



3rd Grade Judaic Studies Purpose Statement Amee Sherer, 3rd Grade Teacher

A Nitzanim student begins the year as a dependent learner, and as developmentally appropriate, becomes an independent learner during the course of the year. S/he is given many different opportunities to explore becoming independent, both during class time and while completing age-appropriate homework assignments. Students use a variety of critical thinking skills to explore our various topics of study, and have many opportunities to both mentor younger students as well as to learn from older buddies, as we blend with the 4th and 5th graders for t'fillot and other holiday related activities. It is a year of "stepping up" into the older grades, and a year of great pride and joy associated with his/her many accomplishments.

The academic goals for Nitzanim are to provide competency and independence in Hebrew language, Torah, T'fillah, Holidays, and Israeli history and culture. During the course of the year students will become comfortable reading, writing, and praying in Hebrew, while also relating as Jews to the world around them.

The Torah unit consists of an in-depth study of the last four parshiot of the book of B'reshit. These chapters encompass the stories of Joseph. While studying this text, students will learn to identify characters, themes, main events, and key Hebrew roots within a Biblical text. Most important, students will use this basic knowledge of the text to study and develop commentary and midrashim relating to the text. In addition to studying the Joseph text, students will also participate in discussions and activities relating to the weekly Torah portion.

Students will learn Hebrew as a living language. Emphasis will be placed on fluent reading, speaking for purposes of communication, writing in script, and acquiring new vocabulary. Grammatical elements will be introduced as they appear in the written text that students are mastering. Special attention will be given to the use of the present tense.

During the first part of the year, students will focus their studies on the Birhot HaShaḥar, the morning blessings. Emphasis will be placed on the concepts of order in the world and organizing one's day. Students will explore the basic physical level in addition to the deeper moral and social issues. When this unit is completed, we will begin our study of the Sh'ma and the b'raḥot that follow. We will take a close look at where the Sh'ma fits into each T'fillah service and learn about the history and value of this significant prayer in our liturgy.

An in-depth study of the holidays is structured around the Jewish holiday cycle. Students learn the historical background, rituals, Hebrew terms, b'raḥot, and customs relating to the Jewish holidays. Stories, discussions, related texts, simulated celebrations, and creative activities will be integrated into our curriculum. We will integrate General Studies skills such as literature circles, math analysis, and science observations as appropriate. In addition, each student in Nitzanim will have

the opportunity to research an assigned topic relating to Shabbat observance, to present during his/her special Kabbalat Shabbat here at school.

Resources

Yesh Lanu Lama Book 2 with workbook

Darkonim Book One (Korin)

Sh'ma and It's Blessings (Rowe)

My Jewish Year (Fisher)

Welcome to Israel (Rivlin and Gevirtz)