

The Joseph and Belle Braun Anshe Emet Religious School

First Grade Full Year Curriculum



We don't just teach Hebrew; we nurture a growing Jewish soul.

Religious School Week 1

Opening Lesson

Jewish Calendar: Sukkot through Core Stories – Harvest & Travel

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Opening Lesson

Coach's Voice:

First grade students might be returning students, or they might be experiencing their first day at Religious School, which is an exciting and potentially scary thing. Today is a day for welcomes and getting-to-know-yous and sweetness of learning. There is time in the coming weeks for making class rules.



Getting to know you

- Play a getting to know you game, such as (from <https://kidactivities.net/name-games-for-kids/>):
 - Action Syllables
 - Web of Names
 - Reporter
- Read your favorite Jewish children's book
 - Share your excitement about the book, and maybe even a short memory or reason that it's your favorite book
 - If you don't have a favorite Jewish book that is great for six-year-olds, consider:
 - *Bagels From Benny* by Aubrey Davis*
 - *Chicken Soup by Heart* by Ether Hershenthorn*
 - *The Treasure* by Uri Shulevitz*
 - *Joha Makes a Wish* by Eric Kimmel*

Tour the Shul

- If many of the first grade students are new to the school, make time during the day to take the students on a short tour
- Future lessons will include meeting many of the people of the synagogue, so today, make sure to at least visit the most important places:
 - The bathroom

- The school principal's office
- The prettiest spot in the synagogue

Sweetness of Learning

- Before class, print out each student's first and last names in Hebrew and English on a piece of paper or cardstock
 - You might want to laminate the name sheets
- Explain to students that long ago, children coming to *heder* (Jewish school) in Europe for the first time would lick honey from the Torah or a slate with the Hebrew Alphabet
 - This way, they would know that learning is sweet
- Consider sharing this video: <https://ritualwell.org/ritual/honey-ceremony>
- Pass out the name papers to the students
- Put a drop of honey on the first letter of each student's names (first and last), both the Hebrew and English names
- Say the Shehecheyanu prayer with the students, since this is their first day of first grade at Religious School: <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/shehecheyanu-blessing>
- Play "Sweet as Honey" by Dan Nicols: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nwug-g5kOf8>
- OR: <https://open.spotify.com/track/54V7qJMjDCXcLhMDruOZ5X?si=7194laf4e8e4c71>
- Invite students to lick the honey off of their name

First Day Keepsake

- Save some time near the end of the day, and invite students to draw a picture of their favorite thing (or person or experience) today
- Invite the students to write down the explanation of what is in the picture (or take dictation)
- Also invite them to write down one or two things that they are wondering about, or which they hope they learn this year in Religious School
- Save the picture, explanation, and wonderings to share with the students on their last day of first grade

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Name cards
- Honey
- Drawing supplies

Jewish Calendar: Sukkot through Core Stories – Harvest & Travel

Coach's Voice:

The focus for first graders in exploring the holidays of the Jewish calendar is the core stories of the holiday. For Sukkot, this includes exploring Sukkot as a harvest holiday, and a commemoration of the Israelites wandering in the desert.



KWL

- Have a know-wonder-learn brainstorm with students about Sukkot (more information about KWL here: <https://practices.learningaccelerator.org/strategies/know-wonder-learn-kwl-chart>)
 - What do they already know?
 - What do they wonder about and want to learn?
- Read *Night Lights* by Barbara Diamond Goldin*
- Notice and wonder with students
 - Did the students know that people sleep in a sukkah?
 - Have any of the students done this?
 - Were they scared like Daniel?
 - Daniel wonders if the ancestors - the Israelites who left Egypt and wandered, building temporary huts to sleep in - were afraid of the dark, and the night, and the scary noises and of bears and wolves
 - What do the students think?
 - What might it feel like to sleep in a sukkah after a day of harvesting in the fields?

Harvest

- Play classical music or Israeli folk songs
- Consider a playlist like this <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/7Gk8tkPrPtPFQIYJdrwvKv?si=d164f6a97f9147a8>
- Invite the students to pretend to be in the fields harvesting
- Consider having snack in the synagogue sukkah after all this hard work
- This Lego movie provides a fun overview of Sukkot and the agricultural aspects of the holiday: <https://youtu.be/SRHkgWGyn4Y>

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Snacks

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that there is a story unique to Sukkot; that it is a harvest holiday which commemorates the Israelites wandering in the desert

Religious School Week 2

Jewish Calendar: Simchat Torah through Core Stories – Lev

History: How Did Jews Come to America? (Ashkenazim)

Contemporary Jewish Life: Who are the People in Your Synagogue Community?
Lesson 1 – Program & Youth Staff (and how they make holidays happen)

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Jewish Calendar: Simchat Torah through Core Stories - Lev

- On Simchat Torah we finish reading the Torah and begin again right away
- Share with students:
 - The last word in the Torah is **יִשְׂרָאֵל** (*Yisrael/Israel*, referring to the People Israel)
 - The first word in the Torah is **בְּרֵאשִׁית** (*B'reisheet/In the beginning*)
 - If you take the last letter of the Torah - **ל** (lamed) and the first letter of the Torah - **ב** (bet), as if you are wrapping the end of the Torah to meet the beginning, and read them together, they spell an important word: **לב** (Lev), which means Heart
- Wonder with students:
 - Why might the beginning and end of the Torah make the word “heart?”
 - What does “heart” have to do with the Torah, or with learning Torah? (You may need to prompt responses)
 - The Torah touches our hearts: it makes us feel warm and loved
 - The Torah is like God’s heart: it shows us what God thinks or feels
 - The Torah is like the heart of the Jewish people: it guides us doing the right thing

Suggested Activities:

A Whole Heart

- Create enough hearts on cardstock so there is enough for half per student
- Write **לב** on each heart
 - Cut each heart differently, so there is a **ל** or **ב** on each piece
- Distribute the heart halves and invite the students to find their lev match
- These Lev buddies can work together on creating their Torah Lev (below)

Our Torah Lev

- Provide each student with a die-cut or photocopied **ל** (lamed) and **ב** (bet)

- Invite students to draw and/or cut a heart shape, large enough to hold the לב and their own thoughts or midrash (story about the Torah) explaining why there is a Lev in the middle of the Torah
- Encourage students to think and discuss (and write) with their Lev Buddy about:
 - What does the Torah tell me about being a better person?
 - What Torah story has touched my heart?
 - How do the Jewish holidays, like Simchat Torah or Rosh HaShanah, make my heart feel good?
 - Students may need help with writing; teachers and madrichim can take dictation and students can glue on the ל and א and decorate their לב

Supply Needs:

- Cardstock
- Glue

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to explain the story of Simchat Torah to others
2. Understand that for each major Jewish holiday there is a story unique to the holiday

History: How Did Jews Get to America? (Ashkenazim)

Coach's Voice:

Our goals for addressing how Jews came to America with first graders is to help them understand that Jews have been in this country since its beginning and that Jews in America are very diverse, with varying backgrounds, appearances, traditions and stories. Most importantly, exploring how Jews came to America lays the foundation for students to explore their own stories, how THEIR families came to America, whether 200 years ago or 2. Here is a good article for you to read for your own understanding:

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/jewish-immigration-to-america-three-waves/>



- Read the book *When Jessie Came Across the Sea* by Amy Hest*
- Wonder with the students: What might Jessie have felt when the rabbi chose her to come to America?
 - On the boat?
 - During the first few months in Cousin Kay's house?
 - Does it require bravery to do what Jessie did?
- How did she travel here?
- Why did she come?
 - Why do the people in her village call America "the promised land"?
- The book doesn't tell us, but it's likely Jessie's story happens between 1880 and 1920, about 100 years ago
 - Are there students in the class whose families came to America around the same time as Jessie?
 - This is a great conversation to spark between parents and their children
- Look at a world map, and trace Jessie's journey
 - The book tells us only that Jessie is from a "poor village far from here" so you can place that anywhere in Eastern Europe (Russia, Austria-Hungary, or Romania)

Suggested Activity:

- Jessie crosses the sea, but it is very important to her to pass along tradition, like her mother's wedding ring
 - Bring several Ping-Pong balls to class
 - Imagine with your students that the balls are really miniature storage units for their most important traditions
 - What traditions and values would they store inside?
 - Play relay races and pass the "traditions" on spoons or by hand
- (Adapted from
https://pjlbrary.org/HGF_ResourceCenter/media/LiveResourceLib/My-Grandfathers-Coat-Resource-Guide.pdf)

Supply Needs:

- Globe/map(s) of the world
- Story books
- Ping-Pong balls
- Spoons

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that Jewish people have lived in America since it began in colonial times

Contemporary Jewish Life: Who Are the People in Your Synagogue Community? Program & Youth Staff (and How They Make Holidays Happen)

- Look on your synagogue's website
 - Who are the people who work for the synagogue?
 - What kinds of things and activities are happening at the synagogue this month? (If this information is not on your website, can you find it somewhere else? Newsletter? Social media?)
- Invite the person or people at the synagogue who are responsible for making all these activities happen - the program director, youth director, etc. - to join you in class, or go meet them in their office
- Prepare interview questions with your students, for example:
 - Why do you like to work here?
 - How many programs do you plan every week?
 - Every month?
 - How long before a holiday do you start planning for that holiday?
 - How do you let people know about your programs?
 - What is the best or most fun program you've ever created?
 - Do you prefer dark or milk chocolate?
 - How long have you worked here?
 - What's a fun thing coming up we should tell our parents about?
- Assign a question to each student
- Keep the interview to under fifteen minutes
- Take some photos of the students with the staff person
 - Start a Google slide show with the photos and some quick outtakes from the students after the interview (what does this person do? What do they like? what other things do you wonder about them? when might you see them again?)
 - Share with parents and community (and the staff person, of course)
- Be sure to make a thank you card!

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Know the people in the synagogue community and the roles they play in making life and community happen
2. Understand how each person is important in building the synagogue community
3. Feel connected to the people who build and sustain the synagogue community

Religious School Week 3

First Grade

Jewish Calendar: Rosh HaShanah through Core Stories – Birthday of the World; Sweetness & Round Foods; Yom Kippur through Core Stories – Prayer from the Heart

History: How Did Jews Get to America? (Sephardim)

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers); We Are God's Partners Lesson 1 – Talking to God & Asking Questions

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Jewish Calendar: Rosh HaShanah through Core Stories - Birthday of the World

Coach's Voice:

In previous years, students have focused on the foods and symbols associated with each holiday. In first grade, the focus shifts to the core stories of each holiday in its season, with one to three lessons per holiday.

Regarding loose parts: Loose parts are an excellent strategy for allowing students to explore a text or story from their own perspective. Each time you utilize loose parts, be sure to take photos of the students at work and of their final products. In addition, take dictation or ask students to write a line or two about what they were thinking. Create a "Learning through Loose Parts" Google slide show (or other technology) in which you add the students' work and writing for each text or story, which you can share with parents and students for further reflection.



- Reflect with students:
 - What do they already know about Rosh HaShanah?
 - Write a list of all the students' comments on the board or easel paper, to come back to later
- Read "The First New Year" in *Does God Have a Big Toe?* by Marc Gellman*
- Wonder with students while you read:
 - How is Adam feeling as the sun goes down at the end of the year, when he thinks he has used up all the time?
 - In that moment, why does he apologize to the animals?
 - How does Adam feel when he discovers there is more time?
 - On Rosh HaShanah, we celebrate this moment that Adam has just discovered - the beginning of a new year, or the birthday of the world
 - How do we celebrate this birthday?

- If students need more ideas, read *The World's Birthday* by Barbara Diamond Golden
- Reflect with students:
 - How does Daniel celebrate Rosh HaShanah - the world's birthday?
 - How does he get other people involved?
 - Look back at the list of what students already know about Rosh HaShanah
 - How do these things that students are already familiar with - shofar, apples and honey, going to synagogue to pray, and saying sorry to people - help us to celebrate the birthday of the world, and to appreciate the beginning of a new year with the same wonder that Adam felt?

Suggested Activity:

Celebrating the World's Birthday

- Invite students to create their ideal celebration of the world's birthday
- Offer prompts such as
 - To the World's Birthday, I would bring...
 - To celebrate the world's birthday, we could play...
 - I would make the World's birthday cake like this....
- Consider offering:
 - Loose parts - be sure to add photos and writings to the "Learning through Loose parts" slide deck
 - PlayDoh
 - Watercolors
 - Glue sticks and construction paper to rip

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Loose parts
- PlayDoh
- Watercolors
- Glue sticks
- Construction paper

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand how Rosh HaShanah traditions, rituals, and foods find their source in the core holiday stories

Jewish Calendar: Rosh HaShanah – Sweetness & Round Foods

Coach's Voice:

In the last lesson, students explored Rosh HaShanah as the birthday of the world. In this lesson, we explore the sweet and round foods that we enjoy on Rosh HaShanah, and what these foods tell us about the holiday.



Suggested Activities:

Rosh HaShanah Tasting Party

- Introduce three foods we eat on Rosh HaShanah:
 - Apples and honey
 - Pomegranate
 - Round challah
- With each food, wonder with students:
 - What is this food?
 - Is it something you eat a lot, or sometimes, or never?
 - Why might we eat it on Rosh HaShanah?
- Apples and honey:
 - Share with students (if they don't suggest it first): We eat apples dipped in honey to express our hope that we will have a good, sweet New Year
 - What does the apple's shape tell us about this holiday?
- Pomegranate:
 - Display a cut half
 - Show the seeds and demonstrate how to eat one
 - Share with students: We eat pomegranates because in the year ahead we hope that we will be able to do as many mitzvot/good deeds as there are seeds in a pomegranate
 - Wonder with students:
 - How many seeds do you think are in this pomegranate?
 - What is a good deed which you would like to do in the year ahead?
- Round Challah:
 - Notice with students:
 - The challah which we eat on Rosh HaShanah looks a little different from the challah which we eat all year round (if possible, display each type of challah)
 - What is the shape of the Rosh HaShanah challah?
 - Share with students (if they don't suggest it first):
 - A Rosh HaShanah challah is round in order to show that every year, the months and seasons of the year go round and round
 - Right now, the season is summer/fall
 - What comes after fall?
 - What comes after spring?
 - Eventually, we always come back to the season with which we started

- On Rosh HaShanah, not only is it a custom to dip apples in honey, but we also dip our challah in honey
 - Again, we use the honey to show that we would like to have a good, sweet New Year
- Taste!
 - Invite students (in small groups with a teacher or madrich/a) to walk from table to table, sampling the foods at each table
 - At each table, remind students of the symbolism of each food item and wonder about what they tell us about Rosh HaShanah and the New Year

Rosh HaShanah Cards

- Invite students to wonder together:
 - To whom might you want to wish some sweetness for the new year?
 - How might you tell them you hope they have a good new year?
- Consider sharing this Shalom Sesame video, in which Orly makes New Year's cards:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BEcZaYZsDrM&list=PL75BDE5C7CEB5CEA3&index=3>
- Provide card making materials, such as:
 - Card stock, oak tag, or construction paper
 - Pens, markers
 - Glue sticks
 - Paint
 - Paper bowls
 - Apple slices
 - Plastic forks
 - Copies of Rosh Hashanah sayings and greetings (i.e. L'Shana Tova, Best Wishes for a Sweet New Year, L'Shana Tova Umetukkah, etc.) to glue to or write on the front of the card (optional)
- Prep tips:
 - Fill small bowls with paint
 - To minimize mess, sponges can be placed in bowls to absorb most of the paint. The sponges will function as ink pads.
 - Slice apples (sticking a plastic fork in each apple slice minimizes the need to touch them directly)
- Invite students to decorate their cards with apple paint-stamps, traditional Rosh HaShanah greetings, or other images, such as the round foods they tasted today
- Students can write or dictate personalized messages to the people they are thinking of inside the cards
 - Play a playlist of Rosh HaShanah music while students create, such as this from jkidsradio.com:
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/6oB2LkdIIBoxd9rDbr4XOt>
 - Provide envelopes so students can mail the cards when they have dried
 - Better yet, mail the cards for the students!

(This lesson adapted from the PJLibrary Book Based Program, The Sticky Shofar
https://pjlibrary.org/HGF_ResourceCenter/media/LiveResourceLib/The-Sticky-Shofar-updated.pdf*)*

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Pomegranates
- Challah
- Apples
- Honey
- Card stock/oak tag/construction paper
- Pens
- Markers
- Glue sticks
- Paint
- Paper bowls
- Plastic forks
- Copies of Rosh Hashanah greetings
- Envelopes

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand how Rosh HaShanah traditions, rituals, and foods find their source in the core holiday stories

Jewish Calendar: Yom Kippur through Core Stories - Prayer from the Heart

Coach's Voice:

The focus for first graders in exploring the holidays of the Jewish calendar is the core stories of the holiday. For Yom Kippur, that is the experience of asking for forgiveness from other people and God, and praying from the heart. These are concepts that are sometimes difficult for adults.



Praying from the Heart

- Read *Yussel's Prayer* retold by Barbara Cohen
- Wonder with students:
 - Why were Reb Meir's prayers not reaching God?
 - What kind of people were Reb Meir and his sons?
 - How might you describe them?
 - What does it mean that Yussel's "mind, soul and heart were all in the music he played for God?"
 - How did Yussel pray with his whole heart?
 - How might we pray with our whole heart?
- Invite students to explore what it means to pray with your whole heart
 - Play a recording of Kol Nidre or other High Holy Day melodies like this: <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/3Fw3DZoazvMuUxOVnmANe8?si=356c1451356f40fd>
 - Invite students to move or dance in ways that convey praying with their whole heart, or from their heart
 - Reassure students that it may feel or look strange, but to just go for it
 - Stop students after 2-3 minutes.
- Debrief:
 - What kinds of things did they think about as they were moving to the music?
 - Is it easy or difficult to pray from the heart, or with a whole heart?
 - Did the music help the students feel prayerful?

Asking Forgiveness

- Ask students:
 - Did Reb Meir say "I'm sorry" to Yussel at the end of the story? (You may have to review the book with students - he does not actually say those words)
 - Did he recognize that he made a mistake and change his ways to make it right?
 - Is that the same as apologizing?

- Share with students: On Yom Kippur, we strive to do teshuvah, which literally means “to turn”
- Teshuvah includes:
 - Thinking about (reflecting on) our mistakes of the past year
 - Asking for forgiveness from God and others we have hurt
 - Making a sincere effort to not make the same mistakes again
- Read *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* by Kevin Henkes
- Notice and wonder with students:
 - Does Lilly do teshuvah?
 - How?
 - Who helps her?
 - How does she feel once she does teshuvah?
 - How does Mr. Slinger feel when Lilly does teshuvah?
- Invite students, if anyone is willing, to share a time when they made a mistake or hurt someone (You may need to share a mistake you’ve made - nothing too serious - to get the ball rolling and to create a safe space)
 - How did students feel afterward?
 - What were they able to do to make the situation right?
 - How did it feel if they were forgiven?
- Students might also share stories of when they were hurt by someone, and that person did teshuvah - apologized or made the situation right
- Each time after a student shares, invite them to come to the board or easel, and trace their hand
 - Trace the students’ hands touching or overlapping
 - Be sure to invite all the students to have their hand traced
 - Include the teachers’ and madrichim’s hands, too
- Notice, when everyone’s hand has been added, how this is a community where everyone holds and cares for each other

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Easel paper

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand how Yom Kippur traditions and rituals find their source in the core holiday stories

History: How Did Jews Get to America? (Sephardim)

Coach's Voice:

Our goals for addressing how Jews came to America with first graders is to help them understand that Jews have been in this country since its beginning and that Jews in America are very diverse, with varying backgrounds, appearances, traditions, and stories. Most importantly, exploring how Jews came to America lays the foundation for students to explore their own stories, how THEIR families came to America, whether 200 years ago or 2. Here are some good articles for you to read for your own understanding:

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/jewish-immigration-to-america-three-waves/>

<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/nineteen/nkeyinfo/judaism.htm>

<https://jewishmuseumtulsa.org/collections/oklahoma-jewish-experience/american-jewish-immigration/>



The Journey

- On the world map where you traced Jessie's journey from somewhere in Eastern Europe in the previous history lesson on how Ashkenazi Jews came to America, trace the path of the first Sephardic Jews to come to America:
 - Spain - Expelled during the Inquisition 1492
 - The Netherlands - Some Jews in the sixteenth century sought refuge in the young Calvinist republic of The Netherlands
 - Brazil - A century later, hundreds of their descendants crossed the ocean to settle in the new Dutch colony of Recife in Brazil, where Jewish communal life became possible for the first time in the New World
 - New Amsterdam (Lower Manhattan, NY) - When Portugal recaptured the colony of Recife in 1654, its Jews scattered
 - A boatload of about twenty-three Jews sailed into the remote Dutch port of New Amsterdam and requested to stay.
- Explore with students:
- Why did these first Jews come to America?
- Consider:
 - In colonial times, Jews settled along the Atlantic coast and in several southern states
 - During the 17th century, Rhode Island was the only New England colony which allowed a permanent Jewish community
 - That settlement was in Newport, where the Touro Synagogue, built in 1773, still stands as a memorial to the patriot and philanthropist Judah Touro
- Other early Spanish-Portuguese Jewish communities were established in Charleston, South Carolina, and Savannah, Georgia
- What language did these first Jews speak?

- Read the book *Buen Shabat, Shabbat Shalom* by Sarah Aroeste*
 - This is a board book, so it's young for first graders, but it is still useful for how it weaves Ladino vocabulary throughout
 - Ladino is a combination of Spanish and Hebrew (similar to how Yiddish is a blend of German and Hebrew)
- Sing a song in Ladino, such as Ocho Kandelikas:
 - Lyrics: <http://hebrewsongs.com/?song=ochokandelikas>
 - Video of Flory Jagoda performing the song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OfHPK6CEN1k>

Supply Needs:

- Story books

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that Jewish people have lived in America since it began in colonial times

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: We Are God's Partners Lesson 1 - Talking to God & Asking Questions

Coach's Voice:

Our goal for first grade is to continue to lay the foundation for students to begin to think about God, and to build their own relationship with God. It is not our place to tell children what God is, or the right way to think about or speak to God. Rather, we seek to open the door so they can continue their journey and their lifelong relationship with God, and make solid connections to their everyday life. Students have begun to build a relationship with God in previous years. In this lesson, we check in with students about God, opening the doors to talking to God, asking about God, and ultimately, in upcoming lessons, becoming God's partner in caring for this world.



