



## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW FOURTH GRADE

### JUDAICA

Our Fourth Grade curriculum focuses on two large topics: Prayer and Israel.

For the first half of the year, our students will closely examine Jewish Prayer. Students will study the different parts of a prayer service, the prayers that we say and their meaning. Students will engage with not only the prayers themselves but what it means to pray. We will struggle with questions such as: *Can I participate in prayer if I am not feeling focused on praying? How does my prayer change when different things happen in my life? How do I connect with the prayers in our service?* Our Fourth Grade classes will discuss the difference between individual and communal prayer, intention in prayer vs. fixed liturgy, and even have the opportunity to create their own prayers.

During the Prayer Unit, we will focus on the following goals:

- To help students find their own personal meaning and understanding of our liturgy.
- To provide students with the tools to make prayer meaningful on a personal level.
- To empower students to explore various prayer outlets and make prayer a more significant part of their lives.
- To compare the ways that Jews pray as individuals with the ways we pray as a community.
- To examine the concept of *minyán* and the prayers that require it.

For the second half of the year, our Fourth Grade will focus on Israel. Students will learn about the history of the Jewish state, the people who live there, and the amazing things that Israel has to offer us even today! Throughout the year, the students will create their own relationships with the land of Israel, and begin to gain a deeper understanding of why we have a Jewish state and how we can support it. As they learn about different aspects of Israel, students in the Fourth Grade will create posters, activities, and other things that will be on display at our Religious School's Israel fair in April.

During our Israel Unit, we will focus on the following goals:

- To help students form a connection to the State of Israel.
- To familiarize students with important moments and figures in Israeli history.
- To get students excited about the idea of visiting Israel in the future.

### HEBREW

At Stephen Wise Free Synagogue's Religious School we work to ensure that every child is capable of decoding (reading without full comprehension) Hebrew prayers and blessings, and that they know and can define common Hebrew words and phrases. We want our students to see Hebrew as a living language of the Jewish people and to be able to use it to help them in prayer and in Jewish life. Our teachers strive to make Hebrew accessible and to ensure that every child's ability to decode improves each week.

In Fourth Grade, students will review the basic Hebrew reading skills they learned in Third Grade and continue working on their reading proficiency. Students will practice reading harder and longer prayers. Additionally, they will learn some of the important vocabulary in our liturgy and see how it relates to the Judaic themes they are learning this year. Students have the opportunity to reinforce their Hebrew skills and learn more about our prayers during tefilah (prayer services) each week.

By the end of the Fourth Grade year, we expect every student to be able to:

- Decode simple words/phrases and short blessings at first sight.
- Self-correct on shorter, simpler words.
- Decode the following prayers: Barchu, Shema, Mi Chamocha.
- Identify and define the following vocabulary (plus additional not listed): TEFILAH, BARUCH, ATAH, MELECH, ECHAD, YISRAEL, KEVA, KAVANAH, MINYAN.