



**Seattle Jewish Community School**  
*Challenging each **Mind** and **Inspiring** each **Heart***

**1<sup>st</sup> Grade/Sh'tilim  
Curriculum Overview  
2011-12/5771**

**Teachers**

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## LANGUAGE

### **ENGLISH READING**

Students read for a variety of purposes across subject areas throughout the school day. Our reading learning includes a reading workshop model with seven “proficient reader strategies,” *Wired for Reading*, and *Words Their Way*.

**Reading Workshop** involves a *mini-lesson* in which reading strategies are taught, students *practice* these skills, and *sharing* of what they learned.

- Mini-lessons are often in the form of **Interactive Read Alouds**, in which the teacher reads aloud, stopping frequently to model the use of reading strategies by “thinking out loud.”
- Practice includes *independent reading* of self-selected texts, in which students read “just right” books independently. During this time, they are practicing decoding and comprehension strategies that have been taught during interactive read aloud and other reading mini-lessons. Practice also comes in the form of *Buddy Reading*, when students work on reading fluency and expression while reading a just-right text with a partner or small group. During practice, **Guided Reading** lessons will provide small groups of students with direct instruction to support their practice of specific decoding and comprehension strategies.
- Sharing closes the workshop, when students share in pairs, small groups, or as a whole class.

Throughout the year, students will learn and practice these seven comprehension strategies:

- Monitoring for Meaning (Using Fix-Up Strategies)
- Making Connections (text to self, text to text, text to world)
- Visualizing
- Asking Questions
- Retelling
- Making Inferences
- Deciding What is Important

**Word Study/Decoding** using the *Words Their Way* curriculum allows students to study and understand letter patterns and word structure as they build phonics, fluency and decoding skills to use while reading. *Wired for Reading* teaches concepts and strategies that support this study of letter patterns and word structure.

Additional components of our reading program include:

#### **Read Aloud**

During Read Aloud, the teacher reads aloud for the enjoyment of literature and to model fluent, expressive reading.

#### **Literature Study**

Students participate in reading discussions and are challenged to respond to text with an emphasis on interpretive thinking. This will possibly include the form of “book clubs” later on in the year.

### **ENGLISH WRITING**

As in *Gan and Alim*, students will participate in **Writing Workshop** to develop their writing skills. Our emphasis will be the craft of writing.

### **Frequent Writing**

We will have writing workshop time three or four days per week, with each workshop lasting 45 minutes to 1 hour. Writing Workshop always begins with a whole-group mini lesson in which explicit, direct instruction on a writing skill will be given; a new skill will be added almost every day. After the mini lesson, students write independently while teachers confer with individuals and small groups of students whose writing needs may be similar. Writing Workshop ends with writers sharing their work with others.

### **Units of Study**

Our yearlong writing curriculum is laid out by Lucy Calkins and Leah Mermelstein into a sequence of units of study. Each unit lasts approximately 1 month. Our units of study are:

- Launching the Writing Workshop
- Small Moments: Personal Narrative
- Writing for Readers
- The Craft of Revision
- Nonfiction "How-To" Books
- Nonfiction Informational Texts ("All-About" Books)
- Poetry

At the end of each unit, we will host a Writing Celebration to share the work that we are most proud of with our classmates and others. One important aspect of this work is that students – like "real" authors – write for an audience. At first, this audience will be for their classmates, and as the year goes on, for other members of the SJCS community, and for their families. I will put an invitation on the blog well in advance to invite you to family writing celebrations.

**Word Study/Spelling** using Words Their Way and Wired for Reading also develops students spelling skills. As they study letter patterns and word structure, learn the physical aspects to distinguish letter sounds, and learn which sounds go with which letter patterns, students will improve their spelling.

**Handwriting Without Tears** was developed by Jan Olsen, OTR, to help children develop key skills needed for writing legibly and with speed. The lessons are visual, tactile, auditory and kinesthetic. We use uncluttered black and white pages. Each child receives an individual handwriting workbook. We use movement to teach the letter formation as well as imaginary writing with large arm movements and visual cues. Workbooks build letter, word, and sentence writing skills. We will continue to work on handwriting throughout the year.

