



Curriculum Connections

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Challenging Anti-Semitism:

Debunking the Myths and Responding with Facts

In This Issue

One of the oldest forms of bigotry in existence, anti-Semitism has persisted on account of religious intolerance, cultural misunderstanding and centuries-old myths that have resulted in divisions among cultural and religious groups and, in the most extreme cases, the loss of lives, families and communities. From bigoted jokes and slurs uttered in school halls to physical assaults and the desecration of Jewish synagogues and cemeteries, anti-Semitism manifests in all forms and instills fear in any community. For as long as the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation has kept records of national hate crime activity, anti-Semitism has accounted for a majority of the hate crimes motivated by religious bias in the U.S., which is the second highest motivating factor of all hate crimes, the first being racial bias.

Studying anti-Semitism can debunk centuries-old myths that are the basis for many anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic incidents. Learning about the history of the Jewish people and the development of anti-Semitism combats misinformation about Jews, reveals the origins of age-old anti-Jewish stereotypes, and provides factual information that challenges anti-Semitic remarks and intolerance.

There are two lessons included in this unit that provide students with a basic understanding of Judaism and the cultural, historical and religious aspects of the U.S. Jewish community (Lesson for Grades 3–6) and offer facts to refute anti-Semitic myths and stereotypes so that young people can effectively respond to anti-Semitic incidents in their schools and communities (Lesson for Grades 8–12).

During these lessons, students discuss topics that may be sensitive and produce a range of emotions. If you have not spent time establishing class ground rules for discussion, please see the document, [Establishing Ground Rules](#), to set some guidelines for creating a safe environment for discussion.

This curricular unit also contains a number of resources for educators, students and families, including a myths and facts booklet on anti-Semitism, a list of book and video resources on anti-Semitism, recommended books on Jewish culture and faith, a handbook on the teaching of religion in public schools, a link to the ADL discussion guide, [Anti-Semitism and The Merchant of Venice](#), and information on a new multimedia curriculum on the Holocaust that includes compelling video of first person testimony from Holocaust survivors, rescuers, and liberators.

In general, the study of anti-Semitism informs us of how all forms of bigotry operate. Prejudice of any kind can ultimately lead to hateful actions such as scapegoating, social exclusion, discrimination, and the genocide of a group of people. Understanding how anti-Semitism grows can help students recognize the importance of standing up to prejudice of any kind before it escalates.

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ADL – Religion in the Public
Schools

Correlation of Lessons to Common Core Standards

| Content Area/Standard | Lesson for Grades 3–6 | Lesson for Grades 8–12 |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Reading | | |
| R.1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. | X | X |
| R.2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas. | | X |
| R.3: Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text. | X | |
| R.4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone. | X | X |
| R.7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words. | X | |
| R.9: Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take. | X | |
| R.10: Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently. | X | X |
| Writing | | |
| W.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content. | X | X |
| W.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences. | | X |
| W.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. | X | X |
| W.5: Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. | X | |
| W.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation. | X | |
| W.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism. | X | |

| Content Area/Standard | Lesson for Grades 3–6 | Lesson for Grades 8–12 |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|
| W.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. | X | |
| Speaking and Listening | | |
| SL.1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. | X | X |
| SL.2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. | X | |
| SL.3: Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric. | X | |
| SL.4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. | X | X |
| SL.5: Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations. | X | |
| Language | | |
| L.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. | X | X |
| L.2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. | X | X |
| L.3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening. | X | X |
| L.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate. | X | X |
| L.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. | X | |
| L.6: Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression. | X | X |

Lesson for Grades 3–6

Understanding Judaism and the Jewish Community

Rationale

The purpose of this lesson is to provide a basic understanding of U.S. Jews and Judaism. Using the children’s book *Mrs. Katz and Tush* by Patricia Polacco and applying research, teamwork, and presentation skills, students will be introduced to the cultural, historical and religious aspects of the Jewish community. By acquiring a basic understanding of Judaism and the Jewish community, students will be able to speak knowledgeably about the religion and the community and respond to any stereotypes about Jews that may hear using facts they learned.

[NOTE TO TEACHERS: While this lesson is focused on Judaism, the format can be adapted for other religions, such as Buddhism, Islam and Native American spirituality. When teaching in a public school, it is important to recognize that teaching about religion (in a secular, religiously neutral and objective manner) is not a violation of separation of church and state as mandated by the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution’s First Amendment, but that the teaching of religion (by promoting one religion over another or participating in faith-based rituals or practices, such as prayer), is unconstitutional. Religious diversity is part of the growing diversity in the U.S., and for many students, religion plays a significant role in their identity development. Parent letters can help assuage any concerns you and the school may have about introducing curriculum on religious diversity.]

For more information about teaching religious diversity, please refer to the following resources:

- Anti-Defamation League. 2004. “Religion in the Curriculum.” In *Religion in the Public Schools*. New York: Anti-Defamation League.
- Douglass, S. L. 2002. Teaching About Religion. *Educational Leadership* 60(3):32–36.
- Green, C., and S.B. Oldendorf. 2005. “Teaching Religious Diversity Through Children’s Literature.” *Childhood Education* 8(4):209–218.
- Haynes, CC. and O. Thomas. 2007. *Finding Common Ground: A First Amendment Guide to Religion and Public Schools*. Nashville, TN: The First Amendment Center.

Objectives

- Students will be introduced to Judaism and the Jewish people through the experience of Mrs. Katz in *Mrs. Katz and Tush* (1992) by Patricia Polacco.
- Students will research a certain aspect of Jewish culture or religion using multiple resources
- Students will prepare and present their research findings in class.

Time

50 minutes for Part I; 30 minutes for Part II, plus additional time in and outside of class for group research and presentation work; 50 minutes for Part III (*Part II and III are optional*)

Requirements

Handouts and Resources:

- [Introductory Facts about Judaism](#) (one for teacher use)
- [Mrs. Katz and Tush Reference Page](#) (one for teacher use)
- [Research Topics \(Teacher Version\)](#) (one for teacher use)
- [Research Topic](#)
- [Resource List about Judaism and Jewish Community](#)
- [Suggested Guidelines for Group Research and Presentation](#) (one for teacher use)

Key Words

Hebrew
Immigrant
Jews
Judaism
kashrut/kosher
Kipa
Menorah
Passover/Pesach
Poland
Shabbat/Sabbath
Star of David
Stereotype
Tallit
Unions
Warsaw
Yiddish

Other Material:

- **Part I:** [Mrs. Katz and Tush](#) (book) by Patricia Polacco; chart paper, markers and masking tape, or chalkboard and chalk, or dry erase board and markers; *optional*: laptop/LCD projector/screen
- **Part II & III:** Computers with Internet access; basic art and writing supplies; masking tape or tacks

Advanced Preparation

- Review the entire lesson and determine if Parts II and/or III will be conducted.
- Reproduce handouts as directed above for the part(s) of this lesson that will be conducted.
- Read through the book [Mrs. Katz and Tush](#) and locate concepts, words and images referring to Judaism and the Jewish culture. Use the Mrs. Katz and Tush Reference Page for these terms. *Optional*: Copy the pages of the book and project them on a screen (see Part I #4).
- (*Optional*) Set up laptop/LCD projector/screen.
- Review the [Introductory Facts about Judaism](#) and [Research Topics \(Teacher Version\)](#) to familiarize yourself with some basic information about Jews and Judaism and to help understand the concepts, words and images in the story.
- If conducting Part II, Make 6–8 copies of each of the six topics from the [Research Topic](#) handouts, preferably using different colored paper per topic (see Part II #2). Review [Suggested Guidelines for Group Research and Presentation](#).
- If conducting Part III, identify six areas in the class where the groups can display their presentations, with at least 5–7 feet of space between each presentation area (see Part III #1).

Techniques and Skills

applying text to research, brainstorming, communicating ideas and opinions, cooperative group work, creating multimedia presentation, critical thinking, historical understanding, large and small group discussion, presentation skills, reading skills, research skills, writing skills

Procedures**Part I (50 minutes)**

1. On the chalkboard or on chart paper, write “What I Know.” Ask students what they know or have heard about Judaism and people who are Jewish, (e.g., “When I say ‘Judaism,’ what comes to mind?”). Write their ideas underneath the statement “What I Know.” If stereotypes or falsehoods/myths are conveyed (e.g., Jews are cheap), respond in a neutral tone (e.g., repeat what was said), put a check mark by the comment and share that the class will revisit the idea at a later time. Solicit 5–10 ideas.

NOTE: If students have never heard the word Judaism or do not know about Jews, share 2–3 points from *Introductory Facts about Judaism* and skip to step #3.

2. Review the list generated by the class. If necessary, clarify, correct or augment the information. In addition, remind students that the ideas with a check mark will be discussed at a later time.
3. Share with the class that they will learn more about the Jewish community through one specific character in the book [Mrs. Katz and Tush](#) by Patricia Polacco.
4. Read the book aloud to the class with little or no interruptions. Read the book again, but in this manner: After each page, ask students to identify words, concepts and images with which they are unfamiliar, and that represent Jewish culture, history or heritage (e.g., Passover, rocks on gravestones). Write them on the board and use the handout, [Mrs. Katz and Tush Reference Page](#), to add to the list the students have generated.

Optional: Copy the pages of the book and project them on a screen. Circle all unfamiliar concepts, words and images on the acetate sheet.

5. At the end of the story, share that Mrs. Katz is Jewish and shows Larnel her Jewish heritage in different ways—through language, her experiences as an immigrant, stories of her husband, Myron, and through religious celebrations. Tell the students that while Mrs. Katz does not represent all Jews in the world, her life provides us with one example of someone who is Jewish.

