

## Learning Objectives and Topics by Grade

We are a place of Jewish learning and Jewish community. The bullet points below focus on curriculum content. An objective in every year is that children make new friends and deepen existing friendships.

### **Kindergarten:**

The focus of Kindergarten is basic Jewish literacy centered around values and the Jewish holidays. Students will:

- Develop their empathy and kindness through Jewish values, including *tzedakah* (righteous/charitable giving) *hachnasat orchim* (welcoming guests), *derech erez* (being polite), *shamor lashon* (being careful and kind with speech), *shomer adamah* (taking care of the earth) and *Talmud Torah* (love of learning, curiosity)
- Deepen their understanding of Jewish holidays, including making ritual objects to take home and learning about the rituals and a value associated with each holiday
- Chant Shabbat evening blessings (*nerot over* candles, *borei p'ri hagafen* over the wine or grape juice, the *Motzi* over challah/bread), Chanukah blessings and the Four Questions (for the Passover seder); and sing and be able to explain the meaning of the Shema.

### **First Grade:**

The focus of First Grade continues the basic Jewish literacies of Kindergarten, by learning about the people, places, symbols and stories that set the foundation of children's understanding of Jewish community. Students will:

- Learn Torah stories, including the story of Creation, Adam and Eve, Noah, stories of the patriarchs and matriarchs (Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob, Rachel and Leah), and Moses and the Exodus. They will explore what lessons they can draw from these stories which are at the heart of so much of Judaism
- Meet our clergy and leaders, the Torah scrolls, ark and holy spaces, and other important people, places and objects in our synagogue and discover the roles each play and why learning and community are so central to Judaism;
- Celebrate Jewish holidays and dive into the meaning of each holiday's rituals and the values embedded in them.
- Chant Shabbat evening blessings (*nerot over* candles, *borei p'ri hagafen* over the wine or grape juice, the *Motzi* over challah/bread), Chanukah blessings and the Four Questions; and recite and be able to explain the meaning of Mi Chamocha.

### **Second Grade**

The focus of Second Grade is being a *mensch*, a good person, using a Social, Emotional, and Spiritual Learning approach. Students will

- Use the lens of Jewish values to develop interpersonal skills such as healthy communication (*lashon*, not gossiping, *viku'ach*, healthy disagreement, and *shmi'at ozen*, listening), collaborative problem solving (*brit*, covenant and *kehillah*, community)

- Explore their own spirituality and connection to self through the values, God and Israel curriculum
- Develop a sense of connectedness to the Jewish people through our Israel, holiday and values curricula and
- Learn and play with the Hebrew letters, the Aleph-Bet (pre-primer level learning)

### Third Grade

The Third Grade curriculum emphasizes developing students' critical-thinking skills and moral fiber in a Jewish context. Students unpack texts from Torah (the 5 Books of Moses), learn to read Hebrew, prepare for the holidays, and explore *Middot* (values) and *Mitzvot* (good deeds/commandments). Students will:

- During T'filah, students will become familiar with our prayers as they begin the day in holy space, a beautiful and bonding opening to each session's learning. Starting in third grade, students will also explore the topics of Jewish *t'fillot* (prayers) and what it means to pray in community in a modality that emphasizes questioning and community and makes space for many ideas. Topics include Jewish ideas of God, gratitude, Torah, heritage and community.
- During our "Core" class, students will explore the stories of our Torah, in a text- and story-based approach. Students will be encouraged to question, interpret and apply the foundational stories of the Five Books of Moses ("Torah")\*. We will use tools such as partnered text study, bibliodrama, and graphic novels to unpack the stories and build a curious, respectful community among the students.
- During Hebrew, students will learn to decode Hebrew, meaning students will be able to read the letters and vowels and put them together into full words. Students should be able to lead the Shema, Shabbat evening blessings (such as Motzi and the candle blessings), the Chanukah blessings and the Four Questions by the end of the year.
- In their final period of the day, "Chug," students will deepen their knowledge of Jewish holidays, *Mitzvot* (commandments/good deeds) and *Middot* (values/virtues), approaching them through many lenses in a whole-person approach that may include art, STEM, sports, movement, performing arts, creative writing and music. The focus this year are the values embedded in Jewish holidays, including feeding the hungry (*tzedakah*), gratitude (*hakarat hatov*), making wrongs right (*teshuvah*), joy (*oneg*), hope (*tikvah*) caring for the earth (*bal taschit*), responsibility for one's fellow Jews (*kol Yisrael aravim zeh b'zeh*), protecting the "stranger," being kind, and a love of learning.

