

Creating a Kosher Kitchen Workshop

LIS560 Assignment 2

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1.0 Introduction

The table below provides a high level overview of skills and practices related to following kosher dietary laws. This workshop will focus on the intermediate level of the last row, on how to create and maintain a kosher kitchen in one's own house. The workshop is most *relevant* to people who wish to create and maintain a kosher kitchen in their home, but don't have the necessary skills and knowledge yet. The workshop is designed for the newly orthodox segment of this group, the people known as *Baal Teshuvah*. The workshop is applicable, however, to others who share their kashrut-related needs, such as household employees and guests. (A note on terminology: *kosher* is the adjective, designating the status of the food items; *kashrut* is the noun, referring to the related laws and customs; and *kashering* is the verb, meaning the act of making something kosher.)

Skill/Practice	Beginner	Intermediate	Advance
Identify kosher food	Recognize kosher symbol on packaged food	Evaluate status based on list of ingredients on packaged food	Know the rules of kosher meat slaughter and food preparation
Eat kosher	Eat vegetarian	Eat kosher at home	Eat kosher everywhere, including restaurants and friends
Kasher a kitchen	Ask a rabbi to do it	Do it yourself	Provide it as a service

2.0 Lesson Plan: Literature Searching Workshop

2.1 Objective/ Outcome

- Increase knowledge of kashrut related laws and customs
- Introduce skills necessary to kasher a kitchen

2.2 Skill

- Ability to differentiate the materials that can be kashered from the ones that can not
- Ability to kasher silverware and glass

2.3 Target Audience

According to the Second National Jewish Population survey in 1990 about one percent of the US Jewish population was *Baal Teshuvah*. (Lazerwitz 501) Less than half of them grew up as conservative Jews and more than half without any religious background. For the purposes of this workshop I have to assume that their knowledge of kashrut is limited, but their commitment is great. That is why this workshop is *relevant* for them. They are already committed to follow a orthodox practice but lack the necessary skills and knowledge. For them kashering a home is "an effort to find social acceptability necessary for entry to this [orthodox] society." (Herbert 469)

In Orthodox Judaism women are charge of cooking and maintaining a kosher house. Therefore we can expect that mostly women will attend this workshop. However, it is

increasingly common for men to choose to be involved in the kitchen, even in the most traditional home, so the workshop cannot be designed exclusively for women.

This kind of change, converting to a stricter version of a religion, occurs mostly for people in their twenties. This means that most workshop attendees will be probably women in their twenties.

2.4 Material needed

- Printouts of guidelines of koshering and list of local mikvehs
- Access to water tap and sink to pour out water
- One bucket for every 3-4 people, each filled with water before the class starts
- Towels for drying hands
- A handful of stainless steel silverware for every 3-4 people
- A magnifying glass, a glass cup, a piece of china, and a wooden spoon for everyone
- A bag of Hershey kisses, beef jerky, and a basket of hardboiled eggs
- A data projector that can be connected to the instructor's computer

2.5. Program

2.5.1 Introduction

After the instructor welcomes the participants she asks everybody to introduce themselves and say a few sentences about why they are present. I expect they will talk about their readiness of maintaining a kosher household and share segments of their journey why they chose this path. The round of introduction will be summarized by the instructor, pointing out the similarities in motivation and level of knowledge.

This is followed by an overview of the workshop, listing the objectives and skills mentioned above. The instructor will also ensure the students that they will receive handouts of the procedures and skills taught in this workshop. This is important for creating a relaxed atmosphere, where participants can pay full attention and do not have to worry about making notes or committing everything to memory.

Attention activity

Every participant receives a Hershey kiss (the milk chocolate type), a strip of kosher beef jerky and a hard-boiled egg. In groups of 3-4 they should decide in what order and why the milk chocolate, meat and eggs can be eaten. The group that is ready to share the consensus of the order should do so along with their reasoning. If they are correct they can go ahead and eat the goodies. If not they have to wait till the end or break of the workshop.

The solution is that the egg can be eaten any time, but the jerky has to come after the chocolate. According to the laws of kashrut, meat cannot be mixed with milk and eating meat first would constitute mixing them in the human body, because it takes time to digest it. Thus the three possible correct order combinations are:

- Chocolate, egg, jerky

- Egg, chocolate, jerky
- Chocolate, jerky, egg

Discussion

The *Relevance* concept of Keller's ARCS model was addressed by the opening introduction and its summary. If the former is extensive and varied enough and the latter was executed skillfully it (and the overview of the workshop) will show the students that the skills taught in this workshop are directly relevant to their daily life as Orthodox Jews.

The attention activity is designed to generate small group discussions and ensure that everybody is aware of the basic kashrut law of separating meat and dairy. This activity will focus their *Attention* onto kashrut itself, which is the topic of the workshop.

2.5.2 Body of the Lesson

Skill 1: Ability to differentiate materials that can be kashered from ones that can not

Step

- Lecture, introducing materials that can be kashered
- Class activity, examination materials

Method

A short lecture will introduce what materials can be kashered and why. This is followed by a class activity where students can examine the materials themselves.

The lecture will appeal to auditory learners. It will also be of interest to both the "what" type learners of the McCarthy model, because they are given a very specific list of what is kasherable. The exercise, following the explanation will be useful to the "why" type of learners, because they will be presented with an explanation for the differences in handling various materials and they can confirm the explanation themselves. The activity will not only give hands-on training for all, but serve as a reminder on the differences between materials.

