

Pirkei Avot contains a compilation of sayings and teachings from some of the earliest Jewish sages. In verse 5:7, we are told that ten traits were created in the universe, and these are wisdom, understanding, knowledge, awe, strength, judgment, creativity, speech, humility, and righteousness. Let's explore how these traits can connect with high school life.

First of all, high school is a place of learning, and the traits of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge are crucial for navigating academics successfully. Students who are wise, who understand how to stay organized and study effectively, and who have knowledge in their subject areas will tend to be more successful in their academic pursuits.

Second, high school is often filled with social events and gatherings, as well as a variety of extracurricular activities. Awe can come into play in this context, as students may find themselves awed by other students' accomplishments, by teachers or coaches who inspire them, or by the opportunities that come their way. Having a sense of awe can help students appreciate the world around them and stay motivated to learn and achieve. The trait of strength is also important for high school students. Whether it is physical strength for sports or mental and emotional strength for dealing with stress and adversity, having this trait can help students persevere and overcome challenges. Judgment is another crucial trait for high school students. They are constantly being tested and evaluated, not just in terms of grades, but also in terms of their character and decision-making abilities. Developing good judgment and making sound choices can help students become more responsible and respected members of their communities.

Finally, creativity, speech, humility, and righteousness all have important roles to play in high school life. Being creative allows students to come up with new and innovative ideas and solutions to problems. Speech is important both for communication and for standing up for one's

beliefs. Humility can help students stay grounded and not take their successes for granted, while righteousness can help students act ethically and with integrity, even in challenging situations.

As high school students move through their academic and personal lives, they are faced with a variety of challenges, ranging from achieving academic success to developing relationships with their peers and teachers. The traits described in Pirkei Avot can be useful in a variety of ways in navigating these challenges. Wisdom, for instance, is a trait that can help students make good decisions about how to allocate their time and energy. For example, students who have wisdom are more likely to prioritize their studies over other activities, recognizing the long-term importance of academic success. By using wisdom, students may also be more able to make strategic choices about things like extracurricular activities, internship opportunities, and part-time jobs, all of which can have significant implications for their post-high school lives.

Understanding, another trait described in Pirkei Avot, can also be beneficial in high school. Students who have a good understanding of the issues they are encountering will be more successful at figuring out the root causes of challenges faced and will be able to more effectively work around them. They will be better at identifying when they need outside help, like visiting a tutor or guidance counselor, but also better equipped to develop a plan of action for resolving the issue.

In conclusion, the principles outlined in Pirkei Avot verse 5:7 have some relevance in the high school environment. Engaging the traits of wisdom, understanding, creativity, speech, humility, awe, judgment, strength, righteousness, and knowledge with situational appreciation and mindfulness can help prepare students for success while in high school and beyond in their future lives.