

JCS Class Summaries--December 8, 2013

Littles Class

This week The Littles discussed Shabbat, and the need for rest days. We discussed how Shabbat is similar to vacations, and how it is different. We read a Shabbat story, we drew pictures of how we like to spend our rest days, and we discussed them as a class.

As I often do, when each student finishes their task for the day, they can look through the stack of JCS books that we have. This time, Manny grabbed a book and began to read aloud to the other students. It was a great moment.

Also, there was a tiny sweatshirt left behind at the end of class. It will be returned at the next session.

Middles Class

In December, the Middles class focused on tradition. We reviewed Chanukah by watching the Rugrats Chanukah Special. We followed this up by discussing who passes the traditions and stories down from one generation to the next in the movie, as well as in our own families (here's looking at, you, moms and dads!). We thought about different kinds of traditions and enjoyed one of the best - food! Together we made some very delicious rugelach. We also had a great music and Hebrew lesson with Sarah.

Juniors Class

In December, during our fourth session of the school year, we focused on learning about the Holocaust and different forms of resistance to the Nazis. Students recalled facts that they already knew about the Holocaust and listened to a short talk (with accompanying slideshow) that outlined the historical conditions that gave rise to Nazism, many of the Holocaust's tragic events, and the varied ways that people responded to the horror and tragedy. For the remainder of the lesson, students learned about Jewish and "righteous Gentile" resistance to the Nazis. After returning from break, Sarah taught us to sing "Zog Nit Keynmol," the

anthem of the Jewish partisans' movement. Then the class split into groups and rotated through learning stations that focused, respectively, on Jewish armed resistance, Jewish cultural resistance, and "righteous Gentile" solidarity resistance efforts. At the first station, students read about partisans and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and then listened to another Yiddish partisan song. At the second station, they made realistic and imaginative drawings and then compared them to drawings made by children at the Terezin concentration camp, reflecting on how the children's art constituted a form of cultural resistance. At the third station, students learned about "righteous Gentiles" who helped to hide, protect, or smuggle Jews to safety during the Holocaust, and created collages in honor of the "tzedeck" or "tzedecket" (righteous man or woman) of their choice. Students left the classroom with an understanding that even in the face of Nazi terror, brave Jewish people and their Gentile allies fought to save Jewish lives and preserve hope in the future.