

'Makom' Playschool

Jewish & Hebrew Studies

Dear Playschool families,

The month of February was mostly dedicated to Purim - the most cheerful and colorful of all the Jewish holidays. The holiday celebrates the salvation of the Jewish people in the Persian Empire by Queen Esther as described in the Scroll of Esther - Megillat Esther. Since this holiday of Purim offered us many activities, songs, stories and customs, the playschool team (i.e. 5 excited children) has been working hard, from the beginning of the month almost until the end, to meet all the holiday tasks set before them, including taking part in the special project of Megillat Ester at the Kiever Synagogue.

At the end of the month, we made sure to find a window for parashat hashvua - Mishpatim (Laws) for its value of the relationships between men, and for Parashat Truma.

Megillat Esther

We learned the story of Megillat Esther. King Ahashverosh needed a new queen to come and live with him in his palace. The one person he liked most of all was Esther, who was not only pretty but also kind and smart. Esther became his queen, but she didn't tell him she was Jewish. There was a man who worked in the palace who was not very nice. His name was Haman. He expected everyone to bow down to him. Mordechai, Esther uncle, did not bow down to Haman, and Haman became very angry and convinced the King to declare that the Jews will all be killed. Mordechai asked Esther to talk to the King and ask him to stop Haman. He also told Esther that the guards of Ahashverosh wanted to kill him. Ahashverosh ordered Haman to honor Mordechai, and to lead him around the city on the king's horse. The story had a happy ending. Haman was hanged and the Jews were saved.



Purim



Making Megillat Esther

While learning the Purim story, the children made their own Megillah. They chose six scenes from the story that described important key points in the narrative, painted them and glued them in the order on a scrolled cardboard. Then, they opened the finished scroll and told the story according to the ordered pictures to the rest of the group.

Participating in the art project of Megillat Esther at the Kiever Synagogue.

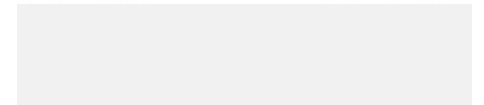
The children illustrated scenes from Megillat Esther using watercolours and markers. These were digitally scanned and, along with the other Megillah art that Makom participants (young and old) made, projected on the east wall of the Kiever Synagogue during Makom's Megillah reading. The artwork added a lot to the ritual reading and many people commented that it made Purim more interesting and meaningful for them. The most popular character among the children to draw was ...Mean Haman!

Mask Making

It is customary to dress up when celebrating the happy holiday of Purim, and this custom is very old. The children made their own mask and then put them on to hide and change their outer appearance. However... at the same time, their own creation of the mask revealed their true, hidden nature: Fearsome fighters!



Making your Own Megillat Esther



Esther sleeps in the palace. The king sits upon his throne. Haman plans to destroy the Jews.
Elie Levy Kramer

And Esther said: An adversary, and an enemy, this wicked Haman. (7:6)



Leytzan-Katan (Little Clown)

Clowns are an important part of a happy and joyful Purim. We learned the Hebrew most popular Purim song "Leytzan Katan" and we also made one!

Mishloach Manot

Mishloach manot are gifts of food that Jews send to each other during the holiday of Purim. "Mishloach manot" means the "sending of portions" in Hebrew and this mitzvah is meant to ensure that everyone has enough food to enjoy the traditional Purim feast. We made such "Portions" in the form of Haman's ear (Hamantasch – in Yiddish), and we had one real Haman's ear in it as a sweet treat to give to the parents.



Ellon: "Haman's ears for \$10"



Emmet's Birthday

We have not forgotten Emmet's birthday. The children made him a birthday card and decorated it. With collaboration of the Hebrew learning, the children wrote Mazal-Tov in Hebrew.



Mazal-Tov



The Menorah

Parashat Truma

According to the biblical historical narrative sequence, we learned the story of the construction of the Temple in the desert. The children learned about the Menorah, a seven-branched lampstand used in the ancient "Mishkan" (Tabernacle) in the desert, as one of the symbols of Judaism since ancient times. The kids compared the Menorah to the Chanukah Menorah and drew a seven branched Menorah.



Nikpotz Lagova

Games and Physical activity

The Hebrew movement song "Nikpotz Lagova" (Let's Jump High") was the favorite physical activity this month. Jumping, rolling hands, lifting up shoulders, walking forward, walking backwards, and finally hugging – became the traditional dance of the end of each session.

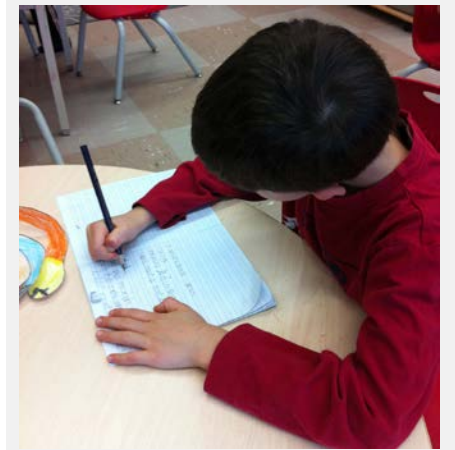
Other dances included "Uga Uga" (Cake Cake) and other Hebrew songs.



Hebrew

We learned to write different words in Hebrew that served us in our Purim activities: פורים שמח, אסתר המלכה, (happy Purim, Queen Esther) and more. We learned songs in Hebrew, and we started learning "Ma Nishtana" for Pesach.

The cursive letters were still a hit!



What's next?

Pesach is waiting for us with songs, the Seder customs, and learning the Hagada. At issue - Learning to sing "Ma Nishtana" for the upcoming Seder, and making our own Hagada.

...Dancing is fun



Art Gallery

