

RPRYconnect

YOUR LINK TO THE STUDENTS & FACULTY OF RPRY

Volume 1, Issue 1

Featured Instructor: Mrs. Rachel Callen

Subject: Hebrew Language

Classes: Boys Grades 5-8

Years at RPRY: 5



Students who enter the classroom of Mrs. Rachel Callen learn much more than speaking, writing, and understanding Hebrew with comfort and ease. They are completely immersed in the environment of Eretz Yisrael, almost breathing its air through the creative and thought-provoking classroom activities.

“Morah Rachel” is much more than a teacher of grammar and vocabulary; she fosters love of her native Eretz Yisrael within the heart of each student. She sees her primary role as instilling confidence in the students and training them not to be afraid of the language. Her class is run completely in Ivrit, sometimes at rapid Israeli speed, and students

may only respond in Ivrit. This can be quite challenging, but Mrs. Callen knows her charges can handle it. “Each year, I have seen the ability of my students increase. Their Hebrew vocabulary is impressive, and they can converse in full sentences.”

Harnessing the power of the internet, Mrs. Callen uses the computer in the corner of Room 231 to access live reports on Israeli radio and the latest articles from Israeli newspapers.

In Mrs. Callen’s classroom, games are often employed to rehearse newly-acquired skills. She has an arsenal of them: Hebrew Monopoly, Scrabble, and Life, not to mention everyone’s

favorite Hebrew card game, "Taki."

Each year, Mrs. Callen also creates an incredible display of artifacts from Tzahal, the Israel Defense Forces, and brings a former soldier to discuss life in the army. That is the dramatic conclusion to a unit on the structure of Tzahal, the obligation to protect the Land of Israel, and the challenges that face religious soldiers in the army.



Two projects that her students especially enjoy are their in-depth studies of "Operation Jonathan" (1976) and Israel's raid on the Iraqi nuclear reactor (1981).

To begin this school year, Mrs. Callen's classes read articles from Israeli newspapers about the return of the bodies of the two murdered soldiers, Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, and discussed the mood in Israel over the summer. In preparation for

Rosh Hashanah, her classes have tackled Hebrew essays on the symbolic foods of the holiday, and stories about sin and repentance.

"My students returned from the summer eager to talk with me about the events in Eretz Yisrael when school was out. They genuinely care, and that's what I'm here for."

A major component of Mrs. Callen's labor of love is her organization of RPRY's march in the Salute to Israel Parade in New York City. This is a task that begins in September and reaches a feverish pitch in the spring, and involves everything from the design and creation of T-shirts and banners to transportation to and from New York City. It is hundred of hours of work, but well worth it when RPRY marches up Fifth Avenue, with love for Eretz Yisrael in its heart.

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