Fight Famine

Text connection:
From *Bereishit* (Genesis) chapter 41

שֶׁבַע שָׁנִים שָׂבָע גָּדוֹל ... שֶׁבַע שְׁנֵי רָעָב.
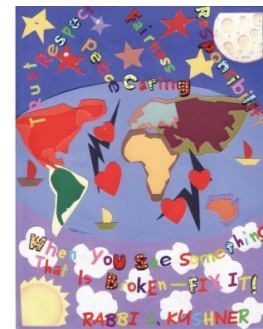
She-va sha-nim sa-va ga-dol ... she-va she-nei ra-av.

Seven fat years … seven lean years.

Joseph is rescued from prison to interpret Pharaoh's dream. He warns that seven years of plenty will be followed by seven years of famine.

Questions to consider:
- A famine is a shortage of food. What might cause a famine?
- What's the difference between being hungry and starving?
- Joseph responds to Pharaoh's dream with a plan to conserve grain. How can you waste less food?

Fix the World

Text connection:
From *Vayikra* (Leviticus) 19:18

וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֲךָ כָּמוֹךָ.

Ve-a-hav-ta le-rei-a-cha ka-mo-cha.

Love your neighbors as yourself.

Questions to consider:
- Who are your neighbors at home and in school?
- What makes a good neighbor?
- Draw or look at a map to identify the neighborhood of your synagogue. How can your synagogue be a good neighbor in the community? Look at maps of the country and the world to expand the conversation.

Let's Get Along

Text connection:
From *Bereishit* (Genesis)1:27

בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא [אֶת־הָאָדָם].

Be-tze-lem e-lo-him ba-ra [et ha-a-dam].

In God's image was humankind created.

Questions to consider:
- Humans are created in God's image, yet the Torah says God is not a physical being. If you can't be like God physically, in what ways can you be like God?
- How do we show that we recognize everyone is created in God's image?
- Brainstorm ways to treat people with dignity and respect.

Help Me, I'm Homeless

Text connection:
From *Bamidbar* (Numbers) 24:5 and the siddur (prayer book)

מַה טֹּבוּ אֹהָלֶיךָ, יַעֲקֹב.

Mah to-vu o-ha-le-cha Ya-a-kov.

Balaam, a wizard, is sent to curse the people of Israel, yet when he sees the tents of the community he says, "How goodly are your tents, [O people of] Jacob."

Questions to consider:
- What is important about having a home?
- How do people become homeless?
- How do you feel when you see a homeless person?
- What can we do as a community to help homeless people?

Tikkun Olam
Instant Lessons with Poster

Visions of Tikkun Olam

Dear Educators,

Bring your teaching of Jewish values alive with lessons that stimulate the visual/spatial intelligences. This beautiful poster, created by children, will spark rich discussions in your classroom.

This poster was inspired by a Voices & Visions™ art contest for children on the topic of *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world). Children between the ages of seven and twelve were invited to interpret this quote from Rabbi Lawrence Kushner: "If you see something that is broken, fix it." The children's images illustrate some of the many ways one can start to repair our world. Their visions suggest that our world needs environmental and social improvements.
Read more about the pictures at:
www.voices-visions.org/tikkunolam

Here are some ideas for how to use these instant lessons:

- A lesson might open your class, transition between subjects, or spice up extra time.
- We have chosen familiar Hebrew texts that relate to each image. Introduce the image when you are teaching the corresponding Torah story, *siddur* (prayer book) text, or vocabulary.
- Kick off or enrich a values lesson with the discussion questions and activities on the following pages.
- Enhance your lesson with music. Look through your Hebrew music collections for coordinating songs.

We would love to hear how you use the poster and lessons at **pjgts@hgf.org**.

Feed the Hungry

Text connection:
From the opening paragraph of *Birkat Hamazon* (Grace after meals)

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, הַזָּן אֶת הַכֹּל.

Ba-ruch a-ta A-do-nai, ha-zan et ha-kol.

Blessed are You, Adonai, who provides nourishment for all.

Questions to consider:
- What does it feel like to be hungry?
- Many people only have one meal a day – if they are lucky.
- Why might some people not have enough to eat?
- The blessing says God provides food for all. How can we help God feed the hungry?

Smile

Text connection:
From *Pirkei Avot* 1:15 (*Ethics of Our Ancestors*)

[שַׁמַּאי אוֹמֵר:] הֱוֵי מְקַבֵּל אֶת כָּל הָאָדָם בְּסֵבֶר פָּנִים יָפוֹת.

