



The Battery Park Synagogue Hebrew School 2009/2010-5770

Our Philosophy

The Hebrew school was founded on the premise that, above all, Jewish education should be filled with positive and meaningful experiences. We want children to feel proud as Jews and to have strong experiences in which this pride is based. This approach can be broken down into two basic levels:

1. The broader concepts of our relationship with G-d and with each other, including prayer, tzedakah, respect for ourselves and for others, and community.
2. Rituals that enrich our lives as Jews including objects, foods and actions.

G-d in the curriculum

G-d is an important part of our curriculum. Even very young children begin to wrestle with theories about G-d's relationship to the world and to each one of us. We encourage questions and discussion and try to help each child understand G-d for him or herself.

Our approach to violence

Death and destruction, though prevalent in the bible, are minimized in classes for young children. In stories such as the crossing of the Red Sea or Noah and the Ark, which are important and appropriate for young children, emphasis is on the positive values of freedom and renewal and not on the death of the Egyptians or the destruction of the world. Material is presented so that children's understanding of the stories is rooted in strength, not fear.

Curriculum

Our curriculum for all ages includes the cycle of the year with its abundance of holy days and holidays, Shabbat, tzedakah, Israel, Bible and Hebrew. As the children grow, they explore each subject on a deeper level and often come up with their own ideas of which aspects of Judaism they want to explore in more depth. Older children have more formal and intensive Hebrew language training as well as instruction in ritual and prayer.

Activities

Students enjoy story reading, acting, crafts projects, discussions, cooking, singing, dancing, planting, exploring rituals, playing games and one trip each semester.

Religious school and your family

We encourage all families to incorporate lessons from school into your home. For very young children (pre-K), a parent or caregiver usually accompanies each child so that the experience can be reinforced at home. We welcome any questions you have about any subject covered in school or about Judaism in general, and would be glad to help you with ideas of how to incorporate more Jewish experiences into your family's life.

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