

## The Introductory Mifgash

### The focus:

Getting children acclimated to the Zoom environment and Flipgrid.  
Beginning to build community.

### Teacher preparation:

Prep for the use of technology: Check all the resources for Zoom and Flipgrid: <https://jec-tohealthcurric.weebly.com/tech-tutorials.html>

- Sign up for your own educators' Flipgrid account (Flipgrid.com). You will need a Google or Microsoft account to join. When you create a "Group" that will be used for your *k'vutza*, you need to:

- Choose a "Private Group"

- Add students using a "Student Username"

- Click NEXT

Add your students one-by-one.  
Their "username" can be their first name or initials. [Ignore the suggestion of uploading as CSV file.]

You could add a guest password for parents to join the group. Talk to your education director about this.

Click NEXT. The next two screens may be skipped.

Practice doing a Flipgrid posting with friends and family.

- New to working with Zoom? Check out the Zoom Tech Tips about half-way through this webpage: <https://pocketofpreschool.com/zoom-ideas-and-tips-for-distance-learning/>

In advance, the adults in each home need to

- know how to get on Zoom (ask your education director how this is being handled)
- be introduced to Flipgrid

For this session, ask in advance for at least one parent (or a teen sibling) to sit next to their child(ren) during the first 10 minutes of the *mifgash*. Their support will be needed to make sure that the children know how to manipulate various elements of Zoom, especially muting and unmuting, as well as making sure that children can switch between Gallery and Speaker View. It's a bonus if children know how to rename themselves.

Generally, the teacher and any *madrichim* (teen helpers; this is the plural of *madrich* or *madrichah*) should remain on Gallery View so as to see what is going on in the session overall. Most of the time, children will also be using Zoom in Gallery View at home.

Give thought to the make-up of your *k'vutzah* (group):

- If it has mixed ages, consider how you will help the older children look out for the younger children and how to help the younger children feel comfortable with the older ones.
- If it has family groupings, consider the kinds of sibling challenges that might arise and how you might mitigate them.
- For all groupings, consider the various needs and abilities of the children and what you can do to support them throughout the year. This includes pre-readers who may be working side-by-side with readers.

### ***The session:***

#### **1) GREETINGS/CHECK-IN (3 min)**

As families come online, say hello to each and ask the adult/teen to rename the screen with the participating child(ren)'s name(s). There might be one child in a family on the screen, or a number of siblings.

This week, start by muting everyone. Introduce yourself and ask the adult/teen sitting at home with the children to show the child how to switch between Speaker and Gallery View. Ask everyone to put the Zoom call on Speaker View and to point at the screen when they see you BIG on their screen. Then ask the children to shift to Gallery View and put their hands on their head (or whatever signal you'd like) when they see everyone in little boxes. Do this a few times.

Then, ask the adult/teen to make sure that the child knows how to mute and unmute. Practice a few times with everyone unmuting themselves when you ask (or give some kind of a signal), and then

muting themselves. Tell them that they may only unmute themselves if you tell them to. Otherwise, everyone has to be on mute.

Ask everyone to move to Gallery View and put their hands on their heads when done. Mute everyone and then more formally begin the Greetings/Check-in.

Call on each child by the color or pattern of their clothing and other distinguishing feature. For example, "Would the person wearing a red shirt who has curly hair, unmute and tell our *k'vutzah*, our group, their name?" After each child's introduction of name, give some kind of acknowledging action for the rest of the group to do. [e.g., "Everyone clap for Sammi!" or, thumbs up, or snaps, or salute, etc.] The selection of an acknowledging action is a great job for a *madrich/madrichah* to do.

After each person introduces themselves, make sure they mute again. Then call on another child to unmute.

**2) REFLECTION/COMMUNITY-BUILDING (7 min)** – The adult/teen sitting next to the learners can probably slide away in the middle of this activity.

- a) Mute children
- b) Offer an overview of the session's activities and flow. Feel free to say more about yourself and excitement for the year ahead.
- c) Explain that each session will start with some kind of checking in (they did that with the name game already played) and then a *k'vutzah* (group) activity. Today's activity is "would you rather?" which will help everyone get to know the others a bit better.
  - i) Explain that you will be offering two choices, for example,  
"Would you rather (1) Eat a banana or (2) eat a chocolate bar?"  
If the answer is #1, children hold up one hand.  
If the answer is #2, children hold up two hands.  
After each question choice, call on (or have one of the *madrichim* call on) one to two children for more explanation, "Jon – you are a chocolate bar person. Unmute yourself and tell us your favorite chocolate bar." Make sure Jon mutes before the next question is asked.
  - ii) Then play the game. Below are some potential questions.  
Would you rather:  
(1) Read a book or ride a bike?  
(2) For a pet, have a hippopotamus or a giraffe?  
(3) Eat breakfast or eat dinner?  
(4) Jump on one foot for 15 minutes or learn to knit?  
(5) Play a board game or bake cookies?  
If you create other questions, make sure that they can be easily-enough answered by younger and older children, as well as children with little-to-no Jewish background and those with more.

**3) NEW CONTENT (15 min) – Setting up for the year**

- a) Explain your general structure, for example:
  - i) The *k'vutzah* will meet once a week on Zoom – you anticipate having fun and learning together, and hopefully becoming like a strong family or group of friends.
  - ii) Each time, the session (known in Hebrew as a *mifgash*) will start just like today with a greeting and a community-building activity
  - iii) If your program also has Hebrew, *t'fillah* or other activities, explain how those will fit into the day or week.
  - iv) If you'll be offering informal meeting times for one-on-one or small group help, you can mention that here.
- b) Explain the focus of the year, for example:
  - i) The learning is all about our health and wellness, but it is built on five big Jewish ideas – creating a shelter of peace, using one's inner strength, having courage, joining together with others, and doing big kindnesses.
  - ii) Children will learn many different Jewish things and explore new ways to think about being safe, strong, healthy, kind and hopeful.
- c) Make a *b'rit* (a group "covenant" or set of promises to each other) for working on Zoom and the learning this yea. Consider in advance – perhaps with other teachers and/or *madrichim* – the kinds of guidelines that would be helpful for the *k'vutzah*. Brainstorm with the children, make a list of ideas (a great job for a *madrich* or *madrichah*) and once completed, ask the children to agree to the *b'rit*, perhaps with thumbs' up and concluding with a group/virtual hug.

**4) LAUNCHING AT-HOME LEARNING (5 min) –** There is no specific at-home learning this week, but you do want them to get on Flipgrid. Check the instructions in the "Teacher Preparation" section of this *mifgash*, above and set up an easy enough question for them to answer, perhaps, "What is your favorite book?, with "bonus points" for it having a Jewish theme (many may have PJ Library books at home).

**FOLLOW-UP DURING THE WEEK**

- Immediately after the session send a note to parents telling them how the first day went and thank them (or whomever) for their help getting started. Explain that each week children will be posting to an app called Flipgrid – this week, you would like them to help their child(ren) to record a response to this week's question which is about their favorite book.
- Check with your education director to see if your community is part of PJ Library. FREE (yes, free) books are delivered monthly to children from birth to age 12 and many complement the

themes of this curriculum. Parents may register here: <https://pilibrary.org/enroll-in-a-community>

- Remind students to share their work on Flipgrid (“I can’t wait to see what you post!”).
- Respond to children’s postings
  - To encourage students for future sessions
  - To choose what to share in the spotlight section of the next session