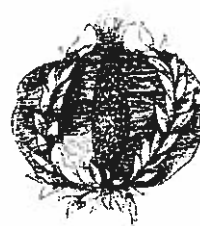


**AR?
W?
TH?R?
Y?T**

**A Curriculum
Exploring the Power of Questions**

Created March 2011

**CONTEMPORARY
JEWISH MUSEUM**



The Covenant Foundation

Are We There Yet? A Curriculum Exploring the Power of Questions

Table of Contents

Preface

Lesson I: The Power of Questioning and Finding Ourselves in the Process

Lesson II: The People of the Questions

Lesson III: Questioning and Social Change

Culmination Activity

Source Materials and Student Handouts

**CONTEMPORARY
JEWISH MUSEUM**



The Covenant Foundation

This *Are We There Yet?* curriculum and the LINK fellowship was made possible with an ignition grant from The Covenant Foundation. Teacher programs and free public school tours at the CJM are made possible by Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Inc.

Are We There Yet? 5000 Years of Answering Questions with Questions is a collaboration between Ken Goldberg, Gil Gershoni, and the Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco. The project has been made possible with special seed funding from the Creative Work Fund, a program of the Walter and Elise Haas Fund supported by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and The James Irvine Foundation. Major support has been provided by the Jim Joseph Foundation. Additional support generously provided by Meyer Sound Laboratories Inc.

Koret and Taube Foundations are the lead supporters of the 2010/11 exhibition season.



Are We There Yet? A Curriculum Exploring the Power of Questions

About this Curriculum

Inspired by the act of questioning celebrated in the Contemporary Jewish Museum exhibition, *Are We There Yet?*, this curriculum explores the purpose and impact of personal questions, illuminates the importance of questions in Jewish tradition, and encourages students to consider the power of questioning to affect social change. Designed for students in grades 7-12, the curriculum may be used in conjunction with a Museum visit or as a stand-alone experience.

This curriculum was co-developed with seven bay area educators who partook in a year-long LINK fellowship at the CJM and Museum education staff. These fellows include: Jessica Alper, Minna Dubin, Marilyn Heiss, Harrison Krat, Dan Lange, Josh Levine, and Erez Saldinger. Fraidy Aber and Janine Okmin from CJM staff also worked on this curriculum.

Information about the LINK project

LINK: A Jewish Art & Technology Initiative is a CJM project that was launched in spring 2010 with an Ignition Grant from the Covenant Foundation.

LINK is a multidimensional initiative which brought together a lecture series, a year-long educator fellowship, and an innovative exhibition to take a close look at the intersection of Judaism, Art, and Technology.

The year-long project included:

- 1) Six-part lecture series (at the Museum with recordings made available to the online community at thecjm.org/link) featuring Jewish educators, technologists, artists and cultural leaders, who are driving new thinking on issues of Jewish culture and technology.
- 2) An interactive exhibition, *Are We There Yet?*, by media artists Ken Goldberg and Gil Gershoni that explores the Jewish tradition of questioning as a model for communal conversation in the digital age.
- 3) Yearlong curriculum-building consortium of Jewish educators collaborating to create a robust curriculum in conjunction with the upcoming Museum exhibition.

Social Media Educator Connections

With the launch of the **Are We There Yet Curriculum**, the CJM and LINK fellows are pleased to announce the launch of a new, interactive curriculum platform – on a **Facebook page**. Available by searching Are We There Yet Curriculum on Facebook, this platform creates a community of educators, and enables educators to download the curriculum and additional related resources, comment on lessons, share suggestions and variations, and post their class activities, photos or videos. It is our hope that educators will feel supported and connected to colleagues with shared interest through this curriculum sharing page. We invite you to participate in this unique forum and share your experiences.

Information about the exhibition *Are We There Yet?*

If not now, when? What's your hurry? Why is this night different than all other nights? Are you experienced? When does life begin? Why do Jews always answer a question with a question? Do you feel lucky? Do you love me? Are you Jewish? What, me worry?

Search and questioning are at the core of Jewish cultural and spiritual identity. Jews of all ages are encouraged to question assumptions and authorities, taking to heart the Yiddish proverb: "One who does not ask, does not know."

Are We There Yet? is a new media art installation in the Museum's Yud Gallery by Bay Area artists Ken Goldberg and Gil Gershoni that celebrates the inquisitive impulse. An immersive sound environment, the installation poses questions from a variety of sources including the Talmud, literature, and popular culture. Questions vary based on visitors' movement through the space.

Each visit is a unique mix of playfulness, poetry, and spiritual journey. A companion website, www.are-we-there-yet.com, allows visitors to suggest questions for the exhibition and to playfully explore the suggestions of others. *Are We There Yet?* encourages visitors to reflect on the rich history and future of curiosity.

The Art of Questions Tour

In conjunction with this exhibition, CJM will be offering the Art of Questions tour. This tour takes students on a journey throughout several exhibitions—a journey that explores the power of questioning. The tour highlights the new, immersive sound installation *Are We There Yet* and examines the role questioning has played in Jewish culture as well as the impact of questioning on individuals and on contemporary society. The tour's other interactive stops include the exhibitions *Charlotte Salomon: Life? Or Theatre?*, with a focus on personal questions and *StoryCorps* as an entry into the questions we ask each other. This highly-interactive tour encourages students to respond, reflect, and ultimately compose their own questions.

Using this curriculum in conjunction with the Art of Questions Tour

Curricula designed to be used in connection with a Museum visit are often divided into pre- and post- visit lessons. If used with a visit to the CJM, Unit I may be used to prepare students and Units II and III may be used as follow-up lessons.

To Book a Tour

Email tours@thecjm.org Call 415-655-7856 or book online at: www.thecjm.org/teachers

About the Contemporary Jewish Museum:

With the opening of its new building on June 8, 2008, the Contemporary Jewish Museum (CJM) ushered in a new chapter in its twenty-plus year history of engaging audiences and artists in exploring contemporary perspectives on Jewish culture, history, art, and ideas. The new facility, designed by internationally renowned architect Daniel Libeskind, is a lively center where people of all ages and backgrounds can gather to experience art, share diverse perspectives, and engage in hands-on activities. Inspired by the Hebrew phrase "L'Chaim" (To Life), the building is a physical

embodiment of the CJM's mission to bring together tradition and innovation in an exploration of the Jewish experience in the 21st century. To learn more about the CJM visit thecjm.org

For Teachers on Asking Questions

As you delve into a journey of questioning with your students, consider the important role questions and questioning plays in your teaching practice.

In this age of standardized testing and multiple choice answers, students are accustomed to being asked (and answering) questions with a right or wrong answer. Too often, this kind of questioning tests memorization of information, and may not emphasize enduring understanding and multiple perspectives. On the other hand, enduring understanding *can* be cultivated through asking different sorts of questions—open-ended questions that promote critical thinking and the unique perspective of the individual student. “Inquiry-based learning” is a method grounded in cultivating students’ curiosity, and is the educational technique most commonly used by museum educators. For example, rather than, “What shape is this leaf?” an educator using open-ended questions might ask “What do you notice about this leaf?” Students may then share their observations, and educators can encourage the critical thinking process by asking appropriate follow-up questions that oblige students to support their answers with evidence and justify their response. Laurel Schmidt, author of *Classroom Confidential: The 12 Secrets of Great Teachers* suggests that the following steps stimulate enduring learning and true cognition.

1. Ask initiating questions.
2. Ask questions to respond and follow up, asking students to support their answers.
3. Insert information at key points.

