

Show-Tell-Collaborate

| ASSIGNMENT EXAMPLE |

STEP ONE: FINDING A BOOK

Choose a copy of a book printed before 1800 in a Pittsburgh collection that is either a) substantially in Hebrew (or a Jewish language such as Yiddish or Ladino); or b) in Latin, English, French, etc. about Jews and Judaism. (Note: a Christian Bible would not be ok, but a polyglot Bible or a book about ancient Israelite history would be ok). You can choose one of the books listed at the end of this assignment OR select another book with instructor approval. Google the books listed below and choose one that sounds interesting to you. Then visit the special collection room where the copy of the book is housed.

DEFINITIONS: COPY = the particular copy of the book that you are examining; EDITION= all the copies of a particular work that was printed on the same printing press at the same time; TEXT= the words in the book; WORK= the literary composition that the book represents a copy of

STEP TWO: EXAMINE AND COMPARE

Look at the library catalogue for the record. Then look at the book copy itself. Even if you can't read the text in the book, make notes about what you see.

- Using the library record and the book itself, write down everything you can about this copy and this edition.
- Make sure to answer the following questions but feel free to add any other observations you have.
- Some libraries (ask the librarians for help) maintain a file on each rare book in their collection with notes and documents related to the library's acquisition. You can also use this.

Email a 3-5 page report answering the following questions to your instructor:

- 1) What is the title of the book?
- 2) Is there an author? Multiple authors? An editor of this edition?
- 3) When and where was the book printed?
- 4) Who was involved in printing it?
- 5) What is the subject/topic of the book?
- 6) Who do you think the intended audience of the book was?
- 7) What does the binding of this copy look like? Is the binding original or added more recently?
- 8) Is there handwriting in the copy? How many different hands? Are there notes in the margins? Underlining? Writing on flyleaves? What alphabet/language is the handwriting in?
- 9) Can you make a signature or the name of an owner of the copy? Are there bookplates in the copy?
- 10) Are the pages of the book numbered?
- 11) Are there marks of censorship in the copy (Are there passages crossed out?)
- 12) Anything else you notice about the printed edition or the particular copy that looks interesting? If the library allows it, take a picture on your phone or other "smart" device of any interesting features.

Look up your book on WorldCat (<http://www.library.pitt.edu/worldcat>) to look up the edition that your book is an example copy of. Then answer these additional questions:

- 13) Is your book a first edition of this work? Were there other editions of this work or similar works? When and where were those printed? (a selection if it's a long list)
- 14) Where are some other libraries where copies of the edition you are looking at are extant?
- 15) How many copies of this edition does Worldcat list?

See if you can find a digitized copy of your book (same edition) or another copy of the same book in Pittsburgh. Take a look at it and answer the next question.

- 16) Do you see any differences between the different copies you looked at?

STEP THREE: TRACING THE BOOK

Go to the website for the database “Footprints: Tracing the Movement of Jewish Books.”

(<https://footprints.ccnmtl.columbia.edu/>)

Look for your book by title in that database. Answer the following questions

18) were any traces of other copies of your book (same edition) found in the database?

19) were any traces of other copies of other editions of the same text found in the database?

You have one “footprint” for your book: its presence in a Pittsburgh library collection. Do you have information about when this book entered that particular collection? You might find this in a description of holdings on a website and you may need to ask a librarian for help.

Do you have any other evidence of where your book might have been before it came to the Pittsburgh library collection? (Owner’s signature, bookplate of an owner or another library, a notation in the library record). Collect all this information. If there is a signature or a bookplate or a notation in the book that you can’t decipher, ask for help from the librarian.

[You might need to visit the library again to complete this part of the assignment]

BRING whatever information you have about where your book travelled to class on _____.

STEP FOUR: COLLABORATING TO BUILD NEW KNOWLEDGE

In class on _____, we will examine evidence together as a group and compile the evidence you have found about the travels of the book for entry into the Footprints database.

Suggestions:

in Hillman Special collections:

Thomas Goodwin, *Moses and Aaron. Civil and ecclesiastical rites, used by the ancient Hebrewes...*

1641

Johannes Buxtorf, *Synagoga Judaica*. 1622.

Mahzor shel kol ha-shanah. [Cycle of Prayers for the Year] 1772.

at CMU, Posner Center

Spinoza, *Opera Posthuma*. 1677

(also another copy in Hunt Rare Book Room)

Bible with commentary by Kimhi. 1539 (note PTS copy below)

Koppelman, *Emek Halakha*. 1710
 at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Babour Library (Anderson Rare Book Room)

Calvin, ***Hinukh behire Yah*. 1820 [Hebrew, Latin] (past 1800 but really interesting)**

Surenhuys edition of Bible. 1713 [Hebrew, Greek]

Victorinus. *Prophetica Davidis Regis*. 1653 [Latin]
 at Duquesne University, Gumberg Library (Rabbi Herman Hailperin Collection)

Wagenseil. *Tela ignea Satane*. 1681

Wagenseil. *Mishnah Sotah*. 1674.

Rashi. *Sefer ha-Pardes*. 1802.

Abraham Mears. *Siddur*. English selections. 1738.

Solomon Molcho. *Sefer ha mefo'ar*. 1709.

Abarbanel, *Mashmi'a yeshu'ah*. 1767.

de Rossi. *Meor Enayim*. 1573.

Bible with commentary by Kimhi. 1539 (also a copy at the Posner Center; for the ambitious--work on both)

Sefer Haredim. 1601.

Mulhausen. *Sefer Nitzahon*. 1644.

Troki. *Sefer Hizuk Emunah*. 1681 and 1705 [for the ambitious: work on both of these]

Modena. *Sur me-ra*. 1683.

Sefer ha-Yashar. 1708.

Lipman, *Sefer Korban Aharon*. 1717

Bible. 1726.

Elijah b. Solomon ha-Kohen. *Seder Shevet Musar*. 1745.

de Vidas. *Sefer Reshit Hokhmah*. 1763.

Eibeschutz, *Ya'arot devash*. 1778.
