Welcome to Hidden Sparks Without Walls.
We will be starting at 8:30pm.

To alleviate background noise and ensure a quiet session, your audio connection has been muted.



Chat: Asking Questions & Sharing Thoughts

You are encouraged to ask questions and share your thoughts on the chat.

Please activate the chat feature on the bottom of the screen. You may choose to chat to panelists and all attendees or just panelists.

Audio:

If you would like to call in via phone for audio, please look up the call in number, webinar id, and passcode information on your webinar invite.

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About Hidden Sparks

Hidden Sparks helps educators and Jewish day schools nurture the Hidden Spark within each student, facilitating professional development to increase understanding and support for the broad range of learners in the classroom.

Offerings include:

- award-winning **Learning Lenses** course on understanding learning and behavior
- 1:1 **coaching** for teachers
- **Internal** and **Peer Coach mentoring** within schools
- workshop on **Differentiating Instruction**
- **Hidden Sparks Without Walls** webinar series
- **Parent Learning Center** (PLC)

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without walls

Improving Student Engagement with Havruta Routines in the General and Judaic Studies Classrooms

Presented by Allison Cook & Dr. Orit Kent

Wednesday, March 11, 2026

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helping children reach their potential™

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Our Guests: Allison Cook and Dr. Orit Kent



Allison Cook is the founder and co-director of Pedagogy of Partnership (PoP), a research-based Jewish education model that reinvigorates the practice of havruta to cultivate habits of wonder, empathy, and responsibility in learning and communal life. Allison is a long-time Jewish educator, teacher-educator, researcher and writer, and has led numerous programs to improve teaching and learning, instructional leadership, and meaningful collaborative work. An alumna of the Wexner Graduate Fellowship, Allison earned her Ed.M. in Teaching and Learning from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and M.A. in Jewish Studies from Hebrew College. Allison is a 2023 recipient of the prestigious Covenant Award for excellence in Jewish education.



Dr. Orit Kent is the founder and co-director of Pedagogy of Partnership (PoP), a research-based Jewish education model that reinvigorates the practice of havruta to cultivate habits of wonder, empathy, and responsibility in learning and communal life. A long-time Jewish educator and scholar of teaching and learning, Orit researches and writes about peer and relationship-based learning and is the co-author of the award-winning book, A Philosophy of Havruta. An alumna of the Wexner Graduate Fellowship, Orit holds a doctorate in Education and Jewish Studies from Brandeis University, an Ed.M. in Teaching and Learning from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a B.A. in history from Yale University.

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V’ha’eir Eineinu

Shine a light into our eyes
See the love that’s in our hearts
The voices all around, that help us learn together

Shine a light into our eyes
Feel the love that’s in our hearts
Feel our voices join as one, so we can live together
V’ha’eir einenu b’toratecha…

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Overview of the Session

1. Vision of student engagement
2. Core PoP framework to build shared metacognition
3. Two foundational havruta routines
    a. Elements of a havruta routine
    b. See examples!
    c. Teaching routines
4. Explore adaptations to meet learner and developmental needs
5. Questions

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Session Goals

1. Inspiration: We can work to improve both the **amount** and **quality** of student engagement–join us!

1. Knowledge: Understand how the havruta **structure** and **routines** can improve student engagement

1. Tools: Leave with havruta routine tools for implementing and adapting in your own setting

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What do we mean by engagement?

- Behavioral
- Cognitive
- Emotional
- Social
- Agency: Developing a sense of self as a learner; as an active part of constructing learning



“Only when you [the learners] do the practicing, reading, writing, thinking, talking, collaborating, and reflecting does your brain make permanent connections. Your teachers cannot do this for you.”

The New Science of Learning, by Doyle and Zakrajsek (2019)

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Inducting Students into the Practice of Havruta

1. The Havruta Triangle: Build shared metacognition
2. Teach Havruta Routines explicitly: scaffold student engagement
3. Practice, reflect/assess, repeat, improve
4. Adapt to meet needs of learners





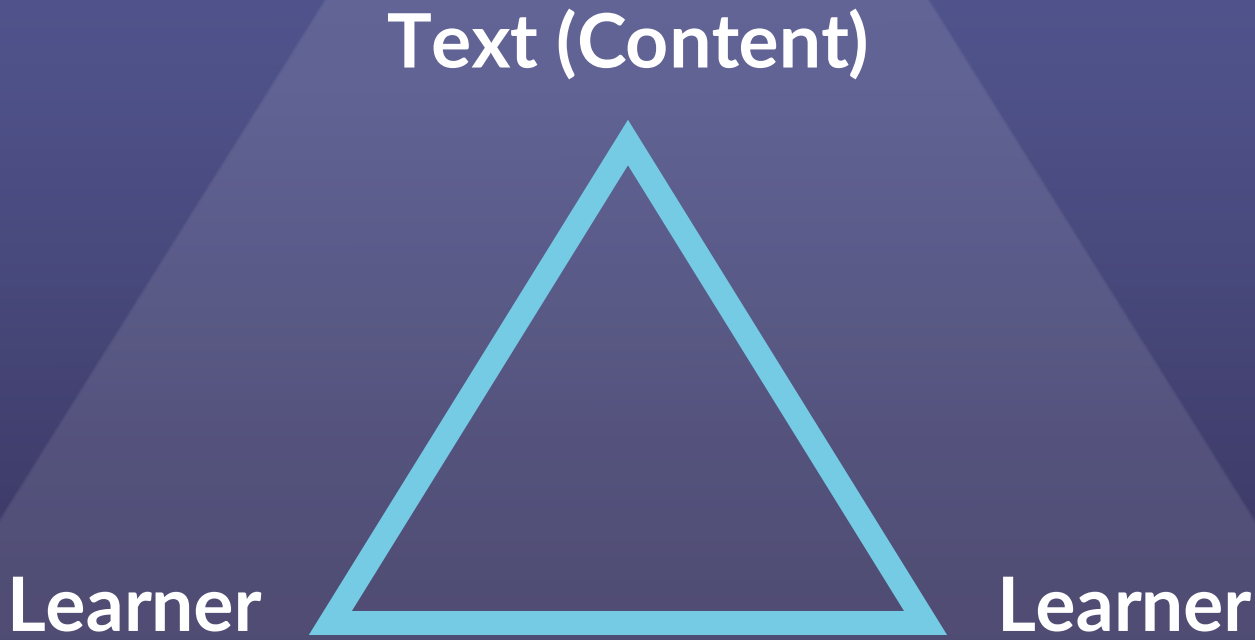
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Havruta Learning Triangle

