

**Ohavi Zedek Synagogue Hebrew School  
Curriculum Overview 2016-2017 5777**

Revised July 2016

**Table of Contents**

Letter from our Principal.....	page 2
CURRICULUM GOALS FOR GAN/ALEPH – KINDERGARTEN/GRADE 1.....	page 3
CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH BET/ GRADE 2.....	page 5
CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH GIMMEL - GRADE 3.....	page 8
CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH DALET/ GRADE 4.....	page 9
CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH HEY/GRADE 5.....	page 9
CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH VAV /GRADE 6.....	page 10
CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH ZAYIN /GRADE 7.....	page 13
CURRICULUM GOALS FOR MAKOM L'MISHPACHA /GRADE 6/7.....	page 14

## Letter from our Principal

The Jewish population of Vermont is somewhere between 5000 and 6000 Jews. Some of our children can find themselves at public school being the only Jew in their class, grade or even school. Here at OZHS, we give them an opportunity to connect to their history, heritage and customs and to their fellow Jewish classmates.

We strive to create a sense of welcoming and community for our families. Our doors are always open to both child and parent alike. We also look to make connections for our students between what they learn here and the greater world. It is so very important that what we teach is relevant to the lives of our students, growing up as Jews in Vermont in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Each month, we delve into different themes and come together to celebrate our learning at an all school event. This way, kids get an opportunity to explore ideas that relate to the rich cycle of traditions our Jewish calendar offers us.

Ohavi Zedek means 'Lovers of Justice'. We take this name to heart in our teachings here. Many of our monthly events encompass the concepts of tzedakah and Gimilut Hasadim and stress the idea that as Jews we can reach out to the greater community around us and help.

At the end of their tenure here, we want our students to graduate with a kitbag filled with tools to continue their own exploration of Judaism. They should leave here with an understanding of holidays, history, Tanach, tefila, kashrut, Israel, Hebrew, mitzvot, life cycle events and ethics. May they learn it with joy and love.

-Naomi Barell, Ohavi Zedek Hebrew School Principal

## LOWER GRADES

### CURRICULUM GOALS FOR GAN/ALEPH – KINDERGARTEN/GRADE 1

Kitah Gan/Aleph aims to provide a fun, comfortable and welcoming experience which helps students to become more connected with their Jewish identity and heritage. In keeping with the notion that young children thrive on consistency, sessions are structured so that schedule/routine each session remains relatively constant, while specific themes for that day's discussions, activities, projects, etc. vary during the course of the year. Connections are threaded among the weekly Torah portions, holidays, or community events and the experiences the students are likely to have had in their own lives.

Gan students are presented with a miniature Torah and formally "consecrated" to Jewish study at *Simchat Torah* children's services in the fall. **Consecration date for 2016 is Monday evening, 10/24/16.**

#### TEFILA

- Participate in Learners' Service on Saturday 11/5/16
- Participate in Junior Congregation.
- Learn the first line of the *Shema* (Gan) and the *Mi Chamocha* (Aleph) to lead during Junior Congregation.
- Shabbat table blessings (candles, bread, wine/grape juice up to *borey pri hagafen*).
- Food blessings.
- First line of the "Four Questions" ("*Ma nishtanah...*")

#### TORAH

- Families present weekly Torah portion highlights through an age appropriate story, skit, pictures, etc. during "Torah Time".
- Each session includes storytelling time.

