

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

General Studies

Judaic Studies

Specials Program

**ושננתם לבניך**

“And you shall teach  
your children...”



Solomon Schechter  
Day School of Las Vegas

Havenwood Lane, Las Vegas, Nevada 89135 • (702) 804-1333

[www.ssds-lv.org](http://www.ssds-lv.org) • [info@ssds-lv.org](mailto:info@ssds-lv.org)

Mr. Jonathan Mitzmacher, Head of School

## **A Message to the Reader**

This brochure lists skills and abilities in General Studies, Judaic Studies, and the Specials program that students should acquire by the end of First Grade to earn promotion to the Second 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 Nevada Education Department, the New York State Education Department, 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-5 curriculum of the Solomon Schechter Day School of Las Vegas. Similar brochures can be obtained for other grades.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please be sure to contact Mr. Mitzmacher at 702-804-1333. We value your feedback and input.

### **Mission Statement**

The Solomon Schechter Day School of Las Vegas provides an outstanding secular education in a dynamic Jewish setting. It is our goal to instill in our students a lifelong love of learning and discovery, a healthy self image, and a strong, positive Jewish identity. Each student's ability to think critically is developed through a dual-language program. Additionally, our school fosters a synergy and appreciation of both Jewish and American cultures.

We strive for educational excellence by encouraging free inquiry, discussion, and creativity, while promoting intellectual integrity in a warm, personal, and highly motivating atmosphere. Our students receive personalized instruction to address fully their needs, develop their abilities, and stimulate their interests. The School guides each student on a path toward success by fostering the fulfillment of his or her individual potential through a uniquely integrated curriculum of general and Jewish studies.

## **Language Arts**

### **Reading—Reading Habits**

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

- Choose reading as a way to enjoy free time at school and at home.
- Choose challenging books to read every day alone or with help.
- Re-read favorite books and hear a book read aloud each day.
- Read a range of materials, including poems, picture books, letters, and simple informational books.
- Read classroom labels, signs, and instructions.
- Discuss books daily with the teacher, a classmate, or in a group.
- Learn new words daily.

### **Reading—Getting the Meaning**

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

- Show that they understand a book they have read on their own by retelling, summarizing, or discussing it with classmates.
- Begin to use their own strategies in reading, such as stopping to consider whether words or sentences sound right and make sense in the story.
- Use punctuation such as periods, question marks and quotation marks to help make sense in the story.
- Show that they understand a read-aloud by making predictions, discussing cause and effect, and/or extending the story.
- Join with the class in creating charts and diagrams to record important details about setting, characters and events in stories.
- Compare characters, setting, and story from one book to another.
- Extend vocabulary by looking up unfamiliar words in a children's dictionary.

### **Reading—Print/Sound Code**

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

- Recognize and know the sounds of all the letters in the alphabet.
- Develop sound phonemic awareness.
- Blend sounds and letters together to make words.
- Recognize by sight at least 150 words they see often when reading.
- Use beginning and ending sounds to figure out words.
- Recognize blends sounds and digraphs, such as *bl* or *ph*.
- Recognize vowel combinations such as vowel, consonant, silent *e*, and two vowels together such as *ea* and *ou*.

### **Writing—Habits**

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

- Enjoy writing daily in journals and writing folders on topics they choose themselves.
- Choose some pieces of writing throughout the year to revise and polish, with the goal of publishing in a class booklet at the end of the year.
- Begin to develop a sense of what makes a good piece of writing.
- Conference with classmates to improve each other's writing.
- Keep a portfolio of writing in a writing notebook and folder.
- Have opportunities to share finished work with an audience.

### **Writing—Purposes**

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

- Write in order to:
  - Share an experience or event – personal narrative.
  - Communicate information to others – expository writing.
  - Tell a made-up story – fictional and fantasy writing.
  - Tell about events in the order that they happened – sequencing.
- Use a combination of words and pictures in their writing.
- Write about books they have read, using skills learned from *getting the meaning*.

- Apply language and ideas from books they have read to their own writing.

