

כיתה ה'

As the final year of the Upper Elementary Division experience, fifth grade marks a transition toward more independent learning. With the help of their teachers, who scaffold the independent learning skills for them, the students are asked to organize their materials, take notes in class, and sustain work on long-term projects. A key milestone of the fifth grade is a major research project and presentation on immigration, which serves as a stepping stone to the exhibition-based assessments students will undertake in the middle school. Further preparation for middle school experience takes the form of a number of test-like experiences during the year, in which students learn how to prepare for and take a formal test. Other major emphases include the development of an interfaith living museum exhibition through the American Museum for Jewish Heritage, in cooperation with the Al Ihsan Academy, the Islamic Leadership School, and Kinneret Day School, and several community service projects. The students also deepen their understanding of themselves as learners as they continue to participate in portfolio conferences with their teachers and parents and reflect knowledgeably about their academic progress. As well, the fifth grade marks the students' first formal exposure to Jewish history, health education, and advisory.

ART

The art work of our fifth graders is both art for art's sake, as well as art that is integrally related to the rich fifth grade Jewish and General Studies curriculum. The creation of Shabbat ritual objects kicks off the formal art curriculum for the year. These items are used throughout the school year for the class' Kabbalat Shabbat on Fridays. As the students study units in Colonial America, the History of Eastern European Jewry, and Immigration, art creation compliments the learning and thinking they do in those academic areas. Paper quilt designs accompany the study of Colonial America, an artist study of Jewish artist Marc Chagall is part of the Jewish Studies unit (students experiment with paintings that utilize differences in scale and non-traditional colors) and the drawings of artist Ben Shan are used as a reference point for the illustrations that students create as part of their study and research in immigration. Other projects during the year emphasize observation and include a figure drawing exercise and the use of torn paper in collages. A trip to Modern Museum of Art (MOMA) is a highlight of the art experience in fifth grade.

עברית HEBREW

Fifth grade students are divided into groups according to Hebrew language proficiency. This arrangement makes it possible for students to study at the level best suited to their needs.

The language series on which the program in these grades is based, and which provides the continuity from class to class and year to year, is *Aleph-Bet Y'ladim Lomdim Ivrit*. A

sequential program, *Aleph-Bet Y'ladim Lomdim Ivrit* follows a structured linguistic progression and integrates the four language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – in each unit. Based on the most current understanding of language acquisition in children, it exposes students to multiple genres, including stories, conversations, telephone conversations, poems, songs, albums, journals, bulletin board notices, and the like. Students are challenged to speak and write, using the language patterns they are learning in both familiar and new contexts. Additional reading materials and language exercises developed by the school complement the published units and ensure that students have ample opportunity to practice their emerging language forms and structures within a naturally occurring, functional context.

In the advanced class, students read short stories, write extensively, and speak in full sentences using verbs in several conjugations, in present and past tenses, and in active and passive voices. In addition, they make oral presentations.

Students review and reinforce their basic reading skills and learn to conjugate verbs in present tense and the infinitive form; in addition, they study agreement among nouns, verbs, and adjectives in gender and number. For all students, Hebrew continues to be spoken throughout the day in class routines and in the Jewish Studies program.

JEWISH STUDIES

A new subject in fifth grade is Jewish history. In a two-week mini-unit, students look at Jewish life in Europe in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, using both history and literature.

The fifth grade Torah curriculum focuses on the exodus from Egypt as related in *Sh'mot* (Exodus) 1-10. Students work primarily in study pairs (*chevruta*) and small groups to negotiate the text, comprehend it, answer text-based questions ranging from basic comprehension to close analysis, empathize with the biblical characters, pose interpretive questions, and answer them. In so doing, they create their own commentaries, which they share with other groups of students, invite them to offer their own interpretations, and together read classical and modern commentaries on the same questions that they posed. Students also learn to teach each other passages that they studied in small groups, using group presentations, dramatizations, writing, artwork, and short projects.

In *Mishnah*, the curriculum incorporates a number of *mishnayot* and related sources from the Talmud on topics relating to interpersonal behavior. In small groups, students negotiate the text with the help of a glossary, think about the situations and concepts that the *mishnah* presents, ask interpretive, text-based questions, apply the ideas they discover to present-day situations, and argue and debate the questions, much as the rabbis of the *mishnah* did. .

