

Heritage Academy

TIMES

Jewish Community Day School



Fall/Winter 2006;
Cheshvan/Kislev 5766
Volume 3, Issue 1

EVENTS:

Thursday, 9/22 - Kindergarten Welcome Breakfast
Friday, 9/23 - 5th grade hosts guest speaker Dr. Mike Zmurko
Friday, 9/30 - Poetry Reading for Grades 6-8
Monday, 10/10 - Board of Directors' Meeting
Sunday, 10/23 - *Sukkah-Fest*
Monday, 10/24 - *Simchat Torah* Assembly
Thursday, 10/27 - *Kol Ha'Yam* Singers perform at Heritage Academy
Friday, 10/28 4th grade hosts Guest speaker Beth Perlman
Friday, 11/4 - Second Grade Chumash Party with scribe Rabbi Kevin Hale
Monday, 11/7 - Jackson Gillman, *BUGMAN*, assembly for Grades K-3, Board of Directors' meeting
Wednesday, 11/9 - Kindergarten Field Trip to the Longmeadow Fire Department
Thursday, 11/10 - Middle School field trip to Westover Air Reserve Base in Chicopee, MA; the first of our "Breakfast with the Specials" teachers (a six-week event)
Thursday, 11/17 - PICTURE DAY at Heritage Academy; Breakfast with Geri Johnson, Heritage Librarian
Sunday, 11/20 - *Chaver l'Chaver* (formerly known as Sunday Funday) from 9:30-11:30AM
Tuesday, 11/22 - Family Thanksgiving Luncheon and program for Grade K-5; Middle School Tzedakah project
Thursday, 12/1 - Breakfast with Susan Shaker, Heritage Art Teacher
Monday, 12/5 - Board of Directors' Meeting; 6th grade to Teva
Thursday, 12/8 - Breakfast with Darice Clark Heritage Science Teacher; 6th grade returns from Teva
Monday, 12/12 - Regional Day School Conference (no school)
Thursday, 12/15 - Breakfast with Rachel Wesley, Heritage Computer Teacher
Wednesday, 12/21 - Chanukah Show, 6:30P.M.
Thursday, 12/22 - Breakfast with Rob Lirange, Heritage Physical Education teacher
Monday-Friday, 12/26-30 - Winter Break
Monday, 1/2/06 - School resumes; Board of Directors' meeting
Monday, 1/16 - Teacher In-service day (no school)

FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

At a time when public education is going "back to basics," and school budgets are not allowing for "extras" such as enrichment programs and the arts, Heritage Academy Jewish Community Day School in Longmeadow, Massachusetts is going against the tide. In its pursuit to always enhance its offerings in both general and Judaic studies, the school is fortunate to be beginning its first year of a three-year plan to bring a total school enrichment program to all its students.

The program grew out of faculty and parent interest in doing more for all our high potential and gifted and talented students. More than 50% of Heritage Academy students score in the 95th percentile or above on at least one portion of standardized tests. However, the desire was to create an enrichment program that all students would benefit from and result in total school improvement. Studies on the life cycles of any institution suggest that institutions that are not constantly improving will enter conditions of decline.

This interest in an enrichment program occurred at the same time that many board members and I attended a PEJE (Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education) Conference in Boston. At that conference a challenge grant was offered by the *Avi Chai* Foundation. Board member Dr. Jonna Gaberman approached a first-time donor to the school, Audrey E. Wintman, to make a significant new gift of \$50,000, for the purposes of a new enrichment program. A grant proposal was submitted to *Avi Chai*, which accepted the proposal and resulted in a \$50,000 match.

The Education Committee under the leadership of the Head of School then embarked on a six-month investigation of

what enrichment model to implement at the school. After much research, visits to schools with enrichment programs (including *Multiple Intelligences* schools), and attendance at the Conference for the Gifted and Talented given by *The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented* at the University of Connecticut decisions were made and a plan drawn up.

Type I enrichment (which is not funded through the above-mentioned grant), is for all students and includes bringing in to the school performances, speakers, authors, musicians, etc. that enhance the general studies and/or Judaic studies curriculum. Already scheduled for this year is the *1000 Cranes Studio*, *Shakespeare & Company*, *Jewish Civil War Soldier Levy*, *Out of Many Waters* Jewish book author *Jacqueline Greene*, the Springfield Orchestra's *Musical Petting Zoo*, the Traveling Lantern's *Life and Music of Mozart* and so much more. After the students' exposure to the activity, they will be given the opportunity to pursue self-selected, individual projects designed by the classroom teacher, to deepen and enrich the experience.

Kindergarten through third grade students have already experienced performance artist *Jackson Gillman* (sponsored by the Kessler Family), fourth graders shared x-rays with bone expert Dr. Zmurko (and then made incredibly creative skeletons), fifth graders have had "a mock course in *Literary Approaches to the Bible* with college professor, Beth Kissileff Perlman, and fifth through eighth grade students heard the wonderful Israeli singing group *Kol HaYam* (sponsored by the Anna P. Housen Israeli Desk).



Type I enrichment has not been funded through the \$100,000 grant. It has been partially funded through a music grant I obtained from the *Arts Initiative of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation*, private donors, such as grandparent Margie Feinberg, and parents Dr. Steven and Lisa Kessler, and the books, supplies and equipment budget-line of the school. Additional donors are still needed, especially for the expense of *Shakespeare & Co.*

The Heritage Academy Enrichment Program includes Type I, II, and III enrichment, and will be phased in over three years. In this column, I have only shared with you one-half of the Type I enrichment plan. The rest of the Enrichment Program will be explained and highlighted in future *Heritage Times*. Be sure to look for them!

I am very excited about this new endeavor at Heritage Academy. The enrichment learning we have decided on allows gifted education to be a systematic plan that results in total school improvement. Both targeted students, and all students will benefit from this enrichment program. All the students at the school will experience challenging and appropriate educational opportunities. I am thrilled that we are taking advantage of cutting-edge computer technology (more about this in the future) as well as the arts to accomplish our goals.

Dr. Deborah R. Starr

FROM THE JUDAIC STUDIES CURRICULUM COORDINATOR

Shalom,

First and foremost I would like to thank Dr. Starr and the whole Heritage Academy community for trusting me and allowing me the opportunity to lead the Judaic studies program at Heritage Academy. I greatly appreciate your support.

This year there is a specific school-wide improvement goal for all Judaic teachers. The objective is for improved Hebrew language instruction in order to emphasize the Hebrew language as a second language, as opposed to a foreign language. Through *Chaverim B'Ivrit*, the new Hebrew program we hope that the students will improve their ability to communicate in Hebrew and converse in Hebrew in different situations. In order to accomplish this Yehuda Edry, Yossi Mastey and Idit Shushan participated in a *Chaverim B'Ivrit* 3 day Training Workshop. This was an exciting and important opportunity for them to learn about the new program directly from the people who wrote it, and share their experiences with other Hebrew teachers from various Jewish Day Schools. (Rachel Wesley, Tali Edry, Yaacov Asulin and I all participated in the same training last year. During the month of *Tishrei* (October), we celebrated the holidays both with class activities and school-wide events. We celebrated Rosh Hashanah in various ways: K-5 grades assembly on Friday,

September 30th. K-8 grade recited the blessings on the apple and honey, *rimon* (pomegranate) and fish during lunchtime on Monday, October 3rd. High Holiday Middle School Program on Friday, October 7th. Fourth and Fifth grade went to the Forest Park for *Tashlich* on Friday October 7th. We had a Counting-the-*Rimon*-Seeds Contest, Greeting Card delivery in school, and booklets for *Rosh Hashanah* and for *Yom Kippur* were sent home to the parents. All the classes have learned the laws and the customs of the Holidays in various ways, and prepared an art project which they took home.

