

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

Judaic Studies  
Language Arts  
Mathematics  
Science  
Social Studies

ושננתם לבניך

“And you shall teach  
your children...”



**SOLOMON SCHECHTER  
DAY SCHOOL OF NASSAU COUNTY**  
Barbara Lane, Jericho, New York 11753 • (516) 935-1441

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
27 Cedar Swamp Road, Glen Cove, New York 11542 • (516) 656-5500  
Mr. Allan Dalfen, Principal  
Ms. Ofra Hiltzik, Assistant Principal

## A Message to the Reader

This brochure lists the skills and abilities in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies that students should acquire by the end of the Sixth Grade to earn promotion to the Seventh 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 Solomon Schechter Day School of Nassau County/Solomon Schechter High School of Long Island. Similar brochures can be obtained for other grades. If you have any questions or suggestions, please be sure to contact your child's school principal.

## Mission Statement

The mission of Solomon Schechter Day School of Nassau County/Solomon Schechter High School of Long Island 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

Solomon Schechter Day School of Nassau County/Solomon Schechter High School of Long Island 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 through 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

### Hebrew Language

Grade 6 Hebrew students attend a class that is conducted in Hebrew in order to expand their aural comprehension skills. Sixth Graders develop reading comprehension skills and achieve fluency in phonetic reading. They continue to develop their written expression skills through writing paragraphs, writing book reports, and analyzing Hebrew sentence structure. In the area of grammar, students study the *Pa'al* verb form in the past, present, and future tenses, as well as the grammatical forms of numbers and nouns. Reading materials and activities are selected from a variety of textbooks to create the most meaningful experience for the students.

In addition to regular coursework, Sixth Grade Hebrew students engage in a variety of activities that are geared towards enhancing students' personal connections to Jewish religious values and experiences in addition to the Hebrew language. Many of these events focus on holiday celebrations, such as Hanukkah, Purim, Pesach, Yom haShoah, Yom haAtzmaut, and the like. Other activities include the hobby fair, a literary magazine, and Israeli current events.

The *Gesher* program is designed for students who are new to the study of Hebrew language or who will benefit from greater individual attention. These students study at a more individualized pace. Teachers adapt materials to meet the needs of the class, teaching in both Hebrew and English in order to develop aural comprehension skills and to ensure student understanding. Students engage in hands-on activities, such as art projects, role-playing, and acting, as well as engaging in activities that are centered on reading and writing.

### Bible

The Bible is the source of our sense of history as a people. We study Bible as one of the basic texts to understanding our identity as a Jewish people. In the Middle School, there are goals and objectives common to all grades, as well as specific goals and skills for each grade level.

In general, the goals of the Bible curriculum are to learn the source of the *mitzvot*, to develop pride in the Jewish people, to have the students recognize that we are a unique nation, to learn the importance of the unity of the people and the important role of the nation's leaders, and to encourage the students to see themselves as future leaders. We teach Jewish values and concepts through the material in the texts and the opinions the students express about them. We encourage the development of skills to enable the students to continue to learn Bible in high school and on their own. We also try to present the text as relevant to their lives so that they will desire to do so.

The texts studied in the Sixth Grade Bible classes include the *Book of Exodus* beginning with chapter 15, the weekly portion (*parsha*); 1 Samuel: chapters 1-15; and *The Book of Esther*.

## Sixth Grade Bible goals and skills:

- Ability to find the location of different books in the Bible.
- Ability to use the Pentateuch, finding chapter and verse.
- Correct pronunciation and phrasing when reading a verse.
- Ability to read and understand a verse.
- To recognize the cantillation notes (*trop*), which help divide a verse by topic.
- Ability to read Rashi script.
- Ability to understand Rashi's difficulty with a verse and explain it.
- Develop original opinions on a topic.
- Understand the difference between the divisions into chapters and the divisions into weekly portions.
- Understand the origins of the weekly readings and know when the Torah is read.
- Know the different special Torah, Maftir, and Haftorah readings for the year.
- Use of Hebrew language as a vehicle to a deeper understanding of the text.
- Understand concepts such as sin and punishment, forgiveness, mercy in the Bible and as relevant to our modern lives.
- Ability to use Midrash or Aggadah (non-literal interpretations) and differentiate between it and other commentaries.
- Ability to differentiate between what is written in the text and Aggadah.
- Ability to connect themes and concepts from Torah to Prophets and vice versa.
- Understanding that the events in the Torah are not always written in chronological order or in sequence.

