

Grab 'n' Go Lesson Leveling the Playing Field

Good People Grab 'n' Go Lessons are designed so educators have all of the education materials needed in one document to teach a 60-90 minute lesson on a specific topic. Some Grab 'n' Go Lessons will require photo copies while others will require internet access and a projector and speakers; some will require markers while others will require post-it notes each one is unique. We encourage educators to adapt the materials to their environment and learners.

(Note: All stock graphics are free on <http://www.freedigitalphotos.net>)

5-8 minutes Arrival Activity

Supplies: a variety of sporting equipment (baseball, bat, glove, football, basketball, kick ball, soccer ball, Frisbee, tennis racket, jump rope, beach ball, swim goggles; hockey stick, golf club); markers, butcher paper

1. Place each item around the room centered on a giant piece of butcher paper
2. As people arrive, have them write down a memory they have of using this item on the butcher paper. It can be the earliest memory of using the item, a favorite funny memory, something they remember about learning how to use the item, being a spectator, or maybe about who they used the item with.
3. Some people won't have something to write for each item – that is okay.

3-5 minutes Set Induction

1. Once everyone is there, gather near the items
2. Ask for volunteers and place one participant near each item/butcher paper
3. Have one volunteer read out some of the answers near the item. What are the common themes around the memories we have of this item?
4. Ask the room – is there anyone who hasn't ever used this item before? What does it feel like being in the minority (we are assuming that most people have used each item at least once)?
5. You can do this for each item or pick a few and go through this process.

6. Then as a group discuss:

- Based on what we wrote about the items, what are some of the added-value benefits of these items? (exercise, fun, team work, agility, skills, memories with family and friends, for some college scholarships and careers)
- Ask a few to share – when you outgrow your equipment, what do you do with it?
- Do we take for granted having these items in our lives? What do you think our lives might be like if we never had access to any of these items?

Explain to your participants that today we are going to learn about how helping those who don't have access to sports equipment can change their lives.

8-12 minutes The Good People Profile: Max Levitt

Read aloud (and/or distribute copies) of The Good People Profile (handout located at the end of the lesson). Then discuss:

- What motivated Max?
- What basic needs has Max helped others access?
- What problems has Max solved?
- How might Max impact one person in a significant way?
- How might Max impact a whole group of people in a significant way?

10-15 minutes Adding it All Up

Supplies: mobile devices (computers, iphones, ipads), internet access; copies of each of the worksheets (located in this packet at the end of the lesson)

Split your group into smaller working groups (3-4 people per group) and give each group a worksheet entitled, "What Does It Cost?". Depending on the size of your group, you might have more than one group working on the same sheet – that's fine.

- Baseball
- Golf
- Football
- Tennis

Once the groups have had a few minutes to research and fill out the worksheet, bring them all back together and compare the costs of the sports. (Those who have team sheets can also divide by the number of team members to get the average cost for 1 person.)

Discuss:

- Did anything surprise you about what you have researched?
- On average, how much would a family spend to put two kids through a sport?
- If a family has limited financial income and had to choose between one of these sports and some basic needs (i.e. food, shelter, medicine), what choice do you think they would be forced to make?

10-18 minutes **What's Jewish About Max's Work?**

Included in this Grab 'n' Go is a Text Study sheet for your use.

Depending on the age of our participants, you may want to choose one text to explore via a projector, a few texts via posters, or provide them with the entire 2-sided text sheet. For advanced learners, you may want to provide them a full copy of Hilchot Deot Chapter 4 for access to some of the original texts.

One method for engaging these texts:

1. Divide your group into two sub-groups. Give one group all of the texts dealing with health and wellness and give the other group all of the texts dealing with taking care of the community, charity, and education/experience.
2. Each group reads through their assigned texts and creates an advertisement (print ad or radio spot) covering the key ideas in the text.
3. Then each sub-group shares their ad to the entire group.
4. As a whole group discuss why these two classifications of texts best summarize the work that Max has engaged in.
5. Ask the group to reflect back on their thoughts about the different pieces of equipment in the opening activity ... what about their experiences are reflected in these texts?



