



Religious School

2018-19/5779

Essential Question

- ▶ **What do children (and adults) need to be able to do and to know in order to make Judaism and active part of their lives right now?**

Torah

- ▶ Torah at JRC is understood as the ongoing, creative and sacred search for meaning as discussed through our people's record of their encounters with The Divine. Torah is not just the five books of Moses, but all of textual and oral traditions - from Mishnah to memes, all can be mined for wisdom to be used today. Students will gain an appreciation for the arc of textual tradition while also seeing how Torah study is still alive today.



Photo of Michael Twitty. Photo by Jasper Colt
From <https://coffeeshoprabbi.com/2015/04/27/>

Middot/Character Traits/Virtues

- ▶ Every parent wants to raise a mensch (a good person), and at JRC we know that it takes a village. Our middot program creatively infuses ancient Jewish values and practices that our students become more self-aware, more confident, and more resilient. By exploring middot, students will become equipped with Jewish language and tools which will help them achieve those goals. At JRC several middot are explored per-grade.



Image from <https://www.hebrewacademymiami.org>

Spiritual Practice Lab

- ▶ We often buzz through the day with little thought given to gratitude or beauty, but at JRC's Religious School, each time we meet (and not just when we pray) there will be moments to honor the sacred in each child's life - to give praise for the joys, to support one another in hard times, and to help students develop a language around prayer and the muscle of spiritual practice.



Image from <http://www.seekingsimcha.com/?cat=9>

Tzedakah / Righteousness

- ▶ Inspired by Torah, Jewish values and JRC's commitment to make a more caring and safe world for all, each class will undertake a tzedakah project. Key to our approach is teaching the difference between charity and justice, and how each are needed and cherished in Jewish tradition. Students will understand Judaism's imperative regarding loving the stranger and repair of the world.



Image from <https://canyourelate.org/tag/tikkun-olam/>

History

- ▶ At JRC, students will learn how Judaism is an evolving tradition. As important as our mythic stories are (and we teach them), Reconstructionism demands that we learn the history of Judaism and the Jewish people. We will explore each historical period with an eye towards those individuals and groups who played key roles in innovations that kept Judaism alive in their times as we seek to do now.



Image of Solomon's Temple from US Library of Congress.
<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/ancient-jewish-religion-and-culture/>

Jewish Time

- ▶ Through engaging, experiential and age appropriate activities students will explore the meaning of Jewish holidays, including rituals, customs and histories. Chaggim, Jewish Holidays, will also be a chance for us to occasionally have special school wide programming. Jewish time will be focus on helping students live the rhythms and order of Shabbat, Torah readings, the Hebrew calendar and Chaggim.



Image from <http://www.circlecalendar.com/ordering/jewish-time-wheel-limited-edition-print>

Entire School at a Glance

	Pre-K	Kinder-1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th
Torah	Genesis and Exodus	Genesis and Exodus	Exodus	What is holiness?	Proverbs and Prophetic Voice	The Great Jewish Debates!	Torah through the commentators	Reconstructionism
Middot/ Character	Yirah (Awe), Simcha (Joy)	Hachnasat Orchim (Welcoming), Hesed (Lovingkindness)	Anavah (Humility), Shmirat Ha'Guf (Care for the Body)	Ahavah Atzmit (Selfcare), shmirat ha'olam (care for the world)	Lashon Tov (Righteous Speech), Ometz Lev (Courage)	Hakarat Ha'Tov (Gratitude), Savlanut (Patience)	Hitlamdut (Self-Awareness), Seder (Order)	Nosay B'ol im Chevero (Bearing the burden with one's friend)
History	N/A	N/A	N/A	The World of the Bible	The Rabbinic Period	Medieval times!	Modern Period	Contemporary Period
Spiritual Practice Lab	Learning Jewish Objects; home & JRC	Learning Jewish Objects; home & JRC	Spirituality and movement	Ritual Practice Lab	Music	Hiddur Mitzvah (Beautifying rituals)/Ritual Creation	Meditation & B'nai Mitzvah Year	Chevrutah/ Paired Text Study
Tzedakah	Shelly Tzedakah	Crayons for Kids	New book and toy drive	Green Team	Peace and Justice	Racial Equity	Immigrant Justice	B'nai Mitzvah Service Project

