



Our Curricular LENSES

At Hi Tech Hebrew School we focus on identifying with Judaism's unique value system and its wide range of knowledge and skills. To make this a reality, our academic program is designed around five "courses" which serve as lenses through which we can impart these important goals.



WHY WE STUDY PRAYER:

In the 'busyness' of everyday life, prayer gives us the opportunity for introspection. It is a quiet time in which we retreat into our inner-selves and develop a personal relationship with our core Jewishness. These touchstone moments allow us to evaluate our spiritual growth and reaffirm our connection to our deeper self.

HOW WE STUDY PRAYER:

Beginning with the youngest class, we introduce prayers and songs - increasing both the amounts of prayers and the depth of their meanings, as the students progress. Ultimately, our goal is for our students to attain a familiarity with the words of the prayers and their deeper messages.



WHY WE STUDY HEBREW READING:

There is great value to Hebrew literacy. Ideally, Hebrew reading should be more than

just about learning a series of letters and vowels. Attaining the skill of reading Hebrew, accessing our common language, enables our students to identify with their common identity and imparts a sense of belonging. By studying to read Hebrew, our students can - eventually - read from original texts, and explore the roots of Jewish practice. They begin to see the Hebrew language holistically, rather than just as a splinter skill.

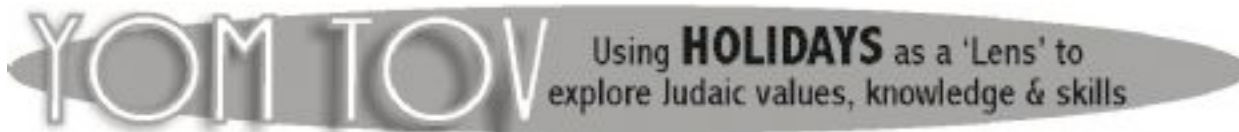
HOW WE STUDY HEBREW READING:

Our Kindergarten children are introduced to the Hebrew alphabet through games, crafts, songs, and stories - gaining comfort with the letters.

For children in Grade 1, we begin integrating letters and vowels. The students learn the patterns of Hebrew, learning how to piece letters together and sound short words. We also begin to study the numerical values of the Hebrew alphabet.

From Grades 2 onwards, our students are all inducted into the ALEPHchamp system. In this highly motivated learning environment, students are divided by skill into various color levels, with a designated reading teacher who oversees the progress of each student.

When a student feels ready to move onto the next level, they simply arrange to be tested. In this way the Aleph Champ program empowers the individual, stressing self-motivation and personal goals while encouraging group work. At ceremonies, held both in the middle and at the culmination of the year, family and friends are invited to a celebration of each student's accomplishments. Skills learned in the Aleph Champ program cross over into all curricula: implemented while learning holiday liturgy, saying prayers and in a variety of other ways.



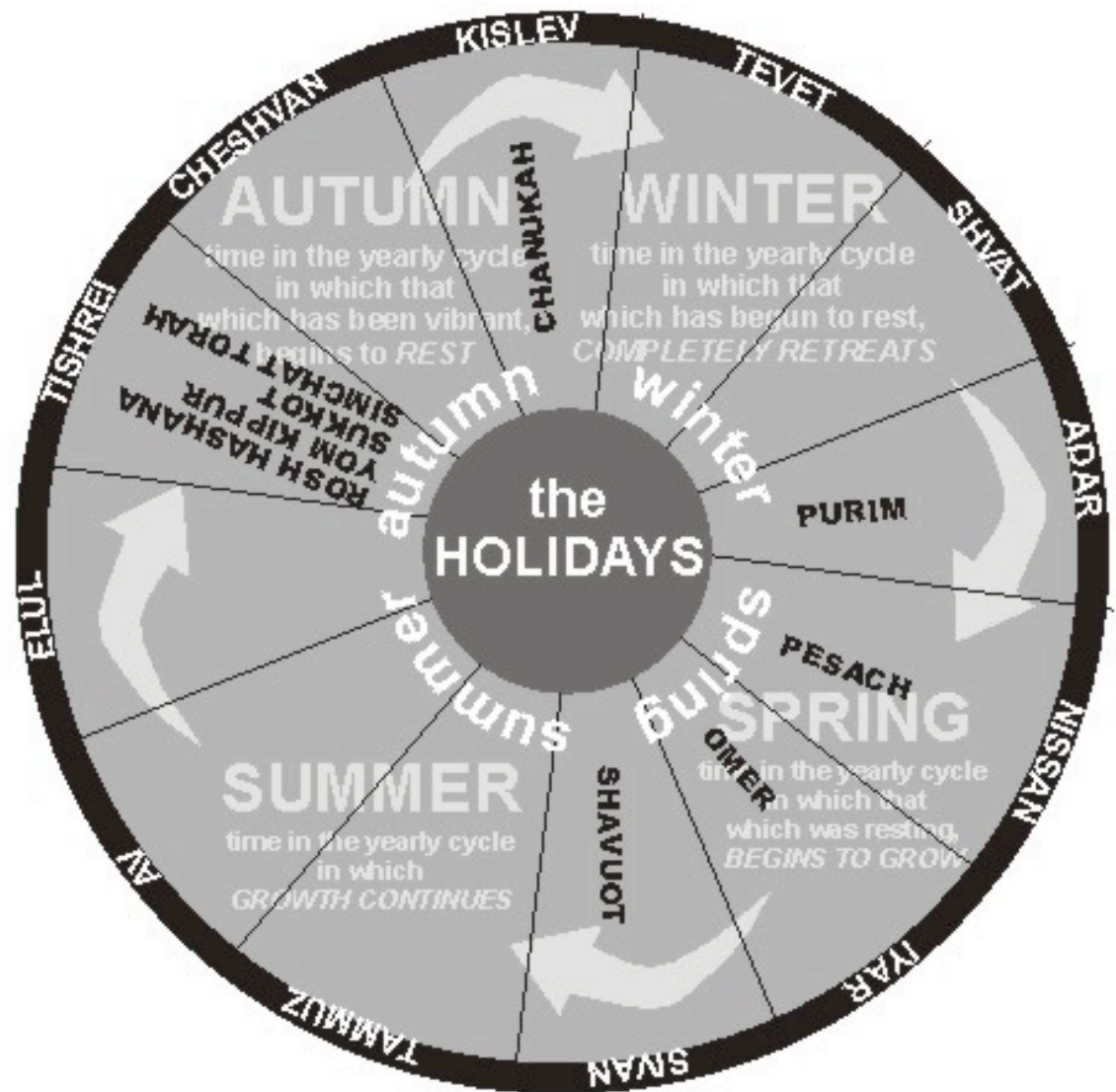
WHY WE STUDY JEWISH HOLIDAYS:

