



כוכב הצפון

NEWSLETTER

NORTH SHORE HEBREW ACADEMY

EDITOR: MICHELLE RUTTA**FRIDAY NIGHT CANDLE LIGHTING: 8:05 PM** הדלקת נרות:**SHABBAT ENDS: 9:14 PM** זמן הבדלה:**Parshat Naso**

BRINGING BACK THE LIGHT:

A Shabbat Message from Rabbi Dr. Jeffrey Kobrin

The events of the past few days (and weeks, and months) have many of us obsessively thinking and talking about what our life is like in the United States and what type of society we have built here. (My email earlier this week was a product of some of that thought and talk.)



The Torah in the first parshiot of Bemidbar details the setting up of a society: it describes where everyone would live, then tells us who is excluded from society. (I've had a soft spot for this week's parasha of Naso for years, ever since I read it at my Bar Mitzvah.) People such as the sotah, the unfaithful wife, or the tamei and the metzora, those ritually unclean, must all be removed from society. And then we learn of another citizen, one who also doesn't quite fit into society: the nazir.

The nazir chooses to remove him or herself, avoiding any wine or even grape juice and any contact with the dead. He or she goes beyond the demands of normal halacha. When he or she must rejoin society, the nazir must then bring a sin offering, a korban chatat. The commentators differ on why such a korban is brought. What sin has this person committed? Rashi cites one opinion that the nazir should have been more careful regarding the dead, once he or she had taken on this extra stringency.

But it's Rashi's second explanation, which comes from the Midrash and Talmud in Nazir, that I find resonant this week. Rabbi Eliezar Ha-Kappar explains that the nazir has sinned by "afflicting himself" by avoiding wine, meshum she-tzi'er et atzmo min ha-yayin. God created a wonderful world, as Louis Armstrong liked to remind us. Who are we to deny ourselves of some of its permitted pleasures?

One of our fundamental beliefs as Modern Orthodox Jews is that we are fully involved and invested in what NSHA's mission statement calls the "global community." My daughter reminded me this week of Elie Weisel's 1986 words to the Nobel Prize Committee: "And that is why I swore never to be silent wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim." We have an obligation to care about the world. We shouldn't become violent, God forbid. But we should get involved -- in ways that are safe, but in ways that are meaningful. Is that by writing a letter to the editor, or by making a campaign contribution, or even by posting a blacked-out Instagram, as a number of our own students did this week? We cannot be nezirim at such a time. We must be involved in our society and do what we can to help it.

By doing so, we bring in some of the light that has somehow seeped out of our world.

Shabbat Shalom.

By: Morah Aviva Smus

Parshat Naso includes a very interesting law, the law of the nazir. A nazir is a person who takes a vow to dedicate a set amount of time to Hashem. The amount of time can last anywhere from a month to as long as a lifetime. A nazir swears to abstain from drinking wine and cutting his hair, and is also not allowed to come in contact with a dead body. A nazir completely separates himself from the mundane things in life. The Torah does not demand this extremely difficult lifestyle from every person. The lifestyle of a nazir is for one who chooses to spend time completely absorbed in spirituality and nothing else. The average person cannot live this way on a constant basis because there are many other things that life demands.

So how can the average person apply the law of nazir to everyday life? There are times in life when we can behave like a nazir. If we find ourselves wanting to grow spiritually we can turn to the lessons of the nazir to help us get back on track. It doesn't have to be for a lifetime, but can last for a month, or even for a day. We can dedicate an hour of our day to Hashem, and occupy ourselves only with spiritual activities. For example, we can concentrate on not speaking negatively about others, we can sit down and learn Torah, or we can help out a friend. The way to behave like a nazir, is to completely involve yourself in good deeds and allow that amount of time to be dedicated entirely to Hashem. This can help us reconnect with our spirituality, and to feel closer to Hashem and His mitzvot.

Shabbat Shalom!



AROUND THE NSHA COMMUNITY

Shavuot Bake Sale

Our PTA did not let the current circumstances get in the way of its annual Shavuot Bake Sale! Scrumptious cakes and challah by World of Chantilly, and delicious dishes by Elite Pizza, made Shavuot a bit sweeter for everyone. Many thanks to **Jessica Steinberg** and our PTA presidents, **Sadie Hakimian** and **Marla Lemonik**, for spearheading this effort.



