

The Mifgash

The *mifgash* (מִפְגָּשׁ - meeting or gathering) is a 20-30 minute weekly synchronous session with the *k'vutzah* ("group"), comprised of teacher and learners, plus any teaching assistants (*madrichim*). During each *mifgash*, there is opportunity to: check-in with the students; build community; celebrate and share some of the activities/challenges the students accomplished the previous week; and, introduce new content for the upcoming week. Each *mifgash* follows the same format to create a sense of consistency and routine:

- **Greetings/check-in (3 minutes)**

These are hellos to every individual as they enter the meeting and a quick check-in or activity.

Examples include:

- Pass the greeting – Call on someone and ask how they are feeling today and they call on another person in the group.
- Finding each other – Everyone is asked to reach to the people on either side of them and then above and below.
- Etc.

- **Reflection/Community Building (4-7 minutes)**

This is a reminder of what happened the last session and the activity or challenge that children worked on. The Flipgrid uploads are referenced and 2-3 children's postings are spotlighted each week (over the course of a number of weeks, everyone will have a chance to be in the spotlight). The teacher might also do a 3-4 minute community-building activity that fits the theme.

- **New Content (15 minutes)**

This week's learning is introduced and the main activity is accomplished together.

- **Wrap Up (5 minutes)**

The lower elementary and upper elementary learners are introduced to their activities or challenges for the upcoming week. Ideally, these are done in breakout rooms so that each age group is offered a focused (and exciting) introduction and explanation of their task. A teen assistant, prepped for the task, could meet with one group and the teacher with another.

Follow-Up – Whether or not teachers will be scheduling call-in/"Ask Me" times during the week, children should receive work-reminders and additional resources (links to books online with complementary themes, songs, etc.). Parents should be sent or linked to the weekly Family Schmooze, designed for casual conversation around the dinner table, while in the car or any other appropriate time.

La'bri-ut: To our health and wellness
A curriculum for K-6

Jewish Education Center of Cleveland
Sukkat Shalom

Session 1: What is *sukkat shalom*?

The focus:

Learners explore images that help them define the concept of *sukkat shalom*, as used in this module. While the phrase literally means “shelter of peace,” it may also connote a place (or even person) that promotes feelings of safety and protection.

Note to the teacher – The noun “*sukkah*” is familiar. It translates as a booth, shelter or temporary structure. The Torah tells us the Israelites camped in such structures when they left Egypt and lived in the wilderness for 40 years; one booth is called a “*sukkah*” (singular), many are referred to as “*sukkot*” (plural).

The “t” that one finds in *sukkat shalom* is there for a grammatical purpose. It indicates that instead of translating this phrase “*sukkah* peace,” we need to include “**of**” – a *sukkah of* peace.

Bottom line, call the booth a *sukkah*, but pronounce the key phrase for this unit, “*sukkat shalom*,” a *sukkah* (or shelter) **of** peace.

Teacher preparation:

In advance of this session, ask parents to make sure their child has paper and a bold writing/drawing instrument (marker or crayon).

Open on your computer:

Note that images in Resource Sheets A & B were placed two to a page. If you open this document and set the “VIEW” to 125%, the images should project in Zoom so only one is seen at a time. However, you may need to experiment with this setting on your device.

- RESOURCE SHEET A: What is a *sukkah*?
- RESOURCE SHEET B: How are these examples of safety, protection, and peace?
- OPTIONAL: This video showing a *sukkah* being built in time-lapse photography:
<https://tinyurl.com/y6t72sbt>
- OPTIONAL: Paper and an easy-to-read (bold!) writing instrument for the *madrich* to record learner responses. This allows children to see each other during the discussion, rather than be blocked by the whiteboard or a document on the screen.

OPTIONAL FOR WRAP UP:

- Open on your computer (available on the *La-bri'ut* website)
 - Lower Elementary Instructions Video
 - Upper Elementary Challenge Video

The session:

1) GREETINGS/CHECK-IN (3 min)

Teacher’s choice

2) REFLECTION/COMMUNITY-BUILDING (7 min)

OPTION: Greet the group with “*shalom!*” Ask each child to think about where they like to go when they need peace and quiet, a place of *shalom*. Then ask them to quickly sketch that place on their paper using their bold marker or crayon.

After 2 minutes, ask if a child would be willing to share their safe, quiet space.

After they talk about it in a couple of sentences (sharing their picture, too) the child is asked to call on another child to share. Children always have the option to “pass” on the sharing. Continue around the group until everyone has had an opportunity.

