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A Note from the Editor

The Talmud teaches that “A person is forbidden to enjoy any of the pleasures of the world without first reciting praise to G-d.” (Brachot 35a)

G-d is seen in every aspect of existence. G-d is in the beauty of the sunset, in the morning dawn, in the love we feel for another person, in the desire we have to provide for the poor, in the help we experience in times of trouble, in the gratefulness we sense in satisfying our hunger, and in our struggles to overcome evil and suffering. The ברכה (*bracha*) is a means through which Jews give thanks and praise to G-d and reminding themselves that life is a

sacred opportunity; nothing should be taken for granted.¹

Rabbi Meir said that a person should recite 100 *brachot* daily. This issue of the PJE, dedicated to *brachot*, contains many ideas for learning *brachot*. A person is never too young or too old to begin this learning process. This year we even have an opportunity to say a blessing that is recited only once in 28 years – blessing the sun (See pages 8-10).

Alice Jacobson

¹ *Bechol Levavcha*. Harvey J. Fields. Union of American Hebrew Congregations. New York. 1978.

Methodology for Level 1

Background

Young children thrive on emotional experiences and enrichment, although they may not grasp intellectually what they hear and see. Thus integrating *brachot* with music, body movement, dramatization and arts and crafts is very effective. Young children also love to hear the various forms of new, strange words—and to repeat them with a sense of pride and achievement. This predisposition is certainly helpful in the teaching of the Hebrew /linguistic content of *brachot*.

Brachot are suitable for introducing young children to the world of Jewish ritual: they are always associated with an activity—generally a pleasant one; they are not too long; and their repetitive phrases allow the young child to gain a sense of familiarity with Jewish ritual.

Classroom Preparations

- Decorate classroom with materials related to the *bracha* you teach (i.e., posters/charts/flashcards), including the short Hebrew “formula” of the *bracha*: ברוך אתה הי מלך העולם. Although students don’t read yet, let their eyes get used to the shapes of the Hebrew letters, words and vowels. Point to the appropriate flashcards, as well as the “formula”, whenever

you say the *bracha*.

- In addition to the key vocabulary designated for each *bracha*, you may wish to select words or word-forms that are problematic for your students.

Motivational Activities

- Tell a story/legend or read a midrash that is in some way related to the *bracha*. A recommended resource is Joel Grishaver’s *The All New Shema Is For Real*. In *When A Jew Prays* (pages 92-93) Seymour Rossell cites a midrash explaining why the word *הי* always precedes the word *אלהינו*.
- Explain/point to some interesting feature in the *bracha* that the class is about to learn—or special custom associated with it. For example:
 - The word *amen* (as well as *Shabbat*, *Hallelujah*) has been assimilated into the English language.
 - Covering the eyes when reciting the *bracha* להדליק נר של שבת
 - Lighting the Chanukah candles from left to right
 - The alphabetical order of the verses in *Ashrei*

- Unusual repetition of certain words (The word ברוך is repeated 12 times in *Baruch She'amar*.)
- c. Hint or point to opportunities for class recognition or a particularly enjoyable activity—after class has learned and mastered the *bracha*. For example:
- Class may be chosen to lead a school assembly in which the *bracha* is recited or chanted.
- A culminating class party or play where the students will have an opportunity to practice the *bracha*.

Teaching Tips

Introduce the *bracha* by chanting it, encouraging children to learn by rote.

Practice the *bracha* at appropriate occasions (washing hands before meal, eating snack lighting candles, etc.). Use the real article of blessing (challah, apple, candle, etc.). If that is not possible, use pictures and gestures.

Have students repeat key words/phrases many times—in a variety of ways and at different

times. Do not settle for having students listening to your repetition.

Utilize children's imagination for dramatizing situations related to a *bracha*. For example, children may play the role of a plant, tree, candle, etc. Such an activity should culminate in the chanting/recitation of the *bracha* in Hebrew. Class or group recitation is recommended.

Reinforcement

Incorporate vocabulary taught in *brachot* in other learning activities, pointing to the visual reference: poster, flashcard, etc.

Read/tell a story that is related to the *bracha*. Integrate and use the *bracha* with the story whenever appropriate.

A variety of the Hebrew key words/titles/phrases may be incorporated in arts and crafts activities.

Source: *Brachot Resource Kit*. Milwaukee Association for Jewish Education. Compiled by Dr. Joshua Chorowsky, Jeffrey Lasday and Chaim Ohel.

Methodology for Level 2

The Right Way to Teach a Prayer*

Pupils should derive pleasure and inspiration from mastering a *bracha/prayer*; they should enjoy using it in worship and in expressing their Jewish feelings. Pupils should always be conscious of the meaning, significance, and purpose of any prayer they can "read"—whether they can read part of it or all of it and whether they can translate its wording exactly or not. Through prayer, pupils should experience the inspiration, enjoyment and meaning in the larger realms of Jewish worship and Jewish life. Reading ability is both important in itself, and important for full attainment of the foregoing goals...

You are therefore teaching a prayer the right way if you present it to pupils as a challenge in experience and understanding; if you balance

learning activities to develop not only oral reading abilities other reading abilities, other kinds of Siddur abilities, religious understandings and appreciations, personal and social growth and insights.

