



**Congregation Beth Hatikvah**

# **Religious School Curriculum Guide**

**2009-2010**

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## **Curriculum Objectives**

### ***Jewish Living Skills and Celebrations***

Familiarity with Jewish life-cycle events and holidays that are part of the Jewish way of life.  
Exposure to Jewish information that help to make important Jewish decisions about personal and communal celebrations and observances.  
Finding new meaning in old traditions, and being able to apply them to your life.

### ***Values and Ethics***

Knowledge of the "values of spiritual peoplehood" and using them in decision-making.  
Understanding the spiritual meaning of Jewish traditions, such as:

- Hidur Mitzvah - Beautification of ritual ceremonies
- Kedushah - Holiness
- Menschlichkeit - Being a person of value
- Tikun Olam - Improving the world
- Hochmah - Wisdom
- Tzionut - Zionism

Understanding the relationship between ethical dilemmas, the resources of the Jewish tradition, and moral decision-making.  
Learning to live a Jewish life while being a participant in American and world civilizations.

### ***Prayer and Spirituality***

Ability to fluently recite important Hebrew prayers, including but not limited to, Kaddish, Shabbat Brachot, Torah Blessings, and lifecycle/holiday prayers.  
Understanding the meaning of important prayers, and the use of prayer to explore the traditional and Reconstructionist understandings of God.  
Knowledge of the order of the service in order to participate in the prayer experience, and have a level of comfort in leading communal prayer.  
Understanding key concepts related to prayer.

### ***Peoplehood and Israel***

Knowledge of Jewish cultures and traditions from around the world.  
Familiarity with the central role of the people, land, and dream of Israel in the life of the Jewish people.  
Knowledge of the history of the formation of the state of Israel, and contemporary issues in Israeli life.

### ***Jewish Texts: Sources and Applications***

Familiarity with Torah as a Jewish text that reflects Judaism as an evolving religious civilization.  
The ability to use the Torah as a source for moral decision-making, and to address the challenges of living in two civilizations.

**Hebrew**

The ability to utilize Hebrew as the language of prayer.  
Awareness of Hebrew as the "living language" of the people of Israel.  
Foster Hebrew language skills through the language of prayer.

**Educational Goals of the Reconstructionist Movement**

Present Torah as the ongoing, creative, and sacred search for meaning in life, a record of human encounters with the Divine.  
Recognize that the Jewish people's experience of God, Torah and peoplehood has changed and grown throughout history.  
Focus on Hebrew as the language uniting all Jews and provide programs that allow Jews to develop Jewish language skills that allow for enriched connections with Jewish civilization of the past, present, and future.  
Recognize praying, participation in ritual and text study as expressive modes of Jewish spirituality that can shape Jewish lives.  
Encourage active, egalitarian participation in a sense of responsibility for the Jewish community.  
Draw students of all ages into caring, committed, and knowledgeable relationships with the land and people of Israel.  
Seek to understand the human spirit that lies behind diverse Jewish understanding of God and encourage individuals to reflect on the meaning of godliness in their own lives.  
Understand the concept of Mitzvah as obligation and perpetuate Jewish values reflected in deeds of social justice and acts of loving-kindness.

We are dedicated to intellectually honest inquiry combined with faithfulness to our tradition and commitment to the continuity of the Jewish people. We believe this happens best with challenging, caring, and supportive learning environments.

**Prayers**

We recognize that Hebrew reading and prayer is an essential component of our curriculum. The following is a list of prayers that are covered, and the grade in which they will be studied. At the beginning of each year, there will be a review of the prayers learned in the previous years.

## **Kindergarten**

SUBJECTS: Shabbat and Holidays

### **Goals**

Students will be introduced to the following holidays: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Simchat Torah, Chanukah, Tu B'Shevat, Purim, Passover, Yom Ha'atzmaut, Shavuot, and Shabbat

Students will recognize some basic vocabulary and blessings relating to Jewish holidays and celebrations.

Students will understand the concept of mitzvot, and the importance of being a good person, and a good Jew.

Through the use of stories, song, and hands-on learning, the students will explore the use of Jewish symbols and rituals, and how they help us to express things about Jewish life, and enhance the performance of mitzvot.

There will be a basic introduction to the land of Israel as the Jewish homeland.

### **Activities**

Storytelling, discussion, crafts, games, song, and foods relating to the holidays and celebrations

### **Family Learning Component**

As a culmination of their study of Shabbat, parents will join their children in a program that celebrates Shabbat - rituals, customs, songs, and prayer.

