

MTEI COHORT SEVEN –SEMINAR 3
March 27-30, 2016 - Adar Bet 17-20

Learning *supporting* and *challenging* as interpretive practices
Guidelines

Your role when you **offer an interpretation** is to:

- * Articulate your interpretation of what the story is about and provide evidence and reasons for this interpretation.
- * Listen and reply to your colleague's questions.

Your role in **helping** your havruta partner's **learning** (and also your own learning) is:

- * **Listening** actively to your havruta's interpretation so that you are clear about what s/he is saying. You might ask clarifying questions such as: "*Am I understanding that you are reading this part of the text to mean X?*" "*You said X, could you tell me more about what you mean by that?*" "*What in the text triggered your response?*"

- * **Supporting** and reinforcing your havruta's interpretation by offering additional cues in the story and/or reasons which may support his/her interpretation. Consider using the following language:

"I can see additional textual evidence to support your interpretation: ..."

"Your interpretation helps me better understand the following elements of this story..."

"Would you say that 'when it says X', this reinforces your point..."

You may offer additional reasons why your havruta's interpretation is in fact compelling in your view.

- * **Challenging** your havruta's interpretation by focusing on what you consider its weaker points to: e.g. you may point to details in the story which the interpretation does not address or which may contradict the interpretation. Consider using the following language:

"In the text it says X, how do you make sense of this particular part according to your interpretation?"

How do you account for...?

Why do you say that.....? How does that fit with this other part of the text....?

"I am having a difficult time with your interpretation because it assumes that ..."

You may offer additional reasons why your havruta's interpretation is in fact not compelling enough in your view.