



## Torah Study Initiation

Submitted by: Lael Har

**Subject Area:** Torah Study

**Target Age Group(s):** Kindergarten (and parents)

**Abstract:** To set an exciting beginning to the year and imbue the magic, mystery, and importance of the Torah.

**Materials:**

1. The Torah portion of the week or the first story you want to start with.
2. A copy of the story and 3-5 guiding questions.
3. Torah Scroll, preferably child size, and *yad*.
4. a large *talit*
5. table covered with cloth to place the Torah on.
6. Challah and Honey

**Procedure:**

1. Sit in a circle, set induction by telling about our old Jewish tradition; that when a child turns 5 years old they are initiated into the study of Torah and Hebrew and are given sweets to sweeten the study of Torah. "...Today is a special day, today you will study Torah for the first time."  
"We have a very important guest ..." When I uncover the Torah Scroll, preferably child size, we...
  - Admire the scroll pointing out all its elements ( i.e. breastplate, cover, *rimonim*, *yad*, and so on).
  - Learn how we treat the Torah.
  - What's inside the Torah (i.e. stories, lessons, heroes, far away places).
  - We touch the Torah to see how it feels.
  - Why it's important to us (i.e. a gift from G-d, Torah shows us how to live and be good people through acts of loving kindness).
  - And how it has been passed down through the generations.
2. We celebrate the moment by dancing and singing with the Torah as each parent holds the scroll and passes it to their child to cradle. The parents can name our forefathers and mothers add the grandparents, their name, and the child's name.
3. The parents hold a *talit* as a *chuppa* as all the children gather underneath while parents bless them with the priestly blessing.
4. Placing on the table, unrolling the scroll, we talk about the letters, how it was created, read or sing the *parasha* they will be studying in Hebrew and translating into English (in part or whole) using the *yad*.



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5. Bless over a snack of bread and honey to sweeten the occasion. Anytime you are teaching a blessing it is an opportunity to STOP, and bring attention to the power of blessing. Close the eyes and create *Kavanah* and a sense of appreciation for the actions that are about to be preformed.
6. Children and Parents pair up to study Torah by illustrating the story and answering guided study questions.
7. Meet back in a circle to share.

### Questions to Consider:

Guided study questions can be about the heroes in the story, what they looked like, what they did, where they are, how they felt, what roll dose God play, and so on.

### Comments and Feedback:

The idea behind this activity is to make the first day of school special, fun, magical, and to give children and parents an opportunity to get aquatinted while sharing in this activity.

Children learn best when knowledge and experience are integrated in the learning process by introducing kinesthetic activities, the five senses, and inner reflection. Make Jewish study fun by inspiring a sense of wonderment, curiosity and a love of learning in children. This lesson plan can be replicated with flexibility according to the teacher's inclination.

### Bibliography/Additional Resources:

- for children's Torah stories and guiding questions:  
"A Child's Garden of Torah" Torah Aura Production
- for information on the creation of Torah scrolls and scribe:  
"The Jewish Catalog" The Jewish Publication Society of America