Build shared metacognition for learning in Havruta

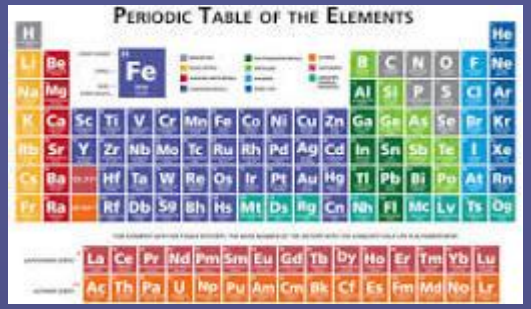
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Building shared metacognition: the Havruta Learning Triangle



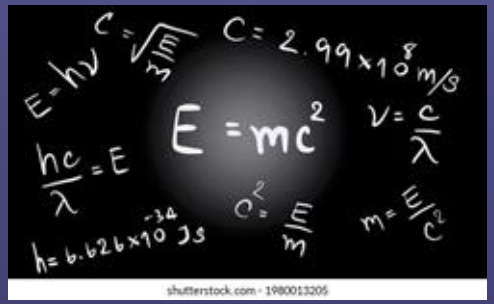
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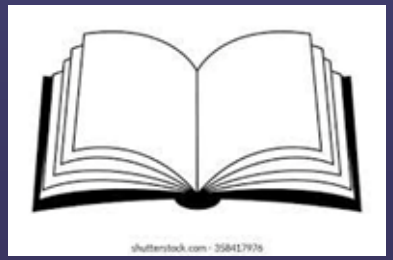


















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Havruta Learning Triangle



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Havruta Learning Triangle

A. What does the triangle imply about learning and engagement in havruta?

A. What attitudes may be called upon to cultivate this partnership?

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Attitudes

I have something to learn; and
I have something to teach.

- Openness and Listening
- Curiosity and Wonder
- Empathy
- Responsibility
- Humility and Confidence

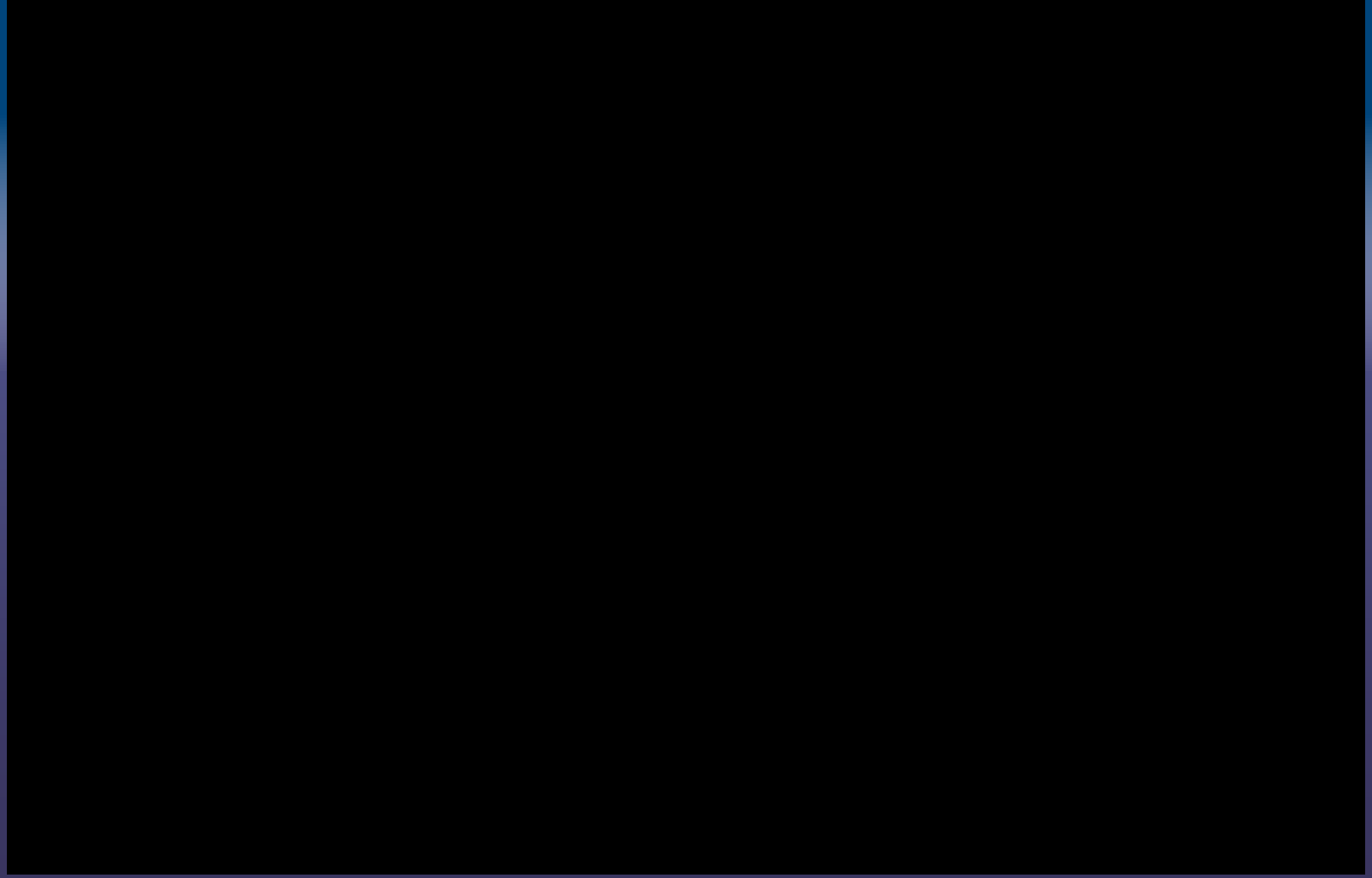


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Building Metacognition for Havruta



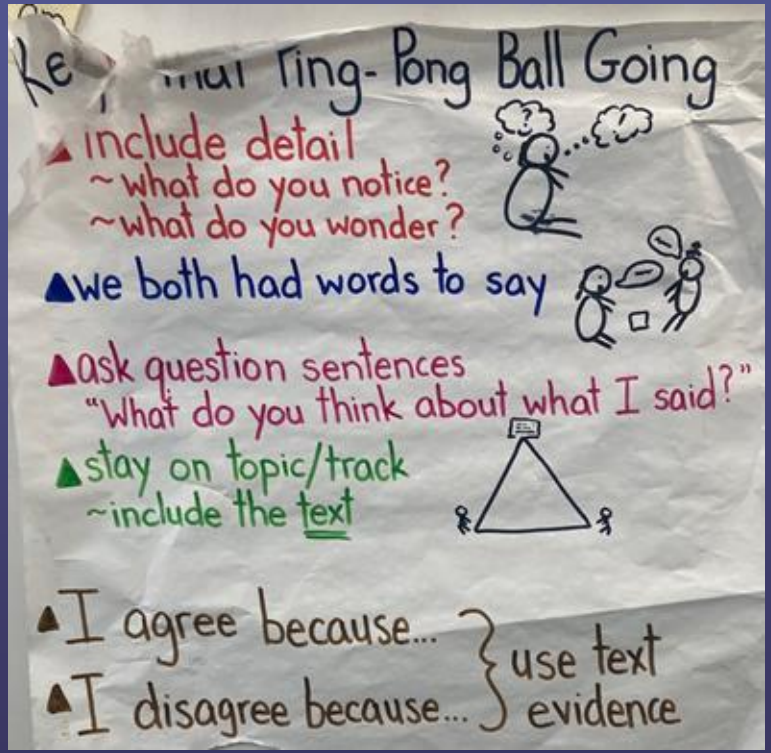
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Keep the Ping-Pong Ball Going!



