

2nd/3rd grade Curriculum – Part II

GOALS

- To foster an appreciation of the richness of Jewish tradition, including our stories, and holidays.
- To develop in the students an understanding of the life of our ancestors.
- To inspire the students to embrace Jewish values as their own.
- To give the students a sense of how time is organized throughout the Jewish year and how the Jewish holidays tie into the seasons.

Methods: The students will become familiar with a wide range of stories from the Jewish tradition. Through investigating these stories, they will understand how our ancestors lived, what motivated them and some core Jewish values. They will participate in various hands on activities that exemplify the values they study. They will create their own Jewish calendars and celebrate Jewish holidays throughout the year.

Themes: Creation and other myths of the Jewish people, Friendship, Wisdom, the Value of Study, Bravery, Compassion

Enduring Understandings:

1. Stories are a great way to understand a people. The stories of the Jewish people tell us about the life of our ancestors, what was important to them and what is still important to us today.
2. Stories can teach about both the universal human condition and a particular time, place and culture.
3. Stories are a good way to investigate our own responses to a wider variety of experience than we would encounter just through our own lives.
4. Stories contain much truth.
5. Living a Jewish life includes living in Jewish time and celebrating the Jewish holidays.

Essential Questions:

1. What does this story tell us about our ancestors? What was important to them? How did they live? What were the conditions that they lived under? How is that different or the same from how we live?
2. What is this story telling us about what is important? Do you agree? Disagree? Why?
3. Can you imagine living like the people in this story? Why or why not?
4. What would you have done in the situation described in the story?

5. How we live in “Jewish time”?

Students will know:

- That the Jewish people’s stories are contained in the Torah, Hebrew Scriptures, Talmud, folktales and modern stories also.
- That our ancestors lived very different lives from our own, from nomadic to ancient rural and ancient city, to small villages in Europe and the Middle East.
- That Jewish culture values an appreciation of the natural world, repentance, personal responsibility, humility, friendship, wisdom, logic, study, bravery and compassion
- That the Jewish calendar is a lunar calendar.
- The names of the months in the Jewish calendar and which holidays fall in which month.
- Which holidays fall in which season.

Students Will Be Able To:

- Identify the sources for the stories they have studied.
- Describe some of the specific attributes of nomadic life, rural life, ancient urban life, Eastern European village life, Middle Eastern life.
- Compare and contrast the lives of their ancestors and their own modern, suburban lives.
- Express caring and appreciation for the world.
- Articulate appropriate ways to ask for forgiveness.
- Reflect on their actions and identify areas that need improvement.
- Distinguish the difference between arrogance and humility.
- List several qualities of true friendship.
- List at least three elements of wisdom.
- Use logic to solve riddles.
- Consider the possibility that study is more precious than gold.
- Imagine a time when bravery might be called for in their own lives.
- Empathize with people with physical and mental challenges.

Evidence of Understanding (end of year performance task)

The students should be told that this is a new curriculum that Ms. Rain is trying out. Her idea is that by the end of the year they will be able to explain what “living in Jewish time” means, teach others about the reasons behind each Jewish holiday, know a lot about the lives of our Jewish ancestors and give examples from the Jewish tradition about what are some important ways for us to be. One of Ms. Rain’s friends who is also a principal is very interested in this new curriculum, but has some doubts if the students can really learn all these things in just one year and through just making their own calendars, celebrating the holidays and listening to stories. She has written you a letter that says, (Teacher reads a real letter, signed by a real principal – Rain will arrange)

Dear 2nd /3rd grade students of Beth Chai,

I am really interested in the studying you are going to be doing this year. But I really don’t know if I believe that you can learn all the things that Ms. Rain thinks you can learn. Will you please write to me through the year and let me know what you are learning and what questions you still have? I look forward to hearing from you!

Signed: (Probably) Eva Sarelle

Throughout the year, the students will get more specific questions from the principal and either dictate to the teacher group answers, or as the year progresses, write individual answers. They will also create a chart that says: Living in Jewish Time means..... and add on throughout the year.

Throughout the year, games will be used to reinforce and check for factual knowledge.

Learning Activities

Each day you should plan on having Music and Hebrew, time to fill in the week of their calendar, a story, a discussion about the story, a craft project that ties in to the story. The stories will either be on one of the themes, or tie in to a holiday. In many cases the story will both tie in to a theme and a holiday. Some holiday celebrations will be school wide, and there will be some Family Education days that will address some of the themes we are thinking about on a school wide basis.

Making their own Jewish Calendar (Every week throughout the year, beginning in the week closest to Rosh Hashanah)

Teacher Instructions:

Using the **My Calendar** booklet the students will fill in the all the appropriate dates, season, new moons, holidays, including Shabbat and birthdays of themselves and their classmates. As close to the beginning of each Jewish month as our schedule allows, they

will be introduced to each new month, its name and season. Each week they will fill in the dates for the upcoming week. This will allow a review of the month, what season it is in and re-enforce the idea that Shabbat come every week.