During *Sukkot* we enjoyed our *Sukkah* very much. First and third grades decorated the *Sukkah*, some classes had activities in the *Sukkah*, and we all ate our lunch in the *Sukkah*. Our *Sukkah-Fest* was a great success with more than 100 parents and children attending. The rock band "Track 5" from UMASS Hillel sang for us in Hebrew and English, both Jewish and Israeli songs. We had two Arts and Crafts stations. Children with their parents created beautiful *Sukkah* decorations. The delicious food prepared by Cheryl Blonder, was served by parent volunteers who came earlier, with Denise Broverman, to organize and prepare it. It was nice to hear from many parents that they enjoyed the evening.

The next morning, on October 24th we celebrated *Simchat Torah*. Mr. Shushan led the assembly. Middle school students (prepared by Mr. Shushan) read the Torah. All the classes participated in the *Hakkafot*, saying the *Hoshaanot*, singing and dancing with the Torah. Middle school students gave *Midrashim* about the Torah. Every student could follow along with everything, using a booklet that I made. The assembly was very joyful and well organized.

Kol HaYam, a group of teenage singers from Bat-Yam, Israel, performed for grades 5-8 on November 1st, as part of our Type I Enrichment Program. Prior to their coming, I contacted the musical director of the group. Together we designed the performance at our school in order to compliment our Israel studies and *Chaverim Be'Ivrit* curriculum. The performance was outstanding. Grade 6 and 8 will follow up with the program in their Israeli studies classes, and grade 7 will follow up with the program in *Chaverim Be'Ivrit* (Hebrew class), since the unit they are learning now is Music.

As part of our Type 2 Enrichment Program I am working along with the classroom teachers on pre-assessment of students in their regular curriculum areas. Students who are already proficient in the material to be taught will be working on alternative materials. An individualized enrichment and remediation Hebrew plan were made for most of the students who were identified as such. I deliver some of the instruction myself.

Mazal Tov! Our second grade students received their first Chumash at the *Mesibat HaCumash* on Friday, November 4th. The students presented the portion on the Creation of the World, and each made an *Aliyah*. Rabbi Hyman, Rabbi Schwartz and Rabbi Shapiro, who honored us by attending the big event, joined the children on the *Bimah*, presenting them with the



Chumashim. After that, parents together with their children rotated through 3 stations: Sofer STaM (Scribe), Decorating Cakes according to one day of the creation, and decorating a *Yad* (the pointer). It was a collaboration between Yaakov Asulin and Tali Edry Sulamot- Family Education program. This was a very special event for both parents and students. Many parents told me that they were impressed with the children and enjoyed the program; particularly the fact that they learned as well.

Our middle school students also had a workshop with the Sofer, as part as the Enrichment Program. They have learned about the laws involved with the Torah writing and about the different instruments and tools he uses. Mr. Shushan did follow-up activities, and will design unique projects for the students who are interested in learning more.

There are so many other wonderful things happening in Judaic studies classes. The Judaic Studies teachers are doing a wonderful job. Our new *Morim Shlichim*, Idit and Shimon Shushan, have acclimated quickly to the school. Shimon introduced us to a new Talmud textbook from Israel, and with a new approach to teaching it. Idit has designed an amazing *Siddur* for the first grade. The teachers are always searching for ways to make learning exciting for their classes. You will be able to read about them in the teachers' reports in this newsletter.

Bi'vracha,
Iris Mastey

MIDDLE SCHOOL

LANGUAGE ARTS/ENGLISH

MRS. ROY

Middle School Orientation began with an introduction to poetry. After a discussion of what poetry is, students collected three items from nature on a hike to Forest Park. These items became subjects of three original haiku poems students wrote and illustrated on posters that were displayed on Back to School Night. Students enjoyed their introduction to a new school year and an intense poetry unit that consisted of reading the poems of masters such as Frost, Poe, and Sandburg; learning figures of speech and musical devices; and ultimately writing three original poems. The poetry studied determined the vocabulary and grammar content. The unit culminated with a poetry reading program to celebrate the outstanding creativity of the middle school students and to provide an opportunity for students to share their work with their parents and peers.

Since the study of literature is by genre, the short story is the next unit. As with poetry, the grammar and vocabulary content is determined by the literature. Students are developing expository writing skills of literary analysis, comparison and contrast, essay of opinion, character sketch, and the book review. Students are developing the technical vocabulary required to

discuss and write about the short story. In addition to studying the short story, students are required to read literature outside of class assignments. As part of their outside reading, students keep reading journals and write a book review.

Sarah Eva

Heritage Academy—Grade 8

Book Review: *The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck

Pearl S. Buck wrote a novel called *The Good Earth*, which was very fascinating because it taught about China and its culture. Most American readers do not know that the Chinese respected their elders so highly (Buck 3) or that they dye eggs red when a baby is born (38). Some books reveal customs and their meanings so that the readers question themselves. One such book is Pearl S. Buck's *The Good Earth*. Although it reveals a way of life different from ours, it has meaning for a modern audience.

Set in China, prior to the twentieth-century, Wang Lung endures much hardship to achieve great wealth. A drought in the South caused a famine (Buck 61); Wang Lung, poorer than ever, decides to move his family to the North for a better life (93). Then the Boxer Rebellion occurs and O-lan, his wife, steals some precious jewels (135). The family moves back to their land and become wealthy from the land they purchase with the stolen jewels. Wang Lung becomes pretentious and hires people to work the land (162). His sons later decide that they will sell the land when he dies (357).

Although Wang Lung is rich, he realizes that his life has no meaning (Buck 357). His sons are going to sell his land because he had never taught them how significant it was to him. The land was Wang Lung's heart and soul. Yet, as soon as he dies, it will be gone. "But the old man heard only the words 'sell the land' and cried out and he could not keep his voice from breaking and trembling with anger..." (Buck 357). This part is so sad because Wang Lung worked his whole life to get it.

Wang Lung, the main character, is greedy, hard working, and one with the land. "Wang Lung was hard pressed with the swelling wheat and was cultivating it with his hoe, day after day, until his back throbbed with weariness" (Buck 29). Wang Lung was a poor man who became more and more greedy as he aged. The older he became, the more he treats O-lan like a slave. At times his behavior is ludicrous (253) and could make the reader angry knowing there are better choices for him to make (341).

The strength of *The Good Earth* is the bad relationship between O-lan and Wang Lung. Even though Wang Lung ignored O-lan, she still served him faithfully (258). The way the author put together this relationship was marvelous. A weakness of the book is the middle of the story, which is monotonous because it is quite uninteresting to read about a very long wagon ride (93). However, the story became much more exciting once the Boxer Rebellion occurs (134).