## HOLIDAYS, CUSTOMS AND CONCEPTS

- Tour the synagogue
- Learn about Jewish holidays through stories, observances, customs and appropriate blessings and prayers.
- Arts and craft projects related to Jewish concepts. Activities and projects in recent years have included making *tzedaka* boxes, making a storyboard of the days of creation, Jewish bingo, drawing pictures to describe and illustrate their definition of G-d and what G-d means to them, making *mezuzot*, and drawing life size murals of their Jewish self
- Arts and craft projects related to specific holidays. Activities and projects in recent years have included making *Sukkah* decorations, making up the *lulav* and *etrog* in the *sukkah* on *Sukkot*, making *chanukiyot* (menorahs), making and playing with *sevivonim* (dreidels), planting seeds on *Tu B'Shevat*, making *ra'ashanim* (groggers) for *Purim*, making *seder* plates for *Pesach* (Passover), making *haggadot* for Passover, participating in an in-class model Passover *seder*

## MODERN HEBREW

- Understand that there is a distinction between Hebrew letters and English letters
- Introduction to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet and the sounds they make through games, music and crafts
- Learn to recite the Aleph-Bet song
- Learn to count to *eser* (10)
- Introduction to Hebrew vocabulary through playing games
- Polite Words and Greetings: Please – *bevakasha*, Excuse me/sorry – *slicha*, thank you – *todah*, hello/goodbye – *shalom*, good morning – *boker tov*, good evening – *erev tov*, good night – *lailah tov*

## CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH BET/ GRADE 2

As in younger grades, in Kitah Bet we continue to build a foundation for Jewish education and to provide a rich variety of experiences in Jewish observance and in the

joy of *Shabbat* and holidays, through hands-on experiences and through songs, games, artwork, and crafts. We join the entire school in celebrating the holidays such as: performing the *mitzvah* of *leyshev basukkah*—visiting a *sukkah*, and *netilat lulav*—waving the *lulav*, the fun of *Chanukah*, *Tu B'Shevat seder*, and more. We hope to help each child find a source of significance and enrichment in Jewish living through Jewish values such as the practice of *tzedakah* and *mitzvot*, and a love for Israel. In keeping with the notion that young children thrive on consistency, sessions are structured so that schedule/routine each session remains relatively constant, while specific themes for that day's discussions, activities, projects, etc. vary during the course of the year. Connections are threaded among the weekly Torah portions, holidays, or community events and the experiences the students are likely to have had in their own lives.

## TEFILA

- Participate in Learners' Service on Saturday 11/5/16.
- Participate in Junior Congregation
- Learn the *Barechu* and lead it during Junior Congregation.
- Review:
  - *Shabbat* table blessings (candles; bread; wine/grape juice, up to *borey pri hagafen*)
  - the first line of the *Shema*
  - the *Chanukah* candle blessings
  - the "Four Questions"
  - *Mi Chamocha*
- Learn "*Hiney Mah Tov*" and "*Oseh shalom*" from the *siddur*.

## TORAH

- Families present weekly Torah portion highlights through an age appropriate story, skit, pictures, etc. during "Torah Time".
- Each session includes storytelling time, sometimes in conjunction with visits to the Ohavi Zedek library.

## HOLIDAYS, CUSTOMS AND CONCEPTS

- Students learn about Jewish holidays through stories, observances, customs and appropriate blessings and prayers.
- Arts and craft projects related to specific holidays and Jewish concepts.
- Study of various mitzvot and of qualities associated with G-d
- Opportunities to talk about students' own understandings of G-d
- Review 4 Questions in preparation for *Pesach*.

## MODERN HEBREW

- Increase comfort with the Hebrew alphabet and vowels, both reading and printing.
- Put letters and vowels together and read whole words phonetically.
- exposure to spoken Hebrew in classroom activities
- increase Hebrew vocabulary through playing games
- review colors:
  - black - *shachoor*, white - *lavan*, purple - *sagol*, blue - *cahol*, green - *yarok*, yellow - *tsahov*, orange - *katom*, red - *adom*, pink - *varod*
- review weather words:
  - sun - *shemesh*, rain - *geshem*, snow - *sheleg*, cloud - *anan*, hot - *cham*, cold - *kar*, sky - *shamayim*, star - *kochav*, moon - *yareach*
- feelings
  - happy - *sameach*, sad - *ahtzoov*, okay - *beseder*, tired - *ayef*, excited - *meragesh*, quiet - *shaket*

## STUDENT TEXTBOOK USED IN KITAH BET:

“Shalom Alef Bet: A Pre-Primer for Shalom Uvrachah” by Pearl Tarnor

## UPPER GRADES

Our additional meeting on Wednesday for Kitot Gimmel, Dalet, Hey, Vav, Zayin and Makom L'Mispacha, gives students expanded opportunities. While they meet within their age based grades on Sundays, on Wednesdays they learn Hebrew language according to ability during the first hour of class and participate in SUPER Electives during the second hour.