The calendar begins with either Tishrei or Elul, depending on the year. Please start this project as close to Rosh Hashanah and the month of Tishrei as possible. Fill in the weeks according to when we will be in School – there may be some weeks where you will have to fill in ahead of time. Please remember that we are not usually in the school building for Sukkot and plan accordingly.

The teacher should share the time when IF we were very observant and lit candles right before sundown, what time that would be. The goal is to raise awareness of the changing of the seasons, the shortening and lengthening of days, and Judaism's connection to the natural world.

STORIES – Teacher Instructions.

For all the stories, you should refer back to the Enduring Understandings and Essential questions and weave these into your lesson. Each story will also have some specific Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions. The Enduring Understandings are what we would like the students to really get by the end of the year through the process of answering the Essential questions. These do not necessarily have to be taught explicitly, but should be in the teacher's mind and should come out in the course of discussion and inquiry on the part of the students.

Lesson 1.

Our Creation myth

The Creation myth from Genesis 1-2. Use more than one source for the story. See if the children can say what their book left out. (Principal can provide other sources)

Enduring Understandings:

All people have myths about how the world started. These myths tell us a lot about the worldview of the people who created the myths.

Essential questions:

1. What is a myth? Why do myths exist?
2. Do you know any myths about how the world came to be from a people or tradition that is not Jewish?
3. What kind of world does the Jewish creation story in Genesis 1-2 describe. How would you describe the world?
4. What are examples from children's own lives of a time they felt the world was an awesome and good place.
5. What can we learn from this story?
6. What does this story tell us about our ancestors? What was important to them?

Background for the teacher:

Key concepts:

- Ancient people wondering about the world, didn't have a scientific explanation
- created myths to explain what they couldn't understand
- feeling of awe we may still experience in the presence of nature
- Jewish interpretations of Genesis I: This is the ideal, men and women equal, humans created to take care of the earth.

Students should know:

1. This story is from the Torah.
2. It is the first story in the Torah
3. The Torah is part of the Tanach, or Jewish Bible
4. The Torah is the oldest part of the Bible. It consists of the first 5 books – called the Five Books of Moses.
5. A myth is a legend that attempts to explain something.

Art Project:

Have the children paint a picture of something they really appreciate about the world. Have poster board ready with the days of creation, i.e. The First Day, the Second Day, etc. written across the top. When the paintings are dry, have the children tape their paintings on to the day of the week that the story says this was created. Children who get

done early can do more than one. Check around the room to see if there are whole days that are missing. See if anyone appreciates the sun and moon for example, if these are left out. Write: And it was GOOD on all appropriate days. Be sure to have something for G-d resting on the seventh day.

Lesson 2.

Rosh Hashanah

Enduring Understandings

1. For Jews, the fall is a time of thanksgiving and renewal – the New Year.
2. When we think of a new year, we also think about the earth as a whole.

Essential Questions:

1. Does this feel like a new year to you?
2. How do we live in Jewish time during the month of Tishrei?
3. What is a symbol?

Students should know:

1. Rosh means head, Shanah means year.
2. It is traditional to send New Years cards to friends and family at Rosh Hashanah.
3. It is also traditional to eat apples and honey on Rosh Hashanah to symbolize our hopes for a sweet New Year. (We will have a snack)

Learning Activities:

1. Do Introduction and Tishrei in the My Calendar book.

To introduce this topic, the teacher should say something like this:

- I) Why is the Hebrew Calendar different from our everyday calendar? The Hebrew calendar is based on the cycles of the moon going around our earth. Our everyday calendar is based on the earth going around the sun.
- II) The Jewish holidays are based on the Hebrew calendar. The months have Hebrew names. But if you knew Hebrew – you would not necessarily be able to know what these names mean. This is because these Hebrew names come from the Babylonian names of the months from the time when the Jews were exiled in Babylonia. They admired the Babylonian astronomers and adapted their names for the months. We will be learning these names of the month.
- III) The week in the Jewish calendar always begins with Sunday and ends with Shabbat. We will be marking all the Shabbats on our calendars.
- IV) The Jewish calendar is arranged so the holidays come during the same season every year. We will be marking the seasons on our calendars. But because the lunar cycle is shorter than the solar cycle, the holidays do not come on the same day of the solar calendar every year. However, they are never “late” or “early” by the Hebrew calendar - they are always right on time! Rosh Hashanah always comes on the first day of Tishrei. And Tu B'Shevat (the 15th of Shevat) always comes on the 15th of Shevat! We will be marking the holidays on our calendars.

V) The first of the month is when the new crescent moon can be seen. This is called Rosh Chodesh. This is a little holiday in the Jewish calendar. It is sometimes celebrated by special thanks being given and by the women not doing any work! We will be marking the new moons on our calendars and looking for the new moon in the sky.