Electives

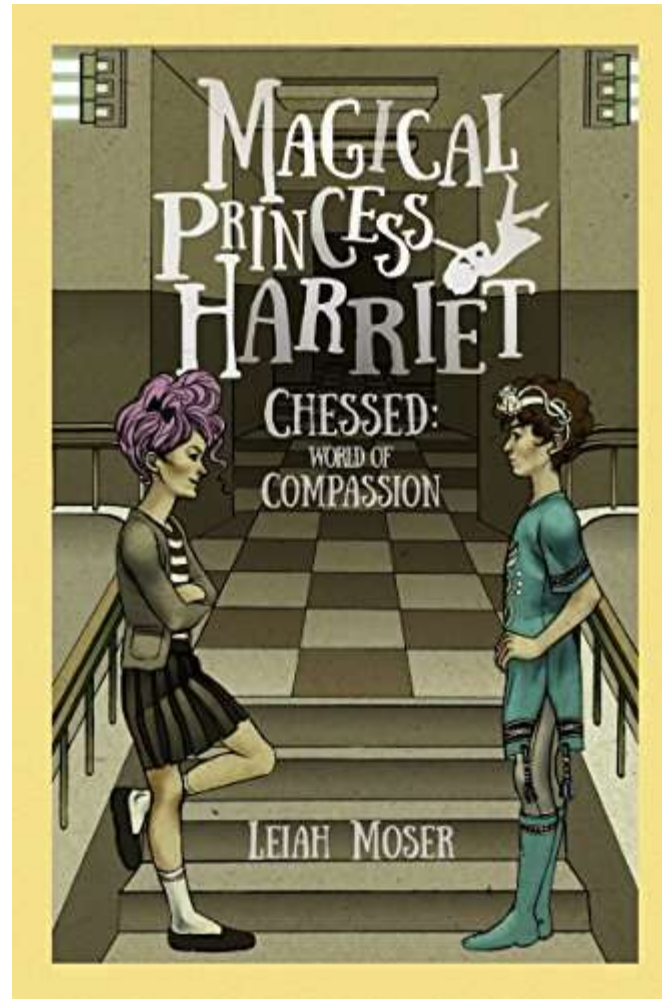
- ▶ Jewish History Through Cooking
- ▶ Book Club
- ▶ Creative Arts
- ▶ Nature
- ▶ StoryCorps
- ▶ Etgar: Teamwork Challenges



Book Club:

Magical Princess Harriet: Chessed: World of Compassion

- ▶ Middle school can be tough, especially when you can't figure out whether or not you're a boy or a girl. Homework and gym class are hard enough to deal with, but what exactly do you do when a pushy angel shows up insisting you are a magical princess and that is your job to defend your school from the forces of darkness? For Harris Baumgartner, only one thing is certain - life is about to get a lot more complicated!



StoryCorps

- ▶ Interviewing skills
- ▶ Actual audio story recording
- ▶ Experienced Teacher



Hebrew

- ▶ Prayer Based
- ▶ Meaning Based
- ▶ Scaled by ability
- ▶ Supports B'nai Mitzvah

Kol Yisrael: The Prayers of Our People

Series Behrman House



Kol Yisrael 1 : Blessings and Prayers for Home Ritual Celebration

1. מוֹדָה / מוֹדָה אֲנִי
2. בְּרָכוֹת
3. בְּרָכוֹת שֶׁל מִצְוָה
4. בְּרָכוֹת שֶׁל שַׁבָּת
5. קִדּוּשׁ
6. הַבְּדֵלָה
7. בְּרָכוֹת שֶׁל יוֹם טוֹב
8. מַה נִּשְׁתַּנָּה
9. בְּרַכַּת הַמָּזוֹן
10. שְׁמַע

Modeh Ani, Blessings for Mitzvot, Shabbat, Kiddush, Havdallah
Blessings for Holy Days, 4 Questions, Birkat Hamazon and the Shema

Not Just Fluency of Words, but also Fluency of Meaning

- ▶ How does saying “thank you” help increase shalom in the world and in our lives?
- ▶ How can reciting blessings strengthen our connection with G!d and with each other?
- ▶ In what ways might performing mitzvot add holiness to our lives?
- ▶ What is the impact of praying alone versus in a minyan?
- ▶ How can reciting blessings of thanks for the wonders of creation remind us of our responsibility to take care of the world?
- ▶ How can we apply the teaching of the prophets to our daily lives?
- ▶ What does it mean to love with God with all of my might?

Reconstructionist Principles:

- ▶ Judaism is a living tradition that is, and has always been, evolving.
- ▶ Judaism is a culture: Languages, dances, art and food are included in tradition
- ▶ Judaism is a spiritual path that provides meaning in the 21st Century
- ▶ Judaism is our sacred inheritance, AND, the past has a vote but not a veto
- ▶ Judaism was created by Jews to connect with God, not the other way around



**RECONSTRUCTING
JUDAISM**

Deeply rooted. Boldly relevant.