Texts

Let's Discover the Holidays

Let's Discover Shabbat

### **Syllabus**

The following are some basic concepts, symbols, vocabulary and prayers that will be taught about the Jewish Holiday cycle.

#### **ROSH HASHANAH/YOM KIPPUR**

To understand why we call these holidays High Holy Days and to learn basic vocabulary, such as: Shana Tovah, tashlich, Kol Nidre

To learn about the shofar

To understand that Teshuvah means feeling sorry

To learn about why we eat apples and honey

#### **SUKKOT/SIMCHAT TORAH**

To understand that Sukkot is a holiday about the Harvest

To understand that Simchat Torah is about the celebration of ending the reading of the torah, and beginning it again, and the joyous celebration

Basic vocabulary words: sukkah, hakkafof, lulav, etrog

**CHANUKAH**

To learn the story of the Maccabees and why we celebrate this holiday as one of freedom  
 To learn the traditions of lighting the menorah, and to sing the candle blessings  
 To learn the symbols and customs of the holiday, such as eating latkes and playing dreidel

**PURIM**

To understand that this is the story of the Jews of Persia who were saved from being destroyed, and that it happened a long time ago  
 To learn about the heroes and villains of the story  
 To understand that we celebrate this as a fun holiday  
 Basic vocabulary: megillah, gragger, mishloach manot

**PASSOVER**

To learn the story of the Jews being slaves in Egypt, and to recount the story of their exodus to freedom  
 To learn about the seder, and the traditions and symbols associated with it  
 Basic vocabulary: matzah, haggadah, afikomen, plagues

**YOM H'ATZMAUT**

To learn about the celebration of Israel's Independence  
 To understand the importance of Israel to the Jewish people  
 Basic vocabulary: Eretz Yisrael, Zionism, Hatikvah

**SHAVUOT**

To understand that this is the holiday when the Jewish people celebrate receiving the torah  
 To learn why this holiday is also associated with the harvest  
 To learn about the importance of the 10 Commandments, and why we need "rules"  
 Basic vocabulary: Mt. Sinai, commandment, shalosh regalim, Omer

**SHABBAT**

To understand that according to tradition, God created the world and then rested  
 To understand that this is a special day, and one that we celebrate as a holiday every week  
 To learn the symbols and traditions of welcoming Shabbat, including lighting candles and reciting the blessings over challah, wine, and candles  
 To learn about the celebration of Havdalah

Students will learn about the following JEWISH SYMBOLS:

Torah, yad, breastplate  
 mezuzah  
 Aron Hakodesh  
 Tallit, Kippah  
 siddur

Student will learn about ISRAEL as the homeland of the Jewish people. This course of study will include geographical locations such as the Negev, the Kinneret, and the Dead Sea. They will also learn about the major cities of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Eilat.

There will be a discussion on the lifestyle in Israel, including life on a kibbutz, and city life, and the students will understand the connection of the Jewish people in the Diaspora to the Jewish people who live in Israel.

## **First Grade**

SUBJECTS: Jewish Values, Theology, Holidays

### **Goals**

Students will continue to learn the basic holiday blessings, and to understand what they mean, and how we use them. While there will be hands-on learning, the focus will extend to explaining more about the customs of the holidays, and why we celebrate them in the way that we do.

Students will explore basic concepts about God, and how we can act in God's image. They will be introduced to basic prayers that we use to communicate with God in our everyday lives, such as Motzi, Shema, and other blessings.

Students will begin to understand the importance of Jewish values and how to relate to their every day lives.

Students will explore their Jewish identity by learning the what, why, and how of being Jewish. Students will learn about, and celebrate, Jewish holidays as a community, and as a class.

### **Activities**

There will be storytelling, discussion, crafts, games, and songs related to Jewish holidays, Jewish values, and spirituality.

### **Family Learning Component**

Folders will be sent home to families that will encourage participation in Jewish reading and doing, with ideas for simple activities that families can do together to explore ways of bringing God into their lives. There will be a family Havdalah program where the children and their families will focus on the meaning of the Shema.

### **Texts**

Let's Discover God  
Let's Explore Being Jewish  
Let's Celebrate

### **Holidays**

Students will build on their basic understanding of the Jewish holidays, with an increased understanding of the concepts and history associated with each holiday. They will review the basic blessings learned, and understand more fully the symbols associated with the holidays.