VI) Many Jewish holidays fall on the full moon. We will be looking for the full moons on: Sukkot, and Passover.

We will also be putting other special days like birthdays on our calendars.

As we learn more about the Jewish Calendar, we will be making a scroll (use a long piece of mural paper, writing the title across the top – have the scroll be long from top to bottom) that says, “LIVING in JEWISH TIME MEANS...” . Each month we will add on to our scroll.

We will start with the month of Tishrei, which is an important month. The holidays of Rosh HaShanah (the Jewish new year), Yom Kippur (the day of Atonement), Sukkot (the Jewish Harvest festival) and Simchat Torah (rejoicing in the Torah) are all in this month. Tishrei is the Jewish month with the most holidays in it. What other things start at this time of year? Ask them, so what does living in Jewish time during the month of Tishrei mean? Begin scroll.

2. Review last week’s lesson on Creation. Explain that one Jewish tradition says that Rosh Hashanah not only celebrates a new year, but also celebrates the creation of the world. This tradition comes from the Talmud, the writings of the ancient Rabbis.

Art Project:

Have students make Rosh Hashanah cards for the world. They should express something they appreciate about the world and something they will do to help the world.

Lesson 3. (Oct. 1, 06)

Yom Kippur and the Book of Jonah/ Intro to Sukkot

Enduring Understandings:

1. Judaism holds that repentance is always possible.
2. We are responsible for our own behavior.
3. “You can run, but you can’t hide”

Essential Questions:

1. Is repentance possible?
2. Why would we read the Book of Jonah on Yom Kippur?
3. How hard is it to change?
4. What do you think the story is trying to teach us?
5. Do they ever know they should do something, but try to “run away” from it? (Concept of the reluctant prophet)
6. What are the images of God in this story?
7. Is it enough to say you are sorry, or are actions necessary? What might be like fasting and wearing sackcloth and ashes today? (no T.V???,etc.)
8. Why do we decorate the Sukkah with fruits and vegetables?

Students Should Know:

1. Yom Kippur is the Jewish Day of Repentance
2. There are ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, when we traditionally ask friends and family to forgive us for ways we may have harmed them in the last year.
3. The Book of Jonah is traditionally read on Yom Kippur.

Learning Activities:

My Calendar:

Have them fill out the dates through Sukkot. Have them count how many days there are between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. They should also fill in the Shabbat days and the Sukkot days, any birthdays, etc. How many days does Sukkot last? Fill in more on the Living in Jewish Time chart. How many of them will come to the Sukkah building in the park next week??

Let them know that if there is time today, you will make decorations to bring to the sukkah.

Introduce Yom Kippur. Find out what they know and don’t know. Tell them you are going to read them a story from the Tanach – (Bible) which is traditionally read on Yom Kippur. It is their job to figure out why they think this book is read. Read the story (please note, in the original version, no reason is given for Jonah’s running away. Let the students know that, as it opens up lots of fruitful questions).

Discuss the essential questions. Have each student think of one thing they would like to change about their behavior this year. They should write this on a piece of paper that only

they see and then put it into an envelope that they address to themselves. The teacher should collect the envelopes and send them to the students mid – year.

Art Project:

Make fruit and vegetable mobiles to hang either in the congregational sukkah next week or at home. The principal can provide the materials.

While students are working, discuss the central meaning of Sukkot as a harvest festival that expresses our gratitude for the food we eat.

Lesson 4.

Sukkot in the Park

Remind students and their parent by either phone or email that we will be celebrating Sukkot next week in the park and that the students can bring their decorations to this celebration. This is a Sunday school day. The teacher should plan on attending. The job of the teacher on this day is to connect with your students, help out with the building and decorating and to participate in the singing and other activities under the sukkah.

Lesson 5.

Simchat Torah/ Love of Learning

Enduring Understandings:

1. Torah means more than just the first five books of Moses, but also includes all of Jewish learning.
2. Torah study has been one of the most esteemed acts of Jewish life.
3. From this, came a more generalized valuing of education.
4. Learning is joyful.

Essential Questions:

1. What would you do if you were all of sudden rich- for instance won the lottery (ask before and after the story)
2. What does Sarah mean when she says, “We never considered the gold our own. Only what we earn with our hands is truly ours.”
3. Do you agree with her statement? Why, or why not?
4. Why did the Jews think studying was so important? Do you think it is important? Why? or Why not?

Background for teacher:

This story was written by I.L. Peretz, who lived and wrote in Poland in the 19th – through early 20th century. He shows what life was like for our ancestors in Eastern Europe about 100- 125 years ago. The students’ great grandparents might have lived like the people in these stories.