Language classes grouped by level narrows the spectrum of ability that teachers need to address enabling them to build a more focused lesson. Students, no matter their age tend to be more engaged when the material is within their grasp. No one is stuck in a class that is too difficult or too easy. This structure also allows for more movement when a student is ready to move up a class or finds that they need to move down to a less challenging class. Constant assessment and intervention by our Language Learning Lab assures that each student is working at the appropriate level. Hebrew is reinforced on Sundays through its use in prayer, Torah study and general classroom interactions.

SUPER Electives allow our learners to explore Jewish culture, history and traditions through different lenses via class discussions and hands-on activities in a multi-sensory environment. SUPER Elective offerings have included 'Judaism and the Environment', 'Judaism and Food', 'Shabbat Toolkit', 'Israel and You', 'Judaism and the Arts' and more. SUPER Elective activities included making drip irrigation models, painting Chagall windows, a visit from the Chittenden Solid Waste District recycling expert, baking challah, making tzedakah boxes, decorating a cake with a map of Israel and more.

This flexible schedule enables students to meet others outside of their grade creating more connections and building a stronger community. It can also foster a sense of greater responsibility amongst the older students and gives younger students models to emulate.

## CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH GIMMEL - GRADE 3

As in younger grades, in Kitah Gimmel we continue to build a foundation for Jewish education and to provide a rich variety of experiences in Jewish observance and in the joy of Shabbat and holidays, through hands-on experiences and through songs, games, artwork, and crafts. We join the entire school in celebrating the holidays such as: performing the mitzvah of *leyshev basukkah*—visiting a sukkah and *netilat lulav*—waving the lulav, the fun of *Chanukah*, *Tu B'Shevat seder*, and more. We hope to help each child find a source of significance and enrichment in Jewish living through Jewish values such as the practice of *tzedakah* and *mitzvot*, and a love for Israel.

Particular emphasis in Kitah Gimmel is placed on beginning to learn Hebrew as a meaningful language, with an emphasis on modern Hebrew but with inclusion of vocabulary related to holiday observances.

### TEFILA

- Participate in Learners' Service on Saturday 11/5/16.
- Participate in Junior Congregation.
- Learn the first 8 lines of the *Ashrei* and lead it during Junior Congregation.

### TORAH

- Families present weekly Torah portion highlights during "Torah Time."
- What is the Torah? Weekly discussion and exploration of Torah.

### HOLIDAYS, CUSTOMS AND CONCEPTS

- Students learn about Jewish holidays through stories, observances, customs and appropriate blessings and prayers.
- Continued reflection and development of personal approaches to G-d and holiness with introduction of a Jewish vocabulary for doing so
- Arts and craft projects related to specific holidays and Jewish concepts.
- Introduction to basic principles of *kashrut* (dietary laws) and eco-Judaism
- Visiting a *sukkah* and reciting appropriate prayers.



- Review 4 Questions in preparation for *Pesach*.

## STUDENT TEXTBOOKS USED IN KITAH GIMMEL:

“Shalom Uvracha Primer Express” (Behrman House)

## CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH DALET/ GRADE 4

As in younger grades, in Kitah Dalet we continue to build a foundation for Jewish education and to provide a rich variety of experiences in Jewish observance and in the joy of Shabbat and holidays, through hands-on experiences and through songs, games, artwork, and crafts. We join the entire school in celebrating the holidays such as: performing the mitzvah of *leyshev basukkah*—visiting a sukkah and *netilat lulav*—waving the lulav, the fun of *Chanukah*, *Tu B'Shevat seder*, and more.

