



March 15, 2011
9 Adar II, 5771

Dear Parents:

Our Annual Torah Fair will take place on Wednesday, May 25, 2011. Students in grades 3 – 5 will participate by completing an individual project. Students in first and second grade will complete a class project. This year's Torah Fair will focus on the topic of "Seeing the World Through Jewish Eyes."

The Torah Fair is an incredible opportunity for our students to expand their knowledge of Torah through research and exploration. This is meant to be a learning experience based on the process of conducting research and formulating a conclusion. Students will use the research process known as "The Big 6 Research Model" to ask themselves, "What am I curious about?" Specifically, they will be answering an essential question. An essential question is one that usually starts with "Which one?" or "How?" or "What if?" or "Should?" and finally, "Why?" Essential questions are questions that require you to make a decision or plan a course of action. The end product is that there will be an enduring understanding when the question is answered. Essential questions are sometimes difficult to develop. We will work with your child(ren) to develop their essential question in school. **The essential questions for this year's Torah Fair will be focused on "Seeing the World Through Jewish Eyes." The Torah and our Jewish values help us to live Jewish lives. What we learn from the Torah helps us understand our world and shapes our responses to our experiences in life. Students will choose a topic they want to explore and will conduct research in the Torah and other Jewish resources to learn about their topic.**

Class time in Judaics, Hebrew, general studies, and media/technology classes will be used throughout the majority of the project. Students will work on their project in school for the process of brainstorming, finalizing their essential question, information seeking, research, and organization. Students may decide with their parents on how to make their final presentation and the project idea must be approved by the teacher. How students present their information and create their project is open to each student's creativity. Presentations can be a tri-fold presentation, diorama, video, PowerPoint presentation, song, poster, puzzle, game, or a science experiment. The sky is the limit! **The students will create their final projects at home.** Students will have preparation time in school to practice their presentations for the Torah Fair.

The project was introduced in class, today. Please review the attached materials with your child and note the due dates. A copy is also posted on our website on the curriculum page. **This packet should be brought back to school tomorrow and kept at school throughout the research process.**

We look forward to a wonderful creative process and amazing results. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your student's teacher.

Sincerely yours,

Bini W. Silver
Head of School



**HEBREW DAY INSTITUTE
TORAH FAIR
SPRING 2011**

Student Name: _____ Class: _____

Name of Project: _____

Essential Question: _____

Important Dates:

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| March 15 – March 16 | Introduction of project in school |
| March 16 – March 21 | Brainstorm & Determine Question
Approved by teacher _____ |
| March 21 – March 24 | Gathering materials
Approved by teacher _____ |
| March 24 – April 14 | Research it!
Written Research and Notes
Approved by teacher _____ |
| April 14 | Drash! Write your Opinion/Decision/Conclusion based on your research to
'answer' your Essential Question
Approved by teacher _____ |
| April 14 | An Idea! Pick an idea for your project.
Approved by teacher _____ |
| April 15 – May 17 | Express it! Complete your project at home. |
| May 12 | Final Approval of Text (words) and Bibliography
Approved by teacher _____ |
| May 17 | Project Due in school - Practice presentation
Approved by teacher _____ |
| May 20 | Final Project Due in school - after any last minute changes based on Peer
Review Approved by teacher _____ |
| May 25 | Torah Fair! |
| June 1 | Project Evaluation sent home |

All documents are on the website – www.hebrewdayinstitute.org



Hebrew Day Institute Torah Fair 2011 Project Organizer

Name: _____ Today's date: _____

Topic: _____



Step #1: Task Definition

What am I curious about in the Torah or in Jewish life that relates to “Seeing the World Through Jewish Eyes?”



“Essential Questions” What is it that you think? What is your evidence? And what are the consequences of you holding these ideas? Write an essential question about something you want to know about seeing the world through Jewish eyes. This can be about **food, culture and the arts, values and ethics, jobs, life cycle events, or other parts of Jewish life and Torah** that you want to explore.