Using open-ended questions to teach helps students learn to think independently, support their answers with evidence, and form their own (educated) opinions and judgments. Ideally, going through this guided process in the classroom will ultimately help them internalize these critical thinking skills, creating a more thoughtful, inquisitive, and critical mind.

In addition to teaching with open-ended questions, many educators also teach with essential questions. These questions are the big, over-arching questions that can drive a lesson, a unit, or even an entire curriculum. Essential questions get at the true point of a lesson—what do you want students to learn? A good essential questions leads to more questions and can be the entry point to a variety of projects and conversations. An example of an essential question for this curriculum might be, “why are questions important?” or “what can we learn about Jewish tradition through questions?”

This lesson begins by familiarizing students with their own questions as well as with those of their peers. Starting with this framework, students will be able to draw connections between their personal reflections that are revealed in this first lesson and the broader questions in upcoming lessons II and III.

Goals:

1. Introduce students to questioning
2. Show how the act of questioning is relevant to students' lives and reflects perceptions of place and time

Materials Needed/Preparation:

- 3x5 cards
- Pens/pencils
- Copies of Stories I and II from Source Material
- Computer for *Our Questions* activity if you choose the texting process

Source Materials:

- Story I: Isidor I. Rabi Story
- Story II: "The Reencounter" by Isaac Bashevis Singer

Introductory Activity: Cultivating the Questioners (15 minutes)

The game begins with your students standing in a circle. Start by asking the student on your right a question. Without answering, that student turns to the person on his right and asks her a question. This questioning without answering continues around the circle.

Example: Player 1: Why am I so tired?
Player 2: Where's the bathroom?
Player 3: Did you see the full moon last night?
And so on....

The game ends after a round or two, once everyone gets the hang of it. You can make it competitive by saying a player is "out" if the student stumbles, misses a beat, or makes a statement instead of asking a question. This continues as the circle whittles down to the final two players and they have a question standoff.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did it feel to not answer the questions?
2. How did asking questions feel as it went on? Did it get easier or harder?
3. What was the tone of the questions?
4. Do you think asking questions is a skill, like playing an instrument, where you have to practice to get better at it?

Primary Activity

Part I: Introduction to the Importance of Questioning (30 minutes)

Now that your students have “whet their questioning whistles,” they are ready to read and consider questions as they are addressed in two short stories.

Read stories I and II from the Lesson I source material. Then use the questions provided to guide the class in a thoughtful discussion on questioning.

Story I: Isidor I Rabi

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the differences between Izzy’s mother’s question and the other neighborhood mothers’ questions?
2. Why do you think his mother emphasized asking?
3. How do you think questioning led to science? What else can asking lead to?
4. What in your opinion is a good question?

Story II: *The Reencounter* by Isaac Bashevis Singer

Preparation

Isaac Bashevis Singer (1902 – 1991) was one of the great storytellers of the 20th century. Born in a village near Warsaw, Poland, Singer immigrated to the United State in 1935. Isaac Bashevis Singer, who always wrote in Yiddish, won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1978.

Note: This story is about an imagined encounter between two people after their deaths. This story may bring up emotions based on students’ personal experiences with the death of a loved one or their own ideas about life and death and require a sensitive introduction.

There are a lot of questions posed by the characters in this story. You might ask students to underline the text each time a question is raised. Or you might divide the class into smaller groups and have the students select three people in each group to read the story (as narrator, Liza, and Max), while the rest of the group listens. Bring the class back together for the discussion.

Discussion Questions:

1. What happened in this story?
2. How would you describe this story: Is this a love story? Is this a theoretical exploration of afterlife? Is this a story about the impact one has in his or her life?
3. What questions do you have about the story?
4. What are some of the big universal questions that this story considers? (For example, *Is my life meaningful? What happens when I die? Do I make an effort to stay connected to the people who are important to me?*)
5. What ideas does this story broach that you have also wondered about? *For example, Max’s reencounter with Liza brings up the complicated nature of human relationships, and may remind students of their own questions, “With whom in my life should I keep in touch?” Or, “With whom should I reconnect?” or contrary to Max’s disinterest, they may have wondered “Who would come to my funeral?”*

Primary Activity

Part II: *Our Questions* (60 minutes)

We first looked at the power of questions to transform Ravi I Isidor's life, and then connected with the philosophical questions asked by the characters in *The Reencounter* that may have resonated with the students' personal questions. Now primed with the idea of personal questions, we will ask students to consider their own questions as well listen to each other's.

In this activity, the students may hear more than questions; they may hear the feelings and circumstances that inspire such questions. The act of listening, or being listened to, can be transformative. Maybe one student will hear a question that he also has and feel he's not alone. Or another student will hear a question she didn't realize she had until that moment. This exercise will help students recognize the universality of questioning.

Note: This activity is meant to be reflective. To create this mood, you may lower the lights or ask for this activity to be done in silence.

Question Prompts:

Note: Feel free to choose the questions that best fit your students or add in your own.

- A question you would like to ask your mother
- A question you would like to ask a rabbi
- A question you would like to ask God
- A question you might ask yourself when you look in the mirror
- A question you would like to ask someone who could predict the future
- A question you would like someone else to ask you
- A question you don't like being asked
- A question you have for the world at large
- A question you wish people would start asking more
- A question that inspires you

Process:

Low tech process:

1. Pass out ten 3x5 cards to each student.
2. Read the question prompts aloud and have students write the key word(s) underlined above, one per card.
3. On the flipside of each card, ask students to write a question they have that corresponds with the prompt.
4. Next, collect the cards so there are ten piles, one for each question. You may want to read them for content. You can ask the students to put a fold in the corner of a card if they prefer it is not shared.
5. Pass the cards back out at random so every student has one card per prompt.
6. Give the students an order ("number off").
7. In the order you gave, ask the students to go around and read their classmates' questions on the cards. You can do this in many ways: Go through each question prompt, one at a time, so all the mother questions will be read aloud, followed by rabbi questions, and so

on. Or ask students to read the questions at random so they can silently wonder which prompt spurred what questions.

Interactive Technology Alternative Using Texting:

1. Before class, using the free (and simple) service provided at polleverywhere.com, sign up for a free k-12 plan (which includes 32 student responses per poll) and enter each prompt below as its own poll. You will receive a number for each prompt.
2. Arrange for a computer in the classroom, to be logged on to the polleverywhere website.
3. One prompt at a time, ask the students to text their responses to the number you received from polleverywhere.com. (The service ensures that the students can only answer once per poll from each phone.)
4. The text responses will appear in live time on the computer screen.
5. Select student to read the responses out loud. (You may want to share after each prompt.)

Note: Save these 3x5 cards or the text results for the curriculum's culminating activity.

Conclusion/Reflection Discussion Questions:*Younger Students*

1. What was it like to have a roomful of people hear your questions?
2. What was it like to read aloud a classmate's question?
3. What similarities or differences did you find in the questions you heard?
4. Did you hear any questions that you also have?
5. Could any of the questions written for one prompt have been written for another?

Middle students

6. Did all the questions we heard need answering? Why or why not?
7. Why might it be valuable to ask a question (whether or not it gets answered)?
8. Do questions tell you anything about the person who asked them?
9. What might make one feel a question is unaskable?
10. What about a question that you knew you *shouldn't* ask, but asked anyway? What happened?

Older Students

11. After having heard all of your classmates' questions, what do you now know about who you are as a group of people?
12. How do the questions we ask reflect who we are?
13. How would it have felt to scream your question to the sky with no one around?
14. Do you need witnesses for your question to feel heard?
15. How can a question that isn't heard make an impact?