*From *Teaching the Siddur* by Abraham Segal. Pages 34-35.

The Wrong Way to Teach a Prayer

Do not present a prayer as merely an exercise in oral reading... Good reading—oral and otherwise—is only partly an end in itself; it is also partly the means to other, entirely different ends. Overemphasizing any or all of the reading factors of Siddur study may actually defeat our true goals. The Siddur may become, for the pupil, a mere task-book, a manual of difficult and monotonous learning drills; a source of embarrassment to "poor readers" and a means

of showing off for “good readers;” a source of other negative attitudes toward all of Jewish life and worship.

You are teaching a prayer the wrong way if you present it to pupils as a challenge in reading ability; if you confine all learning activity on it to reading skills and habits; if you accept smooth, accurate, rapid enunciation of it as the goal of studying it, and as the justification for going on to another prayer.

Teaching the Lesson

The following sequence may be adapted to particular needs and settings. Whatever sequence and resource is selected, a variety of learning activities (i.e., reading drills, games, exercises, discussions, etc.) is indispensable. In order to avoid student boredom, mechanical drills that are necessary for the acquisition of skills and habits need to be integrated with activities aimed at conceptual understanding.

- a. Select a story or midrash that is appropriate for a motivation activity.
- b. Read the *bracha* to the class. Institute the habit of students’ careful listening to your reading, paying attention to pronunciation, pace, pauses, etc. do not ask students to read an unfamiliar *bracha*, as this is likely to result in stammering and class frustration.
- c. Discuss and explain the basic meaning of the content in the *bracha*.
- d. Drill assigned vocabulary. Flashcards, pictures and a variety of reading games may be used for:
 - isolating/recognizing prefixes and suffixes
 - recognition drills—identifying similarities and differences in vowels and letters drilling parts or syllables of “long”/difficult words
 - counting how many times a certain word (or prefix/suffix) appears on a page finding a certain word in a page or a passage
- e. Have the class read the *bracha* in unison.

The use of posters or other visuals, while underlining key words, is very effective. When appropriate, ask pupils to chant the *bracha*.

- f. Discuss and explain the name of the *bracha* and its meaning as well as pertinent history, background and special feature. (i.e., composition and structure, related customs, and word sequence. For example, the alphabetical order of the verses in Ashrei and the repetition of the word *baruch* (12 times) in Baruch She’amar.) Appropriate topic for discussion:
 - the meaning of G-d’s names (See Joel Grishaver’s *Shema Is for Real*, pages 15-20.)
 - the *bracha* “formula” (See Rossell, *When a Jew Prays*, pages 88-92.)
- g. Teach key vocabulary in the context of sentences—not in isolation. A recommended activity for drilling key vocabulary is called “word elimination”:

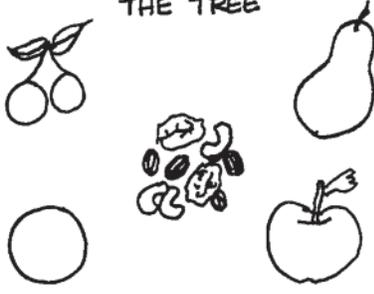
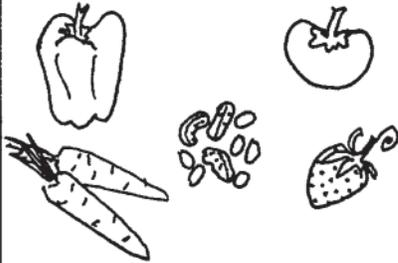
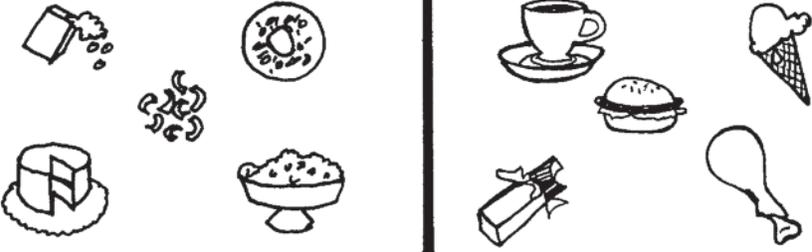
Write a sentence or a few sentences containing the key vocabulary (can be used with flashcards, too). Class reads the sentences in unison (in later stage—groups and individuals, too). Erase a key word. Continue to erase key words and read in the same way. In the end of this part, students can write the missing words and “return” them to their original places. This activity reinforces the words in the students’ memory.
- h. Use a variety of activities/exercises for a summary/review of content and vocabulary.
- i. Repeat reading exercise: alternate between unison reading, group reading, responsive reading and individual reading. Start with the skilled readers, allowing the less skilled readers to listen and practice silently before being called upon to read. Emphasis should be on accuracy and fluency—not speed.
- j. Encourage students to compose their own, personal *brachot*, as well as melodies/chants.

Source: *Brachot Resource Kit*. Milwaukee Association for Jewish Education. Compiled by Dr. Joshua Chorowsky, Jeffrey Lasday and Chaim Ohel.

Blessing Chart

This activity is perfect for an interactive bulletin board display.