Students Should Know:

1. That the majority of Jews were poor at this time.
2. That Peretz’s stories were very well known and loved by the Jews of Eastern Europe.
3. That a heder is a small school for Jewish boys (usually) to study Torah and Talmud.
4. Traditionally Jews have finished reading the Torah and begun again on Simchat Torah.
5. Traditional Jews celebrate Simchat Torah by singing and dancing with the Torah. We Humanist Jews add our other favorite Jewish books to our celebration.
6. On Shemini Atzeret traditional Jews pray for rain. There has been no rain in the land of Israel from May till Oct. That is why there is a rain cloud for their calendar.

Learning Activities:

1. Read “The Seven Good Years”. Ask: The storyteller says that Tovyeh is poor. How do we know that from the story? (rope instead of belt, nothing to eat for Shabbat, kids sent home because couldn't pay for heder, mud hut, etc.) What do you think it would be like to be that poor? Do you think anyone in your family was ever that poor? Have them ask their parents about this question. Then go to the essential questions.

2. My Calendar

They should fill in Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah. Discuss the meanings and tradition. Use the Enduring understandings and essential questions. Fill in more on their Living in Jewish time scroll – should include joy.

3. Art Project

Have the students make flags for the Simchat Torah celebration that have a favorite Jewish book or books on them. You can use plain white paper and wooden dowels that the principal can provide.

4. Simchat Torah procession

Usually this will occur the last 10 minutes of the day.

Lesson 6. (Oct. 22, 06)

The Importance of Tzedakah / The month of Cheshvan

Enduring Understandings:

1. Tzedakah is a central Jewish value.

Essential Questions:

1. Why do they think Jewish tradition teaches that Tzedakah is the right thing to do?
2. What would the world be like if no one practiced tzedakah?
3. Is it fair that some people have so much more than other people?

Students Should Know:

1. The word tzedakah comes from the Hebrew word for righteousness, or justice. It is considered the right thing to do.
2. The Jews of Lithuania were more educated in Jewish learning than the Jews of Poland at this time and had a reputation of looking down on less educated Jews.

Learning Activities:

1. Read, “If Not Higher”. Ask: What did the villagers mean when they said their rabbi went to heaven? What do you think the Litvak meant?

2. Why do they think the rabbi dressed up as a peasant?

What is this story telling us is important? What does this story have in common with the story they read last week, “The Seven Good Years”?, plus the general Essential questions.

Have the class decide on a tzedakah project that will benefit poor people. They can make tzedakah boxes to collect money in for their project. (If the project involves bringing in canned goods or other items, the money can be added to it. (The principal can supply plain tzedakah boxes).

Remind the students that next week, they will have a chance to help poor people with our Walk for the Homeless.

2. My Calendar

The month of Cheshvan. Have students fill in the next two weeks. There are no traditional Jewish holidays in the month of Cheshvan. Perhaps that is why the month of Nov. in American is Jewish book month. Fill in Living in Jewish Time scroll – a good time to emphasize Shabbat, if it has not already been mentioned. (The holiday we have every week).

Lesson 7 – Mitzvah Day or Tikkun Olam Day, or tzedakah Day

These are a Family Education Days that some years that will focus on disability awareness – honoring all types of creation. There will be centers set up for the students and parents to experience first hand dealing with some common disabilities such as being on crutches, being hard of hearing, having arthritis or a learning disability. There will be age appropriate stories or other activities. The teacher will be working at one of the learning centers, The students will rotate through the centers with their parents. Other years will focus on other topics, but the format will be the same. We will not always have these days, Check your calendar. We will also have our annual Walk for the Homeless the last few minutes of the day.

The First Week of November is always Professional Day. All teachers are required to attend.

Lesson 8 Wisdom tales

King Solomon's wisdom. And King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba

Enduring Understandings:

Wisdom is very valued in Jewish tradition.

Wisdom involves understanding human nature.

Wisdom involves knowing about nature and how it works.

Essential Questions:

How does a true mother act?

What are some differences between artificial and real flowers?

Do you think King Solomon was richer than you? How do you think the rest of the people lived way back then?

Do you think King Solomon was wise?

Do you think it is important for a king to be wise? Why? What happens if a king isn't wise?

Learning activities;

Read King Solomon's Wisdom **ONLY** up to the point where one of the mothers says, "I would rather give him away than have him hurt!"

ASK: Can you tell who is the real mother? How? Why? If they answer correctly – you can say "you are as wise as King Solomon!". If not, then say, "Let's see what King Solomon does. They may need to have it spelled out to them how King Solomon knew.

Introduce the story of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba by saying something like: At the same time that King Solomon was alive, there was also a very wise queen alive in a neighboring kingdom. Her name was Makeda and she was the Queen of Sheba. King

Solomon heard about her and wanted to meet her very much. So he sent an invitation to her to come and visit him.

