

**What a
Solomon Schechter
Fourth Grader
Should Know
and
Be Able To Do!**

Judaic Studies

General Studies

Specials Program

וְשִׁנַּנְתֶּם לְבָנֵיכֶם

“And you shall teach
your children...”



**SOLOMON SCHECHTER
DAY SCHOOL OF NASSAU COUNTY**

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A Message to the Reader

This brochure lists skills and abilities in Judaic Studies, General Studies, and the Special program that students should acquire by the end of Fourth Grade to earn promotion to the Fifth Grade. It answers questions that everyone in the school community needs to ask, such as:

- What are students expected to know and be able to do?
- How are their achievements measured?

This document is the product of extensive work by our faculty and administration, taking into account guidelines published by the New York State Education Department, the Board of Education of the City of New York, and the unique needs of our school community. Besides detailing the curricular goals and objectives of this particular grade, this document is designed to be part of the overall K-12 curriculum of the Solomon Schechter Day School of Nassau County. Similar brochures can be obtained for other grades. If you have any questions or suggestions, please be sure to contact either Mr. Dickstein or Mrs. Hirsch at 516-935-1441. We value your feedback and input.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Solomon Schechter Day School of Nassau County is to provide a caring and nurturing environment within which Jewish students grow educationally, culturally, socially, and spiritually, and to promote the observance of mitzvot and traditions that are the foundations of the Jewish religion.

Statement of Purpose

The Solomon Schechter Day School of Nassau County is a co-educational private Jewish day school affiliated with the Conservative Movement. Through the efforts of a dedicated and qualified staff, the school offers rich and innovative curricula for students from Kindergarten to 12th Grade in both general and Judaic studies, and strives to help students and their families lead meaningful lives, instilled with the values of American democracy, pluralism, and the love of Israel.

Judaic Studies

Conservative Judaism

We are a school proudly aligned with the Conservative Movement. We adopt the guiding principles of our Movement for our school's curriculum and program. As such we provide learning and experiences that encourage:

- Development of a personal relationship with God
- The centrality of Mitzvah and Torah Study
- Valuing and cherishing Jewish plurality and diversity, both within our school and the larger world around us
- Identity with Jews in Israel and the world

Mitzvah

As a Conservative Day School, we teach, experience, and celebrate mitzvah. All of the mitzvot are both taught and observed throughout our school program. Much of the Mitzvah curriculum is implicit in all phases of our school program. This applies both to mitzvot we traditionally call "ritual" (*mitzvot bein Adam l'Makom*) and those we sometimes refer to as "ethical" (*mitzvot bein Adam l'chavero*). For example, all children give tzedakah during their weekly Kabbalat Torah celebrations. So too, Kashrut is required for all food brought to the school. At the same time, we teach respect for teachers through an emphasis on proper behavior. Children observe the mitzvah of *kavod ha Brit* through recognition of the differences among our students and teachers. While we recognize the wide range of observances among our families, the school remains committed to the observance of mitzvot for our children and families.

The Fourth and Fifth Grade learn about the Bar/Bat Mitzvah as part of a Jewish Family Life Education program. Through a series of three programs, the children begin to explore the Jewish possibilities for this occasion and learn many of the laws and mitzvot relating to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and general synagogue life.

Among the mitzvot lived in Fourth Grade are:

- Lashon HaRa – The proper and respectful use of words
- Bikur Cholim – Sending cards and making calls to those who are sick
- Tzedakah
- Shabbat – Candles, Kiddush, Challah, Tefillah
- Food – Kashrut, Brachot
- Tefilah

Tefilah

Tefilah is seen as the central way we express our thoughts, needs, and wishes as Jewish people. Tefilah teaches us the central categories of Jewish values and helps us communicate with God. Because the school sees Hebrew as the language of the Jewish people, tefilah is always done in Hebrew. Boys and girls participate equally in all aspects of the school's curriculum and Jewish experiences.

