



# Kosher or Not Kosher

## Topic

Daily Life & Sacred Moments, Hebrew, *Mitzvot* and *Middot*

## Grade Level(s)

2<sup>nd</sup> and Up

## Goals for the Lesson/Activity

### Students will:

- Recall the Hebrew names of different animals
- Identify what makes an animal kosher or not kosher
- Determine whether certain animals are kosher or not kosher

## Materials needed

- “What Makes an Animal Kosher?” Pyramid (one copy per group)
- “What Makes Animals Kosher?” source sheets (one copy per group)
- Kosher or Not Kosher Flash Cards (one set printed on cardstock per group)

## Technology needed (Optional)

- Tablet or Computer with Browser: A digital flashcard set is available on [Quizlet](#). When prompted, enter the case-sensitive password: JTeach. You do not need to have the [Quizlet](#) app to use the flashcard deck. However, it is available for free for the iPhone, iPad and Android devices.
- Projector and necessary cables, if you want to use Quizlet as a whole class.

## Background for Teachers

The Torah distinguishes among different types of animals when dealing with *kashrut*: sea creatures, flying animals, and land animals.

- Sea creatures are kosher when they have fins and scales.
- Flying animals (i.e. birds) are *not* kosher if they are mentioned specifically by the Torah. Today, birds are considered kosher only when there is a longstanding tradition to eat them.
- Land animals are kosher when they have cloven hooves and chew their cud. If an animal only chews its cud (e.g. camel) or only has a cloven hoof (e.g. pig), it is not kosher. While the Torah specifies only the cloven-hoof and cud-chewing criteria, there are other characteristics that help us to identify kosher animals. Kosher land animals have horns. Also, all kosher land animals are vegetarians.

Consider using the Create Your Own Kosher Animal [lesson](#) as a fun assessment for student understanding of what makes animals kosher.



# Kosher or Not Kosher

## Description of Activities

1. Divide students into *hevruta* (partners/small groups) and give them the “What Makes an Animal Kosher?” pyramid, the “What Makes an Animal Kosher?” sources, and the Kosher or Not Kosher flash cards
2. Students sort the cards into Kosher and Non-Kosher Animal groups based on the pyramid and the sources.
3. Ask two different *hevruta* groups to work together and share how and why they sorted the animals as they did. For each animal, students should be able to explain what makes the animal kosher or not kosher.
4. Use the Reference Guide at the end of the lesson to review classifications with students.

## Make Some Noise!

- To get your students moving around and making sound, you might choose to complement the activities with one of the following:
  - Ask students to make the sounds of the animals as they go through the flash cards.
  - Assign each student to be an animal and have the students group themselves according to different categories (kosher/not kosher, land animal/bird/creepy, crawly thing)
  - Ask students to imitate the movement of each animal
  - Play games with the animal cards. Suggested vocabulary games can be found on [JTeach.org](http://JTeach.org).



# Kosher or Not Kosher

## Reference Guide

### KOSHER

English Name of Animal	Hebrew Name of Animal	Category	Kosher?	Why Kosher or Not Kosher
Locust	אַרְבֵּה ar-beh	Creepy, Crawly Thing	Y	The Torah specifies four types of locust that are fit for consumption.
Chicken	עוֹף ohf	Bird	Y	Not forbidden by the Torah
Duck	בָּרַז bar-vaz	Bird	Y	Not forbidden by the Torah
Quail	שִׁלּוֹ sih-lahv	Bird	Y	Not forbidden by the Torah
Turkey	הוֹדוֹ ho-du	Bird	Y	Not forbidden by the Torah
Cow	פָּרָה pa-rah	Land Animal	Y	Chews its cud Has a cloven hoof
Deer	אַיִל ah-yahl	Land Animal	Y	Chews its cud Has a cloven hoof
Giraffe	גִּירָף jee-rahf	Land Animal	Y	Chews its cud Has a cloven hoof
Goat	עֵז Goat	Land Animal	Y	Chews its cud Has a cloven hoof
Sheep	כֶּבֶשׂ keh-vehs	Land Animal	Y	Chews its cud Has a cloven hoof
Salmon	סָלְמוֹן sahl-mon	Sea Creature	Y	Fins Scales
Trout	טְרוֹטָה tih-roo-tah	Sea Creature	Y	Fins Scales
Tuna	טוֹנָה too-nah	Sea Creature	Y	Fins Scales



# Kosher or Not Kosher

## NOT KOSHER

English Name of Animal	Hebrew Name of Animal	Category	Kosher?	Why Kosher or Not Kosher
Eagle/Griffon Vulture*	נְשֵׁר neh-sheer	Bird	N	Forbidden by the Torah
Falcon	בָּז bahz	Bird	N	Forbidden by the Torah
Owl	יְנִישׁוּף yahn-shoof	Bird	N	Forbidden by the Torah
Raven	עוֹרֵב oh-reiv	Bird	N	Forbidden by the Torah
Swan	בְּרַבּוּר bahr-boor	Bird	N	Forbidden by the Torah
Ant	נְמָלָה nih-mah-lah	Creepy, Crawly Thing	N	No creepy, crawly things
Bee	דְּבוּרָה deh-vo-rah	Creepy, Crawly Thing	N	No creepy, crawly things
Fly	זְבוּב zeh-voov	Creepy, Crawly Thing	N	No creepy, crawly things
Snake	נָחַשׁ nah-chash	Creepy, Crawly Thing	N	No creepy, crawly things
Spider	עֶכְבֵּיִשׁ ah-kah-veesh	Creepy, Crawly Thing	N	No creepy, crawly things
Camel	גָּמָל gah-mahl	Land Animal	N	Chews its cud No cloven hooves
Cat	חֲתוּל cha-tool	Land Animal	N	Does not chew its cud No cloven hooves
Dog	כֶּלֶב keh-lev	Land Animal	N	Does not chew its cud No cloven hooves
Donkey	חֲמוֹר chah-moor	Land Animal	N	Does not chew its cud No cloven hooves
Elephant	פִּיל peel	Land Animal	N	Does not chew its cud No cloven hooves
Lion	אֲרִיָּה ar-yeh	Land Animal	N	Does not chew its cud No cloven hooves
Monkey	קוֹפּוּ kof	Land Animal	N	Does not chew its cud No cloven hooves
Pig	חֲזִיר cha-zir	Land Animal	N	Does not chew its cud Has a cloven hoof



## Kosher or Not Kosher

English Name of Animal	Hebrew Name of Animal	Category	Kosher?	Why Kosher or Not Kosher
Rabbit	אַרְנָב ar-nav	Land Animal	N	Does not chew its cud No cloven hooves
Squirrel	סִנְאִי sih-nah-ee	Land Animal	N	Does not chew its cud No cloven hooves
Crab	סַרְטָן sar-tahn	Sea Creature	N	No Fins No Scales
Alligator	תַּנִּין ta-nin	Sea Creature	N	No fins No scales
Lobster	לוֹבֶסְטֵר loh-b-ster	Sea Creature	N	No fins No scales
Turtle	צָב tzav	Sea Creature	N	No fins No scales

\*The word “neshar” is commonly understood to mean “eagle.” However, the word seems to refer to the griffon vulture. There is a long history of confusion about which animal the word refers to. There is a connection between the word’s meaning and the identification of the animal. Thus the understanding of נֶשֶׁר, which is “his head and long neck are covered with a fine white hair and it looks like his feathers fell [נשרו].” Thus, the literal understanding would be “griffon vulture” while the accepted use today is for “eagle.”