This book is a part of a trilogy called *The House of Earth*. The sequels, *Sons* and *A House Divided*, were written



within five years of each other (“Buck” n.p.). As Buck was an autobiographical author, she wrote a novel called *The Child Who Never Grew* about her daughter whose mental development ended at age four. Both books have characters who are mentally retarded: “the fool” in *The Good Earth* and Buck’s daughter in *The Child Who Never Grew*.

The Good Earth is meaningful to twenty-first century audiences because it shows a way of life different from ours. Olan was supposed to be Wang Lung’s wife, but he treated her like a slave. Tradition allowed him to push her aside when he no longer needed her. One should treat everyone as an equal no matter what. This book is great because its meaning is universal and is done with artistry. “To endure, a book must live in our heart and soul.”

Works Cited

Buck, Pearl. *The House of Earth*. New York: Washington Square Press, 1958. “Buck, Pearl.” *Books and Writers 2002*. <<http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/pearlbuc.htm>>

Jacqueline

Heritage Academy—Grade 6

Book Review: *The Hobbit* by J. R. R. Tolkien

The Hobbit by J. R. R. Tolkien is a thrilling adventure of an unlikely hero. It is a rich fantasy story of compelling characters and a twisting plot. In *The Hobbit*, Tolkien uses an apparently ordinary character, the hobbit Bilbo, to show how anyone can become a hero. The tale of the shy hobbit is intriguing, and the reader finds it difficult to put the book down. The length of the book is suitable; Tolkien included just enough detail so that it is not overwhelming. Tolkien uses an apparently ordinary character, the hobbit Bilbo, to show how anyone can become a hero.

A timid hobbit, named Bilbo Baggins, is instrumental in helping his dwarf friends retrieve their long-lost treasure. However, many exciting sub-plots are developed along the way. This story takes place in the fantastic Middle Earth, a land filled with mountains and rivers, as well as goblins and elves. The group of dwarfs and Bilbo navigate themselves through this mysterious world facing challenges and dangers of the unknown. Only occasionally did they have some help from the wise wizard Gandalf, but he was not always there, and he did not give them abundant necessary information. Rather, he let them try to figure out their problems or answer their questions themselves and learn to trust each other.

The main theme in *The Hobbit* is that everyone has courage within; everyone just has to be given the opportunity to discover it. Several times, Gandalf says things that support this idea: “There is much more to him than you might guess, and a deal more than he has any idea of himself” (Tolkien 19). Therefore, Gandalf knew Bilbo had the potential to be brave, but Bilbo did not think so. That is why Bilbo had to discover his

bravery, and that is when he finds out who he really is and what the true extent of his capabilities is. Gandalf says something similar to the dwarfs and Bilbo in the middle of the book: “I have told you before that he has more about him than you guess, and you will find out before long” (136). Here, Gandalf is still implying the same concept. Finally, by the end of the book, Gandalf exclaims to Bilbo: “My dear Bilbo! Something is the matter with you! You are not the same hobbit that you were”(302). When Gandalf says this, he means that Bilbo is now a brave hobbit, who is more confident and courageous; he has changed dramatically since the beginning of their mission. Bilbo Baggins has many characteristics that change during the course of the book. However, throughout the book he is brave, humble, and loyal. Bilbo is brave when he confronts Smaug, the dragon, all by himself and even successfully attempts to fool the dragon. While talking to Smaug, he makes a mistake by insulting the dragon. “Never laugh at a live dragon, Bilbo you fool! You aren’t nearly through this adventure yet” (227). Bilbo tells himself this as a note for the future. He does not brag about how he talked to the dragon or how he outsmarted Smaug. He tells himself what he could have done better and tries to remember for the future. This shows a time when he is humble. When Bilbo is talking to Smaug, he is wondering if his friends the dwarfs are laughing at him, but he chooses to remain loyal to his colleagues: “‘I’ll tell you’ he said in order to remain loyal to his friends...” (225). Bilbo Baggins is an admirable character because he strives and always tries to do his best.

J. R. R. Tolkien’s book has its strengths and weaknesses. Its strength is that *The Hobbit* has an engrossing plot with lots of action. In addition, he writes with detail. He has just the right number of action sub-plots to balance out the more calm and thoughtful scenes. However, some of the characters are not as developed as they could have been. For instance, the dwarfs in particular are kind of just there, with no real purpose. Though the dwarfs added to the spirit of adventure, Tolkien could have included more character development to individual dwarfs. Tolkien could have had some of the dwarfs become heroes and find bravery in themselves. This would also back up the idea that everyone contains the potential for bravery.

In this book, Tolkien takes the apparently ordinary hobbit Bilbo Baggins and turns him into a hero to show us anyone of us “ordinary” people can become a hero as well. An insight about life is that it is important to leave one’s comfort zone and take risks; in doing so, one might learn something new about the world, or one might even learn something new about oneself. Books in general can influence people, and, in this case, a reader learns that a character can take a risk and succeed; therefore, the reader might be open to taking a personal risk.

Jenna

Heritage Academy—Grade 7



Book Review: *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* by Jules Verne

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea by Jules Verne is an enthralling science-fiction novel. The book is thrilling and full of fun-filled adventures that occur in the oceans and seas. Verne uses descriptive language to lure his readers into believing that one is actually part of the novel. In *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, three captured men tour underwater life for several months in a submarine. As the monotonous days aboard the *Nautilus* pass without much to see, except for a blue mass of wonder, the prisoners become bored, weary, and eager to escape to civilization. It is exhilarating to read how the three prisoners show perseverance and never give up on their desired goal.

Along with fellow companions, Professor Aronnax, his servant, Conseil, and Ned Land pursue a mysterious sea monster to rid it from the seas in the year of 1866. Unfortunately, as the men try to attack the strange creature, the eerie monster shocks the ship, sending Professor Aronnax, Conseil, and Ned Land flying into the Pacific Ocean (Verne 31). After hours of swimming, the three men reach a metal platform in the middle of the ocean (34). Surprisingly, this object that they originally thought was the narwhal turns out to be just a submarine (34). Soon, a few men emerge from the opening and bring the stunned men inside the machine (36). While inside the submarine, the three men meet Captain Nemo, the captain of the ship (48). They learn that they are on board the *Nautilus* and will be imprisoned on it for the rest of their lives (51). During the novel, Captain Nemo takes his prisoners on an amazing journey around the world. Jules Verne demonstrates how persistence can lead one to reaching a desired goal. After about a month passed without seeing civilization, Conseil and Ned Land star to become restless. Both plead to Professor Aronnax to escape many times (131,150,156). Finally, after three months, Professor Aronnax starts to become bored as well. When the *Nautilus* travels near Portugal, the three prisoners have the perfect chance to escape (170). As the men are close to escaping, Captain Nemo appears as if he suspects their escape plans (176). Even though this plan does not succeed, Professor Aronnax, Conseil, and Ned land never give in until finally they have escaped from the *Nautilus*.

Professor Aronnax is the main character in *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*. He is intelligent, adventurous, and daring. While Professor Aronnax is traveling under the oceans, he is writing a novel about marine life (Verne 156). This is a sign of intelligence. By taking on the journey to hunt down the sea monster, Professor Aronnax demonstrates his adventurous character (14). At the end of the novel, Professor Aronnax is shown to be daring when he escaped from the *Nautilus* during a ferocious storm (276-77). Professor Aronnax demonstrates the many side of his personality.