We teach tefilah both to help children learn the *matbayah tefilah* (the way the tefilot are recited in the synagogue services) and the ideas and aspirations the tefilah encompasses. Our Staff Development program is centering on tefilah.

Tefilah is a sequential curriculum. Each year builds on the tefilot learned in the previous school years. By the end of their learning in the Elementary School, the children are capable of leading almost all of the daily and Shabbat tefilot. The children continue to expand their repertoire of daily tefilot. The children also study Rosh Hodesh, the beginning of the Jewish month. They learn about the lunar basis of the Jewish calendar.

By the end of the Fourth Grade, the expectation is that our students will be familiar with the following tefilot:

Bracha for Wearing a Talit; Modeh Ani; Mah Tov; Yigdal; Reysbet Chochmah; Bircbot haShachar; Baruch Sheamar; Ashrei; Haleluyah; Yishtabach; Barcho...Yotzer Or...Or Chadash; Shema v'abotah and v'yomer; Amidah – Avot, Gevurot, and Kedusha Brachot; Sim Shalom; Oseh Shalom; Torah Tzeva Lano Moshe; Bircbot haTorah; V'zot HaTorah; Aleino; Ayn Kelobeino; Adon Olam; Kiddush Shel Shabbat; Kabbalat Shabbat; Tefliah Mincha – Ashrei, Amidah, Aleino.

Shabbat and Holidays

Through the weekly and monthly life of the school, the children see Shabbat and the Jewish holidays as special moments for Jewish celebration. Connections are made between the mitzvot of the Torah, our Jewish life in school, and our lives as Jews at home and in the wider world. Since the holidays are annual celebrations, the classes review and include the learning from previous years.

Torah Study

The goal of Torah study is to fulfill the mitzvah of *Talmud Torah*. We study the Torah as the central unifying story of our people's understanding of the world and our relationship with God. By studying the Torah, we come to identify with our Jewish history and fulfill God's covenant with the Jewish people. Finally, we begin to appreciate God's commands and wishes for us as responsible and committed Jewish people.

In Fourth Grade, the children continue the *Book of Bereshet*. After a comprehensive review of the lives of the Avot and Emahot, the remainder of the year focuses on the life of Yosef. Through the study of Yosef, the children explore the human qualities always evident in the Torah. The ground is also set for the eventual Slavery and Redemption from Egypt.

As was started in Third Grade, the children use a Hebrew text for their Torah Study (*Beresbet Sheli*). Hebrew is the predominant language of instruction. As the children's ability with Hebrew grows, they are able to focus on the differences between Biblical and Modern Hebrew.

Children in Fourth and Fifth Grade meet weekly with a local rabbi to explore the meaning of the weekly Torah reading. This learning introduces the children to rabbinic midrash and commentary. It also strengthens the connection between our school learning and the obligation of out-of-school observance.

In Fourth Grade, the children begin to study the second section of the *Tanach*, the *Nevi'im* (Prophets). The children are exposed to the *Book of Yehoshua*, the beginning of the conquest of the Land of Israel following the chronological close of the Torah.

By the end of the year, the children should be able to understand:

- Story of the Binding of Yitzchak
- Story of Ya'akov and Esav
- Blessing of Yitzchak to his sons
- Story of Lavan
- Reunion of Ya'akov and Esav
- Main stories of Yosef
- Descent into Egypt

Hebrew Language

The Fourth Grade curriculum provides opportunities to review and reinforce learning skills that were introduced in the former Tal Sela units. It also introduces new learning to acquire skills such as:

- Brainstorming skills.
- Organizational skills.
- Outline a story, plot, or essay.
- Improving retention of new vocabulary and language skills.
- Creative and constructive peer learning.

By the end of the year, children should be able to:

- Answer all questions using complete sentences.
- Write short stories.
- Apply rules of grammar appropriate to Fourth Grade, including correct verb formation in both past and present tense.
- Understand short stories and write summaries.
- Write multi-word, descriptive sentences.
- Assimilate new vocabulary words.
- Follow all class directions.