### **Jewish Values**

The students will learn about many aspects of Jewish life, and the values and concepts that form the basic foundation for Jewish learning. The following are the topics that will be covered, the goal of each, and basic vocabulary and concepts of each topic:

## **MITZVOT**

To understand that a mitzvah is a commandment that has to do with the way we behave toward God and the way we treat others, and that there are different ways to do mitzvot.

Vocabulary and concepts to include: Mitzvah, Sh'lom Bayit, tradition, Bal Tash'chit, tzedakah, Talmud Torah, Ahavat Yisrael, tikkun olam

## **THE SYNAGOGUE**

To learn the functions of the synagogue, the objects in the sanctuary, and the roles of the members of the community.

To understand that there are synagogues in Jewish communities all over the world.

Vocabulary and concepts include: prayer, Aron HaKodesh, bimah, Ner Tamid, siddur, minyan, rabbi, cantor

## **JEWISH SYMBOLS**

Students will be able to identify symbols and how they are used, and to understand that they are a reminder of our tradition and history.

Vocabulary and concepts to include: mezuzzah, Magen David, Ten Commandments, menorah, tzedakah, kiddush, shofar.

## **BIBLE**

To learn the three parts of the Bible are written in scroll form, and that the stories are a history of the Jewish people, and that the prophets were people in history who taught us how to lead better lives.

Vocabulary and concepts include: tanach, torah, chumash, sofer, yad, aliyah, Nevi'im, haftarah, Ketuvim, and Tehillim.

## **JEWISH LIFE CYCLES**

To learn about the events in the Jewish life cycle, and how we celebrate these events as Jews. The children will understand that Jewish learning is lifelong, and what it means to be part of a Jewish family and a Jewish community.

Vocabulary and concepts to include: simcha, chupaah, kallah, chatan, mazal tov, ketubah, kaddish, yahrzeit, tzedakah, Simchat HaBat, Brit Milah, shem tov, consecration.

## **ISRAEL**

The first part of this unit will include an understanding of Israel as a modern country with cities, money, language, flag, and culture. The students will understand that Jews come from all over the world to visit and live in Israel and why it is called the Jewish homeland. They will begin to learn the history and role that Israel has played in Jewish history. The second part of this unit

will teach about the major cities and special places in Israel, and how it is a modern country with an old history.

Vocabulary and concepts to include: Israel, Magen David, Yom Ha'atzmaut, Jerusalem, Holy Temple, Hebrew, moshav, kibbutz, sabra, Jerusalem, Knesset, kotel, archaeology, Negev.

## **THEOLOGY**

We will attempt to teach the children an understanding of the role that God plays in their lives. Some of the themes that will be taught are:

God as a creator, and that we are partners with God

The concept of our belief in one God

We are created in God's image, yet we are all unique

In Judaism, we thank God by reciting blessings

We have a covenant with God, and it is our responsibility to keep that covenant

God created Shabbat as a day of rest

We talk to God by praying, and we can pray individually or as a community

## **Second Grade**

SUBJECTS: Hebrew Reading Readiness, Israel, Holidays

### **Goals**

Students will continue to explore the meaning of the holidays by celebrating them in class and as a community. They will understand how holidays are celebrated in Israel.

Students will begin to study the Hebrew alphabet, doing Reading Readiness activities, so that they will become familiar with the alphabet in preparation for learning to read Hebrew in 3rd grade.

Students will explore the land of Israel, and the modern and biblical ties that we have to the Jewish homeland by learning about the geography of the land, exploring the sites and cities, and understanding the diversity of Israel's culture.

### **Activities**

There will be storytelling, discussion, crafts, and song, as well as hands-on activities to help the children learn the Hebrew alphabet.

### **Family Learning Component**

There will be a family Israel program, in which the parents and children will eat Israeli food, sing Israeli songs, and the children will teach their parents about what they have learned about the Jewish homeland.

There will also be a family Havdalah program, where the children and their families will learn about tzedakah, and participate in making a family tzedakah container.

### **Texts**

The Great Israel Scavenger Hunt  
Shalom Alef Bet  
The Jewish Holiday Treasure Trail

## **HEBREW READING READINESS**

Students will learn the letters and the vowels of the Hebrew alphabet. They will learn the names of the letters, the sounds that they make, and how we read from right to left. There will be an association of Hebrew letter with Hebrew words, e.g. Shin for Shabbat, Bet for Bar Mitzvah, Mem for Menorah. They will learn some basic vocabulary words, such as numbers, days of the week, animal names, and colors. By the end of the year, students will have learned the entire alef-bet and the vowels, and will be able to do simple decoding.

