

## *It's Summer! Time for Multiple Intelligences!*

Dr. Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences suggests that learners approach content through a variety of modalities. Gardner asserts that the realization of different approaches to learning should empower learners to explore the world through multiple avenues. Use the following activities to enjoy summer in a variety of ways.



### **Logical / Mathematical**

**Mr. Sandman**—In the Torah, God promised Abraham that God would give Abraham offspring [as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore](#). Go to the beach and pick up

a handful of sand. Try to count how many grains of sand you picked up. How many grains would there be on the whole beach? How many people do you think could fit on the beach? (And, if you were wondering, yes [someone did calculate](#) and compare how many grains of sand there are on earth to how many stars there are in the sky.)

**Rain, Rain, Don't Go Away**—Many people hope for a sunny summer, but rain is also needed to keep flowers and trees growing. Israel's rainy season comes after summer is over; [traditional Jewish Wisdom](#) even acknowledges how dry summer is in Israel. Track the daily or weekly rainfall in your own hometown. Compare it to the rainfall in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Feeling extra curious? Find out how much rain your local flora needs in order to thrive and compare that to how much rain the flora in Israel needs.

**Amazing Journey**—When *B'nei Yisrael*—the Israelites—[traveled](#) from Egypt to the Promised Land, they made many stops along the way. Make a scavenger hunt for your family and friends that sends them to different places where they can try different activities. Include some ancient travel-related undertakings like building a model sukkah, collecting food (like the manna *B'nei Yisrael* collected on their journey), and getting water to flow out of a rock.

### **The Ebbs and Flows of Summer**

Summer is a time of great joy and great sadness on the Jewish calendar. At the beginning of the season comes the holiday of Shavuot, which Jewish wisdom states is the day of *Matan Torah* (the giving of the Torah). The middle of the summer is marked by the Three Weeks and Tisha b'Av, times that commemorate the destruction of the *Beit Hamikdash* (Holy Temple) and Jerusalem. However, less than a week after Tisha b'Av comes Tu b'Av—a day that, according to the Talmud, was a joyful day ideal for making romantic matches.

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### Verbal / Linguistic

**A Season by Any Other Name**—The Hebrew word for summer is קיץ. Learn how to say summer in other Jewish languages like Yiddish and Ladino.

**Read On**—Summer reads have a special quality to them. They can be good for taking to the beach or just sitting outside in a lounge chair, so grab a [limonana](#) and sit outside with your next summer book. Not sure where to start? Don't kvetch. [Here](#) is a suggested Jewish-themed summer reading list to get younger readers started and [here](#) is one for grown-up readers.

**Modern Midrash**—Jewish wisdom reports about how [Biblical figures reacted to days becoming shorter](#) during the winter and how *Hazal*—the Sages—would [sacrifice to learn Torah](#) during winter. Do the inverse and write your own summer narrative in the midrashic style. What is something you want to explain about summer? Who is the best figure to demonstrate what you are trying to explain? What do you imagine the figure doing?



### Visual / Spatial

**Picture This**—When God showed Abraham the land that Abraham would receive from God, Abraham looked up to survey all that was around him and then walked through the land. While you might not be able to own your entire neighborhood, you can still feel as though it is your own. Take a walk around your neighborhood and notice details you might not have noticed before. Then build a model of your neighborhood in your favorite medium; whether it be Lego, toothpicks, pudding, or something else.

**Paint the Streets**—Solomon Souza is a British-Israeli artist who specializes in street art, and he has [decorated Jerusalem's Mahane Yehuda](#) with hundreds of his creations. While we do not condone drawing on public property without permission, summer is a great time for sidewalk chalk art; so go outside and start drawing. You can even honor your favorite Israeli artists, athletes, scholars, etc. with your creations.

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### **Musical / Rhythmic**

**The Sounds of Silence**—During the three weeks leading up to Tisha b'Av, many Jews have the tradition not to listen to music. During this time, listen to what silence sounds like.

**The Sounds of (Summer) Music**—When the silence is over, what does summer music sound like? Curate a playlist of Israeli summer songs. [Here](#) are a few ideas to get you started. Make sure to include old favorites along with new jams.

**A Song of the Spirit**—They say there was a secret chord that David played, and it pleased the Lord. Regardless of your opinion of Leonard Cohen, the Tanakh is full of [songs of David](#), who was a talented [lyre player](#) before he became king. In the spirit of holy music, gather friends, family, and even random acquaintances and hold an outdoor jam session. [Here is a recording](#) to get you started. Don't know how to play an instrument? Use a bucket to hold down the rhythm section.



### **Body / Kinesthetic**

**Stand in the Place Where You Learn**—While modern research might posit a different workout routine, no less an authority than the Rambam (aka Maimonides) advocates that exercise is important for a healthy life. Summer offers the opportunity to get outside and try new sports, games, etc. Pick a sport, any sport, and enjoy moving around.