Start reading from the book: King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba on page 21. (Don't read the whole invitation, since we are not going to go into the whole part of the story where King Solomon converts the Queen of Sheba to a belief in one god)

Just say something like: "I, King Solomon hereby invite you to visit me in Jerusalem".
Read pages 21-22.

At this point you should ask for volunteers to be King Solomon and The Queen of Sheba. Tell the class that they will take turns and many will have a chance to be King or Queen. (*Have some crowns ready for props*) You will need to prepare ahead of time the speaking parts of the king and queen. You will read the rest. Tell the children to act out what you read and read their lines when you tell them. Clue them in to the acting like (*whisper – look like you are thinking*)

Read. p.23 till To his servants he said: Let the student read from "Hurry to palace". continue reading. Have the first queen act out taking off her sandals and walking into the water. She says" The tales you have been told about me". Read till "I can see... End at that sentence and just say the king and queen gave each other many beautiful gifts. Pause to show the pictures from the Illustrated Bible for Children of the caravan, gifts and what the queen might have looked like.

Continue with the Riddles – new king and queen. Have them read the dialogue through Solomon saying this miracle happened to the Jewish people, my people.

Skip the whole retelling of the parting of the Red Sea, but have the students tell what it is from. (*at least the ones who were in this last year should know*).

Next king and queen. Begin with ...What other riddles do you have for me? Have them act out and say the next riddle about the tree trunk.

Next riddle, next king and queen: From " The queen clapped her hands...to end of page 29.

Last riddle – plenty of supporting roles for those who have not yet had a turn – you will need a king and queen, servants carrying fake flowers with one real one mixed in (*the principal can provide*) and someone to help the little stuffed bird fly (*the principal will also provide bird*). Another servant, people in the court to ask: "Is there no limit to the wisdom of our king?"

Art Project: Have the students make crowns for themselves. They should write some bit of wisdom they know on the inside of their crowns. (*You may well have to ask lots of questions to get them to be able to articulate a bit of wisdom- if they have agreed that wisdom includes knowing about humans and knowing about nature you can ask them what is something they know about humans , how they like to be treated, how to get them*

to work together, etc. And what they know about nature, how to take care of nature, or their pets, etc.)

Lesson 9

More Wisdom tales

Lesson 10

Chanukah - a story of courage

Enduring Understandings:

Chanukah is a story about having the courage to stand up for one's beliefs. Courage is not a feeling, rather it is doing the right thing in spite of feelings we may have. (*Some people might have a sense of exhilaration when they are being brave, others may be afraid and act anyway. The doing is what is important*).

Chanukah demonstrates the necessity of having at least one person take the first stand, and the necessity of everyone pitching in to help.

It is also a story about having faith that the few can defeat the many.

The story of the miracle of the oil exists to teach us the importance of spiritual as well as physical resistance.

Essential Questions:

1. What is worth fighting for? What are you willing to fight for? If someone asked you to bow down to an idol, or to give up being Jewish, what would you do?
2. Have you ever had to say no to something you knew was wrong that another child wanted you to do? How did that feel?
3. Is physical resistance sometimes necessary? How do we tell?
4. What is a myth? Why do myths exist? Why do *you* think the rabbis added the myth of the oil to the Chanukah story?
5. What do you think is the real miracle of Chanukah? (That they fought at all? That they won?, etc.)
6. Is Chanukah worth celebrating? Why?

Students Should Know:

Chanukah means dedication. The Maccabees rededicated the Temple.

The Syrian Greeks wanted to forbid keeping the Shabbat and studying Torah, as well as forcing the Jews to bow down to idols.

Our ancestors at this time were mostly farmers and shepherds.

The myth of the oil was added by the rabbis about 200 years after the Chanukah story. It does not exist in the Book of the Maccabees.

One explanation of why we celebrate Chanukah for eight days is that the Jews had not been able to celebrate Sukkot (an eight day holiday) while they were in the hills fighting the Syrian Greeks, so they made up for it when they rededicated the Temple.

Students Should be Able to Do:

List the events that led up to the rebellion.

Discuss what they think is the miracle of Chanukah.

Learning Activities:

1. Read “ *The Story of Chanukah*” by Marilyn Hirsch. Let the students know that this story follows the Book of the Maccabees very closely. Ask them to pay close attention to things it might tell them that they didn't know. And ask them to pay close attention to one thing the story leaves out that they would have expected to be in there (*the story of the*

miracle of the oil. Don't read the last page in the book until you have discussed this omission.)

Emphasize the courage, Mattathias's leadership, the participation of all, including the women and children. You can ask them how they would feel to leave their homes and go live in caves. What would be hard? How could the children help? (*being quiet, carrying messages, spying, etc.*)

2. Have them act out the story of Chanukah with props. It might be a good idea to list the events in order before they begin and to assign some parts -Greeks, Jews, Mattathias, Judah Maccabbe, the person who finds the oil.

