

Kindergarten at Solomon Schechter Day School is a time of exploration. Students develop foundational concepts of literacy, numeracy and fluency in both Hebrew and English alongside social skills, self-reliance and the ability to work independently through hands-on activities and the development of critical thinking skills.

Essential Outcomes

Subject-specific descriptions follow below, including a listing of *Essential Outcomes* which reflect targets for educational attainment that most children should master or exceed. In practice, these essential outcomes are based on the needs of each child and appropriate enrichment or remedial attention is assessed and provided. By the end of the year, each student is expected to accomplish, but not be limited to, these essential outcomes. **The listing of essential outcomes in each subject area below is highly abbreviated.** We are pleased to provide more thorough documentation of our curriculum if you desire.

Language Arts / Reading

Solomon Schechter Day School utilizes a guided reading approach and appropriately diverse literature to meet the differentiated needs of each individual child. Children begin reviewing concepts of print, and move quickly towards mastery of phonemic patterns that support decoding. By the end of the year, students increase independence as they develop an expanding base of sight-words which support reading fluency. Effective letter formation, the development of writing skills and reading for pleasure are stressed throughout the year.

Essential Outcomes (Selected)

- Count the number of words in a sentence and syllables in a word
- Identify letters of the alphabet in order and learn sound/letter relationships
- Match sound to spelling and blend letters and phonograms
- Sight-read and comprehend at least 25 high-frequency words
- Develop syntactic awareness
- Respond to what is heard or read by making personal connections and sharing understanding (e.g. through offering relevant comments or reactions and participating in discussions)
- Develop vocabulary by listening to and discussing unknown words in stories
- Develop and apply pre-reading strategies to aid comprehension: access prior knowledge, preview text and pictures, make general predictions

Language Arts / Writing

- Self-generate ideas for writing
- Participate in pre-writing experiences (e.g., communicate writing ideas orally)
- Write independently to convey meaning using a combination of temporary spelling and sight words
- Write first and last name by memory
- Write for a variety of purposes such as lists, signs, notes, letters
- Awareness of print conventions (e.g., writing from left to right and spacing between words)
- Recognition of forms of punctuation and correct usage
- Use conventional spelling for words on the “word wall”
- Form letters using correct pathway of movement (letter formation)

Hebrew

Over the course of the Gan year, students will develop a comfort with spoken Hebrew and an intuitive feel of the language. Our Hebrew program offers a full immersion environment as students acquire practical, day to day spoken Hebrew in an “Ivrit b’Ivrit” environment using the Halav u’Devash curriculum developed by the Jewish Agency for Israel. Instruction creatively weaves art, song and physical activity as students acquire a working vocabulary of approximately 250 words, which are closely coordinated with the content of our General Studies curriculum so that essential concepts are reinforced in two languages.

Essential Outcomes (Selected)

- Respond to all teacher directions regarding the daily flow of classroom interactions in Hebrew
- Develop an expanding lexicon for classroom work in Hebrew including colors, numbers, days of the week, Jewish holidays, body parts, names of plants and animals, the geography of the classroom and all other concepts employed by the General Studies teacher
- Develop visual familiarity with the basic shapes of Hebrew alphabet
- Share songs and stories that peers in Israel would learn in Gan
- Locate the State of Israel on maps and solidify identity with Israel via its flag, its national anthem and its unique national customs

Physical Education

The Solomon Schechter curriculum promotes healthy physical activity across each grade level by scheduling a full period of physical education each day, in addition to morning and afternoon recess. While recess is supervised but loosely structured, our physical education program is skill-centered and supports the healthy development of school age children. Research indicates all physical activity has a positive impact on health and learning, our attention to gross motor development, fine motor control and upper body toning has important benefits for students that are just beginning to write.

Tefillot/Prayer

Daily tefillot during the Gan year offer a comforting and joyful ritual that draws students into the start of each day. Participation in tefillot helps strengthen their sense of belonging to a group, both in their classroom and as a part of the Jewish people as a whole. This commitment to daily tefillah offers children an early and intuitive knowledge of the cadences of Jewish ritual, so that they may participate confidently at their respective synagogues and grow into leaders of services as they mature.

Essential Outcomes (Selected)

- Develop a commitment to sharing feelings and appreciation with peers
- Become familiar with basic patterns of Jewish liturgy morning blessings, call-and-response prayers such as the bar'chu and chanted liturgical texts such as the Shema
- Cultivate a sense of thankfulness, appreciation and an awareness of the sanctity of the world

Mathematics

Through studying mathematics, children acquire skills to better describe and explore the world around them. Gan students use the calendar as an introduction to numeracy, developing the symbolic language of numbers and counting structures including units and place values. Students build familiarity with numbers by counting objects, graphing their findings and ultimately learning to express mathematical concepts by using simple mathematical formulas.

Essential Outcomes (Selected)

- Create and continue patterns and describe how simple repeating patterns are generated
- Reads and writes numbers from 0 to 100
- Skip-count from 0 to 100 by 5's and 10's and from 0-20 by 2's
- Use mathematical vocabulary (more than, less than, plus, minus, equals)
- Conduct surveys to generate graphs, solve problems and answer questions
- Tell time to the hour
- Identify and understand the numerical value of a penny, nickel, dime and quarter
- Generate addition and subtraction sentences for number stories up to 10

Science

In Gan we develop the skills of careful observation, asking scientific questions, collecting data and drawing logical inferences from the living and non-living world around us. By appreciating the complexity of the world around them, students also develop a sense of appreciation for nature and the environment that supports the religious values of sanctity and respect for God's creations.

Essential Outcomes (Selected)

- Recognize that people have five senses, explore those senses and the function and location of the corresponding sense organs
- Observe the life cycle of the butterfly and identify the basic characteristics of insects
- Recognize that plants are living organisms that need air, water, food and sunlight and be able to identify the four basic parts of a plant
- Understand scientific inquiry and the scientific process by conducting "science in a glass" experiments
- Learn the importance of dental hygiene

Social Studies

The discipline of Social Studies affords Gan students an opportunity to learn the important lessons of citizenship, geography, and history. They explore their own identities in relationship to expanding circles of association: family, friends, school, community, nation and the world at large. During the year, students begin to understand that each of these circles makes us special, and that they should take pride in the identities which make them unique. At the same time, each circle of association carries unique responsibilities, which our students begin to formally assume during the Gan year.

Essential Outcomes (Selected)

- Recognize the geographical features and symbols of the United States, Missouri and the State of Israel
- Recite and understand the importance of the Pledge of Allegiance and Hatikvah
- Participate in setting classroom rules as an introduction to the idea of government
- Learn to distinguish between needs and wants
- Explore feelings and equate specific feelings to an event
- Explore the newspaper as a vehicle for gathering information about local as well as more global events.