

Jewish Traditions Around Death and Funerals Lesson 1

I feel comfortable talking about this topic	😊	😐	😞
I have questions about this topic	Many	Some	None

If you need a break during this lesson, you can:

- Raise your hand
- Request a break in the calm room
- Take deep breaths

Key Vocabulary

Word	What It Means	Picture
Funeral	A ceremony to honor someone who has died	
Burial	Placing the body in the ground	
Shiva	A 7-day period when family mourns together	
Psalm	A special prayer or song	

Video Notes

We will watch a video about Jewish funeral traditions.

While I watch, I will look for:	
1. Three things that happen at a Jewish funeral:	• _____ • _____ • _____
2. How people show respect:	• _____ • _____

Reading: Psalm 23

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul..."

Circle the words or phrases that make you feel:

Peaceful 😊	Safe 🛡️	Comforted 😊
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Mock Funeral Activity

We will practice a funeral for a fictional character: Albus Dumbledore from Harry Potter.
Each group will be responsible for one part of the funeral:

Group	Responsibility	Check when done
Group 1	Prepare a eulogy (speech about Dumbledore's life)	☐
Group 2	Create a program for the funeral	☐
Group 3	Prepare to read Psalm 23	☐
Group 4	Plan the burial ceremony	☐

What I Learned Today

Draw or write one new thing you learned about Jewish funeral traditions:

How I Feel Now

I understand Jewish funeral traditions better now	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
I still have questions	Many	Some	None

Questions I still have: _____

Jewish Mourning Customs and Shiva

I feel comfortable talking about mourning	😊	😐	😞
I have experience with shiva	Yes	A little	No
I want to share my experiences	Yes	Maybe	No

Remember: If you need a break during this lesson, you can:

- Request a break in the calm room
- Take deep breaths
- Ask to speak with the teacher privately

Key Vocabulary

Word	What It Means	Visual Clue
Shiva	7 days of mourning after someone dies	
Mourner	A person who is sad because someone they love died	
Shloshim	30 days of mourning (includes the 7 days of shiva)	
Kavod Achi	Respecting the family who is mourning	
Unveiling	Ceremony to reveal the headstone on a grave	

Shiva Project Research Guide

Choose **ONE** format for your guide:

☐ PowerPoint presentation	☐ Blog post
☐ Graphic cartoon/comic	☐ Skit/role play
☐ Poster with pictures	☐ Brochure/pamphlet

Section 1: Who and When

Question	Our Answer
Who sits shiva?	
Which family members are required?	
Do all ages sit shiva?	
When does shiva start?	
How many hours per day do families sit?	

Section 2: Customs in the Home

Custom	What Happens	Why
Covering mirrors		
Low chairs		
Other customs:		

Section 3: Visiting a Shiva House

Topic	What to Know
What to say to the mourner	
What to bring (if anything)	
What NOT to bring	
How to behave/etiquette	

Section 4: Prayer Services

Question	Our Answer
Why is there a prayer service at shiva?	
What prayers are said?	

Section 5: After Shiva

Time Period	What Happens
End of shiva (day 7)	
Shloshim (first 30 days)	
First year of mourning	
Unveiling ceremony	

Reflection

What I Learned Today

Write or draw one new thing you learned about Jewish mourning customs:

How This Helps People

How do Jewish mourning customs help people who are sad about losing someone they love?

How I Feel Now

I understand shiva customs better now	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
I would feel more comfortable visiting a shiva house	Yes	Maybe	No
I still have questions	Many	Some	None

Questions I still have:

Chevra Kadisha - The Jewish Burial Society

How did I feel about learning about shiva last time?	👍 Good	👎 Hard	😐 Okay
I am ready to learn about Chevra Kadisha	Yes	Maybe	Not sure

Remember: If you need a break during this lesson, you can:

- Request a break in the calm room
- Take deep breaths
- Ask to speak with the teacher privately

Key Vocabulary

Word	What It Means	Visual Clue
Chevra Kadisha	Jewish burial society ("holy society")	
Shmirah	Watching over the deceased	
Taharah	Ritual washing and preparation	
Aramaic	Ancient language used in Jewish texts	

Word Detective Activity

Look at these words: "Chevra Kadisha"

Word Part	Sounds Like...	My Guess
Chevra		
Kadisha		

What I think "Chevra Kadisha" means: _____

What is Chevra Kadisha?

Fact	Details
Name means:	"Holy Society" (in Aramaic language)
What they do:	Take care of people who have died
When they help:	From the time someone dies until burial
Extra help:	Sometimes help families during shiva

Video 1: Personal Experience

What I learned:	My notes:
How the person felt about this work	
Why this work is important	
One thing that surprised me	

Video 2: About Chevra Kadisha

What I learned:	My notes:
Who can be part of Chevra Kadisha	
What training they need	
How they help families	

Research Project: Two Important Rituals

Ritual 1: Shmirah

Question	Our Answer
Who can do this ritual?	
What is said during Shmirah?	
What is done during Shmirah?	
What surprised me about this ritual?	

Ritual 2: Taharah

Question	Our Answer
Who can do this ritual?	
What is said during Taharah?	
What is done during Taharah?	
What surprised me about this ritual?	

My Questions for the Guest Speaker

Question Type	My Question
About their experience	
About the training	
About helping families	
About the rituals	
Something I'm curious about	

Reflection

What I Learned Today

Draw or write one new thing you learned about Chevra Kadisha:

Why This Matters

How does the work of Chevra Kadisha help families during a difficult time?

How I Feel Now

I understand what Chevra Kadisha does	Yes	Somewhat	Not yet
I think this work is important	Yes	Maybe	Not sure
I have more questions	Many	Some	None

Questions I still have: