

### Educational Department

### Zachor Lessons

**Goal:** To enable students to reflect on loss: of people they have lost personally and on our national sacrifices generally.

**Environment:** quiet, darkened room, Connections Israel yartzheit candles

**Group leader:** Questions for initial group discussion:

- 1) What does “light” mean to you? How does it make you feel? (Probe for details i.e a sunny day vs. a cloudy one; a brightly lit room vs. a basement without windows...)
- 2) What sources do we have for light? (Push participants to include natural and man-made forms of light i.e. light bulbs-electricity, sun, stars, candles, flashlight...)
- 3) Biblically, why was there a need for various types of light – sun, moon, stars and how does each help us?
- 4) In today’s world, what represents light and darkness?

**Activity:** Turn out the lights, close the blinds and instruct the students to light their candles. Without speaking, ask the children to walk around the room and find something with the help of their candles that they hadn’t seen before. (It could be dust, a paper clip on the floor, a friend’s facial expression etc).

#### **Group Discussion:**

Once the group is back together, ask each student to report his/her findings.

- 1) How was this experience of looking for something by candle light different from searching with a big light?
- 2) What religious practice does this remind you of? (Bedikat chametz – search for leaven, before Pesach). What are some of the reasons for using candle light there? (Aside from candles being available in ancient times, it allows for a careful search into tiny spaces you can otherwise not access; seeing things literally "in a different light", mood of concentration, togetherness of those searching which is usually the family)
- 3) How is all of this related to using candles to remember a person?
- 4) How else are candles and light related to a person? (Group facilitator can have backup ideas of the light the person brought to the world; the comparison of a Jewish soul to a candle...)
- 5) Does anyone know someone who died in the Shoah/Israeli wars/acts of terrorism? Would that person like to share something about this individual?

**Making it concrete:** Ask participants to speak to their family members, neighbors, friends etc. in order to learn about one person who perished in this way. Write their personal story and if possible get a photo. Send a copy to: [sharon@connectionsisrael.com](mailto:sharon@connectionsisrael.com) and this individual will now be memorialized in our Zachor kits next year!