



**The Wonder of Shabbat**  
Submitted by Eliyahu Krigel

**Subject Area:** Creating metaphors based on Shabbat

**Target Age Group:**

Family Education with children of all ages for one hour during religious school in a synagogue setting.

**Lesson Objective:**

The primary goal of this lesson is to motivate families to learn together and begin a dialogue by creating metaphors based on random objects that are compared to Shabbat.



1. "And G-d said, "Do not come closer. Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place whereon you stand is holy ground." Exodus 3:5
2. "The world is full of wonders, special radiance, and marvelous secrets, but all it takes is a small hand held over the eye to hide it all." Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel



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3. “We read: Moses said, “My doctrine shall drop as rain. “(Deuteronomy 32:2). We see that rain falls upon many kinds of plants, and each grows according to its own nature. In the same fashion, let instruction be accepted by all persons, and each one will profit according to his inherent ability.” Newman, *Hasidic Anthology*, page 459

4. “In all that God created in this world, the Holy One did not create a single thing without purpose: thus the snail is a remedy for the scab, the fly is an antidote for the hornet’s sting, the mosquito crushed up for a snake bite, the snake can cure certain types of boils, and the spider as a remedy for the scorpion sting.” Babylonian Talmud, *Shabbat 77b*

5. “She is a Tree of Life to those who hold fast to her, and whoever holds onto her is happy.” Proverbs 3:18





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**(Preparation Time Before Class 15 Minutes)** Fill up a brown paper bags with random objects found around the house. Some possible items include paper clips, pencils, safety pins, hairbrushes, spoons, napkins, toy racecars, envelopes, papers, stuffed animals, pens, markers, etc. There should be at least 12 objects in each bag.

**(5 Minutes)** Hand a bag to each family as they enter the class along with a colored poster board. Once everyone has arrived, sing Hinei Ma-Tov (Hinei ma tov uma na'im, Shevet achim gam Yachad – How very good and so lovely, Brothers and sisters together.)

**(10 Minutes)** Ask families to group up with other families holding the same color poster board. Each group should contain two or three families. Challenge the families to write the words, “Shabbat is like...” on the top of their individual colored poster board. Provide stencils, glitter, markers, and feathers to help families decorate the outer edges of their poster board.



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**(15 Minutes)** The purpose of this lesson is to enable families to create a spontaneous metaphor based around an object's connection to Shabbat. Motivate families to take the small hand referenced by Rabbi Heschel that is metaphorically held over their eyes away from their face and encourage these families to see the wonder and beauty in ordinary objects **(Discuss Quote 2)**.

**Ask families to ask each other the following questions:**

1. What is the small hand Rabbi Heschel is referring to in your opinion?
2. Do you believe in Miracles? Why and have you ever witnessed a miracle?
3. Do you have to see something to believe in it? Is there anything you believe in that you can't see with your physical eyes?
4. What marvelous secrets is Rabbi Heschel referring to in your opinion?

**(5 minutes)** Ask each family group to begin to go around in a circle within their family unit and have each member pull one object from the brown bag. Once each family member in the group has an object, read **quote two** and ask all participating to try to think before they fill in the blank and create a metaphor based around their object.



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**(15 minutes)** Now ask the families to create a metaphor about Shabbat using the object they found in the bag. If a paper clip is pulled from the bag, you might say Shabbat is like a paper clip because Shabbat holds the weeks together in a meaningful way. If a hairbrush is pulled from the bag, you might say Shabbat is like a hairbrush because Shabbat cleans out and straightens your soul's connection with God just like a hairbrush straightens your hair. In between each family member shares their thoughts about the object, read **quote 4** and answer the following questions:

1. Do you believe G-d created you with a purpose?
2. Is purpose something we choose or is it chosen for us?
3. Does the purpose of all of these ordinary animals mentioned in this quote have something in common? (They all prevent harm that might be caused to human beings.)



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Introduce **quote 3** to the group and ask the following questions:

1. What does profit according to his inherent ability mean to you and what is it a metaphor of? (One possible answer is living the best life you can in the most morally and G-d conscious way.)

**(5 minutes)** After each member in the family has had a chance to go, remembering that there are no right answers to this question, glue or tape the objects up on the poster board and write the metaphorical description of the object in a decorative way next to or around the posted object.

**(10 minutes)** Once the families are finished have them show each other and then their group the boards they have created. Display all the boards in an area where all can see and will have a chance to look at close up after the program.

**(Sing Etz Chaim, quote 5)**



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**Works Cited:**

- ❑ Artson, Rabbi Bradley Shavit. *Barukh Ha'Shem: God is Bountiful.*
- ❑ Kadushin, Max. *The Experience of Worship.*
- ❑ *Let me Count the Ways,* Torah Aura Publications.
- ❑ Pitzele, Peter. *Scripture Windows.* September 1997.
- ❑ Steinsaltz, Rabbi Adin. *The Talmud, The Steinsaltz Edition.*
- ❑ Steinsaltz, Rabbi Adin and Lurie Grishaver, Joel. *Talmud with Training Wheels: An Absolute Beginner's Guide to Talmud.* June 2004.