



THE ELECTRONIC EDUCATOR-
A weekly update of information for you and your school!
A service of the NJ Region USCJ Dept. of Education
Michelle Rich, Director of Education and Youth Activities
Nita Polay Levin, Field Worker
Lisa Harris Glass, Executive Director

In this Week's Issue:

Preschool Directors ONLY Mini-Course:
Building Bridges
Teacher Training Mini-Courses
Preschool Corner: Young Children & God
BabagaNewz: Protecting the Environment
From PITOME: Green Ideas for Tu Bishvat
The Jewish Museum (Re)visited
Combing Through My Files

*NJ Region USCJ-NJ Region
Commission on Jewish Education
Presents*

A Mini-Course for PRESCHOOL DIRECTORS ONLY

BUILDING BRIDGES:

**Making Our Synagogue Community a Warm & Welcoming
Place for Our Preschool families**

with

INSTRUCTOR: CARYN BRUCKHEIMER,
Early Childhood Consultant and Trainer

**Explore and discuss various ways in which our nursery schools, along with the
synagogue team, offer unique opportunities for establishing long-term
connections with ALL of our families, including unaffiliated and interfaith.**

Monday, February 9, 2009

7 - 8:30 PM

At

The NJ Regional USCJ office

1090 King Georges Post Rd., Suite 1003, Edison (Raritan Center)

This program is open to all USCJ preschool directors. We are delighted to provide it at no charge, a benefit of your congregation's affiliation with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

R.S.V.P. by February 5 to Michelle Rich at (732) 738 – 4301 or rich@uscj.org.

* * * * *

TEACHER TRAINING
MINI-COURSES
Winter/Spring Semester

The last chance to register for this course:

COURSE # 2: PRESCHOOLERS AND ISRAEL: PERFECT TOGETHER!

INSTRUCTOR: LINDA RIPPS, VETERAN TEACHER

Young children are not developmentally capable of conceptualizing the global map or of a place that is not in their daily lives. This would make it seemingly useless to teach them about another country far away, and yet, it is never too early to introduce a love for Israel as the special place of the Jewish People, which is different from learning about other cultures and countries. By using some Hebrew, the Israeli flag, videos and story books about Israel, we begin to plant the seeds that will bloom as they get older. Linda, who has taught preschool and is an expert in resources about Israel, will show you how to introduce the concept of kibbutz and other aspects of the country to young children.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2009, 1 - 2:30 PM

LOCATION: CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL, RUMSON

COURSE # 3: For PRESCHOOL DIRECTORS, ONLY:

Our Congregational Nursery Schools: The Gateway to a Jewish Experience

INSTRUCTOR: CARYN BRUCKHEIMER, CONSULTANT AND TRAINER

Explore and discuss the various ways in which nursery schools, along with the synagogue team, offer unique opportunities for establishing long-term connections with all families, including unaffiliated and inter-faith.

Date : Monday, February 9, 7 - 8:30 PM

LOCATION: NJ USCJ REGIONAL OFFICE, EDISON, RARITAN CENTER

Course #4: USING KNOWLEDGE OF LEARNING STYLES AND MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES TO TEACH ALL OF OUR CHILDREN

Instructor: DR. SHOSHANA SILBERMAN, EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT, PHILADELPHIA & NEW JERSEY, AUTHOR AND LECTURER

Since the monumental writings of Howard Gardner introduced educators to the fact that there are, in fact, 7 or 8 *different* ways in which students learn (of which MATH AND SCIENCE MAKE UP ONLY ONE OF THOSE!), educators have been designing methods for teaching all

types of learners. Dr. Silberman will teach us how to be able to reach ALL of our children, no matter what type of learning style suits their needs.

DATE: Wednesday, February 18, 6:45 – 8:15 PM

LOCATION: Temple Beth Or, Brick

COURSE # 5: TEACHING THE PARSHA THE ACTIVE WAY IN RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

INSTRUCTOR: DR. SHOSHANA SILBERMAN, CONSULTANT, AUTHOR & LECTURER

Author of the up-coming book on Active Learning Techniques as applied to the religious school classroom, Dr. Silberman will share Active Learning techniques that you can apply to any parsha in 5 - 15 minutes.

