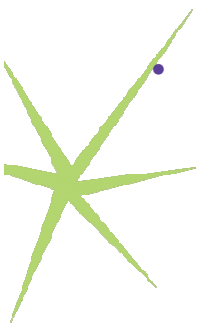


Welcome to *Hidden Sparks Without Walls*. We will be starting shortly...

- While we are waiting to begin please **practice using the chat** feature by sharing your name, school and location. Activate chat by **clicking the “Chat” tab below the attendees list** on the right of your screen. Enter your communication and click on “Send.”
- If you have any clarifying questions about the format or the topic, you **may click on the “Q&A” tab below the presenter list** and enter your questions. Feel free to use the hand raising feature, by clicking on the little yellow hand on the right side of the screen.
- Don’t hesitate to engage as active, full participants. Your contributions may help others.
- Be aware of your air time.



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without walls

*How To Talk To Children about their
Learning Strengths and Struggles*

With Kelli Pollock

October 28, 2009

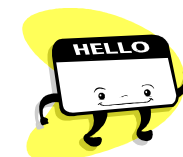


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helping children reach their potential™

Welcome & Conference Etiquette

Below are some tips that will help make this conference call successful.

- **Use the right phone.** - Cell phones can be included in conference calls, but some can also cause static on the lines. Try to use a landline phone if possible. Speakerphones pick up a lot of background noise. If you use one, mute it whenever possible.
- **Participate in a quiet, undisturbed room.** – Background noise can be heard through the phone and will disturb others in the conference. If you can't find a quiet room, use your phone's mute button until you want to speak – and avoid distracting noises such as humming, scraping chairs, tapping a pencil, etc.
- **Never Put a Conference Call on Hold!** - Participants will be forced to listen to your on-hold music or they will not know that you have stepped away and may continue to address you while you're gone.
- **Call Waiting** - The sound of your call-waiting beep can be disruptive and confusing to conference call participants. Quite often the Call Waiting function can be temporarily suspended by touching *70 prior to the call.
- **Identify Yourself** - When you first enter the call and when you ask a question please identify yourself by name and school or state on-line.
- **Chat Room & Question/Answer Box** – Those participating on line may use the chat room and question/answer box on the lower right of their screen to enter questions and comments at any time. We will offer regular opportunities for those joining by phone only to participate as well.



Our Guest: Kelli Pollock

Kelli Pollock has been a National Facilitator of Schools Attuned since 1997 and has developed and implemented curriculum for the Schools Attuned course and various other workshops on neurodevelopment. She received her Masters in Special Education from Bank Street College of Education and taught for four years at The Churchill School in New York City. In Livingston, N.J., Kelli served as a Middle School inclusion teacher prior to moving into mainstream classrooms where she taught from third through sixth grades. She was an adjunct professor at Bank Street and has been a private tutor for students with learning disabilities. Kelli is currently a field facilitator for Schools Attuned in New York City, helping teachers and administrators to implement the content of Schools Attuned in their classrooms and schools.

Overview of the Session

In this session, we will discuss communicating with children about their learning. We will explore how to work these conversations into our daily practice as well as how to facilitate planned discussions about learning strengths and struggles.



Consider your own learning

What do you wish a teacher would have shared with you?



At Heart

- **Helping** children to understand and share how they learn
- **Making connections** with children
- **Forming relationships** with children and their parents/caregivers
- **Facilitating** ongoing, open **communication**
- **Celebrating** strengths and valuing differences



Case Study: Anthony

Fourth grader – public school
“B” student with no support services

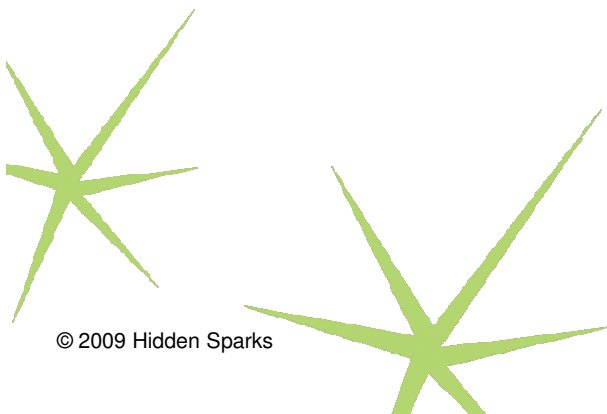
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• everything motor• active working memory• creativity• enthusiasm/energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• pacing (too fast)• self-monitoring

Anthony's Parents...