- Read *In God's Name* by Sandy Eisenberg Saxon*
- Wonder with students:
 - Why might God have so many names?
 - What does the name "One" make you think of? (Hopefully, it makes students think of the Shema)
 - What do you wonder about all these names?
 - If you are wondering what the Hebrew terms are for some of these names, check out the list below
 - What do these names add to what you already knew or thought about God?
 - How do these names change what you already knew or thought about God?
 - How might you be helpful to a God called "Maker of Peace"?
 - Or a God called "Creator of Light"?
 - Or another name in the book?
- Invite students to further explore the name of God they find most interesting

Names of God

Nishmat Kol Chai — The Breath of All Life
Shalom — Peace
Ayin — Nothingness
Ribono Shel Olam — Master of the Universe
Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh — I Will Be What I Will Be
Av HaRachamim — Merciful Father
Ein Sof — The Infinite
Refa'einu — Our Healer
Dayan HaOlam — Eternal Judge
Ma'ayan Chayenu — Wellspring of Life
Ish Milchama — The Man of War
Ehyeh — Becoming

Mi She'amar V'haya HaOlam — The One Who Spoke the World into Being
 Ro'einu — Our Shepherd
 El Emunah — Reliable One
 Ahuv — Beloved
 Adonai Tzeva'ot — Master of Armies
 Ruach Ha'Olam — Spirit of the World
 Avinu She'ba'shamayim — Our Father in Heaven
 Anochi — I Am
 Melech Malchei HaMelachim — King of Kings
 HaMakor — The Source
 Tzur Yisrael — Rock of Israel
 Rachmana — Compassionate One
 Oseh HaShalom — Maker of Peace
 Shekhina — The Presence
 Avinu Malkeynu — Our Father and Ruler
 El Nistar — The Hidden One
 Elohai Avoteinu — God of Our Ancestors
 Echad — Oneness/One
 Moreinu — Our Teacher
 Adonai — My Lord
 Eloheinu — Our God
 Kadosh Baruch Hu — Holy Blessed One
 Avinu — Our Father
 HaGadol — Great One
 El Nora — Terrifying One
 El Elyon — Highest God
 Eli — My God
 Yedid Nefesh — Soulmate
 Melech — King
 Tzuri — My Rock
 YHVH — Was/Is/Will Be
 Atik Yomi — The Ancient One
 Mekor HaChayim — Source of Life
 HaBorei — The Creator
 HaShem — The Name
 HaGoel — The Redeemer
 HaMakom — The Omnipresent
 Ro'eh — Shepherd
 Rofeh — Healer
 Yotzer Or — Creator of Light
 Menakhem — Comforter
 Ima — Mother
 Av — Father
 Chaver — Friend

- Using watercolors or loose parts, encourage students to craft what their chosen name of God might mean

- Invite students to also consider how they might talk with or partner with the God with the name they've chosen

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Drawing supplies
- Watercolors
- Loose parts - Be sure to add photos and writings to the "Learning through Loose parts" slide deck

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Feel their own personal connection with God

Religious School Week 4

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Religious School Week 5

Sacred Text: Abram & Sarai – From Haran to Canaan

Contemporary Jewish Life: Who are the People in Your Synagogue Community?
Lesson 2 – Rabbis

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers); We Are God's Partners Lesson 2 – What Does it Mean to be God's Partner?

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Contemporary Jewish Life: Who are the People in Your Synagogue Community? Lesson 2 – Rabbis

Coach's Voice:

The goal of the lesson is for students to understand who the rabbi(s) at their synagogue are, and what they do. All questions asked and interaction should be in service of those goals.



- Brainstorm with students: What does a rabbi do?
 - Make a list you can add to later
- Can the students name all the rabbis (or at least some, if there is more than one) at your synagogue?
- Where is the rabbi's office (or rabbis' offices)?
- If you want to talk to a rabbi, can you just pop into their office?
 - Who are the people who support the rabbi and help them get their work done?
- Invite a rabbi to join you in class, or go meet them in their office
- Prepare interview questions with your students. For example:
 - Why do you like to work here?
 - We made a list of what we think you do
 - How did we do?
 - What did we miss?
 - Do you prefer dark or milk chocolate?
 - How long have you worked here?
 - What do you like to do when you're not here at synagogue?
 - Do you have any pets?
 - Who are the members of your family?
 - Why did you want to be a rabbi?
- Assign a question to each student
- Keep the interview to under fifteen minutes

- Take some photos of the students with the staff person
 - Start a Google slide show with the photos and some quick outtakes from the students after the interview (what does this person do? What do they like? what other things do you wonder about them? when might you see them again?)
 - Share with parents and community (and the staff person, of course)
- Be sure to make a thank you card!

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Know the rabbis in the synagogue community and the roles they play in making life and community happen

Sacred Text: Abram & Sarai - From Haran to Canaan

Coach's Voice:

The focus of sacred text for first graders are the Avot (Patriarchs, lit. "Fathers") and Imahot (Matriarchs, lit. "Mothers") of the Jewish people. In previous years, students have studied the Days of Creation in depth, and explored the stories that lead up to Abraham. First graders will study Jewish values that emerge from the texts of the Avot and Imahot and will explore putting those values into action.

More information about the Avot and Imahot is here:

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/who-are-the-patriarchs-and-matriarchs/>



(Much of the Sacred Text Curriculum in first grade is inspired by First Steps in Learning Torah with Young Children by Rivka Behar, Floreva Cohen and Ruth Musnikow, published by the BJE of Greater New York in 1993. Text translations from Sefaria, with some edits for age appropriate language.)

Genesis 12: 1-7 (edited)

God said to Abram, "Go out from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you; I will make your name great, And you shall be a blessing."

Abram went out as God had commanded him. Abram was seventy-five years old. Abram took his wife Sarai, and they set out for the land of Canaan.

God appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your children." And Abram built an altar there to God who had appeared to him.

- Share the text with the students
- Before you read:
 - Recall with students who were in SK in the Religious School last year:
 - Who comes in the Torah ten generations after Noah?
 - Do students remember talking about Abraham at the end of last year?
- If you are lucky, you might have notes from the SK teacher about their predictions and wonderings about Abraham
 - If so, share them with students now
- Share with students the goals of Sacred Text in first grade - to get to know the Avot and Imahot (Fathers and Mothers) of the Jewish people really well
 - Can students name any of the avot or imahot?
- As you read:
- Encourage the students to ask questions while you are reading
- Consider giving each student a dot sticker to put on the back of their hand - this is their question buzzer

- When they have a question, they can press the sticker and say “Buzz!” or “Beep!”
 - You can decide if you answer the question right away, ask other students for their thoughts, or add the question to a parking lot
- Wonder together:
 - What does it mean to be a blessing?
 - What might Abram and Sarai have packed for their journey?
 - How do you think Abram and Sarai felt about leaving their home?
- Consider sharing this map of the journey:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vXJ8A8cczFWBGrgchnpl57d5ytDHzsZLTOuuAzgLo6U/edit?usp=sharing>
- If students wonder why God picked Abram for this journey, consider reading *Abraham’s Search for God* by Jacqueline Jules

Lech Lecha

- Look at some of this sacred text in Hebrew with students:

לְךָ-לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץךָ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל-הָאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֹמַרְךָ

Lech-l'cha may-artz'cha u-mee-molad't'cha u-mee-bayt aveecha el-ha'aretz asher ar-eh-cha

Go out from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you.

Sing Debbie Friedman's song, “Lechi-Lach”

Lyrics:

L'chi lach, to a land that I will show you
Leich l'cha, to a place you do not know
L'chi lach, on your journey I will bless you
 And (you shall be a blessing) 3x *l'chi lach*

L'chi lach, and I shall make your name great
Leich l'cha, and all shall praise your name
L'chi lach, to the place that I will show you
 (*L'sim-chat cha-yim*) 3x *l'chi lach*

- Video of Debbie Friedman singing Lechi Lach at UAHC Biennial 1993:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eR7NCBTyXu4>
- Video with the lyrics (Debbie Friedman recording):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZqU-yndUhc>

And You Shall Be a Blessing

- Invite students to think about how they are a blessing
 - Do they make their parent laugh with funny stories or jokes?

- Do they read a book to a younger sibling without their grownups asking?
 - How do they make the lives of the people they love better?
- Invite students to make a representation of how they are a blessing. Offer prompts such as
 - I am a blessing when I....
 - I am blessing because I...
 - Offer loose parts, watercolors, or magazines to cut and collage
 - Be sure to add photos and writings to the “Learning through Loose parts” slide deck

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Art supplies
- Loose parts - Be sure to add photos and writings to the “Learning through Loose parts” slide deck
- Writing supplies
- Dot stickers

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that the Torah tells stories of the Jewish people who came long before us

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: We Are God's Partners Lesson 2 – What Does it Mean to be God's Partner?

Coach's Voice:

Our goal for first grade is to continue to lay the foundation for students to begin to think about God, and to build their own relationship with God. It is not our place to tell children what God is, or the right way to think about or speak to God. Rather, we seek to open the door so they can continue their journey and their lifelong relationship with God, and make solid connections to their everyday life.



- Read “Partners” in *Does God Have a Big Toe?* by Marc Gellman (prologue)*
 - The setting of this story is the Creation story
 - Students studied the Creation texts in JK and SK
 - Explore what they remember for previous years, and how that informs what they are hearing in this version of the creation story
- Wonder with students:
 - What are some things in your life that are a big thing no one can do by themselves?
 - Who are the partners in your life?
 - How are you a partner? What are your best “partner skills” (cleaning, fixing, teaching, entertaining, etc.)?
 - What are things in the world that need finishing, or fixing?
- Explore this story further by acting it out, or through loose parts
 - Be sure to add photos and writings to the “Learning through Loose parts” slide deck
- Look at the first example of God and people being partners in the Torah:

Genesis 2:18-20

Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.” So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field.

- Invite students to identify the way(s) God and the first person were partners in this text.
- Think together about the sacred text you’ve studied thus far this year
 - How were Abraham and Sarah partners with God (God promised to make Abraham a nation, and Abraham went out and invited others to join him; God helped Sarah and Abraham have a baby, etc.)?
 - What about Isaac and Rebecca (God helped Rebecca have babies)?

- Jacob and his family (Jacob's dream, all those babies, etc.)?
- Demonstrate how people and God are partners in the world
- Serve orange juice for snack
 - Ask the students who made the orange juice
 - Let them know that God did not make the juice, but God helped
 - People helped, too
 - Talk about how God helped the orange tree grow, but people then need to take over to pick the oranges, squeeze the juice, get it to the store, etc.
- Give the students oranges cut into quarters, and let them squeeze out the juice
 - Note that the blessing for oranges is borei pri ha-aytz, but since we partnered with God to make the juice, the appropriate blessing is she-hakol nihyeh bidvaro
- She-hakol nihyeh bidvaro is a blessing the students may not be familiar with
 - Now is the perfect time to learn!

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam shehakol niyah bidvaro.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, by Whose word all things came to be.

- Say the appropriate blessing (she-hakol nihyeh bidvaro) before you drink the juice
 - Allow this new blessing to spark further discussion about how the orange juice is a "partnership food"

(From Jewish Every Day by Maxine Segal Handelman)

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Oranges
- Cups

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that they are partners with God in taking care of and perfecting the world

Religious School Week 6

Sacred Text: Abraham & Sarah – Covenant with God

History: Where Did American Jews Come From?

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers); We Are God's Partners Lesson 3 – Everyday Actions

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Sacred Text: Abraham & Sarah - Covenant with God

Gen 17:1-17 (edited)

Sarai, Abram's wife, had not given birth to any children. When Abram was ninety-nine years old, God appeared to Abram and said to him, "I will establish My covenant between Me and you, and I will make you exceedingly numerous."

Abram threw himself on his face; and God spoke to him further, "And you shall no longer be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I make you the father of many nations. I give this land to you and your children to come, all the land of Canaan. I will be their God."

And God said to Abraham, "As for your wife Sarai, you shall not call her Sarai, but her name shall be Sarah. I will bless her; indeed, I will give you a son by her."

Abraham threw himself on his face and laughed, as he said to himself, "Can a child be born to a man a hundred years old, or can Sarah give birth to a child at ninety?"

- Share the text with the students
- Before you read:
 - Wonder with students:
 - What has life in Canaan been like for Abram and Sarai?
 - What have they been doing in this land that God told them to go to?
- As you read:
 - Encourage the students to ask questions while you are reading
 - Be aware of the words and concepts that need exploring
 - Covenant: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/covenant>
 - Abraham throws himself on his face twice in this text
 - If you dare, invite a student to act this out
 - What feelings are involved with throwing oneself on one's face?
- Wonder together:
 - What's the connection between Abraham and Sarah being old, and having a baby?
 - Why do names and blessings go together?

- What, exactly is the agreement (covenant) between God and Abraham and Sarah?
- What do you predict will happen the next time we return to our Sacred Text?

Classroom Covenant

- Just as God makes a Covenant with Abraham and Sarah, you can make a classroom covenant
 - What might teachers and students promise each other?
 - What are the rewards for keeping the covenant?
 - What are the consequences for breaking the covenant?
- Write the Class Covenant neatly on butcher block paper, and invite students to decorate with markers or watercolors
- Read *Much, Much Better* by Chaim Kosofsky*
- Wonder with students: How might this book provide a sneak peek into the upcoming adventures of Abraham and Sarah?

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Markers
- Watercolors

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Know the main characters and basic plotlines of Abraham and Sarah's story

History: Where Did American Jews Come From?

Coach's Voice:

Our goals for addressing how Jews came to America with first graders is to help them understand that Jews have been in this country since its beginning and that Jews in America are very diverse, with varying backgrounds, appearances, traditions and stories. Most importantly, exploring how Jews came to America lays the foundation for students to explore their own stories, how THEIR families came to America, whether 200 years ago or 2. In this lesson, we focus on the incredible diversity of the American Jewish community. Here is a good article for you to read for your own understanding:

<https://ejewishphilanthropy.com/population-of-jews-of-color-is-increasing-in-u-s-despite-undercounting-in-population-studies/>

- Read *We Are Jewish Faces* by Debra. B. Darvick.



Coach's Voice:

This book is written for much younger children; it is included here to spark a conversation about the diversity of the American Jewish community.



- Wonder with the students:
 - Have you seen Jewish people in your synagogue, at Jewish events, on TV, etc., that look like the different people in this book?
 - Based on the people you know of, and the people pictured in this book, where do Jews in America come from? (Every answer the students give is correct. Jews come from everywhere.)
 - Is being born into a Jewish family the only way to be Jewish? (No. See question below)
 - How might someone become Jewish? (Hopefully students will offer these options, if not, add them to the conversation: adoption, conversion/choosing to be Jewish. They might have other interesting thoughts, too).
 - Can there be a Jewish family where not every member of the family is Jewish? (Yes!)
 - Make sure this conversation validates all ways of being Jewish as equally esteemed
 - We've talked previously about how some Jewish families came to America long ago - remember that story about the Statue of Liberty?
 - But some Jewish families didn't come from Europe or Spain long ago; they came to America recently or even became Jewish recently
 - This story about a baby adopted from Vietnam shows us that some of us were not born Jewish; we became Jewish on our way to America, or even in America:

- *Rebecca's Journey Home* by Brynn Olenberg Sugarman

Suggested Activity:

Creating a Scene

- In the Torah, God says to Abraham, "Look to the heavens and count the stars if you are able to number them. So shall your descendants be" (Genesis 14:5).
- None of us know what Abraham's face looked like, but according to Jewish tradition, every Jew is part of his family, whether by birth or by choice
 - Converts to Judaism are all considered children of Abraham and his wife Sarah, patriarch and matriarch of the Jewish people

(From the PJ Library reading guide for We are Jewish Faces

<https://pjlibrary.org/getmedia/cf974c47-1112-497d-9d47-f91f69c7e8f4/We-Are-Jewish-Faces-Reading-Guide.pdf>)

- Using magazine pictures, invite students to make a collage of a big Jewish event (all together on large paper or individual ones)
- The students can determine (or make up) the event or celebration, and use magazine pictures, Jewish store catalogs or their own drawings to make the event identifiably Jewish
- Encourage students to include at the event the diversity of Jews in America

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Magazines
- Glue

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Feel part of a wide, diverse Jewish family

Prayer, God, and Spirituality: We Are God's Partners Lesson 3 – Everyday Actions

- Read the book *God In Between* by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso
 - Wonder with students:
 - How were the people in this story partners with God?
 - How did they teach other people to be partners with God?

Being partners in class

- Give students a challenging task to do on their own (build something with Legos, figure out a puzzle, etc.)
 - After a couple of minutes, stop the students and check in
 - How was it to work on that task?
 - Hard?
 - Easy?
 - Fun?
- Pair up students and ask them to do the same task as partners
- After a couple of minutes, stop the students and check in
 - How was it to work on that task?
 - Hard?
 - Easy?
 - Fun?
 - How was it different doing it with a partner?

Being partners in daily life

- Sometimes being a partner with God means being a partner with another person
- Wonder with students, why?
- Brainstorm with students a list of ways they might be partners to someone in their everyday life
 - Make four columns:
 - **Task/Job/Action -- Partners with -- Necessary skills -- I will be this partner**
- During the brainstorm, leave the last column blank
 - For example:
 - Unloading the dishwasher -- Mom -- Knowing where the dishes go, being able to reach the cabinets
 - Feeding the fish -- Dad and God -- Not giving the fish too much food, remembering to do it
- After all the brainstorming, go back and ask for commitments to be a partner
- Write the names of the students in the last column by the partnerships they commit themselves to
- Encourage every student to commit to at least one way of being a partner
 - This is a great chart to share with parents afterwards!

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Legos or puzzles

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that they are partners with God in taking care of and perfecting the world

Religious School Week 7

Sacred Text: Abraham & Sarah – Welcoming Visitors

Mitzvot & Values: Mitzvot in Sacred Text – Hachnasat Orchim/Welcoming Guests, Abraham & Sarah [study]

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers); We Are God's Partners Lesson 4 – Perfecting the World & Our Role in the Big Picture

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Sacred Text: Abraham & Sarah - Welcoming Visitors

Coach's Voice:

When you share this text with students, consider erecting a tent (a real tent or a tent fashioned from a sheet) for students to sit in while they explore the text. Before this lesson, reach out to parents to ask them to send the story of how they chose their child's name with their child to school.



Genesis 18:1-15

God appeared to him [Abraham] by the terebinths (a kind of tree) of Mamre; he was sitting at the entrance of the tent as the day grew hot.

Looking up, he saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them, he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them and, bowing to the ground, he said, "My lords, if it please you, do not go on past your servant. Let a little water be brought; bathe your feet and recline under the tree. And let me fetch a morsel of bread that you may refresh yourselves; then go on—seeing that you have come your servant's way." They replied, "Do as you have said."

Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quick, three seahs of choice flour! Knead and make cakes!" Then Abraham ran to the herd, took a calf, tender and choice, and gave it to a servant-boy, who hastened to prepare it. He took curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared and set these before them; and he waited on them under the tree as they ate.

They said to him, "Where is your wife Sarah?" And he replied, "There, in the tent."

Then one said, "I will return to you next year, and your wife Sarah shall have a son!" Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent, which was behind him.

Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. And Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "Now that I am withered, am I to have enjoyment—with my husband so old?"

Then God said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I really give birth to a child, old as I am?' Is anything too wondrous for God? I will return to you at the same season next year, and Sarah shall have a son."

Sarah lied, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was frightened. But God replied, "You did laugh."

- Share the text with students and notice:
 - What are all the actions Abraham took to welcome the guests?
 - Name each action and invite a student or students to act out each action
 - Did Abraham offer the hospitality all by himself?
 - How did he involve other people in the household?
- Wonder with students:
 - Why did Abraham work so hard to welcome the strangers?
 - Why did he offer to wash their feet?
 - Offer students pans of warm water and towels and ask for volunteers to wash or have their feet washed
 - What does that feel like?
 - Does it feel welcoming?
 - Why did the stranger ask where Sarah was?
 - Do you think Sarah started listening because she heard her name?
 - Sarah and Abraham are old, older than your grandparents
 - Do you think your grandparents could have a baby?
 - Why did Sarah say she didn't laugh?
 - Have a vote: How many students think Sarah will have a baby?
- Share a little more text with students:

Genesis 21: 1-6

God took note of Sarah as He had promised, and God did for Sarah as He had spoken. Sarah had a baby with Abraham in his old age.

Abraham gave his newborn son the name of Isaac. And when his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God had commanded him.

Now Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.

Sarah said, "God has brought me laughter; everyone who hears will laugh with me."

Coach's Voice:

The name Isaac/Yitzchak יִצְחָק comes from the Hebrew word for laughter חִיָּהּ (tz'choke).



- Notice with students:
 - Who was right about whether Sarah would have a baby?
 - Yitzchak is the first baby in the Torah to have a brit milah (bris)
 - Since then, every Jewish boy has a bris
 - Which students have heard of this, or remember being at a bris?
- Why does Sarah say that God has brought her laughter?

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Tent or sheet
- Pans
- Water
- Towels

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that we learn significant Jewish values from the stories of the matriarchs and patriarchs, such as hachnasat orchim in the story of Abraham and Sarah

Mitzvot & Values: Mitzvot in Sacred Text – Hachnasat Orchim/Welcoming Guests, Abraham & Sarah [study]

Coach's Voice:

This year, first graders have the opportunity to study the Avot (fathers) and Imahot (Mothers) of the Jewish people. As they study the Torah text, they will also do a deep dive into the Jewish values and mitzvot we learn through these text stories. Over the course of two lessons, students will study the value in the text, and then engage in active ways to bring this mitzvah to fruition in their own lives.

In this first lesson, we study the story of Abraham and his practice of Hachnasat Orchim (hospitality) in Genesis 18:2-8. There is good background info here: <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/jewish-hospitality/>

Ideally, this lesson is taught the same day as the sacred text lesson “Abraham and Sarah - Visitors to the Tent, Birth of Isaac (Genesis 18:1-15)”, and is placed after that lesson.



