



**Temple Beth Shalom
Religious School
Curriculum Overview
2009- 2010
5770**



CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH MEROM / PRE-K & K

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

- Kitah Merom aims to provide a fun, comfortable and welcoming experience which helps students to become more connected with their Jewish identity and heritage. In keeping with the notion that young children thrive on consistency, sessions are structured so that schedule/routine each session remains relatively constant, while specific themes for that day's discussions, activities, projects, etc. vary during the course of the year. Connections are threaded among the weekly Torah portions, holidays, or community events and the experiences the students are likely to have had in their own lives.
- All lessons are based on the Values of Spiritual Peoplehood model used at Camp JRF, which places teachings into seven categories; *hohmah* (wisdom), *kehillah* (community), *dereh eretz* (ethical behavior), *hiddur mitzvah* (beautification of the commandments), *tziyonut* (peoplehood), *kedushah* (holiness) and *tikkun olam* (repair of the world).
- The goals and values of each lesson are assessed using Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan's Belonging-Behaving-Believing philosophy of Jewish identity and in how the experience fosters a sense of Jewishness within the students.
- Merom students are presented with a miniature Torah and formally "consecrated" to Jewish study at *Simhat Torah* children's services in the fall. (Consecration date for 2009: Sunday, 12:00pm 10/11/09)
- Merom students help to lead *tefillot* each month during School Shabbat

JUDAICA GOALS:

- The Merom teacher presents weekly *torah* portion stories during "Torah Time" using the "I Can Learn Torah" series from Torah Aura. Students study important *torah* portions and begin to understand a connection between the *torah* and their personal Jewish identity.
- Weekly age-appropriate music sessions are led by the Merom teacher weekly, and Rabbi James during monthly visits.
- Students learn about Jewish holidays through stories, observances, customs and appropriate blessings and prayers.
- Arts and craft projects related to specific holidays and Jewish concepts. Activities and projects might include:
 - Making edible *tzedakah* boxes
 - Making a story board of the days of Creation
 - Making a recycle bin for our classroom
 - Making *Sukkah* decorations.
 - Taking up the *lulav* and *etrog* in the *sukkah* on *Sukkot*
 - Making *hanukiyot* (menorahs)
 - Making and playing with dreidels (*sevivonim*)
 - Jewish Bingo
 - Planting seeds on *Tu Beshvat*
 - Making groggers (*ra'ashanim*) for *Purim*
 - Drawing pictures to describe and illustrate their definition of God and what God means to them.
 - Making *mezuzot*

- Making *seder* plates for Passover (*Pesach*)
- Making *haggadot* for Passover
- Drawing life size murals of their Jewish self.
- Making mini-arks
- Drawing a ladder to Heaven
- Building a classroom Tabernacle
- Making *Shabbat* boxes to take home

MODERN HEBREW GOALS:

- To understand that there is a distinction between Hebrew letters and English letters through fun activities like “Aleph-Bet Yoga” and singing songs about the letters of the Aleph-Bet.
- To begin to learn the letters of the Hebrew alphabet and the sounds they make through games, music and crafts. These may include drawing pictures, reading from the Aleph-Bet Storybook or other creative projects.
- To introduce Hebrew vocabulary through playing games.

TEFILLAH/PRAYER GOALS:

- Shabbat table blessings (candles, bread, wine/grape juice [up to *borey pri hagafen*]);
- First line of the “*shema*,”
- *oseh shalom*
- *hiney mah tov*
- First line of the “Four Questions” (“*mah nishtanah...*”)

STUDENT TEXTBOOKS USED IN MEROM FOR 5770/ 2009-2010:

- *The Hebrew Aleph-Bet* (Guseet and Dunlop)
- *Sam the Detective* (Behrman House)
- *The Aleph Bet Story Book* (Sarah and David)
- *The Aleph Bet Story Workbook* (Sarah and David)
- *My First Learn and Do Holiday Book* (Behrman House)
- *Teach Me Torah Set* (Behrman House)
- *Let’s Discover The Bible Set* (Behrman House)
- *BJL Do It Yourself Megillah* (Torah Aura)
- *Children’s Garden of Torah Series* (Torah Aura)

OTHER SOURCES OF CLASS ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- *Jewish Every Day: The Complete Handbook for Early Childhood Teachers* (Behrman House/ARE)
- *Aleph-Bet Yoga: Embodying the Hebrew Letters for Physical and Spiritual Well-Being* (Jewish Lights)
- *101 Jewish Stories*
- *Teaching Torah* (Behrman House/ARE)
- *Teaching Jewish Holidays* (Behrman House/ARE)
- *I Can Learn Torah Series* (Torah Aura)

CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH RAM / GRADES 1-2

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

- The goal of Kitah Ram is to continue to build a foundation for Jewish education and to provide a rich variety of experiences in Jewish observance and in the joy of Shabbat and holidays, through hands-on experiences and through songs, games, artwork, and crafts. We join the entire school in celebrating the holidays such as: performing the mitzvah of *leyshev basukkah*/visiting a *sukkah* and *netilat lulav*/waving the *lulav*, the fun of *hanukah*, *Tu Beshvat seder*, and more. We hope to help each child find a source of significance and enrichment in Jewish living through Jewish values such as the practice of *tzedakah* and *mitzvot*, and a sense of *ahavat yisrael*, love for Israel. In keeping with the notion that younger children thrive on consistency, sessions are structured so that schedule/routine each session remains relatively constant, while specific themes for that day's discussions, activities, projects, etc. vary during the course of the year. Connections are threaded among the weekly Torah portions, or community events and the experiences the students are likely to have had in their own lives. Students are also exposed to an in-depth study of the Jewish year cycle and the rituals of the Jewish calendar.
- All lessons are based on the Values of Spiritual Peoplehood model used at Camp JRF, which places teachings into seven categories; *hohmah* (wisdom), *kehillah* (community), *dereh eretz* (ethical behavior), *hiddur mitzvah* (beautification of the commandments), *tziyonut* (peoplehood), *kedushah* (holiness) and *tikkun olam* (repair of the world).
- The goals and values of each lesson are assessed using Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan's Belonging-Behaving-Believing philosophy of Jewish identity and in how the experience fosters a sense of Jewishness within the students.
- Kitah Ram students who were not previously "consecrated" to Jewish study as Merom students are presented with a miniature Torah at *Simhat Torah* children's services in the fall.
- Kitah Ram students help to lead *tefillot* each month during School Shabbat.

JUDAICA GOALS:

- Students discuss how Judaism is observed in their homes and how Judaism is observed through the year in different Jewish settings. Activities might include:
 - Edible *menorot*
 - Making a class torah scroll
 - Helping to build the TBS *sukkah*
 - Take-home *lulav* and *etrog* set
 - Planting parsley seeds for *Tu Beshvat*
 - Collecting macaroni and cheese boxes as *groggers* for *Purim*
 - Having a tour of the *hagaddah* with parents
 - Building a bon-fire for *Lag Ba'omer*
 - Making Israeli food for *Yom Ha'atzma'ut*
- Monthly visits from Rabbi James offers a regular insight into new and creative Jewish experiences.
- Each session includes weekly check-ins to discuss special things happening in the lives of our students to better understand the year cycle. Show and tell is encouraged.

- Study of various *mitzvot* and of qualities associated with God related to the various holiday experiences. Opportunities to talk about own understandings of God
- Students learn about Jewish holidays through songs, stories, observances, customs and appropriate blessings and prayers.
- Arts and craft projects related to specific holidays and Jewish concepts.

MODERN HEBREW GOALS:

- To learn all the letters of the Hebrew *Aleph-Bet* and to begin to learn vowel signs.
- To be exposed to spoken Hebrew in classroom activities.
- To begin learning Modern Hebrew words and phrases.
- To introduce Hebrew vocabulary through playing games.
- To be able to read and write one's own Hebrew name.

TEFILLAH/PRAYER GOALS:

To review, or to learn for the first time:

- Shabbat table blessings (candles, bread, wine/grape juice [up to *borey pri hagafen*])
- the first two lines of the “*shema*,”
- the first line (“*mah nishtanah...*”) and the first two of the “Four Questions.”
- the blessing for sitting in a *sukkah*,
- the *Hanukah* candle blessings
- *barehu*
- *sheheyanu*
- *modeh ani*
- blessing formulations

STUDENT TEXTBOOKS USED IN KITAH RAM FOR 5770/ 2009-2010:

- *Let's Celebrate Series* (Behrman House)
- *The Jewish Holidays* (Behrman House)
- *My Jewish Year* (Behrman House)
- *Head Start on Holidays* (Behrman House)
- *Alef Celebrations Series (Torah Aura)*
- *Time To Celebrate Series* (Torah Aura)

OTHER SOURCES OF CLASS ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- *Teaching About God and Spirituality* (Behrman House/ARE)
- *Teaching Jewish Holidays* (Behrman House/ARE)
- *Does God Have a Big Toe*
- *Teaching Mitzvot* (Behrman House/ARE)

CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH MELAH / GRADES 3-5

Note: Because of the inherent diversity in the learning abilities of such a wide age range, this class will be particularly challenging to teach. Special attention will be paid to bridging the developmental gaps and providing students with the opportunity to work at a level which is appropriate to their abilities.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

- As in younger grades, in Kitah Melah we continue to build a foundation for Jewish education and to provide a rich variety of experiences in Jewish observance and in the joy of Shabbat and holidays, through hands-on experiences and through songs, games, artwork, and crafts. We join the entire school in celebrating the holidays such as: performing the mitzvah of *leyshev basukkah*/visiting a *sukkah* and *netilat lulav*/waving the *lulav*, the fun of *Hanukah*, *Tu Beshvat* seder, and more. We hope to help each child find a source of significance and enrichment in Jewish living through Jewish values such as the practice of *tzedakah* and *mitzvot*, and a love for Israel. The year also includes a unit on *kashrut* (the Jewish dietary laws) plus significant study on the geography and society of contemporary Israel.
- All lessons are based on the Values of Spiritual Peoplehood model used at Camp JRF, which places teachings into seven categories; *hohmah* (wisdom), *kehillah* (community), *dereh eretz* (ethical behavior), *hiddur mitzvah* (beautification of the commandments), *tziyonut* (peoplehood), *kedushah* (holiness) and *tikkun olam* (repair of the world).
- The goals and values of each lesson are assessed using Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan's Belonging-Behaving-Believing philosophy of Jewish identity and in how the experience fosters a sense of Jewishness within the students.
- The goal of Kitah Melah is to make Judaism increasingly relevant to student's daily lives. We strengthen and increase their Hebrew vocabulary and teach our collective history, from ancient to modern American Jewry.
- Kitah Melah focuses on Jewish civilizations through different time and space. Students will look at Jewish communities from across the centuries in an attempt to see the variety in Jewish life and to find common threads which exist in all Jewish experiences. Activities might include:
 - Slip-n-slide Nile River
 - Collages of different images of Creation from various time periods
 - Learning how to write *STaM*
 - Creative *midrash* writing
 - Mezuzah writing
 - Meet Maimonides
 - The Cardinal's Snuff Box Story
 - Zionism 101
 - Jewish Choices - Emancipation
 - Israeli Civ. Day
 - Writing a new Declaration of Independence for Israel
- Particular emphasis in Kitah Melah is placed on beginning to learn Hebrew as a meaningful language, with an emphasis on the development of beginning liturgy skills and on Modern

Hebrew. Students will play games designed to strengthen their vocabulary, but will also begin to identify words based on their *shoresh* (root).

- Students in Kitot Melah participate in School Shabbat in more extensive ways and will also begin leading sections of the Sunday morning service; beginning to develop a comfort level with liturgy.

JUDAICA GOALS:

- Students learn about Jewish civilizations through stories, observances, customs, foods, languages, poetry, music and appropriate blessings and prayers.
- Students continue to develop a sense of *ahavat yisrael*, with particular emphasis on learning about Israeli culture through dance, theater, film, language, music and other cultural expressions.
- Arts and craft projects related to specific Jewish civilizational periods.
- Develop a sense of Jewish continuity through civilizational learning, including threads of Jewish experience related to God, *kashrut* and prayer.
- Discussions of ethical and philosophical questions arising from study of Torah stories.

MODERN HEBREW GOALS:

- Initial review of Hebrew letters, vowels and decoding. Learning to (or reviewing existing knowledge of how to) write Hebrew letters in block print.
- Begin formal study of Modern Hebrew with special emphasis on vocabulary and reading passages connected with Jewish holidays and home life.

TEFILLAH/PRAYER GOALS:

- *v'ahavta*
- *mi hamoha*
- Psalm 150
- *avot*
- *birhot hashahar* (morning blessings)
- Holiday blessings for *Sukkot*, *Hanukah*, *Purim* and *Pesah* (including the entire Four Questions and other *Pesah* melodies)

STUDENT TEXTBOOKS USED IN KITAH MELAH FOR 5770/ 2009-2010:

- *Camp JRF Curriculum, 2002-2005* (Camp JRF)
- *Teaching Jewish Civilizations* (JRF Press)
- *The History of the Jewish People* (Behrman House)
- *Pass The Torah, Please* (Behrman House)

OTHER SOURCES OF CLASS ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- *Teaching Jewish History* (Behrman House/ARE)
- *Teaching Jewish Holidays* (Behrman House/ARE)
- *Growing Together* (Behrman House/ARE)

CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH KINERET / GRADE 6-7

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

- The goal of Kitah Kineret is to help students to begin the journey towards Jewish maturity by rounding out students' basic Jewish education while they prepare for their transition to the status of Bar or Bat Mitzvah, and to motivate them to continue their engagement with Jewish living and learning throughout the years to come.
- The curriculum affords them opportunities to develop the intellectual and spiritual resources for connecting with the values and ethical ideals that make Judaism distinct from other faith traditions and an important tool in leading an adult life. Hebrew language study includes both modern conversational and classical liturgical forms of the language. Particular emphasis is placed on Shabbat morning prayers and on the liturgy of the Torah service. Study of significant Torah stories is augmented by introduction to the history and process of *midrash*. Students also begin work on their mitzvah projects related to their *b'nai mitzvah* study.
- All lessons are based on the Values of Spiritual Peoplehood model used at Camp JRF, which places teachings into seven categories; *hohmah* (wisdom), *kehillah* (community), *dereh eretz* (ethical behavior), *hiddur mitzvah* (beautification of the commandments), *tziyonut* (peoplehood), *kedushah* (holiness) and *tikkun olam* (repair of the world).
- The goals and values of each lesson are assessed using Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan's Belonging-Behaving-Believing philosophy of Jewish identity and in how the experience fosters a sense of Jewishness within the students.

JUDAICA GOALS:

- Students in Kitah Kineret spend time dealing with ethical issues that encounter Jewish students of all ages. In focusing on ethical dilemmas, students learn how to use their Jewish tool box to help provide answers to difficult questions. Weekly "questions of the week" provide regular opportunities to interact with various ethical questions. Activities might include:
 - Media and Music – Ethical Downloading
 - Online Character IDS – Online Ethics
 - Building a TBS Western Wall
 - Gender Identity – Ethics of Being a Welcoming Community
 - American Ideals Ice Cream Sundaes
 - An Inconvenient Truth
 - B'nai Mitzvah Ethical Wills
- The Holocaust and Antisemitism as an ethical dilemma is addressed. Students take a field trip to the Holocaust Museum and learn about the Holocaust using various modalities of learning including; poetry, film, music and discussion groups.
- Study of key stories from throughout the five books of the Torah. Special emphasis on creative projects such as art *midrash*, original dramatic re-enactments, and philosophical debates arising from ethical issues raised in Torah.
- Discussion of Jewish and American current events with time set aside for discussions related to sustainability and advocacy.

- In addition, students explore with Rabbi James their ideas for mitzvah projects in the categories of “*beyn adam lehavero*” (pertaining to our relationship with fellow human beings and all creation) and “*beyn adam lamakom*” (pertaining to our relationship with God.)
- Additionally, beginning approximately 12 months before the student’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah date, the student and parents begin to meet for individual Bar/Bat Mitzvah lessons with Rabbi James. During these individual lessons, in conjunction with practicing the chanting of the student’s *haftarah* and *maftir*, some time is also spent studying commentaries to the *haftarah* and Torah texts. In doing so, we try to identify points of interest that the student might want to develop further into the student’s *devar torah*.

MODERN HEBREW GOALS:

- Thorough review of basic Hebrew grammar and structure. While reading practice in this grade focuses more on biblical and rabbinic Hebrew than on modern Hebrew, skills acquired are applicable to all forms of the language.

TEFILLAH/PRAYER GOALS:

- Focus on the Shabbat Morning liturgy and liturgy of the Torah service
- *baruh she’amar*
- *hatzi kaddish/kaddish titkabal*
- *birhot haftarah*
- *aleynu*
- *birhot hatorah*

STUDENT TEXTBOOKS USED IN KITAH KINERET FOR 5770/ 2009-2010:

- *You Be The Judge, Volumes I, II, III (Torah Aura)*
- *A Kid’s Mensh Handbook (Behrman House)*
- *Making a Difference (Behrman House)*
- *The Holocaust, The World and The Jews (Behrman House)*
- *The Sarah and David Bar/Bat Mitzvah Book (Sarah and David LLC)*
- *The Sarah and David Shabbat Morning Book (Sarah and David LLC)*
- *Content of Their Character (Torah Aura)*

OTHER SOURCES OF CLASS ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- *Teaching About God and Spirituality (Behrman House/ARE)*
- *Teaching Hot Topics (Behrman House/ARE)*
- *Teaching Jewish Values (Behrman House/ARE)*
- *It’s a Mitzvah (Rabbinical Assembly/Behrman House)*
- *Doing Mitzvot: Mitzvah Projects for Bar/Bat Mitzvah Isaacs and Olitzky, (KTAV)*