6. Write on the board or on another piece of chart paper, “What I Learned.” Ask students to reflect on the story about Mrs. Katz and to respond to this statement. Write their ideas underneath the statement “What I Learned.”

NOTE: If not conducting Part II, refer to the [Research Topics \(Teacher Version\)](#) to provide additional information about the different images, concepts, and words in the story.

7. Compare the “What I Know” list with the “What I Learned” list, and comment on the amount and type of information gained from reading the book.
8. If stereotypes or misinformation was presented about Jews during the “What I Know” exercise, continue to step #9. Otherwise, skip to step #12.
9. Tell students that some of the ideas brainstormed under the “What I Know” list are not completely accurate. Let them know that sometimes what we learn about different groups of people is actually exaggerated or untrue.
10. Share the following definition of the term stereotype with students: a stereotype is an idea that many people have about a thing or a group and that may often be untrue or only partially true. Elaborate that sometimes we look at groups of people and think they are all the same in one way or another. Provide an example of a stereotype, e.g., all four-year olds are crybabies. Elicit a few examples of stereotypes from the students.
11. Go back to the items that were checked on the list, and identify them as stereotypes and/or myths. Provide a very brief explanation about the origins of the stereotype. If necessary, refer to ADL’s [Confronting Anti-Semitism: Myths and Facts](#) booklet.
12. Conclude by asking some or all of the questions below:
 - What was the most interesting thing you learned about Judaism and the Jewish community?
 - Are you surprised about how much you learned between the start of the class and the end of class? Why or why not?
 - How is your heritage/family/culture similar to Mrs. Katz’s? How is it different?
 - What do you still want to learn about Judaism and the Jewish community? (Optional: Write “What I Still Want To Learn” on the chalkboard or chart paper, and write students’ responses underneath.)

Part II (30 minutes)

1. Explain that in order to better understand [Mrs. Katz and Tush](#) and the Jewish religion and community, students will be assigned to do group research work on different aspects of Judaism and the Jewish community based on Mrs. Katz’s life.
2. Introduce the research topics listed in the [Research Topic](#) student handouts. [For additional research topics, see the last page of [Research Topics \(Teacher Version\)](#).] Explain that the class will be divided into research groups and will receive a handout that explains in more detail what they will research. Tell them that they will work as a group to put together a presentation for the class, and indicate how much time they will have to prepare it.
3. Divide students into research groups and assign each group its research theme. Pass out the appropriate [Research Topic](#) handout to each student. Use the remainder of the period to check in with each group in order to make sure they understand the assignment, and to help them divide the work appropriately. Work with students to begin to identify research materials.

Optional: In addition, distribute [Resource List about Judaism and Jewish Community](#), or relevant portions of the list, to assist students in identifying research materials. The list is divided into three sections: Section 1 provides an alphabetical listing of resources related to the research projects; Section 2 organizes resources by research topic; and Section 3 lists resources for additional research topics. Please encourage students to seek other sources of information in addition to those listed.

Part III (50 minutes)

1. Instruct students to display their presentation in one of the designated areas (or ask students to submit their presentation to you for you to post).

2. Begin the presentation process. Two types of presentation processes are described in the [Suggested Guidelines for Group Research and Presentation](#).
3. At the conclusion of the presentations, instruct students to take a seat. Ask students what new information they learned from the presentations. Add their ideas to the “What I Learned” list from Part I, but as a second column. Compare the “What I Know” and the “What I Learned” lists from Part I to this new list, and comment on the amount and type of information gained from their group research and presentations.

Optional: If students generated a list for “What I Still Want to Learn” in Part I, refer back to the list and assess with the class which ideas from the list were addressed in the presentations.

4. Conclude by asking some or all of the questions below:
 - a. What part of the research process did you find enjoyable, and why? What part of the research process did you find difficult, and why?
 - b. How did you feel when presenting your information to your classmates?
 - c. What is the benefit of doing research about different people and cultures?
 - d. How will your new knowledge about Jews and Judaism benefit you? How might you use or apply this knowledge?

Extension Activities

- In [Mrs. Katz and Tush](#), Mrs. Katz talks to Larnel about vacationing in the Catskills with her husband because of discrimination and, later in the book, about slavery. Discuss the connection between Jews and African Americans and their experience in struggling against prejudice and discrimination, particularly during the Civil Rights Movement.
- Invite a parent or community member who is Jewish to speak to the class about a certain aspect of Judaism or Jewish life. Have this become an interview session, and encourage students to prepare questions ahead of time to ask the guest. Following the visit, students can add new information to their presentations.
- Because [Mrs. Katz and Tush](#) is accessible to 1st and 2nd graders, have the students (in grades 3–6) read this book to 1st and 2nd graders and explain parts of the story based on their research projects and presentations.
- Replicate this lesson with other religions. Create an exhibit of different religions studied, and display them in the hallway for other students, parents and community members to see.
- Visit local Jewish museums or exhibits about the Jewish religion and experience. Go to the [American Historical Jewish Society](#) for a list of different Jewish museums across the U.S.

Introductory Facts About Judaism

- Jews have been around for over 5,000 years, and their religion, Judaism, is one of the oldest world religions—older than most civilizations! *(If students are familiar with Christianity and Islam, add: Judaism has given birth to two other world religions—Christianity and Islam.)*
- Jews believe in one God. Judaism is the first religion to state that there is one God, rather than many different gods, which was the common belief among many people in ancient times. Religions that pray to one god are called monotheistic religions. Judaism is therefore called a monotheistic religion.
- Judaism was started by a man named Abraham who lived in the area now known as the Middle East. Jewish people believe that Abraham was chosen by God to create a nation of holy people called Hebrews (who later became known as Israelites and are now called Jews). Abraham is considered the father of the Jewish people.
- The *Tanach* (tah-NAKH) is the Hebrew bible, which starts with five books that record the beginning of Jewish history. The first section is called the *Torah* (TOR-ah). The Torah also explains the basic values of the Jewish people and how to practice the religion of Judaism. Examples of such values are to be nice to your neighbors and to donate time and energy to important causes.
- Shabbat is a holy day for Jews. On Shabbat (from Friday evening to Saturday evening), Jews go to a synagogue (a place of worship, like a church or a mosque) to pray and learn about their religion. Services in the synagogue are led by a rabbi. A rabbi is the chief religious official of a synagogue. During Shabbat, some Jews have a special dinner in honor of this holy day.
- Some Jews are religious and practice Judaism on a daily basis; others do not practice the Jewish religion but are connected by family history, upbringing and culture.
- Although people think that Jews only came from Europe, in reality, throughout their long history, Jews lived in many countries all over the world, in places like the Middle East, Spain, Italy, Northern Africa and China.

Mrs. Katz and Tush Reference Page

The following is a survey of concepts, images, and words related to Judaism and the Jewish community in Patricia Polacco's [Mrs. Katz and Tush](#) (New York: Bantam Books, 1992). Each concept, image, and word/phrase below is linked to either one of the topics from the Research Topics handout and/or directions from the lesson. Because there are no page numbers in the book, the title page (picture of Mrs. Katz gazing at a photo) will be designated as page 1.

| Page Number | Concept, Image, Words | Research Topic(s) |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Page 3 (text): | "He came from Poland like me, a long time ago." | US Jewish Immigrant Experience 1880s-1930s |
| | "I'll be all alone for Hannukah and Passover ." | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jewish Holiday – Passover (Pesach) <i>Optional:</i> Hannukah |
| Page 5 (text) | "Scrawney little bubeleh " | Language – Hebrew and Yiddish |
| | "A good Yiddish name I'll give her...all you see is her tush . That's it! We'll call her Tush ." | Language – Hebrew and Yiddish |
| Page 8 (text) | "I come from Warsaw . That's in Poland " | US Jewish Immigrant Experience 1880s-1930s |
| | "I came here to work sewing dresses in the garment district for my cousin..." | US Jewish Immigrant Experience 1880s-1930s |
| Page 10 (image) | Image of prayer book in Mrs. Katz's hands | Jewish Life Events – Weddings and Funerals |
| | Image of Larnel placing a rock on the headstone | Jewish Life Events – Weddings and Funerals |
| Page 11 (text) | "I want you should come with me to say kaddish for my Myron." | Jewish Life Events – Weddings and Funerals |
| | Then she asked Larnel to put a small rock on top of Mr. Katz's headstone . "We do this to remember," she said softly. | Jewish Life Events – Weddings and Funerals |
| | " Shalom , my Myron" | Language – Hebrew and Yiddish |
| Page 12 (image) | Image of menorah on table, by the window | Jewish Symbols - Menorah, Start of David, Kipa and Tallit |
| Page 13 (text) | "Poor bubeleh! " | Language – Hebrew and Yiddish |
| Page 15 (text) | Mrs. Katz hardly slept as she thought about her little kattileh . | Language – Hebrew and Yiddish |
| Page 16 (text) | "My bubeleh! Little kattileh! " Mrs. Katz exclaimed. | Language – Hebrew and Yiddish |
| Page 19 (text) | "It was at my aunt Havelah's Passover seder that I met Myron." | Jewish Holiday – Passover (Pesach) |
| Page 20 (text) | "So he sent an angel—an angel that brought death and sadness to the houses of our captors. But the angel did not visit the houses of my people ...Passed over, Larnel, that's why we call this time of celebration Passover! " | Jewish Holiday: Passover (Pesach) |

