**UNWRAP THE STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS**-Unpack the components of the selected standards, benchmarks and content to determine what students should know and be able to do.

***Text: Esther***

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| **Standard :**  **4. STUDENTS WILL VIEW THE TANAKH AS THE FORMATIVE NARRATIVE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.**  **8. STUDENTS WILL DEVELOP A LOVE OF TORAH STUDY FOR ITS OWN SAKE AND EMBRACE IT AS AN INSPIRING RESOURCE, INFORMING THEIR VALUES, MORAL COMMITMENTS, AND WAYS OF EXPERIENCING THE WORLD.**  **Benchmarks:**  **4.29: Explores the timelessness of prophetic moral and ethical messages**  **8.19: Shows how traditional and modern biblical commentators develop biblical issues of morality** | | |
| **Students will know** | **Students will be able to do** | **Content Material (text references, questions, activities)** |
| What is a moral issue?  Style and form often communicate content  Judaism reads the Bible as a moral work  Commentators on moral issues  Students have the right and responsibility to comment  Text inherently lends itself to multiple interpretations  There are often various (sometimes contradictory) perspectives within the text itself on particular moral issues  The text offers enriching voices that help us grapple with contemporary moral issues  The reason we do text study is that it helps us express things that we would otherwise be unable to articulate  Interpretation is an inherent human act/ trait/function  The Torah deals with issues of ultimate concern  Ancient Near Eastern issues that shed light on the text  Morality has various definitions. | Navigate the text, skim for information, distinguish between important and unimportant information  Understand structure of the text  Locate moral issues within Biblical texts  Reflect and define what morality means  Discuss moral issues that emerge from texts  Identify moral issues in their own lives  Express themselves as interpreters of moral issues in text  Express and articulate personal opinions about moral issues  Support their opinions with the text  Articulate multiple viewpoints on one text or one moral issue  Demonstrate respect for various viewpoints  Make connections between moral issues in the text and contemporary moral issues | From the book Our Heritage  Page 399- Declaration of Fast- Ta’anit Esther 13th of Adar  Why do Jews declare a fast?  Does fasting have to do with morality or immorality?  Page 404- Mitzvot associated with Holiday of Purim   1. Read Megillah 2. Festive Meal 3. Meshloah Manot 4. Gifts to the Poor   Page 414- Commentaries on why Esther invited Haman to the feast  Look at how people comment on actions and behaviors  Who gives credence to those commentators?  Page 420- Mordechai overhearing plot and going to Esther  A couple of questions  1. Did Mordechai do the right thing?  2. What were some of Mordechai’s options in response to the plot  3. Why Esther? Only because she was married to a king?  Page 421-423 Esther’s prayer to Gd/Meeting with the King   1. What role does Gd play in making decisions of morality 2. What individual steps should/can be taken? 3. What would you have done?   Page 429 Al Ha-Nissim  Page 442- Morality of Humility and Gratitude  On a day that we celebrate the saving of the Jewish people- we make it a point to  Give to others  **Specific Verses from Esther that will be focused on in class**  Esther 2:10- honesty? Secrets?  Esther 2:20- again with secrecy  Esther 2:21-23- plotting against the King- Mordechai Honesty  Esther 3:4- Mordechai won’t bow because Jewish- he told the truth  Esther 3:5- Does one person represent the entire community for good and bad?  Esther 3:8- Difference? What’s wrong with those people? NEVER mention to king that it was Jews- Morality and trust Is it ok to have complete trust?  Esther 4:1-3- Mourning-sackcloth- what are the implications?  Esther 4:8- written work- power of words- good or bad  Esther 4:11- Esther does not want to go to King because of the rules- relationship between husband and wife  Esther 4:13-14- Now in times of problem be proud and proclaim identity- what’s the purpose of that?  Esther 4:16- Take a stand- sacrifice herself for good of whole |

**DETERMINE BIG IDEAS AND ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

BIG IDEAS: (Identify the important generalizations—what you want students to deeply understand and apply. Brainstorm several, and narrow to a few that align best with the chosen content material)

* **The consequences of your actions have long-lasting effects.**
* **Morality is about making tough decisions in complicated circumstances.**

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS: (Open-ended questions to focus students’ thinking and encourage students to engage with Big Ideas.)