In Lesson II, your students will discover questioning as one of Judaism's cornerstones.

Note to teachers: Whereas typically a unit on Jewish study might begin with the oldest text source, this unit begins by looking at Jewish personal practice, then continues by delving into the questioning method for learning used by sages. It will close by studying the 'raw' Torah itself. This will allow us to follow a trajectory:

- Questioning the personal - what is before us every day
- Questioning for learning – as a method for in-depth inquiry
- Questioning our greater society - using universal lessons that can be revealed by studying the questioning in the Torah stories of our ancestors

The freedom -- some might say *imperative* -- to question nurtures the development of active participants in the Jewish culture and religion.

Goals:

1. Connect students to Judaism's rich tradition of asking questions
2. Promote dialogue and the inclusion of varying opinions

Materials needed:

- Flipchart sheets of paper
- Markers
- Pens
- Masking Tape or Post-Its
- Copies of source material for the class
- Multiple Bibles/Chumashim if you would rather have the students find the biblical quotes

Source Materials:

- Biblical Excerpts

Introductory Activity: Questioning the Everyday (15 minutes)

Jerry Seinfeld has made a career of questioning the everyday. He's made America laugh by highlighting the everyday and inviting us to look at how silly, sometimes ridiculous, our social norms can be.

- A. Hand out the Seinfeld quotes and have the students take turns reading them aloud.
- B. Watch one or more of the clips below and ask the students to write down any questions they hear, or to try and figure out what is the question he's asking with each joke.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FzhypkGmdBA>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KzOSkO8BZFw&feature=related>

Discussion Questions:

1. What is Jerry questioning in each quote or clip?
2. Why do you think he is questioning it? Would the jokes work if he said them as statements and not as questions?
3. What is the common link between all of these questions?
4. What questions were relevant to you?
5. How do you think this relates to Judaism or Jewish practice?

Much as Jerry Seinfeld questions the everyday, seemingly accepted, or mundane, we as Jews are implored to question the accepted traditions during the Passover seder.

Part I: Questioning in Jewish Practice (20 minutes)

It is taught that the Passover Seder is celebrated especially for children. The commandment to “tell your children about the exodus from Egypt” appears multiple times in the Torah.

How is this obligation fulfilled? When Passover comes around each year we know to expect certain things. There will be matzah. The story of exodus from slavery in Egypt is told, and just after the retelling (*magid*) portion of the Seder begins, the youngest at the table recites the Four Questions.

Directions: Pass out the four questions and ask one of the students to read them aloud.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the nature of these questions?
2. Why do you think the youngest is meant to ask these questions?
3. Why do you think we ask these same questions every year?

The fact that every person, even the youngest present, is expected to participate and question (even question longstanding traditions) in the Passover Seder is indicative of the importance of questioning in Jewish tradition. Now that we have taken a short look into questioning in Jewish practice (a somewhat more personal look at practice), we will take a look at questioning as a way to engage with the text, and as a way to invite various voices and interpretations to the table.

Part II: Questioning as Vigorous Learning – or Rashi’s Unspoken Question

(25 minutes) In Jewish tradition, Torah is not encountered as passive reading. In Jewish tradition, we *wrestle* with the text, probing the meaning of words and passages. This process results in many opinions and perspectives. Through this cooperative and interactive learning method, we are taught to question and accept that there is often more than one right answer (demonstrated by the range of opinions and perspectives in the Talmud). By encouraging critical and communal reading of our holiest texts, Judaism implicitly promotes the receptiveness to diverse views and ideas.

Process:

Introduce the concept of *chavruta*:

Chavruta (noun: group, coming from the same root as *chaver*, meaning friend) is a traditional approach to learning in which pairs study a shared text through discussion and debate (or in *chavruta*).

Introduce Rashi:

Rashi was the outstanding Biblical commentator of the Middle Ages (1040 – 1105). At twenty-five, he founded his own academy in France. Rashi's commentary is regularly studied with Torah learning and was so well read that well over 200 commentators have since commented on Rashi's comments.

Rashi would use very few words in his commentary. Instead of stating his question, his commentary goes right to his 'answer' to the difficulty he saw in the text. Every Rashi comment is an answer to a question (like Jeopardy). But, what is his question? That is the activity we are about to dive into.

Activity:

Divide the students into *chavruta* 'groups' – for each discussion section.

Allot 7 minutes for group discussion followed by 5 minutes of sharing time.

Moses' Birth Discussion:

Read the Birth of Moses and the associated Rashi commentary.

1. What happens in this Passage?
2. What questions do you have about the story?
3. Why might Rashi have chosen to expand upon the simple definition of "he was good"?
4. What might it mean to have a house fill with light?
5. What might be associated with light?

Read the second text source about the creation of light.

6. What is the connection between these two texts?
7. What might it teach us about Moses?

Reflection: How did the process of working in a group give you additional insight? What was this process like?

Note to teachers: If you would like to present a second Rashi excerpt, the source material includes the two biblical sources on remembering/keeping the Sabbath. The changes in language used in the Torah during the two instances that the Israelites heard the commandment about the Sabbath has a very interesting and well known Rashi interpretation. You can use similar discussion questions as above to ask students to consider the differences in the two Sabbath passages.

You can also find additional Rashi excerpts with explanation on the webpage:

<http://www.shemayisrael.com/parsha/bonchek/index.htm>

Part 3: Questioning and the Almighty (30 minutes)

Now that students have been introduced to guided *chavruta* study and to questioning the text, we will continue with the *chavruta* format to explore excerpts from the Torah in which our ancestors question God's rulings or decisions. Whereas the Four Questions and Rashi Commentary may have shown instances of questioning in Jewish tradition, in looking at the Torah itself, we find the ultimate instances in which our ancestors themselves employed questions in their interactions with God. This may be the ultimate source of the Jewish allowance and insistence on questioning and serves as a great source for encouraging broader questions about society.

Process:

1. Split your class into groups of five.
2. Give each group a blank flipchart page and one of the excerpt pages.
3. Ask the groups to read their excerpt, discuss the following questions, and write their ideas on the blank flipchart page.

Answer the following based on the questions that each of our ancestors ask:

- What is going on in this passage?
- How would you describe the relationship between the person(s) that is asking the question and the responder?
- Why do you think the character questions the original decision or ruling?
- What emotions do you think the character may have been feeling when he asked the question(s)? What is the tone of their question?
- What kind of answer do you think the asker was hoping for, or, if he received an answer, how do you think he felt about the answer he received?
- Do you have any additional questions you would ask?

Conclusion

Once the groups have finished, bring the class together and have each group share their passage. Conclude with a whole-class discussion on tradition, including the consequences, difficulty, and empowerment of questioning tradition and authority.

- Why do you think our traditional texts show so many instances of people questioning authority or God?
- Do you think the character was respectful in their asking? Why or why not?
- What can we learn from this?

Note to teacher: After Units I and II, your students should be comfortable with questioning. Both units highlighted questioning's inherent value: Unit I demonstrated that questioning can help us know ourselves and others better, and that it can form connections, which in turn encourages community building; Unit II showed how deep the roots of questioning are in the Jewish tradition, and how Jews have been asking questions about our faith since the beginning, not because we are agitators (though sometimes we are!), but because Judaism implores us to think critically through questioning.

To become an agent of change, capable of affecting one's social reality, an individual must be able to see a problem or a need for change. The first step to enacting change is to ask a question, such as, "Why are things like this?" or "Is this situation just?" Thus Judaism's spirit of inquiry, which is we learned about in Lesson II, fosters the desire and capability to effect social change by asking questions. In Lesson III, your students will make the connection between asking questions and social change. They will look at social change activists and identify the questions that might have initially spurred their campaigns that changed the world. Then the students will consider their own communities and the questions they have, leaving the students empowered as critical questioners and agents of social change.