## **ISRAEL**

Students will learn about the land of Israel, studying the geography, culture, and language of Israel. They will be able to identify Israel as the Jewish homeland, and understand the connection that the Jewish people of the Diaspora have to the country. They will achieve a comprehension

of where Israel is located, and the size of Israel in relation to the state of New Jersey.

They will learn about the regions of Israel, such as Galilee, the Judean Desert, and Coastal Plain, and learn about the cities of Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Eilat, and Haifa.

The focus of the learning will center on the following concepts:

Hebrew is both a spoken language and a sacred language.

The tradition of planting trees has contributed to the building of the modern state of Israel, and the role of the JNF.

Israel is a world leader in science and technology.

The Israeli week and year are structured around the Jewish calendar.

The symbols of Israel, and the relationship of the flag to the tallit.

The mitzvah of Ahavat Zion.

They will also learn some basic modern Hebrew vocabulary words.

## **Third Grade**

SUBJECTS: Hebrew Reading, Jewish Identity, Bible

### **Goals**

Students will learn the alef-bet and vowels, and learn to put them together to read words. They will also learn basic reading rules that will help them to become fluent in Hebrew prayer reading.

Students will continue to learn basic prayers, with emphasis on reading and not on rote recitation.

Students will learn basic vocabulary in order to understand the prayers.

Students will be able to relate Jewish experiences and values to their lives, while learning to participate in the Jewish community.

Students will explore the values relating to weekly Torah stories, from Creation to the Exodus.

### **Activities**

Written activities, games and puzzles, discussion, and song. Each child will have an interactive CD that will assist them in learning Hebrew, and help them to do review at home.

### **Family Learning Component**

There will be a family learning program in which the children "teach" their parents about the Bible, and the value that they have learned from the stories that the torah teaches.

### **Texts**

The New Siddur Program Primer

The Explorer's Bible

### **Grade 3 Prayers**

Motzi

Pg. 277, Shema

Pg. 673, Chanukah Candle Blessings

Pg. 5, Shabbat Candle Blessing

Haggadah, The Four Questions

### **Syllabus**

#### **HEBREW**

Students will learn the Hebrew alphabet and vowels, and decoding skills from key cultural words and concepts. Vowel sounds will be introduced in small increments, and look-alike letters will be taught separately to minimize confusion. By the end of the year, students will learn the basic blessings, including the Shema, Candle Blessings, Motzi, and Short Kiddush, and they key concepts associated with these prayers. The students will also learn to read the Four Questions, and to understand their place in the Passover seder.

As each new Hebrew letter is introduced, there will be a vocabulary word taught that uses the new letter. For example, when learning the letter Shin, the students will learn the word Shabbat. Along with learning the vocabulary, they will learn other words that are associated with that key word.

## **BIBLE**

The students will learn about certain Bible stories from Genesis and Exodus. They will understand that these stories are part of the history of the Jewish people, but they are only stories, and their actual events are questionable. They will learn the values that are associated with these stories, and about the role that people of the Bible played in creating our Jewish history.

The following are the stories that will be covered, and the important concepts that will be learned:

### **Creation**

- An ongoing process that consists of bringing order to chaos
- God is separate from Creation
- God wants people to rule over all living things
- Shabbat is intrinsic to Creation

### **Garden of Eden**

- It is not good for people to be alone
- God loves all of Creation
- Human beings have free will

### **Cain and Abel**

- Good leads to more good; evil leads to evil
- We are all responsible for one another
- We are all entitled to life, even if we do wrong

### **Noah**

- To learn that Jewish symbols help us remember Jewish teachings
- We understand about the covenant between God and man

### **Tower of Babel**

- To understand that idolatry has disastrous results
- That language can bind us together, but sometimes binds us to others
- That heaven is beyond human reach

### **Sodom**

- Welcoming strangers is a Jewish value
- A good person earns the right to argue even with God
- God does not destroy the good along with the evil

### **Abraham**

- We are tested to help us learn our own strengths

We are not required to make sacrifices as proof of faith

**Rebecca**

Mourning, and caring for the dead, is a mitzvah  
Choosing a partner from among the one's own people is wise  
Kindness to animals is as important as kindness to visitors  
Love of family can help us even in difficult times