- Wonderful and eager to learn
- Do not agree on what is going on with Anthony!

How do I:

- keep us focused
- help Anthony's Dad to understand his son's attention-based difficulties



Opening the door ...

- Classroom that values differences of all kinds
- Used to sharing learning differences, approaches, difficulties, strengths
- “Teachable Moment” conversations daily



Teachable Moments

When you see something,
say something!



Teachable Moment #1

During a read aloud, Anthony shared a comment (without raising his hand) that had no connection to the text or the conversation. This happens a lot.

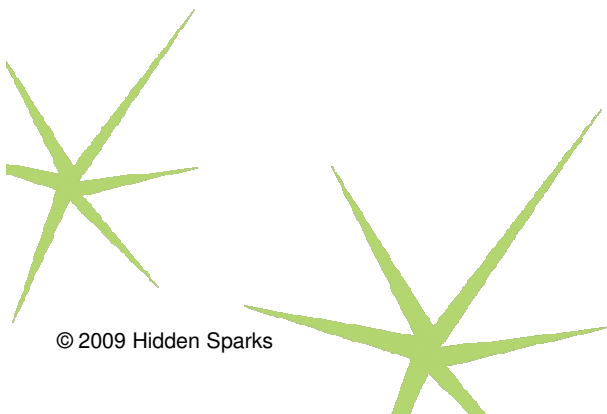


- **When** would you talk with him?
- What's your **opening line**?
- Listen to response.
- Probe, if needed.
- Share thoughts.
- Talk with him about a strategy.

Teachable Moment #2

I walked into school just as the kids were entering. I was frazzled. Within five minutes, I had misplaced the attendance folder, my pen (twice), and my lunch bag. The kids were giggling at me.

- Think about neurodevelopment. What could be going on here?
- How can I share this with my students?

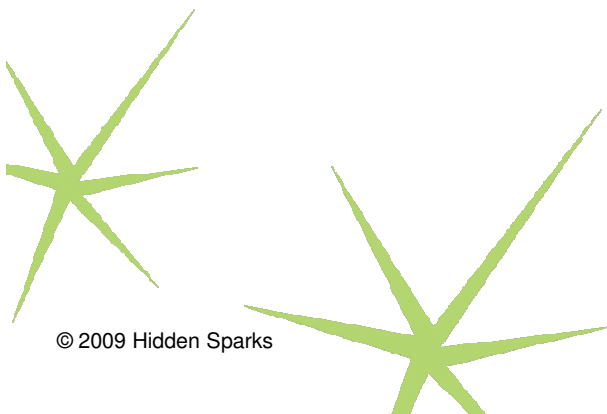
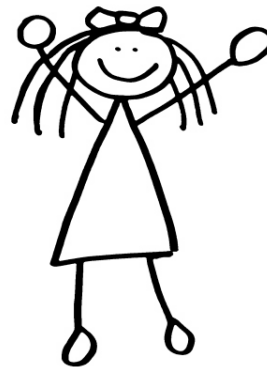
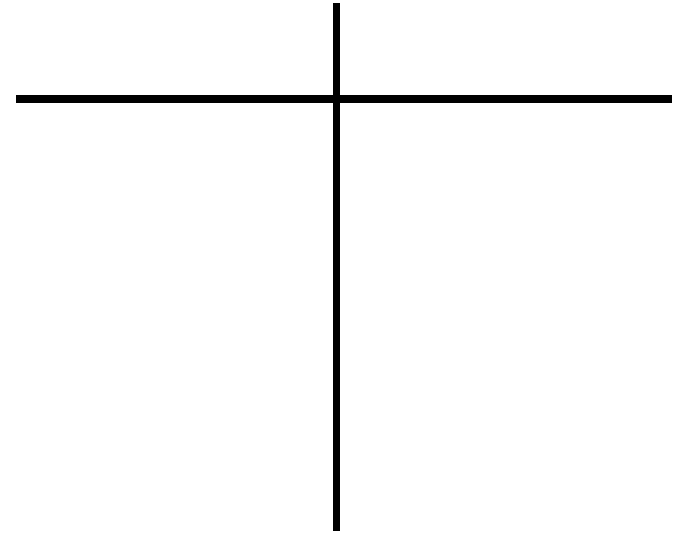


Planned Conversations: “To Do” List

- Have a plan. Think before.
- Practice language.
- Consider the student. Language or attention weakness? Motor strength? Use strategies that make sense!
- Include the student. Two-way conversation.
- Be creative/engaging.
- Make it comfortable.
- Imagine what it’s like to be him/her.