| Page Number | Concept, Image, Words | Research Topic(s) |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| Page 21 (image) | Bakers wearing kippa | Jewish Symbols – Menorah, Star of David, Kippa and Tallit |
| | Challah or braided bread on the shelves | <i>Optional:</i> Shabbat |
| Page 22 (image) | Image of two candles and nice silverware and china | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jewish Holiday – Passover (Pesach) • <i>Optional:</i> Shabbat |
| Page 23 (text) | “You see this tablecloth, this was our wedding chuppa , our canopy.” | Jewish Life Events – Weddings and Funerals |
| | “How come you have so many different dishes?” Larnel asked. “Because some Jews don’t eat dairy and meat off of the same dishes... ” | Jewish Religious Practice – Kashrut (Keeping Kosher) |
| Page 24 (image) | Image of two candles | Jewish Holiday – Passover (Pesach) |
| | Image of Haggadah or special book for Passover | Jewish Holiday – Passover (Pesach) |
| Page 25 (text) | Mrs. Katz lit two candles and waved her hands over them. She read from her book , said prayers... They drank red wine and water....(ate) spicy chopped apples with potato pancakes | Jewish Holiday – Passover (Pesach) |
| | “We call it matzoh , dear. We eat it at Passover . It’s flat because there is no yeast in it , so it doesn’t rise.” | Jewish Holiday – Passover (Pesach) |
| | “I have hidden one piece of the matzoh here in the apartment...” | Jewish Holiday – Passover (Pesach) |
| Page 27 (text) | “The angel of death passed over , but the angel of life didn’t!” | Jewish Holiday – Passover (Pesach) |
| | “ Mazel Tov, Tush! Four babies—at last, I’m a bubee. ” | Language – Hebrew and Yiddish |
| Page 28 (text and Image) | There were graduations, weddings, new babies, and finally a kaddish. Larnel stood in front of the headstone. He read from her book. He placed a small rock on top of her headstone... | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language – Hebrew and Yiddish • Jewish Life Events – Weddings and Funerals |
| | Mrs. Katz, our bubee... | Language – Hebrew and Yiddish |

Research Topics (Teacher Version)

Following is an abbreviated version of all the *Research Topic* handouts for students, without the research questions. This document can be used to assist teachers in briefly explaining some of the images, concepts and words found in Patricia Polacco's *Mrs. Katz and Tush* (New York: Bantam Books, 1992) in Part I of the "Understanding Judaism and the Jewish Community" lesson.

Research Topic: Language – Hebrew and Yiddish

Do you remember?

In *Mrs. Katz and Tush* by Patricia Polacco, Mrs. Katz used words that are not English, such as "bubeleh," "bubee" and "Tush," referring to the cat's name as a "good Yiddish name." These are Yiddish words.

Mrs. Katz also says "Mavel Tov" when Tush gives birth to a litter of cats. "Mavel Tov" is a Hebrew word.

Background Information:

When Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe arrived in the US in the late 1800s and early 1900s, most were able to speak their home country's language as well as a language called Yiddish. Yiddish was the language of most Jews in Eastern and Central Europe before World War II. Today, it is spoken by descendants of those Jews living in the United States, Israel, and other parts of the world. Although the number of people who can speak Yiddish is decreasing, you can still hear Yiddish words used, even among people who are not Jewish, such as bagel, klutz, and nosh. The term Yiddish comes from the German word for Jewish.

Hebrew is the spoken language of the Jewish people in Israel today. Many Jews in the US and other countries are familiar with the language, too, at different levels of fluency. From the 4th century until the late 19th century, Hebrew was not a spoken language, but was used mainly for religious purposes. Hebrew was made new and strong again during the late 19th and early 20th century. Today, it is called New Hebrew, Israeli Hebrew or Modern Hebrew.

Research Topic: US Jewish Immigrant Experience 1880s–1930s

Do you remember?

In *Mrs. Katz and Tush* by Patricia Polacco, Mrs. Katz tells Larnel about "the old country": "I come from Warsaw. That's in Poland, you know. I came here to work sewing dresses in the garment district for my cousin Moyshe. I didn't speak one word of English!

"Then how did you talk to people?" ask Larnel.

"I didn't," she answered. "A lot, I cried in those days...until I met Myron."

Background Information:

While we do not know how old Mrs. Katz is, she may have been a part of the 3rd major wave of Jewish immigrants who traveled to the US between the 1880s and 1930s. Because many couldn't speak English when they first arrived in the US, many Jewish immigrants had to work in places that didn't require knowing English, and the work was very hard. Because of that, many Jewish people started unions (organizations of workers formed to protect their rights and to work toward fair pay, benefits, and working conditions).

Research Topic: Jewish Life Events – Weddings and Funerals

Do you remember?

In *Mrs. Katz and Tush* by Patricia Polacco, Mrs. Katz invites Larnel to a cemetery where Myron is buried: "Since you are almost family to me, Larnel, "she said one day, "I want you should come with me to say kaddish for my Myron..." At the cemetery, she read from her book. Then she asked Larnel to put a small rock on top of Mr. Katz's headstone. "We do this to remember," she said softly. Later in the book, as Mrs. Katz and Larnel set the table for Passover, Mrs. Katz shows Larnel a tablecloth and says, "This was our wedding chuppa, our canopy."

Background Information:

Just like other religions, Jews celebrate weddings and mourn people's deaths. They have objects, prayers and rituals (ways of acting, customs) that are specific to their Jewish religion and culture.

Research Topic: Jewish Holiday – Passover (Pesach)**Do you remember?**

In *Mrs. Katz and Tush* by Patricia Polacco, Mrs. Katz tells Larnel that she met Myron at her aunt Havelah's Passover seder. "What good times they were, with lots and lots of family. Now it's just me," she says softly.

Could I have Passover dinner with you?" asked Larnel.

"I though you would never ask!" she exclaimed as she hugged him close. "Such a seder I'll prepare for you!"

Background Information:

Passover is the oldest and one the most important Jewish holidays. In Hebrew, Passover is called "Pesach" (PEH-sock). This holiday begins with a ritual called a seder (SAY-duhr).

Research Topic: Jewish Symbols – Menorah, Star of David, Kipa, and Tallit**Do you remember?**

In *Mrs. Katz and Tush* by Patricia Polacco, when Mrs. Katz and Larnel realize that Tush left the apartment through the window, there is a candlestick with many places to put candles on it. In the Jewish culture, this is called a menorah. Later in the story, Mrs. Katz and Larnel are in a bakery, surrounded by many people. Some of the bakers are wearing a tiny covering on their head, called a kipa.

Background Information:

The menorah is a very important Jewish symbol. Another important symbol in the Jewish community is the Star of David. There are several pieces of clothing that are important to the Jewish faith, such as a kipa or kippah (also known as a yarmulke in Yiddish, or skullcap) and a tallit.

Research Topic: Jewish Religious Practices – Kashrut (Keeping Kosher)**Do you remember?**

In *Mrs. Katz and Tush* by Patricia Polacco, Larnel asks why Mrs. Katz uses different dishes for the seder dinner.

How come you have so many different dishes?" Larnel asked.

"Because some Jews don't eat dairy and meat off of the same dishes," she answered.

Background Information:

In the Jewish religion, the Torah (Jewish bible) teaches Jews how to live, such as how to treat others and how to practice justice and equality. It also provides Jews with more specific laws, in this case, how to keep "kosher," based on the laws of Kashrut.

Research Topic

Student Name: _____

Language – Hebrew and Yiddish

Do you remember?

In *Mrs. Katz and Tush* by Patricia Polacco, Mrs. Katz used words that are not English, such as “bubeleh,” “bubee” and “Tush,” referring to the cat’s name as a “good Yiddish name.” These are Yiddish words.

Mrs. Katz also says “Mavel Tov” when Tush gives birth to a litter of cats. “Mavel Tov” is a Hebrew word.

Background Information:

When Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe arrived in the US in the late 1800s and early 1900s, most were able to speak their home country’s language as well as a language called Yiddish. Yiddish was the language of most Jews in Eastern and Central Europe before World War II. Today, it is spoken by descendants of those Jews living in the United States, Israel, and other parts of the world. Although the number of people who can speak Yiddish is decreasing, you can still hear Yiddish words used, even among people who are not Jewish, such as bagel, klutz, and nosh. The term Yiddish comes from the German word for Jewish.

Hebrew is the spoken language of the Jewish people in Israel today. Many Jews in the US and other countries are familiar with the language, too, at different levels of fluency. From the 4th century until the late 19th century, Hebrew was not a spoken language, but was used mainly for religious purposes. Hebrew was made new and strong again during the late 19th and early 20th century. Today, it is called New Hebrew, Israeli Hebrew or Modern Hebrew.

Research Questions:

1. What is Hebrew? *To help you with your research, here are some specific questions:*

- a. What is “aleph-bet?” _____

- b. In what direction is Hebrew written? _____

- c. What does it look like? _____

- d. Where is Hebrew used? _____

- e. What does Hebrew sound like? _____

2. What is Yiddish? *To help you with your research, here are some specific questions:*

- a. The Yiddish language originate mostly from what three other languages?

- b. Where and when did the Yiddish language begin? Where and how did it spread? _____

c. What alphabet is used to write Yiddish? _____

3. Your presentation should help the class know the meaning of the following Yiddish or Hebrew words from *Mrs. Katz and Tush*:

✓ Bubeleh, as in “scrawny little bubeleh” _____

✓ Tush, as in “all you see is her tush” _____

✓ Shalom, as in “Shalom, my Myron.” _____

✓ Mavel Tov and bubee, as in “Mavel Tov, Tush! Four babies—at last, I’m a bubee!” _____

Introduce three more Yiddish words and three more Hebrew words in your presentation, and be prepared to teach us all of these words!