**Jacob and Esau**

To understand that the Jewish tradition is our inheritance  
To understand that we must accept the good or bad consequences of our actions

**Jacob**

To understand that the covenant must be renewed in each generation  
To learn that the more good we do, the more we love doing good  
To comprehend that people learn evil by watching evil  
To learn the concept of Sh'lom Bayit, peace in families  
To accept that growing up means accepting responsibility  
To understand that all of us are created in God's image

**Joseph**

To understand that bragging causes envy and jealousy, and that both have dangerous results  
To learn that just as evil leads to evil, so does good lead to good, and that doing good for others changes the entire world for the better  
To learn that we must do what is right, even when it hurts us, and that others deserve forgiveness even when they have wronged us

**Moses**

To understand the concept of slavery as an inhumane condition  
To learn that we can not stand idly by while injustice is being done  
To understand that we must learn that we must see all the details of the world  
To understand how God plays a role in our lives in a direct and non-direct way

## **Fourth Grade**

SUBJECTS: Hebrew Prayer Reading, Introduction to Basic Jewish Beliefs, Torah

### **Goals**

Students will continue to learn prayers relating to the Shabbat service, and there will be an emphasis on Hebrew reading fluency.

Students will learn key words and concepts relating to the prayers, and the meanings of the prayers learned.

Students will be expected to master prayers from the CBH primer, and to be able to participate in the Torah service.

Students will be introduced to the basic tenets of Judaism, with regard to life cycle events, Jewish history, and Jewish ritual.

Students will study the stories of the Bible by learning about the prophets, and the role that they played in the history of the Jewish people.

### **Activities**

Reading stories and commentaries, group discussions and role playing, written activities in Hebrew and English, games and puzzles to reinforce Hebrew skills, arts and crafts, and song. Monthly magazine articles on current events, and relevant Jewish topics, will also be discussed.

### **Texts**

Partners with God

Prayer Pamphlets

CBH Prayer Primer

The Explorer's Bible - Book 2

Prayer Reading Skills

### **Grade 4 Prayers**

Pg. 295-7, Avot v'Emot

Pg. 443, Ein Keloheinu

Pg. 277, V'ahavta

Pg. 77-79, Mi Chamocho

Pg. 119, Friday Evening Kiddush

Pg. 299, Gevurot

### **Syllabus**

#### **HEBREW PRAYERS**

##### **Avot v'Emot**

To understand the 1st blessing of the Amidah, which is central to every synagogue service, and learn the rituals for recitation

To provide an understanding of our ancestors, with an emphasis on the matriarchs and patriarchs

To learn the role that God plays in the lives of the Jewish people

Key vocabulary words associated with this prayer, including: Avot, Emot, Eloheinu, Chasadim  
Tovim, HaGadol, HaGibor

### **Ein Keloheinu**

To understand that this prayer makes an important statement about our belief in God when we say "there is none else like our God"

To explore the different relationship that we have with God, and words to define that relationship, including provider, sovereign, and redeemer

Key vocabulary words: Eloheinu, Mosheyeinu, Adoneinu, Malkeinu

### **V'ahavta**

To understand the reciprocal love between the Jewish people and God

To learn about the significance of the mezuzah as a reminder of our love for God and our respect for God's commandments

Key vocabulary words to include: V'ahavta, L'avcha, HaDevarim, L'ot, Mezuzah

### **Mi Chamocha**

To understand that this passage has its origins in the Torah

To have an understanding of what freedom means for the Jewish people

To recognize God's role in the story of the Jewish people leaving slavery in Egypt

Key vocabulary words: Mi Chamocha, B'ayleem, Adonai, Ne'dar, BaKodesh

### **Kiddush**

To understand that blessing over wine is recited at home and in the synagogue

To understand that performing mitzvot adds holiness to our lives

To understand that memory of the work of Creation, and our going out from Egypt is an important concept to the Jewish people

Key vocabulary words: Kiddush, zicaron, beresheit, zachor, litzyot mitzrayim

### **Gevurot**

To understand that we have the strength to make the world a better place

To understand the concept that our Jewish souls live on forever

Key vocabulary words: Gibor, L'olam, Mechayay, Chayim, B'rachamim

## **BIBLE**

The children will study the Bible beginning at the Sea of Red, and concluding with the construction of the Second Temple. Some of the prophets that will be discussed include Samson, Deborah, Ruth, Solomon, Jonah, and Isaiah.

