**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: Genesis 4: 1-16***

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| **Standard 2: Students will be engaged in the learning of ancient, rabbinic, and modern modes of interpretation of the biblical text and will see themselves as a link in this ongoing chain of interpretation.**  **Benchmarks:**  **2.7 articulates that there are commentaries that provide interpretations of the Torah.**  **2.11 articulates elements and principles of rashi’s (and other’s) commentary on the torah text.**  **2.13 interprets various art media as modern forms of textual midrash.**  **2.16 compares multiple interpretations to a textual issue.**  **2.31 develops own interpretations of text.** | | |
| **Students will know** | **Students will be able to do** | **Content Material** |
| **Narrative** | Identify names of characters and who is speaking in both the Torah text and the midrashim/commentaries  Retell the story in sequence—first as in the Torah text and then according to the midrashim/commentaries | Retell 4:3-12 according to the “p’shat” of the Torah.  Retell verses 4:9-10 as portrayed in the midrashim/commentaries. |
| **2.7 articulates that there are commentaries that provide interpretations of the torah** | | |
| Midrashim /commentaries interpret the Torah text | Explain how a specific midrash/commentary interprets a given text. | Cain’s questions in Midrash #1 and #3 focus on Cain’s response to God’s question (הֲ**שֹׁמֵר** אָחִיאָנֹכִי). In response, Cain challenges God: You (God) should be a “shomer.”  אֻמָנוּתְךָ לשמוֹר בַּשַעַר, למה הִנַחְתָּ אֻמָנוּתֶךָ? [connection to BI: Humans can challenge and even blame God]  Midrash #1 relates to the EQ: Do humans have free will (to kill)?  Cain challenges God for creating in humans the evil impulse, saying:  בָּרָאתָ בי יֵצֶר הָרַע, אתה שוֹמר את הכֹל ולי הִנחתָּ לְהָרְגוֹ? |
| **2.11 Articulates elements and principles of rashi’s (and other’s) commentary on the torah text** | | |
| Definition of **קשי /** textual ‘difficulty’  משל (“parable”)– that midrashim can employ a parable to make a point | State the implied question raised by a commentary. (מה קשה לרש''י).  Explain the ‘difficulty’/specific textual language on which the midrash/ commentary is based  Unpack and explain the משל and נמשל. | In 4:10 דְּמֵי is plural – “bloods”  In 4:10 The word “**אֵלַי**”-“to Me” could be read as “**עָלַי**”-- “against Me.”  Explanation of each of the משלים -- the שומר and the אַתְלֵיטִין.  Comparison of these משלים. |
| **2.13 interprets various art media as modern forms of textual midrash** | | |
| Art is a valid form of commentary | Analyze works of art as a form of textual midrash  Connect a visual version of a midrash/commentary to a written one. | Using four visual representations of this text (attached), make connections between specific verses and/or midrashim/commentaries and the visual representations  Examine how details in visual representations are a form of “commentary” |
| **2.16 Compares multiple interpretations to a textual issue** | | |
| A verse can have multiple (even contradictory) interpretations | Compare two commentaries on a textual issue  Explain personal choice of favored midrash/commentary. | Examine differences among the three midrashim. (#1 and #3 both “blame” God through the use of משלים. What is the difference between the format and ideas behind these two midrashim?  Which do you prefer? Which seems more daring? |
| **2.31 develops own interpretations of a text** | | |
| The Torah text is open to our own interpretation | Given a pasuk, create a written or visual commentary/midrash. | Create written midrash or picture for one of the verses in our section  Specify the textual basis for this “new” midrash |

**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)

* There are multiple interpretations of a text.
* Visual representations are a valid form of commentary.
* Humans can challenge God about justice in the world.
* Humans have free will and are responsible for their own actions.
* Violent actions have long ranging consequences.

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

* How can we evaluate varying interpretations of the same text?
* Who has the responsibility to restrain escalating violence?
* To what extent do humans have free will?

**CREATE THE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT WITH ENGAGING SCENARIO**

**Engaging Scenario**

You are an artist, biblical scholar and museum curator working for the Bible Commentary Museum. You will be installing the museum’s new display entitled: Cain and Abel: Art as Midrash. It will focus on four new art pieces that the museum has just acquired. (See the attached pictures.)

**Task 1:**

Create museum display cards for four pictures that will be part of the special Cain and Abel display. Each card should include an appropriate quote from the biblical text of Bereisheet, Chapter 4 as well as from a Midrash on that text.

**Task 2:**

Write the review which will appear in the local paper evaluating the pictures in the display in terms of their connection to a midrash/commentary. Include in your review which picture best matches the midrash/commentary and a written explanation for your choice.

**Task 3:**

Because you are both an artist and a biblical scholar, you have been asked to create a new midrash/commentary on any verse in the section to add to this display. You may choose to do this in visual or written format. (Indicate which verse.)

**Task 4:**

As part of the brochure, create a section entitled: “Lessons from the Cain and Abel Narrative.” Write an essay explaining what any one of the midrashim/commentaries teaches us about the conflict between seeing God as directing human behavior and seeing humans as having free will.

*Checklist:*

**Task 1:**

I created one museum display card for each of the four pictures using the following format:

(on a 3” x 4” card stock):

Hebrew letter (א' – ד') indicating the specific “picture” this card is describing.

Quote from בראשית ד' with correct perek/pasuk citation.

Quote from midrash / commentary referenced by its number (#1 - #3 and its source).

**Task 2:**

For each picture in my “review” I have explained in 3-5 sentences the connection between the picture and the midrash/commentary.

I have explained in a paragraph of 5-8 sentences which picture best matches the midrash/commentary. In my paragraph I have pointed out at least two specific connections between the language of the midrash / commentary and my understanding of the picture.

**Task 3:**

I have created a new midrash/commentary on any verse בראשית ד':ג'- י''ב -. (It could be a verse on which I have already read midrashim/commentaries or another verse.) I have followed one of our class’ “established” formats:

* Format for visual midrash
* Format for written midrash.

**Task 4:**

I have written an essay entitled “Lessons from the Cain and Abel Narrative.”

* My essay follows the established format for a “five point essay.”
* I have cited the midrash/commentary on which I am basing the “lesson.”
* I have included a clear statement of my understanding or what that midrash/commentary teaches me about the conflict between seeing God as directing human behavior and seeing humans as having free will.
* I have included my personal opinion about this “lesson.”