

The Schmooze **Stories with a Yiddish Twist**

SAY A FEW WORDS, BILL GATES

Note: “Zog a por verter” means “Say a few words.”

by
Marjorie Gottlieb Wolfe



Syosset, New York

It's almost back-to-school time. Perhaps you've heard the story of Abe Cohen, who had only one son (“zun”). He had high ambitions for the lad and gave him the best education (“khinukh”) that money could buy. Mr. Cohen realized, however, that since both he and his wife were of foreign origin and spoke with a decided accent (“aktsent”), the boy was at a disadvantage. He could not learn to pronounce English correctly at home. A friend gave Mr. Cohen some sound advice. He suggested that the father take the boy to New Haven where a professor (“profesor”) at Yale would be glad to take him into his home at the right price. There the boy's accent would improve marvelously.

Mr. Cohen carried out the friend's suggestion (“forshlog”)

and took the boy to New Haven. But the father was warned not to come to see his son for a whole year.

“It will require that length of time for the youngster (“bokherl”) to lose his foreign accent,” said the professor, “and nothing should be done to impair his chance of learning English correctly.”

At the end of the year Mr. Cohen rushed down to New Haven. “How is my son doing?” he asked.

“Dun’t esk,” said the Yale professor. “His spich is poifict!”

Bill Gates recently gave a speech at a high school about 11 (“elf”) things they did not and will not learn in school. He spoke about how feel-good, politically correct teachings created a generation (“dor”) of kids with no concept of reality and how this concept set them up for failure in the real world (“di velt”).

Here are his rules; the Yiddish has been added.

1. Life is not fair (“orntlekh”)—get used to it!
2. The world doesn’t care about your self-esteem. The world will expect you to accomplish something (“epes”) BEFORE you feel good about yourself (“zikh”).
3. You will NOT (“nisht”) make \$60,000 a year (“yor”) right out of high school. You won’t be vice-president with a car phone (“oyto telefon”) until you earn both.

“Shver tsu machen a leben” (It’s tough to make a living.)

4. If you think your teacher (“lehrer”) is tough/difficult (“shver”), wait till you get a boss (“balebos”).
5. Flipping burgers (“kotlets”) is not beneath your dignity. Your grandparents (“zeyde-bobe”) had a different word (“vort”) for burger flipping: they called it opportunity.
6. If you mess up, it’s not your parents (“tate-mame”) fault, so don’t whine (“k’vetsh/“klogen”) about your mistakes, learn from them.
“Az der kluger feilt, feilt er velt!” (When a clever man makes a mistake, does he make a mistake!)
7. Before you were born (“geboyrn”), your parents weren’t as boring as they are now. They got that way from paying your bills, cleaning your clothes/clothing (“klayder”) and listening to you talk about how cool you thought you were. So before you save the rain forest (“regn vald”) from the parasites of your parent’s generation, try delousing the closet (“shafe”) in your own room.

Note: An exciting person is a “kasnik.”

8. Your school may have done away with winners and losers, but life has NOT. In some schools, they have abolished failing grades and they’ll give you as MANY TIMES as you want to get the right (“rikhtik”) answer. This doesn’t bear the slightest resemblance to

ANYTHING in real life.

And don't bluff your way out ("unterfonfen").

9. Life ("lebn") is not divided into semesters. You don't get summers off and very few employers are interested in helping you FIND YOURSELF. Do that on your own time.
10. Television is NOT ("nisht") real life. In real life, people actually have to leave the coffee ("kaveh") shop and go to jobs.
11. Be nice to nerds. Chances are you'll end up working for one.

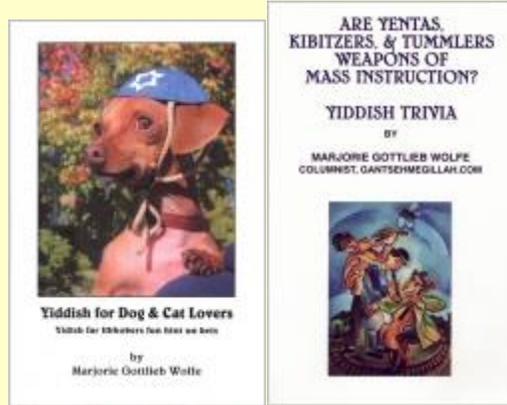
MARJORIE WOLFE agrees with Jen Spyra ("To The Class of 2050," The New Yorker, May 16, 2016), "Today, you guys are going to be awarded diplomas. And that's wonderful. You earned it. But remember that a diploma is just a piece of paper. What really matters is what you do with that piece of paper."

She also loves what Karen Salmansohn said, "Accept that bad things happen. Embracing life is like adopting a new puppy. Because you love your puppy, you accept that some pooper-scooping is involved. Everything in life comes with a pooper-scooper! Instead of sweating the small stuff, welcome stress as a part of life."

(Source: Christian Gollayan, "Get Positive in a Jiff," New York Post, 8/11/16.)

Search for Stories Beginning with the Letter												
<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>J</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>M</u>
<u>N</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>Q</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>V</u>	<u>W</u>		<u>Y</u>	<u>Z</u>

Marjorie Gottlieb Wolfe is the author of two books:



"Yiddish for Dog & Cat Lovers" and "Are Yentas, Kibitzers, & Tumblers Weapons of Mass Instruction? Yiddish Trivia." To order a copy, go to her website: MarjorieGottliebWolfe.com

NU, what are you waiting for? Order the book!



[Yiddish Stuff](#)
[Jewish Humor](#)
[Schmooze News](#)
[More Majorie Wolfe](#)

[Principle](#)
[Jewish Stories](#)
[All Things Jewish](#)
[Jewish Communities of the World](#)

Site Designed and Maintained by
 Haruth Communications