

This document is a sample of an 8th grade syllabus that provides an overview of the various references and skills that are utilized in a personalized learning Talmud class. This was the first year of its implementation, and as we continue to expand the program we will take the curriculum map from all grade levels and build out spiraled standards within each grade level. This will provide the ultimate personalized learning experience where students progress through grade levels based on mastery.

I'd like to point out our innovative 50-35-15 model of personalized learning time, as well as our student conferences, which emphasizes student agency in their learning.

Appendix A: The 8 domains (4 Primary & 4 Peripheral) that we formalized through our professional development sessions that I conducted. The primary domains are the skills that are taught in every unit, assessed on every test, and graded and communicated separately from the numeric grade. Peripheral domains are incorporated into the planning and assessments, but not as a mandate for each unit and these will be explored differently in different classes.

Appendix B: Vocabulary list includes words that are most frequently mentioned throughout Shas. The goal is to build student vocabulary across all of Shas and not just the words found in the specific Masechet being taught.

Appendix C: The same reading rubric is used by all Talmud rabbeim across all grade levels. This provides consistency and continuity for the students and a common language for communicating reading proficiency. It also creates an objective method for developing strong Talmud reading skills beyond memorization and translation. (This rubric was adapted from Zekelman Standards)

Appendices D & E: Functional structures is a term I coined to describe terms in the Talmud that serve a function. These are words that require a deeper understanding beyond just the translation. I've outlined the key functional structures of Mishna on page 5 and Talmud on pages 6-9.

Appendix F: One of our areas of focus is to learn about the Tannaim & Amoraim to understand the historical and social context of their Halachic perspectives and rulings. This list includes the Tannaim/Amoraim that our 8th graders will be exploring in conjunction with the text.

Syllabus 2016-2017 8G1 Gemara

Standards: This year, we will be introducing an entirely new innovative approach to Gemara learning. In partnership with local high schools, several leading educational organizations, and under the guidance of professional consultants, we will be rolling out a set of standards per each grade level. Helping each of our students achieve proficiency of these standards will provide them with the tools and skills necessary to learn Gemara properly after they graduate.

50 -35 -15: Under this new model, the focus of instruction starts with meeting the needs of all of our students. To provide the ideal learning environment for every student, we will be implementing multiple modalities of learning each week:

- * **50%** of the week will be spent on teacher-led learning activities
- * **35%** of the week will be spent on personalized learning time where students can work on activities that help them with specific areas of need.
- * **15%** of the week will be spent on student time. This is time that students will be able to work on their anchor activity or choice boards. This opportunity for students to have a voice and choice in their learning has shown to increase engagement.

Formative Assessments: Effective instruction begins with an accurate understanding of how each of our students is learning. Consistent assessment provides meaningful data, helping both the Rebbe and students perform at a higher level. Instead of waiting weeks for an exam to inform how the students are learning, these quick and simple almost-daily assessments will be incredibly valuable.

Summative Assessments: At the end of each *sugya*, we will administer an exam. This will take place approximately twice a month and will be listed on both the test calendar and Haiku. Each assessment will include questions on all 8 domains of learning listed in Appendix A. This will ensure that all students are achieving proficiency in their grade-level skills.

Grading: We will be providing separate grades for academic achievement and behavior. The academic grade will be based on summative & formative assessments, and projects. In addition to a numerical grade, students will be given a learner's profile of their performance for each of the skills we assessed and have the opportunity to reflect on how to improve in areas of need. Behavior grades will be based on adherence to the class norms. We intend on communicating regularly with both students and parents regarding both academic progress and behavior management. There will be no surprises on the report card, as it will be a formal way of communicating the scope of the growth of each child.

Class Norms: These are a set of expectations that will help our students create the ideal learning environment so that they can reach their highest potential. This will be created together as a class. Students will be held accountable for adhering to the class norms which will be managed under the Middle School discipline policy.

Writing: Research shows that writing improves a student's ability to learn and retain knowledge. We will be incorporating time for reflection, collaboration, and writing throughout the school year. **Therefore, it is important that you purchase a Gemara binder which includes section dividers and lined paper.**

Student Conferences: As an important component of our personalized learning method is student ownership of their learning, we will be holding student conferences once a month. These conferences are designed to help students reflect on their areas of strength and where they need to improve. Together with the Rebbe, students will then design an action plan to ensure that they meet the standards.