DATE: Wednesday, March 4, 7 - 8:30 PM

LOCATION: Morristown Jewish Center

COURSE # 6: FOR RELIGIOUS SCHOOL PRINCIPALS ONLY

ASSESSING AND EVALUATING STUDENT LEARNING IN THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

INSTRUCTOR: SUSAN WYNER, No. American Consultant for Synagogue EDUCATION, USCJ

This workshop will broaden your thinking about student assessment and how it can be used to promote maximum learning in the classroom. We will examine ways to communicate teacher observations both to the students and to the parents, so that progress is reported and challenges are addressed. Traditional Jewish texts, the latest research, video observation and your own skills and ideas will be critical tools in our study.

DATE: Tuesday, March 17, 10 am - 12 N

LOCATION: NJ Region USCJ office, Raritan Center, Edison

If you are interested in attending any of these courses, contact Michelle Rich at Rich@USCJ.org. As a benefit of your synagogue's membership in United Synagogue, all courses are free for teachers affiliated with a USCJ school or anyone who is a member of a USCJ congregation.

*** **

PRESCHOOL CORNER

I return from the JEA inspired, and this month's shiur is enriched by the teaching of Mary Lou Allen and Rabbi Ed Feinstein. Enjoy, and remember I love feedback about the conversations you have with your staff using the shiur.

B'Shalom,
max

Maxine Handelman
Consultant for Early Childhood Education
United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
847-641-9963

USCJ EC Staff Meeting *Shiur* – February 2009

Rabbi David Wolpe on addressing children's questions about God:

“Our answers to these questions guide our children's view of the universe. What do we wish them to believe - that they are accidents of ancient chemistry or sparks of the divine? Whatever one's philosophy on these matters, we owe our children an honest and searching discussion.”

-from “How to Talk to Your Kids about God” by *Rabbi David Wolpe*
http://www.jewishfamily.com/families/features/talk_kids_god.txt

Questions for discussion:

1. What is the scariest thing about talking with children about God?
2. Who do you turn to, who could you turn to, when children ask challenging questions about God?
3. Ask yourselves: “What is my connection with God? Do I have a connection with God? What do I wrestle with?” Discuss the answers as a staff.
4. “Wherever children are learning there dwells a divine presence” (Yiddish proverb). Think about moments in your class when that divine presence has become apparent, moments of wonder, or to quote Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, moments of “radical amazement.” Share some of these moments. Then think together about how you mark these moments in the classroom, and as a community take note of the presence of God. With a blessing? With a special song? With a quiet but awe-inspired conversation? How could you be more intentional in marking moments of divine presence, or radical amazement, in your classroom?
5. When children ask about God, they usually have their own theories. As a staff, role-play conversations with children about God. Generate questions the children might ask, or have asked in the past. Test out using such language as, “Tell me what you think about God.” or “I don't know. What do you think? I wonder about that too.” or “Some people believe...” “I wonder how God...” “We can thank God for...” Continue to check in as a staff as you venture into the classroom to have these conversations with children.

Maxine Segal Handelman
Consultant for Early Childhood Education, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
handelman@uscj.org

* * * * *

*For other articles on young children and God, prayer and spirituality,
contact Nita at Levin@USCJ.org*

* * * * *

Protecting the Environment with BabagaNewz.com

January 28, 2009/ 3 Shevat 5769

In This Issue

Shevat Lessons

Win a Trip to Israel!

Free Conference Call

Join our Director of Education, Lisa Micley, to learn more about our web site, get fresh teaching ideas, ask questions, and plan classroom time.

Choose one of the following times:

Thursday, January 29 at
4:00 PM EST

or

Thursday, February 5 at
1:00 PM EST

Contact us at educator@babaganewz.com to register, or just dial 1-888-247-2572 and enter 9607# when prompted.

