

Spin It – Torah - Spies

AUTHOR(S):	Meir Balofsky
SUMMARY:	Participants will step into the shoes of the Israelite spies along with the fear and the peer pressure that goes along with it through drama and role play. - <i>Submitted by Meir Balofsky</i>
TOPIC(S):	Deuteronomy, Parshat Shlach, Peer pressure, Israel
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants will learn about the story of the Israelite spies and the pressures and challenges they faced.
AUDIENCE:	Best for high school students
TIMING:	20 minutes
APPENDICES:	Personality Profiles
SET-UP DETAILS:	Large space for moving around

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

As participants come in, they are each given a card folded over with “Personality profile” written on it – and they are told to keep it folded we go on our field trip

Program begins with an instant role-play of everyone being in a student council meeting of their 8th grade class of which they are all members.

Leader: Welcome everyone to this very important meeting about our future. Middle school has been fantastic for us. We are the oldest students here, we know where to hide to get away from class, how to get the best seats in the cafeteria and all of our teachers think we’re their best friend. We rule this place and now we get to move on to the next amazing stage of our lives.

We were all told how incredible high school is going to be but everyone is a little unsure what it’ll be like, so they’ve asked us, as the student council delegates to go on a fact finding mission to report back to the rest of our class about what to expect. We’re all the leaders of the class from all the different social cliques – so it’s our responsibility to do our job right.

We are now going to go on our field trip to the new high school! (That is the cue to look at the profile info cards. (if they don’t figure it out – be more explicit)

(The boxes with asterisk’s are the positive outlook students - only one of each to be printed. The rest of them – make 3 sets to give out to the rest)

CORNERSTONE 2018 RESOURCE

Clique: Popular

Personality type: Outgoing - Leader –but has hidden insecurities

Middle school experience: Rule the school. Parties all the time. Have had 5 romantic relationships since sixth grade

Outlook: Know that you will need to start from scratch and would rather not have things change

No matter what I see on this tour this how I'm thinking: Convince the board to have middle school to continue to 9th grade and beyond

Clique: Popular

Personality type: Outgoing – Leader – Ready for anything in life

Your Middle school experience: Involved in all the clubs – loved by everyone.

Outlook: Middle school was great – and high school will be even better. Can't wait

No matter what I see on this tour this how I'm thinking: no plan B – High school is going to be the best.

*

Clique: Nerd culture

Personality type: Into fantasy – sci-fi - board games. On the quieter side.

Your Middle school experience: Never really found a group to relate to in middle school. Were not invited to parties and get togethers. Have had the same 2 close friends since 1st grade.

Outlook: High school sounds terrifying. Would rather stick with the world you know

No matter what I see on this tour this how I'm thinking: Convince parents to home-school me

Clique: Skater / Chiller

Personality type: Very laid back / go with the flow

Your Middle school experience: Never made much of an effort to get involved, but people seem to want to hang out with you.

Outlook: Life is a chill-fest. High school will be all good. People can chill with me – I'll do my thing.

No matter what I see on this tour this how I'm thinking: No plan B – I'm good with what comes.

*

Clique: Loner

Personality type: Easily intimidated. Easier to retreat into self rather than engage

Your Middle school experience: Kept to yourself for the most part. Weren't sure how to get more involved or make new friends

Outlook: High school sounds terrifying. Too many new situations and people.

No matter what I see on this tour this how I'm thinking: Take online-courses for high school

Clique: Athlete / sports nut

Personality type: Confidence based on athletic skills. Friendly with plenty of insecurities

Your Middle school experience: starting athlete on all the school teams. Social status based on sports.

Outlook: Frightened because not sure how to adjust to not being the best at sports in the school. More students means you might not be the best.

No matter what I see on this tour this how I'm thinking: Convince the board to have middle school to continue to 9th grade and beyond

Clique: Academic

Personality type: High test-scoring perfectionist.

Your Middle school experience: Straight A's since 1st grade. Sacrificed social activities and friends for academic study.

Outlook: Overwhelmed by the prospect of grades now counting on a transcript. Petrified to not be able to score an A in everything. Not sure what identity will be without academic perfection.

