

Introduction to Judaism Classroom Materials

Note to Teachers: These materials are intended to be used in your class to prepare your students in advance of their visit to the Jewish Museum of Maryland. Included are a pre-visit lesson plan, a description of what you can expect during your visit, a follow-up post-visit lesson plan, and a suggested resource list.

Overview

Introduction to Judaism provides students with an introduction to the Jewish religion, culture, and history. This program introduces students to Jewish religious objects, places, and ritual practices through a hands-on guided tour of the historic Lloyd Street Synagogue, Maryland's first synagogue built in 1845. Moreover, it not only invites students to examine and interpret Jewish ritual articles and traditions, but it also provides students with the opportunity to compare and contrast the Jewish culture and traditions with other cultures and practices about which they have learned. Additionally, this program teaches students about the basic history of the Baltimore Jewish community by encouraging them to imagine the sights, life, and sounds of Baltimore's original, Jewish neighborhood.

Grade Level

While these materials have been designed for students in Grades 5-6, they can be modified to suit older and younger grades.

Objectives

- To introduce non-Jewish students to Judaism, by providing an overview of some of its religious traditions through a multi-sensory program that allows students to listen to liturgical music and to handle religious artifacts.
- To introduce students to a Jewish house of worship and to explain the importance of the Lloyd Street Synagogue in Maryland and Jewish history as well as the significance of specific features found in the Lloyd Street Synagogue.
- To teach students about Baltimore's Jewish community and the neighborhood where many Jewish immigrants settled.
- To encourage students to use critical thinking skills as they compare the Jewish traditions and culture to other cultures and practices about which they have learned.
- To encourage students to ask questions about Judaism and to learn how to distinguish between fact and stereotype.
- To enrich the teaching of a multicultural curriculum by exposing students to an authentic and historic Jewish site.

Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Curriculum Standards

Grade 5

Social Studies

1. Describe how environment and location influenced the cultures and lifestyles (2.A.1.a)
2. Acquire and apply new vocabulary through investigating, listening, independent reading and discussing a variety of print and non-print sources (6.A.1.a)
3. Connect key ideas to prior knowledge (personal experience, text, and world) (6.B.1.b)
4. Pose questions about the topic (6.C.1.b)
5. Identify examples of tradition, such as the economic roles of men and women (4.B.1.a)

Reading/Language Arts

1. Acquire new vocabulary through listening to, independently reading, and discussing a variety of literary and informational texts (1.D.1.a)
2. Use new vocabulary in speaking and writing to gain and extend content knowledge and clarify expression (1.D.3.d)
3. Demonstrate active listening strategies (6.A.1.a-d)
4. Elaborate on the information and ideas presented (6.A.2.c)

Grade 6

Social Studies:

1. Describe and compare elements of culture such as art, music, religion, government, social structure, education, values, beliefs and customs, from civilizations in early world history (2.A.1.b)
2. Identify cultural groups within a region in early world history (2.B.1.a)
3. Describe factors that resulted in cultural diffusion, such as trade, conflict, and migration (2.B.1.b)
4. Examine the practices and beliefs of world religions and philosophies including monotheism and polytheism (2.B.2.a)
5. Acquire and apply new vocabulary through investigating, listening, independent reading, and discussing a variety of print and non-print sources (6.A.1.a)
6. Use new vocabulary in speaking and writing to gain and extend content knowledge and clarify expression (6.A.1.d)
7. Connect key ideas to prior knowledge (personal experience, text, and world) (6.B.1.b)
8. Pose questions about the topic (6.C.1.b)

Reading/Language Arts

1. Acquire new vocabulary through listening to, independently reading, and discussing a variety of literary and informational texts (1.D.1.a)
2. Use new vocabulary in speaking and writing to gain and extend content knowledge and clarify expression (1.D.3.d)
3. Apply and demonstrate listening skills appropriately in a variety of settings and for a variety of purposes (6.A.1.a-g)
4. Elaborate on the information and ideas presented (6.A.2.a)

Background:

Judaism is the religion of the Jewish people, based on principles and ethics embodied in the *TaNaKh* (Jewish Bible) and in Rabbinic Law. Judaism is one of the first recorded monotheistic faiths and among the oldest religious traditions still in practice today. According to Jewish tradition, Judaism dates back to Abraham, the patriarch and progenitor of the Jewish people. Throughout its years in existence, Jewish history and doctrines have influenced other Abrahamic religions such as Christianity, Islam, Samaritanism, and the Bahai faith.

