

TEMPLE BETH-EL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS GUIDE

COMMUNITY

Classes designed to help students understand that we are part of local community and their role in the larger American and global Jewish community. (3 courses)

CULTURE

Classes designed to let students experience the colorful culture of Judaism. (9 courses)

GOD

Classes designed to give students space to openly discuss their thoughts and feelings about God. Students will learn that throughout history Jews have explored their relationship with God. (4 courses)

HISTORY

Classes designed to help students develop a meaningful identification with Jews past and present through studying events, people, and their own families. (3 courses)

HOLIDAYS

Classes designed to help students familiarize themselves with the rituals and traditions observed around our calendar of Jewish holidays. (4 courses)

ISRAEL

Classes designed to help students understand the connection between the Jewish people and Israel through learning about the land, the state, and the people who live there. (6 courses)

LIFECYCLE

Classes designed to teach students how Jews mark passages of time and season through their lives and the Jewish moments that help define them. (3 courses)

VALUES

Classes designed to help students practice our ethical and ritual commandments and connect them to the values they and their families hold. (4 courses)

TANACH

Classes designed to help students learn what is in the Tanakh (the Hebrew Bible) and the other sacred texts from which Judaism originated. (4 courses)

TEMPLE BETH-EL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS 2021-2022

PRIMARY COURSES (GRADES K-2)

TRIMESTER 1

LET'S EXPLORE THE HOLIDAYS*

HOLIDAYS

It's all here: fun activities, thought questions and descriptive text that will engage emerging readers and help them discover their own connections to the holidays of *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, *Sukkot* and *Simchat Torah*, *Hanukkah*, *Tu Bishvat*, *Purim*, *Passover*, and *Shavuot*. Each week we'll explore the meaning of the holiday, its symbols, and rituals, and read a retelling of the holiday origins. Perfect for students who love to read!

SHABBAT IN A BOX

HOLIDAYS

Learn about how Jews all over the world celebrate Shabbat while you build your own box full of the items we use to observe. Make candle sticks, a *kiddush* cup, and a challah cover! All materials will be provided. Great for students who enjoy hands on activities.

THE GREAT ISRAEL SCAVENGER HUNT

ISRAEL

Following cryptic instructions contained in a letter from their grandfather, two cousins travel across Israel on an adventurous scavenger hunt in search of special objects and places, including the Israeli flag, a palm tree, and the Western Wall. As they travel, the cousins and students will discover the major cities and extraordinary sites of Israel, the diversity of Israel's people and cultures, our biblical and modern ties with the Jewish homeland, and the geography of Israel.

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TRIMESTER 2

THESE ARE THE PEOPLE IN MY SYNAGOGUE*

COMMUNITY

Our Jewish community is full of important people who all play different roles in making Temple and other Jewish places special. Learn about the special things Jewish people can do to help each other as Rabbis, Cantors, camp counselors, building managers, teachers, musicians, volunteers, and even students!

TORAH GODLY PLAY

TANACH

See Torah come alive through story, wonder, and play. Torah Godly Play nurtures the rich spiritual lives of children by honoring their capacity to understand and engage with Torah stories through imagination and wonder. Children will learn central Torah stories in this favorite of many of our past students.

MITZVAHS EVERY DAY!

VALUES

Some of the most important *mitzvot* (commandments) and acts of *gemilut chasadim* (loving kindness) are the ones we can do easily, day-after-day. In this class, through dramatic play, storybooks, coloring pages, and games, students will learn about the *mitzvot* they're already doing (and might not even know about) and how they can add more *mitzvot* to their day-to-day routines.

TRIMESTER 3

ALEF BET LAB

CULTURE

Through song and game, free work time and art, students will explore the letters of the Hebrew alphabet and learn to recognize touchstone Jewish words. This class encourages exploration and creativity and is highly recommended for second grade students who will begin Hebrew school next year.

