



Tu B'Av

Grade Level(s)

Intermediate

Goals for the Lesson/Activity

Students will

- Identify Tu B'Av on the Jewish and secular calendar
- Describe the origins of Tu B'Av
- Connect Tu B'Av to other cultural celebrations of love
- Express love for others through a variety of activities

Background for Teachers

Many people think of Tu B'Av (the fifteenth of the month of Av), as the Jewish Valentine's Day. This perspective comes from thousands of years of tradition of Tu B'Av being a day of particular joyousness. According to the Talmud (Tractate Ta'anit Mishnah 4:8 and Gemara), Tu B'Av was the day that B'not Yerushalayim (the unmarried girls of Jerusalem) would go out in borrowed white clothes and dance in the vineyards. There, they would hope to find a suitable match for marriage. Gaining popularity in recent years, Tu B'Av is celebrated in the State of Israel as Day of Love.

Activities

Offer one or more of these activities to students to explore expressing love for others and our community.

- Brainstorm a list of loving actions. How do we *show* love to our family, friends, community? Use [Tagxedo](#) to turn the list into a heart-shaped piece of art.
- Use a large heart-shaped cookie cutter to create a variety of edible masterpieces to share with your loved ones. You can make cookies, sandwiches, pancakes, and more in the shape of a heart. Be sure to share why you love someone so much when presenting your edible gifts.
- Use [Google Images Safe Search](#) to find images of love-themed stamps from around the world. Compare and contrast the images from different countries. Use these ideas to create your own artwork for a Love Stamp. Use one of the sites listed [here](#) to turn your artwork into a real, mail-able stamp.
 - Alternate search option: Use Google Images, but be sure to set the *SafeSearch* option to "on." This option appears in a dropdown menu on the top right of the Google Images landing page.



Tu B'Av

- Create a love song playlist. Do you have any Hebrew songs in your list? Or Israeli musicians? Try adding some to your list using your favorite music searching tool.
- How fun is it to receive surprise notes of love and caring? Write and/or draw messages of love and hide them for others to find. You might hide notes in your brother's lunchbox, inside the kitchen cabinet, or on the seat of the car. Try taping messages to the bathroom mirror to greet your loved ones in the morning.
- Tu B'Av is considered a Jewish version of Valentine's Day. What other cultures/religions have a holiday to celebrate love? How are these holidays similar and/or different to Tu B'Av? Learn more [here](#) and [here](#). Then, create a product using your favorite tech tool (i.e., an infographic, audio recording, or video) to showcase what you learned. Don't love tech? Chose another way to share what you have learned using words and/or pictures.
- Take a look at these 2 famous sculptures using the letters in the word love:
 - [Love in English](#) (original by Robert Indiana, Indianapolis Museum of Art)
 - [Ahavah in Hebrew](#) (Israel Museum)Think about what word you would use as a synonym for love. Using Wikki Stix, create your own word sculpture. Be ready to share your sculpture as well as why you chose the word that you did.
- Use the Hebrew word for love, *Ahavah*, to write acrostic poems about someone you love and/or for someone you love. You could use the Hebrew letters אהבה and write your poem in Hebrew or use the transliteration and write your poem in English.
- How can you show love without using words? Brainstorm a list of actions that you could do for someone to show love. How can you help, support, and or encourage someone to share your love? After making your list, select an action to focus on doing for the next week. Then, try another action in the next week, and so on.
- Discuss the following *mitzvot/middot*:
 - *Kibud Av Va'Aym* – Honoring Parents
 - *Shalom Bayit* – Peace in Your Home
 - *Vahavta L'rayacha Kamocha* – Loving One's Neighbor
 - *Lo Ta'amod al Dam Rayecha* – Not Standing Idly By



Tu B'Av

How do these *mitzvot* relate to love? When, where, and how can you perform these *mitzvot* as acts of love? With whom could you perform one or more of these *mitzvot*? What makes it easier or harder to perform these *mitzvot*?