

LESE CENTER FOR LIVING JUDAISM



# PARENT WELCOME AND CURRICULUM NIGHT

3<sup>rd</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

# YOUR CHILD'S JEWISH JOURNEY AT LCLJ

K-2: a taste of  
PBL



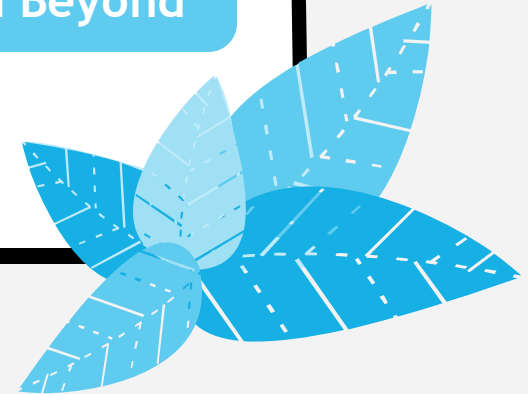
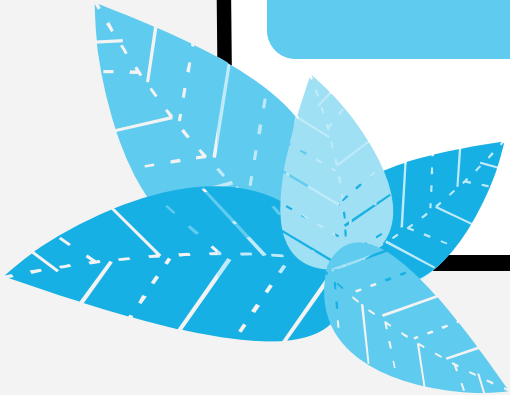
3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>  
Grade:  
PBL, Hebrew,  
T'filah



5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>  
Grade:  
PBL, Hebrew,  
T'filah



7<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>:  
CenSyn Teens:  
Leadership,  
Confirmation,  
and Beyond



# WHAT IS PBL AND WHY DO WE DO IT?

- ▶ Students gain knowledge and skills by investigating and responding to an authentic, engaging, and complex question.
- ▶ PBL at LCLJ:
  - ▶ Students explore 3 units each year.
  - ▶ Classes run on a trimester schedule for 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> graders.
  - ▶ Student-driven learning: students can decide what they want to explore within the unit

# Project Based Learning

## Judaic Units: 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade (K'tanim)

- ▶ **Jewish Holidays**
- ▶ **Shabbat and Creation**
- ▶ **Genesis**

# Unit 1 (And Returned to Throughout the Year): Jewish Holidays

## ▶ Main points we explore:

- The meaning and traditions of the Jewish holidays
- Marking time and the Jewish calendar
- How celebrating our holidays unite us as a Jewish people

## ▶ How we explore this:

- Participating in holiday rituals as a class
- Looking at the lunar calendar (with the help of Oreos!)
- Comparing Jewish holiday traditions from around the world

# Unit 2: Shabbat and Creation

## ▶ Main points we explore:

- The story of Creation from the Torah
- The concepts of rest and holiness
- Shabbat rituals and prayers

## ▶ How we explore this:

- Telling the Creation story in our own words
- Interviewing guest speakers about their Shabbat practices
- Comparing everyday moments to the holiness of Shabbat
- Plan and lead a Family Shabbat Service

# Unit 3: Genesis

## ▶ Main points we explore:

- Stories and characters in the Book of Genesis
- Jewish values and lessons found in Genesis
- Importance of retelling Torah stories each year

## ▶ How we explore this:

- Creating interactive visuals that embody the values we learn
- Finding the connection between Jewish stories and our lives
- Creating a Genesis “newspaper” with articles written by our students

# Project Based Learning

## Judaic Units: 4<sup>th</sup> Grade (Nitzanim)

- ▶ **Exodus**
- ▶ **Jewish Rituals**
- ▶ **Israel: Land, People, and Culture**



# Exodus

## ▶ Main points we explore:

- The arc of the Exodus story; Characters and events
- Lessons and Jewish values that we can learn from our stories
- Modern-day heroes and activists who embody those Jewish values

## ▶ How we explore this:

- Reading stories, watching videos, and acting out scenes to bring these stories to life
- Journaling—using pictures or words—to reflect on key points and values from each of the stories
- "Meeting" a variety of people who dedicate their lives to making positive change

