



Rosh Hashanah

Lesson Plans

K – 2nd Grade

Recommended for K – 2nd Grade

OPTION 1: A ROSH HASHANAH ROCK GARDEN

Big Ideas

- Rosh Hashanah is the start of the Jewish new year.
- Many Jewish people practice *Tashlich*, which is “letting go” of the past year.
- We are going to look toward the future and think about what we want to improve on in the coming year.

Objectives

- Students will be able to draw or write on a rock their hope or wish for the coming year.
- Students will be able to share/express their hope or wish for the new year (in the form of drawing a picture, writing words, pointing to picture prompts, or verbalizing their hopes).
- Students will learn about *Tashlich* and “letting go” of the past year while looking forward to the new year.
- Students will have the opportunity to express themselves through art.

Materials

- Acrylic paint and brushes, or acrylic paint pens
- Large, smooth “water rocks” like [these](#) or [these](#)



Accessibility Considerations

- Some students may have an easier time attending during discussions if they have seating accommodations, including, but not limited to:
 - sitting on a pillow, yoga block, wedge, in a chair
 - sitting near the instructor
 - standing and/or leaning during instruction
 - holding a fidget tool during instruction - the appropriate fidget will be different for each student
- Many students with communication challenges may benefit from working 1:1 or in a small group, or from additional time or resources to share their ideas.
- Many students with ADHD and Autism use a tremendous amount of energy to maintain eye contact while listening to instructions or while engaging in a conversation. By not forcing students to make eye contact with the speaker or “appear” engaged, there is a higher likelihood that those students will be able to absorb the information.
- Give “wait time” (~7-10 seconds) for students to process a question before hearing responses.
- Allow students to write or draw their ideas on a piece of paper if a rock is not a comfortable medium for them, or if they would like to practice before committing ideas to a rock.

Activities

Tashlich takes place between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. It is traditionally a time where people gather around living water and throw bread crumbs into the water to represent the thoughts or actions they were not proud of from the last year. As the breadcrumbs are thrown into the water these undesirable thoughts or actions are taken away by the water or any animals that live in the water.

This year we are looking toward the future and will be creating a “Hopeful Rock Garden” or a “Rosh Hashanah Rock Garden.” Before you begin the art activity, sit in a circle with your class and discuss actions or thoughts they might not have been so proud of this past year. As the instructor, it is important to model this before calling on students. Sharing things like, “I spoke unkindly to my friend/parent/sibling” or “I threw litter on the ground and did not pick it up” are examples of appropriate regrets to share. Once students have shared a few of their regrets from the past year it is time to focus on the new year.

“What is something you would like to do better/improve on this year?” or “How can you help your synagogue/family/friends in the coming year?” There are many ways to phrase this prompt, but the most authentic question will come from you, the students’ teacher. Once students have had some time to share what they would like to improve upon, it is time to introduce the “Rosh Hashanah Rock Garden.”



Students will paint a rock with words and/or pictures to represent their hopes and dreams for the coming year. After the rocks have dried they can be sent home or placed in a prominent place at the school for all congregational members to enjoy and appreciate.

Assessment:

- Did the student attempt to color a rock or piece of paper to represent their hopes for the new year/Rosh Hashanah?
- Was the student able to communicate their hopes for the coming year either with the class, in a small group, or one on one?
- Was the student able to discuss the traditional concept of *tashlich*, letting go of the past year or share a personal experience of participating in *tashlich* in the past?

OPTION 2: SHOFAR BLASTS THROUGH THE SENSES

Big Ideas

- The *shofar* is blown 100 times during Rosh Hashanah
- The four different shofar sounds have four different meanings
 - *tekiah*, a long, loud blast calling people to attention
 - *shevarim*, three broken blows which sound like crying
 - *teruah*, nine or more staccato rings serving as a wakeup call to the new year
 - *tekiah gedolah*, a great blast played at the end of the Rosh Hashanah service

Objectives

- Students will gain embodied experiences with the shofar while learning about the four different shofar sounds
- Students will use their voices and/or bodies in call/response to the four sounds
- Students will feel the different lengths of the four shofar blasts using the Matan Shofar Blasts printable
- Depending on teacher preference and classroom cleanliness, students may practice using a real shofar

Materials

- A real shofar to explore sensorily, touch, smell, and possibly experiment with blowing
 - If students are able to put their mouth on the shofar it should be sanitized between uses.
- Shofar Blasts Video such as [this one](#) (shofar blasts starts at 1:22) or, if possible, have someone from the community come in to blow the shofar
- Matan Shofar Blasts printable
 - The printable can be used in multiple ways, while students can follow the shofar sounds with their finger, a thin strip of sandpaper tape may be added on top of each line for a physical experience and to aid students who have visual or auditory considerations.

Accessibility Considerations

- During the activity consider allowing students to sit in a space and position that will allow them to focus to the best of their ability. Some seating accommodations, include but are not limited to:
 - sitting on a pillow, yoga block, wedge, in a chair
 - sitting near the teacher
 - standing and/or leaning
 - holding a fidget tool - the appropriate fidget will be different for each student
- For students with visual or communication considerations the Shofar printable can be printed in larger and with a thin strip of sandpaper tape adhered on top of each line
- Students may connect to different parts of this lesson which can be broken down into multiple days
- Students with various needs may benefit from working 1:1, in a small group, or with additional time or resources to share their ideas.

- Students with auditory processing needs or sensitivities may benefit from having this lesson outdoors or having noise canceling headphones available.
- Depending on the age, stage, and curriculum, some students may be more or less comfortable using Hebrew.

Activity

1. While sitting in a circle, pass around a real shofar and ask students to describe how it feels, smells, and looks.
2. Using the included video, or inviting a community member to come to class, have the students hear the 100 shofar blasts that we hear on Rosh Hashanah. How did the sound of the shofar make you feel? What did it sound like or remind you of?
3. Call and Response- using their voices by either saying the Hebrew word or making the sound of a shofar conduct a “Call and Response” activity where you shout each sound and they respond. You can do this using your voice or by actually blowing each note of the shofar.
4. Call and Response with body movements- Similar to using their voices to respond, allow students to respond using body movement. Each student will come up with their own way to represent the different sounds.
5. Feeling the shofar blasts- using the Matan Shofar Blast printable with a thin strip of light sandpaper tape students can work individually or in pairs to call out the sound of the shofar and then trace the sound to represent the length and amount of each blast.

Assessment

- Did your student attempt to use their voice and/or body in call/response to the four sounds?
- Did your student feel and explore the different lengths of the four shofar blasts using the Matan Shofar Blasts printable?
- Did your student touch a real shofar and describe how it felt?
- Did your student smell a real shofar and describe how it smelled?
- Did your student hear the 100 blasts on Rosh Hashanah either via video or if someone from the community was able to blow the shofar in person for the class? (parent, lay leader, clergy)
 - What does the shofar blast sound like? (crying, a siren, shout)

Shofar Blasts



תקיעה
Tekiah

Shofar Blasts



תרועה

Teruah

Shofar Blasts



שבר'מ

Shevarim

Shofar Blasts



תק'עה גדולה

Tekiya Gedola