

Kitah Aleph (Grade 1)

Kitah Aleph (Grade 1) meets once a week on Sunday mornings from 9:00-11:30am. 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 Aleph learner begins to or continues to develop a sense of Jewish identity and community through socialization among their fellow Kitah Aleph learners and the wider K-2 community.

Our 1st graders are ready and set to learn! We take full advantage of their enthusiasm and plunge them straight into the world of Jewish learning.

Children in the Kitah Aleph are introduced to select Bible stories that teach Jewish values and concepts, as well as the narrative itself. The Bible stories learned in Kitah Aleph complement and are different than the stories explored in the Gan, so that by the end of Kitah Aleph, children have explored all major Bible stories. Hebrew language in Kitah Aleph includes Aleph-Bet Yoga and the beginning of letter recognition and letter formation. We strive to call children by their Hebrew or Jewish names when possible, and environmental Hebrew is also a part of the routine. Also included in Hebrew language is the introduction and use of key words of Jewish cultural and religious values.

Holidays/Hagim:

Kitah Aleph looks at the holidays through the lens of 'symbols'. Children discover and learn the connections between Jewish symbols and the holidays. Children are taught the historical and religious ideas of each holiday and booklets come home for continued family use.

Materials: "Drops of Honey" take home packets

Torah:

Kitah Aleph learners explore select Bible stories and use the text "A Child's Garden of Torah". Materials are sent home for family discussion and interaction with each story they explore.

Text and Materials: "A Child's Garden of Torah" and take-home packets of Bible stories

Middot/Jewish Values:

Children focus on and explore 4 Jewish values over the course of the year: Tzedacka (charity), Derekh Eretz (doing the right thing), Tzaar Baalei Hayyim (being kind to animals), among others. Family involvement is designed to create a connection between what is learned in Shorashim and what is learned at home.

Hebrew:

Aleph-Bet Yoga is a weekly learning activity designed to teach the letters of the aleph-bet in a kinesthetic way. Hebrew workbooks are used as an introduction to Hebrew decoding and the formation of the letters. We continue the use of environmental Hebrew and calling the children by their Hebrew/Jewish names.

Tefillah/Prayer:

Children participate in a weekly K-2 tefillah experience, in which they gather as a community to connect to God and to 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.

Text: In-house siddur that learners reflect in all year and take home at the end of the year.

Israel Learning:

Israel is integrated throughout the curriculum and in the spring children explore the symbols of the modern State of Israel in preparation for Yom HaAtzmaut (Israel Independence Day).

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

Torah:

- We keep the Torah in the Aron
- About the sefer Torah (how it is dressed, how it is made, what it looks like)
- Basic Torah stories

Hagim/Holidays:

- Stories of each holiday
- Recognize the ritual objects connected to each holiday

Israel:

- Symbols of Israel (flag, the Kotel, the emblem of the State of Israel, Jerusalem skyline)
- Israel's meaning to us as Jews -> Jewish homeland

Hebrew:

- Hebrew names
- Hebrew classroom words
- Basic vocabulary
- Introduction of letters through Aleph Bet Yoga and workbook

Other:

- How to be a respectful member of a learning community
- Tzedacka, Derekh Eretz (being respectful), Tzaar Baalei Hayyim (being kind to animals) Bikkur Holim (visiting the sick)