- To introduce the concept of Hachnasat Orchim, watch this BimBam video: <https://youtu.be/6LA35K09hK4>
 - What does this video make students wonder?
- Read *Sarah Laughs* by Jacqueline Jules
- Reread the page which begins “As Sarah and Abraham traveled throughout the land of Canaan, their tent was taken down and put back up many times.”
- Notice with the students that Sarah is doing the mitzvah of hachnasat orchim, welcoming guests, or hospitality
 - How exactly does she do this mitzvah?
- Read the next page
 - Wonder with students, how does Sarah’s hachnasat orchim make people feel?
- Several pages later (“Then one hot day...”), revisit Abraham’s hachnasat orchim
 - You may want to also review the sacred text, Genesis 18:2-8.
 - Does Abraham do hachnasat orchim the same way Sarah does?
- Watch “Be Our Guest” from *Beauty and the Beast* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=afzmmwAKUppU>
- Notice with students:
 - What are the ways the characters in the castle offer Belle hospitality?
 - Did you know they were doing hachnasat orchim?

Plan for Hachnasat Orchim

- For the next Hachnasat Orchim lesson, invite parents or another class in for snack, so students have the opportunity to practice hachnasat orchim
- Share with students: In a future class, we will have the opportunity to offer hachnasat orchim
- Brainstorm and make lists:
 - What will we need to do to welcome our guests?
 - What do we need to get or bring?
 - How might we make our guests feel most welcome?
- Invite students to decorate placemats if you will be inviting guests to eat, or signs if you are simply welcoming them into the classroom for an experience

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Hachnasat orchim supplies

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that many Jewish values (such as hachnasat orchim) come from the Torah, including the text they are studying this year

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: We Are God's Partners Lesson 4 – Perfecting the World & Our Role in the Big Picture

Coach's Voice:

First graders have had many conversations and lessons about partnering with God, and big and small ways that people might help fix the world. They've looked at how historical figures such as Martin Luther King, Jr. partnered with God to repair the world. They've looked at ways they can partner with God by partnering with other people and repairing the world in small ways in their families. This lesson opens kids to the possibilities of how they can partner with God and help fix the world beyond their front door. If, by chance, this lesson motivates the students in your class to want to take some big actions together to fix the world, what might you do to support them?



Kids can fix the world

- First graders are not too young to help fix the world
- Share one or two real-world, current examples of how kids have helped to fix the world

Suggested Resources:

- Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes:
 - Pick a story of a kid that moves you, maybe someone local to you
 - Try and pick a story of one of the younger heroes.
<https://www.treehugger.com/meet-kids-who-are-changing-world-4868568>
- Hayley Fields' drive to raise money for a new Torah for Beth Israel Congregation after Hurricane Katrina:
<https://jwa.org/media/excerpt-from-beth-israel-torah-ceremony-by-gail-chalew>
- Celebration Playground:
 - Two kids built a playground, and relationships between two communities, in Chicago:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KgRBxpr-5TI&t=23s> (fundraising video)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJqve7wGlrU> (build video)
- Reference any kid-initiated projects that were discussed in the MLK lesson
- After you share the story (or stories) and you've grappled with any clarifying questions, observe with your students:
- The first step to helping to fix the world is to notice something is wrong in their world (something needs fixing)
 - What did these kids notice?

- The next step is knowing that you are partners in with God, and that you have the responsibility and the ability to fix the world
 - These kids had confidence they could make change/help fix the world
 - How do you know?
 - What evidence is in the stories you shared?
- The next step is often making a plan and finding other partners
 - Who were these kids' other partners?
 - What actions did they take?
- Read *Miss Rumphius* by Barbara Cooney*
- Wonder with students: How did Miss Rumphius partner with God in making the world a better place? (The book doesn't use that language, but you can)
- Dream with students:
 - Recently, you made a chart with students of how they might be partners to someone in their everyday life, and you asked them to commit to at least one way of being a partner
 - Make a new chart: what's one thing in their world each student would like to help fix?
 - Using markers, magazines to collage, or loose parts, encourage students to make a representation of how they would like to partner with God to fix the world
- This is great work to share with parents afterwards!

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Markers
- Magazines
- Glue
- Loose parts

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Feel empowered to make the world a better place

Religious School Week 8

Sacred Text: Eliezer & Rebecca

Mitzvot & Values: Mitzvot in Sacred Text – Hachnasat Orchim/Welcoming Guests, Abraham & Sarah [action]

Contemporary Jewish Life: Who are the People in Your Synagogue Community? Lesson 3 – Maintenance & Security Staff

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Sacred Text: Eliezer & Rebecca

Coach's Voice:

The Sacred text in this lesson is long, Genesis 23:1-2 and 24. The servant is not named in this text, but elsewhere we learn his name is Eliezer.



- Read “Rebekah at the Well”, pages 43-45 in the JPS Illustrated Children’s Bible
- Share with students some works of art depicting this story:
 - Nicolas Poussin, Rebecca at the Well:
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nicolas_Poussin_-_Rebecca_at_the_Well_-_WGA18327.jpg
 - Benjamin West, Isaac's servant tying the bracelet on Rebecca's arm:
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Benjamin_West_-_Isaac%27s_servant_tying_the_bracelet_on_Rebecca%27s_arm_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg
 - Friedrich Bouterwek, Isaac Meeting Rebecca:
<https://biblequestion.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/isaac-meeting-rebecca-by-friedrich-bouterwek.jpg>
- Wonder with students:
 - Since there were many women at the well, how did Eliezer know which one to choose?
 - What made Eliezer choose Rebecca?
 - How did Rebecca demonstrate chesed? (kindness)
 - How did Rebecca and her family offer hachnasat orchim (hospitality)?
 - Why was Rebecca willing to go with Eliezer without waiting ten days?
 - Why did Isaac love Rebecca?
 - What more do the paintings tell us about the characters?

- If you have a big decision, how do you decide?
 - Do you ever ask God to help you, like Eliezer?

Camels and water

- Learn with students a little about camels, especially how much water they drink
 - Consider:
 - Camel fun fact video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r3lk5SfScd0> (also share that camels can drink up to forty gallons of water at a time
 - *Camel* by Meish Goldish*
- Schlep water like Rebecca
 - Fill up gallon milk jugs with water and invite students to carry it from a spot designated as the well to a spot designated as the camel's trough
 - Can they go back and forth thirty times?

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Milk jugs
- Water

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that we learn significant Jewish values from the stories of the matriarchs and patriarchs, such as ha'achalat re'evim in the stories of Rebecca, Jacob, and Esau

Mitzvot & Values: Mitzvot in Sacred Text – Hachnasat Orchim/Welcoming Guests, Abraham & Sarah [action]

Coach's Voice:

Based on the study of the Sacred Text of Abraham and Sarah offering hachnasat orchim, and the study of the value of hachnasat orchim, now it is the class's opportunity to put this value into action. Perhaps you've invited another class for snack, or parents and other relatives in for a song session.

Previously, you prepared to offer hachnasat orchim as a class. You made lists of necessary supplies and how you might make guests feel welcome. Hopefully, the supplies have been acquired, the placemats or signs are at the ready, and the guests are on the way.

Review the list you made with students of how you might make the guests feel most welcome. What last-minute things do you need to do? What do students need to remember to do or say?



- Read *Chik Chak Shabbat* by Mara Rockliff or *Joseph and the Sabbath Fish* by Eric A. Kimmel

Coach's Voice:

You might choose to read before guests arrive, to help prepare students, or while guests are present, as part of the experience and learning together.



- What do students notice about how the characters in the story practice hachnasat orchim?
- Is hachnasat orchim just a one-way street?
- What new things does this book teach about hachnasat orchim?
- Based on the plans you made in a previous lesson, welcome in another class, or parents and relatives, and enjoy the experience of offering hachnasat orchim!
 - Take lots of pictures
 - Afterwards, debrief with students:
 - What did they think of the experience of doing hachnasat orchim?
 - What might they have done differently?
 - How was their hachnasat orchim like that of Abraham and Sarah's?
 - Like the characters in the book?

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that we learn significant Jewish values from the stories of the matriarchs and patriarchs, such as hachnasat orchim in the story of Abraham and Sarah

Contemporary Jewish Life: Who are the People in Your Synagogue Community? Lesson 3 – Maintenance & Security Staff

Coach's Voice:

The goal of the lesson is for students to understand who the Maintenance and Security staff at their synagogue are, and what they do. All questions asked and interaction should be in service of those goals. Take care, especially with the security staff, to investigate how they keep the synagogue and its members safe without letting the conversation get too scary or focused on potential threats.



- Brainstorm and investigate with students:
- What does the maintenance staff do?
 - Make a list you can add to later
- Where is their office?
- Who is in charge of the maintenance staff?
 - What is that person's title?
 - Are they listed with the staff on the synagogue's website, if the staff is listed on the website?
 - Why does that matter?
- What does the security staff do? Make a list you can add to later.
- Where is their office?
- Who is in charge of the security staff?
 - What is that person's title?
 - Are they listed with the staff on the synagogue's website, if the staff is listed on the website?
 - Why does that matter?
- Can the students name all (or at least some of) the maintenance and security staff at your synagogue?
- Invite a member of each the maintenance and security staff to join you in class or go meet them in their offices or work areas
- Prepare interview questions with your students, for example:
 - Why do you like to work here?
 - We made a list of what we think you do
 - How did we do?
 - What did we miss?
 - Do you prefer dark or milk chocolate?
 - How long have you worked here?
 - What do you like to do when you're not here at synagogue?
 - Do you have any pets?
 - Who are the members of your family?
- Assign a question to each student
- Keep the interview to under fifteen minutes
- Take some photos of the students with the staff person

- Start a Google slide show with the photos and some quick outtakes from the students after the interview (what does this person do? What do they like? what other things do you wonder about them? when might you see them again?)
 - Share with parents and community (and the staff person, of course)
- Be sure to make a thank you card!

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand how each person, such as maintenance and security staff, is important in building the synagogue community

Religious School Week 9

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Religious School Week 10

Sacred Text: The Birth of Jacob & Esau

Jewish Calendar: Hanukkah through Core Stories – The Miracles of Hanukkah

Mitzvot & Values: Mitzvot in Sacred Text – Ha'achalat Re'evim/Feeding the Hungry, Rebecca & Isaac [study]

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Sacred Text: The Birth of Jacob & Esau

Coach's Voice:

There are two important “scenes” in this sacred text: the circumstances around Rebecca becoming pregnant and giving birth to Jacob and Esau, and the stew-for-the-birthright episode.



Genesis 25:20-34

Read the beginning of “Jacob steals the Birthright”, page 47 in the JPS Illustrated Children's Bible (stop with “So Esau rejected his birthright.”)

- Notice and wonder with students:
 - Rebecca needed God's help to become pregnant
 - Who else in the Torah needed God's help to have a baby?
 - Rebecca talked to God about the babies growing inside her, and God answers her
 - This is the first time, and one of the only times in the Torah, that God speaks to a woman
 - Why do you think God speaks to Rebecca?
 - What do you make of God's answer?
 - Esau and Jacob are twins
 - Does anyone know any twins?
 - In what ways are they alike?
 - In what ways are they different?

- What's a birthright?

Coach's Voice:

Here is a nice explanation of the birthright:

<https://www.studylight.org/dictionaries/eng/hbd/b/birthright.html>



- Was the value of the lentil stew and bread equal to the birthright?

Suggested Activities:

Jacob on Trial - Did Jacob really steal the birthright from Esau?

- Divide the students into two teams:
 - Jacob and lawyers for Jacob
 - Esau and lawyers for Esau
- Select a student (or maybe a madrich/a) to be the judge
- Let both teams present arguments on whether Jacob stole the birthright from Esau or earned it fairly

Lentil Soup

- Make lentil soup with the students
- Try a nice red recipe like this one:

<https://cookieandkate.com/best-lentil-soup-recipe/>

Supply Needs:

- Stew ingredients

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Know the main characters and basic plotlines of the stories of Jacob and Esau's birth and Jacob stealing Esau's blessing

Jewish Calendar: Hanukkah through Core Stories - The Miracles of Hanukkah

- Check in:
 - What do students know and remember about Hanukkah?
 - What are they fuzzy on?
 - What do they want to know?
- Read one or two books about Hanukkah
 - During the reading, be sure to pause to ask about the characters and the story line
 - Ask students to predict what will happen next
 - *Books marked with * are also available online*
 - *Like A Maccabee* by Raymond Zwerin and Audrey Friedman Marcus
 - *The Littlest Maccabee* by Sylvia Rouss
 - *Hanukkah* by Miriam Chaikin*
 - *Queen of the Hanukkah Dosas* by Pamela Ehrenberg
- Invite the students to act out the Hanukkah story
- Wonder with the students, what was the miracle of Hanukkah? (Was it the oil or the Maccabee's victory?)
- Encourage students to use loose parts to illustrate what they believe the Hanukkah miracle is
 - Be sure to add photos and writings to the "Learning through Loose parts" slide deck

Supply Needs:

- Loose parts - Be sure to add photos and writings to the "Learning through Loose parts" slide deck
- Hanukkah books
- Props to act out Hanukkah story

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that for each major Jewish holiday there is a story unique to the holiday
2. Be able to name some of the characters and plot points of the Hanukkah story and will be able to explain the story to others

Mitzvot & Values: Mitzvot in Sacred Text - Ha'achalat Re'evim/Feeding the Hungry, Rebecca & Isaac [study]

Coach's Voice:

This year, first graders not only study Sacred Text, but they also mine that text for Jewish values which they will put into action.

Ideally, this lesson is taught in proximity to the sacred text lesson, "The birth of Jacob and Esau and the Stew (Genesis 25:20-34)", and is placed after that lesson.

The value of ha'achalat re'evim (feeding the hungry) does not come directly from the sacred texts containing the stories of Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob, and Esau.

Looking at those texts, we can extrapolate this value, or perhaps even learn what NOT to do.



- Share these three texts with students, with opportunity for unpacking with each text
- We learn the value of ha'achalat re'evim from God's instructions to farmers in Leviticus 19:10-11:

When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not pick your vineyard bare or gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I the LORD am your God.

- What exactly is God asking farmers to do?
 - To best understand reaping, it may be useful for students to act out reaping and leaving the corners and fallen crops for others
- Why might God ask farmers to do this?
- We likely don't live on farms, and we likely don't harvest food like this
 - How might we practice the value of ha'achalat re'evim?
- Rebecca offers water, not food, to Isaac's servant and his camels (Genesis 24:17-20):

The servant ran toward her and said, "Please, let me sip a little water from your jar."

"Drink, my lord," she said, and she quickly lowered her jar upon her hand and let him drink.

When she had let him drink his fill, she said, "I will also draw for your camels, until they finish drinking." Quickly emptying her jar into the trough, she ran back to the well to draw, and she drew for all his camels.

- What exactly is Rebecca doing here?

- What is her attitude about offering water?
- To best understand, it may be useful for students to act out this scene, especially if it's been a while since they studied this text
- Rebecca offered water, not food
 - Is she still doing the value of ha'achalat re'evim?
 - Why or why not?
- Jacob demonstrates how NOT to fulfill the Jewish value of ha'achalat re'evim (Genesis 25:29-34):

Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the open, famished. And Esau said to Jacob, "Give me some of that red stuff to gulp down, for I am famished"—which is why he was named Edom.

Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright."

And Esau said, "I am at the point of death, so of what use is my birthright to me?"

But Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So, he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob.

Jacob then gave Esau bread and lentil stew; he ate and drank, and he rose and went away.

- What exactly is Jacob doing here?
 - What is his attitude about offering food to Esau?
- To best understand, it may be useful for students to act out this scene, especially if it's been a while since they studied this text
- Jacob gives his brother food
 - Is he doing the value of ha'achalat re'evim?
 - Why or why not?
- What can we learn from Rebecca and her son Jacob about the value of ha'achalat re'evim?

Suggested Activities:

- Read a book that demonstrates the value of ha'achalat re'evim, such as:
 - *Bagels from Benny* by Aubrey Davis
 - *Maddi's Fridge* by Lois Brandt
 - How do these characters feed hungry people in their lives?
- Explore ha'achalat re'evim with loose parts
- Invite students to create the Leviticus text, or Rebecca's story, or Jacob and Esau's story, with loose parts or watercolors.
- Offer prompts such as:
 - What does it feel like to harvest the field but leave the corners?
 - How heavy was the water Rebecca carried for the camels?
 - What was Jacob thinking when Esau asked for stew?
- Document students' new learnings through the use of loose parts
 - Be sure to add photos and writings to the "Learning through Loose parts" slide deck

Supply Needs:

- Loose parts - Be sure to add photos and writings to the “Learning through Loose parts” slide deck
- Story books

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that we learn significant Jewish values from the stories of the matriarchs and patriarchs, such as ha’achalat re’evim

Religious School Week 11

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Religious School Week 12

Sacred Text: Jacob (& Rebecca) Deceives Isaac & Steals Esau's Blessing

Jewish Calendar: Hanukkah through Core Stories – Oil Hanukkiot

Mitzvot & Values: Mitzvot in Sacred Text – Ha'achalat Re'evim/Feeding the Hungry, Rebecca & Isaac [action]

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Sacred Text: Jacob (& Rebecca) Deceives Isaac & Steals Esau's Blessing

- Read the remainder of "Jacob Steals the Birthright", page 47-49 in the JPS Illustrated Children's Bible (start with "When Isaac was old and blind...")
- Encourage the students to ask questions while you are reading
- Consider giving each student a dot sticker to put on the back of their hand - this is their question buzzer
 - When they have a question, they can press the sticker and say "Buzz!" or "Beep!"
 - You can decide if you answer the question right away, ask other students for their thoughts, or add the question to a parking lot
- Notice and wonder with students:
- Why did Rebecca help Jacob get the blessing?

Coach's Voice:

It might be worthwhile to remind students of Rebecca's conversation with God in the last Sacred Text lesson



- How did Jacob feel about the plan?
- Did Isaac know who was who even if he could not see?
- What are all the feelings Esau felt?
- Why was Isaac's blessing so important?

Coach's Voice:

Here is a good explanation: The family blessing was more personal than the birthright. The passing on of this blessing would give purpose, honour and direction for the future of the family. Years before God had promised to bless Abraham and subsequently the world through his descendants ([Genesis 12:1-3](#)). Isaac, himself, had received a blessing from God ([Genesis 23-24](#)).

(From <https://missionbibleclass.org/old-testament/part1/tower-of-babel-through-joseph/jacob-esau-and-the-birthright/>)



Suggested Activities:

Act out this story

- Consider acting it out a few times, with a different cast each time
- Provide props like Esau's clothing, and fake-fur fabric for Jacob's arms
- During the acting, freeze the actors and ask students in the audience to name the feelings the characters might be feeling at that moment

Most meaningful moments

- Invite students to more deeply investigate one moment from this sacred text
- Offer students loose parts or watercolors to recreate one moment of the text, such as:
 - Rebecca eavesdropping as Isaac offers the blessing to Esau
 - Jacob about to go into Isaac's tent
 - Esau out on the hunt
- Ask students to reflect on what they learned through their recreation of the scene and write down their thoughts
- Be sure to add photos and writings to the "Learning through Loose parts" slide deck

Supply Needs:

- Storybooks
- Dot stickers
- Props
- Loose parts
- Watercolors

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Know the main characters and basic plotlines of the stories of Jacob and Esau's birth and Jacob stealing Esau's blessing

Mitzvot and Values: Mitzvot in Sacred Text – Ha’achalat Re’evim/Feeding the Hungry, Rebecca & Isaac [action]

- Share the book *Hanukkah Cookies with Sprinkles* by David Adler
 - The book is not online, but there is this read-aloud video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uc5qUGevV5k>
 - Wonder with students:
 - What might you do if you saw someone eating from the garbage?
 - How does Sara feel when she sees the man at the synagogue?
 - Why is it important to Morris that he shares things like juggling lessons and stories with Sara and her family?
- Make or decorate cookies to donate to a local food pantry or shelter
- Decorate the bags for the cookies with notes and pictures designed to make the recipients feel happy
- Play Hanukkah music while you decorate the cookies
 - Put on a Hanukkah playlist like this one: <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/37i9dQZF1DXbEF1ZIM800j>

Supply Needs:

- Cookies to decorate
- Ziplock baggies
- Art supplies

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Feel empowered to put Jewish values and mitzvot into action
2. Be able to name ways in which they can feed the hungry

Jewish Calendar: Hanukkah through Core Stories – Oil Hanukkiot

- Read one or two books about Hanukkah
 - During the reading, be sure to pause to ask about the characters and the story line
 - Ask students to predict what will happen next
 - Books marked with * are also available online
 - *Hanukkah Moon* by Deborah Da Costa

Coach's Voice:

This story is about Rosh Chodesh during Hanukkah. Be sure to check a Jewish calendar for Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan, so you can tell students when to look for the Hanukkah Moon.



- *Harvest of Light** (oil hanukiah)
- Share the book *Harvest of Light* to kick off the conversation of olives and olive oil
- Share this video - making olive oil for hanukkah in Israel (Shalom Sesame):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJsx1o1EFGM&list=PL936025519F71FCD6&index=8>
- Using a clear glass, olive oil and a floating wick, demonstrate lighting an oil light.
 - What do the children observe?
 - What do they wonder?
 - How does this oil hanukiah help them understand the story of Hanukkah better or differently?

Suggested Activities:

Make oil hanukkiot

1. Using juice glasses and sharpie markers, encourage each student to create a shamash for an oil hanukiah. Send each child home with:
 - A few floating wicks:
https://www.amazon.com/Ner-Mitzvah-Round-Floating-Wicks/dp/B01N1KK974/ref=asc_df_B01N1KK974/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=191967931333&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=3418417156558740038&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvgmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9021758&hvtargid=pla-300809175830&psc=1
 - Resources for them to teach their parents, and to create a full oil hanukiah at home:
http://www.designmegillah.com/2011/12/oil-menorah.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%253A+DesignMegillah+%2528Design+Megillah%2529

Spin dreidels!

