

# WELCOME TO THE HEBREW PRAYER PROJECT

Jewish Education Center of Cleveland  
Siegal College of Jewish Studies

Discussions at the end of the 2009-2010 school year, spurred on by a variety of articles and postings on <http://TheHebrewProject.wikispaces.com>, led Cleveland's Jewish educators to begin the process of rethinking the teaching of Hebrew and prayer. It was becoming more and more apparent that:

- Hebrew prayer study is hard. If one were to pick an engaging text to introduce to an already disengaged 4th or 5th grader, chances are that *Yotzer Ohr* or *Kiddush* would not be at the top of the list. Also, the language of Hebrew prayers is on an adult level, both grammatically and conceptually.
- Even with the best of teachers, there were too many students on the verge of Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparations who did not decode with 98% accuracy. It was felt that this was partially caused by the drop in days students attend "Hebrew School" (from 3 days down to 2). And, it was felt that this situation could be ameliorated with more efficient teaching.

With the expertise of Dr. Lifsa Schachter (Siegal College), and the support of Nachama Skolnik Moskowitz (JECC Curriculum Department) and Ronna Fox (JECC Teacher Center), Cleveland's supplementary school directors came around the table to rethink the teaching of Hebrew prayer. Lifsa taught the group core principles of Hebrew and Hebrew learning. As a result of a very stimulating two hour session, the school directors wanted to see how their new understandings of Hebrew and prayer education might be applied to specific prayer. So they chose to create this model/pilot curriculum, with support materials, focused on אבות-אמהות.

With the help of Ronna Fox, JECC Teacher Center Director, the group decided to provide teachers access to the curriculum and its supports in three formats:

- A multi-page curricular document.
- A set of 4x6 notecards, one for each of the activities for the prayer. It was felt that teachers might better to be able to plan their lessons if they could "pull" from their small looseleaf the activity cards they will form the basis of their planning for a particular lesson.
- A wikispace that holds all the background and the documents, enabling teachers to access the information 24/7, in formats that are helpful to their planning.

<http://jecchebrewprayer-avotimahot.wikispaces.com/>

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# TEACHING PRINCIPLES: ABOUT HEBREW LANGUAGE AND DECODING

Several articles, posted to The Hebrew Project Wiki ([TheHebrewProject.wikispaces.com](http://TheHebrewProject.wikispaces.com)) impacted the thinking of Cleveland's Jewish educators in developing a more grounded approach to the teaching of Hebrew prayers. These include:

“Hebrew is not a subject to be taught,” by Cyd B. Weissman

<http://thehebrewproject.wikispaces.com/file/view/Hebrew+is+not+a+subject+to+be+taught.doc>

See especially the section on prayerful Hebrew.

“Why Bonnie and Ronnie Can't Read the Siddur,” by Lifsa Schachter in the *Journal of Jewish Education*, Vol 76, Issue 1.

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~content=a919641793~db=all~jumptype=rss>

The article is not posted online, only the abstract. It is worth, however, tracking down.

“What you need to know to help learners decode Hebrew effectively,” by Lifsa Schachter

[http://thehebrewproject.wikispaces.com/file/view/Alphabet\\_and\\_Teaching\\_Hebrew\\_Decoding+1+14+%283%29.pdf](http://thehebrewproject.wikispaces.com/file/view/Alphabet_and_Teaching_Hebrew_Decoding+1+14+%283%29.pdf)

*Derech Halimud* – The way to study, by Avram Mandell

<http://thehebrewproject.wikispaces.com/file/view/Derech+HaLimud+-+WikiArticle+-+Final.docx>

In integrating the core ideas of these articles, Cleveland's Jewish educators have shaped its אבות-אמהות pilot curriculum document on the following teaching principles:

## **1) Provide lots of Hebrew aural experiences prior to and while exposing children to the language in printed form.**

As a baby, a human being first hears language, then progresses over the years to speaking, reading and finally writing; the normative language learning sequence is from sound to print. On the other hand, most supplementary school Hebrew programs move from print to sound: “Look - this shape is a *Bet* with a *kamatz* underneath it – say *bah*”). It behooves our educational programs to begin not with print, but with aural language. Options for this include:

- TPR (James Asher, Total Physical Response) offers a full-body connection to Hebrew language. Students of all ages love it and they become familiar with a large vocabulary that they will later encounter in print. In addition, TPR doesn't require teachers with native proficiency. An overview of TPR is here: <http://www.tpr-world.com/what.html>
- For schools that have chosen a prayer focus, lots of singing and chanting of selected prayers is important. Yes (contrary to what some teachers think), students should have the sounds of a prayer in their head before they learn to decode it ... just as they know

the sounds of the English language and its vocabulary and grammar before beginning to learn to read.

**Be clear about the distinction among reading, decoding and reciting.**<sup>1</sup>

- When we read we are deriving meaning from printed symbols. We read what we see and we know. And often we read what is of interest so as to enrich ourselves and attain meaning. Unfortunately, even if our students were native Hebrew speakers in the 4th or 5th grade in Israel, Jewish prayers would not only be hard to *read* because of their formal, adult-level language, but they'd also not be considered the most engaging content for the age-group. For our American students who don't know enough Hebrew to be able to read the prayers, other approaches are therefore important.
- When we decode we sound out previously unseen words. Therefore, it's important to develop skills in all three decoding tasks: 1) Visual discrimination, 2) Connecting sound to symbol, and 3) Producing sounds.
- When we recite we repeat sequences we have sounded out previously many times. It is what most adults do in synagogues. Just check where the eyes are as adults chant prayers, and remember that reciting *Ashrei* countless times does not transfer to being able to decode (or recite) untaught texts.

**Teach according to sound Hebrew grammatical principles.** We should not transfer principles for teaching English reading to teaching Hebrew decoding in an unmediated way because of the significant differences in the two alphabets.

- Hebrew is a consonantal alphabet; all the letters are consonants and have sounds.
- The three letters פ כ ב can be sounded in two ways, depending whether or not they hold a *dagesh* (פ כ ב)
- Unlike English, Hebrew has no letters that serve exclusively as vowel letters. At the same time it does include four consonants that sometimes function as vowels: י ו ה א. When they are being used as a vowel, these letters will not have a vowel sign or a *sh'va*. Only in this use are they silent.
- The vowel signs serve as prompts but do not have independent sounds.
- The names of the vowel signs help teachers communicate effectively and help children master the way the vowel signs shape the sound of the consonant.
- The *sh'va* is not a vowel sign. This is critical to being able to break words into syllables, a skill that is important to teach from the very beginning.

For more details, see “What you need to know to help learners decode Hebrew effectively,” by Lifsa Schachter. [http://thehebrewproject.wikispaces.com/file/view/Alphabet\\_and\\_Teaching\\_Hebrew\\_Decoding+1+14+%283%29.pdf](http://thehebrewproject.wikispaces.com/file/view/Alphabet_and_Teaching_Hebrew_Decoding+1+14+%283%29.pdf)

**Provide students with tools to become ‘word solvers.’**

- Teach them how to break words apart into syllables (see the “What you need to know” article, cited above, pages 7-11).
- Draw on their considerable knowledge about reading.

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<sup>1</sup> This was pointed out long ago in a helpful article by Yosi Gordon in the first *Jewish Teachers Handbook* (ARE).

- Be aware of interferences from student knowledge about reading English – which is a true alphabet, unlike Hebrew.
- Provide tools for figuring out words based on sound grammatical principles.

**Provide many experiences that promote visual discrimination and matching symbols to sounds.** Whether individually or in small groups, sounding out words or phrases should be a very limited activity.

**Tell stories about Hebrew words and the Hebrew language** that point to its richness and relevance. One great resource is *How the Hebrew Language Grew* by Horowitz.