## English Language Arts

### Reading

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

- Read and understand
  - At least 10 books.
  - At least four writings about one subject, or by the same author, or in one genre in literature. (These writings would include complete texts, specific excerpts, abridged versions, essays, and short stories.)
    - Informational texts (such as reference materials, newspapers and magazines, and textbooks).
- Show evidence of understanding their reading, both in writing and classroom discussion.
- Skim texts to get an overview of content or locate specific information.
- Put together ideas, information, and points of view from several books.
- Read silently and independently.
- Read a series of steps to accomplish a task (for example, how to follow a recipe, fill out a form, etc.).
- Use computer software to expand reading choices as an option for either enrichment or remediation.
- Keep a record of the year's reading, 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 feature article or report using three or more sources of information. (This writing should use details and examples to support larger ideas.)
- A response to literature, such as an essay making connections between characters or themes from different stories. (This writing should express the student's thinking and should use examples from the stories to support his or her ideas.)
- A story, fictional or autobiographical. (This writing should use a variety of strategies to create interest, such as dialogue and suspense.)
- A narrative procedure explaining how something is done. (This writing should lay out clear steps that are easy to follow, and should anticipate anything that may be confusing to a reader.)

All finished writing should have an introduction, a middle that consists of supporting sentences, and a conclusion; should use correct 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:*

- Make connections between different sources of information and ideas.
- Ask questions to understand better.
- Respond thoughtfully to questions, using details and examples.
- Use knowledge from other subjects and personal experience to form and express opinions.
- Take turns speaking, and respond to each other's questions and comments without interrupting.

- Share data, facts, and ideas, and back them up with sources and explanations to persuade a listener.

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

- Present reports five to seven minutes long for teachers and other students in all subject areas.
- Organize what they will say using notes or other memory aids.
- Begin by stating a main idea or purpose; support it with details, examples, and reasons; and end by summarizing main points.

## **Grammar and Usage of the English Language**

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

- Grammar, including correct subject/verb agreement.
- Paragraph structure, including main and supporting ideas.
- Punctuation, including semi-colons, quotation marks, commas, and colons.
- Sentence construction, including correct subject/verb agreement, and verb tense.
- Spelling strategies for Sixth 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.
- Rearranging the sequence of words, sentences, and paragraphs.
- Adding or deleting details and explanations.
- Using dictionaries, reference books, and thesauruses to assist in editing.
- Learning word processing skills.

## **Literature**

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

- Identify and compare similar themes in a variety of books.
- Begin to notice and think about the way descriptive language (e.g., simile, metaphor, personification, etc.) helps an author create meaning.
- Begin to identify and compare literary elements (e.g., setting, plot, character, rhythm, rhyme, etc.) in different types of literature.
- Examine the ways in which characters change and develop throughout a story.
- Develop and compare ideas (e.g., draw conclusions, make predictions, etc.) about events, characters, and settings from one book to another.
- Produce written work in at least one genre of literature (e.g., poetry).

# Mathematics

*By the end of the school year, students should understand and be able to use:*

## **Arithmetic and Number Concepts**

- Whole numbers and decimals.
- Decimals and fractions.
- Exponents.
- Squares and square roots.
- Integers.
- Order of operations.
- Estimation.
- Multiples and factors.
- Prime factorization.
- Mixed numbers and fractions.

## **Geometry and Measurement Concepts**

- Points, lines, and planes.
- Classifying lines.
- Angles.
- Polygons.
- Symmetry and congruence.
- Transformations.
- Tessellations.
- Edges and vertices.
- Two dimensional views of solids.

## **Function and Algebra Concepts**

- Ratios.
- Rates.
- Proportions.
- Circle graphs.

- Discount and simple interest.
- Similar and congruent figures.
- Ratios and proportions of similar figures.

## **Statistics and Probability Concepts**

- Collecting and organizing data.
- Using graphs to display data.
- Histograms.
- Mean, median, mode.
- Experimental probability.

## **Mathematical Process**

*By the end of the year, students should be able to:*

- Talk about mathematics in their daily life and in their future.
- Create, analyze, and solve word problems in all of the concept areas.
- Use a variety of problem-solving strategies to solve problems with multiple steps.
- Work in groups to solve complex problems.
- Use calculators for problem solving.
- Solve basic linear equations.