Goods Drive

The entire NSHA Community showed incredible response on for the Goods and Donation Drive held on Sunday, May 24th. Thank you to the dozens and dozens of cars that came to donate clothing and household items and to our partner **Spring Clean Challenge** for making all the arrangements. The moving truck pulled away from the Cherry Lane

parking lot packed to the brim! Many thanks to **Rachel Spinner**, NSHA's Director of Development, for coordinating the entire effort.

Upcycling for a Good Cause

Our PTA has donated over 400 unused old logo shirts to be up-cycled and turned into face masks through YIGN's Chesed project "Re-Task into Masks." If you are looking to buy masks, you can go to Young Israel of Great Neck's page <https://form.jotform.com/201438408679160> to purchase these up-cycled and adjustable face masks. All proceeds will be donated towards Covid-19 causes. Tizku L'Mitzvot!



During normal times, erev Shavuot brings many people to synagogue for all-night Torah study, yet with stay-at-home orders due to Covid-19 still in place, we knew that this custom was not possible. Determined to find a way to give our community this unique Shavuot experience prior to the chag, our virtual vision of Tikun L'Shavuot - or literally to prepare for Shavuot - was born.

On May 27, over 250 families joined us for a variety of programs and experiences on Zoom, taught by our talented and dedicated faculty. While our Early Childhood students heard stories about Shavuot and made special snacks including "ice cream in a bag," our elementary school students participated in sessions about the essence of Shavuot. Our Kindergarten through Second graders participated in an Interactive Map session which traced the route the Jewish people took from Egypt to Har Sinai, and our 3rd-5th grade students engaged in sessions exploring Megillat Ruth and studying the songs of Shavuot.

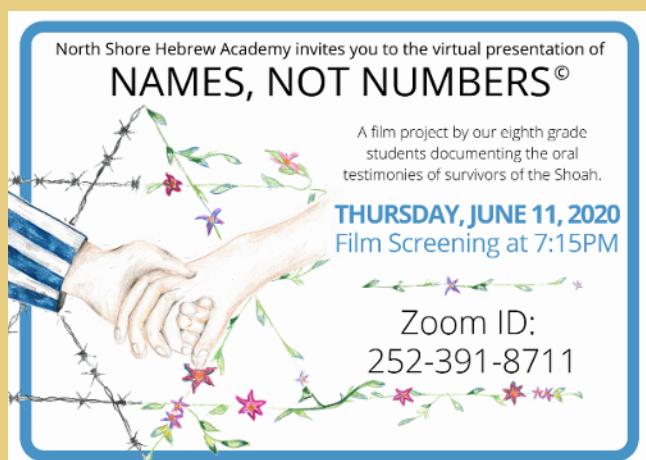
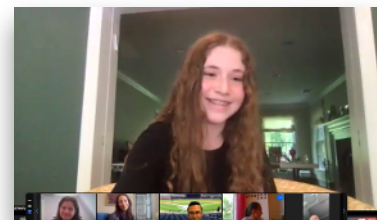
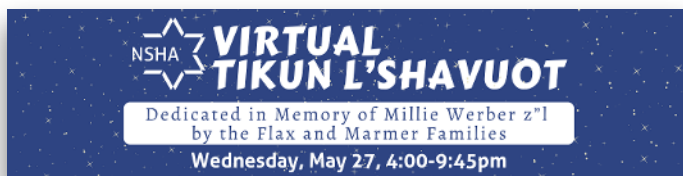
Our middle school students participated in their own sessions including a celebration of the B'not Mitzvah of **Molly Feldschreiber** and **Eve Gelberg** as they taught us about Megillat Ruth, which they studied with Morah Katie Lichter in preparation for their simcha. **Rabbi Simon Basalely '96** taught a class entitled, "Jewtube: Receiving the Torah in 2020."



Other highlights from the program included a Shavuot themed Kahoot and a dairy cooking demo. Our Keynote Event, dedicated to the memory of **Joseph Hyman, z'l**, was a panel featuring **Rabbi David Bitton**, **Rebbetzin Abby Lerner**, **Rabbi Dale Polakoff** and **Yoetzet Halacha Lisa Septimus**. Facilitated by **Rabbi Kobrin**, the virtual panel gave us the unique opportunity to gather the many communities that comprise our NSHA family in one inspiring conversation.

