

BAIS YAAKOV LOWER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT THE

Forefront of Innovative Teaching



Language is the most powerful gift human beings are given. It makes the world accessible and opens the portal to knowledge. Reading is one of the most effective means to gain proficiency in and mastery of language.

Bais Yaakov is continuously re-imagining teaching methodologies and implementing new programming to best prepare their students for success. Preschoolers, in their crucial early years of learning, are taught pre-reading and language skills with a multi-sensory approach, keeping them fully engaged and excited about learning and helping them focus and retain information. These adorable youngsters can be seen touching, smelling, observing, listening, and role playing their way to knowledge. This multi-sensory approach to learning is a cornerstone of Bais Yaakov's highly successful Kriability program, which encourages girls to see, hear, and feel the aleph-beis. Learning foundational Hebrew reading skills with these highly interactive techniques helps create solid neural pathways to reinforce knowledge and make it intuitive.

Not only is Bais Yaakov innovative in its approach to teaching reading and language, but its teachers are employing new and exciting teaching tech-



niques and strategies curriculum-wide. Mrs. Beth Pasternak, Lower Elementary General Studies Coordinator, has implemented a more kinesthetic approach to learning, incorporating more songs, games, and movement in the classrooms. Students enjoy a wonderfully interactive experience in which they often partner with others, helping each other succeed. This fosters camaraderie and brings a level of comfort to the girls, leaving uncertainty by the wayside as they work with their friends.

Using this method, teachers are able to differentiate instruction with wisdom, warmth, and creativity to meet the needs of all students. Students benefit tremendously from this individualized teaching style as each girl is primed to fulfill her unique potential.

Mrs. Dassi Barr brings science to life in her first-grade classroom with hands-on experiments. Recently, enraptured students gathered around Mrs. Barr's desk as she taught evaporation, condensation, and precipitation using a bowl filled with boiled water covered with plastic wrap. Mrs. Emily Feinberg's second-grade class learns math predominantly through games. Math is transformed into fun, and challenging concepts are made much more manageable.

Mrs. Rivky Anisfeld sparked curiosity and ignited creativity in an extraordinary cross-curricular project. While learning about government, students were taught the art of respectful disagreement or debate. Combining English with social studies, girls then learned the structure and format of persuasive paragraph writing and chose to either advocate for or argue against one of two topics: shifting the start time of school in the morning or replacing teachers with computers. Next, girls crafted thoughtful persuasive

paragraphs to be used as roadmaps for their very own debate.

Students were divided into teams and worked together to choose which arguments from each essay to include in the debate. Animated discussions ensued, and the girls gained valuable team-building skills as they collaborated and strategized about how to best argue their position. Teams also designed and created beautiful posters illustrating



their point of view.

Then, imagining themselves as council members, students gained confidence as they staged a spirited and respectful debate. There were many memorable arguments. Girls posited that if school started later, students would be more rested and would be able to focus more and learn better. Others countered that families may already be eating supper by the time students got home and girls wouldn't have time to play with their little siblings. Teams asserted that computers don't care about you as teachers do, and can't help you if something is wrong. Others pointed out that with computers, each student can learn at her own pace.

Bais Yaakov is succeeding in creating a stimulating, positive, enriching learning experience in which girls thrive. ♦