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea is filled with strengths and weaknesses. One especially enjoys how the

characters are able to see the marvelous sights of the mysterious underwater life (Verne 68). In addition, Jules Verne uses a lot of descriptive language (39). One learns so much about Captain Nemo's countenance by the details Verne includes in this novel. He shows great detail in all that he is writing about. The conclusion of *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* is unresolved since the readers do not know how the three prisoners escaped from the clutches of Captain Nemo (277). Over all, this book is entertaining and suspenseful, especially for those who appreciate marine life.

Although Professor Aronnax, Conseil, and Ned Land made several attempts to escape to their homes, they never gave up on their dream. Finally, with perseverance, they succeed and reach civilization. It is important in life not to be a quitter and to believe that one can achieve one's goals. In relation to other science fiction novels, this book has a real setting and realistic events. Science lovers and oceanographers would certainly find *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* enjoyable.

Work Cited

Verne, Jules. *Twenty thousand Leagues Under the Sea*. London: Puffin, 1870.

**Elliot
Grade 7
Poem: First Day in the Spotlight**

Careful caution, looking left, rearing right.
The fans are felling loose, but no fights,
The smell of dew upon the squeaky grass,
Hearing the stand, hoping it lasts.
The feel of horsehide at my fingertips,
While both dugouts are having fits.

Feeling like the world is in my hand,
No one else could ever hope to understand
The stands go crazy as they observe the scoreboard,
as they worship me, their lord.

The fans hiss as the batter approaches the box.
The fans hiss like a wicked witch, but soon become
As silent as a fox.

As I ready myself, the fans roar again.
As though their red heads will explode again and again.
The batter swung his trunk, not once, but twice.
while the batter walks around the battle zone,
Fans as silent as mice.

The wind whispers against my face,
Then leaves without a trace.
I look into his eyes and he looks into mine,
His eyes sparkling like divine wine.



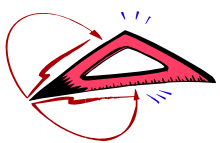
Doesn't matter to me about being rich,
All I want to do is throw the first pitch.
The ball comes screaming out of my hand,
No one else could ever hope to understand.
Strike 1, strike 2, strike 3,
and I got 26 more easily.

Ariel
Grade 6
Poem: Wind

I am the wind, flying fast,
Blowing in faces,
Whistling a chilling shriek,
Racing through the skies.

I am the wind, rustling leaves,
Speedy and swift as a steed.
In a blink of an eye, I can circle the sky,
Or fly over a shimmering sea.

I am the wind, spinning quickly by
The eternal sky.
I am the wind, always roaming,
Flying proud and high.



MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH -

MR. LOMBARD

GEOMETRY

The middle school geometry students have started chapter three of their Key Curriculum texts Discovering Geometry by launching into constructions of line segments, angles, angle bisectors, and perpendicular bisectors. When asked to construct an angle bisector, students find that a line that splits an original angle into two equal or congruent parts, the formal conjecture that can accompany this construction is the Angle Bisector Conjecture which states that if you are anywhere on the dotted line you are equidistant from either of the other lines.

ALGEBRA – FUNCTIONS & MR. LOMBARD AS

SHORT ORDER COOK

The middle school Algebra class started on a section that focused on functions. A function is a relationship between two or more things. For example, if Mr. Lombard is a short order cook during the summer and makes \$6.75 per hour, how much will he make after a 40-hour work week (\$270)? I ask the students if there is a relationship between the amount of money I could make and the number of hours I work. They see that there is a relationship between time and money, or stated another way, that money is a function of the amount of time I work. It also

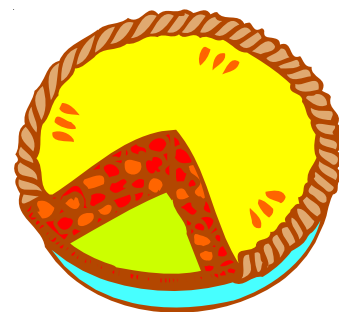
brings up the issue of minimum wage and how the work week is structured.

I then ask them whether an employer gives me the \$270 at the beginning of the week, or whether I must first work the hours and then get paid. Through this, students realize that time is the independent variable and that money depends on the amount of time worked. Furthermore, I ask them the possible amount of time I can work during the week at the restaurant bearing in mind that the owner will not let me work more than 40 hours a week. They tell me that it is from 0 hours to 40 hours which is the domain or possible inputs for the function. The amount of weekly money could range from 0 to \$270. Functions are a critical part of the Algebra course and the class is off to a good start on this concept.

JOURNALING IN MATHEMATICS—

FRACTIONS

Although middle schoolers have been exposed to various fraction operations in their elementary classes, it is critical to keep on reviewing and enhancing their conceptual understanding of this key math mathematical concept. Math educators are extolling the benefit of journaling about different math concepts to deepen student's understanding.



The sixth and seventh grade math classes were challenged to journal about the differences between adding and multiplying two simple fractions. During the writing of their essays students had to understand the concepts well enough to communicate their ideas in writing. In the past, math courses had been content with having students accurately answer a problem. Sadly, many students did not know the concept well enough to communicate their knowledge. By writing about their understanding, students will hopefully retain and deepen their appreciation for the two important mathematical skills and concepts being taught.

SCIENCE NEWS – MRS. CLARK

All of the students in the school have been very busy in science class. This year, Kindergarten has been coming to the science lab this year and has learned about the characteristics of living things. They now know all about bees, trees, and spiders, and can tell you what makes them living or nonliving. First graders have really enjoyed learning about what makes them healthy. They know how important it is to eat right, exercise and get enough sleep. Second graders started with a unit on weather.



They made working pinwheels, thermometers and a cloud in a bottle. Third grade has been studying animals. They have made a field guide of animals indigenous to our area. Fourth grade started the year studying the skeletal and muscular systems. They observed real bones and did activities using their muscles. Fifth grade started the year learning about the Earth and its moon. They now know why there are seasons and different phases of the moon. They have since moved onto weather on our planet and are learning about the atmosphere and wind. They have recently made anemometers in lab.

The middle school students have been working very hard in science. The sixth grade is exploring the universe. They are enjoying learning about the formation of the universe and our solar system. From here we will move onto the Dynamic Earth and learn all about the surface of our planet. The seventh grade began this year by studying cells. We have looked at them under a microscope and watched diffusion and osmosis across a membrane. We will continue on with mitosis and then move onto body systems. The eighth grade has learned about different types of matter. This is in preparation for learning about atoms and molecules and how they combine. The year so far has been exciting and challenging. I look forward to the rest of the school year with all the students.

HEBREW – MRS. WESLEY

We have had a very exciting start to the year in the middle school. The 6th graders subject is “Food.” We are learning a lot of words and names of meals in Hebrew. Our last project was very interesting. We chose a type of restaurant and created a menu. We are now planning an Israeli night with the 6th grade parents so they can taste and see our work.

The 7th grade’s subject is “Music.” We have learned about Naomi Shemer, a famous Israeli songwriter and composer that passed away last summer. Naomi Shemer contributed hundreds of songs, the most well known is “Jerusalem of Gold”. It was very special to hear some of her songs by the singing group *Shirat Hayam* that visited our school.

The 8th grade’s subject is “Small Animals.” We just finished reading and learning fables. Fables are short stories that have animals as the main characters. The animals can talk and behave as people. At the end of every story there is a message or moral.