Research Topic

Student Name: _____

US Jewish Immigrant Experience 1880s–1930s

Do you remember?

In *Mrs. Katz and Tush* by Patricia Polacco, Mrs. Katz tells Larnel about “the old country”: “I come from Warsaw. That’s in Poland, you know. I came here to work sewing dresses in the garment district for my cousin Moyshe. I didn’t speak one word of English!

“Then how did you talk to people?” ask Larnel.

“I didn’t,” she answered. “A lot, I cried in those days...until I met Myron.”

Background Information:

While we do not know how old Mrs. Katz is, she may have been a part of the 3rd major wave of Jewish immigrants who traveled to the US between the 1880s and 1930s. Because many couldn’t speak English when they first arrived in the US, many Jewish immigrants had to work in places that didn’t require knowing English, and the work was very hard. Because of that, many Jewish people started *unions* (organizations of workers formed to protect their rights and to work toward fair pay, benefits, and working conditions).

Research Questions:

1. *Type of Jewish Immigrants:* From what countries did the Jewish immigrants come between the 1880s and 1920s? Why did they come to the US?

2. *Working Conditions in the US:* What kind of work did the Jewish immigrants do once they arrived in the US? What were the conditions like in the factories?

Research Topic

Student Name: _____

Jewish Life Events – Weddings and Funerals

Do you remember?

In *Mrs. Katz and Tush* by Patricia Polacco, Mrs. Katz invites Larnel to a cemetery where Myron is buried: “Since you are almost family to me, Larnel, “she said one day, “I want you should come with me to say kaddish for my Myron...” At the cemetery, she read from her book. Then she asked Larnel to put a small rock on top of Mr. Katz’s headstone. “We do this to remember,” she said softly. Later in the book, as Mrs. Katz and Larnel set the table for Passover, Mrs. Katz shows Larnel a tablecloth and says, “This was our wedding chuppa, our canopy.”

Background Information:

Just like other religions, Jews celebrate weddings and mourn people’s deaths. They have objects, prayers and rituals (ways of acting, customs) that are specific to their Jewish religion and culture.

Research Questions:

Your research questions are in two sections.

[Jewish Weddings]

1. What does the Jewish wedding ceremony look like? _____

2. What happens for a week after the wedding ceremony? _____

3. What is a “chuppa (also spelled huppah)? _____

[Jewish Funerals]

1. What does a Jewish funeral look like? _____

2. What is kaddish? _____

3. What is the purpose of the prayer book? _____

4. What does it mean to put rocks on top of the gravestone (like what Larnel did)? _____

Research Topic

Student Name: _____

Jewish Holiday – Passover (Pesach)

Do you remember?

In *Mrs. Katz and Tush* by Patricia Polacco, Mrs. Katz tells Larnel that she met Myron at her aunt Havelah's Passover seder. "What good times they were, with lots and lots of family. Now it's just me," she says softly.

Could I have Passover dinner with you?" asked Larnel.

"I though you would never ask!" she exclaimed as she hugged him close. "Such a seder I'll prepare for you!"

Background Information:

Passover is the oldest and one the most important Jewish holidays. In Hebrew, Passover is called "Pesach" (PEH-sock). This holiday begins with a ritual called a seder (SAY-duhr).

Research Questions:

1. What is Passover? *To help you with your research, here are some specific questions:*

a. What is the biblical story behind Passover? _____

b. When does Passover happen? How long does it last? _____

c. How do Jewish people prepare for Passover? _____

2. What is a seder? *To help you with your research, here are some specific questions:*

d. What is a seder plate? _____

e. What are the different parts of the seder dinner? _____

f. What is afikomen (ah-fee-KOH-men)? _____

g. Why is matzoh an important part of Passover? _____

3. How does this connect to *Mrs. Katz and Tush*? Your presentation should be able to explain why:

- ✓ Mrs. Katz uses linens and china for the meal
- ✓ Mrs. Katz hides one piece of matzoh in the apartment

Research Topic

Student Name: _____

Jewish Symbols – Menorah, Star of David, Kipa, and Tallit

Do you remember?

In *Mrs. Katz and Tush* by Patricia Polacco, when Mrs. Katz and Larnel realize that Tush left the apartment through the window, there is a candlestick with many places to put candles on it. In the Jewish culture, this is called a menorah. Later in the story, Mrs. Katz and Larnel are in a bakery, surrounded by many people. Some of the bakers are wearing a tiny covering on their head, called a kipa.

Background Information:

The menorah is a very important Jewish symbol. Another important symbol in the Jewish community is the Star of David. There are several pieces of clothing that are important to the Jewish faith, such as a kipa or kippah (also known as a yarmulke in Yiddish, or skullcap) and a tallit.

Research Questions:

1. What is a menorah?
 - a. What does it look like? _____

 - b. How is it used? _____

 - c. Why is it an important symbol? _____

2. What is the Star of David?
 - a. What does it look like? _____

 - b. How is it used? _____

 - c. Why is it an important symbol? _____

3. What is a kipa?

a. What does it look like? _____

b. How is it used? _____

c. Why is it an important symbol? _____

4. What is a tallit?

a. What does it look like? _____

b. How is it used? _____

c. Why is it an important symbol? _____

Research Topic

Student Name: _____

Jewish Religious Practices – Kashrut (Keeping Kosher)

Do you remember?

In *Mrs. Katz and Tush* by Patricia Polacco, Larnel asks why Mrs. Katz uses different dishes for the seder dinner.

How come you have so many different dishes?" Larnel asked.

"Because some Jews don't eat dairy and meat off of the same dishes," she answered.

Background Information:

In the Jewish religion, the Torah (Jewish bible) teaches Jews how to live, such as how to treat others and how to practice justice and equality. It also provides Jews with more specific laws, in this case, how to keep "kosher," based on the laws of Kashrut.

Research Questions:

1. What does "kashrut" mean? _____

2. What does it mean to "keep kosher?" _____

3. Why can't dairy and meat be eaten off the same plate? _____

4. What does a kosher home look like? _____

5. How can people tell what food in the grocery store is kosher? _____

6. Give two examples of each type of food that is considered kosher and not kosher:

Kosher

Not Kosher

Seafood: _____

Birds: _____

Meat: _____

7. Who checks to make sure food is kosher? _____

Resource List about Judaism and Jewish Community

This list is divided into three sections: Section 1 provides an alphabetical listing of resources related to the research projects; Section 2 organizes resources by research topic; and Section 3 lists resources for additional research topics.

Section 1: Resources arranged in alphabetical order

| Resource | Brief Description (per Web site or Book) <i>Additional comments in italics</i> | Web Site | Book |
|--|---|----------|------|
| Akhlah: The Jewish Children's Learning Network @ http://www.akhlah.com/ | This Web site provides Jewish children and their families access to the prayers, stories and rituals that have bound Jews together around the world and through the ages. Akhlah is specifically designed for the youngest and least knowledgeable among us, while maintaining attention to the details of the subject matter. | X | |
| BabagaNewz @ http://www.babaganewz.com/index_main.cfm?cat=9&sub=matcharchive | This monthly classroom magazine for grades 4–7 analyzes major news stories, religious holidays, cultural events and youth trends that play an important part in children's lives. Each issue of BabagaNewz is organized around a specific Jewish value. <i>Magazine only available in print, but the Web site has several resources.</i> | X | |
| <i>Celebrating Passover</i> by Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith (New York: Holiday House, 2000) | Through color photographs and text, this book explains the customs, symbols, and importance of Passover through the eyes of a 9-year old Jewish boy. Blessings and quotes from the Haggadah, a Passover recipe, a lively song, and a retelling of the story of the exodus round out this tribute of a festive and spiritual holiday. Ages 9–11. <i>Get it at Barnes & Noble @ http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/isbnInquiry.asp?z=y&isbn=0823414205&itm=11</i> | | X |
| Chabad.org @ http://www.chabad.org | This Web site utilizes Internet technology to unite Jews world wide, empowers them with knowledge of their 3,300 year-old tradition, and fosters within them a deeper connection to Judaism's rituals and faith. <i>Has a Kid Zone that includes factual information about Judaism for young children.</i> | X | |
| Educational Program on Yiddish Culture (EPYC) @ http://epyc.yivo.org/home.php | A project of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, this educational curriculum aims to familiarize students with the Yiddish- speaking Jewish culture that flourished throughout Eastern Europe in the last 500 years. <i>More suitable for older students with strong reading skills.</i> | X | |
| <i>The Family Treasury of Jewish Holidays</i> by Malka Drucker (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1994) | Through watercolor illustrations, this book recounts the history and rituals of ten Jewish holidays, and includes games, recipes and songs. Ages 9–12. <i>Get it at Barnes & Noble @ http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/isbnInquiry.asp?z=y&isbn=0316193135&itm=1</i> | | X |
| Jewish Virtual Library @ http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaism.html | This comprehensive online Jewish encyclopedia covers a variety of topics from anti-Semitism to Zionism to the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. <i>More suitable for older students with strong reading skills.</i> | X | |
| <i>The Jewish-American Heritage</i> by David M. Brownstone (New York: | This book (second volume in the America's Ethnic Heritage series) explores the history, culture, and contributions of Jews in the US from the arrival of | | X |