Some of the concepts that will be taught are: the Jewish value of freedom, ethical monotheism, Judaism offers the freedom of choice, the binding of history and heritage to the covenant, equal spiritual abilities for men and women, the act of teshuvah

**BASIC JUDAISM**

To teach a basic understanding of God and of holiness, to find a higher meaning for the things and creatures that inhabit our world. The children will have an awareness of God so that they can understand that Judaism teaches them to struggle between their good and evil inclinations. They will come to understand some of the following concepts:

They need to learn how to be good, and that goodness may be difficult, but deserves praise

A source of moral rules to understand, elaborate on, and to live by

Jewish ritual is Jewish language, and our ritual is a language that we use to speak to God, and to each other

We build self-esteem through our knowledge of God, and that all people are created in God's image.

We feel holiness through our knowledge of God, and connecting to God is how we bring a sense of holiness into our lives

We build continuity and community through our knowledge of God

## **Fifth Grade**

SUBJECTS: Basic Judaism, Hebrew Prayer Reading, Israel

### **Goals**

Students will continue to learn prayers and blessings for the Shabbat service, with emphasis on accuracy, clear reading, and fluency.

Students will learn the background, meanings, and application of the prayers.

Students will have an understanding of Jewish rituals.

Students will discuss ethical topics, and have group discussions related to Jewish ethical dilemmas.

Students will have a clear understanding of the importance of the connection between the Jewish people of the Diaspora and the State of Israel.

### **Activities**

Class discussion will be an integral part of this curriculum, in addition to role playing, debate, and song. There will be both verbal and written activities to improve prayer-reading skills, and to develop familiarity with the Jewish concept of prayer. Different types of media will be used in the teaching of the Israel curriculum. Monthly magazine articles on current events, and relevant Jewish topics, will also be discussed..

### **Texts**

Basic Judaism for Young People Volume 1

CBH Prayer Primer

Prayer Pamphlets

Welcome to Israel

### **Grade 5 Prayers**

V'shamru, P. 85

Lechah Dodi, P. 41

Aleinu, P. 445-7

Mi Chamocho/Tzur Yisrael, P. 291

Yotzer, P. 247

Adon Olam, P. 459

Or Chadash, P. 269

### **Syllabus**

#### **HEBREW PRAYERS**

##### **V'shamru, P. 85**

To understand the sacredness of Shabbat

To understand that by celebrating Shabbat, we strengthen our ties to God

Key vocabulary words associated with this prayer, including: V'shamru, B'nai Yisrael, Ledorotom, Brit, Yom Hash'vee'ee

### **Lechah Dodi, P. 41**

To understand that this prayer teaches us to welcome Shabbat with joy  
 To see how the connection to Shabbat is made to the Sabbath Bride  
 Key vocabulary words: Lechah Dodi, Calah, Shamor, Zachor

### **Aleinu, P. 445-7**

To understand that we pray as a community  
 To acknowledge God as a creator  
 To understand that we pray for a world of peace and unity among all people  
 Key vocabulary words to include: Aleinu, HaKol, Melech Malchay HaMelachim, Bayom HaHu, Leshabayach, Umodeem

### **Mi Chamocha/Tzur Yisrael, P. 291**

To understand that this passage has its origins in the Torah  
 To have an understanding of what freedom means for the Jewish people  
 To recognize God's role in the story of the Jewish people leaving slavery in Egypt  
 To understand God's role as a redeemer  
 Key vocabulary words: Mi Chamocha, B'ayleem, Adonai, Ne'dar, BaKodesh, Tzur Yisrael, Go'aleinu

### **Yotzer, P. 247**

To understand that God is a creator of peace and all things  
 To understand that creation is renewed each day  
 Key vocabulary words: Yotzer, Ohr, Uvoray, Choshech, Oseh Shalom, HaKol

### **Adon Olam, P. 459**

To understand it's roles as a concluding hymn in the Shacharit service  
 To understand how prayers connect us to Jews in other parts of the world  
 Key vocabulary words: Adon Olam, Melech, Norah, Levado

### **Or Chadash, P. 269**

## **BASIC JUDAISM**

The students will explore a variety of themes in Jewish life. They will be introduced to selected Jewish concepts related to the Land of Israel, the People of Israel, and the State of Israel. The primary objective is for the students to “think Jewishly” about the world, and their relationship to it. The students will become familiar with Jewish vocabulary-concepts and how they relate to their own lives.