As one of the oldest active religions and cultures, the Jewish religion and history spans over many centuries and countries. Additionally, the Jewish people have interacted with and lived through many world powers and empires, including the Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans.

Although Judaism's history and connection with America is recent in comparison, it is still continuing to grow and develop. Historically, Jews arrived in North America as early as the 1500s with other sailors and land developers. However, one of the first significant groups of Jews to settle in North America came in 1654 from Brazil. They were only 23 in number and they arrived in New Amsterdam, presently New York. Even though this group marks the first Jews to consciously settle in America, an influx of Jewish immigrants to America has only occurred within the past two-hundred years. These massive immigrations were a result of various events and catalysts that occurred throughout Europe and Asia, such as:

- economic and political situations
- anti-Jewish and anti-semitic sentiment
- the Enlightenment in Western Europe
- the Pogroms in Eastern Europe
- the Holocaust
- the social and the educational opportunities that America presented.

In congruence with their immigration, the Jewish people brought to America their sacred traditions, culture and customs that they have practiced and maintained for hundreds of years.

Baltimore was a major city that was culturally affected by the massive immigration of Jews. The first Jews to arrive were from Germany. They settled in East Baltimore during the early 19th century. In 1826, the Maryland legislature enacted the "Jew Bill" which modified the state constitution's Christian oath requirement for public office allowing the Jews to substitute a declaration of belief in a Creator. Additionally, the German Jews formed a congregation in East Baltimore known as *Nidchei Yisroel* (The Scattered Israel), later known as Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, and built the Lloyd Street Synagogue in 1845. The Lloyd Street Synagogue became Maryland's first synagogue and therefore is an important historic landmark not only for Jewish history, but for Maryland history as well. The Lloyd Street Synagogue was also used at the turn of the twentieth century as a place of worship for the second wave of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe.

Some of the ancient religious traditions, which are still practiced by many Jews today, include the wearing of religious garments such as the *tallit* (a prayer shawl), the *teffilin* (a pair of phylacteries) and a *yarmulke* (a skullcap). Additionally, many Jews continue to observe the holy day of *Shabbat*, (Sabbath, the day of rest), and the laws of *Kashrut* (dietary laws). Similarly, the traditions pertaining to Life Cycle events (birth, marriage, death, etc) and the celebration of Jewish holidays are still practiced. While many of these practices have developed over time and adapted to the times, they remain rooted in ancient traditions.

**Many of the terms relevant to Jewish practice are explained in the Glossary.*

Pre-Visit Lesson Plan: Synagogue Terms

Materials needed: Teacher Resource Sheet #1, index cards

Advanced preparation: Write each term that is listed on Teacher Resource Sheet #1 on an index card

Time: 30-45 minutes

This lesson plan focuses on the terms that are described in the glossary (Teacher Resource Sheet #1). Divide students into groups of 2-3. Distribute an index card to each group. Have students research their assigned term using resource materials in your school's library or the internet. Give students 15-20 minutes to conduct research and then some additional time to prepare how they are going to present their findings to the class. They should also think about how to compare the Jewish term that they have researched to similar concepts or objects from other faiths with which they are familiar. While some of the terms may seem simplistic, encourage students to research their history or significance. Students should present the results of their research in a creative manner. Some examples are as follows: students can perform a short skit that demonstrates their understanding of their assigned term; they can produce a drawing of the item they've researched; they can write a song or poem about the term. Once the students have completed this assignment, reassemble the students and give each group five minutes to present what they researched to the rest of the class.

If your class time is limited, on the back of each index card, write the definition of the term. Hand out to each group the index card that lists both the term and the definition. Have students spend twenty minutes discussing how to interpret the term to the rest of the class in a creative fashion. For the remainder of the class, each group should present their term to the rest of the class.

During Your Visit: Introduction to Judaism

When your group arrives at the Museum, you will be greeted by a Museum representative who will lead your students to the Lloyd Street Synagogue where the program will begin. If your group is larger than 25-30 students, you will need to split the group into smaller groups of no more than 25-30 students. Please note that the maximum number of students that we can accommodate for this program is 60. If your group is larger, we ask that you split it into smaller groups and schedule separate visit times for each group. The Museum can recommend other nearby museums or houses of worship for part of the class to visit while the other group is touring the Lloyd Street Synagogue.