All classes are now searching for information and working on the legacy of Yitzchak Rabin. November 12th was the tenth anniversary day of Rabin’s assassination.

ISRAEL STUDIES - MORAH IRIS, MORAH RACHEL

Last week all middle school classes finished the first unit of Israel studies, which was the **Geography of Israel**. The

students learned about the map of Israel: direction, borders, main cities and surrounding countries. It was fun to “travel” on the map from one place to another and to be able to recognize important places. The students compared and learned about the *Negev, Galil, Ramat-HaGolan, Mishor HaChof* and *HaArava*. It all became very real for the students. They learned about each area and located it in the map. One main problem Israel faces is water. The students learned about Israel’s climate and about Israel’s sources of water. They gave suggestions as to how Israel can solve the water problem. They brainstormed ideas as to how every household in Israel can save water. Lastly, they compared modern times to ancient times.

As a culmination to the unit, sixth grade prepared a brochure for the different areas in Israel; seventh grade prepared PowerPoint presentations for different areas and cities in Israel, and the eighth grade planned a three day tour in Israel

SOCIAL STUDIES – MR. LIRANGE

In the next few weeks, Middle School Social Studies will be an exciting time.

The sixth grade will continue their study of the American Constitution. We will develop an understanding for the manner in which it was created, the powers and duties of each branch of government, and the unit will culminate with debates as to why our government is one of the strongest in the world. After the completion of this unit, we will study world geography and the numerous effects geographical conditions have on a country.

Our seventh graders are in the process of studying Ancient Greece during the Hellenic Era. This study will include a 4-week simulation of the Golden Era where the class will become members of each of the city-states and compete against one another in a variety of challenges. During this unit the students will present at a middle school assembly.

In eighth grade we are studying the many religions of the world. We have completed studies on Christianity and will shortly begin a unit on Buddhism. The students have been a true pleasure during these units, as they have been very inquisitive and attentive. Their research papers on Christianity are impressive and will be displayed at a world religion presentation in December.

I am eagerly looking forward to the rest of this school year. I would like to give a special thanks to Mr. Z. who did a fantastic job in my absence. I will be having conferences on Thursday, December 15th and on Thursday, December 22nd, from 3:30-5:30PM. Please call the school office to schedule an appointment.



JUDAIC STUDIES IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL MR. SHUSHAN



It is with great pleasure that I write this article and with great excitement that we have started this year of Judaic studies in the middle school. The classes are varied and include Bible, Prophets, Talmud, general Jewish Law, the holidays and the weekly Torah portion. All of these subjects are being

explored through many learning tools, which include homework, class projects and independent research. The students are expected to strive and understand the ethical challenges presented and to think critically, give their own opinions and work to compare and contrast varying ways of approaching the subject.

The class will use multiple resources to achieve their research goals, which will include standard Judaic texts, classic works, encyclopedias and the Internet. In this way we will work together to develop their sense of independent creative expression. We have already started a rotating weekly project on the Torah portion. The projects include posters, outlines, newspaper-like updates, and Power Point presentations. These choices have helped engage the students and foster their own creativity and explore deeper questions, which are encountered and encouraged in class.

This year the curriculum will include and integrate a new area specifically devoted to prayer. The students will learn not only the prayer texts but explore the deeper meanings and connections between prayers and their daily lives. In this way our goal will be to create an interest, connection and deeper feeling for prayer expanding on the mechanical and repetitive elements of prayer to one that is more personal and meaningful.

In the sixth and seventh grade the students created and built a model of the encampment of the Twelve Tribes in the desert after leaving Egypt and on their journey towards the Promised Land. The results were wonderful, and the students enjoyed the project. The goal of the project was for the student to feel what it was like to live in the desert for forty years and to develop their creative imagination. We also spent time considering the physical layout and organization of the tribes to further understand the importance and meaning of these specific relationships.

The seventh grade is focusing part of their learning on *Pirkei Avot*, Ethics of our Fathers. Specifically we are studying issues which revolve around the responsibilities between one individual and another, between the individual and his community, and between the individual and society. Here too, the students are involved in creating special activities which broaden the scope of

the topic from a purely book based experience to one which makes a personal impression on the individual student.

In the eighth grade the students started this year learning Talmud, where the central topic is the relationship between parents and children, and teachers and students. This topic is a very germane one to the students, because this is the time in their lives when these relationships are developing and so very important. They are learning Talmud with an innovative educational tool which incorporates flowcharts and visually captivating information, allowing them to understand better the flow and logic of the Talmud.

One of our first projects for Talmud was to build a model of the construct and layout of the Talmud, and the many different commentators included on the classic Talmud page. The students were expected to be involved in serious research in an area that was new to them and they were able to truly learn from this research, and the results were wonderful. We also prepared newspaper articles relating to the subjects of circumcision and redemption of the first born which are central to Judaism. I was very impressed with results of their written work which was at a very high level.

In conclusion this will be a very exciting and challenging year for both the students and myself. They have taken on their responsibilities with a lot of excitement and interest, and have already developed research tools which will help them throughout the year. I am so very happy to be able to have the opportunity to be here, to teach the students and to grow with them. Hopefully together we will develop their critical thinking abilities with a love and desire to individually explore these areas further in their future studies.

FIFTH GRADE NEWS - MR. EDRY

The fifth graders are a group of intelligent and diligent students who are eager to learn and excel in Judaic studies. In Hebrew, we are studying with a new program called *Chaverim b'Ivrit*, which focuses on speaking the Hebrew language. The first unit is about a class in Israel who goes on a field trip. We study the Hebrew vocabulary of the field trip, and travel to different places in Israel. Every student also shares his or her favorite trip or place and presents his or her report to the class in Hebrew. Via the Internet, we visited the *Neot Kedumi*. This is a very special place where one can see all of the vegetation and most of the animals that are mentioned in the Bible.

In Chumash class, we are studying the book of *Shmot* (Exodus), and we are learning about how the Jewish people became enslaved in Egypt. The Rashi commentary is a very important part of our *Chumash*. We integrate his commentary to fully understand the text. The students write plays to summarize all of what they learned in each chapter.

The book of *Shophetim* (Judges) is a very interesting book that describes the new leadership system for the Jews after



Joshua. We learn the cycle of the book, a sin→ punishment →repentance→ judge. We summarize every chapter with a class poster that reflects all that we have learned in that chapter.

Every Friday, we celebrate Kabbalat *Shabbat* and discuss the *parsha* of the week. We are then tested on the material on Monday.

I enjoy working in the 5th grade and am looking forward to a very exciting year.



Fourth Grade *Tashlich*

KITAH DALET – 4TH GRADE

MR. EDRY AND MR. MASTEY

In fourth grade this year, we are focusing on individual and group work in order to meet every student's needs. Having two professional teachers in the classroom allows parallel teaching. When Mr. Mastey is teaching Hebrew and *Navi* (prophets), Mr. Edry is teaching *Chumash* and *Dinim* (Jewish laws and holidays). The students are divided according to their Hebrew level, which allows the teachers to address every student in the group.

In Hebrew we are studying the new program *Chaverim Be'Ivrit*. We are studying the Unit "My Friends". In this unit the children are exposed to the daily life of an Israeli child. They learn how to communicate, in Hebrew, in many different situations. Classroom Hebrew instruction is done only in Hebrew.

