



CURRICULUM OVERVIEW FIRST GRADE

The synagogue is a *beit tefilah* (house of prayer), *beit kneset* (house of meeting), and a *beit midrash* (house of study) and during First Grade, our students think about how we can take advantage of each of the synagogue's functions. While our students explore the physical synagogue and meet various people who work here, they will engage with the Jewish values of community, prayer, and study. Our First Grade classes think about what it means to be Jewish from the perspective of each of these three functions of a synagogue. They also get to learn more about our sanctuary space and the larger Stephen Wise Free Synagogue building.

During the Synagogue Unit, we will focus on the following goals:

- To help students become comfortable in the synagogue building and with the people who make up our synagogue community.
- To show students the various aspects of our synagogue community.
- To familiarize students with the parts of the sanctuary.
- To come up with ways that we can continue to take advantage of the synagogue as a place of study/prayer/meeting.

Just as the synagogue is the center of the local Jewish community, Torah is the central text of our people. Throughout the year, First Grade will study the stories of our ancestors and learning from them. Students will hear the stories of all our matriarchs and patriarchs, as well as the stories of Joseph, Moses and others. Students will explore Torah using multiple creative approaches such as drama, art and music.

Throughout the year of Torah, we will focus on the following goals:

- To study important Torah stories and have students engage with the text
- To teach of Jewish values through Torah stories
- To create character profiles of biblical figures

While we do not begin formal Hebrew study until Third Grade, we recognize that for language acquisition and reading skills to be successful, a child must first engage with a language on an auditory and oral level. Our students will begin to interact with Hebrew words that are core to our Jewish lexicon and show Hebrew as a living language. Additionally, throughout the year, students will participate in Hebrew immersion games and activities that will begin to acclimate them to the Hebrew language.

During our PreK-2nd Grade program, students will focus on the following goals in Hebrew:

- To introduce students in our PreK-2 to the Hebrew language - both orally and some written.
- To have students become comfortable using Hebrew words and phrases that are common in our school/community (BRIT, TEFILAH, SHABBAT, TZEDAKAH, TIKKUN OLAM, etc.).
- To have students see Hebrew as a living language and begin to connect to it.