



**Hasten Hebrew Academy  
of Indianapolis**

**Friday, September 17, 2021 Vol. 18 #5**

**“Shabbat Shalom”**

**11 Tishrei 5782**

Friday, September 17, 2021

Candle Lighting 7:29 pm

Saturday, September 18, 2021

Shabbat ends after 8:48 pm



**A Message from the Principal  
Mrs. Miriam Gettinger**

We are all familiar with the idiom ‘less is more’ and its application in art and design. Yet in our frenzied over packed daily lives, we really need ‘to stop’ lists replacing our ever-growing ‘to do’ lists. In both parenting and educational instruction, we readily create incentives for good behavior or achievements without truly getting rid of the obstacles to these desired outcomes. Intuitively, which is of us wouldn’t prefer addition to subtraction math problems particularly if done mentally rather than with pencil and paper? We seem somehow to be hopelessly addicted to addition!

In the behavioral science journal *Nature*, University of Virginia professor Klotz explores the untapped potential of ‘less,’ unpacking the reason that adding has become our default mode in a world that has conditioned and rewarded this mental shortcut. Biologically, our animal drive to acquire food and resources as well as demonstrate competencies by visibly shaping our surroundings pulls us toward the elusive ‘more’ while globally human civilization actually defines its success by the addition of technologies, education and culture. Klotz suggests a paradigm shift moving away from the false dichotomy of adding OR subtracting to a complementary mindset employing both perspectives. He cites for example ‘pocket parks’ in urban congestion as a green oasis built amidst concrete jungles by subtracting a single often derelict structure. Organizationally, Klotz suggests making change to our daily routines by trying new experiences on our schedules while simultaneously weeding out what has become useless appendixes of our time and resources actualizing Chinese philosopher Tzu’s pithy quip: ‘to gain knowledge add things every day; to gain wisdom subtract something every day!’”

The upcoming Sukkot holiday more than any other underscores the universal lessons of less in our lives; we leave behind our warm secure homes to dwell temporarily in natural huts for a week’s period recreating our desert sojourn in the Exodus from Egypt. We enjoy family, guests (wait we don’t actually invite the bees!) and nature reflecting upon true values and life priorities. Each of the three pilgrimage festivals Passover, Sukkot and Shavuot is predicated upon a sensitivity and outreach to those less fortunate and in need with their respective Torah readings messaging the mitzvah to empathize with the poor, widow, orphan and, convert. This motif is, however, highlighted most especially over Sukkot with the sukkot representing the actual Biblical tented booths or the ananei hakavod/ the spiritual clouds of Glory which enveloped the Jewish nation for their forty years in the Sinai desert.

Over the summer I read and thoroughly enjoyed Deirdre Mask’s *The Address Book: What Street Addresses Reveal About Identity, Race, Wealth and Power* recommended to me by Monica Rosen-



**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**



Homework Club for grades 4-8 will meet Thursday next week.



The next scrip order will be placed on October 5. Orders will be here on October 8. Please call Toni at 251-1261 ext. 158 to place an order.



**Erev Sukkot**  
9/20 - 1:00 dismissal  
**After School Care Available for  
already enrolled students until 5pm**

**Sukkot**  
9/21 & 9/22  
**NO SCHOOL**



**Hoshana Rabba**  
9/27 - **NO SCHOOL**

**Shemini Atzeret & Simchat Torah**  
9/28 & 9/29  
**NO SCHOOL**



**5th Grade Rosh Chodesh Program**  
10/7 at 11:00 am  
**Families invited to join Via Zoom**

feld as a recent selection for her senior book club. An avid history buff with a penchant for urban planning, I was fascinated by the analysis on ancient Roman street design and the section detailing the origin of street names which was my first career aspiration! Significantly, the book poignantly depicts homelessness, the lack of said street address, correlating the phenomenon with loneliness and an adrift sense of identity in finding one’s place in society. As we are all but sojourners on the path of life, it is our moral imperative to ponder the lessons of subtraction in our lives...perhaps I will add that to my very long holiday ‘to do’ list!



## Parshat Haazinu By Rabbi Berel Wein

These last chapters of the Torah, culminating in this week's reading, are all a very serious and almost fearsome quality and tone. Heaven and earth are called upon to be the ultimate witnesses regarding the covenant that the Lord has made with Israel for all time. Rashi points out to us human witnesses and even historical tradition within families, tribes and other groups are insufficient to uphold the veracity of the covenant between God and Israel. Human beings, by their very natures, can only see things superficially, and remember things selectively and often with a bias and/or agenda. This is not the case with nature, that always does the will of the creator and has no independent opinion or understanding of events on its own. We will see later in Jewish history that the prophet Isaiah will also invoke heaven and earth in repeating the outlines of the covenant and justifying the rewards and punishment that observance or disregarding the covenant always bring with it. The concept that nature itself, with all its wonders, unpredictability, and beauty, is itself the greatest source of testimony regarding the covenant between God and Israel is one of the truly unique ideas and interpretations that Moshe teaches us in this final part of his valedictory oration to the Jewish people. Heaven and earth are eternal in this world and have fixed laws and patterns that are to never be altered. So too, is the covenant between God and Israel. It also is unchangeable, and can be reliable, and, therefore, its consistency and predictability serve as an example and witness to the covenant that had bound us for millennia and remains in force in our current world as well.