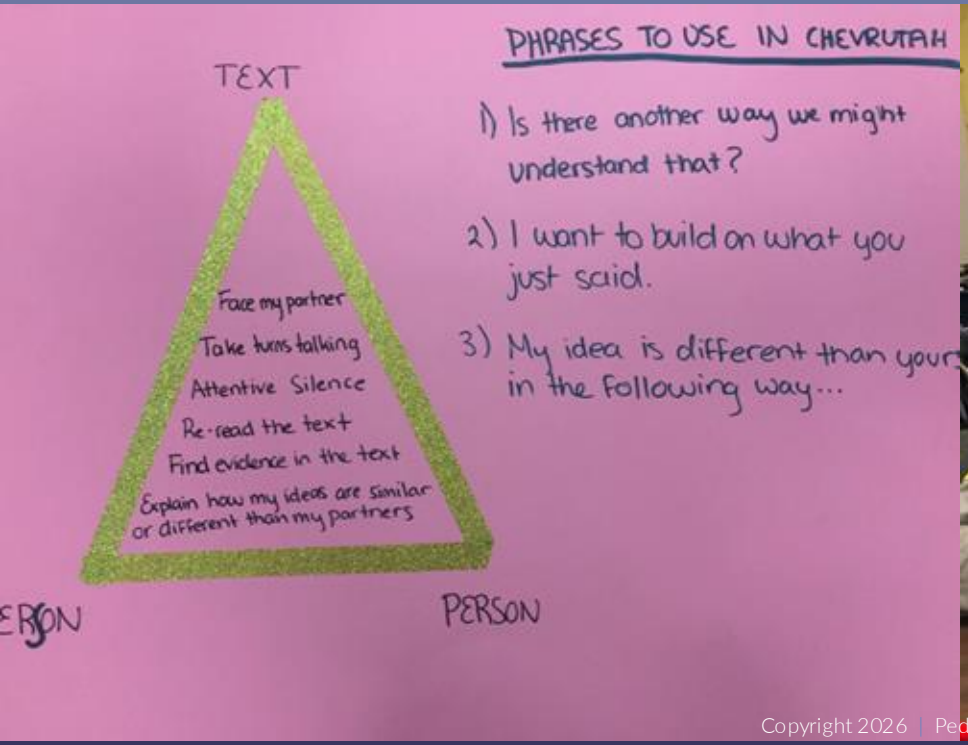


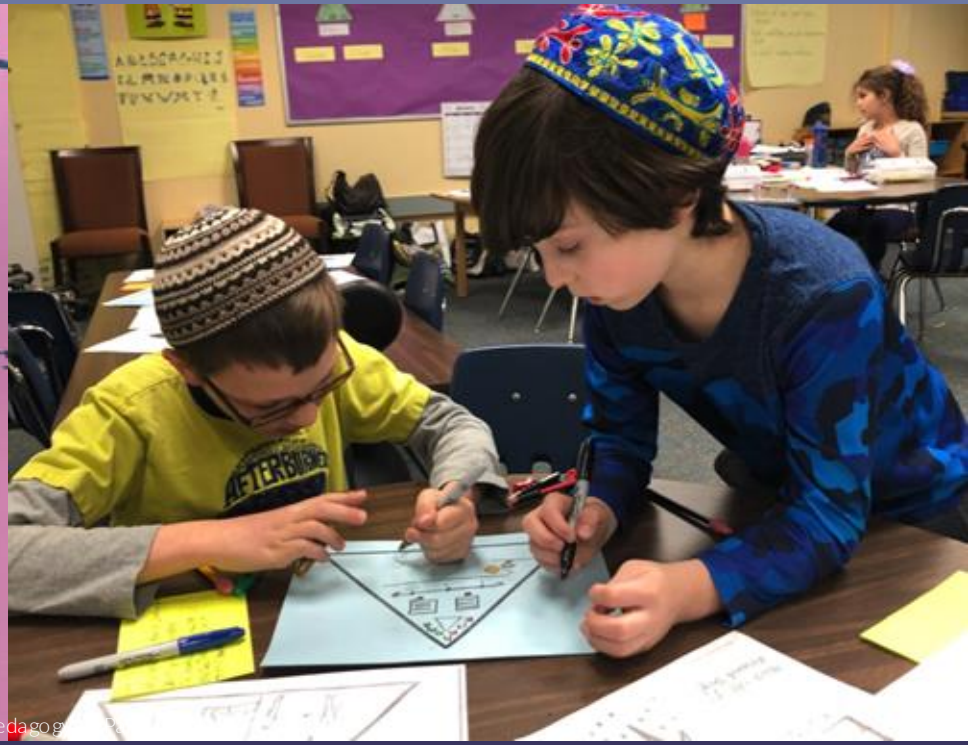
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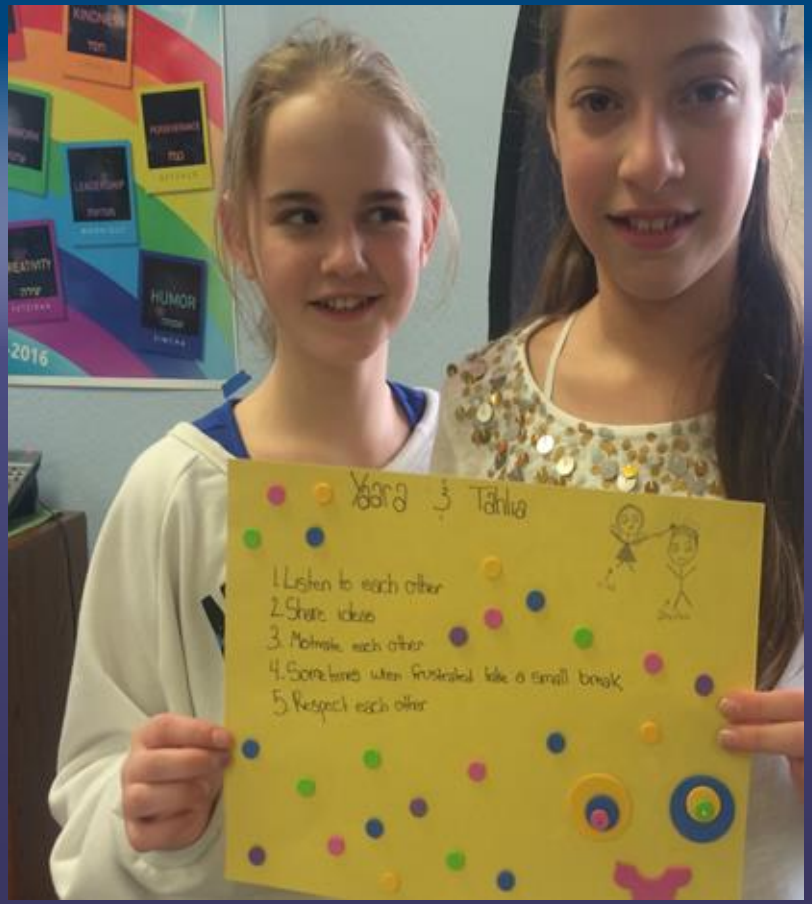
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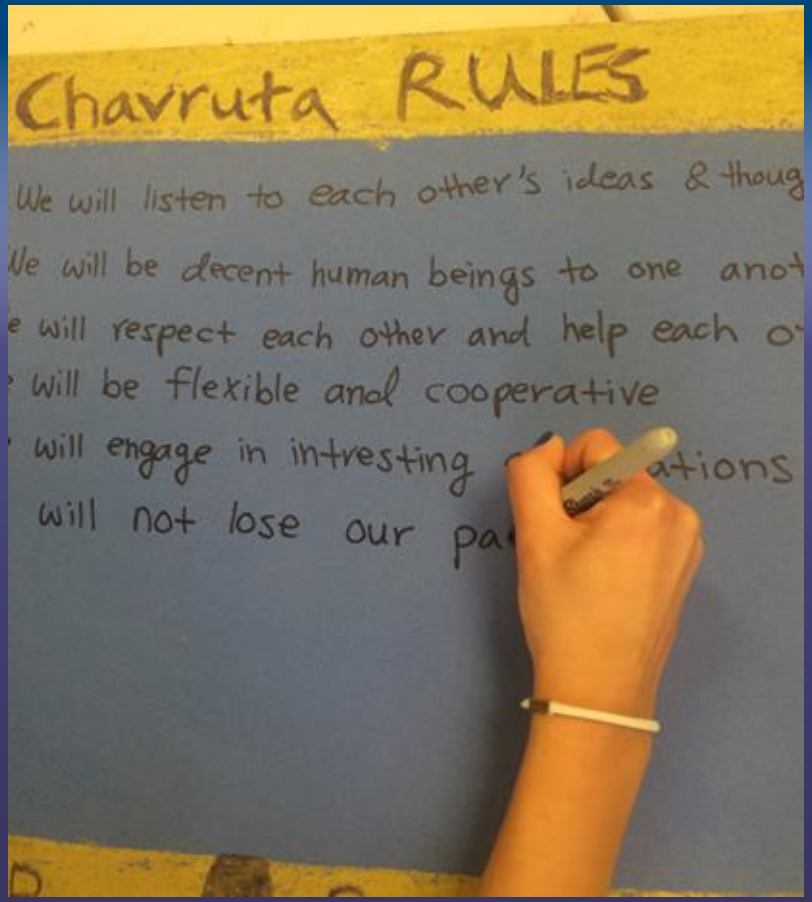
Learners Explore the Triangle