CORNERSTONE 2018 RESOURCE

No matter what I see on this tour this how I'm thinking: Take online-courses for high school

Clique: Nerd culture

Personality type: Into fantasy – sci-fi - board games. On the quieter side.

Your Middle school experience: Were not invited to parties and get togethers. Have had the same 2 close friends since 1st grade.

Outlook: Can't wait to get to high school and finally meet more people who have same interests

No matter what I see on this tour this how I'm thinking: High school is going to be a fresh start to make new friends and not be stuck with the same class I've had all my life

*

Clique: Preppy

Personality type: Cream of fashion. Wanting for nothing in life. Shallow /materialistic personality

Your Middle school experience: Cool by default. Have friends, have many insecurities to keep up the image.

Outlook: Petrified that the image can't be kept up in high school. Unsure what the standards for cool will be.

No matter what I see on this tour this how I'm thinking: Convince the board to have middle school to continue to 9th grade and beyond

Once everyone seems to understand their personalities - we begin the tour

Tour Guide – Welcome to Mother of Cliché's High School – we are so happy to give you this glimpse of the next 4 years of your life!

Station 1: The hallway – Play, hallway music.

"Everyone is getting ready for class. I know everyone is much taller and bigger than you, but don't worry, that'll be you in a few years!

Oh, those are the Emo students – they really don't like anyone – don't worry about them. You'll make a ton of new friends here

Station 2: Chemistry Lab.

This is the chemistry Lab. I know you don't have chem in middle school – this is a place of academic excellence where we push you to strong academic standards to get you ready for your future as an adult.

This lesson is about the effects of weak electro-static forces, like induced dipole forces, on drug-receptor interactions. Some of you look confused. That's ok – it's all explained in the 2 volume introduction.

Station 3: Football field – (play football practice sound effects)

Welcome to our Physical Education facility. Our varsity teams have won 3 state championships in the past five years and we're looking to build on that tradition.

All of our championship banners are hanging from the rafters and are on the walls.

Over there practicing is the football team of course. They look really tough, but don't worry, once you get to know them, they are really a great bunch of guys – really warm and nice.

Station 4: Auditorium

Welcome to the auditorium. It's a bit of a zoo right now because tonight is the fashion and talent show. Our feature this year is the Obil Zenol collection. The featured talent in the show is an incredible group of juniors who are reigning national teen acrobat champions.

Station 5: Administrative Wing

Our last stop is the administrative wing. We have 8 post-secondary guidance offices to help prepare you for your futures. It's also our discipline department but I'm sure that won't be an issue with you fine students.

Thank you for your visit – I'm sure you have a lot to think about and we can't wait to see you in a few months!

- BACK IN THE STUDENT COUNCIL OFFICE

Everyone take a few moments to write down their reactions to the experience

Back in the big council circle – Discuss the recommendations that you as a group will be presenting to your classmates.

This is an open forum and the class is counting on us – be as outspoken as you can.

Allow debate and hopefully chaos to ensue.

Closure:

The Israelites were raised in slavery and spent a year and a half in the desert before they were set to make their way into Israel, the promised land. The people asked Moses to send delegates – one from each of the 12 tribes to visit the land and report back.

The delegates were the leaders of their communities.

25 And they returned from spying out the land at the end of forty days. **26** And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, ...and showed them the fruit of the land. **27** And they told him, and said: 'We came the land, and surely it flows with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. **28** But the people that dwell in the land are fierce, and the cities are fortified, and very great; and moreover we saw the children of giants there.**30** And Caleb stilled the people toward Moses, and said: 'We should go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.' **31** But the men that went up with him said: 'We are not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.' **32** and the spies declared: 'The land, through which we have passed to spy it out, is a land that eats it's inhabitants; and all the people that we saw in it are men of great stature. **33** ...we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

Our sages teach that the spies feared change, did not want to lose their comfortable status as leaders and did not trust the Almighty to see that the settling of the land would be successful.

Only two of the 12 spies spoke well of the land and they were shouted down as the minority.

Mass hysteria and rejection of the promised land led the people be punished and remain in the desert for another 38 years until the generation died out.

Are we aware when people think for us?

How do we react to peer pressure?

When are we the perpetrators of peer pressure?

What would you have done if you were a spy? If you were listening to their report?