**Water, Water Everywhere**—Swimming is a very big deal [in the Talmud](#) (and ask [Jonah](#) what he thinks about the importance of knowing how to swim as well). Don't know how to swim? Start learning. Already know how to swim? Teach someone else or start learning water rescue techniques.

**Barefootin'**—Be like Moses and remove your shoes, even if you are not approaching a burning bush. Use the warmth of summer as an opportunity to go barefoot outside. (Make sure that the ground is clear of dangerous debris first.) How do different surfaces feel beneath your feet? What surfaces make you want to keep your shoes off? Which ones make you want to put them back on? Do you think Moses wanted to put his sandals back on?

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### **Naturalistic**

**Walk and See the Flowers**—Take a walking tour around your neighborhood and catalog the flora in your area. Research how much sunlight and water each type of plant needs to thrive. Check whether any of your local flora appear in the *Tanakh*—the Bible.

**Animals Everywhere!**—Take pictures of the fauna in your neighborhood. Explore what the animals eat and what might be threatening to them. Which of these animals appear in the *Tanakh*? How does their portrayal in the *Tanakh* compare to how you see them in real life?

**Let the Desert Bloom**—David Ben Gurion's dream of the greening of Israel's desert became possible with the development of the [plastic emitter and trickle irrigation](#). Plant your own garden and figure out the most ecofriendly way to feed the plants.

**I Scream! You Scream!**—Ben and Jerry? Jewish. Reuben and Rose Matthus, the founders of Häagen Dazs? Jewish. Bert Baskin and Irv Robbins? Jewish brothers-in-law. Honor the great history of Jewish ice cream by making your own. Don't have an ice cream maker? [Here is a no churn recipe](#) to get you started.



### **Interpersonal**

**Block Party!**—Summer provides a great opportunity to fulfill the command of **וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֶךָ כָּמוֹךָ**—Love your neighbor as yourself. Gather your neighbors and hold a big social gathering. Take the opportunity to hear about what exciting things your neighbors have planned and to interact in a joyful way.

**Spread the Love**—Traditional Jewish wisdom ascribes the destruction of the second *Beit Hamikdash* (Holy Temple) to the Jewish people exhibiting *sinat hinam*—baseless hatred—to each other. On Tisha b'Av, which commemorates the destruction of the *Beit Hamikdash*, flip the script and engage in acts of *ahavat hinam*; do nice things for people without any provocation.

**Cold Drink, Hot Cause**—Who doesn't love a cold drink on a hot day? Who doesn't feel good after giving tzedakah? Combine those two good feelings into a single activity. Open a lemonade—or other refreshing beverage—stand. Choose a local non-profit organization and donate the money you raised through beverage sales.

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### **Intrapersonal**

**One More Mitzvah**—Summer is often a time that allows for more relaxation and reflection. Pick one personal [mitzvah](#) that you can focus on to improve yourself. Keep track of your progress over the course of the summer.

**Feelings, So Many Different Feelings**—The summer Jewish calendar ebbs and flows with periods of sadness—the Three Weeks, Tisha b'Av—and joy—Shavuot, Tu b'Av. Keep a personal journal of how your own emotions ebb and flow over the course of the summer. Note how different events, weather changes, relationships, the amount of light each day, etc. can bring about different emotions.

**Arami Oved Avi**—One of the mitzvot for Shavuot was for [individuals to bring bikkurim](#)—first fruits—to Jerusalem and declare that God brought them out of Egypt and into a land flowing with milk and honey. Imagine that you live in ancient Israel and are bringing *bikkurim*. Write a journal entry about the experience. Make sure to include how the experience connects you to your ancestors and why you need to mention the Exodus from Egypt as part of the process.



### **Existential**

**A Little Off Center**—Tisha b'Av marks the remembrance of the destruction of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> *Beit Hamikdash* (Holy Temple). It was a devastating event for the Jewish people, who were left without a central place of worship. Contemplate how having a central place of worship could strengthen the Jewish people and also how having a multitude of places of worship have been beneficial to the growth of the Jewish people as well.

**The Prayerful Outdoors**—Summer can present an opportunity to engage in outdoor prayer. Find a quiet outdoor place and pray by yourself or with a *minyan*. How does praying outdoors change your *kavanah* (focus)? What elements of outdoor prayer help you to focus better? What elements are more distracting?

**Save the Trees**—In *Beresheet*—the Book of Genesis—God, after creating the world, gave people dominion over the world to both use its resources and to protect it. Develop a summer plan that takes into account this permission and responsibility. Consider how water usage can provide lush plants while also using a valuable natural resource. Take into account how to balance acquiring food from supermarkets and farmers markets, taking into account how the various resources where one acquires food are affected by transportation, agricultural concerns, etc.