

Early Childhood Newsletter

Yeshiva Toras Chaim Toras Emes

Parashas Yisro

January 17, 2014
Candle Lighting 5:34 P.M.

THANK YOU:

Mr. Naftali and Shulamis Tyberg for donating the Malkali Sefer Shemos DVD to the Kindergarten I class.



MAZEL TOV:

Rabbi Yaakov Tzvi and Malka Blejer on the birth of a son

Dr. Moises and Deborah Haratz on the birth of a daughter

Calendar Notes:

January 20-24- Mid-Winter Vacation.
No School

January 27- School Resumes

February 4- Pre-K Trip to the Museum of Discovery and Science

February 11- Fire Truck Demonstration

Enjoy Your Winter Break!

NURSERY – MORAH TAMI

How delighted we were to walk into our classrooms and see our lima bean plants starting to grow. **The children are very excited that Tu B'Shevat is almost here!** They have been working diligently on their many projects and cannot wait to take them home lichvod hachag. The songs "How To Plant a Tree" and "Little Rain Little Sun" were taught to the children.

We continued learning about plants and seeds. We talked about the importance of trees and learned several songs about them. We listened to the stories A Tree Is Nice by Marc Simont and I Am A Tree by Josh Sanchez. We discussed how we should take care of trees and how we can enjoy them. We also talked about what trees produce.

For Parashas Yisro, we learned about Matan Torah and the Asseres HaDibros. We discussed the commandments of "Lo Tignov," "Kibbud Av Va'Eim" and "Zachor Es Yom HaShabbas." The children enjoyed hearing the many beautiful midrashim about Matan Torah.

NURSERY – MORAH SUSAN

A new unit on plants and seeds was started this week in the Afternoon Nursery. We listened to many stories such as How A Seed Grows by Helene J Jordan, Round The Garden by Omri Glasser and Look At This Tree by Susan Canizes.

As our art project for this unit, we transformed our handprints into fruit trees and colorful flowers. We also used our leaf collection to create "leaf people" and leaf rubbings.

The Nursery has grown their own garden! They planted marigolds, lima beans, parsley, green beans and radishes. They all take turns watering it and have had a wonderful experience watching everything grow.

PRE-KI & II MOROT HEIDI & NECHAMA

Parashas Yisro taught us about so many mitzvos! We learned how excited Bnei Yisroel were to accept the Torah and discussed how they prepared themselves for many days for this special gift from Hashem. The children made a beautiful project depicting Bnei Yisroel standing at Har Sinai. They also learned about the mitzvah of Kibud Av Va'Eim.

This week, we reviewed the ossiyos that we learned so far. The yeladim enjoyed playing aleph bais games and were so proud of how much they knew.

This Thursday was Tu B'Shevat. We enjoyed listening to many books and reviewing the Hebrew language phrases pertinent to Tu B'Shevat. We also reviewed the names of the Shivas Haminim and learned the following songs:

ארץ חטא ושעורה
גפן ותאנה ורמון
זית שמן ודבש

And

השקדיה פורחת
שמש בה זורחת
צפורים בראש כל גג
מבשרות את בא החג
טו בשבט היגע חג האילנות

The children listened to the stories the Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss and Dear Tree by Doba Weber.

PRE-KI & II- MORAH JUDY

This week, the children continued their unit "All About Famous Artists". One artist that was introduced was Piet Mondrian. He was best known for his abstract designs. The other featured artist was Yaacov Agam. His artistic techniques are famous all over the world. Agam created many art pieces that reflected Jewish symbols and objects. The Pre-K children enjoyed his technique so much, that they decided to spend extra time creating more than one project. When our art unit is completed, they will bring home their masterpieces in a portfolio. A few of the books that we read with the children about the artists were Mondrian by Italo Tomassoni, Meet famous Artists by Harriet Kinghorn and Making Faces by Judy Richardson. Some of the vocabulary words that related to our artists were bold, bright, famous and modern.

This week, we reviewed all of the letters taught so far. Some activities that we engaged in were recognizing the upper and lower case letters and sounding out words such as dad, jab, cab, cat, bat and sat.

A winter recycle project that was exciting for the Pre-K children was building a snowman out of car tires. The process was a group effort.

As a literacy activity, the children created works of art about the snowman that they named "Snowy." Many children dictated poems and letters to Snowy. They were proud that the older children in the school joined in writing poems to Snowy. We spent time reading all of the letters that were sent to Snowy.

KINDERGARTEN I, II, III & IV
MOROT BAYLA, HEIDI & RENA

Tu B'Shevat Higiya! We enjoyed celebrating Tu B'Shevat in our classroom on Thursday and eating foods from the Shvat Haminim.

Tu B'Shevat is called Chag Hallanot. It is the day that Hashem judges the trees. We also asked the children how trees are involved in each of our chagim and realized that trees play an important role in all of our chagim.

Rosh Hashana– The trees provide apples and rimonim.

Yom Kippur– Our machzorim are made from paper which comes from trees.

Chanukah–We use oil from olives which grow on trees to light the menorah.

Purim– Haman was hung on a tree.

Pesach– We get our wine from grapes which grow on the vine.

