



Social Justice

Tzedek (justice), as expressed in *Torah*, is our shared responsibility to partner with God in the work of *tikkun olam* (repair of the world). As Reform Jews, we are commanded to perform *mitzvot* as social justice work. *Tzedek* is one of Rashi's core values and an essential part of our identity as a community. The adults in the Rashi community raise children's awareness, build their knowledge, and model these actions. Our goal is to empower children to identify "brokenness" in the world and work to mend it. Our hope is that they fulfill their sacred obligation to act while at Rashi and throughout their lives.

KINDERGARTEN

Students will be able to....

- Know that the stories in the *Torah* teach us how to behave (to each other, to guests, to animals).
- Understand *Kavod* (respect) in the context of classroom behavior (listening when someone is speaking, waiting in line).
- Understand *Kehillah* (community) in the context of the classroom (group work, cooperation, taking turns, valuing others, having empathy).
- Identify areas of brokenness in basic human needs with a focus on hunger.
- Understand *Tzedakah* as an obligation to take what we have and share it, which is actualized through a connection with a food pantry.

GRADE ONE

Students will be able to....

- Understand *mitzvot* as commandments that direct our behavior: love your neighbor as yourself; *Shalom Bayit*; *Rodef Shalom*, visiting the sick, honoring the elderly, honoring your parents; *Gemilut Chasidim*.
- Understand *Kavod* in the context of the larger community.
- Understand *Kehillah* in the context of the larger community.
- Identify areas of brokenness in basic human needs with a focus on shelter and clothing.
- Understand *Gemilut Chasidim* (acts of loving kindness) is one of the ways we practice *Tzedakah*, which is actualized with a connection to an organization that serves children's shelter and clothing needs.

GRADE TWO

Students will be able to....

- Understand *mitzvot* as commandments that direct our behavior: everyone is created in God's image, *B'tzelem Elohim*; guardians of the Earth, *shomrei adamah*; and guardians of our speech, *shomrei lashon*.
- Understand that the morning blessings are a way of engaging with the world (*Ruach*).
- Understand *Ruach* by identifying a spark of God in each other. This *Ruach* is exemplified by *Tzedakah* heroes and their varied approaches to mending the world.
- Identify areas of brokenness in the environment.
- Understand the mitzvah of *Shomrei Adamah* (protecting or guarding the Earth) as actualized by responding to a community's issues related to water.

GRADE THREE

Students will be able to....

- Understand speaking up for cultures that need help articulating their needs, i.e., Native Americans, new immigrants.
- Understand *Tzedek* as an individual person's obligation to speak up for other people.
- Understand that *Limud* means learning *Torah*, which inspires learning in general and influences who we become as people.
- Identify areas of brokenness in cultural differences.
- Understand that fulfilling the mitzvah of *V'ahavta L'rayecha Kamocha* (love your neighbor as yourself) comes from learning about and connecting with others.

GRADE FOUR

Students will be able to....

- Understand that *Pirke Avot* teaches us how to behave in the community at large.
- Understand *Tzedakah* through the study of Maimonides' Ladder of *Tzedakah*.
- Build awareness about taking others' perspectives.
- Identify areas of brokenness in human connections and relationships.
- Understand the mitzvah of *Hiddur P'nei Zaken* (respectful treatment of the elderly) by building a relationship with an elderly community.

GRADE FIVE

Students will be able to....

- Explore issues of social stratification, labor forces, diversity in Jewish texts, literature and historical documents.
- Understand *Kavod* is the foundation of *Kehillah*.
- Understand that words have the power to create and destroy (*Baruch She'amar, Lashon Hara*).
- Identify areas of brokenness in workers' rights, working conditions, and relationships of unequal power.
- Understand full implications of *Lashon Hara* and develop a leadership role in the lower school.

GRADE SIX

Students will be able to....

- Understand *Shomrei Adamah* in terms of issues of environmental sustainability and conservation of earth's resources.
- Understand responsible alternatives for use and disposal of materials (both secular and holy items) as *Tikkun Olam*.
- Understand that *Ruach* is examining personal practices of eating (personal health/*kashrut*).
- Identify areas of brokenness in human impact on the environment.
- Understand holiness by participating in a specific project to repair the environment.

GRADE SEVEN

Students will be able to....

- Understand the connection between the Tractate of *Sanhedrin* and the US Constitution.
- Understand that in a democratic society, there is a process that people go through to ensure the rights of people.
- Understand *Tzedek* as our obligation to ensure the general wellbeing of the people in our *kehillah*.
- Understand *Tzedek* as our obligation to ensure full participation in society of all people on the periphery.
- Understand holiness by participating to impact a legislative project on a national level.

GRADE EIGHT

Students will be able to....

- Understand the mitzvah of *Ahavat Y'Israel* in the context of Jewish peoplehood and the State of Israel.
- Recognize historical and modern expressions of anti-Semitism.
- Understand that systems are in place in the Jewish community to help us respond to instances of anti-Semitism.
- Understand the obligation of *Ahavat Y'Israel* by responding to an area of brokenness in Israel.
- Understand *K'lal Y'Israel* by participating in a social justice project in Israel.