**Decide which prayers you really wish to teach and in what order. This might be:**

- *Based on the congregation's worship service:* For instance, congregations that do not *daven* (pray) the last part of the עמידה in Hebrew, might not give these prayers curricular priority.
- *Based on the order of the service:* A curriculum could group the prayers in the order of the Jewish worship service, or by section (i.e., teaching שמע and its blessings one year, and עמידה the next).
- *Based on difficulty:* For learners still new to decoding, some prayers are more challenging than others. Case in point is the full וְאֶהְיֶה which is hard to decode because of the many times a *sh'va* appears in words; it is best saved for students with some confidence in their skills. Thus, it is useful to consider which blessings and prayers might best be taught in the year after students learn all the Hebrew letters (i.e., short, non-complex), which ones might be the focus for students two years beyond learning decoding (a bit longer and more complex) and which ones might be best for students just a year or so away from their Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

**Provide adequate time for students to learn about and practice a specific prayer.** This means making sure that there are enough calendar sessions for students to explore the meaning behind a prayer, as well as learn to recite it, and practice decoding skills. For most prayers, this probably means scheduling 4-6 sessions, each (plus review). Adequate time also means making sure that each student has numerous opportunities each class session to recite and decode.

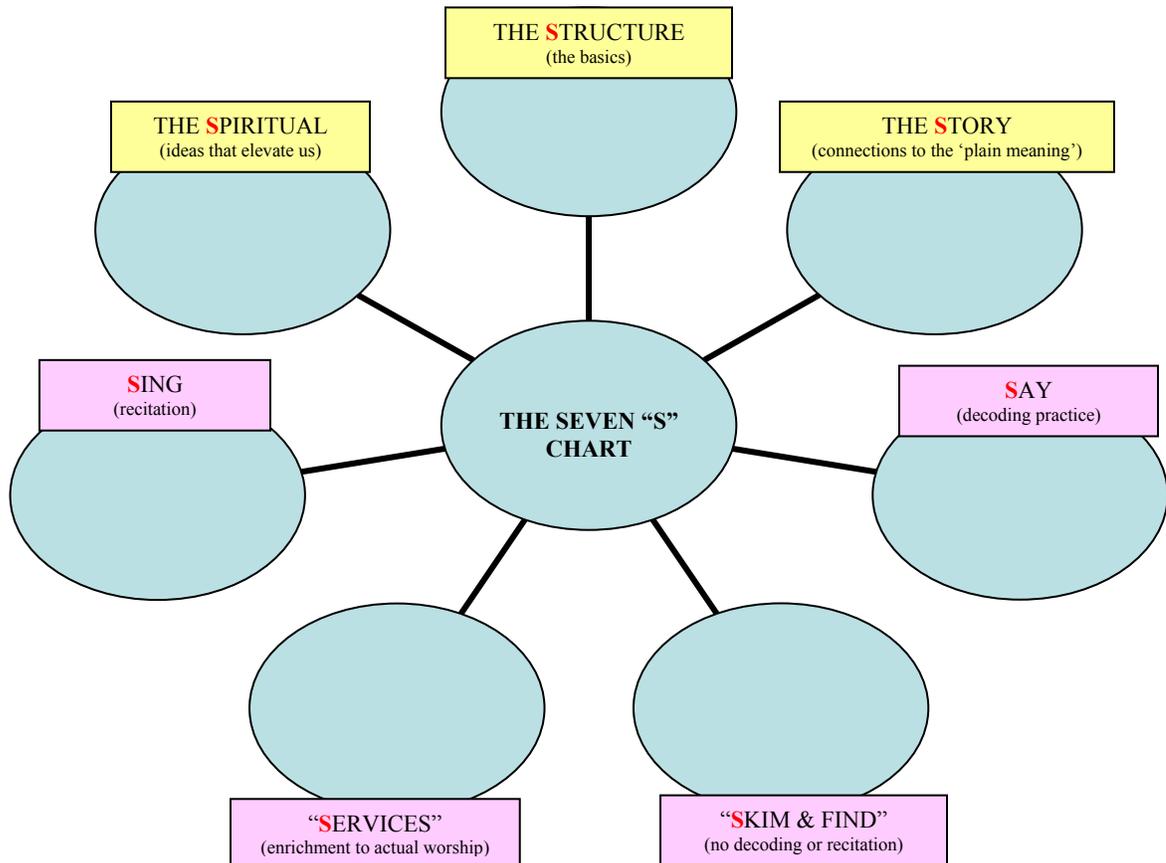
**Bring the meaning behind the prayers alive!** For our students, memorizing Hebrew words out of context becomes a learning exercise that won't stick. Think about what it would mean as an adult to be given 8 words written in Korean (assuming for the sake of argument that the person could decode this language) and asked to memorize the words so as to better understand a moving poem on a spiritual subject. Or, think about what it would mean to be taught Korean prefixes and suffixes to "better understand" a full paragraph. It's all a bit meaningless. While teachers may use these tools at times, focusing on them won't help connect learners to the bigger ideas of Jewish prayer. On the other hand, teachers could help students engage with the meanings of the Jewish prayers through a variety of hands-on (and heads-on) activities.



# TEACHING PRINCIPLES: ABOUT THE “SEVEN ‘S’ CHART”

The “Seven ‘S’ Chart” was developed as a way to organize thinking about the teaching and learning of Hebrew prayers. It assumes that there is no one way to teach any given prayer. Much depends on a school’s goals, the nature of a given class, and the amount of time available for teaching a given prayer. A teaching unit that includes elements from each ‘S’ will offer students deeper understandings based on the content of each prayer, as well as more nuanced skills related to recitation and decoding.

The three “S” elements at the top of the page (in a light yellow  color) all explore the content of the prayer, whereas the four elements at the bottom (in a light pink  color) focus on recitation and decoding skills.



Teachers are encouraged to create lesson plans that choose from the top of the chart and the bottom, finding a balance that works for the class and the school’s curricular goals.



## אבות-אמהות

### GENERAL BACKGROUND

אבות-אמהות is the first blessing of a core section of the Jewish prayer service called עמידה (“standing,” referring to the posture in which we say it) and התפילה (“The Prayer,” referring to its importance), and שמונה עשרה (*Sh'moneh Esrei*; “18,” referring to the original number of blessings when recited during the week).

אבות-אמהות is a ברכה (rather than a prayer) that opens with a one line (albeit long) blessing, and closes with a different blessing. It invokes the names of our Patriarchs (and in the contemporary gender-fair version, also our Matriarchs), connecting us and God to those who served as anchors for our People. It then offers a series of words and phrases that praise God's qualities. As such, it is considered to be a blessing of praise, as compared to one of petition or thanksgiving.

אבות-אמהות serves at least two purposes:

a) Connecting the pray-er to past generations and the community

When Moses is standing before God at the burning bush (Exodus/שמות 3:13-15) and told that he must go back to Egypt to free his people, he asks who he should say sent him. God answers, “Tell them that the Eternal One, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob sent me to you. And that is my name for all generations.” The message to the Israelites is that they are part of a history that dates back to Abraham, a man with whom God formed a unique relationship. When we pray the אבות-אמהות, we connect ourselves to the Jewish people back in time and throughout all time. As Abraham, Isaac and Jacob prayed to God, as Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel prayed to God, as the hundreds of generations of Jews have prayed to the same God since... so do we.

b) Invoking זכות אבות (the merits of the ancestors) as we stand before God.

In addition to their special connections to God, each of the ancestors mentioned in the אבות-אמהות are seen as having characteristics (or merit) that make them ... and us... special. In the Talmud (Shabbat 30a), the rabbis tell the following story when describing what Moses said when pleading on behalf of the Children of Israel after the sin of making the Golden Calf, “For when Israel sinned in the wilderness, Moses stood before the Holy One, blessed be God, and uttered many prayers and supplications before God, but he was not answered. Yet when he exclaimed, 'Remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Your servants!' he was immediately answered.” Because of the merits of our ancestors (זכות אבות), God showed mercy. When we come before God in prayer, we sometimes feel as though we are not worthy, that we lack merit. Therefore, we mention our ancestors to remind God that because of the relationship to our ancestors, זכות אבות, we also wish to be shown mercy.

### THE BLESSING'S NAME: DO WE CALL IT: אבות OR אמהות-אבות?

In recent years, in most of the liberal traditions, אבות has been made egalitarian with the inclusion of the names of the Matriarchs: Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, and Rachel. When referring to this version, the blessing is called אבות-אמהות. Teachers whose congregations do not

recite the names of the Matriarchs should refer to the blessing as אבות, saying just the first part of the two names provided.

