

Jewish Journeys

Jewish culture, religion, & identity through joyful, creative learning
8-week Electives for Grades 3-7

Elective Cycle 1: September 11 – November 18, 2023

Jewish Studies

JS01 | Jewish Justice: You Make the Case

Judaism has many ancient teachings, laws, and stories to guide us in what is fair and right. We'll look at how the Talmud is structured, as a conversation and debate among a group of rabbis, and discuss its purpose. Students will then choose topics of interest to them and construct their own debates as though they are rabbis recording pages for the Talmud. Taught by Ellery Schiller.

JS02 | Jewish Textiles: Tallit Workshop

We'll learn all about the tallit, a Jewish prayer shawl with special knots and windings called tzitzit which give it symbolic spiritual meaning. We'll explore how and why of the tallit, and then we'll design and create our own Jewish prayer shawl using fabric paint and tie-dye/batik techniques, completing our project by tying our own tzitzit to the corners. Taught by Rabbi Rachel Barenblat.

(Materials Fee: \$20)

JS03 | Cooking, Blessing, & Learning Jewish Food

We'll gather in the kitchen and make a variety of delicious Jewish dishes from around the world — hummus, challah, Israeli salad, kasha varnishkes, potato knishes, and more! We'll learn about what makes these dishes Jewish, and how they reflect the many different Jewish cultures. We'll also learn what food blessings to say with different foods, and what makes food kosher. Taught by Spencer Jarrett. *(Materials Fee: \$30)*

Hebrew Language

HL101 | Hebrew Foundations

This eight-week class is offered during the first elective cycle of each year and serves as a prerequisite for taking Hebrew electives in cycles 2 and 3. Students are grouped into three levels based on Hebrew proficiency and practice the basics of Hebrew reading such as learning / reviewing the alphabet, sounding out words, and learning their meanings. Any student who wishes to enroll in future Hebrew electives must complete this class in the first elective cycle. Taught by Rabbi Rachel Barenblat, Ellery Schiller, and Shayna Podhoretz.

Elective Cycle 2: November 20, 2023 – February 3, 2024

Jewish Studies

JS04 | Torah Stories Through Theater: Playwriting & Acting

Floods, plagues, sibling rivalry! Students will choose a story from the Torah and breathe life into it. We'll explore interpretations, understand characters through improv, write our own script, and perform an original play for our peers, parents, and community. Taught by Ellery Schiller.

JS05 | Jewish Ethics: Comics-Style!

We'll dive into *The Illustrated Pirkei Avot* by Jessica Tamar Deutsch, a graphic novel that contains a second-century collection of ethical and cultural teachings. Expect funky illustrations, ethical quandaries, and deep thoughts. We'll also develop our own creative multimedia responses such as collage, zines, mobile-making, and illuminated manuscripts of wisdom sourced from you. Taught by Rabbi Rachel Barenblat.

JS06 | Jewish Ceramic Art

Judaism teaches that human beings are like clay in the potter's hand. As we make things out of clay, we'll explore the connections between this Jewish wisdom and our own creativity. We'll also learn about Jewish ritual art — kiddush cups, candle sticks, seder plates, and more — and draw inspiration from these for our own ceramic creations which will be fired and glazed to take home.

Teacher TBD. *(Materials Fee: \$40)*

Hebrew Language

HL01 | Hebrew Roots & Word Webs

We'll learn about Hebrew word roots, the system upon which the Hebrew language is built and how words evolve in meaning. We'll create word webs and discuss how two seemingly separate words that share a root may relate to one another. Through visual art and creative writing, students will explore, interpret, and create their own images and stories about the meanings and relationships among Hebrew words. Taught by Ellery Schiller.

HL02 | The Poetry of Prayer

Words are powerful! We use them to think, play, learn, connect, and pray. Working with prayerbook Hebrew words and their meanings, we'll explore ancient Hebrew prayers and write our own contemporary poems / prayers through creative prompts, exploring the elements of poetry and culminating with a chapbook of original poems. Taught by Rabbi Rachel Barenblat.

HL03 | Conversational Hebrew

We'll take Hebrew off the page and learn how to speak! This class will introduce students to the conversational basics of Modern Hebrew. We'll learn and practice introductions, ask and answer questions, engage in back-and-forth dialogue, and integrate our language learning through movement-based activities and games. Taught by Shayna Podhoretz.

Elective Cycle 3: February 5 – May 4, 2024

Jewish Studies

JS07 | Can a Werewolf Have a Bar Mitzvah?

Can a Zombie pray? Would interacting with an electric Pokemon break Shabbat? We'll bring humor and fun to the process of posing dilemmas, reasoning with sound logic, and looking for answers to life's most absurd questions while actually thinking through Jewish teachings on topics such as the nature of the soul, the observance of Shabbat, and treating others with dignity. Taught by Ellery Schiller.

JS08 | Story Writing: Our Voices in Torah

Torah's stories will come alive as we read them, see what our ancestors said about them, and then write ourselves into the narrative. What was Eve thinking in the Garden? What did Noah's daughters think about the whole ark situation? How did Isaac feel on the mountaintop? We'll end by creating a zine of our own Torah fanfiction (aka "midrash"). Taught by Rabbi Rachel Barenblat.

JS09 | Jewish World Music

Listen, learn, sing, and play Jewish music from around the world. We'll explore the distinctive musical features of a variety of styles such as Klezmer, Middle Eastern, and Israeli folk and even create original music of our own. Taught by Michael Quiñones.

Hebrew Language

HL04 | Create a Hebrew Board Game

Students will design their own board game to play with their peers, parents, and community! Through creating their board game, students will review and practice Hebrew letters / vowels / words and learn basic vocabulary to incorporate into their game such as numbers and action words. They will also learn Hebrew vocabulary related to the game theme chosen by the group. Taught by Ellery Schiller.

HL05 | Make Your Own Hebrew Prayer Tools

Working with the most common words in the Jewish prayerbook (siddur), we'll learn to recognize Hebrew prayers and their meanings as we experiment with different kinds of spiritual tools (and make some of our own), including prayer flags, candles, nature art, and singing bowls. Suitable for those who can sound out Hebrew words. Taught by Rabbi Rachel Barenblat.

HL06 | Ancient Symbols & How to Sing Them

Learn how to sing the ancient markings known as trope which add music to the Hebrew words of the Torah. This class is ideal for students who like music, like to sing, and want to know how to chant a passage from the Torah scroll. Suitable for those who can sound out Hebrew words. Taught by Ziva Larson.