OPTION: Teacher’s choice

3) NEW CONTENT (15 min)

- a) INITIAL DEFINITION: Say, *shalom*, and ask what the word means. Chances are that someone will respond, “hello, goodbye and peace.”
 - i) Explain that for the next five weeks they will be exploring a Hebrew phrase with the word *shalom* in it: *sukkat shalom* (סִכַּת שְׁלוֹם).
 - ii) Ask if anyone hears another familiar word in the phrase, *sukkat shalom*. They might (or might not) hear the word, סִיכָה *sukkah*.
 - (1) Share the photos on RESOURCE SHEET A: What is a *sukkah*? [Option to also share this video that shows a stop-motion progression of a family building a *sukkah*: <https://tinyurl.com/y6t72sbt>]
 - (2) As you and the learners look at the photos, engage them in conversation – what do they know about a *sukkah*? Key responses should underscore that it’s used during the week-long holiday of *Sukkot*, that it is not meant to be permanent (it can fall down in a strong wind or storm), that it’s a place where people invite guests, eat and have fun.
 - iii) They know that *shalom* means peace (that’s the definition they will be working with, not hello and goodbye) and they know that *sukkah* is a fragile building used during the fall holiday of *Sukkot*. But the two words together – *sukkat shalom* – means something a bit bigger, a bit different. We hear these words in the *Hashkiveinu* (הַשְׁכִּיבֵנוּ) – “[God] lie us down”) blessing in the evening service – we call on God to “spread over us Your shelter of peace.”

וּפְרוֹשׁ עָלֵינוּ סִכַּת שְׁלוֹמֶךָ

U’fros aleinu sukkat shlomecha.

“Spread over us Your shelter of peace.”

Wonder aloud what it might mean for God to spread over us a shelter of peace.

- (1) Ask the children to simultaneously act out what it might feel like to be surrounded by a shelter of peace (does it calm them, excite them, make them feel safe, make them feel strange, or something else).
- (2) Then ask for learners’ thoughts – what is a shelter of peace, a *sukkat shalom*? As you discuss this with the children, refer to the drawings they created and the responses they

gave in the beginning – explain that where they feel safe and protected could be called a *sukkat shalom*.

- iv) The question for today, besides thinking of a *sukkah* of peace, is what does it mean to have a shelter of peace put over us, surrounding us? Is it just an unsteady building like a *sukkah*? Might it be something else like a parent's arms?

b) NUANCES OF SUKKAT SHALOM:

- i) Introduce the second set of images in the slideshow (the section: "How are these examples of safety, protection and peace?") telling students that each offers an example of protection and safety. For each slide (with the *madrach* recording responses on their paper) ask learners:

- (a) What do you see?

- (b) What does the slide show you about safety, about protection, about peace?

Have the *madrach* share the recorded answers by holding it up to the camera and rereading the list to the group. Ask if there are other answers the group would like to add. Note that the ideas learners provided can be referred to and expanded on as the module progresses.

c) SUMMARY

Based on everything discussed today, what do students feel might be the many meanings of *sukkat shalom* – a shelter of peace, protection, of safety?

4) **WRAP UP** – Ideally, this section is done in breakout rooms, one for the lower elementary learners and one for the upper elementary ones. *Madrachim* may be tapped to help lead one of these conversations.

- a) **Lower elementary** (those with the activity box) – Explain/show that they will find a large piece of fabric and other supplies in their box. This week at home, their task is to decorate the fabric with the materials provided OR anything they may have at home. They will be making their own *sukkat shalom* cloth, something that may remind them of safety and protection. During the week, they should experiment with ways to use this *sukkat shalom* cloth – as a personal wrap/blanket, as a fort, as a *sukkat shalom* cape, as whatever else they imagine. A couple of days before you meet again, ask them to post to Flipgrid a picture of their *sukkat shalom* cloth and tell you about it.
- b) **Upper elementary** (those with the video challenge) – Share the video that introduces the first at-home challenge, or ask learners to watch on their own at home. Consider showing it all the way through, returning to one of the embedded questions (your choice) to discuss as a group for a few minutes. Then, using screen-share, introduce learners to the *Sukkat Shalom* Challenge Card #1.

Make sure they see and understand the challenge of the week: *to show what sukkat shalom means using words and pictures*. Talk through the two options on the second side of the

Challenge Card and ask for some ideas of how children might get started. Make sure children remember how to post a photo of their project on the group's Flipgrid.

FAMILY SCHMOOZE: *A PDF of the card is on the La'bri-ut website.*

This is either an idea or behavior that parents can reinforce in the coming week, or a set of open-ended questions that families may discuss around the dinner table, in the car, or anywhere they are together. If there is more than one child in the family, the schmooze questions will bridge the learning and thinking between younger and older, older and younger. In this module, we are defining a *sukkat shalom* as a place where people can feel safe and protected.

- What in our house (or school, or synagogue, or neighborhood) helps us feel safe?
- Who helps us feel safe?
- Where does each family member feel safe and protected? Where is each person's *sukkat shalom*? Answers might include: a space in the house or outside, in someone's arms, or while involved in a favorite activity.
- How do we (can we) help each other feel safe when something is scary to a family member – a bad storm outside, someone is very sick, when learning at school feels hard, etc.?

FOLLOW-UP DURING THE WEEK

- Immediately after the session, send upper elementary children and parents a link to the challenge video so they may watch it again.
- Send a check-in note to parents; include the Family Schmooze page (link is on the *La-bri'ut* website)
- 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.

RESOURCE SHEET A: What is a sukkah?





RESOURCE SHEET B: How are these examples of safety, protection, peace?