1. Enlarge the picture below or pick up an enlarged version from the CJL Creativity Center.
2. Color all the food items.
3. Mount the blessings on a large piece of tagboard as shown in the illustration.
4. Laminate the tagboard and food items.
5. Put a piece of magnetic tape or velcro on the back of each food item.
6. Also put pieces of magnetic tape or velcro on the tagboard corresponding to where the different food items will be attached.

<p>פָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם...</p> <p>BLESSED ARE YOU, LORD OUR GOD, KING OF THE UNIVERSE...</p>	
<p>בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ... WHO CREATES THE FRUIT OF THE TREE</p> 	<p>בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה... WHO CREATES THE FRUIT OF THE GROUND</p> 
<p>שֶׁהַכֹּל נִהְיָה בְּדַבְּרוֹ BY WHOSE WORD ALL THINGS COME INTO BEING</p> 	<p>בּוֹרֵא מִיְּנֵי מְזֻנּוֹת WHO CREATES MANY KINDS OF FOOD.</p>

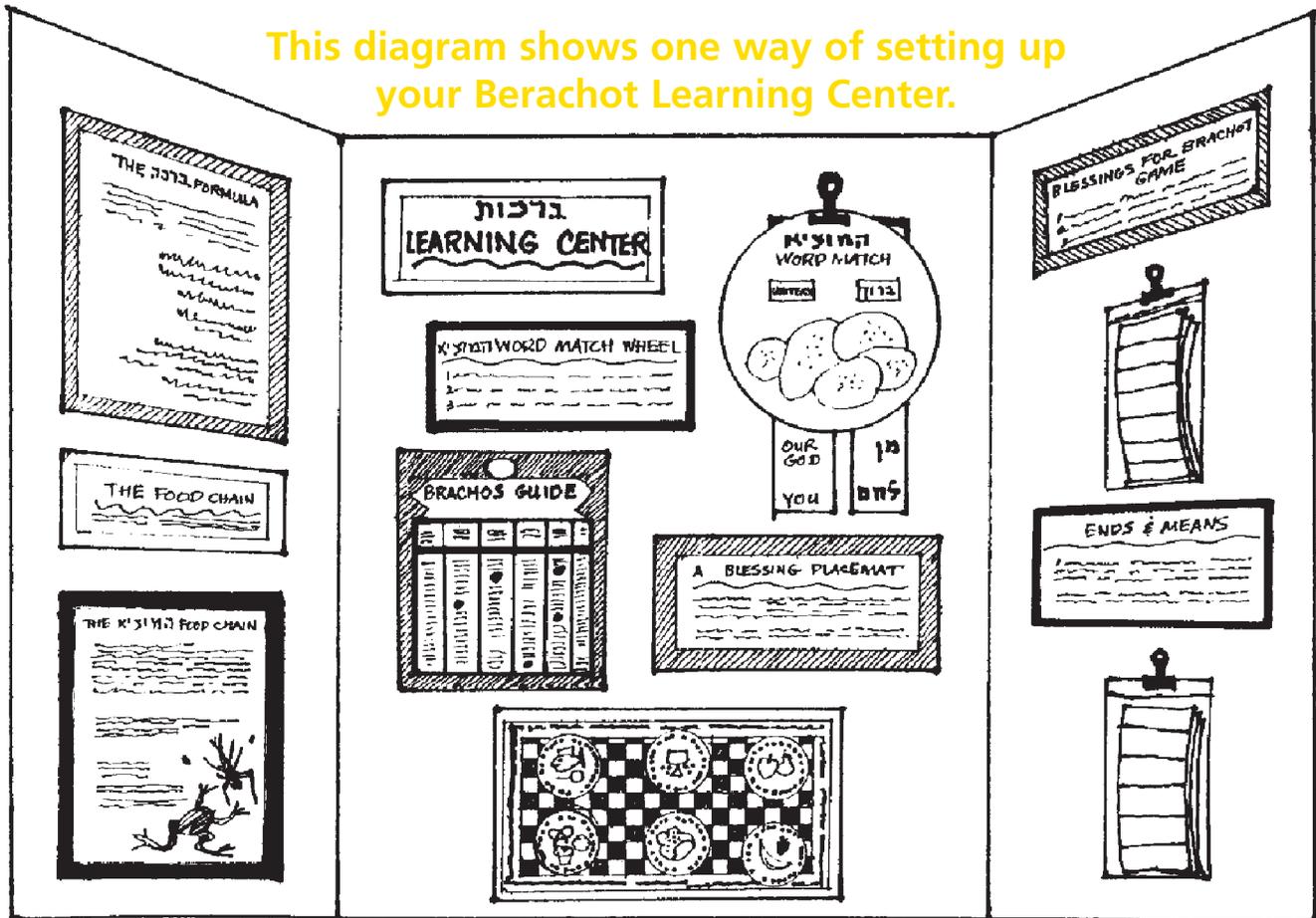
ברכות (Berachot) Learning Center

The CJL Creativity Center has a ready-made Berachot Learning Center Kit available for sale. It contains the following activities:

- The ברכה Formula
- The המוציא Food Chain
- המוציא Word Match wheel
- Blessing Placemat
- Blessing for Berachot Game
- Ends and Means
- (See 'n Match game board is not included and must be purchased separately.)

Our staff would be happy to help you customize a learning center to meet your class needs.

This diagram shows one way of setting up your Berachot Learning Center.