Goals:

1. Help students to understand the connection between questioning and social change
2. Empower students to see themselves as activists of the change they wish to see

Materials Needed:

- "Reporter's notebook" handout (list of suggested questions)
- Photos of six social justice leaders
- Quotes and/or very short biographies of each social justice leader
- Masking tape rolls
- Markers
- Scissors
- Pieces of white cardstock cut into "thought bubbles", enough for one per student plus four.
- 8.5 x 11 paper – cut into quarters, enough for one per student

Source Materials:

- Social Justice Activist Bios
- "Reporter's notebook" handout

Introductory Activity: Social Change Activist Press Conference (20 minutes)**Preparation:**

1. Post the names and photos of social justice leaders around the room, like an art gallery, with accompanying quotes and/or very short (2-4 sentences) biographies highlighting each leader's key accomplishments.
2. Write each of the following questions on large "thought bubbles" (white cardstock cut to look like clouds; one thought bubble per question):
 - Why do things have to be this way?
 - Can I accept this?
 - What can I do to change this?
 - Who will join me?

Process:

1. Select three student volunteers.
2. Out of hearing range from the rest of the class, assign each volunteer the role of a different social justice leader, and explain that they are about to become these characters and must answer the “reporters” questions as best they can without completely giving away who they are.

Note to teachers: This activity works best if you prep the three student volunteers very well. So explain their tasks thoroughly, and make sure they can get into it.

3. Give the three students their assigned characters’ biographical overviews, and allow them time to familiarize themselves with their role.
4. While the volunteers are getting ready, announce to the rest of the class that they are high-level journalists. They have been granted access to an exclusive press conference featuring three powerful social justice activists from history. They may communicate with the activists only by asking questions.

Note: To keep your students on task, you may also include that any student who attempts to communicate with the activists in non-question form will be branded as “paparazzi” and banned from participating in the activity.

5. To “scoop the story,” the reporters must identify each activist by name. They may consult their “reporter’s notebook” for suggestions if they need help determining which questions to ask.
6. Pass out “reporter’s notebook” handout while the three activists sit in the front of the room making small talk about how much they love social justice.
7. Allow students 7-12 minutes to question the social justice activists and attempt to identify them.
8. If the students are struggling, prompt the social justice activists to offer hints. (For example, Martin Luther King, Jr. might comment that he is hungry, and Mahatma Gandhi might say, “Hungry? You don’t know the meaning of hungry! Try fasting unto death to improve the status of the Hindu Untouchables!”)
9. The activity ends when the class has guessed the identities of the three social justice activists.

Primary Activity: Social Justice Activist Gallery (40 minutes)

1. Explain to class that today’s lesson will focus on exploring the relationship between questioning and social change. Note that although we tend to remember social justice leaders for the actions they take, questions often serve as a driving force behind those actions. Ask students, “What do you think is the relationship between questioning and social change?” Encourage students to share freely. If no one has any ideas, note that this class will help them begin to answer that question.
2. Give students 5 minutes to wander around the room reading the quotes.
3. Ask, “Which quote did you have the strongest reaction to? And why?” and let a couple students share their thoughts. Follow with, “What quote are you the most familiar with?”

What quote have you never heard before?” giving students time to share some of their initial reactions. Make sure to ask, “Are there any quotes or words you don’t understand?”

4. Pass out a blank “thought bubble” to each student. Split students into small groups. Give each group markers and masking tape and assign each group two or three social justice leaders by providing them with a copy of the leaders bio page from the source materials. You may assign the same social justice leader to more than one group.
5. Ask each group to consider the quotes and/or accomplishments of the social justice leaders featured in their assignment. Working collaboratively, groups should write a question that they imagine each social justice figure might have asked of himself, herself, or others that led to their specific actions. (One per question per social justice figure).

For example, given the following quote by César Chávez:

“Once social change begins, it cannot be reversed. You cannot uneducate the person who has learned to read. You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride. And you cannot oppress the people who are not afraid anymore.”

A student might choose to write, “How can I be a leader that helps provide a path for these irreversible social changes in the oppressed workers – so that they can be empowered? Then the group would tape that thought bubble next to CC’s photo and quote.

6. Reconvene as one group. Give each group time to share what questions they assigned to which figure and why.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did it feel to do this activity as a group?
2. What questions were the easiest to ascribe to a figure?
3. Were there questions that you discussed that could have been assigned to more than one of the social justice leaders? Which were these?
4. Returning to the question I asked at the beginning of class, how would you describe the relationship between social justice and questioning?
5. Is questioning an effective tool for creating social change? Why or why not?

Conclusion/Reflection

In this lesson, we built upon the idea of questioning from Jewish tradition and brought in the concept of social change. We began by learning about a few prominent activists and realized that the act of questioning led them to begin their quest for social change. Next, students were challenged to think critically and decide what question other prominent activists may have asked in beginning to move forward with their activism. Finally, we discussed the implication of this questioning and realized that different questions can often lead to the same result, but the act of questioning itself is what brings us towards change in the first place. Now, let’s make things personal and discuss our personal questions as related to social change we wish to see.

Discussion Questions

Hand out the quarter pieces of paper, one per student.

1. What are injustices that you have observed that you have wanted to question or challenge?
2. What emboldened or prevented you from taking action?
3. What question/s might you ask to begin to develop an idea of how to affect change in this arena? What questions would you ask yourself? What questions would you ask society?

Ask each student to write down the question and ask them to keep this question in their wallet to remind themselves to continue to ask.

4. What concrete steps would you need to take to begin to effect that change?

Inviting a Community Audience

This final step of the Curriculum builds upon the introspective questioning work your students began in Lesson I and built on in the subsequent units. Now rooted in the history of questioning as a Jewish tradition and as a necessary building block for enacting social change, your students are ready to take this knowledge and use it to generate a conversation with the greater community – the rest of the school, the students' families, or even perhaps, the surrounding neighbors. By inviting the community to experience the youth's questions, the students are asking their communities to listen, learn, and engage with them. By showing up, the community is doing just that.

Depending on your resources and students' interests, you can create any of a variety of questioning experiences for the community you'll be inviting. One possibility is a live soundscape, described below.

A Live Soundscape of Questions

A soundscape is a group of sounds that “form or arise from an immersive environment.” *Immersive* is the key word. Create a live soundscape of your students asking their questions.

The content: The questions can include the many questions the students have generated through this curriculum, including questions from the 3x5 card (or texting) activity in Lesson I and the social justice questions from Lesson III. Or the students can come up with new questions to fit a certain theme. If you do choose to use the questions that the students created in the previous lessons, before each new prompt, decide how you'll introduce it. You can have a voice say, “A question you would like to ask your mother,” followed by all the students' mother questions. Or perhaps introduce it with “Dear Mom” or simply “Mother.”

The voices: Have fun with this! The students can play with voice: serious or giggly; loud or whispering; scared or confident.

The environment: Choose a space that can be quiet (maybe an empty classroom, an auditorium, or under the night sky). Try to create a space that gives the community a feeling of being *immersed*. They should feel like they are in an alternate universe, or somewhere that is unusual, with no distractions except for the sounds you want them to experience. For example, you can turn the lights off in a school hallway, so it's pitch black. Allow a few guests in at a time through the door at the end of the hallway. Put up a rope that they can hold onto to guide themselves in a straight line down the hall. Every couple of feet, one of your students asks a question aloud. This continues until the end of the hallway, where the guests exit through a door. Once everyone is through, there can be a community discussion of the experience.