# Science

The following list includes examples of Science Activities, content, and skills for the Sixth Grade. Science skills are as important as content understandings, and students will be encouraged to use these skills to explore topics or themes in depth. Science instruction for students in Grades 6-8 is based on The New York State Intermediate Science Core Curriculum (Grades 5-8) and The New York City New Standards Performance Standards in Science (Middle School Level). Therefore, by the end of Grade 8, all students should have received instruction in all areas of the Intermediate Level Science Core Curriculum.

*By the end of the Sixth Grade, through inquiry activities, students should:*

## **Life Sciences Concepts**

- Understand and describe how the structure of a cell, an organ (such as the heart), an organ system (such as the respiratory system), and an organism (such as a frog), affects its functioning.
- Microscopically observe cells (the basic unit of living things), and cell division (cell theory).
- Understand how cells, organs, and organ systems interact with each other in complex organisms, (e.g., how the respiratory system functions to bring oxygen to cells throughout an organism).
- Understand the relationships in an ecosystem between the environment and the populations of producers (plants), consumers (animals such as rabbits and lions), and decomposers (organisms such as bacteria and fungi that break down wastes and/or dead organisms) that live in that environment. These relationships include the flow of energy from the Sun through producers (photosynthesis), to consumers, and then to decomposers.
- Understand that an ecosystem's balance is the result of interactions and interdependence between the populations and their environment, and that this balance can be altered by a variety of things, including human activities.
- Understand reproduction and the role of genes in heredity, including using models such as Punnett Squares to predict the likelihood of a trait, such as a pea plant's flower color showing up in offspring.
- Understand and give examples of how individual species have changed, survived, or become extinct over time (evolution).
- Observe and describe the development of plants and animals and their ability to sense and respond to their environment (regulation and behavior of organisms).
- Describe the importance of nutrients, vitamins, and minerals in maintaining health.

## **Scientific Connections and Applications**

- Understand and describe examples of the importance of science and technology and the impact they have on our lives, such as how research scientists discover new treatments for diseases.
- Develop and describe, orally and in writing, appropriate choices leading to good personal health, including an understanding of the role peer pressure plays in making those choices.
- Understand big ideas and unifying concepts, including the relationship between form and function (e.g., the shape of a bird's foot and its ability to swim); order and organization (e.g., respiration of a plant in the carbon and oxygen cycle); change and constancy (e.g., how an introduced species of insect can affect the health of a forest); cause and effect (e.g., how salt can affect the cells of a water plant such as elodea).
- Understand the planning, problem-solving, and decision-making process in which the designed world is created (e.g., before deciding whether or not to get rid of an insect species, the expense, impact, and reasonableness of different methods have to be considered).

## **Scientific Thinking**

- Ask appropriate questions, and use evidence and concepts learned from observations and reliable sources, as well as common sense, to construct explanations for experiment results.

- Work individually and in teams using appropriate methods to collect, describe, record, and share information and ideas, such as building a model of a cell to help explain its function.
- Identify the variables that could affect the results of an experiment, such as how the amount of food, light, water, and temperature affects the growth of a plant.
- Propose and critique alternate explanations for observations, and distinguish between fact and opinion.
- Plan and evaluate an investigation in order to solve a problem.

### **Scientific Tools and Technologies**

- Use technology and tools such as microscopes, triple-beam balances (scales), thermometers, and computers to observe and measure objects, organisms, and phenomena.
- Collect, analyze, and record data using mathematical concepts such as mean (average), mode (most frequent amount), and probability (the likelihood of something happening).
- Use a variety of means such as data tables, graphs, and databases, to record information.
- Recognize possible sources of bias and perspective in data, such as the perspective of a fruit growers' organization on a study it has sponsored on the healthfulness of fruits.
- Acquire information from observation, experimentation, print, and nonprint sources.

### **Scientific Communication**

- Use information gathered from experiments and other sources to explain and defend conclusions and resolve disagreements.
- Represent data and results in a variety of ways, including tables, graphs, drawings, diagrams, art-work, and both technical and creative writing.
- Critique published materials as well as written and oral explanations.
- Explain and defend a scientific concept or procedure to other students.

### **Scientific Investigation**

- Plan and conduct at least one of these investigations: An experiment with controlled variables, such as the effect of gravity on the development of a plant; Field Work, such as observing the organisms that live in the tree pits around the vicinity of the school; Design, such as creating a model of a DNA molecule; Secondary Research, such as researching changes in a local body of water over the last two centuries.

