



NORTH SHORE HEBREW ACADEMY

EDITOR: MICHELLE RUTTA**LAYOUT & DESIGN: RACHEL SPINNER****FRIDAY NIGHT CANDLE LIGHTING: 4:43 PM** הדלקת נרות:**SHABBAT ENDS: 5:52 PM** זמן הבדלה:**Parshat Bo**

EVERY SECOND COUNTS:

A Shabbat Message from Rabbi Dr. Jeffrey Kobrin

Anyone who has ever watched the ball drop in Times Square at midnight on New Year's Eve knows the electric feeling of counting down as they watch the slow descent of the ball marking the official beginning of the new year. One second it's 2020; the next second -- literally -- it's 2021.

Rabbi Aaron Soloveichik once commented that the reason we measure halachic time in what are called chalakim, or "portions," is that every single one of them, no matter how small, can make a difference. As proof, he cited the famous mishnah in Avot which says that "all Jews have a chelek, a portion, in the world to come." A chelek may seem small, but it's actually huge.



When Moshe told Pharaoh that all the firstborn sons would die at midnight in our parasha of Bo, Moshe said the plague would occur ka-chazot ha-layla, literally "around midnight." Yet when the Torah describes this horrible plague taking place, it reports that it took place ba-chatzi ha-layla, "at the stroke of midnight." The Talmud in Berachot picks up on this tiny difference and explains that Moshe was intentionally vague in telling when the plague would begin, lest Pharaoh's astrologers would get the time wrong and conclude that Moshe was a liar. My question: who cares? How far off could these astrologers have been in their estimation of time? A few minutes? A few seconds? After that incredibly short time would have elapsed, these astrologers (and Pharaoh, and everyone else) would surely have realized that Moshe was not a liar. Why the concern?

Because seconds count. Even the few short moments of delight that the Egyptians would have felt thinking that Moshe lied would be an affront to the truth -- to the reality of God's power. And those seconds, those chalakim, matter. This week, as we watched the peaceful transfer of power, knowing that Donald Trump was President until 11:59 am and that Joe Biden became President at 12 noon, we were reminded of the importance of each and every minute, each second, and each chelek.

As we look ahead to some quality time with our families this coming week, how will we make the most of that time? How will we make every second count?

The opportunities are endless.

Shabbat Shalom and enjoy the break!

FROM THE DESK OF ELANA HELFGOTT:

This month we enjoyed celebrating some of our E.C. Parent Winter Invites. Kindergarten A and B did a great job hosting their parents this week. Each class's Winter Invite is an opportunity to showcase their creativity and interests. Both Kindergarten A and Kindergarten B choose Tu B'shevat as their theme.

Kindergarten A decorated beautiful platters with colorful tissue paper and pictures of trees and Shivat Haminim (the seven species that grow in Israel - Pomegranates, wheat, olives). The children also expressed their thoughts by writing about how they would like to celebrate TU B'shevat (e.g. planting trees, eating fruit...). The class then used the decorated platters for their Tu B'shevat seder. They also sang songs for Tu B'shevat and danced an Israeli dance. What fun!

The children in Kindergarten B also enjoyed learning about Tu B'shevat. They learned the importance of trees, the trees' different parts and about Tu B'shevat traditions. At the Winter Invite, the children performed Tu B'shevat songs and participated in an authentic Tu B'shevat Seder. They also showcased some of their Tu B'shevat art. A great time was had by all!

All our E.C. classes are enjoying learning about Tu B'shevat as well. We have been planting and learning all about this wonderful upcoming holiday.

Our teachers have also been finding other creative ways to include parents in their "everyday" classroom life. We will be inviting parents via zoom each week to a host of different activities such as tefilah, morning circle and some specialized activities. If you have not received an email from your class yet for these invites please be on the lookout for one, as it will be arriving soon.

Last week all our E.C. teachers also made their "just because" phone calls. We hope you enjoyed this call. The purpose of these calls is to keep you connected to your child's progress in between our two formal parent- teacher conferences. Our teachers enjoy making these calls and connecting with you on a regular basis.

On Monday, Martin Luther King Day, we had amazing programming at both our campuses. Each program was tailor made to be age appropriate for each grade. Our PreK and K students enjoyed decorating bins and filling them with items that others desperately need. They enjoyed creating personalized cards for the donation bins as well.