| Resource | Brief Description (per Web site or Book) <i>Additional comments in italics</i> | Web Site | Book |
|--|--|----------|------|
| Facts on File Publications, 1988) | the earliest European settlers to the present day. <i>More suitable for older students with strong reading skills.</i> | | |
| <i>Judaism</i> by Douglas Charing (New York: DK Publishing, 2003) | With photos and pictures, this guide explores the history, faith and traditions of Judaism, past and present. Ages 8 and up. <i>Get it at Barnes & Noble @ http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/isbnInquiry.asp?z=y&isbn=0789492407&itm=4</i> | | X |
| Judaism 101 @ http://www.jewfaq.org/toc.htm | This online encyclopedia of Judaism covers Jewish beliefs, people, places, things, language, scripture, holidays, practices and customs. The author's purpose is to make freely available a wide variety of basic, general information about Judaism, written from a traditional perspective in plain English. It is written from an Orthodox point of view. <i>More suitable for older students with strong reading skills.</i> | X | |
| <i>Kids Explore America's Jewish Heritage</i> by Westridge Young Writers Workshop (Santa Fe, NM: John Muir Publications, 1996) | Written by students in the Westridge Young Writers Workshop for other students, this book introduces young readers to Jewish American art, food, history, folk stories, famous people, and music--all from a kid's point of view. Ages 9-12. | | X |
| <i>Menorahs, Mezuzas, and Other Jewish Symbols</i> by Miriam Chaikin (New York: Clarion Books, 1990) | This book explains the most popular Jewish symbols as well as many that are less well known. Using black-and-white illustrations, this book paints a vivid picture of the symbols, ideas, and traditions that link the Jewish past with the present. Ages 9-11. <i>Get it at Barnes & Noble @ http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/isbnInquiry.asp?z=y&isbn=0899198562&itm=1</i> | | X |
| My Jewish Learning @ http://myjewishlearning.com/index.htm | This trans-denominational Web site of Jewish information and education is geared toward learners of all ages and educational backgrounds. <i>More suitable for older students with strong reading skills.</i> | X | |
| Triangle Factory Fire @ http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/ | This Web exhibit presents original documents and secondary sources on the Triangle Fire held by the Cornell University Library. The site includes selected information on a terrible and unnecessary tragedy involving the death of many young working women in a New York City sweatshop at the beginning of the 20th century and the resulting investigations and reforms. <i>More suitable for older students with strong reading skills.</i> | X | |
| <i>Wonders and Miracles: A Passover Companion</i> by Eric Kimmel (New York: Scholastic Press, 2004) | With artwork that spans 3,000 years in four continents, this book presents steps performed in a traditional Passover Seder, plus stories, songs, poetry, and pictures that celebrate the historical significance of this holiday to Jews all over the world. Ages 8-12. Very comprehensive look at Passover. <i>Get it at Barnes & Noble @ http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/isbnInquiry.asp?z=y&isbn=0439071755&itm=1</i> | | x |

Section 2: Resources organized by research topic

Language – Hebrew and Yiddish

BabagaNewz Games. <http://babaganewz.com/games>. (While this does not provide research materials, it does engage visitors in learning a few Hebrew words.)

Expressions and Greetings. Judaism 101. <http://www.jewfaq.org/express.htm>.

Hebrew Alphabet. Judaism 101. <http://www.jewfaq.org/alephbet.htm>.

Judaism by Douglas Charing. New York: DK Publishing, 2003.

Kids Explore America's Jewish Heritage by Westridge Young Writers Workshop. Santa Fe, NM: John Muir Publications, 1996.

Learn the Aleph Bet (the Hebrew Alphabet). Akhlah: The Jewish Children's Learning Network.

http://www.akhlah.com/aleph_bet/aleph-bet.php. (In addition to a page about the Hebrew alphabet, "Learn Hebrew" section includes words for seasons, days and months.)

Yiddish Language and Culture. Educational Program on Yiddish Culture. <http://epyc.yivo.org/main.php?uid=3>.

Yiddish Language and Culture. Judaism 101. <http://www.jewfaq.org/yiddish.htm>.

US Jewish Immigrant Experience 1880s-1930s

"The 1911 Triangle Factory Fire: Fire!" Ithaca, NY: Cornell University. <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/story/fire.html>.

"The 1911 Triangle Factory Fire: Sweatshops and Strikes Before 1911." Ithaca, NY: Cornell University. <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/story/sweatshopsStrikes.html>

"The International Ladies Garment Worker's Union Strike" by Howard Sachar. My Jewish Learning. New York: New York. http://www.myjewishlearning.com/history_community/Modern/Overview_The_Story_17001914/Socialism/Socialism_in_America/GreatRevolt.htm.

The Jewish-American Heritage by David M. Brownstone. New York: Facts on File Publications, 1988.

"Jewish Garment Workers Into the Sweatshops" by Howard Sachar. New York: My Jewish Learning. http://www.myjewishlearning.com/history_community/Modern/ModernSocial/FactoryWorkers.htm.

Jewish Population of the United States (1954–2011). Jewish Virtual Library. <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/usjewpop1.html>.

Jewish Population of the United States, by State. Jewish Virtual Library. <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/usjewpop.html>.

Kids Explore America's Jewish Heritage by Westridge Young Writers Workshop. Santa Fe, NM: John Muir Publications, 1996.

"Life in Shop" by Clara Lemlich. *New York Evening Journal*, November 28, 1909. http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/primary/testimonials/ootss_ClaraLemlich.html.

Maps. Educational Program on Yiddish Culture. <http://epyc.yivo.org/home.php>: For a visual of the immigration patterns from Eastern Europe during the 1890s–1930s, click on "Maps" on the home page; in the new window with the map of Eastern Europe, click on "Emigration 1890s–1930s."

"My First Job" by Rose Cohen. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University. http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/primary/testimonials/ootss_RoseCohen.html.

Jewish Life Events – Weddings and Funerals

“Arriving at the Huppah, or the Wedding Canopy” by Michael Kaufman. New York: My Jewish Learning.
<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/lifecycle/Marriage/LiturgyRitualCustom/ChuppahArrive.htm>

Burial and Mourning Practices. My Jewish Learning.
[http://www.myjewishlearning.com/life/Life Events/Death and Mourning/Burial and Mourning.shtml](http://www.myjewishlearning.com/life/Life%20Events/Death%20and%20Mourning/Burial%20and%20Mourning.shtml)

“The Huppah, or Wedding Canopy” by Michael Kaufman. New York: My Jewish Learning.
<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/lifecycle/Marriage/LiturgyRitualCustom/Chuppah.htm>

Judaism by Douglas Charing. New York: DK Publishing, 2003.

Kids Explore America's Jewish Heritage by Westridge Young Writers Workshop. Santa Fe, NM: John Muir Publications, 1996.

Life, Death and Mourning. Judaism 101. <http://www.jewfaq.org/death.htm#Death>.

A Typical Wedding Ceremony. Judaism 101. <http://www.jewfaq.org/marriage.htm>. (To find this section, refer to the vertical bar on the right side of the screen, and click on “Typical Marriage” under the heading “Marriage.”)

Jewish Holiday – Passover

Food Culture (Slide 10). Educational Program on Yiddish Culture. <http://epyc.yivo.org/main.php?uid=3>

The Family Treasury of Jewish Holidays by Malka Drucker. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1994.

Judaism by Douglas Charing. New York: DK Publishing, 2003.

Kids Explore America's Jewish Heritage by Westridge Young Writers Workshop. Santa Fe, NM: John Muir Publications, 1996.

Matzah: What's Up With It? A Matzah Documentary by Jono. 7 mins. Chabad.org.
http://www.chabad.org/multimedia/media_cdo/aid/269485/jewish/Matzah-Documentary.htm

Passover. Kids. Chabad.org. <http://www.chabad.org/kids/article.asp?AID=354750>

Passover of Pesach. Akhlah: The Jewish Children's Learning Network. <http://www.akhlah.com/holidays/pesach/passover.php>

Passover (Pesach). My Jewish Learning. <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/holidays/Passover.htm>

Pesach: Passover. Judaism 101. <http://www.jewfaq.org/holidaya.htm>

Wonders and Miracles: A Passover Companion by Eric Kimmel. New York: Scholastic Press, 2004.

Jewish Symbols – Menorah, Star of David, Kipa, and Tallit

Menorah. Jewish Virtual Library. <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/menorah.html>.

Star of David. Jewish Virtual Library. <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/star.html>.

Kippah (Yarmulke). (Practice and Ritual). Jewish Virtual Library.
<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/Kippah.html>

Tallit. Akhlah: The Jewish Children's Learning Network. http://www.akhlah.com/history_tradition/tallit.php.

Judaism by Douglas Charing. New York: DK Publishing, 2003.

Kids Explore America's Jewish Heritage by Westridge Young Writers Workshop. Santa Fe, NM: John Muir Publications, 1996.

Menorahs, Mezuzas, and Other Jewish Symbols by Miriam Chaikin. New York: Clarion Books, 1990.

Jewish Religion Practices – Kashrut (Keeping Kosher)

Food Culture (Slides 1–4). Educational Program on Yiddish Culture. <http://epyc.yivo.org/main.php?uid=3>.

Judaism by Douglas Charing. New York: DK Publishing, 2003.

Kashrut: Jewish Dietary Laws. Jewish Virtual Library. <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/kashrut.html>.

Kashrut: Jewish Dietary Laws. Judaism 101. <http://www.jewfaq.org/kashrut.htm>.

Kashrut: Jewish Dietary Laws. My Jewish Learning. http://www.myjewishlearning.com/daily_life/Kashrut.htm.

