






TRANSGENDER & JEWISH

A FUN GUIDED WORKBOOK FOR KIDS

 **HELLO!** 

MY NAME IS     



 **THIS IS WHAT I LOOK LIKE**

I LIKE TO DO A LOT OF THINGS, LIKE PLAY SOCCER, READ,



AND HANG OUT WITH MY FRIENDS!



**I AM TRANSGENDER. THIS MEANS THAT
WHEN I WAS BORN, EVERYONE
THOUGHT I WAS A GIRL, BUT I WAS
ACTUALLY A BOY!**



**I AM ALSO JEWISH. WHEN I WAS A KID, I
DIDN'T KNOW HOW JUDAISM AND BEING
TRANSGENDER WORKED TOGETHER. NOW I
KNOW, AND I THINK THAT EVERYONE
SHOULD KNOW, NO MATTER THEIR AGE!
THAT'S WHY I MADE THIS WORKBOOK!**

INSTRUCTIONS

1) GO IN ORDER!

I KNOW, I KNOW, THIS CAN BE BORING. BUT I PROMISE IT WILL MAKE MOST SENSE THIS WAY.

2) KEEP AN OPEN MIND AND HEART!

YOU MIGHT LEARN THINGS THAT ARE NEW TO YOU. THAT'S OKAY! WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS THAT YOU KEEP AN OPEN MIND AND HEART; BE WILLING TO LEARN NEW THINGS!

3) HAVE FUN!

THIS IS YOUR WORKBOOK — IT'S MEANT TO BE FUN WHILE TEACHING YOU ABOUT SOMETHING YOU MAY NOT KNOW MUCH ABOUT!

LET'S LEARN SOME TERMINOLOGY

*TERMINOLOGY IS JUST A FANCY WAY OF SAYING "WORDS"

DIRECTIONS:

- 1) USE THE CODE TO FIGURE OUT THE WORDS
- 2) READ EACH WORD AND IT'S DEFINITION

																									
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

WORD: _____



DEFINITION: IDENTIFYING WITH A DIFFERENT GENDER FROM THE ONE YOU WERE BORN AS.

WORD: _____



DEFINITION: THE STEPS A TRANSGENDER PERSON TAKES TO LIVE AS THEIR TRUE SELF (FOR EXAMPLE: WEARING DIFFERENT CLOTHES).

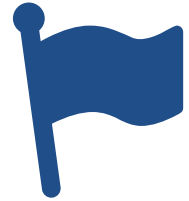
WORD: _____



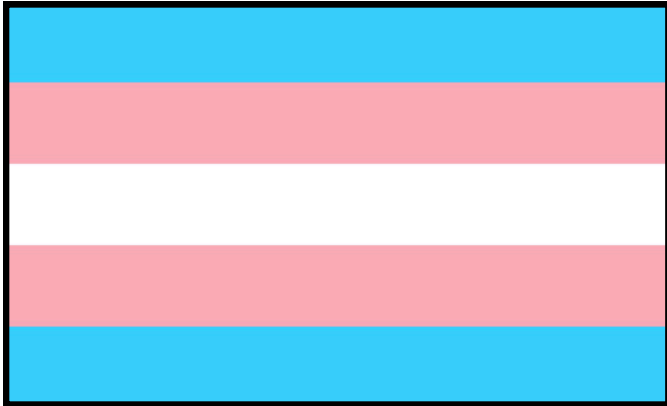
DEFINITION: THE GENDER THAT YOU FEEL YOU ARE (THIS COULD BE A BOY/MALE, GIRL/FEMALE, NEITHER, BOTH, OR SOMETHING ELSE).



CREATE A FLAG



THIS IS THE TRANSGENDER FLAG



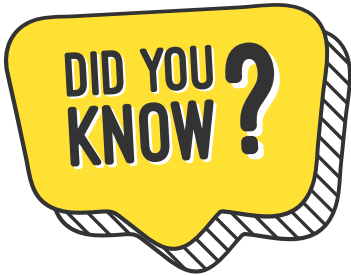
THIS IS THE MAGEN DAVID (JEWISH STAR)