Post-Visit Lesson Plan: Rites of Passage

There are three different Post-Visit lesson plan activities. Teachers can choose to have their classroom only focus on one activity or they can allow each student to choose which activity he/she prefers to do.

Each activity can also be modified for students in grades 8-12

1. Music Activity

Materials needed: Computer with speakers, access to the four websites given, copies of the Student Resource Sheet or blank pieces of paper, pencils

Advanced preparation: Make enough copies of the Student Resource Sheet for all students

Time: 30-45 minutes

Procedure:

1. Review with your students what they have learned during their visit to the Jewish Museum of Maryland. Have them discuss the details of observing *Shabbat* (the Jewish Sabbath – day of rest), about the meaning of the word “*Shalom*” (“hello”, “good-bye”, “peace”) and ask them to reflect on what they learned about Judaism and the role of the synagogue in the Jewish community.
2. Explain to students the meaning of the phrase and song “*Shalom Aleichem!*”
~ “Shalom Aleichem!” is the traditional greeting used when two Jews meet and it is also the name of the song that Jewish families sing each Friday night to welcome in *Shabbat* (the Sabbath – Jewish Day of Rest)
~ “Shalom Aleichem!” literally means “May Peace be Upon You”
3. Go over translated lyrics with students

Translated Lyrics

Peace be upon you, ministering angels, messengers of the Most High, of the Supreme King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

Come in peace, messengers of peace, messengers of the Most High, of the Supreme King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

Bless me with peace, messengers of peace, messengers of the Most High, of the Supreme King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

May your departure be in peace, messengers of peace, messengers of the Most High, of the Supreme King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

4. Ask students what they think is the meaning of the song.
5. Explain another meaning for the song: On the most basic level, by singing this song, Jews are asking G-d to bless their home with peace; that there should be no conflict between friends or family, especially on *Shabbat*.
6. Explain to students that this song has been sung by Jewish families for hundreds of years all over the world. It can be sung with many different melodies, but it is always sung with great happiness and joy.

7. Listen to four different versions of "Shalom Aleichem" from the websites below. Write on the board the following five questions for students to think about as they are listening to each melody.

Questions for Students:

1. What makes each tune different?
2. Does the feeling of the song change when the music changes? How?
3. What is the feeling of each piece?
4. Can you think of some important song or melody that has been passed down in your family? Why do you sing it? What is its importance?
5. What do you think is the purpose of music in traditions and cultures? What is its importance? What does it show? What feelings can it evoke?

Music Websites

One way to access websites:

1. Go to <http://faujsa.fau.edu> (Florida State University Judaica Sound Archives)
2. Go to "Search"
3. You will search for:
 - *1. **Artist:** Malavsky
Title: Sabbath with the Malavsky Family
4. Click "Search" and then click on the second option (JSA# 401329)
5. The song that you want to hear is "Shalom Alechem", song number 4 in the jukebox.
6. Go back to "Search"
7. You will search for:
 2. **Title:** Hassdic Z'miros
8. Click "Search" and then click the option presented on the screen. (JSA # 400865)
9. The song that you want to hear is "Shalom Alechem", song number 1 in the jukebox.
10. Go back to "Search"
11. You will search for:
 3. **Artist:** Chaim Parchi
Title: Zmirot le'erev Shabbat Vol. 2
12. Click "Search" and then click the option presented on the screen. (JSA # 300386)
13. The song that you want to hear is "Shalom Alechem", song number 1 in the jukebox.
14. Go back to "Search"
15. You will search for:
 4. **Artist:** Ben Zion Shenker
Title: Joy of the Sabbath
16. Click "Search" and then click the option presented on the screen. (JSA #400866)
13. The song that you want to hear is "Shalom Alechem", song number 1 in the jukebox.

*About the Songs

1. "Shalom Alechem" sung by the Malavsky Family. A well-known, Eastern European melody.
2. "Shalom Alechem" sung by the New York Cantors Concert Ensemble. A Hassidic melody.
3. "Shalom Alechem" sung by Chaim Parchi. A Spanish melody.
4. "Shalom Alechem" sung and composed by Ben Zion Shenker. An American melody.

Another way to access the websites*:

1. From Eastern Europe:
http://faujsa.fau.edu/jsa/music_album.php?jsa_num=401329&queryWhere=jsa_num&queryValue=401329&artisttext=Malavsky&artist=contains&titletext=&title=contains&selectgenre=&selectlanguage=H

[ebrew&musiconly=&id=&select=title&side=&track=&fetch=&pagenum=1&return=search_albums](#)

(**song number 4. Song begins at 0:23.)