Consider an Organizer



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Steps

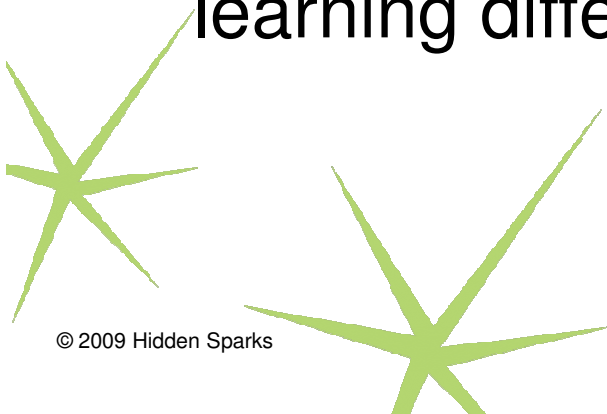
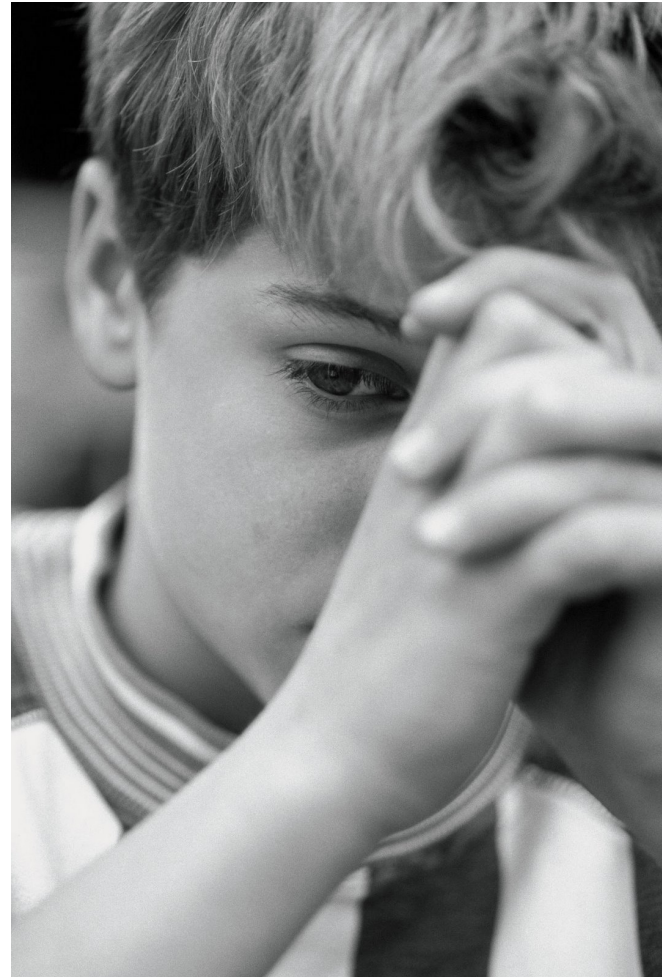
1. Remove the stigma
2. Discuss strengths
3. Discuss weak areas
4. Discuss strategies
5. Check for understanding

listen
form a team
infuse hope



Step 1: Remove the Stigma

- How can we take the stigma out of these conversations?
- What words can we use to “normalize” these conversations?
To “normalize” learning differences?