# Jewish Rituals

- ▶ Main points we explore:
  - Jewish rituals through the lens of the Passover Seder
  - How these rituals are portrayed in different contexts (i.e. Shabbat, Chanukah, High Holy Days)
  - What customs and texts make Jewish rituals meaningful
- ▶ How we explore this:
  - Defining "ritual" and connecting it to how we celebrate the Jewish holidays
  - Opportunities to participate in and perform Jewish rituals with Central clergy and staff
  - Creating our own 4th Grade Passover Haggadah and Seder experience

# Israel: Land, People, and Culture

## ▶ Main points we explore:

- Israel's popular sites and landmarks
- Israel's diverse demographics and people
- Israel's vibrant culture through song and food

## ▶ How we explore this:

- Taking an interactive "tour" of Israel's various cities
- Experiencing a "day in the life" of Israelis of all different backgrounds
- Singing Israeli songs and getting a "taste" of Israeli cuisine

# Project Based Learning

## Judaic Units: 5<sup>th</sup> Grade (Bonim)

- ▶ **Israel: Birth of the State**
- ▶ **Jewish Law**
- ▶ **Jewish Life Cycle Events**

# Israel: Birth of the State

- ▶ Main points we explore:
  - ▶ The historical, political, and social contexts in which Israel was established
  - ▶ Key values that impacted the establishment of Israel (i.e. land, safety, innovation, Jewish pluralism, freedom)
  - ▶ Influential leaders and their perspectives on the values above

# Israel: Birth of the State

- ▶ How we explore this:
  - ▶ Chronological overview of Israel's formation
  - ▶ Games, comics, videos, and exploring important texts
  - ▶ Kibbutz rotations, building evidence for a debate on the Dreyfus Affair

# Jewish Law

- ▶ Main points we explore:
  - ▶ History and evolution of Jewish Law
  - ▶ Interpreting how Jewish laws are applicable to our lives
  - ▶ Principles of Reform Judaism

# Jewish Law

- ▶ How we explore this:
  - ▶ Participating in a Torah scavenger hunt for different types of Jewish laws
  - ▶ Interviewing Central clergy and staff about Reform Judaism
  - ▶ Bringing Jewish text to life through a live action text-study
- ▶ Public Product:
  - ▶ Students will create their own “Talmud Page,” and participate in an interactive study and discussion with families



# Jewish Life Cycle Events

- ▶ Main points we explore:
  - ▶ The significance of Jewish life cycle events
  - ▶ The rituals associated with each event
  - ▶ How to make life cycle events more inclusive

# Jewish Life Cycle Events

- ▶ How we explore this:
  - ▶ A gallery walk of pictures from various lifecycle events
  - ▶ Interviewing Central staff and family members about their experiences with baby namings, conversions, weddings, and death

# Project Based Learning Judaic Units: 6th Grade (Chalutzim)

- ▶ **Social Justice/Tikkun Olam**
- ▶ **The Holocaust**
- ▶ **God**

# Social Justice / Tikkun Olam

- ▶ Main points we explore:
  - ▶ Using Jewish values as a tool to repair the world
  - ▶ How to be advocates for issues we care about
  - ▶ The importance and foundations of volunteerism

# Social Justice / Tikkun Olam

- ▶ How we explore this:
  - ▶ Participating in a Family Day of Service
  - ▶ Brainstorm upstream vs. downstream solutions to issues we care about
  - ▶ Learning from our Clergy and teens how we can make a difference in our community

# The Holocaust

- ▶ Main points we explore:
  - ▶ The historical and societal context of the Holocaust
  - ▶ The importance of remembering the Holocaust
  - ▶ Themes of resistance, righteousness, and legacy

# The Holocaust

- ▶ How we explore this:
  - ▶ Listening to survivors tell their stories
  - ▶ Analyzing pictures, documentaries, and memorials
  - ▶ Helping to plan Central's Yom HaShoah service

# God

- ▶ Main points we explore:
  - ▶ Where do people find or feel God?
  - ▶ What is God's role in the Torah?
  - ▶ How do our students, as 6th graders, relate to God?
  - ▶ What does God mean to each of us?