* **How does experience form character?**
* **What is a “natural” family relationship?**
* **How does text help me think about how to navigate life?**

**CREATE THE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT WITH ENGAGING SCENARIO**

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (Performance Assessment includes a spectrum of tasks designed for students to synthesize and consolidate what they learned. Students demonstrate “proficiency” in the skills, knowledge and big ideas of the unit.)

ENGAGING SCENARIO (Creates motivation or sets the scene for students to apply knowledge and skills to problem solving.)

**The moral times**

You have all been charged with starting a new newspaper in your community. It seems to local officials, both religious and secular, that the residents have lost their moral compass. Residents are lying to one another, keeping secrets, telling on one another, competing with one another and on one terribly sad occasion, even killing their own brother.

Your job is twofold:

1. Create an appealing newspaper that patrons in the community would like to buy. That means clear and attractive layout as well as eye catching headlines and advertisements. The more creative you are the better
2. Produce articles that will inspire and teach the readers about their shared moral past and their moral choices in the present. Use your prowess in reading the Tanach to find moral issues along the way.

Create a Newspaper with 5 articles

Article 1- Week 1 of unit- What is morality?

Article 2- Week 2 of unit- What role did morality play in the story of Esther?

Article 3- Week 3 of unit- How does community and morality inform identity?

Article 4- Week 4 of unit- Another example of how we can learn about morality from Jewish sources/heros/heroines

Article 5- Of the choosing of the group- can be a personal reflection or an article form a modern source somehow connected to Judaism and our topic of discussion.

Must include certain items such as:

Name of Newspaper

Titles of Articles

Photographs

Advertisements

The students will be put in groups of 3 or 4 depending on the class size. All of their articles will be individually written will be put in the newspaper and they will have to work on the layout of the newspaper and the “creative” spice.

Your newspaper will be read by the town mayor; Honorable Jill Spielman, as she is most concerned with the state of the town.

Each newspaper should include:

1. Four articles **per** member of staff
2. **1** **group** editorial dealing with a Biblical moral of the groups choosing and connecting it to the town and it’s troubles.
3. Headlines for every article with author’s name
4. Advertisements-
5. A lot of creativity

**Rubric: Final Project- Morality in the Bible**



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|  | **Incomplete** **1 pts** | **Proficient** **2 pts** | **Exemplary** **3 pts** |  |
| **Organization** | Incomplete  Sequence of information is difficult to follow.  Work is illegible. | Proficient  Student presents information in logical sequence which reader can follow. Work has one or two areas that are sloppy. | Exemplary  Information in logical, interesting sequence which reader can follow. Work is neatly done. |  |
| **Content Knowledge** | Incomplete  Student does not have grasp of information; student cannot answer questions about subject. Student makes no mention of Bible or Biblical source | Proficient  Student is at ease with content, but fails to elaborate. Basic knowledge of Biblical text. Basic implies the student knows the basic plot and characters of the story. | Exemplary  Student expresses personal opinions on the subject while connecting it to Biblical resources. |  |
| **Grammar and Spelling** | Incomplete  Work has four or more spelling errors and/or grammatical errors. | Proficient  Presentation has no more than two misspellings and/or grammatical errors. | Exemplary  Presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors. |  |
| **Creativity** | Incomplete  Work shows no creativity or personality. | Proficient  Student expresses personal relevance to the project, articles and overall newspaper. | Exemplary  Student thinks outside of the box and expresses personal expression. |  |
| **References** | Incomplete  Work displays no Biblical references | Proficient  Correct number of Biblical references. The quotations from Biblical texts are cited incorrectly. | Exemplary  Work displays more than three Biblical references, cited correctly in Hebrew and /or English. Arguments made are original to the student |  |