



EDITOR: **MICHELLE RUTTA**
LAYOUT & DESIGN: **RACHEL SPINNER**

FRIDAY NIGHT CANDLE LIGHTING: 5:34 PM הדלקת נרות:
SHABBAT ENDS: 6:41 PM זמן הבדלה:
Parshat Lech-Lecha

TRICK OR TREAT: A Shabbat Message from Rabbi Dr. Jeffrey Kobrin

I'll miss the visits of Buzz Lightyear and Spongebob Squarepants this year. We recently noted with some sadness that there will probably be no trick-or-treaters ringing our doorbell this year. We always offer them something; my kids have learned to love welcoming the eager yearly customers. My kids understand that our family doesn't "do this" (we save such activities for Purim), but it gave us a chance to connect to our neighbors, and it's one that we will miss this year.



What does it mean to live in a place where not everyone is like you? Avraham in our parasha of Lech-Lecha this week shows us that it can be complicated: he had to lie to Pharaoh about whether Sarah was his wife; he had to go to battle against four kings to save his nephew Lot from captivity; and, on the home front, he had to endure the fighting between Sarah and her (non-Jewish) maid Hagar within his own home.

One way we must acknowledge our relationship to our adopted home is by voting. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein famously tells us to vote to express our thanks that we can live in a place that allows us religious freedom. (This freedom is no doubt the reason most of our families came to America in the first place.) But there's a deeper idea too: we must remember that we are only guests here. In a brilliant and insightful post, Rabbi Yisroel Gottlieb of Bais Torah in Monsey regrets the disappearance of trick-or-treaters in his neighborhood. While one might think that it's great to live in a mostly Orthodox neighborhood, Rabbi Gottlieb disagrees. "There was much to be learned growing up in a neighborhood where trick-or-treaters knocked on your door," he writes, and "we are worse for the wear without them." Why? Because "when a child sees his parents answer the doorbell for young children who are engaged in a practice totally foreign to our religion and culture, he becomes subtly aware that we, the Jewish people, are but guests in someone else's home. He also becomes aware that it is imperative that we cultivate positive feelings toward Jews and positive relations with our non-Jewish neighbors."

Rabbi Gottlieb goes on to cite the practices of the late gedolim Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetsky and Rabbi Avraham Pam, who made it a practice to give out treats on Halloween. They did this to bring joy to those children -- and because they understood "the importance of cultivating a favorable impression of a Jew in the eyes of non-Jewish children, for they will grow to be the next generations non-Jewish adults."

But there's more: seeing kids in Halloween costumes reminds us that this is not our home. "All around you, you could smell, feel, and taste the exile, and know that the American Jewish experience is but another stop along the route back to our ultimate destination." This is exactly what Avraham realized as he journeyed first to Israel, then back to it from his time in Egypt. "When you have no neighbors putting out holiday lights, and none ringing your doorbell for candy, it is easy to confuse this exile with The Promised Land. That is never healthy for the Jewish people." We appreciate all that we have - but we are guests here.

And finally: "Raising children on the autopilot of the norms of their surroundings does not make for a meaningful relationship with religion and certainly does little to prepare them for what they will encounter in the world beyond. Letting your children know that your religious experience is the product of deliberate thought and choice may plant the seeds for a deeper, more purposeful encounter with religion as they mature."

Our people don't trick or treat. But it's important to see others that do and remember how and why we are different.

Shabbat shalom.

SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENCE

Brought to you by: Mr. Anthony Imburgia

A few weeks ago, I was in my backyard and noticed the amount of fallen leaves had multiplied. There were a variety of different leaves in different sizes, shapes, colors, and so on. Botany isn't and never was my strongest area of science, so I thought to myself: Wouldn't it be great if there was a phone app that told me what type of leaf, and which tree it came from?



To my delight, a friend of mine informed me of an app called Seek. This awesome app uses your camera to identify leaves, insects, trees, flowers, and many other objects outside. Hold the camera at different angles, and watch the app work its magic. It uses location services to combine your findings with other app users in the area. Within minutes, you will know which tree your leaf came from!



I highly recommend Seek if you are curious or need something to spark your interest in nature. And hey, this app works way better than having to Google search "brown leaf with pointy ends on Long Island."

