at the sources and created three points, the debate will begin. Each group will present their points and then the group who are the judges will add any points they feel were not mentioned and will then decide who wins.

Following the debate, continue the discussion of the merits of learning from the older generation and students will be asked who they would consider their elders?

Parents? Teachers? Guardians?

Do these people always deserve respect?

What do you do if there is a situation where you don't feel that respect is deserved?

The next activity the students will do will be to write a reply to a question written to an agony aunt regarding a situation where they know that they should respect a teacher or a parent but they don't deserve it. How would they answer this question? They should refer to the sources that they used in the debate to help them answer the question.

To conclude this lesson, discuss the intergenerational learning programme that will happen. Ask the students to come up with a list of guidelines for chevrotah study to share with the guests who will be visiting their class and participating in text study with them. They will be studying the book of Ruth and will be focussing on the relationship between Naomi and Ruth. They will come up with a list of questions to be answered during the course of the study.

## Unit II

This will be the intergenerational programme. Arrange in advance for older members of the community to come in and take part in this programme around Shavuot. They should be identified and invited a month in advance and followed up with phone calls.

On the day of the programme set up the class room so that one older person sits with three or four students. Each group will receive a copy of the text to be studied and the questions to be answered. Before the groups start they will get to know the guests by conducting an interview with them. They will need to find out where they were born, how many siblings they have/had, where they went to school and whether they went to Cheder, and one way they show that they are Jewish. When they have finished the interviews they will then go into the text study. The teacher will introduce the topic of relationships between different generations and that we will look at a specific relationship between Ruth and Naomi.



Before the text study begins the teacher will go through the story so that everyone in the room is familiar with the story.

The groups will then study the text in chavurah style. They will need to answer the questions which were prepared the previous lesson. When they have finished they will join together as a class and the teacher will conclude the programme by asking each chevrotah group to volunteer the main point they discussed. One student from each group should introduce the older person to the rest of the class and should also think about one thing they learned from this experience.

To end the session everyone should write a letter to someone else in their group thanking them for partaking in this learning experience. Everyone will leave with a personal letter.