Some questions for consideration:

- Rambam is a physician who puts tremendous emphasis on physical well-being. Why do you think this is a fundamental Jewish concept?
- One of the texts says, “Children without childhood are a dark and fearsome spectacle” ... what about engaging in sports helps young people grow into adults who are happy and well adjusted?
- One of the texts talks about the “national spirit.” Why do you think sports are a part of our national spirit? Why is it important for Jews to be a part of their home country’s national spirit? Why is it important for children in general to be a part of a national spirit?

8-15 minutes

The Good People Making a Difference

Visit these links to learn the other ways The Good People Fund has supported Max’s work. Print copies or have the participants access them electronically:

- <http://www.goodpeoplefund.org/leveling-playing-field/>
- <https://www.goodpeoplefund.org/program/leveling-playing-field/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/TheGoodPeopleFund/posts/918144648216735>

Getting to Good

Depending on the time you have, this can either be a short conversation about some options to get involved or can be a hands-on project adjusted to your needs.

1. Ask the participants in your group to each bring a lightly used sporting good item from their home to donate to Leveling the Playing Field. Ask for a small financial donation from each participant in order to cover shipping to Max.
2. Have the participants in your program contact the schools and sports clubs they are a part of. Have them share Max’s profile and ask the sports groups to donate used equipment to Leveling the Playing Field. Have a day set aside for the groups to bring the equipment to your location where your group can sort it and do an inventory. Depending on the amount of equipment and your distance, arrange for a shipment to Max.
3. Contact Leveling the Playing Field and find out from Max if there is a local organization in your area that he knows could use equipment (or have your group conduct their own research to find organizations in need). Then work to pair those organizations with sports clubs/schools with used equipment.

Your group’s tzedakah donations can be contributed to The Good People Fund and earmarked for our work with Leveling the Playing Field

<https://www.goodpeoplefund.org/mitzvah-donate/>



Why donate to The Good People Fund to distribute your tzedakah?

Shulhan Aruch, Yoreh De'ah 249:6

One able to motivate others to contribute, receives greater reward than the giver.

Shulhan Aruch Yoreh De'ah 249:7

A person should not contribute to a tzedakah fund unless he knows that its management is reliable.

Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 256:1

Every Jewish community is obliged to appoint charity administrators, respected and reliable individuals who will collect from each person what they are able to contribute ...and give to each poor person sufficient for their needs for the week.

Mishnah Peah 8:7

A public fund needs to be collected by no less than two people, and distributed by no less than three people.

For a copy of our Annual Report, visit: tinyurl.com/2014GPFReport

THE GOOD PERSON PROFILE

Max Levitt

Waste! Most of the time we think about the huge amount of food that is tossed away by restaurants and markets each and every day. But, that is not the only kind of waste we produce in our “throw away society.” Waste can be found just about everywhere and involves many more items than we might think.

Like most kids, Max Levitt loved sports while he was growing up. As a toddler he would toss and pitch whatever was available. Baseballs, tennis balls, a football...it didn't matter — if it was sports-related he was excited and ready to go.



Max, on the right, receiving sports equipment a bar mitzvah boy collected

In fact, sports were such an important part of Max's life that by the time he went to college he decided to study Sports Management so that he could pursue his passion *and* his education at the same time. During his college years Max became the Equipment Manager for Syracuse University's football team and that was where he learned about waste in organized sports programs. At the start of every season Max would be responsible for cleaning out the sports equipment storage lockers, an experience that showed Max just how much used and excess equipment accumulated in college sports programs (as well as in the basements and garages of most of our homes).

It was that experience that got Max thinking. So many kids don't participate in sports because of the high cost of equipment so why not take this excess and get it to kids who really want and need it but cannot afford to buy it? Max began *Leveling the Playing Field* which is an organization that collects donations of sports equipment from collegiate athletic departments, professional teams, recreation departments, manufacturers and private donors and then dispenses the equipment to kids who would not otherwise experience the many benefits of sports activities. With studies consistently showing that participation in sports can bring higher grades, improved school attendance, better health and a stronger sense of belonging and connection, Max's work takes on even greater significance.



