



## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW FIFTH GRADE

### JUDAICA

Our fifth grade curriculum provides a unique pathway for relating to and understanding the bar/bat mitzvah. As our students start to think about this important event coming up in their lives, we spend the year engaging with the text they will read when they become bar/bat mitzvah, and understanding how our Jewish bible has evolved into the great Jewish textual tradition.

Our fifth grader classes will do some in-depth study of the Tanakh (the Hebrew Bible.) They will explore the different books that make up the Bible, how they fit together, and how to navigate the text. They will also briefly explore Mishnah, Talmud, Midrash, and other Jewish texts in order to understand how we can interpret the bible and continual our textual tradition. This will prepare our students to begin their Parasha Projects (which will kick off as part of our fifth grade family program) and put their bar/bat mitzvah Torah portion in a larger context.

During the Tanakh unit, we will focus on the following goals:

- Teach students the structure of the Tanakh.
- Place the Torah in a larger context of Jewish text/thought/understanding.
- Expose students to the variety of genres found in the Tanakh.
- Familiarize students with part of what they will be chanting for their bar/bat mitzvah.

Our students will spend the final third of the year working on creating their parasha projects. The parasha project is an innovative and unique approach to Torah study in which each student has the chance to deeply engage in the text and become the teacher for their peers. During our family program, students and parents will uncover the ways that Jews engage in Torah study. They will practice this skill together using the Torah portion that their child will read when they become bar/bat mitzvah. Students will spend the next few weeks of class time carefully reading and analyzing their Torah portion in order to determine what values the text can teach us. **Parents will be given information on how to check in on their student's progress at home and help them continue their work outside of class time.** Each student will come up with a way to teach their fifth grade community about the text. Students are encouraged to be innovative and creative! Parents will be invited to their child's presentation.

During the Parasha Project unit, we will focus on the following goals:

- Familiarize students with part of what they will be chanting for their Bar/bat mitzvah.
- Give students (and their parents) an opportunity to engage with the words and meaning of their text.
- Encourage students to take part in the textual tradition of interpreting and teach text.
- Give students a space to present their ideas about Jewish texts to their peers and families.
- Inspire to be creative and show off their talents!

### HEBREW

At Stephen Wise Free Synagogue's Religious School we work to ensure that every child is capable of decoding (reading without full comprehension) Hebrew prayers and blessings, and that they know and can define common Hebrew words and phrases. We want our students to see Hebrew as a living language of the Jewish people and to be able to use it to help them in prayer and in Jewish life. Our

teachers strive to make Hebrew accessible and to ensure that every child's ability to decode improves each week.

In fifth grade, students will continue to improve their reading proficiency and increase their Hebrew vocabulary. They will review prayers taught in third and fourth grade. Additionally, students will practice the Torah blessings and study their meaning. Students have the opportunity to reinforce their Hebrew skills and learn more about our prayers during *tefilah* (prayer services) each week.

By the end of the fifth grade year, we expect every student to be able to:

- Decode complex words/phrases and longer blessings in the first try
- Self-correct when reading prayers and blessings
- Decode the following prayers: Vahavta, Avot V'Imahot, Chanukah blessings, Four Questions
- Follow along and assist in leading weekly Religious School *tefilah*