**MAKE A FLAG FOR PEOPLE WHO
ARE TRANSGENDER AND JEWISH**



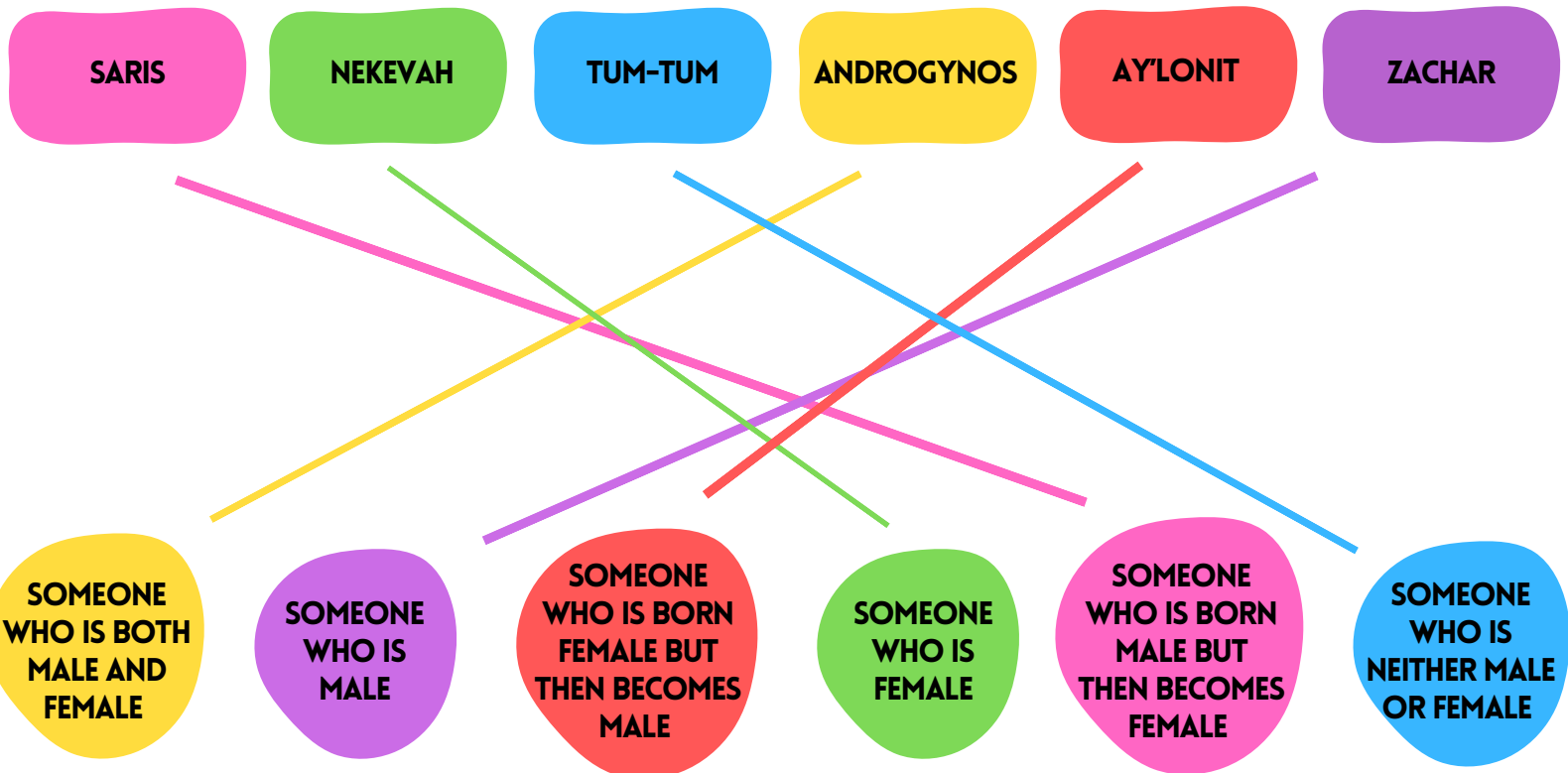
GENDER IN JEWISH TEXTS



THERE ARE 6 DIFFERENT GENDERS
IN THE MISHNA AND TALMUD













THE MISHNA AND TALMUD ARE HISTORICAL JEWISH TEXTS (IN OTHER WORDS, BOOKS WRITTEN A SUPER LONG TIME AGO THAT TALK ABOUT DIFFERENT PARTS OF JUDAISM)

FOLLOW THE LINES TO FIND OUT
WHAT EACH GENDER IS...



WHICH GENDER MATCHES WITH HOW
YOU FEEL? (IT CAN BE MORE THAN ONE!)