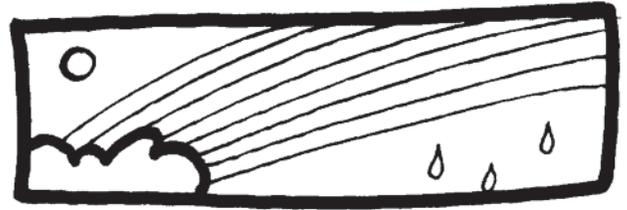
“Blessings Everywhere” Cards

Copy the sheet on page 7 onto card stock. Have students color the cards. Laminate the page, if desired. Cut out the cards on the dotted line. Punch a hole in the upper left hand corner of each card. Use a metal ring to keep the cards together. This makes a handy blessing reference.



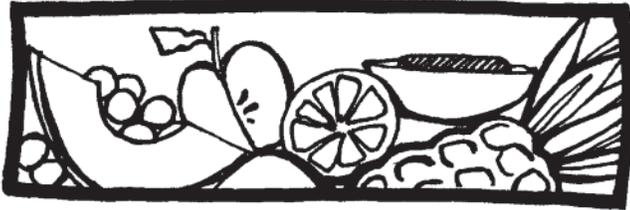
Said on smelling fragrant woods or barks:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
בוֹרֵא מִיְּנֵי בְשָׁמִים.



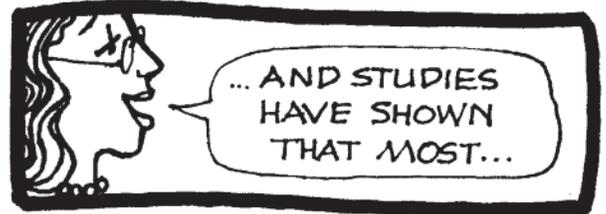
Said on seeing the rainbow:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם זוֹכֵר
הַבְּרִית וְנֹאמֵן בְּבְרִיתוֹ וְקִים בְּמֵאמְרוֹ.



Said on smelling fragrant fruits:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
הַנוֹתֵן רֵיחַ טוֹב בְּפְרוֹת.



Said on seeing a person distinguished for secular knowledge:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
שֶׁנֶּתַן מַחְכְּמָתוֹ לְבֶשֶׁר וְדָם.



Said on witnessing lightning,
or on seeing falling stars, lofty mountains, or great deserts.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
עוֹשֶׂה מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית.



Said on seeing a person distinguished for Jewish knowledge:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
שֶׁחָלַק מַחְכְּמָתוֹ לִירְאָיו.



Said on hearing thunder:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
שֶׁכָּחוּ וּגְבוּרָתוֹ מְלֵא עוֹלָם.

Blessings
Everywhere
Cards

The Blessing Of The Sun

ברכת החמה Birchat HaChamah

By Karen Torem, kindergarten teacher at Yeshiva Elementary School and
CJL Professional Development Coordinator

There are 613 mitzvot in the Torah. Some of these mitzvot can be performed daily. Some mitzvot we can perform weekly. But there are some mitzvot we only have the opportunity to carry out on rare occasions. The *Birchat HaChamah* which is the focus of this article is one such mitzvah, for it can only be performed every 28 years! This mitzvah offers us the opportunity to praise the Almighty for one of His magnificent creations—the sun.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים יְהִי מְאֹרֶת בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הַיּוֹם וּבֵין הַלַּיְלָה וְהָיוּ
לְאֹתוֹת וּלְמוֹעֲדִים וּלְיָמִים וְשָׁנִים: טו וְהָיוּ לְמְאֹרֶת בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהָאִיר
עַל-הָאָרֶץ וַיְהִי-כֵן: טז וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹקִים אֶת-שְׁנֵי הַמְּאֹרֹת הַגְּדֹלִים אֶת-הַמָּאֹר
הַגָּדֹל לְמַמְשֶׁלֶת הַיּוֹם וְאֶת-הַמָּאֹר הַקָּטָן לְמַמְשֶׁלֶת הַלַּיְלָה וְאֵת הַכּוֹכָבִים:
יז וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָם אֱלֹקִים בְּרָקִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהָאִיר עַל-הָאָרֶץ: יח וּלְמַשַּׁל בַּיּוֹם וּבַלַּיְלָה
וּלְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הָאֹר וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹקִים כִּי-טוֹב: יט וַיְהִי-עֶרֶב וַיְהִי-בֹקֶר
יוֹם רְבִיעִי:

14. And Hashem said, "Let there be lights in the sky of the heavens to separate between the day and the night and they will be for signs, and for holidays, and for days and years. 15. And they will be for lights in the sky of the heavens to give lights on the earth and it was so. 16. And Hashem made the two big lights, the big light to rule the day and the small light to rule the night and the stars. 17. And Hashem put them in the sky of the heavens to give light on the earth. 18. And to rule in the day and in the night and to separate between the light and the dark and Hashem saw that it was good. 19. And it was evening and it was morning the fourth day.