APPENDIX A: 8 Domains:

Over the course of the year, you will hear a lot about the “8 domains”. These refer to the 8 specific categories of skills and knowledge that students will be expected to have upon graduating each grade level. These domains were established with a tremendous amount of research and collaboration with many professional consultants and stakeholders.

1. **Content Knowledge:** Students will know the content of the discussions, debates, and decisions made in the Talmud being studied.

2. **Reading:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in reading the Talmud including the proper use of punctuation, inflection, translation, and reading fluency.

3. **Vocabulary:** Students will demonstrate mastery of at least 85 words that are frequently found throughout the Talmud. Words were chosen for each grade based on the number of times it is used in Shas. With the words mastered at each grade level, students will graduate with an expansive Gemara vocabulary, increasing their ability to learn Talmud at higher levels of proficiency. Words from previous years will be included in assessments, so review of all words is important.

4. **Functional Talmud Structures:** These are key words/terms that serve a functional purpose in the Talmud. A student who is able to identify these key words can easily break down the various components of a discussion in the Talmud, which in turn makes it easier to process, retain, and understand the entirety of the *sugya* with clarity.

5. **Navigation:** Students will demonstrate the ability to navigate the various components of a page of Talmud. This also includes a deep understanding of the purpose of the various commentaries found on a page of Talmud and when and how they are applied to the learning.

6. **Development of Torah She’Bal Peh:** Students will understand the connection between the Written and Oral Torah in each of the *sugyot* they will be learning. This domain also includes an understanding of the Tannaim and Amoraim who contributed to the transmission of the Oral Torah.

7. **Higher Order Thinking:** Students will not be expected to just spit back information. It is important for students to also learn how to analyze a text and to articulate their understanding of Talmud principles in deeper ways.

8. **Halachik Application:** Beyond simple comprehension, students will be taught how to use the knowledge and skills in the application of real-life problem solving. Being an Orthodox Jew living in the 21st century has become increasingly more challenging. Yet, our students have more access to information than ever before. Our goal is to teach them how to connect their Torah knowledge to their daily lives.

Appendix B: Vocabulary List

All students will be expected to be proficient (80+%) on the following 75 vocabulary words by the end of the school year. These words were selected based on frequency of occurrence in Shas. Assessments will be given throughout the year and support/remediation provided when necessary. An additional 25 words will be available for students who have demonstrated mastery of 75 words prior to final exam. These students will automatically receive the highest grade for vocabulary on the report card.

איכא	אי	אימא/תימא/נימא	אין	אמאי
אית / איתא	אמרי / אמרן	אתא/אתו/אתי	בהו / ביה	אמינא
בעינא / בעינן	בר / בריה	The prefix ד	דמי / דמיא	בי
הר / האי	היינו	הואי/הוה/הוו הוי /הויא	היכי	היכא
הכא	הכי	הן	הני/הנך	השתא
תם	כי	דכתיב	כתיב	חד/חדא
לאו	להו/ לן	למימר/ למימרא	מאי	לימא
מאן	נמי	מינה/ מיניה	מנא/ מני	מידי
סבר	קאמר	עבד/ עבדי עבדינן/ עביד	ק- / קא	מילי
קמיה	קרא	קתני	רחמנא	נפק/ נפקי
שאני	שנא	תנא/ תנאי	תנו/ תני	סיפא
תרי/ תרתי	שמיה	צריכא	עלמא	רישא
תא	איניש / אינשי	אנא	מעיקרא	דידי/דידיה/דידן
נינהו	אלמא	אנן	בעי	יתבי / יתיב
למעוטי	כוותיה	קאי	שפיר	שרי

APPENDIX C: Reading Rubric

Students will be asked to read on a regular basis. Short, take-home online assessments will be administered on a frequent basis. Grading will be based on this rubric.