INTERPRETING THE TORAH

THE TORAH  TELLS THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY  OF THE JEWISH  PEOPLE. IT WAS WRITTEN  A SUPER LONG TIME AGO, BEFORE THE WORD  "TRANSGENDER" EXISTED. EVEN THOUGH IT DIDN'T  EXIST, THERE ARE SOME CHARACTERS  WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN TRANSGENDER . WE WILL NEVER KNOW FOR SURE , BUT IT IS ONE WAY TO THINK  ABOUT IT! THERE ARE A LOT OF DIFFERENT WAYS TO UNDERSTAND  THE TORAH . CHOOSING HOW TO UNDERSTAND SOMETHING IS CALLED CHOOSING HOW TO INTERPRET IT.

WE ARE GOING TO READ SOME STORIES. HOW DO YOU THINK WE ARE GOING TO INTERPRET THEM?

CIRCLE ONE:

THE CHARACTERS ARE
NOT TRANSGENDER

THE CHARACTERS
ARE TRANSGENDER

THE STORY OF JACOB

Directions:

- 1) Use the word box to fill in the blanks and learn about Jacob
- 2) Answer the multiple choice question to check for understanding

take care of	Esau	birthright
trick	different	mom

Jacob and Esau were twin brothers. Esau loved to hunt animals, and Jacob loved to _____ animals. Esau was closer to their dad, and Jacob was closer to their _____. They were not similar; they were _____.

Esau had the birthright. This means that when he grew up, he would get all the power his dad had. Jacob wanted the _____, so he dressed up as _____ to try to _____ his dad into giving it to him.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING:

WHAT IS ONE REASONS WHY JACOB MIGHT HAVE BEEN TRANSGENDER?

CIRCLE 1

- A) ESAU HAD THE BIRTHRIGHT
- B) JACOB LIKED TO DO THINGS THAT ARE OFTEN CONSIDERED MORE FEMININE THAN MASCULINE
- C) JACOB AND ESAU WERE TWINS

THE STORY OF JOSEPH

Directions:

- 1) Read the story to learn about Joseph
- 2) Answer the multiple choice question to check for understanding
- 3) Draw Joseph

Joseph was part of a big family. He had 11 brothers, a dad, and a mom. Joseph was beautiful, just like his mom. He wore a long rainbow coat. He was very different from his brothers, and his brothers did not like that, so they threw him out of the house.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING:

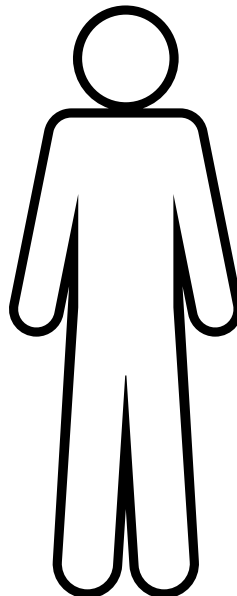
WHAT ARE 2 REASONS WHY JOSEPH MIGHT HAVE BEEN TRANSGENDER?

CIRCLE 3

- B) JOSEPH HAD 11 BROTHERS**
- C) JOSEPH LOVED TO WEAR HIS LONG RAINBOW COAT (QUESTION: WHAT MIGHT A LONG COAT LOOK LIKE?)**
- D) JOSEPH HAD A DAD AND A MOM**
- E) JOSEPH WAS BEAUTIFUL, JUST LIKE HIS MOM**

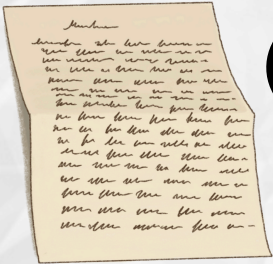
DRAW JOSEPH 

 **THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED ABOUT THEM SO YOU CAN DRAW A SUPER AWESOME PICTURE!**



Make your own character

A letter came for you in the mail! What does it say?



An official decision has been made: There needs to be a new transgender character in the Torah, and you have been chosen to create them. They need to have a name, age, gender identity, and hobbies, and we need to know what they look like. Please start immediately.

It looks like the directions are in the letter. Get started!