The rabbis of the Talmud have often used nature and its attendant animal world as a source of instruction as to how human life should also be conducted. The Talmud tells us that we could learn cleanliness from the feline species, monogamy from the ant, and other such values that are present in the great natural that we inhabit. The natural world that surrounds us is one of wonder and inspiration, but at the very same time, one of possible danger and trepidation. Volcanoes and earthquakes are also present when we view the beauty and inspiration that snow peak mountain ranges present before us. If one stands in the shadow of a great, tall mountain every human being experiences the trepidation that the gigantic rock formation provokes. So, too, is the nature of the covenant between God and Israel. It is a thing of wonder and beauty, of soaring visions, rich in mystery and inspiration. It invokes within us a sense of wonderment. But it also awakens within us the fear and anxiety that make our lives uncertain and bestow upon us feelings of danger. Our only choice, therefore, is to observe the covenant and to realize that, in so doing, we guarantee our eternity in partnership with the natural world in which we live.

Shabbat shalom

Rabbi Berel Wein

# Classroom News

## Kindergarten Judaics

By Fraidel Schusterman

Dear HHAI Families,

Yesterday was Yom Kippur the holiest day of the Jewish year and our special day of forgiveness, so I want to wish every one of us in the HHAI family among all our brothers and sisters, a happy and healthy, sweet new year. I want to wish all of us a year of growth, of joyful learning, a year of strengthening our Jewish commitments, a year where our personal and collective hopes and dreams are actualized and a year where every child has the ability to be his or her best.



In our Kindergarten Judaics class, we've been immersed in holiday learning and experiences from the very start of school. We started off the year with preparing for Rosh Hashanah then went straight into Yom Kippur and now we are almost at Sukkot.



Every center and area is intentional and the children learn most by creating their own experiences with the materials provided and environment created.

The songs, stories and lessons inspire the children to play Rosh Hashanah in the dramatic play area. The provocation table, piques their interest in the shofar and its source.



The scales and Tashlich custom inspire thoughts and discussions about making good choices, and fixing our mistakes.



Sukkot is almost here and this holiday is so joyful and exciting!



They've been building sukkahs in the block area and in free art. They all got to use a real hammer and nails, thanks to Mr. Simon.

We discussed some of the meaning (the why) of this special holiday and they were fascinated to learn about G-d's protection of the Jewish people when they left Egypt and traveled through the desert.

We created a protective cloud with pillow stuffing and everyone drew their family inside the cloud, as if they are leaving Egypt. Some friends included their pets.

I'm looking forward to a fantastic year of growth, connection and learning with this class.

Have a very joyful Sukkot.



# Classroom News

## Hebrew Language

By Sarit Linkon



Our year has gotten off to a great start! Kita Alef is a new and exciting world just waiting to be explored. Our Hebrew program is lively and enjoyable for everyone. The TaLl AM curriculum develops Hebrew literacy by utilizing a wide range of activities for all styles of learning. Students have fun learning to read, write and speak Hebrew through conversations, songs, stories, and games in our digital environment - iTaLAM, an online adaptive program based on the iTaLAM curriculum. Students use their designated Chromebooks to experience learning activities in a multimedia environment making the learning process more enjoyable and effective. They love the recording feature and listening to themselves reading and singing. This allows students to progress at their own level and provides me a unique way to follow their individual progress in class.

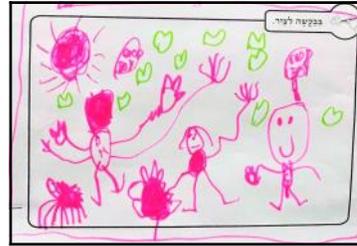
With the holidays coming early this year, we have focused much of our time this month learning about the high holidays. With special songs and stories, students learned how to greet their family and friends for the new year with Shanah Tovah! To express what they have learned in a creative way, they made a one-of-a-kind art piece on canvas. For the background, students created a collage using printed paper with text that is familiar to them and taken from Rosh Hashanah songs they have learned. Then they traced a special fruit of their choice which is eaten during the holiday, and finished the piece using watercolors and markers to add "שנה טובה" and other words they learned. They loved working on this project and did a fantastic job!



In the story "Slichah" (Sorry) the sound of the Shofar reminds us to ask for forgiveness. The animated story is about Shachar and Sharona, two main characters in our program, who recall actions they took that were not so considerate of others. Shachar was playing tennis in the living room, knocking his father's coffee mug on his book. Meanwhile, Sharona played loudly on her computer and woke her grandfather who was sleeping in his chair. Students were able to relate to the story and the actions of Shachar and Sharona, while learning about respect and asking for forgiveness. After we learned to say Slichah (sorry), we watched a story called "Anachnu Tovim", We are Good. In this story, students learned that the shofar reminds us of Tzedaka and doing good deeds. The story is full of example of appropriate behavior, friendship, and helping others in the classroom, at school, in the synagogue, and while playing outside. First graders shared different ways they can be good and expressed their ideas by creating wonderful drawings.