Bereshit (Genesis) 1:14-19

At the time of Briyat HaOlam (creation of the world) G-d created two lights to rule in the sky. The sun and the moon were known as the two big lights *הַמְּאֹרֹת הַגְּדֹלִים* – HaM'orot HaG'dolim. According to the Midrash, the moon complained that it was sufficient to have one larger light and one smaller light, and the Almighty agreed. He, then, (because the moon complained) made the moon smaller. Then the sun, although larger of the two, would rule in the day and the moon would rule at night. That occurred on the fourth day of Creation. According to our Sages, that day was the beginning of the spring equinox - when the days are exactly equal in length. That period is referred to as Tekufat Nissan. Since the creation of those celestial bodies occurred on Yom Rivii, the fourth day (i.e. Tuesday night/Wednesday) Abaya, the Amorah (Talmudic scholar) said in Brachot 59b that every time the Tekufat Nissan occurs on a Tuesday evening at 6:00 pm one should go outside and recite a *bracha* the next morning when you can see the sun.

Since the sun rules the day and is visible in the morning, the *bracha* is ideally recited during the first third of the day. The Amorah, Shmuel, known to be the astronomy expert in the time of the Gemara (Brachot 58b), states that it takes 365 1/4 days (a solar year) for the earth to revolve around the sun. Each year when the sun returns to its exact location, it is one calendar day later than it was the previous year. Therefore, only after every 4 years does the sun make a complete cycle – known as *machzor katan* (small cycle). To make up this discrepancy in the calendar, we

add a leap day every four years on the solar calendar. **But, every 28 years, the sun returns to its celestial position on the same day of the week as it was during the time of creation.** When the sun has completed 7 cycles it returns to its origination point on the same day. This is referred to as a *machzor gadol* (large cycle). When the sun returns to its heavenly place once every twenty-eight years, we get a tiny glimpse of the world when it was untainted and pure. To commemorate this momentous event, we recite a special *bracha*, *Birkat HaChamah*.

On April 8, 2009, corresponding to the 14th day of Nissan, we will again recite *Birkat HaChamah*, the Blessing of the Sun. On that day, not only will the sun be in its original position relative to the earth, but the moon will also be a full moon at that time. Hence, both *M'orot HaG'dolim* (Great Lights) will return to the precise position they were in at the time of Creation.

When we say this blessing we are recognizing the magnificence and glory of the Almighty's creations. Wednesday morning, before the third hour of the day, will be the most appropriate time for reciting the following *bracha*. The blessing is said outside, while looking at the sun.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם עוֹשֶׂה מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית

Baruch Atta Ad-on-ai Eloheinu Melech HaOlam, Oseh Maaseh B'raishit.

Blessed are You, our G-d, King of the Universe Who continues the process of creation.

In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the blessing may be ideally recited between 6:22 am and 9:02 am.

Other names for the sun:



Chammah

Shemesh

M'Ohr HaGadol

חַמָּה

שֶׁמֶשׁ

מְאֹר הַגָּדוֹל

This article was based on information from the following sources:

Blessing of the Sun. Yehudah Marks. HaModia Magazine. February 11, 2009. Pages 10-14.

Birchas HaChammah: The Blessing Recited Once in 28 Years. Rabbi J. David Bleich. Artscroll Mesorah. *Once in 28 Years.* Rabbi Moshe Goldberger. Feldheim Publishing.

www.star-k.org/kashrus/kk-BirchasHachama.htm (Rabbi Dovid Heber-Kashrus Administrator)

There is a new children's book on this subject, *The Sun's Special Blessing*, by Sandy Wasserman (<http://web.mac.com/sfwasserman>). The picture book, for children primarily in grades 2-5, combines the story of the blessing with an activity suitable for replication. It would be valuable for children in the home environment, or in a classroom. It could easily be adapted for preschoolers, who will be in their early 30's at the next recitation of this life cycle event in 2037.

To read about the midrash regarding creation of the sun and the moon in a beautiful story, read *Why the Moon Only Glows* by Dina Rosenfeld and published by HACHAI Publishing.

Try this out for one day. Make a list of your experiences and, if you can, a record of what you said by way of thanks. After you have composed your list, ask yourself what effect the whole experience has had upon you. Then share it with others.

"Sun" Learning Center Activities

Art Center: Make a Sunburst Wind Catcher

1. Trace a sunburst pattern onto yellow construction paper.
2. Cut out the sunburst.
3. Trace a circle in the middle of the sunburst.
4. Make a tiny hole in the center of the circle on the yellow paper and cut out the circle.
5. Take a piece of waxed paper and put it under the open circle.
6. Using a paintbrush, paint tissue squares over the open circle. Overlap the edges on the sunburst. Let it dry.
7. Make a hole in one "ray" and put a string through it.
8. Hang it in a window.

Science Center: Make a Solar Paper Picture

1. Arrange 2 or 3 objects on a piece of special solar paper.
2. Put the paper in a sunny spot near a window with acrylic on top and cardboard underneath.
3. Remove objects from paper.
4. Remove acrylic and cardboard.
5. Rinse under water and let it dry.
6. Prints should appear on paper.

Math Center

Using 1 hexagon  shaped block and 6 triangle  shaped blocks, create a sun shape with rays.

Writing Center/Literacy

- Copy the words for sun in Hebrew.
- Write a short story or poem about the sun. Draw a picture to illustrate the story.
- Write a cinquain about *brachot*. (Line 1-noun [either *bracha* or blessing]; line 2-two adjectives; line 3-three verbs ending in "ing"; line 4-four adjectives; line 5-a synonym for the noun in line one.