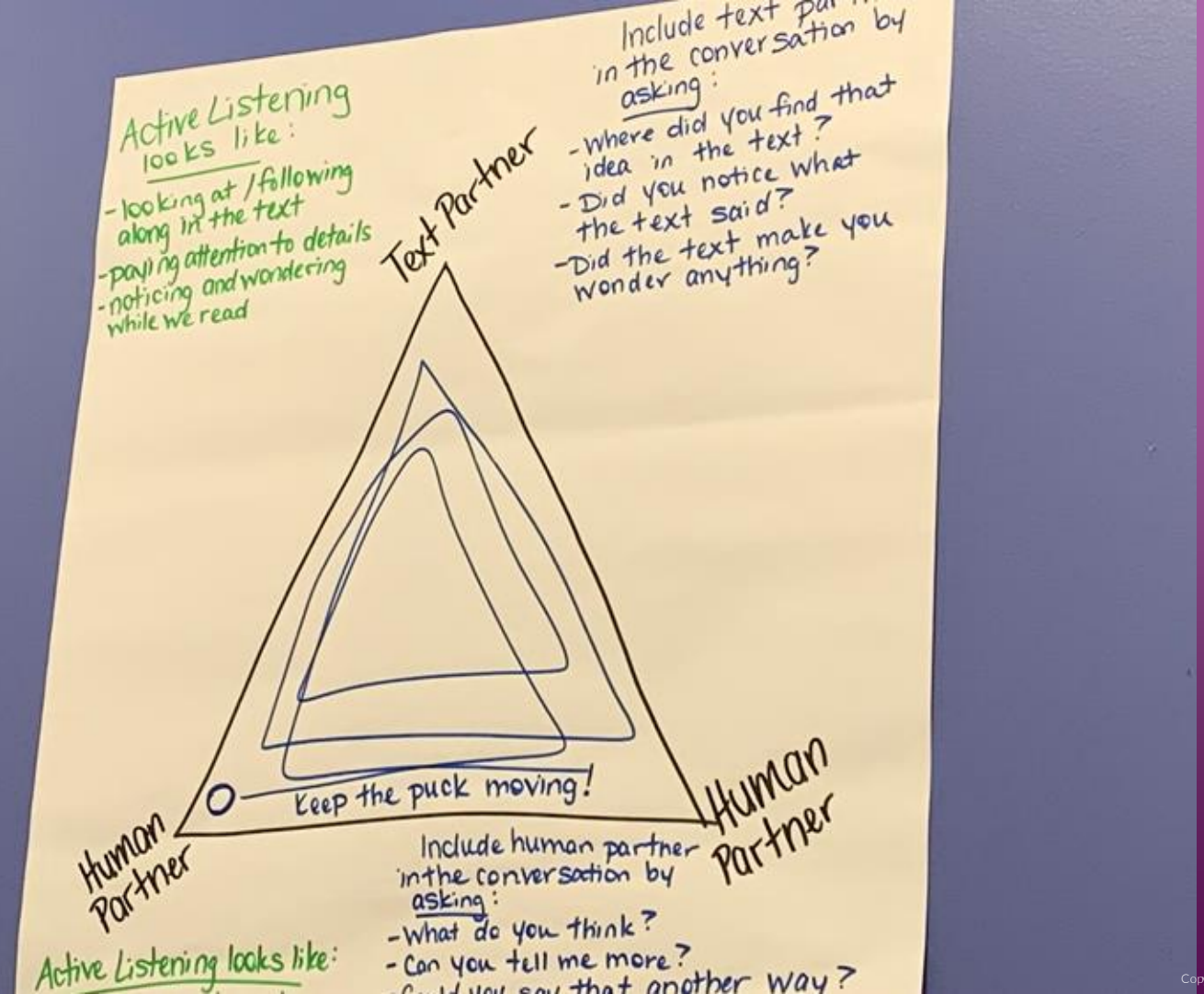


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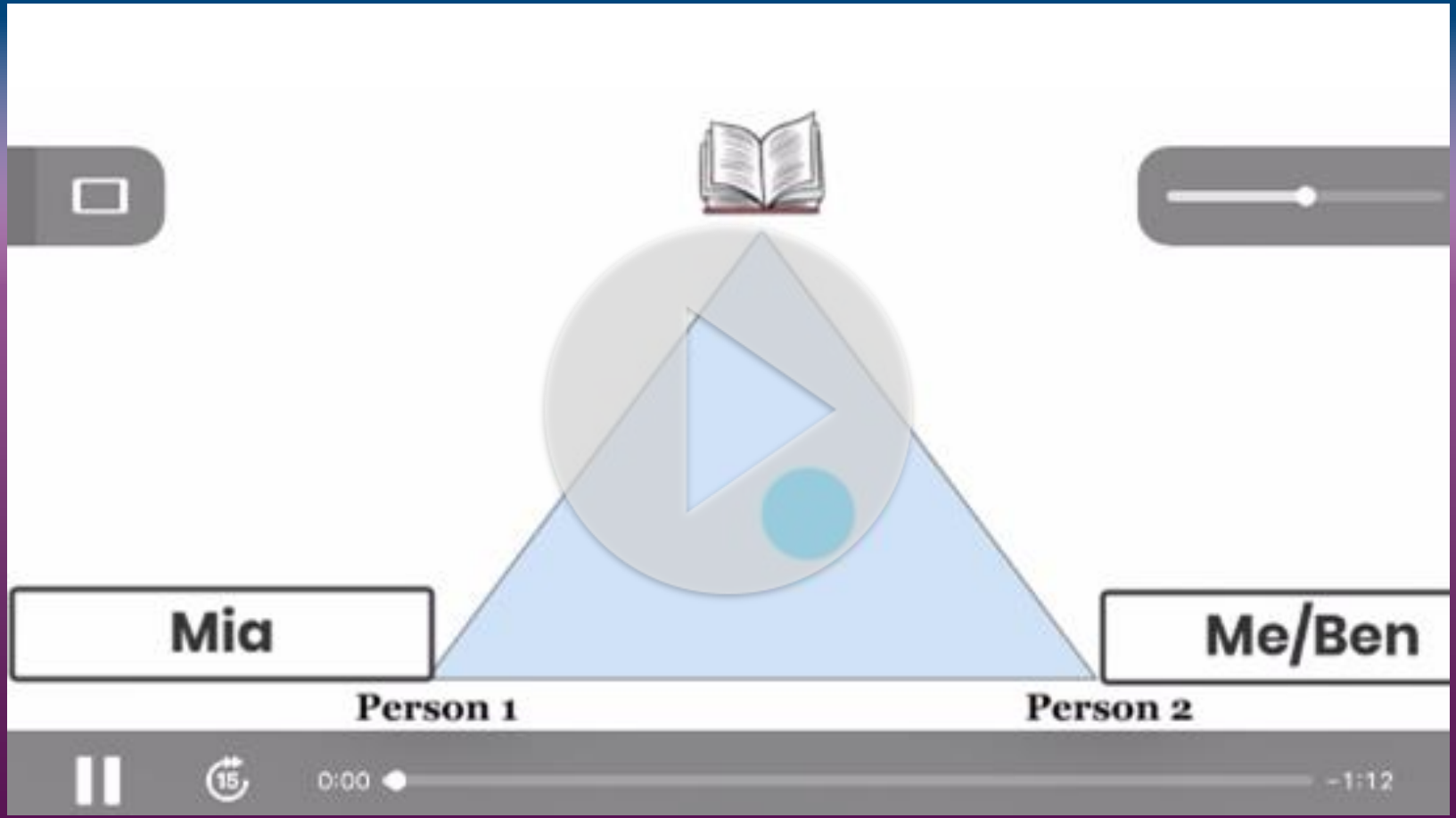


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Reflection: Where is your havruta hockey puck?



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Havruta Routines

Scaffolding student engagement

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Two Foundational Havruta Routines

Core elements to activate all three partners and connect them.

Listening & Articulating Routine

Starts with a given question or idea for students to explore.



Noticing & Wondering Routine

Scaffolds students to explore content on their own and raise their own questions.



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Listening & Articulating Havruta Routine for Young Children

Greet your partner 

Think Time on given question/idea 

A. I think…
B. So are you saying…?

A. [Responds] and asks, What do you think? (discuss)

Switch! 

Thank you for… 

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How we learn is what we learn.

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A Havruta using Listening & Articulating Routine



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Listening & Articulating Havruta Routine for Older Kids

Greetings

Take a moment to catch up

Read the text aloud

Think Time on the havruta question

A. I think…
B. So are you saying…?

Tell me more…

Where do you see that in the text?

(discuss)