Share: Record this experience and share it with other teachers and community members on the Are We There Yet Curriculum Facebook website. You might choose to record using Guitar Hero or other recording software.

Discussion Questions for Students:

1. How did it feel to listen to your and your classmates' questions in the soundscape?
2. Did the dramatic setting make the experience more powerful? If yes, how so?
3. Do you think anyone who walked through the soundscape heard a question they connected with?
4. How would it make you feel if the question they connected with was yours?
5. Do you want to know what the community thinks of your questions? Why or why not?
6. Does public questioning change depending on who's listening? How was it different to have *this* audience hear your questions?
7. Did you feel that your questions accurately represented you and your peers?

Note: After such a thought-provoking activity, both the students and the community are likely to want to discuss the soundscape experience. A cross-panel discussion might be a great post-soundscape reflection. The students and community will probably have some terrific questions to ask each other.

Discussion Questions for the Community:

1. How did it feel to listen to the students' questions?
2. How did it feel to not respond to the questions?
3. Did any of the questions hit a nerve or touch you?
4. Did you expect these kinds of questions or were you surprised? If surprised, what kinds of questions were you expecting?
5. When you were a student, were your questions similar or very different?
6. If you could respond to any of the questions, what would you say?

Conclusion/Reflection

By completing the curriculum's Culmination Activity, the students have continued Judaism's tradition of questioning. By sharing their personal questions, the students reveal themselves; showing their identities as individuals and as a group. This self-exposure permits the greater community to see the youth in a more complex and complete light, helping them connect with this younger generation of thinkers, questioners, and leaders of future change. The students showed themselves as activists by bringing together the people in their community to listen and discuss the students' questions.

Story I: Isidor I. Rabi

Isidor I. Rabi, a Nobel laureate in physics, was once asked, "Why did you become a scientist, rather than a doctor or lawyer or businessman, like the other immigrant kids in your neighborhood?" He answered, "My mother made me a scientist without ever intending it. Every other Jewish mother in Brooklyn would ask her child after school: 'So? Did you learn anything today?' But not my mother. She always asked me a different question. 'Izzy,' she would say, 'Did you ask a good question today?' That difference - asking good questions - made me become a scientist!"

Story II:

Isaac Bashevis Singer, *The Collected Stories* (New York, NY Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1982)

The Reencounter

THE telephone rang and Dr. Max Greitzer woke up. On the night table the clock showed fifteen minutes to eight. "Who could be calling so early?" he murmured. He picked up the phone and a woman's voice said, "Dr. Greitzer, excuse me for calling at this hour. A woman who was once dear to you has died. Liza Nestling."

"My God!"

"The funeral is today at eleven. I thought you would want to know."

"You are right. Thank you. Thank you. Liza Nestling played a major role in my life. May I ask whom I am speaking to?"

"It doesn't matter. Liza and I became friends after you two separated. The service will be in Gutgestalt's funeral parlor. You know the address?"

"Yes, thank you."

The woman hung up.

Dr. Greitzer lay still for a while. So Liza was gone. Twelve years had passed since their breaking up. She had been his great love. Their affair lasted about fifteen years—no, not fifteen; thirteen. The last two had been filled with so many misunderstandings and complications, with so much madness, that words could not describe them. The same powers that built this love destroyed it entirely. Dr. Greitzer and Liza Nestling never met again. They never wrote to one another. From a friend of hers he learned that she was having an affair with a would-be theater director, but that was the only word he had about her. He hadn't even known that Liza was still in New York.

Dr. Greitzer was so distressed by the bad news that he didn't remember how he got dressed that morning or found his way to the funeral parlor. When he arrived, the clock across the street showed twenty-five to nine. He opened the door, and the receptionist told him

that he had come too early. The service would not take place until eleven o'clock.

"Is it possible for me to see her now?" Max Greitzer asked. "I am a very close friend of hers, and . . ."

"Let me ask if she's ready." The girl disappeared behind a door.

Dr. Greitzer understood what she meant. The dead are elaborately fixed up before they are shown to their families and those who attend the funeral.

Soon the girl returned and said, "It's all right. Fourth floor, room three."

A man in a black suit took him up in the elevator and opened the door to room number 3. Liza lay in a coffin opened to her shoulders, her face covered with gauze. He recognized her only because he knew it was she. Her black hair had the dullness of dye. Her cheeks were rouged, and the wrinkles around her closed eyes were hidden under makeup. On her reddened lips there was a hint of a smile. How do they produce a smile? Max Greitzer wondered. Liza had once accused him of being a mechanical person, a robot with no emotion. The accusation was false then, but now, strangely, it seemed to be true. He was neither dejected nor frightened.

The door to the room opened and a woman with an uncanny resemblance to Liza entered. "It's her sister, Bella," Max Greitzer said to himself. Liza had often spoken about her younger sister, who lived in California, but he had never met her. He stepped aside as the woman approached the coffin. If she burst out crying, he would be nearby to comfort her. She showed no special emotion, and he decided to leave her with her sister, but it occurred to him that she might be afraid to stay alone with a corpse, even her own sister's.

After a few moments, she turned and said, "Yes, it's her."

"I expect you flew in from California," Max Greitzer said, just to say something.

"From California?"

"Your sister was once close to me. She often spoke about you. My name is Max Greitzer."

The woman stood silent and seemed to ponder his words. Then she said, "You're mistaken."

"Mistaken? You aren't her sister, Bella?"

"Don't you know that Max Greitzer died? There was an obituary in the newspapers."

Max Greitzer tried to smile. "Probably another Max Greitzer." The moment he uttered these words, he grasped the truth: he and Liza were both dead—the woman who spoke to him was not Bella but Liza herself. He now realized that if he were still alive he would be shaken with

grief. Only someone on the other side of life could accept with such indifference the death of a person he had once loved. Was what he was experiencing the immortality of the soul, he wondered. If he were able, he would laugh now, but the illusion of body had vanished; he and Liza no longer had material substance. Yet they were both present. Without a voice he asked, "Is this possible?"

He heard Liza answer in her smart style, "If it is so, it must be possible." She added, "For your information, your body is lying here too."

"How did it happen? I went to sleep last night a healthy man."

"It wasn't last night and you were not healthy. A degree of amnesia seems to accompany this process. It happened to me a day ago and therefore—"

"I had a heart attack?"

"Perhaps."

"What happened to *you*?" he asked.

"With me, everything takes a long time. How did you hear about me, anyway?" she added.

"I thought I was lying in bed. Fifteen minutes to eight, the telephone rang and a woman told me about you. She refused to give her name."

"Fifteen minutes to eight, your body was already here. Do you want to go look at yourself? I've seen you. You are in number 5. They made a *krasavetz* out of you."

He hadn't heard anyone say *krasavetz* for years. It meant a beautiful man. Liza had been born in Russia and she often used this word.

"No. I'm not curious."

In the chapel it was quiet. A clean-shaven rabbi with curly hair and a gaudy tie made a speech about Liza. "She was an intellectual woman in the best sense of the word," he said. "When she came to America, she worked all day in a shop and at night she attended college, graduating with high honors. She had bad luck and many things in her life went awry, but she remained a lady of high integrity."

"I never met that man. How could he know about me?" Liza asked.

"Your relatives hired him and gave him the information," Greitzer said.

"I hate these professional compliments."

"Who's the fellow with the gray mustache on the first bench?" Max Greitzer asked.