Our Toddler and Nursery children enjoyed collecting snacks from home for children that need those too. Thank you to Rachel Spinner for organizing this most meaningful day for both campuses.

Wishing you all a wonderful, safe, and healthy vacation. We look forward to seeing you back at school!

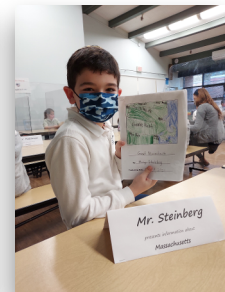
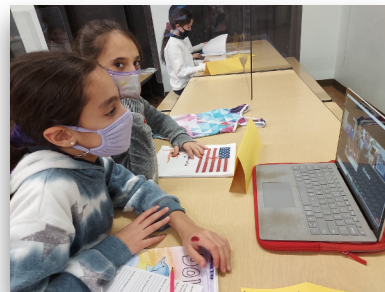


"HOW TO" AND "EXPERT FAIRS" COME TO NSHA

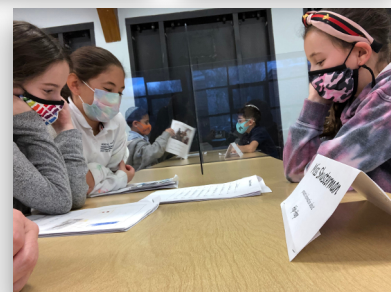
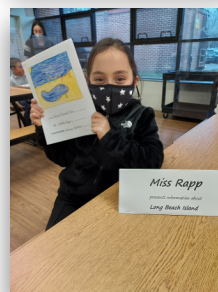
By Lisa Weinstein, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Our Informational Writing Unit culminated this week with celebrations across Cherry Lane. Our first and second graders participated in a How To Fair while our upper grade students took part in an Expert Fair. Classes that didn't have the opportunity to celebrate this week, will celebrate following vacation.

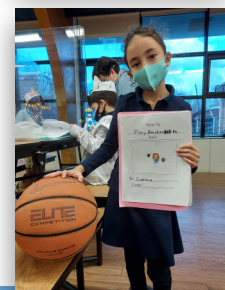
During the Informational Writing unit, our first and second graders wrote a number of How To Books. Students learned to write in an informational, “teaching voice,” as opposed to in a story telling voice, to break down a process into precise steps, to use exact words to describe a specific step or action, and to introduce and conclude their How To Books in compelling and interesting ways. During the How to Fair, students presented their published books to their classmates in small groups, learning from each other how to do everything from “How to Stay Safe During Covid” to “How to Take Care of Puppies.”



Our third, fourth, and fifth graders spent the last two months learning about how to craft an informational piece of writing. While writing their Informational Books, students learned the differences between narrative and informational writing and the different ways that one thinks and writes about information using organizational structures like problem/solution, pro/cons, compare/contract, and chronologically, and to introduce and conclude their books. Students also experimented with using different text structures in their books including headings, pictures, captions and diagrams. The unit culminated in an Expert Fair where students presented their published books to their classmates. Each fair was held in the cafeteria, and students rotated around the room learning from their classmates about their topics. Some of the topics students wrote about included animals, hobbies, holidays and vacation destinations.



Following mid-winter break, our first through fifth grade students will begin an Opinion/Argument Writing unit. Students will learn to craft a thesis or opinion, and to use reasons and evidence to support their opinions. Our younger students will write reviews about personal collections and books, while our older students will consider the ways they want to change our school, community and world, and will craft letters and essays about why these things are a problem, and how they want to fix them. We can't wait to get started on this new genre of writing after break.



FROM THE DESK OF MR. OFIER SIGAL: MAKING A COMMUNITY THROUGH KAHOOT!

When we pivoted to online learning in March, I began hosting a weekly Wednesday evening Kahoot! game with various topics such as Harry Potter, Disney, Broadway Shows, Minecraft, and Shavuot. Our goal at the beginning of the pandemic was to provide a way for our students across different grades to connect socially outside the classroom. Many of the Kahoots were written by students themselves based on their areas of expertise which was a great way to let our students shine. When some of these games brought well over one hundred players from our school (and some parents too!), I realized that it became more than just playing the game.