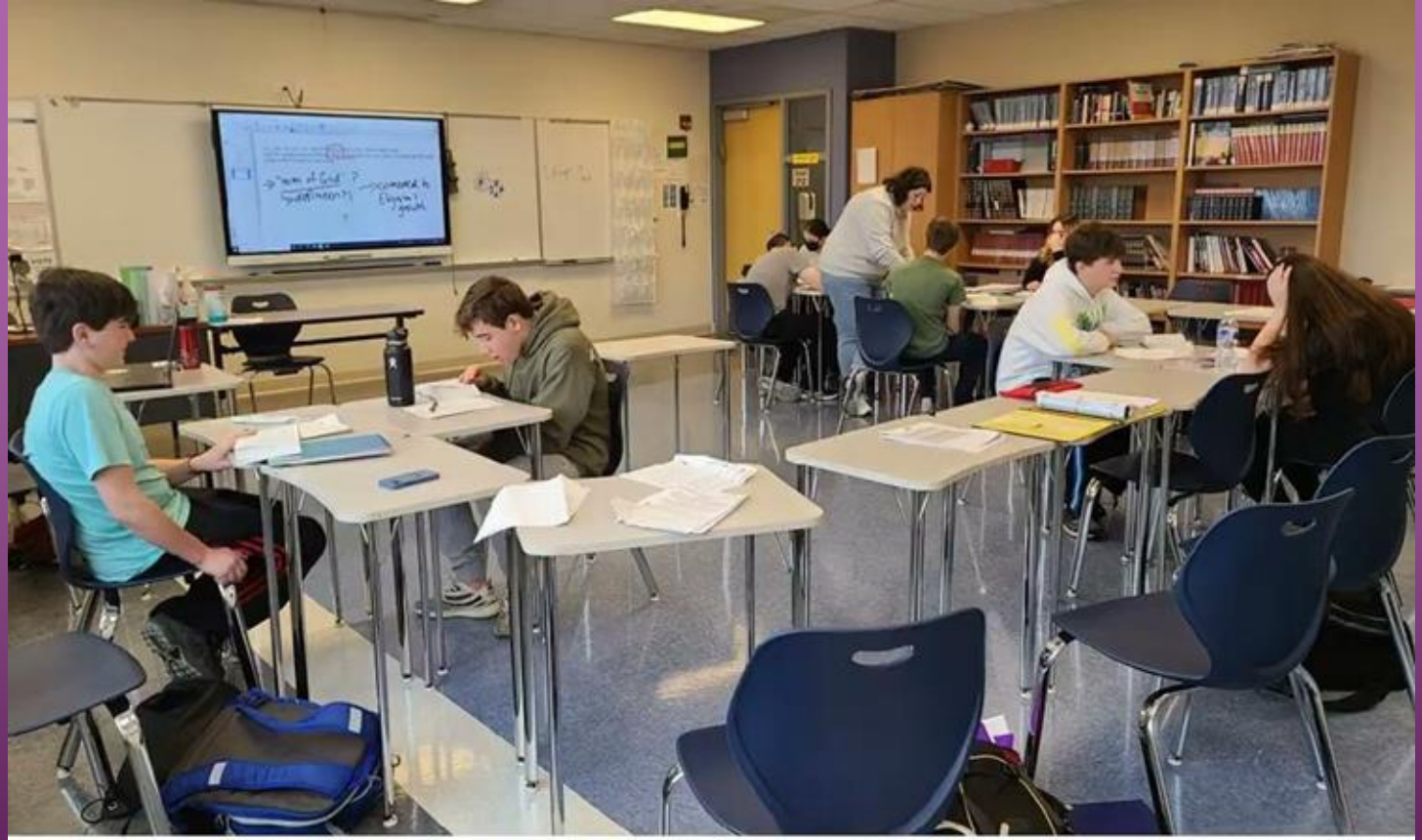
A. What do you think?
B. I agree/disagree because…

Switch!

Thank you for… one thing I learned from you is…

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Noticing & Wondering Havruta Routine for Young Children

Greet your partner



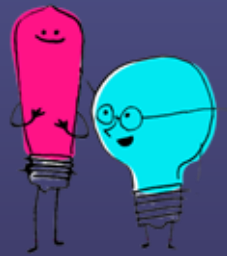
I notice…



I wonder…



I think… What do you think?



Switch!



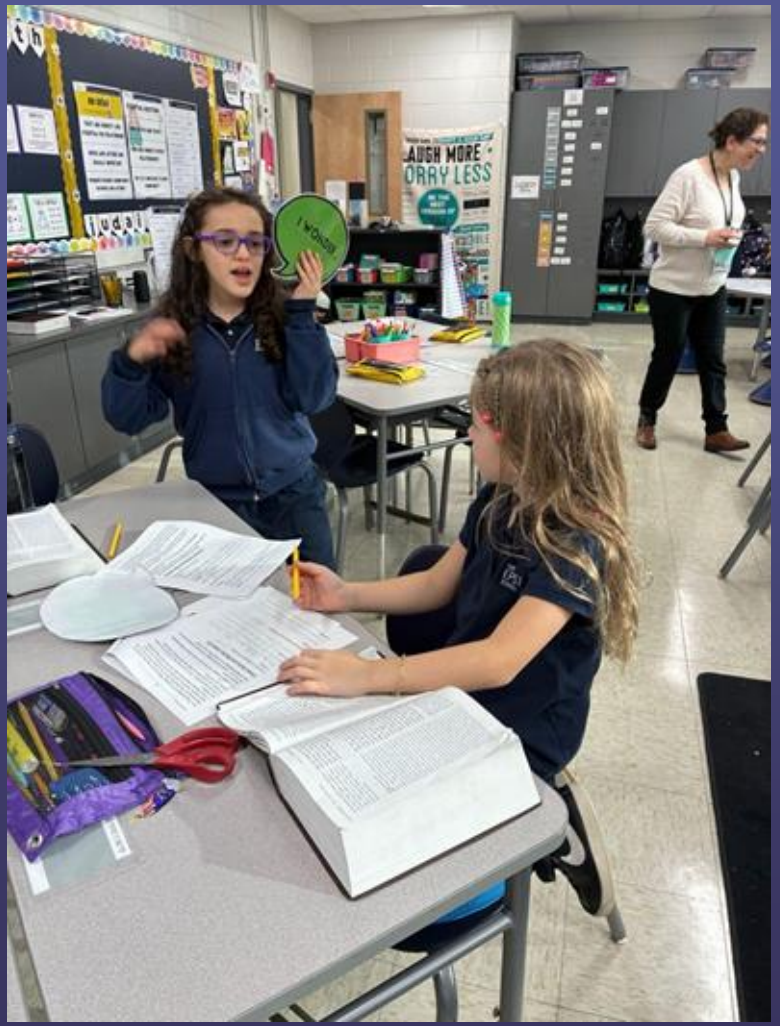
Thank you for…



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How we learn is what we learn.

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Noticing & Wondering
Havruta Routine for Older Kids