### **Writing—Language Use and Conventions**

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

- Write using a combination of invented spelling and correctly spelled common words.
- Create their own voice in their writing through the use of words they hear spoken around them and have read in books.
- Use appropriate letters to represent sounds they hear in words.
- Create writing that can be read by themselves and others.
- Begin to use periods, question marks, and capital letters.
- Use classroom resources such as charts, word lists, and dictionaries to help with writing.

### **Listening and Speaking**

*By the end of the school year, students should listen and speak daily in whole class and small group discussions, and in one-to-one conversations with the teacher, in order to:*

- Show an understanding and appreciation of stories read to them.
- Retell stories in the correct sequence of events.
- Give clear directions in properly sequenced steps.
- Add to a rapidly growing vocabulary.
- Share ideas, facts, observations and opinions with classmates and teachers.
- Ask questions to make things clearer.
- Hear, listen and follow directions.
- Listen respectfully and learn to take turns speaking.

## **Mathematics**

### **Arithmetic and Number Concepts**

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

- Count forward on the number line by 1's, 2's, 3's, 5's and 10's to at least 100.
- Count backward from 100 on the number line by 1's, 2's, 3's, 5's and 10's.
- Learn place value (ones, tens and hundreds) for two and three-digit numbers.
- Identify even and odd numbers.
- Use symbols < (less than), > (greater than), and = (equal to).
- Compute with combinations of numbers that equal 10.
- Begin to have instant recall for addition and subtraction facts to 20 (fact power).
- Begin to add and subtract two-digit numbers.
- Show an understanding of fractions:  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{3}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{5}$ , and  $\frac{1}{6}$ .
- Understand what makes a whole, such as  $\frac{1}{1}$ ,  $\frac{2}{2}$ , etc.
- Recognize and know the value of a penny, nickel, dime, quarter, half-dollar and dollar.
- Calculate the values of combinations of pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters.
- Represent the value of money using decimals.

- Begin to make change for amounts of money up to \$1.00.

### **Geometry and Measurement Concepts**

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

- Use clocks to study time to the hour, half-hour, quarter-hour and minute.
- Use calendar to study days, months, weeks, seasons and years.
- Use manipulatives to explore geometry and measurement concepts.
- Measure length using inches, feet, yards, centimeters and meters.
- Measure weight using ounces, pounds, kilograms and liters.
- Measure temperature using Fahrenheit and Celsius thermometers.
- Identify shapes: square, rectangle, triangle, circle, hexagon, rhombus, trapezoid, oval, and know their characteristics.
- Identify polygons and know their characteristics.
- Identify symmetrical figures.
- Identify three-dimensional shapes such as sphere, cube, pyramid and prisms and know their characteristics.

### **Function and Algebra Concepts**

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

- Sort and classify objects by the characteristics of color, shape and size.
- Investigate patterns using models.
- Recognize geometry and number patterns.
- Repeat geometry and number patterns.
- Make up geometry and number patterns.

### **Statistics and Probability Concepts**

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

- Collect data and record results with tally marks and bar graphs.
- Predict what will happen when a coin or number cube is tossed.
- Solve problems such as: “How many different pairs of numbers add up to ten?”

### **Mathematical Process**

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

- Use objects or drawings to solve problems.
- Use objects to represent numbers in real-world situations.
- Decide whether to add or subtract to solve word problems.
- Create and solve word problems.
- Explain the answer to a problem.
- Write numerals on a number grid of 1 – 100.
- Begin to write numerals on number grids of 1 – 1000.

## Science

### **Physical Sciences**

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

- Observe states of matter: solid, liquid and gas.
- Observe and describe the effects of magnetism on objects.

- Begin to understand that the material of which an object is made determines some of its properties (e.g., sink and float).

### **Life Sciences**

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

- Begin to understand that plants and animals need air, water, and food in order to live and thrive.
- Begin to understand the interdependency of animals and plants in the rainforest.
- Begin to understand the interdependency of animals and plants in the desert.
- Observe and explain changes over time as plants and animals mature (parts of a seed, parts of a plant).