### Fourth Grade

Fourth continues the Jewish literacy focus, with an eye to preparing students for b'nai mitzvah, lifelong Jewish learning, and an ethical toolkit for life. Students learn prayers through T'filah and Hebrew; our stories and to question through Torah study; and Jewish values and holidays through "Chug." Students will:

- During T'filah, students will become familiar with our prayers as they begin the day in holy space, a beautiful and bonding opening to each session's learning. Starting in third grade, students will also explore the topics of Jewish *t'fillot* (prayers) and what it means

to pray in community in a modality that emphasizes questioning and community and makes space for many ideas. Topics include Jewish ideas of God, gratitude, Torah, heritage and community.

- During our “Core” class, school year 22-23, students will explore the stories of our Torah, in a text- and story-based approach. Students will be encouraged to question, interpret and apply the foundational stories of the Five Books of Moses (“Torah”)\*. We will use tools such as partnered text study, bibliodrama, and graphic novels to unpack the stories and build a curious, respectful community among the students.
- During Hebrew, students will build their prayer chanting skills in small groups based on grade and Hebrew level. By the end of the year, students who begin Hebrew learning in 3rd grade should be able to accurately chant the Friday evening blessings of the *nerot* (Shabbat candles), Kiddush and Motzi; holiday blessings; and the Barchu and Shema (advanced groups may get further, or may learn Modern Hebrew vocabulary)
- In their final period of the day, “Chug,” students will deepen their knowledge of Jewish holidays, *Mitzvot* (commandments/good deeds) and *Middot* (values/virtues), approaching them through many lenses in a whole-person approach that may include art, STEM, sports, movement, performing arts, creative writing and music. The focus this year are the values embedded in Jewish holidays, including feeding the hungry (*zedakah*), gratitude (*hakarat hatov*), making wrongs right (*teshuvah*), joy (*oneg*), hope (*tikvah*) caring for the earth (*bal taschit*), responsibility for one’s fellow Jews (*kol Yisrael aravim zeh b’zeh*), protecting the “stranger,” being kind, and a love of learning.

### **Fifth Grade**

The focus of fifth grade is deepening students’ Jewish roots and relationships while developing their capacity for questioning and evidence-based debate: through learning Jewish history and literature; *t’filot* (prayer) learning and Jewish values and holidays through “Chug.” Students will:

- During T’filah, students will become familiar with our prayers as they begin the day in holy space, a beautiful and bonding opening to each session’s learning. Starting in third grade, students will also explore the topics of Jewish *t’filot* (prayers) and what it means to pray in community in a modality that emphasizes questioning and community and makes space for many ideas. Topics include Jewish ideas of God, gratitude, Torah, heritage and community.
- During “Core” (grade-level Judaica class), students will
  - Learn about Jewish history since biblical times until the beginning of modernity, deepening their own self-understanding and concept of Judaism by exploring how our tradition evolved in response to crises while staying true to the values of *Torah, Avodah v’G’milut Chasadim* (Torah/learning, Worship/service, and acts of Loving Kindness);
  - Discover the “Jewish Bookshelf,” including Talmud and Midrash, developing an understanding of our rich textual tradition.
  - These two topics are grounded in each other. Students will use text study, role play, art, historic objects from daily life, videos and stories to unpack our history,

interrogate it, and craft a personal definition of “being Jewish” rooted in our rich heritage.

- During Hebrew, students will build their prayer chanting skills in small groups based on grade and Hebrew level. By the end of the year, students who began Hebrew learning in 3rd grade should be able to accurately chant the Friday evening blessings of the *nerot* (Shabbat candles)\*, Kiddush\* and Motzi\*; holiday blessings\*; the Barchu\*, Shema\* and V’ahavta; and from the Amidah (standing prayer), the Avot v’Imahot\*, Gevurot\* and Shalom (Peace) prayers
  - Advanced groups may get further, or may learn Modern Hebrew vocabulary;
  - Students who begin Hebrew in 4th grade should be able to recite the blessings with an \*asterisk.
- In their final period of the day, “Chug,” students will deepen their knowledge of Jewish holidays, *Mitzvot* (commandments/good deeds) and *Middot* (values/virtues), approaching them through many lenses in a whole-person approach that may include art, STEM, sports, movement, performing arts, creative writing and music. The focus this year are the values embedded in Jewish holidays, including feeding the hungry (*tzedakah*), gratitude (*hakarat hatov*), making wrongs right (*teshuvah*), joy (*oneg*), hope (*tikvah*) caring for the earth (*bal taschit*), responsibility for one’s fellow Jews (*kol Yisrael aravim zeh b’zeh*), protecting the “stranger,” being kind, and a love of learning.