2. This may be physically challenging for six-year-old fingers
 - Is it easier to spin certain dreidels?
 - Why?
3. Be sure to notice that there are four different Hebrew letters on the dreidel
 - You can name the letters, and definitely talk about the Hebrew words they stand for
 - Nes Gadol Haya Sham - A Great Miracle Happened There
4. Use the dreidel to encourage the students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the Hanukkah story
 - What was the miracle?
 - Where is “there?”
 - Who played a role in making the miracle happen?
 - What letter is on the Israeli dreidel in place of *hay*? (*Pay*, for “po” or “here”)
5. Visit <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/how-to-play-dreidel/> for more info
 - You can start to introduce the students to actual rules of the dreidel game, but don’t worry if they don’t completely follow the rules

Supply Needs:

- Storybooks
- Olive oil
- Floating wicks
- Glasses
- Dreidels

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that for each major Jewish holiday there is a story unique to the holiday
2. Understand how Hanukkah traditions, rituals and foods find their source in the core Hanukkah story
3. Be able to name some of the characters and plot points of the Hanukkah story and will be able to explain the story to others

Religious School Week 13

Sacred Text: Jacob's Journey to Haran

Contemporary Jewish Life: Who are the People in Your Synagogue Community?
Lesson 4 – Cantors, Ritual Directors, & Song Leaders

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Sacred Text: Jacob's Journey to Haran

Read "Jacob's Dream" (p. 51) from JPS Illustrated Children's Bible

- Encourage the students to ask questions while you are reading
- Consider giving each student a dot sticker to put on the back of their hand - this is their question buzzer
 - When they have a question, they can press the sticker and say "Buzz!" or "Beep!"
 - You can decide if you answer the question right away, ask other students for their thoughts, or add the question to a parking lot

Discuss Dreams

- Dreams can be:
 - Something you wish would be
 - Something you are afraid of
 - Something you remember
- Ask students to share recollections and/or ideas about their dreams

Draw Dreams

- On a large piece of butcher block paper, invite students to make their own dream images, using markers or watercolors
- Using loose parts, invite students to create the scene of Jacob's dream or their own dreams

(This lesson inspired by First Steps in Learning Torah with Young Children by Behar, Cohen and Mushnikow)

Supply Needs:

- Illustrated Children's Bible
- Dot stickers
- Art supplies
- Butcher paper
- Writing and drawing supplies
- Loose parts - Be sure to add photos and writings to the "Learning through Loose parts" slide deck

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Know the main characters and basic plotlines of the story of Jacob

Contemporary Jewish Life: Who are the People in Your Synagogue Community? Lesson 4 – Cantors, Ritual Directors, & Song Leaders

Coach's Voice:

The goal of the lesson is for students to understand who the cantors/ritual directors/song leaders at their synagogue are, and what they do. All questions asked and interactions should be in service of those goals.



- Brainstorm with students:
- What does a cantor/hazzan do?
 - Make a list you can add to later
- Where is the cantor's office?
- Who are all the people in the synagogue who help lead tefillah or singing?
- Can the students name the cantor and other musical staff at your synagogue?
- Why is it important to have a person in charge of the music at the synagogue?
- What are some favorite Jewish songs or tefillot the students like to sing?
- Invite the cantor to join you in class, or go meet them in their office
- Prepare interview questions with your students, for example:
 - Why do you like to work here?
 - We made a list of what we think you do
 - How did we do?
 - What did we miss?
 - Do you prefer dark or milk chocolate?
 - How long have you worked here?
 - What do you like to do when you're not here at synagogue?
 - Do you have any pets?
 - Who are the members of your family?
 - Why did you want to be a cantor?
 - Will you teach us your favorite song?
- Assign a question to each student
- Keep the interview to under fifteen minutes
- Take some photos of the students with the staff person
 - Start a Google slide show with the photos and some quick outtakes from the students after the interview (what does this person do? What do they like? what other things do you wonder about them? when might you see them again?)
 - Share with parents and community (and the clergy person, of course)
- Be sure to make a thank you card!

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Know the cantors/ritual directors/song leaders in the synagogue community and the roles they play in making life and community happen

Religious School Week 14

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Religious School Week 15

Sacred Text: Jacob Meets Rachel

Jewish Calendar: Tu B'Shevat through Core Stories – New Year of the Trees

Contemporary Jewish Life: Who are the People in Your Synagogue Community?
Lesson 5 – Lay Leaders

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Sacred Text: Jacob Meets Rachel

- Share the story of Jacob meeting Rachel in art:
<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1PU7bRK7XCkrXJucCbA4B-eUtrNfxigZSZ5pHUOjq2n8/edit?usp=sharing>
 - The text is in the speaker notes section
- As you share the slides:
 - What do students notice?
 - What do they wonder?
 - What is amazing in this story?
 - What is surprising?
 - What do the students predict will happen next?
 - Why did so many artists paint or draw this story?
- Invite students to use loose parts to work through this story
- Offer prompts such as:
 - What did Jacob think when he saw Rachel at the well?
 - How strong was Jacob to lift the rock?
 - Why did Rachel bring Jacob home?
 - Be sure to add photos and writings to the “Learning through Loose parts” slide deck
- Act out this story (not the kissing part)
 - Depending on the size of the class, some students can play the shepherds and the sheep or goats at the well
- Read a story about being a shepherd, to help students understand the job of Rachel and Jacob
 - *Charlie Needs a Cloak* by Tomie de Paola*
 - *The Herd Boy* by Niki Daly

Supply Needs:

- Loose parts - Be sure to add photos and writings to the “Learning through Loose parts” slide deck
- Story books

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Know the main characters and basic plotlines of the story of Jacob

Contemporary Jewish Life: Who are the People in Your Synagogue Community? Lesson 5 – Lay Leaders

Coach's Voice:

Synagogue lay leaders - board and committee members - are typically not visible, especially to first graders, in the way that rabbis or teachers are. It is important for first graders to understand these behind-the-scenes leaders and how they help build community, even if they are not up-front leading prayer or youth groups.



- Wonder with students:
- Who are the people that help make the synagogue run every day?
 - Are they listed on the synagogue website?
- Does the board president have an office at the synagogue?
- What kinds of decisions might the lay leaders make?
- Invite the Synagogue Board President to join you in class
 - If there is a parent in class that serves on the board, they are a good choice, too
- Prepare interview questions with your students, for example:
 - What do you do as the Board President (or member of the board)?
 - Why do you want to be a lay leader here?
 - Do you prefer dark or milk chocolate?
 - How long have you been a lay leader here?
 - What do you like to do when you're not here at synagogue?
 - Do you have any pets?
 - Who are the members of your family?
 - What are your hopes and dreams for the synagogue?
- Assign a question to each student
- Keep the interview to under fifteen minutes
- Take some photos of the students with the staff person
 - Start a Google slide show with the photos and some quick outtakes from the students after the interview (what does this person do? What do they like? what other things do you wonder about them? when might you see them again?)
 - Share with parents and community (and the staff person, of course)
- Be sure to make a thank you card!

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Know some of the lay leaders in the synagogue community and the roles they play in making life and community happen

Jewish Calendar: Tu B'Shevat through Core Stories – New Year of the Trees

Coach's Voice:

In first grade, as we focus on the core stories of the Jewish holidays, we look at Tu B'Shevat as the New Year, or the Birthday of the Trees.

The rabbis taught (in the Talmud, Rosh Hashanah 1:1): There are four New Year days including ..., the New Year for the trees. According to those who follow Hillel, it is on the fifteenth day of Shevat. You can find more background information here: <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/tu-bishvat-ideas-beliefs/>



- Sing and dance: Tu B'Shevat Higi'ah
- Share this video of this traditional Israeli song for Tu B'Shevat: https://israelforever.org/interact/multimedia/Music/almond_tree_Tubshevat/
 - All the lyrics are in the notes below the video
 - Encourage your students to sing the refrain:

ט"ו בשבט הגיע
חג לאילנות.

Tu B'Shevat higi'a, Chag La'ilanot.
Tu B'Shevat has arrived
The festival of trees

- Share the *Story of Travis the Tree* by Rabbi Molly Kane
<https://reformjudaism.org/travis-tree>
- Wonder with students, why are strong roots important?
- Act out this story, or invite students to draw the different scenes with markers or watercolors, or create scenes with loose parts
 - Be sure to add photos and writings to the "Learning through Loose parts" slide deck.
- Offer prompts such as:
 - Why did Elie and the other mice chew on Travis' roots?
 - What do trees just starting to bloom look like?
- Have a tasting of fruits that grow on trees in Israel
 - Be sure to say the blessing *borei pri ha'aitz* (the blessing for fruits which grow on trees)

Supply Needs:

- Loose parts - Be sure to add photos and writings to the "Learning through Loose parts" slide deck

- Story books
- Art supplies
- Fruits

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that there is a story unique to Tu B'Shevat

Religious School Week 16

Jewish Calendar: MLK & Being Partners with God; Tu B'Shevat through Core Stories – Honi the Circle-Maker

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers); Class Service Preparation 1 – Review (Lechu Neranenah, Yismechu, Lecha Dodi, Barchu, Shema, & Oseh Shalom)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Jewish Calendar: MLK & Being Partners with God

Coach's Voice:

Previously, you explored with students what it means to be partners with God. This lesson for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is another opportunity to look at being partners with God, and specifically, how Martin Luther King, Jr. partnered with God to make the world a better place and do tikkun olam.



- Two texts support this lesson:
 - Jewish foundational text: “It is not your responsibility to finish the work, but you should not stop from working on it anyway.”—Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers) 2:16
 - Ask students:
 - What does it mean that we have to start an important job, even if we don't finish it?
 - Can you think of an example of a time, you started something important, but needed someone else to help you finish it?
 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Quote: “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”
 - Ask students:
 - How does light drive out darkness? (Be physical here)
 - How does love drive out hate?
 - Can you think of a time when love helped make someone feel better?
- Read the book *Gathering Sparks* by Howard Schwartz*
- Wonder with students:
 - How can we gather sparks?
 - Is it important that we partner with God in this way?
 - Why or why not?
- Watch this video about Martin Luther King, Jr.:

<https://www.simplykinder.com/martin-luther-king-videos/>

- Wonder with students:
 - What are some of the ways Martin Luther King, Jr. took action?
 - Why did he keep going?
 - Did he take action alone?
 - How was Martin Luther King Jr. partnering with God?
 - Was he “gathering sparks”?
 - How?
 - What job did Martin Luther King Jr. start even though he didn't finish it?
 - How did Martin Luther King Jr. use his love to drive out hate?
- At the end of the video, Kid President mentions something he did (in 2015) to make the world a better place, #BOOKITFORWARD
 - What are some kid-initiated projects happening locally that the students in your class might contribute to, in order to partner with God and act in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. to do tikkun olam and make their world a better place?

Supply Needs:

- Story books

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Feel empowered to put Jewish values and mitzvot, such as tikkun olam, into action

Jewish Calendar: Tu B'Shevat through Core Stories – Honi the Circle-Maker

Coach's Voice:

Honi the Circle Maker is a traditional story for Tu B'Shevat.



- Share the story of Honi the Circle Maker with this video and/or the book *Honi's Circle of Trees* by Phillis Gershator:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRfV7XrGfBo&feature=emb_logo
- If possible, have some fresh carob pods or carob chips to taste while you enjoy the story (they look like this):
https://www.ohnuts.com/buy.cfm/dried-carob-pods?pre=37392&qclid=Cj0KCQiAifz-BRDjARIsAEElyGIEen29vCIVGd9OAvezSjtHZZRdswOM1N-lpcUuowrWjAFjLochnhMaAlIEEALw_wcB
- Wonder with the students:
 - Why did God listen to Honi?
 - Why didn't Honi think it was a good idea to plant the carob tree? Do you think it was a good idea?
 - Why or why not?
 - What might you want to do, create, or leave for your grandchildren?
- Take a quick trip outside to collect natural loose parts - acorns, tree bark, twigs, etc.
- Use these to create scenes from this story of Honi, or of what the students might want to do or create or leave for their grandchildren
- Be sure to add photos and writings to the "Learning through Loose parts" slide deck

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Carob pods or chips

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to name some of the characters and plot points of the Tu B'Shevat story

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Class Service Preparation 1 – Review (Lechu Neranenah, Yismechu, Lecha Dodi, Barchu, Shema, & Oseh Shalom)

Coach's Voice:

All year, the first grade students have been engaging in weekly tefillah in the form of a Kabbalat Shabbat service, in order to become familiar, or more familiar, with this tefillah service. The tefillah curriculum in JK and SK is also Kabbalat Shabbat, laying the foundation for first and second graders to become strong participants and leaders of Kabbalat Shabbat. In a few weeks, the first grade students and their families, along with the second grade families, will come together on a Friday evening to welcome in Shabbat with a Kabbalat Shabbat service and dinner. The goals are for the students to feel extremely comfortable in the service, and to be able to lead parts of the service. This lesson will help students move beyond at-large participation in the weekly service, to look more closely at specific tefillot. In coming weeks, the students will be encouraged to take on leadership roles in some of the tefillot. While the first grade students may have experienced the Kabbalat Shabbat service over the last year, this year they are more mature and better able to really dig in and lead.

Ideally, a cantor, music leader or ritual director can be part of this 15-20 minute lesson.

Here is a great resource for recordings:

<https://www.ansheemet.org/learn/onlinelearning/audiofiles/>



Lechu Neranenah

- The words of this tefillah are complicated, and it's quite possible students have become familiar with the melody but not the words
- Spend some time intentionally teaching the words of Lechu Neranenah, singing it back and forth, leader to students

Yism'chu Ha'shamayim

- The words of this tefillah are complicated, and it's quite possible students have become familiar with the melody but not the words
- Spend some time intentionally teaching the words of Yism'chu Ha'shamayim, singing it back and forth, leader to students
- Introduce joy and movement, throwing arms in the air or standing with the echo of "ha'shamayim"

Lecha Dodi (refrain)

- The words of the verses of this tefillah are complicated, but the refrain repeats often, and our goal is for students to feel mastery over the refrain
- Spend some time intentionally teaching the words of the refrain of Lecha Dodi, singing it back and forth, leader to students
 - Look at the translation too: Come with me, my friend, to greet the bride, to bring Shabbat peace inside.
- Introduce the concept of the Shabbat Bride (or Queen), and the choreography of the final verse - rise, face the entrance to the room, bow and bend as we sing Bo-ee Ka-lah

Barchu

- Take some time to look at the intention of the Barchu - it invites God to enter into conversation with us
- Typically, when we want someone to talk with us, we open by saying something nice ("Your eyes are bright today!")
- Practice this by inviting students to offer each other complements or kind conversation starters, taking turns going around a circle or the classroom
- Practice the choreography of the Barchu, when the leader and then the participants bow and straighten up
 - Here is video demonstration:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9W_A5ZtBKgo&feature=emb_logo

Shema

- If the students previously learned sign language for the Shema, now is a good time to review that

Oseh Shalom

- Using the symbol version of Oseh Shalom on page 38 of The JWeb Accessible Siddur, ask the students to explain what the tefillah Oseh Shalom means:
https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/jweb-production/ckeditor_assets/attachments/458/JWEB_A4_Accessible_Siddur.pdf
- Sing Oseh Shalom together in your favorite melody

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to sing along with/lead some of the Kabbalat Shabbat prayers (Lechu Neranenah, Yismechu, Lecha Dodi, Barchu, Shema, Oseh Shalom)

Religious School Week 17

Sacred Text: Jacob & Leah & Rachel – Wedding Mix-Ups

Contemporary Jewish Life: Different Kinds of Jewish Families – Interfaith & Interracial Families

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers); Class Service Preparation 2 – Practice New Prayers (V'ahavta, Aleinu, & Shalom Aleichem)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Sacred Text: Jacob & Leah & Rachel - Wedding Mix-Ups

Genesis 29:13-30 (edited):

On hearing the news of his sister's son Jacob, Laban ran to greet him; he embraced him and kissed him, and took him into his house. He told Laban all that had happened, and Laban said to him, "You are truly my close relative." When he had stayed with him a month's time, Laban said to Jacob, "Just because you are a kinsman, should you serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?"

Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older one was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah had weak eyes; Rachel was shapely and beautiful.

Jacob loved Rachel; so he answered, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel."

Laban said, "Better that I give her to you than that I should give her to an outsider. Stay with me." So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her.

Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my time is fulfilled." And Laban gathered all the people of the place and made a feast.

When evening came, he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob.

When morning came, there was Leah! So he said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? I was in your service for Rachel! Why did you deceive me?"

Laban said, "It is not the practice in our place to marry off the younger before the older.

Wait until the bridal week of this one is over and we will give you that one too, provided you serve me another seven years.”
Jacob did so; he waited out the bridal week of the one, and then he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife. And Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served him another seven years.

- Share the text with the students
- As you read:
 - Encourage the students to ask questions while you are reading
 - Consider giving each student a dot sticker to put on the back of their hand - this is their question buzzer
 - When they have a question, they can press the sticker and say “Buzz!” or “Beep!”.
 - You can decide if you answer the question right away, ask other students for their thoughts, or add the question to a parking lot
 - Be sure to draw the students’ attention to the twists and turns and emotions in the story:
 - What is going on with Laban tricking Jacob?
 - Has Jacob ever tricked anyone?
 - How might Rachel feel when Leah marries Jacob first?
 - How might Leah feel about this?

Coach’s Voice:

A few things you will likely need to explain in this text:

Students will hopefully wonder how Laban was able to switch in Leah for Rachel. You can explain that the bride in these times would have been fully covered with a thick veil, so Jacob would not have seen Leah’s face. The tradition at a Jewish wedding of the groom lifting the bride’s veil before the wedding (even though the veil is typically see-through) comes from this scene in the Torah. No groom wants to be fooled like Jacob and end up with the wrong bride.

Students will also hopefully notice that Jacob gets married to two people at the same time. While that may have been a custom that was allowed in the time of the Torah, we are no longer allowed to be married to two people at the same time.



Suggested Activity:

Act out this story with “feelings doubles”

- Invite four students to play Laban, Jacob, Leah and Rachel
- Encourage them to “perform” the story with the teacher narrating
- Assign one to two kids to play the feelings for each character

- Have the four initial students act out the story with the teacher narrating again, but at each step of the story, invite the “feelings actors” to talk about or act out what the characters might be feeling at that moment in the story

Supply Needs:

- Dot stickers

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Know the main characters and basic plotlines of the Jacob, Leah, and Rachel story

Contemporary Jewish Life: Different Kinds of Jewish Families - Interfaith & Interracial Families

Coach's Voice:

In first grade, students immerse in contemporary Jewish life by looking at who is around them - people in their synagogue community, and different kinds of Jewish families. As you explore different kinds of Jewish families, it is important to notice who is in your class, and include books and lessons that validate the families in your class. This curriculum includes lessons and resources for teaching about interfaith Jewish families, multiracial Jewish families, Jewish LGBTQ+ families, and Jewish families with family members with disabilities. If you have families in your class that are exceptional in other ways, maybe a single parent, or grandparents raising children, or blended families, it is worthwhile to find resources that validate all the families in your class. This resource can help you structure your conversation about "What is a family?"

https://assets2.hrc.org/welcoming-schools/documents/WS_Lesson_What_is_a_Family.pdf



Suggested Activities:

Family Brainstorm

- Write down everything students suggest about what a Jewish family might look like on a board or easel
 - Don't push too hard, but try and elicit a wide variety, which includes all the family make-ups represented by the class, and then includes a wider diversity
 - Help students think about number of parents, skin colors, gender of parents, abilities and disabilities of family members, etc.
 - Make sure the list is made without judgment and without elevating one kind of family as better, or more authentic
- Read the book *Chicken Soup Chicken Soup* by Pamela Mayer*
 - The story is about a girl with two grandmothers: one Asian American and one Jewish American
 - Here is the reading guide from PJ Library:
<https://pjlibrary.org/getmedia/61ab8967-8faa-4962-bb51-24342aa32870/Chicken-Soup-Chicken-Soup.pdf>
What happens when Sophie mixes together the traditions of her two grandmothers?
- Read *Ezra's Big Shabbat Question* by Aviva Brown
 - Watch a video of the author reading the book here:
<https://fb.watch/2YK7V-F-0F/>
 - This article describes why the author wrote the book
 - While this article is mostly for background information, it is important to share with students that sometimes it is hard to find

picture books that represent all kinds of different Jewish families (although it's starting to get easier):

<https://www.kveller.com/i-couldnt-find-kids-books-that-reflected-my-black-jewish-family-so-i-published-my-own/>

Get in the Kitchen

- Take inspiration from *Chicken Soup Chicken Soup*, and make two similar Jewish recipes from two different cultures
- Consider using the recipes found at the end of *Chicken Soup Chicken Soup* for Chicken soup, Kreplach and Wontons
- Invite parents in to help with the cooking
- Depending on the makeup of your class, consider making other complementary recipes that have something to teach each other, like the chicken soups of the two grandmothers
- For example:
 - Dosas, traditional Indian pancakes, and latkes
 - The book *Queen of the Hanukkah Dosas* by Pamela Ehrenberg will support this activity
 - Ethiopian Dabo and challah:
<https://jwfoodandwine.com/article/2019/09/13/bless-bread-pan-cooked-shabbat-dabo-ethiopia>)

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Recipe ingredients

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that Jewish families in America have different skin colors, speak different languages, have different customs, and are all part of the same Jewish family

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Class Service Preparation 2 - Practice New Prayers (V'Ahavta, Aleinu, & Shalom Aleichem)

Coach's Voice:

All year, the first grade students have been engaging in weekly tefillah in the form of a Kabbalat Shabbat service, in order to become familiar with this tefillah experience. In a few weeks, the first grade students and their families, along with the second grade families, will come together on a Friday evening to welcome in Shabbat with a Kabbalat Shabbat service and dinner. The goals are for the students to feel extremely comfortable in the service, and to be able to lead parts of the service. This lesson will help students move beyond at-large participation in the weekly service, to look more closely at specific tefillot which they were exposed to but likely didn't learn last year. In coming weeks, the students will be encouraged to take on leadership roles in some of the tefillot. While the first grade students may have experienced the Kabbalat Shabbat service over the last year, this year they are more mature and better able to really dig in and lead.

Ideally, a cantor, music leader or ritual director can be part of this 15-20 minute lesson.

