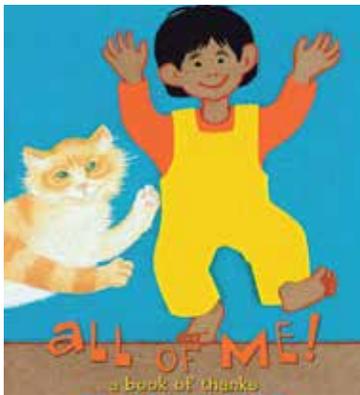


# Global Day of Jewish Learning

## Curriculum: Blessings & Gratitude



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[www.theglobalday.com](http://www.theglobalday.com)

A Project of the Aleph Society



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## Introduction (7 minutes)

You come home from school to find a giant gift-wrapped box waiting on your kitchen table. You're thrilled to discover that it is for you! You quickly rip off the wrapping paper. You can't believe it! It's exactly what you wanted! What is the first thing you do?

Today we are going to use the five senses to help learn about blessings.

➤ **Ask:**

1. What is a blessing?
2. What are some things you'd say a blessing over?

➤ **Write their answers up on the board.**

Answers may include:

- *We say blessings over food that we eat.*
- *Blessings are a way to say thank you.*

The traditional blessings that most of us are familiar with are blessings said over food. There are blessings for both before and after eating.

➤ **Ask:**

1. Why do you think that is?
2. What is the value in saying a blessing over food?

Some ideas your students may come up with (and feel free to help them reach these ideas):

- *It is important to show appreciation for the food you receive. A blessing says thank you.*
- *There are places in the world where there isn't enough food. We should appreciate having food.*
- *Instead of jumping into the meal, it is appropriate to stop for a moment and think about what we have just received.*

Think of a blessing as a **yield sign**. We slow down to appreciate the moment, the experience and our good fortune.

### Part One: Worksheet (12 minutes)

Hand out **Worksheet #1** to your students. Give them a few minutes to complete the page and then ask them to share their drawings and experiences with the class.

Point out to your students that we don't only say blessings over food. In fact, there are blessings that can be said over many experiences. That's where knowing our five senses can help.

► Ask your students to list the five senses:

*The five senses are:*

*Sight*

*Smell*

*Touch*

*Taste*

*Hearing*

### Focus on: The Havdala Service (3 minutes)

Ask one of your students to describe the **Havdala service**. Which of your senses are involved?

Every Saturday night, as Shabbat ends, families gather together to say the Havdala service. The room is dark so you can see the flame of the candle. There is a blessing made over wine. There is a blessing made over beautiful smelling spices as they are passed around to everyone. There is also a blessing made over the light of the candle. Which senses are involved in Havdala? Sight, smell and taste!

### Part Two: Meet the Senses (5 minutes)

#### **Taste**

The blessings that we may be the most familiar with are the blessings we say over food.

There are different blessings that we say over each food group. We have blessings for bread, fruits, vegetables, grains and everything else.

#### **Sight**

Ever seen a beautiful rainbow? Been awed by a lightening bolt? Seen a beautiful view? There are blessings for that too! We are offered a series of different blessings to say over awesome things that we see.

## Experience a Blessing

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### ➤ Ask:

1. Why would we say blessings over things we see?
2. What is the value in saying those blessings?

### Hearing

On Rosh Hashana, we say a blessing when we hear the shofar being blown. There is also a blessing we say when we hear thunder. Why do you think it is important to say a blessing over something we hear?

### Smell

There is a special blessing we say over beautiful smelling spices. We say it weekly during Havdala, along with other times when we smell something delicious!

### Touch

There are some objects that we consider to be special. For example, there are blessings we say when we put on tzitzit or a tallit.

## Part Three: Worksheet #2 (10 minutes)

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**Hand out Worksheet #2 to your class. Ask them to connect the experience with the sense that it relates to on the page. Have them share their answers with the class.**

## Part Four: Summary (3 minutes)

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### Did you know?

Did you know that the Talmud suggests that we say 100 blessings each and every day? Why do you think that is?

**Pick your favorite blessing!** Which blessing did you like learning about? Was there one that surprised you? For which experience would you like to make up your own blessing?

Saying thank you is important—to your parents, to your friends and to your teachers. Blessings are a way to say thank you to God for the food you eat and the experiences you have with all five senses.

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# Experience a Blessing

## Experience a Blessing!

### Worksheet #1

Draw some of your favorite experiences.

Here is my favorite meal!

Here is my favorite place to visit!

Here is my favorite activity!

## Experience a Blessing!

### Worksheet #2

Match the Blessing to the Sense.

