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Your Choice

Answer one of the following:

- What is a way you show responsibility?
- What are three regular chores you are responsible for at home?
- Who is one of your role models? Why?
The root of *achrayut* (אכריית) comes from the Hebrew word *acher* (אחר), meaning other.

We have to answer for our own actions and make others’ needs and concerns our own.
You've heard your mother, your grandmother, your dad, your aunt, your teacher, and/or your coach remind you of your responsibility.

What do we mean by that word responsibility?
Who is the most responsible person you know?

How do they show responsibility?
Achrayut is defined as “responsibility.”

Achrayut tells us how we should respond, answer, or account for our decisions and actions.
INTRODUCTION TO ACHRAYUT

Share a personal experience of taking responsibility.

What are the benefits of being a responsible person at home, school, or part of a team? Are there benefits to being irresponsible?

What are they?
One way we show responsibility is looking out for the environment, the land, and the planet.
THE MITZVAH הָוְצִמָּה OF STEWARDSHIP

What have you done today that impacts the environment?
Is it a mitzvah (a commandment) to take care of the environment?

Does Judaism have something to say about our responsibility toward the environment?
THE MITZVAH מִצְוָה OF STEWARDSHIP

Read Midrash Kohelet Rabbah 7:13

When God created the first human beings, God led them around to all the trees of the Garden of Eden and said: “Look at My works! See how beautiful they are—how excellent! For your sake I created them all. See to it that you do not spoil and destroy My world; for if you do, there will be no one else to repair it.”
Discussion Questions

- If God created the world for us to use, does that mean that we can use it however we please?
- Are we responsible for preserving our natural resources?
THE MITZVAH מִצוּדָּה OF STEWARDSHIP

- How do we show that we appreciate the natural resources that we have been given?
- How can we balance our need and desire to use modern technology and disposable products with our concern for the environment?
The Most Beautiful Place

Write a detailed description of a natural place that you think is beautiful.

- What is necessary to be a “steward” and care for that place?
- Use the term “steward” in your writing.
THE MITZVAH מִצְָוָה OF STEWARDSHIP

Describe your place to the class.

As you are speaking, the class will try to draw what is being described.
BRAIN BREAK

Be a steward!

- Take a quick trip around your classroom or school.
- Identify areas that need stewardship, or someone to take responsibility.
- Think creatively about which areas need care and what you can do to help.
The commandment of *bal tashchit*—do not destroy or waste—has long been considered central to a Jewish environmental ethic.

Jewish tradition widely forbids wasteful acts and needless destruction, and teaches us how *not* wasting can help us improve our lives both physically and spiritually.
Devarim/Deuteronomy 20:19-20:

“When in your war against a city you must besiege it a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy its trees, wielding the ax against them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down. Are trees of the field human to withdraw before you into the besieged city? Only trees that you know do not yield food may be destroyed; you may cut them down for constructing siege works against the city that is waging war on you, until it has been reduced.”
BAL TASHCHIT גל המתחית TEXT STUDY

יימ. כי תצוה אל עיר ימי ויביס חלקות עלייה חפשת לא
השחיתה את עשת קמה עלייה עלי פרצה כי ממון האכל ואלקו לא
תוכרת כי الجهات עין השדיה לבנآ מפקית במתור.

כ. כי עשה השדיה כי לא עשת מהלום הווא אultimo השחיתזכרה
נבטית מצוור על היום אשר הוזה ונשאו שמה מלוחמה עד ראתה:

WELCOME ACTIVITY 1 ACTIVITY 2 BREAK ACTIVITY 3 ACTIVITY 4 ACTIVITY 5 ACTIVITY 6 WRAP UP
Discussion Questions

● Where do you see waste in your everyday life?

● How do you feel when you see others wasting food or resources? Does it bother you? Do you notice?
What do you think is worse: wasting time or wasting resources?

Think about the midrash of Adam in the Garden of Eden we studied earlier. Why do you think the Torah sees *bal tashchit* as such a terrible thing?
Share one example of *bal tashchit* - do not destroy or waste from your life that this text reminds you of:

Whoever breaks vessels, or tears garments, or destroys a building, or clogs a well, or does away with food in a destructive manner violates the negative *mitzvah* of *bal tashchit* - do not destroy or waste (*Kiddushin 32a*).
Share one example of bal tashchit from your life that this text reminds you of:

Rav Zutra taught: “One who covers an old lamp or uncovers a naptha lamp [actions which burn extra fuel] transgresses the prohibition of wasteful destruction (bal tashchit פל רותיה).” (Shabbat 67b)
Share one example of *bal tashchit* from your life that this text reminds you of:

One should be trained not to be destructive. When you bury a person, do not waste garments by burying them in the grave. It is better to give them to the poor than to cast them to worms and moths. Anyone who buries the dead in an expensive garment violates the negative *mitzvah* of *bal tashchit*. (Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Mourning 14:24)
Discussion Questions

- What do you think is worse? Wasting time or wasting resources?
- Think about the midrash of Adam in the Garden of Eden from Kohelet Rabbah that we studied at the beginning of class. Why do you think that the Torah sees bal tashchit as such a terrible thing?
VIDEO: AM HA’ARETZ

Watch this clip about how personal interest can lead to environmental impact.
VIDEO: AM HA’ARETZ

Discussion Questions

- In what ways did planting a garden make an impact?
- How did Am Ha’Aretz get started?
- What is something you are interested in or passionate about, that could help the environment?
VIDEO: AM HA’ARETZ

Discussion Questions

● How are the people who work at this recycling plant/sustainable farm doing a mitzvah וְצִמַּהוּ?

● How can we learn from their actions?

● What can we do to “take care of the garden” in our homes, schools, and community?
VALUES IN ACTION: BAL TASHCHIT

- Walk around and look for five ways that you could improve the environment. For example, could you add a recycling bin? Replace old light bulbs with energy-efficient ones?
- Write a letter to the building administrators or to your parents with your ideas.
TU B’SHVAT וּט בָּשָׁבַע SNACK
Our Jewish values and traditions connect us to the environment.

Next Week:
What do we do when we find something of value that doesn’t belong to us?
TABLE TALK

What are some things we could do as a family as an expression of our commitment to the value of *achrayut* (אַחְרָיָות) to the environment?