

# PJ Goes to School Complementary Schools



## Course Outline 2015-2016

### Family engagement

- Hang a map of the world on a classroom wall. Send home an unadorned cutout shape of a person. Ask parents to tell their children about a person in their family history who came to America from a foreign country, and write the name of the country on the cutout. Invite parents to share a few details about the family member's journey to this country. As children bring the cutout back to school, encourage them to share their family history with the class and attach the cutouts to their proper locations on the map.
- Challenge your families to change an ordinary outing into a journey of discovery. For example, a visit to the supermarket can include an exploration of exotic foods. A dog walk might turn into a hunt for unusual insects or plants. Ask families to send a captioned photo about their adventure.
- Invite your families on a class journey to accomplish a mitzvah. Brainstorm together where you might go and what you will do. Ask them to share previous mitzvah journeys, such as visiting a sick friend or going to volunteer at a food bank. Perhaps you will travel to a homeless shelter to donate toys and books or drive to a senior center to enliven everyone's day.
- Look in the Educators' Center for a companion mini-news template for each of our journey-themed books. Fill out the section reserved for your classroom – or encourage the children to draw or write their thoughts in that square.

### Music to play:

- *With All Your Heart* CD by Jay Rapoport: "When We Get There"
- *Uri, Uri* CD by Elana Jagoda: "Esa Enai (Lift your eyes to the mountain)"
- *An Ethical Start* CD by Lisa Litman, Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Ruth Feldman "Traveling Through Time"  
[www.pjfor.me/traveling-through-time](http://www.pjfor.me/traveling-through-time)
- *Free to Be the Jew in Me* by Rick Recht: "Goin' to Israel"
- "Lechi Lach" by Debbie Friedman

### Poster image instant lesson

**Voyager Text connection:** From *Tefilat haderech* (Prayer for travelers)

...תְּגִיעֵנוּ לְמַחֲזֵז חַפְצֵנוּ לְחַיִּים וְלִשְׂמִיחָה וְלִשְׁלוֹם, וְתַחֲזִירֵנוּ לְבֵיתֵנוּ לְשְׁלוֹם...

... Lead us to our desired destination in health and joy and peace, and bring us home in peace...

For the complete *Tefilat Haderech*, consult a *siddur* (prayer book).

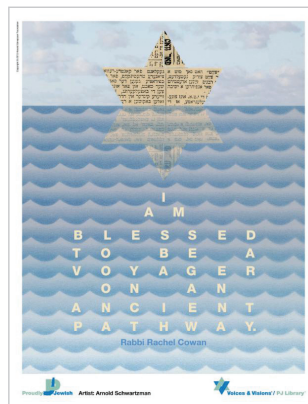
### Questions to consider:

- What makes a trip good?
- Why might you say a blessing when you go on a trip? When would you say it?

[Traditionally the Tefilat Haderech is said when you pass your city limits if you are leaving on a day-trip. For overnight excursions, you may say the prayer before leaving the house. Ask your rabbi to come and give your class a lesson about this prayer.]

- Look carefully at the paper boat in the poster. The writing on it isn't Hebrew – it's Yiddish, a mixture of Hebrew, German, Polish, and Russian that was once the predominant language of the Eastern European Jewish community. Why do you think the artist made the boat from a Yiddish newspaper?

Direct your families to the Voices & Visions website: <https://www.voices-visions.org/proudly-jewish>



### Theme: Journeys

In today's society, we all tend to have highly scheduled lives. Adults and children alike have packed agendas – we've got places to go, things to do, and people to see. How do these physical, spiritual, and emotional journeys affect our lives? How do we make the most of our journey through life?

The Torah is filled with stories of journeys. This course, and the accompanying selection of books, is designed to help us reflect on the experiences of our ancestors and apply those lessons to our everyday existence.

### Why choose a theme?

You can integrate the four books we have selected into your existing curriculum, teach them as a unit with the theme of Journeys, or use this theme to tie together your entire year. Adding a broad overarching theme to your school year can increase the impact of everything you teach, tying your year together and deepening the children's learning.