Library

- Look at books in the library corner.
- Share them with your friends.
- Quietly discuss something new you learned from the story.

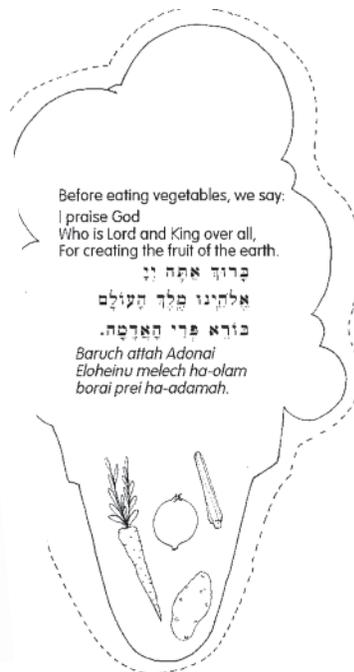
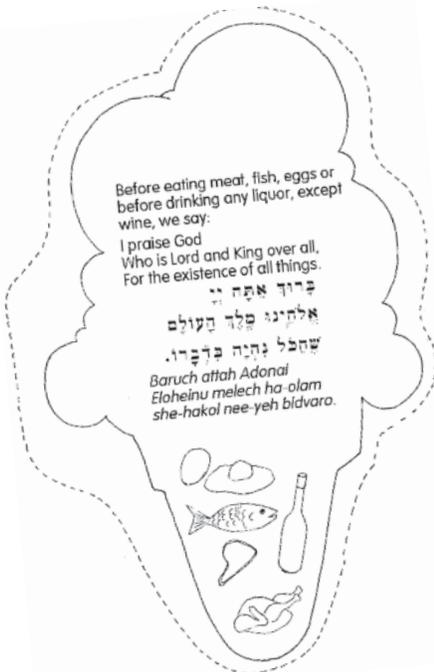
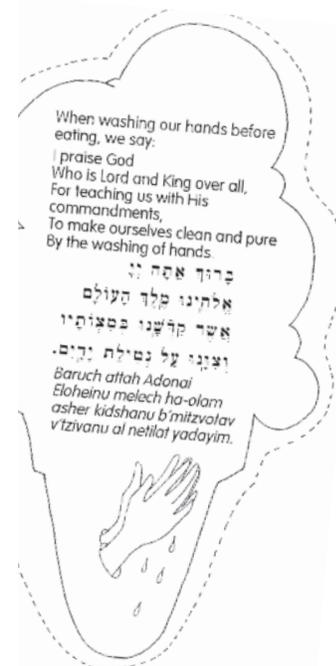
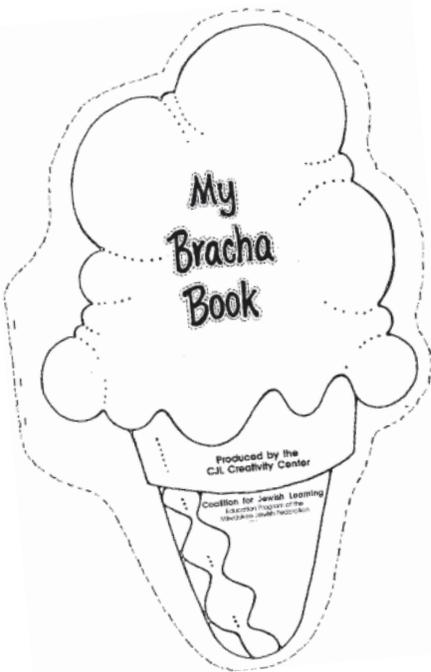
Music

- Play songs about the sun, such as "Here Comes the Sun" by the Beatles and "Mr. Sun, Sun , Mister Golden Sun" by Raffi.
- Which songs did you like the best?
- Make up your own lyrics to a short song about the sun.

My Bracha Book

This book, in the shape of an ice cream cone, contains blessings in Hebrew, transliteration and English for different kinds of foods. A form page is also included so that the child can include his/her own items with their proper blessings. The pages of the book may be cut out on the dotted lines and bound on the left side, thus making an ice cream shaped book.

My Bracha Book may be ordered from the CJL Creativity Center. See our online catalog (www.cjlmilwaukee.org/Creativity/c%20c%20catalog%20'07.pdf) or call Alice Jacobson at 414-963-2727.



sample pages

Bibliography on Brachot

from the CJL Library/Media Center

Compiled by Laurie Herman, CJL Library/Media Center Director

Curricular Materials for Teachers:

Brachot...Brachot...Brachot! (1982) – by Aaron Friedman

This paperback about brachot includes common brachot for children, in Hebrew and English, accompanied by black-and-white illustrations and activities. The activities, which can be xeroxed by teachers, include word searches, mazes, crossword puzzles, and drawing lines from pictures to the corresponding brachot. Designed for use with elementary school students.

Brachot Resource Kit (MAJE) – compiled by Joshua Chorowsky, Jeffrey Lasday and Chaim Ohel

Compiled by the Milwaukee Association for Jewish Education, this resource kit provides worksheets for general brachot, Kiddush, candle lighting, hamotzi, shehechianu, natilat Yadayim, Sukkot and general brachot. It also presents activities and games to help teach the brachot; background information; student performance objectives and a brachot chart. Teachers will find many ideas here to assist them in teaching common brachot to young people. Aimed at elementary/middle school.

