

Student impact - raw responses

Critical questions:

1. (How) did the assignment to **create your own sugya** about Hebrew/English or dignity/shortcomings change the way you thought about the subject you chose?
2. (How) did the assignment to **create an object** about your sugya change the way you thought about the subject?
  1. Did it feel different from other kinds of assessment?
  2. Did you feel more interested or invested in using the project to show your thoughts?

Devora S:

Hi,

I'm so glad you asked me! I definitely think the project was very good to incorporate the things we learned in class but the directions were a bit unclear. It made it seem like the artistic aspect was the most important part which I don't think should have been. I also think the points should be divided differently, because as I remember it was about even which seemed a bit weird because I think the actual sugya should have been more weighted.

It was definitely different than other projects we've had in the past and I think it is a very good project. I'm not sure if the artistic part made me more invested but it was fun. [I] Think as long as the directions are clear and thorough, your class will not freak out as much as ours (hopefully)!

Thanks so much,

Devora

Sivan B:

Hi!

1. My first plan turned out to be something I did not agree with after looking into it with more detail. So overall, the assignment helped me get a clearer opinion on these issues.
2. Again, the more I thought about the object I was going to make, more issues were developed regarding the first opinion I had changed my whole opinion entirely because the object showed the opinion visually which helped me understand it more.
  - 1) Yes it was very different than other assessments I had and I thought it was a lot more interesting and I liked it a lot more
  - 2) I did feel more interested and invested because figuring out how to express my opinion visually was fun for me

Sophia (a STEAM cohort student):

When the assignment was first handed out I was very stressed out because I didn't feel like the assignments requirements were clear but as I began to work on it I understood what the assignment was and I was able to complete it successfully. (After meeting with you) It was also hard at first because I didn't feel like I actually could complete the project since I didn't think I knew what a sugya [was] or how to structure it but I actually did and once I realized that all the skills I had acquired throughout the year I was able to figure it out. I think one of the problems I faced was not recognizing all of the things I had learned.

I really liked the creative aspect of it, it gave students who lacked the creativeness in the writing a chance to show their skills in the arts. I also thought that this was so much better than a test, memorizing texts and what happened in them is helpful for showing the teacher if the students pay super close attention etc but I think the more important part of beit midrash are the skills that you get from parsing, analyzing and studying the text not necessarily being able to spew out all the facts from a previously learned text.

Helen (a STEAM cohort student):

1. Creating my own sugya was extremely helpful in understanding the topic I discussed, and allowed me to think about it in a more personal way than we learn most texts, which I found extremely beneficial.
2. I am not artistically inclined, and it wasn't so groundbreaking for me, but I completely can see how it could be a good way for more artistic people to personalize and connect to the sugya.
  1. Yes, it was definitely different!
  2. Writing the sugya made me feel invested and interested, but the object not as much. The object felt like more of a formality.

Stefanie:

- 1) I think I understood the sugya more because it was in my words. When writing the Sugya in my own words, it was easier for me to understand the idea and my peers to understand the idea better.
- 2) Because a creative approach was incorporated with a written approach, I was able to understand the works [words] more. I was able to see an idea through different approaches to it, in my project and in my peers'; some people could have picked the same exact idea for a Sugya but displayed it differently.

- a) It was more fun than other assignments because I was able to express myself through my work. I was able to channel a creative aspect in my mind and it aided my written work.
- b) Yes, I did feel more interested when using the project because I was able to see different approaches of the same texts. It was definitely not boring and the process of learning about others people's projects was not boring, rather very interesting.

Maya:

The overarching way the sugya project changed the way I thought about when to speak Hebrew was about absolutes - should we always speak Hebrew in this or that situation. The objections I made both dealt with exceptions to an absolute. The second objection in particular (about whether or not the people you're with would be made uncomfortable) leapt out at me when I was brainstorming what to write about, because it fluctuates and is different in every situation. Although I didn't completely recognize it at the time, that brought up the inherent limitations of laws: everyone is different, and there is an uncountable number of ways a law will eventually have to be interpreted. Now that I'm writing this and thinking it out, that leads to an individual interpreting the law in the way they see fit, and through that the importance of education. I'm rambling here, but what I want to get at is that looking at the example of when to speak Hebrew, and really thinking about potential problems and applications, changed the way I thought about it in that any conclusion I come to won't work for everyone. It's not just about what things to speak Hebrew for, it's also about who to speak Hebrew with.

The object portion of the project was a very unique person-to-person because there was so much you could do with it. Personally, the way the key ring that I made held the arguments and statements in a circle, connecting the first and the last, was most important. The first part was my beginning statement, and directly to the left of it was the final statement, which made me think about how much things can change after you look into them. I'd started with an "always", and I ended with a statement about being considerate of others. A "look how far we've come" type thing.

The project in general was different from other assessments in that it felt way more stress-free. Since there were so many ways to interpret the prompt, it was fun to find a creative way to go about it. Doing something that I really liked made me more invested in the project. Making the object didn't feel like work, it was fun. I think what ultimately made the object part so enjoyable was that people

could do something that they really liked, and in a way that made them happy. I'm thinking of Stef's flower, with the arguments on the petals. It's unique, it's personal, and it looks like it was a whole lot of fun to make.

I hope this feedback helps. I really liked this project.

Mia:

1 *(How) did the assignment to create your own sugya about Hebrew/English or dignity/shortcomings change the way you thought about the subject you chose?*

My sugya was about not announcing your "good grades" or accomplishments out loud to a large group of people. It changed the way I thought about that subject because I am now extremely careful about what I say/ how I say things- I do not want to make anyone feel badly.

2. *(How) did the assignment to create an object about your sugya change the way you thought about the subject?*

- By creating the object I was able to see all of the "words" laid out in the form of a collage. Words like "beautiful" and "strong" really stood out to me and showed me how powerful they can actually be. Instead of making someone feel badly, and thinking without saying something as small as "I got an 100 on this test", it taught me to really consider my word choice. It showed me how even words as common as those could really change the way a person feels.

--> This assignment felt different than other assignments and I really enjoyed it. I love being creative[;] creating an object was very fun for me and a way to express my thoughts. I also thought that the written part was not too much and a great way to reflect on a major part of the curriculum.

--> I felt more invested in creating the object because **I personally I am a visual learner and love expressing my thoughts through images.**