

Tefillah Toolkit

We – children and adults – often go through *tefillot* without a sense of how they fit together. What is the structure of our *tefillot*? This toolkit shows how the pieces fall into place, which can ultimately make our experience of davening more meaningful.

What does this picture have to do with our *tefillot*?

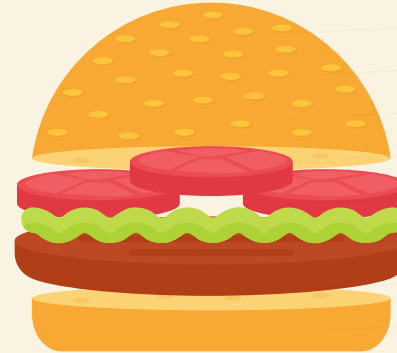
For Students:

Answer these questions, individually or in pairs, to share with the class:

What is the difference between a *tefillah* and a *b'rachah*?

Provide one example of a “Tanakh Burger” in our *tefillot*.

Scan here for Teacher's Guide explanations.



Bread = *B'rachah*

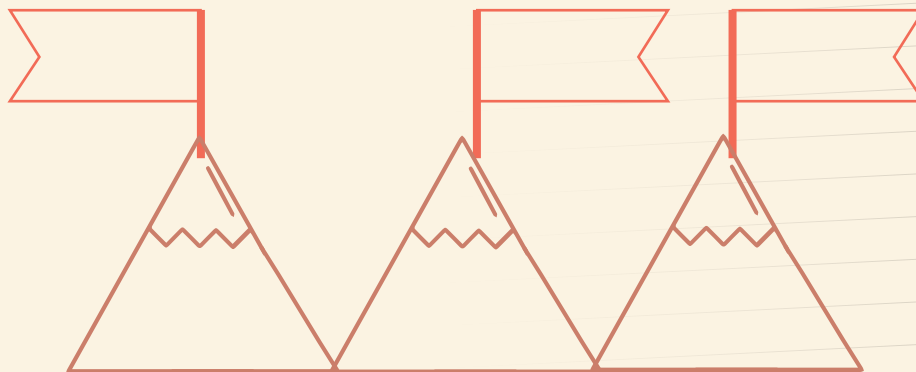
Burger & Fixings = quote from Tanakh

Bread = *B'rachah*

Why do you think this “burger” structure (quote from Tanakh “sandwiched” between two *b'rachot*) is used in our *Tefillah*?



Label the flags with the three most important or "Peak" *tefillot* in the order they appear in our Monday, Thursday or Shabbat morning *tefillot*.



Are these all "Tanakh Burgers"? Explain why.



What is at the very peak of each of these "Tanakh Burgers"?



Each "Tanakh Burger" works up to a peak and then back down. What does that do for the flow of our *tefillot* as a whole?



Draw an icon to represent the main idea each of the *b'rachot* and Tanakh quotations in the space provided.

Icons	מַעְרִיב / עֲרֵבִית	Tanakh Passages	שְׁחֵרִית	Icons
	מַעְרִיב עֲרֵבִים		יוֹצֵר אוֹר	
	אֶהְבֵּת עוֹלָם		אֶהְבֵּה רַבָּה	
		שָׁמַע / וְאֶהְבֵּתָ		
		וְהָיָה אִם שָׁמַעַ		
		פָּרַשְׁתָּ צִיצִת		
	גְּאוּלָּה		גְּאוּלָּה	
	הַשְּׂכִיבֵנוּ			



What patterns do you see? Why do you think the themes are arranged in this order?



- **Identify** the 3 parts of the "Tanakh Burger" and explain why we have these "Tanakh Burgers".
- **Name** our 3 "peak prayers," all "Tanakh Burgers," using the S.A.T. mnemonic. What are other sections of our *tefillah* that are also "Tanakh Burgers"?
- **Recognize** that "Tanakh Burgers" work up to a peak and then back down, providing our *tefillah* with drama & movement.
- **List** the themes in the 3 paragraphs of the *Shema* & its Blessings and explain how they relate to one another.
- **Analyze** one *brachah* or a complete "Tanakh Burger" on my own and demonstrate the meaning of its parts and the whole.
- **Daven** my *brachah* or "Tanakh Burger" for a period of time and keep a journal of the experience and its impact on me.
- **Teach** my classmates what I learned on my own about this *brachah* or "Tanakh Burger".

Word Walls



PBL Strategies



Choice Boards



Small Group Sessions



Analyzing & Annotating a Text #1



Adapt for under 8th grade

Analyzing & Annotating a Text #2

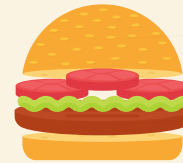


Adapt for under 10th grade

Journaling for Reflection & Gratitude



Analyzing a “Tanakh Burger”: Shema & its Blessings



Bread = B'rachah

Burger & Fixings = Tanakh quote

Bread = B'rachah

To the Teacher:

As a model, lead the class in analyzing *Ma'ariv Aravim* using a Word Wall and Annotating (see chart below) to pinpoint the theme in the text and if it develops, and finally, design an icon for this *b'rachah* based on its major theme.

Phrase or passage from the text	Why is it important? Is it repeated?

To the Student:

In your small group, read your assigned *b'rachah* or Tanakh quotation from the *Shema* & its Blessings to determine its theme(s). If you are assigned a *b'rachah*, locate the *hatimah*, the ending *b'rachah* (and the opening *b'rachah* for a “*b'rachah k'fulah*,” with blessing at the beginning and the end) to help you determine the theme. Are there any sub-themes? Use the Annotation Chart to help you.

Does the theme change or evolve over the course of your text? If so, how?
Create a Word Wall for your text.

Design an icon to represent the major theme of your text. Then prepare to present your icon and the text it represents. Finally, draw your icon in its proper place on the class poster or Google slide.


When all the icons have been added, go back to your small groups to discuss why the themes might be in this order.

Are any of them “matching” or reciprocal (mirror images of each other)?


Do these themes in this order remind you of anything in our lives? [Creation, Revelation & Redemption. For example: our Jewish Sacred History; A Day in the Life: wake to a new day, live life of Torah & go to sleep at night; and the Life Cycle: Birth, Life & Death.]

Your Own Tefillah Experience


- Analyze a “Tanakh Burger” or *B'rachah* or Tanakh quotation in a *tefillah*.
- Label *b'rachot* and quotations from Tanakh.
- What is the theme of your *B'rachah*, Tanakh quotation or “Tanakh Burger”?
 - What are the sub-themes?
 - How does the theme change or evolve over the course of your text?
- Daven your *tefillah* for 5 days. Journal the impact it had on your day (be honest!) After 5 days, write a summary statement.
- Share your experience with your classmates [select]:



an oral presentation



posters or Google slides



a poem or song



a skit