“Kahoot! is a game-based learning platform, popularly used in schools to combine learning and gaming. Our teachers have used Kahoots in their classrooms to prepare for tests, to review materials, and to create some buzz about a topic they are learning. The real fun begins when you compete in large groups. Points are awarded based on accuracy and speed.

Each week during remote learning in the Spring, we had both a core group of students who joined the Kahoots and various students who attended based on their interest in the Kahoot

topic. By popular demand, I have continued the tradition this year and quite often on Monday nights, you can join us for a special interest Kahoot! I love having the opportunity to show our students some of the topics I love and that I think they love too. Even more gratifying is when a student comes to me with a Kahoot! that he or she has written based on his own interest which we then present to the school.

My Zoom Kahoots created a community when we couldn't be together in school. When we returned in person in the Fall, students still wanted to carry on the new tradition. During Chanukah week, we combined our Kahoot! with the Kobrin family candle lighting bringing light into each and every home via technology. Kahoot! is a great example of the power of technology to bring families and communities together to learn and grow.

I hope to see you at the next Kahoot, this Monday, January 25th. The topic is "Vacation", something we all deserve! Even if it's not a topic you know well, you might just learn something new from your child and each other.

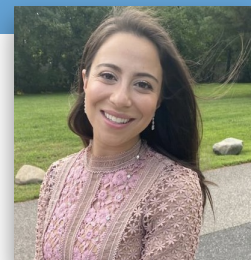


D'VAR TORAH ON PARSHAT BO: THE POSITIVE MESSAGE OF THE MOON

By Morah Kelly Nitzani

This week's parasha, Parshat Bo, contains the first mitzvah commanded to the Jewish people - to create a calendar based on the moon. The Zohar explains that the Jewish calendar is centered around the moon because "they (the Jewish people) are the moon of the world." How are Jews like the moon? The moon famously waxes and wanes; its cycles alternate between growing and shrinking, month after month. These phases symbolize the history of the Jewish people who have experienced periods of prosperity and peace followed by periods of stress and strain. Each individual Jew can also be compared to the moon as we have all experienced periods of happiness and pain, of success and failure throughout our lives. Perhaps Hashem placed the moon at the center of our Jewish calendar because the Jew is to be constantly reminded that, like the moon's cycle, even if one is currently experiencing a low period, a brighter time is inevitably on its way.

Hashem planned that the concept of renewal, as symbolized by the moon, would play a dominant role in our lives, so that we are constantly reminded that the ability to start again can be tapped into at any moment. When we remember that we can grow and renew, like the ever-changing moon, our relationship with Hashem and with others becomes enhanced, because we know that there is always another chance. Even more so, the moon does not only remind us that good is to come, but also that the very low points in our lives are what bring future successes. It is those very failures, those darker times, that allow for growth and can bring success. Our achievements are born in those very moments when we cannot "see the moon." We are now living in a time of unknown in many areas of life, which for many can seem like the darkness of the sky without the moon, but as Jews, we are to hold onto our first mitzvah and remember that it is during these times that we should be preparing to shine brightly and fully one day soon. Shabbat Shalom.

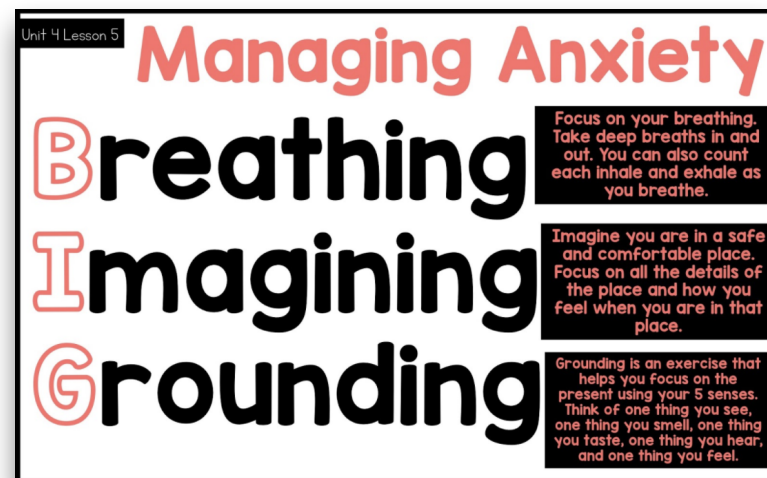


SPOTLIGHT ON SEL: LEARNING WAYS TO MANAGE ANGER AND ANXIETY

Cherry Lane students started off the week strong by learning ways to manage their anger and anxiety.