Reflecting on the evening, alumna and parent **Nadine Shatzkes '95** said, "Wow! It was really the most meaningful Shavuot and ruach and learning. Amazing." Another alumna and parent, **Shoshana Flax '93**, who with her sister **Tovah Marmer '93** and their families, sponsored the Tikun L'Shavuot in memory of their grandmother, **Millie Werber, z'l**, said, "You participate in something like this and it just feels really heartwarming to be a part of this community."

The Tikun L'Shavuot culminated in a powerful session led by **Rabbi Hakimian** entitled, "Shavuot Ruach Workshop: Preparing for Matan Torah." As students, parents and faculty listened to the drumming and music, stories and words of Torah, we felt very much connected as a community, honoring the essence of Shavuot, despite each of us being in our own home.



Names, Not Numbers®, a film project by our 8th grade students, is a great opportunity for family learning. We encourage our grandparents, family and friends to join the virtual presentation on **Thursday, June 11th at 7:15PM.**

Kol Ha'NSHAma

Shortly before Shavuot, we called upon our NSHA community to join together in a way we have never done before, to respond to a need which we have never encountered before.

Through the generosity of over 150 families, alumni, grandparents, faculty members and former NSHA parents, we exceeded our fundraising goal and raised over \$110,000 to support our tuition

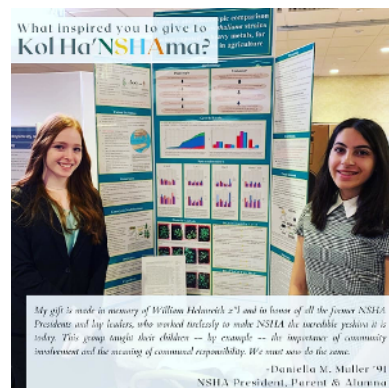
assistance funds for next year. This is in addition to the over \$12,000 raised through families who generously donated their building closure credits and refunds back to our school. Our campaign was led by several matching sponsors who personify the power of tzedakah and serve as true examples of community leadership.

Throughout the campaign we asked: "What Inspired you to Give?"

The responses poured in from our entire community. We heard about the centrality of NSHA in creating individuals and families grounded in the values of Torah UMadda. We received words of thanks for the stability NSHA has provided during this extraordinary time. We learned of the ways in which NSHA leadership, past and present, has guided us individually and communally. And we paid tribute to members of our NSHA community who are no longer with us but whose legacy has impacted generations of NSHA families.

But perhaps the loudest response was one of Achrayut -- the notion of responsibility for our fellow man -- a core value at NSHA which is thriving within our community. We share here some of the inspiring responses we received and we hope they move you as much as they did us.

If you have not yet made a gift to the Kol Ha'NSHAma campaign, there's still time to make your impact and share your words of inspiration. Thank you for demonstrating your commitment to the NSHA mission and our community.



SPOTLIGHT ON: 5TH GRADE GENERAL STUDIES

Greetings from our homes! We hope you are all staying safe and well. Our 5th-grade students have worked hard during their time with remote learning and they have done a wonderful job navigating the technology and our new "classrooms." They've learned how to operate Zoom, upload and download documents, use Google Classroom, and even take quizzes! In math, we are finishing up the last unit on composite figures and preparing for sixth grade. We are focusing on reviewing important math topics and skills that students will need for next year. The 5th graders are reading Holes by Louis Sachar. It's a mystery genre with themes of redemption and making a great comeback. From what we hear, the students are having a hard time putting the book down. In Social Studies, we're learning about the growing tensions between the Colonies and Britain, as well as America after the Revolution. We are focusing on the many actions Britain took to anger the American colonists during the 1760s and 1770s. Students have been channeling their creative writing skills and focusing on different types of poetry, such as bio poems, odes, haikus, and many more. We want to take this opportunity to wish you all a good and healthy summer. We hope to see you all in September!

Mrs. Elizabeth Seiden 7th and 8th Grade Classes

In **7th grade** we are exploring space. We have recently learned about our solar system as well as stars and their life cycles. Stars burn fuel and hydrogen, for energy, just like cars burn gasoline, and therefore the larger the star, the more energy it requires, and the shorter its lifespan; just like the economics of big cars and small cars. We learned about apparent brightness of a star versus absolute brightness. We are currently learning about our expanding universe and the Big Bang Theory.