Brainstorming Questions

You can start building a list of possible topics by writing questions for these topics. As you do, you’ll see that one of your possible topics is easier for you to write about and that’s the one you should choose. For each topic you are considering, **try to write a question using the question words below.**

	Topic #1	Topic # 2
Decide whether you want to explore food, culture, values, life cycle events, or something else. Then think about a possible topic in that category.		
Which one?		
How?		
What if?		
Should?		
Why?		

Write Your Essential Question:

Deadlines and Signatures for Step 1

When you have completed each Research Step have your teacher sign in your organizer.

Due March 21

Teacher's Approval of Essential Question:

Date: _____



Step #2: Information Seeking Strategies

How do I find out? Where will I look for answers? What are the best sources I can use to find this information?



Once the Essential Question has been formulated, you must consider all possible information sources and develop a plan for searching.

Brainstorm a list of possible *types of* sources for your research. This can include books, articles, Internet, family, Rabbis, encyclopedia, and more. Decide which of these types of sources is most likely to have the information you need to answer your question. Write your sources (the types, not the specific materials).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

If I am using web sites, how will I know that they are good enough for my project?

- I will use only those evaluated by my teachers, using HDI's Torah Fair Search Engine.
- I will ask my librarian, teacher, or parent for help in finding good web sites for my project.
- I will check the date the information was posted on the Internet and check to see who has posted the information to detect any potential inaccuracies or one-sided points of view. Then I will try to find out if it's a legitimate website.



Step #3: Location & Access Where will I find these sources?



After you have a plan for seeking information, you have to actually find the information sources. Where are the books you want to use? What encyclopedia and other reference materials can you use and where are they? Use key words and kid-friendly search engines to find the websites you'll need. Brainstorm a list of people to talk to and get their contact information.

1. Where, specifically, will I look for my information?

- school library
- public library
- personal library
- provided by my teachers
- Internet

Other: _____

2. How will I find the information I want once I've located the sources?

- Use the index in the encyclopedia.
- Use the Dewey Decimal to find library books.
- Where might these information sources be right now?

3. Who can help me find what I need?

- I can find the sources myself
- My librarian
- My teacher
- My parent(s)

Deadlines and Signatures for Steps 2 and 3

It is very, very important to get your teacher's approval on your list of sources, before you go off and spend hours doing the research from sources the teacher won't accept.

Due March 24

Media & Technology Teacher's Approval of Information Sources to be used:

Date: _____



Step #4: Use of Information

After you find and prioritize the research materials, you have to read (or view or listen) to them to get your information. You have to take out only the information that is related to your Essential Question. You have to ask yourself what information within each source is useful.



After completing your research, you have to think about your research and form your opinion about your Essential Question. You will try to make some decisions or say what you think about your Essential Question, using your research to support your ideas and thoughts.

Note Taking for Research

You have written your research question and found sources to use for your research. Now you are ready to read the information and take notes. Start by looking at sub-titles in articles, chapter headings in books, navigation buttons on the tops and sides of web pages. You only have to use the pages in your source that are related to your topic and Essential Question. Here is a system for taking notes while you do your research.

You don't have to write down everything you read. You have to take out the facts that are related to your research question. And you have to do it a way that is organized and that will help you put your final project together. To do this you will use index cards. The cards will be numbered and coded so that you can see all the information you found in each source, or so that you can see all the information on one subject from many sources.

How will I give credit to my sources?

Each source you use, including people interviewed, must be included in your bibliography. Please use the MLA format for bibliographies that can be found on the Hebrew Day Institute website.

Here's how it works:

1. For the first source (book, website, personal interview) you are using, start with 1 index card and write down the bibliography information for that source. Write the number "1" in the upper right hand corner of that card.

1

2. On your next card, write down **only ONE key fact** or piece of information you've found. You do not need to use full sentences on these cards. You can use a key word or a phrase. In the upper right hand corner of this card, write the number "1" to let you know that this information came from source number "1".

1

3. Continue doing this, **writing down one idea, phrase, key word** per card and writing the number "1" in the upper corner.