In *t'filah*, the fifth graders add new prayers to their daily liturgy, including *birchot hashachar* (the first morning blessings) and several chapters of psalms from *p'sukei d'zimra*. As in previous years, each new text is not only recited with correct intonation and melody; it is also mined for meaning, interpreted, personalized, and placed in the context of the overall structure of the prayer service. The highlight of the year is the *siddur* ceremony in which the students celebrate their completion of the *matbe'a shel t'filah* (the main prayers of the liturgy) and demonstrate their readiness to join the middle school *minyan*. The process begins by reviewing all the prayers that they have learned over the years and then reminiscing about the impressions that these early prayer experiences made on them. They also receive their first published *siddur* at this ceremony. Additionally, the fifth grade students extend their knowledge of *birkat hamazon* (grace after meals) to include the full text of the first *b'rachah*, in addition to the excerpts of the remaining *b'rachot* that they continue to recite, and they learn a new *b'rachah* to be recited after eating snacks.

The fifth grade *chagim* (Jewish holidays) curriculum incorporates most of the experiential elements that students encountered in their earlier years, thereby reinforcing an emotional attachment to each calendar event. At the same time, new concepts and texts are introduced to deepen students' knowledge and enrich their experience: prior to *Rosh Hashanah*, *Yom Kippur*, *Sukkot*, *Chanukah*, *Purim*, and *Pesach*, they complete their study of the laws of these holidays by reading portions of the *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch – M'kor Chaim* (code of Jewish law) not studied the previous year; in addition, they learn the structure of the *musaf* prayer on *Rosh Hashanah*; they learn about challenges to Jewish unity during the Hellenistic period by simulating the

responses of different sects to the events of the time; and they learn the *mishnah* which presents the agricultural basis for the *Tu Bish'vat* holiday.

In Israel studies, the students deepen their understanding of the varieties of in Israel by looking at early immigrants and settlers to Israel as well as documents connected to establishing the State of Israel.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Reading and writing in fifth grade are fully integrated ways of learning and communication. In their writing and reading workshops, the units of study are coordinated so that the same, or complementary, genres and topics are the focus of both reading and writing simultaneously.

Writing workshop begins, as in previous years, from a writer's notebook containing personal experiences, thoughts, and ideas that are the seeds for essay writing in various forms such as flash fiction, persuasive pieces, essays, literary analysis, memoir writing, and short fiction stories. The workshop culminates in a full-length independent research project. Throughout the writing units the students develop skills in using sophisticated language and syntax, revising, and editing.

Students learn to expand their writing from several paragraphs to several pages and make effective use of craft moves, such as strong beginnings, beautiful language,

transitions, details and description, and figurative language, including similes and metaphors. They continue to use the writing process effectively to plan for narrative and expository writing, edit for conventional spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammatical usage, and word choice, and revise both independently and in peer conferences.

In reading workshop, paralleling the experiences in writing workshop are internet research; themes in picture books; memoir; non-fiction; short stories; and historical fiction. Student initiative and active learning are encouraged through book clubs relating to their genre study. Key goals for the year include achieving high levels of literal and inferential comprehension and an appreciation of literature. Students learn to be actively aware of narrative sequence, character motivation, the author's message, theme, big idea of a story, and literary techniques; to read with a writer's eye; and to read between the lines. During read-aloud sessions, teachers model for students the thinking, language, behaviors, and strategies of successful readers. In the spring, students run their own book clubs, where groups read an historical fiction book and discuss it. Students improve their active listening and discussion skills, including how to disagree constructively, build on ideas, and extend conversation.

In a unit on internet literacy, students look at the role and function of the internet, safe communication, acceptable use, and good decision making.

Students also study a unit in both reading and writing memoir, in which students read memoirs to study styles and voice, using these skills to craft their own memoirs.

MATHEMATICS

Fifth grade students perform mathematical operations and understand mathematical concepts at a high level. Contributing to this balance of thinking and doing are two extended real-world applications and numerous briefer real-life problems; regular work in pairs and small groups as a complement to independent work; and a continuing emphasis on communicating mathematical ideas verbally.

Key goals for the year include mastery of all four operations in multiple digits, fluency in all basic operations, an integrated understanding of fractions, decimals, and percents, and increased independence in problem solving.