### **Earth and Space Sciences (Environmental Studies)**

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

- Examine and describe the Earth's materials including water, rocks and soil.
- Observe and describe how day and night occur.
- Observe and record seasonal changes.
- Be familiar with the planets of the solar system.
- Be familiar with constellations.

### **Scientific Thinking**

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

- Work individually and in groups to collect, describe, record, share, and to apply information to answer new problems.
- Begin to ask questions and construct explanations based on observations and the results of simple experiments.

### **Scientific Tools and Technology**

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

- Use magnifiers and measuring devices such as rulers, pan balances, and measuring cups.
- Use standard and non-standard units of measurement for length, width, weight, and volume (inches, cubes, parts of the body, etc.)
- Record findings in science journals – drawing pictures, diagrams and graphs.

## **Social Studies**

Through these studies students will gain an understanding of their roles as members of a family, school community, national community and Jewish community. In our study of history we will focus on the family and how families functioned during different time periods. We will also look at the education of Pilgrim children, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr., and other historical figures.

## **Geography**

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

About the World:

- Locate continents and oceans on the globe.
- Name the continents and oceans.
- Continents contain countries.
- The United States is in North America.
- There are fifty states.
- Locate Las Vegas, Nevada on a map.
- Cardinal directions can be used to locate places and physical features.

Physical Geography

- How features of the earth were formed, such as mountains and oceans.
- Features of rocks and minerals: igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic.
- Climate and topography of the desert.
- Climate and topography of the rainforest.

## **Political**

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

Symbols of Countries

- The flag is a symbol for a country.
- The symbolic meaning of the United States and Israeli Flags.
- Know the pledge of allegiance, and national anthems of the United States and Israel.

Government

- People form governments in order to develop rules and laws to govern and protect themselves.
- Key terms of government including democracy, citizenship, justice and equality.
- Three branches of government (judicial, executive and legislative) and the concept of checks and balances.
- Beginning with the Pilgrims, people of our country organized to make decisions for the common good of the people.
- The head of our country is the president and be familiar with Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt.
- Who is currently the President of the United States.
- Who represents our local government at the national level.
- How our local government is organized.
- Schools develop rules to govern and protect students and teachers.

Economics

- Be familiar with the currency of the United States.
- Through work, people in communities earn income (money) to help meet their needs and wants.
- Communities provide facilities and services to help satisfy the needs and wants of people who live there.

## American History

- Crossing the Land Bridge: Early American Civilizations.
- The Arrival of the Europeans: Christopher Columbus crossed the Atlantic Ocean.
- The Arrival of the Pilgrims: Life at Plymouth.
- The Revolutionary War, Freedom from England and the Thirteen Colonies.
- George Washington, the First President.
- Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. and Civil Rights.

## 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 each week. So too, Kashrut is strictly observed throughout 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 First Grade children learn about the mitzvah of *hachnasat orchim*, welcoming of guests.

Among the mitzvot lived in First Grade are:

- Tzedakah
- Shabbat – Candles, Kiddush, Challah
- Food – Kashrut, Brachot
- Tefillah
- Bikur Cholim
- Kavod – Mitzvot between people and their friends – understanding and appreciating the differences among the people in our school and families

- Defining and identifying Ma'asim Tovim – Good Deeds

### **Tefillah**

Tefillah is seen as the central way we express our thoughts, needs, and wishes as Jewish people. Tefillah 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, tefillah is always done in Hebrew. Boys and girls participate equally in all aspects of the school's curriculum and Jewish experiences.

We teach tefillah both to help children learn the *matbayah tefillah* (the way the tefillot are recited in the synagogue services) and the ideas and aspirations the tefillah encompasses.

Tefillah is a sequential curriculum. Each year builds on the tefillot 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 tefillot.