Purim Preview

In 2009, **Purim** falls on Tuesday, March 10. View resources for teaching

The value for Shevat/February is ***L'avdah u'Leshamrah, Protecting the Environment***. God not only gave humans dominion over the environment, but also commanded us to protect and care for it. Use these [materials](#) to explore this important value in your classroom. Also find materials to teach the upcoming **Israeli elections**, scheduled for February 10. Use the [lesson plan](#) and extensive [BabagaNewz.com Election Guide](#), which includes a mock election.

You should be receiving a **BabagaNewz.com Users' Guide** in the mail at your school. It highlights the vast resources available to you and your students on the web site. Please contact us with questions or to be added to our mailing list at educator@babaganewz.com.

The deadline for the [Destination Israel Contest](#) is fast approaching on 2/5. The contest's prize includes a **free trip to Israel**. Read more [here](#).

B'Shalom,
Sara Marx
Web Editor

Shevat Lesson Plans

Our Shevat 5769/February 2009 materials focus on the theme of *l'avdah u'leshamrah*, protecting the environment.. These materials are available online [here](#).

2009 Israeli Elections

This lesson is a primer for understanding the Israeli electoral system and the upcoming Israel elections, scheduled to take place on February 10, 2009.

is for teaching
[re](#). Watch your
x in the next few
much more on
is topic!

our list

ur Mailing List!

ck Links

[aNewz.com](#)

[out games](#)
[an e-card](#)

scheduled to take place on February 10, 2009.

- [Lesson plan](#)
- [BabagaNewz.com Election Guide](#)
- [Mock Election](#)
- [Israel Central](#)

Torah Page

Verse: Be mindful not to corrupt or destroy My world, for if you corrupt it, there will be no one to repair it after you. (Ecclesiastes *Rabbah* 7:13) In this lesson, students will create original advertisements that reflect the Jewish values that motivate "going green."

- [Lesson plan](#)
- [Message wall](#)

What Shoes Do You Wear?

In this lesson, students will take this personality quiz and then they will put their best foot forward to reduce their carbon footprints.

- [Lesson plan](#)
- [Printable quiz](#)
- [Online quiz](#)

****Deadline 2/5: Win a Free Trip to Israel!**

Invite your students to explain what being in Israel would mean to them by creating an original logo design. The winning design will be made into a decal for a **Nefesh B'Nefesh *aliyah* plane** and the winner will receive a **free trip to Israel!**

For the rules and entry form, click [here](#). Visit [Israel Central](#) for inspiration! Have each student enter and before mailing in the designs, make color copies to showcase in the entrance to your school.

Entries must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 5, 2009.

z.com is an educational web site that helps students see the world from a Jewish perspective. BabagaNewz.com is a project of JFL Media in partnership with The AVI ation.
dia on the web at [JFLmedia.com](#)

Other JFL Media projects: JBooks.com, JVibe, Sh'ma

BabagaNewz.com does not charge subscription fees. We are a non-profit organization and rely on donations to produce the web site and teachers' materials. Please click [here](#) to make a donation to help us continue to offer these materials.

Please do not reply to this message with questions or comments unrelated to this newsletter.

To communicate with the staff of BabagaNewz.com, please write to:
webmaster@babaganewz.com

Copyright 2009 The AVI CHAI Foundation. All rights reserved.

From Pitome Publishing

Dear Educator,

Tu B'Shevat is just around the corner. As Pitome Publishing continues to go green, this month we are featuring "green" ideas for the holiday of fruits and vegetables. At home, we've gone through a green food revolution. See the highlights below.

Tu B'Shevat is the ultimate green holiday. Take advantage of the topic on the table to explore, literally, what is on our table? Here are some suggestions:

- 1. Become a locavore. Make a commitment to buy local fruits and vegetables to reduce greenhouse emissions, and eat the freshest food possible!**
- 2. Make [green smoothies](#) for a nutritional boost.**
- 3. Sprout seeds. Eat some, and plant some. Click [here](#) for instructions.**
- 4. Re-educate yourself about our food system. See below for our hot pick book recommendation.**
- 5. Skip the parsley and plant nasturtium seeds for Tu B'Shevat. Nasturtium is easy to grow and the edible leaves and flowers double nicely as Passover horseradish.**

Winter E-Specials

Plan ahead for your Jewish bedtime programs and capture our buy two get one free [special](#).