PreK-2nd grade students started off the lesson with watching a video on Howard B. Wiggle bottom and how he learned to manage his anger. Students learned to identify where they feel anger in their body; some students said they feel anger in their stomachs and others said their heads and fists. Students then played a game, learning helpful ways to manage emotions and non-helpful ways. For example, it is helpful to take deep breaths, but it is NOT helpful to hit someone. Students ended off the lesson by learning different coping strategies they can use when they feel angry.

3-5th grade students were introduced to the topic of managing anxiety. Students watched a short video about a boy learning how to manage his anxiety in school. Students were able to relate to the video. Students learned about B.I.G strategies which stands for Breathing, Imagining and Grounding. Students discussed different strategies on how to manage test anxiety. Students ended off the lesson being introduced to the topic of mindfulness. Students learned that mindfulness is "being present in the present moment" which means we notice what is happening around us RIGHT NOW instead of worrying what happened earlier or what might happen later. Mindfulness can help us feel calm when we are worried.



A DAY HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING THROUGH LEARNING AND CHESED (SERVICE)

Brought to you by: Rachel Spinner, Lisa Weinstein and Abigail Weiss



Our first ever MLK Day of Learning and Chesed to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King was truly a day to remember.

It was an unprecedented event for NSHA in which all of our students and faculty in grades Toddler-8 had an opportunity to take action, learn about, and perform chesed in the merit of Dr. King's contributions to our world.

When our school leadership team initially joined together to plan the event, we established several goals for the day including a combination of learning, service and reflection so that our students would fully connect the purpose of their actions with this great man's life. We specifically wanted to experience this through the lens of how Dr. King's values connect with our Jewish values of Achrayut (responsibility) and Torat Yisrael (the teaching of the Torah).

In the Book of Devarim we learn, "Tzedek, tzedek tirdof. Justice justice you shall pursue." We interpret this to mean that all Jews are commanded to pursue fairness and equality for mankind. Nearly all Jewish children learn from a young age the proverb "Ve'Ahavta Lereacha Kamocha. Love your neighbor as you would like to be loved." Our clear mandate as given by the Torah and our cultural values is to better the world through equality, fairness and love. These core values formulated the foundation of our learning on MLK Day.

For the chesed aspect of the day, we specifically selected organizations that typically reach beyond our own community to ensure our impact would reach widely. As a school, we collected thousands of items ranging from food to household and winter necessities which were sorted, packaged and sent to assist those in need.

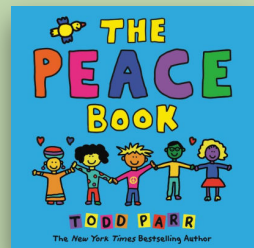
Our General Studies teachers in grades PreK-5 anchored their discussions with a specific book which they read aloud to the class. A special curriculum crafted for our Day of Learning and Chesed explored Dr. King's life, experiences and impact on our world. We also discussed the concepts of peace, equality, segregation, words, service and talked about the changes we still want and need to make to our world.

At the end of the day, each class reflected on quotes from Martin Luther King Jr., selected Hebrew text about the importance of chesed, and the chesed work they participated in. Students were asked to reflect on the ways they can continue Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy, what they learned from the day, and how it made them feel.

Please read on below for a grade by grade description of the learning and service that took place:

Toddler and **Nursery** students joined in our collection efforts by bringing in items for our Cherry Lane sorting and packing projects. Thank you to our students and families for your contributions!

In **Pre-K** and **Kindergarten**, students read the "The Peace Book" by Todd Parr and explored how they could build a more peaceful world. This book which is illustrated in Parr's signature colorful and child-like style shows children all the different ways they can make an impact in making the world more peaceful, no matter how small or large you are.