When you are all finished getting information from your first source, take another card for your second source, write down the bibliography information and number this card with a "2" in the upper right hand corner. Now read your materials and make notes, one per each card, and number them all with a "2" because they are from the second source.

2

Keep going until you are finished with all your sources and all your research. Then, organize your cards according to topics/subjects and color code them by putting a colored dot in the upper left hand corner. By organizing the cards this way, you have all your material on each subject together and it will be much easier to create your project.

After your research is completed, read your notes, **think about your Essential Question**, and come up with your personal answer to your question. This means you should state your opinion, or make a decision about your Essential Question. You may decide to take some action based on your question and your research findings. Based on your research, what do you think? This should be put in writing, and opinions and decisions should be supported by the examples you found in your research. This will be the conclusion you will include in your final project. This is what your final project should show us! Then discuss this with your teacher, before going on to the next steps.

**** (Special Note: Creative Thinking Time)** When you have a lot of your research done, please look it over and start thinking about what kind of project you'd like to use to tell us about what you've learned. It's good to start thinking of this early so it can be approved and you'll have lots of time to put the project together. This will also help you see if you are missing anything in your research that you'll have to go back and find. This is described more in Step 5 below.

Deadlines and Signatures for Step 4

It is very important to get your teacher's approval on your research and notes to make sure have complete information for your project.

Due April 14

Teacher's Approval of Research done so far and of note cards:

Date: _____

Teacher's Approval of Your Conclusions and Opinions about your Essential Question:

Date: _____

Final Steps For Your Hebrew Day Institute Torah Fair Project

At this time you should have already completed these steps for your Torah Fair project:



Task Definition: This is when you picked your topic and wrote your essential question.



Information Seeking Strategies: This is when you decided where you'd look for information.



Locate the Information: In this step you found the specific sources you wanted to use.



Use the Information: In this step you did your research, read the information and took notes on what you read. In this step you also used your research to help you form your opinion about your question.

Now it's time for the final steps in the process. First you will create your project. Then you'll present your project at the Torah Fair on the evening of May 25.

Step #5 Synthesis



Organize the information from all the different sources you've used. Create your project and present the information. "The Fun Part."



The project should be a representation of your opinion about the answer to your question. From looking at your project a person should be able to understand your opinion, and should also be able to see some of the background information that was the basis for that opinion. The project should also include your essential question, as well as a written bibliography.

Your project will be created at home. Your parents can help, but you should do the majority of the work yourself. On Friday April 15, just before Pesach and Spring Break, you will take home your Organizer, all your notes, your bibliography cards, and anything you've written about your opinion.

What kind of project should you do? It can be anything you like to do, as long as it is a good way to show us your opinion and thoughts on your question. Here are some ideas, but feel free to pick some other kind of project if you'd like.

- Create a poster on a tri-fold board (like the ones used in Science Fair, or any other kind of poster)
- Multimedia presentation (this could be PowerPoint, video, songs, etc.)
- Diorama (build a model or diorama that shows the story you studied and your opinion about your question. It can be a diorama with more than one part or a group of boxes if you need space to show background as well as your thoughts.)
- Write a report or written paper (please create a nicely illustrated cover if you are using a written report. Please make sure the report is typed so it can be read easily. You will still have to be able to tell people about your research and your opinion during the Torah Fair in your own words.)
- Design an advertisement
- Create a photo album or scrapbook
- Write a newspaper
- Create a game (card game, board game, etc.)

To help you stay organized, make a list of the materials you'll need to use when creating your project. Then gather all the materials before you start. This will make it much easier to create the actual project.

Materials I will need for my project:

Due April 14 (or earlier) Teacher Approval of Project Format _____

Bibliography: You can type this and paste it onto a poster if you're making a poster. You can type it on a sheet of paper that will be put next to your diorama or model if you're building something. You can include it in your PowerPoint or newspaper if that's what you're doing. There are many ways to show us your bibliography, but you must use the MLA format found on Hebrew Day Institute's website under "curriculum" and then click on "media and technology center." If you scroll down that page you'll find the information for each kind of source you've used. First we give you an example of how the bibliography should look, then we tell you what to include specifically for each kind of source. If you are not sure about this, please ask a teacher to help you.