Here is a great resource for recordings:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1kjNa15b4Z_7xpg81TrjKlzMdbllXg0Ww?usp=sharing



V'Ahavta

- In the V'ahata, we sing about three ways we show our love for God - with our heart, our soul and all our might
 - What might this look like to your first grade students?
- We are instructed to take the words which God commended us this day – in other words, all the commandments - and talk about them when we are sitting at home and when we go out, when we go to sleep and when we get up
 - We should even make a sign on our hand and between our eyes to remember the commandments
 - What are some of the commandments/mitzvot the students can think of that they may talk about at these times mentioned in the V'Ahavta?
- Sing the V'Ahavta together, slowly
 - There's a lot of words which are likely familiar to students even if they don't know all of them
- Point out the concrete words, maybe even adding motions for l'vevecha (your heart), b'vei-techa/bay-techa (your house), va-derech (on the path, as you go), uv-ku-mecha (when you rise up - similar to La-kum which students may have learned in Hebrew Through Movement), yade-cha (your hand), ay-necha (your eyes)

Aleinu

- In the Aleinu, we speak about God as a King or Queen
- Discuss with students - how might one act (and stand and move) in the presence of royalty?
- As you sing Aleinu, invite students to listen for the word Melech (King) or derivations (mal-chay, ha'milachim) and to make a certain movement whenever they hear a word that refers to God as royalty (like putting a crown on their head)
- Practice the choreography of Aleinu as you sing: Bend knees at korim, bow at waist on umishta'avim umodim, up straight on lifnei melech
 - You can show part of this video to demonstrate (her introduction is a bit wordy, but she goes through the choreography at 2:42):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xb0heUKZhkY>

Shalom Aleichem

- Here is a good background info article with a video of Alicia Jo Rabins singing Shalom Aleichem:
<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/shalom-aleichem/>
- Shalom Aleichem welcomes melachim - angels or messengers - to our Shabbat table
- Read the book *The Shabbat Angels* by Maxine Segal Handelman
 - Invite students to join the family singing at the end of the book.
- Shalom Aleichem includes a lot of repetition
 - When you sing, ask students to point out the words or phrases they hear repeating again and again

Supply Needs:

- Story books

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to sing along with/lead some of the Kabbalat Shabbat prayers (V'Ahavta, Aleinu, and Shalom Aleichem)

Religious School Week 18

Sacred Text: Jacob & Leah & Rachel – Baby Wars

History: Where Did MY Family Come From?

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers); Class Service Preparation 3 – Practice New Prayers (V'ahavta, Aleinu, & Shalom Aleichem)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Sacred Text: Jacob & Leah & Rachel - Baby Wars

Coach's Voice:

This sacred text is tricky, as it describes Jacob having children with 4 different women. It is appropriate to introduce Zilpah and Bilhah as surrogates, who help Rachel and Leah have babies when they cannot. Many families today are created with the help of a surrogate. You may want to alert parents that you will be discussing alternative ways to create families in this week's sacred text. Your students may want to share their own birth stories. If you find yourself in the midst of a conversation about the many varied ways to create a family, mazal tov! Be sure to validate all the students' stories. There is no better or more correct way to create a family. As with the last sacred text lesson, it is important here to help students pay attention to how everyone is feeling, especially the mothers.



Gen 29:31-30:13 and 30:17-24

God saw that Leah was unloved and he opened her womb; but Rachel was barren.

Leah became pregnant and bore a son, and named him Reuben; for she declared, "It means: 'The LORD has seen my affliction'"

She became pregnant again and bore a son, and declared, "This is because the LORD heard that I was unloved and has given me this one also"; so, she named him Simeon.

Again, she became pregnant and bore a son and declared, "This time my husband will become attached to me, for I have borne him three sons." Therefore, he was named Levi.

She became pregnant again and bore a son, and declared, "This time I will praise the LORD." Therefore, she named him Judah. Then she stopped having children.

When Rachel saw that she had no children, she became envious of her sister.

She said to Jacob, "Here is my maid Bilhah. She will be my surrogate so I too may have children."

Bilhah bore Jacob a son.

And Rachel said, "God has heeded my plea and given me a son." Therefore, she named him Dan.

Rachel's maid Bilhah bore Jacob a second son.

And Rachel said, "A fateful contest I waged with my sister; yes, and I have prevailed." So she named him Naphtali.

When Leah saw that she had no more children, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a surrogate.

And when Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son, Leah said, "What luck!" So, she named him Gad. When Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son, Leah declared, "What fortune!" So, she named him Asher.

God heeded Leah, and she became pregnant and had a fifth son.

And Leah said, "God has given me my reward." So, she named him Issachar.

When Leah became pregnant again and bore Jacob a sixth son, Leah said, "God has given me a choice gift; this time my husband will exalt me, for I have borne him six sons." So, she named him Zebulun.

Last, she gave birth to a daughter, and named her Dinah.

Now God remembered Rachel; God heeded her and opened her womb. She became pregnant and had a son, and said, "God has taken away my disgrace." So she named him Joseph, which is to say, "May the LORD add another son for me."

Share the text

- As you read, invite a third of the students to be the illustrators, and draw the mothers and children as they are introduced on the board or easel paper (quickly, maybe just with stick figures or rough drawings)
- Invite another third of students to be the "What?!?" listeners, and jump up and ask every time something doesn't make sense, so you know when to slow down and explain as you go
- Invite the final third of the students to be the commentators, pointing out things like "She's really mad!" or "That's a lot of kids!" or "What was she thinking??"

What's in a name?

- Reach out to parents and ask them to send you (or send in with their child) a brief explanation of what their child's name means or why they chose that name
 - It would be useful to also have a name dictionary handy, or a website like:
<https://www.babynames.com/>
<https://reformjudaism.org/baby-names>
- In this text, we hear the meanings behind the names of eleven of Jacob's sons (there is no explanation for Dinah's name, and Benjamin is the only son not born in this portion)
- Encourage the students to share the meaning or explanation for their own name or invite parents to class to share the stories

Text Flashback

- Remind students that Sarah had a similar experience with not being able to have a baby (Gen. 16:1-4)
- Revisit that text and compare the role God played in the creation of each family

Dance party

- The birth of so many children in one text is cause for celebration!
- Put on some music and invite students to celebrate and DANCE!.
- Consider the "Our Family Tree" spotify playlist from jkidsradio.com:
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0dt7rltIJANqsLmt16Qxpf>

Supply Needs:

- Easel paper
- Drawing supplies

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to explain the Jacob, Rachel, and Leah story to others

History: Where Did MY Family Come From?

Coach's Voice:

Every student has a story. Some stories are easy to collect and easy to share. Other stories need to be handled with more care. Students who are adopted may have a more complex experience answering the question “Where did my family come from?” Students whose parents are divorced or under unusual strain may have more difficulty securing parents’ participation in this project. Know your students. Consider the potential challenges and landmines as you shape this lesson, and adapt accordingly.



Collect stories

- In advance of this lesson, send a questionnaire to families regarding the story of how their family came to this country
- Consider including questions such as:
 - From what country does your family originate?
 - Who in your family came to this country?
 - How did they travel?
 - Why did they come?
 - What special things or traditions did they bring?
- Read *The Keeping Quilt* by Patricia Polacco*
- The author tells us where her ancestor came from but doesn't tell us how she came to America
 - Can the students figure it out from what they've learned?
- What are some traditions that are handed down through the generations in the story?
 - How are they handed down?
- What are some traditions that have been passed down in the students' families?
- Mark your city on a world map
- Mark the cities or countries students' families came from.
- Compare how far students' families have traveled
- Is there a place in the world when several families originate from?
- Discuss with your students:
 - If they were moving to a new, faraway place, what would they pack?
 - If you have students who have moved to your city from a faraway place, or even not such a faraway place, invite them to share their story, as much as they are comfortable
 - What did they pack?
 - What was exciting about the move?
 - What was scary?

Gratitude

- Encourage students to illustrate and/or write a letter of gratitude to their ancestor who came to this country
- The letter might be to a known relative, such as Great-great Grandma Bess or Mom and Dad, or an unknown relative, if the story is not known or if it's complicated
- What are the blessings that come from living in your country or city that the student is grateful for?
- The student might also consider what challenges and risks the ancestor faced in order to come to this country, and express thanks or praise

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Drawing supplies
- World map

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that Jewish families in America have different skin colors, speak different languages, have different customs, and are all part of the same Jewish family

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Class Service Preparation 3 - Practice New Prayers: V'Ahavta, Aleinu, and Shalom Aleichem

Coach's Voice:

All year, the first grade students have been engaging in weekly tefillah in the form of a Kabbalat Shabbat service, in order to become familiar with this tefillah experience. In a few weeks, the first grade students and their families, along with the second grade families, will come together on a Friday evening to welcome in Shabbat with a Kabbalat Shabbat service and dinner. The goals are for the students to feel extremely comfortable in the service, and to be able to lead parts of the service. This lesson will help students move beyond at-large participation in the weekly service, to look more closely at specific tefillot which they were exposed to but likely didn't learn last year. In coming weeks, the students will be encouraged to take on leadership roles in some of the tefillot. While the first grade students may have experienced the Kabbalat Shabbat service over the last year, this year they are more mature and better able to really dig in and lead.

Ideally, a cantor, music leader or ritual director can be part of this 15-20 minute lesson.

Here is a great resource for recordings:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1kjNa15b4Z_7xpg81TrjKlzMdbllXg0Ww?usp=sharing



V'Ahavta

- In the V'ahata, we sing about three ways we show our love for God - with our heart, our soul and all our might
 - What might this look like to your first grade students?
- We are instructed to take the words which God commended us this day – in other words, all the commandments - and talk about them when we are sitting at home and when we go out, when we go to sleep and when we get up
 - We should even make a sign on our hand and between our eyes to remember the commandments
 - What are some of the commandments/mitzvot the students can think of that they may talk about at these times mentioned in the V'Ahavta?
- Sing the V'Ahavta together, slowly
 - There's a lot of words which are likely familiar to students even if they don't know all of them
- Point out the concrete words, maybe even adding motions for l'vevecha (your heart), b'vei-techa/bay-techa (your house), va-derech (on the path, as you go), uv-ku-mecha (when you rise up - similar to La-kum which students may have learned in Hebrew Through Movement), yade-cha (your hand), ay-necha (your eyes)

Aleinu

- In the Aleinu, we speak about God as a King or Queen
- Discuss with students - how might one act (and stand and move) in the presence of royalty?
- As you sing Aleinu, invite students to listen for the word Melech (King) or derivations (mal-chay, ha'milachim) and to make a certain movement whenever they hear a word that refers to God as royalty (like putting a crown on their head)
- Practice the choreography of Aleinu as you sing: Bend knees at korim, bow at waist on umishta'avim umodim, up straight on lifnei melech
 - You can show part of this video to demonstrate (her introduction is a bit wordy, but she goes through the choreography at 2:42):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xb0heUKZhkY>

Shalom Aleichem

- Here is a good background info article with a video of Alicia Jo Rabins singing Shalom Aleichem:
<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/shalom-aleichem/>
- Shalom Aleichem welcomes melachim - angels or messengers - to our Shabbat table
- Read the book *The Shabbat Angels* by Maxine Segal Handelman
 - Invite students to join the family singing at the end of the book.
- Shalom Aleichem includes a lot of repetition
 - When you sing, ask students to point out the words or phrases they hear repeating again and again

Supply Needs:

- Story books

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to sing along with/lead some of the Kabbalat Shabbat prayers (V'Ahavta, Aleinu, and Shalom Aleichem)

Religious School Week 19

Sacred Text: Jacob Prepares to Meet Esau

Contemporary Jewish Life: Different Kinds of Jewish Families – Families with Disabilities

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers); Class Service Preparation 4 – Practice New Prayers (V'ahavta, Aleinu, & Shalom Aleichem)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Sacred Text: Jacob Prepares to Meet Esau

Coach's Voice:

Since the last time the first graders studied sacred text, Jacob has decided to take his large family and leave the home of his uncle Lavan. In this week's text, Jacob is getting ready to leave, and specifically, to meet his brother Esau, who he has not seen in twenty years.

Before diving into today's text, think back to earlier texts. Look at Genesis chapter 27, especially verse 41. Recall and wonder together:

- What happened the last time Jacob and Esau were together?
- How might Esau be feeling about Jacob, even twenty years later?

Consider discussing the questions inserted into the text as you share the text below.

Genesis 32:4-22

Jacob sent messengers ahead to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom, and instructed them as follows, "Thus shall you say, 'To my lord Esau, thus says your servant Jacob: I stayed with Laban and remained until now; I have acquired cattle, sheep, and male and female slaves; and I send this message to my lord in the hope of gaining your favor.'"

- Why does Jacob feel he needs to gain Esau's favor (be forgiven)?

The messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau; he himself is coming to meet you, and there are four hundred men with him."

- What might this mean, that Esau is coming with 400 men?



Jacob was greatly frightened; in his anxiety, he divided the people with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two camps, thinking, "If Esau comes to the one camp and attacks it, the other camp may yet escape."

- Why is Jacob frightened?
- What do you think of his strategy, dividing the people and flocks into two camps?

Then Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O LORD, who said to me, 'Return to your native land and I will deal bountifully with you!' I am unworthy of all the kindness that You have so steadfastly shown Your servant: with my staff alone I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps.

Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; else, I fear, he may come and strike me down, mothers and children alike.

Yet You have said, 'I will deal bountifully with you and make your offspring as the sands of the sea, which are too numerous to count.'"

- What do you make of Jacob's prayer?
- How does he praise God?
 - What does he ask of God?
 - What does Jacob remind God of?

After spending the night there, he selected from what was at hand these presents for his brother Esau:

200 she-goats and 20 he-goats; 200 ewes and 20 rams; 30 milch camels with their colts; 40 cows and 10 bulls.

- Is this a generous gift? Why or why not?

These he put in the charge of his servants, drove by drove, and he told his servants, "Go on ahead, and keep a distance between droves."

He instructed the one in front as follows, "When my brother Esau meets you and asks you, 'Whose man are you? Where are you going? And whose [animals] are these ahead of you?' you shall answer, 'Your servant Jacob's; they are a gift sent to my lord Esau; and [Jacob] himself is right behind us.'"

He gave similar instructions to the second one, and the third, and all the others who followed the droves, namely, "Thus and so shall you say to Esau when you reach him.

And you shall add, 'And your servant Jacob himself is right behind us.'"

For he reasoned, "If I make peace with him with presents in advance, and then face him, perhaps he will show me favor."

And so the gift went on ahead, while he remained in camp that night.

- What is Jacob's strategy or intention by sending group after group of flocks as gifts to his brother?
- Do you think it will work?

Suggested Activities:

Bringing the story to life

- Invite students to draw and cut out quick pictures of Jacob, the four mothers, the eleven sons and Dina (Benjamin is yet to be born), many slaves and lots of goats, camels, cows, and sheep
- Using these pictures, invite pairs or small groups of students to retell the story to their classmates
- Encourage three or four retellings
- Keep these pictures for upcoming text study

Anticipating Jacob's reception

- Invite students to make predictions about how Jacob and his entourage will be received by Esau
- Using loose parts, clay or watercolors, encourage students to make artistic representations of their predictions
- Use prompts such as:
 - What is Jacob feeling as he approaches Esau?
 - What is Esau feeling as he is approached by Jacob?
 - What might the reunion scene look like?
- Be sure to add photos and writings to the "Learning through Loose parts" slide deck
- Hold on to these predictions to reflect on when Jacob and Esau meet in a few lessons

Supply Needs:

- Loose parts - Be sure to add photos and writings to the "Learning through Loose parts" slide deck
- Art supplies
- Clay
- Watercolors

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Know the main characters and basic plotline of the story of Jacob and Esau's reunion

Contemporary Jewish Life: Different Kinds of Jewish Families - Families with Disabilities

Coach's Voice:

In first grade, students immerse in contemporary Jewish life by looking at who is around them - people in their synagogue community, and different kinds of Jewish families. As you explore different kinds of Jewish families, it is important to notice who is in your class, and include books and lessons that validate the families in your class. This curriculum includes lessons and resources for teaching about interfaith Jewish families, multiracial Jewish families, Jewish LGBTQ+ families, and Jewish families with family members with disabilities. If you have families in your class that are exceptional in other ways, maybe a single parent, or grandparents raising children, or blended families, it is worthwhile to find resources that validate all the families in your class. It is important to remember that not all disabilities are visible. While you may be able to see when family members use a wheelchair or a hearing aid, you cannot necessarily see if there are family members with mental illness or a chronic autoimmune disease. The enduring understanding is that Jewish families in the community face challenges, such as supporting a family member with a disability, and part of being a Jewish community is caring for all families in the ways they need support.



Supporting friends with disabilities

(This lesson adapted from <https://jewishlearningventure.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/JDAIM-Online-Lesson-Plan-K-2.pdf>)

- Watch this video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLCP7qeYlsw>
- Wonder with students:
 - What are some loud places in our community?
 - Have you been places that have been too loud?
 - How does that feel to be in a place that is too loud, or bright, or cold?
 - How might you make it better for someone like Julia, when it is too loud for them?
- Consider watching this report of students who created a silent prom for one student: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhwlgIQMyO4>

Jewish text

- Share this text with students: "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor." (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 31a)
- Wonder together:
 - What are some things you don't like that you should not do to others?

- Why do the rabbis tell us to do this (or act like this)?
 - How is taking care of other people a Jewish thing to do?
- Read *We Can Find a Way - a Hachnosas Orchim Inclusion Story* by Dina Rosenfeld
- Notice with students:
 - What are the different needs of the guests invited to Bubbie's birthday party?
 - How do Eli, Zev and Leah find a way to include everyone?
 - Why was it important that they try to include everyone?

Expand the community you envision

- Take out the large piece of butcher block paper on which you invited students to draw the community - as they know it and as they imagine it - in a previous lesson
- Invite students to add families with disabilities to the community they've drawn and envisioned
- Take a walk around the synagogue, to look for ways that the space invites or excludes people
 - Is there a way for people using wheelchairs to easily enter the building?
 - How about a way to reach important places, like the Bima or bathrooms?
 - Are there large print siddurim for people who can't see as well?
 - Are there siddurim with transliteration for people who don't read Hebrew?
 - Is there anything in the synagogue environment that lets people know, even before they ask, that the synagogue welcomes and supports children, teens, and adults with disabilities and mental health conditions, and their families and caregivers?
- Make a list of the things that include and exclude people
- As a class, write a two-part letter to the rabbi and the board president
 - Part 1: Commend them on the steps the synagogue has already taken to make the space inclusive of people with different needs
 - Part 2: Offer suggestions on how to improve on the things that exclude people, such as installing ramps or investing in a supply of magnifying sheets or fidgets

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Butcher paper
- Writing and drawing supplies

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Feel part of a wide, diverse Jewish family

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Class Service Preparation 4 - Practice New Prayers (V'Ahavta, Aleinu, & Shalom Aleichem)

Coach's Voice:

All year, the first grade students have been engaging in weekly tefillah in the form of a Kabbalat Shabbat service, in order to become familiar with this tefillah experience. In a few weeks, the first grade students and their families, along with the second grade families, will come together on a Friday evening to welcome in Shabbat with a Kabbalat Shabbat service and dinner. The goals are for the students to feel extremely comfortable in the service, and to be able to lead parts of the service. This lesson will help students move beyond at-large participation in the weekly service, to look more closely at specific tefillot which they were exposed to but likely didn't learn last year. In coming weeks, the students will be encouraged to take on leadership roles in some of the tefillot. While the first grade students may have experienced the Kabbalat Shabbat service over the last year, this year they are more mature and better able to really dig in and lead.

Ideally, a cantor, music leader or ritual director can be part of this 15-20 minute lesson.

Here is a great resource for recordings:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1kjNa15b4Z_7xpg81TrjKlzMdbllXg0Ww?usp=sharing

V'Ahavta



- In the V'ahata, we sing about three ways we show our love for God - with our heart, our soul and all our might
 - What might this look like to your first grade students?
- We are instructed to take the words which God commended us this day – in other words, all the commandments - and talk about them when we are sitting at home and when we go out, when we go to sleep and when we get up
 - We should even make a sign on our hand and between our eyes to remember the commandments
 - What are some of the commandments/mitzvot the students can think of that they may talk about at these times mentioned in the V'Ahavta?
- Sing the V'Ahavta together, slowly
 - There's a lot of words which are likely familiar to students even if they don't know all of them
- Point out the concrete words, maybe even adding motions for l'vavecha (your heart), b'vei-techa/bay-techa (your house), va-derech (on the path, as you go), uv-ku-mecha (when you rise up - similar to La-kum which students may have learned in Hebrew Through Movement), yade-cha (your hand), ay-necha (your eyes)

Aleinu

- In the Aleinu, we speak about God as a King or Queen
- Discuss with students - how might one act (and stand and move) in the presence of royalty?
- As you sing Aleinu, invite students to listen for the word Melech (King) or derivations (mal-chay, ha'milachim) and to make a certain movement whenever they hear a word that refers to God as royalty (like putting a crown on their head)
- Practice the choreography of Aleinu as you sing: Bend knees at korim, bow at waist on umishta'avim umodim, up straight on lifnei melech
 - You can show part of this video to demonstrate (her introduction is a bit wordy, but she goes through the choreography at 2:42):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xb0heUKZhkY>

Shalom Aleichem

- Here is a good background info article with a video of Alicia Jo Rabins singing Shalom Aleichem:
<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/shalom-aleichem/>
- Shalom Aleichem welcomes melachim - angels or messengers - to our Shabbat table
- Read the book *The Shabbat Angels* by Maxine Segal Handelman
 - Invite students to join the family singing at the end of the book.
- Shalom Aleichem includes a lot of repetition
 - When you sing, ask students to point out the words or phrases they hear repeating again and again

Supply Needs:

- Story books

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to sing along with/lead some of the Kabbalat Shabbat prayers (V'Ahavta, Aleinu, and Shalom Aleichem)

Religious School Week 20

Sacred Text: Jacob Wrestles with an Angel

History: Coming to America – Celebration of Our Stories

Israel: Desert

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Sacred Text: Jacob Wrestles with an Angel

Coach's Voice:

Following is the text (translation from Sefaria.org), or you might read the version in the JPS Children's Bible, page 57 only. You might also consider sharing this video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yc2UAY6h7PI> (first 2:30 min only), or you can watch it for your own background information.



Genesis 32:23-30

That same night he (Jacob) arose, and taking his two wives, his two maidservants [or his four wives], and his eleven children*, he crossed the ford of the Jabbok. After taking them across the stream, he sent across all his possessions.

Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the break of dawn.

When he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he wrenched Jacob's hip at its socket, so that the socket of his hip was strained as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for dawn is breaking." But he answered, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me."

Said the other, "What is your name?" He replied, "Jacob."

Said he, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with beings divine and human, and have prevailed."

Jacob asked, "Pray tell me your name." But he said, "You must not ask my name!" And he took leave of him there.

**Dina is believed to be present too, although the rabbis argue about her strange absence from this text.*

- Encourage the students to ask questions while you are reading
- Consider giving each student a dot sticker to put on the back of their hand - this is their question buzzer
 - When they have a question, they can press the sticker and say “Buzz!” or “Beep!”.
 - You can decide if you answer the question right away, ask other students for their thoughts, or add the question to a parking lot
- What do students notice?
- What do they wonder?
- What is amazing in this story?
- What is surprising?

Suggested Activities:

Act out this story

- Invite various pairs of students to act it out for the group, each adding their own understandings

Look at this story in art

<https://americanart.si.edu/artwork/jacob-wrestling-angel-9936>

Jacob Wrestling with the Angel by Hananiah Harari

- What do students see? (Shapes, colors, objective observations)
- How does this painting tell the story?
- What does this painting add to the text?