Liza uttered something like a laugh. "My has-been husband."

"You were married? I heard only that you had a lover."

"I tried everything, with no success whatsoever."

"Where would you like to go?" Max Greitzer asked.

"Perhaps to your service."

"Absolutely not."

"What state of being is this?" Liza asked. "I see everything. I recognize everyone. There is my Aunt Reizl. Right behind her is my Cousin Becky. I once introduced you to her."

"Yes, true."

"The chapel is half empty. From the way I acted toward others in such circumstances, it is what I deserve. I'm sure that for you the chapel will be packed. Do you want to wait and see?"

"I haven't the slightest desire to find out."

The rabbi had finished his eulogy and a cantor recited "God Full of Mercy." His chanting was more like crying and Liza said, "My own father wouldn't have gone into such lamentations."

"Paid tears."

"I've had enough of it," Liza said. "Let's go."

They floated from the funeral parlor to the street. There, six limousines were lined up behind the hearse. One of the chauffeurs was eating a banana.

"Is this what they call death?" Liza asked. "It's the same city, the same streets, the same stores. I seem the same, too."

"Yes, but without a body."

"What am I then? A soul?"

"Really, I don't know what to tell you," Max Greitzer said. "Do you feel any hunger?"

"Hunger? No."

"Thirst?"

"No. No. What do you say to all this?"

"The unbelievable, the absurd, the most vulgar superstitions are proving to be true," Max Greitzer said.

"Perhaps we will find there is even a Hell and a Paradise."

"Anything is possible at this point."

"Perhaps we will be summoned to the Court on High after the burial and asked to account for our deeds?"

"Even this can be."

"How does it come about that we are together?"

"Please, don't ask any more questions. I know as little as you."

"Does this mean that all the philosophic works you read and wrote were one big lie?"

"Worse—they were sheer nonsense."

At that moment, four pallbearers carried out the coffin holding Liza's body. A wreath lay on top, with an inscription in gold letters: "To the unforgettable Liza in loving memory."

"Whose wreath is that?" Liza asked, and she answered herself, "For this he's not stingy."

"Would you like to go with them to the cemetery?" Max Greitzer asked.

"No—what for? That phony cantor may recite a whining Kaddish after me."

"What do you want to do?"

Liza listened to herself. She wanted nothing. What a peculiar state, not to have a single wish. In all the years she could remember, her will, her yearnings, her fears, tormented her without letting up. Her dreams were full of desperation, ecstasy, wild passions. More than any other catastrophe, she dreaded the final day, when all that has been is extinguished and the darkness of the grave begins. But here she was, remembering the past, and Max Greitzer was again with her. She said to him, "I imagined that the end would be much more dramatic."

"I don't believe this is the end," he said. "Perhaps a transition between two modes of existence."

"If so, how long will it last?"

"Since time has no validity, duration has no meaning."

"Well, you've remained the same with your puzzles and paradoxes. Come, we cannot just stay here if you want to avoid seeing your mourners," Liza said. "Where should we go?"

"You lead."

Max Greitzer took her astral arm and they began to rise without purpose, without a destination. As they might have done from an airplane, they looked down at the earth and saw cities, rivers, fields, lakes—everything but human beings.

"Did you say something?" Liza asked.

And Max Greitzer answered. "Of all my disenchantments, immortality is the greatest."

Unit II Source Materials

Jerry Seinfeld Quotes

If airline seat cushions are such great flotation devices, why don't you ever see anyone take one to the beach?

Bozo the Clown. Do we really need "the Clown"? Are we going to confuse him with Bozo the Tax Attorney? Bozo the Pope?

Why do they call it a "building"? It looks like they're finished. Why isn't it a "built"?

Why is it when you turn on the TV you see ads for telephone companies, and when you turn on the radio you hear ads for TV shows, and when you get put on hold on the phone you hear a radio station?

Why is it illegal to park in a handicapped parking space but okay to go the bathroom in a handicapped stall?

How come you have to pay someone to rotate your tires? Isn't that the basic idea behind the wheel? Don't they rotate on their own?

All the king's horses and all the king's men? Are you kidding me? No wonder they couldn't put Humpty together again. Just what did those idiots expect the horses to do, anyway?

Did you ever notice, when you are sitting at a red light, that when the person in front of you pulls up a couple of inches, you are compelled to move up too? Do we really think we are making progress toward our destination? "Whew, I thought we would be late, but now that I am nine inches closer, I can stop for coffee and a danish!"

The Four Questions:

Why is this night different from all other nights?

On all other nights we eat leavened products and marzah, and on this night only marzah.

On all other nights we eat all vegetables, and on this night only bitter herbs.

On all other nights, we don't dip our food even once, and on this night we dip twice.

On all other nights we eat sitting or reclining, and on this night we only recline.

The Birth of Moses – Exodus 1:22, 2:1 - 2

Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, "Every boy that is born you shall throw into the Nile, but let every girl live."

A certain man of the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw **that he was good**, she hid him for three months.

Rashi When he was born, the whole house was filled with light.

The creation of light Genesis 1:3-4

Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.

Questions to guide your chavruta discussion:

Read the Birth of Moses and the associated Rashi commentary.

1. What happens in this Passage
2. What questions do you have about the story?
3. Why might Rashi have chosen to expand upon the simple definition of "he was good"?
4. What might it mean to have a house fill with light?
5. What might be associated with light?

Read the second text source about the creation of light.

6. What is the connection between these two texts?
7. What might it teach us about Moses?

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 20: 8, 11

8. Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it. 11. For [in] six days the Lord made the heaven and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.

Deuteronomy 5: 12,15

12. Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord your God commanded you...15. And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord your God took you out from there with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm; therefore, the Lord, your God, commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

Rashi. "Remember" [the Sabbath day] and "Keep" [the Sabbath day] were said in one utterance.

Questions in the Torah

Use the following questions for your chavruta discussion:

- What is going on in this passage?
- How would you describe the relationship between the person(s) that is asking the question and the responder?
- Why do you think the character questions the original decision or ruling?
- What emotions do you think the character may have been feeling when he asked the question(s)? What is the tone of their question?
- What kind of answer do you think the asker was hoping for, or, if he received an answer, how do you think he felt about the answer he received?
- Do you have any additional questions you would ask?

Abraham questions God about Sodom & Gomorrah Genesis 18:23 - 32

Abraham came forward and said, “Will You sweep away the innocent along with the guilty? What if there should be fifty innocent within the city; will You then wipe out the place and not forgive it for the sake of the innocent fifty who are in it? Far be it from You to do such a thing, to bring death upon the innocent as well as the guilty, so that innocent and guilty fare alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?”

God said, 'If I find fifty innocent people in Sodom, I will spare the entire area for their sake.'

Abraham spoke up and said, 'I have already said too much before my Lord! I am mere dust and ashes! But suppose that there are five missing from the fifty innocent? Will You destroy the entire city because of the five?'

I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there,' replied God.

[Abraham] persisted and said, 'Suppose there are forty there?'

I will not act for the sake of the forty.

Let not my Lord be angry, but I [must] speak up. What if there are thirty there?

I will not act if I find thirty there.

I have already spoken too much now before my Lord! But what if twenty are found there?'

'I will not destroy for the sake of the twenty.'

'Let my Lord not become angry, but I will speak just once more. Suppose ten are found there?'

'I will not destroy for the sake of the ten.'

Moses at the Burning Bush

Exodus 3:11 – 14

But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and free the Israelites from Egypt?” And He said, “I will be with you; that shall be your sign that it was I who sent you. And when you have freed the people from Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain.”