First grade is a critical part of the foundation of every child's Hebrew and Judaic studies and we focus on making their classroom room experience educational, fun, and as enriching an experience as possible. We are looking forward to a wonderful and unforgettable year!

## Shabbat Shalom and Shanah Tovah! Hamorah Sarit



Helping in the garden

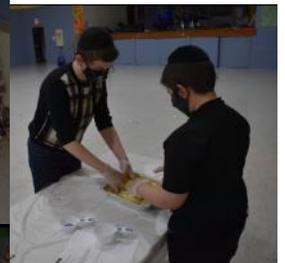


Sh... keep quiet when mom is resting



Being nice to friends

Middle School students and Dina Hasten made home-made noodle kugle for the St. Vincent ER to share before Yom Kippur.



# Classroom News

## Middle School Science

By Lonica Solomon



Hello Families, Friends, and Community Members! I have to say that this year is off to a great start! Middle schoolers change so much in these formative years—most apparently in height, which we are keeping track of this year with a special bulletin board. As 6th graders go from elementary to middle school, they experience quite a metamorphosis on

their path to becoming independent learners: one classroom to several; a schedule to follow that differs everyday; homework to keep track of in each class; lockers; and a larger group. 7th graders,

while settled into their roles as middle schoolers, develop their executive skills sets and abstract thinking. While 8th graders begin to prepare to fly away from our tight-knit community. They are settling into being independent learners and preparing for their next step to finding the path towards a high school where they will feel they belong. I cannot help but think of them like butterflies, beginning as larvae and emerging very different—in body and mind—ready to migrate out into the world! It's one of my favorite things about getting to teach all three grades. And although they might not think of themselves that way, it certainly fits the purview of my lesson plans for them to witness real butterflies undergo the biggest and very rapid transformation of their lives. We have gone to our front pollinator garden to search for monarch eggs (and we even found a chrysalis!).

(Between our front garden and the one I have at home, we've managed to bring in many monarch eggs (enough to share with other classrooms) as well as a couple swallowtail caterpillars. Students can directly appreciate the life cycles of these creatures in addition to biodiversity in general through comparison of the two species.



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All grades opened this year with the same investigation: What is the nature of the scientific process? In it, they had to solve a tangram puzzle in which each piece represented a different scientific observation and/or piece of data. First, they had to figure out how to make a square. Once they solved it (and thought they were done), they were given a new piece (newly discovered “information”) and asked to remake a square that incorporated the new piece. The first puzzle was a little hard and required several attempts, but the second was MUCH more difficult. Lastly, all students shared out and reflected on how this activity reflected the nature of science as well as to set them up to succeed with grit, collaboration, and humility. Hearing and seeing their thoughts on the experience also was a good way for me to get a sense of where they are in their development as abstract/critical thinkers and articulation. It serves as an important reminder to me as their teacher to shift expectations between classes and tailor lessons that best support each group. Here are some of their take-aways from the activity:

6th: “It’s like science because the more data you get, you have to work with it.” “Working with your peers.” “Thinking and trying again.” “Because you have to work with what you have.” “Thinking and trying again.” “You can think in one way—you can’t see that you’ve made a mistake.”

7th: “I experimented. I tried [different] stuff” “You need to fit in new evidence for your theory.” “It helps to change your way of thinking and perspective.” “[Science] helps you change your way of thinking & perspectives. It also has different ‘puzzle’ pieces fitting together.”

“I enjoyed this activity. I think this is like science because it was hard and because you don’t know.” “This is like science because you have to keep trying to get through hard situations. Is I am in a situation like this, I will not give up.” “You have to keep trying different things and you may have to make discoveries as you go.” “You have to rearrange ideas to fill it in.”

New this year is a weekly period of STEM class for middle schoolers. 8th graders work with Mrs. Bick while I have the pleasure of working with 6th & 7th graders together. Our activities have ranged from working on improving our pollinator garden and re-educating the building on how to recycle properly to having the chance to do some real engineering. Classroom time is more limited by the state content standards but I always put into practice learning through the lens of student inquiry. This allows for plenty of labs, but also a significant focus on content and skill development. It’s fun for us to have a chance to get out of the classroom as well as put into practice what we learn inside it. Last year’s 6th graders spent a lot of time investigating the rocky soil in the front garden. One of the ways they discovered to amend it was to just get more of it. Since it’s a native pollinator garden, we looked to nature for inspiration. Leaving the wood fragments on top of the soil is one of the ways nature builds up her gardens. As the wood decays, more decomposers will be brought to the garden. These will help break down and mix together other types of organic material we add to the garden. (Our first engineering task involved making straw rockets (They go REALLY FAR!) This is a great tie-in to the 6th graders 1st unit on energy. It also allows us all to practice the engineering process as we were able to design, build, test.



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