Kosher: A Guide to Eating Jewishly. Chabad.org. <http://www.chabad.org/generic.asp?AID=113424>.

Kosher – Jewish Dietary Laws. Akhlah: The Jewish Children’s Learning Network.
http://www.akhlah.com/history_tradition/kosher/kosher.php.

Koshermentary. Produced by Dovid Taub & Jonathan Goorvich. 9.35 mins. Chabad.org.
http://www.chabad.org/multimedia/media_cdo/aid/297425/jewish/Koshermentary.htm.

Kids Explore America’s Jewish Heritage by Westridge Young Writers Workshop. Santa Fe, NM: John Muir Publications, 1996.

Section 3: Resources for additional research topics

This list only includes a selection of books (both previously listed and new additions). Web sites that are in the previous list will have information about these research topics.

Bar Mitzvah

Bat Mitzvah: A Jewish Girl's Coming of Age by Eric A. Kimmel. New York: Viking Juvenile, 1995.

Judaism by Douglas Charing. New York: DK Publishing, 2003.

Kids Explore America's Jewish Heritage by Westridge Young Writers Workshop. Santa Fe, NM: John Muir Publications, 1996.

Hannukah

Celebrating Hanukkah by Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith. New York: Holiday House, 1996.

The Family Treasury of Jewish Holidays by Malka Drucker. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1994.

Judaism by Douglas Charing. New York: DK Publishing, 2003.

Kids Explore America's Jewish Heritage by Westridge Young Writers Workshop. Santa Fe, NM: John Muir Publications, 1996.

Purim

The Family Treasury of Jewish Holidays by Malka Drucker. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1994.

Judaism by Douglas Charing. New York: DK Publishing, 2003.

Kids Explore America's Jewish Heritage by Westridge Young Writers Workshop. Santa Fe, NM: John Muir Publications, 1996.

Shabbat

The Family Treasury of Jewish Holidays by Malka Drucker. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1994.

Judaism by Douglas Charing. New York: DK Publishing, 2003.

Kids Explore America's Jewish Heritage by Westridge Young Writers Workshop. Santa Fe, NM: John Muir Publications, 1996.

Menorahs, Mezuzas, and Other Jewish Symbols by Miriam Chaikin. New York: Clarion Books, 1990.

Shabbat: A Peaceful Island by Malka Drucker. New York: Holiday House, 1983.

Suggested Guidelines for Group Research and Presentation

In Parts II and III of the Understanding Judaism and the Jewish Community lesson, students are divided into research groups and asked to research a specific topic from Patricia Polacco's *Mrs. Katz and Tush* (New York: Bantam Books, 1992), and to present their findings to the class. Recognizing that each teacher has a preferred approach to group research projects, please treat the following as suggestions and guidelines.

Prior to the start of the lesson:

1. Assess the diverse knowledge base and research and presentation skills of students; use this information to divide the class into well-balanced research groups. Also consider student relationships and use this as an opportunity to group students who would not otherwise work together.
2. Review the [Suggested Resource List about Judaism and Jewish Community](#). Consider how many resources you want students to use, depending on the scope of the project.
3. Determine if the school library has the books listed in the *Suggested Resource List about Judaism and Jewish Community*. If necessary, ask the librarian for assistance in locating these books, and set them aside either in the library or in the classroom.
4. Talk to the librarian and/or school's IT staff person for any research assistance they can provide to the students while researching their topic, including leading a session about how to do research in the library or on the Internet.

An approach to the presentation:

1. To address all styles of learners in the classroom, ask research groups to include the following in their presentation:
 - Text (e.g., typed or handwritten) that answers the research questions in the assignment
 - Charts and images (e.g., drawings, photos, pictures, graphs, maps)
 - Audio and/or visual aids from Web sites, if Internet access is available in the classroom (e.g., hearing and learning the Hebrew alphabet)
2. Based on the skills and abilities of the students, provide more specific parameters for this research project and add any instructions that complement and/or augment class and/or grade-level objectives. Create a rubric that can help guide the research groups. The following is an example of a rubric.

| Jewish Religion Research Project Rubric | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|
| _____ | All research questions are answered | 10 points |
| _____ | All answers are from documented research sources | 10 points |
| _____ | At least 5 chart and images are shown You may use, drawings, photos, pictures, graphs, maps | 10 points |
| _____ | Editing, capital letters and punctuation | 10 points |
| _____ | Overall neatness of project | 5 points |
| _____ | Names are clearly displayed on the project | 5 points |
| _____ | Total Points | 50 points is the maximum |

3. Instruct students to divide the work as equally as they can. Encourage them to partner with each other to work on one research question, rather than having one student per research question.
4. Because each member of the research group may not delve into all aspects of the topic, ask each member to do a “mini-presentation” to their group members about their area of focus before the presentation. (Consider using some portion of class before the presentation date for groups to prepare their presentation and for this teaching to take place.)

During the presentation:

The following are two methods of presenting information to the class:

Method #1: Group Presentation

Ask each research group to give a five-minute presentation of their research topic to the entire class. Allow five minutes for questions and answers. Highlight any connections and overlap among the different presentations.

Method #2: Jigsaw Group Carousel

1. Divide the class into small groups comprised of at least one member from each research group. For example, each group will have one student from the Language Research Group, one from the US Jewish Immigrant Experience Research Group, one from Jewish Life Events Research Group, etc.
2. Explain that each group has one person from each research group. At each presentation area, the student who is a member of that research group’s presentation will give a brief presentation to the small group. For example, if the group is standing in front of the Language presentation, the student from the Language Research Group will present his or her group’s findings to the small group.
3. Continue to explain that after five minutes, you will say “change” and the groups will all move to the adjacent presentation, where the representing student of the presentation will report his or her group’s findings to the small group.
4. Begin the presentation process and circulate to the different presentation areas. Join in as an audience member and ask questions when appropriate. Continue until the groups return to their original presentation area.

Lesson for Grades 8–12

Using Facts to Respond to Anti-Semitism

Rationale

This lesson introduces students to factual information that refutes commonly circulated anti-Semitic myths, which are the basis for many anti-Semitic remarks and incidents today. Applying this newly acquired information to anti-Semitic case studies, students can begin to develop effective responses to anti-Semitic incidents. By generating ideas in a small group setting, students will also learn from each other and increase their skill set when responding to anti-Semitism and other forms of bigotry.

[NOTE TO TEACHERS: (1) While this lesson is focused on anti-Semitism, the format can be adapted for other forms of discrimination, such as racism, sexism, ableism, and classism. Although these anti-Semitic myths are commonly circulated in society at-large, students may be unaware of them and find the explanations in the handouts insufficient. Like with all lessons, assess your students' familiarity of the Jewish community and history, awareness of these myths and critical thinking skills to determine if this lesson is both informative and appropriate. (2) This lesson works well in response to an anti-Semitic incident in the school and/or the school community. (3) If a primer about the Jewish community is required, adapt and use some portion of the [Understanding Judaism and Jewish Community](#) lesson in this unit to introduce Judaism and the Jewish community to the students.]

Objectives

- Students will learn facts that can refute commonly circulated anti-Semitic myths.
- Students will use case studies to reflect on common anti-Semitic situations faced by teens and identify facts to effectively respond to them.
- Student will consider how the skills to respond to anti-Semitism can be used to respond to other forms of bigotry.

Time

50 minutes for Part I; 50 minutes for Part II

Requirements

Handouts and Resources:

- [Myth and Facts 1–5](#)
- [Case Study 1–5](#)

Other Material:

- chart paper, markers, and masking tape or tacks

Advanced Preparation

- Reproduce handouts as directed above.
- Write the following definitions from Merriam-Webster's [World Central's Student Dictionary](#) on the board, or on chart paper, and post them in a visible area of the classroom (see step #1):

Myth: a popular belief that is false or unsupported

Fact: a piece of information about something presented as true and accurate

- Write the following definition of anti-Semitism on the board or on chart paper (see step #4):

Anti-Semitism: Anti-Semitism is prejudice and/or discrimination against people who are Jewish. Anti-Semitism can be based on hatred against Jews because of their religious beliefs and their group membership (ethnicity).

Key Words

Anti-Semitism
Fact
Judaism
Myth

- Review and make enough copies of the [Myth and Facts 1–5](#) handouts so that each group has a different one, but each student in a group has the same Myth and Facts handout (see step #8). (Note: Additional anti-Semitic myths and their explanations can be found in ADL’s [Confronting Anti-Semitism: Myths and Facts](#).)
- For Part II choose one of the following two options:
 - a. Option 1
 - Write out 3–4 anti-Semitic case studies based on the examples discussed in Part I (see [Case Study 1–5](#) for a template), and the following questions (these questions can also be written on the board or on chart paper instead of the handout):

What anti-Semitic myth is this situation based on?

What facts can you give to disprove the myth?

What else can you do or say in response to this situation?
 - Make enough copies for students in small groups.
 - b. Option 2
 - Review and select scenarios from [Case Study 1–5](#) for the class to review in small groups and make enough copies of the assigned case study for each student in the groups.

Techniques and Skills

brainstorming, cooperative group work, critical thinking, forming opinions, historical understanding, large and small group discussion, presentation skills, reading skills, strategic thinking, understanding multiple perspectives, writing skills

Procedures

Part I (50 minutes)

1. Begin the lesson by asking students to read the definitions of myth and fact. To clarify the definitions, provide an example, e.g., “All girls hate sports” is a myth, while “many girls enjoy sports” is a fact (and identify examples of girls who enjoy sports).
2. On the board, create three columns with the following headings: myth, fact, feelings. Ask for a volunteer to share one myth that the student has experienced or heard about based on some aspect of his or her identity (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, family, hobby, appearance). Write the myth under the “myth” heading. Follow this by asking two additional questions: What is the fact that disproves the myth, and how does it make you feel when people believe the myth? Write the responses under the corresponding heading. Ask for a few more examples and repeat the process.

