

INTRODUCTION

This is the third in a series of DVDs produced by the Mandel Teacher Educator Institute (MTEI). All materials in this series are designed to support educators as they investigate core issues of teaching and learning. The lesson you will see took place in the spring, close to *Yom HaAtzmaut*, Israel Independence Day. Because the lesson was developed for a school using the CHAI curriculum, those materials are used as a starting point. The children are 10- and 11-year old students in a congregational school affiliated with the Reform movement. In the lesson, students study three biblical texts that recount God's promise of the Land of Israel to the Jewish people, and the children explore the texts and their personal connections to the land of Israel.

This particular multi-media package supports exploration of issues that have not been highlighted before in this series, including:

- Importance of text-based learning
- Architecture of a *hevruta*-based lesson, emphasizing both *hevruta* learning and personal meaning-making
- Collaborative lesson planning
- Studying student work

You will find short background essays about each of these topics, as well as a short essay on "Using Videos in Professional Development" embedded in the DVD.

This lesson was taught by Jennifer Lewis and collaboratively developed by educators who participated in the sixth cohort of MTEI. As you view the lesson, you will see members of this group watching the "live" lesson. They also appear in the epilogue section of the DVD, which shows selections of the educators planning the lesson and studying students' work to assess their learning.

In addition to the background essays and the edited video clips from the classroom, we have also included a set of lesson materials associated with the class. These include:

1. The lesson plan
2. *Hevruta* practices—the learning approach that students are taught as part of the lesson
3. Text-based worksheets—the versions of the biblical texts and worksheet questions designed for use in this lesson
4. Students' charts—the wall charts that students created to summarize their learning. Note: We have included a transcribed version of their work in order to make students' responses to the text-based worksheets more readable.
5. Written assessment questions—written questions that students responded to at the beginning and end of the lesson
6. Students' work (the responses to the written assessment questions)
 - Transcribed version of all students' responses (including responses to question from the beginning of lesson, text-worksheet responses when available, and the responses to the end-of-lesson questions).
Note: Because students wrote their responses in pencil, we are including this version, in addition to their hand-written responses, to make the work, itself, more readable. However we have not corrected any spelling errors. What you see in the transcribed version is exactly how they wrote their responses.
 - Scanned responses organized by child
 - Scanned responses organized by worksheet question

USING THIS DVD IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Step One: Preview the whole DVD before sharing it. See the video footage and review the background essays, as well as the documents in the “Records of Practice” section.

The videos are broken up into six sections. The DVD is designed to view either section by section, or as one continuous piece by pressing the PLAY ALL button.

The first five chapters include the sections of the classroom lesson, including:

- The launch
- Setting up *hevruta* work: Introducing several *hevruta* practices
- Working in *hevruta*: Guided study
- Whole group discussion
- Closure: integrating and personalizing the learning

The sixth chapter, or epilogue, shows brief video clips in which members of MTEI Cohort 6 work on collaboratively planning the lesson and studying the work that students produce.

Step Two: Decide on goals and select appropriate footage to support them.

Once you have reviewed the materials, keep in mind your goals and decide how much and which sections of the DVD you want to show. (Sometimes showing just two minutes of a video can be provocative and useful.)

These videos can be used to focus on a variety of questions. Determine your particular focus for using the DVD at this time with your intended group.

In most cases, it will be useful to choose one or two foci. Some possible areas of focus include:

- What content goals does the teacher seem to have for her students?
- What is the nature of teacher-student interactions?
- What is the teacher doing to help kids learn?
- What is the nature of the classroom climate and culture?
- What do you notice about how the children work together in *hevruta*? Does the nature of the project seem to affect the nature of the student interactions?
- What does the teacher do during *hevruta* work?

Step Three: Plan your professional development session(s).

- Will you want to study the Biblical texts with teachers as a group before viewing the video?
- Is there a conversation that you want to have with your group prior to showing the DVD? Do you want them to watch with particular questions in mind?
- Do you want participants to take notes on what they see?
- Which, if any, of the background essays would you like your group to read? And when would you like them to read them (before or after viewing the video)?
- Do you want participants to try to distinguish between what they observe and what they think or feel about what they observe?
- Do you want participants to focus on any particular element of the instructional triangle: teacher, learner, or content?
- Do you want to show the segment once—or two or more times?

- Are there issues or questions that you want participants to take back to their own classrooms to investigate?
- Are there connections between this activity and classroom observations that your teachers might do? If so, are there ways that you want to make that connection explicit?
- If, when, and how are you planning to use the teacher narration and/or the overview?
- How will you debrief your session?
- How will you ascertain what your participants took away from the session?
- How will you follow up?