The school offers a Geshet Hebrew language program for children who need more intensive support in their Hebrew language development. While the content of the program is the same as the other class, the Geshet program is modified to ensure children's success and love of Jewish learning. Children use all Hebrew texts; however, on occasion the class may, in limited circumstances, use English as the language of conversation and instruction.

Medinat Yisrael

All children in the school learn about the State of Israel. Focusing primarily on modern-day Israel, the children daily express our love of Medinat Yisrael by singing *Hatikvah* at the start of the school day. The children learn about the Flag of Israel.

Through our annual celebration of Yom haAtzmaut (Israel Independence Day), the children learn about different aspects of modern day life in Israel, ranging from Jerusalem to the Army, from the map of Israel to the joy of Israel's existence. So too, the children periodically learn about the political conflicts confronting present-day Israel. Finally, the children regularly engage in projects fostering their connection to the State of Israel and our responsibility to Israeli Jews. These projects range from letter writing to tzedakah projects.

Language Arts

Reading

By the end of the school year, students should:

- Read and understand:
 - At least 15 books.
 - At least four books about one subject, or by the same writer, or in one genre of literature.
- Show evidence of understanding their reading in both writing and classroom discussion.
- Relate new ideas and information in books to previous knowledge and personal experience.
- Read familiar books aloud:
 - With accuracy and expression.
 - Using strategies for self-correction.
 - Using strategies to figure out unfamiliar words.
- Read silently and independently.
- Use computer software to support reading.
- Keep a record of what has been read, reflecting goals and accomplishments.

Writing

Student writing should go through a process of planning, drafting, revising, and editing before it is considered a finished product. By the end of the school year, students are required to produce four types of writing:

- **Informational Writing**, such as a Science or Social Studies report. This writing should include appropriate facts and details.
- **A response to literature**, such as a book review. This writing should show an understanding of the book's story, setting, and characters.
- **A story, fictional or autobiographical**. This writing should establish interesting characters and situations, and should include details and descriptions.
- **A narrative procedure** explaining how to do something. This writing should lay out clear steps that are easy to follow.

All finished writing should have a beginning, a middle, and an end; should use basic punctuation; and should spell most words correctly.

Speaking, Listening, and Viewing

Students will participate in whole-class lessons, small-group meetings, and one-to-one conversations with a teacher, in order to:

- Collect information and identify important ideas.
- Ask questions to further understanding, and repeat what they have heard in their own words.
- Respond to questions thoughtfully, using details and examples.
- Take turns speaking, and respond to each other's questions and comments.
- Express opinions and back them up with reasons.

Students will prepare and deliver an individual presentation in which they:

- Present information so that their audience understands and is interested.
- Organize what they will say using notes or other memory aids.
- Make decisions on what to say based on how they want the audience to respond, not just according to what information they can find.
- Students will make informed judgments about television, radio, and film productions.

Grammar and Usage of the English Language

By the end of the school year, students should demonstrate correct use of:

- Grammar, including nouns, adjectives, and verbs.
- Paragraph structure, including rules of dividing a piece into paragraphs.
- Punctuation such as commas, periods, exclamation points, and question marks.
- Sentence construction, including statements, questions, and exclamations.
- Spelling strategies for Fourth Grade content-area vocabulary.

By the end of the school year, students should be able to revise work by:

- Making their writing easier to understand.
- Adding or deleting details and explanations.
- Editing for spelling and punctuation.
- Rearranging the sequence of words, sentences, and paragraphs.

Literature

Using the literature read during the school year, students should be able to:

- Identify similar themes across different books.
- Think about the author's word choices and decisions about content.
- Compare different types of literature.
- Describe the personalities of individual characters, and why they act the way they do.
- Develop ideas (for example, draw conclusions and make predictions) about events, characters, and settings.
- Be able to select books based on personal needs and interest.
- Produce written work in at least one genre (for example, book review).

