

## **Feeding the Hungry Learning Session**

**Priority Goal:** We are living Jewish values anchored in/that lead to caring, purposeful relationships.

**Big Idea:** It's a mitzvah to feed the hungry.

**Key Text: Leviticus 19:9-10**

When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field to its very border, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am Adonai your God.

**Knowing:** Learners will be able to explain why hunger is an issue in New York City, and what government assistance is available. Learners will be able to explain in their own words what Jewish texts have to say about the mitzvah of feeding the hungry.

**Doing/Living:** Learners will engage in the mitzvah of feeding the hungry.

**Believing/Valuing:** Learners will be able to express why it's their responsibility as Jewish adults to feed the hungry.

**Belonging:** Learners will feel connected to each other and to other Emanu-El/ NYC community members by volunteering together. Learners will be able to advocate on behalf of fellow New Yorkers regarding SNAP benefits.

**Noticing Tools:**

Text Presentations

Verbal answers to questions

**Materials:**

Pudding

Spoons

Napkins

Hunger quiz

Text study handout

Flatscreen tv hooked up to computer

Taboo buzzer

**Prep Required:**

1. Buy pudding
2. Make copies of text study – save these for Reflection Session
3. Create worksheet for menu activity – list of common dinner foods/beverages and prices
4. Check to make sure video works. If not, find something similar about serving food in a soup kitchen

**Activities**

Rituals (5minutes, belonging)

Created by the Department of Lifelong Learning  
Congregation Emanu-El of the City of New York



Extended Snack (15 minutes, doing, believing)  
Hunger Quiz and Discussion (25 minutes, knowing)  
Text Study (30 minutes, knowing, believing)  
SNAP Activity (25 minutes, knowing, doing, believing)  
Logistics (10 minutes, doing)  
Closing Rituals (5 minutes, believing)

## **Plan of Action**

### **Rituals**

- Kvetch/Kvell
  - Each student will share a kvetch and a kvell from their week
- Tzedakah
  - Say the blessing for giving tzedakah

### **Extended Snack**

- For this activity, go to the room across the hall where there are tables. On the tables will be pudding.
- Each student will sit at the table. They are told that they may not under any circumstances bend their arms. They have 10 minutes to enjoy snack. They cannot waste any food or there will be consequences!
- Discussion questions
  - What did you notice during this experience?
  - Was anyone successful in eating? How?
- Tell Chasidic story (on page 4 of lesson plan)
  - How were they able to eat?
  - What is the moral of the story?
  - Can you infer a mitzvah from this story?

### **Hunger Quiz and Discussion**

- Ask students:
  - What are your assumptions about people who do not have enough food to eat?
- Divide students into 2 teams. They will do the mazon hunger quiz (on page 5 of the lesson plan) with a buzzer.
- Teacher should go through each question and give the right answer
- Discussion questions
  - Did any of the answers surprise you? Which ones? Why?
  - Why do you think so many of the hungry are children?
  - How do you feel when you see someone on the streets asking for food or money?
  - According to Jewish law, we are required to give to anyone who asks. How do you feel about this? What are some reasons why you would not want to give to a person who asks on the streets?
  - What are ways that we can feed the hungry in a safe way/secure environment?
    - Work at a soup kitchen



- Only buy food for the hungry
- Save leftovers in a safe, healthy way

## Text Study

### Leviticus 19:9-10

When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field to its very border, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am Adonai your God.

- Students will divide into groups based on how they want to re-interpret the text – skit, song, poem or comic strip. They will then present this to the class.
- Why does the Torah command this?
- Why does the text conclude with “I am Adonati our God?”
- We do not live in an agricultural society. What are the implications of this text for us? (This is what being a reform Jew is all about – taking a text that may feel outdated, but figuring out how it fits into our lives!)
- Why is it an adult Jewish responsibility to feed the hungry?
- How does this contribute towards tikkun olam?

**SNAP Activity** Ask students: what are components of a nutritious meal? (protein, whole grain, fruits/vegetables, dairy).

- In small groups (2-3), students should create a menu for a nutritious dinner for a family of 4 and add up how much it costs (students can use [freshdirect.com](http://freshdirect.com) for prices).
- Each group should share how much their meal cost.
- Ask students:
  - Have you heard of SNAP? (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. New name for food stamps.)
  - How much money do you think a family of 4 gets? (Let them guess. The answer: \$17.84/day – families would not be able to afford any of these meals.)
  - How does that make you feel?
- We will continue with this at the Reflection Session!

## Logistics of Action Session

- Go over what the options for the action session are – serving dinner at NYCP or preparing meals with the Sunday Lunch Program.
- What they will encounter
- How to behave
- Show video on youtube about serving in a soup kitchen  
<http://www.nycommonpantry.org/news.html> (scroll down to Videos)

## Closing Rituals

- Excited/Nervous
  - Each student should share one thing that they are excited about/nervous about for the action session.



## Chassidic Tale

There was a man and he wanted to see the difference between Heaven and Hell. An angel appeared by his side, and said “I will show the difference between Heaven and Hell.” Naturally the man was a little scared; after all he had never seen an angel before. With great hesitation he followed the angel up these stairs to a huge hallway. The hallway had two doors. The angel opened the first door and said, “I will first show you hell.” Much to the man’s surprise there was huge banquet with many guests. The food on the table looked so delicious and so plentiful. There was definitely enough for everyone to eat as much as they needed and it was displayed so deliciously. The man looked closely at the banquet and notices something really weird about all the guests; they were all crying!!! The man asked the angel, “With all this delicious food and tasty drinks, why are the guests crying?” The angel remained silent. The man asked his question again, but again the angel remained silent. The man looked closer at the guests and noticed that instead of arms and hands the people had wooden spoons. The people could not bend their arms, therefore they could not feed themselves and were stuck just looking at this amazing food.

The angel then brought the man through the other door down the hall. Again there was this beautiful banquet. The food looked delicious, the drinks looked tasty, but this time all the guests were smiling, laughing and having a lot of fun. The man assumed that these people must have regular arms, but as he looked closer he noticed they had the same arms as the guests in the first room. Then he looked really close and realized that all the guests weren’t feeding themselves, but rather they were feeding each other. In that moment the man immediately realized the difference between Heaven and Hell



## HUNGER Quiz

1. True or False: one in 6 Americans does not have access to enough food.  
**True**
2. True or False: Most individuals struggling with hunger are homeless and out of work.  
**False. Only 10% are homeless**
3. Most people in low-income households would be fine if they just worked harder.  
**False. More than 30% of households suffering from hunger include at least one adult who works.**
4. What does the term “food insecurity” mean?
  - A. The limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods.
  - B. Having to involuntarily cut back on meals and/or food portions.
  - C. Not knowing the source of the next meal.
  - D. All of the above**
5. How many people are perpetually hungry?
  - A. 500,000 people
  - B. 10 million people
  - C. 50 million people**
  - D. Less than 100,000 people

***50.2 million people lived in food-insecure households in 2008, including 32.4 million adults and 16.7 million children.***

6. True or False: There are hungry children in America.  
**True. 16.7 million children are hungry.**
7. True or False: Children in food-insecure households are all thin.  
**False. Many children are obese because high fat high calorie foods (like fast food) are cheap and fast.**