Moses said to God, “When I come to the Israelites and say to them ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?”

The Golden Calf

Exodus 32: 7 – 14

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. ⁸ They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, ‘These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.’

⁹ “I have seen these people,” the LORD said to Moses, “and they are a stiff-necked people. ¹⁰ Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation.”

But Moses sought the favor of the LORD his God. “LORD,” he said, “why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? ¹² Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth?’ Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people. ¹³ Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever.’” ¹⁴ Then the LORD relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.

Inheritance for Daughters

Numbers 27: 1- 11

A petition was presented by the daughters of Tzelafchad, son of Chefer, son of Gilead, son of Makhir, son of Manassch, of the family of Joseph's son Manassch. The names of these daughters were Machlah, No'ah, Chaglah, Milkah and Tirtzah. They now stood before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the princes, and the entire community at the Communion Tent entrance with the following petition: Our father died in the desert. He was not among the members of Korach's party who protested against God, but he died because of his own sin without leaving any sons. Why should our father's name be disadvantaged in his family merely because he did not have a son? Give us a portion of land along with our father's brothers. Moses brought their case before God.

God spoke to Moses, saying: The daughters of Tzelafchad have a just claim. Give them a hereditary portion of land alongside their father's brothers.

Reporter's Notebook:

Suggested Questions for Press Conference Activity

During what decade were you most well known?

What social causes are you most passionate about?

How did you pursue social justice?

Who did you work with to pursue social change?

What obstacles did you face in your pursuit of social justice?

Reporter's Notebook:

Suggested Questions for Press Conference Activity

During what decade were you most well known?

What social causes are you most passionate about?

How did you pursue social justice?

Who did you work with to pursue social change?

What obstacles did you face in your pursuit of social justice?

Rosa Parks

1913 – 2005

“The only thing that bothered me was waiting so long to make this protest.”

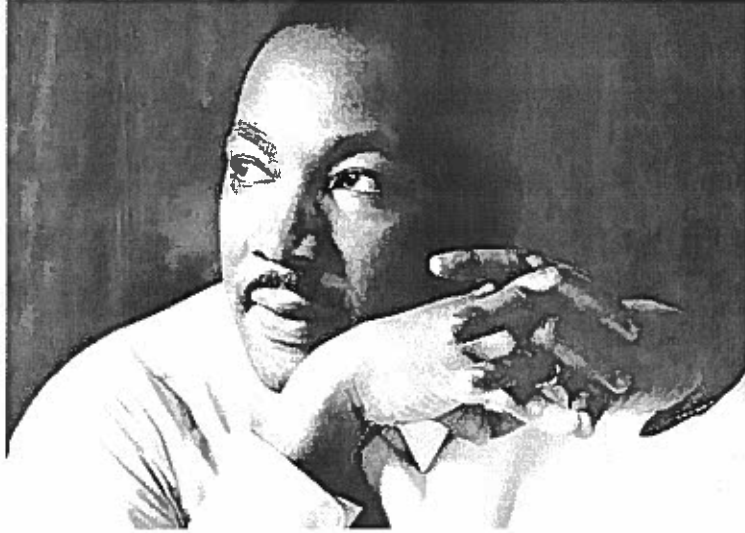


- On December 1, 1955, refused to give up her seat in the front of a bus in Montgomery, Alabama to a white man and move to the back. Arrested as a result.
- “The only tired I was, was tired of giving in” – tired of the daily degradation and unjust treatment to which African Americans were subjected.
- This defiance sparked the famed 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott, led by Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.
- The boycott lasted more than a year and opened the door for anti-segregation legislation and a Supreme Court ruling to ban segregation on public transportation.
- By December 1956, the buses in Montgomery were officially desegregated.
- Secretary of the local chapter of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Color People) for 12 years prior to the bus incident. Had been active in the movement for change for quite a while.

Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.

1929 – 1968

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”



- Attended segregated public schools in Georgia as a child. Graduated high school at 15 years old. Attended a distinguished Negro college and graduated in 1948, at 19 years old. Went on to a Theological Seminary where he was elected president of a mostly white class. Graduated in 1951.
- Accepted position as pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama in 1954. A member of the executive committee of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Color People), took on the leadership of the bus boycott in December, 1955. During the days of the boycott, was arrested, home was bombed, subjected to personal abuse.
- Elected president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957. Traveled over six million miles and spoke over 2500 times in 11 years as president, appearing wherever there was injustice, protest, and action. Also wrote five books and numerous articles during this time period.
- Directed the peaceful march on Washington, D.C. of 250,000 people and delivered famous address, “I Have a Dream.” Conferred with President John F. Kennedy and campaigned for President Lyndon B. Johnson.
- Awarded five honorary degrees, named Man of the Year by *Time* magazine in 1963, became a world figure and symbolic leader of American blacks. Youngest man to receive the Nobel Peace Prize at 35 years old.

Fannie Lou Hamer

1917 – 1977

“Nobody’s free until everybody’s free.”



- Known as the lady who was “sick and tired of being sick and tired.”
- Granddaughter of slaves and youngest of 19 brothers and sisters.
- At 44 years old, attended a voter registration meeting in her town. Surprised to learn that African Americans had a constitutional right to vote. Volunteered to go to courthouse to register to vote – a dangerous decision. Later shared, “The only thing they could do to me was to kill me, and it seemed like they’d been trying to do that a little bit at a time ever since I could remember.”
- Jailed and beaten by the police as a result of going to the courthouse. Thrown off of the plantation where she was a sharecropper. Began to receive constant death threats and was shot at.
- Became Field Secretary of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and traveled the country speaking and registering people to vote.
- Co-founded the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. In 1964, challenged the all-white Mississippi delegation to the Democratic National Convention.
- Spoke in a televised proceeding that reached millions of viewers, sharing that many African Americans had been prevented from voting through illegal tests, taxes and intimidation.

Bella Abzug

1920 – 1998

*“We are coming down from our pedestal and up from the laundry room.
We want an equal share in government and we mean to get it.”*



- Daughter of Russian immigrants. Father died when she was 13. Told she was not allowed to say Mourner's Kaddish because it is tradition for the son to say it. She chose to say it anyway – one of her first feminist acts.
- Went to Columbia Law School. Was one of first women law students in the country. Practiced law for 25 years, specializing in labor and tenants' rights and civil rights and liberties cases.
- During McCarthy Era, was one of the few attorneys willing to fight against the House Committee on Un-American Activities.
- Helped to start Women Strike for Peace in response to nuclear testing in the 1960s. Became important voice against the Vietnam War.
- Ran for congress at 50 and won. Became first Jewish Congresswoman and one of 12 women at all in the House. Spent years in congress as an anti-war activist and fighter for social and economic justice.
- After three terms gave up seat to run for an all male Senate but lost.
- Presided over the National Women's Conference in 1977. After, headed President Jimmy Carter's National Advisory Committee on Women. Fired for criticizing Carter's economic policies. In response, founded Women USA, grassroots political action organization.
- Co-founded Women's Environment and Development Organization in 1990, international activist and advocacy network. Became influential leader at the UN, working to empower women around the globe.

Margaret Sanger

1879 – 1966

“No woman can call herself free who does not own and control her body. No woman can call herself free until she can choose consciously whether she will or will not be a mother.”