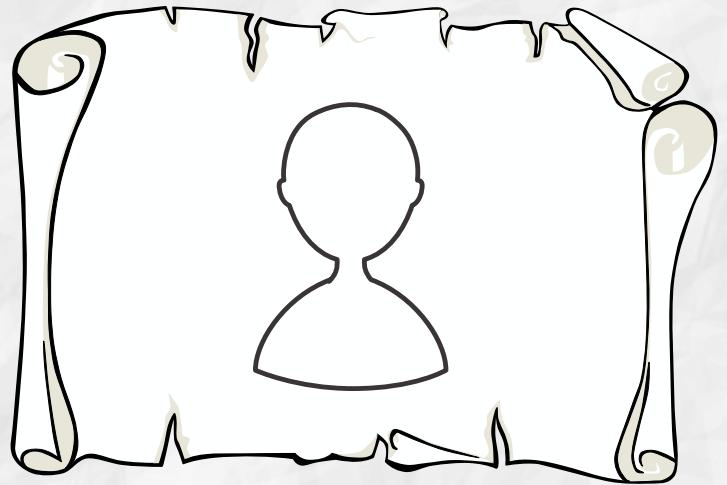
THE NEW TRANSGENDER TORAH CHARACTER

Name: _____

Age: _____

Gender identity: _____

Hobbies: _____



Great job! It's almost complete. Before you can send your work back, you need to write your name and their name on the envelope.

Your name: _____

Their name: _____

VALUES

WHAT ARE VALUES AND WHY DO THEY MATTER?
TRACE THE SENTENCE BELOW TO FIND OUT!

Values are the beliefs that
you think are important. Our
values influence our actions.

WHAT IS ONE OF YOUR VALUES?
WHAT IS AN ACTION THAT YOU DO BECAUSE OF IT?

EXAMPLE:

Value: *Honesty*

Action: *Always telling
my parents the truth*

YOUR TURN:

Value:

Action:

Values are a really important part of life. And guess what? There are values in the Torah! There are even values that can help us understand and think about transgender people and how we should treat them! We're going to check some out and see what they teach us!

MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE

There is a super important line in the Torah.

This is what it says:

"And God created humankind in the divine image, creating it in the image of God"

This is written in a little bit of a confusing way. A common interpretation is that God creates everyone to be beautiful and amazing, perfect just the way they are.

MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE

SO IF GOD CREATES EVERYONE LIKE THAT, WHAT DOES THAT TELL US ABOUT TRANSGENDER PEOPLE?
CIRCLE ONE:

- A) TRANSGENDER PEOPLE ARE NOT REAL
- B) TRANSGENDER PEOPLE ARE JUST AS BEAUTIFUL AND AMAZING AS EVERYONE ELSE
- C) GOD DOES NOT SUPPORT TRANSGENDER PEOPLE

IF GOD CREATES EVERYONE LIKE THIS, THAT INCLUDES YOU! THAT MEANS THAT GOD CREATED YOU TO BE EXACTLY WHO YOU ARE.
WHAT ARE SOME THINGS THAT MAKE YOU, YOU?

Things that make me, me:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



HOW TO TREAT OTHERS

THERE IS ANOTHER SUPER IMPORTANT
LINE IN THE TORAH.
THIS IS WHAT IT SAYS:
"LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF"

WHAT IS ANOTHER WAY TO SAY THIS?

CHOOSE ONE:

- A) BE MEAN TO EVERYONE
- B) TREAT OTHERS HOW YOU WANT TO BE
TREATED
- C) NEVER TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBORS

WHAT DOES THIS VALUE TELL US ABOUT HOW WE
SHOULD TREAT TRANSGENDER PEOPLE?

CHOOSE ONE:

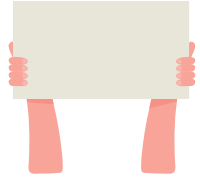
- A) WE SHOULD BE KIND TO TRANSGENDER PEOPLE
- B) WE SHOULD TREAT TRANSGENDER PEOPLE JUST
LIKE WE TREAT EVERYONE ELSE
- C) WE SHOULD TREAT TRANSGENDER PEOPLE THE
SAME WAY WE WANT TO BE TREATED
- D) ALL OF THE ABOVE

HOW TO TREAT OTHERS

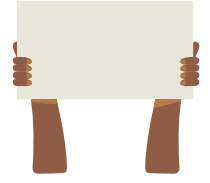
LET'S PUT THIS VALUE INTO PRACTICE!

DIRECTIONS: FILL IN THE BLANKS IN THE COMIC TO HELP THIS PERSON RESPOND TO THEIR FRIEND.





SYNAGOGUE SIGN



Your synagogue wants to put up a sign at its entrance to show that it welcomes transgender people. They have asked for your help designing the sign. Create two designs for the sign! You can include words, pictures, symbols, designs, and anything else you can think of!





UNSCRAMBLE THE WORDS

Below is a list of words related to topics in this workbook!