1. Greet your partner
2. Partner A: Read a line aloud
3. Partner B: notice and wonder

   I notice… I wonder…

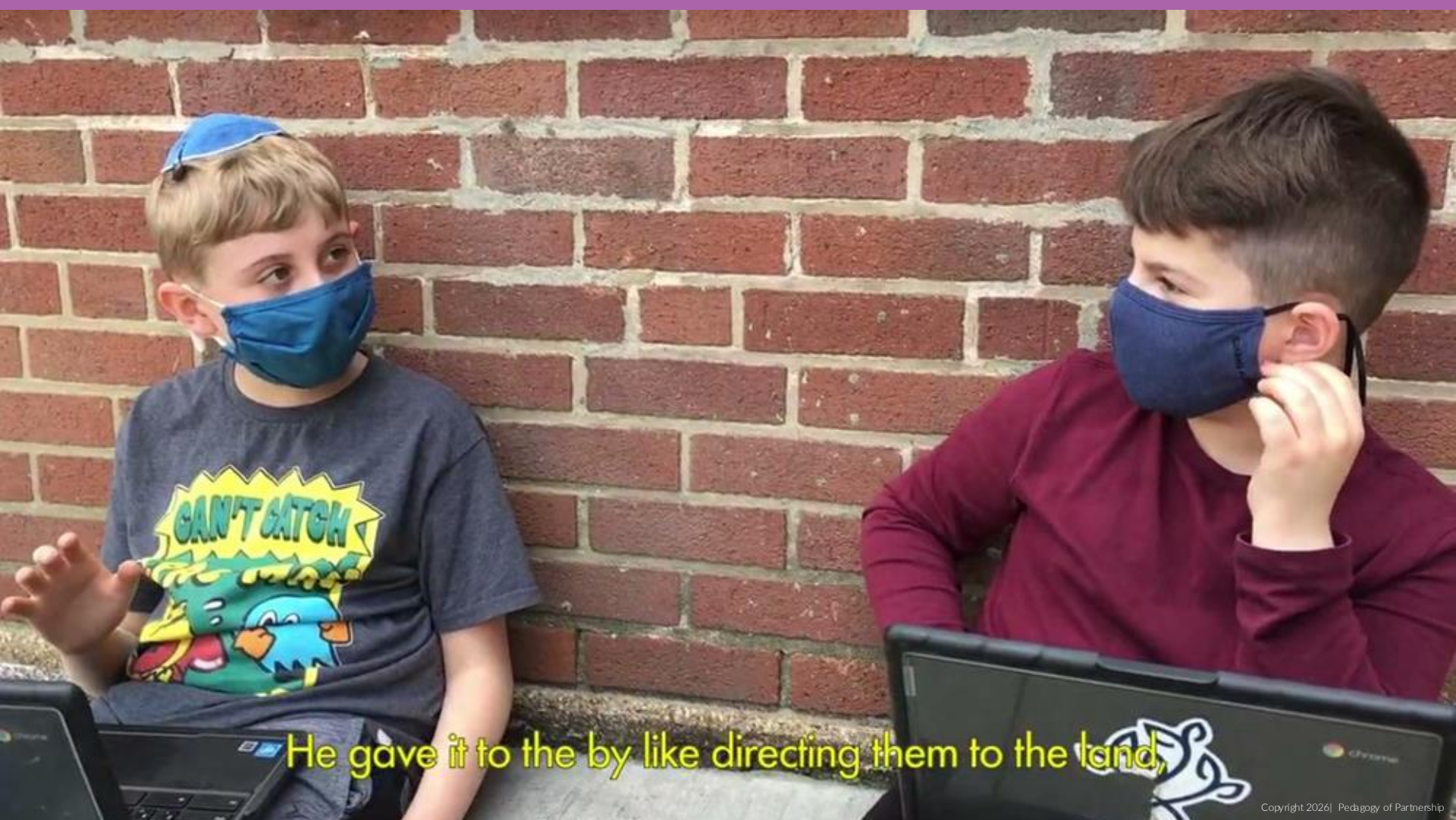
   So are you saying… I think…

1. Switch and repeat 2-3 until you finish the text
2. Share: *One thing you helped me notice is…*
3. Appreciate your havruta!



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How to Teach Routines

Scaffolding student engagement

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Steps for Teaching Havruta Routines

A. Direct instruction: Model; I do, We do, You do; Fishbowl
B. Supporting materials: Anchor charts, bookmarks, speech prompt cards, graphic organizers, accountability mechanisms
C. Targeted practice on specific steps (like speech prompts)
D. Coaching in real time
E. Reflection, self assessment, feedback, REPEAT
F. Adapt to meet needs of learners

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Direct Instruction: I do, We do, You do



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Direct Instruction: Fishbowl

