Lookstein Virtual
Power up Jewish Learning

Bar-Ilan University
אוניברסיטת בר-אילן

The Lookstein Center for Jewish Education

# The Power of the Individual
# Lesson Plan

**Introduction**

In this lesson, students will learn about the Avital Sharansky, and will compare her story to the events of the Purim story.

**Objectives**

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**Background**

Throughout Jewish history, there have been many individuals whose actions changed the course of history. Eduard Kustenov, one of the leaders of Operation Wedding said in an interview (Operation Wedding 58:50) "I always valued the power that the individual can have over history. If you can reach that exact pressure point, if you are in the right place at the right time, you can influence history dramatically." We will highlight two women – one biblical and one modern – about whom this can be said. They are Queen Esther and Avital Sharansky, whose stories of helping to save Jews from evil oppressors share many resemblances

**Essential Questions:** Can one individual make a difference?

**Materials**: Tanach, poster board, scissors, glue, tinfoil, picture of Avital Sharansky (attached)

**Procedure**

- Ask the students if they have heard of/what they know about Natan Shransky.
- Introduce them to the figure of Avital Sharansky, his wife who was instrumental in his release.
- Show the video of her telling her story (if the students understand Hebrew, better to show them that one) and/or have them read the translated quotes below. ("Avital Sharansky at Oz veGaon" on youtube) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWXVncoCLrw&t=146s
- Have the students compare these excerpts to the Purim story and have them chart the parallels that they find – they can work with Tanachs or with Megillot Esther

**Project**: Have the students create a "mirror poster" highlighting these parallels.

- Divide a poster board into two sections
- Draw a frame around one of the sections and fill the inside with tinfoil so that it looks like a mirror.
- Have the students draw or find a picture that depicts how they imagine Queen Esther and stick it on top of the tinfoil.
- On the other half of the poster, stick a picture of Avital Sharansky
- Fill the empty space with a collage of quotes and pictures that depict the parallels found between the two stories. On the Esther side, the frame can be decorated with the collage.
- Fold the poster in half and display it standing up so that it looks like Avital is looking in the mirror and seeing Queen Esther.
- Have the students attach their parallel chart to the back of the poster or write a paragraph explaining their depiction.

**Making Connections**

- Have the students recall and share times where they felt they made a difference in someone's life, or did something small which affected a group of people.
- Show this clip ("Starfish Animation" on youtube ) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8_cOGuOIlA and discuss the importance of taking action even if you doubt you will be able to have an impact.