Particular emphasis in Kitah Dalet is placed on developing a relationship with secular Hebrew culture and society, including an appreciation of Israeli geography and daily life.

### TEFILA

- Participate in Learners’ Service on Saturday, 11/5/16.
- Participate in Junior Congregation.
- Learn the first 3 paragraphs of *Baruch She’Amar* and lead it during Junior Congregation.
- Increased comfort and facility with basic synagogue prayers included in Hebrew School services.
- Words for G-d and their different attributes.
- What is prayer?

### TORAH

- Weekly discussion of Torah portion highlights and ethical and philosophical questions arising from study of Torah stories.

## HOLIDAYS, CUSTOMS AND CONCEPTS

- Arts and craft projects related to specific holidays and Jewish concepts.
- Learn the geography and secular culture of contemporary Israel.
- Sing *Hatikvah*.

## STUDENT TEXTBOOKS USED IN KITAH DALET:

Artzeinu: An Israel Encounter (Torah Aura)

## CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH HEY/GRADE 5

The goal of Kitah Hey (Grade 5) is to make Judaism increasingly relevant to student's daily lives. We strengthen and increase their Hebrew vocabulary and teach our collective history, from ancient to modern American Jewry. The year also includes an extended unit on Kashrut (the Jewish dietary laws) plus study of the Jewish life cycle.

## TEFILA

- Participate in Learners Service **11/5/16**.
- Participate in Junior Congregation.
- Learn the *v'Ahavta* and lead it during Junior Congregation.
- Master all prayers from earlier grades.

## TORAH

- weekly discussion of Torah portion highlights and ethical and philosophical questions arising from study of Torah stories
- study of key Torah stories including special emphasis on the Book of Exodus, using modern curriculum that emphasizes roles of women in the Exodus stories
- What is the *Talmud*?
- What is the *Gemorrah*?

## HOLIDAYS, CUSTOMS AND CONCEPTS

- Study of highlights of Jewish history (post-biblical through early 20th century).
- Study of Jewish life cycle events

- Review of *kashrut*
- Eco-Judaism and Jewish agricultural practice
- The Jewish lunar calendar including Hebrew months
- Celebration of holidays throughout the year

### **STUDENT TEXTBOOKS USED IN KITAH HEY:**

History of the Jewish People, Vol. 1: Ancient Israel to 1880's America by Jonathan D. Sarna and Jonathan B. Krasner (Behrman House)

The Life Cycle Journey: A Workbook for Jewish Students by Risa Towbin Aqua and Hal Aqua (Behrman House)

### **CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH VAV /GRADE 6**

The goal of Kitah Vav (Grade 6) is to help students to begin the journey towards Jewish maturity. The curriculum affords them opportunities to develop the intellectual and spiritual resources for connecting with the three main components of Jewish identity: God (theology and spirituality), Torah (our literary and ethical heritage as Jews) and Israel (connection to the Jewish people and our ancestral homeland). Hebrew language study includes both modern conversational and classical liturgical forms of the language. Particular emphasis is placed on Shabbat morning prayers and on Havdalah (the ceremony that ends Shabbat on Saturday evening). Study of significant Torah stories is augmented by introduction to the history and process of midrash. Students learn trop (traditional cantillation modes for Haftarah and Torah) in preparation for Bar/Bat Mitzvah studies that they will pursue the following year in Kitah Zayin (Grade 7). Kitah Vav also includes a special focus on the development of Zionism from the 19th century to the early years of the State of Israel, including student reenactments of the Dreyfus trial and the sixth Zionist Congress.

### **TEFILA**

- Participate in Learners' Service on Saturday 11/5/16.
- Participate in Junior Congregation.

- Learn the first 8 lines of *Aleinu* and then the last 5 lines and lead it during Junior Congregation.
- introduction to *trope*
- Learn *Havdalah* prayers and ceremony.