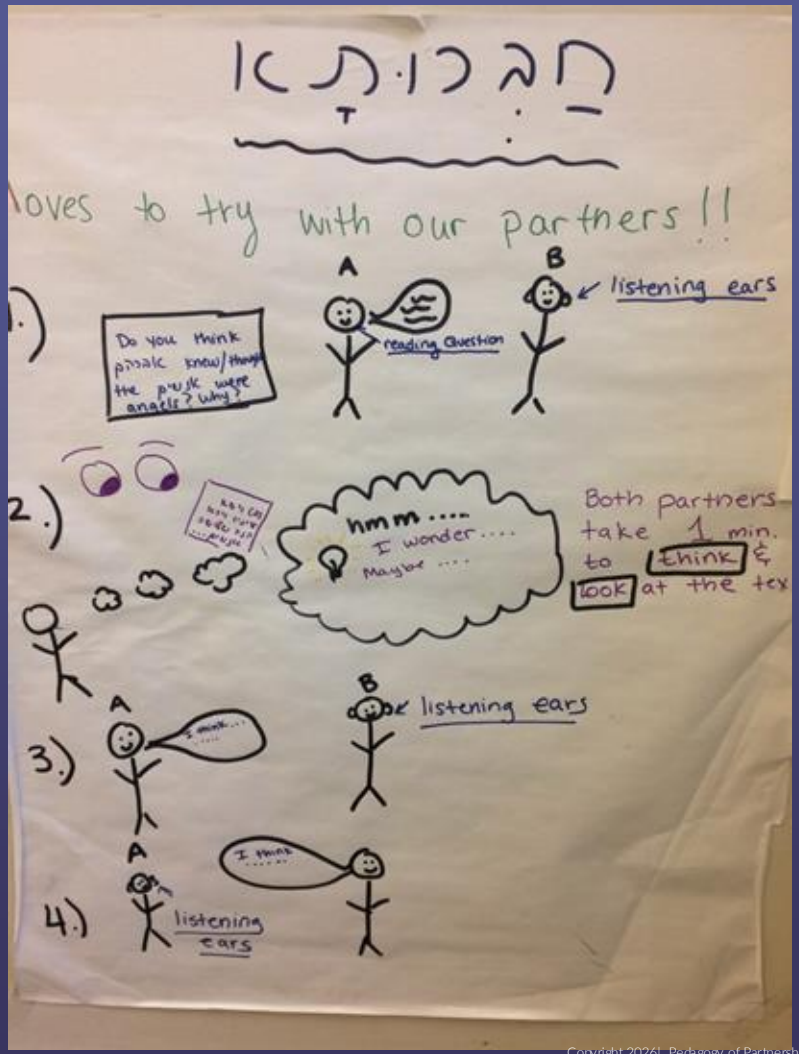


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Supporting Materials

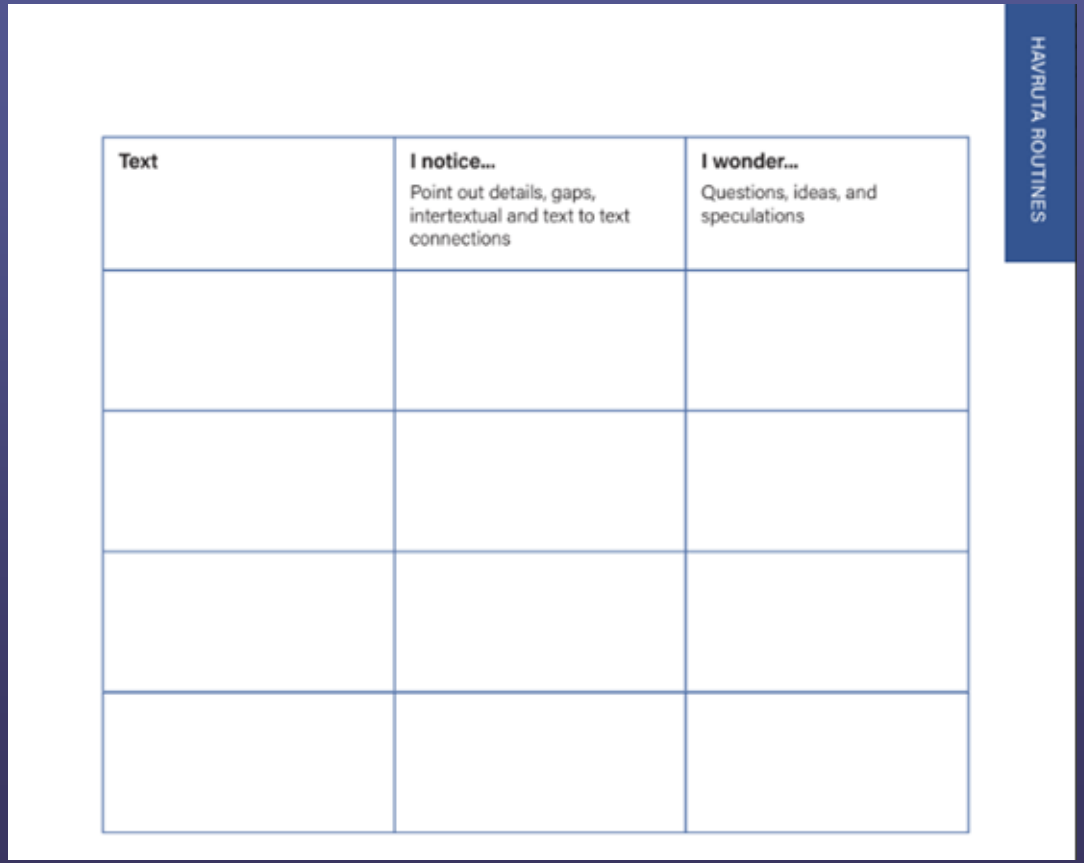






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Graphic Organizers



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Graphic Organizers

Sample Template:

Name:

My Havruta's Name:

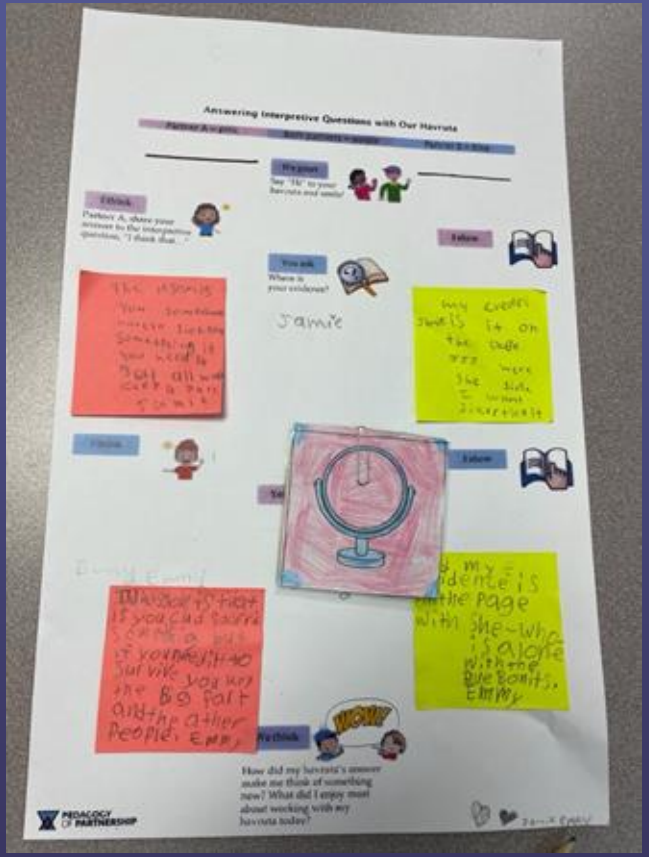
Text:

Three details my partner helped me notice in the text:

1

2

3



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Practicing Speech Prompts with Cards



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Targeted work on Speech Prompts



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Self Assessment Tool

	Yes	Sometimes	Not yet
I listened to my human partner			
I contributed ideas and questions			
I listened to the text by re-reading, noticing, bringing evidence from text			
I used speech prompts			
I worked to balance the Triangle			

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Reflection & Self Assessment



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Adaptations

Meeting the needs of learners

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Adapting Routines

A. Breaking up protocols into smaller chunks or adding elements
B. Teacher guided, step by step
C. Assign some steps to be individual work
D. Use symbols with or instead of words
E. Reduce or eliminate writing—focus on conversation
F. Voice record , draw, use images instead of reading or writing
G. Use “Good job” or “thank you” as prompts for little people to connect person-to-person side of triangle.
H. Hand motions for different speech prompts.

Try things, observe carefully, and make adjustments: ask students what feels hard for them and brainstorm solutions.

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Havruta: structure for differentiated instruction

- Goals, content, process, product
- Flexible groupings
    - Homogeneous groupings for skill level, pacing
    - Heterogeneous groupings for texts/tasks that invite multiple perspectives and skill sets



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Additional thinking/speech steps

