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Religious School Curriculum



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Vision

At Temple Beth Torah, we wish to create an ever growing variety of engaging and well planned educational programs for students and their families in order to provide a foundation for building strong and lasting Jewish identities.

Philosophy of Jewish Education

We believe that children and adults learn best by doing. Examples of our Jewish learning experiences include:

- **★** Experiencing the celebration of holidays and Shabbat
- **★** Building community (*Kehila*) with fellow students and Temple members
- **★** Impacting others in the real world by practicing Tikun Olam & Mitzvot
- **★** Meaningful Judaic long term projects that build a lasting Jewish identity

- **★** Connecting with Judaism via music, art, drama, debate, and more
- **★** Praying with the community at real services
- **★** Connecting with Israeli kids to learn from their first hand experiences
- ★ Using Hebrew as an everyday language through the use of conversational words and terms as well as prayer

Curriculum Design

Our currciulum is of a spiral design, in which the illustrated topics are learned each year with growing depth and changing sub-topics as students advance in grade. The capacity for understanding continues to develop as children grow from early childhood Hebrew, to elementary school, through middle school T'fila and into high school. Values. A spiral curriculum begins with Israel **Ethics** the belief that "any subject can **Jewish** be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any **Identity** child at any stage of development" (Jerome Bruner, 1960) and can Holidays, Temple life, help to maximize retention of Rituals Community learning. (Excerpt from USCJ Torah, guidelines for congregational schools) Jewish law We consider each of the star's points to be an & history access point for a Jewish person to connect to Judaism in a way that is personalized and meaningful to him or her.

Experiential Jewish Education

(Adapted form: http://ejewishphilanthropy.com/what-exactly-is-experiential-jewish-education/)

Experiential Jewish Education is the process of teaching Jewish life, and Jewish values, by building meaningful Jewish experiences – creating programs that combine traditional methods of text study, learning, and service, with physical and emotional interaction between learners. Experiential Jewish education works to

inspire learners to embrace meaningful Jewish lives.

Project Based Learning

PBL moves students from the traditional Hebrew school setting of listening about Judaism to "really engaging in Judaism and taking ownership of it." With project-based learning, the teacher moves from lecturer to



partner, and teacher and student work together to create a project.

Adapted from: http://ejewishphilanthropy.com/project-based-learning-offers-deeper-and-better-way-to-teach-judaism/)

Whole School

| Jewish values | Holidays / Rituals | Torah/Tanach/ Jewish History | Israel | Community / Temple | Hebrew | Music | Art |
|---|---|--|--|--|---|--|--|
| Jewish values • Kavod – respect • Savlanut – Tolerance • Kabbalah – Acceptance • Todah – appreciation, • gratitude • L'shon hara – speech/bullying • Kehila – teamwork, community • Tikun Olam – repairing the world, | By the end of my Jewish education at TBT: I know the background for each Jewish holiday celebration – the story behind it and the reasons for celebrating I know how to celebrate each Jewish holiday with its customs | | Israel By the end of my Jewish education at TBT: I know what Zionism is I understand that Israel is the only Jewish country in the world I understand the importance of Israel to the Jews as the Jewish homeland I have learned | Temple By the end of my Jewish education at TBT: I know who the key members of the Temple community are I understand the function of a Temple as the center for the community Jewish life I have participated in celebrating | Hebrew By the end of my Jewish education at TBT: I know that Hebrew is the language of the Torah, most of our prayers and is the spoken language in Israel I know that Hebrew is read from right to left, I can read and decode Hebrew | Music By the end of my Jewish education at TBT: I am familiar with many chats and prayer melodies I have connected with certain Jewish tunes and melodies. I understand the different between a song and a chant Through memorization OR | By the end of my Jewish education at TBT: I know there are forms of art unique to Jewish culture I have created some art work that is Jewish in nature I have expressed my Jewish self creatively I am familiar with some artifacts and specific images |
| Chesed – charity, caring for others Vahadarta pnei zaken – caring for elderly Mishpacha – family Gvura – inner strength Savlanut – patience Achrayut – responsibility Tzedakah – helping the less fortunate | and traditions I can name all the artifacts and items used for each Jewish holiday I can recite the blessings and prayers specific to each Holiday I know some songs that are relevant to each Jewish holiday. | I know that Tanach is made out of three parts – Torah, Prophets and Writings. I am familiar with many Bible stories I understand the connection between the Biblical people of Israel and todays Jewish people I know about major events in modern Jewish history such as the Holocaust, Zionism, and the birth of the state of Israel. | about the conflicts and challenges Israel faces politically and with security. I know the basic geography of Israel, its location and neighbors I can name main cities and regions in Israel I know that Hebrew is the official and spoken language of Israel | holiday festivities/events together with the TBT community I enjoyed musical T'fila with John on Sunday mornings I have attended a variety of Shabbat and holiday services I have participated in Family education programs I have taken part of Tikun Olam through various opportunities with the TBT community and in the real world | print with vowels from the Siddur and other text • With practice, I can read Hebrew from the Torah with no vowels • I recognize, can say and can translate about 30 Hebrew words • I may recognize some Trope notes and the sounds they make | Trope reading I can chant Torah/Haftorah. | that are unique to Jewish culture. |

