

Kitah Gimel (Grade 3)

Kitah Gimel (Grade 3) meets twice a week on Sunday mornings from 9:00-11:30am, and either Wednesday or Thursday afternoon from 4:00-6:00pm. This may be the first time that the child experiences the synagogue and school as a gathering place of children of all ages to meet on a regular basis to learn as a community. The Kitah Gimel learner begins to or continues to develop a sense of Jewish identity and community through SEL and socialization among their fellow Kitah Gimel learners and the wider Grades 3-6 community.

Torah/Humash:

Kitah Gimel learners study in the Beit Midrash every Sunday, learning about Parshat HaShavuah for Bereshit and Shemot. Some highlights of this study are creating our own watercolor interpretations of Jacob's dream, deciding what it really means to "struggle with God," and learning to work in hevruta. During the week, we look at Parshat HaShavuah in interactive ways, using different media to learn and reflect on our Torah study. Creating a torn paper midrash, window paintings of the days of creation, or putting on a skit to show our own interpretations of the parshiyot are some examples of learning activities.

Holidays/Hagim:

In Kitah Gimel, learners explore the stories of the holidays and find ways to celebrate that they can connect with. An example of a highlight for Passover was creating our own Four Questions booklet that went along with our study of the Four Questions as relating to slavery and freedom.

Shabbat:

Third grade does an 8-week long unit learning about and experiencing Shabbat in our learning space. It includes creating our own hallah tray, learning about each of the blessings that make up the Kabbalat Shabbat ceremony, and celebrating Kabbalat Shabbat each week in our learning space. The unit also includes a day when we make our own loaf of hallah to take home and enjoy. During the 8-week unit, families are encouraged to try different traditions at home each Shabbat, and learners report back about their experiences each week. The unit culminates with Kabbalat Shabbat services and a dinner for 3rd grade families at TIC, where we pray and celebrate Shabbat together, and 'unveil' our 3rd grade family Shabbat collage.

Israel Learning:

We spend time each week of the year learning about an important place and/or person in Israel. Our Israel lessons are designed to introduce our learners to many places in Israel that they may not have heard of before, such as Ein Gedi or Tzipori. We focus on

places that are both ancient and modern, and learn about people who have played an important role in Israel's history. Each year the focus of our learning around Yom Ha'atzmaut changes, depending on the TIC community-wide theme.

Hebrew:

Third graders spend all year learning the letters of the Aleph-Bet. We begin learning how to blend sounds and read fluidly. We work on Hebrew decoding each day that we are together. In general, we worked on learning one new sound each day, followed by individual or small-group learning focused around flashcards and individualized review.

Materials: flashcards, workbook

Brakhot/TSefillot:

In third grade, our learners begin participating in Community Tefillah with our older learners in Shorashim. They learn about prayer during tefillah in real time, and begin to get used to looking at prayers in the siddur.

On Sunday mornings, children participate in a weekly 3-6 grade tefillah experience, in which they gather as a community to connect to God and to learn the prayers of our people. Through song, movement, exploration of the words of prayers in the siddur, children develop and continue to discover positive and reflective attitudes toward prayer.

On weekdays, for the first semester 2nd and 3rd graders come together and engage in God-talk. This provides an opportunity for community building and also for the children to explore and talk about God. It is also a time for learners to ask questions, reflect, discuss, and connect to God in a very personal way. The learners have conversations with one another and themselves about ways that we might see God in our everyday lives or thinking about ways that we are able to communicate with God.

During the second semester, Kitah Gimel focuses on learning the blessings of the Friday night Kabbalat Shabbat ritual.

Materials: "I have Some Questions About God", "The New Lev Shalem prayer book".

Community Building and SEL (Social Emotional Learning)

In Kitah Gimel we like to start our days together with community building. We take some time to come together as a group and center ourselves, while we learn more about one another and connect in a more personal way. Learners take turns sharing something about their day or something that they are looking forward to with the rest of the group. They are then able to call on two other learners who will ask them questions about what they've shared. This allows our learners to really have a conversation about something

that is important to them, and helps them learn appropriate questions to ask of one another. This is an opportunity for everyone to give to and get respect from their peers.

Happiness Wall:

Kitah Gimel has a Happiness Wall. This wall is a space where each learner can create a card with a picture or words describing something that brings them happiness. These cards are then posted on the wall for the rest of the year and for everyone to see. The point of the Happiness Wall is to show the learners that the things that bring them happiness are important, even if they have nothing to do with Shorashim, and to offer something that could brighten their day if they are in need of a boost.

Kitah Gimel Literacy Goals (by the end of the year our learners should know):

Torah:

- What is a Humash? What is a parasha?
- There are five books in the Torah and the names of the books
- Increased familiarity with stories and people in the Torah

Hagim/Holidays:

- What is the story of each holiday?
- Review basic practices, customs and traditions
- Customs, laws and traditions of Shabbat

Israel:

- Map of Israel
- Israel is in the Middle East
- Review of major cities in Israel and learn of more obscure places
- Learn about select Zionist personalities as they relate to places
- Connect modern cities to their biblical roots especially in connection to Torah study

Hebrew:

- Learn the letters and vowel sounds and begin or continue decoding
- The Aleph Bet Song
- Basic vocabulary
- Hebrew is our Jewish language and the language of the Torah and of Israel

Brakhot/tefillot:

- Brakhot (blessings) over different foods
- Shabbat blessings
- Four Questions
- Begin to learn the prayers of the weekday morning service/prayers of the weekday afternoon and evening services during Community Tefillah

Other:

- How to be a respectful member of a learning community