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Dot stickers

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Know the main characters and basic plotline of the story of Jacob and the angel

History: Coming to America - Celebration of our Stories

Coach's Voice

In the previous lesson, students considered what it was like for their ancestors who came to this country, and wrote letters acknowledging and expressing their gratitude. Now it is time to celebrate those journeys and stories that have led to the creation of this community in this class.



- Invite family members to join the class to celebrate their coming to America stories
- Consider:
 - Asking parents or grandparents who made the journey themselves to tell the students about their journey, or why they chose to come to America
 - Inviting family members to bring pictures of people or places in the place they came from
 - Asking family members to share a tradition or ritual object that has traveled with the family through locations and/or generations
 - Inviting students to teach their families about the diversity in the class by explaining the map illustrating where all the families came from.
 - Inviting students to read their letters of gratitude to their ancestors for all the families

Suggested Activity:

Create a class community mural

- On a long expanse of butcher block paper, invite students and their families to draw the story of their coming to America, and their being in America, and this class community
- Drawings might include:
 - Symbols of where they've come from
 - Modes of transportation to get to America
 - Traditions that have traveled with them
 - Relationships that exist in the class because all these families have come to America
- End with the Shehecheyanu blessing, to give gratitude for all the people who braved changing their lives so that these students and families could come together in this class

Supply Needs:

- Writing and drawing supplies
- Butcher block paper

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Feel pride as they share their family's story of coming to America

Israel: Desert

Coach's Voice:

In first grade, we turn our focus to the geological aspects of Israel, to help students develop a concrete understanding of the Land of Israel. In previous years students have explored Israel in light of its celebrations, and in upcoming years, the focus will return to the people of Israel, and in fourth grade, the geography of Israel.



Some background information about the Negev Desert:

- The word Negev means “dry”, and that’s just what this huge desert is
 - It covers more than a third of Eretz Yisrael, the entire south of the country
- A major challenge in creating the State of Israel has been to “make the desert bloom”
 - That’s just what has happened
 - Vast systems of irrigation pipelines installed by Israeli settlers over the past several decades have pushed the desert back, making it possible to grow crops and build cities
- The largest city in the Negev is Beersheba
 - The rest of the Negev is dotted with small communities and kibbutzim
 - Bedouin encampments can also be found scattered through the region
 - Bedouin are nomads who have lived in the Negev for generations
 - They reside in tents, and wander with their flocks of sheep and goats (*Jewish Every Day*, p. 92)
- To show students how much of Israel is desert, check out this map of Israel in Hebrew: <https://jr.co.il/pictures/israel/maps/hebrew-illustrated-map-israel.jpg>
- Or this geological map:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography_of_Israel#/media/File:Israel_relief_location_map.jpg
 - What do these maps make the students wonder?
- Share this video, Israelis Use Technology to Make the Desert Bloom:
 - (Note: the video includes a number of words on the screen which aren’t read aloud; you’ll need to pause and explain. The visuals are beautiful, but your translation of “fish waste” as “fish poop” for example, will help kids understand what’s happening.)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68XFaXXHpj0>
- What questions would the students ask Alon Badihi or Mayan Kitron if they could?
- Here is some background information (with some beautiful photos) about the invention of drip-irrigation in Israel: <https://www.myolivetree.com/simcha-blass-history-drip-irrigation/>
- Explore the animals that live in the desert in Israel:
<https://www.goeco.org/article/desert-animals-of-israel>

<https://www.fromthegrapevine.com/slideshows/nature/10-desert-animals-israel>

- Wonder with students, what makes these animals able to live in the desert?
- Create the desert together
- Provide the students:
 - Butcher block paper
 - Glue
 - Paintbrushes
 - Sand
- Invite them to create the desert
- Ask students to encompass their desert in an outline of Israel (that the students draw or the teacher draws)

Coach's Voice:

Students will reference and add to this map in future lessons, so be sure not to skip this step.

- Ask students to create the base of the desert and discuss what else they might find in the desert of Israel
- Add animals, people, crops, tents, maybe even the city of Be'ersheva
- Be sure to include in your desert an irrigation system for your crops!



Supply Needs:

- Writing and drawing supplies
- Butcher block paper
- Glue
- Paintbrushes
- Sand

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to identify the desert on a map of Israel

Religious School Week 21

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Religious School Week 22

Sacred Text: Jacob's Reunion with Esau, Jacob's Travels Home

Mitzvot & Values: Mitzvot in Sacred Text – V'ahavta L'reiacha Kamocha/Loving Your Neighbor as Yourself, Jacob, Leah, & Rachel [study]

Israel: Seas & Ocean

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Sacred Text: Jacob's Reunion with Esau, Jacob's Travels Home

Coach's Voice:

This lesson is the end of the first graders' study of the Avot (fathers) and Imahot (Mothers) of the Jewish people. The book of Bereshit/Genesis continues with the dramatic story of Jacob's son, Joseph, and Jacob does appear again toward the end of the book. First grade is focused on these seven essential parents of the Jewish people, so we end our study here, and leave Joseph to later grades. Following is the text (translation from Sefaria.org).



Genesis 33:1-11 (excerpts), 35:27, 37:1

Looking up, Jacob saw Esau coming, accompanied by four hundred men. He divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two maids (Zilpah and Bilhah). He himself went on ahead and bowed low to the ground seven times until he was near his brother.

Esau ran to greet him. He embraced him and, falling on his neck, he kissed him; and they wept.

Looking about, he saw the women and the children. "Who," he asked, "are these with you?" He answered, "The children with whom God has favored your servant."

Then the wives, with their children, came forward and bowed low.

And Esau asked, "What do you mean by all this company which I have met?" He answered, "To gain my lord's favor."

Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; let what you have remain yours."

But Jacob said, “No, I pray you; if you would do me this favor, accept from me this gift; for to see your face is like seeing the face of God, and you have received me favorably. Please accept my present which has been brought to you, for God has favored me and I have plenty.” And when Jacob urged Esau, Esau accepted.

Jacob journeyed on. [Along the way, Benjamin was born. Finally,] Jacob came to his father Isaac. Jacob settled in the land where his father had lived, the land of Canaan.

Suggested Activity:

Bringing the story to life and checking predictions

- Reflect on students’ predictions about how Jacob and his entourage will be received by Esau
 - Were students correct about how Esau would react, and how the meeting went?
- Using the pictures of all the characters the students drew when Jacob was preparing to meet Esau, invite pairs or small groups of students to retell the story to their classmates
 - Encourage three or four retellings

Avot and Imahot (Biblical Fathers and Mothers)

Coach’s Voice:

As you come to the end of your study of the three Avot (fathers) and four Imahot (mothers) of the Jewish People, take this opportunity to review these important characters, their stories, and the values their stories teach us.



- Consider:
 - A gameshow-style quiz show, with questions highlighting the stories and the values the students learned, for example:
 - Which of these people had their name changed?
 - Who taught us the value of Hachnasat Orchim?
 - Why did Avram leave his home?
 - A museum walk through the art the students created throughout their study of the Avot and Imahot
 - Invite various students to be the docent and explain what the students are seeing
 - Invite students to choose one of the Avot or Imahot who most inspires or intrigues them, and draw or write their thoughts and connection to this character

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that we learn significant Jewish values from the stories of the avot and imahot (patriarchs and matriarchs)

Mitzvot & Values: Mitzvot in Sacred Text – V'ahavta L'reiacha Kamocha/Loving Your Neighbor as Yourself, Jacob, Leah, & Rachel [study]

Coach's Voice:

The Torah commands us: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18). Because humanity was created in the image of G-d, b'tzelem Elohim, we show disrespect for G-d when we show disrespect to our fellow human beings. Hence, we are obligated to treat everyone with respect. Judaism teaches us to celebrate each individual's uniqueness and affirm their divine worth. While this value of v'ahavta l'reiacha kamocha (loving your neighbor as yourself) does not involve specific actions like many of our biblical precepts, it does call for a type of attitude. It demands we think about people in a particular way. To love our neighbor as ourselves means we behave towards others in the way that we would want them to treat us. Therefore, the value of v'ahavta l'reiacha kamocha offers the foundation for understanding moral behavior. Our tradition teaches that the great sage Rabbi Akiva is attributed to saying that Judaism is a religion that cherishes, above all else, treating people well. According to Akiva, compassion for the other is at the heart of Judaism (Jerusalem Talmud, Nedarim 9:4; Sifra, Kedoshim 4:12)

From <https://www.jewishlearningmatters.com/Lesson2-Love-Your-Neighbor-Like-Yourself-1563.aspx>



- Two foundational texts help us see the Jewish values in our Sacred Texts:

Leviticus 19:18

V'Ahavta Lereicha Kamocha

Love your fellow as yourself

Genesis 33:10

וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל-נָא אִם-נָא מִצָּאֵתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וְלִקְחֹת מִנִּי מִיָּדִי כִּי עַל-כֵּן רָאִיתִי פָנֶיךָ כִּרְאֹת פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים וַתִּרְצָנִי

Vayomer Ya'akov al-na im-na matsati chen be'eyneycha velakachta minchati miyadi ki al-ken ra'iti faneycha kir'ot peney Elohim vatirtseni.

But Jacob said [to Esau], "Please, no, I pray you, if you would do me this favor, accept from me this gift: for to see your face is like seeing the face of God, and you have received me favorably."

- Share these texts with your students and wonder together:

- What does it mean to love your neighbor?
 - What does it mean to love yourself?
 - When Jacob meets his brother Esau after twenty years, Jacob tells Esau that “seeing his face is like seeing the face of God”
 - What does he mean by this?
 - Is Jacob living the value of V'Ahavta Lereiacha Kamocha?
 - Why or why not?
- Sing and dance to this song by Sheldon Low:
<https://sheldonlow.com/track/568548/v-ahavta>
 - Wonder with your students (as you dance):
 - What do these lyrics mean?
- Live with blessing
 Live with meaning
 Keep on sharing
 Keep on giving
- How do we do that?
 - Read a story that demonstrates the value of V'Ahavta Lereiacha Kamocha, such as:
 - *The Mitten String* by Jennifer Rosner
 - PJ Library reading guide:
<https://pjlibrary.org/PJLibrary/media/PJ-Library/PDF-files/JDAIM-2016-The-Mitten-String-Educational-Materials-Final.pdf>
 - *The Story Blanket* by Ferida Wolff*
 - Notice with your students:
 - How do the characters live the value V'Ahavta Lereiacha Kamocha?

Supply Needs:

- Story books

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to identify mitzvot and values that are found in the stories of the avot and imahot, such as V'Ahavta Lereiacha Kamocha with Jacob and Esau

Israel: Seas & Ocean

Coach's Voice:

In first grade, we turn our focus to the geological aspects of Israel, to help students develop a concrete understanding of the Land of Israel. In previous years, students have explored Israel in light of its celebrations, and in upcoming years, the focus will return to the people of Israel, and in fourth grade, the geography of Israel.



Some background information about Israel's seas and ocean:

- Israel's major bodies of water include the Mediterranean Sea to the West, the Kinneret (Sea of Galilee) in the North, the Jordan River (to the East), the Dead Sea, and the Red Sea in the South
 - Here's more information from the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs:
<https://mfa.gov.il/mfa/>
- The coastal plain runs parallel to the Mediterranean Sea and is composed of a sandy shoreline
 - The coastal plain is home to more than half of Israel's 7 million people and includes major urban centers such as Tel Aviv
- The Jordan River, flowing from north to south, descends over 2,300 feet (700 m.) in the course of its 186-mile (300 km.) route
 - Fed by streams from Mount Hermon, it runs through the fertile Hula Valley into Lake Kinneret and continues winding through the Jordan Valley before emptying into the Dead Sea
- Lake Kinneret (Sea of Galilee), nestled between the hills of Galilee and the Golan Heights at 695 feet (212 m.) below sea level, is 8 km. (5 miles) wide and 21 km. (13 miles) long
 - It is Israel's largest lake and serves as the country's main water reservoir
- The Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth at about 1,300 feet (400 m.) below sea level, lies at the southern end of the Jordan Valley
 - Its waters, with the highest level of salinity and density in the world, are rich in potash, magnesium, and bromine, as well as in table and industrial salts
 - It is possible to float in the Dead Sea; in fact, it is practically impossible to submerge oneself
 - Fish and other sea life are not able to survive in the Dead Sea
- The sub-tropical Gulf of Eilat, noted for its deep blue waters, coral reefs and exotic marine life, lies at the southern tip of the Arava (Red Sea)
- To show students the bodies of water in and surrounding Israel, check out this map of Israel in Hebrew:
<https://jr.co.il/pictures/israel/maps/hebrew-illustrated-map-israel.jpg>
- Or these geological maps:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography_of_Israel#/media/File:Israel_relief_location_map.jpg

<https://www.ducksters.com/geography/country/israel.php>

Developing a map of Israel

- On the map on which you crafted the desert with your students in the last Israel lesson, you can add one or more of the bodies of water

The Dead Sea

- Watch this video of a visit to the Dead Sea:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U32rbYgRmUE>
- What do the students wonder?
- Read *Hare and Tortoise Race Across Israel* by Laura Gehl*
- Hare and Tortoise race from the Mediterranean Sea to the Dead Sea
 - What do people do at the Mediterranean Sea, or at the beach in Tel Aviv?
 - What do people do at the Dead Sea?
 - What do the students recognise as Hare and Tortoise race through the desert?
- Act out this story, complete with the activities happening at the beach, in the desert, and at the Dead Sea

Kinneret in song

- Watch this video and listen to the song Kinneret by Naomi Shemer:
https://israelforever.org/interact/multimedia/Music/kinneret_song_naomi_shemer/
- Try this dance to the song Shir Li Kinneret:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bNR8OWguP0>

Supply Needs:

- Drawing supplies
- Story books

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand the geography of the land of Israel in terms of its seas and ocean

Religious School Week 23

Jewish Calendar: Purim through Core Stories – Book of Esther

Mitzvot & Values: Mitzvot in Sacred Text – V’ahavta L’reiacha Kamocha/Loving Your Neighbor as Yourself, Jacob, Leah, & Rachel [action]

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Jewish Calendar: Purim through Core Stories - Book of Esther

Coach's Voice

In first grade, as we focus on the core stories of the Jewish holidays, we look at the physical megillah and the story of the Book of Esther. The experience with the story of Esther in this lesson will help explain rituals and objects connected to Purim that students are already familiar with from previous years' celebrations and learning (more on that in the next Purim lesson). Here is good article with background information: <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/reading-the-megillah/>



Introduce students to the physical megillah

- Megillat Esther is Hebrew for The Book (or Scroll) of Esther
- Share this video from BimBam:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xe2COQmYoHU&feature=emb_logo
- Gather pictures of megillah scrolls - Google Images is a fine source
- Share a real megillah scroll with students, if you have one
- Wonder and notice with students
 - How is the Megillah scroll similar and different from a Torah Scroll?
 - What do you know or remember about the story of Esther?
 - What do you know or remember about what we do to celebrate Purim?

Share the story of Esther

- Read *The Story of Esther* by Eric A. Kimmel*

Coach's Voice:

Finding a picture book with a telling of the story of Esther that is developmentally appropriate for first graders is not easy. The story of Esther is a violent story at times, with lots of twists and turns. This version by Eric Kimmel is pretty good for first graders. You may want to tone down the language about hanging as you are sharing the story with students.



- Take time while you are reading for students' questions
 - Ask students to predict what they think might happen next, or to advise the characters on what they should (or shouldn't) do
- Alternatively, share the Purim Story version for older children in *Jewish Every Day* (pp. 2018-19):
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1csDvBqKWvkAnTJ2GwSggdxf82UxlmQveK7HYkBSnaQA/edit?usp=sharing>
- Instead or in addition, consider this video telling of the story from BimBam (Note: it talks about Haman's plan to kill all the Jews):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mYGqOMe-DqQ&feature=emb_logo

Invite the students to play with the story

- Grab some costumes or silly hats and act out the story
- Play Guess Who - once all the students have become familiar with the Purim characters, have one student act out a Purim character
 - The other students guess who it is
 - Give many students the opportunity to act out a character
 - Encourage students to act out lesser-known characters too, not just the top five

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Megillah scroll or pictures
- Costumes or hats

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to explain the Purim story to others

Mitzvot & Values: Mitzvot in Sacred Text – V’ahavta L’reiacha Kamocha/Loving Your Neighbor as Yourself, Jacob, Leah, & Rachel [action]

- Consider playing or dancing to this Love your neighbor playlist from JewishLearningMatters.com:
https://open.spotify.com/playlist/50kdQaJEa3HhvToeHnHGZb?uri=spotify%3Auser%3Aajewishlearningmatters%3Aplaylist%3A50kdQaJEa3HhvToeHnHGZb&utm_source=embed_v2&go=1&play=1&nd=1
- Read *The Brother’s Promise* by Frances Harber (PJ Library reading guide below)
https://pjlibrary.org/HGF_ResourceCenter/media/LiveResourceLib/Brothers-Promise-2015.pdf
 - This book ties together the value of v’ahavta l’reiacha kamocha, caring for the earth, and the holiday of Tu B’Shevat
- Consider three aspects of this value (from the PJ Library reading guide):
 - Love yourself, understand your own needs, and be content with who you are
 - Honor the different ways in which people live their lives
 - Loving others goes beyond emotion; it means taking action to help one another
 - Notice with the students:
 - In what ways did the brothers take care of each other?
 - Part of working together and loving one another involves honoring, respecting, and appreciating differences
 - In what ways were the brothers similar to one another?
 - In what ways were they different?
 - How did these brothers embody the value of v’ahavta l’reiacha kamocha?

Suggested Activities:

Make Someone Happy

- In the story *The Brother’s Promise*, each brother considered the needs of the other brother
- Invite each student to think about two or three people they know and what would make those people happy
- Encourage the students to write or draw a plan for making the people on their list happy

Role-Play

- In acting out a series of relatable scenarios, students are asked to think: “What would I want if that was me?” and THEN “How could I help someone else in the way I would want to be helped?”
- Invite a student to act out one of the role-plays below, and encourage one or two volunteers to jump in to enact the value of v’ahavta l’reiacha kamocha and help out

(Adapted from this lesson:

<https://www.learningtogive.org/units/repairing-world-private-religious/love-your-neighbors-yourself-private-religious>)

- Hold bags of items and try to open the door
- Drop items on floor and scramble to pick them up
- Pretend to hurt your finger
- Pretend to look for a lost item
- Begin putting away materials and sweeping the floor
- Reflect with students:
 - When someone is in need, we can imagine, what would I want if I were in their shoes?
 - What are the things you might do for others to show that you love them like yourself?

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Writing and drawing supplies

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to identify mitzvot and values that are found in the stories of the avot and imahot, such as V'Ahavta Lereicha Kamocha with Jacob and Esau

Religious School Week 24

Jewish Calendar: Purim through Core Stories – Why Masks, Groggers, & Hamantaschen?

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Jewish Calendar: Purim through Core Stories – Why Masks, Groggers, & Hamantaschen?

Coach's Voice:

The goal of this lesson is to present students with the main symbols of Purim and the story of the Purim which they explored in the previous lesson, and guide students to uncover the meaning and purpose behind these symbols.



- Gather pictures or real examples of people in Purim costumes and masks, groggers, and hamantaschen
- Explore with students
 - What are these objects?
 - Invite students to sort pictures into groups of costumes, groggers and hamantaschen
 - Play a game - flash the pictures and students do movements for each symbol
 - Costume/mask - strike a pose
 - Grogger - make a grogger noise and spin around
 - Hamantaschen - pantomime eating a hamantaschen (like cookie monster)
- Review the story with one of these versions:
 - The Purim Story version for older children in *Jewish Every Day* (pp. 2018-19)
 - This video telling of the story from BimBam (Note: It talks about Haman's plan to kill all the Jews):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mYGqOMe-DqQ&feature=emb_logo
 - *Goldie's Purim* by Jane Breskin Zalben
 - Before you review the story, ask the students to be detectives - based on the Purim story, can they answer:
 - Why do we wear costumes and masks on Purim?
 - Why do we use groggers?
 - When do we use them?
 - Why do we eat hamantaschen?

- What do they help us think about?
- You might encourage students to offer answers as soon as they uncover them, or wait until the end of the telling
- Have a Purim dance party to celebrate some great detective work
- Consider the JkidsRadio Purim playlist:
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5VeKZvqKwem2Gu1jiP9Avd>
 - Many of the songs reinforce the discoveries the students have just made

Suggested Activity:

Create Purim Masks

- Provide students with craft foam sheets or paper plates to cut into eye or full-face masks
 - Offer colorful jewels, feathers, pom poms, glue, and any other colorful notions for the students to create masks as they see fit
- Play Purim music while students work

Supply Needs:

- Pictures of Purim symbols
- Story books
- Foam or paper plates
- Glue
- Mask decorations

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand how Purim traditions, rituals and foods find their source in the Book of Esther

Religious School Week 25

Jewish Calendar: Pesach through Core Stories – Moses, the Early Years

Israel: Cities & Why We Face East for Tefillah

Contemporary Jewish Life: Different Kinds of Jewish Families – LGBTQ+ Families

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Jewish Calendar: Pesach through Core Stories- Moses, The Early Years

Coach's Voice:

In first grade, students dive into an in-depth study of the story of Pesach. In this lesson and the next, we will look closely at the Torah text of the life of Moses. In this lesson, we focus on Exodus 1:1-2:10. In addition to studying the story of Pesach, first graders should also spend time learning and reviewing Mah Nishtanah. SK contains four lessons of detailed strategies for learning Mah Nishtanah. You can borrow from those lessons, and also consider reading a book like The Best Four Questions by Rachelle Burk.



Moses' Early Years in Art

Coach's Voice:

We are introduced to Moses in the second chapter of the second book of the Torah, Exodus. The story of Pesach starts with the first chapter of Exodus, which serves to connect the stories and characters of the book of Genesis, many of which you've been studying in first grade, to the events that come next; the events of the Pesach story. In first grade, the students have briefly met Joseph, but will not fully examine his story. They may be familiar with Joseph's story if they've seen Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat (thank you, Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber).



