# **Disposition: Caring for Other’s Animals and the Environment**

## **Lesson:** Three

### Question/LO: How do Jewish people care for the world?

| **Dimension of learning** | **Activities** | **Resources** |
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| Learning about religious traditions and non-religious world-views | Show pupils photos of trees and leaves (maybe photographed from nearby your school) or even better if you have the actual leaves they can hold. Ask pupils if they know the names of the trees or the seeds of the trees – for example acorns, chestnuts.  Explain that Tu Bishvat is a festival that Jewish people celebrate. It literally means ‘the new year for trees’. It is celebrated in Israel as a day for ecological awareness and trees are planted. It occurs on the 15th day of the Jewish month of Shevat (towards the end of January. Jews often eat fruits associated with their holy land (Jerusalem) on this day. The Torah (Jewish scripture) praises 7 fruits in particular – wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates. A blessing is recited after the eating of any fruit.  It is linked to Leviticus 19. 23-25 where Jews are commanded not to eat the fruit of trees for the first 3 years after they have been planted.  Why do you think that this might be so?  Explain that thousands of years ago the ancestors of the Jews were looking for a new land to escape slavery. God had promised a land for them. They were given rules about how to look after the land. Trees would be part of this important plan. The Jews were given rules about trees; that they should leave a tree for the first three years of its life and then could pick the fruit on the fourth year. During the fourth year should give thanks for receiving it. During the fifth year they could pick the fruit and eat it.  In this way Jewish people are showing that they care for trees and the wider world in which they live. Share the following Jewish story with pupils.  One day when Choni Hamagel was walking on the way, he saw a man planting a Carob tree. Choni asked him “How long will it take for the tree to bear fruit?”. The man answered, “Seventy years”. Choni then asked him, “And are you sure that you will live seventy more years and eat the fruit?”. The man responded, “I found this world planted with carob trees. Just as my fathers planted those trees for me, so too, I must do the same for my children after me”. (Babylonian Talmud Taanit 23a).  Discuss what plans or work you could get involved in which MAY NOT have immediate impact to support the world. Pupils could respond on pre-cut leaf shapes and grown to display on your own class tree (drawn on the wall or dead branches fallen from a tree in a vase). | n/a |
| Learning from faith and non-religious world-views | What would the world be like if no one cared for it? Can pupils imagine what the world would look like if people did not do positive things like plant trees pick up rubbish, put starfish back in the sea (perhaps they might draw a picture or design a poster).  If pupils are aware of environmental protesters like Extinction Rebellion or Insulate Britain – ask what they know and think. | n/a |
| Learning to discern | Can people go too far in their actions to look after the planet? | n/a |