Tefillah is a daily experience. On Monday, the children celebrate Havdalah. On Friday, the children anticipate the beginning of Shabbat through the Kabbalat Shabbat. An overt connection is made between our school celebration and home observances and celebrations. For example, families are welcome to join us on Friday afternoons for Kabbalat Shabbat.

Because Hebrew reading and writing is a central part of the First Grade program, the children use a written text for learning the tefillot. The children use tefillah charts supplied by the Tal Am Hebrew language program.

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

*Modeh Ani; Mah Tov; Birchot haShachar; Ashrei; Haleluyah; Barchu...Yotzer Or; Shema; Torah Tzeva Lano Moshe; Birchot haTorah; Ayn Keloheino; Adon Olam; Kiddush Shel Shabbat.*

At the conclusion of the school year, the children have a Siddur Ceremony. Each child is given a siddur in recognition of the fact that he/she is able to read Hebrew well. A siddur is then used in all subsequent grades during tefillah.

### **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.

The children have a working book on each holiday. It is entirely in Hebrew and includes songs, games and other hands-on activities. In the First Grade in particular, the children learn about the months of the year and the annual holiday cycle. As the children's

Hebrew ability improves, the children read stories about the holidays. They also expand their repertoire of Jewish songs.

### **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.

The study of Torah continues to build on the Kindergarten learning. In First Grade, the children learn the names of the Five Books of the Torah and the name of each weekly parsha. By the end of the school year, the children will be able to recount the major Torah story cycle, identify the main personalities of the Torah, and understand many of the mitzvot.

### **Hebrew Language**

The following comes from curriculum materials of the Tal Am Hebrew Language First Grade program:

The goal of Tal Am is expressed in the acronym LIMUD (learning):

**L**efateach - to develop

**I**eled Yehudi - a Jewish child

**M**askil - who is literate

**U**masaur Bechol – committed and

**D**rachav – skilled to live Jewishly.

Our goal is to develop the evolving learner in a gradual process with a holistic and spiral curriculum. We aim to develop the knowledge about and commitment to:

- Am – People. Pride in being part of the Jewish people and understanding and accepting responsibility for Tikkun Olam (contributing towards improving life on earth).
- Torah – Commitment to study, respect, and transmit the entrusted sources from generation to generation.
- Israel – The land we came from and we returned to. Recognizing the centrality of Israel in our lives.
- Lashon – Hebrew is our people's communication, identity, and heritage language and is essential for authentic learning of our sources.

By the end of the year, the children are able to accurately read and write Hebrew. The children will greatly improve their passive understanding of the teacher's spoken Hebrew and their Hebrew booklets. So too, the children increasingly use their active Hebrew skills by both answering questions and initiating Hebrew dialogue. Hebrew vocabulary and sentence structure become increasingly sophisticated. The children assimilate the elemental grammar structures of the Hebrew language.

## **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 symbol (menorah) and flag of Israel.

Through our annual celebration of Yom Ha'Atzmaut (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. 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.

## **Specials**

In addition to classroom learning, all children are offered an enriching "Specials" program. Children have Music, 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 professional 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, the 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.

### **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. Students will improve skills, knowledge, and attitudes to help them lead active, healthy, and productive lives as adults.

### **COMPUTER**

The Computer program is fully integrated with the classroom curriculum. Kindergarten classes work on early learning programs, including early literacy and math. First Graders are introduced to a range of phonic awareness, reading, and math programs. Second Graders begin to use desktop publishing programs. They also learn basic editing skills and graphics programs. Third Graders are given their own disks to learn data management. They also use the computer as a research tool.

Fourth and Fifth Graders use the Internet to supplement their class learning and research projects. The Fourth Graders learn about databases. Students in Fifth Grade learn the fundamentals of spreadsheets.

#### ART

Each week, every child in SSDS has art for approximately 40 minutes. The children learn basic methods for drawing and painting and are given opportunities to explore new media. Curriculum objectives include understanding color, composition and tone and value relationships. Historically important artists and art movements will be discussed to enhance understanding of subject matter. Children should be able to discuss their artwork and the material presented in class both in the classroom and at home.



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