For the fourth grade, it is the students' first year learning *Navi* (prophets). This is part of their study of the Bible. In *Navi* class, we have finished the introduction of the book of *Yehoshuah*, and discussed questions such as: Who is a leader? Who is a prophet? Who chose the prophet? We learned about the transition of leadership from *Moshe* to *Yehoshua*. We enhance our learning through experiencing Jewish life activities. We use drama, music, short exercises, dance, class games and storytelling.

Our *Chumash* class is very exciting. We are learning about the first place that was purchased in the land of Canaan (Israel): the cave of the *Machpela*. The students wrote a play and built a model of the cave, and learned about its present significance in Israel.

We have added many new parts of the *Teffilah* (prayers) to our repertoire, and learned new tunes for the weekday and Shabbat services.

Our social environment is broadened by combining activities with the 5th grade in Open Circle, *Kabbalat Shabbat*, and recess. We are looking forward to a year full of learning and activities in our Judaic Studies. It continues to be an incredible educational experience all of us.

4TH GRADE GENERAL STUDIES

MISS REISH

Our fourth grade writing program goals include: developing an understanding of writing as a process, developing an understanding of the qualities (or traits) of good writing, and developing the ability to self-assess writing. The writing process we use in the fourth grade is: plan, write and reflect, request and apply feedback, revise, edit, and publish. The six traits we use to evaluate our writing are: ideas and content, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions. The following writing strategies are taught in fourth grade:

- To choose a topic that is narrow and focused
- To organize thoughts into well-crafted paragraphs with clear main ideas and specific details
- To choose precise and original words that paint a picture
- To write text that is smooth and connected
- To consider and apply feedback

So far this year, the following genres/ writing projects have been accomplished in the fourth grade:

- Summer experience piece- capturing a special moment in summer
- Tishrei writing piece- capturing a special moment in Tishrei- we submitted these pieces to The Jewish Press in Brooklyn, New York
- Math concept essay- explaining an important math concept in detail to prove understanding of the concept
- Poetry of the senses (currently in the process)- we will submit poems to the Anthology of Poetry in early December



I Learned How to Camp in the Wild at Cape Cod
Lauren

This summer when I went to Cape Cod, my grandma and grandpa were there too. They were camping in the woods and I slept one night with them. They taught me how to set up the hammock and tent, and then I broke the tent down.

They took me deep into the woods and when we got to the trail they showed me different plants. It took a long time to find the trail. We saw a pond and we looked into the pond with binoculars and in the middle of the pond, on a log, were about 12 box- and painted turtles. At first, I couldn't see them, so I had to climb out on a branch with the binoculars. Afterwards, we hiked back to the campsite, and I went on the hammock and took a long nap. I learned how to camp in the wild at Cape Cod and I like it.

What I Will Learn This Year
Ilana

I think some of the most important things I will learn this year will be about the Prophets, and stories about the Bible. I have never learned about the Prophets before and I hope to keep learning about them all year long.

Throughout my schooling, I have been learning the basic ideas about prophets, but now that I am in the 4th grade, I am hearing more elaborate stories about the prophets. When I started learning about the prophets, I was interested and wanted to learn even more. I am happy that we are going to have focused lessons on the prophets in our small groups.

Some of the bible stories we have known for a long time, but we are now adding detail and focus on Avraham's life, Jonah, Living in the Desert, Crossing the Red Sea, and YOSHUA (Joshua). I have learned new, interesting facts about these stories. Some of them I was very surprised about. One fact I have learned is that only two people made it to Israel and survived being in the desert for the whole 40 years G-d made them travel. Their names were Kallev and YOSHUA. I also learned that the reason the Jewish people traveled in the desert for 40 years is because Moses had sent 12 spies into Israel. When they came back, 10 of them said it was an awful land and there are other, bigger nations living there. But the two others, Kallev and YOSHUA, said that it was a beautiful, wonderful land. Everybody started crying and asking Moses why he took them out of Egypt. G-d decided not to forgive them. So, they traveled in the desert for forty years. I think that learning Jewish history is very interesting and I am glad that we are learning about it.

5TH GRADE GENERAL STUDIES

MISS REISH

Our fifth grade writing program goals build on what was learned in fourth grade which includes developing an understanding of writing as a process, developing an understanding of the qualities (or traits) of good writing, and developing the ability to self-assess writing. The writing process we continue to use in the fifth grade is: plan, write and reflect, request and apply feedback, revise, edit, and publish. The six traits we use to evaluate our writing are: ideas and content, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions. In the fifth grade, students are expected to:

- Develop and advance a big idea/ thesis to prove one's thinking
- Communicate effectively in a variety of genres
- Research and integrate information from several sources as well as background knowledge
- Monitor quality of text for sense, elaboration, language choice, and sentence structure
- Exhibit control over mechanical aspects of writing typical of grade placement

The following genres/ writing projects have been accomplished in the fifth grade so far this year:

- Summer experience piece- capturing a special moment in summer
- Letters to Dr. Starr- explaining how the 9/11 assembly impacted our lives
- Tishrei writing piece- capturing a special moment in Tishrei- we submitted these pieces to The Jewish Press in Brooklyn, New York
- Math concept essay- explaining an important math concept in detail to prove understanding of the concept
- Social Studies essay on the Articles of Confederation- to explain how America's first attempt at a national government was not successful
- Social Studies essay on the Beginning of America- incorporating last year's study of America History with this year's study up through the U.S. Constitution
- Social Studies essay comparing the United States Constitution with the draft of the Iraq Constitution
- Reading Group essay on The Incredible Journey by Sheila Burnford- to prove how setting affects the characters' perspectives in the book
- Poetry of the senses (currently in the process)- we will submit poems to the Anthology of Poetry in early December

Excitement at Fenway
Nathan

When I went to the Red Sox game with my dad, we went on a Peter Pan bus. The Red Sox were playing the Kansas City Royals.



We got to Fenway Park early enough to see the Royals batting practice and we also saw David Wells, the Red Sox starting pitcher. It was my 5th time at Fenway Park. It was really fun watching.

In the first inning, Johnny Damon from the Red Sox collided with the catcher at home plate, but was out, which was the first out of the inning. Then Tony Grafanino slid in at home plate two times and was safe both times, which of course helped the Red Sox. I also saw Manny Ramirez of the Red Sox hit a 3-run-homer into the Green Monster seats. Then later in the game Manny and Edgar Renteria collided trying to catch a pop-up and the paramedics came, but Manny didn't go on the cart. Everybody in the stadium was shouting, "Manny! Manny!" Then Renteria stayed in the game, but Manny didn't play the rest of the game with a bloody nose.

The Red Sox won 9-7; Kansas City had 2 errors. When the game was over my dad and I went to Burger King for dinner. I had a really fun night!

The Last Shabbat at CRNE

Alizah

The last Shabbat at Camp Ramah was special to me. It was special to me, because on Saturday it would be the last official day (other than the day we left) at camp. It was the last time we would have Friday night services. It was the last good meal, the last big shira (a time when we sing) at a meal, the last dinner, the last time we would have an official meltzer (waiter), and the last time we would have bug juice (no it's not made of bugs). The last Shabbat at camp was a sad time.