### **SPECIAL CHOREOGRAPHY**

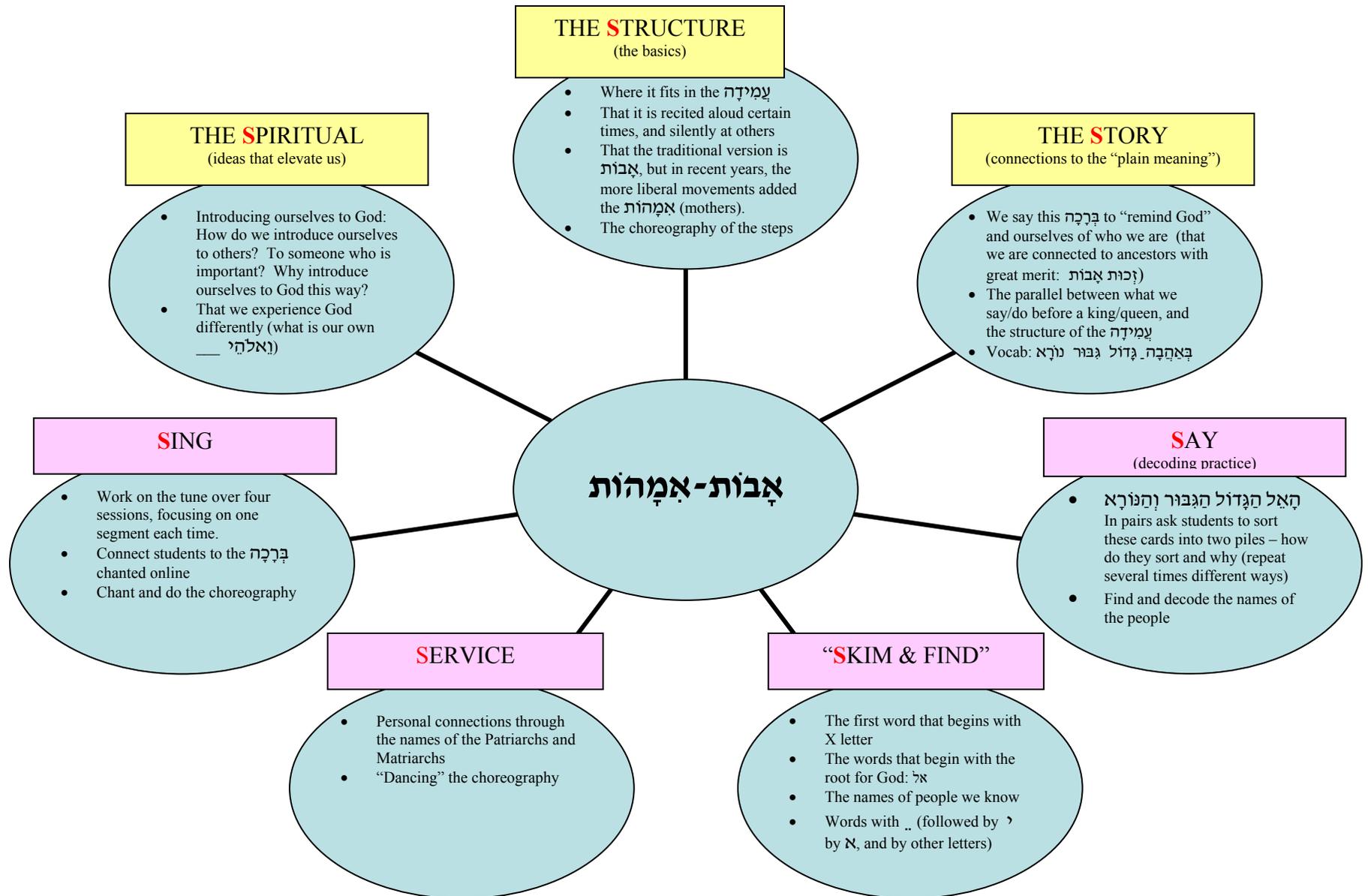
As the first blessing of the עמידה, the אבות-אמהות introduces a larger section of our worship experience. Before starting the עמידה, during the recitation of the line אֲדַנְי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח, a worshiper following the choreography of this blessing will move backward three steps and then move forward three steps. The three steps back simply allows the person to take the three steps forward, so as to (metaphorically) come into the presence of God.

At the word בָּרוּךְ in the opening blessing of אבות-אמהות, the worshiper bends at the knees and bows from the waist, then stands up straight before getting to God's name (??). The worshiper also bends at the knee, bows from the waist, and stands up at the same words during the closing line of the אבות-אמהות.

### **WORKING WITH TRANSLATIONS**

If working with a *siddur's* translation of this blessing, know that some changes have been made in the English, especially in the Reform movement's *Mishkan T'filah*. Some of the English words are not in the order of the Hebrew, and some words are added that aren't in the literal Hebrew. There are also versions of אבות-אמהות that put the Matriarchs in this order: Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel, and others that reverse the last two names: Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah. Teachers need to pay attention to the materials they provide to their students.

The support materials for this curricular unit offer a linear translation for classroom use, as well as the order of the Matriarchs from the two different versions (these are at the end of this document).





## Top Part of the Diagram: Content

### THE STRUCTURE

(the basics)

- Where it fits in the עמידה
- That it is recited aloud certain times, and silently at others
- That the traditional version is אבות, but in recent years, the more liberal movements added the אמהות (mothers).
- The choreography of the steps & bowing

### THE STORY

(connections to the "plain meaning")

- We say this בְּרִכָּה to "remind God" and ourselves of who we are (that we are connected to ancestors with great merit: זכות אבות)
- The parallel between what we say/do before a king/queen, and the structure of the עמידה
- Vocabulary:  
בְּאֵהָבָה גְּדוּל גְּבוּר נוֹרָא

### THE SPIRITUAL

(ideas that elevate us)

- Introducing ourselves to God: How do we introduce ourselves to others? To someone who is important? Why introduce ourselves to God this way?
- That we experience God differently (what is our own ואלהי \_\_\_)



## THE STRUCTURE

(the basics)

- Where it fits in the עמידה
- That it is recited aloud certain times, and silently at others
- That the traditional version is אבות, but in recent years, the more liberal movements added the אמהות (mothers).
- The choreography of the steps & bowing

As noted earlier, אבות-אמהות is the first blessing of a core section of the Jewish prayer service called עמידה (“standing,” referring to the posture in which we say it) and התפילה (“The Prayer,” referring to its importance), and שמונה עשרה (*Sh'moneh Esrei*; “18,” referring to the original number of blessings when recited during the week). It would be helpful for students to consistently be reminded of the larger context into which אבות-אמהות is placed. Therefore, separately from this unit on the אבות-אמהות, it would be appropriate to teach about the larger structure of the עמידה including:

- its three names and their meaning
- that in its traditional form, it is prayed silently at three of the daily worship services (שחרית, מנחה, מעריב) and then repeated aloud at two (מנחה, שחרית). There are times when the first three blessings of the עמידה are recited out loud by the congregation, and the end is recited silently by each worshiper; in this instance, it is not repeated aloud.
- the structure of
  - three blessings at the beginning
  - middle (intermediate) blessing(s)
  - three blessings at the end
- the choreography throughout
- the parallel between the structure of the עמידה (the content/spirit of each of the 3 sections) to how a person might make a request of royalty

These foci are not part of this particular unit. For information about the עמידה, see:

[http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/Liturgy\\_and\\_Prayers/Siddur\\_Prayer\\_Book/Amidah.shtml](http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/Liturgy_and_Prayers/Siddur_Prayer_Book/Amidah.shtml)

For congregations that use the URJ CHAI curriculum, an overview lesson is provided in Level Five, *Avodah*.

### ACTIVITY IDEAS:

1) Consistently use a graphic to help students see that אבות-אמהות is the first blessing of a core section of our worship service: עמידה. [A graphic that can be enlarged and put together with Velcro or magnetic tape is: [here](#).] Each time the class works with אבות-אמהות, separate and hold up the graphic that represents this blessing so that students understand that they're working with a smaller part of the bigger whole.

