



THE CLEAN SPEECH PROJECT

promoting constructive speech

Y6 Syllabus



a joint project of

Seed **GIFT**

Lesson 1: Keep Losh Locked Up Safe

Lesson Objectives:

Using fireworks as an analogy, understand the 'dangers' of speaking badly towards others and learn the safeguards needed to have 'clean speech'

Lesson Materials:

- Fireworks safety poster
- Speech safety poster

Lesson Overview:

Stage 1: Fireworks safety discussion.

Stage 2: Speech safety discussion.

Stage 3: Quick recap of Non-Kosher speech.

Stage 4: Students learn and act out the safety precautions for 'clean speech'.

Assessment Method:

- Students will show understanding of the dangers of Lashon Hara by making 'speech safety' poster.
- Assessment can be done during discussions about dangers of speech.
- Students will show understanding of the 'safety precautions' by acting out scenarios.

Differentiation:

- Students will make posters with different levels of understanding, based on their levels.
- Students will choose how to act out and express their understanding of 'safety precautions' of clean speech.
- More nuanced examples could be given for higher/lower abilities.

STAGE 1



Fireworks Safety Discussion:



- Give the 'fireworks safety poster' to students.
- What safety precautions would you put on the box?
For example:
Keep it in metal box, only sold to over 18s, keep away from fire etc.
- Discuss with students their answers.
- Why must we be so careful?
- Why can't we just tell people 'be careful'?

STAGE 2



Speech Safety Discussion:



- Give the 'safety speech poster' to students.
 - What safety precautions would you put on the mouth?
- Q.** What is more dangerous? Fireworks, or the mouth? Why?
- Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan 1838–1933 wrote an instruction manual to speech called the 'Chofetz Chaim'. He understood that the power of speech can be very dangerous. He searched through the Torah and all the ancient Jewish wisdom that spoke about speech and compiled a 'safety precaution' manual on how to use speech.

STAGE 3



Quick Recap of Non-Kosher Speech:

The 3 major categories of Non-Kosher speech are:

- **Motsi Shem Ra (Lit. Making a Bad Name)**

This refers to spreading lies about other people.

- **Lashon Hara (Lit. Evil Speech)**

It refers to any statement that is nasty or harmful to others - even if it is true!

- **Rechilut (Lit. Gossip)**

Words that break down relationships. Rechilut speech is not objectively negative, but it will negatively affect relationships between people.

STAGE 4



Learn and Act Out Safety Precautions:

Divide the class into groups. Each group is given one of the 'safety measures' written below.

They have to explain to the class the concept and come up with a 1 min sketch showing an example of what is not allowed.

Safety 1:

Teeth, lips, fingers and ears

- The Talmud teaches that the reason why we have teeth and lips is to have two sets of guards protecting our mouth from speaking 'Non-Kosher' speech.
- The Talmud also teaches that the ear lobes are soft so that we can stuff them into our ear holes to stop us listening to Lashon Hara. Alternatively, we can put our fingers into our ears to stop listening to Lashon Hara.

(Talmud Ketubot 5b)

Safety 2:

Dropping hints about the culprit

- It is Lashon Hara to give clues as to whom is the culprit, if it can be worked out.

For example:

"Someone in the room stole yesterday. They were wearing a red scarf, and this is their address".

Safety 3:

Avak Lashon Hara (Lit. the dust/traces of evil speech)

The Rabbis added an extra layer of caution to Lashon Hara by warning us not to say things that promote or cause Lashon Hara. This is known as 'Avak Lashon Hara'.

TYPE 1

Saying good things about someone to an audience who are likely to react by saying negative things in reply.

- *For example:*

Excessive praise of a person in public might likely cause those listening to distort facts or act with envy and speak Lashon Hara.

- *For example:*

Praising a person in front of a group of people who hate him. They are likely to respond with all sorts of negative information about him to counter what you said.

TYPE 2

Dropping hints 'something' bad was done – without saying what it was.

It is also Avak Lashon Hara to imply that a person did 'something' negative, even if the exact act is not specified.

- *For example:*

"I have some juicy information about Miriam, but I can't tell you, because it is Lashon Hara".

- *For example:*

"Stop talking about so-and-so, I don't want to tell you what's going on with him".

- *For example:*

"Who would have expected Eli would be like he is today?"