This week in **8th grade** we finished our unit on protein synthesis, mutations and evolution. We watched a video on the geologic time scale, the calendar of Earth. We spoke about how Earth's calendar and the development of species follows the same order of the development of organisms described in "Beresheet". Darwin and his famous voyage to the Galapagos Islands was discussed, as well as his famous finches, iguanas and tortoises.

Mr. Puccio's 6th and 7th Grade Classes

Despite the challenges of online learning, my **6th grade** students are continuing to progress well through our curriculum. We are completing our third textbook titled Forces and Energy. Studies in this book include Motion, forces, Newton's laws of motion, energy, electricity and magnetism. Upon completion of these topics the students will receive instruction regarding sound and light prior to the end of the year. While there will not be a formal end of the year final exam, ongoing assessment has been taking place to ready your child for the coming school year. I would like to commend each and every 6th grade student for their hard work and their ability to carry on under very trying conditions.

My **7th Grade** Earth Science classes have covered various topics this year regarding our planet such as the hydrosphere, biosphere, geosphere and atmosphere and how they are linked together. The theory of plate tectonics, as well as classification of rocks and the processes which form igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rock, seafloor spreading, earthquakes and volcanoes were also studied. Even while faced with the various challenges associated with distance learning, we are now actively involved in expanding our knowledge in regard to the fields of astronomy and space science. Topics in this section will include learning about the Earth, moon and sun, the science of rockets, the history of space exploration, the solar system and stars, as well as galaxies and the universe. Due to time and logistic concerns there will not be a formal end of the year final exam. I have been conducting ongoing assessments in order to ready your child for the coming school year.

SPOTLIGHT ON: A SPECIAL SIMCHA

Celebrating a Bat Mitzvah with Words of Torah and a Piano Performance for Tzedakah



Due to Covid-19, sixth grader **Sara Ahdout's** Bat Mitzvah celebration and chesed initiative had to be reimagined. With the help of her supportive family and NSHA, she was able to do just that, and this morning, Sara marked the occasion of her Bat Mitzvah during the middle school virtual tefillot by sharing a thoughtful D'var Torah with her classmates, teachers and family.

In preparation for her Bat Mitzvah, Sara studied Pirkei Avot with her father and tehillim with Morah Yaghoubi. In her D'var Torah, she spoke about a specific mishna in which Ben Zoma discusses who is wise, strong, wealthy and honorable. The answers, she explains, are not what you expect. To be wise is to learn from others, to be strong is to conquer your yetzer hara, to be wealthy is to be satisfied with what you have, and to be honorable is to honor others. "Becoming a bat mitzvah, these are all important characteristics that I strive to have. I encourage everyone to

follow these paths because doing so will make us all closer to HaShem," Sara shared. "Even though we are in this pandemic, we should try to work on ourselves and be the best people we can be. When we look back at this time we should see if we reached Ben Zoma's expectations."

Sara also planned to volunteer at Masbia, a kosher soup kitchen, to mark her becoming a Bat Mitzvah. However, she was unable to do this in person due to the coronavirus. Instead, she will be raising money for Masbia. "I was inspired to do this because I know that I am fortunate to have a warm home and plentiful food. That is not the

case for everyone - even in the Jewish community. I am raising money to support the efforts of the Masbia soup kitchen to feed hundreds of people daily." Sara will be giving a piano performance over Zoom, on Monday evening, June 15 at 8pm, and is asking for a donation of \$5 to attend the concert. **The Zoom ID for the concert is: 481 863 6722 and the password is: 611145. If you'd like to make a donation, you can Venmo her mother, at @Sherry-Farzan-Ahdout.**

When asked how she felt about not being able to celebrate her Bat Mitzvah as planned, Sara shared, "At first I was a bit upset about not having my bat mitzvah as planned. But I now realize that HaShem does everything for a reason. I have to accept that and G-d willing, I'll be able to celebrate in person with my friends and family soon. I know that we always have to make the best of a situation. It's important to look at the bright side, and this is an important milestone in my life whether or not it's during a pandemic. I would like to celebrate with the people who support me and love me - even on Zoom." Mazel Tov to Sara and the Ahdout-Farzan Family! NSHA was honored to be a part of your simcha.

If your family would like to celebrate a simcha that may have already passed or that is scheduled for before summer vacation, please reach out to Rabbi Adam Acobas at aacobas@nsha.org The middle school has live davening on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and we would love for your child to share a D'var Torah in honor of their Bar or Bat Mitzvah, or to organize a chesed event for their classmates to participate in over Zoom. Please reach out to lweinstein@nsha.org if we can spotlight your child's simcha, some of their words of Torah and share their chesed project, in this newsletter as well.