Although it was sad at dinner it was still fun. My friends and I sang, we laughed, we cried, and of course we ate! We also enjoyed each other's company. Dinner was fun but all things fun must come to an end.

Saturday morning services were also very enjoyable. We had morning services, breakfast, torah services, and then the kiddish or oneg. After that we had the whole day to ourselves (except for meals). We could go swimming or do whatever we wanted to. And then it was Sunday, the day we all went home. It was sad to go home but I got over it (eventually).

Letter to Dr. Starr:

September 22, 2005

Dear Dr. Starr,

Terrorists crashed into The World Trade Center September 11, 2001. The assembly commemorating September 11th was really meaningful to me. Just to think, so many people died in the World Trade Center. So many people volunteered to help. The people who volunteered to help were heroes. Some people called home and said they were coming home and did.

Those people were very lucky. Some people called home and said they were coming home and never did. I wonder why terrorists would kill themselves to kill other people?

Love,

Devorah

Beginning of America Essay

America

1607-1787

Stephen

In the early 1600's, England, a world power, decided to expand and make colonies in the New World called America. Jamestown was founded in 1607 and then Plymouth was founded in 1620. Plymouth was not founded to dig for gold like Jamestown was, but because the colonists wanted independence from the Anglican Church, which was mandatory in England. Many religious freedom seeking people set out to make their own colonies. The first Jews came to America in 1654 because of religious rights too. Eventually, 13 British colonies were founded.

The Stamp Act and the Intolerable Act infuriated the people of America who now wanted their independence from Britain. A war started and America declared independence from Britain by making the Declaration of Independence, which was written mostly by Thomas Jefferson in 1776 (even before the war ended.) If America wanted to win the war they would need a strong national government so they created the Articles of Confederation, an attempt of a strong national government, but that didn't help because it didn't give the national government enough money to support the war. Even though there was no money from the government to support the war America won the war and gained independence from Britain. Now that they won the war they needed a national government to pull all the states' governments together so America made a lasting constitution, which was accepted, gave money to the national government and is the same constitution our government uses today.

The Articles of Confederation

Jessica

Colonists in America were not happy with the King of England's power. Therefore, the Revolutionary War was fought by Colonists who had the goal to be free. After they won the war and had the country to themselves they had to govern it. Instead of there being a powerful government, there were powerful citizens, well, according to the Articles of Confederation. The government didn't have enough power to protect America's rights and I think it was not a wise choice.

Before the Revolutionary War, the colonists were heavily taxed, so afterwrds the states decided not to heavily tax



themselves. The British had taxed the colonists for almost everything they needed. The colonists had tried very hard to prevent the harsh taxes, but separation from Britain was the only answer. However, just because the colonies were taxed unfairly then doesn't mean we shouldn't be taxed appropriately now.

Under the Articles of Confederation the national government couldn't make the laws and rules and couldn't protect America's rights. The national government had no money because of the Articles of Confederation's rules. Even though the states decided to tax, the national government did not have the power to tax American citizens; therefore, the government was poor. I don't think it's acceptable for the government to be plagued with poverty.

When the national government was really desperate they would ask the states for donations of money. The unfortunate part was that the states had a choice to say yes or no. It wasn't too easy for the government to get money under the Articles of Confederation.

This situation is just like if teachers ran all schools. The Head of School couldn't make decisions to let the school run smoothly. Just like the national government, the Head of School would have to go around asking the teachers for money, because the teachers would be in charge of the money; therefore, the Head of School would be broke. If a teacher ran the school it wouldn't be fair just like the idea of the Articles of Confederation.

People had the goal to be free in America (I think freedom went to their heads). The states were controlling the national government and it wasn't going well. But at least they were getting a step closer toward the Constitution!

THIRD GRADE – MRS. Z.

The Third grade has been very busy this year. We have adjusted well to all the new things 3rd grade brings with it. The holidays kept us very busy and we had to remember lots of things so when we got back to school we could move ahead. But now that the holidays are over we are back to all the challenges of 3rd grade.

We had fun doing our animal projects for Science. Hopefully everyone got a chance to see them in the hall. We also learned how to research on the web and had fun doing a report from the virtual zoo.

In Math we have reviewed all that we learned in 2nd grade and are moving on to new things. We have learned about fractions and how to add them. We also know what an improper fraction is and what a numerator and denominator is. We have used *Tangrams* and found them both fun and challenging. We continue to practice our math facts to 20 and enjoy our 1-minute checks to see how many we know. We are working on addition and subtraction to the thousands with borrowing and re-grouping.

In reading, we have been enjoying some fun trade books. We have read *Chocolate Fever*, *Stuart Little* and now *Squanto*. We saw the movie of *Stuart Little*, and compared and contrasted the likenesses and differences between the book and the movie.

We are also doing a unit on the Indians and learning many new things. We will be working on reports and projects in the coming weeks. We have each chosen a tribe that we will research and we will find out many exciting things that we can share with our classmates.



As you can see we have been working like "busy beavers."

I am pleased at how far this class has come since first grade and how much they have grown.

THIRD GRADE – MORAH IDIT

Our third grade year has begun energetically and with a lot of enthusiasm. During the month of September, we had the opportunity to get to know each other and to unite socially, creatively, and academically.

In class, we use Hebrew all the time. In Hebrew language, the students are learning reading, writing, expressive language, and grammar. They are beginning to express their emotions in Hebrew through questions, statements and exclamations. In *Chumash*, we are studying *Parshat Lech Lecha*. Following this, we will learn *Vayeira*. These Torah portions tell the story of the father of the Jewish nation, Abraham, and how he became the leader of the Jews. We discuss his positive attributes, and how we can apply them to our own lives. The students designed several interesting projects connected to the holidays. These included wooden napkin holders, illustrated storybooks and *sukkah* decorations. At the *Rosh Hashanah* assembly, *Kitah Gimmel* presented a play in Hebrew about performing good deeds.

The class is working on a long term project on the subject of *Eretz Yisrael*. This project, which is being done in the computer lab, concentrates on life in Israel – past and present. Students will type in Hebrew. On Fridays, we celebrate *Kabbalat Shabbat* with songs, stories, *tefillah* (prayer) and blessings for Shabbat.

During the year, we will continue to improve our Hebrew reading skills. Each student chooses several books to read and writes a book report as they complete the book. I am happy that the students enter the class with a smile and that they learn Hebrew enthusiastically.



SECOND GRADE – MRS. KRAMER

Our second grade room is filled with excitement and exploration! All the children are very inquisitive and have a zest for learning!

We have just completed a science unit about weather and as a follow up activity the children have written fiction or non-fiction stories about different weather phenomenon. They are very creative, so please take the time to stop and read the stories that are posted on our bulletin board outside our classroom door.

Each day our mathematicians are busy solving a “Daily Word Problem”. They get very excited when they discover how many different ways the answer can be reached. Math facts are practiced daily and the children keep an independent chart to track their progress.

We have just begun a unit on the Pilgrims and Thanksgiving and are in the process of reading the novel, Squanto, Friend of the Pilgrims. We have some budding actors and actresses in our class who are busy practicing for a play that will be presented during the annual Heritage Academy Thanksgiving Luncheon.

I have continued to implement the Open Circle program into the curriculum. So far we have discussed respecting others, non-verbal signals, and giving and receiving compliments.