Editor's Picks for Going Green

[Seeds! Seeds! Seeds](#)

by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace

This book provides a "spring" board of seed explorations for young explorers. Five special surprises... [more](#) ...

In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto

by Michael Pollan

This book may blow your concepts of everyday eating, and becoming more informed may also add to your longevity. ... [more](#) ...

Digital Update

Our subscribers are so delighted with the ease of digital curriculum. So far we offer...

Digital Tried-and-True Family Workshops with color:

[Jewish Bedtime Happens](#) (A-Z materials for a Jewish bedtime workshop.)

[I Spy a Kosher Kitchen](#) (Excellent resources for introducing and reinforcing concepts of kashrut.)

Coming soon! [Family Folklore and the Magic Megillah](#)

B'shalom,

Nina & the Pitome team

* * * * *

Here's an idea for ANY chag: gather a series of EDUCATIONAL puzzles that review the chag and put them together in a pamphlet form, one for each student. When you have a few extra minutes—such as, when they first come in and you haven't started class yet, when they finish an assignment, etc.—the students take out their chag pamphlet and "work" on the games.

Here's another idea, for class in general: cut out 5 – 10 minutes in the middle of the session and label it an "educational break." Here's another time they can take out their pamphlets, or play other educational games.

Also, they can use this time to go to the bathroom, get a drink of water, etc. Think about it: when a student asks to go to the bathroom or to get a drink, is that really the need, or is this a sign that something else is going on? Is your lesson boring, over their heads, etc.? How often does a child need to go to the bathroom? If they "go" before class starts, they can wait until break (usually an hour later). Unless they bring in a note from home or a doctor stating that they need more frequent breaks—for medical reasons. If you make this clear to your students from the beginning, the requests to leave the room will diminish.

But don't forget to be kind and allow for emergencies!!

* * * * *

DISCOVER THE F*U*N :
ART, CULTURE, FAMILIES
AT
THE JEWISH MUSEUM
LIVE MUSIC, SING ALONG & DANCE! CONCERTS!
FAMILY WORKSHOPS FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
CHAGALL & THEATER TREASURES: ARTS & CRAFTS
COSTUMED CREATIONS: ART WORKSHOP & GALLERY TOUR
PAPER BAG PLAYERS: THEATER PERFORMANCES

DIRTY SOCK FUNTIME BAND: CONCERT

CLASSES FOR KIDS

**FAMILY GALLERY TOURS: DROP-IN WORKSHOPS, STORYBOOK READINGS,
DRAW & DISCOVER**

**ARCHAEOLOGY ZONE: DISCOVERING TREASURES FROM PLAYGROUNDS TO
PALACES**

DROP-IN ART WORKSHOPS! DROP-IN ARHAEOLGY DIGS!

*I had an opportunity to take a trip with our religious school on Sunday and it was a
very worthwhile program and a lot of fun. --Nita*

CONTACT INFO:

(212) 423 – 3200

www.thejewishmuseum.org

COMBING THROUGH MY FILES:

It's not too early to start thinking about **Purim** !!
(okay, you can wait until after Tu Bishvat... But, just to whet your whistle:)

From Babaganewz: *Top 10 Ways the Purim Story Would Go Down in Modern Times;*
Shushan Classifieds (which Purim personality posted these ads??); High School Megillah
(The shpiel)

Crafts **stories** **shpiels**
Recipes **puzzles** **board games**
Carnivals **Early Childhood activities**
Workshops **Shlach manot baskets**
Whole school activities **family programs**

BabagaNewz on Israel: Now that the magazine (z"l) is defunct (but not the website!), you may want to receive some of our extra supplements on Israel: time lines, articles, whole magazines (one to a customer), while the supplies last!

Kashrut Pursuit: the Board Game
(an excellent game for teaching and reviewing about
Kashrut)

Feeling creative but need help designing an idea? Call us!

For these, and other ideas, contact Nita at Levin@USCJ.org