Hebrew Through Prayer – by Terry Kaye, Karen Trager and Patrice G. Mason

Three-volume series that teaches Hebrew through learning the prayers and blessings of the Shabbat morning service. Volume One is for grades 4-5, Volume Two is for grades 5-6, and volume Three is for grades 6-7. Each focuses on different prayers and blessings from the service.

The Shabbat Morning Service – 3 volumes (1985) – Commentary by Jules Harlow. Exercises by Roberta Baum.

3 volume prayer series published by Behrman House, is based on the Conservative Shabbat morning service. The series presents a complete prayer text, introduction, explanation and selected translation. For grades 4-7.

Shema is for Real: Basic Brachot – by Joel Lurie Grishaver

Designed for grades 3-5, this 28-session book introduces students to the study of brachot – how they are structured and how they connect the ethical to the spiritual. Through the sessions, students build a basic Hebrew vocabulary that will help them decode and understand Hebrew prayers.

Shema is for Real (The All New Shema is for Real Curriculum) – by Joel Lurie Grishaver

Textbook for grades 6-8 that is structured into 56 lessons. Students learn common prayers and their meanings, and see how the prayers are structured into the service.

Teaching Tefilah: Insights and Activities on Prayer (Revised Edition) (2004) – by Bruce Kadden and Barbara Binder Kadden

This resource book for teachers covers every aspect of the Jewish worship service. It provides the history and background for specific prayers, insights from the tradition and teaching activities. A bibliography is found at the end of each chapter. Every activity indicates the grades it is intended for, and the teaching ideas cover grades K- high school.

Picture Books:

Blessed are You – written and illustrated by Michelle Edwards (1993)

Blessed are You is a book of everyday Hebrew prayers. Each double-page spread presents a blessing in Hebrew, English and in transliteration. Michele Edwards' bright colored full-page illustrations show children engaged in an activity that illustrates each blessing.

The God Around Us: A Child's Garden of Prayer (revised edition) – by Mira Pollak Brichto (1999)

This picture book presents twelve blessings, providing the Hebrew, English and transliteration for each. In addition, a short, four-line poem accompanies each blessing. Includes blessings for hearing thunder and smelling flowers, as well as common blessings (such as the hamotzi). A brief section at the end explains uses for these blessings.

The God Around Us, Volume II: The Valley of Blessings – by Mira Pollak Brichto (1999)

Even more blessings are given in this second volume in the series, following the same format of Volume I (provides blessings in Hebrew, English, a transliteration and a poem). This volume includes a bedtime prayer, thanksgiving for food, and an appreciation of wisdom – as well as nine others.

Thank You, God! A Jewish Child's Book of Prayers – by Judyth Groner and Madeline Wikler (1964)

This lovely book of brachot begins with the morning prayer and presents common daily and holiday prayers. English, Hebrew and transliterated forms appear on each page.

Books for Adults

A Day Apart: Shabbat at Home (A Step-by-Step guidebook with Blessings and Songs, Rituals and Reflections) (2004) – by Noam Sachs Zion and Shawn Fields-Meyer

This step-by-step guidebook to Shabbat includes blessings & songs, rituals and reflections. Jews who wish to deepen their understanding and practices will find this a useful resource.

On the Doorposts of Your House: Prayers and Ceremonies for the Jewish Home (1994) – edited by Chaim Stern and published by the Central Conference of American Rabbis

Home prayer book that provides a variety of prayers, blessings and readings for individuals and families to use for life cycle and festivals – and for many other moments in life.

Pray Tell: A Hadassah Guide to Jewish Prayer (2003) – by Rabbi Jules Harlow

This oversized paperback provides a complete guide to Jewish prayer, including perspectives from the varied denominations of Judaism. This exploration includes traditional as well as contemporary practices and ideas.

To Pray as a Jew: A Guide to the Prayer Book and the Synagogue Service (1980) – by Rabbi Hayim Halevy Donin

A classic volume that encompasses a detailed guide to Jewish prayer, useful both to the beginner and to those well versed in religious practice. Rabbi Donin takes readers through the entire prescribed course of Jewish liturgy, offering historical background religious teaching and practical instruction.

Videos

At Evening I Seek You (1998)

Musical program featuring cantors from across the U.S. leading a Maariv service for the weekday evening. This program was produced by the Jewish Theological Seminary. The cantors provide explanations of the prayers, and add their personal insights. 1 hr. AGE: Adult

Let's Daven Together (1997)

This video is designed to teach 15 of the most commonly used Shabbat prayers to a basic Hebrew reader. Each prayer appears piece by piece, printed on the screen in Hebrew. First the instructor reads the prayer – then the viewer is to read the prayer – then the viewer is asked to repeat the prayer, this time in unison with the instructor. All prayers are spoken, not sung with the nigun (melody). **Note: Viewers must possess a basic knowledge of Hebrew reading to use this video.** 1 hr. 42 min. AGE: 10 to Adult.