2. From the Hassidic Tradition:

http://faujsa.fau.edu/jsa/music_album.php?jsa_num=400865&queryWhere=jsa_num&queryValue=400865&artisttext=&artist=contains&titletext=&title=contains&selectgenre=Hassidic&selectlanguage=Hebrew&musiconly=&id=&select=title&side=&track=&fetch=&pagenum=1&return=search_albums (song

number 1. Song ends at 1:51.)

3. From Spain:

http://faujsa.fau.edu/jsa/music_album.php?jsa_num=300386&queryWhere=jsa_num&queryValue=300386&artisttext=&artist=contains&titletext=&title=contains&selectgenre=Sephardic&selectlanguage=Hebrew&musiconly=&id=&select=title&side=&track=&fetch=&pagenum=1&return=search_albums

(song number 1)

4. From America:

http://faujsa.fau.edu/jsa/music_album.php?jsa_num=400866&queryWhere=jsa_num&queryValue=400866&artisttext=&artist=contains&titletext=&title=contains&selectgenre=cantorial&selectlanguage=Hebrew&musiconly=&id=&select=title&side=&track=&fetch=50&pagenum=3&return=search_albums

(song number 1)

For PC: You can access these websites by pressing the **CONTROL (Ctrl) button on your keyboard, and while still holding that button, use the mouse to click on the link.*

***You can change songs by clicking on your song of choice in the jukebox located on the right side of the screen*

8. Students can then work on the following activity individually or in partners. Have them interview a friend (or think about it themselves) about a song which is special to their family. It can be a song that has been passed down, one that someone in their family wrote, or a song that everyone knows and loves.
9. Have them fill in the Student Resource Sheet (or use same questions on a blank sheet)
10. Have students share their answers with the class (if they worked in pairs, the friend will share the information about the person that he/she interviewed)
11. Hang presentations around the room.

Modification for grades 8-12

1. Explain the background of "Shalom Aleichem" phrase and song
2. Listen to all four "Shalom Aleichem" melodies
3. Have students write an in-class essay

Essay Topic: Write an in-class essay about the importance of music in traditions and cultures. What is its purpose? Why is it important? What does music illustrate about a culture? Use the melody of "Shalom Aleichem" as one of your supporting examples and come up on your own with some other musical examples.

Student Resource Sheet

Name: _____

Name of Family Song: _____

Meaning of the Song: _____

Why is this song special to the family? _____

How did it become a family song? _____

Favorite line of the song and why? _____

2. Art Activity

Materials needed: Paper, markers, crayons, pastels, paint, magazines, glue, and sculpty-clay

Advanced preparation: None

Time: 45-60 minutes

Procedure:

1. Review with your students what they have learned during their visit to the Jewish Museum of Maryland. Have them discuss the details of the Jewish religious objects such as the *Torah* (Bible), *Yarmulke* (skullcap), *Tallit* (prayer shawl). Also review the Jewish ritual practices such as observing *Shabbat* (the Jewish Sabbath, day of rest) and keeping *Kosher* (the dietary laws). Additionally, ask them to reflect on what they learned about Judaism and the role of the synagogue in the Jewish community.
2. Talk about how all items are important and special to Judaism.
3. Instruct students to think about something that is special and unique to them. It could be a special place, object, or an action/activity.
4. Ask students to make a visual representation of their special item using markers, crayons, paint or pastels on paper. Or, use magazines and glue to make a collage. Or, use sculpty-clay to sculpt and design their idea.
5. Share with the class and then display around the classroom.

Modification for students in grades 8-12:

1. Review the place, religious objects, and ritual practices discussed on tour at the Jewish Museum.
2. Ask students to write an in-class essay:

Essay Topic: Write an essay about the importance of places, objects, and rituals in defining and shaping culture/religion. Use vocabulary words such as *synagogue*, *talit*, *yarmulke*, *Torah*, *kashrut* and/or *Shabbat* as an example(s). Also, come up with your own supporting examples.

3. Creative Writing Activity

Materials needed: Paper and pencils

Advanced preparation: None

Time: 40-45 minutes

Procedure:

1. Review with your students what they have learned during their visit to the Jewish Museum of Maryland.
2. Assign the following two creative writing assignments to students.

