

Yom Kippur Breakout Box Instructions

What is Breakout.EDU?

You may have heard of Escape Rooms - actual (as opposed to virtual) rooms where a group, usually ranging from 6-12 participants, work together to solve a series of puzzles in order to “break out” in an allotted time, often an hour. If successful, participants pose with signs that say, “We did it!” etc.; if they fail, they pose with negative, but good-humored signs. www.breakout.edu brings the concept of breakout rooms into the classroom. Participants are given a series of puzzles, the answers to which each open a different lock on a box or bag. The puzzles, taken together, are known as a “breakout.” Instead of gaining their freedom, if successful, students open all of the locks on the box and claim the prize inside.

In public school classrooms, breakouts are frequently used for review in subjects ranging the gamut of all that is taught in that setting. You can find breakouts created by teachers in many categories at www.breakout.edu. In the Jewish supplemental classroom, breakouts are commonly used to teach material as opposed to being a vehicle for review.

There is no set number of puzzles in a breakout; the amount might be determined by the number of locks available, the amount of time allotted, or the age and/or ability of the participants. The genre of puzzle is often varied - as is the case in this breakout - to capitalize on different skills and abilities of participants. A student who excels in math reasoning for instance and one who is skilled in remembering details might both contribute to their team’s success.

Options for Using this Breakout Box

Puzzles work best when 4-6 participants work together to solve them.

In the best case, you will have one complete set of puzzles and one box for every 4-6 participants. In this scenario, participants can solve puzzles collaboratively, or split up the puzzles and work in smaller groups. If this isn’t the case, you have two options:

- A) Give each group one puzzle and have the class work to complete the puzzles as a team, each group completing one puzzle and unlocking one lock.
- B) Give each group one puzzle but, instead of opening the corresponding lock, have them write down their answer to the puzzle. Rotate puzzles. When each team has completed each puzzle, see if their answers open the lock.

The participants know that they’re solving puzzles to get a prize. You know that in the process of solving puzzles, they’re also learning. The more puzzles a team works through, the more knowledge they can unlock.



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There are three puzzles in this box, which will be discussed in further detail below. Topics include a general review of the High Holy Day season with a specific emphasis on Yom Kippur traditions, Rambam’s 4 steps of *teshuvah* and the *Al Heit* prayer.

The breakout is set in the fictional Congregation *Ahava V’Chesed*, in which Rabbi Cohen has posted a note before *Ne’ilah* letting congregants know of disappointment in their behavior. The rabbi has locked the shofar in a box so that they cannot complete the service. If congregants can learn something and demonstrate their knowledge about Yom Kippur, they will be able to unlock the box, finish the service, and break the fast.