

CURRICULUM

Grades Preschool-2:

The beginning of Religious Education is a time for building children's Jewish identities and connection to Jewish holidays, values, culture and the Bible. It is important that children and their parents feel that Jewish tradition belongs to them. It is also an opportune time to tap into a child's natural and open sense of spirituality. By presenting the curriculum in an interactive manner, the foundation is set for their subsequent Jewish education.

Preschool (ages 3-4): Intro To Being Jewish, Mitzvot, Hebrew

Text: "Jewish and Me" Series

- Students will focus on the idea of identity – connection to Jewish practice and actions.
- Students will explore what it means to be Jewish
- Students will learn about Shabbat and holidays
- Students will learn about Mitzvot through our "Jewish and Me: Doing Mitzvot" series
- Students will get to know our Synagogue and feel safe and comfortable in our sacred space
- Students will meet the Rabbis, Cantor and educators
- Students will start to learn Modern Hebrew through "Hebrew Through Movement"
- Students will start to learn prayers and music during music and services

Kindergarten: Holidays, God, Mitzvot, Hebrew

Text: "Let's Celebrate" Series/"Let's Discover God" Series/ "Let's Discover Kindness" Series

- Students will explore what it means to be Jewish
- Students will focus on the idea of identity – connection to Jewish practice and actions.
- Students will learn about *mitzvot* (Commandments) and Jewish values
- Students will learn about Shabbat and holidays
- Students will learn about God
- Students will learn Modern Hebrew through "Hebrew Through Movement"
- Students will start to learn prayers and music during music and services

1st Grade: Torah, Review of Holidays, Hebrew

Text: “Teach me Torah” Series/I Can Celebrate the Jewish Holidays

- Students will be introduced to Torah/Torah stories
- Students will continue to learn about celebrations, symbols, and customs surrounding the Jewish holidays.
- Students will learn about Jewish symbols and ritual objects
- Students will learn about practices both in the home and the synagogue
- Students will learn Modern Hebrew through “Hebrew Through Movement”
- Students will start to learn prayers and music during music and services

2nd Grade: Cycle of the Jewish Year, Israel, Hebrew

Text: Great Israel Scavenger Hunt

- Students will learn about the Cycle of the Jewish year in conjunction with the calendar and holidays
- Students will explore significant Torah stories
- Students will learn about Israel as a special land and place for the Jewish people
- Students will learn Modern Hebrew through “Hebrew Through Movement”
- Students will start to learn prayers and music during music and services

3rd Grade: Torah, Calendar, Hebrew

Text: The Explorer’s Bible, Volume 1: From Creation to Exodus, My Jewish Year.

- Student will closely examine Torah Stories, focusing on Genesis and Exodus
- Students will see a relationship between the Torah and their own lives.
- Students will continue exploration of the Jewish calendar, exploring the structure of the lunar calendar.
- Students will learn Modern Hebrew through “Hebrew Through Movement”
- Students will deepen their connection to prayer and music. They will increase their prayer fluency and reflect on their connection to God through worship.

4th Grade: Prophets and Kings, Jewish Holidays, Hebrew

Text: The Explorer’s Bible, Volume 2: From Sinai to the Nation of Israel and Jewish Holidays, Jewish Values

- Students will further their exploration of sacred text by continuing to study significant bible stories beyond the books of the Torah. They will focus on stories of significant Prophets and Kings in the *Tanach*.
- Students will see a relationship between Sacred Text and their own lives.
- Students will revisit the Jewish holidays and examine the value and relevance of each
- Students will learn Modern Hebrew through “Hebrew Through Movement”

- Students will deepen their connection to prayer and music. They will increase their prayer fluency and reflect on their connection to God through worship.

