

Hebrew Day Institute

לכבוד שבת

L'chvod Shabbat



General Studies News

December 8, 2005

Kindergarten Highlights

By Ellen Joseph

The kindergarteners have completed the Ss, Ll, and Ii sounds in phonics.

They have made a sock puppet for Sammy Snake, a face mask of Leo Lion and portrayed Inchy Inchworm on a leaf that they stitched with yarn. The children began the sound of Tt and have been introduced to their new phonics friend, Tricky Turtle. The class is continuing to blend sounds into words and the children are progressing nicely with their reading skills.

In Math, we have been busy with numeral identification and formation. The children are getting more confident in writing numerals and continue to practice, which will make

them more proficient. A booklet of numerals will be sent home shortly.

The children have completed their unit on Fall and have done many beautiful projects. They have studied the holidays of Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving. We painted Thanksgiving turkeys, completed a booklet about the holiday and now understand the history of the Pilgrims and their plight. The class baked pumpkin bread (which was delicious) and enjoyed learning many cute songs about Thanksgiving.

In Whole Language, the boys and girls illustrated their class big book of

fall. Each child got to bring it home to read to and share with their families. The book was colorful and beautiful!

Word bank words were sent home to be added to each child's reading box. Continue to work with these words with your child.

We have just started a new unit on healthy foods and the new and modified food pyramid. The children painted figures of Healthy Harry and Junk Food Josie and filled their bellies with pictures of healthy and unhealthy foods. We will be continuing to work on this unit over the next several weeks.

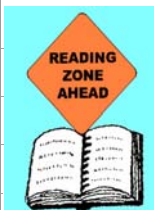
Chanukah Dates to Keep in Mind

More information will be coming shortly about all events. You will be notified by teachers if there are individual class parties.

Sunday December 18 – HDI Hanukkah Bazaar at Magen David Congregation – 12:30 – 3 pm

Thursday December 22 – School-wide Hanukkah Celebration. Join us in the Sarah Lechter Hall for plays, a chorus performance, and Dina's world-famous sufганиyot - 2 pm.

Thursday December 22 – HDI chorus is singing at the community Hanukkah celebration at White Flint Mall - 6 pm.



Scholastic Book Fair December 12—16, 2005

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to help out this year. If you still want to volunteer, please contact Sue Meiselman at: smeiselman@gmail.com; 301-871-5971.

morning and all day on Thursday, December 15 (parent-teacher conference day). Additional hours will be posted. Classes will be visiting the Book Fair so children can make "Wish Lists" for you.

Thursday evening. Children are invited to come in their pajamas and hear stories read by Mrs. Rothbard, Mrs. Lempert and Mrs. Meiselman. Parents will have the pleasure of uninterrupted book shopping during that time. Details and specific times will be sent home to you.

The Book Fair will be open each

We will also have a special program

1st Grade Highlights

By Helene Stolzberg

Now that Thanksgiving (and our play) is over, we are all looking forward to Chanukah. The first graders are doing arts and crafts related to Chanukah to get us into the spirit. We are also discussing "firefighters" connected to our unit on "Community Helpers". The class heard a non-fiction story about "Fireman Jim", a New York firefighter. We talked about fire hydrants (which they didn't seem too aware of), so point them out to your child when you see one! Each child made a cup puppet of "Fireman Jim". They are on display in our

room. We also made bag puppets of "Little Popcorn," a firehouse dog, after hearing a story of how he got his spots!

The class continues to have math each morning with Mrs. Lempert and Mrs. Turpie. Spelling tests are on Fridays. Since this is probably each child's first experience with taking a test, please help your child learn how to study for a test.

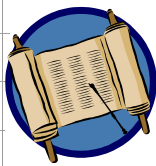
Also a "first" is a book report. The idea is for your child to learn what a book report is all about. If you have

any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to ask me.

The children are reading in their respective reading groups. They have stories read to them connected to the season or to our units. Centers are put out for the children to explore.

Working at computers in the technology lab, and going to science class is on-going.

I look forward to seeing you at parent-teacher conferences. I wish you, in advance, a very happy Chanukah!



