**BIG IDEAS FROM CLASS THREE:**

**HEART OF MANY ROOMS: JEWISH DIVERSITY**

**The Jewish People is not monolithic— we are diverse geographically, culturally, linguistically, and intellectually. The contemporary denominations reflect different approaches to the authority of Jewish law and its ability to change over the generations.**

**JEWS ARE GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSE…**

**Ashkenazi \* Sephardi \* Mizrahi**

**JEWS ARE LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE…**

**Yiddish \* Hebrew \* Ladino \* Farsi**

**JEWS ARE RELIGIOUSLY DIVERSE…**

**REFORM:**  Jewish law (halakha)is advisory, not binding. It can change or even disappear with changing times, though ethical mitzvot are treated with greater weight than ritual mitzvot. Emerges in Europe as a reaction to the Enlightenment.

**ORTHODOX:** Jewish law (halakha) represents the word and will of God, therefore is eternally binding and basically unchanging. Emerges in Europe as a traditionalist reaction to Reform Judaism.

**CONSERVATIVE:** Jewish law (halakha) is binding, but it can change (slowly) in response to a significant shift in social values. Emerges as an attempt to balance Reform and Orthodoxy, tradition and change.

*Other Jewish religious groups include:*

**RECONSTRUCTIONIST**

**RENEWAL**

**TRANS-DENOMINATIONAL**

*“Tell me I don’t look Jewish! Tell me I don’t act Jewish! ‘Cause I’m thinking, I’m saying: What does Jewish look like, to you?”*

*- Vanessa Hidary, “The Hebrew Mamita”*