### ***HEBREW LANGUAGE ARTS AND JUDAIC STUDIES***

Sh'tilim is an environment where learning and play are integrated. Involvement, accountability, and collaboration are the focus of all learning activities. Students work individually, in hevruta (pairs); in small groups; and, in large groups to ensure a high level of participation and mind activation. The goal in Sh'tilim class is for the students to observe one another, to model for one another, and to gain inspiration from one another. The role of the teacher is to support and facilitate students' growth in the areas of academic achievement, social skills, study skills, mitzvot, and the cultivation of dereh erez. Gaining independence is a goal of 1<sup>st</sup> Grade. This includes learning to take care of one's self, while showing consideration towards other members of the SJCS community and classmates as expressed through how we interact with each other. We emphasize *dereh erez* (values), listening, mitzvot, kindness, problem solving, and showing compassion. Our focus is to cultivate a love of Judaism, an appreciation for Jewish practices, and a positive Jewish identity.

The use of **Hebrew language** is woven through all Judaic studies subjects and is a central element in the Sh'tilim curriculum. We will continue to use the TaL AM curriculum in Sh'tilim. TaL AM is actually an acronym for the Hebrew words meaning "curriculum, learning, Hebrew, and heritage." TaL AM is a dynamic curriculum that integrates innovative research in learning and teaching methods and in education in general. The TaL AM curriculum is rich in learning materials and includes student workbooks and CD- ROMs, interactive posters, flash cards, big books, games, and a library of child-friendly Hebrew literature. Through the use of the TaL AM curriculum we aspire to enable Sh'tilim to acquire Hebrew literacy skills while cultivating a love for the Hebrew language. Jewish content, values, and concepts are also woven into the TaL AM curriculum.

## **MATHEMATICS**

We use Everyday Mathematics as the core of our math instruction this year.

Background:

- Developed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project
- Based on research about how children learn and develop mathematical power
- Provides the broad mathematical background needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

In Everyday Math, you can expect to see...

- a problem-solving approach based on everyday situations;
- an instructional approach that revisits concepts regularly;
- frequent practice of basic skills, often through games;
- lessons based on activities and discussion, not on a textbook;
- use of a variety of concrete materials (blocks, counters, etc) as a natural part of every day work, and;
- mathematical content that goes beyond basic arithmetic.

Content emphasized in first grade focuses on six content strands.

- Number and Numeration
- Operations and Computation
- Data and Chance
- Measurement and Reference Frames
- Geometry
- Patterns, Functions, Algebra

### **Basic Facts**

A child's progress in math is severely limited if she/he does not master the basic facts. Our goal is that by the end of the year students will have mastered all the addition and subtraction facts through  $10 + 10$  (without counting on fingers). Basic facts practice is integrated into nearly every unit, and games are a great way to practice math facts in school and at home.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

### **Social Skills Instruction**

In order to facilitate positive social experiences, we will teach social skills in many ways throughout the year. We focus on friendship skills and our school community in the fall. Friendship skills include how to make friends, how to invite others to play, and what happens when friends disagree.

### **Class Meetings**

Class meetings are held to foster citizenship skills and a sense of belonging. Students practice the skills needed to participate in group decision making: listening, sharing ideas, compromising, and

reaching consensus. In the class meeting setting, students develop strategies to problem solve social situations; the class talks through issues that are of concern to the students as individuals and to the class as a whole. We talk about problems, brainstorm solutions, and evaluate each solution before coming to a solution. We'll try out the solution and revisit it for evaluation and revision if needed.

### **Families and Food Around the World**

We'll explore what we eat in the U.S., and study families and food around the world. A brief study of maps and globes will be integrated in our study of basic needs.

### **Oceans**

We will learn about the concept of an ecosystem, and then focus in on oceans. We will focus on the life systems in the ocean, human relationships to the natural world in various cultures, and the impacts of these relationships.

### **Parshat Hashvuah (Weekly Torah Portion)**

Torah Study takes both a general and intensive path for first grade. General Torah studies include the weekly Torah portion, so that by the end of the year each child will have a solid grasp on the overall plot line of the Torah; that tells the story of the Jewish people. Role-playing, drama, and resources from TaL AM, are some ways that will help to enhance their understanding of concepts and characters in the Torah. Students also engage in discussions on issues that arise from the text.

