

The Gottesman RTW Academy Lower School

The Lower School provides young learners with both a core set of academic skills and a respect for the world around them as a meaningful foundation for learning and life. The LS provides a progressively challenging program for students from kindergarten to 5th grade. The dynamic, collaborative teachers actively engage students in the learning process. The dual curriculum is individualized, challenging, and integrated to ensure that students develop a love of learning, gain confidence as learners, and learn key foundation skills.

Language Arts

- The language arts curriculum offers a variety of opportunities for students to develop reading, writing, and communication skills.
- Language Arts includes vocabulary, handwriting, and grammar.
- The Lower School students participate in writing workshops to develop critical thinking skills while honing their written and oral communication.
- The literature-based program offers an individualized and challenging analysis of various texts.

Math

- GRTWA strives for a well-rounded math program designed to address the varying skills and abilities of all students.
- The program emphasizes building upon the foundation of basic math skills through algebra-based problem-solving, including a variety of math strategies and critical thinking skills.
- Cooperative learning groups, use of manipulatives, unit projects, differentiated instruction, and enrichment are examples of the variety of instructional methods used to achieve these goals.
- The math program also incorporates other co-curricular programs in the school including visual arts, music, and computer technology that require the students to use math skills in creative and challenging ways.

Science

- The curriculum includes both labs and lectures, emphasizing hands-on learning opportunities for students.
- Students explore topics that have relevance to today's world, such as pollution, endangered species, renewable resources, and the rain forest, as well as basic curriculum studies in science.
- Co-curricular projects in other subject areas, including language arts, social studies, art, and math support the science curriculum.
- Science is taught by a specialist in the field.

Social Studies

- The social studies curriculum emphasizes learning about Jewish heritage with a blend of world history, American history, and current events.
- The social studies program creates a thought-provoking learning environment for the students, including class discussions, group projects, and the exploration of different themes.
- LS students use social studies to enhance literature and research projects.

THE FOUNDATION YEARS



Judaic Studies

- The core of the Judaic Studies curricula is character development. This includes Tzedakah, empathy, fairness, respect, and humanity.
- The study of the Torah in the Lower School includes an emphasis on analyzing themes as well as recognizing and integrating values into daily living.
- Customs and ceremonies are taught in the Lower School. They include prayer in synagogues, lifecycle events, and holiday celebrations.

Hebrew Language

- Lower School students learn oral, reading, and written Modern Hebrew language skills.
- Hebrew language is a total immersion program. Students learn Hebrew using an interactive, cutting-edge curriculum, TAL AM-TAL SELA.
- A Mechina program is available for students who begin their Hebrew language studies later in their education.

Israel Studies

- GRTWA teaches students to have a commitment, passion, and connection to the Jewish Homeland.
- Israeli messengers, schlichim, visit weekly throughout the school year educating students about modern Israeli culture.
- Biblical and modern history as well as geography are integrated into the curriculum.

Tikkun Olam

- Tikkun Olam (healing the world) is embedded into the culture and fabric of the school.
- GRTWA facilitates student participation in social action projects in the local community and abroad.

The Arts

- The arts are a vital part of the daily life of students at GRTWA, helping Lower School students to develop problem-solving abilities and to explore creativity.
- In visual arts, the art teacher works closely with the faculty to develop curriculum-related collaborative art projects, such as totem poles, rain forest dioramas, drama sets, and written reports on a chosen artist with an accompanying art project in the style of that artist. Art also helps to illumine the students' Jewish heritage through holiday-related projects.
- There is also abundant music and drama. Students learn vocal and performance skills, how to read basic music, and how to play instruments. Music is integrated with the rest of the curriculum, and there are many performance opportunities for all students.

Physical Education

- The goal of the physical education program is for each student to improve personal health and wellness through physical activity and educational opportunities.
- Team and individual sports, with a focus on basic large and small motor skills, are incorporated into the program.

Technology

- GRTWA is committed to providing leading-edge technology to support the curriculum, while retaining the core teacher-student relationship.
- Teachers actively participate in ongoing professional development.
- Students learn to use technology responsibly.