Due May 12 (or earlier)
Media & Technology Teacher's Approval of Bibliography _____

Final Text for Project: Before you complete your project, your written text and conclusions must be approved by your teacher. This will save you time. If you have to make any corrections you'll be able to do that before putting together the final version of your project. **Your teacher must approve your written text prior to completion of your project by May 12.**

Due May 12 (or earlier)
Teacher Approval of final text _____

Peer Review: Your project is due in school on **May 17**. This will give you one week for Peer Review of all projects. You will still have a chance to make any final changes, based on the review of your project, before the Torah Fair Presentations.

Due in School May 17
Teacher Signature
When Project is Brought to School _____

Final Presentation will be at the Torah Fair on May 25

As you create your project, please keep in mind that you will be presenting this on May 25 during the Torah Fair. Your presentation should tell us your question, your opinion, and what your opinion is based on (that's the background research you did). It should be told in your own words. You don't have to read a report. You do have to be able to talk about what you found out and what you think.



Step 6: Evaluation

How will I know if I have done my best?

Evaluation involves determining how well the final product meets the original task (effectiveness) and the process of how well students carried out the information problem-solving process (efficiency).



After the Torah Fair is over you'll have a chance to look back at the process and see how well you used the Big 6 Steps. You'll have time to think about your project to decide what you'd do differently, if anything, next time. And you'll have a chance to ask yourself if the final project answered the Essential Question you asked in Step 1.

Self reflection and Evaluation

Was my essential question answered properly? Explain your answer.

What would I do differently next time and why?

Hebrew Day Institute Assessment Rubric for Torah Fair 2011

This Rubric is for the research process itself, using the Big 6 Research Skills. It also covers presentation skills. For those students doing PowerPoints, the bottom three boxes will help you evaluate the actual PowerPoint itself. You can use a scale of 1-4:

4	Mastered Skill, high proficiency
3	Progressing Skill, some proficiency
2	Emerging Skill
1	Needs Improvement, low level of skill shown

Student's Name: _____		
Teacher's Initials: _____		FINAL GRADE _____
Skills	Evaluation Criteria for High Proficiency	Grade
Big 6 Skill 1 Define Task	Student understands what essential questions are and what the assignment is. Completed brainstorming steps and was able to form an essential question with minimal guidance.	
Big 6 Skill 2 Develop Information Seeking Strategies	Student was able to choose the most appropriate research strategies for the topic (didn't just list all that he/she could think of), was able to easily find appropriate materials to use (books, websites, people to interview) that were relevant to topic and question, with minimal guidance.	
Big 6 Skill 3 and 4 Locate information, do research, take notes	Student completed the assignment with all components in evidence. Relevant information was found within the materials selected with minimal direction. Notes are clearly taken from resources.	
Big Six Skill 5 and 6 Put it all together: The Presentation Itself	Quality of final product reflects understanding of the essential question. Conclusions clearly show answer or opinion and how the research supports the answer. Project format is appropriate to topic. Hebrew is used in the final presentation with correct grammar. Essential Question is listed clearly. Research Summary is included. Conclusions are clearly stated. Bibliography included in proper format.	
Oral Presentation	The oral presentation is organized and coherent. Demonstrates clear understanding of question, research, and conclusions. Can explain information without reading from slides or printed materials. Is comfortable with material.	
For PowerPoint Presentations Only Background	Background color and design has good contrast with text and graphics, does not detract, all can be read easily. Choice of background is consistent from slide to slide and is appropriate for topic.	
For PowerPoint Presentations Only Text	Text is easy to read, not too many words per slide. Careful use of bold, italics, fancy fonts to enhance readability and not detract focus from content. Use of fonts consistent from slide to slide.	
For PowerPoint Presentations Graphics	All graphics are attractive and support the theme/content of the presentation. Special effects add to content and presentation without being distracting, not too busy.	