

Schools

Getting to Know You...the MI Way at Levin Middle School

You may or may not have heard of Dr. Howard Gardner and his theory of multiple intelligences, but the students of the Barbara and Jerry Levin Jewish Middle School have. In fact, each one of them could probably tell you if they have more linguistic intelligence, or bodily-kinesthetic, or both! In fact, they could even tell you if their classmates are more visual-spatial or naturalistic. For those of you who aren't familiar with the multiple intelligences, or MI for short, please allow me to explain.

Howard Gardner is a psychologist and a professor of education from Harvard University. He suggests that traditional IQ (Intelligence Quotient) tests aren't a true measure of how smart someone really is because there isn't just one way to be smart. He

found out through research with adults and kids that people learn and show their intelligence in different ways.

Initially, Gardner identified seven different kinds of intelligences, but has since increased it to eight. They are: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. A good understanding of the multiple intelligences will help you learn about who you are and how you learn, as well as help you understand the people around you.

The students at the Levin Jewish Middle School know all about the MI theory. They are studying the different intelligences during guidance class this year. Throughout the year, we will

all complete several different MI assessments to gauge our strengths and weaknesses. Having this kind of information helps the students pick more suitable partners for activities, choose appropriate assessment projects for themselves, and hold classroom discussions without viewing other's ideas as "stupid." Rather, their ideas come from the point of view of someone with a different kind of intelligence. ☆



The Return of a Favorite Tradition — Rosh Chodesh Breakfasts

Once a month, in celebration of Rosh Chodesh, the students at the Barbara and Jerry Levin Jewish Middle School get to kick back and enjoy a breakfast feast together. Last month, we had our first breakfast in honor of Rosh Hashanah. We all enjoyed a bagel and lox buffet on the day before the holiday began. After breakfast, Rabbi Viorst led the students in a Rosh Hashanah trivia game. The students always get to enjoy a fun, educational activity after their meal.

In addition to the monthly Rosh Chodesh breakfasts, we invite our parents to join us for a feast twice a year. Those two celebrations are extra

special for the students and parents as they get to participate in that month's game together. Our first Parent Rosh Chodesh breakfast is on December 1st in honor of Rosh Chodesh Kislev. ☆



Madeline Taviv and Tali de Groot enjoy some bagels and lox at our first Rosh Chodesh breakfast celebration.

Can a Plate Tell a Story? Mosaic Elective

Each year, the students at the Barbara and Jerry Levin Jewish Middle School participate in a variety of electives classes. Our first round of electives this year included "Bridge Architecture," "Ein Gedi Tutoring," and "Storytelling through Mosaics." In the mosaic class, the students saw examples of mosaics from around the world. They then read simple stories that could be told in three pictures ... beginning, middle, and end.

Each of the students who took this elective then designed his/her own three-picture story to tell on a

plate using glass tiles. The students drew the pictures, transferred them to the plates, chose and cut the tiles, glued them in place, and grouted in between. The end results were wonderful stories told beautifully in glass mosaic.

For more information about the Barbara and Jerry Levin Jewish Middle School, please contact Jessica Sammis at 704-366-4558, or by email at jsammis@cjdschool.org. ☆



Yoni Raffler works on his mosaic plate.

Devorah Weiss shows off her handiwork cutting the glass mosaic tiles.

Preschool Puzzlers

By Fern Sanderson

Preschool Puzzlers is a monthly feature sponsored by The Jewish Preschool on Sardis. Fern Sanderson is director of The Jewish Preschool on Sardis and a member of the national, state and local Associations for Education of Young Children, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and the National Jewish Early Childhood Network. She can be reached at jposonsardis@earthlink.net.



Fern Sanderson

act with imaginary people.

Imaginary friends are a positive tool in helping children learn about the world. They allow children to learn about roles and relationships, providing a "pal" for emerging social skills. They enable children to explore issues of control and power, without the anxiety of interacting with real authority figures. An invisible companion creates a world where the child is in control. Imaginary friends provide an outlet for children to express and work through the normal anxieties of growing up.

Observation and conversation are good ways to get to know about your child's imaginary friends. Watch and listen to interactions between your child and his/her playmate. If your child is comfortable with your interest, ask open-ended questions (questions that cannot be answered with "yes," "no" or another one word response) and let your child guide you. Children will usually tell you what they want you to know.

Take care not to enter into your child's imaginary world too enthusiastically or to interact with an imaginary friend without being invited. Support your child's beliefs positively, but don't overdo it. When adults get too involved, children may feel they've lost control of their creation.

As in other areas, parents should take responsibility for setting limits and boundaries. Try to be accommodating, but if requests or demands are unreasonable, respond with common sense. For example, if your child wants a space set at the dinner table for the imaginary companion, you might respond, "There's no room. I think Janie will have to be somewhere else while we eat."

If your child avoids meaningful interaction with other children or prefers to play exclusively with an invisible playmate, it may indicate your need to respond to those interactions with "I love your imagination." This reinforces your child's creativity while at the same time helping you express your need to make sure your child knows his/her friend is not real. ☆

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Q: My preschooler has an imaginary friend that she talks to. Is this okay? If not, what should I do?

A: Some children have a multitude of imaginary friends. Other children may have only one imaginary companion or none at all. Girls are slightly more likely to create imaginary friends than boys - possibly because boys tend to impersonate characters rather than inter-