Could you do what Max did? We bet you could!

A community sports team receiving collected equipment from Leveling the Playing Field

What Does it Cost?

Baseball for a Team



A dozen baseballs



6 baseball bats



9 baseball gloves



9 baseball jerseys



1 set of catcher's gear

What Does it Cost?

Golf



A golf bag



A dozen golf balls



A set of clubs



A pair of golf gloves



A pair of golf shoes



100 golf tees

What Does it Cost?

Football for a Team



12 Footballs



11 helmets



11 Football Uniforms:
Pads, cleats and jerseys

What Does it Cost?

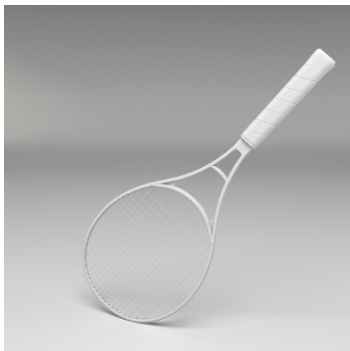
Tennis



12 tennis balls



**A tennis outfit: top
and bottom**



A tennis racket



A pair of tennis shoes



What is Jewish about Max's Work?

A Text Study Guide

Genesis 3:19

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

- Yehuda Leib HaLevi Ashlag (Baal HaSulam) tells us this means that nothing is achieved without effort.
- Another commentary says that there means that a person gains dignity when s/he works for rewards

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Mishneh Torah, Rambam (who was a scholar and physician)

Hilchot Deot, Chapter Four, Halacha 1

"...maintaining a healthy body is among the ways of serving God, since it is impossible for one who is not healthy to understand or know anything of the Creator. Therefore one must distance oneself from things which harm the body, and accustom oneself to the things which strengthen and make one healthy."

Hilchot Deot, Chapter Four, Halacha 2

"Alternatively, he should work or exert himself in some other way. The rule is that he should engage his body and exert himself in a sweat-producing task each morning."

Hilchot Deot, Chapter Four, Halacha 14-15

"As long as a person exercises and exerts himself...sickness does not befall him and his strength increases.... But one who is idle and does not exercise...even if he eats healthy foods and maintains healthy habits, all his days will be of ailment and his strength will diminish."

Asher Yatzar Bracha

"Blessed are You, O Lord our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has with wisdom created humanity and has fashioned with them openings and passageways. It is revealed and known before Your holy throne that if just one of these were perforated or obstructed, it would be impossible to survive before You. Praised are You, O Lord, who heals all creatures and does wonders."

(over)

Talmud Shabbat 82a

Rav Huna asks to his son Rabbah, 'Why are you not to be found before Rav Hisda, whose dicta are [so] keen?'

Rabbah responds: 'What should I go to him for,' answered he, 'seeing that when I go to him he treats me to secular discourses!' [Thus] he tells me, when one enters a privy, he must not sit down abruptly, nor force himself overmuch... for he [his health] is endangered.

Rav Huna responds: 'He treats of health matters,' he exclaimed, 'and you call them secular discourses! All the more reason for going to him!'

Talmud Gittin 61a

Our Rabbi taught: the non-Jewish poor are to be sustained along with the Jewish poor ... for the sake of [the ways of] peace.

Talmud Yerushalmi Berachot

Who occupies himself with the needs of the community is as though he occupies himself with Torah.

Jewish Proverb

Do not be wise in words, be wise in deeds.

Theodore Herzl

What a wonderful machine Man's body is, a chemical laboratory and a power-station, every movement full of secrets and wonders!

Tobit/Dead Sea Scrolls

If you have abundance, give alms accordingly to match; if you have but a little, fear not to give accordingly.

Yehuda Ben Tibbon, 12th century translator and physician

Never refuse to lend books to a man who has not the money to buy them for himself...

Mendele Mocher Sforim, 19th century Jewish author

Children without childhood are a dark and fearsome spectacle.

Achad Ha'am, founder of cultural Zionism

What is the true national education? That which makes children absorb the national spirit unconsciously.