READING RUBRIC	1- Needs Remediation	2 - Approaching Proficiency	3 - Proficient	4 - Mastery
Pronunciation	Pronounces more than 5 of the words in the unit incorrectly	Pronounces between 3- 5 of the words in the unit incorrectly	Pronounces no more than 2 words in the unit incorrectly	Pronounces all of the words in the unity correctly
Pauses & Inflection	Made more than 5 mistakes of pausing and/or inflection	Made 3-5 mistakes of pausing and/or inflection	Missed 2 pauses and/or made two errors of inflection	Pauses in all of the correct places; Uses proper inflection to indicate a challenge, question, or answer
Group & Translate	Made more than 5 errors in translating phrases in the unit	Made 3-5 errors in translating phrases in the unit	Made no more than 2 errors in translating phrases in the unit	Able to accurately translate all of the phrases in the unit
Explanation	NEVER added words “the גמרא asks” and “the גמרא answers”	In SOME cases, adds גמרא words like “the גמרא asks” and “the answers”	In MOST cases, adds גמרא words like “the גמרא asks” and “the answers”	In ALL cases, adds גמרא words like “the גמרא asks” and “the answers”

APPENDIX D: Functional Structures of Mishna

טעם	דין	מקרה	אומר
שנאמר	חייב	No specific key words. Content-specific	דברי
מפני	פטור		אומר
שמא	כשר		רבי
ת"ל	פסול		
.....	טמא		
	טהור		
	מותר		
	אסור		
	יצא		
	לא יצא		
	עד		
	הרי		
	אין		
	לא ...		

APPENDIX E: Functional Structures of Gemara (Work in Progress)

For each of these functional structures, students will need to know:

1. **Literal Translation:** How the word is translated
2. **Characterization:** How is this word used in the Gemara (Question, Challenge, Proof)
3. **Examples:** Specific ways in which the word is used for the above purpose; Important notes about the keyword.

אלו מציאות			
...אידי ואידי... ולא קשיא, כאן... כאן	16	...היכי דמי? אי... והא... ואי... והא	1
בעא מיניה	17	בעי	2
ואי סלקא דעתך	18	טעמא מאי	3
מאי טעמא	19	תיקו	4
אמר מר	20	אי הכי	5
מאי נפקא מינה / למאי הלתכא	21	תרגמה	6
אם תמצא לומר	22	מאי אריא	7
ואי בעית אימא / אי נמי	23	שאני התם	8
ואמרי לה	24	מניין / מנא הני מילי / מאי קראה	9
פשיטא לא צריכא... מהו דתימא..קמ"ל	25	רמי	10
אימא סיפא	26	תיובתא	11
צריכי דאי... הוה אמינא ה"מ... אבל...לא. ואי	27	אמר לך	12
...אי אמרת בשלמא... אלא אי אמרת	28	לעולם	13
ותיפוק ליה	29	לימא כתנאי	14
מי דמי	30	אמאי	15

APPENDIX E2: Functional Structures of Gemara (Work in Progress)

Function	Description	Examples	
פתיחה – STATEMENT	A quote from a Tannaic source, introduced by Keywords such as: מתני – Mishna תנו רבנן – the Rabbis taught	A quote from an Amoraic source, introduced by Keywords such as: it was stated – איתמר the sage stated – אמר מר	
השלמה – SUPPLEMENT	A “Supplement” can be a title, summary, explanation, narrative or clarification to supplement the discussion. A “Supplement” does not constitute a question, solution or conclusion.	As an independent component. For example: תן התם - we have learned elsewhere in a Mishnah located in a different Masechet תנא - it was taught in a Tosefta or a Baraita הכל מודים - everyone agrees זאת אומרת - this implies	As part of another component. For example: בשלמא - this is reasonable... (usually followed by) but then a question arises regarding a – different case. סברוה - the scholars thought!... (explaining the basic assumption of an Amoraic stated – point).
שאלת בירור – INQUIRY	An “Inquiry” seeks to clarify unclear points within the source under discussion. An Inquiry may deal with the meaning of words, the Biblical sources for the Halacha, understanding the basis of a dispute, etc.	(1) What is the meaning of a word or concept in a Mishnah? For example: מאי - what is it referring to?	(2) What is the rationale of the Halachah? For example: מאי טעמה what is the reason? אמאי - why?
	(3) What is the source of the Halachah? For example: מנלן - from where do we know this? מנא הני מילי & מנין - from where are these things derived? מאי קראה - what Biblical verse is it based on?	(4) What is the Halachah in a related case? For example: בעי - he raised a (Halachik dilemma) problem איבעיא להו - they asked them the scholars in the Beit Midrash בעו מיניה they asked him מהו what is the Halachah? פשיטא לי & אלא... מאי - this is simple but what about	(5) What is the root of the dispute? For example: במאי קמיפלגי - what are they arguing about?