LET'S DISCOVER KINDNESS

VALUES

It seems that the world needs more kindness, and now more than ever. But what is kindness, and how do we develop it in ourselves and others? Together, we'll explore the character traits that contribute to kindness, such as empathy, gratitude, and respect, through a Jewish lens. Students will use role-playing, mindfulness activities, personal reflection, and more to explore their emotional responses to the themes and begin to foster those traits in themselves.

GROWING UP WITH DOVEY BEAR*

LIFECYCLE • TAUGHT BY MRS. RACHEL

Meet a new friend, Dovey Bear, and help him learn all about what it means to grow up Jewish. In this class you'll learn all about the Jewish lifecycle including how we get our names, why we become bar/bat mitzvah, what makes a Jewish wedding special, and how to remember people we love when it's time to say goodbye.

INTERMEDIATE COURSES (GRADES 3-5)

TRIMESTER 1

SABOTAGE IN THE SYNAGOGUE

COMMUNITY

It's *Kol Nidre* and someone has stolen the Rabbi's sermon! In this class, designed in the style of a murder mystery party, students will take on roles of members of a congregational community and work together to solve the mystery of the stolen sermon while they learn about the ways members of the Jewish community work together. This class is suggested for students who can commit to consistent attendance.

HIDDEN HOLIDAYS

HOLIDAYS

Why do we light two candles on Shabbat? Did the Red Sea really part during the Exodus? And why do we eat dairy on Shavuot? This class, which features debates, trivia games, videos and more, will teach students about the secret histories of Jewish holiday rituals and the true stories of the holidays.

MINECRAFT: THE MISHKAN*

TANACH

Back by popular demand! Join the Temple Minecraft realm to build the *mishkan* (the tabernacle) according to the specifications God gives the Israelites in the desert. Bring your dolphin skins! While the cost of game is included with tuition, this class is only available to students who have access to a device on which they can play Minecraft's bedrock edition (as opposed to java).

HIDDUR KNIT-ZVAH

VALUES

Hiddur Mitzvah is the commandment that reminds us of the importance of doing *mitzvot* in a way that adds beauty to the world. In this class, students will work together to knit beautiful blankets for our local shelters. By working slowly and frequently on one *mitzvah* project, students will put in the effort that it often requires to make something lasting and beautiful for a stranger. No knitting experience required.

TRIMESTER 2

ISRAELI KITCHEN*

ISRAEL, CULTURE

Learn to cook the classics from every Israeli kitchen! This class will teach you about the geographic influences on Israeli cooking while you make Israeli breakfast, falafel and hummus, schnitzel, shakshukah, *salatim*, *borekas*, *mujaddara*, *sabich*, and *sufganiyot*.

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GADGETS, GIZMOS, AND GOD: LEARNING ABOUT GOD THROUGH ROBOTICS

GOD

By reminding students that God created humans with an idea and mission in mind, what can we learn about God's role in our lives while we create robots with an idea and mission in mind? In a robotics lab setting, students will learn about famous robots and their creators while wrestling with God concepts like power and control, creation, and perfection. Students will create their own robots and use them to help explain their learning.

TIED UP IN KNOTS: MAKE A PRAYER SHAWL

LIFECYCLE

Our prayer shawls follow us through the Jewish lifecycle -- we're wrapped in them when we're born, receive our own when we become *bar* or *bat mitzvah*, wear them when we are confirmed, stand under them when we are married, and wrap ourselves in the comfort near the end of our lives. In this class, students will trace the lifecycle journey of the prayer shawl as they create their own that tells the story of their Jewish life.

TRIMESTER 3

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UP, UP AND OY VEY

CULTURE, HISTORY

From the birth of Krypton to Batman, the Hulk, Spiderman, the X-Men and more, students will learn the Jewish stories behind the origins of the most famous superheroes. This class will use clips of superhero movies and TV shows and comic books to introduce students to enduring stories that are intrinsically Jewish because of their creators and understand the connections between growing up Jewish and learning that what makes us and superheroes different are the things that make us special.