## **ISRAEL**

There will be a yearlong study of the land of Israel. Some of the topics covered will be:

Geography - the Coastal Plain, the Desert, Mediterranean Sea, the Galilee

Cities - Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa, Eilat, Beersheva, Safad

History - how Israel began, Zionism, Balfour Declaration, Archaeology

Modern Israel - people, culture, language, IDF

Lifestyles - Kibbutzim, Bedouins, Moshavim

Places in Israel - Western Wall, Yad Vashem, Masada, Knesset

Famous People - Herzl, Ben Gurion, Moshe Dayan, Golda Meir, Menachem Begin, Yitzhak

Rabin, Shimon Perez

## **Sixth Grade**

SUBJECTS: Hebrew Prayer Reading, Jewish Life Cycle, Basic Jewish Values

### **Goals**

Students will continue to learn prayers and blessings for the Shabbat service, with an emphasis on accuracy, clear reading, and fluency. They will also focus on learning the prayer melodies. Students will learn the background, meanings, and application of the prayers, and develop a basic understanding of Jewish prayer concepts.

Students will explore Jewish life cycles as important moments in their lives.

Students will engage in critical thinking to understand how Jewish values play a role in their personal relationships and their everyday lives.

### **Activities**

Class discussion will also be an integral part of this curriculum, in addition to role-playing, debate, and song. There will be both verbal and written activities to improve prayer-reading skills, and to develop familiarity with the Jewish concept of prayer in their weekly pod classes. Monthly magazine articles on current events, and relevant Jewish topics, will also be discussed. This class will participate in a Shabbaton.

### **Texts**

CBH Prayer Primer  
Kol Haneshamah Prayer Book  
The Time of Our Lives  
Basic Judaism for Young People, Volume 2  
Babaganews

### **Grade 6 Prayers**

Kedusha, P. 303-305  
Chatzi Kaddish, P. 405  
Torah Blessings, P. 399  
Haftarah Blessings, P. 409-11  
Ahavat Olam, P. 63  
Kaddish Titkabal, P. 381

### **Syllabus**

#### **Kedusha, Pp. 303-305**

To understand why we proclaim God's holiness in the words of Isaiah

To understand the supreme glory and holiness of God

Key vocabulary words associated with this prayer, including: Nekadesh, Shemcha, Ledor Vedor, Gadlechah

#### **Chatzi Kaddish, P. 405**

To understand the different versions of this prayer, and their placement in the service  
To understand that it is recited in memory of someone who has died, but never speaks of death  
To understand the differences and similarities between the Hebrew language and Aramaic  
Key vocabulary words: Uvechayai, Leolam, Veyishtabach, Beerchatah, Shelomah

**Ahavat Olam, P. 63**

To understand that this prayer is about God's love  
To acknowledge the torah as a precious possession  
To learn the Hebrew names of the torah decorations  
Key vocabulary words to include: Keter, Choshen, Remonim, Yad, Etz Chayim, Torah  
Umetzvot

**Torah Blessings, P. 399****Haftarah Blessings, P. 409-11****Kaddish Titkabal, P. 381****BASIC JUDAISM**

The students will continue to explore a variety of themes in Judaism, by learning vocabulary related to the texts of our tradition. They will come to understand the complexity and continuity of our culture, and how it relates to their world. They will learn that the Torah is the story of our ancestors, and how it has held the Jewish people together through the generations. .

**LIFE CYCLES**

The students will learn about the most important events in the life of a Jewish person, and the traditions that accompany each life cycle event. They will also explore the concept of L'dor V'dor - from generation to generation - and how rituals and celebrations are a part of Jewish history. Topics to be covered are:

Birth - Naming, Brit Milah  
Jewish Education - Consecration, Confirmation  
Bat/Bat Mitzvah - what it means, how we celebrate, becoming a Jewish adult  
Marriage - Engagement, Kiddushim, Sheva Berachot  
Death - Burial, Shiva, Yahrtzeit, Yizkor

## **Seventh Grade**

SUBJECTS: Hebrew Prayer Reading, Torah Study, American Jewish History, Social Action

### **Goals**

During the first semester, students will continue to learn the prayers and blessings of the Shabbat service, with an emphasis on accuracy, clear reading, and fluency. They will also focus on learning the prayers and melodies.