SPOTLIGHT ON: PHYS ED K-5



Brought to you by Coach Mitchell Hall

Remote Learning hasn't slowed down our passion for fitness and #NSHAANYWHERE gym classes have even welcomed some parents and siblings who are joining our classes! Zoom Physical Education has covered many areas of the fitness realm over the last several weeks including boot camp workouts, cardio boxing workouts, strength and conditioning, balance and coordination and, most recently, yoga. We are currently engaged in our yoga and mindfulness unit. For many students, this is their first experience practicing yoga and their experience and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Yoga not only helps students with strength, but it also helps students feel centered, more focused, confident, less anxious and much more relaxed. That's

something we can all use now that we are adjusting to new schedules and normalcy. In general, we live in such a fast paced world, so practicing yoga and being mindful of living in this moment has helped students tremendously.

It is wonderful to see students who have never done yoga before become fans even after a 25 minute session. There are many areas of fitness and sports and it is important to practice and engage in as many of them as possible. This will help students grow physically and emotionally. Yoga not only has a positive impact on focus in the classroom, but it increases performance in other areas of sports and fitness as well.

I've been really excited to see all my students on Zoom PhysEd classes and hope they will continue to move throughout the summer!

COVID-19 SPECIAL EDITION:

Learning Activities for Young Children

“Let’s play!” Playtime is learning time with the hands-on activities and games in this guide. Below, you’ll find at-home ideas to try with your children. Page 2 features a fun bingo-card format—your youngsters will be excited to mark off each item as they complete it!



Editor’s note: Guidelines are changing rapidly. Make sure to follow all local, state, and federal laws and recommendations on social distancing and other practices when using these ideas.

Number writing

As your child learns to write numbers, a little creativity will add some fun.



Textures. Give him different materials. He might finger-paint numbers. Or spread shaving cream in a pan and let him make a number, “erase” it, and make another one.

Glitter letters. Encourage him to write numbers on construction paper and trace over them with glue. Then, have him sprinkle on glitter (or sugar). When the glue dries, he can shake off the extra glitter.

My post office

Making and delivering “mail” is a good way for your youngster to work on reading and writing.

Let each family member create a mailbox by decorating a file folder and stapling the sides closed. Hang your mailboxes on your bedroom doors, and add addresses (“Hallway Door 3”). Encourage everyone to write messages for each other. *Examples:* “Let’s read a book together” or “Thanks for playing Chutes and Ladders with me.” (If your child isn’t writing yet, he could dictate his messages to you.)

Seal each message in an envelope, and write the recipient’s name and address on it. Stickers can go in the corner for a stamp. Now, your youngster gets to deliver each letter to the correct mailbox. Help your child read his mail. Then, reply to each other’s messages—and send more mail!

ABC strips

Letter by letter, your child can spell and read with home-made alphabet strips.

Cut colorful paper into four long strips. Help your youngster write the alphabet in large letters, leaving about an inch of space between each letter. Have her tape the pieces into one long alphabet strip.

Now, say a short word (*car, box, sit*), and ask her to spell it by pointing to each of its letters on the strip. As she points, she can say the letters aloud (“c-a-r”) and then write the word on another strip of paper. (Give hints as she needs them.) Then, she could use those strips to work on reading the words.

Dance-step coding

Coding is not just for programming computers! Let your youngster practice the same problem-solving skills using pencil and paper—even if she isn’t writing yet. Here’s how to get her started.

Together, think of symbols to stand for different dance steps, and print them on paper as a key. For example, an arrow could mean to take a step forward, backward, right, or left, depending on the arrow’s direction. An X might mean “clap your hands,” while an O may mean “twirl around.”