2) Ask students what they have observed when people pray אבות-אמהות. [Note that depending on the congregation and its practice, students may not be aware of all of the traditions surrounding the recitation of this blessing.] As students list what they know about אבות-אמהות, add (or have other students add) information that would make the observations accurate. They might mention:

- We are standing when we say it
- Prior to beginning the אבות-אמהות (usually during the recitation of the line אֲדַנִּי שָׁפְתַי תִּפְתָּח), worshipers move backward three steps and move forward three steps. The three steps back simply allow the person to take the three steps forward, so as to (metaphorically) come into the presence of God.
- At the word: בָּרוּךְ in the opening blessing, we bend our knees and bow, then stand up straight before we get to God's name (??). We also bend at the knee, bow from the waist, and stand up at the same words during the closing blessing of the אבות-אמהות.
- There are times when the blessing is said silently and times when it's said aloud; this is dependent on a congregation's customs for reciting עֲמִידָה as a whole.

Feel free to write these rituals on chart paper for future reference. Students could also create illustrations for each.

3) Teach students the correct choreography for the אבות-אמהות. [To see how it is done, click here>> [http://www.usy.org/yourusy/reled/creative/body\\_language.pdf](http://www.usy.org/yourusy/reled/creative/body_language.pdf) and look at page 55 and following; a diagram is on page 56.] Practice until it becomes comfortable. Consider doing a davening movement exercise on the *bimah*. [See more in the Spiritual Section, below.]

- 4) There are at least two reasons for bowing at the beginning and ending of אבות-אמהות:
- As a sign of humility
  - As a reminder that when we “fall,” God is there to lift us up. The *שְׁלַחן עָרוֹךְ* (a basic book of Jewish law) teaches that we bow as if we were falling (thus the bending of the knee and bowing at the waist) and before we reach God's name, we stand up, as if God is lifting us up.

Ask students to think about why we might bow during prayer. Integrate their answers with the two, above, and ask them to decide which one(s) they would like to keep in their hearts when they pray the אבות-אמהות. Consider giving each student a paper heart on which to write their response; have them insert the heart into the prayerbook they use during the school's worship service. Ask students to read what they wrote on their heart right before they pray the עֲמִידָה (be sure to use the choreography).

- 5) Ask students to create a resource that would help others learn the choreography of this prayer. Consider dividing your class into 2-3 groups, each to do one of the items, below.
- One group could make a video that could be linked to the congregation's website
  - One group could take photos of someone doing the right choreography and add a written explanation for each; this could be part of the congregation's newsletter.
  - One group could create a way to teach the choreography to younger students during the school's *t'fillah* (and/or maybe Junior Congregation).

[Choose this activity if you have a fair amount of time to devote to the blessing.]

6) Share with students the two versions of this blessing: אבות and אבות-אמהות (see the appendix for copies). Explain that for a couple thousand years, the only version was the אבות, but that in the last few decades, Reform, Reconstructionist and some Conservative congregations have added the אמהות (Matriarchs, or mothers): Sarah, Rebecca, Leah & Rachel (or Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel & Leah). Note that in the closing blessing, the Reform Movement uses the words, עֲזַרְתָּ שָׂרָה (who helps Sarah), while the Conservative movement uses פִּיקְדָה שָׂרָה (who remembers Sarah). For an explanation about this, see page 35 in *S'fatai Tiftah, Vol 2* (Torah Aura): page 35-37 and “Background 24” on page 151. No matter which version your congregation uses, it’s important that students know that when they start going on the Bar/Bat Mitzvah “circuit” they will probably encounter a version other than what they are used to. You might:

- Show students both versions and ask them to compare.
- Discuss how students feel about either version. Should the original version have stayed the same? Or, should women have been added? How does this change reflect how Judaism responds to important changes in our society?



## THE STORY

(connections to the "plain meaning")

- We say this בְּרָכָה to "remind God" and ourselves of who we are (that we are connected to ancestors with great merit: זְכוּת אֲבוֹת)
- The parallel between what we say/do before a king/queen, and the structure of the עֲמִידָה
- Vocabulary:  
בְּאֵהָבָה גְּדוּל גְּבוּר נוֹרָא

### ACTIVITY IDEAS:

Read through the אבות-אמהות in Hebrew, and then in English.

#### זְכוּת אֲבוֹת: Merit of our Ancestors

1) What examples can students give where the first impression that someone has of them was because the person knows one of their parents ("Oh, you're Joanie's daughter"), or maybe the person knows an older brother or sister that was in school (or sports) before them ("Ah, you must be Todd's sister!"), or because of something they belong to ("So, you're a Girl Scout – that's a great group!). While this impression could be good or bad, for this discussion, the focus will be on good reputations (i.e., merit). Ask students what they think are the advantages of being known to others because they are connected to via family or friendship to someone with a good reputation. Explain the use of the word "merit" in this circumstance and be sure that students understand its use in this context.

2) Use the זְכוּת אֲבוֹת worksheet ([click here](#), or see page 25, below) to help students think about the ways that our ancestors either behaved, or how they specifically related to God. Options include:

- Cutting the slips apart horizontally and putting them in a bowl. Have each student pull a slip from the bowl, read the drawn slip, and then answer the question at the bottom.
- Putting the names of the patriarchs/matriarchs in one bowl and the information slips in another. Have each student draw a name and an information slip. Read both and see if they match. [This isn't a very difficult activity, though the names in Hebrew are slightly different from the ones in English.]

End with a general discussion about the importance of these ancestors in our beginning as the Jewish people.

3) Why does אבות-אמהות begin with the repetition "God of our ancestors, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob?" The author of this blessing was reinforcing the phrase found in Exodus/שְׁמוֹת 3:15.

To help students see this, divide them into small groups, give each group a **חֲמִשׁ** (printed *Torah*) and ask them to turn to Exodus/שְׁמוֹת 3:13-15. There it tells us that when Moses learned that God wanted to send him back to Egypt to free the Israelite people, Moses asked who he should say sent him.

God answered,

“Tell them that the Eternal One, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob<sup>2</sup> sent me to you.  
And that is my name for all generations.”

When we want to connect ourselves to God, we do so by remembering that both we and God have connections to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, as well as Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel & Leah.

- Create a class mural that connects students to the encounter of Moses and God at the burning bush, and to the ancestors invoked. On a sheet of bulletin board paper, have students sketch out a desert scene using crayon; make sure they press hard and also do this drawing with lines, rather than fully filling in the space with crayon-markings. Include a burning bush (also from crayon). Then, using white crayon, have students write inside the flames of the burning bush the names of the Patriarchs/Matriarchs. Also, in the space above the twisting flames, ask them each to write their name in white crayon. When done, give students water color paints and ask them to “wash” the color over the mural in colors that complete the scene (the flames of the bush might be in orange/red/yellow, the desert sands might be brown/tan, the sky in various shakes of blue, etc). The names of the Patriarchs/Matriarchs, as well as their own names, will stand out. When done, feel free to add a title that says “That is my name for all generations...” [To save time with this project, an option is to have a teen assistant create the mural with crayon, including student names in white. Then have the class paint with water colors, revealing the scene and their names.]
- Talk with students about their connections to the **אבות-אמהות** and to God, especially as a relationship that has continued through the generations. Children who might be part of an intermarried family need to know that they are part of this chain through the parent who is Jewish. Children who have a parent who converted to Judaism should learn that the Hebrew name of a convert includes the names Abraham and Sarah (as in “Avital bat Avraham u’Sarah”); those who have chosen Judaism are thus directly connected to our earliest ancestors.

When we say this prayer and connect to our **אבות**, we join ourselves to the Jewish people. These people are in the front pages of our family album: we remember the good that they did, and God remembers the good that they did.

4) There is a *midrash* about **זְכוּת אבות** that the students might relate to from the Talmud (Shabbat 30a). The rabbis tell the following story when describing what Moses said when pleading on behalf of the Children of Israel after the sin of making the Golden Calf:

---

<sup>2</sup> Be prepared to answer if students ask why the Matriarchs are not mentioned in this selection from the Torah. One answer might be that the culture in biblical times was patriarchal – the men were considered the leaders.