### 2015-2016 Program overview

Type of Journey	Book	Values	Biblical Text/Prayer
Coming to America	<i>My Grandfather's Coat</i> (Scholastic)	Passing along tradition Preventing waste	Parshat Lech Lecha – Abram and Sarai's journey to a new land
Joining forces to help others	<i>The Magic Pomegranate, a Jewish Folktale</i> (Lerner Publishing)	Cooperation Generosity	Story of Ruth and Naomi – Ruth leaves her country to travel with her mother-in-law to build a new life together.
Moving to a new home	<i>First Rain</i> (Albert Whitman)	Love of Israel Honoring our elders	Moses sends spies to Israel to examine the land, fruit, and soil. They report back it is a land "flowing with milk and honey."
Embracing the unexpected	<i>The Mitten String</i> (Albert Whitman & Company)	Learning from everyone Each person is unique	The Modeh Ani prayer (Hebrew) teaches us to wake up with gratitude for who we are and starting the adventure of a new day.
Visual expression of spiritual journeys	<b>Voices &amp; Visions 6 Posters</b>	Proudly Jewish	Look on the back of each poster for related texts. An "instant lesson" for one poster is included in this guide.

### Supporting materials

Each book will have a complete online guide in the PJLibrary.org Educators' Center.

Please email Lisa Litman with any questions or comments. [LisaLitman@hgf.org](mailto:LisaLitman@hgf.org)

“Go to a land that I will show you; and I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great. And you shall be a blessing” (Genesis 12:1-2).

לְךָ-לָךְ ... אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֶרְאֶה;  
וְאָעֲשֶׂה לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל וְאֶבְרַכְךָ וְאֶגְדְּלָהּ שְׁמִי וְהָיָה בְרָכָה:

Lech le-cha ... el ha-a-retz a-sher ar-e-ka;  
v'e-es-cha le-goi ga-dol va-a-va-re-che-cha va-a-gad-la she-me-cha ve-he-yei be-ra-cha.

### Torah Journeys

The Torah has many accounts of journeys. Among the most well-known are the stories of Abraham and Sarah, who follow God’s instructions to “Go to a land that I will show you” (beginning with Genesis 12:1-2) and the Israelites’ exodus from Egypt (the flight beginning at Exodus 12:37). If we examine the Torah more closely, we find numerous, less obvious, excursions. Consider Adam and Eve’s banishment from the Garden of Eden, Noah’s nautical expedition to save humankind and animals from the great flood, and the scattering of peoples after the Tower of Babel.

The patriarch Abraham starts a domino effect of journeys. Abraham travels to Egypt during a famine, he takes his son Isaac on a fateful trek up a mountain, and he sends his servant on a journey to find Isaac’s wife, Rebecca. Rebecca’s son Jacob must run away to escape the murderously angry Esau, and Jacob returns years later with his family to make amends. Jacob’s sons sell their brother Joseph into slavery, and sends him on a perilous journey to Egypt. The brothers are reunited years later when they must all travel to Egypt for food. And that’s just the first book of the Torah!

