

Hebrew and Henna

Spin it!

AUTHOR(S):	Daniel Abramson
SUMMARY:	In this session, you will play with Hebrew letters, and words, while using henna and zen-style patterning. You will explore the power of approaching language through the aesthetics of calligraphy, and with an eye towards mystical and creative symbolism. - Submitted by Daniel Abramson
TOPIC(S):	Tefillah Alternatives, Visual Arts
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants will learn some of the links between the shapes of the Hebrew letters and their symbolic meaning.
AUDIENCE:	Older campers or staff
TIMING:	20 minutes
APPENDICES:	
MATERIALS NEEDED:	Henna Powder or pre-mixed Henna in prepared cones Precision applicator bottles Sample Hebrew letter calligraphy Sample patterns Siddur and Hebrew English Dictionary Paper towel A copy of "The Book of Letters" by Lawrence Kushner "Alefbet" or "22 Otiot" video by Victoria Hanna - https://youtu.be/gcnxRi0s_DM
SET-UP DETAILS:	Room with A/V to watch a clip on YouTube

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

Introduction – Setting the tone – 5 minutes

Participants watch the "22 Otiyot" clip looking at the way that the letters are written and browse pages about each letter from "The Book of Letters"

The facilitator will explain that Rashi used to say that the Torah was "inscribed upon white fire in black fire" (Tan. BeReshith:1, Mid. Tehillim 90:12, Rashi on Devarim 33:2) meaning that the parchment, or the space around the letters had a meaning that is important, maybe as important as the written letters. With Henna, we can think about ourselves as a meaningful canvas, a space for letters, a foundation for Torah.

Henna body art – 15 minutes

Participants choose a letter and a location to create their body art, and apply the henna with an applicator bottle or using a prepared cone. The henna should be left to dry and the stain will remain on the skin for a few days.

Participants should have access to some sample letters and patterns that can be found and printed online.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

This program also touches on interesting ideas about body art and tattooing. This can be a sensitive issue so it is wise to check with your leadership team at camp to see what they think about it. Lastly, I usually recommend implementing henna programs early on in the camp session so that the henna tattoo has time to disappear before campers go home!