Gan (Kindergarten)

| Jewish values | Holidays / Rituals | Torah/Tanach/ Jewish History | Israel | Community / Temple | Hebrew | Music |
|---|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| Kavod – respect Savlanut – Tolerance Kabbalah – Acceptance Todah – appreciation, gratitude L'shon hara – speech/bullying Kehila – teamwork, community Tikun Olam – repairing the world, Chesed – charity, caring for others Vahadarta pnei zaken – caring for elderly Mishpacha – family Gvura – inner strength Savlanut – patience Achrayut – responsibility Tzedakah – helping the less fortunate | I know the story context of each Jewish holiday. I am familiar with customs and artifacts used for celebrating each holiday. I understand what Shabbat is and how to observe it (including Havdalah) | Creation, Noah, Tower of Babel, Abraham and Sarah Isaac and Rebecca Jacob, Rachel and Leah, Joseph and coat, Moses and exodus, Jonah and the big fish Esther saves the Jews | I know that Israel is a Jewish homeland I know that Israel is far away I know that the lives of kids in Israel are similar and different than mine. I have tried some Israeli foods I know some Hebrew names of cities in Israel I know some conversational words in Hebrew. | I can identify some Jewish ritual objects I know who the Rabbi is and what his job is I can sing some Jewish songs and prayers I participate in Tikkun Olam initiatives and projects. | I understand that Hebrew is a different language than English I understand that people in Israel speak Hebrew I know that the siddur and Torah are written in Hebrew I can identify the Hebrew letters I am can translate 3 Hebrew words | Holiday songs JC prayers and songs (Friday night) Some "Fun" songs. |

Aleph (1st Grade)

| Jewish values | Holidays / Rituals | Torah/Tanach/ Jewish History | Israel | Community / Temple | Hebrew | Music |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| Savlanut – Tolerance Kabbalah – Acceptance Todah – appreciation, gratitude | I know the story context of each Jewish holiday. I am familiar with customs and artifacts used for celebrating each holiday. I understand what Shabbat is and how to observe it (including Havdalah) | Abraham and Sarah Isaac and Rebecca Jacob, Rachel and Leah, Joseph in Egypt Moses and exodus, Jonah and the big fish Esther saves the Jews | know that Israel is a Jewish homeland I can identify the Israeli flag I have compared celebration of Jewish holidays in the US vs. in Israel I have made and tried some Israeli foods I can identify some Israeli regions/cities on the map I know some conversational words in Hebrew. | I can identify many Jewish ritual objects I understand the Temple is the center of the community and many people make it work I can sing some Jewish songs and prayers I participate in Tikkun Olam initiatives and projects. | I can identify and sound all the Hebrew letters I can sound out the 5 basic vowels I can read some Hebrew words I can translate 6 Hebrew words some Hebrew words | Holiday songs JC prayers and songs (Friday night) Some "Fun" songs. |