New Jewish Books & Films in the Reading Room Spring 2009

FICTION

Bohjalian, Chris. *Skeletons at the Feast*
Hemon, Aleksandar. *The Lazarus Project*
Huston, Nancy. *Fault Lines*
Manseau, Peter. *Songs for the Butcher's Daughter*
Spechler, Diana. *Who By Fire*
Vapnyar, Lara. *Broccoli and Other Tales of Food and Love*
Wagenstein, Angel. *Isaac's Torah*
Yehoshua, A.B. *Friendly Fire*
Yellin, Tamar. *Tales of the Ten Lost Tribes*

NONFICTION

Bennett, Roger & Kun, Josh. *And You Shall Know Us by the Trail of Our Vinyl: The Jewish Past as Told by the Records We Have Loved and Lost*
Fold, Nili Scharf. *Yehuda Amichai*
Greenberg, Michael. *Hurry Down Sunshine*
Koenig, Rivky. *Crafting Jewish: Fun Holiday Crafts and Party Ideas for the Whole Family*
Kritzler, Edward. *Jewish Pirates of the Caribbean*
Sabar, Ariel. *My Father's Paradise: A Son's Search for his Jewish Past in Kurdish Ira.*
Sarna, Jonathan. *A Time to Every Purpose: Letters to a Young Jew*
Schwartz, Howard. *Leaves from the Garden of Eden: One Hundred Classic Jewish Tales*
Lavie, Aliza. *A Jewish Woman's Prayer Book*

COOKBOOKS

Fishbein, Susie. *Kosher By Design Lightens Up*
Gur, Janna. *The Book of New Israeli Food*
Weinstein, Kinue. *Japanese Kosher Cooking*

NEW DVDS

The Band's Visit (2007)
Beaufort (2007)
A Cantor's Tale (2008)
Constantine's Sword (2008)
The Counterfeiters (2008)
Dear Mr. Waldman (Michtavim Le America) (2006)
Disraeli (1980)
God on Trial (2008)
Inheritance (2006)

Save the Dates

CSI-Milwaukee* Professional Development for Teachers: Courses for 2008-2009

II. Teaching So All Can Learn: Interactive Learning: Dr. Sherry Blumberg

Teaching So All Can Learn: Part Two – 3 credit hours

Sunday, March 8, 2:30-5:30 pm **OR** Tuesday, March 11, 6:30-9:30 pm

*CSI-Milwaukee is an initiative that supports 6 congregational schools in the Milwaukee area. As part of this effort, we are offering a series of courses to strengthen professional development in our community.

Teachers who fulfill the twelve-hour requirement of study during the 2008-2009 school year will receive a stipend of \$400. *This stipend is only available to teachers in congregational schools participating in CSI-MILWAUKEE.*

All teachers are welcome to attend.

For more information, contact Eve Joan Zucker at 332-8445

Best New Jewish DVDs. Join us as we view these exciting Jewish films on a large screen.

Presented on the following Sundays at 4:00 pm at the Harry & Rose Samson Family Jewish Community Center: March 22 - The Jew in the Lotus; March 29 - I'm Still Here; May 17 - UnSecret. Admission is free. For more information about these films, look at the flyer online (<http://www.cjlmilwaukee.org/Events/Film%20Series%20Poster%204.pdf>) or call Laurie Herman at 414-963-2720.

Jewish Holiday Cooking, Monday, March 16, 7:00-9:30 pm "Passover By Design" with Jonah Levenberg; Monday May 1, 7:00-9:30 pm "The Dairy Gourmet" with Rebbetzin Faige Rapoport.

2009 HOLOCAUST FILM SERIES, sponsored by the Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center. All films are shown will be shown in the in the Daniel M. Soref Community Hall in the Harry and Rose Samson Family Jewish Community Center, 6255 N. Santa Monica Blvd.: Wed., March 18 7:00 pm – STEAL A PENCIL FOR ME; Sun., March 29 4:00 pm – I'M STILL HERE; Thurs., April 23 7:00 pm – SHANGHAI GHETTO; Sun., May 17 4:00 pm – UN SECRET. See (<http://www.cjlmilwaukee.org/Events/Film%20Series%20Flyer.doc>) for complete list of films, descriptions and dates. For more information, call Bonnie at 414-963-2719.

Creativity Center Passover Make It/Take It. This workshop will be offered twice at 7:00-8:30 pm in the CJL Creativity Center: Tuesday, March 17, 2009 and Monday, March 30, 2009. For more information or to RSVP, contact Alice Jacobson at 963-2727 or email her (alicej@milwaukeejewish.org). We need at least three participants at a session to make it viable.

New Jewish Books & Films in the Reading Room Continued

Jellyfish (Meduzot) (2007)

The Rape of Europa (2007)

Shadows in Paradise: Hitler's Exiles in Hollywood (2008)

Sweet Mud (2006)

The Year My Parents Went on Vacation (2007)



Professional Jewish Educator

Coalition for Jewish Learning

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Programs and Resources

Congregational School Initiative • Creativity Center • Day of Discovery • Distance Learning Programs •
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Mentoring • Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center • Synagogue Educator Council (SEC) • Teacher
Preparation • Teacher Recognition and Incentive Program (TRIP) • Teen Enrichment Programs • Ulpan

For further information about any items in this issue or our programs and resources, please contact:

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