For when Israel sinned in the wilderness, Moses stood before God and prayed to God not to punish the Children of Israel. His prayers were not answered.

But when Moses exclaimed,

'Remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Your servants!' he was immediately answered" and God didn't destroy the people.

In the same way, we also call upon the merits of our ancestors.

Because of the merits of our ancestors (זכות אבות), God showed mercy. When we come before God in prayer, we mention our ancestors. This is in the spirit that WE do not feel worthy, nor as if we have merit; therefore we remind God that because of זכות אבות, we also wish to be shown mercy.

5) Direct students to the phrase that says that God remembers the good deeds of our ancestors: זוכר חסדי אבות ואמהות. Have students choose one of their ancestors, possibly the person for whom they were named, whether Jewish or not. Ask them to interview parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles to find out the acts that person did that brought their family merit. Ask students: What types of acts do you plan to do that will bring merit to your family? What do you hope others will continue to do after you?

### Parallel of How we Behave before a King/Queen

6) Make sure that the students understand that the אבות-אמהות begins a whole section of our worship service called the עמידה. While in this particular unit a fuller explanation of the עמידה isn't appropriate (hopefully it happened earlier in the year), it is a good time to talk about how one behaves before royalty. We are respectful, bow, don't turn our backs to them, etc. Here is a set of actual instructions for going before royalty:

[http://www.modaruniversity.org/Newcomer-Packet-14-Interacting\\_with\\_the\\_Royalty.pdf](http://www.modaruniversity.org/Newcomer-Packet-14-Interacting_with_the_Royalty.pdf)

### Vocabulary

7) Have children act out the following words, using a variety of images and commands:

גָּדוֹל גְּבוּר נוֹרָא

Each of these words are used in daily life, but in this prayer they describe God.

8) The word בְּאַהֲבָה means "with love." It's also part of the Friday night *kiddush* (twice) and is also used by good friends in signing off at the end of a letter. [Note that בְּ is usually translated "in," but can also be used to say "with," as is true in this situation.]

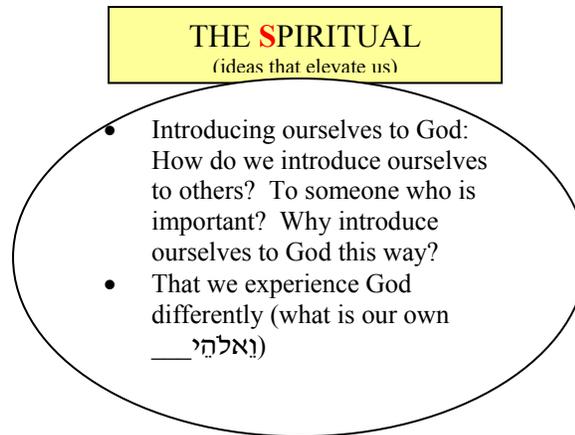


ACTIVITY SHEET

זכות אבות

<p>אברהם</p>	<p>Right after three visitors left Abraham &amp; Sarah, God said, “Abraham’s descendents will become a great and mighty nation, and because of him all the nations of the world will be blessed. I have chosen him so that he will teach his children and <i>their</i> children to keep God’s laws of doing charity and justice.” God then decides to tell Abraham that two cities would be destroyed because there are wicked people in them. Abraham stands up to God and asks if the cities could be saved if 50 good people were found. God agrees not to destroy the city for 50 good people. Abraham then asks God if the cities could be saved if 40 good people were found. God agrees. This back-and-forth continues until Abraham asks if the cities could be saved for 10 people. God agrees.</p> <p>Why do you think that Abraham’s argument would be a good enough reason for us to remind God of Abraham in the אבות-אמהות?</p>
<p>יצחק</p>	<p>Isaac marries Rebecca and together they have two sons, Jacob &amp; Esau. Towards the end of his life, Isaac brings God’s blessing to his sons. Isaac says to Jacob, “May God give you the dew of heaven and the richness of the earth and much grain and wine.”</p> <p>Why do you think that Isaac’s prayer would be good enough to for us to remind God of his name in the אבות-אמהות?</p>
<p>יעקב</p>	<p>Jacob was a patient man, as well as clever. To marry the wife that he wanted (Rachel), he worked seven years for her sister, Leah. Then he worked seven more years for Rachel.</p> <p>Also, in a prayer before Jacob meets his brother after many, many years away, he prays to God:</p> <p>God of my (grand)father Abraham and God of my father Isaac. You told me, ‘Return to the land where you were born and I will help you.’ I do not deserve all the kindness and faith you have shown me ... But you once promised, ‘I will make things go well for you, and make your descendents as many as the sand grains of the sea, which are too many to count.’”</p> <p>Why do you think that Jacob’s patience and the promise that God made him would be good enough to for us to remind God of Jacob’s name in the אבות-אמהות?</p>
<p>שרה</p>	<p>God promised Abraham, “I will bless Sarah and she will give birth to a son. I will bless her and she will be the mother of nations – kings will be among her descendents.”</p> <p>Based on this, how does God think about Sarah? Does he think well of her or not? Why would the relationship be enough for us to remind God of Sarah’s name in the אבות-אמהות?</p>

<p>רִבְקָה</p>	<p>Abraham sent his servant, Eliezer, on a long journey across the desert to look for a wife for Isaac, his son. When he arrived to the place where Rebecca and her family lived, she took care of Eliezer AND gave water to all of his camels. She agreed to go back to Canaan (where Israel is today) to marry Isaac.</p> <p>Years and years later, when her husband, Isaac, couldn't see well she tricked him into giving the best blessing from God to their youngest son, Jacob. She knew that Jacob was the person who could best lead the family.</p> <p>Why do you think that Rebecca's actions would be good enough to for us to remind God of her name in the אבות-אמהות?</p>
<p>רָחֵל</p>	<p>Rachel nurtured her father's flocks of sheep and took good care of Jacob when he escaped his angry brother and father and came to her homeland. Rachel became the beloved wife of Jacob – he was willing to work a total of 14 years to be able to marry her. She was the mother of Joseph, the person who Pharaoh put in charge of making sure that Egypt and the surrounding peoples survived a famine that was coming.</p> <p>Why do you think that what Rachel did would be good enough to for us to remind God of her name in the אבות-אמהות?</p>
<p>לֵאָה</p>	<p>Leah was the older sister of Rachel. She took care of her father's flocks. Leah married Jacob and gave birth to six of his sons and so became the mother of a great nation – the Children of Israel, or the Jewish People.</p> <p>Why do you think that Leah, as the mother of the Jewish people, would be good enough to for us to remind God of her name in the אבות-אמהות?</p>



## ACTIVITY IDEAS:

### Introducing Oneself to God

1) Have students imagine that they are going with their parents to a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* party at the synagogue. Use the following script with them:

There are hundreds of people at the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* party. You are seated with your friends at one table and your parents are seated at another table. During the meal you decide to take a walk around the lobby. Just as you reach the lobby, you notice a guest about to leave. To your shock and amazement, you realize that the departing guest is (*have class insert name of a famous person*). Your parents have mentioned on a number of occasions that they know (*famous person*) personally. They grew up in the same area of town and even went to school together. Occasionally, they still see one another at parties and school reunions. In fact, one time they brought you an autographed picture of (*famous person*).

You want to meet (*famous person*), but unfortunately there won't be enough time for you to rush back in and get your parents to make a formal introduction. (*Famous person*) has just taken his/her coat from the coat room. Without a moment's delay, you rush over to (*famous person*) and introduce yourself by saying the following:  
(*Have students come up to the front and introduce themselves.*)

After the role play, use the following to help you debrief:

- How many students introduced themselves by saying: I'm so and so's son/daughter?
- Why do we sometimes introduce ourselves by first stating our relatives? [Answers might include: making connections with family, or, if the person has fond memories of/feelings toward your relatives, maybe s/he will see you in the same light]
- Why does the אבות-אמהות have us “introduce” ourselves to God using the names of these Jewish ancestors?

2) When Jacob prays to God in Genesis/בְּרֵאשִׁית 32:10, he begins his prayer, “God of my (grand)father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac.” As Jacob prays, he reminds God who *he* is in relationship to the ancestors who came before him. Ask the class why they think he felt the need to do this? [You may find it interesting to read the rest of Jacob’s prayer with the class, too, through 32:13.]