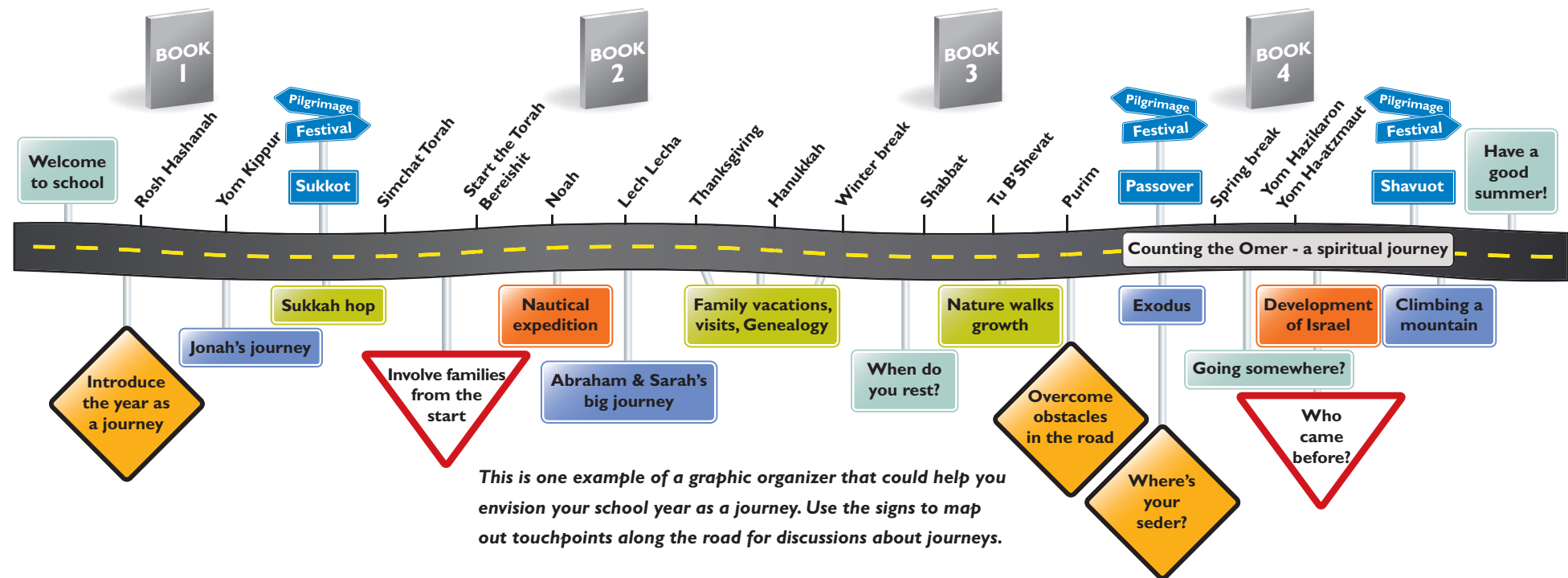
### Journeys are Transformative

Life is an ongoing journey. Modern humans are always on the move – but perhaps that has always been so. From the dawn of civilization, humans were migratory. As we evolved from hunter-gatherer societies to agricultural societies and began to settle into more permanent structures, it remained usual for large families or tribes to move on to seek better land.

Journeys can be transformative in positive or negative ways. Some journeys present seemingly impossible obstacles, while others propel us forward. We are tested, challenged, and rewarded. Rabbi Simon Jacobson, author of *Toward a Meaningful Life*, asks how we know “when to travel and when to rest, when to make a move, when to stay put.” In Biblical times a journey was dangerous. It took stamina and courage to live unprotected in the open road, and it involved constant searches for food and water.

### Before you begin

Take a minute to think about your own journey. Where did you come from, and where are you going? What choices have you made in your life? Who are the people that influenced you in your early years? What have you learned on your travels? What do you think is important to share with your students?



### In the classroom

Define journey. According to the Merriam Webster online dictionary, a journey is the act of traveling from one place to another; a trip. (A journey may also suggest the passage through time.)

- Encourage your students to think about long journeys or trips they have made with their parents. Where did they go? Did they learn anything new while on their journey?
- Ask students if they know of others in their family, such as grandparents or great-grandparents, who have made a journey. Why did these family members go on their journeys?
- Remind your students that Sukkot, Passover, and Shavuot are called the *Shalosh Regalim*, the three pilgrimage festivals. Three times each year many individuals would walk to observe the holidays in the *Beit HaMikdash*, the Holy Temple, in Jerusalem. Refer to a map of Israel and consider how long it might take someone to walk to Jerusalem. What was the importance of these journeys?

### Activities

- Keep a running record of any journeys that you talk about in the classroom. Which Biblical journeys do you discuss? (This year *parshat Lech Lecha*, chronicling Abraham and Sarah’s journey, is October 24, 2015) Help students create personal travel journals to keep track of their adventures.
- For every journey you discuss, consider recording the destination, where you learned about it, the reason for the journey, and new things that were learned on the way.
- Talk children through an imaginary journey. For example, go on a magic carpet ride and listen to the wind and describe the small houses below, or travel back in time to join Moses and the Children of Israel in the desert. Guide the children to feel the sun on their skin and the sand in their toes. Make sure to herd the goats and cattle along the way.