Lesson 2:

Speaking without Speaking

Lesson Objectives:

To understand that:

Communication is done not just through speech but other ways too. Lashon Hara is not Kosher, regardless through which medium it is communicated.

Lesson Materials:

- Video clip: 'Think Before You Click!'
- Video clip: Justine Sacco

Lesson Overview:

Stage 1: Discussion: How many methods of communication are there, other than speech?

Stage 2: Activity: samples of speaking without speech.

Stage 3: Social media discussion:

What is more damaging? In person Lashon Hara OR via social media?

Stage 4: Social media video discussions.

Assessment Method:

Assessment via discussions.

Differentiation:

Students will give simpler/more complex examples based on their level of understanding.

STAGE 1



Intro Recap:

Discussion: How many methods of communication are there other than speech?

Give a simple word to the class. Let's give an example: 'cat'.

Ask the class to demonstrate as many **different** ways to communicate that word as possible to someone in a room next door.

How many can you come up with?

For example:

Speaking, Acting, Sign language, Morse code tapping/light flashing, Sound FX, Writing, Paper aeroplane, Drawing, Typing, Video, Email, Whatsapp, Facebook, etc...

If the person gets the message – does it matter in what format they received the information?

Lashon Hara is not limited to speech, it applies to all forms of communication.

A mere shrug, or raise of an eyebrow, can be just as damaging as a harsh word.

STAGE 2



Activity Samples:

Body Language

Read out the following statements whilst the class are to 'speak' Lashon Hara without words, only using body language ...

- Did you hear that a new Kosher restaurant opened up!?
- Do you know Mr Levy?
- Who ate the cookie from the cookie jar?

Facial Expressions

Read out the following statements whilst the class are to 'speak' Lashon Hara without words, only using facial expressions ...

- What do you think about the maths teacher?
- I think Mrs Cohen is truly kind.
- Wasn't that a good talk!?



Writing

Read out the following statements whilst the class are to 'speak' Lashon Hara without words, only writing...

- I bought a salad from the local Kosher shop.
- Here's a photo of me scoring the winning goal.
- Have you heard the new Jewish music song?

STAGE 3



Social Media:

Social Media has now made it even easier to speak Lashon Hara with the click of a button!

A simple 'like' or 'dislike' can be considered Lashon Hara.

For example:

- *Liking a negative comment someone made about another.*
- *Disliking a person's comment/photo*

Discussion:

What is more damaging? In person Lashon Hara OR via social media?

Ask students to stand up and walk to either side of the classroom:

Left: In person Lashon Hara is more damaging.

Right: Social media Lashon Hara is more damaging.

DID YOU KNOW:

In English Law, one can be found guilty of defamation (speaking badly about someone). In Jewish Law, it is Non-Kosher even if it IS true!

There are two forms in which defamation can be made:

Slander and Libel.

Slander is defamation that is said orally.

Libel is defamation that is written.

Libel is considered worse than slander as it has a longer lasting effect.

Social Media Video Discussions:

On social media, words can be spread at rapid speed and destroy someone in a matter of moments.



SCAN OR CLICK

Watch the '[Think Before you Click!](#)' video

If Lashon Hara is like a gun – Lashon Hara on the internet is like a weapon of mass destruction.

If appropriate, discuss story of [Justine Sacco](#) who was fired after a tweet she sent before getting on a plane for Africa



SCAN OR CLICK

Lesson 3: When is Lashon Hara PERMITTED?

STAGE 2



Lesson Objectives:

To learn and understand when one is permitted to speak negatively about others using AEIOU acronym.

Lesson Materials:

- The AEIOU poster
- Discussion Scenario Cards

Lesson Overview:

Stage 1: Recap the last two classes.

Stage 2: Learning and understanding the five rules needed to speak Lashon Hara.

Stage 3: Go through scenarios and determine whether each case fulfils the criteria to speak Lashon Hara.

Assessment Method:

Discussing the scenario cards will determine whether the students have understood the five rules needed to speak negatively about others.

Differentiation for different learners & levels:

- Give simpler/more complex examples of speech for students to categorise, based on their level of understanding.
- Ask students to make up their own examples of when Lashon Hara is/is not allowed.

STAGE 1



Recap:

We have seen how Non-Kosher speech is dangerous and needs to be locked up.

Just as fireworks need safety precautions, so too does speech.

We also saw how speech can be done in more ways than just speaking. All forms of communication must be Kosher.