Our Pre-K students were in charge of sorting various household items that we collected like tissue boxes, toothbrushes, toothpaste, wipes and diapers and placing them in the appropriate box so that we could send them to our friends at the Ronald McDonald House of Metro NY, where families experiencing financial hardship can live while their children receive life-saving medical treatments. They also decorated the shipping boxes and they look colorful and beautiful as they wait to be picked up by the Ronald McDonald House.



Kindergarten students sorted hundreds of snacks which were later used by our 5th grade students to create snack packs for the children of Bethany House, a shelter for women and children on Long Island.



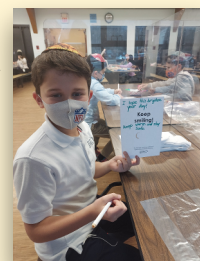
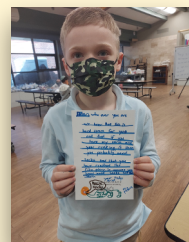
Both our Pre-K and Kindergarten students also made beautiful cards to be included with all of the packages being sent to Bethany House.

Our **first grade** students read "Be A King: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Dream and You" by Carole Boston Weatherford. This book talks about the various ways students can be just like Dr. King. Questions posed to our students included, "Tell me about a time when you stood up for another person who wasn't being treated kindly. How did it make you feel?" and "What do you think Martin Luther King's dream was? What's your big dream for the world?"



First grade students had a big task as they sorted all of the soaps, shampoo, detergent, body wash, cleaning products, cereal, oatmeal, toilet paper and paper goods that we collected for the families at **Ronald McDonald House**. The beautiful personalized cards that they created are also included in the **Bethany House** snack packs.

Second and Third graders read "Martin's Big Words: The Life of Martin Luther King Jr". by Doreen Rappaport. After being asked to share what they knew about the life of Dr. King and learned about the significance of the words he chose to use such as Freedom, Peace and Love. Students reflected on how using words and doing service/action are powerful ways to change the world. We also asked students to consider how Dr. King's family's experience might mirror some of their own families experiences and how Dr. King's values are similar to ours.

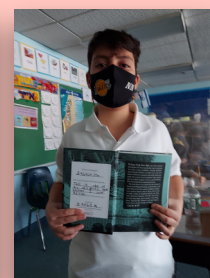
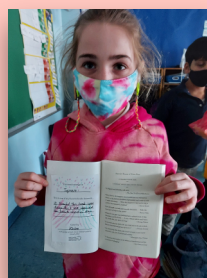


As part of their service, these students first learned about a special organization called **Knock Knock Give a Sock** which provides new socks to homeless individuals. We talked about how everybody should be entitled to have the same basic necessities and how difficult life can be if you don't have access to these items.

Then we created beautiful packages with the new socks which our students brought and a personalized note to the recipient.

In **Fourth and Fifth grade** we read "As Good As Anybody: Martin Luther King Jr. and Abraham Heschel's Amazing March Toward Freedom" by Richard Michelson. We talked about Dr. King's relationship with Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, an important figure during the Civil Rights Movement. Like many of our students families, Rabbi Heschel's experience with discrimination shaped his mission to fight against this happening to others. We discussed the concept of using both words and peaceful action in enacting change.

Our **Fourth grade** students had a special chesed opportunity in which they were paired with a specific fourth grade student at Excel Lower Charter School in Brooklyn, NY. In this school, some students live in poverty and may not have access to certain items that our students at NSHA cherish such as books. Each NSHA student purchased a new book for their book buddy at Excel, specifically one that they really enjoyed reading this year. They learned about Excel and then created a bookplate for their book, explaining to the student they were paired with why they love the book they chose.



Fifth graders picked up where our Kindergarten students left off and utilized the hundreds of sorted snacks to create beautiful snack packs for the children living at the Bethany House shelter. The children loved creating the packs personalized to their favorite snacks.

In our **Middle School**, 6th-8th graders collected winter gear including new hats, gloves, scarves and warm

weather items for families serviced by the Interfaith Nutrition Network (INN) which provides a broad variety of essential services to assist those challenged by hunger, homelessness and profound poverty. During their SEL sessions last week, they learned about the concept of "paying it forward" and how one good deed can in turn create many others. They





created personalized cards and learned about the INN's mission and goals in providing opportunity for those in need.

