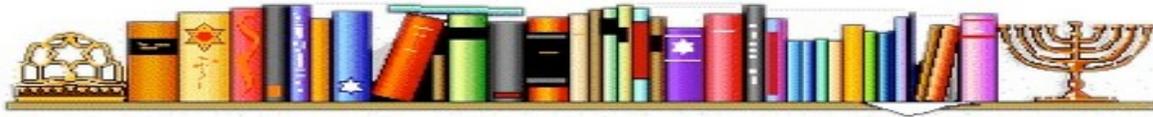


Limud News



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By Axelle LaBaw

With Morah Melissa, the pre-k and kindergarten students bounced around the classroom with their homemade groggers in hand, playing a classic game of freeze dance. Decorated with stickers and filled with sparkling beads and glitter, the Purim toy was an evident hit among the young ones excited for the upcoming holiday. Meanwhile, the first and second graders finished the story of Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat and wrote about what lessons they'd learned from it, gluing their written message onto a giant cutout of their very own painted coat. The class unanimously agreed that the main takeaway was clearly not to be jealous.

Completing their Tu B'Shevat celebrations, the third and fourth graders patched together one giant tree. The classroom, easily conflatable with a forest, was filled with individual branches for each student-all pasted with green paper leaves and ripe with fruits that bore the names of their loved ones. Meanwhile, downstairs, the teens had their very own seder with special guest Gabby. With a table covered with plates of olives, dates, grapes, sliced apples and pears, juicy pomegranate seeds, and more, the teens recited the prayers and ate the traditional meals for the holiday together.

This Sunday, January 27th, was Holocaust Memorial Day. With Noa, the fifth and sixth graders discussed the meaning of the day, which marks the anniversary of when prisoners were liberated from the infamous Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp. In Israel, Noa explained, it is a rule for all students to visit the concentration camps in Poland. And the feeling of standing there, as she remembers, is indescribable and overpowering. "This topic," Noa said, "has always had a special place in my heart."

The students created posters for the "We Remember" project-where social media posts under #WeRemember bring together a global community in honor of remembering those lost. As the fifth and sixth graders worked, they spoke of Holocaust survivors they knew-including loved ones from past generations-and the impact their stories had on their lives. "Psychology tells us that you can't keep this stuff inside, because it hurts you," Moreh Avi commented, regarding how difficult it is for survivors to share recollections of the horrors. But the students also listened to stories of hope, like that of German businessman Oskar Schindler, who saved the lives of over 1,000 Jewish people. Noa also told the fifth and sixth graders of Yad Vashem-the largest Holocaust memorial in Israel-and of its Garden of the Righteous Among the Nations, which honors those who risked their lives to keep Jewish people safe.