All the words are scrambled. All the right letters are there, but they are not in the right order! Unscramble each word and write the unscrambled words.

Example:

RKOBOKOW = WORKBOOK

1) SGNRDAETRNE = _ _ _ _ _

2) ISJEHW = _ _ _ _ _

3) YTIDINTE = _ _ _ _ _

4) EULAV = _ _ _ _ _

5) HROTA = _ _ _ _ _

JOY LADIN

DIRECTIONS: READ ABOUT THIS REALLY COOL PERSON NAMED JOY LADIN. THEN, ON THE NEXT PAGE, ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BASED ON WHAT YOU LEARNED FROM THE READING!

Joy Ladin is a writer and teacher who helps people understand what it means to be transgender. She was born a boy but always felt like a girl. When she grew up, Joy started living as a woman, which made her feel much happier and truer to herself.

Joy Ladin made history by becoming the first openly transgender professor at Yeshiva University, an Orthodox Jewish school. This was a big deal because Orthodox Jewish schools have very traditional ideas about gender. Even though it was hard, Joy stayed strong and kept teaching.

Joy has written many books, including poems and stories about her life. One of her famous books is called *Through the Door of Life: A Jewish Journey Between Genders*. In this book, she talks about her experience of becoming a woman and how it affected her faith and family.

Joy travels around the country giving talks about her life and why it's important to be true to who you are. She teaches people to accept and love themselves and others! Joy's work helps make the world a kinder and more understanding place.

JOY LADIN

- 1) What special role did Joy Ladin have at Yeshiva University?
 - Head of the Science Department
 - First openly transgender professor
 - Art teacher

- 2) How did Joy Ladin feel after she started living as a woman?
 - More unhappy
 - The same as before
 - Much happier and more herself

- 3) What kind of books does Joy Ladin write?
 - Mystery books
 - Poems and stories about her life
 - Science textbooks

- 4) What does Joy Ladin's book, *Through the Door of Life*, talk about?
 - Cooking recipes
 - Space adventures
 - Her experience of becoming a woman and her faith and family

- 5) What does Joy Ladin talk about when she gives speeches around the country?
 - The importance of being yourself and accepting everyone
 - Jewish holidays
 - Why you should do your homework

COOL CONCLUDING CROSSWORD

You're almost at the end of the workbook! That means you have probably learned a lot.

Your second to last task is to complete the cool concluding crossword to review everything you have learned. Flip back through the book to help you!

The clues for the crossword are on this page, and the actual crossword is on the next page. Have fun!