### **T'fillah (prayer)**

Havdallah, Shaḥarit, and Torah services are part of our weekly schedule. At times we will pray together as a whole school, and at times with Kindergarten and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade. Throughout the course of the year the students study braḥot (blessings). We "unpack" the meaning and purpose of braḥot and study many braḥot and their applications. We look at the braḥa formula and learn to differentiate between birḥot ha-nehenin (braḥot of appreciation) and birḥot mitzvah (braḥot said when performing a mitzvah).

### **Holidays**

1<sup>st</sup> grade students celebrate the development of Jewish holidays during the school year. They will learn, through hands-on experiences, about the history and traditional aspects of the holidays as well as the customs and traditions of celebrations. We study the essence of each holiday, and the associated mitzvot, customs, blessings, and liturgy/blessings. We use the holidays as an opportunity to integrate relevant Hebrew language and Jewish Children's Literature. Art, cooking, buddying with other classes, writing in English, making books in Hebrew, and working with partners to address discussion topics are some of the ways we explore the holidays. We begin with what the holiday is about, and then take it to a higher level by asking questions that are deeper and more introspective.

In the spring, our school-wide simulated *Trip to Israel* generates a lot of excitement and is much anticipated. We spend time preparing for our trip by looking at cities, land forms, and becoming familiar with the map of Israel. We also look at what's in each city, what it is known for, and where it is located. We engage in a variety of geography and map skills activities that connect students to Israel and a greater understanding of the world. We emphasize our connection to the state of Israel and Israel's importance to the Jewish People.

## **SCIENCE**

This year we will study two inquiry-based units and two integrated science units. We will learn science by making observations, formulating questions, conducting fair tests, figuring out and testing solutions, and drawing conclusions. The students will study Organisms in classroom and Balls and Ramps in the science lab.

## **What is Inquiry Based Science?**

Research has shown that the best way for children to learn important science concepts is to actively construct ideas through their own investigations. In the science lab, this means making observations, asking questions, testing ideas, recording results, comparing data, building concepts and explanations.

## **Core Inquiry Based Science Concepts for All Students:**

Students explore core scientific concepts in the science lab. All students work on being keen observers. This means that they use their senses to observe what they are learning. They look – noticing changes, colors, shapes, and behaviors. They touch – observing the temperature and feeling for texture and consistency. They smell – noticing differences between the materials and noting if there is an odor. They listen – noting how the sound relates to the materials. Then, they use their words to describe what they are observing by writing in their science journals and having discussions with other scientists. Students have been learning how important it is for scientists to record data and their observations in organized ways, using tables, anecdotes and illustrations. They make predictions based on prior knowledge and then compare the results to their predictions. Students learn that scientists use models in order to observe something that cannot be easily seen. In the lab lessons, they learn how to conduct fair tests. This means knowing which variables remain the same (controlled) and which variables are changed (manipulated).

## **Science Lab Unit: Balls and Ramps**

The ball is a universal toy that delights children of all ages. Children come to school having played with balls of many different kinds and in many different ways. This unit builds on that experience by asking children to extend their explorations of balls, how they roll and bounce, and what they do on ramps. Children explore the properties and characteristics of balls by observing, using, and comparing different balls. They make balls and in so doing learn about materials, size, and weight. They use balls as they bounce and roll them and experiment with them on ramps. Students learn about things that affect the way balls behave such as gravity, inertia, momentum, and friction. During this unit they are continuously engaged in exploration, discovery, and problem solving.

Our two integrated units are on the **body** and on the **environment**, and will be integrated across language arts and with corresponding study in **Hebrew**.

## **Music**

### Listening and Appreciation

- understanding that music tells a story
- introducing major instrumental groups of Western orchestra
- revisiting various classical composers, their work & childhood experiences
- identify and begin to refine the specific qualities of music composition that elicit emotional/intellectual responses

### Creative Expression & Movement

- finding ways to use our bodies to connect to music qualities
- experimenting with music as a catalyst to verbal & nonverbal storytelling
- learning folk dances from around the world

### Music Concepts

- revisiting basic music vocabulary: steady beat, tempo, dynamics, up & downward movement of pitch
- introducing steps and leaps
- introducing note value through symbol identification

