How do learners become empowered to engage in meaningful Torah study with their peers? How can we turn seemingly incidental moments of discovery and connection into intentional design and instruction?

We explored these questions through an eight session course for seventh graders in a supplemental school, using a pedagogy of partnership. We documented the learning and teaching as part of a design research project sponsored by the Mandel Center’s Beit Midrash Research Project. This work builds on scholarship dealing with text learning, group learning and classroom discourse in order to understand how to induct learners into the dispositions and practices of meaningful text learning with others.

These videos provide two ways of learning about the seventh graders’ experiences.

The first (above) provides a brief overview of the pedagogy of partnership and students’ experiences studying Torah through havruta.

The second video (below) gives a fuller account of the seventh graders’ experiences learning Torah through partnership and will let you get further inside their challenges, discussions of text, and reflections on learning.

As you watch, consider:

- What educational values and goals are reflected in the work that students are doing in these videos?
- What beliefs about teaching and learning text undergird this pedagogy of partnership? Beliefs about students? about text? and the nature of learning?
- What are students learning—intellectually, socially, ethically, and spiritually?
- How can the pedagogy of partnership support 21st century learning goals such as cooperation, communication, creativity and critical thinking?

Full version: https://vimeo.com/97982899