I would like to congratulate all my 2nd graders and their families. The children did a wonderful job at the *Chumash* celebration that took place on Friday, November 4, 2005.

It is a pleasure to watch these children grow intellectually and socially. I wish you all a healthy, happy, Thanksgiving holiday!

KITAH BET – MR. ASULIN

With a freshly painted room and walls covered with the new Tal AM 2 posters, we enthusiastically began our year together.

We began our program with the *Tishrei* holidays. The Tal AM 2 books focused on why we celebrate Rosh Hashanah. We researched this by looking in the *Chumash* for the answer. The students wrote Rosh Hashanah cards in Hebrew to each other and to their families. During Yom Kippur, we learned about *Teshuvah*, *Tefillah*, and *Tzedakah*. We concentrated on the steps towards Teshuvah: admitting a mistake, apologizing for the mistake and promising not to repeat it. Our Tal AM literature and grammar book is entitled *Tov B’Kitah, Tov B’Bayit*. (It is pleasant in the classroom; it is pleasant in the house).

This year, as part of *Tefillah*, we have been working hard on several new prayers, including *Yigdal Elohim*, *Chai, V’Yishtabach*, *Ashrei* and *Ein Keloheinu*. The voices of the children can be heard throughout the hallway as they master the words to the prayers.

The highlight of this year so far was our *Mesibat HaChumash*. It was decided to hold our celebration early in the year so that it coincided with *Parshat Bereshit* and to combine it with the Sulamot Family Education program. The event began with readings by the students in Hebrew. Rabbi Fred Hyman gave a D’var Torah. Then each child with his /her family and congregational rabbi (Rabbi Fred Hyman of Congregation Kodimoh, Rabbi Herbert Schwartz of Temple Beth El and Rabbi Mark Dov Shapiro of Sinai Temple were present), came up to the Torah. Each child recited the blessings before and after reading Torah and the first sentences of *Bereshit*. They were treated to honey to symbolize the sweetness of the Torah. After receiving their own *Chumashim*, the children participated in a “Creation Celebration” designed by *Sulamot* Family Educator, Tali Edry. There were three stations. The stations consisted of making a creation cake with Tali, a *yad* station with Mrs. Shaker, and a *sofer* station with Rabbi Hale who helped the children learn calligraphy. It was a memorable and moving program. Thank you to everyone.



FIRST GRADE – MRS. Z.

The First Grade has been very busy these first 50 days of school. We have had to learn many new things and have adjusted very well to accomplishing all the work we do every day.

We have been practicing our letters and learning to write them much smaller on our new 1st grade writing paper. We have even written a few stories. Mrs. Z said she could see some budding authors in the group.

In Math we are busy learning our Math facts to ten. We have learned a new game called “Around the World”. It is fun to play and it helps us practice our Math facts. We have also done geometry and have learned our shapes and how to fill in a design using the right shapes. We had fun working with *Tangrams*, even though we thought it was hard to fit them all into a square.

In Science we have finished our unit on healthy bodies and good eating. Hopefully we are choosing good snacks to eat after what we learned. The “Bugman “ visited and put on a show



for us that was both fun and taught us lots of interesting facts. Thanks to the Kessler family for that great show!

In Social Studies and in Reading we are learning all about the Pilgrims and the Indians and how the First Thanksgiving came to be. Our reading vocabulary is growing every day. We love to read and we read so many different kinds of things.

The holidays kept us very busy. We made lots of fun things and learned many new things about the holidays.

We hope that everyone had a great Thanksgiving. We are all looking forward to great feasts with our families just like the Pilgrims had.

KITAH ALEPH - MRS. SHUSHAN & MR. MASTEY

“*Shalom, Shalom, Shalom Kitah Aleph!*”

If you ask any student in *Kitah Aleph* what the word *Shalom* means, they will immediately begin to sing the above song. This melody is from the Tal-AM 1 program. Tal-AM 1 is the main program in *Kitah Aleph*. It combines the Hebrew language (*Ariot*), Holidays (*hagim*), Daily Life (*shalom*), weekly Torah portion (*Parashat Hashavuah*) and “peaceful Shabbat” (*Shabbat Shalom*). For each subject there is a series of music cassettes with many songs. The songs reinforce the meaning of the subject and its vocabulary, and bring life and enthusiasm to the class. Our main goal this year is to teach each student to read and write in Hebrew, and to develop his or her Hebrew language skills. We are proud to say that the students also have a vast vocabulary in Hebrew that connects to the daily life in our classroom.

Each student takes home a book every Friday (from our Tal-AM library books) and reads it independently. We also enhance learning through activities such as drama, short exercises, dance, music, and class games. The new vocabulary that is taught every day is reviewed in a fascinating story by our famous storyteller *Moreh Yossi*.

On Friday November 11, 2005 we had a great **surprise** for our students: “My Siddur.” Each student received a temporary *Siddur* made by Morah Idit and Moreh Yossi. This *Siddur* was beautiful! Each prayer or blessing is matched with the child’s photograph. For example, alongside the blessing *Modeh Ani* that we say first thing in the morning, the picture shows the youngster getting up from bed. The children just love their *Siddurim* and pray with eagerness.

SHALOM FROM GAN YELADIM, KINDERGARTEN - MRS. FRAN, MORAH TALI, MISS KAREN

We were delighted to have Moreh Yossi join us during Tali Edry’s maternity leave. He brought a wonderful *ruach*, spirit, sense of humor, and his gift of music. A special *today rabah*, thank you, goes out to him. .

Gan Yeladim learned about the fall holidays including: *Rosh Hashanah*, *Yom Kippur*, *Sukkot*, and *Simchat Torah*. Beautiful art projects and songs accompanied these study units. Daily, the children *daven* (pray) and each week they learn about the *parsha* (Torah portion) and celebrate *Shabbat*, often with a birthday *yeled* (boy) or *yaldah* (girl) and his/her family. Dancing special dances on these happy occasions make it a very enjoyable time. The *yeladim* have also begun learning the *aleph-bet* (Hebrew alphabet) and several Hebrew words and phrases.

It’s impressive to see the progress each child has made since the first day of school. During small group instruction the children are acquiring their letters/sounds. Some are beginning to read 3 letter words, while others are reading very short beginners’ books. In math, they have become master pattern identifiers, and can translate a pattern.

Characteristics of *Living and Non -Living Things* were the focus in science and taught by our wonderful Science teacher, Mrs. Clark. Our little scientists learned about bees and how honey is made (integrating *Rosh Hashanah*), collected leaves, and soil samples from outdoors, looked at them closely using a magnifying glass, and followed the growth of pumpkin seeds. We spent the month of October learning about safety at home, in school, on the playground, crossing the street and in the event of fire. Our unit concluded with a great field trip to the Longmeadow Fire Department.

We look forward to a year filled with continued learning and fun.





COMPUTER CLASSES GRADES K-4 MRS. WESLEY

All of the classes in the computer lab started the year with a very thrilling program called “*Kidspiration*.” Each one of them designed their own page about their life and hobbies. During the holidays the students were introduced to Jewish websites such as *Babaganewz*.

Now we are working on a very important skill: Keyboarding.

Grades 3 and 4 will soon start to work on their portfolio in the Renzulli Enrichment Program.

A special thanks to Mr. McBride for his time and effort in helping to get all of our computers up and running.