Diversity in Our School

- ▶ B'tzelem Elohim, we are made in the Divine image
- ▶ Diverse in every sense
- ▶ We work with teachers to both understand the diverse nature of our community and to honor those expressions
- ▶ We work with teachers to incorporate diverse materials, and offer training on inclusion in the classroom



Welcoming

- ▶ Provide a Jewish education for every child
- ▶ Making accommodations where necessary
- ▶ Dedicated staff to inclusion
- ▶ Be our partners



Behavior Covenant

- ▶ **Makom (Place):** A place of learning is sacred and special. We respect the belongings of the school and the building. We honor our classrooms and the covenants of that the class will create together.
- ▶ **Btzelem Elohim (In the image of God):** Each individual is created in the Divine Image and therefore deserving of respect, kindness and compassion
- ▶ **Lashon Tov (Righteous Speech):** Speech has tremendous power. At JRC we strive to have lashon tov, righteous speech that heals and offers praise, rather than harm and destroy.
- ▶ **Hachnasat Orchim (welcoming):** Everyone has been an outsider at some point in a new community, and we are therefore called to care for others because we know what it is like to be “a stranger in a strange land.”
- ▶ **Din and Rachamin (Justice and Mercy):** The world was created with a balance of justice and compassion. In dealing with one another we too must balance these.
- ▶ **Achraiut (Responsibility):** Each individual is responsible for their actions. Each person contains the potential for growth and change
- ▶ **Tshuvah (Repair):** We can all make a change. We can acknowledge mistakes we make and apologize for them and to make a sincere commitment to do better going forward.

JRC Religious School Faculty and Assistant Rabbi are responsible for:

- ▶ Providing a safe learning environment both physically and emotionally
- ▶ Providing clear expectations
- ▶ Promoting and praising positive behaviors
- ▶ Providing fair and consistent consequences which motivate towards repair
- ▶ Informing students and guardians of concerns and appropriate discipline in a timely and respectful manner



Parents and Kids are Responsible for:

PARENTS:

- Working with school and child to comply with behavior expectations
- Encouraging children to resolve their own problems
- Encouraging children to include all children
- Communicating concerns
- Reinforcing a Jewish Philosophy of behavior

STUDENTS:

- Their own actions
- Speaking and acting respectfully towards adults and peers
- Not interfering with the learning of others
- Respecting physical space of others
- Respecting synagogue property and other's property

Communications

▶ Weekly emails from JRC with :

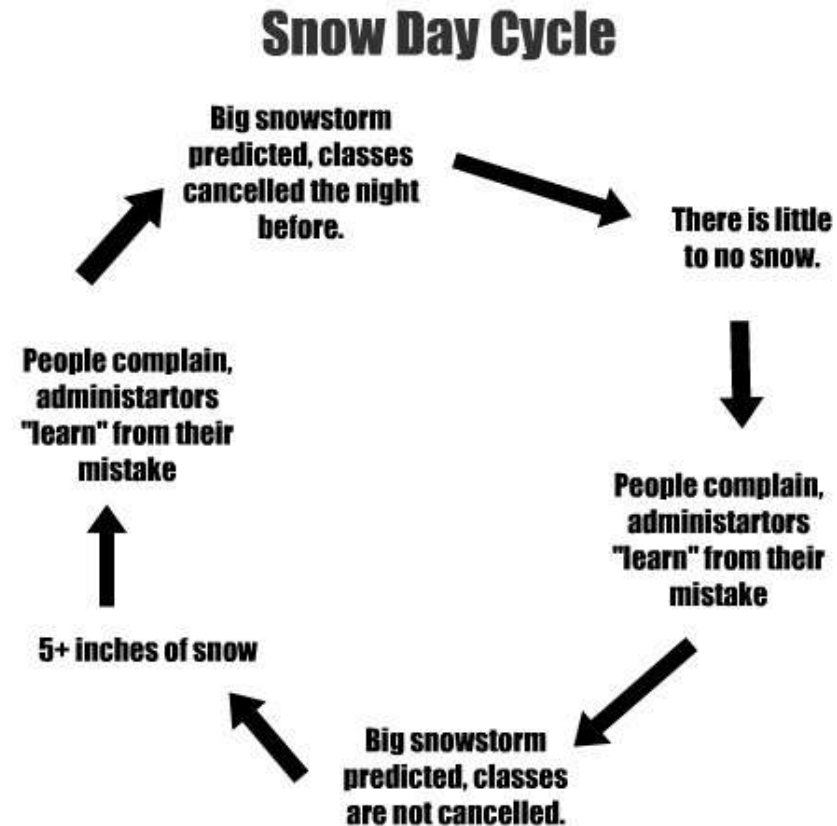
- Updates about upcoming events
- Teacher reports about class activities and highlights
- Teachings and resources for home from Rabbi David
- Occasional requests and reminders
- Forms
- Meeting requests

▶ We Need From You:

- At least one working email
- Any important information about your child that you think we should know, specifically if it relates to learning
- Honest, thoughtful and constructive feedback.

School Closures

- ▶ In case of inclement weather call JRC Office: (847) 328-7678



Snack

- ▶ We provide a lite snack
- ▶ You are allowed to send your child with snacks that meet the following requirements:
 - No nuts
 - No sharing
 - No meat



THANK YOU!