



AMERICAN COMMUNITIES HELPING ISRAEL

Begin the academic year with a class or school wide vote dedicating one day a week with “Israel Snack Day”. All snacks served or brought in on that day should be from Israel.

The following are suggestions to extend the “ACHI” Israel weekly snack program and enhance learning using the calendar year.

By reading through all the suggestions for the various levels you will realize that you can adapt the ideas to the age group you are working with as well as to the number of times you meet with your group and integrate the ideas with your curriculum.

Preschool Level (N , Pre-K, K)

Activities

Shabbat parties – introducing “Gefen” as one of the seven species – grape juice from Israel, Shabbat party –with snacks imported from Israel – i.e. - Osem cakes, Angel’s rugelach, Kedem tea biscuits

Rosh Chodesh parties – celebrate the new lunar month with Israeli snacks and include students’ Hebrew birthdays of the given month

Rosh Hashana – snack on apples and include dipping apple in honey from Israel, learning how to eat the “Rimon” – one of the seven species, learning the special “Yihee Ratzon” prayers

Succot – the Arba Minim, decorating the Succah and utilizing the seven species, snacks for the Succah hopping parties

Simchat Torah – dance with flags and candy from Israel

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Chanukah – chocolate gelt made in Israel, gift giving – items from Israel, Chanukiah display of menorahs made in Israel, Zayit – one of the “Seven Species” and the source for oil to light the Chanukiya

Tu B’ishvat – “Seven Species display – fruit goody bag including items from Israel, almonds from Israel – almond tree being the first tree to blossom – sign of spring

Purim – Mishloach Manot – contents should include Israel products – a time of the year to give to friends and the needy

Pesach – Model Seder with Haggada, and Pesach tunes from Israel –and of course Passover snacks from Israel.

Lag B’Omer – picnic time including snacks from Israel – introduce sister program in Israel – children across the world snacking together

Yom Ha’atzmaut – variety of snacks from Israel, display of objects made in Israel, initiate an e-mail pal campaign – encouraging attachments of scanned pictures and art by children. Virtual tour of Israel- i.e. motel, “shuk” and each child gets make believe “shkalim” to purchase small gifts, beach, art galleries, kibbutz- planting outdoors, etc.

Yom Yerushalayim – snack pal in Jerusalem, start a Yediat Ha’aretz project – pictures of the holy places in Jerusalem, match game of Jerusalem.

Shavuot – cheese tasting party – imported cheeses and crackers from Israel in honor of the holiday where the menu includes dairy foods

Mother’s Day/Father’s Day – cards and gifts should remind the recipient of our loyalty to Israel – ex. Mug with tea and biscuits or cookies imported from Israel

Birthday parties – buy gifts from Israel and loot bag should include snacks from Israel

Concepts:

By introducing children to products imported from Israel they will not only develop a taste for them, but they will also understand the support they are offering the Israeli economy. The children will be able to answer the following questions:

1. What does Israel produce?
2. How do we help Israel by buying products made there? “Veahavta l’rayacha kamocho.”
3. How do we get the products made in Israel?

By following the calendar, the children will develop a loyalty and on going connection to Israel throughout the year. Every holiday and event will introduce a food or product imported from Israel. This will lend itself to the teaching of the customs related to the holiday.

A “brachot” or prayer unit can also be added to the foods and products being introduced. During the course of the year all the blessings before food could be covered. Any special prayers associated with food or products can also be included – “Y’hee Ratzon” on Rosh Hashana, Arba Minim blessings etc.

Lower Grades (1 – 3)

Activities

Rosh Hashana – the many sources for honey, the variety of sounds of the shofar and where does the shofar come from, introducing the “Shivat Haminim” – particularly the Rimon

Succot – the “Arba Minim” – where and how they grow, their special blessings and shaking, decorating the Succah and planning for a succah party with snacks from Israel.

Simchat Torah – Dance to Torah songs from Israel, use flags from Israel, meet a Sofer

Chanukah – Candle lighting – use of oil from Israel, candles from Israel, how is oil made. Menorahs from Israel display, opportunity to buy gifts made in Israel, dreidels from America and Israel – rules to play and difference in letters. Toy drive for adopted brother/sister school.

Tu B’shvat – Fruit bag containing those grown in Israel, Shivat Haminim, and product map of Israel where “Shivat minim” come from, where citrus fruits, Etrogim, flowers, vegetables and dairy come from.

Purim – Mishloach Manot – content contains two varieties and both should be imports from Israel, a parchment Megillah from Israel. Dress up like an Israeli- chayalet /chayelet, kibbutznik. Chasid, nurse with Magen David on uniform, Yemenite bride, Golda Meir, Ben Gurion, etc.

Pesach – K’ara display of those made in Israel, Model Seder utilizing Kosher for Passover foods from Israel, product map based on foods consumed at Seder.

Lag B’omer – promote an international Israel snack day on picnic

Yom Haatzmaut – introduce a new snack from Israel – Israel Museum –display all products (beyond the food line) found in homes in America imported from Israel – books, tapes, and artifacts. Share excitement of the celebrations by “e-pal” in sister/brother schools.