The following topics are studied in fifth grade:

- A review of multiplication and division
- Computation and estimation strategies in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division
- Solving word problems
- Fractions, decimals, and percents, and equivalencies among them
- Adding and subtracting fractions
- Multiplying fractions and decimals

- Pre-algebra, including growth patterns, equations, and graphs
- Geometry, including triangles, quadrilaterals, and the perimeter and area of polygons
- Real-world applications (e.g., playground plan, distribution of M&M's in individual bags)
- Communication of mathematical ideas orally and in writing

MUSIC

In fifth grade, following two years of studying the recorder, students advance to the study of keyboard. Fifth graders begin by learning basic rhythms and the names and locations of notes. Each child works individually or in pairs on pieces suited to his or her own level. These range from simple versions of nursery rhymes all the way up to classical music scores. The students have an opportunity to perform their chosen keyboard piece during the Keyboard Exhibitions, a morning when students present their work of focus to their fellow classmates.

In singing, the students build a repertoire of English and Hebrew songs, with focus on pitch accuracy and lyric memorization. Performance opportunities during the year include the *Zimriyah* at *Chanukah* time, the *Yom Hashoa* remembrance ceremony and the school concert.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Building on previous skill and developing more mature sportsmanship continue in fifth grade. With the addition of our after-school sport program at this age, many fifth graders have the opportunity to join the school soccer, basketball or volleyball team and play in inter-school league competition. Through this experience , students begin to show preference and strength in their desired sport. Besides the continuous skill development, during game play, students are encouraged to take risks. They learn self-awareness and gain self-esteem through trial and error. Students are able to explore movement styles and techniques independently, in pairs, and in a group setting. This self-discovery enables the shy athlete to flourish and the advanced athlete to grow in differentiated ways. .

THEMATIC STUDIES, SCIENCE, & SOCIAL SCIENCE

In fifth grade, the theme is New Beginnings, which parallels the students' own growing need for independence and self-sufficiency. The students begin by studying Colonial America. Students explore world geography as it relates to the routes traveled by the explorers of the New World and the backgrounds of different groups of people before they set sail for the New World; they consider both the conditions they were seeking to escape, as well as the freedoms they were intent on finding. In small groups, they look more closely at the

challenges the new settlers faced in each of three regions of the colonies – New England, the Middle Atlantic, and the South – and the ways in which they adapted and found solutions. Special attention is given to the progressive deterioration of relations between the colonies and England as they moved toward independence. In this study, the students' first formal introduction to the study of history in which they focus on the skills and tools of the historian, they consult non-fiction texts and conclude the unit with a project on the life in the 13 colonies.

Later in the year, they begin a more extended study of immigration. The students read non-fiction accounts and answer complex comprehension questions. Additionally, museum visits, field trips, historical simulations, and guest speakers increase their knowledge of the Jewish culture in turn-of-the-century America, and of the Lower East Side in particular. Moreover, interdisciplinary connections to math and art enrich their understanding. The main focus of the unit is independent research. Each student chooses a topic of his or her own interest related to the wider theme of immigration. Some topics come out of personal or family experience, while others are based on prior reading, discussion, or acquaintance; for example, in the past, topics have included the emigration of Syrian Jewry; processing at Ellis Island; Irish immigration to New York City; Chinese immigration to California; Ethiopian immigration to Israel, and the immigration of Eastern European Jews to America.

The in-depth and cross curricular research project extends over four months and is divided into stages with interim deadlines to help students plan, manage their time, and keep

organized. They learn new research strategies, including highlighting keywords and important information; recording them on note cards; organizing the note cards into an outline before beginning to write; drafting, submitting, and receiving feedback on multiple drafts; and preparing a bibliography. Upon completion, they submit their finished paper, as well as a visual aid; they present their project to classmates, teachers, and parents; and they field questions from the audience at the conclusion of their presentation.

The fifth grade science curriculum is designed to deepen students' experience with scientific inquiry and train them to think and act like real scientists. Early in the year, students study electricity and electric circuits. The students investigate an array of clever electrical devices, first exploring their functions, and then learning how their circuits work. The contributions of famous inventors, as well as child inventors, are highlighted. Students keep an "Inventor's Journal," recording the development of their electrical knowledge, schematic diagrams, and design ideas; explore simple and series circuits, learn about short circuits, and investigate the role of batteries, resistance, conductors and insulators; invent their own switch design and learn how to draw schematic diagrams; and build and compare series and parallel circuits, and pair up to create their own electrical inventions. Finally, in the spring, the students study the human body through the health curriculum.

CODING

Students in fifth grade use physical and computer-based tools to explore the world of functional coding. The coding curriculum teaches students how to access and use the main elements and structures of code, such as sequence, conditionals, variables, and loops. Students put their skills into practice by transmitting their codes to single-board microcontrollers, including arduinos and microbits, and using these controllers to respond to real world problems.