Optional: Students can turn to a partner and share their responses.

3. Review the feelings column with the class (many of the feelings shared will be negative or neutral). Explain that a myth about a group of people can make individuals who are a part of that group feel bad about themselves. Furthermore, if the myth is not challenged, other people may start believing in it and interact with people in a negative way, e.g., not allowing girls to play baseball at a picnic, or making fun of girls who play sports. Share that there are many myths about different groups of people. In this lesson, the class will look at myths about Jews, which can lead to anti-Semitic beliefs and behaviors.
4. Post the definition of anti-Semitism and read it aloud. Explain to students that anti-Semitism often arises from myths, such as stereotypes or other misinformation about Jews.
5. Ask students what myths they have heard or experienced that relates to anti-Semitism, assuring them that sharing the myth does not mean they believe it. Write them on the board.

NOTE: If students cannot share any myths, skip to step #7.

6. Review the list generated by the class. If patterns emerge, group the list into themes based on the themes in [Myth and Facts 1–5](#) handouts. Tell the class that they will be exploring these themes further in small groups.
7. Tell students that they will be divided into small groups and assigned a brief reading that explores a myth related to anti-Semitism and a corresponding fact that refutes the myth. Explain that the handout will also contain group discussion questions. Provide the following instructions to students:
 - a. Choose one person to be the scribe and one person to be the reporter for the group.
 - b. Groups should read their myth on the handout provided to them and discuss their responses to the discussion questions that follow on the handout.
 - c. Groups should write down their myth on top of their piece of chart paper and write down group consensus responses to the discussion questions included in the handout.
8. Divide the class into small groups and pass out the appropriate *Myth and Facts* handout to each student, and one piece of chart paper and markers to each group. (Note: More than one group can have the same myth.) Allow 15–20 minutes for each group to complete their group assignment.
9. Reconvene the class and have each group post their chart paper for everyone to see. Have the presenter from each group briefly describe the assigned myth and share the group’s responses. Allow a few minutes after each presentation for questions, clarifications and corrections.
10. Conclude by asking some or all of the questions:
 - What surprised you about this lesson?
 - Why do you think anti-Semitic myths (or any other kinds of myths) persist?
 - How do you think teens who are Jewish may feel if someone believes a myth about Jews?
 - What could happen if someone believes an anti-Semitic myth?
 - What can you say and do if you hear an anti-Semitic myth?

Part II (50 minutes)

1. Explain to students that this part of the lesson will provide them with the opportunity to use their knowledge about “myths and facts” to come up with positive ways to get involved when anti-Semitic comments are made.
2. Divide students into small groups and distribute the case studies. Instruct students to read their assigned case study as a group, and discuss and write down their responses to the questions (either on the handout or on the board/chart paper). Let them know that they can refer to the [Myth and Facts](#) handout and the notes from the earlier presentations for support. Allow groups 15–20 minutes to complete this task.
3. Reconvene the class, and ask the presenter from each group to read their case study aloud and present their responses to the class. Allow a few minutes after each group presentation for questions, clarifications and corrections.

Optional: Instruct students to role-play their response to the situation, and allow a five-minute Q&A session after each role play.

4. Conclude by asking some or all of the questions:
 - a. Are you surprised that teens continue to experience anti-Semitism today? Why or why not?
 - b. What are some strategies that you heard in class that you think you can use?
 - c. How different would your strategies be if you were confronting someone you didn’t know versus your friend?
 - d. How comfortable do you feel about confronting anti-Semitism? What else do you need to learn in order for you to feel more comfortable confronting anti-Semitism?
 - e. Can some of these strategies apply to other forms of bigotry, such as racism, sexism, or classism? How so?

Extension Activities:

- Invite someone from the [Anti-Defamation League](#) (ADL), or a Jewish youth group to learn more about Jewish teens' experience with anti-Semitism and how to confront anti-Semitism.
- If a myth that a student shares is not addressed in [Myth and Facts 1–5](#) and [Case Study 1–5](#), encourage students to research the origins of the myth and to present the findings to the class.

Myth and Facts #1

Student Name: _____

Jews are cheap, greedy, and materialist; Jews are good with money.

Where does it come from?

The myth of Jewish greed dates back at least to the New Testament story of Jesus forcing the Jewish moneychangers out of the Temple. Teachings concerning the “cursed” Jews radiated into all aspects of Christian culture, and notions of Jews as miserly and greedy took hold throughout Christendom. In the Middle Ages, some Jews became moneylenders—in part because they were forbidden to own land or join many of the craft guilds, and in part because the Church had forbidden Christians from practicing usury (lending money at interest). Usury was condemned as a sin, but since Jews were not subject to Christian law and kings and nobles needed money to build churches and castles, both the Church and the State appointed Jews as moneylenders and tax collectors. In a classic example of blaming the messenger, Christians directed their anger at having to pay back loans and taxes against the Jewish moneylenders and tax-collectors.

More recently, some people believe that wealthy or successful Jews have gotten ahead due to cheapness, greed, materialism or their “natural skill with money” rather than through a commitment to education and hard work, just like anyone else.

What are the facts?

Like all groups of people, some Jews are good with money; some are not. Some Jews are cheap; some are not. The same could be said for any group of people, whether they are defined by religion, nationality or, for that matter, hair color or weight.

In actuality, many Jews are not wealthy. There is a sizeable population of Jews who live in poverty, both in the United States and around the world. According to one study using data collected from the 2001 National Jewish Population Study, close to one million American Jews live in low-income households, defined as those that earn less than 150% of the federal poverty rate, or \$25,000 for a family of four.¹

According to Jewish tradition, giving money to the poor and to others in need is not just encouraged, it is required. The Hebrew word *tzedakah* (zeh DAH kah) is often mistranslated as “charity,” which itself comes from the Latin word “*caritas*” or heart. One gives charity “from the heart,” that is, out of a desire to give. A more accurate translation of *tzedakah* is “righteousness,” implying that *tzedakah* is given because it is the right thing to do, whether one wishes to give or not. According to Jewish law, *tzedakah* is a *mitzvah*, which itself is also often misinterpreted as “good deed.” In fact, *mitzvah* means “commandment.” And, like all commandments in Jewish law, the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah* is a requirement, not just a good deed.

Unlike the Roman rule of commerce, *Caveat Emptor* (let the buyer beware), which puts the burden on the buyer to be wary of unscrupulous sellers, Judaism dictates the opposite. According to Jewish law, the burden is on the seller to ensure that the buyer should benefit from any uncertainty in a transaction. For example, if someone wants to buy a pound of potato salad, Judaism requires the deli clerk to give the buyer a little extra, just in case the scale is not completely accurate.

¹Statistics from the United Jewish Communities 2001 National Jewish Population Study, www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/ujcpop.html.

Answer the questions below.

Where does this myth come from?

What are the facts?

How would you refute this myth if asked about it?

Myth and Facts #2

Student Name: _____

Jews control the banks, media, Hollywood, and even the U.S. government; Jews have a secret plot to take over the world.

Where does it come from?

Anti-Semites point to “The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion” as proof of a Jewish conspiracy to dominate world political and economic sectors as well as media. This proven forgery, written by agents of the Russian czar in the late 19th century, claims to be the minutes of a secret meeting of Jews that details plans of Jewish leaders to rule the world. The proven forgery spread throughout the 20th century and continues to this day to promote the stereotype that the Jews own the banks and control the media.

In 2004, much of the Arab world watched a television mini-series based on “The Protocols” produced by the government of Syria and presented as the truth to its viewers. Among many lies, the broadcast included depictions of Jews killing a Christian boy for blood to make matzah for Passover and the brutal execution of a Jewish merchant by his fellow Jews for keeping his store open on the Sabbath.

The reality is that in societies like the U.S. that have extended rights and freedoms to Jews, many Jewish people have succeeded. For example, in the 109th Congress (2005–2007 congressional term), 11 Senators identify as Jews. Their success, however, is not the result of some secret Jewish conspiracy to rule the world.

This myth is also related to the misperception that Jews are different, alien people with strange powers to control others. Some people who have never met Jews or do not know them well, can build up some strange ideas about what Jews are like. During different historical periods, Jews were accused of killing Christian children, causing plagues, and setting out to destroy Christian society. If something went wrong, the Jews were said to have planned it. Today, there are even those who claim that AIDS was invented by Jewish doctors.

What are the facts?

It is easier to blame one group for everything bad that happens rather than try to understand the complex and multifaceted causes of problems. Conspiracy theories have always tended to be popular in difficult economic times, and Jews often surface as the traditional scapegoat. Many white supremacist groups today thrive on conspiracy theories and blame not only Jews, but also African Americans, immigrants, and even the Federal Government for everything that goes wrong.

The charge that Jews have been trying to take over the world is especially absurd in light of Jewish history. In almost every country where Jews have lived, they have been a small minority and have experienced centuries of persecution.

Jews have played a large part in the development of the movie industry and some find themselves in high-profile positions. Steven Spielberg and Barbra Streisand, among others, are examples of Jewish people with much status and power in Hollywood, but one only needs to watch the Academy Awards to see that Jews do not dominate the movie industry. Likewise, Jews constitute a small minority of the heads of Fortune 500 companies such as IBM, Exxon, and GE.