(You can have them decide whether they want to include the miracle of the oil or not).

The principal can supply a seven branched menorah like the one in the Temple, cloth and twine for tunics, and a small pottery jar from Israel, that actually says in Hebrew - Shemen zayit – Olive Oil. Please have a very responsible student handle this, as it is breakable.

3. Art and Game centers:

a. Have students construct Chanukah menorahs (*chanukiot*) from wooden plaques, finishing washers and nuts. The thicker nuts should be used for the Shamash, as the shamash is supposed to be higher than the other candles. They can arrange these as they wish: 4 to a side and the shamash in the middle, all in a line, with the shamash at the end. in a circle, etc. There are a variety of sizes also.

b. Play Dreidel

c. Play Jewish Holiday Dominoes

d. Assemble the Jewish Celebrations Floor puzzle.

Dec. 24, 31 – Winter break

Lesson 11 – Mrs. Katz and Tush, a story of friendship

Enduring Understanding:

1. Friendship can happen across all boundaries – race, religion, ethnicity, age, and even species. (The cat, Tush is “such a person”)
2. Friendship sometimes begins with compassion, or even feeling sorry for someone.
3. Thinking about your friend and what they might need is a key element of friendship.
4. Helping your friend and keeping your promises are also elements of a great friendship.
5. Reciprocity builds a friendship.
6. Sharing happy times and sad times is a part of a good friendship.
7. Asking questions and learning about each other – both your similarities and differences is another building block to friendship.

Essential Questions:

1. Is beauty necessary for love?
2. Why do we sometimes think we can only be friends with people our own age?

Students Should Know:

1. Yiddish is a Jewish language.
2. Jews were excluded from certain hotels, swimming pools, and country clubs even in the U.S.
3. Not eating dairy and meat together off the same plates is part of Kashrut – observant Jewish dietary law.

Students Should be Able to:

1. List the ways that Larnel helps Mrs. Katz and that Mrs. Katz thinks about and gives to Larnel.
2. Identify the ways to tell that Mrs. Katz is Jewish.
3. Define the way the word “person” is used in this story.

Learning Activities:

The teacher will read the story, *Mrs. Katz and Tush*, by Patricia Polacco, stopping often to discuss and question, using the Enduring Understandings, Essential questions and goals for the students as guides. Ask them to identify elements of friendship as they come up, Yiddish terms, other clues to Mrs. Katz’s Jewish identity.

After the story is over, ask if they or their family has any friends that are of different ages, etc from themselves. Ask Essential question # 2 (*which may be the biggest stumbling block for them*). How can we perhaps change that?

Project:

1. Have the students decorate an item for a special friend of theirs (*could be a sun visor, a picture frame, etc. Principal can provide*). Time permitting, they can write a short note to

the friend saying one thing that they value about the friendship. (*i.e. we have so much fun together, you helped me when I fell down, etc.*)

2. Have students make peanut butter balls at snack. (*principal will provide ingredients and recipe*) Each student should get a small plate to give to either a person of a different age than they are, who is already a friend, or a person who is a different age from them that they would like to have as a friend. They can take these home, if they have someone in mind, or give to someone at Sunday school. It would be really nice if some of the students tried giving theirs to an older adult ed. member.

Lesson 12 (Jan. 14, 07)

MLK Day, Rosa Parks, another story of courage

Enduring Understandings:

1. To truly celebrate Martin Luther King Day, we need to learn about all the people who helped bring about change during the civil rights era, and to think about what is happening now that is not fair, or good and what we can do to help.
2. There's always more to a story than meets the eye.
3. There is a huge non-violent potential in the power of saying "no" to injustice.
4. Ordinary people working together can change more than anyone might think.
5. Saying "no" to people in power takes courage.

Essential Questions:

1. Why do you think people tell this story as if Rosa Parks was just tired from work?
2. Why do you think the author tells about what Rosa was planning for dinner, or what Jo Ann Robinson made for dinner? (*to convey the ordinariness of these women?*)
3. How can a "no" be a "yes"? What are some other examples of 'no's' that might be a "yes" for change?

Learning Activities:

1. Read the story, *Rosa*, by Nikki Giovanni, stopping to discuss and decode the metaphors as you go. I have put post-it notes in the book on pages with key points. Please omit the reference to the lynching of Emmet Till. This is not necessary for the story. (*although it does gives context – our students are a bit young for this*).
2. Discuss the Essential questions in smaller groups.
3. Have the class act out the story of the bus ride. Put the chairs into two columns; let some students be the other passengers, the bus driver, the police. Let each student who wants to be Rosa Parks, do so, to practice the fine art of civil disobedience and simple refusal. Discuss how each role felt. How did it feel to boss Rosa around? How did it feel to be Rosa? An Onlooker? (*both white and black*). Are feelings always a good guide to action? (*For instance , it might feel scary to be Rosa, or good to have privilege*) What is a better guide to action than just how we feel? What is the difference between that feeling you have when you just know something is wrong and just a feeling of having fun, or a feeling of exhilaration? (*This might be beyond some of them, don't push it, just raise it and let the ones who do get it answer*)
4. Have the class generate other times it is good to say "no" and act them out. (*For instance to bullies, to a friend who wants you to steal, or cheat on a test*)