### Thinking about and Experiencing God

NOTE: This blessing says, אֱלֹהֵינוּ – our God. As we pray, besides connecting to the God of others (God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, etc), we are reminded that on a personal level we connect to Our God. Also, when we say אַתָּה (We praise YOU), we make God more personal.

3) Give students a file card and ask them to write on it some words that they would use to describe God, as they understand God. Then, using an English version, ask students to find the words that describe God in the אבות-אמהות. To do this they might:

- Use highlighter on the resource sheet
- Cut apart the resource sheet so that they can manipulate each line of the blessing; in this case, they would sort into one pile all the words that describe God

As a class, make a list of all these words and then compare them to the words the students put on their cards. How are they the same? How are they different? How do the words of the rabbis who wrote this blessing (at least 2000 years ago) help us think about God?

4) Have students sort the English words for God into piles (they could sort and re-sort multiple times, with conversation in between, either in small groups or the whole class)

- What ideas seem to go together?
- Which words fit their understanding of God? (and which do not)
- How might they sort the words so that the piles show two very different ideas of God? [There are words that describe God as great, mighty and awesome ... and others that are softer like “doing acts of loving kindness.”] How do they react to this difference? Can they think of examples with people who are strict and powerful, but also soft and kind? [One might be a parent who is strict about the child doing homework, but also loving and supportive when helping with it.]

5) Ask students to think of 5 words or phrases that come to mind they hear the name of their synagogue/temple. Then have them make a short list on scrap paper. Ask each student to choose two of these words/phrases and write them on the board, with their name above them:

<u>Sarah</u>	<u>Joan</u>	<u>Michael</u>
Happy	Part of my family	big
Where my friends are	Busy	Rabbi Jacobson

For each student's responses, say a sentence aloud that shows their perspective on the synagogue/temple. For example, “The synagogue of Sarah is happy and where her friends are.” And “The synagogue of Joan is part of her family and busy.” And “The synagogue of Michael is big and has Rabbi Jacobson.” Make the point that the synagogue is the same, but that each person has a different way of relating to it. See how they react to this idea.

Then, have students look at the lines:

OUR God and the God of our Ancestors,  
the God of Abraham,  
etc (through to the end of all the names in your version).

Ask students why they think it says both Our God and then the God of each of these people? How does this relate to what they just did with the name of the synagogue/temple?

6) Recite אבות-אמהות in English or Hebrew, adding in the students names after completing the list of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs. For example, "...God of Leah, God of Rachel, God of Annie, God of Jon, God of ...". Ask students how they felt hearing their name listed? What does it mean to be connected into this list of names that connects us to our Jewish past? Make sure that the conversation includes an understanding that as God was with our ancestors, God is with us. Consider making a chain with one link for each of the אבות-אמהות, and links for each of the children and every family member they know. When they write names on the links, they should be in the form of "God of \_\_\_\_\_"

7) The textbook, *S'fatai Tiftah*, volume 2, offers thoughts on each of the ancestors listed in the אבות-אמהות and provides a sense of each of their connections to God (page 26-27). Consider using the activity on page 25, in conjunction with these descriptions. In the text, students are asked to read about one of these ancestors and to find the answers to four questions: What was an important moment in the life of this person? What was most special about this person's relationship with God? What moment in my own life is similar to my ancestor's important moment? What lesson can I take from my ancestor, into my own life? If theater and drama are "your thing," consider a way that students could do skits or role plays related to the patriarchs/matriarchs and this exercise.

8) In the אבות-אמהות, we praise God for being great (גדול), mighty (גבור), awesome (נורא) and supreme (עליון). The line is: האל הגדול הגבור והנורא אל עליון

OPTION ONE: Tell students that the Torah says that we are created in God's image – which means that we have the same qualities as God. When we pray, we can reach for the part inside us that is god-like and remember to do our best. Ask students to think of when they have demonstrated these four qualities from the אבות-אמהות by having them fill in the end of the sentences below (perhaps in writing, or silently to themselves, or sharing with another person in the class):

- When I praise God for being גדול, I remember the time when people said I was great because I \_\_\_\_\_.
  - When I praise God for being גבור, I remember the time that I needed all my might to \_\_\_\_\_
  - When I praise God for being נורא, I remember the time when I felt awesome because \_\_\_\_\_
  - When I praise God for being עליון, I remember when I did my supreme best to \_\_\_\_\_
- [From *A Bridge to Prayer*, URJ, page 13]

OPTION TWO: While we can talk of what or who is God, sometimes it's more helpful to consider "when is God." This can be in terms of "when God is גדול, I see \_\_\_\_\_" or the opposite, "when I see \_\_\_\_\_, I know God is גדול."

Students could create artwork showing either the personal (When I praise God for having the qualities of גבור, I remember the time that I needed all my might to \_\_\_\_\_) or the temporal (when I see \_\_\_\_\_, I know that God is has the quality of גבור).

- 9) The very last line of this blessing praises God for being  
מִגֵּן אַבְרָהָם who shields or protects Abraham (traditional)  
שָׂרָה עֲזָרָת who helps Sarah (Reform)  
שָׂרָה פּוֹקֵד who remembers Sarah (Conservative; the biblical word means to remember, but the movement's new *siddur* uses the translation "Guardian of Sarah")

Talk about these images – what do students think of when they hear these words? Which of these do students find help *them* connect with God:

God as a shield?

God as a helper?

God who remembers?

What would they want God to protect, to help with, or to remember?

Offer each student some black construction paper (this will become the background for their artwork), a variety of colored construction paper and glue sticks. Provide no scissors, markers or other art supplies, though a print out of the words of Hebrew for the last line of the blessing could be appropriate (see below). First, ask students to think about God as a protector, helper or remember-er of themselves. How would they like to describe God as the \_\_\_\_ of themselves? Have students think about how they would illustrate this and then to tear (not cut) the colored paper into the shapes they need for their illustration and then glue it down. Share when done.

*These may be duplicated for student use in their artwork:*

__מִגֵּן	who shields or protects	____
__עֲזָרָת	who helps	____
__פּוֹקֵד	who remembers	____

## Bottom Part of the Diagram: Recitation and Decoding

### SING

- Work on the tune over four sessions, focusing on one segment each time.
- Connect students to the בְּרָכָה chanted online
- Chant and do the choreography

### “SKIM AND FIND”

- The first word that begins with X letter
- The words that begin with the root for God: אֱל
- The names of people we know
- Words with .. (followed by ׁ by א, and by other letters)

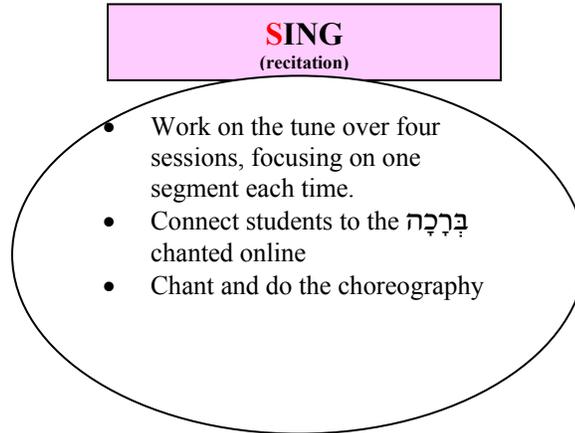
### SAY

- האל הגדול הגבור והנורא In pairs ask students to sort these cards into two piles – how do they sort and why (repeat several times different ways)
- Find and decode the names of the people

### SERVICES

- Personal connections through the names of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs
- “Dancing” the choreography





### ACTIVITY IDEAS:

1) Teach this blessing to students over the course of 3-4 sessions. Consider how you will divide the blessing so that each time they learn one part of it.

2) Sing a few words and have the students sing them back to you while they keep their eyes on the words either: projected on the board via a digital or overhead projector; viewed on a poster hung on the wall; or by looking at the blessing sheet provided (see appendix). Listen for mistakes and teach the correct form after students are done; do not interrupt the singing. Have students practice the singing by varying who is involved, for example:

- Everyone
- Just the boys
- Just the girls
- Just those who are wearing red
- Those who have birthdays in the summer
- Those sitting in the front of the room
- Etc.