Parsha Talk

By Rabbi Philip Pohl (a proud HDI parent)

Parshat Va-Yaytzay

Torah reading - Genesis 28:10 – 32:3

Haftarah (Prophetic) reading – Hosea 12:13 – 14:10

Below you will find a summary of the Torah portion followed by several questions for discussion. I hope you will use this material to enhance your Shabbat study experience as a family.

Shabbat Shalom.

This Shabbat (December 10, 2005 – Kislev 9, 5766) we read Parshat Va-Yaytzay, the seventh portion in Sefer Bereshit (the book of Genesis).

Parshat Va-Yaytzay begins in the middle of Genesis Chapter 28. Jacob leaves his home and makes his way to Haran. One night he dreams about a ladder "set on the ground and its top reached to the sky." Angels were going up and down the ladder. God speaks to Jacob in the dream and tells him that the covenant established with his grandfather Abraham, and father Isaac, will continue with him. When Jacob awakes from his dream, he realizes that something very special has happened in this place and he names the place "Beth El – house of God."

In Chapter 29 Jacob finally arrives near the home of his uncle Laban. Jacob meets Laban's daughter Rachel and falls in love with her at first sight. Jacob wants to marry her but first he must work seven years for Laban before the wedding can take place. Laban tricks Jacob

into marrying Rachel's older sister, Leah, by disguising her so Jacob couldn't see who was standing next to him under the hupa. Before Jacob can get to marry Rachel, he must work another seven years.

Chapter 29 ends with the birth of Jacob's first four sons. Leah gives birth to Reuben, Simon, Levi and Judah, but so far Rachel can not give birth to any children.

Chapter 30 continues the birth of more children but now the birth mothers are Rachel's maid, Bilhah who gives birth to Dan and Naphtali, and Leah's maid, Zilpah, who gives birth to more sons, Gad and Asher. Later in this chapter there is a strange story about mandrakes and then we hear that Leah has two more sons, Issachar and Zebulun. Finally Rachel has a son whose name is Joseph.

Jacob would like to leave Laban and return to his home but Laban convinces him to stay which only brings greater wealth to Jacob and his family. Chapter 31 informs us that this causes jealousy within Laban's family so finally Jacob decides to return home to Canaan. Jacob gathers his family and tries to sneak away. Rachel decides she should take her father's "teraphim - household idols" with her.

This causes Laban to chase after Jacob. When they meet, Jacob finally confronts Laban and claims that everything Jacob now owns, he earned fairly. Laban

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Parsha Talk
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and Jacob establish a peace treaty and Jacob returns on his way home, once again greeted by angels.

Below are five questions to consider from this week's Torah portion. These questions are meant to prompt discussion within your family. Often there will not be a definitive right or wrong answer. It might be useful to review these questions with a Humash containing a commentary nearby for reference.

Question 1 – What do you think the Torah is trying to tell us when it says that Jacob's ladder was "set on the ground and its top reached to the sky?"

Question 2 – Explain why there are so many synagogues named Beth El!

Question 3 – How is what happened to Jacob when he wanted to marry Rachel, similar to what happened to Esau in last week's portion when we learned that Esau wanted the blessing from Isaac?

Question 4 – Chapter 29, verse 35 tells us that Leah's fourth son is named Judah. Examine this verse and see if you can learn anything about that name (Yehuda) and what it teaches us about the Jewish people (Yehudim).

Question 5 – Why does Rachel take the terafim (household idols)? Does she *want* her father Laban to chase after the family?

2nd and 3rd Grade Highlights

By Brenda Chapman

The second and third grade students have been extremely busy this past month.

In second grade we have completed our unit on Harvest and Thanksgiving. We are working on decoding words that belong to word families as well as becoming better at story comprehension.

We have put aside our writing skills workbook for a while and are now concentrating on developing ideas for our stories. We learned how to

make a story outline to help us organize our thoughts as we begin writing. The children are relying on familiar words and invented spelling. They have good stories and are looking forward to sharing one of their writing samples along with other work samples during the conferences on the 15th of December.

In math we continue to work on number families for addition and subtraction. We will be covering basic facts to a sum of 20. The children should be practicing these at home

every night with flash cards until they have mastered them.

In third grade we have recently completed our study of Jamestown as they first permanent English settlement in the Virginia Colony. We will continue our study of communities by focusing on Williamsburg and the thirteen colonies before independence. The children are developing their mapping skills and doing a small internet research project in class.

