

Carmel Program 2 – The Middah Zoo

Location: New Beit

Name of Planners: Michael Weiss

Essential Questions: How can Tikkun Middot (working on our character) help us be our best selves?

Program Summary:

In this program, campers will be introduced to the idea of middot at camp through the middot that we learn from animals. This will be accomplished through a visit to the zoo!

Goals/Objectives:

Campers will be able to:

- In their own words, describe some of the middot they will learn about during the summer.
- Identify some places in their own lives where the middot apply.
- Learn some Hebrew animal names.

Supplies Needed:

Quantity	Item	Notes
1 set	Hebrew animal index cards	Hidden around the room - feature a picture of the animal and the Hebrew word
1 set	Animal picture printouts (see Middah Zoo Animal Printouts)	Spread around the room, taped at eye level
1 per camper	Middah sticker labels (see Middah Zoo Stickers)	
1 per camper	Hybrid animal sheets (see Hybrid Middah Animal Sheet)	
1 per campers	Markers	
	iPod/ hookup cable	Ask A/V to set it up beforehand
1 sheet	Easel paper	For sponge activity

Timetable

:00 - :05 - **Trickle Time/Staff Briefing**

:05 - :10 - **Hebrew Animal Hunt**

:10 - :15 - **Intro to Animals and Middot**

:15 - :30 - **Visit to the Middah Zoo**

:30 - :45 - **Hybrid Animal Creation**

:45 - :52 - **Hybrid Animal Sharing**

:52 - :55 - **Takeaway Teach**

Total Time - 55 Minutes

Detailed Program Description:

:00 - :05 - Trickle Time/Staff Briefing

:05 - :10 - Hebrew Animal Hunt

The program leader will hide index cards with a picture of an animal and the Hebrew word for that animal on them. Campers will be divided into team of 4-5 to search for animal cards. Individual members of a team can spread out to search, but once one person on the team finds a card, they have to stand and make the noise of the animal they found until their entire team is all together making the sound. Once everyone on the team is making the same animal sound in the same place, the team gets to keep the card. At the end, the team with the most animal cards wins. During this, staff should go around with teams to make sure they are actually making the animal sounds before they take cards

:10 - :15 - Intro to Animals and Middot

- Ask campers about what some of the character traits of the animals they found are. Also, ask about the personalities of some animals that we know (animals around camp, our pets). (e.g. lions are brave or a dog is loyal)
- Explain that the rabbis say that we can learn how to act from places other than the Torah including an unlikely source: animals.
- Introduce some of the texts about animals (see Middah Zoo Source Text Sheet)
- Discuss: What are some midot (character traits) that we can learn from animals that we'd want to have? (Something like ometz lev/courage or anavah/humility more so than something like speed or strength)

:15 - :30 - The Middah Zoo

- The program leader will turn on the Middah Zoo playlist over the sound system.
 - Suggested Songs:
 - At the Zoo - Simon and Garfunkel
 - Man Gave Names to All the Animals - Bob Dylan or Jason Mraz
 - Jungle - Electric Light Orchestra
 - Joy to the World - Three Dog Night
 - Any other animal related song
- Campers will each be given a middah sticker sheet and will be asked to go around the middah zoo. Be sure to explain that not every animal needs to have a sticker on it and that every camper will only get one sticker sheet.
- Each camper will meander about, looking at the animals and putting their middah stickers on animals that they think act in a certain way.
- Counselors and faculty, at this time, can walk around and ask campers questions about their choices:
 - What do you think that animal acts like?
 - Why did you put that sticker on that animal?
 - Are you like that animal at all or would you want to be like it?

- When campers are finished, instruct them to go back to the center of the room where they can share some of the middot that put on certain animals with their friends and staff.

:30 - :45 - **Hybrid Animals**

- Turn off the music and gather campers in the center of the room.
- Ask campers for a few examples of what middah they put on which animal and why.
- Campers will each get a blank hybrid animal sheet and will pick 3 middot that they think are most important to the person they want to be. Give some examples (courage, strength, being humble...)
- For each middah, they will pick an animal that represents one of the middot they want to have and choose one of its body parts that they want to have as part of their hybrid animal. For example, a camper could choose a bee's wings, so they can work hard. Campers will draw that animal part on their sheet and record the corresponding middah.
- After picking all 3 parts, campers can draw the whole animal on the back of the sheet.

:45 - :52 - **Hybrid Animal Sharing**

- Depending on the group's energy level, have them share their hybrid animals and middot in groups of 2-3 or call on some campers to present them in front of the whole group, explaining the name, body parts, middot, and acting out how it moves.

:52 - :55 - **Takeaway Teach**

- Charge campers to be like their new hybrid animal because it has all the character traits that they want to have. Feel free to use some of the animals they came up with as examples (e.g. be the libearicorn that you can be!).

Sponge activity (if there's extra time):

The 10 Commandimals -

Have campers come up with 10 commandments based on the behavior of animals (e.g. "Remember to keep our promises like an elephant" or "Be quick like a cheetah to do acts of kindness."). Write these on a piece of chart paper in marker.

Check out these links for the resources cited above:

- <https://jewishcamp.org/making-mensches/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2018/02/Middah-Zoo-Stickers.pdf>
- <https://jewishcamp.org/making-mensches/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2018/02/Hybrid-Middah-Animal-Sheet.pdf>
- <https://jewishcamp.org/making-mensches/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2018/02/Middah-Zoo-Source-Text-Sheet-3.pdf>