## **Social Studies**

The Sixth Grade Social Studies program, which is based on the New York State Education Department's Social Studies Core Curriculum, focuses on the interactions, similarities, and differences between the peoples of the Eastern Hemisphere (Europe, Asia, and Africa), and those of the United States, Canada, and Latin American nations. Students use geographic and economic information to understand the social, political, and historical perspectives of the peoples of the Eastern Hemisphere. While exploring the themes listed below, students should demonstrate a variety of skills and strategies. These are followed by examples of tasks that Sixth Graders will be asked to perform during the school year.

### **THEMES**

The study of the Eastern Hemisphere includes the history, geography, economies, and governments of nations in the Eastern Hemisphere.

### **SKILLS AND STRATEGIES**

*Students should:*

#### **Getting information**

- Collect information using different types of sources, such as maps, globes, graphs, charts, newspapers, magazines, documents, historical fiction, timelines, political cartoons, surveys, media, museums, interviews, diaries, posters, brochures, travel guides, the Internet, CD-ROM, and other reference works.
- Skim texts to get an overview of content or locate specific information.
- Collect information using a variety of research strategies.
- Chart information from primary and secondary sources.
- Keep a collection of writing and project work on Social Studies topics.
- Reflect upon work and goals regularly.

#### **Using information**

- Interpret and represent information in multiple ways, such as graphs, political cartoons, maps, charts, diagrams, timelines, multimedia, posters, etc.
- Identify differences and similarities in information.
- Make connections between sources of information and ideas.
- Ask questions to further the investigation of topics.
- Identify and summarize information from documents.
- Use knowledge from other subjects and personal experience to form and express opinions.

#### **Presenting Information Orally and in Written Form**

- Write an essay using the process of planning, drafting, revising, and editing.

- Use five or more sources of information to produce a piece of informational writing, such as a Social Studies report or feature article, that meets the New York City English Language Arts Performance standards and shows an understanding of Sixth Grade Social Studies content.
- Develop a current events presentation using the five major questions of journalism (who, what, when, where, and how).
- Organize and present information orally using notes or other memory aids.
- Use computer technology to construct tables, graphs, and charts.

### **Collaborative Learning**

- Understand that others may have a different point of view.
- Participate in group planning and discussion of projects.
- Take responsibility for completing individual and group assignments.

### **Identifying and Solving Problems**

- Develop ideas by drawing conclusions and making predictions about historical events, characters, settings and issues.
- Identify and present the results of problem-solving investigations.
- Identify current political or social problems and conduct research to find solutions.

### **EXAMPLES OF TASKS IN GRADE SIX**

*Using a variety of skills and strategies, by the end of the school year students should:*

#### **History**

- Understand and create a timeline identifying key events in the histories of Eastern Hemisphere nations.
- Write a persuasive essay supporting a specific historic event or issue that took place in the Eastern Hemisphere.
- Develop an appreciation for the arts and sciences of the ancient civilizations.
- Using graphic aids, compare and record how different religions of the Eastern Hemisphere have affected its people.
- Participate in a debate focusing on the negative and positive effects technological innovations have had on people places and regions.
- Work collaboratively with a group to create a newspaper of the period using original documents from civilizations of the Eastern Hemisphere.

#### **Geography**

- Use various grids and symbols to locate places in the Eastern Hemisphere.
- Use maps, globes, and photographs to gather, process, and report information on the Eastern Hemisphere.
- Develop a map identifying the trade routes uniting Africa, Asia, and Europe during the late Middle Ages.
- Develop a map identifying the location of the river valleys of the ancient world, the importance of the Aegean world, the extent of the Roman Empire, the conquests of Alexander the Great, etc.
- Deliver an oral presentation explaining how people in the Eastern Hemisphere have been affected by geography.

#### **Economics**

- Be aware of the diverse living standards in the Eastern Hemisphere.
- Describe the unlimited needs of people that must be met with limited resources.
- Compare and contrast various economic systems from nations of the Eastern Hemisphere.

#### **Civics, Citizenship, and Government**

- Compare and contrast the differing views of the people of the Eastern Hemisphere regarding authority and law.
- Categorize data showing how governments in the Eastern Hemisphere change to meet people's needs.
- Construct tables, charts, and graphs that represent information about international organizations formed to promote peace (United Nations, NATO, etc.).
- Give an oral presentation on the traditions of a nation in the Eastern Hemisphere or Africa.



**SOLOMON SCHECHTER**  
**DAY SCHOOL OF NASSAU COUNTY**  
Barbara Lane, Jericho, New York 11753 • (516) 935-1441

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
27 Cedar Swamp Road, Glen Cove, New York 11542 • (516) 656-5500