[Sha-mai o-mer:] He-vei m'ka-beil et kol ha-a-dam b'se-ver pa-nim ya-fot.

Shammai says: Greet people with a cheerful face.

Questions to consider:
- How do you feel when someone smiles at you?
- What difference can you make with a smile?
- Should you smile when you're not feeling happy? Why or why not?

Be the Change

Text connection:
From *Pirkei Avot* 1:14 (*Ethics of Our Ancestors*)

הִלֵּל אוֹמֵר:
אִם אֵין אֲנִי לִי - מִי לִי?
וּכְשֶׁאֲנִי לְעַצְמִי - מָה אֲנִי?
וְאִם לֹא עַכְשָׁיו, אֵימָתַי?

Hi-lel o-mer: Im ein a-ni li, mi li? Uch-she-a-ni l'-atz-mi, mah a-ni? V'-im lo ach-shav, ei-ma-tai?

Hillel says:
If I am not for myself, who will be for me?
And if I am only for myself, what am I?
And if not now, when?

Questions to consider:
- The people in this poster are working as a team. What are they doing and why?
- What teams or groups are you part of, and what do you accomplish?
- Your class is a group. What positive changes could your class make?

Go Green

Text connection:
From *Bereishit* (Genesis) 2:15

וַיִּקַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם וַיַּנִּחֵהוּ בְגַן־עֵדֶן לְעָבְדָהּ וּלְשָׁמְרָהּ.
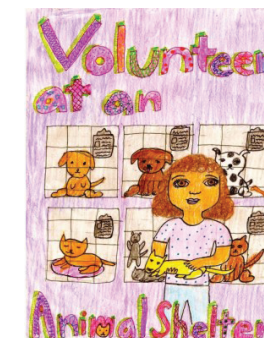
Va-yi-kach Adonai e-lo-him et-ha-a-dam va-ya-ni-chei-hu ve-gan ei-den le-av-da ul-sham-ra.

God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and to watch over it.

Questions to consider:
- What does cultivate mean? What does it mean to watch over the earth?
- In what ways do we use the earth's resources?
- How can we be "green" at home and at school?
- Give an example of one way you can reduce, reuse, and recycle.

Fix the Darkness

Text connection:
The beginning of the *Shacharit* (morning) service contains this blessing:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ, עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא אֶת הַכֹּל.

Ba-ruch a-ta A-do-nai, E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-o-lam, yo-tzeir or u-vo-rei cho-shech, o-se sha-lom u-vo-rei et ha-kol.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God and sovereign, who brings forth light and darkness, makes peace, and creates everything.

Questions to consider:
- The Talmud teaches that each *mitzvah* (commandment or good deed) adds light to our world and changes it for the better. How can you be a light?
- What *mitzvot* (plural) can you do to make the world better?
- God created darkness, too. Why do we need light and dark?

Make the World Beautiful

Text connection:
Rabbi Meir, a great sage, said each person should recite 100 blessings every day. One blessing is for seeing something or someone of great beauty.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁכָּכָה לּוֹ בְּעוֹלָמוֹ.

Ba-ruch a-ta A-do-nai, E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-o-lam, she-ka-cha lo b'o-la-mo.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God and sovereign, who has caused this to exist in the world.

Questions to consider:
- Why should we be thankful for beautiful things?
- What can you do to make the world a more beautiful place?
- Classroom challenge: Name one hundred things for which you are thankful.

Shalom/Salaam

Text connection:
From a popular folk song:

עוֹד יָבוֹא שָׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כֻּלָּם.

Od ya-vo sha-lom a-lei-nu ve-al ku-lam.

There will yet be peace for us and for everyone.

Questions to consider:
- What are the two languages in this poster?
- The Hebrew word *shalom* and the Arabic word *salaam* share a root – wholeness (*shalem*). What is the connection between wholeness and peace?
- Sometimes conflicts arise when people speak different languages and have different beliefs. The children in the poster are together. When you have a conflict, how do you solve it?

Volunteer at an Animal Shelter

Text connection:
From the Talmud, *Bava Metzia* 32b

צַעַר בַּעֲלֵי חַיִּים.

Tza-ar ba-a-lei cha-yim

[Prevent] the suffering of animals.

Questions to consider:
- This poster shows animals in a shelter, waiting to go to a loving home. What other animals need our help and why?
- Eco-*kashrut* extends Jewish dietary laws to include quality of life for animals and farm workers. Design your ideal farm or animal shelter.