



Canfei Nesharim

111 Eighth Ave, 11th floor ▪ New York, NY 10011 ▪ 212-284-6745 ▪ info@canfeinesharim.org

Sample Lesson Plan for Young Children Developed by Atara Weisberger

Appreciating the Creator through Creation: Creating a Perek Shira for the Classroom

Objectives:

- To initiate a dialogue about the relationship between nature and Hashem.
- To introduce the concept that nature can be an inspirational way to connect to Hashem.
- To create a classroom “Perek Shira” for which the students have collected various nature objects or pictures/representations thereof.

Materials:

- A pictorial copy of the original Perek Shira (Artscroll has a nice one as does author Nosson Slifkin. Also, Neot Kedumim - the Biblical Landscape Museum in Israel– has a beautiful library of books about Torah and nature available online.)
- Colorful construction paper – larger than a regular sheet of paper
- Laminating paper (usually available in packages at Staples or Office Max)
- Markers
- Hole puncher
- Colorful Yarn (to tie the pages of the classroom Perek Shira together) or thin ribbon
- Scissors

The following supplies will depend on which option below you choose to represent the natural objects for Perek Shira:

Digital Camera
Nature Magazines
Bag or basket to collect natural objects from outside
Photocopies of pictures from original Perek Shira

The Lesson!

1. Sit down with the students and a copy of the original Perek Shira. Ask them to identify what they see in the picture and ask them what these creatures “say”.
2. Then read or paraphrase to be age appropriate what the animals say to Hashem...that when they speak to their creator – daily, hourly, etc.- it is far more eloquent than “moo” or “sssssss” or “roar”. Creation has no doubt who its creator is and recognizes Hashem’s greatness and expresses on a minute to minute basis.
3. This is a good time to mention the importance of all of creation, down to the smallest creature. Text from Bereishis Rabbah: “Every blade of grass has a malach (angel) directing it from above, telling it to grow.”
4. Ask the students what their favorite thing in nature is and why they love it so much.
5. The next step is to collect either objects from nature or representations of objects in nature (e.g. pictures from magazines, photographs, drawings, etc.). There are several ways to go about this. Preferably,

students can go outside to collect one item each from the natural world around them. They could collect a leaf, bark, a feather from a bird, seeds, an insect, a blade of grass, a flower, other “evidence” of animals, etc. For objects that they see but can’t “catch”, the teacher can bring a digital camera and photograph what interests the students (e.g. squirrels, birds, a dog or cat, etc.). The photographs can then be developed and used in the classroom Perek Shira.

6. Objects that are found outside can then either be laminated into the book or the students can create a pictorial representation of them that can be put into your Perek Shira.
7. If going outside isn’t an option, pictures from magazines, books, photographs or drawings can be used. It is best if each student has a different object so that the book has more variety in it.
8. Once each student has a completed representation of their natural object, the teacher should help each child to imagine what their object might thank Hashem for and write that on the top or bottom of their picture.
9. Once completed, the class can make a cover page with pictures cut out of magazines that show various living things and the words, “Our Perek Shira” on the front.

Other discussions:

10. The class can discuss and may want to portray in on their Perek Shira pages the habitats of the objects. It is good to begin with a discussion of a child’s “habitat” to help them understand the importance of space, nutrients, and shelter for all living things.
11. The final discussion can center on how to protect habitat and the importance of doing so. Again, bring the child back to their own daily lives. What if their favorite play area was cut down and replaced by a strip mall? How would that impact their lives? What if the food that kept them healthy was no longer available? What if their water and air was no longer clean?
12. Then the students can brainstorm how they can help protect the habitat of their object. You could go one step further and create a class project around habitat protection.