



CURRICULUM OVERVIEW SIXTH GRADE

JUDAICA

Our sixth grade curriculum focuses on God, our theology and personal belief systems. Students will be exposed to different ideas about God that are represented in traditional Jewish text and modern day “Jewish” media. Students will become conversant in the diversity of names for God, and will encounter the theologians and philosophers who have shaped Jewish spiritual thought. They will also reflect on the ways their belief in God has changed throughout their lives, and articulate a theology that will grow with them in years to come.

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

- Encouraging students to articulate cohesive and contradicting ideas about God;
- Introducing students to multiple names for God in Jewish traditions;
- Empowering students to navigate talking about God with people who have different beliefs; and
- Showing students that asking questions is part of Jewish spirituality.

Our sixth graders will continue their learning with a brief study of the Holocaust. During this unit, they will explore the history of anti-Semitism, how the Nazis and Hitler were able to gain power in Berlin, and what actually happened to the Jews between 1933 and 1945. We recognize that this is a heavy topic; however, it is important for our students to understand our history, particularly one that is so significant to the current American-Jewish experience.

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

- Enabling students to study the Holocaust in a safe, Jewish environment;
- Guiding students to a deeper understanding of anti-Semitism, its roots and its uses throughout Jewish history; and
- Exploring the personal stories of the Holocaust to find real people to whom each student can connect.

CHUGIM (ELECTIVES):

Our sixth and seventh grade students will have a second elective Judaica class each week. The *chug* class will change every six to eight weeks and fall under the umbrella of one of three units: PEOPLEHOOD, ANI MA’AMIN (I Believe), SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ACTION. Each *chug* in the PEOPLEHOOD unit will explore worldwide Jewish diversity and the things that connect and divide us. Our ANI MA’AMIN unit will explore various *middot* (values), Jewish laws and precepts, ideologies and core values of the Jewish religion. Lastly, during the SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ACTION unit, students will study a social justice topic that they care deeply about from a Jewish lens and then have the opportunity to engage in an action around that topic.

HEBREW

At Stephen Wise Free Synagogue’s Religious School, we want students to see Hebrew as a living language of the Jewish people and to be able to use it confidently in prayer and in Jewish life.

We work to ensure that every child is capable of decoding (reading without full comprehension) Hebrew prayers and blessings in preparation for leading the bar/bat mitzvah Shabbat morning service. During Hebrew class, students will work to decode a specific prayer to the best of their ability before moving on to another prayer. B'nai mitzvah tutors and Hebrew teachers will be in communication as well. Throughout the school year, we will also have *tefilah* (prayer) instead of Hebrew class, where our group will come together and students will be asked to lead certain prayers. This will help students to use the prayer decoding they are practicing and to become more comfortable on the *bima*.