#2: Discussing Strengths

- See if student knows
- Share as many as you know
- Include parent
- Share personal connections
- Provide evidence/tangibles
- Be real



Anthony's Strengths

Brainstorm

Active Working Memory

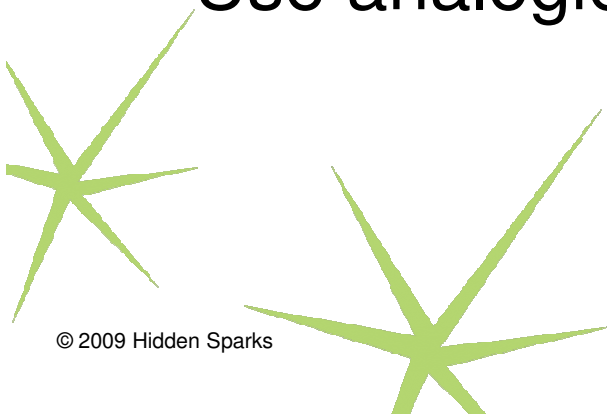
Evidence:

- Can calculate/solve math problems “in his head”
- Managing multiple mental and motor tasks in sports
- Competent writer

How would you open conversation about strengths?	
What visual could you use to explain AWM?	
Share what you see. What would this sound like? How would you share the evidence?	
How would you include his parents? Is there anything you want to know from them?	
Can you make a personal connection to AWM? What would you say?	

Step #3: Discussing Weaknesses

- Choose 1 at a time.
- Think about your language.
- Provide a visual.
- Include parent. Same at home?
- Include student. What does student see? feel?
- Share personal connections.
- Provide evidence/tangibles.
- Use analogies.



Anthony's Weaknesses

Brainstorm

Pacing (and self-monitoring)

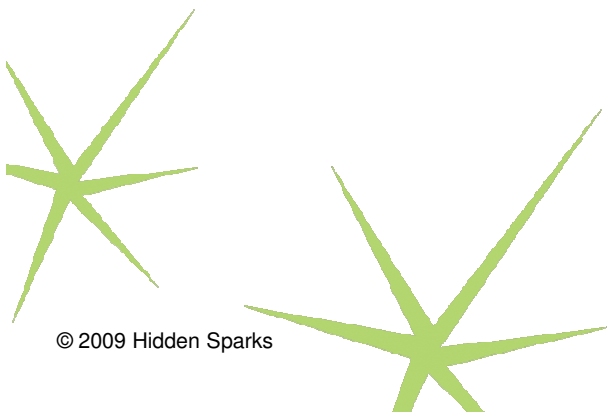
Evidence:

- Always first one done
- Lots of “careless” mistakes/inconsistent
- Will miss whole sections/pages
- Knocks things/people over
- Playground problems
- *Awesome* pacing and monitoring in gymnastics!

How will you open conversation about weakness?	
What visual could you use to explain “pacing?” How would you describe pacing to Anthony?	
How will you share what you see? (anecdotes, sample)	
How might you use Anthony’s strengths to discuss his weakness?	
How can you include Anthony’s parents? Help them to understand?	
Can you make a personal connection to pacing difficulties?	

What Happens When I Go Too Fast?

On a math test...	
Moving around the classroom...	
When I have a disagreement with friends...	



Strategies for Anthony (listen and record strategies)

"Now that we know what 'pacing' is, we need to think about what we can do to help you with it. Can you think of anything that might help you to go at the right speed?"

"Not really."

"That's OK. Mrs. Brown, do you have anything that has worked for you at home?"

"Sometimes I just put up a 'T' sign for 'Take some *time*, you're going too fast!' and that slows him down a bit."

"No way. I don't want anyone doing that *here*."

"What about if we used the speedometer card in a similar way? I can keep it, and if I see that you are going too fast, I can go near you and show it to you so that no one else sees. It would be like this (do it as he sits there). How does that sound?"

"Yeah, that's fine."

"Anthony, if you had to pick one of the areas on this sheet that we talked about, which one would you want to work on first?"

"Definitely my math because I could get like at least in the 90s on like everything in math, but now I'm getting like in the 70s for like no reason."

"That makes sense to me because I know how frustrating that must be for you. I have a couple of suggestions for you and those math tests. Let's look at your last math test again (get it out). Remember that we talked about this right here (show him) where there are like 8 problems that are the same, and you get some of them right and some of them wrong?"

"Yeah, and I know how to do *all* of them. It's just like so hard to focus on all of them and then I guess I go fast and...I don't know *what* happens after that."