5. Time permitting, have students make illustrated posters on the theme, “Times it is good to say no”.

Lesson 13

Friendship and Courage - the story of Jonathan and David

Enduring Understandings:

1. Sometimes being a good friend means taking a risk.
2. Even a parent can be wrong, if filled with jealousy and hatred.

Essential Questions:

1. What does this story tell us about the life of our ancestors in the Land of Israel?
2. Why did Saul become jealous of David? What are better ways we can deal with jealousy?
3. What did Jonathan risk to warn David about Saul's intentions? Have you ever risked an adult's anger to stand up for a friend?
4. Why do you think David spared Saul's life? What would you have done in the same situation? How do you think a different action would have turned out?
5. Why do you think David's act of mercy changed Saul's attitude?
6. Who else took a risk for David?
7. What qualities did David possess that inspired such devotion?

Learning Activities:

Introduce topic by saying that the story of Mrs. Katz and Tush was a story about friendship, the story of Rosa Parks was a story about courage, the stories they are about to hear are stories about both friendship and courage.

1. Read and discuss the story of "David and Goliath", "Saul Turns Against David" and "David the Outlaw" in the *Illustrated Jewish Bible for Children* (pgs. 118 – 123). (*They won't be able to understand the context without all three chapters. They may need some filling in on who Saul was*). The pictures of a slingshot, musical instruments and real caves are very helpful to show the students. They might be interested to know that slingshots such as these were still being used in Afghanistan against first the Soviets and then the Taliban.

2. Ask the Essential questions.

3. Project:

1. Have the students decorate a bookmark for a special friend of theirs. Time permitting, they can write a short note to the friend saying one thing that they value about the friendship. (*i.e. we have so much fun together, you helped me when I fell down, etc.*)

Lesson 14

Ruth and Naomi

Enduring Understandings:

1. It takes a different kind of courage to leave one's home and go to a new place.
2. The example of Ruth's love for Naomi continues to inspire people today.

Students Should Know:

1. Definition of famine.
2. It was also famine that drove Naomi to Moab in the first place.
3. Famine was a re-occurring problem in the time of the Bible.
4. Only men could own land, which left widows in a very vulnerable position if they didn't have grown sons to care for them.
5. The Bible commands Jews to leave the corners of their fields for the poor, especially widows and strangers, so they can glean. This was one of the first examples of tzedakah.
6. Ruth is the first convert to Judaism. Her words are used in the conversion ceremony.
7. She is also the great-grandmother of King David.

Essential Questions:

1. What does this story tell us about the life of our ancestors?
2. How do you think it would feel to leave your family and go to another place to live?
3. Why do you think Ruth puts the people first in her statement to Naomi about staying with her?

Learning Activities:

1. Read and discuss the story of Ruth and Naomi.

What would they be willing to do for a person they loved? Would they leave their home? Change their religion? Work hard?

2. Have the students write a list of three things they would be willing to do for their own mothers on a small piece of construction paper. Have them tie a small bundle of dried wheat together and attach their list of three things to it with a raffia or ribbon. [*the book talks about the barley harvest, but Ruth continued gleaning through the wheat harvest – no barley to be had in U.S.*] This can then be presented to their mother. The list can say: In honor of the kindness that Ruth showed Naomi, I will 1. , 2., 3. *try something new, help set the table, etc.*)

Lesson 15

Tu B'Shevat –

Enduring Understandings:

1. Trees provide us with many things we need.
2. Planting a tree is an act of faith in the future.
3. Tu B'Shevat is our very own tree holiday.

Students Should Know:

1. Tu B'Shevat means the 15th of the month of Shevat.
2. This holiday has changed over time.
3. In the time of the Temple in Jerusalem, people brought first fruits from the trees as gifts to the priests and poor people. A tree needed to be four years old before they brought fruit from it. Tu B'Shevat marked the beginning of the year for trees. It was considered the New Year of the trees, or the birthday of the trees.
4. Tu B'Shevat shows the Jewish people's love of trees.

Essential Questions:

1. What does the holiday of Tu B'Shevat tell us about the life of our ancestors during the days of the Temple?
2. How important are trees? What do they give us?

Learning Activities:

1. Generate a class list of all the many things trees give us. See if you can find 15 things.
2. Read the story of Honi. Ask: What do you think about Honi? Was he foolish, or wise?
3. Have the children act out the story, with each child having a part. This will necessitate thinking about all the possible elements in the story, including the sun, wind, grass, etc. What else might be in the story? They can make some props, especially to show Honi with white hair and long white beard. (*there is cotton and other material on the library cart*) The students can present their dramatization to the Kindergarten class.

