

Thanks for the Food

Topics

Mitzvot & Middot,
Daily Life & Sacred Moments
Thanksgiving

Grade Level(s)

1st – 12th

Big Ideas

Saying *berachot* before eating is a way to express appreciation for the food one is about to eat.

Sourcing food back to its origins can help increase the appreciation that people have for what they eat.

Learning Targets

Learners will:

1. Learn *berachot* that demonstrate thanks for different types of food
2. Be able to match the appropriate *berachah* to foods they enjoy eating
3. Create how-to podcasts about *berachot* before eating foods

Materials / Technology Needed

- *Berachah* Signs (Optional)
- Tablets or laptops with a web browser (e.g., Safari, Firefox, Internet Explorer, Chrome) (Optional)
- Access to the Internet (Optional)
- [Anchor FM](#) or audio editing app like [Audacity](#) (Optional)
 - Click [here](#) for Anchor FM tutorials
- [Kahoot!](#) or other online game platform (Optional)
- Thanksgiving Food Sheets (Optional). Four versions are available in the document in order to best meet the needs of students and to allow for adaptability to other times of year.

Background

There are six basic *berachot* that are said before eating food. Each of these *berachot* begins the same way:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם...

Blessed are You, YHVH our God, Ruler of the Universe...

Relevant Vocabulary

בְּרָכָה / בְּרָכוֹת (<i>Berachah</i> / <i>Berachot</i>)	Blessing / Blessings
חֲתִימָה / חֲתִימוֹת (<i>Hatimah</i> / <i>Hatimot</i>)	The Ending of a Blessing

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What distinguishes the *berachot* is their *hatimot*, which also give the *berachot* their names. Please see the accompanying *berachah* sheet for the *berachot* and the types of foods to which they correspond. Note that most of the *berachot* also have special rules that govern which foods apply to them.

הַמוֹצֵיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ—Only bread made from wheat, barley, rye, spelt, or oats is eligible for this *berachah*.

בֹּרֵא מִיַּי מְזֻזֹנֹת—Only non-bread products made from wheat, barley, rye, spelt, or oats are eligible for this *berachah*. Even dishes that feature other components receive this *berachah* when the grains play an important role in the dish.

בֹּרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ—Fruits of the tree are defined as something growing from a perennial tree that does not renew its stem and that does not grow too close to the ground (approximately 9 inches from the ground).

בֹּרֵא פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה—Fruits of the ground are defined as all of the produce that grows in the ground or that grows from a plant that is not included in “Fruits of the Tree.” Thus, a banana is considered a fruit of the ground because it regenerates its trunk each year.

Also note that some foods might have a different *berachah* depending on the form that they take. For example, cranberries take the *berachah* of **בֹּרֵא פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה** because they grow close to the ground. However, cranberry juice takes the *berachah* of **שְׁהַכֵּל נְהִיָּה בְּדַבְּרוֹ** because it is no longer in the form of the berry.

See the leader’s reference guide for a quick rundown on which *berachot* to say for some common Thanksgiving foods. Of course, this activity can be adapted for use with foods eaten at any time of year.

Description of Activities

1. Ask learners what kinds of food they enjoy eating.
2. Discuss with learners where these foods come from.
 - a. Track the path of these foods to their original sources. In other words, if they say pizza, ask them where the cheese, sauce, crust come from. Where do the different ingredients come from?
 - b. Ultimately, learners should be able to track the source of the food to God.
3. Ask learners what they can do to show thanks for these foods.
4. Explain to learners that there are six different *berachot* that are said to show thanks before eating food.
5. Hand out *berachah* sheets to learners and divide learners into pairs or small groups. Learners practice reading the *berachot* to each other.

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6. Based on the ability of the learners, choose from the following activities to best engage them:

a. Create a *Berachah* Podcast

- i. Using [Anchor FM](#) or audio editing software like [Audacity](#), learners create a *Berachot* Podcast.
- ii. Learners record, individually or in groups, a mini-how-to on when to use each *berachah*, including examples, and a recording of the *berachah* in Hebrew and English. Depending on their ability, learners can include explanations for why it is important to give thanks before eating.
- iii. Learners come up with a name and create artwork for their podcast.
- iv. Learners upload a picture of their own creation to illustrate each *berachah*.
- v. **Note:** Podcasts can be uploaded for public consumption or kept locally for enjoyment by participants only. If uploading for public consumption, it is recommended never to use learners' full names, ages, or locations when posting online. Always get permission from guardians and check your account privacy settings before posting.

b. Play Six Stations

- i. Place signs with each of the *berachot* (i.e. there should be six signs, each with one *berachah*) around the room.
- ii. Name a food and ask learners to walk to the appropriate *berachah*.
 1. If doing this activity remotely, this activity can be done as a Kahoot! or other game.
- iii. Learners can name their own foods as well.

c. Thanksgiving Food Sheets

- i. Hand out Thanksgiving food sheets to learners.
- ii. Explain to learners that they should fill in the left column with Thanksgiving foods that they enjoy and the right column with the corresponding *berachah*.
 1. You might choose to have learners fill in the *berachah* column with only the *hatimah*.

d. Berachot Mix and Match

- i. Cut up the leader's reference guide.
- ii. Learners reassemble the guide by matching foods, *berachot*, and reasons.

