

TEMPLE SOLEL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND LESSON PLAN INSTRUCTIONS

TEMPLE SOLEL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

It is the challenge of the Temple Solel Religious School to touch the heart and soul of every student through the study of Judaism. The school creates an environment where students learn to be comfortable being Jewish. Younger students experience Judaism through their senses: music, art, cooking and stories expose them to the richness of Jewish culture. Intermediate students search for answers to life's questions through an exploration of Jewish values and feelings. Older students develop awareness of our rich history and modern Jewish community. They are encouraged to apply Jewish concepts to social action and personal decision making. A successful Religious School program incorporates Jewish learning into a child's developmental stages leading to a foundation of ethical Jewish values and a deep pride in our people's way of life.

LESSON PLAN INSTRUCTIONS

It is crucial, as Jewish educators, to be clear about the specific information and ideas we want our students to learn each week in class. If we are clear about our goals, the students will receive clear messages as to what they should learn.

Each grade level at the Temple Solel School has a list of concepts that form the base of every lesson. Before the school year starts, you will decide which set of concepts you will teach each week. These concepts will guide you in deciding which activities you provide for your students. The concepts will be listed on the Temple Solel website (www.templesolel.net, click on Education, click on Religious School, click on Religious School Concepts).

It is important that you study the concepts you will teach on a higher level. You can read library books and/or teacher's guides about the subject. It is your responsibility to be well versed in the subject matter being taught.

Learning is most relevant to students when it applies to their own lives. Many of the concepts relate their Jewish learning to the lives of the students.

When preparing your lesson plan each week, first read and familiarize yourself with the concepts you will teach. Then prepare your lesson accordingly. The activities you provide should relate to the concepts you choose.

Your lesson plan must include the beginning and ending time of each activity. Be sure to include singing, dance, assemblies, library visits and/or special programs in your lesson plan.

If you show a video or lead a discussion, you must include the discussion questions. If you show a video, you should include questions for the students to answer during the video (for third grade and older – to be photocopied and handed out to each child and filled in during the video) and discussion questions to discuss with the class following the video.

Studies have shown that children cannot concentrate for more minutes than the number of minutes of their age, plus two. Therefore, if your students are five years old, activities should change every seven minutes. If your students are ten years old, they should change every twelve minutes. You need to change activities according to this schedule. If you have an activity that is longer than the number of minutes your children can concentrate, then you need to get the children up to stretch in the middle of the activity.

Activities should vary from: 1) active to passive 2) sitting to standing 3) individual to group. Every activity should be followed by a different kind of activity (ie: dance to discussion to art to video). It is perfectly acceptable to use activities and lessons from teacher's guides and activity books! You do not need to reinvent the wheel when planning your lessons!

A sample lesson plan is included. Each week's lesson plan is due by email by 8:45am on the morning it is taught.