- Share this slideshow of Moses' early years in art:
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1g4drCFp0lFgdcd3HI5Hse_2U0pLajEBgc1Ug1Lzp0wQ/edit?usp=sharing
 - The Torah text and some commentary is in the speaker notes for each picture
 - You may choose to paraphrase some of the text in gentler or easier-to-understand language
- Go slowly, and invite lots of questions
- Consider empowering students with dot stickers on the back of their hands, which they can "beep" whenever they have a question, comment, or observation
- The last slide offers many images for what it might have been like for Moses to grow up in the palace of Pharaoh
- We don't have any details - the Torah text skips his growing up
 - The next verse, which we will start within the next lesson, is "When Moses was grown..."

Making Midrash About Growing Up in the Palace

- Since the Torah does not tell us about Moses growing up, we can feel free to make up our own answers
 - That's called Midrash!
- Discuss the last slide and wonder with students - the slide has different artists' interpretations, but what do the students think?
- Invite students to create Moses' life in the palace as they imagine it
- Consider:
 - Watercolors
 - Loose parts - Be sure to add photos and writings to the "Learning through Loose parts" slide deck
 - Clay or PlayDoh
 - Markers or colored pencils
- Provide Passover music to work to
- Consider this playlist from jkidsRadio.com:
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/06wjOKbodMayOjUFsyTbDE&si=41f3aa669f724fe7>
- Read the book *Miriam at the River* by Jane Yolan*
 - This book provides us with the perspective of Moses' sister, guarding him as he floats down the river
 - This is also midrash, since the Torah doesn't tell us what Miriam is thinking
 - What might have happened to Moses if Miriam wasn't watching him?

Supply Needs:

- Loose parts - Be sure to add photos and writings to the "Learning through Loose parts" slide deck
- Markers or colored pencils

- Clay or PlayDoh

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to name some of the characters and plot points of the Pesach story

Israel: Cities & Why We Face East for Tefillah

Coach's Voice:

In first grade, we turn our focus to the geological aspects of Israel, to help students develop a concrete understanding of the Land of Israel. In previous years, students have explored Israel in light of its celebrations, and in upcoming years, the focus will return to the people of Israel, and in fourth grade, the geography of Israel. In this lesson, we focus on just the two largest cities in Israel, to give students a flavor for the diverse city life in Israel.



Some background information about Israel's cities:

- The two biggest cities (by population) are Tel Aviv and Jerusalem
- Jerusalem is the capital of the State of Israel
- It is also deemed the most holy city in Israel
 - Jerusalem is not holy just to Jews; it is sacred to Muslims and Christians as well
 - The Kotel (Western Wall) is in the Old City of Jerusalem, and is the holiest place for Jews
 - Machaneh Yehuda is the iconic open-air market in Jerusalem
 - Here is a tourist view of Jerusalem:
<https://www.touristisrael.com/jerusalem/268/>
- Tel Aviv is the first modern Jewish city, founded in 1090 just north of the ancient port city of Jaffa
 - Nestled on the beaches of the Mediterranean Sea, Tel Aviv offers everything that any contemporary city boasts large hotels, tall apartment buildings, industry, universities, a major airport, nightclubs, and streets crammed with cars, buses and cabs
 - Here is a tourist view of Tel Aviv:
<https://www.touristisrael.com/tel-aviv/>
- To show students these two cities in Israel, check out this map of Israel:
<https://cdn.britannica.com/13/80713-050-F93CE8B2/israel-bee-country-map.jpg>
- Take a peek at Tel Aviv and Jerusalem:
 - Video glimpse of Tel Aviv:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pt9RHVHEXVk>
 - Or this from Shalom Sesame:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7p6T4dVmaQ&list=PL9C548DB943B4080C&index=2>
 - Video glimpse of Jerusalem:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8b4ZWFWMK0>
 - Or this from Shalom Sesame:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d3JeXLu63Gw&list=PL9C548DB943B4080C&index=1&t=79s>
- As you watch these videos, what do students notice?

- What stands out about each city?
- What is similar to cities they know?
 - What's different?
- What do students wonder?
- Read a story about Tel Aviv:
 - *The Cats on Ben Yehuda Street* by Ann Edisch Stampler
 - *A Concert in the Sand* by Tami Shem-Tov & Rachella Sandbank*
- How does the story reinforce or challenge what the students noticed in the videos?

The Kotel

Coach's Voice:

The Kotel, or Western Wall, is the one remaining wall (retaining wall) holding up the foundation mountain on which the First and Second Temples of Jerusalem once stood. This spot is the holiest place for Jews. When we pray, we face east so that we are facing this holy space where the Temple once stood.

You can see what's happening, right now, at the kotel, on this live cam:

<https://thekotel.org/en/western-wall/western-wall-cameras/>



Find East

- Using a compass, determine which way is east in your classroom
- Stand, and imagine traveling as the crow flies all the way to Jerusalem, to the Kotel
- Imagine together what it might feel like to pray while standing AT the Kotel

Prayers in the Kotel

- When people visit the Kotel, they often write a prayer on a little piece of paper and stick it in a crevice of the wall
 - Google Images has many pictures of "Kotel notes"
- Offer your students small pieces of paper on which to write or draw a prayer, something they would like to say directly to God
- Send these notes to Israel with the next person you know who is traveling there

Developing a Map of Israel

- On the map on which you crafted the desert and bodies of water with your students in the last Israel lesson, you can add Tel Aviv and Jerusalem
 - Discuss what features of each city stand out
 - Invite half the students to add Tel Aviv to the map, and the other half Jerusalem

- Consider printing photos of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem to help students with their creations
- Music to work by:
Consider a playlist like this of Israeli Kids' Songs:
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/25hugTxHTX62npDj9aMhWJ?si=ceb30d9d25194284>

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Compass
- Writing supplies

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to major cities on a map of Israel

Contemporary Jewish Life: Different Kinds of Jewish Families - LGBTQ+ Families

Coach's Voice:

In first grade, students immerse in contemporary Jewish life by looking at who is around them - people in their synagogue community, and different kinds of Jewish families. As you explore different kinds of Jewish families, it is important to notice who is in your class, and include books and lessons that validate the families in your class. This curriculum includes lessons and resources for teaching about interfaith Jewish families, multiracial Jewish families, Jewish LGBTQ+ families, and Jewish families with family members with disabilities. If you have families in your class that are exceptional in other ways, maybe a single parent, or grandparents raising children, or blended families, it is worthwhile to find resources that validate all the families in your class. Here is an article on various Jewish views of LGBTQ issues and people:

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/judaism-and-the-lgbtq-community-an-overview/>



- Read a book about a Jewish LGBTQ family or celebration with a gay or lesbian couple
- Consider:
 - *The Flower Girl Wore Celery* by Meryl Gordon*
 - Wonder with students:
 - What are the things that surprised Emma in the book?
 - Which of these things surprised you, too?
 - Have you been to a Jewish wedding?
 - What was similar to the wedding in the story?
 - What was different?
 - Do you know any families like Hannah and Alex's family?
 - Do you think Hannah and Alex had a girl who could be Emma's flower girl?
 - Or a boy to be her ring bearer?
 - *The Purim Superhero* by Elizabeth Kushner*
 - Wonder with students:
 - Have you ever wanted to be just like everyone else?
 - What made Nate's family different from other families he knew?
 - What makes your family different from other families?
 - What kind of hamantaschen fillings do you think Nate's Daddy and Abba like best?

Envision your community

- On a large piece of butcher block paper, invite students to draw the community - as they know it and as they imagine it
- As a class, agree on the setting - the sanctuary or the synagogue playground or the social hall - and sketch in a few key walls or swing sets
- Invite students to draw their families, as well as people they have seen or met in the community
- Invite them also to draw people they haven't met yet
 - Think back to a previous lesson on diverse Jewish communities
 - Invite students to include in their drawing multi-racial families, families with same-sex parents, and interfaith families
- Invite students to include some of the synagogue leaders they have met this year (and their families)
- Leave room to add more families in the next lesson

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Markers or colored pencils
- Butcher Paper

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Feel part of a wide, diverse Jewish family

Religious School Week 26

Jewish Calendar: Pesach through Core Stories – Moses, the Later Years

Israel: Farm & Kibbutz

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Jewish Calendar: Pesach through Core Stories - Moses, The Later Years

Coach's Voice:

In first grade, students dive into an in-depth study of the story of Pesach. In the previous lesson and this lesson, we look closely at the Torah text of the life of Moses. In this lesson, we focus on Exodus 2:11-6:1. In addition to studying the story of Pesach, first graders should also spend time learning and reviewing Mah Nishtanah. SK contains four lessons of detailed strategies for learning Mah Nishtanah. You can borrow from those lessons, and also consider reading a book like The Best Four Questions by Rachelle Burk.



Moses' Adult Years in Art

- We continue the story of Moses in art
- Share this slideshow of Moses' adult years in art:
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1H3bIBDyEQWZ6NhqqzM9dHOy-8B7Cvd_7f4z6oWF_zA/edit?usp=sharing
 - The Torah text and some commentary is in the speaker notes for each picture
 - You may choose to paraphrase some of the text in gentler or easier to understand language
 - Go slowly, and invite lots of questions
 - Consider empowering students with dot stickers on the back of their hands, which they can "beep" whenever they have a question, comment, or observation
 - The slide show ends on the cusp of the plagues and our freedom from slavery, which will be tackled in the next lesson

Moses as Reluctant Leader

- When Moses meets God at the Burning Bush, and God tells Moses to speak to Pharaoh, Moses has many objections
 - Explore this scene with your students
- Invite students to play the role of God
 - A teacher or clergy can play Moses, using dialogue directly from the Torah:

God (Students): Moses, go to Pharaoh. (Exodus 3:10)

Moses (Teacher): “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and free the Israelites from Egypt?” (Exodus 3:11)

God (Students): Moses, just go to Pharaoh. (students can add their own responses here, like “I’ll help you” or “don’t be afraid”)

Moses (Teacher): “When I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?” (Exodus 3:13)

God (Students): Moses, just go to Pharaoh. (students can add their own responses here, like “I’ll help you” or “don’t be afraid”)

Moses (Teacher): “What if they do not believe me and do not listen to me, but say: The LORD did not appear to you?” (Exodus 4:1)

God (Students): Moses, just go to Pharaoh. (students can add their own responses here, like “I’ll help you” or “don’t be afraid”)

Moses (Teacher): “Please, O Lord, I have never been a man of words, either in times past or now that You have spoken to Your servant; I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.” (Exodus 4:10)

God (Students): Moses, just go to Pharaoh. (students can add their own responses here, like “I’ll help you” or “don’t be afraid”)

Moses (Teacher): “Please, O Lord, send someone else.” (Exodus 4:13)

God gets angry with Moses, and agrees to send his brother Aaron to help him.
- Debrief:
 - Why do you think Moses argued with God about going to talk to Pharaoh?
 - What does this dialogue tell us about Moses as a person?
 - Is he brave?
 - Fearful?
 - Disobedient?
 - A good negotiator?
 - What do you predict will happen when Moses goes to talk to Pharaoh?
- Read the book *Nachshon, Who Was Afraid to Swim* by Deborah Bodin Cohen*
 - Wonder with your students:
 - How does Moses affect Nachshon, an Israelite slave?
 - How is the Moses in the book similar or different from the Moses arguing with God at the Burning Bush?
 - What does this book tell us about Moses as a person?

Supply Needs:

- Dot stickers
- Story books

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to name some of the characters and plot points of the Pesach story

Israel: Farm & Kibbutz

Coach's Voice:

In first grade, we turn our focus to the geographical aspects of Israel, to help students develop a concrete understanding of the Land of Israel. In previous years, students have explored Israel in light of its celebrations, and in upcoming years, the focus will return to the people of Israel, and in fourth grade, the geography of Israel. In this lesson, we focus on crops and farming techniques in Israel, along with the iconic idea and reality of the kibbutz and moshav.



Some background information about Israel's crops and agriculture

(From: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agriculture_in_Israel)

- The main field crops in Israel are wheat, sunflowers, groundnuts and chickpeas (hummus is made from chickpeas)
- More than forty types of fruit are grown in Israel, including oranges, grapefruit, tangerines, avocados, kiwifruit, guavas, mangoes, grapes from orchards located on the Mediterranean coastal plain, plums, nectarines, strawberries, prickly pear (tzabbar), persimmon, loquat and pomegranates
 - Subtropical areas in the country produce bananas and dates, while in the northern hills apples, pears and cherries are grown
- Tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers and zucchini are grown commonly throughout the country; melons are grown during winter months in the valleys
- There are some beautiful photos of Israel's crops here:
<https://www.israel21c.org/10-glorious-photos-of-israels-fruit-and-vegetable-bounty/#:~:text=The%20main%20field%20crops%20in,%2C%20sunflowers%2C%20groundnuts%20and%20chickpeas.&text=Apples%2C%20grapes%2C%20peaches%2C%20mangos,%2C%20oranges%2C%20grapefruits%20and%20lemons.&text=Israel's%20organic%20farmers%20are%20focused,peppers%2C%20avocados%20and%20citrus%20fruit>

Drip Irrigation

Coach's Voice:

First graders learned about drip irrigation and how it helped make the desert bloom in the lesson on Israel's desert. As a refresher, this video provides a simple illustration of drip irrigation: https://youtu.be/_yDr9dVdA-Q



Kibbutz and Moshav: Background Information

From *Jewish Every Day* by Maxine Segal Handelman

A kibbutz is a communal agricultural settlement, in which all property, land, livestock, ec., is communally owned and the word and decisions are shared. The first kibbutz, Degania, was founded at the southern end of Lake Kinneret in 1909. Today, there are more than 250 kibbutzim in Israel, home to about 2% of the population. The kibbutz takes care of all its members' needs - food, clothing, housing, education for the youngest children - and the members of the kibbutz all work together to run the kibbutz. Usually there is a chadar ochel (dining room) where members can take their meals together, although individual homes also have kitchens. Today, in addition to agricultural endeavors, most kibbutzim also run a factory, high tech industry or hospitality industry or guest house (tourism). There exist religious and secular kibbutzim, and also kibbutzim established by the Reform and Conservative movements.

You can find more information here: <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-kibbutz-movement/>

A moshav is a cooperative farming community. On a moshav, each family owns its own house and some land, but the moshav jointly owns land and farming equipment. The members of the moshav sometimes work the land together as well, dividing the expenses and profits. Beyond the work sphere, each family lives independent. As of 2018 there are a total of 451 moshavim in Israel.

Here is more information: <https://www.amusingplanet.com/2014/07/moshav-villages-of-israel.html>

- Read *Chicken Man* by Michelle Edwards

Coach's Voice:

Be sure to read the author's notes at the end of the book: Kibbutz Hanan is based on the kibbutzim of the 1950s and 60s. Today, a kibbutz is less likely to have a children's house, and much less likely to rotate members from job to job. Still, *Chicken Man* can give students a good look into the many aspects of kibbutz life.

- After reading the story, ask:
 - What do the students wonder about?
 - Which job would they want on this kibbutz?
 - Why was Chicken Man good at every job he was given?



Suggested Activity:

Classroom Kibbutz

- Invite students to create their own kibbutz, together
- Brainstorm:
 - What does the kibbutz need for its members?
 - Think about where members will live, eat, play, go to school, stay healthy, and work

- How will the kibbutz make money?
- What crops will it grow?
- What other industry might the kibbutz have? (Check out this list of Kibbutz industries for some ideas:
https://www.duns100.co.il/en/rating/Industrial_Companies/Kibbutzim_Industry)
- What makes this kibbutz special or unique?
- Where in the country is this kibbutz located?
- Invite small groups of three or four students each to design one aspect of the kibbutz, using collage materials
 - Encourage students to think about details like drip irrigation in their fields
- Add the finished kibbutz to the Israel map your class has been creating (or at least add the location to the map, if the entire kibbutz won't fit on that map)
- Consider a playlist like this of Israeli Kids' Songs:
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/25hugTxHTX62npDj9aMhWJ?si=ceb30d9d25194284>

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Collage materials

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Feel a connection to stories of Israel's farms and kibbutzim

Religious School Week 27

Jewish Calendar: Pesach through Core Stories – Pesach Story & Seder Plate Items

Mitzvot & Values: Mitzvot in Sacred Text – Hachnasat Orchim, Seder Edition

Contemporary Jewish Life: Who are the People in Your Synagogue Community?
Lesson 6 – Educators

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Jewish Calendar: Pesach through Core Stories – Pesach Story & Seder Plate Items

Coach's Voice:

Leaning into everything we've learned about Moses, today the first graders jump into the Pesach story with their entire beings. In addition to studying the story of Pesach, first graders should also spend time learning and reviewing Mah Nishtanah. SK contains four lessons of detailed strategies for learning Mah Nishtanah. You can borrow from those lessons, and also consider reading a book like *The Best Four Questions* by Rachelle Burk.



Suggested Activities:

The Pesach Story

- Print out the 10 stations of the PJ Library Passover River Ride and distribute around the room:
<https://pjlibrary.org/PJLibrary/media/PJ-Library/content/holidays/Passover-River-Ride.pdf>
- At each station, invite the students to engage with the Pesach Story

Slavery

- Read the introduction from *Miriam and her Brother Moses*
 - Wonder and remember with students:
 - Why did the Pharaoh make the Israelite people (the Jews) be slaves?
 - What do you think it felt like to be a slave?
- Building:
 - Teacher and madrichim are the task masters

- Students must move all the large blocks from one area of the room to another and build a building together
 - The building must be strong and not fall
- The students have six minutes to move the blocks and build the building

Floating on the Nile

- Remind students or review story of *Miriam at the River*
- Break children into groups of four or five, one group per vessel (bowl or bin) of water
- Teachers and madrichim encourage and help the children experiment with different materials to make an Ark to float the plastic babies in the water
- Debrief:
 - What materials worked?
 - What didn't float?
 - Do you think you better understand Yocheved, Moses' mother, and how she created the Ark for Moses?

Crying to God for help

- What are the words the Israelites might have used to cry out to God?
 - On a large easel paper or board, invite students to write or dictate words or draw pictures of what it might have sounded like when the people cried out to God

Moses and the Egyptian

- Invite students to narrate this scene in two Acts:
 - Act 1 - Three students strike the pose of Moses seeing the taskmaster hurting the Israelite
 - Three other students narrate, each focusing on the feelings of one of the actors/statues
 - Act 2 - Three students strike the pose: Moses has defended the slave and defeated the taskmaster
 - Three other students narrate, each focusing on the feelings of one of the actors/statues

Burning Bush

- Students can reenact the conversation between God and Moses they experienced last lesson
- Add orange, red, and yellow streamers for students to wave and "be" the burning bush
- Invite students to deliver Moses' lines instead of a teacher

Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh

- Dance break!
- Sing or play one or both of these songs:
 - Pharaoh Pharaoh:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cl-uzRi350g>
 - Listen King Pharaoh:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HvqZgcNNPvM>

Plagues

- Read the page with the frogs in *Miriam's Cup*
- When the first plague is mentioned, do water-to-blood demonstration
- Teacher or madrich/a holds wine glass so kids can't see red food color in the base of the glass
- Ask another teacher or madrich/a to pour some water
- Teacher or madrich/a pours clear water from pitcher into glass, which turns red
 - OOOOOOOhhhh!
- Keep reading the page
- When you get to the frog plague, let kids spread out all over the classroom and jump the plastic frogs
 - See who can get them to go further, highest, into cups or other vessels....
- After a few minutes of frog jumping, bring kids back and wonder together:
 - Why does Pharaoh keep changing his mind?
 - Do you think Pharaoh will let the Israelites go?
- Keep reading the page
- When you get to the boils plague, wonder together:
 - What do you think this plague felt like?
 - What do you think it looked like?
- Pass out stickers and let the kids demonstrate (on themselves, on their friends and teachers) what this plague looked like
- At the seder, we remember all the plagues
- Ask:
 - How many were there? (Ten)
- Pass out the sheet with the 10 plagues, cups with a small amount of grape juice, and napkins to each kid (maybe move kids to tables)
- Explain:
 - At the seder, as we name each of the 10 plagues, we remove a drop of wine from our glasses
 - Can the students explain or guess why?
 - Also ask them if they remember from past years which finger they use
 - The plagues helped us become free from slavery, but they caused suffering to the Egyptians
 - We never celebrate the suffering of other people, even if they caused us suffering

- We remove ten drops of wine or grape juice to decrease our enjoyment, to acknowledge the suffering of the Egyptians
 - DON'T lick your finger at the end!!
- Read each plague slowly, in Hebrew and/or English, dipping a finger and removing a drop of grape juice for each plague

Matzah

- Invite each student to pantomime packing their bag to leave Egypt
- Discuss as you pack:
 - What would you pack?
 - What would you need?
 - What might you leave behind?
- Pass out matzah, say motzi, and eat

Splitting of the Sea

- Gather all students at the edge of two blue sheets
- Invite a teacher, madrich/a or clergy to arrive as Pharaoh behind the students
- Moses (a student, teacher, madrich/a or clergy) lifts their staff and the sea (sheets) part
- Students dance through, employing their best silly walks or dance moves
- Sing or play Miriam's Song:
<https://open.spotify.com/track/26B6ops2EgkJD8WMI4CLKZ&si=66412cdd6db746c7>

Freedom

- Dance break 2!
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/06wjOKbodMayOjUFsyTbDE&si=0863ed8e3e834ef6>

Seder Plates

Coach's Voice:

SK students learn about the seder plate. First graders will revisit the seder plate, and make a seder plate to take home to their family's seder. This article and video will help you empower your students to be able to explain each item:
<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/passover-seder-plate/>



- Read the book *Seder in the Desert* by Jamie Korngold*
 - Notice especially the symbols on the seder table discussed in the book
- Share several examples of seder plates with students, either real plates or photos (Google images is a great source)
 - What do students notice?