You can read more about this amazing app here: https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/seek_app

Morah Kelley Nitzani

Contained in this week's parsha, Parshat Lech-Lecha, is a pasuk which at first glance seems insignificant, but upon further consideration one can deduce an important lesson. The pasuk states: "...ויצאו ללכת ארצה כנען ויבאו ארצה כנען..." "...they went to go to the land of Canaan, and they came to the land of Canaan."



In telling us that Avraham intended to go to the land of Canaan and then arrived there, Hashem is telling us of the importance of having good intentions and goals and the significance of realizing those goals. It is indeed important to set out on a good path, but it is just as important to follow that path and reach your destination.

Inherent in the words Lech-Lecha is the idea of going on a journey and choosing the correct road to take. It seems to teach us that our intentions and the direction of the path which we take is not enough. It is quite important to set worthwhile goals for ourselves. However, contained within the parsha is a pasuk that emphasizes the importance of reaching one's goal. The Chafetz Chaim comments on this pasuk saying that we should learn from Avraham and we should not become sidetracked in attaining our goal, as its realization is as important as setting the goal itself.

The High Holidays are just a few short weeks behind us. This was a period when we were focused on setting new goals for ourselves. At that time, we made promises and set new standards of behavior. Perhaps now is the time for us to arrive at the next stage, one in which we concentrate on reaching our goals. May we all be able to find the strength to finish the projects that we started and reach the destinations that we set for ourselves. Shabbat Shalom.

SEL AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

This year, the North Shore Hebrew Academy Middle School has embarked on an exciting approach to Social Emotional Learning. The students spend one dedicated period a day learning about and discussing essential topics beyond their academic subjects. We piloted the program with a shared “List Poem” activity, which bonded us as a community and afforded the students the opportunity to speak about their feelings surrounding what has become our new “normal.” These cathartic experiences are reinforced each day with lessons and activities covering topics such as: emotions, regulating emotions, self-awareness and “Heart Mapping”, perspective taking, empathy, self-esteem, self-efficacy and gratitude. In addition, our sixth grade students have been focusing on executive functioning skills such as: organizing their work space, study skills, and time management. We are thrilled with our success thus far and look forward to a healthy, productive year together. More to come...

A POWERFUL TOOL AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

By Sara Feldschreiber '93,
English Board Co-Chair (punctuation enthusiast)

Punctuation is powerful it organizes our thoughts and makes our words meaningful a world without punctuation would be a confusing one it might be hard to imagine what it would look like if we had no punctuation but I bet if you took a second to think about it you would see just how important punctuation is

Do you feel like you are out of breath? Removing a few tiny dots and curves from the paragraph above changed a pleasant reading experience into an unpleasant mad dash. You might not think that punctuation is a joy, like I do, but you have to admit that punctuation is pretty powerful.

Many times my students will ask me why anyone cares if there is an extra comma, or if an apostrophe is in the wrong place. “Not everyone cares as much as you do about this stuff,” they argue. I explain to them that proper punctuation is not about appeasing semicolon-obsessed editors; punctuation guides every reader through text. Without accurate punctuation, a reader will become lost, confused, disinterested or annoyed.

Like a traffic light or street sign, periods, commas, hyphens and parentheses tell us when to stop, slow down and go while reading. Just like we would never be able to drive down a long busy street safely without a traffic light, we would never be able to read a busy paragraph without punctuation (see above). The same goes for misplaced punctuation: a comma in the wrong place disrupts the flow of a thought, similar to the way we would have trouble driving if every few feet there was a stop sign (but there really should be a traffic light in front of the crosswalk adjacent to Everfresh, don’t you think?).

Thank you to **Lisa Weinstein** for introducing our children to the joys of punctuation. With this foundation they will be well prepared for a lifetime of clear written communication, and safe driving.