Bet (2nd Grade)

| Jewish values | Holidays / Rituals | Torah/Tanach/ Jewish History | Israel | Community / Temple | Hebrew | Music |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| Kavod – respect Savlanut – Tolerance Kabbalah – Acceptance Todah – appreciation, gratitude L'shon hara – speech/bullying Kehila – teamwork, community Tikun Olam – repairing the world, Chesed – charity, caring for others Vahadarta pnei zaken – caring for elderly Mishpacha – family Gvura – inner strength Savlanut – patience Achrayut – responsibility Tzedakah – helping the less fortunate | I know the story context of each Jewish holiday. I am familiar with customs and artifacts used for celebrating each holiday. I understand what Shabbat is and how to observe it (including Havdalah) | King David Samson Elijah Others as time allows | I can identify some more Israeli regions/cities on the map I know some conversational words in Hebrew. I know who are the various people groups who live in Israel I can compare and contrast between my life in the US and the life of a Jewish child in Israel. I can identify the Israeli flag | I can identify many Jewish ritual objects I understand the Temple is the center of the community and many people make it work I can sing some Jewish songs and prayers I participate in Tikkun Olam initiatives and projects. | I can identify by sight and sound all the Hebrew letters I can sound out the 5 basic vowels I can read some Hebrew words I can identify and translate 9 Hebrew words Bet Plus: I can identify by sight and sound all the Hebrew letters I can sound out the 5 basic vowels I can read Hebrew words I can read and recite some prayers and blessings | Holiday songs JC prayers and songs (Friday night) Some "Fun" songs. |

Gimel (3rd Grade)

| Jewish values | Holidays / Rituals | Torah/Tanach/ Jewish History | Israel | Community / Temple | Hebrew | Music |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| Kavod – respect Savlanut – Tolerance Kabbalah – Acceptance Todah – appreciation, gratitude L'shon hara – speech/bullying Kehila – teamwork, community Tikun Olam – repairing the world, Chesed – charity, caring for others Vahadarta pnei zaken – caring for elderly Mishpacha – family Gvura – inner strength Savlanut – patience Achrayut – responsibility Tzedakah – helping the less fortunate | I know the story context of each Jewish holiday. I am familiar with customs and artifacts used for celebrating each holiday. I understand what Shabbat is and how to observe it (including Havdalah) I am familiar with some midrash / interpretations of holiday stories | Torah stories that relate to holidays: Jonah (Yom Kippur), Maccabees (Chanukah) Esther (Purim), Exodus (Passover) Mt. Sinai and the 10 commandments. Brief history of Israel | I can identify the Israeli Flag I know the name of the Money used in Israel and have seen samples I can identify most Israeli regions and main cities on the map I am familiar with the basic concept of Zionism and Brief history of Israel. | (Mitzvot between me and God) I know what a siddur is I know how to use a siddur I have mastered some, and am familiar with prayers from Friday night liturgy I understand sanctuary and prayer etiquette I can pray with the school community | I can identify by sight and sound all the Hebrew letters, including final letters I can sound out most vowels I can read Hebrew words and short sentences I can read and recite some prayers and blessings I can identify and translate 12 Hebrew vocabulary words. | T'fila: - Friday night service - Saturday morning service - Havdalah - Holiday songs - Hatikvah |

Dalet (4th Grade)

