

Lesson Plan II—What is the Best Chocolate: Jewish Values

About this lesson:

- The material may be used to supplement units about Jewish values, ethics, kashrut (Jewish dietary laws), Jewish food, Passover, Chanukah or other. This could extend over two sessions.
- For Grades 5 and above. May be used with Lesson III. Please feel free to adapt and modify to suit your needs.
- This lesson accompanies *On the Chocolate Trail*, Chapter 11 “The Ethics of Chocolate: Shopping for the Best.” Further information about kosher chocolate may be found [What Makes This Chocolate Different From All Other Chocolate?](#)

Objectives for the students:

By the end of the lesson my students will be able to:

- Explain the basic issues of *kashrut* (Jewish dietary laws) and chocolate
- State some of the challenges of identifying the best chocolate from the viewpoint of Jewish values and recognize some of the Hebrew terms
- Define terms such as: *hechsher*, *kosher*, *kashrut*.
- Select chocolate for next week’s chocolate making lesson based upon Jewish values

Lesson:

Set Induction: (approximately 5-10 minutes)

My opening will be:

Today we will choose a chocolate for use in next week’s chocolate making to donate to local nursing home or food pantry. We will base our decision on our Jewish values.

1. Pose the question: (slide/board) Which chocolate is the best? What makes for a good chocolate? What about from a Jewish values point of view? Record a brief list of the responses.
2. How should we make decisions about the chocolate we buy?

Planned activities to make the lesson work:

1. Show selection of wrappers of various bars (including at least a fair trade, an organic, a Rainforest certified). Identify certifications. Look at ingredients. What do we learn about chocolate quality from these wrappers?
2. Note new terms (approximately 5 minutes): *hechsher*, *kosher*, *kashrut*, (see Glossary, p. 289)

3. Teach about *kashrut* in general and especially as it applies to chocolate (approximately 15 minutes). Look at packaging, see the words in Hebrew and English, find the *hechsher* and/or other certifications. What makes chocolate kosher?
4. Review the handout “What is the Best Chocolate: Jewish Values to Consider.”
5. Show clip about [child labor in chocolate growing](#). Discuss
6. Show clip of [cocoa farmer eating chocolate](#) for the first time. Discuss
7. Divide into small groups. Pass out a bunch of wrappers to each group (with each batch including some distinctive certification options.) Ask each group to select a reporter and to select the best chocolate from the batch of wrappers.
8. Have each group report and ask again: Which is the best chocolate?

Create closure:

1. How do these Jewish values help us with our chocolate choices, the best chocolate?
2. Based on this discussion about kosher chocolate and ethical concerns related to chocolate which certifications should we be looking for when we shop for chocolate?
3. If we had to choose one of these Jewish values which would be most important?
4. The class votes on which type of chocolate should be used in our chocolate making project next session, Lesson III.

Materials and Supplies

- Copies of *On the Chocolate Trail*, including “A Consumer’s Guide to the Ethics of Chocolate: Selecting the Best.”
- Glossary (see page 289)
- Slides/photos/charts prepped with images of certifications, terms used in the lesson
- Collection of chocolate bar wrappers
- Copies of handout “[What is the Best Chocolate: Jewish Values to Consider.](#)”
- Possibly pre-assign students to bring wrappers with or without chocolate of their favorite bar.