On MLK day, together with their social studies teachers they delved into the words of Dr. King's I Have a Dream speech, looking closely at the words and selecting areas which resonated strongly with them still today.

This event would not have been possible without the assistance of our MLK Day Committee:

Shoshana '93 and Daniel '88 Flax
Daniella '91 and Jonathan Muller
Ariel '00 and Nadine '11 Nassim
Stacey and Adam Rapp

Jessica and Evan Shusterman
Rachel and Yitzy Spinner
Lisa and Dov '96 Weinstein
Abigail '96 and Seth Weiss

An incredible thank you to our facilities teams led by **Kevin Callan** for making all the deliveries to the deserving organizations. Thank you to the students, parents and faculty of NSHA. for making this a successful day of learning and service for our children and all those in need. Thank you to our generous sponsors of MLK Day of Learning and Chesed:

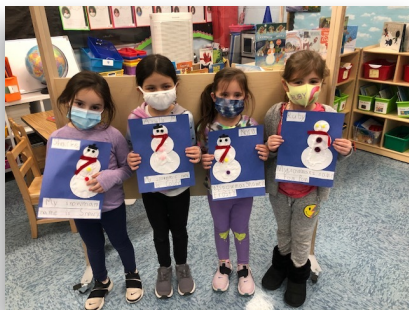
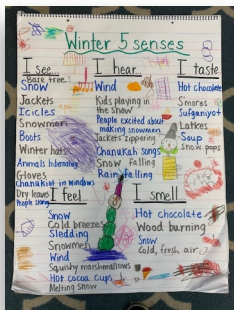
Morah Ronit Cohen
Sara Feldschreiber '93
Shoshana Flax '93
Morah Julie Gross '08
Morah Nitza HersHKovitz

Mrs. Debra Spilkevitz
Rachel Spinner
Ms. Joy Sutton
Lisa Weinstein
Abigail Weiss '96

SPOTLIGHT ON: KINDERGARTEN GENERAL STUDIES

Brought to you by: Morot Mor Fyman, Julie Gross, Nadine Namdar and Brenda Pianko

Winter is in full swing in NSHA's Kindergarten classes. The children are learning about the season of winter through language, literacy, math, art and sensory activities.



In KA, the children read the story Sneezy the Snowman by Maureen Wright and created their very own snowmen using different art materials. They then wrote about what their snowmen should stay away from so they won't melt.

The children in KB practiced ways of making 10 by cutting out 10 snowflakes, pasting them onto a paper snow globe, and writing their

math sentence. They also sequenced how to make their favorite winter treat: hot chocolate, which they enjoyed at home on our Snow Day.

The children of KC wrote about the different activities they enjoy during winter and painted a pair of mittens with water colors after listening to the story The Mitten by Jan Brett.

KD was inspired by the book Snowmen at Night by Caralyn Buehner. After their read-aloud, the children created their very own snowmen with shaving cream and glue. They each came up with a name for their snowman and wrote about it too.

We love seeing how integrating the world around us into our studies allows our children to find inspiration in their daily lives.

Brought to you by Morah Miriam Behnam, Morah Gilit Bessalely and Morah Adina Galai

In first grade we are ready to say goodbye to winter and move on to Spring (at least as related to our brothers and sisters in Israel!) Tu B'Shvat is always a favorite holiday as it symbolizes the hope and warmth of the upcoming Spring. In first grade we celebrate the "birthday of the trees" by building our Hebrew vocabulary to include the parts of the trees. We also speak about the שבעת המינים or seven treasured species of the land of Israel which are wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates. We teach our children that in Israeli tradition, we plant new trees in Israel in honor of Tu B'shvat and to continue the growth of nature in that country.

In our Parashat HaShavua studies our students were very excited to begin Sefer Shemot which leads off with the Exodus from Egypt. This of course is a well known story to them through their study of Pesach and our students have a lot to contribute to our discussion of the Parshiyot based on their knowledge and traditions.

In Ariot which is our Hebrew language curriculum, we're up to letter ג. We're practicing how to make full and complete sentences as well as asking and answering questions. We will miss our wonderful students during the upcoming winter break but look forward to seeing them back at school. Have a wonderful vacation!

Have a Wonderful, Healthy, and Safe Vacation!