Lag Ba'Omer– We use the branches to make a fire.

Shavuos– The first fruit of the trees was brought to the Bais Hamikdash.

The children took home their marigold plants. They are so proud of their gardening skills.

In Parashas Yisro, the children were fascinated to learn many beautiful midrashim connected with Matan Torah. We heard how Moshe Rabbenu's father-in-law joined the Jewish nation and the wonderful advice that he gave to help Moshe lead the people more effectively.

The yeladim made a beautiful "Kibbud Av Va'Eim" game to help us remember the importance of this mitzvah. We stood at attention while the yeladim listened to the Aseres Hadibros.

This week, the yeladim in Kindergarten discussed the importance of saying "Amen." They learned that they must always try to say brachos out loud so that people have a chance to say "Amen." We listened to stories from the book Let's Say Amen by Tamar Ansh.

As a culminating activity for our brachos unit, we had an amazing brachos snack party. We enjoyed eating food items from each of the brachos. The children divided up into five groups corresponding to the different brachos that they learned. Each group made the appropriate brachos for the food out loud and everyone else said "Amen." We also made beautiful "Borei Nefashos" signs for our kitchens.

Mrs. Funny Face came to visit once again and introduced us to the Tzairah (long A) sound. We worked in our aleph-bais books and played many games to reinforce the ottiyos that we have learned thus far.

KINDERGARTEN I, II, III & IV
MOROT BERNEY, PEARLY & TALIA

Hurray! Our kindergartners hopped right into letterbook "Hh", and had a happy week with all of the activities. To begin with, we wrote in our journals about what makes us happy. We read the story "Ted's Hat" and reviewed the rules of apostrophe ('s). We had an amazing time listening to the book A House Is A House For Me by Mary Ann Hoberman. It was a book that stimulated our imaginations working. We talked about other objects that can be used as homes and the children suggested the following: a shoe is a house for a foot, a cone is a house for ice cream, a vase is a house for flowers and an office is a home for Morah Bloom. Each child's response was creative and thought provoking. We added the word "like" to our sight word list, and reviewed the word "the."

In math, we jumped right into addition and are busy practicing this skill.

In honor of Tu B'Shevat, we are learning about plants and seeds. It is amazing to see how a tiny seed can turn into a fruit, vegetable, plant or tree. We learned that plants come in different sizes, shapes and colors and that each part of a plant has a function. Among the books that we read were The Tiny Seed by Eric Carle and A Seed Is A Promise by Claire Merrill. We revisited our egg experiments from last week, and observed what happened to the eggs that were submerged in coke, diet coke, coffee and tea. Needless to say they were stained. We concluded that our teeth also get stained from certain "foods" and how important it is to brush.

As you can see, we were very busy this week. We wish all of you a happy, healthy, wonderful vacation!



Dear Parents,

The climactic moment in the history of the world, from creation to today, was the revelation at *Har Sinai*. *Hashem*'s revealing Himself to millions of newly freed slaves and the giving of the Torah are the foundations of every believing Jew's *emunah*. This week's *Parsha* presents a special opportunity to zero in on the centrality of *Hashem* and His Torah in our and our children's lives.

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The *Gemara (Shabbos 88a)* tells us not only did the Jewish People stand at the foot of *Har Sinai*, but *Hashem* lifted the mountain over their heads declaring, "*If you will accept the Torah, it is good. If not, here will be your burying place.*" This sounds like a threat. What did *Hashem* mean with these words?

HoRav Eliyahu Meir Bloch zt'l, the late *Telzer Rosh Yeshiva*, is of the opinion that the mountain over the Jewish People's heads was symbolic, a lesson regarding what our attitude in approaching the Torah should be. *Klal Yisroel* understood the meaning of that special moment. They can accept the Torah and have much to live for; one can choose life, or choose death. This is the proper perspective through which we are to view our lives as Torah Jews.

One either embraces Torah, studies it, adheres to the laws, comes to appreciate it more and more, or his life will have little substance or meaning. Torah is a life sustaining force that nourishes the Jewish soul. It's G-d's prescription for the Jew to fulfill his mission. The Jews at *Har Sinai* understood that without Torah the mountain might as well have been dropped on them. The Torah gives meaning to life. Without Torah there is no life.

All of our efforts to raise, nurture and educate our children must be seen through this lens. Torah is the core, the key, and nothing is more important than Torah. There are a lot of ideas and philosophies out there, but they have no foundation and continuance if they are not in accordance with Torah values. All the effort, all accomplishments in life take on significance when they are based in Torah. *Anu Ameilim VeHeim Ameilim* - The same running to accomplish, but without Torah, it's often meaningless.

At this mid-point in the school year, we have the opportunity to take a step back and reflect upon all that our children's efforts have accomplished in a few short months. Let us draw our children's attention to how much they have learned and grown, and celebrate it together. Let us focus on the fact that whatever they accomplished in these five months is particularly worthwhile and significant because they are simultaneously building themselves in Torah knowledge and outlook.

If our children are internalizing the message of Torah, then they have truly enjoyed a successful first half of the school year.

Best wishes for a wonderful *Shabbos and rejuvenating vacation*,

Rabbi Kalman Baumann

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