PUNCTUATION WEEK AT NSHA

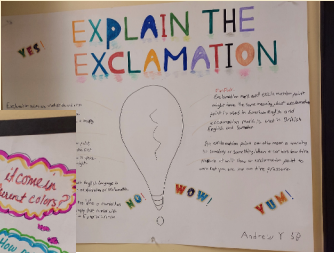
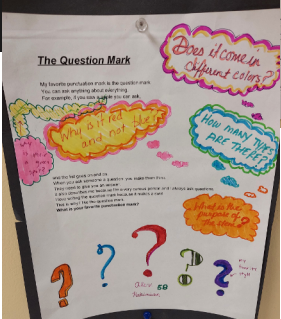
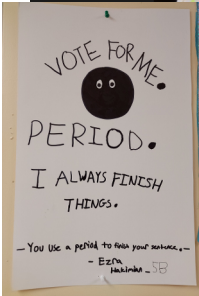
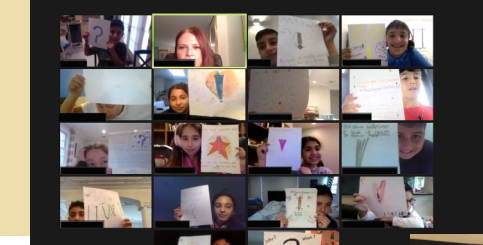
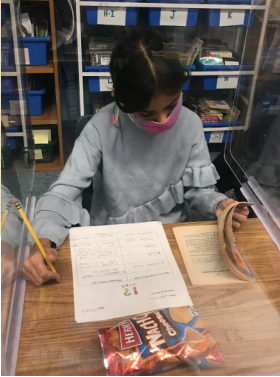
By Lisa Weinstein,
Director of Curriculum and Instruction

This week students in grades 1-5 celebrated Punctuation Week! The goal of the week was to celebrate punctuation and to encourage students to consider the purpose behind using punctuation, and the specific punctuation marks, in a fun and entertaining way.

During their library special and in class, students heard punctuation themed read alouds like Punctuation Takes a Vacation by Robin Pulver, Yo? Yes! By David Shannon and Eats, Shoots, and Leaves by Lynne Truss. After listening to these books, students wrote postcards to their favorite punctuation marks using only that punctuation mark, and acted out the meaning behind punctuation marks. Other students played around with writing the same sentences but with different punctuation, illustrating the very different meanings that resulted. For example, “Look at that huge hot dog!” versus “Look at that huge, hot dog,” conjures up two very different images!

Our third grade students did a punctuation inquiry, where they studied a page from their favorite book, noticed the punctuation marks used, and thought about the purpose behind each mark. In fifth grade, students created campaign posters on behalf of their favorite punctuation marks. Slogans like, “Vote for me. Period. Because I always finish things,” and “Don’t Question It. Vote for the Question Mark,” adorned our hallways!

Next week, our students will be editing their narrative writing pieces in preparation for Publishing Celebrations, the week of November 9th. We hope that this week’s focus on punctuation will support the editing process, as they reread their pieces to affix the appropriate punctuation marks to each sentence. As students learned throughout the week, punctuation is critical to helping others read and understand a piece of writing. As our budding authors work to publish their writing pieces, the use of punctuation will help their audience understand what they’re writing.



PARSHAT LECH- LECHA AND PJ TIME IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

During this rainy week, we all needed to cozy up just a bit but our EC students really enjoyed that chance during their pajama days. Nursery students celebrated their learning of Parshat Lech-Lecha and Hashem's promise of making Am Yisrael as countless as the stars in the night sky by wearing their pajamas and sharing a breakfast treat in school. Our toddlers brought their favorite teddy bears and stuffed animals to share with their friends. Pre-K also had a Lech-Lecha show and tell with each student bringing in a cherished item that they would pack if they were going on a big trip like Avraham. Kindergarten students finished learning about the letters P and J and celebrated by wearing their coziest PJ's and having breakfast for their morning snack.



ON OUR PARENTS' RADAR

Attention Pre K and K Moms: Body Bootcamp!

On **Sunday November 1st**, NSHA will host a special outdoor exercise class for all Pre K and K moms. In the current environment, parents don't have many opportunities to get to know one another in school. Please join us for this special chance to sweat and mingle (6 feet apart of course). RSVP to rspinner@nsha.org.

See the flyer for details.

NSHA Picture Day 2020

Picture day is just around the corner, please send your order forms by no later than **October 30th**.



THIS WEEK WITH GROW TORAH



This week in the garden we learned about and planted garlic! Garlic is a *davar charif*, something spicy or bitter, in kashrut terms. That strong smell that it has makes it an awesome companion plant for our leafy greens growing in the garden since insects don't like the smell and so they stay away from the leafy greens. This helps us to reflect on this month of *mar-cheshvan*, we can learn from the "bitterness" of having no *chagim* this month to look for the different beauties hidden within the mundane.