Mathematics

Arithmetic and Number Concepts

By the end of the school year, students should:

- Add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers, with and without calculators.
- Read and write whole numbers to hundred millions.
- Learn about special numbers (primes, factors, multiples, square numbers).
- Use concrete and real-world models of simple fractions.
- Use single decimal numbers and percents.
- Demonstrate rounding and estimation skills.
- Use recall, mental math, and pencil and paper to get solutions.

Geometry and Measurement Concepts

By the end of the school year, students should:

- Identify and describe geometric figures (triangles, squares, rectangles).
- Read and draw simple maps using coordinates.
- Use basic ways of estimating and measuring the size of figures and objects in the real world.
- Select units of measure (pounds, inches, minutes) for estimating and determining quantities such as weight, area, and time.
- Use pictures and diagrams to show perimeter, area, volume, and circumference.
- Use pictures and diagrams to model lines of symmetry.

Function and Algebra Concepts

By the end of the school year, students should:

- Recognize, describe, extend, and create repeating patterns.
- Recognize, describe, extend, and create growing patterns.
- Use letters, boxes, or other symbols to stand for any number or object.
- Use beginning concept of "variable."

Statistics and Probability Concepts

By the end of the school year, students should:

- Collect and organize information.
- Make, read, and interpret graphs.
- Gather data about an entire group by sampling group members.
- Find the average, median, mode, and range of a set of numbers.
- Find combinations and arrangements of a group of objects.
- Predict results and find out why some results are more likely than others, less likely than others, or equally likely as others.
- Show data in tables, charts, and graphs.

Mathematical Process

By the end of the school year, students should:

- Create, analyze, and solve word problems.
- Give basic statements of problem situations.
- Solve problems in ways that make sense and explain the solutions.
- Draw pictures, diagrams, and charts to represent problems.
- Identify missing information in a story problem.
- Explain how solutions to problems can be applied to other school subjects and in real-world situations.
- Develop formal and informal mathematics vocabularies.

Science

Physical Sciences

By the end of the school year, students should:

- Continue to investigate and describe variables of shape, material, and mass (ability of metal to conduct electricity).
- Demonstrate an understanding of properties of non-living things.
- Develop a deeper understanding of electrical circuits, including parallel and series circuits.
- Observe and investigate how light, heat, electrical, sound, and mechanical energy (machines/gears) affect objects as they interact with them.

Life Sciences

By the end of the school year, students should:

- Observe, explain, and give examples of how plants and animals depend upon each other and how these characteristics help them survive in different environments (adaptation/interdependence).
- Demonstrate an understanding of the life cycles of organisms.
- Investigate how adaptations, interdependence, and environment help certain organisms survive.

Earth and Space Sciences

By the end of the school year, students should:

- Understand how the Earth, the Moon, and other objects in the sky move in regular pattern.
- Understand how the Earth's physical characteristics change over time due to natural processes (erosion).
- Observe the effects of energy on matter.

Scientific Thinking

By the end of the school year, students should:

- Work independently and cooperatively to solve problems, using a variety of inquiry skills.
- Ask appropriate questions that can be investigated by performing experiments.
- Communicate their experiences and observations in a variety of ways.

Scientific Tools and Technology

By the end of the school year, students should:

- Continue to use technology and tools such as magnifiers, thermometers, balances (scale), and computers.
- Continue to use standard and non-standard units of measurement for length, width, weight, and volume, and record data.
- Continue to use data tables and graphs to record, read, and understand scientific data/results.

Social Studies

Local History and Local Government

The Grade 4 Social Studies program builds on the students' understanding of families, schools, and communities, and highlights the political institutions and historic development of their local communities with connections to New York State and the United States. The in-depth study of local government will emphasize the structure and function of the different branches and the roles of civic leaders.