AEIOU:

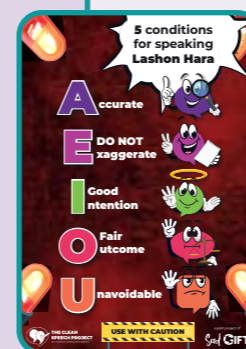
Sometimes, however, it is necessary to speak Lashon Hara!

We are allowed (and SHOULD) speak Lashon Hara for a constructive purpose (known as toelet).

However, it has to go through certain checks first.

Only if all five rules are checked off can one speak Lashon Hara.

Read together with the class the AEIOU poster and discuss in detail the 5 rules.



The 5 rules are **AEIOU**:

A= Accurate

E= Do not Exaggerate

I= Intention must be good

O= Outcome must be reasonable

U= Unavoidable - you've tried all other options including rebuke

A= Accurate (not hearsay)

- You must know the information first hand.
- Are you sure what they did was wrong?
Maybe you misunderstood what happened?

E= Do not Exaggerate

- You may not exaggerate — only state the facts.
- You should not add your own opinions to describe what happened. Just report exactly what happened.
- If you know any reasons that might defend the person, or reduce how bad it was what they did, then you have to report this too.

For example:

Adam stole but he was starving and had no money.

I= Intention must be good

- Are you telling this Lashon Hara to help the person, or is it revenge, or an excuse?



- Whilst reporting, you also must say: 'I am telling you this only for a constructive/good reason'.

O= Outcome must be reasonable

- The outcome of your information must be reasonable and not cause too much damage.

U= Unavoidable - you've tried all other options including rebuke

- Alternative: Can you bring out the constructive purpose without naming and shaming?
- Rebuke: Whenever possible, discuss it with the person themselves first before reporting the act to others. Perhaps they are sorry and you need to give them a chance.

Warning Note for Teachers:

There are clearly some situations that require immediate disclosure on account of their seriousness and implications. The rules of Lashon Hara are not there to stifle such reporting whatsoever.

Discussion:



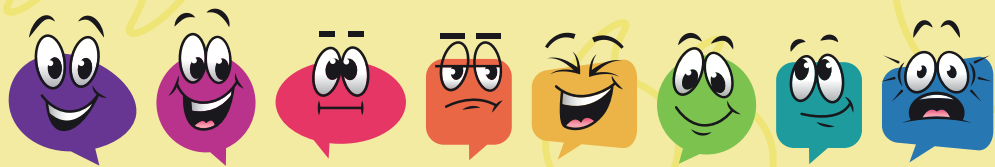
Print out and cut up the 'Discussion scenario cards'.

In pairs, students should look at the cards and discuss whether one is allowed to speak Lashon Hara in each of these cases. If NOT allowed - what would be needed to allow the Lashon Hara to be spoken?

- You've seen someone taking food from a shop without paying. You are pretty sure the person has stolen something, but it is possible they have an account with the shop.

Can you report this?

- It's soon Eli's birthday. Eli asks Sam if he has bought him a present. Sam lies, saying he has not – but you know he has! Can you tell people Sam is lying?
- In the playground, someone runs up to your friend and hits them. You feel you must tell the teacher. In order to get the teacher's attention, you report that your friend was really badly hurt. Is that okay?
- Your friend's father is driving you to a party and he is driving well over the speed limit. It is making you afraid. You want to tell your mother later about it. Can you?
- Someone you **really** don't get on with has just started an argument with another boy on the football team for no reason. You want to tell the coach, so your rival gets kicked off and you play instead?! Can you?
- Your older brother is constantly stealing from your younger sister – but you don't care. However, when you catch your older brother stealing from you - then you want to tell your parents. Can you?
- Your friend had cheated in a test. You want everyone to know how wrong this is by posting it on social media. Is this okay to do?
- Your friend has a business and they refuse to donate any profit to Tzedakah - even though they have lots of money! You want to start a campaign to get them to donate more by putting up posters everywhere informing how stingy the company is. But then you wonder – is this allowed?
- Your friend keeps taking other people's lunch. You could tell the teacher, or you could ask your friend directly why he is doing this?
- Your sister keeps using your shampoo. You want to tell all her friends to get her to stop. Is that okay?



www.cleanspeech.co.uk

Avrohom Zeidman - az@jgift.org | 07984 320 320
Daniel Fine - danielpfine@gmail.com | 07392310866

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written by Rabbis AZ & DF