<p>קושיא – OBJECTION</p>	<p>An “Objection” can be raised on the basis of a source of higher authority or by means of reason and logic. The purpose of an Objection when raised against the view of an Amora, is to weaken the validity of his argument and may ultimately lead to its rejection.</p>	<p>(1) Citing a source of higher authority that contradicts a particular stated point. For example: מיתיבי - they objected אייתיבי - he objected to him מתיב - he objected נימא תיהוי תיובתיה - shall we say that this is a refutation of? מתקיף - he strongly objected</p>	<p>(2) Raising an Objection to the logic. For example: אי.. אי - if X... and if Y מה נפשך אי..ואי - in either case, if X... and if Y במאי עסקינן אי..ואי - what case are we dealing with? If X... and if Y מאי קסבר, אי Y קסבר ואי קסבר - what is the reasoning</p>	<p>(3) Raising a difficulty in understanding why the Amoraim dispute a matter that was already the subject of a Tannaic controversy. For example: לימא \ נימא כתנאי - shall we say that the Amoraic controversy parallels a Tannaic dispute</p>
<p>סתירה – CONTRADICTION</p>	<p>A “Contradiction” relates to a conflict between sources of equal authority</p>	<p>(1) Between two sources of equal authority. For example: ורמיהו - this presents a contradiction ורמי - he raises a contradiction מאי שנא הכא דתני ומאי שנא התם דתני - what is the difference that here it teaches X and – elsewhere it teaches Y? פתח ב... סיים ב - he began with and finished with</p>	<p>(2) Between different elements within the same source. For example: הא גופא קשיא - this itself is difficult</p>	<p>(3) Between a general rule and cases that appear to be exceptions. For example: וכללא הוא - is this a general rule without exceptions?</p>
<p>תשובה מבארת – CLARIFICATION</p>	<p>A “Clarification” provides the source, rationale, or meaning of a particular stated point.</p>	<p>(1) An answer to an Inquiry. For example: דאמר קרא - the Torah states איכא ביניהו - there is a difference between them</p>	<p>(2) A clarification that re-defines the stated point or source under discussion. For example: הכי קאמר - he says as follows this is how it should be understood צריכה - both stated points are necessary</p>	

<p>תשובת אוקימתא - REASSIGNMENT</p>	<p>A “Reassignment” attributes the source in question to specific circumstances or as following a specific Tannaic view. Therefore, a contradiction between sources can be resolved by reassigning one or both of the sources.</p>	<p>(1) One or both of the contradictory sources are reassigned to different <u>cases</u>. For example: הכא במאי עסקינן - what are we dealing with in this case?</p>	<p>(2) One or both of the contradictory sources are reassigned to different <u>sages</u>. For example: ר'... הא ר'... הא ר' - this is the teaching of Rabbi X and this is the teaching of Rabbi Y</p>	
<p>סיוע – REINFORCEMENT</p>	<p>A “Reinforcement” provides support or proof for any stated point from an additional source or logical argument.</p>	<p>(1) As an independent component. For example: דתניא - for it was learned in a Baraita תנינא להא דתנו רבנן we have learned in the Mishnah what was stated in the following Baraita דיקא נמי - you may also deduce it ...כי הא ד - like the case of</p>	<p>(2) As part of another component. For example: שנאמר - as it is stated in the Torah ...כדרב... - as Rabbi X stated</p>	
<p>מסקנה CONCLUSION</p>	<p>A “Conclusion” consists of an acceptance or rejection of a particular opinion, or provides an explicit Halachic ruling. A Conclusion can appear in the course of or at the end of the discussion.</p>	<p>(1) A Halachic ruling. For example: והלכתא - and the Halacha is</p>	<p>(2) Acceptance of the argument stated earlier in the Sugiya. For example: שמע מינה - conclude from this</p>	<p>(3) The Argument is difficult and is left unresolved. For example: קשיא - the statement remains difficult תיובתא - total refutation</p>

APPENDIX F: Development of TSB”P

Names of Tannaim/Amoraim for Elu Metziot	
רבי אלעזר	רבי ירמיה
ריש לקיש	רבה
רבינא	רב הונא
רב יוסף	רב נחמן
רבי יוסי הגלילי*	רבן שמעון בן אלעזר*