## TORAH

- study of key stories from throughout the five books of the Torah with special emphasis on creative projects such as art midrash, original dramatic re-enactments, and philosophical debates arising from issues raised in Torah
- weekly discussion and exploration of Torah using other religious texts

## HOLIDAYS, CUSTOMS AND CONCEPTS

- discussion of Jewish current events
- study of the development of modern Zionism from 19th century Europe through the early years of the State of Israel
- coordination with OZ library for use in student research projects.
- Plan and undertake individual *mitzvah* projects starting in January.

## STUDENT TEXTBOOKS USED IN KITAH VAV:

Selected readers from the Hebrew comic book series “Og Harasha” (EKS)

Parashat Hashavua: Reading Genesis (Behrman House)

Parashat Hashavua: Reading Exodus through Deuteronomy (Behrman House)

## CURRICULUM GOALS FOR KITAH ZAYIN /GRADE 7

The goal of Kitah Zayin (Grade 7) is to round out students’ basic Jewish education while they prepare for their transition to the status of *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah*, and to motivate them to continue their engagement with Jewish living and learning when the opportunity arises.

The Sunday morning Kitah Zayin curriculum varies from year to year depending on the

teacher's focus. In year's past it has included studying the weekly parsha and discussing the relevance to a teen's every day life's experiences, dramatic interpretation of the weekly parsha, exploring what it means to be a Jew in Vermont through interviews and the creation of a movie, examining the roots of our moral code and ethics in ancient texts and more. This coming year, Kitah Zayin will concentrate their studies on Israel; her history and her people, Zionism and our connection to the Jewish Homeland. Through the Jewish Agency's Twinning project, the class will be matched with a class of students in Israel that they will get to know through Skype, email and maybe even a personal visit someday!

The Sunday morning curriculum also focuses on b'nai mitzvah projects. Questions addressed are: What is a mitzvah? Can you really make a difference? What causes are important to you? Do you want to help locally, nationally or internationally? What kind of time should you devote? Do you want to give of your time, your wallet or both? Can you actually do what you want to do in practical terms? What do you want to achieve?

Kitah Zayin learns to chant the *Amida* and leads Junior Congregation. They also plan for their participation in our all school events – The Desert Tent Jamboree, Mitzvah Day and Passover Celebration.

For greater familiarity, comfort and experience before their *bnai mitzvah*, Kitah Zayin students (and their parents) are expected to attend Ohavi Zedek Shabbat morning services a minimum of 10 times during the school year including our Learners' Service on **12/5/16**.

Kitah Zayin students are presented with their own *siddur* at the *Simchat Torah* celebration in the fall. **Monday evening 10/24/13**

## CURRICULUM GOALS FOR MAKOM L'MISHPACH /GRADE 6/7

Makom L'Mishpacha is an educational alternative for parents and middle-schoolers who want to explore their connection to Judaism together.

Through classroom and experiential learning, families uncover the stories, the songs, the actions, and the questions that guide the emergence of Jewish identity. Themes of the program include community building, service, history, prayer, and storytelling. The second year focuses on prayer and the study of texts – Torah, Talmud, and Midrash – as building blocks toward creating and participating in a bar/bat mitzvah.

Based on the belief that Judaism is best learned together, Makom L'Mishpacha meets on Sunday mornings three times a month: families meet together for holiday learnings and celebrations; parents and students meet in a combined class at Ohavi Zedek designed to share stories and questions about Jewish heritage; and students meet together for an experiential class focused on service, art, or the environment. Classes have included a fieldtrip to a blacksmith to learn about the place of Judaica in Jewish family life, participating in the Sukkot on the Farm festival, a Shabbat snowshoe at Sleepy Hollow, creating a family Passover seder, attending a multi-age Holocaust seminar and more. Students enrolled in Makom L'Mishpacha may also attend Hebrew language classes and SUPER electives on Wednesdays.