



Ten Commandments Relay Race

Topic

Tanach, Lag B'Omer, Shavuot

Grade Level(s)

Primary

Goals for the Lesson/Activity

Students will

- Run, play and create in order to review *Aseret Hadibrot* (the Ten Commandments)

Materials needed

- Building Materials
 - These can be blocks, plastic cups, shoe boxes, etc.
- Play Shabbat Set or Actual Challah Plate, Candlesticks, Kiddush Cup, etc. (optional)
- Paper and Markers or Crayons
- Checklist

Background for Teachers

This activity invites students to run a relay race based on each of *Aseret Hadibrot*. Each leg of the race requires one or two students to run and perform an action related to one of the *dibrot* (commandments).

Receiving the Torah is one of the most important moments in Jewish memory. According to the Talmud (Tractate *Shabbat* 88b), the Torah was given on Shavuot, the 6th of Sivan, at the end of the time that became the counting of the *omer*.

Aseret Hadibrot (the Ten Commandments) are the first words that God speaks during the revelation on *Har Sinai* (Mount Sinai) (Exodus 20:1-14). Later, Moshe recounts what the people heard (Deuteronomy 5:4-18). While much of what Moshe recounts is the same as what is reported in *Shemot*, there are some key differences between the two accounts.

One of the key differences concerns the observance of Shabbat. In *Shemot* (20:8), God tells *B'nei Yisrael*, "*Zachor* (Remember) the day of Shabbat to keep it holy," while in *Devarim* (5:12) Moshe relates that God said, "*Shamor* (Guard) the day of Shabbat to keep it holy." Traditionally, the commandment of "*Zachor*" is understood to refer to all of the things that people do to raise the holiness of Shabbat while "*Shamor*" is understood to refer to all of the things that people refrain from doing in order to raise the holiness of Shabbat.

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Note: The 7th commandment is *Lo Tin'af*, "Do not commit adultery." The activities here adapt this statement to be, "Respect other people's bodies."

Further Note: This activity can stand alone, and it can also be used as part of a *Lag B'Omer* field day or other station event.

Prepare in Advance

- Mark off a starting line and create an activity line/area opposite the starting line. The activity line is where students will perform various actions of the relay race before they return to the starting line.
- Build an "idol" out of cardboard blocks or other material that will not hurt when knocked over.
- Place the items needed to set up the Shabbat table (challah, candlesticks, etc.) at the activity line.
- Station a *madrish* at the activity line to help with questions, etc.
- Make sure that someone is at the starting line to remind students of each activity they must perform in their respective legs of the relay.

Description of Activities

Show students a list of *Aseret Hadibrot*.

Announce that students will be participating in an *Aseret Hadibrot* relay race.

Teams perform the following actions for each *Dibur*.

1. **I Am God** – Sing "One is Hashem" (from the song "Who Knows One?") as they run up and back.
2. **Have no idols** – Knock over the idol made of blocks.
3. **Do not take God's name in vain** – Answer a *berachah* (blessing) question asked by the person stationed at the Activity Line. Some examples include:
 - What *berachah* is said before eating bread? (*Hamotzi*)
 - When is *Birkat Hamazon* said? (After eating a meal)
4. **Observe Shabbat** – Set up a challah, candlesticks, etc. (If a Shabbat set is not available, lie down and sleep for three seconds.)
5. **Respect Your Parents** – Clean up the blocks that were knocked over (but do not put them back together in the form of an idol).
6. **Do Not Kill** – Run up and back holding up a peace sign.
7. **Respect Other People's Bodies** – Run arm in arm. (This is a two-person leg of the relay race.)



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8. **Do Not Steal** – Run up and back with hands in pockets.
9. **Do Not Bear False Witness** (i.e. Do Not Lie About What You See) – Play a quick game of “I Spy” at the activity line.
 - a. The *madrich* or teacher at the activity line spies something and asks the runner to figure out what it is.
10. **Do Not Covet Other People’s Things** (Be Happy with What You Have) – Draw a picture of something of yours that is important to you.