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4th and 5th Grade Highlights

By Naomi M. Kaplan

Mazel Tov to the students of grades 4 and 5 who placed in the Mid-Atlantic Jewish Expo Essay Contest. Jay Rosenthal (4th grade) won First Place, Jack Gruber (4th grade) won Second Place, and Shira Torchinsky (4th grade) placed third. Both Caleb (5th grade) and Yoshi (4th grade) Tanenbaum received Honorable Mention.

Fourth and fifth graders continue to improve their skills in language arts, reading, and social studies. Fourth

graders have completed the unit on nouns and are beginning the unit on verbs. They are working on vocabulary and interpretive reading skills in both their novels and in Our Maryland.

Fifth graders have completed the units on verbs and U.S. geography, including reading and interpreting various maps, charts, tables, and graphs. Students begin the unit on Native Americans of North America next week and will be required to

write a research paper about a tribe. Students will learn how the environment influenced the way members of the Native American tribe lived and worked together.

I am looking forward to speaking with all the parents of 4th & 5th grade students on Thursday, December 15th, if not sooner, about individual student progress and the details of the upcoming social studies and language arts projects.

2nd and 3rd Grade
(Continued from page 3)

We have put aside the writing skills workbook for a while and are concentrating on writing stories. The children are beginning to apply the skills that they have learned as they

begin editing their own writing. They are looking forward to sharing a writing sample along with other work samples with their parents at conferences on the 15th of December.

In math we have been working on

counting money and making change. We are also reviewing the basic addition and subtraction facts in preparation for multiplication.

The children in Mrs. Chapman's classes have been preparing for conferences on December 15th and are required to attend.

Information on Bar/Bat Mitzvah in Israel

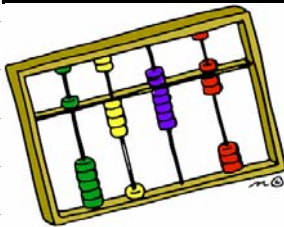
By Lenore Layman, Partnership for Jewish Life and Learning

Are you planning a trip to Israel to celebrate a bar/bar mitzvah? If you are thinking about this and would like to get in touch with a conservative rabbi who lives in Jerusalem to help you plan your ceremony, go to: www.israelbarbatmitzvah.com.

New HDI Fundraiser

We are very excited about our new ongoing fundraiser, **Big Yellow Box by Crayola**. Big Yellow Box sells all-inclusive craft kits for kids and adults ages 3 and up. All of the supplies you need to make the craft come in the yellow box! Each Crayola craft kit comes with step by step directions to follow and all necessary supplies which also make these kits a convenient gift!

Orders will be shipped directly to HDI for pick up or anywhere in the US you'd like your gift to go! **100% of the profit will go to Hebrew Day Institute!** Many of the products will be on display next week at the Book Fair as well as at the Chanukah party on Sunday, December 18th. Be sure to check them out! So, start to think about all the gifts you buy throughout the year for your children, family and friends...and at the same time help Hebrew Day Institute raise much needed funds!



Math Message

By Robin A. Lempert

It is important to help your children practice their basic math skills at home. To do this, you can play games using the number facts and operations they are learning.

1st Grade: Please help your children understand the value of money, by using coins to tell number stories and playing games. Help your children group pennies into nickels and nickels into dimes, and dimes and nickels into quarters.

2nd Grade: Practice basic addition and subtraction facts adding up to 15 so the students know them without hesitation or counting.

3rd Grade: Help your children measure things around the house for extra practice.

4th Grade: The students are learning to draw circles with a compass. This is a

skill that needs practice. If you want to help your children practice at home you can purchase an inexpensive compass (office supply stores, grocery stores). Have the children draw many circles of many shapes and sizes until they feel comfortable with the compass.

5th Grade: We now have a subscription to a series of online games that complement our Everyday Math program. Students play the games against the computer. I can monitor their progress and math skills through an administrative site. The games provide good practice with skills. To play, just go to www.emgames.com and then on the bottom, left of the screen click on "At Home Student Login" and the students can follow the instructions there. Each student has been given a password to the games site. The games will be shared with students in 4th grade as well.



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