

Onaas Devarim Middos Activities

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Grade Level: 4-8

Description:

Short typical scenarios that the girls act out in skits where they focus on responses that would be onaas devarim and those that would be acceptable. The goal of these activities is to sensitize the girls and make them aware of how powerful their words are. This is a nice idea to do with a unit on Shemiras Halashon or during Sefirah time when we are more careful with our middos and our interpersonal relationships.

Goals/Objectives:

Students will dramatize scenarios relating to onaas devarim and will role play correct and incorrect responses to give them a greater awareness of how hurtful their words can be.

Instructions:

1. The group was divided into groups of four.
2. Each group received a lifelike scenario that required a response.
3. The girls need to think of proper and improper ways to respond.

Ona'as Devorim Scenarios

- 1) A few girls are schmoozing in the morning and one girl enters the room really excited to share something. She lets her friends know that her father made it back from Chicago to St Louis (around 300 miles) last night in less than four hours. What are three responses that friends can say that would fall under the category of ona'as devorim and six things the girls can say that would either be "parve" or help make a friend feel good.**

- 2) The girls are lining up for the Lag Ba'omer trip and two girls are lining up together. All of a sudden, Naomi realizes that she left her water bottle in the classroom. Her friend Chaya says she will save her a seat next to her on the bus. As Chaya sits down thinking she will save a seat for her friend, Devorah quickly sits down in the seat that was saved for Naomi. What are three responses that Chaya can say that would fall into the category of ona'as devorim? Please come up with three things she can say that will help her not fall into the trap of saying painful words and still accomplish her goal of saving Naomi's seat.**

- 3) Two friends walk to school everyday together. They talk about all kinds of things that close friends talk about. One day a third girl mentions that she would be joining them on their walk to school the next day. What are three responses that would be ona'as devorim and three responses that would make girls #3 feel included and wanted.**

4) The art committee prepared scenery that would be copied onto canvas for the Chanukah Chagiga. One of the three girls feels the person in the picture does not look real and the scenery would look much better if they would exclude the picture of the lady standing in the background. All other three girls put a lot of effort into the original drawing and like it a lot. How can the girl express her opinion in a way that would be ona'as devorim and what are three things she can say that can express her opinion and share her concerns.

5) The tire swing holds four girls. Five girls go out to recess and the first four that run to the tire swing start swinging away. When girl number five arrives what are three painful ona'as devorim things that can be said and what would be three ways to deal with the situation that feeling are not being hurt.

6) Two girls share a small table in the science room. During snack time one girl eats her corn pops with some friend and the whole table gets oily and crummy. When the second girl returns to class she sees the table and can comment to her friend in a variety of ways. What are three ona'as devorim things she can say? What are three things she can say that would express her dissatisfaction with the messy area and would not be ona'as devorim?

7) You love the front seat of the car. As you are leaving on a family outing your brother runs ahead and takes the seat that you like best. Although this is unfair what are three things you can say that would fall under the category of ona'as devorim and what are three ways we can express disappointment that would not fall under the category of ona'as devorim.

Each group needs to do the following.

- 1) Act out the situation.**
- 2) Include the proper responses and improper responses to each situation.**
- 3) Hold the red and green sticks when using the ona'as devorim phrases and not the ona'as devorim phrases.**
- 4) Each group must answer the three questions below.**

Questions for each group to answer:

- 1) Do you feel that you say things that fall into the category of ona'as devorim?**
- 2) Do you think that things are said to you that fall into the category of ona'as devorim?**
- 3) What ideas does your group have of how we can translate this concept of ona'as devorim to real life changes and a change in behavior?**