## Sixth Grade

The focus of sixth grade is deepening students’ Jewish roots and relationships while making sure students have the Jewish literacies that prepare them for the teen years and b’nai mitzvah. Topics covered include Israel, modern Jewish history, Jewish prayers and their meaning, and the *middot* (values) and *mitzvot* (good deeds/commandments) of Jewish holidays in “Chug.” Students will:

- During T’filah, students will become familiar with our prayers as they begin the day in holy space, a beautiful and bonding opening to each session’s learning. Starting in third grade, students will also explore the topics of Jewish *t’fillot* (prayers) and what it means to pray in community in a modality that emphasizes questioning and community and makes space for many ideas. Topics include Jewish ideas of God, gratitude, Torah, heritage and community.
- During “Core” (grade-level Judaica class), students will learn about modern Jewish history around the world (including the United States) and in Israel. This year has a particular focus on Israel, including its founding, its diverse peoples, contemporary culture (including food and music), and innovation leadership. This curriculum aims to foster students’ awareness of being part of the Jewish people (*am Yisrael*) and sense of responsibility for other Jews (*kol Yisrael aravim zeh b’zeh*), while celebrating resiliency and providing tools students can apply to their own lives.
- During Hebrew, students will build their prayer chanting skills in small groups based on grade and Hebrew level. By the end of the year, students who began Hebrew learning in 3rd grade should be able to accurately chant the Friday evening blessings of the *nerot*

(Shabbat candles)\*\*, Kiddush\*\* and Motzi\*; holiday blessings\*; the Barchu\*, Shema\*\*, V'ahavta\*\*, and from the Amidah (standing prayer), the Avot v'Imahot\*, Gevurot\* and Shalom (Peace) prayers; Torah service prayers including the Blessings before and after the Torah\*\* and Haftarah\* readings; the blessing for putting on a tallit; and the closing prayers of Aleinu and Kaddish

- Advanced groups may get further, and/or may learn Modern Hebrew vocabulary;
- students who begin Hebrew in 4th grade should be able to recite the blessings with any \*, and those who began in 5th grade with \*\*.
- In their final period of the day, “Chug,” students will deepen their knowledge of Jewish holidays, *Mitzvot* (commandments/good deeds) and *Middot* (values/virtues), approaching them through many lenses in a whole-person approach that may include art, STEM, sports, movement, performing arts, creative writing and music. The focus this year are the values embedded in Jewish holidays, including feeding the hungry (*zedakah*), gratitude (*hakarat hatov*), making wrongs right (*teshuvah*), joy (*oneg*), hope (*tikvah*) caring for the earth (*bal taschit*), responsibility for one's fellow Jews (*kol Yisrael aravim zeh b'zeh*), protecting the “stranger,” being kind, and a love of learning.

### **B'nai Mitzvah Discovery Class**

7th Grade curriculum explores what it means to be an adult and a leader in the Jewish community. There is a dual focus in this grade: *tikkun olam*, making the world a better place, and *k'hilah k'doshah*, creating a holy community. Students will:

- During T'filah, become familiar with our prayers as they begin the day in holy space, a beautiful and bonding opening to each session's learning. Starting in third grade, students will also explore the topics of Jewish *t'fillot* (prayers) and what it means to pray in community in a modality that emphasizes questioning and community and makes space for many ideas. Topics include Jewish ideas of God, gratitude, Torah, heritage and community.
- Do hands-on community service projects and learn about the associated Jewish values
- Learn about the Holocaust, including adopting a victim to honor during students' b'nai mitzvah ceremony, visiting the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles, and, hopefully, hearing from a survivor
- Do a “Torah story” research project

### **Teen Learning Journey: 8th & 9th Grades**

### **Teen Learning Journey: 10th - 12th Grades**

\*The Five Books of Moses (parenthesis are some of the stories explored):

- Breishit (Genesis, including Creation, the matriarchs, patriarchs and their siblings, and the Joseph saga)
- Shemot (Exodus, including Yocheved, Miriam, Pharaoh's daughter and Moses, the Burning Bush, Exodus from Egypt, the golden calf, and revelation at Mount Sinai/The Ten Utterances “Commandments”)
- Vayikra (Leviticus, focusing on the holiness code, how to build strong community)

- BaMidbar (Numbers, particularly the stories of the Spies to Canaan and Balaam and his talking donkey) and
- Devarim (Deuteronomy, which might be considered Moses' ethical will)