As human beings living on Earth we all live in a natural system, a system framed by time and space. Because time seems to be in life's background, just 'framing' our lives, it's easy to lose sight of each moment's special character.

The Jewish calendar helps us with that. The cycle of holidays stimulates our sensitivity to time, and grants us the opportunity to celebrate its uniqueness. With mindful awareness of these special moments, we have the power to propel our backdrop onto life's center stage

HOW WE STUDY THE JEWISH HOLIDAY:

We see the Jewish calendar operating as a complete unit. In this framework, the Jewish holidays spiral on one another and build on similar concepts. In sync with this spiraling pattern, this course addresses both the particular messages of each holiday and its purpose within the larger context of the Jewish year. Our holiday curriculum builds not only previously studied holidays, but on the information covered in preceding years. In this way the material grows with the students and expands their holiday knowledge, depth and skills.



THE CORE IDEA OF EACH HOLIDAY:

High Holidays are a time for us to take a serious look at ourselves, (re)connecting with our deepest potential and launching a new beginning toward a 'Better Me'.

Sukkot we move out of the serious, contemplative mode. We feel and express the

palpable joy that comes from integrating our deepest values into our everyday lives.

Simchat Torah is the time we celebrate the 'map' which G-d gave us (the Torah), and which provides access to an integrated, meaningful life.

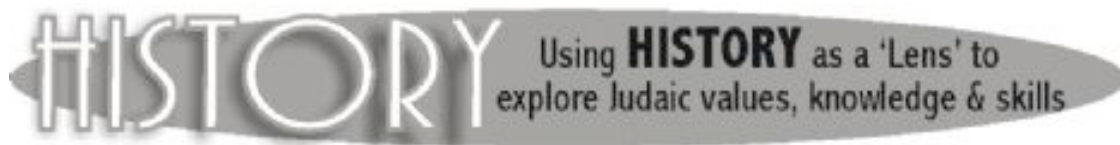
Chanukah is a time when we connect with the idea of firm commitment to identity and values, and recognize the incredible inner strength we can unlock in ourselves through maintaining that commitment.

Purim is the time to recognize that life is more than it appears to be; looking beneath the veneer, we can find beauty and meaning.

Pesach, The Festival of Liberation, celebrates our individual freedom from our personal 'Egypt', soaring above our limitations to actualize our inner selves.

Sefirat Ha'Omer - During the Sefirah period, we focus on self-refinement period in preparation for receiving the Torah.

Shavuot - In the revolution at Sinai, G-d presented us with a Torah, a program through which life in its entirety could be imbued with meaning.



WHY WE STUDY JEWISH HISTORY:

Our Story is intrinsic to our identity. But stories are much more than a memorization of names and places. Stories are the threads that connect us to each other, to our past, present and future.

Sometimes it is only through the stories of others that we can best understand ourselves. At times it can be very difficult to understand the world we live in and find the power to make good choices. The study of history allows us to take a step back and distance ourselves from our present reality. In the cloak of time, we feel safe enough to listen and engage with the personalities of the past, applying the lessons gleaned from their struggles and triumphs to our own lives.

HOW WE STUDY JEWISH HISTORY:

This course is designed to foster a sense of self and propel the continuation of 'Our Story'. From the Jewish exodus out of Egypt to the heart warming miracles of Chanukah, learning these ancient stories in such an animated and captivating fashion allows our

students to see themselves as writers of history and begin enabling the next chapter of our nation's development.



WHY WE STUDY 'MITZVOT':

Mitzvot give us the opportunity to anchor lofty concepts in daily life. By performing good deeds, we implement our knowledge in a real and meaningful way. Connecting learning with doing enables us to transform the world. Mitzvot honor our relationships with G-d, with each other, and with the world.

HOW WE STUDY 'MITZVOT':

Every year specific Mitzvot are selected for exploration on a school-wide scale. The material covered in the Mitzvot curriculum is imparted in an informal, spirited and creative fashion. Instead of de-contextualized learning, the Mitzvah course focuses on the implementation of the selected Mitzvot in the form of school wide projects, community events, and exciting trips.

Examples of Mitzvot we will be exploring are:

Tzedaka (charity, empathy for those in need), Israel: Its sanctity and centrality to Jewish identity, Kosher, Maintaining and caring for the environment, Mezuzah, Respect for animals, Shabbat, Visiting the sick, etc.