3) Give students a chanted or recited version of אבות-אמהות. It could be chanted by your cantor or soloist and provided on a CD. Or it could be from an online link. Encourage students to sing along with it at school or home.

Below is an online list of this blessing, though not a comprehensive one:

<http://www.tedallas.org/education/religiousschool/practiceresources.html>

<http://www.templehabonim.org/avot.html>

[http://www.centralsynagogue.org/downloads/blessings/Avot\\_V'Lmahot\\_10.mp3](http://www.centralsynagogue.org/downloads/blessings/Avot_V'Lmahot_10.mp3)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZfqR\\_EFxlF8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZfqR_EFxlF8) (this is labeled as Reconstructionist)

4) Have children chant the blessing and do the choreography at the same time. Feel free to talk about how it feels to do so.



**“SKIM AND FIND”**

(no decoding or recitation)

- The first word that begins with X letter
- The words that begin with the root for God: לֵא
- The names of people we know
- Words with .. (followed by ׁ by ל, and by other letters)

**ACTIVITY IDEAS:**

- 1) Ask students to skim and find the letter/word patterns listed below.
  - Students can signal what they find by putting their finger on the correct spot on a printed sheet or in a *siddur*. A classmate could have the honor of finding the selection from a version that is digitally projected onto the board or posted on the wall as a poster. [An overhead projector is also an option.]
  - Students can work in pairs to find the letters/words requested of them. Each time a new combination is read, the partners should trade off who will find the letters/words and who will check what is being pointed to

Be sure to rotate around the room to double-check students.

- 2) Play Bingo or a similar game with students – in this they are asked to skim and find the words you call out, but do not need to say them aloud.

**PATTERNS TO SKIM AND FIND:**

**Words that begins with X letter**

Letters found multiple times in this blessing:

- ל (way too many!)
- מ
- ך
- ל

Letters found in this blessing that would be helpful to help distinguish between them:

- ך - ך
- ט - מ

**Words that have X vowel**

Words with .. (followed by ׁ by ל, and by other letters)

### Words that have the root for God: אל

Words that begin with אל

Words that the root for God in the middle

[Watch out for גואל which is not a name for God]

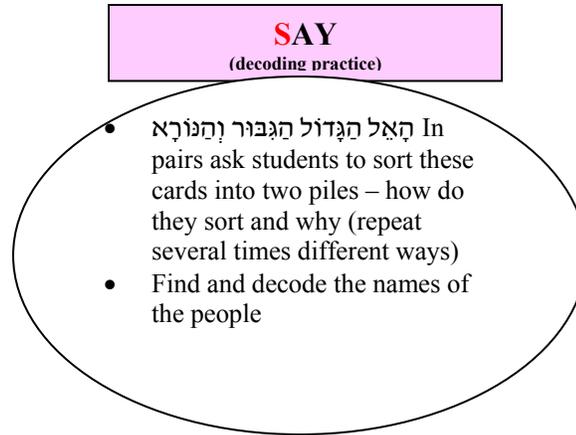
### The names of people we know

Have students tell you on which line the name \_\_\_ is found.

Make cards that say אלהי and then the name of each child in the class according to the name you use for them (first name in Hebrew or first name in English with Hebrew letters). Ask them to skim & find the names of those whose name you say.

### Phrases

Read a phrase from the blessing and ask students to skim and find it. Have them put their finger on the line (you walk around and see where they are pointing).



### ACTIVITY IDEAS:

#### האל הגדול הגבור והנורא

1) Give students cards, each with one of these words on them (see page 39, below, for a version to duplicate). In pairs ask students to sort these cards into two piles according to a letter/vowel pattern they discover – how do they sort and why (repeat several times different ways)

#### Find and decode the names of the people

2) Make cards by cutting up the names of the אבות-אמהות from this ברכה (include the אלהי part, too). Mix up the names and have students put them in order. [For the principle “Skim & Find” students don’t say these aloud, just find.] For the names to duplicate see pages 41-42.

#### General Phrases

3) Read a line aloud and have students find it by putting their finger on it. Have one student decode it for the person sitting next to them, and then have the other person do it.

4) Read a line aloud and have students find it by putting their finger on it. Ask one student to recite/decode the line aloud. That student can choose another line for the others to find.

5) Play “I’m thinking of a line.” Have the students guess the line – they have to tell you the line number, recite/decode the line ... and then you tell them if it’s right or wrong. The student who guesses the line can choose the next line for the rest of the class to guess.

6) Remind students how one divides Hebrew words into syllables by looking for a letter and a vowel (open syllable), or a letter/vowel/letter (closed syllable). For a reminder of how to divide Hebrew words into syllables, see pages 7-11 of “What you need to know to help learners decode Hebrew effectively,” by Lifsa Schachter.

[http://thehebrewproject.wikispaces.com/file/view/Alphabet\\_and\\_Teaching\\_Hebrew\\_Decoding+1+14+%283%29.pdf](http://thehebrewproject.wikispaces.com/file/view/Alphabet_and_Teaching_Hebrew_Decoding+1+14+%283%29.pdf) Give students the Resource Sheet for Activity #6 (below, page 43)

and ask them to divide the words into syllables. [They could do this independently, or with a partner where each takes a turn doing a word.]

7) Give students words from this blessing cut apart. Ask them to sort the words into two syllable words, three syllable words, etc. Ask them to read the words in their piles to a partner.

**RESOURCES FOR THIS SECTION:**

**FOR ACTIVITY #1**

הָאֵל	הַגְּדוֹל
הַגְּבוּר	וְהַנּוֹרָא



FOR ACTIVITY #2

אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם

אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק

וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב

אֱלֹהֵי שְׂרָה

אֱלֹהֵי רַבָּקָה

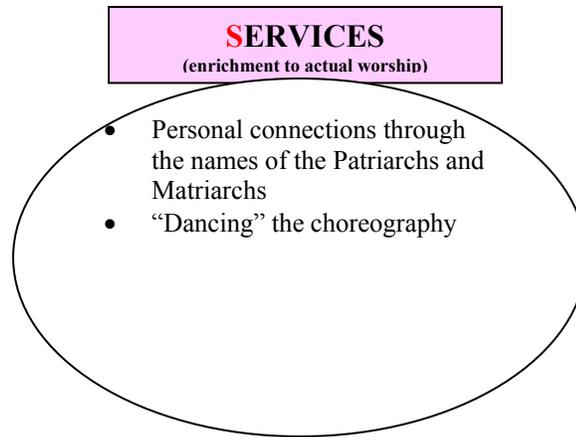
אֱלֹהֵי רַחֵל

וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה

FOR ACTIVITY #6 – Divide these words into syllables

וְהִנּוּכָא	הָאֵל
הַגָּדוֹל	גּוֹמֵל
הַגְּבוּר	עֲלִיוֹן
וּמְבִיא	טוֹבִים
אַבְרָהָם	גּוֹאֵל
	הַכֹּל
	וְקוֹנֵה
	בְּנֵיהֶם
	לְבָנֵי





### ACTIVITY IDEAS:

1) Recite the אבות-אמהות in English or Hebrew, adding in the students names after completing the list of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs. For example, “...”God of Leah, God of Rachel, God of Annie, God of Jon, God of ....” Afterwards, ask students how they felt hearing their name listed. What does it mean to be connected into this list of names that connects us to our Jewish past?

2) Keep a focus on the names of the ancestors listed in this blessing. Have students begin by doing some slow breathing. Begin the blessing and say, “breathe in on אֱלֹהֵי” (pause) and “breathe out on Avraham” (pause). Then, “breathe in on אֱלֹהֵי” (pause) and “breathe out on Yitzhak” (pause).

3) Ask students to think about the people that are listed in this blessing: each of these ancestors stood before God and prayed. When students *daven* (pray), as they say each of the names of the אבות-אמהות, ask them to stop and think about what they would like to say to God, just as the Patriarchs and Matriarchs had something to say to God. Recite the בְּרָכָה, stopping after the name of each ancestor so they can think about God. After the names are done, recite the rest of the בְּרָכָה at a normal pace.