Yom Yerushalayim – getting to know Jerusalem and its holy places, send a prayer to the Kotel in J-m

Shavuot – Torah on Mount Sinai – where is Sinai? If you were there – what would you be wearing and whom would you be standing next to? What would you be eating then and now?

Concepts:

Introduce children to current and new products made in Israel. Help children develop a bond and loyalty to Israel and Israeli students throughout the year. Provide opportunities for children to purchase not only foods made in Israel but other products as well.

Introduce the idea of responsibility for helping our fellow Jew. By purchasing products made in Israel we are not only boosting the economy but also boosting the morale of the people.

Middle Grades (4 – 8)

School Orientation- introduce and outline ACHI Weekly Snack Day Program based on individual school's plan, decorate bulletin board in classrooms and corridor displaying "ACHI", distribute letters of endorsement from political figures and chief Rabbis.

Rosh Hashana- E-Pal in sister/brother school in Israel, Rosh Hashana customs from different Jewish cultures related to food and "yehi ratzon". Create wish list for us and for Israel.

Succot- Study of "arba minim"- where from (are lulavim from Arizona?), Succot and decorations around the world (as influenced by weather patterns and local customs), Succah parties including foods from Israel, plan to include in your family menus at least one Israeli product per meal- share ideas and recipes- for extra Mitzvot on Chag Hasuccot.

Simchat Torah - goody bags with products of Israel, understanding the different design of Torahs scrolls based on different cultures (Ashkenazi/Sephardi), develop questions for an interview with a Sofer – are they licensed, how long does it take to write a Torah, where is the writing done, what is used to write, what they write on, etc.

Chanukah- Rosh Chodesh Kislev- Goods and services auction with proceeds to sister schools in Israel for their Chanukah parties. Services can include babysitting, errands, car wash, baked goods (sufganiot with jam from Israel), teacher's offering special activities (a day on the town with teacher and students, pizza party, extra credit points, no homework for the day pass). Maccabiah sportsathon with sponsors.

Tu B'shvat- Fruit bags from Israel, Tu B'shvat seder

Purim- Mishloach Manot from Israel. Different ways of celebrating Purim- walled and unwalled city, send mishloach manot to a "chayal, a sister school, design and sell Purim cards and proceeds go to food packages for the poor containing imported Israeli products, and to chayalim.

Pesach- Israeli wine sale, display of different Haggadot and commentary from Israel, different minhagim for the Seder (B'Chol Dor Vador), Charoset recipes from different cultures in Israel, different tunes representing different cultures for songs in the Haggadah

Lag B'omer – Bonfire with songs and snacks from Israel, understand the "hilulah" in Israel – trip to Meron. Hiking in Israel- unit on Israeli geography. The importance of "achdut" and "Veahavta l'reacha kamocho"- and its connection with "ACHI" snack program.

Yom H'atzmaut – campaign in community – what did you for Israel today, Israel snack and gift shop with proceeds to Sister school, yearbook. Invite Israeli child to discuss differences in life. Show video made in Israel – life on a kibbutz, moshav, in a city

Yom Yerushalayim – Understanding the old city and the new city, different communities, a virtual tour of Jerusalem, Jerusalem in the Torah, products of Jerusalem – ex. Candle making factory by disabled Jerusalem residents

Shavuot – Matan Torah - preparation for the virtual trip to Sinai – comparing then and now, eating of dairy foods and promoting dairy products from Israel. Decorate the synagogue with flowers from Israel if possible.

Concepts

Instilling in the children in America a connection to Israel throughout the calendar year. Helping children gain a better understanding of the country, the cultures, the topography, the agriculture, the demographics and the economy. Goal is to create a sense of responsibility for our people in Israel and creating a commitment to our fellow Jew.

Upper Grades (7 – 12)

Orientation to introduce and implement “ACHI” program – Project manager (staff member) and student liaison start the school year with an assembly program highlighting the goals the school undertakes for the year.

Chodesh Elul - Design a greeting card to sell with proceeds to yearbook and to ACHI's “Nourish a Child – Nourish a Mind” mitzvah program.
Origin of the shofar and learning to blow one – understanding the significance of the different sounds.

Yamim Noraim – Rosh Hashana – Yom Kippur –Understanding these national and religious holidays in Israel, Collective wish list for Israel, Honey, sweets, and tea from Israel campaign with proceeds to both a local and Israeli charity. Create a menu for a Rosh Hashana dinner and break your fast meal - including products and sweets from Israel. A Machzor from Israel – how is it different? A new fruit – try to find one from Israel if possible.

Succot – Build and decorate a Succah – utilizing decorations from Israel or craft them representing the Shivat Minim and Israeli themes.

