

11/11

We shared our Jewish/Israel current events and then went to the computer lab to learn more about the HBO documentary "Shmatta: From Rags to Riches to Rags." In our history lesson we learned about the poor working conditions suffered by Jewish immigrants in the U.S. at the turn of the century and how the tragedy at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory prompted the labor rights movement. This documentary showed historical footage of those events...and taught us a little Yiddish along the way! After minyan we resumed our practice of writing in Hebrew script by playing "hangman" using the vocabulary words we've learned in our text and writing the correct and incorrect letters in script on the whiteboard.

11/8 After tefillah, we watched a documentary on "shtetl" life in Eastern Europe. Even though we learned about shtetls earlier in the semester, it's a term we continue to revisit in our history lessons since so many of our ancestors and relatives came to the U.S. from shtetls. The documentary had amazing historical footage and photography which we examined. Then we spent a good portion of time learning about Jewish involvement in World War I. We talked about the countries that were involved in the War, how many Jews fought for those countries, and how many died. It's important to realize that only 2 decades later, many of those people who fought for countries like Germany and Austria-Hungary were then targeted themselves because of their religion. We concluded our day by revisiting the vocabulary we learned in the third chapter of our Hebrew textbook.

9/9

- Current Events
 - Reading and activities from "Higher and Higher: Making Jewish Prayer Part of Us".
Chapter 1: What is Jewish Prayer? Why do People Pray?
 - Hebrew writing block to script review
 - Hebrew book chapter 2 and introduction of new vocabulary words
 - Minyan
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9/2:

-As a follow up to our history lesson on Russian pogroms and immigration, we will be watching clips from the film An American Tail.

Students will discuss themes including:

What were the reasons the Mousekewitz family left Russia?

What do you think the line "the streets are paved with cheese" means?
There is a song called "There are no cats in America." Who are the cats? Who are their targets?
How does this film represent the experiences of those who immigrated to this country?
Was the family's immigration worth all of the hardships they experienced along the way?

8/30:

- Completed chapter one of History book covering pogroms in Russia and immigration. We had an internal debate\discussion where we each made a claim for the reasons to either stay in Russia, emigrate to Palestine and revive the Hebrew language or immigrate to the United States.
 - Guest presentation by Andrea Cohen of the B'nai Tzedek Youth Philanthropy program. I hope all of your students decide to participate in this wonderful program! Please make note of the important dates listed on the materials that were sent home on Sunday. There will be an informational meeting for all interested parents and students on November 1st.
 - Writing Hebrew in script letters. We were able to use Beth El's brand new SMART Board for this technological and interactive lesson. It was a lot of fun!
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August 26, 2009

- Current events
- Review of Hebrew vowels
- Chapter 1 Hebrew vocabulary review: we will learn how to say "I am", "are you (m/f)", "who", "yes", "no" in short sentences

History of the Jewish People

- Socialism and the Bund
- Sholom Aleichem
- Seeking new homes

- Minyan

August 23, 2009

1. Introductions
2. Textbook Distribution
3. Expectations:
Class commandments, current events every Wednesday (suggest resources include: jta.org, Jerusalem Post, jewishphoenix.org, nytimes.com, etc.), Mastery of L'cha Dodi and Birkat Hamazon
4. Weekly Parsha Discussion
5. Chevra Kadisha Discussion
=The holiest deed one can ever perform because you cannot receive thanks from the recipient of the deed.

- I want you to think about a few things over the course of the school year – What is the holiest mitzvah you can imagine yourself doing? This year? In your lifetime?

With regard to your Bar/Bat mitzvah project I want you to think about doing mitzvot that are truly holy. You will do presentations in front of the class and we will be adding descriptions and photos to the Beth El website. Who already knows what they are interested in pursuing for their mitzvah project? Hannah and Nate will present on their projects.