Strategies for Anthony (listen and record strategies)

“That’s a great description and that’s really helpful for me to hear. So I was thinking...why don’t you take your test like your mind works. Do two or three of this section, then two or three of the next section...bounce around your test!”

“Cool...do you think it will work?”

“I don’t know. Let’s try it out on Thursday’s quiz and find out. If not, I’ll give you a retake.”

“OK.”

“Anthony, I had one other suggestion for you. You know how you hand your paper in first a lot? I was thinking that if you hand your paper in 10 minutes early, that I would give you those 10 minutes later in the day to check it and make corrections if you have to. How does that sound?”

“Great!”

“Good. So I think we’ve got two good strategies to start us off with these math tests. Do you remember what they are?”

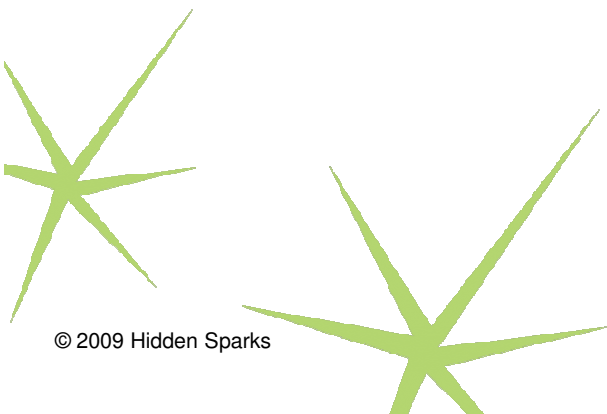
“Yeah, bounce around the sections and check it later.”

“Great, Anthony. Maybe when you check it later, you could do it in a different color so we can see if you were able to catch any mistakes. That will tell us if that strategy is working for you.”

“Yeah, OK, cool.”

Step #4: Discussing Strategies

What did you notice?



Step #5: Check for Understanding

How can we make sure that
Anthony has “gotten it?”

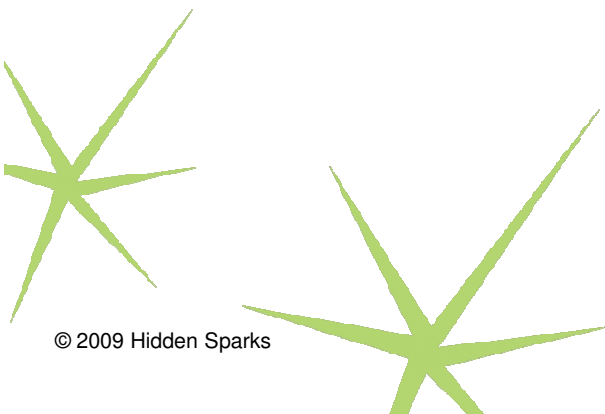


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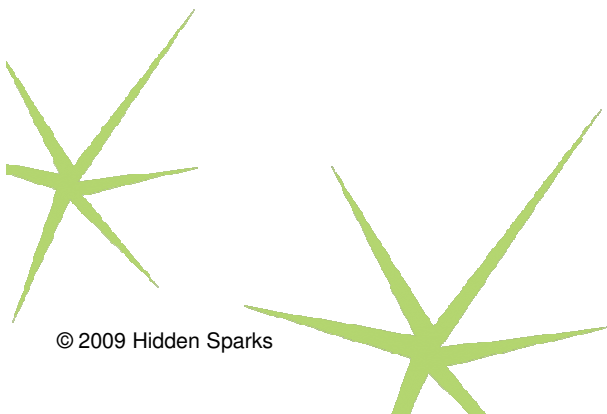
Team Work

- What can we say or do to communicate with Anthony (and his parents) the importance of working as a team to understand and improve learning?