- What are some interesting designs they notice?
 - What do they wonder?
- Students may notice that some plates have space for five items, and some for six
 - The extra item is Lettuce/Hazeret, which is an additional symbol of the bitterness of slavery
- Review the items of the seder plate
 - Encourage students to make connections between the seder plate items and the story they have been studying:
 - Zeroa (shankbone) - protection on the doorposts of the house during the plagues
 - Beitza (roasted hard-boiled egg) - the new life post slavery
 - Maror /Chazeret (horseradish) - the bitterness of slavery
 - Maror /Chazeret (lettuce)- the hardship of slavery (or you might substitute matzah for lettuce)
 - Haroset - bricks to build cities for Pharaoh
 - Karpas (parsley) - new life in springtime
- Provide materials for students to each make a seder plate, ideally with the ability to incorporate their own designs and ideas
 - Choose materials that will be food-safe and washable
 - Consider:
 - Clear plate with tissue paper, fabric or pictures glued to the back and modge podged
 - A base that students can decorate in any way, paired with condiment bowls or even Silicone Cupcake Baking Cups Liners

Supply Needs:

- PJ Library printouts
- Story books
- Blocks
- Large vessels (bowls, bins) of water
- Plastic babies
- Assorted materials for float/sink experiments
- Writing or drawing supplies
- Streamers
- Clear wine glass
- Clear water pitcher
- Red food coloring
- Plastic jumping frogs
- Mini red stickers
- Red grape juice
- Cups
- Napkins
- Copies of the 10 plagues
- Matzah
- Two blue sheets or tablecloths
- Seder plates or photos

- Seder plate craft supplies

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand how Pesach traditions, rituals, and foods find their source in the core story

Mitzvot & Values: Hachnasat Orchim, Seder Edition

Coach's Voice:

Earlier in the year, first graders studied the Jewish value of Hachnasat Orchim - welcoming guests - in the context of the text study of Abraham and Sarah, the first ones to practice Hachnasat Orchim in the Torah. Now we have come to a holiday that is all about Hachnasat Orchim. Indeed, we begin the telling of the Pesach story at the seder with the proclamation "Let all who are hungry come and eat!" There's good background information here:

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/what-does-it-mean-to-say-all-who-are-hungry-come-and-eat/>



- Explore this text from the Haggadah at the beginning of the Maggid section:
- Hold up three pieces of matzah, and if possible, read from your haggadah of choice:
 - This is the bread of poverty which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt
 - Let all who are hungry, come and eat; all who are needy, come and celebrate Passover with us
- Wonder with students:
 - Why might the story part of the seder start with these words?
 - In other words, why does the haggadah story start with the Jewish value of Hachnasat Orchim?
 - Is it possible to invite everyone who is hungry or needy to come and eat and celebrate Pesach with us?
 - So what might the haggadah be asking us to do or think about?
- Think back to Abraham's actions in Genesis 18:2-8
- Consider inviting students to act out each of Abraham's actions (and those of Sarah and the servant-boy), in bold:
 - **Looking up**, he (Abraham) saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them, **he ran from the entrance of the tent** to greet them and, **bowing to the ground**, he said, "My lords, if it please you, do not go on past your servant. Let a little water be brought; bathe your feet and recline under the tree. And let me fetch a morsel of bread that you may refresh yourselves; then go on—seeing that you have come your servant's way." They replied, "Do as you have said."
 - Abraham **hastened into the tent** to Sarah, and said, "Quick, three seahs of choice flour! Knead and make cakes!"
 - Then Abraham **ran to the herd, took a calf**, tender and choice, and **gave it** to a servant-boy, who hastened to prepare it.
 - He **took curds and milk** and the calf that had been prepared and **set these** before them; and he **waited on them** under the tree as they ate.
- Reflect with students:
 - How did Abraham and Sarah "do" Hachnasat Orchim?
 - What can we learn from them?

- What can we do at our own seder to be like Abraham and Sarah?
- Read a book about Hachnasat Orchim and the seder, such as:
 - *The Elijah Door* by Linda Leopold Strauss*
 - *Another Sheep Turned Up* by Laura Gehl*
- After the story, discuss:
 - How do the families in the story deal with the challenge of more and more guests for seder?
- Set four chairs at a table and invite four students to sit
- Choose two more students to join the students seated at the table
 - How will they manage?
- Have more students come to join the students at the table, in pairs or singles
 - What must students do to welcome more and more guests to the table?
- Invite students to role play engaging in Hachnasat Orchim like Abraham and the families in the story at their seder:
 - Setting the table when the family is getting ready for seder
 - Helping make the food for seder
 - Planning something to welcome other kids coming to the seder
 - Answering the door when guests arrive for the seder

Supply Needs:

- Story books

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to name ways in which they can welcome guests

Contemporary Jewish Life: Who are the People in Your Synagogue Community? Lesson 6 – Educators

Coach's Voice:

The goal of the lesson is for students to understand who the educators at their synagogue are, and what they do. All questions asked and interactions should be in service of those goals.



- Brainstorm with students:
 - What's an educator?
 - Who are the educators at your synagogue?
 - What do they do?
 - Where is their office?
- Invite the director of the religious school or other educator to join you in class, or go meet them in their office.
- Prepare interview questions with your students, fexample:
 - Why do you like to work here?
 - We made a list of what we think you do
 - How did we do?
 - What did we miss?
 - Do you prefer dark or milk chocolate?
 - How long have you worked here?
 - What do you like to do when you're not here at synagogue?
 - Do you have any pets?
 - Who are the members of your family?
 - Why did you want to be an educator?
- Assign a question to each student
- Keep the interview to under fifteen minutes
- Take some photos of the students with the staff person
 - Start a Google slide show with the photos and some quick outtakes from the students after the interview (what does this person do? What do they like? what other things do you wonder about them? when might you see them again?)
 - Share with parents and community (and the educator, of course)
- Be sure to make a thank you card!

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Know the educators in the synagogue community and the roles they play in making life and community happen

Religious School Week 28

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Religious School Week 29

Israel: Preparing for the Trip (Passports & Itinerary)

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers); We Are God's Partners Lesson 5 – Our Hands

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Israel: Preparing for the Trip (Passports & Itinerary)

Coach's Voice:

First graders have spent the year looking at various geographical aspects of Israel. Now it's time to go visit those places! In this lesson, students prepare for their trip. They'll need passports, of course, and an itinerary.



Passports

- Share a real passport with students
 - What information does it contain?
 - What is it used for?
 - Why do countries need this information about people who travel from country to country?
- Using a template that you create or find, engage students in filling out their own information in their own passport
 - You might ask students to bring in a picture, or ask them to draw their picture on their passport

Itinerary

- Look with students at the map of Israel you have made together this year
- Consider the different types of places you have studied
- Which places would the students like to visit?
- What would they like to see in the Negev desert?
 - Will they visit a farm that uses drip irrigation?
 - What animals do they hope to see?
- Which bodies of water will be included on the itinerary?
 - Do the students prefer the beaches on the Mediterranean Sea near Tel Aviv, or the peaceful waters of the Kinneret?
 - Do they want to float in the salty water of the Dead Sea?
 - Will they go snorkeling in Eilat?
- Do students want to visit both Tel Aviv and Jerusalem?
 - What (or who) do they hope to see in those cities?

- You'll want to visit the class Kibbutz, of course
 - Will you join the kibbutzniks in the fields, or visit the factory or the guesthouse, or just enjoy a typical kibbutz breakfast of cheeses, bread, and *salatim*?
- Limit the students to only four or five stops on their trip to Israel
 - Allow time for students to negotiate with each other about what to include.
- Use the map to determine the best or most logical order of stops, so you spend the least time on the bus getting from place to place
 - Remember, the airport is in Tel Aviv

Trip Journal

- Offer the students small notebooks or stapled paper which will serve as their travel journal
- Invite students to decorate the cover
- This will be the place they record their observations and stories during the trip

Packing list

- Based on the stops you decide to include in your itinerary, what do you need to pack?
 - Do students need hiking shoes?
 - Bathing suits?
 - Sunscreen?
- Brainstorm a packing list
- If you have time, you might also have students create their airline tickets
 - Departure Date: Next Lesson!

Supply Needs:

- Passport templates
- Writing and drawing supplies
- Notebooks

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Feel a connection to stories of Israel's desert, seas, cities, and farms

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: We Are God's Partners Lesson 5 – Our Hands

Coach's Voice:

First graders have had many conversations and lessons about partnering with God, and big and small ways that people might help fix the world. They've looked at how historical figures such as Martin Luther King, Jr. partnered with God to repair the world. They've looked at ways they can partner with God by partnering with other people and repairing the world in small ways in their families. They've looked at the possibilities of how they can partner with God and help fix the world beyond their front door. This lesson helps students look at the miracles they can create with their own hands.



- Read *In God's Hands* by Lawrence Kushner and Gary Schmidt*
- Wonder with students:
 - What is a miracle?
 - Did Jacob partner with God to make a miracle happen?
 - If so, how?
 - If not, why?
 - What did the rabbi mean when he said, "your hands are God's hands"?
- Read or skim *26 Big Things Small Hands Do*

Coach's Voice:

This book is written for younger children, ages two to four, so you may not want to read it straight through. It's an alphabet book, so you may just read the pages of letters the students request, or just the letters of their first names; enough to get the point across.



- With each page you read, notice with students:
 - Do you do this with your hands?
 - Is doing this with your hands partnering with God to make the world a better place?

Each of our hands

- Invite each child to make an acrostic of their own name, and, taking a clue from the *26 Big Things Small Hands Do* book, come up with something for each letter that their own hands do to partner with God to make miracles happen
 - For example:
 - **M**ail a letter to an Israeli soldier
 - **A**lways keep granola bars in the car for homeless people
 - **R**ead a book to my baby sister so my mom can take a nap
 - **C**arry the groceries for my next-door neighbor

- To help students come up with ideas, look at the chart of ways to partner with people in their everyday life, and the chart of things in their world students would like to fix
- First graders may need help writing their acrostics
 - Alternatively, they can just draw illustrations

Supply Needs:

- Writing and drawing supplies
- Story books

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that they are partners with God in taking care of and perfecting the world

Religious School Week 30

Israel: Pretend Trip to Israel

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Israel: Pretend Trip to Israel

Coach's Voice:

Due to the fact that the itinerary for the trip was only solidified in the last lesson, it will have been a busy week or so getting everything in order for the trip. This curriculum contains many suggestions for the possible places which might be included in the trip. You will likely have to do a lot of filling in the gaps. Coffee table books about Israel, if you can collect some, will come in handy. Consider connecting with someone who lives in one of the places on your itinerary to join you by Zoom for a conversation about what it is like to live there. Be sure to take lots of pictures of the students as they travel around Israel!



The Flight

- Passports - check! Luggage- check! Seatbelts - check!
 - Show a video or read a take-off script
 - El Al safety video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_6akiuRIEF8
 - Takeoff safety procedures script:
http://kennarar.vma.is/ghasoub/educ7011/assignment_files/listening_text.pdf
<https://www.englishclub.com/english-for-work/airline-announcements.htm>

Negev Desert

- Print pictures or gather posters of the Negev Desert, or desert animals
- Drone footage video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qmBj5itVibw>
- Drip irrigation
 - Invite students to experiment with tubes, implements to make small holes (are push pin holes too small?) and water, to see how drip irrigation works
- Which desert animals were intriguing to the students?

- Encourage them to draw a picture of an ibex, caracal or other desert animal
- Maybe they might even invent an adventure with that animal and write it in their travel journal.

Israel's bodies of water

- Whichever body (bodies) of water the students choose to visit, they can include in their travel journal illustrations of themselves on the shore, and stories of the people they meet there

Mediterranean Sea

- Drone footage:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KublGT_YdoQ
- Visit a Tel Aviv Beach
- Play matkot:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N9VMEj4K9Xc>

Kinneret (Sea of Galilee)

- Drone footage:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIV8HBmL6ek>
- Try this dance to the song Shir Li Kinneret:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bNR8OWguP0>

Dead Sea

- Drone footage:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7I4A_GbkSR4
- With two bins of water, one with lots of salt and one plain, encourage students to conduct float and sink experiments

Red Sea

- Drone footage:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HwXEtSIhNM>
- Go snorkeling!
 - Check out all the beautiful fish and coral:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69YKC7xnQKY>

Cities

Tel Aviv

- Visit the beach
- Explore a museum - Tel Aviv has many - you can explore the Tel Aviv Museum of Art's collections online:
<https://www.tamuseum.org.il/en/event/explore-exhibitions-online/>
- Stroll down Dizengoff street:
https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g293984-d318950-Reviews-Dizengoff_Street-Tel_Aviv_Tel_Aviv_District.html

Jerusalem

- Visit the kotel
 - Build the kotel with or for students with blocks or butcher block paper
 - Encourage students to write a note to put in the Kotel
- Visit Machaneh Yehudah
 - Prepare bins of fruit, candy, vegetables for students to shop

- Stroll the Tayelet Haas Promenade:
https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g293983-d558581-Reviews-Tayelet_Haas_Promenade-Jerusalem_Jerusalem_District.html

Kibbutz

- You will, of course, want to visit the Kibbutz that the class created
 - Join the kibbutzniks in the fields to plant or harvest
 - Plant some orange or date seeds
 - Have a tasting of the produce from your kibbutz
 - Make Israeli salad:
<https://toriavey.com/toris-kitchen/israeli-salad-week/>
 - Visit the factory or the guesthouse
 - Encourage students to write or draw in their journal about this adventure
 - Enjoy a typical kibbutz breakfast of cheeses, bread, vegetables and *salatim* (salads) <https://www.serious-eats.com/2012/07/serious-entertaining-israeli-breakfast-recipes.html#:~:text=The%20big%20breakfast%20tradition%20began,cheeses%2C%20juices%2C%20and%20milk.>
 - Arrange a Zoom call with someone who lives on a kibbutz (even if it's not the class kibbutz) to have a conversation about life on a kibbutz

Supply Needs:

- Writing and drawing supplies
- Pictures of Israel
- Tubes
- Pushpins
- Water
- Bins
- Salt
- Objects to float and sink
- Blocks
- Butcher paper
- Fruit
- Candy
- Vegetables
- Orange or date seeds
- Cups
- Soil
- Israeli salad ingredients
- Cheese
- Bread

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Feel a connection to stories of Israel's desert, seas, cities, and farms

Religious School Week 31

Closing Lesson

Prayer, God, & Spirituality: Weekly Grade-Level Service (focus on Kabbalat Shabbat prayers)

Hebrew: Hebrew Through Movement, Jewish Life Vocabulary & Song

Closing Lesson: Saying Goodbye

Coach's Voice:

Today is the final day of religious school. Your students will need time to remember what they learned this year, celebrate their successes, and say goodbye to you and to their classmates for the summer. You will likely want to leave this time loose so that it conforms to the culture of your class and has plenty of opportunity to focus on the social/emotional well-being of your students. If, however, you are looking for some structure, there are a few ideas below.



Walking Down Memory Lane

- As a reminder, this year's learnings included:
 - Sacred Text: Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob, Rachel and Leah
 - Prayer: Kabbalat Shabbat and Ma'ariv
 - God: We are God's Partners
 - History: Jews in America
 - Israel: Land of Israel - desert, sea, cities, and farms
 - Mitzvot: Mitzvot from sacred text
 - Jewish Calendar: Core Stories of each holiday in its season
 - Contemporary Jewish Life: Who are the People in Your Synagogue Community? Different Kinds of Jewish families
- Consider the following ideas for reviewing what you learned this year:
 - Quiz Show: Make it Fun!
 - Break your class into teams
 - Generate topics based on the full sweep of what you have learned this year
 - Ask questions ranging from easy to challenging
 - Make sure everyone participates
 - Obstacle Course: Make it Active!
 - Choose one station for each of the topics you learned this year. For example:

- Trip to Israel: Review the map of Israel you created this year
 - Act out highlights of your trip to Israel - floating in the Dead Sea, shopping in the shuk, farming on a kibbutz
- Synagogue people: Stop by the rabbi or cantor's office to say goodbye for the summer
- Sacred Text: Build a well out of blocks and act out Rebecca or Rachel coming to the well
- Here are even more great curriculum review ideas/games:
 - <https://www.weareteachers.com/curriculum-review-ideas/>

A Goodbye Craft/Activity:

- Consider a memento that students can create as a tangible reminder of the year
 - Letter to the next class:
 - As a class, dictate a letter to next year's first graders, letting them know what to expect and the secrets of having a great year
 - Invite students to sign and decorate the letter
 - Deliver to the Religious School principal for safekeeping over the summer
 - Picture Frames:
 - Take a class picture and provide copies to all students
 - Work to create a decorative frame students can put the picture in. Here is an example (look at #15, #26, or #28):
 - <https://homebnc.com/best-diy-photo-picture-frame-crafts-ideas/>
 - "What I Loved This Year" collage
 - Provide a large piece of butcher block paper and markers or magazines and glue sticks. Invite students to draw or create what they want to hold on to from this year. Consider questions like:
 - One thing I loved about Religious School this year was...
 - One thing I learned in Religious School this year was...
 - You can be more specific if you wish, as in "One new thing I learned about a holiday..." or "One new thing I learned about a mitzvah..."
 - Someone I met or got to know better is...
 - One thing I want to remember about Religious School is...
- Invite students to add captions to their drawings or magazine picture collages
- Share with students the picture and explanation they made of their favorite thing on the first day of first grade
 - Do they remember the things they drew?
 - What does this picture help them notice about everything they learned and experienced this year?
 - Did their wonderings or questions get addressed this year?
 - Did they learn what they were hoping to learn?

Saying Goodbye

- Consider the following exercises as ways to say goodbye to school, to teachers, and to peers:

- Last Day of School Party:
 - Bring in fun snacks
 - Play lively music
 - Visit jkidsradio.com for playlists
 - Set up a few arts and crafts tables for kids who like structured activities
 - Give students a chance simply to celebrate what they've learned and each other
- Closing Circle:

In a “responsive classroom”, closing circles are used every day to give a chance to wind down, reflect on what happened, and leave with closure. Consider something similar.

(<https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/closing-circle/>)

Make sure to include the 3 core elements (adapted from the above website):

Reflection—The teacher cues students to reflect on their learning for the year. This can be as simple as going around the circle to answer an open-ended question, such as “What’s one thing you want to remember from this year in Religious School?” It might also be an activity that involves reflective thinking. (For an example of such an activity, see “[Fostering Reflective Thinking](#).”)

Celebration—The whole group does a quick, lively song, chant, or cheer celebrating the community’s effort and accomplishments that day. You can celebrate hard work and learning, living up to class rules, working to solve problems together—there are many possibilities. (See an [article on fun, quick celebrations](#) for some ideas.)

Closing—The group does a brief activity that ends the gathering and makes the transition to dismissal. consider something like:

- Human knot:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gbCPau5YL0g/>
- Hive-Five Hustle:
<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/22-powerful-closure-activities-todd-finley>

Religious School Additional Material

Jewish Calendar: Sukkot - Ushpizin

Coach's Voice:

Ushpizin are symbolic guests we invite to our sukkah. This article provides nice background information:

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/ushpizin-welcoming-guests/>

If you have already shared the lessons on Abraham and Sarah and their hospitality, you can certainly make connections between those lessons and the ushpizin.



Sukkah Guests

- Brainstorm with students:
 - If they could invite anyone to the sukkah - living or dead, people they know or people from history or popular culture - who might they invite?
 - Why?

Coach's Voice:

Traditionally, we invite seven male Biblical guests - the Ushpizin - to our sukkah, one each night. This list includes Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, and David. The revived tradition is to invite Ushpizot - female Biblical guests - to our sukkah along with the Ushpizin. Because the Ushpizot are a more recent tradition, there are different suggested lists.

There is more information here:

<https://ritualwell.org/ritual/welcoming-ushpizot-ushpizin>

There is a handy poster here:

<https://ritualwell.org/sites/default/files/images/ushpizin.jpg>

Option 1 is the seven female prophets named in the Talmud (B. Megillah 14a-b):

- Sarah (Genesis 16:21)
- Miriam (Exodus 2:1-9; 15:20-21)
- Deborah (Judges 4-5)
- Hannah (I Samuel 25)
- Abigail (I Samuel 25:20)
- Huldah (II Kings 22:10-20)
- Esther (Book of Esther)

Option 2 is Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, Rachel, Dinah, Miriam, and Ruth.

- Read *The Mysterious Guests* by Eric Kimmel*
- Wonder with students:
 - What are the most meaningful gifts and experiences in the sukkah?
 - How do the ushpizin - the visitors - help the brothers understand this?



Ushpizin and Ushpizot

- Which of the ushpizin and ushpizot are students familiar with?
- Invite the students to write or dictate letters to the ushpizin or ushpizot, inviting them to the sukkah, based on what they know about each person
 - For example:
 - Dear Abraham, Please come visit our sukkah because you were the first Jew
 - Dear Esther, We know Purim is really your holiday, but please come to our sukkah anyway
 - Dear Moses, Will you bring the Ten Commandments to our sukkah?
 - Dear Rachel, We don't know very much about you. We have a girl named Rachel in our class. Will you come to our sukkah and tell us your story?
 - Wonder together about other fantastical ushpizin
 - What if Pete Seeger's monster Abiyoyo came to visit your sukkah?
 - What if the Cat in the Hat came?
 - Or Jack and Annie, the kids from the *Magic Tree House*?
 - Or Ms. Frizzle, the teacher from the *Magic School Bus*?

- Invite the students to create a scene or a story about one of the Ushpizin or Ushpizot (traditional or fantastical, or maybe someone from the “who would you invite” brainstorm)
 - Consider using:
 - Loose parts - Be sure to add photos and writings to the “Learning through Loose parts” slide deck
 - PlayDoh
 - Watercolors
 - Collage with magazine pictures and construction paper

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Writing supplies
- Loose parts
- PlayDoh
- Watercolors
- Collage materials

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Be able to name some of the characters of the Sukkot story, such as the ushpizin and ushpizot

Jewish Calendar: Shavuot - Mt. Sinai & the Ten Commandments

Coach's Voice:

Shavuot is an agricultural holiday, but it also celebrates the Jewish people receiving the Ten Commandments, and by extension, the entire Torah, at Mount Sinai. This aspect for Shavuot is the focus for first grade.



Mount Sinai

- Read *Sadie and the Big Mountain* by Jamie Korngold*
 - Wonder with students:
 - Why did Sadie think she couldn't climb Mt. Sinai?
 - What helped her realize that she could?
 - What is something you thought you couldn't do?
 - What helped you accomplish the goal?

The Ten Commandments

- Brainstorm with students:
 - What are some rules we have had in our classroom community this year?
 - Are the rules we didn't need?
 - Are there rules we should have had?
- Read *The Ten Commandments for Jewish Children* by Miriam Nerlove*
 - Which commandments did you know already?
 - Which commandments surprised you?
 - Why do people need rules?
- Play the game "Get Moses to the Top of Mt. Sinai"
 - On a large piece of paper or chalkboard, draw a large mountain with the ten commandments at the top
 - Make a little Moses, or draw in a Moses stick figure at each stage
 - Ask students questions about Shavuot or other things they learned throughout the year
 - Move Moses up the mountain one step for every correct answer
 - How fast can the students get Moses up the mountain to the Ten Commandments?

Supply Needs:

- Story books
- Drawing supplies

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand that receiving the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai is a story unique to Shavuot