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Differentiation Options

Knowing that students learn in a variety of ways and modalities, the following options are provided to adjust the above lesson to meet the unique needs of your learners.

For learners who need more assistance

- Have extra copies of the blessings in Hebrew for learners to cut and glue into the chart instead of rewriting the Hebrew.
- Choose 1 – 2 blessing to focus on instead of using the full list. Start with the blessing and then move to brainstorming the foods that go with it.
- Make audio recordings ahead of time for students to listen to and follow along with as they learn the blessings.

For learners who need extension opportunities

- Create a comic strip or cartoon that incorporates the *berachah* and when it should be used.
- Some foods are complicated because their form is changed or they have multiple components. Provide learners with a list of “complicated” foods. Ask them to identify what might be complicated about determining a particular food’s *berachah*, analyze the food in order to determine which *berachah* they would say, and explain why they chose that *berachah*. Learners can share their thought-process in writing, through an illustration, with a skit, or through an video/audio recording.
 - **Some suggested “Complicated Foods”:**
 - **Cranberry Sauce** (Does the cranberry change its form? How much? Why does it make a difference? How does the cranberry sauce compare to a natural cranberry vs. cranberry juice?)
 - **Stuffing** (What is the stuffing made from? What *berachah* would it take in its original state? Does its new form change its character? Does its new form change its *berachah*?)
 - **Twizzlers** (Click [here](#) for a list of ingredients. The key question is how much the wheat flour makes a difference in the character of the licorice.)

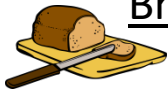
Thanksgiving Blessings

Teacher's Guide

Thanksgiving Food	<i>Berachah</i> / בְּרָכָה	Reason
Turkey	שְׁהַכֵּל נִהְיָה בְּדָבָרוֹ	It is meat.
Sweet Potato	בוֹרָא פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה	It is produce from the ground.
Marshmallow	שְׁהַכֵּל נִהְיָה בְּדָבָרוֹ	It is candy.
Pumpkin Pie	בוֹרָא מִיַּנֵּי מְזֻנּוֹת	The crust makes it a cake-like food.
Green Bean Casserole	בוֹרָא פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה	The green beans come from the ground.
Corn Bread	שְׁהַכֵּל נִהְיָה בְּדָבָרוֹ	It is made from corn flour. (Note that this assumes that there is no wheat flour in the corn bread.)
Mashed Potatoes	בוֹרָא פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה	The potatoes come from the ground.
Squash	בוֹרָא פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה	It is produce from the ground.
Glazed Carrots	בוֹרָא פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה	The carrots come from the ground.

Blessings over Food

Bread



בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

Blessed are You, *YHVH* our God, Ruler of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

Wine & Grape Juice



בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
בוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

Blessed are You, *YHVH* our God, Ruler of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.



Fruits of the Tree (e.g. apples, oranges)

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
בוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ.

Blessed are You, *YHVH* our God, Ruler of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the tree.



Fruits of the Ground (e.g. carrots, cranberries)

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
בוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה.

Blessed are You, *YHVH* our God, Ruler of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the ground.



Grains (e.g. crackers, cake)

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
בוֹרֵא מִיְּנֵי מְזֻנּוֹת

Blessed are You, *YHVH* our God, Ruler of the Universe, who creates types of grains.



Miscellaneous Food (meat, eggs, fish, dairy, candy, etc.)



בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שֶׁהַכֹּל נִהְיָ בְּדְבָרְךָ

Blessed are You, *YHVH* our God, Ruler of the Universe, at whose word all came to be.

Blessings of Thanks

List the foods you like to eat on Thanksgiving.
Then match the food to the appropriate בְּרָכָה (blessing)!

Thanksgiving Food	בְּרָכָה

Blessings of Thanks

List the foods you like to eat on Thanksgiving.

Then match the food to the appropriate בְּרָכָה (blessing)!

Thanksgiving Food	בְּרָכָה	Reason

Blessings of Thanks

List the foods you like to eat on _____.
Then match the food to the appropriate בְּרָכָה (blessing)!

Food	בְּרָכָה

Blessings of Thanks

List the foods you like to eat on _____.

Then match the food to the appropriate בְּרָכָה (blessing)!

Food	בְּרָכָה	Reason