

Help Your Children Explore Their Jewish Heritage

Curriculum Summary 2011-12

Jewish History & Culture

3rd/4th/5th Grades:

This is an exciting curriculum which covers ancient Jewish history up to the Bar Kokhba Revolt. Students continue their study of the later Prophets Elijah through Jeremiah, Ezra and Nehemiah as well as an understanding of Jewish life in Bible times. Selections from the Five Books of Moses are analyzed and each of the Jewish holidays are reviewed.

6th/7th Grades:

Students focus on the development of the modern State of Israel and learn about the socio-cultural environment which led to the Holocaust. Teachers introduce the Holocaust timeline, emphasizing Jewish heroes like Anne Frank, Raul Wallenberg, Sugihara, and Janusz Korczak. After, we focus on the rebuilding of modern Jewish life in Europe up to the present. Supplemental lessons include other Jewish heroes and the values they display. Playlets, short stories, adventure stories, songs and first person narratives put a personal spin on these historic personalities. The class also reviews each of the Jewish holidays.

Hebrew Studies

Beginning to Intermediate Hebrew:

The students learn the alef-bet and vowels, blend phonetic units and write in block print. The class continues with the system of brachot (blessings) and the main body of our morning prayers – Barachu, Shema, Ve-ahavta. They learn about the Hebrew root system and how to decode and derive meaning from the prayers. At this level, they are able to track their reading and become more fluent and confident.

Pre-B'nai Mitzvah Hebrew:

This year, the 6th & 7th graders focus on the Kabbalat Shabbat (Friday Evening) Service as well as specific pieces of the Shabbat Morning Service. Learning the liturgical melodies, tracking and decoding prayer material is key to understanding and participating during synagogue services. The students also become familiar with reading Torah calligraphy this year. Graduation of the 7th graders includes written essays and preparation for leading the Shabbat graduation service.

Tefillah, Prayer, Torah, Holiday Activities

As a group, we review the weekly Torah portion by discussing the midrash stories in *Torah Toons* and selected Torah story playlets. Tefillah this year focuses on the Friday evening Kabbalat Shabbat Service, empowering our students to participate in our monthly Friday Evening Family Services. Group activities also include preparing for the Hanukkah and Purim plays, mitzvah projects, decorating the sukkah, Tu B'Shevat, baking hamantaschen, model Passover seder, preparation for monthly Family Shabbat school presentations and congregational holiday celebrations.