- extending experiences with steady beat by moving, and/ or clapping in instructed patterns
- Instrumental Production
- practicing applying steady beat to use of hand percussion instruments
  - introducing application of note value to playing hand percussion instruments

Singing

- extending sense of joyfulness in singing
- increasing repertoire of songs
- providing opportunities to perform within the class, as well as with the support of the larger school community

## **Art**

The over-arching goal of the SJCS art program is to provide a broad, multi-media art experience towards developing an understanding of the arts as a universal form of cultural and personal expression. The program offers an introduction to masters of American/European art history as well as non-Western masters, keeping in mind cultural and historical contexts. Students are shown the intrinsic connection between art and the disciplines of math and science especially, and also of literature, and taught that creativity is not the provenance of the arts alone. As an elementary school topic, the emphasis is to provide a breadth of experience in the art program.

The media used in the SJCS art program are based on the National Arts Standards, and include: drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, ceramics and sculpture. Each grade works on projects designed to build skills, but mostly to provide experiences that create an understanding of process. The creation of art comes from individuals in cultural settings, such as the collages Romare Beardon created in New York City in the Harlem Jazz scene. It comes from needing to solve “problems”, such as how to create a clay coil bowl. It requires planning, focused work and completion, in limited time. Each year we discuss the Elements of Art, on levels appropriate to age.

In the fall, First Graders focus on drawing and painting. They use a number of different media including crayons, oil pastels, colored pencils, finger paints, watercolors and tempera. As young artists, the focus is on the process, not the product. Sometimes a specific drawing or painting topic will be given, and sometimes they will find their own. This is the first time for most to have formal art lessons, and the goal is for them to use their creativity within the boundaries created for them. They are introduced to a great deal of vocabulary related to the Elements of Art. They all know what a line is, but it’s fun to connect the idea of line in their own art with lines in Van Gogh’s painting. They will do oil pastels of sunflowers that they look at, trying their hand at drawing what they see. They will begin to learn the difference between abstract and representational art.

In January, we move onto collage, and introduce Principles of Design. Contrast, movement and focal point are design principles all evident in collage, which we do in a variety of materials. Printmaking follows, with stamping and rolling paint as an introduction, then create and print with relief plates.

In the spring we create three-dimensional art using clay and wood. Our clay pieces will be fired, and children learn the process from lump to finished piece. We will be gluing wood pieces together to explore three-dimensional space. As we move through the year, the students will be introduced to Visual Thinking Strategies, a program that uses well-known works by Masters as an introduction to art criticism.

## Library

**All of the units in the library curriculum are guided by three main goals:** 1) to instill a love of books and reading, 2) to teach library and research skills, and, 3) to use various forms of literature as a vehicle to explore important personal and social issues such as respect for diversity and social responsibility.

### **First Grade**

**Review:** Book care, borrowing versus owning, shelf markers, finding interesting books, title-author-illustrator, fiction versus nonfiction, alphabetical order. During this time we also read aloud some fun books about the library.

**Library Sections:** What are these sections and where are they located: Everybody Books, I Can Read, Chapter – Series, Fiction, Non-fiction.

**Book Labels and Parts of a Book:** Students learn to identify cover, spine, and title page, spine labels, and call numbers.

**Friendship:** Each week we read aloud and discuss a book that focuses on some kind of social dilemma such as teasing, exclusion, jealousy, expressing anger, recognizing other’s feelings, etc. In addition to a core group of books designed for this type of learning, books may be added that specifically apply to issues that a particular student or group of students may be facing. Discussion encourages students to relate to *all* of the characters involved in the stories and to examine the feelings and choices they made.

**SJCS Book Awards:** First we learn about the Caldecott and Newbery Awards while highlighting certain authors. Then first graders award an “everybody” book award.

**Introduction to Dewey:** At this level, students learn that nonfiction books are arranged by the Dewey Decimal System and students use the ten basic classifications.

**Library Check-out:** Students learn about the SJCS and public library systems for checking out books.

## Physical Education

### **Statement of Purpose**

The Seattle Jewish Community School recognizes the need for Physical Education and provides opportunities for students to learn, grow and develop in the areas of movement skills, fitness (energy) education, and teamwork. Paramount to its physical education environment is good sportsmanship through *dereh erez*, mutual respect, positive language and proper behavior among students. SJCS provides a safe learning environment and uses a diverse array sports games, tumbling exercises, dance, fitness and other related activities to provide a well-rounded physical education curriculum.