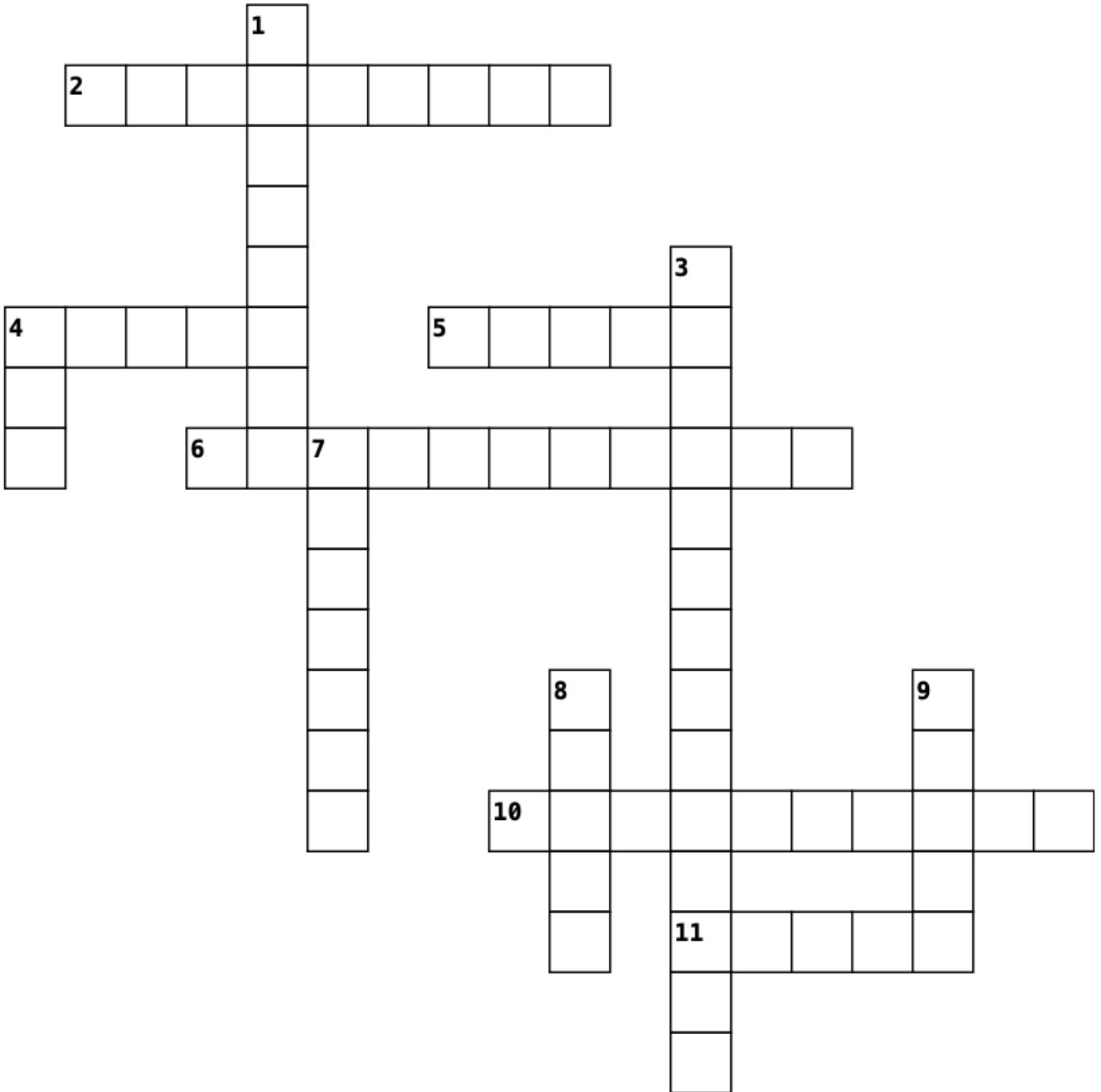
ACROSS →

2. Choosing how to understand something is called choosing how to _____ it
4. Esau's twin brother
5. A belief that you think is important
6. The word for identifying with a different gender than the one you were born as
10. The steps a transgender person takes to live as their true self
11. "God created humankind in the divine _____"

DOWN ↓

1. "Love your _____ as yourself"
3. The gender that you feel you are (hint: it's 2 words)
4. ___ Ladin was the first openly transgender professor at Yeshiva University
7. Someone who is born female but then becomes male in the Mishna and Talmud
8. Someone who is born male but then becomes female in the Mishna and Talmud
9. The colors of the transgender flag are blue, pink, and _____

COOL CONCLUDING CROSSWORD



FINAL THOUGHTS...

YOU MADE IT TO THE LAST PAGE! THE LAST ACTIVITY IS TO REFLECT ON EVERYTHING YOU HAVE LEARNED.

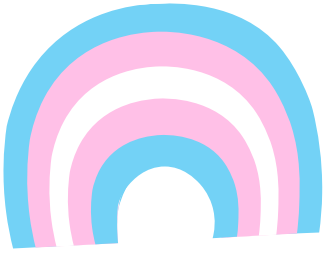
DIRECTIONS: FINISH THE SENTENCES ON EACH POST-IT NOTE!

My favorite part of the workbook was...

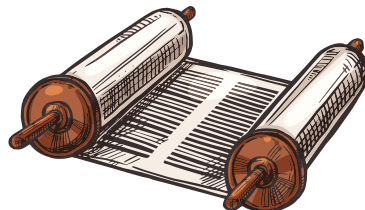
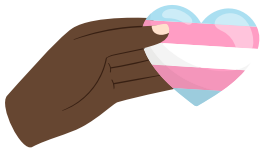
The most important thing I learned was...

The most surprising thing I learned was...

A question I still have is...



THE END





 @sivan_kb

 liinks @sivan

 transgenderandjewish@gmail.com

Sivan Kotler-Berkowitz (he/him) is a rising sophomore at UMass Amherst studying Special Education and Psychology. He is passionate about transgender youth advocacy, working with kids with disabilities, and making the world a better place.

As an advocate, Sivan shares his story as a thriving transgender teenager to help replace misinformation about transgender youth. Through his advocacy, he has appeared on national television, worked with Nike, met with officials in the U.S. Department of Education, attended events at the White House, and even spoken with the President and Vice President. In his free time, Sivan enjoys hanging out with his friends, reading, and playing with his dog.