

[Class Summary, Middles - October 2009](#)

Last session our focus was primarily on Sukkot. We played Sukkot Trivia ([download here](#)) and learned about how Sukkot is both a celebration of the harvest and a commemoration of the Exodus from Egypt. The kids really had a great time with the trivia game. We also discussed how Sukkot is about cooperation...working together to build and decorate the Sukkah, just as people work together during the harvest. To practice cooperation we played one of the students' favorite games...the human knot. Everyone stands in a circle, reaches across the circle and takes the hands of others, and then the group works together to untangle the the knot and make a new, untangled circle. We had a great time and no one lost any limbs! The students made paper lanterns to decorate the Sukkah at Tom and Barbara's.

As is tradition, my class joined the others to decorate the panels for the Sukkah.

Muriel joined us for our Hebrew lesson and brought some fantastic items for show and tell...a lulav and etrog.

The students were sent home with homework. The assignment from this session is to practice Hebrew writing. Each student was given a worksheet along with a page that shows the proper way to write the Hebrew letters in block form. Download the [worksheet here](#). Also available for download - a [Hebrew writing guide](#) and [alphabet](#).

[Class summary - Middles, September 2009](#)

Session

Sept 13, 2009

We spent the early part getting to know each other. We introduced ourselves and each shared the favorite thing we did this summer.

Next the topic of discussion was about what it is to be Jewish. Quite a bit of time was spent talking about the major holidays throughout the year:

Rosh Hashanah
Yom Kippur
Sukkot
Chanukah
Tu B'Shvat
Purim
Passover

We also discussed some key Jewish values (Tzedakah, Tikkun Olam, taking responsibility for our own actions) and talked about how we would be working with the pre-school class on a Tikkun Olam project throughout the year.

Muriel Sterne visited us for our Hebrew lesson.

Shalom Moreh Scott (Hello, teacher Scott)
Shalom Talmidim (Hello students)

Rosh Hashanah related words

Rosh - head
Hashanah - year
Shofar
Ta[uach - apple
D'vash - honey

We joined the other classes for apples and honey and listened to Sam (from the juniors class) play the shofar.

I took the kids through a slide presentation on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. They had the opportunity to hear the shofar again including the shofar calls (tekia, teruah, shevarim, tekia gedolah) as well as the singing of Kol Nidre. We will try to post the PowerPoint on the Word Press site. ([Download that presentation here.](#)) If for some reason that does not work, I can email it to the parents.

I had planned on having each student think about something they could do to help

make the world a better place and to draw a picture depicting what that is and how they are going to help. Unfortunately, time was tight so we will finish the project at the next session. I then hope to take the pictures and mount them to poster boards so they can be displayed in our classroom throughout the year.

We ended the class by joining the pre-school students to decide what the Tikkun Olam focus would be for the year. The majority of students were interested in doing things related to animals. Projects may include making toys for animals at shelters, organizing pet food drives, letter writing (e.g. to encourage people to work to reduce the destruction of the rainforests in order to protect the wildlife) or others yet to be determined.

Each student was given a blue folder (Katja had to leave early and did not get hers, however the documents will be available electronically). In the folder was a schedule for the year, a sheet titled "Measure Up" (this was an assignment I had ready for class if time permitted...time was not on our side) and a sheet with the header "[Yamim Noraim Journal](#)."

Yamim Noraim is the 10 day period between Rosh Hashanah. In the spirit of Rosh Hashanah as a time for us all to think about the things we can do to better ourselves as people and things we can do to help improve the world around us, I would like the students to complete the journal with an entry on each day of Yamim Noraim. ([Download here](#).) It should only take a few minutes each night. They simply need to think about something they did well that day, something they could have done better and a goal for the next day.

We had a fantastic time (at least I did) and the class flew by!