Simchat Torah – Invite a vocalist and dance teacher to learn Torah songs and dances

Chanukah – Have a goods and services auction with proceeds to Israeli sister/brother school and GO. Connect with Israeli vendors and plan for a Chanukah Boutique – percentage of proceeds go to a toy drive for sister school in Israel, bring in olive press to make oil for lighting the Chanukiyah

Tu B'shvat - Plan for the Tu B'shvat seder – all F and B (food and beverage) should be products of Israel

Post Tu’B’shvat announce a community mishloach manot campaign – package and send to the entire membership for a nominal fee. Think of UPSing to affiliate members or those who moved away – a great gesture. Announce that the package will contain delectibles from Israel – a great way to introduce new products to consumers.

Purim – Bring in and display a Megillah written by a Sofer in Israel and illuminated as well. If you were to interview the sofer, what questions would you ask him? The personal manot you send should focus on an Israel theme.

Pesach - Bring in an assortment of illuminated Haggadot from Israel to display and review. Understand the different customs at the seder as well as different foods considered Kosher for Passover based on your origin (kitniyot). Tefillat “geshem” said on the holiday – who and for whom?

Lag B’omer – What do you need to build a bonfire? Its significance on this day. Virtual hiking and jeeping through Israel. The counting of the Omer and the significance of this day (considered a break in this time of mourning). The importance of “Veahavta L’rayacha Kamocho” and “Achdut” amongst the Jewish people.

Yom Ha’atzmaut – design of school T-shirt, caps, head band, bandana for parade, compare July 4 to this day, Israel fair – proceeds to school yearbook

Yom Yerushalayim – Understanding the walls and gates of Jerusalem, variety of synagogues, cultures in J-m, variety of restaurants in J-m and the differences in their menus, recreation in J-m.

Virtual visit to the Knesset in J-m – understanding the political parties and government of Israel

Shavuot – Chag Habikurim – understanding of the agriculture in Israel – what grows best – what do they export, what can we consume? Sources of water, seasons and weather patterns in the country, when is the best time to travel to Israel, virtual tour of an agricultural Kibbutz. Z’man Matan Torah – where did it happen, map study, getting there and touring in the area today. Create a dairy menu for the holiday dinner – utilizing cheeses and sweets from Israel whenever possible.

Concepts

Giving the children an opportunity for leadership role in implementing creative projects that involve consumption of imported products from Israel. Instilling in the children a better understanding for the diverse cultures in the state of Israel and our responsibility to all of its people. The bond and loyalty to our fellow Jew will be enhanced and hopefully will follow the students into their adult years. Helping children and their families become aware that by visiting Israel, consuming their products, connecting with its people via phone fax or e-mail, we boost the economy of the country and the morale of its people.

Alternative Approaches

1. Concept from Portion of the Week – follow the portions of the week and highlights that lend themselves to a better understanding of the land of Israel, biblical sites, customs of the Jewish people, cultures, housing, hospitality, kashrut observance, source for mitzvot

Bereshit – source for text for Kiddush – Israeli wine and grape juice, gift giving (Kayin and Hevel)

Noach – Kosher Animals in the Ark – signs of kashrut today, Rainbow – blessing – colors of the rainbow – rainbow in the commercial world – candy, stickers, fashion

2. Israel Culture of the Month- to help create understanding and unity through knowledge- choose one culture of Jews in Israel each month- perhaps to be introduced on Rosh Chodesh. Students to learn about customs, observances and daily life, and food of this cultural group. When possible – this can be introduced with guest speaker wearing traditional costumes. When available, students to sample food of this culture imported from Israel. Examples of cultures- Jews of: Yemen, Morocco, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Bucharria, Germany, Eastern Europe, India, Spain, Portugal, Italy, South America, Syria.

3. Israel Fact of the Week - Each week on snack day present a short “interesting fact about Israel” that would appeal to specific age groups. Facts could be about schools in Israel, games played, sports, favorite foods, political parties, demographics, important dates to remember, famous people from history, famous and fun sites to see- on and off the beaten track, life on a kibbutz. These facts can be collected on cards for the entire year, and made into an “Israel facts (trivia) game” at the end of the year. In addition, this provides an opportunity for students to do their own “interesting Israel facts” research.

4. Current Events of the Week – On designated Israel snack day, students and teachers follow an “Israel in the News” approach to stay current with happenings in Israel. Map study, political parties, economic situations, business deals, import/ export updates, and – the efforts to peace. Summary statements can be added to a bulletin board. Snacks from Israel can be served as the discussion is taking place.

5. Multi-media approach – Each month entertainment from Israel is brought to the school followed by a collation of imported foods from Israel. Entertainment can include – a dance troupe, vocalists, klezmer group, pop concert musicians, artists, video photographers, student skits and talent show, etc

6. Digging down and Building up – With a focus on archeology and new construction, children will have a better understanding of the biblical past and the present growth on the same land. A virtual visit to an archeological dig and the “Shrine of the Book” and other museums will develop appreciation for the archeologists. Getting ready to interview an archeologist from Israel, list of questions to ask, sample artifacts found etc.

7. Design your own “ACHI “ program – at the beginning of the year meet the children to complete the grid below. This is a timeline the children will follow throughout the year with a focus on – I am helping Israel today. Network with other “ACHI” schools culminating with ACHI idea book project with BJE/ACHI awards for best ideas.

