

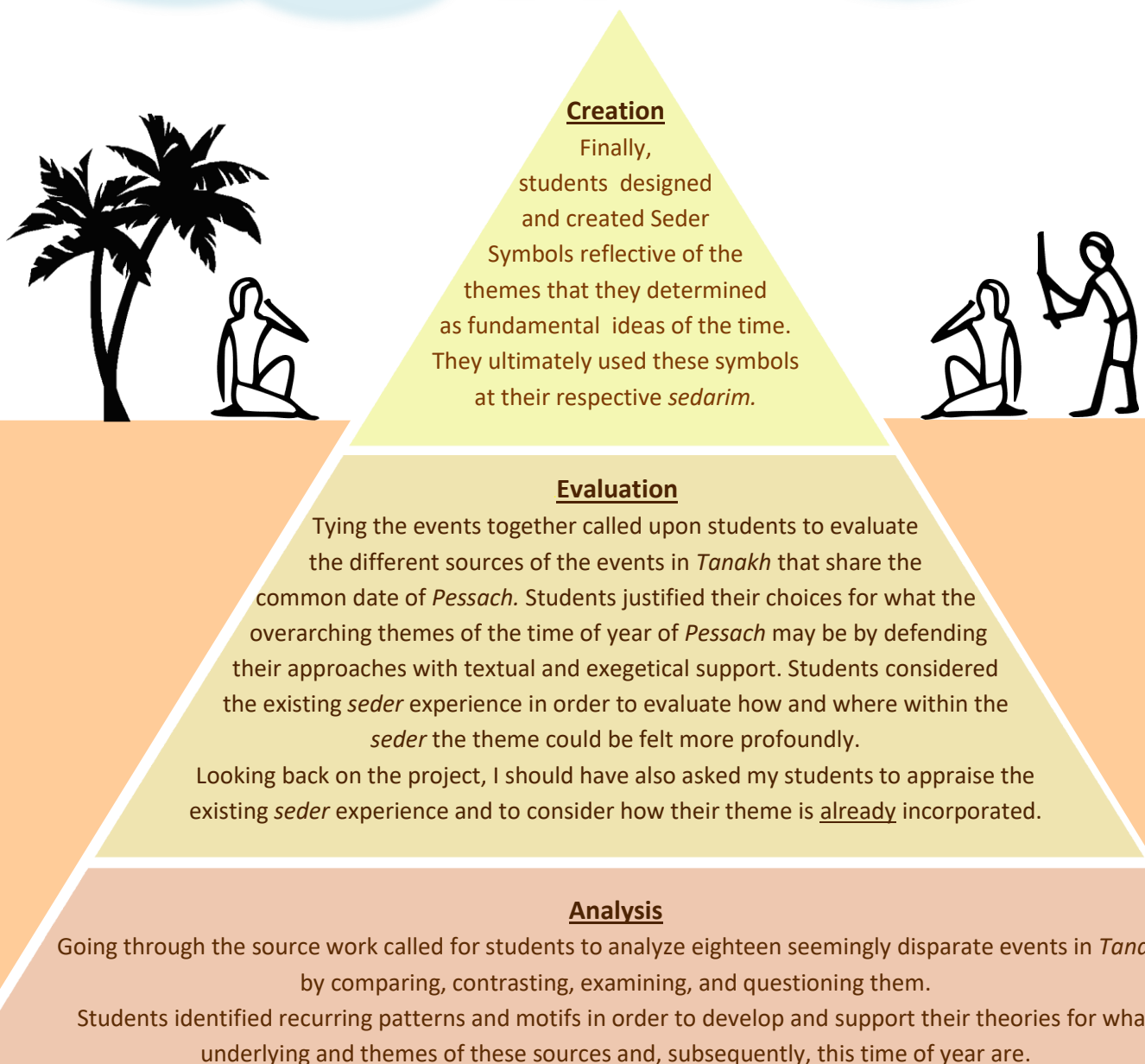
# Personal Reflection on the Development of Critical and Creative Thinking in *B'Chol Dor VaDor*:

While the lower echelons of Bloom's Taxonomy were certainly developed throughout the project, most of the project time was spent developing the upper three: analysis, evaluation, and creation.

\*\*\*Please read from bottom to top.

## And two final levels of evaluation:

Students presented their work and process to the class in a model-*seder*-esque setting. This allowed for students to iterate their symbol prototypes through constructive peer and audience feedback. As part of the project reflection (after *Pessach*), students evaluated the degree to which their Seder Symbols effectively inspired the theme of *Pessach* as determined by their critical *Tanakh* research for their family.



This project empowered enrichment-ready students to develop these higher echelons of Bloom's Taxonomy through meaningful engagement with *Tanach*. It is a project that can be done across a range of grade levels (middle school and higher) and, given the breadth of *Sifrei Tanach* involved, across many *Tanach* classes. For example, I taught these same students for both *Chumash* and *Navi* and was able to use this anchor activity in both courses.

The rigor and depth of learning allowed for these gifted students to explore *Tanakh* in new ways. One student reflected, "In school we always learn one *sefer* of *Tanakh* at a time- and that can be really interesting- but there's also so much that you can learn about something by seeing how it connects to other ideas and events in *Tanakh*. This project gave me the opportunity to do that."

Beyond the criteria and guidelines that I initially set for my students, this project was an open one; students made choices that drove and determined the outcome and path of their research and creations. For example, two of the participating students came to the same conclusion that this time of year is one of recognition of the hand of Hashem in the world. They presented their work to the class one after the other. The second student to present said, "You might think that I have the same project as [my peer] but you have to remember that my learning and working process is different from hers. Yes, we used the same sources and got to a similar conclusion but the way we got from point A to point B was different for each of us because we learn differently. And then when it came time to incorporating this idea of recognizing Hashem into our *Seder*, I was thinking of a way to help my family experience this while she was thinking about hers. She incorporated her creation at the end of *Maggid* and I hope to do [this activity] with my family before *Kadesh* even starts."

Another student shared, "This is one of the first times I feel like I really, I mean really, know what I learned. Ask me anything. I can explain it to anyone. And not just explain it, I know how to share it in a way that others can really understand too." When prompted to reflect upon what about the learning led her to feel this way she said, "We didn't just look at a source and then move on. Throughout the learning of each source we were constantly comparing it to a previous one. It's like we kept learning all of the sources over and over again through each other. But it wasn't just the amount of times that we learned something that makes me feel like I really know it; it's also because of what we did with all of that information. We developed really thoughtful theories. It was a lot of work. I think that was the point when I really felt like I was caring about this, that it really meant something to me. Evaluating all of the sources made the material take over so much of my brain. I was thinking about supporting and refining my ideas constantly. And then when it finally came time to put all of those ideas into an actual part of the *Seder*, I used even other parts of my brain and other skills that I hardly ever used for Torah before. That was cool. I felt so proud of the [fire centerpiece] that I created and my family really appreciated it, too. But really, ask me anything. I know this stuff for real."