| Jewish values | Holidays / Rituals | Torah/Tanach/ Jewish History | Israel | Community / Temple | Hebrew | Music |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| Kavod – respect Savlanut – Tolerance Kabbalah – Acceptance Todah – appreciation, gratitude L'shon hara – speech/bullying Kehila – teamwork, community Tikun Olam – repairing the world, Chesed – charity, caring for others Vahadarta pnei zaken – caring for elderly Mishpacha – family Gvura – inner strength Savlanut – patience Achrayut – responsibility Tzedakah – helping the less fortunate | I know the historical context for each holiday story I can name all artifacts and tools used for celebrating each holiday I understand the literary reasons for the customs and artifacts used for celebrating each holiday. I am familiar with some midrash/interpretations of holiday stories I can recite the blessings / prayers for each holiday | I recognize the names of and have learned about important characters from the Bible. I know who the Ushpizin are I am familiar with Jewish historical holiday heroes I can demonstrate knowledge of holiday related biblical stories | I can make the connection between Historical/biblical Israel and modern day Israel I have tried and experienced some modern day Israel elements (food, culture, people) | (Mitzvot between me and other people) • I understand the Jewish context to performing Mitzvot between people – keeping my word, acts of loving kindness, Chesed, Tikun Olam | I can identify by sight and sound all the Hebrew letters, including final letters I can sound out most vowels I can read Hebrew words and longer sentences I can read and chant a growing list of prayers I can identify and translate 17 vocabulary words. | T'fila: - Friday night service - Saturday morning service - Havdalah - Holiday songs - Hatikvah |

Hey (5th Grade)

| Jewish values | Holidays / Rituals | Torah/Tanach/ Jewish History | Israel | Community / Temple | Hebrew | Music |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kavod – respect Savlanut – Tolerance Kabbalah – Acceptance Todah – appreciation, gratitude L'shon hara – speech/bullying Kehila – teamwork, community Tikun Olam – repairing the world, Chesed – charity, caring for others Vahadarta pnei zaken – caring for elderly Mishpacha – family Gvura – inner strength Savlanut – patience Achrayut – responsibility Tzedakah – helping the less fortunate | I know key phrases, blessings and Hebrew words for each I can make connections between the stories of the holidays and current topics such as antisemitism and social justice I can compare the celebration of Jewish holidays in Israel and elsewhere, I understand the difference between Mitzvah (commandment) vs. Minhag (custom) | I can analyze a Bible story (from Torah, Prophets) and recreate it in a format that can be shared with others. I can write a Midrash about a Bible story | I know what the Holocaust was and how it affected the European Jewry I understand my personal connection to the Holocaust I can describe what Zionism is I am familiar with the modern history of Israel as well as some current challenges the country faces. | • I understand the Jewish context to performing Mitzvot between people – how do we treat each other, working together as a community and team | I can identify by sight and sound all the Hebrew letters, including final letters I can sound out most vowels I can read Hebrew words and longer sentences I can read and chant a growing list of prayers I can identify and translate 22 vocabulary words. | T'fila: - Friday night service - Saturday morning service - Havdalah - Holiday songs - Hatikvah |

Vav (6th Grade)

| Jewish values | Holidays / Rituals | Torah/Tanach/ Jewish History | Israel | Community / Temple | Hebrew | Music |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| Kavod – respect Savlanut – Tolerance Kabbalah – Acceptance Todah – appreciation, gratitude L'shon hara – speech/bullying Kehila – teamwork, community Tikun Olam – repairing the world, Chesed – charity, caring for others Vahadarta pnei zaken – caring for elderly Mishpacha – family Gvura – inner strength Savlanut – patience Achrayut – responsibility Tzedakah – helping the less fortunate | I can identify holiday customs, I can recite the blessings / prayers specific to each holiday I can make connections between the holiday and the world at large I can answer the question: 'How is celebrating this holiday relevant to me?' I understand the meaning of the holiday story and history as reflections on current events and our own lives | • I know what the Hebrew "Parshat hashavua" means. • I have read, analyzed and related selected Torah portions to everyday life. (from: Bereshit (Genesis), Shmot (Exodus), some Vayikra (Leviticus) | I have read and discussed current events, news, media from and about Israel I can make connections between 21st century Israel and the biblical homeland | I understand my Jewish community as circle of support – communal prayer, shiva, caring of sick I have learned about various streams in Judaism and Jewish ways of life I understand the challenges facing Jews in the 21st century I understand the meaning of "becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah" in traditional Judaism and for me personally. | I can read full Hebrew sentences with vowels I can read and chant a growing list of prayers I can identify and translate 28 vocabulary words. Some students can identify Haftorah Trope symbols and their corresponding vocalization. | T'fila: - Friday night service - Saturday morning service - Havdalah - Holiday songs - Hatikvah |