



ASK HERZL

Program Title: Tu BiShvat in the Schools 2019

Program Tagline: (limit 25 words) This program focuses on how different communities in Israel celebrate trees. Each community was chosen to highlight a different population within Israel, and provide students a different way to interact with the holiday and Israel's trees.

Target Audience: Middle

Grade: 6, 7, 8

Length of Program: 30 minutes

Goal: To provide tangible examples for students of the different ways people celebrate trees in their day-to-day life, so they can pick the one that they connect with the most.

Materials: Stickers you can write on

Implementation:

- **Israel's Pioneers:** At this station we recognize all of the amazing resources that trees provide us. From the shade provided to the early pioneers as they worked hard to build the very first kibbutzim in the early 1900s, to the wood and paper provided by trees, trees provide so many important benefits to us on a daily basis. At this station we encourage the students to wander around the class and collect five different objects each made from the byproduct of a tree. Once the students have collected all of their objects, the students reconvene and put them in order of importance to their lives.
- **Israeli Students:** On Tu BiShvat Israeli students spend the entire day out in nature, visiting forests, and planting their own trees and herbs! This year, your students will be able plant the enclosed seeds, and water them every day until they grow! Materials required include cups and soil, we have provided the seeds!
- **Israeli Kibbutznicks:** At this station, students will learn about the farmers in Israel who grow a variety of fruits, plants, and vegetables for Israel to eat. The students will say a blessing on the fruit of the tree (Boreh Pree Ha'etz) and taste a variety of fruit. We recommend dates, grapes, oranges, and bananas. We recommend that you talk about the benefit we receive from trees by eating and absorbing their nutrients. Eating their fruit is also beneficial for the trees because we can plant the seeds inside the fruit to grow new trees, and to help keep the trees healthy by preventing rotting fruits.



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- Israel's Firefighters: Israel's firefighters do so much more than just put out the fires in Israel's forests. Israel's firefighters work to ensure that Israel's forests are healthy. The way we plant trees now ensures that they are not too close together, that the trees are healthy, and that they are not too close to homes. Included in each package are trees which can be decorated by your students. Make as many copies as you need! We suggest providing stickers, crayons, puffy paint, and other fun accessories for students to decorate the trees.

In class, students will personalize a tree sticker that reads, "I enjoy celebrating Tu BiShvat by _____." Upon completion, their stickers should then be added to your tree outline.

Briefly talk about what Tu BiShvat is:

- A Jewish holiday occurring on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat.
- The new year, or birthday for trees.
- We celebrate by having a Seder, which celebrates different trees and the fruits they produce.

Give a brief history of JNF, Israel, and planting trees in Israel.

- In 1901 Theodore Herzl began collecting money to buy land in the Ottoman Empire. Under Ottoman law, if you didn't use the land, they took it back. So, JNF began to plant trees on the land to show that they were using it. Once the State of Israel was founded and ecological research began, planting trees became a much more significant and important part of our infrastructure. Today we plant trees for a variety of reasons, according to a master plan developed by the Land and Forestry Authorities in Israel. Following the 2010 Carmel fire and the 2016 fires, JNF and the forestry agencies in Israel began to heal and replant the forests.
- Israel is now planting trees which produce edible fruits and nuts, so that hikers can enter the park without packaged foods, and eat from the designated trees, reducing litter. Trees are planted for security purposes also. They are planted around villages, cities, and communities to provide cover from enemies/prevent snipers and terrorists from planning attacks. Trees are planted to stabilize land and prevent erosion. This is very important during the flash floods in the south, to prevent large landslides. Trees are a large part of the ecosystem, providing animals with places to live, providing people with air to breathe.

Use the following questions for a discussion, as age appropriate:

- Who has been to Israel?
- What is your favorite memory or experience from Israel?
- What do you expect to see when you get off the plane in Israel?
- How do you think we can best help Israel?



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- Why are trees so important, in America and in Israel?
- Does anyone have any family members who are from Israel, or who live in Israel now?
- How many trees do you think JNF has planted in Israel since 1901?(Answer: Over 250 million)
- What benefits do trees provide to us?
- What objects in our lives would we miss if we didn't have trees?
- What are the important steps we need to take to keep our herbs alive?



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