5th Grade: Israel, Holidays, Hebrew, Trope

Text: Experience Modern Israel, and Make, Create, Celebrate: Jewish Holidays Through Art

- Students will study modern Israel – its significance, culture, people, geography, and ancient history
- Students will explore the meaning and values of each Jewish holiday through artistic concepts
- Students will learn Hebrew through “Hebrew Through Movement”
- Students will develop connections with Israeli 5th graders in our sister city, Rechovot
- Students will deepen their connection to prayer and music. They will increase their prayer fluency and reflect on their connection to God through worship.
- Students will explore Jewish Holidays through art and artistic expressions.
- Students will be introduced to Trope, which are the symbols used for teaching the melody when chanting from the Torah. This will continue in preparation for B’nai Mitzvah.

6th Grade: Jewish Life Cycle, History of the Jewish People, Hebrew, B’nai Mitzvah Preparation, Trope

Text: The Time of Our Lives, The History of the Jewish People, Volume 1: Ancient Israel to 1880s America

- Students will explore significant moments in the Jewish Life Cycle, including: birth, B’nai Mitzvah, confirmation, marriage, divorce, conversion, sickness, and death.
- Students will learn Jewish History from Ancient Israel to 1880s America
- Students will learn Hebrew through Hebrew Through Movement
- Students will deepen their connection to prayer and music. They will increase their prayer fluency and reflect on their connection to God through worship.
- Students will engage in social programming to build community and connect with Jewish peers.
- Once B’nai Mitzvah preparation begins, students will dedicate time to learning B’nai Mitzvah prayers and participate in individual tutoring.
- Students will be introduced to Trope, which are the symbols used for teaching the melody when chanting from the Torah. This will continue in preparation for B’nai Mitzvah.

7th Grade: American Jewish History in the Common Era, Social Responsibility, Electives, B'nai Mitzvah Preparation

Text: Challenge and Change: History of the Jews in America (Books #1-3)

- Students will study significant moments in American Jewish History and what it means for them to be an American Jew.
- Students will learn and implement Jewish values
- Students will participate in field trips that explore responsibility to their peers, communities, and to the world in the context of becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, and will do so within the context of our Jewish Values.
- Students will engage in social programming to build community and connect with Jewish peers.
- Students will participate in a variety of electives (according to their own passions and expertise) including the preparation for upcoming B'nai Mitzvah.

8th Grade: The Holocaust, Electives

Holocaust: The Holocaust, the World, and the Jews, 1933-1945 and The History of Israel

- Students will explore what events happened leading up to and during the Holocaust.
- Students will ask how we, as a Jewish community, should act today in response to the Holocaust.
- Students will engage in social programming to build community and connect with Jewish peers.
- Students will participate in a variety of electives according to their own passions and expertise.

9th Grade: Comparative Religion, Electives

- Students will learn about reform, conservative and orthodox Judaism and compare Judaism to other world religions.
- Students will engage in social programming to build community and connect with Jewish peers.
- Students will participate in a variety of electives according to their own passions and expertise.

HEBREW

Grades PreK – 6th Grade:

Our Hebrew program for PreK through 6th grade is called, “Hebrew Through Movement” and is based on the idea that we should introduce a second language through the same method that we acquired our first language as infants. This means that we move from “sound-to-print.” Students will learn the sounds of letters and vowels as they apply to words and phrases, eventually learning the corresponding written letters and vowels. Students will be introduced to Hebrew words/phrases by listening to their teachers speak in Hebrew, while at the same time, observing what type of movement their teachers make when words are said. Students go through a three-step process of learning. First they observe what the teacher does, then mimic the action with the teacher, and finally perform the action on their own. As students move through what the program calls “foundational levels,” then students will move on the speaking and learning Hebrew in the context of holidays and prayers. In addition to this, there will be a “Letter of Week” and “Jewish Vocabulary of the Week” that teachers will use in the classroom and families will be encouraged to use at home.

Grades 3rd – 6th: Hebrew Reading with a focus on Prayer and B’nai Mitzvah preparation

Beginning in 5th grade (the beginning of formal Hebrew reading) and continuing through 6th grade, students are introduced to decoding and reading fluency. Students will focus on basic reading comprehension and expand to master basic prayer literacy and preparation for chanting from the Torah.