The historic study of local communities focuses on the social/cultural, political, and economic factors that helped to shape these communities. Students study about the significant people, places, events, and issues that influenced life in their local communities. The Grade 4 program considers the following themes and events at the local level: Native American Indians of New York State; the European Encounter; the Colonial and Revolutionary War period; the New Nation; and the period of Industrial Growth and development in New York State. This chronological framework will help students to organize information about local history and connect it to United States history.

History

By the end of the school year, students should understand:

- Native American Indians were the first inhabitants: The Iroquois (Haudenosaunee-People of the Longhouse) and the Algonquian were the early inhabitants of our state.
- Important accomplishments and contributions of Native American Indians who lived in our community and state.
- Major explorers of New York State and the impacts of exploration (social/cultural, economic, political, and geographic).
- The slave trade and slavery in the colonies.
- Dutch, English, and French influences in New York State and the lifestyles in the colonies; comparisons during different time periods.
- Different types of daily activities including social/cultural, political, economic, scientific/technological, or religious.
- Cultural similarities and differences, including folklore, ideas, and other cultural contributions that helped shape our community, local region, and state.
- Colonial governments.
- Causes for revolution: social, political, economic.
- Important accomplishments of individuals and groups living in our community and region.
- How Native American Indians in New York State influenced the War.
- The War Strategy: Saratoga and other local battles.
- Loyalists and patriots in New York State.
- Leaders of the Revolution.
- Effects of the Revolutionary War.
- The values, practices, and traditions that unite all Americans.

Geography

By the end of the school year, students should understand:

- Location of New York State.
- Ways that colonist depended on and modified their physical environments.
- Geographic influences of industrialization and expansion (e.g., natural resources, location); the interactions between economic and geographic factors.
- Geographic features that influenced the War.
- Continue working with maps, globes, and atlases to gather data/information.

Economics

By the end of the school year, students should understand:

- Rural to urban to suburban migration.
- Colonial societies were organized to answer three fundamental economic questions: What goods and services do we produce? How do we produce them? For whom do we produce them?
- Ways of making a living in our local region and state.
- Economic interdependence (e.g., resource use; from farm to market).
- The labor movement and child labor.

Political

By the end of the school year, students should understand:

- Foundations for a new government and the ideals of American democracy as expressed in the Mayflower Compact, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitutions of the State of New York and the United States of America.
- The importance of the Bill of Rights.
- Individuals and groups who helped to strengthen democracy in the United States.
- The roots of American culture, how it developed from many different traditions, and the ways many people from a variety of groups and backgrounds played a role in creating it.

- The fundamental values of American democracy, including an understanding of the following concepts: individual rights to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness; the public or common good; justice; equality of opportunity; diversity; truth; and patriotism.
- The fundamental values and principles of American democracy are expressed in the Declaration of Independence, Preamble to the United States Constitution, Bill of Rights, Pledge of Allegiance, speeches, songs, and stories.
- The basic purposes of government in the United States are to protect the rights of individuals and to promote the common good.
- An introduction to the probable consequences of the absence of government.
- The structure and function of the branches of government, including executive, legislative, and judicial branches.
- The meaning of key terms and concepts related to government, including democracy, power, and citizenship.

Specials

In addition to classroom learning, all children are offered an enriching "Specials" program. Children have Music, Library, Computer, and Art, for 40 minutes each week. The children have Physical Education twice a week. Each of the special areas is taught by a full-time teacher who specializes in the given area.

MUSIC

The Music program combines singing, clapping, and body movement with the playing of both pitched and unpitched instruments to teach beat competence, vocal development, music notation, form, rhythm, melody, harmony, timbre, dynamics, and conducting. In addition, separate educational units are presented in the areas of the science of sound, musical instruments and their respective families, unconventional musical instruments, recorder, and famous composers. The vocal repertoire, approximately 80% of which is Judaic, is often used as a tool in teaching the elements of music.