Answer the questions below.

Where does this myth come from?

What are the facts?

How would you refute this myth if asked about it?

Myth and Facts #3

Student Name: _____

Jews are responsible for the death of Jesus.

Where does it come from?

The belief that the Jews killed Jesus grew out of interpretations of the trial and crucifixion portions of the New Testament in the Christian *Bible*. The Gospels describe Jewish religious leaders delivering Jesus to Roman authorities with the request that they execute him for blasphemy and public menace. In the Gospel of Matthew (27:25), it is written that Jews cried out, "His blood be on us and our children," as they demanded his crucifixion. As a result, Christians have historically held Jews collectively responsible for the death of Jesus.

What are the facts?

Crucifixion, the particular method used to execute Jesus, is forbidden by Jewish law. Moreover, Jesus did not commit any crime that is punishable by death according to Jewish law. It is widely agreed upon by current scholars that Jesus was executed by the Roman rulers of Israel, the same Romans who also executed tens of thousands of other Jews by crucifixion, including two others on the day Jesus was executed.

The myth of Jewish responsibility for Jesus' death is embedded in 2,000 years worth of Christian teaching and Western culture, starting with the gospels' attempt to define who the true Jews were. While most people respect the rights of others to adhere to the tenets of their religion, there has been a historic resentment against Jews by many Christians who cannot understand why Jesus has been so stubbornly rejected. Beginning in the Middle Ages, Christians believed that Jews desecrated communion wafers and killed Christian children to use their blood for matzah (the famous "blood libel"). Today, these issues come up in all sorts of ways, from history classes where the Crusades are taught as heroic times (thousands of Jews were slaughtered during this period) to literature and media that suggest Jewish responsibility for Jesus' death. The most recent widespread example is Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*. In Mr. Gibson's film, there is absolutely no ambiguity as to who is responsible for the death of Jesus—it is the Jews.

According to Christian theologian Carl Evans, "From the New Testament times to the present, it is difficult to find a single period when the Church has not acted shamefully toward the Jews. I'm convinced that anti-Semitism has been such a powerful and persistent nemesis largely because of the Church's false witness against the Jews." To this day, some Christian children are still being taught that "Jews are Christ-killers" and "Jews drink the blood of Christians."

However persistent these myths may be, the Catholic Church has recently made significant steps to correct them. In 1965, the Vatican Council officially declared that Jesus' death "cannot be charged against all Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today." In 1992, the Catechism of the Catholic Church (a teaching guide) noted that no one is certain of what happened 2,000 years ago and that Jews as a collective group should not be considered responsible for the crucifixion.

Answer the questions below.

Where does this myth come from?

What are the facts?

How would you refute this myth if asked about it?

Myth and Facts #4

Student Name: _____

Jews think they are better than everyone else.

Where does it come from?

According to Judaism, the Jews are the “chosen people.” This concept has been misunderstood by both Jews and non-Jews alike. Many people have come to believe that by calling themselves the chosen people, Jews are declaring that they think they are better than other religious and ethnic groups.

What are the facts?

Being the chosen people does not mean that Jews have greater privileges than non-Jews. Rather, according to Jewish law, being the chosen people means that they have a special responsibility to uphold Jewish ethical teachings.

The idea comes from a portion of the Torah (the Jewish bible) in which the Jewish people were “chosen” to accept the responsibilities of the Torah and to be a “light unto the nations,” that is, an example of good behavior for all. But the “chosen people” concept has been twisted over time by some who say that the title proves that Jews think they are better than those who are not Jewish.

Jews, like most groups, are proud of their heritage and identity. However, this does not make them better than anyone else. Orthodox Jews interpret the “chosen people” idea to mean that they have a responsibility to keep the 613 commandments of the Torah. All sects of Judaism have acted on this ethical responsibility through their work on social issues.

Moreover, Judaism espouses the concept of the righteous gentile, whereby someone who is not Jewish and who follows the Seven Laws of Noah (requirements that establishes moral interaction, justice compassion for all of humanity) will receive the same rewards after death as a righteous Jew. Jews do not view being Jewish as an exclusive status reserved only for those who happen to be born into the faith. According to Jewish law, anyone can convert to Judaism by accepting the same responsibilities as the other members of the faith.

Answer the questions below.

Where does this myth come from?

What are the facts?

How would you refute this myth if asked about it?

Myth and Facts #5

Student Name: _____

Jews/Israel perpetrated or had advance knowledge of the September 11th terrorist attacks.

Where does it come from?

Immediately after the tragic events of September 11, 2001, rumors began circulating that the airplane hijackings and subsequent crashing of the planes into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon had been the work of Israel's secret service, the Mossad. At the heart of this propaganda, named the "Big Lie," were stereotypical messages: "Only the Israelis could have been skilled enough, only Jews could have been smart enough to plan and execute such a complicated and intricate plot." There is another virulently anti-Semitic assumption underlying this notion: "Only Jews could have been evil enough."

Another version of this falsehood is that Jews had advance knowledge of the attacks; that Jewish employees were secretly warned not to go to work that day. In fact, then poet laureate from New Jersey, Amiri Baraka's poem, a lengthy diatribe about September 11th, repeats the conspiracy about Jews and Israel having foreknowledge of the attacks and the false rumor that 4,000 Israelis did not show up for work at the World Trade Center.

What are the facts?

The September 11th attacks were perpetrated by members of the terrorist organization Al Qaeda. Jews and Israelis had no knowledge of the attacks. Of the 2,996² victims who died during the September 11th terrorist attacks, an estimated 400 victims were Jews, including at least two Israeli citizens. The primary propagators of the lie that Jews were somehow behind the terrorist plot are the Arab and Muslim media in the Middle East, attempting to deflect blame from their brethren onto Jews and Israel.

The September 11th terrorist attacks were perpetrated by 19 members of Al Qaeda, ten of whom hijacked and flew two passenger airplanes into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, five of whom hijacked and flew another passenger airplane into the Pentagon in Washington, DC, and another four who died when the passengers on a fourth hijacked airplane rose up and prevented the hijackers from crashing that airplane into the White House.

² <http://www.september11victims.com/september11victims/>

Answer the questions below.

Where does this myth come from?

What are the facts?

How would you refute this myth if asked about it?

Case Study #1

Student Name: _____

Being Good with Money

When your friend Tammy was elected to the school council last year, one of her campaign promises was that spring dance was going to be the best ever. When January came, Tammy asked you to be part of the spring dance committee and you agreed. At the first meeting Tammy starts assigning committee roles. When she gets to your friend Sheryl and puts her in charge of raising money for the dance you are surprised because Sheryl is an amazing artist and you believe she would be put in charge of decorations. You speak up and recommend Sheryl be in charge of decorations. Tammy says in front of everyone, "No, I need Sheryl to be in charge of money because she's Jewish and everyone knows Jews are good with money."

What anti-Semitic myth is this situation based on?

What facts can you give to disprove the myth?

What else can you do or say in response to this situation?

Case Study #2

Student Name: _____

Controlling Everything

You are over at your friend Greg's house finishing up a group project for your current events class on U.S. foreign policy during the last four years. You are just about to leave when Greg's mom comes in and asks what you are working on. You and Greg spend a few minutes talking about the time line you've created and the poster full of charts. When you are finished she nods in approval and says, "I wonder what our foreign policy would be like if the Jews weren't controlling everything."

What anti-Semitic myth is this situation based on?

What facts can you give to disprove the myth?

What else can you do or say in response to this situation?

Case Study #3

Student Name: _____

The Movies

You and your high school friends Thomas and Christine decide to go to see Mel Gibson's movie *The Passion of the Christ*. The three of you know nothing about the movie, except that it was produced by Mel Gibson, an actor you all love from movies like *Braveheart*, and *What Women Want*. As you enter the theater, you see that some of the people leaving the theater are crying, and you all get a little nervous as you take your seats. After the movie has ended, you look over at Thomas and Christine. Christine is crying, and Thomas looks shocked. As they leave the theater Christine says, "I cannot believe those Jews were responsible for killing Jesus!" Thomas gets upset and exclaims that he is Jewish and that the Jews were not responsible for killing Jesus. Thomas looks over at you for help.

What anti-Semitic myth is this situation based on?

What facts can you give to disprove the myth?

What else can you do or say in response to this situation?

Case Study #4

Student Name: _____

Excused from School

You are sitting in your math class when the bell rings and the teacher starts taking roll call. When she gets to Josh Weinberg's name she doesn't bother to call it out, and continues on with the roll call. John leans over to you and asks, "Where's Josh?" You have no idea and are about to answer when Heather leans over and says, "Oh, don't you know? Josh is Jewish and today's supposed to be a Jewish holiday. On top of that, Josh says that there was a Jewish New Year's celebration last week, which was why he didn't come to school then. He gets out of class assignments and tests so often! It's so unfair! You know Jews think they are better than everyone else."

What anti-Semitic myth is this situation based on?

What facts can you give to disprove the myth?

What else can you do or say in response to this situation?

Case Study #5

Student Name: _____

The September 11th Remark

It's the start of the school year, and you and your friends are trying to decide what to do after school. You suggest attending the September 11th memorial service to remember the lives lost from the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania. Your friend says with a snicker, "There won't be a single Jew at that service. I heard that the Jews knew that it was going to happen, but didn't tell anyone. They all stayed home that day, you know." You look around the group, and notice that one of your friends, who is Jewish, looks really mad but doesn't say anything.

What anti-Semitic myth is this situation based on?

What facts can you give to disprove the myth?

What else can you do or say in response to this situation?