Task

Lecture, introducing materials that can be kashered

- The concept is introduced that objects from porous materials, such as china or wood, cannot be kashered or switched back and forth between usage with dairy or meat.
- The rabbinical explanation is given that small particles of the food can get into the pores of some materials which cannot be taken out even with the most aggressive methods of cleaning.
- The instructor will also point out that this does not apply to brand-new dishes and utensils, which have never been used.

Class activity, examination materials

- Each student receives a magnifying glass, a glass cup, a wooden spoon, a piece of china, and a stainless steel flatware.
- They examine each material one by one with the magnifying glass

- They discuss in small groups what they observed in terms of porosity
- They order the items in terms of porosity. The "what if" type of learners can discuss the cases of objects made up from more than one material. They will be given materials at the end of the workshop to correlate their conclusions with that of the rabbinical authority.
- They draw a line in the established order and recognize that wood and china is too porous to be kashered, but glass and stainless steel is not

Skill 2: Ability to kasher silverware and glass

Step

- Lecture on the steps of kashering
- Demonstration of proper immersion
- Class activity, hands on practice of kashering

Method

The instructor will explain the steps of kashering all glass and all metal kitchen objects. A slide will illustrate each step. Then she demonstrates one of the steps: how to immerse objects properly into (a bucket of) water. This is followed by everyone practicing the immersion for 5-10 minutes, until they master it.

The slides will help the visual learners to learn the method. The hands-on practice will enable the kinesthetic learners to make it their own. This will also engage the interest of the "how" type of learners of the McCarthy model, because they are provided with a procedure they can follow and practice.

The fact that students are encouraged to practice this skill until they are in full control of it will improve their *Confidence*. They will know that when they go home after the workshop they will be able to repeat what they learned on their own. At the same time the positive feedback from their groupmates will increase their level of *Satisfaction*. As this skill is relatively simple to learn everyone will feel satisfied that they learned and accomplished something new.

Task

Lecture on the steps of kashering

- The objects to be washed thoroughly with hot water and soap
- They have to be left untouched for 24 hours
- They have to be put in boiling hot water for a few minutes
- They have to be taken to a mikveh, the ritual bath, and immersed three times into its water. This has to be done in a way that the water touches every part of the surface of the object. This means they have to be dropped, let them sink for a second and then be caught. If glass touches the bottom it might break. Also the mikveh might be deep and to find dropped items can be difficult. Therefore the point of this exercise is to practice catching items released in water.
- (After the mikveh most people wash them again at home, but this step is optional.)

Demonstration of proper immersion

- The instructor demonstrates in a bucket of water how to drop and catch a silverware or glass

- If the class is large enough this is repeated several times, ensuring that every student had a chance to look at it from close enough. Students rotate away from the demonstration, bucket once they viewed the demonstration, allowing other students to view it.

Class activity, hands on practice of kashering

- Students form groups of 3-4.
- One by one they practice the art of proper immersion of objects into the bucket of water.
- They rotate through the activity. While one is practicing the others are watching. They \ provide positive feedback when the skill has been mastered.
- They repeat the immersion with different object, learning how glasses, forks, knives, spoons... sink differently in water.
- They repeat it until they are confident in their skill.
- Towels have to be provided to dry hands.
- One student from each group is asked to empty the bucket into the sink.

3.0 Evaluation/Conclusion

The instructor summarizes the common themes from the introductory circle, emphasizing the found commonality of relevance for keeping kosher.

Then students receive an answer sheet with a list of objects and materials. Each student marks the answers on it whether the items are kasherable. When they are done they form pairs, correct each other's answers and discuss the results. The correct answers are read aloud, each pair giving one of the answers to the whole class.

On the same answer sheet there is the list of steps of kashering glass and metal objects. The students should put them into the correct order.

The answer sheets are collected at the end of the workshop and form part of the formative assessment. The instructor also monitors the students during the workshop for understanding the material presented. Finally, the class's success will also be assessed from the workshop evaluation forms that the instructor asks them to fill out before they leave.

To leave the classroom each student has to form one more proper immersion of a piece of silverware as they exit. This is also part of the assessment.

4.0 Further Training

Students will receive the printout of a webpage (along with its address) that lists all kashering methods based on level of observance. They will also receive a list of local mikvehs, where they can do their kashering.

The instructor will point out that kashering kitchen appliances such as refrigerators, ovens and dishwashers were not covered on this workshop. She also mentions that knowing what makes a mikveh a ritually clean bath would enable the students to kasher their dishes even when there is no approved mikveh in the vicinity.

5.0 Bibliography

Hebert, Danzger M. "The Meaning of Keeping Kosher: Views of the Newly Orthodox." Judaism 39:4 (1990): 461-469

Keller, John M. "Development and Use of the ARCS Model of Motivational Design." Report No. IR 014 039. Enschede, Netherlands: Univ. of Technology. (1983) (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 313 001)

Lazerwitz, Bernard. "Denominational Retention and Switching among American Jews." Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 34:4 (1995): 499-506.

McCarthy, Bernice. "A Tale of Four Learners: 4 MATs Learning Styles." Educational Leadership 54:6 (March 1997): 46-52.

Appendices

Appendix A: Workshop handouts

Printout of "How to Keep Kosher" from http://www.njop.org/html/how_kosher.html

Printout of local mikvehs, specific list is based on location

Appendix B

Workshop Evaluation

What did you learn from this workshop that will be the most useful?

What aspects of this workshop were the least useful?

Do you wish more time or explanation was provided for any topics covered in this workshop? If so, what topics?

Are there topics that you wish were covered in this workshop? If so, what are they?

How would you change about this workshop to make it more useful for future participants?