In addition to the weekly music period, the school sponsors a Fourth and Fifth Grade Choir. The Choir performs during special school functions and for a variety of events in our community. Students in Third through Fifth Grades may also participate in the after-school instrumental music program.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The primary goals in Physical Education are to teach students individual and team games that stress the importance of physical activity and fitness. Instructional emphasis in Grades K-3 is based on motor skill theme development, movement concepts, and improvement in muscular strength, endurance, flexibility, and agility. In Grades 4-5, emphasis is on refinement of motor skill themes, and development of a high level of physical fitness. Student will improve skills, knowledge, and attitudes to help them lead active, healthy, and productive lives as adults.

The Physical Education program is based on Project Adventure, which encourages children to engage in non-competitive games and group problem-solving initiatives. The program seeks to help individuals reach their goals, to improve self-esteem, to develop strategies that enhance decision-making, and to respect differences within a group.

In addition to the two weekly Physical Education classes, there is a very active after-school sports program. We belong to a private school league, composed of different private schools in our area. There are separate boys' and girls' teams, with three sports seasons during the year.

LIBRARY

Loving to read is one of the most important goals of the Library program. The children are exposed to a wide range of quality children's literature. Children in the younger grades learn about different kinds of books and authors. Children in the middle and upper grades also learn the different parts of a library and are introduced to elements of library research. Students learn and use basic library skills through the use of games.

Various types of books are shared with the children throughout the year, especially at Jewish holidays. Responsibility in taking care of the book at home and returning the book on time is stressed. Every day starts with a poem read to the whole school. In the fall, the Read-a-thon is used as a reading incentive. At Purim time, we "Search for Haman" with a school-wide geography game. Together with the Parents Association, we offer birthday books to the children. The library has approximately 8,000 volumes. We also have a range of encyclopedias and other research materials.

In recognition of the importance of computers and the Internet to all learning, the Library and Computer Specials are becoming linked. Children will learn to use the Internet to do research, and to seek, evaluate, and synthesize information. This learning will be connected to the classroom curriculum through year-long projects. Students will be encouraged to use the computer as a tool to facilitate their ability as independent, critical learners. The school looks forward to sharing this work with you throughout the school year.

COMPUTER

The Computer program is fully integrated with the classroom curriculum.

Kindergarten classes work on early learning programs, including early literacy and math. Children also work on "All About Me" projects that integrate sounds and digital photos. To coordinate with the First Grade curriculum, the children are introduced to their first writing program, entitled *Paint, Write, and Play*. First Graders are introduced to a range of phonic awareness, reading, and math programs.

Second Graders begin to use desktop publishing programs, using *The Writing Center* and *Storybook Weaver*. They learn basic editing skills and graphics programs. Second Graders also use *Inspiration*, a program that helps organize ideas. Third Graders are given their own disks to learn data management. They also use the computer as a research tool for their Solar system and Rainforest units. They also make a multimedia presentation using *Kid Pix*.

Fourth and Fifth Graders use the Internet to supplement their class learning and research projects. The Fourth graders use *ClarisWorks* to learn about databases. They also use *Inspiration* to brainstorm ideas and thoughts as they write their Cinderella stories. Students in Fifth Grade learn the fundamentals of spreadsheets. They also use the Internet to obtain information for the State reports.

ART

Each week, every child in SSDS comes to the Art Room for approximately 40 minutes. The children have assigned seats, participate in a Great Behavior program, create artwork in a variety of media on a variety of themes, assist in reading directions, and help give out and clean up supplies. When they finish their projects, Mrs. Fields encourages them to create free drawings, read about an artist, fold an Origami project, or learn and practice drawing using assorted art books. The children read a color poem and learn about a new artist each month and receive notes and phone calls from Mrs. Fields to compliment their great work. Class often ends with a 2 or 3 minute game such as Hang the Colors, Finish the Picture, Observation (what is different), and verbal vocabulary games.