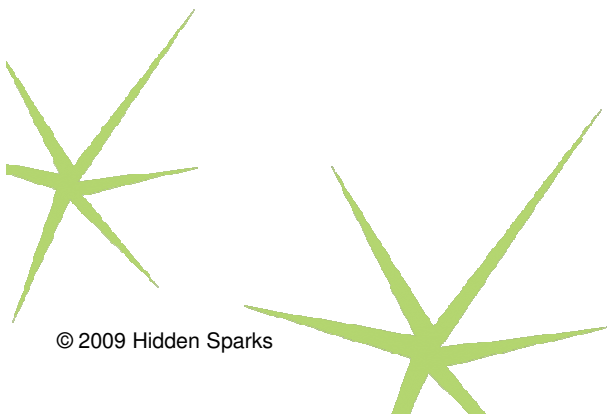
Hope and Optimism

- How do we send the message that things are going to get better? That there is hope?
- Parents often need to hear this too!



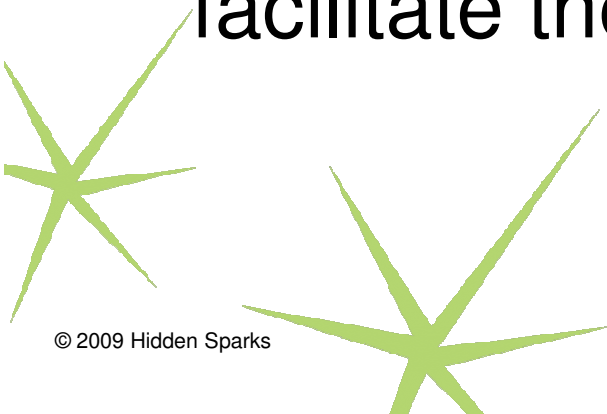
Developmental Differences

- How might these conversations be adapted for younger students? Older students?



Considering our Styles

- How do *you* communicate most effectively?
- What do you know about your own learning profile that might influence *your ability* to communicate about learning with a student? The *way* in which you will facilitate the discussion?



Continue the discussion with Kelli

Continue the discussion with Kelli in the Diverse Learners Community of Practice: a partnership between Hidden Sparks and Hebrew College, formerly under the auspices of PEJE.

Monday, Nov. 16th, 4PM, EST:

"Deepening Our Understanding of the Demystification Process" with Kelli Pollock

In this session, we will be deepening our understanding of this process. Using short cases and our own experiences with students, we will explore such issues as: thinking about the language we use when we speak with children, how we communicate these complex ideas with younger students and with students who are resistant, and using visuals and analogies to help explain difficult concepts about learning. The conversation will be structured, but reliant upon participants to share ideas, experiences with children, and questions.

For more information or to register for the CoP, please contact Sandy Miller-Jacobs at cop.dl.smj@gmail.com or 617.559.8615.

Upcoming Hidden Sparks Without Walls Sessions

Tuesday, December 1, 2009	Kriyah: Developing an Effective Management Plan for Building Kriyah Skills , with Judah Weller, Ed.D.
Wednesday, December 9, 2009	Transitions , with Andrea Rousso
Tuesday, February 16, 2010	Is This Typical? Understanding Variations in Child Development , with Dr. Rona Novick Primary School Session
Tuesday, February 23, 2010	Is This Typical? Understanding Variations in Child Development , with Dr. Rona Novick Secondary School Session
Wednesday, March 3, 2010	Core Classroom Practices in Judaic and General Studies that Reflect an Appreciation for All Kinds of Learners in the Classroom , with Judah Weller, Ed.D.
Wednesday, March 17, 2010	Helping Students Discover How They Learn , with Kelli Pollock
Wednesday, April 14, 2010	Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction: Enhancing Understanding of Text , with Jane Gertler, Ph.D.
Monday, May 3, 2010 Monday, May 10, 2010	Cooperative Learning: A Way to Differentiate Your Instruction and Enhance Your Students' Engagement , with Harriet Lenk, Ph.D.

For more details visit www.HiddenSparks.org

About Hidden Sparks

Hidden Sparks is a non-profit fund whose purpose is to help children with learning differences reach their full potential in school and life. Hidden Sparks develops and supports professional development programs for Jewish day schools to help increase understanding and support for teaching to diverse learners.

Guided by a philosophy that by helping schools meet the needs of children with learning and behavioral differences, ultimately all students will benefit. Hidden Sparks' programs combine professional development in learning and positive behavioral support, guided classroom observation and one on one coaching. The Hidden Sparks model and program is currently in 21 Jewish Day Schools/Yeshivot in New York and 7 in Boston, through a partnership with Gateways: Access to Jewish Education.



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