Students will have knowledge of the Shabbat services, and have a comfort level in leading the service.

Students will understand what it means to be an adult member of the Jewish community, and to explore their responsibilities to that community.

Students will be comfortable with reading from the Torah, and understanding the values of the weekly parsha.

Students will learn about the American Jewish community

Students will learn about the Holocaust and the heroes who played a part in helping the Jewish people.

Students will learn about modern life in Israel, and what it means to be an Israeli today.

### **Activities**

Written and verbal activities to help master Hebrew prayer skills, and to develop ease in leading prayer. There will be critical thinking activities to help students make ethical decisions, and to develop an understanding of how to integrate Jewish values into their lives. Students will spend time each week with the rabbi to participate in a question and answer period, entitled “Ask the Rabbi.”

### **Texts**

CBH Prayer Primer

Kol Haneshamah Prayer Book

Challenge and Change – Book 2 & 3

Torah Toons II

Zim Zoom magazine

### **Grade 7 Hebrew Prayers**

Torah Service, P. 385

Eyn Kamocha, P. 383

Lecha Adonai, P. 393

Gadlu/Echad/Shema, P. 393

Etz Chayim, P. 441

Yehalelu/Hodo Al-Eretz, P. 433

### **Syllabus**

#### **Torah Service, P. 385**

Prayers for taking torah from the ark  
Prayers for returning the torah to the ark  
Torah Blessings  
Haftarah Blessings  
Processional Torah prayers

**Eyn Kamocha, P. 383**

**Lecha Adonai, P. 393**

**Gadlu/Echad/Shema, P. 393**

**Etz Chayim, P. 441**

**Yehalelu/Hodo Al-Eretz, P. 433**

## **AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORY**

Students will learn about the American Jewish community from World War I to the present. They will learn about how events in the world, during different historical times, have helped to shape the status of Jewish life today in modern America, by discussing the roles that Jews have played in the arts and sciences, sports, politics, social action, U.S.-Israel relations, and the women's movement. There will also be discussions on how different Jewish movements evolved, including the major branches of Judaism, in addition to the Jewish Renewal movement. There will be a unit on the Holocaust, where students will understand the time line of events, the facts relating to this period, and the importance of remembering and teaching of this period in the history of the Jewish people.

## **TORAH STUDY**

By studying commentaries, and asking ethical questions, the students will discover that the Torah offers many insights. They will come to understand that the Torah teaches us many lessons, and that scholars have struggled for thousands of years with trying to understand the meaning of the Torah.

## **Eighth and Ninth Grade**

Our post-B'nai Mitzvah class will be working toward accumulating credits in order to become confirmed at the end of 11<sup>th</sup> grade. The program is based on three components:

### EDUCATION

Participation in the Reconstructionist TEL Program, and additional programs that will be presented throughout the year. There is also an alternative for our students to earn credits by participating in other educational programs, e.g. Hebrew High.

### COMMUNITY

There will be opportunities to participate in the CBH community, including, but not limited to: assisting in the Religious School as a classroom aide, helping out with Tot Shabbat, being part of the Teen Programming (e.g. Purim Carnival, fund raisers), and participation in Teen-led services. Other community participation will also be available for credit.

### SOCIAL ACTION

Students will participate in programs of their choosing, sometimes working as a group, or at times, working on their own.

Credit breakdown is as follows:

25 Credits in Education, 10 Credits in Social Action, 15 Credits in CBH Community.

There will be various ways to earn credits in each of the categories. Students may present options to the Education Director for earning credits that are not listed. The Education Director will determine the amount of credit to be given, and will be the record keeper. Education credits will only be given for successful completion of any program.

### THE TEL PROGRAM

*Tel* is the Hebrew word for an archeological hill, and JRF is using the word as an acronym for **Teens: Experience and Learning**. JRF seeks to create a true *tel* experience for our teens based on the opportunity to *dig* through first-hand “life-centered” experiences and *sift* out new, meaningful educational gleanings that are personally relevant to their lives.

This program is framed and anchored by two *kallot* (retreats) at Camp JRF. In between the *kallot*, eight two hour *havayot* (experiential learning opportunities) will be held. The curriculum is based on the Values of Spiritual Peoplehood, one of the key approaches to Reconstructionist education. Each year of the program will have a different theme. The theme for this year is Tikkun Olam.

Each student will keep a “Reflection Journal” and will communicate with other teens in the program by using Facebook.