

Using *Hevruta*

Read these instructions carefully as your teacher reviews them with you in class:

- Sit face-to-face with your partner.
- Use your “twelve-inch” voice: this ensures that your partner, but not the whole class, will hear you.
- Take turns reading the assigned text slowly and *aloud*. As you hear the words, silently note anything that jumps out at you: this could be a word or phrase you do not understand; something that seems problematic, disturbing, or inconsistent; something that moves you or touches you; or something you either agree or disagree with.
- You and your partner take turns posing questions to each other about the text. Explore what answers to your questions the text provides, and what answers your partner may come up with. Some questions may not have easy answers, and some questions may have no answers at all—in *hevruta* that’s okay!

If you’re stuck on what kinds of questions to ask, consider these three broad categories:

1. *What does the text say?* On a really basic level, what is this text about? How do you know? What words or ideas are repeated in this text?
2. *What does the text mean?* What is the deeper message that comes across in this text? Do you agree with this message? Why or why not? What metaphors or symbols do you see in the text?
3. *What does the text mean to you?* How does this text relate to your own life? What have you experienced that is similar to something you see in this text? What could this text teach you?

Be sure to write down your questions and answers in a notebook or on a sheet of paper so you remember them and can share them with the class later.