Lesson 16

Noah, Why Noah Choose the Dove , Prayer for the Earth

Lesson 17,

Purim

Enduring Understandings:

1. Purim is a story about courage.
2. Courage sometimes requires keeping quiet until the time is right.
3. Tyrants have tried to destroy us many times, but the Jewish people survive.

Essential Questions:

1. Why do you think Mordechai tells Esther to hide the fact that she is Jewish?
2. Why do you think Esther does not tell the King what she really needs to tell him on the night of the first dinner party?
3. What do you think about King Ahasuerus? What kind of a king was he?
4. What do you think about Vashti? Was she right to refuse the king?

Students Should Know

1. This story took place a long, long time ago in Persia (which is now Iran)
2. The Jews were a minority in Persia.
3. Esther was risking death to approach the king without being sent for.

Learning activities:

1. Read and discuss the essential questions as they arise in the story, *The Purim Costume*, by Peninah Schram
2. Have the students play a game of “Who Am I?”. This is played by preparing names and names of objects in the story, and names of things that we use to celebrate Purim, ahead of time. Place in a grab bag. The teacher pulls out the names and tapes them to the students back WITHOUT letting the student know what is there. The object of the game is for each student to figure out what is written on his or her back. They do this by asking questions of each other that can be answered with a yes or no. (Like 20 questions).
Example: Am I an object?, Am I a person? Am I brave? Am I evil? The students can read what is on each other’s backs in order to answer the questions. When the students guess correctly they get a small prize.

Here are the names and objects:

Esther, King Ahasuerus, Vashti, Mordechai, one of the guards who plotted to kill the king, a hamantaschen, a gragger, the horse that Mordechai rode, a servant of the king, a wine cup, one of the young women the king did not pick to be his queen, a pillow from the banquet, a megillah (scroll) of Esther, an advisor to the king, some delicious food from the banquet, a Purim mask, a Purim costume, the king’s golden scepter, Esther’s

crown, King Ahasuerus's crown, Vashti's crown, Haman, Haman's hat, the book of records, the gallows, the proclamation that the Jews could defend themselves

Lesson 18 Congregation Purim Party

Lesson 19 - Tower of Babel

Enduring Understandings:

1. Sometimes people lose sight of human relationships when they get caught up in a project.
2. Stories are sometimes written to try to explain natural phenomena.

Essential Questions:

1. What question do you think this story is trying to answer? (Plaut suggests that this is a story to explain why people speak different languages and why people are dispersed throughout the world.)
2. What does this story teach us about the right way to live?
3. Can we build without arrogance? What would that look like? What would be most important?
4. How is Washington DC like Babel? (Capital of an empire, many arrogant people....Have they ever been downtown? What were the buildings like? Huge? How does that make you feel?)

Learning Activities:

1. Divide class into small groups. Give each group a deck of cards. Tell them they have one minute to see which group can build the highest and best tower. Really play up the competitive aspect. Don't correct bragging behavior, or other behaviors that might ensue, such as not everyone getting a turn to help, etc.
2. Tell them that there is a story in the Bible (Torah) that describes people building a Tower. You want them to listen carefully to the story. Read pgs. 28-29, The Tower of Babel from The Illustrated Jewish Children's Bible.
3. Ask them how this story is similar to the building they just did. (What does vain mean? Did they get vain? Did they feel vain?) Show them the pictures in their book. (Many commentators believe that the Tower of Babel was a symbol of the pagan, Babylonian ziggurat pictured in the textbook. As such, the story stands as a condemnation of "...all empire building, corruption, arrogance, craving to erect monuments, desire for fame...alienation from the simple life (living close to the earth and its creatures). This is not a condemnation of co-operation, but rather of arrogance and materialism.)

4. Does it seem mean to them that God makes the people not understand each other? You can explain that the rabbis also wondered about this (or worried about this). They wrote the following story to explain what had gone so wrong with this building project.
5. Tell Midrash:

“ As the tower grew in height it took one year to get bricks from the base to the upper stories. Thus, bricks become more precious than human life. When a brick slipped and fell the people wept, but when a man fell and died no one paid attention”.
6. Ask the essential questions 1 and 2. Extend the discussion to explore their experience building their towers. Did everyone get a turn? How did the losing team feel? Then proceed to questions 3 and 4.

Lesson 20 Passover, Miriam’s Cup, make own ceramic seder plates, or Kiddish, Miriam or Elijah cups

Lesson 22

The Two Brothers (Yom Ha’ Atzmaut)

Lesson 23

Compassion, Possibly the Kingdom of the Singing Birds

Lesson 24, Last Day– end of year performances, possibly something for Shavuot