# God

- ▶ How we explore this:
  - ▶ Interviewing members of Central Synagogue's clergy and staff
  - ▶ Studying representations of God in Judaism through primary source texts, commentaries, art and more
  - ▶ Creating personal statements about God

# Seminars

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade (Tzofim)

- ▶ **Jewish Ethics**
- ▶ **PG-13 Torah**
- ▶ **Book of Why**

# Jewish Ethics

- ▶ Main points we explore:
  - ▶ Identify Jewish values within contemporary scenarios
  - ▶ Apply said values to situations that arise in their own lives
  - ▶ How to respectfully disagree with and debate our peers on issues important to us

# Jewish Ethics

## ▶ How we explore this:

- ▶ Practice respectful debating through imagined ethical scenarios
- ▶ Text studies to ground us in the proof texts from which many ethical scenarios arise
- ▶ Barometer exercises to visualize where we stand on various topics

# PG-13 Torah

- ▶ Main points we explore:
  - ▶ Torah stories not previously taught in younger grades
  - ▶ Characters whose stories have been hidden or not fully understood
  - ▶ How we can learn from these stories and characters, even when they are challenging or confusing

# PG-13 Torah

- ▶ How we explore this:

- ▶ Text studies

- ▶ Group and class-wide discussions

- ▶ Comparisons between the stories they were told in younger grades vs. the stories in their original context

# Book of Why

- ▶ Main points we explore:
  - ▶ Jewish values: Hachnasat Orchim, Shalom Bayit and more
  - ▶ Leadership in Judaism, Biblical and contemporary, with an emphasis on female leadership
  - ▶ What choices do we have to make as Jewish adults?

# Book of Why

- ▶ How we explore this:
  - ▶ Generate questions about Jewish tradition and culture
  - ▶ Utilize online resources and Central staff and clergy to help answer our questions
  - ▶ Compile questions and research into the Tzofim Book of Why, to be distributed to the entire 7th grade



# Hebrew Curriculum

- ▶ Hebrew Instruction:

- ▶ 30 minutes each week
- ▶ PBL classes are divided into smaller Hebrew groups, with Hebrew specialists pushing in to co-teach or teach their own group

- ▶ Goals:

- ▶ For students learning the Alef-Bet:

- ▶ Recognize each Hebrew letter by name and sound, and each vowel by sound
- ▶ Decode Hebrew letter/vowel pairs and words

- ▶ For post-Alef-Bet learning:

- ▶ Learn modern Hebrew vocabulary and basic grammar structures
- ▶ Read conversational Hebrew and practice phrases with their peers

# T'filah / Prayer Curriculum

- ▶ T'filah at LCLJ:
  - ▶ 30 minutes per week
  - ▶ Led by Jeremy Sipe, Shirel Richman, and Tkiyah with visits from Central clergy during the year
  - ▶ Class-wide sessions (Grade-wide on Zoom)
- ▶ Core Prayers, Kabbalat Shabbat, Shacharit Shabbat

# T'filah / Prayer Goals

## ▶ Students will:

- ▶ Acquire the ritual and liturgical skills to become active participants in t'filah
- ▶ Be able to navigate the siddur and enunciate and chant the t'filot accurately and fluently.
- ▶ Learn the prayers in the siddur as a text, learning the meaning and content of individual prayers.
- ▶ Acquire skills for participation such as responding appropriately to prayers recited responsively, practicing when to sit, stand, and bow.
- ▶ Become leaders of their LCLJ prayer community with opportunities to lead their classmates in prayer.
- ▶ Experience t'filah as a vehicle for connecting to and cultivating a personal relationship with God, as well as a way to connect to the Jewish community.
- ▶ Be exposed to a range of positive t'filah experiences and options, including Central's Kabbalat Shabbat service, music, storytelling, yoga, movement, meditation, niggunim, praying outdoors, or creative writing.

# T'filah / Prayer Curriculum

- ▶ **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade:** Familiarizing with: Hinei Mah Tov, Barchu, Shema/Hear O Israel, Mi Chamocha, Silent Prayer, Oseh Shalom, Shehecheyanu, V'Ahavta Hashkiveinu, Adonai S'fatai
- ▶ **4<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Honing in on core prayers above, adding in: L'cha Dodi, Shiru L'Adonai, V'Shamru, Mi Shebeirach, Avot V'imahot

# T'filah / Prayer Curriculum

- ▶ In 5th and 6th Grade, students begin to learn Central's Shacharit Shabbat service: learning the prayers, focusing on the order of service, and exploring the meaning of prayers:
  - ▶ Kedusha, Aleinu, Mourner's Kaddish, YotzeirOr, Shema V'Ahavta

# PROGRAMMING

- ▶ Shabbat Yeladim
- ▶ YFE Programming (Holidays, etc.)
- ▶ Outside Programming
  - ▶ By grade (Pre-K-2; 3-4; 5-6)
  - ▶ Outdoors at Central
  - ▶ Hopefully soon at other locations!

# B'nei Mitzvah Programs

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy blue. The shapes are primarily triangles and polygons, creating a dynamic, layered effect on the right side of the page, while the left side is mostly white.

Q&A