Creative Writing Options:

- Pretend that it is the 1960's and you are a journalist and work for the newspaper, *The Lloyd Street Times*. You were just assigned to write an article about why the Lloyd Street Synagogue should **not** be torn down and should **not** be turned into a parking lot. As a reporter, make sure to interview some people who are connected to this building. Be creative!
 - Pretend that it is 1910 and you are a Russian, Jewish immigrant to Baltimore. Write a diary entry describing what your new life is like here in Baltimore. How many people do you have in your family? Where do you eat? Where do you live? Where do you go to school? Where do you work? Do you belong to a synagogue, if so, where? Who are your friends? Be creative!
3. When students have completed their writing assignment, have them share it with the class.
 4. Display around the classroom.

Modification for students in grades 8-12:

1. Review with your students what they have learned during their visit to the Jewish Museum of Maryland.
2. Ask students to write an in-class essay:

Essay Topic: Write an argumentative essay arguing why the Lloyd Street Synagogue is an important historic landmark and should be preserved. Defend your argument with strong supporting details and examples.

Resource List:

Books

Introduction to Judaism Resources:

- Corrigan, John (editor), Jews, Christians, Muslims: A Comparative Introduction to the Monotheistic Religions, Prentice Hall Inc., 1997.
- De Lange, Nicholas, An Introduction to Judaism, Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Einstein, Stephen J., Introduction to Judaism: A Sourcebook, UAHC Press, 1999.
- Solomon, Norman, Judaism: A Very Short Introduction, Oxford University Press, Inc., 2000.
- Wylen, Stephen M., Settings of Silver: An Introduction to Judaism, Paulist Press, 2000.

About the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony:

- Cohen, Nachman, Bar – Bat Mitzvah and Beyond, Phillipp Feldheim, Inc., 1997.
- Cutter, William (editor), A Spiritual Journey: The Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah Handbook, Behrman House, Inc., 1998.
- Leneman, Helen, Bar/Bat Mitzvah Basics: A Practical Family Guide to Coming of Age Together, Jewish Lights Publishing, 1991.
- Salkin, Jeffrey K., Putting God on the Guestlist: How to Reclaim the Spiritual Meaning of Your Child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah, Jewish Lights Publishing, 1996.
- Seiffer Sage, Linda, The Complete Bar-Bat Mitzvah Planner, St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1993.

About other Jewish Life Cycle Events:

- ~ Cardin, Rabbi Nina Beth and Scott Blumenthal, The Time of Our Lives: A Teen Guide to the Jewish Life Cycle, Behrman House, Inc., 2003.
- ~ Kadden, Bruce and Barbara, Teaching Jewish Life Cycle, Behrman House, Inc., 1997.

Web Sites

About Judaism:

- <http://www.jewfaq.org/> - Judaism 101
- <http://www.nmajh.org/timeline/index.htm> - Timeline of American Jewish history
- http://Judaism.about.com/library/intro/bl_intro.htm - answers basic questions about Judaism
- <http://www.shir-tikvah.org/jewclass/> - brief introduction to Judaism
- <http://www.aish.com/shabbat/> - an overview about Shabbat

Jewish Music Websites:

- ~ <http://faujsa.fau.edu/jsa/> - Florida Atlantic University Judaic Sound Archives
- ~ <http://jnul.huji.ac.il/eng/music.html> - National Sound Archives at the Jewish National Library in Jerusalem