### **Curriculum**

Students begin the year learning to use **basic movement skills** such as hopping, skipping, jumping, kicking, throwing, rolling, balancing, dodging and fleeing, through a number of **challenging activities**. In October the focus shifts to **basketball** as students develop **hand/eye coordination** while learning the finer points of dribbling, passing, catching and shooting/placing a basketball or tossing bean bags in a hoop. November brings our soccer & first **fitness unit** installment. Students learn to dribble, stop rolling balls, and pass to teammates using their feet only. A variety of fitness activities are also conducted to promote aerobic endurance, body manipulation, quick reaction, and listening.

The month December continues with **listening skills** development, but now focuses on **teamwork**. Students are challenged to work with a partner(s) while participating in various activities using jump ropes, hula hoops, and bean bags with a **focus on friendship, personal space awareness, and cooperation** along with **balance, agility, coordination, and quick reaction**. January brings another **fitness** installment as students now learn the correct way to do calisthenics such as jumping jacks, sit ups, pushups, etc., as well as bear crawls, crab walks, and jogging nonstop for 2 minutes each class. During February's football unit students learn how to carry a football through a maze of wall mats while trying to keep other kids from snatching the flags attached to their waist. This activity helps kids with the skills **dodging, snatching, fleeing, and strategy**. It also helps prepare them for flag football at the higher grade levels.

Our March t-ball unit is solely focused on striking the ball off the "T", fielding the baseball, and then the actual game of t-ball. During our t-ball unit students learn to develop **hand/eye coordination** as they are challenged to watch the bat as it makes contact with the ball for a hit, successfully field a rolling or flying ball, and maintain awareness as they run the base paths alone or with teammates. Forward rolls, handstands, and cartwheels comprise the month of April as we usher in our **tumbling/gymnastics** unit. During the months of May and June a review of different skills/games/activities taught during each prior month will be conducted each week.

### ***SJCS PE Dress for Success Policy***

SJCS welcomes students to its Physical Education Curriculum of exercises and activities. In order for your child to optimize their learning experience and to reduce the embarrassment factor, we request that you pay close attention to your child's PE day(s) and make sure they are dressed appropriately each day.

Each child should wear a pair of athletic shoes. No heels, sandals, crocs, uggs, boots, etc.

Girl appropriate dress would include shorts, skorts, yoga pants, sweats. No dresses or skirts please!

It is preferred that boys wear shorts or sweat pants.

Thank you for your understanding, and detailed attention to this matter. We look forward to having another great year of PE at SJCS

## Guidelines for Reading To and Reading With Your Child

### Before Reading:

- Choose reading materials that are at your child's reading level or slightly higher.
- Take a "walk" through the book (preview). Talk about the cover illustrations, title, author, headings, chapter titles, captions, pictures, etc.
- Use predictions to draw on what your child already knows and to allow your child to use the information gathered during the preview.
  - Ask questions: What do you think this book (article, story, etc.) might be about? (Answers should be based on what he or she already knows about a topic and also on what they learned from the preview.)
- Make real life connections. Draw your child into the book.

### During Reading:

- When reading to your child, make sure he or she can see the book or has a copy.
- Pause at appropriate times and discuss the books or story as you read.
- Pause and discuss interesting or keywords without disrupting the flow or meaning.
- When your child is having difficulty with words, silently count to ten before prompting, and encourage him or her to:
  - Sound it out.
  - Look at the part of the word they know (called 'chunking').
  - Back up and try again.
  - Put in something that makes sense.
  - Continue reading to see if he/she can tell what it means from the rest of the sentence.
  - Give information and discuss it.

### After Reading:

- Ask your child to retell the story.
- Talk with him/her about:
  - the story to clarify meaning;
  - the characters ~ Which did you like? Why?
  - similar events in their lives and experiences (prior knowledge, background experience).
- Identify new words or difficult words
  - discuss or act out words, concepts, or events.
- Ask how he/she might behave or react to a similar situation.
- Give praise during and after reading.
- Discuss what was learned from the book/story and what he or she might like to learn more about.