4) There are three exercises great for use in a worship service in the book, *Karov L'chol Korav, For All Who Call: A Manual for Enhancing the Teaching of Prayer* (by Jeff Hoffman and Andrea Cohen-Keiner), Melton Research Center for Jewish Education, pages 103-111). The JECC's Ratner Media and Technology Center owns a copy of this volume.



### A Note about Using a Textbook:

This curriculum document can stand on its own, without a specific textbook because there are a large number of activities from which a teacher may pick to create his or her specific lessons. However, if a school has a textbook that it wishes to use to complement this curricular document, teachers should do a few things to prepare:

Read through the textbook to see which activities complement the Hebrew Learning Principles.

- Activities that complement this document's curricular focus may easily be incorporated.

- One example, found in two different textbooks by the same publisher, is below.

*Journey Through the Siddur: Shabbat Morning* (Torah Aura), Page 49

*S'fatai Tiftach: Volume 2* (Torah Aura), page 22

Both are called “Choreography” and each offers 3 explanations for why we bow at the beginning of the אבות and then asks students to then explain what they think is the best of the 3 reasons for bowing at the beginning of the אבות. This activity may be used “as is” as a complement to this document.

- Another example is one that expands the ideas that the textbook author provides for a photo: (See *Hineini: Book 2*, Behrman House, pages 9 & 14). The teacher could ask the students to look at the photo of the children on page 9 and use it to discuss what why we stand for various important events. Do they know why we stand when singing the Star Spangled Banner? Have they seen people stand up when someone comes into the room? Tell them that the אבות-אמהות starts a section of our service called the עמידה – the “standing” prayer. Why might we stand for an entire part of our worship service? What might we be thinking about when we stand up? What does standing up signal to us? Page 14 has sections that can continue the conversation about how we are asked to behave when praying אבות-אמהות and more fully, the עמידה.

- Activities that do NOT complement the approach used in this curriculum could be ignored or tweaked. For instance in Behrman House's *Hineini* series, a lot of attention is paid to a series of vocabulary words pulled from each blessing. Students are asked to learn these. But the Hebrew Learning Principles suggest that such out-of-context memorization is short-lived and not helpful to a student's connections to the prayer. These are best ignored for the purposes of staying coherent with the curriculum approach used in this document.



אבות  
(Traditional)

- 1 בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
- 2 אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
- 3 אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם
- 4 אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק
- 5 וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.
- 6 הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא
- 7 אֵל עֲלִיוֹן
- 8 גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים
- 9 וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל

10 - וְזוֹכֵר חֲסֵדֵי אָבוֹת,

11 - וּמְבִיא גּוֹאֵל לְבְנֵי בְנֵיהֶם

12 - לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה

13 - מֶלֶךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן :

14 - בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי

15 - מַגֵּן אֲבֹרָתָם.

אבות ואמהות  
(Reform)

- 1 בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
- 2 אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ:
- 3 אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם
- 4 אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק
- 5 וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.
- 6 אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה
- 7 אֱלֹהֵי רַבֵּקָה
- 8 אֱלֹהֵי רַחֵל
- 9 וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה
- 10 הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגְּבוּר וְהַנּוֹרָא

11 - אֵל עֲלִיוֹן

12 - גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים

13 - וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל,

14 - וְזוֹכֵר חֲסָדֵי אָבוֹת וְאִמָּהוֹת

15 - וּמְבִיא גְּאֻלָּה

16 - לְבָנֵי בְּנֵיהֶם

17 - לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאֵהָבָה:

18 - מְלַךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמְגִן:

19 - בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ

20 - מְגִן אֲבֹתָם וְעֹזֵר שְׂרָה.

אבות ואמהות  
(Conservative)

- 1 בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
- 2 אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ:
- 3 אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם
- 4 אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק
- 5 וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.
- 6 אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה
- 7 אֱלֹהֵי רַבֵּקָה
- 8 אֱלֹהֵי רַחֵל
- 9 וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה
- 10 הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא

11 - אֵל עֲלִיוֹן

12 - גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים

13 - וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל,

14 - וְזוֹכֵר חֲסָדֵי אָבוֹת וְאִמָּהוֹת

15 - וּמְבִיא גְּאֻלָּה

16 - לְבָנֵי בְּנֵיהֶם

17 - לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאֶהְבָּה:

18 - מְלַךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמְגִן:

19 - בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ

20 - מְגִן אֲבֹרָתָם וּפִקֵּד שְׂרָה.

## אבות - Traditional

We praise You <i>Adonai</i>	1 - בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
our God and God of our Ancestors:	2 - אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ:
God of Abraham	3 - אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם
God of Isaac	4 - אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק
God of Jacob	5 - וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.
The God who is great, mighty and Awesome	6 - הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא
God on High	7 - אֵל עֲלִיוֹן
the One Who grants good kindness	8 - גּוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים
and the One Who owns everything	9 - וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל
and the One Who remembers the kindness of parents	10 - וְזוֹכֵר חֲסָדֵי אָבוֹת
and brings redemption to their children's children	11 - וּמְבִיא גְאֻלָּה לְבָנֵי בְנֵיהֶם
for the sake of God's name	12 - לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה

Ruler, Helper and Savior and Shield	13 - מֶלֶךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן :
We praise You <i>Adonai</i>	14 - בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ
Shield of Abraham	15 - מַגֵּן אַבְרָהָם

## אבות וְאִמֹּהוֹת - Reform

We praise You <i>Adonai</i>	1 - בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
our God	2 - אֱלֹהֵינוּ
and God of our Fathers & our Mothers	וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ :
God of Abraham	3 - אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם
God of Isaac	4 - אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק
God of Jacob	5 - וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.
God of Sarah	6 - אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה
God of Rebecca	7 - אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה
God of Rachel	8 - אֱלֹהֵי רָחֵל
God of Leah	9 - וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה
The God who is great, mighty and awesome	6 - הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא
God on High	7 - אֵל עֲלִיוֹן

the One Who grants good kindness	8 - גוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים
and the One Who owns everything	9 - וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל
and the One Who remembers the kindness of parents	10 - וְזוֹכֵר חֲסָדֵי אָבוֹת וְאִמּוֹת
and brings redemption to their children's children	11 - וּמְבִיא גְאֻלָּה לְבָנֵי בְנֵיהֶם
for the sake of God's name	12 - לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה
Ruler, Helper and Savior and Shield	13 - מֶלֶךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמִגֵּן :
We praise You <i>Adonai</i>	14 - בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
Shield of Abraham	15 - מִגֵּן אַבְרָהָם
and Helper of Sarah.	וְעֹזֶרֶת שָׂרָה.

## אבות ואמהות - Conservative

We praise You <i>Adonai</i>	1 - בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
our God	2 - אֱלֹהֵינוּ
and God of our Fathers & our Mothers	וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ :
God of Abraham	3 - אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם
God of Isaac	4 - אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק
God of Jacob	5 - וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.
God of Sarah	6 - אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה
God of Rebecca	7 - אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה
God of Rachel	8 - אֱלֹהֵי רָחֵל
God of Leah	9 - וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה
The God who is great, mighty and awesome	6 - הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא
God on High	7 - אֵל עֲלִיוֹן

the One Who grants good kindness	8 - גוֹמֵל חֲסָדִים טוֹבִים
and the One Who owns everything	9 - וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל
and the One Who remembers the kindness of parents	10 - וְזוֹכֵר חֲסָדֵי אָבוֹת וְאִמּוֹת
and brings redemption to their children's children	11 - וּמְבִיא גְאֻלָּה לְבָנֵי בְנֵיהֶם
for the sake of God's name	12 - לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה
Ruler, Helper and Savior and Shield	13 - מֶלֶךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמִגֵּן :
We praise You <i>Adonai</i>	14 - בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
Shield of Abraham  and Guardian of Sarah.	15 - מִגֵּן אַבְרָהָם וּפִקֹּד שָׂרָה.