Teacher Resource Sheet #1

GLOSSARY OF JUDAISM TERMS

- ❖ *ALIYA* - Hebrew term meaning going up. When a person blesses the *Torah* before and after it is read, it is called an *aliya* because he or she is “going up” to the *Torah*.
- ❖ *BAR/BAT MITZVAH* - Hebrew term meaning son/daughter of the commandment. At the age of thirteen, a child becomes a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* at a special ceremony when he or she reads from the *Torah* and accepts the duties of the commandments. The plural of *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is *B'nai Mitzvah*.
- ❖ *BIMAH* - a raised platform holding a table that faces the ark. Parts of the service are conducted from the *bimah*.
- ❖ *CHANUKKIAH* – Chanukah menorah with eight apertures plus one more that is set apart for the *shamash* or master light.
- ❖ *ETERNAL LIGHT* - a continuously lit lamp located in front of the ark to recall the eternal light in King Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem. The eternal light serves as a symbol of God's eternal presence. In Hebrew, it is called *Ner Tamid*.
- ❖ *HAFTORAH*- Selections from the book of Prophets that are read on *Shabbat*, after the *Torah* reading. Each *Shabbat*, a different selection is read, according to the *Torah* portion of the week.
- ❖ *KASHRUT*- Dietary laws observed by some Jews that contain specific guidelines for what people can and cannot eat. For example, the mixing of meat and dairy products is prohibited, as well as eating certain kinds of animals such as pork and shellfish. This is also referred to as keeping *Kosher*.
- ❖ *KIPPAH* (Yarmulke) - a head covering worn by Jews as a constant reminder of God's presence. *Yarmulke* is the Yiddish term for a *kippah*.
- ❖ *MATZAH* - Special kind of bread that is eaten on the holiday of Passover. It is flat and hard because it is not allowed to rise.
- ❖ *MENORAH* – Hebrew for candelabrum. The name given to the seven-branched candelabrum, which was a prominent feature in the Jerusalem Temple. After the destruction of the Temple the menorah became the most important Jewish pictorial motif, and from an implement it became an emblem.
- ❖ *MEZUZAH* - a small case attached to the right upper doorpost of a house, slanting inward. It contains a parchment with two passages from the Bible – (Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 11:13-21) with the commandment to write G-d's words upon the doorposts of your house and upon your gates. When you see a *mezuzah* on a door, you know that it marks a Jewish home or organization.
- ❖ *MIKVEH* - a modern day custom based in antiquity. A *mikveh* is a ritual bath for purification and rededication. A *mikveh* is built to exacting standards, must be partially filled with water collected from rain or from a stream, and cannot have a drain in its bottom.
- ❖ *MONOTHEISM* - The doctrine or belief that there is only one God.

- ❖ *RABBI* - a Hebrew word meaning my teacher. A *rabbi* serves as a synagogue congregation's leader who conducts services and teaches classes. Other duties include counseling, conducting weddings and funerals, and visiting the sick and bereaved.
- ❖ *SHABBAT*- The Jewish Sabbath that lasts from sundown on Friday through an hour past sundown on Saturday. This is the Jewish day of rest, and observant Jews refrain from all types of work on this day.
- ❖ *STAR OF DAVID* - a six-pointed star consisting of two superimposed triangles. It is a universal Jewish symbol.
- ❖ *SYNAGOGUE* - a Greek term referring to Jewish house of worship.
- ❖ *TALLIT* - a four-cornered prayer shawl with fringes worn as commanded in the Bible to serve as a constant reminder of God's presence, love and the importance of fulfilling commandments.
- ❖ *TANAKH* – A Hebrew acronym that stands for the three major sections that, together, comprise the Jewish Bible: *Torah* (5 Books of Moses), *Nevi'im* (Books of the Prophets), and *Ketuvim* (Books of Writings).
- ❖ *TEFILIN*- phylacteries boxes containing prayer selections that are worn during morning prayers, but not on *Shabbat*. One box is worn on the forehead and the other box is worn on the arm. The straps of the arm box are wrapped around the arm seven times, and then around the hand three times.
- ❖ *TORAH* - the history and laws of the Jewish people from the time of creation until the death of Moses, handwritten on parchment in Hebrew by a trained scribe that has been rolled to form a scroll. The *Torah* is partially unrolled during synagogue services. In book form the *Torah* is also known as the Five Books of Moses. There are several components of the *Torah* with special meanings:

BREAST PLATE- a decorative piece on the *Torah* that is usually designed to imitate the breast plate worn by the High Priest in ancient times.

GARTL- a Yiddish word meaning "belt". This belt secured the *Torah*, so it does not unroll on its own.

MANTLE- a covering for the *Torah* that is both decorative and protective.

RIMMONIM- individual crown-like objects that are placed over the handles of the *Torah* to emphasize the *Torah*'s importance. The wooden handles are often called *rimmonim* themselves.

YAD- a Hebrew word meaning hand. It is a pointer that is usually in the shape of a hand with an outstretched pointer finger. A *yad* is used to point to words while reading the *Torah*, because people are not supposed to touch the parchment with their hands.

- ❖ *TORAH ARK* - a closet or container for the *Torah* scrolls when they are not in use. In America, the ark is usually located on the eastern wall of the synagogue facing towards Jerusalem.
- ❖ *TZEDAKAH*- often translated as charity, but in fact, a more literal translation is "righteousness." According to Judaism, the giving of *tzedakah* is not only to be done as an act of compassion, but instead is the "right" thing to do.