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TRIMESTER 3

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ISRAEL THROUGH SPORTS

ISRAEL • TAUGHT BY MR. CORY

If you thought your favorite pro sports team was the Spurs, think again! Pretty soon you'll be rooting for Macabbi Tel Aviv, Hapoel Haifa, and the Beit Shemesh Blue Sox when you take Israel through sports. Learn about the different leagues in Israel, then spend time actually playing those games in class. This class will feature basketball, soccer, gaga, *matkot*, chess, tennis, and rhythmic gymnastics.

I ADVANCED COURSES (GRADES 6-7)

TRIMESTER 1

ISRAELI KITCHEN*

CULTURE, ISRAEL

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SHABBAT SONG WRITING WORKSHOP

HOLIDAYS

Calling all musicians! Ever wanted to learn how Olivia Rodrigo and Taylor Swift write a song? How do you pick a music style to match to lyrics? In this class, students will work with a professional song writer to learn the basics and work independently or collaboratively to write a piece of music for use at Shabbat services at Temple. Prior music experience is great, but not required.

GAN GARDENING

VALUES

Get your green thumbs ready. In this class students will work in Temple's raised garden bed to learn about the Jewish responsibility of caring for land and get outside of the classroom! Students will tend our garden, develop a plan to put all the harvest to use, and grow their skills as gardeners.

TRIMESTER 2

STAR TREK JUDAISM

CULTURE

Go where *Beit Midrash* has never gone before -- into the Enterprise! This class will cover all things Star Trek from the movies to the TV shows to the creation of the *Star Trek* universe by examining the Jewish influences the writers, actors, and producers. Live long and prosper!

JEWS ON BROADWAY

CULTURE

What do *West Side Story*, *Dear Evan Hansen*, and *Cinderella* have in common? They are all musicals written by Jewish people! In this class, learn about 7 different Jewish Broadway librettists, composers, and lyricists, and prepare a song to perform in a showcase at the end of the trimester.

HOLOCAUST HEROES

HISTORY

Though the Holocaust began nearly 90 years ago, the stories of the survivors and heroes of the Holocaust continue to inspire people all over the world. In this class students will adopt the persona of a real-life Holocaust Hero and create a project to tell that person's story to their families and classmates in a showcase at the end of the trimester.

TRIMESTER 3

PEOPLE OF THE BOOK BOOK CLUB: LIFE, AFTER

CULTURE

In this class, students will read together from the Young Adult novel "Life, After," featuring by Sarah Darer Littman. This book tells the story of Dani, a teenager who moves to New York from Argentina to escape hardship in the midst of economic and civil unrest. There she gets to know a new classmate, a new country, and a new love. The Jewish Book Council recommends this book to tell the story of, "Argentinian Jews, modern-day immigrants, and one strong, spirited teen." Content Warning: Romantic Storyline (kissing/love story).

IN GOD'S IMAGE -- EXPLORING GOD THROUGH ART

GOD

Many of us have a picture of God based on the ways God is depicted in art. In this class, using art techniques like micrography, painting, collage, mural/graffiti, kaleidoscope, and more, students will depict their own images of God in ways that are in line with their own theological understandings. (Teacher: Mrs. Rachel; Content Area: God)

MINECRAFT: THE LAND OF ISRAEL*

ISRAEL

Back by popular demand! Join the Temple Minecraft realm to build the land of Israel from the group up -- literally. Learn about the underground tunnels of the old city, the Bauhaus and contemporary architecture in Tel Aviv, the giant crater in Eilat, the hiking and mountains near the dead sea, the sweeping deserts of the Negev, and the organizations planting trees in the North while you build the land of Israel in our realm together. While the cost of game is included with tuition, this class is only available to students who have access device on which they can play Minecraft's bedrock edition (as opposed to Java).