

LESSON 9: PREPARING CREATIVE PROJECTS AND COMMUNITY SHOWCASE

Lesson Overview

Theme/Topic/Big Ideas: Translating information into creative formats

Summary: This lesson provides time for the students to share the results of their interviews and supports them in the development of a creative representation of the interview.

Objective:

In this lesson, students will:

- Learn how to synthesize information into written and creative formats

Time: 45–50 minutes

[Handouts and Visuals Link](#)

Materials and setup

- Sticky notes and pens
- Large sticky chart paper and markers

Preparation for Showcase Event

Note to teachers: Make a plan to hold a community showcase event, during which students present their projects to family, friends, other classes, and the larger school or congregational community. Make sure to celebrate their accomplishments, and consider asking families to bring in food and drinks that best represent their family’s unique heritage. Other ideas include designing and sending a special invitation and creating “interviewee” badges for family members who were interviewed.

When you introduce the creative project, share with the students that their work will be presented at a showcase event.

Introduction/Set Induction: Post-it Quick Write (10 min)

Check in with the students about their interviews. How did they go? What was fun? What was challenging?

On sticky notes, write down 3–5 interesting tidbits about languages and names that you learned during your interviews. Use 1 sentence to share this information (1 tidbit per Post-it).

Question of the day: How might you represent this story or information to others? Think back to the symbols/songs/images/objects we used to represent specific stories about our family names and languages (Lesson 8). How might we expand on these to represent our larger family name or language story?

Today, we'll use these ideas to help us identify a creative format to share this information with our community.

CREATE: Interview Talmud (10 min)

[Handout Link](#)

Remind students (or share with them for the first time) that the Talmud is a written record of centuries of rabbinic conversations (including debate) about Jewish law, stories, biblical interpretation, and more. In format, it is made up of a text surrounded by related commentary.

This activity is loosely inspired by this format, with a core idea in the center, surrounded by various ideas and interpretations.

Have students choose 1–3 of their favorite sticky note ideas. Have them place each one of these notes at the center of a large piece of chart paper. Using a mind-map style approach (see Lesson 1 Identity Maps), they use markers to annotate their key interview information with ideas for representing this information to others in creative ways. (After the discussion below, students will have an opportunity to add their comments to their peers' ideas.)

DISCUSS: Ideas for Creative Projects (15–20 min)

Based on what you brainstormed, what ideas do you have about what format your presentations might take? This conversation could happen in front of the class, in pairs, or in individual consultation with the teacher.

We'll be identifying a creative format to share this information with our community today. Some ideas for format:

Visual Art:

- Paint or draw a picture
- Create a mixed-media portrait including photos or other images, words, collage, maps
- Build a mixed-media sculpture or object (fabric, clay, found objects, wood, and more!)
- Design a poster
- Curate a museum exhibit, using primary sources or images plus explanatory text

Performing Arts:

- Perform a monologue in role as a family member you interviewed or learned about
- Write and perform a song or poem

Digital Technology:

- Create a video presentation
- Create an audio presentation, like a podcast or interview show
- Create a slide deck or PowerPoint presentation
- Make an Instagram or TikTok post

Writing:

- Write an imagined letter or diary entry
- Create a display that includes writing and images, using a tri-fold presentation board
- Write and illustrate a family cookbook, and prepare one of the recipes

Other:

- What else might you create?

DISCUSS: Ideas for Creative Projects (15–20 min)

Handout Link

Invite students to add these new ideas for creative presentations to their interview “Talmud” pages. Place interview pages on the walls of the classroom.

Invite the class to do a gallery walk, reviewing their peers’ ideas and adding sticky notes to the posters with their comments and suggestions.

Guidelines for Creative Projects:

The project should explore at least one of the following questions:

- Beyond English, what language(s) has my family spoken, and how does this connect to a larger Jewish story?
- What names are in my family, and how does this connect to a larger Jewish story?
- What are some of my family’s migration stories, and how do our languages and names reflect these stories?

Review formats as discussed above.

Feel free to show some examples (these are from a similar project; examples from this unit coming soon!).

CREATE: Creative Project Work Time (10 minutes and additional time inside or outside of class, as needed)

Provide class time to work on these projects, or assign students to work at home, setting a deadline appropriate for your class’s needs. We recommend reserving at least one class during which students can work on their projects and share with their peers. Consider gathering materials for students to use; this could be an opportunity to collaborate with a school art teacher, if you have one.

Reflection/Conclusion: Revisiting KWL (5 min)

Revisit the class KWL you did during Lesson 1 (if applicable)-- what did we say we wanted to know about our community's diversity? What did we learn? Add what the class learned in the "L" section of the chart.

Discuss: What did we learn about our class community? What did we learn about the Jewish community? In what ways is our community connected to the larger Jewish story?