

Taxonomy of Meaning Mining							
Aspects of Meaning:	Values Clarification	Developing Middot	Identifying with Characters	Cultural Identification	Relationship to the Divine	Textual Empowerment	Personal Relevance
Elaboration	Students will articulate and critically consider, from multiple viewpoints, the values being expressed in the text. Students will clarify their own values in relation to the text.	Through respectful consideration of the middot, behaviors, and choices of characters in the texts, students will be guided in a reflective process of considering their own choices or characteristics. Meaningful encounter with the text leads to the refinement of students' middot.	Students connect to or identify with characters or plot lines in narrative texts. Students are able to empathize with the struggles, pain and triumphs of characters in biblical and rabbinic stories and feel drawn to them.	Students feel an innate sense of belonging in the text and a connection to the studying of Jewish texts. Fundamentally, students have internalized that engaging in Torah study is not merely an academic pursuit, but an act of identity formation.	Studying Jewish text builds or strengthens students' relationship with the Divine, makes them more attuned to their own spirituality, and/or enhances their sense of transcendence in the world. Students might appreciate that Torah study is itself an act of love for God.	Students feel a sense of pride in their ability to read, understand and engage with the text. They see the value in the textual and critical thinking skills they have accrued. Thumbing through a Tanakh or navigating a Seder of Mishnah is intuitive and comfortable.	Students can draw connections between aspects of the text and their own lived experience today. The student has closed the time gap and surmounted the culture barrier that often exists between student and text and understands how and why the lessons of the Torah speak to her/him today.
Student perspective (what a student could conceivably say if they were successfully engaged in this aspect)	"When I see the Rabbis grappling with what to do in a situation where halakha and maintaining kavod habriyot clash, I can better evaluate value clashes in my life..."	"I realize that I sometimes justify being dishonest with my parents and I wonder if I can continue to do so in light of my criticisms of Yaakov's behavior with Yitzhak..."	"It must have been so hard for Yaakov to decide what to do when approaching Esav after all those years - to err on the side of forgiveness or rather of self-protection. What I would have done in that situation is..."	"I am one of the stars God is referring to in His promise to Avraham"; OR "I see how the way we'd build a sukkah today is shaped by the mahloket in this gemara."	"God chose to appear to Moshe in a modest desert bush—almost missable; that makes me think of signs of God in my life I might miss."	"I totally understand what Rashi is saying" OR "I know how to find that word in Jastrow."	"When the 10 Commandments talk about EVERYONE deserving a break once a week, I understand why we keep Shabbat today, and why we need to make sure to get away from technology and media once a week!"
Learning Domain	Cognitive (Head)	Conative (Hand)	Affective (Heart)	Affective (Heart)	Affective (Heart); Conative (Hand); Cognitive (Head)	Cognitive (Head); Conative (Hand)	Affective (Heart); Conative (Hand)
Developmental readiness	Middle school	Upper elementary	Elementary	Elementary	Lower elementary	Elementary	Upper elementary
Sample activities and/or assessment	Argue the other side: Students are asked to make a case for the other perspective with which they do not (initially) agree; Tug of war: Place two competing values on opposite sides of the board and have students write in supports for each side; Class debate: In teams, have students orally argue in defense of the competing values in the text.	Self-reflective journaling: Students are asked to respond in writing to prompts, which draw from the text and which encourage them to consider actions they have taken and/or a choice they might make differently next time; Heshbon haNefesh journals: Using a set of very focused prompts and usually focusing on a single middah at a time, have students reflect on their behavior and choices.	Bibliodrama: A variety of activities and prompts (such as: Yaakov, explain to us why you decided to arrange your family the way you did to greet Esav) that have students 'step into the shoes' of a character from the Tanakh or aggadot. Students speak in first person as the character; Letter writing: Guided by a prompt or set of criteria, students write a letter to a character in the text or as a character in the text.	Be a commentator: Students receive a worksheet that includes a section titled "Rashi's Interpretation," "Rashbam's Interpretation," and "YOUR Interpretation." Students will fill in each box and will see themselves as legitimate valuable interpreters of these texts; Ritual research: After studying about a particular mitzvah or ritual students are tasked with researching another Jewish community in order to find both varieties and similarities in the way Jews carry out our traditions.	Shema kavvanot: After learning the text of the Shema, students can come up with ways in which they love G-d when they are "וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם, בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בֵּיתְךָ וּבְלֶכְתְּךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ" God metaphors: Students are asked to portray their relationship to God in the form of a personal metaphor. They can be encouraged to think of this metaphor when praying or performing rituals.	Dictionary "treasure" hunt: Provide students with questions or clues that can only be solved by finding the right entry in a dictionary (such as: "What example does Frank provide for term X" or "How many definitions are there for word Y?"; Textual plays: Students write short plays using the dialogue from the text in their play; Conjugation races: Students race across the classroom to match two parts of a Hebrew word together (such as: the clue is אָחִיו and students match a card with the word אָח to a card with שָׁלוּ on the other side of the class).	Rewrite the mishnah: Students keep the same structure and concepts of a mishnah but replace any features that are not relevant today with modern equivalents; Establishing guidelines: After learning about Moshe's leadership qualities, students can write a guidebook of how to be a good leader and think about where they can utilize these traits in their own lives.
Assessability	Immediately assessable/ Objective	Assessable long-term/ Subjective	Immediately assessable/ Subjective	Assessable long-term/ Subjective	Assessable long-term/ Subjective	Immediately assessable/ Objective	Immediately assessable/ Subjective

Note: The taxonomy was created collaboratively with the faculty of the Pardes Center for Jewish Educators: Rachel Friedrichs, Sefi Kraut, Aviva Lauer, Rachel Margolin, Reuven Margrett, Susan Yammer