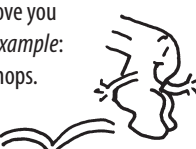
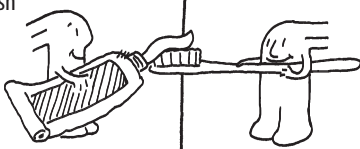
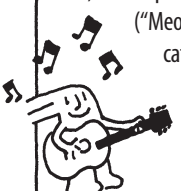






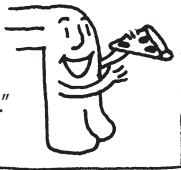
Once she finishes, ask her to use the codes to write a “program” for you to follow. As you dance around the living room, be sure to tell her she’s thinking like a programmer. Then, make up one for her to follow. Put on music and →←XX→OXO →→X the night away!



continued

Instructions: Do the activities on this bingo card in any order you choose. When you get five in a row (vertically, horizontally, or diagonally), you've earned BINGO. Keep going until you've completed the entire card—that's Super BINGO!



B	I	N	G	O
<p>Pitch a reading tent! Drape sheets over chairs, and get books, pillows, blankets, and stuffed animals. Now snuggle up inside to read.</p> 	<p>Gather small toys like a rubber duck and a superhero figure. Use a flashlight to cast their shadows on paper. Trace around the shadows, then color in the outlines.</p> 	<p>Cut out pictures from magazines and catalogs. Glue them on a sheet of paper, and make up a story about them.</p> 	<p>Write the numbers 1–12 on separate craft sticks and put the sticks in an “exercise cup.” Pull out a stick and do that number of any move you choose. <i>Example:</i> 5 bunny hops.</p> 	<p>Choose several board games, and mix and match the boards and playing pieces to invent a new game. Teach your family to play. Don't forget to return all the pieces to their original boxes!</p>
<p>Engineering challenge: Build the tallest tower you can using index cards and plastic cups. Experiment with different arrangements. How many cups can you stack?</p>	<p>Turn empty cardboard tubes into cute critters like butterflies, elephants, and penguins. Glue on yarn for hair or fur, googly eyes, pom-pom noses, and pipe cleaners for ears or antennae.</p>	<p>Illustrate the steps involved in washing your hands. Post your paper on the bathroom mirror. Now make a sign that shows how to brush your teeth.</p> 	<p>Find one item in your home that starts with every letter—from apple to zipper! Draw pictures of all the objects you found.</p>	<p>Have your stuffed animals put on a play—maybe one based on your favorite book. Assign a role to each one and speak their lines for them.</p>
<p>Be a rock star! Record yourself singing your favorite songs. Then, make up new words (“Meow, meow, little cat” to the tune of “Twinkle, twinkle, little star”).</p> 	<p>Design a paper bag city. Decorate each bag to create a building your city needs (school, post office, grocery store). Use tape to make streets on the floor, and place your buildings along the streets.</p>	<p>FREE SPACE</p> 	<p>Read a grocery store circular. Use the pictures to help you read words like <i>lettuce</i>, <i>milk</i>, and <i>bagels</i>. Count the letters. What's the longest word you read?</p>	<p>Make a picture menu of healthy snacks. You might draw celery sticks with cream cheese and raisins (“ants on a log”) or a bowl of fruit salad. Post your menu on the refrigerator.</p> 
<p>Start a journal. Each day, color a picture of something you did or saw. Write letters or words to describe the picture. Decorate your journal cover with pictures or stickers and write your name on it.</p> 	<p>Use a “pointer,” such as a chopstick or ruler, to read words around the house. Look on food packages, book covers, game boxes, and clothes.</p>	<p>Which shape comes next? Complete the pattern: □ △ □ _ Now draw shape patterns of your own!</p> 	<p>Study your reflection in a mirror, and draw a self-portrait. Display your portrait on the fridge, and encourage family members to add their own.</p>	<p>Set up ramps for toy cars to “drive” down. Stack books and prop one book against the pile. Or lean a piece of sturdy cardboard against the couch. Which ramp lets cars travel the farthest?</p> 
<p>Observe the animals outside your window. Maybe you'll spot birds, squirrels, or lizards. Make “trading cards” by drawing each one on an index card.</p> 	<p>Create a counting book. Label separate sheets of paper 1–10 and staple them together. On each page, draw the matching number of objects. <i>Example:</i> One cat on page 1, two stars on page 2.</p>	<p>Build the entire alphabet out of Legos or other blocks. Arrange the letters to spell words you know.</p>	<p>Invite your stuffed animals to a pizza party. Make a play dough “pizza” with toppings like pepperoni and green peppers. Then, divide it equally among your “guests.”</p> 	<p>Graph family members' names. Spell each name (don't forget pets!) with letter tiles. Line up the tiles in even rows and columns. Whose name is the shortest? The longest?</p>

Early Years