A. Attentive silence
B. I want to build on what you just said.
C. Is there another way of understanding that?
D. This [detail/datum] supports/challenges this idea.
E. Where do you see that in the text?
F. I agree/disagree because… [bring evidence]

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PoPortunities!

- Havruta text study
- Read alouds
- Math talk, problem solving
- Lab partners
- Primary source documents and artifacts study
- Peer critique and editing
- Group discussions
- Prepping for discussion
- Project based work
- Multi-modal learning activities
- Literature study—pairs, Lit Circles
- Centers
- Sharing and refining research questions and interpreting results
- Other!



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Where to use havruta in my classroom?

- What is a good text/content partner in my curriculum?
- Where do I want to slow things down and give students deep, first-hand engagement with the content?
- Where do I already do “group work” and could sharpen engagement with havruta?

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If you only have five minutes…

Havruta Turn and Talks:

1. I notice… I wonder
2. I think… What do you think…?

Something I learned from my havruta is…



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The Jewish Learning Tradition: A tradition of engagement…

Form many groups and study Torah, for the Torah is only acquired through study in a group.

-Brachot 63b

Two Torah scholars who listen to each other in the discussion of halakha (Jewish practice), the Holy Blessed One, hears their voice… *-Shabbat 63a*



"Sea of Halachah" Map, Beit Hatfutsot

Questions?

Upcoming Hidden Sparks Without Walls Sessions

Tuesday, March 17, 2026 For Parents	**The Emotionally Aware Parent: Regulating Yourself to Support Your Child** Presented by Ariella Azaraf
Tuesday, March 17, 2026 For Teachers	**The Visual Literacy Classroom: From Pictures to Words** Presented by Hollis Dannaham

If you are interested in bringing Hidden Sparks to your school or city, please contact us:

212-767-7707 or rabbihus@hiddensparks.org

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