- Worked as visiting nurse in New York City's tenements and wrote about sex education and women's health.
- Articles in *The Women's Radical* in 1914 brought a federal indictment against her for violating federal postal obscenity laws. As a result, fled to Europe. As soon as ship left US waters, cabled a radical publisher in New Jersey to distribute 100,000 copies of pamphlet, *Family Limitation*.
- Remained exiled for a year. Returned to face charges against her. Charges were dismissed because of public sentiment.
- With sister, Ethel Byrne, opened first birth control clinic in US, modeled after those seen in Holland. On October 16, 1916, dozens of Jewish and Italian immigrant women lined up to receive birth control information. Nine days later, center was closed by police and sisters were arrested.
- Ethel went on hunger strike. Sanger convicted and served 30 days in jail. This was considered a legal failure and became a huge victory – publicity had made birth control a matter of public debate.
- During 1920s & 1930s, focused on international birth control. Traveled and lectured throughout Asia and Europe. In 1952, founded International Planned Parenthood Federation and served as president until 1959.
- Months before death, Supreme Court decision made birth control legal for married couples – the culmination of events she had started 50 years earlier.

Mahatma Gandhi

1869 – 1948

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”

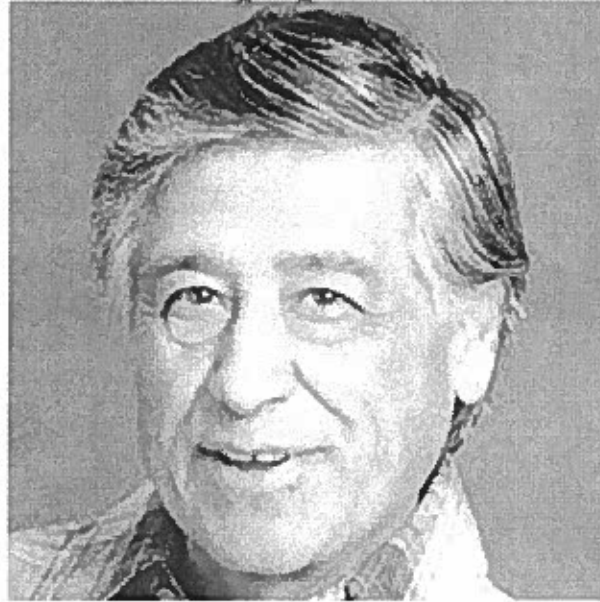


- Studied law in London. In 1893, went to South Africa and spent twenty years opposing discriminatory legislation against Indians.
- Pioneer of Satyagraha, resistance through mass non-violent civil disobediences.
- Returned to India in 1914 and became leader of Indian National Congress. Advocated for policy of non-violent non-cooperation to achieve independence for India. Wanted to help poor farmers and laborers protest oppressive taxation and discrimination. Struggled to alleviate poverty, liberate women, and put an end to discrimination. Ultimate objective was self-rule for India.
- Jailed four times – 1922, 1930, 1933 & 1942. While in prison, went on hunger strikes. Famous enough that his death in prison would have made international headlines and embarrassed the British.
- Led a 200-mile march to the sea in 1930 to collect salt in symbolic defiance of the government monopoly.
- Attended London Round Table Conference on Indian constitutional reform. Negotiated with the Cabinet Mission in 1946 for a new constitutional structure. After India gained independence from England in 1947, tried to stop the Hindu-Muslim conflict in Bengal, a policy which led to his assassination.

César Chávez

1927 – 1993

“The fight is never about grapes or lettuce. It is always about people.”



- As a child, worked in the fields as migrant worker. Dedicated life to improving treatment, pay, and working conditions for farm workers.
- Worked as community and labor organizer in 1950s. Went on to found National Farm Workers Association in 1962. Joined with the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee to strike against grape growers in California in 1965.
- In 1968, called for a national boycott of California table grape growers. Battle with grape growers for improved compensation and labor conditions lasted for years. Many grape growers eventually signed contracts with the union.
- Two unions merged in 1972 and renamed themselves United Farmer Workers.
- Employed nonviolent means to bring attention to the plight of farm workers. Led marches, called for boycotts, went on several hunger strikes.
- Brought national awareness to dangers of pesticides to workers' health.

Harvey Milk

1930 – 1978

“Burst down those closet doors once and for all, and stand up and start to fight.”



- Moved from New York City to San Francisco in 1972 amid migration of gay men to the Castro District.
- Ran unsuccessfully for political office three times. Opposed government interaction in private sexual matters and supported legalization of marijuana. Theatrical campaigns that included fiery, flamboyant speeches, earned increasing popularity.
- Worked tirelessly to promote gay rights. Partnered with Teamsters union to hire more gay drivers, founded the Castro Village Association, and encouraged gays to buy from gay businesses.
- Won seat as city supervisor in 1977. Was first openly gay man elected to public office in the United States. Swearing in made headlines across the country.
- Responsible for passing stringent gay rights ordinance for San Francisco.
- Assassinated along with Mayor of San Francisco George Moscone by fellow city supervisor Dan White in 1978.

Mother Teresa

1910 – 1997

“Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person.”

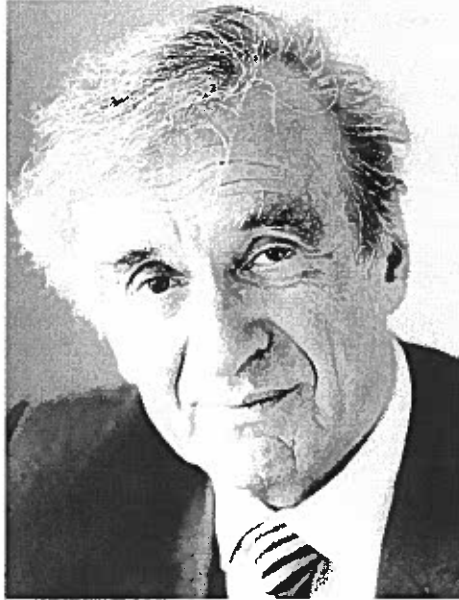


- Catholic nun. Founded Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta, India in 1950.
- Began missionary work with the poor in 1948. Ventured into slums of India to help anyone she could reach. Started a school in Calcutta before going on to tend to the needs of the destitute and starving.
- Received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, “for work undertaken in the struggle to overcome poverty and distress, which also constitutes a threat to peace.”
- In 1982, rescued 37 children trapped in a front line hospital by brokering a temporary cease-fire between Israeli army and Palestinian guerillas.
- Spent more than 45 years helping the poor, sick, orphaned, and dying. Guided the Missionaries of Charity’s expansion throughout world. By 2007, the Missionaries of Charity numbered approximately 450 brothers and 5,000 nuns worldwide, operating in 120 countries.
- Following death was beatified by Pope John Paul II and given title Blessed Teresa of Calcutta. This is recognition from the Catholic Church of her entrance into Heaven.

Elie Weisel

Born 1928

“Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.”



- Holocaust survivor. Spent almost two years in Auschwitz Birkenau.
- Became professional journalist. For ten years after World War II, refused to write about his experiences until he met Francois Mauriac, the 1952 Nobel Laureate in Literature, who persuaded him to let it out.
- Published 57 books, including *Night*, based on his experiences as a prisoner in the concentration camps. *Night* has been translated into 30 languages.
- Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986 for speaking out against violence, repression and racism.
- As a political activist, has advocated for many causes, including Israel, the plight of Soviet and Ethiopian Jews, victims of apartheid in South Africa, Argentina's Desaparecidos, Bosnian victims of genocide, Nicaragua's Miskito Indians, the Kurds and the victims of Darfur.
- Led a commission organized by the Romanian government to research and report on the true history of the Holocaust in Romania and the involvement of the Romanian wartime regime in atrocities against Jews and other groups.